

Nico Knauer, Classics

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DEATHS

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Nico Knauer

Georg Nicolaus (“Nico”) Knauer, emeritus professor of classical studies at the University of Pennsylvania, died on October 28 in Haverford, Pennsylvania. He was 92.

Dr. Knauer was born in Hamburg, Germany. In 1944, he was drafted into the Wehrmacht and dispatched to the Eastern front. Soon after his arrival, he was almost killed by a land mine, which destroyed most of his right leg. After the war, Dr. Knauer studied classics at the University of Hamburg with Ernst Zinn. He earned his PhD in 1952 and from 1952 to 1954 he was a fellow at the Institute for the Thesaurus Linguae Latinae in Munich. He taught at the Free University of Berlin from 1954 to 1974. During this time, he was also a British Council Scholar at the

University of London, visiting professor at Yale, Nelly Wallace Lecturer at Oxford, and a member of the Institute for Advanced Study.

He is best known for the book that originated as his 1961 Habilitationsschrift on Vergil’s imitation of Homer in the *Aeneid*, *Die Aeneis und Homer*. His study of Vergil and Homer remains one of the most frequently cited books in the field of classics.

Ultimately, the volatile political situation caused Dr. Knauer to move to the US. In 1975, he joined the faculty at Penn, where he remained until his retirement in 1988. While at Penn, he also served as a visiting professor at Columbia. In 1979, he was a Guggenheim Fellow, in 1984 a Fellow of the National Endowment for the Humanities, in 1985 a Resident of the American Academy in Rome, in 1989 a Resident of the Rockefeller Foundation in Bellagio, and in 1991 and 2002 a guest researcher of the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel.

According to Joseph Farrell, professor of classical studies and the Mark K. and Esther W. Watkins Professor in the Humanities, Dr. Knauer’s students were in awe of both his personal and his intellectual style, recognizing that, through him, they had some contact with scholars like Eduard Fraenkel, Bruno Snell, Otto Skutsch and other great names. Dr. Knauer felt keenly the responsibility to pass on what his teachers had given him, insisting that the entire point of our work is to serve “the next generation,” one of his favorite and most often repeated phrases.

Dr. Knauer is survived by Sabine Solf, his close companion during the years since the death of his wife, Kezia; a few family members; and many devoted students and colleagues.

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