

OBITUARIES

Frank Speed (aged 87 years)

Mr. Francis Speed most commonly known as Frank Speed was one of the earliest members of staff of the then Institute of African Studies of the University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University) and among the earliest members of the Ile-Ife Branch of the Nigerian Field Society. He was well established as a professional photographer and filmmaker when he came to Nigeria in 1955 to start the medical illustration unit for the University College Hospital at Ibadan. For nearly twenty years of his stay in Nigeria he travelled extensively recording many aspects of Nigerian life. His films on medical and cultural subjects won a host of international awards and high praise from critics for their objective authenticity.

Apart from his technical and artistic skills, Frank Speed was an unusual and valuable filmmaker in that he respected the human situations in his recording as being of greater value than the record itself, so that the material is never contrived nor rearranged for cinematic effect. Having initiated an archive of recorded sound and film at the Institute of African Studies of the University of Ibadan (UI) Frank Speed moved as a Senior Research Fellow to the Institute of African Studies of the then University of Ife. At Ife he continued and enlarged the scope of his work to cover many areas of African Studies. He was a very active member of the Nigerian Field Society, Ife Branch and his contribution included talks and cinematographic shows. Records show that he gave the first talk to the Branch in January 1972. The talk was entitled "Time is short" (Recording Traditional Culture).

May his gentle soul rest in perfect peace.

—I.F. Adeniyi
Ile-Ife Branch Secretary

Editor's note: Films by Frank Speed available at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, include:

1. The Benin kinship rituals
2. Ifa: Yoruba divination and sacrifice
3. Were ni (He is mad)
4. New images: art in a changing African society
5. Dominea: a Kalabari festival for the water spirits
6. Culture in transition
7. Ozidi: tides of the Delta
8. Studies in Nigerian dance: Tiv women, Miango men

Professor (Mrs.) Bisi Adeline Durotoye, J.P., FNMGS

The Nigerian Field Society (NFS) is one of the eleven professional organizations to which



our dear colleague and cherished friend, Professor (Mrs) Bisi Adeline Durotoye, belonged until she was called to glory on Sunday 14th May 2006 at the age of 62 years. She joined the Ile-Ife Branch of the society during the 1976/77 session. At the time she joined the Society, the Nigerian membership of the branch was less than 20% (others being expatriates) and she was the first Nigerian female member of the academic staff to join the fold. From then on, she remained one of the most dedicated, consistent and active members the Ile-Ife Branch was fortunate to ever have. She was drawn into the fold by her keen interest in nature and the environment in general, being a Quaternary geologist.

Mrs Durotoye's interest in the Nigerian Field Society cut across its three main activities, i.e. lectures / talks, field trips and attendance at the Annual (General) Business Meeting (ABM) of the society. Within one year of her joining the branch (14th December 1977), she gave a most interesting and stimulating talk on "Inselbergs" with particular reference to the three inselbergs on the OAU campus. The lecture did not only arouse the awareness of the university community of these picturesque island mountains around it but helped to attract more members, especially female members, into the fold of the branch. Her write-up on these campus inselbergs has made them the most famous physical features for which OAU campus is known. In the late 1970s / early 1980s when the branch almost ground to a halt following the departure of most expatriate staff of the university, Mrs Durotoye was one of the few members who worked hard to resuscitate it. She encouraged all staff of the Natural History Museum to join the Society, hence today the museum is the major catchment area for our branch membership with virtually all its staff being members.

Professor Durotoye showed a keen and inspiring interest in field trips and led a couple of them for the Ife Branch. She was in the forefront blazing the trail on our trips to Idanre Hills, the Lisagbede forest, Ikogosi warm spring area, Ipetumodu clay factory, among others. Her well-furnished cooler of cold drinks and tasty snacks always came to the rescue on these trips. She was a most regular presence at the ABM; on the few occasions she was unavoidably absent everyone noticed. In 1989, when the Ife Branch accepted to host the ABM of the Society for the first time, she played the leading role. She championed the "optimistic budget" which we adopted, and through her contacts alone about one half of that budget was raised.

Bisi Durotoye was born into the Onimole family on 3rd October 1943. She attended Queen of Apostles College, Kakuri, Kaduna (1956 - 1960), Queen's College, Yaba Lagos (1961-1962) and the University of Ibadan where she obtained Ph.D. Geology (1973). She was Elder Dempster Scholar (1963-1966), University of Ibadan Postgraduate scholar (1966-1967) and Museum Curator / lecturer in the Geology Department (1970-1972). In 1973 she transferred to the then University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University) as one of the pioneer staff of the Natural History Museum and the founding Head of the Geology-Palaeontology section of the Museum. She was also adjunct lecturer at the Department of Geology (OAU) throughout and for some time visiting lecturer in the Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA). The thrust of her research for almost four decades was the new multidisciplinary area of the Quaternary Period, the youngest on the geological time scale. Her unique contribution in this area was the establishment of a morphostratigraphic sequence for the Late Quaternary Period in Southwestern Nigeria, viz: the Bodija formation. She was able to establish for the first time that the alternation of angular pediment gravels with paddy river gravels were indicative of drier phases with wetter pluvial phases. Later she examined the problems of environmental hazards and degradation in many parts of Southwest Nigeria especially in the rapidly developing urban areas. Her museum collections include the Ewekoro Palaeofauna, the fossils of Sokoto Basin (including a rare giant turtle) and invertebrate fauna of the Ashaka Formation.

Professor Durotoye's publications truly reflect the multidisciplinary nature of Quaternary Geology. They include eight contributions to published books and over twenty journal articles (including some in the Nigerian Field) and published conference proceedings. Through a series of Technical reports she also contributed to the exploration of tar sands in southwestern Nigeria (1974-1982), the processing of talc and non-metallic minerals in Nigeria, and the sourcing of other raw materials in the country. For over ten years and for four terms she served as the Acting Director of the Natural History Museum. She also served on a number of national committees including one on the design and establishment of exhibition centres of Raw Materials' Research and Development in twelve cities in Nigeria.

Bisi Durotoye was endowed with an uncommon combination of talents, which were

developed and used to impact positively on people around her. She was a Professor of Geology, Fellow of the Nigerian Mining and Geosciences Society, Justice of the Peace, a devoted Christian, an accomplished chorister, a keen gardener and the jewel of our Branch and the Natural History Museum at OAU, Ile-Ife. Ife Branch will forever cherish fond memories of her. May light perpetual shine upon her. Our heartfelt sympathy goes to her three children, Eng. Olapade Durotoye, Dr. Jibike Oyewumi, Pastor Fela Durotoye and the grand children.

—I.F. Adeniyi
Ile-Ife Branch Secretary

Editor's note: See her article "Annual flooding of parts of Oşogbo," *The Nigerian Field* 65:35-45 (2000).