

Kevin Hargreaves Lee (1941–2001)

Kevin Lee died suddenly on 28 May 2001, of a heart attack, in his sixtieth year. His untimely death is a grievous loss to classical studies in Australia and to international scholarship in the field of Greek drama.

Kevin graduated with first class honours in classics from the University of Newcastle (then still a college of the University of New South Wales) before undertaking postgraduate studies at the University of New England. He chose Greek tragedy as the subject of his master's degree, thus setting foot in the field of study that was to remain the principal research interest of his career. Before he began his MA thesis on Euripides' *Troades*, he read the whole of Greek tragedy three times over—a feat that illustrates his characteristic thoroughness and explains his enviable knowledge of the field. An expanded version of the thesis, together with his own revised Greek text, comprised his edition of *Troades*, published by Macmillan in 1976 and reprinted in 1997.

He lectured at New England from 1967, becoming a senior lecturer in 1972. In 1972–73 he had his first opportunity to study abroad when he was awarded the Alexander von Humboldt Fellowship. At Tübingen he gained valuable firsthand experience of the German tradition of classical philology, working under the eminent Euripidean scholar Professor Richard Kannicht, with whom he formed a lasting friendship.

On his return to Armidale, Kevin completed a comprehensive study of the indication of entrances and exits in the plays of Euripides, which earned him, in 1978, his PhD. Although unpublished, this work remains an extremely valuable examination of an important aspect of the dramatist's technique.

In 1979 Lee moved to New Zealand to take up appointment to the Chair of Classics at The University of Canterbury. He held the chair for 13 years and it was a very happy and rewarding period of his career. He enjoyed warm relations with classicists at other New Zealand universities, while also keeping in close touch with Australian colleagues. An active member of AULLA, he had a leading role in organising its Christchurch congress in 1987, and subsequently became a member of the editorial board of AUMLA.

It was largely through Kevin's initiative that a Greek drama conference was held in Sydney in 1982, which brought together Antipodean scholars and a few visitors from further afield. A second Greek drama conference, held in Christchurch in 1992, included a larger international participation. Kevin had made plans for holding a third in the series, at Sydney University in 2002; this is to take place in his memory.

The years in Christchurch were also productive for his research: his textual edition of Euripides' *Heracles* was published in 1988; there were several articles; and he had the opportunity to study abroad, notably a Fellowship at the Center for Hellenic Studies in Washington DC in the mid-1980s.

He returned to Australia in 1992 to become Professor of Classics at the University of Sydney, the Chair of Classics having been reinstated after 100

years of separate chairs in Greek and Latin. It was indeed not inappropriate that he should occupy the Chair once held by Charles Badham, an eminent nineteenth-century editor of Euripides. He was also initial head of a combined School of Archaeology, Classics and Ancient History. If there was a risk that Sydney's traditional emphasis on the study of classical languages might be reduced in this amalgamation, Lee made it clear that he was firmly committed to maintaining the strength of Greek and Latin, both in the University and in schools. Significant initiatives towards this end included the introduction of an annual Latin summer school, which has attracted increasing numbers each year, and the setting up of a Classical Languages Acquisition Research Unit in 1996.

Despite the success of his efforts, financial constraints led to a depletion of the Classics staff, when those retiring were not replaced, resulting in increased pressure on those who remained. Lee also found his administrative skills and experience increasingly in demand at Faculty level, and on occasions as an adviser to other universities. In addition, he gave wise counsel as a Trustee of Sydney Grammar School and as a Councillor of Sancta Sophia College.

In 1998 he became President of the Classical Association of NSW, and in 2000, President of the Australian Society of Classical Studies, both offices he held at the time of his death.

Notwithstanding the heavy demands on his time and energy, Kevin found time to maintain his links with international scholarship and to make progress with his research projects. In 1992 he was invited to take part in the inaugural meeting of the International Society for the Classical Tradition, held at Tübingen and in 1993 he gave an invited paper to a Greek tragedy conference at King's College, London. In 1996 he was Visiting Professor at the University of Pennsylvania, and in 1999 joint organiser of an international conference on Euripides and Tragic Theatre held at Banff, Canada. His edition of Euripides' *Ion* appeared in 1997. For the same series he collaborated with C. Collard and M. Cropp on a two-volume edition of *Selected Fragmentary Plays of Euripides*, of which the first volume was published in 1995; at the time of his death he was working on his contribution to the second volume.

In a rather different field he collaborated with A. W. James in *A Commentary on Quintus of Smyrna*, which appeared in 2000.

Kevin was an inspiring teacher, skilled in communicating to others his own enjoyment of classical literature, whether discussing broad questions of interpretation or exploring fine points of text and language. Students appreciated his close individual interest in them and his ready help with their problems. His colleagues also valued his lively interest in their work and his practical advice. Teachers, too, were encouraged by his concern for the welfare of classics in schools.

In 1965 he married Mailie Comerford, a fellow student at Newcastle, who was a source of strong support throughout his career. They had seven children. Devotion to his family and a strong commitment to his church were important aspects of Kevin's life. Among his family, he could put aside academic concerns.

His leisure pursuits included music, theatre and outdoor recreation. He also enjoyed conviviality in the company of friends and, assisted by Mailie and the family, would celebrate a special occasion with generous hospitality at his home.

W. Ritchie