Basil Edwards 1930-2014

The passing of Professor AB Edwards in January 2014 was a sad moment – not only for his family, but also for his friends and former colleagues, and particularly those formerly and presently at the University of South Africa. As one of the latter I am honoured to write a tribute in memory of him and the thoughts of him that I share are written in that vein.

As was the convention in the erstwhile faculty of law at Unisa, Basil Edwards, together with compatriots John Middleton and Pierre Brookes (like him they were later to become professors), began his career as an academic assistant in 1969 after successfully completing the then post-graduate LLB degree. Soon afterward he became a lecturer and subsequently senior lecturer and professor in the Department of Legal History, Comparative Law and Legal Philosophy. It was at this time that I met him, first when I was a student in the early seventies and appointed (in the then conventional fashion) as a junior lecturer in Private Law, and later as a colleague of his in the Department of Legal History, Comparative Law and Legal Philosophy. As a junior colleague I particularly valued our conversations concerning his field of expertise which was Private International Law, and under his guidance completed the compulsory dissertation for the LLB on the question of the matrimonial domicile. He was appointed as Head of Department in 1982 and obtained a PhD from the University of Cape Town in 1984. In the same year he and Sybil Meston were married.

The scholarship of the late Professor Edwards has been outlined in a further tribute in this journal and I would like to highlight some more personal moments in my memory of him. He was a fine conversationalist at office get-togethers and

Fundamina
Volume 21 | Number 1 | 2015
pp 216-217

Doi: 10.17159/2411-7870/2015/v21n1a13
Print ISSN 1021-545X/ Online ISSN 2411-7870
© Unisa Press

OBITUARY

parties at my home as well as at those held during the meetings of the then Society of University Teachers of Law where in the wee hours of the morning, at late after-parties, his keen sense of humour was shared with colleagues and friends from sister universities.

He retired in 1995, but returned to work in the Department on various research projects, notably as collaborator on the mammoth *The Selective Paulus Voet* of which mention is made elsewhere in this journal. Some two years later he and Sybil moved to Cape Town. Here he continued his research and honed his golf, first at the Clovelly Golf Club and later in the southern suburbs of the Mother City. After a final move to an apartment in Kenilworth, I am told he became a dab hand at the game of croquet. Although Baz and I remained good friends over the years, always remembering one another at Christmas and birthdays, I was able to maintain a more regular and personal contact once we moved to Cape Town some six years ago. While we often revisited the past together, he was always eager to hear the more recent news of his alma mater and erstwhile colleagues there.

I was privileged to keep in touch with Sybil during his short but trying illness and very sad to hear that he had passed on. I am honoured to have known him as a colleague and friend.

Joan Church
Professor Emeritus, University of South Africa