

In Memory of

# Frank Bradlow

## 19 June 1913 - 12 March 2000

by Tony Biggs

It is with sadness that we record the passing of one of fly fishing's firmest adherents and supporters, Frank Rosslyn Bradlow. Frank was an active member of the Cape Piscatorial Society from 1957 and acted as its president during 1986, being formally elected in 1987, a position which he held until his recent death.

Born on the 19th of June 1913, his formal education commenced at the King Edward VII school in Johannesburg. Hence to Wits University where he completed a B Com degree and was awarded the Alexander Aitken medal for best Commerce graduate of his year (1934).

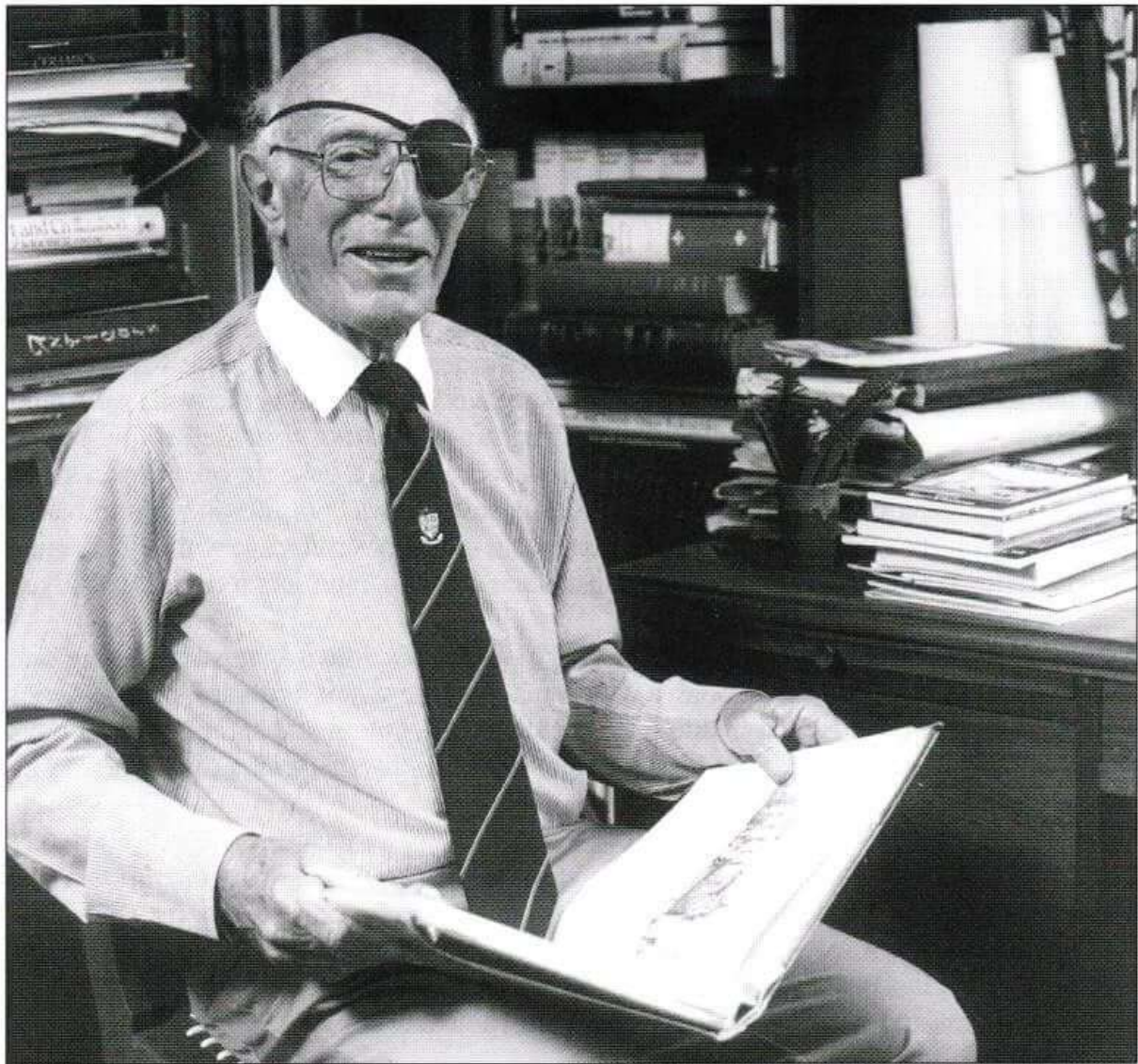
World War II saw Frank actively involved; at first in the Abyssinian (now Ethiopia) campaign where he served with the Imperial Light Horse regiment. Later in the Western desert, before the third battle of El Alamein, an injury sustained as the result of an exploding bomb caused the loss of an eye, and during the period of recuperation which followed, time was spent contemplating the purpose and direction of his life. It is to this period that he gave credit to a subsequent interest and devotion to art and matters historical.

After retiring from the family business in the 70's, Frank immersed himself in the things which he loved best: art, literature, travel, philanthropy and, by no means least, fly fishing. In all facets of these involvements, the most notable quality was his integrity. A leading authority on South African paintings and artists of the 19th century, in particular Bowler and Baines, he was recognised world-wide in this capacity.

The scope of his interests and research was by no means confined to these two artists, but involved a wealth of other luminaries. These included Charles Bell, David Livingstone, Robert Moffat and Baron von Ludwig - the person who was responsible for the development of the exotic Cape Town Gardens.

The joint biography of Frank and his wife Edna, an historian of note, is an interesting document of some 53 pages, listing close to 500 books and articles, and including various reviews and catalogues. It was an all-consuming curiosity that served to confirm Frank as one of the foremost, accomplished and thorough researchers in his chosen arena. There was no detail, even the smallest, that managed to escape his attention, and each task was wholeheartedly pursued to its logical conclusion, no matter what the cost.

Awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Philosophy from Wits University, Frank never sought or pursued the mantle of academe, and benefited financially by not so much as one cent from his considerable endeavours and achievements. A considerable amount was, however, certainly spent in pursuing these objectives.



*Frank Bradlow, soldier, businessman, scholar, fly fisher.*

Many committees and boards were graced by his presence including The Friends of the South African Library, of which he was chairman, also holding this position on its influential publications sub-committee, and the Council of the University of Cape Town, where his contributions were highly valued. He also participated in the founding of Stephan Welz & Co (associated with Sotheby's) and served as a director for many years.

To Edna his wife, his three children and grandchildren - we express sincere condolences.

Goodbye Frank, we and all other fly fishers will miss you.

*(From Complete Fly Fisher - May 2000)*