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SIMON COLDHAM: A COLLEAGUE'S TRIBUTE

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This year is marked by the retirement of Simon Coldham after 27 years' service to the Law Department of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), and over twenty years' service to this journal as a member of the Editorial Board.

Simon was bitten by the 'Africa bug' when, as a young graduate, he taught in Zambia under the auspices of the Voluntary Service Overseas scheme. While completing a Ph.D. at SOAS in Kenyan land law, he taught for a year in Nairobi, before being appointed to a lectureship in law at Birmingham University in 1974. In 1978, he moved to SOAS, where he remained until his retirement, thus completing over thirty years of dedication to the profession of law teacher. His particular expertise in the field of African law lies in property and succession, which he has taught at undergraduate and postgraduate level, including the supervision of many doctoral candidates. He has made numerous contributions to the academic literature in his chosen field, as often reflected in the pages of this journal. As a member of the Editorial Board, he has made a particularly notable contribution to African scholarship. It was my privilege to share this task with him for many years. However, Simon bore the principal editorial burden in terms of correspondence with contributors and the meticulous checking of manuscripts and proofs. The work of many an aspiring young scholar emerged into print in a very much improved state owing to Simon's dedication to these tasks.

Simon showed similar dedication as a teacher, as witnessed by the many grateful students with whom he is still in touch. He came to SOAS only three years after the introduction of its undergraduate law degree, so, apart from his teaching of African law, he assumed an increasingly heavy burden of 'core' teaching in the fields of criminal, property and family law. He also played a key role in sustaining the London University external law programme, frequently making trips to Hong Kong and Malaysia in order to lecture to local candidates. He also undertook with cheerful and calm efficiency many administrative burdens in the SOAS Law Department, in particular those of undergraduate tutor. I was enormously grateful, when head of that department, for his support and advice in ensuring the smooth running of the programmes in a period of development and expansion.

Simon, a keen sportsman (he was a mainstay of the SOAS squash team for many years), theatre-goer and traveller, will not be idle in retirement. I am sure that all readers of this journal, his former students all over the world, his colleagues, particularly those who have served with him on the Editorial Board of this journal, will wish to join me in hoping that that retirement will prove to be a long and happy one.

* Consulting Editor.

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