

Grace and courtesy abound in life of service



Frank Hambly served on the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee for 30 years and his wisdom and advice were in great demand

OBITUARY

Frank Hambly, university leader. Born: Melbourne, 7 November 1935. Died: Canberra, 21 November 2018

PETER DRAKE

Francis Sutherland Hambly, the doyen of university education in Australia, has passed away aged 83.

Frank served the universities as director and secretary of the Australian Vice-Chancellors

Committee (AVCC) from 1966 to 1996; indeed he personified the AVCC.

Frank was a son of a Methodist and remained a dutiful Christian throughout his life. He supported the union of the Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational churches into the Uniting Church. He was educated at Prince Alfred College in Adelaide and the University of Adelaide.

After an early job in the Commonwealth Public Service, he joined the University of Adelaide in 1959 as an administrative assistant and served there until moving to the AVCC at the age of 31. In the 30 years that Frank held office in the AVCC, he saw the number of universities in Australia multiply

five-fold and he must have seen several hundred vice-chancellors on and off the course.

Frank was universally respected among the VCs and never a bad word was said about him.

Frank was an honest and cogent mentor to vice-chancellors who sought his advice but he was not one to impose it. He was very knowledgeable about every university and willing to assist their governing bodies to find candidates when a new VC was needed — he was often referred to as The Keeper of The Stud Book.

Frank was available and affable to all and played no favourites. He had a good friendship with the late Michael Birt (UNSW vice-chancellor) stemming from their com-

mon passion for VFL/AFL football.

Frank himself was no mean footballer, his tall physique helped as a very successful ruckman for North Adelaide in the SAFL. Apart from football, Frank's recreations included cricket, philately and listening to music.

Frank's wisdom and advice were in great demand, as his contributions to very many governmental and other educational organisations attest.

He was awarded honorary doctorates from La Trobe and Southern Cross universities, he was an honorary professor in the University of Canberra, an adjunct professor in the University of Queensland and a fellow of The

Australian College of Education.

In December 1963, Frank married Patricia Wyeth and in their long and happy marriage raised two sons and two daughters.

Frank Hambly was the epitome of grace and courtesy. He bore the immobility of his late years with both dignity and good humour. As his lifelong friend John Menadue said at his funeral "He was the nicest person I ever met. A life lived to the full ... for others."

Vale Frank, we loved you and miss you but know that you have joined the communion of saints.

Peter Drake was vice-chancellor of the Australian Catholic University from 1991 to 1997