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MAURICE KENNEDY
Obituary

It was with great regret that the Irish mathematical community learned of the death, following a long, serious illness, of Professor Maurice Kennedy on 15 January 1994. He had retired, on grounds of ill-health, from University College Dublin in 1983. At the time of his retirement he held the offices of Registrar and Associate Professor of Mathematics. He is survived by his brother and his sister.

Maurice Kennedy was born in Dublin in 1924, the son of a distinguished figure of the early days of the new Irish State, Dr Henry Kennedy (an active member of the cooperative movement). Maurice received his secondary education at Belvedere College and he won an Entrance Scholarship to University College Dublin in 1942. He spent his first year studying engineering, but switched to Mathematical Science in his second year, graduating with a first class honours B.Sc. in 1945. He gained his M.Sc. in 1946 and was appointed an assistant in the departments of mathematics and mathematical physics in 1947. In 1951 he went to the California Institute of Technology on a Smith-Mundt Scholarship. Although he used frequently bemoan the inadequacy of his mathematical background as a preparation for graduate study, he completed his Ph.D. degree under Samuel Karlin in three years with a thesis entitled *Ergodic theorems for a certain class of Markov processes*. These results were later published in the Pacific Journal of Mathematics [3]. Maurice returned to Ireland in 1954 and took up an appointment as an assistant lecturer in mathematics in UCD. Apart from a sabbatical year in Stanford university in 1958–59 he spent the rest of his academic life in University College Dublin, becoming College Lecturer in 1959, Associate Professor in 1966 and Registrar in 1974.

When Maurice was a graduate student at Caltech he did work related to the famous Bateman Manuscript Project. Harry Bateman had been a professor of mathematics there and, at the time of his death in 1946, had been working on a large project to give an up-to-date account of the properties of the special functions of mathematical physics. The results of his work were contained on a card index file occupying some dozens of shoe boxes. Arthur Erdélyi had been appointed to a professorship at Caltech with the specific task of completing the Bateman project. The results of all this work appeared as *Higher Transcendental Functions* (three volumes) and *Tables of Integral Transforms* (two volumes) and were published by McGraw-Hill, beginning in 1953. The work that Maurice did in this connection was done as part of his duties as a research assistant and was published in [1, 2]. Inspired by his year in Stanford, where he again met Samuel Karlin, Maurice published a second paper on stochastic processes [4]

Professor Kennedy was an outstanding teacher and was particularly inspiring to weaker students. His presentations were meticulous in every detail. He pioneered the teaching of measure theory, functional analysis and stochastic processes at UCD. At a different level he was involved in giving courses to school teachers to help them implement changes in the school curriculum [5]. In the early 70s he organized a memorable series of seminars based on the book *Geometry of Quantum Theory* (vol. 1) by V. S. Varadarajan (Van Nostrand, 1970). His idea was to get a topic which would contain mathematics that would appeal to the widest possible audience. As well as lecturing himself, he always summed up and commented on the lectures of the other speakers. In his later years at UCD he took a very great interest in general topology and foundations of analysis and produced some results in these areas which were never published.

Maurice Kennedy became very active in all aspects of College life. He had very deeply held views on the nature of the university, he had very high standards and he argued his views at all levels of the College, from Arts Faculty to Governing Body. He was deeply suspicious of the academic value of a number of the newer disciplines. Since 1972 he was a member of the Senate of the National

University of Ireland and served on its Standing Committee and Board of Studies. From 1978 to 1980 he acted as executive secretary of the Committee of Heads of Irish Universities and represented the Committee at meetings in Brussels, Strasbourg and Helsinki. Almost all his waking hours were devoted to the work of UCD. However, he did have an abiding interest in Irish politics, as befitted someone who came from a family that was heavily involved in political life in the early days of the State. His one recreation was grand opera and he never missed the opportunity to attend a performance if he was visiting a major European city.

What distinguished Maurice Kennedy's participation in academic life was his deep understanding of the nature of the university as an academic institution. Even those who disagreed with him respected the dedication and integrity with which he defended and promoted academic ideals and values. No matter whom he was dealing with he never compromised his values for any short-term gain.

Publications

1. (With A. Erdélyi and J. L. McGregor) Parabolic cylinder functions of large order, J. Rational Mech. Anal.3, 459-485 (1954).

2. (With A. Erdélyi and J. L. McGregor) Asymptotic forms of Coulomb wave functions I, Tech. Report 4, Department of Mathematics, California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, 1955, 29pp.

3. A convergence theorem for a certain class of Markov processes, Pacific J. Math. 7(1957), 1107-1124.

4. A stochastic process associated with the ultraspherical polynomials, Proc. Roy. Irish Acad., Sect. A, 61(1961), 89-100.

5. (With R. Ingram, S. O'Brien and J. R. Timoney) Mathematics for Teachers, Department of Mathematics, University College Dublin, 1963.