

Obituaries

Deaths

AUGUST – NOVEMBER 2005

Richard Gilbert Alexander A'BECKETT
(TC 1962)

Dr John Lawrence BIGNELL
(TC 1935)

Peter Matheson BIRELL
(TC 1939)

Dr Howard Windham COOPER
(TC 1978)

Alan GORDON
(TC 1937)

Peter Francis HART FRACS
(TC 1951)

Lt Cdr (Rtd) Jeremy Charles KEDGE
(TC 1958)

The Revd Dr Harry Reynolds SMYTHE
(TC 1960)

John Herbert STANDISH
(TC 1927)

Michael Rayner THWAITES
(TC 1934)
Fellow of Trinity College

Dr Horace Finn TUCKER
(TC 1934)



Sir Rupert Hamer, AC, KCMG, ED
29 July 1916 – 23 March 2004

Rupert James Hamer, usually known as Dick Hamer, was born in Melbourne, and educated at Melbourne and Geelong Grammar Schools, and Trinity College, the University of Melbourne. Resident at Trinity from 1935 to 1938, he was an outstanding student, winning the Supreme Court Prize in 1938. He was most active in College life, serving as secretary of the TCAC, representing Trinity in both cricket and football, and securing the Franc Carse Essay Prize and the Leeper Prize for Oratory. He was also a firm and public opponent of appeasement. Dick Hamer graduated LL M in 1940 and was called to the Victorian Bar in the same year.

Joining the AIF in 1940, Dick Hamer served in North Africa in the crucial battles of Tobruk and El Alamein, and in New Guinea, where he was mentioned in despatches. He took part in the Normandy landings in 1944, and was involved in planning the crossing of the Rhine. On returning home with the rank of major, he joined the family law firm of Smith & Emmerton, but maintained his army links, serving as Commanding Officer of the Victorian Scottish Regiment from 1954 to 1958.

In 1958, Dick Hamer was elected to the Legislative Council seat of East Yarra for the Liberal Party. He was appointed Minister for Immigration from 1962 to 1964, and Minister for Local Government from 1964 to 1971. Resigning from the Council in 1971, he entered the Legislative Assembly, winning the seat of Kew. In the same year he became Chief Secretary and Deputy Premier.

In August 1972, Dick Hamer succeeded Sir Henry Bolte as Premier. His term of office was characterised by a great concern for cultural and environmental matters. He demonstrated this by holding the Arts portfolio, concurrently with the office of Premier, from 1972 to 1979. This was the first Arts ministry established by a State Government. He played a central role in the development of the Victorian Arts

Centre and at a tribute concert following his death (in which the Choir of Trinity College performed), the Melbourne Concert Hall was renamed Hamer Hall in his honour.

Sir Rupert coined the term, ‘Victoria, The Garden State’, introduced legislation for town and regional planning, founded the Environment Protection Authority, and undertook other conservation measures. He also introduced legislation to provide for equal opportunity for women, and for the abolition of capital punishment. He gave up the post of Treasurer in 1979, but added the portfolios of State Development, Decentralisation and Tourism to his responsibilities. Dick Hamer resigned as Premier in June 1981, retiring from Parliament in the following month.

For the remainder of his life he remained extraordinarily active in many community organisations, perhaps most notably as Chairman of the Victorian State Opera from 1982 to 1995, and as President of the Victorian College of the Arts from 1982 to 1986. He supported the Republican Movement and spoke strongly for a more compassionate approach to refugees. He served on the Council of Trinity College from 1949 to 1966, was made a Fellow of the College in 1980, and maintained a close connection with Trinity. An enthusiastic supporter of the Choir, it was fitting that they sang for his state funeral service in St Paul’s Cathedral, and for the special Memorial Evensong in the Trinity College Chapel in September 2004.

Married to April Mackintosh in 1944, the couple had three sons and two daughters, and celebrated their sixtieth wedding anniversary just a few weeks before his death. Dick Hamer, imbued with a life-long commitment to public service, has been described as one of Australia’s finest representatives of classical liberal values in the Deakinite tradition.

Geoff Browne

‘Without doubt, as so often in history, the times produced the right man for the task; he brought to an immensely difficult role vision, success and great distinction.’

– words written by the late Sir Rupert (Dick) Hamer in 1957 following the death of the second Warden of Trinity, Sir John Behan, but which, the sixth Warden noted at the special Memorial Service for Sir Rupert on 5 September 2004, also apply to Dick himself.



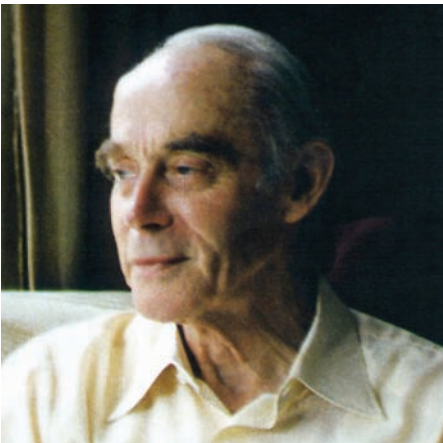
Sir Rupert Clarke, AM, MBE(mil)
5 November 1919 - 4 February 2005

Although not an undergraduate member of the College, Sir Rupert Clarke, 3rd Baronet of Rupertswood, continued the connection which his grandfather, Sir William Clarke and Janet, Lady Clarke began with their substantial benefactions to the College in its early days.

His sons, Rupert and Peter, were enrolled at the College and, in 1971, he accepted Warden Sharwood’s invitation to chair the Appeal for the Centenary Endowment Fund. This raised over \$100,000 in its first phase and, in following years, the Fund has enabled a number of significant initiatives.

Sir Rupert was an active member of the College’s Art Committee from its inception in 1987 to 1999. He was appointed a member of the College Council and in 1979 was elected a Fellow of the College. In this role he maintained his interest and he and Lady Clarke were welcome visitors on many College occasions.

Bishop James Grant



Michael Rayner Thwaites, AO
30 May 1915 – 1 November 2005

Michael Thwaites enjoyed a remarkably varied life. A Rhodes Scholar, a naval officer during World War II, and a poet of rare talent, he also played a vital counter-intelligence role during the Cold War.

He was born in Brisbane, the son of Robert Ernest Thwaites, a schoolmaster, and Jessie Elizabeth (née Nelson). During the 1920s, the family moved to Melbourne where Michael attended Ivanhoe and Geelong Grammar Schools. He continued his studies at the University of Melbourne, as a resident student of Trinity College, from 1934–36. A brilliant all-rounder, he graduated with first-class honours in Classics, was sprint champion of the University in 1936, and was elected Victorian Rhodes Scholar for 1937. He was active in student life, editing *Fleur-de-Lys*. He met his future wife, Honor Mary Good, while she was a student at Janet Clarke Hall.

At Oxford, Thwaites secured the Newdigate Prize for his poem *Milton Blind*, for which he was also awarded the King’s Gold Medal for Poetry. This was the beginning of a long and distinguished career as a poet. His collected verse, stretching over nearly seventy years, was published last year under the title *Unfinished Journey*. The hymn, ‘For Australia’, written by Thwaites and his wife, was sung at the opening of the New Parliament House, Canberra, in 1996, and in 1997 at the Anzac Service in Westminster Abbey. Michael Thwaites was a devout Christian and at Oxford he was active in the group later known as Moral Rearmament. This was central to his life for many years.

On the outbreak of war, Thwaites enlisted in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve and served throughout the war in the Atlantic and North Sea. In 1999, he published *Atlantic Odyssey*, a vivid account of his 20-month voyage on an anti-submarine escort trawler. Thwaites’ best-known poem, *The Jervis Bay*, published in 1943, reflects his wartime experiences.

Returning to Australia after the War, Thwaites became a Lecturer in English at the University of Melbourne. In 1950, he was appointed to ASIO as Director of Counter-Espionage, and in 1954 his branch supervised the sensational defection of the KGB officers Vladimir and Eudokia Petrov. He remained with ASIO until 1971, when he took up the post of Deputy Head of the Federal Parliamentary Library in Canberra, retiring in 1976.

Always a staunch supporter of the College, Thwaites was installed as a Fellow of Trinity in November 2000. In 2002, he was made an Officer in the Order of Australia (AO). The citation referred to his ‘service to the community, to the Anglican Diocese of Canberra-Goulburn, and to literature as an author of poetry and narrative works reflecting the emergence of Australia’s nationhood.’

Predeceased by his wife, Honor, in 1993, he is survived by his children, Peter, Penelope, Richard and John, and nine grandchildren.

Bishop James Grant



Yvonne Aitken, AM
1911-2004

From her enrolment in 1930, Yvonne Aitken, as student, tutor, Vice-Principal and Fellow of Janet Clarke Hall, had a close and continuing association with Trinity College.

The elder daughter of David Aitken and Arabella Miller, she was educated at the Convents of Mercy in the several country towns where her bank manager father worked. Graduating with honours in 1936, she had a distinguished career as teacher and researcher.

She was tutor, lecturer, senior lecturer and reader in plant sciences and, from 1977, honorary senior associate of the Institute of Land and Food Resources. Her research, for which she was awarded her Doctorate of Agricultural Science, addressed the question of why day length determined the time over which crops matured. This involved expeditions from Greenland to Hawaii and she became a world authority on predicting geographic and climatic limits for plant varieties. She collected an enormous number of pea varieties to preserve genetic diversity for plant breeders of the future. Notable, too, were her pictorial records of her work and field expeditions.

Yvonne was a familiar figure to generations of Trinity students, in Chapel and en route to the University. At her funeral, JCH Principal, Dr Damien Powell, eulogised her quality of mind, her unfailing graciousness and her Franciscan love of nature.

Bishop James Grant
(Acknowledgements to Susan Hudson.)