

OBITUARIES

Roger Davies (1943–2017)

Roger Davies, who died on the 20th of December 2017 at the age of 74, was for many years one of the Association for Latin Teachers' most colourful, enthusiastic and inspiring members.

He first attended a summer school in 1968 and quickly made his mark, being elected to the committee and taking a leading role in the entertainments, where his great talents as an actor were immediately manifest. Members who attended summer schools in those days will remember many a part he played, and putting on a home-made tunic or a chiton seemed second nature to him.

Nor is this surprising, as he was a born actor. He was born in Anfield, Liverpool, in 1943 and was a lifelong enthusiast for Liverpool football team. However, the 'camp' side of him appeared early. He knew himself, and fell easily into the role of performer. He attended Alsop High School, Walton, where his histrionic and musical talents developed, and when he left school he had the offer of a place at RADA which was very much in line with his ambitions. Sadly, however, opposition from his father forced him to abandon the offer, to the benefit of the smaller stage of the classroom. He graduated in Classics in Liverpool and after taking a PGCE at Cambridge where he was attached to Fitzwilliam College. In 1967 he was appointed to teach Classics at Lord Wandsworth's School, a boys' boarding school in Hampshire, where he was at his happiest and made many lifelong friends, besides teaching some outstanding people such as Julian Sands, Sir Peter Coulson and the late Mark Whittow. It was here that he met his partner, John O'Gorman. In 1993 he moved to St Swithun's School at Winchester where he stayed until he retired in 2003. Though the school is a prestigious girls' independent school, it turned out to be an unfortunate move which he somewhat regretted.

He had been part owner of a country house at Eymet in the Dordogne area of France where many of his friends enjoyed

idyllic summer holidays but he sold his share to buy a house in Winchester. He retired in 2003 after which he travelled a great deal, especially to California. He was in South West France in July 2008 when he suffered a life-threatening stroke from which he was only saved by the excellence of the treatment he received at a hospital in Cahors. Though the prognostic was that he would not walk again, he recovered sufficiently, thanks to enormous determination on his part, to be able to walk with the assistance of a frame, and he taught himself to write with his left hand. He was able to attend summer schools until 2015, after which the venues proved unsuitable for one with his disability. He was much missed.

He was first elected to the committee in 1978, and was re-elected in 1984. He directed two summer schools for the ARLT, in 1982 at Canterbury (he was Nero in the entertainment) and in 1996 at his former school, Lord Wandsworth's. He was elected president for 1988 to 1991. He was the life and soul of the entertainments at the many summer schools he attended, displaying his theatrical talents and using his knowledge of Aristophanes to great effect.

His contribution to the Guildford Branch of the Classical Association was outstanding. He was a founder member in 1975 and in 1985 at the tenth anniversary dinner played the part of Hephaestus in a pantomime. He regularly presented pupils in the reading competitions with much success. He also acted in a presentation of Scenes from Plautus and Terence. He also frequently acted in amateur performances of Gilbert and Sullivan operas playing principal roles.

He was also a talented gourmet cook and entertained many of his ARLT and other friends to dinner over the years. He was a wine enthusiast and was for many years a member of the Sunday Times Wine Club. He took part in many competitions of all sorts and won many prizes.

His voice can be heard on tape recordings made for the *Cambridge Latin Course*. Many members of the teaching profession, especially classicists, are indebted to his work and example. Indeed, in the words of Linda Soames, he will be remembered for 'his wit, warmth, anecdotes, friendship, and always, always, laughter'.

John Hazel, ARLT

James Morwood (1943–2017)

James Morwood died suddenly in September while on holiday in Greece. No-one has done more for the cause of classical education in this country. James was educated at St John's School Leatherhead and at Peterhouse Cambridge, where he read Classics and English. He taught both subjects at Harrow for 30 years, and was Head of Classics for 17. In 1996 he became Grocyn Lecturer at Oxford, in charge of language teaching across the university, and a fellow of Wadham. He was immensely energetic in both roles, continuing college administration well beyond his nominal retirement and teaching until the end of his life.

Innovative textbooks had already come from the Harrow department before Maurice Balme and James collaborated on *Cupid and Psyche* and the *Oxford Latin Course*, intended as a compromise between the Cambridge course and more traditional approaches. Before leaving Harrow, James produced the *Pocket Oxford Latin Dictionary*, as well as a biography of the Harrovian playwright Sheridan. Experience of the needs of undergraduate students produced the OUP Greek and Latin grammars, as well as the *Pocket Oxford Dictionary of Classical Greek*. James also translated five volumes of Euripides plays for the Oxford World's Classics series. An edited collection *The Teaching of Classics* gave an optimistic snapshot of the subject in 2003; subsequent progress has in no small measure been thanks to James himself. Shorter books included introductory surveys of Sophocles and Euripides, and a biography of the emperor Hadrian. In his later years James produced several editions of classical texts: Euripides' *Suppliant Women*, then (with his Wadham colleague Stephen Heyworth) *Propertius 3* and *Aeneid 3*, and finally (with Chris Collard) *Iphigenia at Aulis*. The last two appeared only weeks before his death.

James took over the running of the JACT Greek Summer School (from its founder David Raeburn) when it moved to Bryanston in 1986, directing it for several years, chairing the management committee for several more, and seeing the school almost double in size. He served as President of JACT in its heyday,

also heading its subsidiary LACT. He was tireless in serving on committees and in speaking at events for teachers and students. Cheerful and always entertaining, he carried his learning and commitments lightly. James will be much missed: he was a good friend, and a good man.

John Taylor, University of Manchester

Robert West (1948–2018)

It is with great sadness that we record the death from cancer and heart disease on January 9, 2018, of Robert West, Classics teacher at Bradford Grammar School for 41 years, long-term supporter of the Association for Latin Teaching (ARLT) and examiner.

Born in 1948, Robert was educated at Dulwich College where he enjoyed the teaching of such 20th century scholars as Philip Vellacott and Tony Verity. He read Classics on a major scholarship at Trinity College, Oxford before doing a PGCE at Bristol. His entire career was spent at

Bradford where he taught Latin, Greek and Ancient History, and for 17 years he was head of a large and thriving department. He spent a sabbatical term in 1996 at Selwyn College, Cambridge, working on Cicero's *Pro Milone*. This was published in 2006 and is currently much used by pupils, as it is the prescribed edition for A level. A fitting tribute indeed.

Robert was Treasurer of the ARLT from 2000–2009, a post he carried out with his usual efficiency and calm. Officers of the association who worked with him have commented on his kindness, patience and meticulous attention to detail, all of which made their roles much easier and more enjoyable. He also led many option groups at the Summer School, particularly on prose authors and prose composition. He undertook the latter with sensitivity to younger teachers who had had little or no experience of this dying art, while maintaining a rigorous approach for the cognoscenti.

Robert spent many years as a Principal Examiner for OCR, both for GCSE Latin and A level Greek, and

latterly as a reviser/assessor and then a scrutineer for GCSE Latin.

Apart from Classics, music was his great interest. A very fine bass, he sang with the Halifax Choral Society. He regularly attended the Three Choirs Festival, as well as concerts in London and Yorkshire. He was extremely fond of Elgar's music in general and the *Dream of Gerontius* in particular, becoming something of a connoisseur of performances of the latter. He was also a very competent organist.

A modest but scholarly man with a subtle wit, he was gentle and kind, inspiring many of his pupils to pursue Classics to degree level and beyond. There is no doubt that he will be much missed in the classical world.

We express our condolences to his brother Geoff and his many friends, especially his former colleagues who looked after him with great diligence in the final months of his illness.

Lynda Goss, ARLT