

OBITUARIES

AMY FRANCES MAY GORDON JACOT GUILLARMOD, NÉE HEAN (1911–1992)

During a working career that spanned 54 years Amy Jacot Guillarmod (Figure 1) was a stalwart of botany in southern Africa. Her collecting label duplicates, housed at GRA, indicate 10 241 collections, mainly from Lesotho, from Port St Johns in the Transkei, from the Albany, Bathurst and Victoria East Districts of the eastern Cape and from George and Knysna in the southern Cape. They are housed mainly at PRE, GRA, RUH and overseas at Kew (K) and Missouri (MO). Her publications, of which there are records of 198, range from the cornerstone *Flora of Lesotho* which appeared in 1971, through research papers on wetlands, 'bogs and sponges' and on cycads, to numerous popular articles showing her concern for conservation and education. She is commemorated in the names of the grass *Merxmuellera guillarmodiae*, the diatoms *Navicula jacotiae* and *Pinnularia guillarmodiae* and in several entomological names. She was also honoured by numerous societies and by the Botanical Research Institute, which dedicated Volume 50 part 1 of *The Flowering Plants of Africa* to her. She particularly appreciated its salutation 'khotso', meaning 'peace be unto you' which acknowledged her bond with the Basotho. But probably Amy's most lasting contribution, and the one for which she would most like to be remembered, was to the knowledge of and enthusiasm for botany that she engendered in students and colleagues alike.

Amy was born at Hillcrest in Natal on the 23rd of May 1911. Her father was in the Royal Navy Reserve and she spent much of her early childhood in Durban and Cape Town. Until 1922, when she was 11 years old, she was tutored at home. From 1923 until 1926 she attended primary school, briefly in Durban and then in Scotland. Her secondary schooling from 1926 to 1929 was at Durban Girls High School where she matriculated. Amy returned to Scotland to attend the University of St Andrews from 1930 to 1935. She first obtained her M.A. in English and History but then established the basis for her career in science by switching to Botany and Zoology and obtaining her B.Sc.

On returning to South Africa in 1935, Amy taught briefly in Durban before taking up an appointment as a plant pathologist at the Pretoria headquarters of the Division of Botany and Plant Pathology of the Union Department of Agriculture. Her first five publications from this period were on virus diseases of tobacco and of other crops—an interest that continued long after she left the Department in 1940. Although her early work was on viruses, she was part of a team whose responsibilities ranged from the taxonomy of fungi to that of higher plants, and they were expected to give advice on any plant related subject. Thus was nurtured a wide knowledge of things botanical and agricultural, with personal interests as divergent as conservation and economic botany.

Whilst in Pretoria, Amy met the entomologist 'Charlot' Charles Frederic Jacot Guillarmod, and they were

married in Bethlehem in the Orange Free State in 1940. In the same year Charlot's father died. Charlot and Amy left their employment in science and went to help his mother run the family store at 'Mamathe's in Basutoland (now Lesotho). They were to spend the next 17 years, a period crucial in career building, in the Mountain Kingdom. To Amy, however, it was a golden opportunity to collect and study the little known flora of the area. It was by no means easy to concentrate on this task. She had to learn both French and Sesotho. She taught at a girls school and helped with the store. In 1949 young Francois arrived. Scientific work and publications were reduced to a trickle, but 1956/7 saw Amy's return to academic life—as lecturer and Head of the Botany Department of the University College of Basutoland at Roma.

In 1958 the family moved to Grahamstown, Charlot to join the staff of the Albany Museum, and Amy to lecture in the Botany Department of Rhodes University. It was a post that she was to hold for 15 years, until her retirement as senior lecturer in 1973. During this period her list of publications grew to 60, and she established her reputation both as a teacher and as a researcher. She was rewarded in 1962/63 with the Mary E. Woolley Fellowship for overseas study of the International Federation of University Women and in 1967 with a D.Sc. in Botany from the University of St Andrews for her studies on the *Flora of Lesotho*.



FIGURE 1.—Amy Frances May Gordon Jacot Guillarmod, née Hean (1911–1992).

Retirement, to Amy, meant new challenges: taking a succession of new jobs and moving from the secure comfort of her home in African Street to a 31 ha plot which she was determined to clear of invading scrub pine, wattle and stinkbean. Her first appointment was, as a Senior CSIR Bursar, with the Institute for Freshwater Studies at Rhodes University. This enabled her to continue her interest in wetland plants, begun many years before in Lesotho and developed through her long association with the Limnological Society of Southern Africa. She remained a Research Associate, retaining a working place at Rhodes University, until the time of her death. In addition to this position she joined the staff of the Botanical Research Institute, in a half-day capacity as Research Assistant in the Albany Museum Herbarium, from 1981 to 1987. Then, from 1987 to 1990, i.e. until she was 79 years old, Amy was part-time curator of the M.A. Pocock Collection of Marine Algae at the Albany Museum.

She loved her plot 'Faraway', just outside Grahamstown on the Highlands road which was later to be declared a heritage site. When she and Charlot moved to the plot in 1974, a great number of pines grew on it and their friends had a standing invitation for tea after work or on weekends—but only after said friends had sawn down at least one pine tree. She and Charlot also sawed down 2 or 3 trees daily after work before enjoying their coffee. The system paid off and within three years the natural vegetation started coming back. Amy has systematically recorded every species she found on the plot from Fungi to Asteraceae. The new *Marasmius titanosporus* described by Derek Reid at Kew in 1988 was collected by Amy in the little forest patch on 'Faraway'. There was also a 'magic tree' in the forest which produced Easter eggs, Christmas gifts, and birthday treats for her little grandchildren whom she adored.

Fires were always a threat and Amy and her staff fought many over the years—not just on 'Faraway' but on surrounding farms as well. They were all linked by citizen band radio and kept a day and night vigil to spot the fires early. Spoor-net was the worst culprit and started many a fire by ditching clinkers—Amy fought them with her usual energy and I think the railway types involved must have shaken in their boots whenever her name was mentioned!

When her husband, Charlot, died so unexpectedly and suddenly in 1977 we all watched anxiously as she lost centimetres in height—but that questing spirit did not let her down. Her therapy was work. She returned to Rhodes as an undergraduate student in Geography and at the end of the year wiped the floor with all the bright young minds pitted against her, coming first in class.

In searching for one word to describe Amy, we found many: indomitable, indefatigable, intrepid, redoubtable—

all the names of battleships. Amy, the daughter of a Commander in the Royal Navy, would have loved that, just as she enjoyed sharing her birthday with Linnaeus, father of taxonomic botany, for whom she gave a party every year. The day-long Scottish breakfast party that co-incided with Amy's own 80th birthday was very special. It provided a reminder, that behind Amy the teacher and researcher was Amy the housewife—ever active and creative.

'Active' is also the word to describe Amy's commitment, both scientific and social. Her scientific societies included: Botanical Society of South Africa (Life Member); Dendrological Foundation (Publications Committee); Limnological Society of Southern Africa (Honorary Life Member); Linnean Society of London (Fellow); Royal Society of South Africa; Lesotho Scientific Association (Vice President); South African Archaeological Society (Life Member); South African Association for the Advancement of Science (Council Member); South African Association of Botanists (Founder Member and Vice President); South African Association of University Women (National Fellowship Secretary and President of the Grahamstown Branch); Systematic Association (Life Member).

She was also an avid supporter of local horticultural and conservation groups, was active in church affairs, in the Girl Guide Movement and in hockey circles, and received the S.A. War Services Medal.

Amy was not only a producer, she was also an avid critic. One always waited with bated breath to hear what unforgivable flaw Amy had discovered in one's latest work. I have taken the liberty of slipping in one such (unbotanical) error of fact that Amy would undoubtedly have found. I am sure that it would please her if you were to do a little detective work on her behalf.

Amy died in Settlers Hospital, Grahamstown on the 7th of May 1992. Shortly before her death she was planning to continue working on her specimens in the Albany Museum Herbarium.

Amy was much loved by her students who never returned to Grahamstown without visiting her—some of them now lecturers and professors themselves. Even students of recent years knew her and their high regard showed in the standing-room-only service on Tuesday when the little Christ Church she attended regularly was simply packed. Some flew to Grahamstown from Cape Town and Pietermaritzburg just for the service.

Botany is not the best paid of professions and it did not enable Amy to fulfil all her ambitions, but in 1979 she wrote to a colleague ... 'isn't it pleasant to be a botanist, much nicer than any other profession?'

M.J. WELLS and E. BRINK

PUBLICATIONS OF A.F.M.G. JACOT GUILLARMOD

- HEAN, A.F. 1938a. *Diseases of tobacco*. South African Department of Agriculture. Bulletin 188: 45–50.
 —1938b. Krommek disease of flowers and vegetables (spotted wilt virus disease). *Farming in South Africa*, April.

- 1938c. The control of tobacco mosaic. *Farming in South Africa*, May.
 —1940. Krommek (spotted wilt virus disease) in South Africa. *Farming in South Africa*, October.
 —1941. *Our Child the Earth*. African Home Library Series, ICCLA

- No. 87. Sheldon Press, London.
- 1943. Notes on maternal care in thrips. *Journal of the Entomological Society of South Africa* 6: 81–83.
- 1945. They threaten our food supply. *South African Insect Life* 1: 35–37.
- 1947a. A wilt disease of *Crotalaria juncea* (Sun Hemp). South African Department of Agriculture. Science Bulletin 255.
- 1947b. A South African virus disease of crucifers. South African Department of Agriculture. Science Bulletin 254.
- 1949. Yesterday and today in Basutoland. Health practices of the Basuto. *Health Horizon*: 43–48. National Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis, Jan. London.
- HEAN, A.F. & MOKHEHLE, C. 1947a. Some Basuto beliefs about wild life. *African Wildlife* 1: 62–63.
- 1947b. Some Basuto beliefs about wild life. *African Wildlife* 1: 68, 69.
- 1947c. Some Basuto beliefs about wild life. *African Wildlife* 1: 80–82.
- HORAK, I.G., JACOT GUILLARMOD, A., MOOLMAN, I.C. & DE VOS, V. 1987. Parasites on domestic and wild animals in South Africa. XXII. Ixodid ticks on domestic dogs and on wild carnivores. *Onderstepoort Journal of Veterinary Research* 54: 573–580.
- JACOT GUILLARMOD, A. ?1950. 'Me, ke rata ho ba Lesupatsela. In Sesotho for Girl Guides Association, Basutoland (now Lesotho).
- 1958. Temperature variations in male cones of *Encephalartos*. *Nature* 182: 474. London.
- 1959a. Variations of temperature in male cones of *Encephalartos altensteinii*. *Journal of South African Botany* 25: 93–99.
- 1959b. The flora of Basutoland I. Ecological introduction. *Basutoland Notes and Records* 1: 5–14.
- 1959c. Aseroë in South Africa. *South African Journal of Science* 55: 282.
- 1960. The flora of Basutoland II. The flora of the dolerite dikes and sills. *Basutoland Notes and Records* 2: 5–10.
- 1961. The botany of Basutoland. *Journal of the Botanical Society of South Africa* 47: 12–14.
- 1962a. *The botany of Basutoland*: 29–34. 'Science in General Education' Conference Handbook, Roma, Basutoland.
- 1962b. *Common wild flowers of Basutoland*: 98–100. Year Book, British Red Cross Society, Basutoland Branch, Maseru.
- 1962c. The bogs and sponges of the Basutoland mountains. *South African Journal of Science* 58: 179–182.
- 1963a. Further observations on the bogs of the Basutoland mountains. *South African Journal of Science* 58: 115–118.
- 1963b. Missionnaires botanistes au Bassoutoland. *Musées de Genève* 38: 12, 13.
- 1964a. The flora of Basutoland III. Water plants and waterside plants. *Basutoland Notes and Records* 3: 7–15.
- 1964b. Plant hunting in Europe. *The Bluestocking* 30: 32–35.
- 1964c. Botany and bogs. *Scottish Rock Garden Club Journal* 9: 125–129.
- 1964d. Wild animals forecast rain. *African Wildlife* 18: 256.
- 1964e. Habits of chamaeleons. *African Wildlife* 18: 256.
- 1964f. Interesting and rare plants in Basutoland. *African Wildlife* 18: 283–291.
- 1965a. Notes on 'Les plantes et l'ethnographie au Basutoland'. *Annali lateranensi* 29: 397–414.
- 1965b. A contribution towards the economic botany of Basutoland. *Botaniska Notiser* 119: 209–212.
- 1966. Botanical exploration in Basutoland. *Basutoland Notes and Records* 5: 22–31.
- 1967a. Botanical exploration in Basutoland (abridged form of above article). *South African Journal of Science* 63: 81–83.
- 1967b. *Phoenix reclinata*—distribution. *African Wildlife* 20: 257.
- 1968a. From the roof of southern Africa. *African Wildlife* 21: 304, 313–320.
- 1968b. Selmar Schonland. *Dictionary of South African Biography* 1: 695, 696.
- 1968c. Lesotho. In I.O. Hedberg, Conservation of vegetation in Africa south of the Sahara, edn 1. *Acta Phytogeographica Suecica* 54: 253–256.
- 1969a. The effect of land usage on aquatic and semi-aquatic vegetation at high altitudes in southern Africa. *Hydrobiologia* 34: 3–13.
- 1969b. Modern agricultural practice and limnology in Lesotho. *Limnological Society of southern Africa. Newsletter* 13: 41–44.
- 1970a. Notes on *Aloe polyphylla*. *Basutoland Notes and Records* 8: 30–36.
- 1970b. Where does it come from? *Veld & Flora* 1: 8, 9.
- 1970c. Two baboon tales. *African Wildlife* 24: 51, 52.
- 1970d. The Orange River headwaters. *Limnological Society of Southern Africa. Newsletter* 15: 46–51.
- 1970e. Aquatic weeds in southern Africa. *Probe* (Science Students Council Journal, Univ. Wits.): 47–49, 53.
- 1970f. Review: Principles of dispersal in higher plants, by Van der Pijl. *Journal of South African Botany* 36: 331.
- 1971. *The flora of Lesotho*. Cramer, Lehre, Germany.
- 1972a. The bogs and sponges of the Orange River catchment within Lesotho. *Civil Engineer in South Africa* 14: 84, 85.
- 1972b. The Caledon River in the early days of European settlement. *Civil Engineer in South Africa* 14: 93, 94.
- 1973a. Biography of Banks. *Dictionary of South African Biography* 2: 24, 25.
- 1973b. Biography of Burchell. Botanical aspects. *Dictionary of South African Biography* 2: 104–106.
- 1973c. Biography of Schinz. *Dictionary of South African Biography* 2: 629, 630.
- 1973d. Biography of Stoneman. *Dictionary of South African Biography* 2: 717, 718.
- 1973e. Biography of Trimen. *Dictionary of South African Biography* 2: 750, 751.
- 1973f. Biography of Wahlberg. *Dictionary of South African Biography* 2: 829, 830.
- 1973g. Fish River vegetation. *Veld & Flora* 3: 47–49, 52.
- 1974a. *Plumbago* and *Tecomaria*. *Veld & Flora* 4: 34–36.
- 1974b. *Vegetation: technical data report in environmental study of the Swartkops River Basin*, Vol. 3, Part 2. City of Port Elizabeth.
- 1974c. Vegetation of the Grahamstown area. In J. Daniel, *Grahamstown and environs*: 16–19.
- 1974d. Pelargoniums and geraniums. *Veld & Flora* 4: 43–45.
- 1975a. Limnological bibliography for Africa south of the Sahara. *Journal of the Limnological Society of Southern Africa* 1: 37–51.
- 1975b. Review: History of British vegetation, by Pennington. *South African Geographical Journal* 57: 150, 151.
- 1975c. Point of no return. *African Wildlife* 29: 28–31.
- 1976a. Use of odourless carrier, a petroleum product, in preparing herbarium material. *Taxon* 25: 219–221.
- 1976b. The floras of Lesotho and of the Orange Free State (Republic of South Africa). *Boissiera* 24: 623, 624.
- 1976c. *Myriophyllum*, an increasing water weed menace for South Africa. *Proceedings of the South African Association for the Advancement of Science*, Nelspruit: 93–100.
- 1976d. Review: A treatise on limnology, Vol. III, Limnological Botany, by G.E. Hutchinson. *South African Journal of Science* 72: 254, 255.
- 1976e. Letter re 'Flora of Lesotho'. *South African Archaeological Society Bulletin* 31: 68, 69.
- 1977a. *Myriophyllum*. Duplicated report to Inland Waters and Water Research Commission.
- 1977b. *Myriophyllum*, a powerful threat to our water supplies. *Environment RSA* 4: 3–5.
- 1977c. Review: Aquatic weeds in South East Asia, by Varshney & Rzoska. *South African Journal of Science* 73: 29.
- 1977d. Some waterweeds of the eastern Cape Province I. *Eichhornia crassipes*. *Eastern Cape Naturalist* 60: 4–8.
- 1977e. Notes on various uses for gladioli in Lesotho, southern Africa. *Gladiolus Annual* 1977 (Golden Jubilee year): 44, 45.
- 1977f. *Myriophyllum*, an increasing water weed menace for South Africa. *South African Journal of Science* 73: 89, 90.
- 1977g. Biography of Bews. *Dictionary of South African Biography* 3: 63, 64.
- 1977h. Biography of Christol. *Dictionary of South African Biography* 3: 148.
- 1977i. Biography of Clarke. *Dictionary of South African Biography* 3: 154, 155.
- 1977j. Biography of Cooper. *Dictionary of South African Biography* 3: 175, 176.
- 1977k. Biography of Dyke. *Dictionary of South African Biography* 3: 260, 261.
- 1977l. Biography of Ellenberger. *Dictionary of South African Biography* 3: 267, 268.
- 1977m. Biography of Meisner. *Dictionary of South African Biography* 3: 596.
- 1977n. Biography of Sloley. *Dictionary of South African Biography* 3: 742.
- 1977o. Biography of Tyson. *Dictionary of South African Biography* 3: 792, 793.
- 1977p. Emerised water milfoil/waterduisendblaar, a new pest plant in southern Africa. *Nurserymen's Journal* 13: 3–12.
- 1977q. Dr Mary Agard Pocock. *The Bluestocking* (Journal of the South African Association of University Women) 31: 40.
- 1977r. Review: Making aquatic weeds useful, by Ruskin & Shipley. *South African Journal of Science* 73: 157.