Professor Pike obituary

With the death of Professor Douglas Pike on 19 May, scholarship lost a devoted servant and the University a most distinguished and albeit unassuming, member.

Professor Pike was born on 3 November 1934, in Australia, where his Australian parents were missionaries, and was educated there in the school of the Inland Mission until his sixteenth year. He then, in 1942, came to Australia again and joined the Victorian Education Department as a part-time teacher while he studied at the University of Melbourne. Two years later his father was killed by bandits and Douglas became responsible for the education of his two younger brothers and sister. To earn the necessary money he went to work in the bush, becoming after a time overseer of a large cattle station in New South Wales, with a brief interlude during the depression as manager of a small religious printing producing the weekly War Cry in Sydney.

In 1958, with his brothers and sister established respectively in pharmacy, accounting and nursing, he experienced a call to the ministry, and entered the theological college of the Churches of Christ in Melbourne, serving after graduation as a minister first in Melbourne and later in Adelaide. In 1941 he married Olive Hagger, the daughter of a minister of the same church. The marriage was an exceptionally close and happy one, and they had two sons.

In Adelaide, Pike resumed his interrupted university studies, and though a part-time student he graduated in 1947 with first class honours in history and political science and the Tinley Scholarship for the best student in history. Six months filling in for an absent senior lecturer turned him towards a regular academic career. In 1949 he became lecturer in his University in the Western Australian, and two years later he returned to Adelaide as a reader. In 1960 he moved to the chair of history in Tasmania, and in 1962 he came to ANU as the first General Editor of the Australian Dictionary of Biography with the rank of Professor. Here he built up the organisation of the Dictionary and saw the first four volumes issue from the press. The fifth, virtually completed, was with the printer when he died.

Paradise of Distant: South Australia 1829–1857 (1957; 2nd ed. 1973), the story of the foundation and early years of South Australia, was a landmark in the writing of Australian social history, not only for its scholarship but for its perceptive study of the interaction of the English background of Professor Pike at Cambridge in 1946–70. The founders and their colonial aspirations and experience. Australia: the Quiet Continent (1962; 2nd ed. 1970) is still the best short introduction to Australian history. But Pike's great monument is, of course, the Australian Dictionary of Biography. While the conception of this project was shared by a number of people, of whom Pike was one, and its execution was the work of many collaborators, every page bears the unmistakable marks of Pike's personality, his rigorous and exacting scholarship, his passionate sense of style and relevance and his terribly precise editing. Every fact was checked and double-checked, usually by the editor himself. Legends were toppled, family histories generously but firmly shattered that truth might prevail. To the work he devoted himself without reserve, driving himself relentlessly. Only a few weeks in New Zealand after the completion of volume II Collecting material on E.J. Wakefield and a subnationality in 1946–70 as Common- wealth Fellow of St John's College, Cambridge, provided some break in his detailed work. The result has been generally acclaimed as one of the best of the national biographical dictionary and a unique achievement in Australian history: the covered Ernest Scott Prize of the University Pike to the Australian Dictionary of Biography for award in 1971 were signs of this recognition.

The breadth of Pike's experience, his warm interest in people of all sorts and conditions and his glowing sincerity, to say nothing of his earthy common sense and the fact that he had lived in every State except Queensland contributed to make him not only a uniquely qualified social historian but a widely appreciated friend and colleague. He was a superb teacher, always willing to help younger students, even if sometimes deservedly caustic about their elders, and his devotion to scholarship and interest in people led to his taking on more than his share of the chores of examination and advising. The work of the Dictionary will go on along the lines he laid down, but for Douglas himself there can be no replacement.

L.F. Fitzhardinge

COUNCIL TRIBUTE

The Standing Committee of the University Council, at its 14 June meeting, noted with regret the death of Professor Pike, and asked the Registrar to record its appreciation of Professor Pike's work in conveying its sympathy to his family.

At the meeting of Council in March, attention was drawn to the substantial and scholarly contribution made by Professor Pike to the publication of Biography by his service as Editor. Professor Pike's name has been inscribed on the roll of emeritus professors of the University.

Standing Committee approved introduction of external degree in Politics, offered in 1975 from the Department of Russian. Standing Committee also approved a new series, "Sociology of the Soviet Union," offered in the Department of Sociology. Industry. It will be available to third-year students in the Department of Sociology. The standing Committee approved a change in the appointment conditions of tutors to provide that in special cases appointment or reappointment of a tutor or senior tutor be for a specified period, normally of three years.

In these cases, more than one appointment during the specified period has normally been three years but this is not always possible.

In March, Council decided that the title "demonstrator" be abandoned. Tutors will thereafter be known as "demonstrators" or "lecturers-demonstrators.

Fourth half term. Council approved establishment of a non-profit cooperative store in the new hall of residence.

The store will purchase bulk rice, flour, sugar and oil, and sell these and other necessities to residents who will supply their own containers. Canned goods and toiletries will also be sold.

The store will be administered by a committee of students. It will be staffed initially by residents on a voluntary basis.

Secondments. Mr A. Martinez, Lecturer in Economic History, is acting as temporary economics consultant to the States Government.

Dr R.G. Gregory, Senior Research Fellow in Economics (RSSE), has been given leave of absence from 12 months to work with the Industries Assistance Commission.

Drs C. Jenkinson and J. K. Gillis, Acting professors of Law, is to work for 12 months with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

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Russian summer course to continue if enrolments reach 50

The summer course in Statistics, held for the first time in January–February this year, in which over 50 students enrolled in 1975 provided that there are at least 50 enrolments.

Standing Committee, at its 14 June meeting, noted that the Board of the School of General Studies had reviewed the Statistics summer course schedule after the report on it from the head of the Department of Statistics, Professor R. T. Allender. The course offered is Statistics A03, a first-year semester unit, which is continuing for six weeks.

In 1974, 33 students (including a number of postgraduates) enrolled but only 25 actually sat the examination. There were no failures in the examination. The grade distribution was: two highest distinctions, five good distinctions, six moderate distinctions, ten passed credits, and four were given pass grade.

Professor T. P. I. T. Allender said he was instructed by the course, Mr P. Winer, who had had much experience in teaching first and second-year general education courses, had been extremely impressed by the student interest, motivation, and effort. This had been reflected in the high proportion of students obtaining credit or better.

"Despite the overwhelming success," Professor T. P. I. T. Allender reported, "that the need to continue the course into six weeks has been a change in emphasis in the material taught. In particular, there was time to teach the necessary material in the course, and there was not the same opportunity for the students to work in groups as in the TSL Summer course."

Professor T. P. I. T. Allender said that the teaching and tutoring requirements of the two staff members involved in the course was one of the main reasons that the normal TSL Summer course would have to be a substantial change in order to justify commitment of such resources again.

Professor T. P. I. T. Allender said that the normal TSL Summer course was an opportunity for students to work in groups and that the TSL Summer course should be offered as a trial.

New courses. On the recommendation of the Board of the School of General Studies, the TSL Summer course should be offered as a trial.

Russian summer course marks birth of Alexander Pushkin

The Department of Russian will hold a number of activities during the first fortnight of July to mark the 250th anniversary of the birth of Alexander Pushkin, who is regarded as possibly the most important of all Russian writers.

The department aims to popularise the people's culture. It holds a number of activities, one of Pushkin's contribution to Russian culture.

Pushkin creations such as Eugene Onegin, The Queen of Spades and The Snowstorm have been translated into all European languages, and a number of Russian authors. Tolstoy, Gogol, Turgenev, Chekhov, Gorky, Sholokhov have acknowledged their debt to him.

The activities organised by the Russian Department are free and open to the public.

They are:

• Introduction and reading of Pushkin's poetry in Russian and English in the National Library theatre on Tuesday 2 July at 7pm.

• Screening of an exhibition "The art and architecture of ancient Kiev" in the McDonald Room of the Menzies Building, ANU Library, on Monday 8 July at 7pm.

The exhibition will be open during library hours until 19 July.

Copies of the Russian and Slavonic operas by Professor Gerald Seaman of the University of Auckland in the Russian Department, "Romeo and Juliet" and "Eugene Onegin" will be offered on 30 July at 7pm and 11 July, 7:30pm. The first, "Romeo and Juliet," will be presented by the "Romeo and Juliet" of the ANU repertoire group, and the second, "Eugene Onegin." The lectures will be illustrated with recordings.