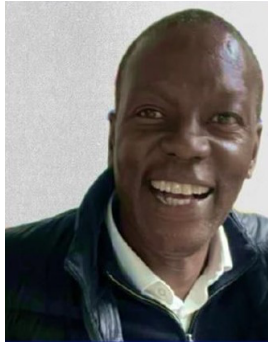


TRIBUTES

2025

MR MWAMBU WANENDEYA

(-2025)



Mr Mwambu Wanendeya worked as Public Affairs Officer in the Communications Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat from 1995 – 2006. During his tenure, he coordinated publicity opportunities with external media for the Secretary-General and other members of senior management.

- *I am sorry to inform that ex-ComSec staff member Mwambu Wanendeya passed away a couple of days ago after a long illness. He joined ComSec in 1995 I think and was chiefly responsible for radio, film and broadcasting matters, as well as the dissemination of Commonwealth news and public affairs duties. Mwambu died in his home country, Uganda, and I attach here information on his funeral arrangements. Cheryl Dorall*
- *I was shocked and saddened to hear of Mwambu's passing. At Comsec he was in the same division as you and me but the Library was in the basement of Marlborough House and he was on the ground floor of Quadrant House across the road. However, he had a studio in the basement of Marlborough House and we occasionally saw him working there. We worked together a couple of times but not for long periods.*

He was a lively person, highly intelligent and always ready to explore new ways of getting the Commonwealth better known. He had a number of high powered jobs after leaving Comsec, as shown on his LinkedIn page, where he describes his time at Comsec. He was an intensive user of X, formerly Twitter. David Blake

- I am very sorry to hear of Mwambu's death. He was a consummate professional - hardworking, creative, bright but soft-spoken and engaging, with a good sense of humour. It was a pleasure to work with him on many projects over the years, and my heart goes out to his family. **Stuart Mole**

- *It was for me and I'm sure others, a deep sadness, to have heard of Mwambo's passing after a long illness. Mwambu Wanendeya was the perfect public affairs officer in the Secretariat when I arrived in April 2000. He very soon ensured I met all there was to meet across the key London media people who showed interest in the Commonwealth. He was the consummate professional who knew his trade intimately, could throw a press release together on his phone and ensured it landed well. Nothing was too much even in the weekends to ensure that I or the Commonwealth responded in an efficient manner. I was sorry when he left Comsec in 2006 but was pleased to see he went onto more greater and successful challenges. The fondest of good wishes and sympathy go out to his family who will always be proud of his achievements, from Clare and myself. **Don McKinnon** (Sir Don McKinnon, Commonwealth Secretary-General, 2000-2008)*
- *I wanted to add my deep sadness at Mwambu's passing. For me as I joined COMSEC trying to navigate my way, he was a smiling light of happiness and can-do-ness. I can mainly see him scheming a press release, speech or media strategy over Mischa's desk readying something for the SG and then darting off to do something else totally necessary to make the Commonwealth come across as well as it could in any circumstance. And better. I am really sad at his passing - as a bright light in the world leaves us. Michele Law*
- *I too am sorry to read of Mwambu's death and of his long illness. Although not working for Comsec then I remember his contribution in broadcasting. Like Stuart I am thinking of his family now. **Richard Bourne***

Selected links:

[Ugandans shining abroad: Mwambu is flying Uganda's flag in telecom business | Monitor](#)

[Tribute to Mwambu Wanendeya](#)

[Bing Videos](#)

ALISTAIR NIVEN
1944-1925



Colleagues will be sad to learn of the unexpected death last Wednesday March 26 of Dr Alastair Niven OBE LVO at the age of 81. a person devoted to the Commonwealth and active on its behalf, particularly in the areas of education and literature. It is understood that he tragically failed to survive a critical heart operation which, though major, had been fully expected to have a successful outcome.

Many CA colleagues will have encountered Alastair in his role from 2001 to 2013 as Principal of Cumberland Lodge where many major gatherings addressing key Commonwealth issues took place during his tenure. Or they may have encountered him earlier during his tenure as one-time Director General of the Africa Centre, or in his capacities as Director of Literature for the British Council or for the Royal Society of Arts.

Alastair was a Commonwealth Scholar at the University of Ghana in the 1960s and nearly 20 years later in the 1980s worked with Anastasios Christodoulou and Professor Tom Symons from Canada in launching a very success funding appeal for ACU's 75th anniversary. That is when I myself (then at ComSec) first became acquainted with him. For the past 15 years he has been first member, and for the past dozen years Chair, of the Support Group for the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan, during most of which time I was its Secretary. In that capacity he has organised and chaired the successful series of annual seminars and parliamentary receptions for Commonwealth Scholars in the Houses of Parliament. He performed this role for the Council for Education in the Commonwealth on whose Council he served for over a dozen years and with which he was still very active right until the day before his death his last week.

Alastair earlier served on the Executive of the Association of Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (ACLALS). He was at one time Chair of the Panel of Judges for the Commonwealth Literature Prize and served as Judge for the Booker Prize. He was personally acquainted with several of the giants of African and Commonwealth literature: I believe he was

asked to speak at Chinua Achebe's funeral in Nigeria.

We have lost a devoted friend of the Commonwealth, a distinguished scholar, a warm and generous man who had exceptional skills in bringing people together and creating consensus.

I understand the funeral will be a private family one but that there will later be a Memorial event. Alastair is survived by his wife Dr Helen Niven, whose address I can share with anyone who may wish to write to her, if they contact me by email.

Peter Williams

I remember him when he was a fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies in the mid 80s. He has a long Who's Who entry:

Lecturer in English: Univ. of Ghana, 1968–69; Univ. of Leeds, 1969–70; Lectr in English Studies, Univ. of Stirling, 1970–78; Dir Gen., Africa Centre, London, 1978–84; Chapman Fellow 1984–85, Hon. Fellow 1985, Inst. of Commonwealth Studies; Special Asst to Sec. Gen., ACU, 1985–87; Lit. Dir, Arts Council of GB, then of England, 1987–97; Dir of Literature, British Council, 1997–2001; Principal, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Foundn of St Catharine's, Cumberland Lodge, 2001–13. Visiting Professor: Univ. of Aarhus, 1975–76; Sheffield Hallam Univ., 1998–2002; Vis. Fellow, Aust. Studies Centre, Univ. of London, 1985; Hon. Lectr, SOAS, 1979–85; Hon. Fellow: Univ. of Warwick, 1988; Harris Manchester Coll., Oxford, 2012–. Editor, JI of Commonwealth Literature, 1979–92. Chairman: Public Schools Debating Assoc. of Eng. and Wales, 1961–62; Literature Panel, GLAA, 1981–84; Welfare Policy Cttee, 1983–87, Exec. Cttee, 1987–92, UK Council for Overseas Student Affairs; Southern Africa Book Devel't Educn Trust, 1997–2003; Soc. of Bookmen, 2003–04; Bd, Border Crossings, 2013–21; Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan Support Gp, 2013–; Sec. and Treas., Assoc. for Commonwealth Lit. and Lang. Studies, 1986–89; Member: Public Affairs Cttee, Royal Commonwealth Soc., 1979–99; Laurence Olivier Awards Theatre Panel, 1989–91; British Library Adv. Cttee for the Centre for the Book, 1990–97; Home Office Standing Cttee on Arts in Prisons, 1995–97. Trustee: Millennium Liby Trust, 1998–2008; Council for Educn in the Commonwealth, 2013–21; Stephen Spender Trust, 2019–. President: Windsor WEA, 2003–13; English PEN, 2003–07. Judge: Booker Prize, 1994, Man Booker Prize, 2014; Forward Poetry Prizes, 1996; David Cohen British Literature Prize, 2000 (deviser of Prize, 1992); The Independent Foreign Fiction Prize, 2001; DSC Prize for South Asian Literature, 2012 (Mem., Mgt Cttee, 2012–14); Chairman of Judges: Eurasia Reg., 1994, 1995, Adv. Cttee, 1996–2006, Commonwealth Writers' Prize; Stakis Prize for Scottish Writer of Year, 1998; ESU Marsh Prize for Biography, 1999–2011; Saif Ghobash Banipal Prize for Arabic Literary Translation, 2017; Mem. Council, Caine Prize for African Writing, 2000–24 (Trustee and Chm., 2019–24). Chm. of Govs, Royal Sch., Windsor, 2004–08. Mem. Editorial Bd, Annual Register, 1988– (Chm., 2013–). Hon. FRSL 2021 (Benson Medal, 2021)

David Blake

MS MISSOURI SHERMAN-PETER (-2025)



Ms Missouri Sherman-Peter served as Assistant Director, Political Affairs Division, Commonwealth Secretariat, from 1994-97.

- *I am sorry to forward the link below about the passing of Missouri Sherman-Peter who served as Assistant Director in the Political Affairs Division in the 1990s.*
Shobhna Rattansi
- *This is sad, sad and very sad news. May Missouri rest in peace.* **Sandra Pepera**
- *So very sorry to hear of Missouri's passing. She was a wonderful colleague and an engaging friend.* **Cheryl Dorall**
- *Very sorry to hear the news of Missouri's passing. She was a warm and engaging colleague always ready to discuss any Commonwealth or global issue that I raised with her.* **Madhuri Bose**
- *This is truly shocking news. Missouri was a dear friend and colleague, with whom I've stayed in touch off and on until about a year ago. May she rest in eternal peace and may her family get the strength to bear her loss. In sorrow,* **Amitav Banerji**
- *Very sad news indeed. Missouri had a distinguished diplomatic career both with the Commonwealth and in many other posts representing her country. I knew and respected her as a colleague and friend when we worked together in PAD in the late '90s. She will be sadly missed.* **Jon Sheppard**
- *I kept in touch with Missouri for a long time and we got together whenever I was in New York. I don't know how old she was but I think she was older than me so she must have been quite an age!* **Mary Mackie**
- *Very sad news indeed. Missouri had a distinguished diplomatic career both with the Commonwealth and in many other posts representing her country. I knew and respected her as a colleague and friend when we worked together in PAD in the late '90s. She will be sadly missed.* **Jon Sheppard**
- *A big loss. She could light up a room. Always a class act.* **Don (Sir Don McKinnon, Commonwealth Secretary-General, 2000-2008)**
- *The awful news of the death of my dear friend and former colleague, Angela Missouri Sherman-Peter, has left me numb with shock. It is hard to come to terms with the fact that she is no longer with us. Missouri was so full of life - proud, loud and determined to make her mark. She brought tremendous energy to any room she entered and filled it with her presence. Once met never forgotten.*

Missouri and I spoke on the telephone in New York just a few weeks ago. She did not mention her illness but I got a strong sense that all was not well. Although concerned, I

was hopeful that whatever it was could be fixed and that Missouri would recover and bounce back to her usual rambunctious self.

Missouri and I worked closely together at the Secretariat (in the then Political Affairs Division) on Caribbean and small states matters. I found her to be a highly intelligent professional, irrepressible and great fun. She always strove for perfection in everything she did - even if it meant missing deadlines. And Missouri was never afraid to speak truth to power, even if it got her into trouble. She had a keen understanding and awareness of global issues as well as deep knowledge of Caribbean and UN affairs. The latter was invaluable when she became Chef de Cabinet to Sir Julian Hunte, President of the United Nations General Assembly during the 58th regular session (2003-2004). Sir Don McKinnon kindly agreed to Sir Julian's request to second me as an Adviser to the Office of the President of the GA. Missouri and I again worked very closely together, including toiling for long hours well after midnight, at weekends and on public holidays at her lovely apartment in the Trump Tower close by the UN. She always said that her best work experience had been at the Commonwealth Secretariat. She had great respect for her colleagues especially her favourites, the late Dr Moses Anafu and Dominic Sankey. She was especially grateful that her job at the Secretariat had enabled her to hone her writing skills, which became useful when we drafted endless statements and speeches for the President. At the time of her death, she was writing a book about her illustrious career and planned to include photos of herself in the presence of royalty, heads of government, Ministers, heads of international organisations and other prominent personalities.

We resumed our working relationship when Missouri, as Permanent Representative for CARICOM to the UN, persuaded their headquarters to take the last remaining unit at the new location of the Joint Office for Commonwealth Permanent Missions to the United Nations. Missouri was an invaluable ally during this period as I, as Head of Office for the Commonwealth Secretariat at the UN and Manager of the Joint Office, threaded my way gingerly through the corridors of power. I learned so much from her. I shall always be grateful for her generosity in sharing knowledge and introducing me to key personnel at UNHQ as well as to delegates. I will miss her warmth, her friendship, her contrariness, her sense of fun and her sheer presence. It is still surreal as I cannot imagine a world without her. There will never be another Missouri.

*She was a proud and devoted mother and I send my deepest condolences to her children Senaka and Sebastian and to other members of her family. In sorrow, **Lorna McLaren***

- *Such a beautiful tribute to Missouri and her work. Thank you for sharing it with us, Lorna. My condolences to you too in what is a great personal loss for you. I think many of us feel our best work experience in our careers was in ComSec. So special to gather there recently to pay tribute to SG Sonny Ramphal and remember together our Commonwealth service. Great to see you and so many others there. **Matthew Neuhaus***
- *What a beautiful tribute to Missouri, Lorna. I wish I had known her but she comes alive through your writing. I share your sorrow at her death. **Antony Ellman***

- *Lorna, I join others in applauding you for your very touching tribute to our late comrade-in-arms, Missouri. The very sad news is still sinking in... In shared sorrow. **Amitav Banerji***
- *I completely agree — I didn't know her well, but was delighted when she was given significant appointments at the UN. A sad loss, and a reminder of the high quality of many who have served at the Secretariat. **Richard Bourne***
- *Missouri and I worked closely together in 1994 to organize back-to-back Commonwealth ministerial meetings in Islamabad, foreign ministers for her and education ministers for me. We shared many wonderful moments and agreed on a wide range of issues. I shall miss her smiling confidence and good humour. My sincere condolences to her family.*

*I am sorry to report the passing of Dr. Peter Meinke, former Chair of the National Council of the Royal Commonwealth Society of Canada and former President of the University of Prince Edward Island. He was a staunch supporter of the Commonwealth, small island development and sustainable development. **Gail Larose***

Selected links:

<https://www.tribune242.com/news/2025/jul/18/tributes-paid-to-missouri-sherman-peter/>

<https://mofa.gov.bs/statement-on-the-passing-of-a-missouri-sherman-peter/>

[H.E. A. Missouri Sherman-Peter | Department of Economic and Social Affairs](#)

H.E. A. Missouri Sherman-Peter | Department of Economic and Social Affairs

During her diplomatic, international, and public service career, she served her country, The Bahamas, as Consul ...

[Message of Condolence | CARICOM Mourns the Passing of Ambassador A Missouri Sherman-Peter – CARICOM](#)

Message of Condolence | CARICOM Mourns the Passing of Ambassador A Misso...

[Regional : Former Bahamian Diplomat Angela Missouri Sherman-Peter Passes Away in New York - Guyana Updates](#)

Regional : Former Bahamian Diplomat Angela Missouri Sherman-Peter Passes...

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Bahamas has announced with deep sadness the passing of Her Excellency Ang...

<https://uwitv.global/news/uwi-news/uwi-tribute-on-the-passing-of-her-excellency-a-missouri-sherman-peter-odc/>

https://www.thenassauguardian.com/news/missouri-sherman-peter-dies/article_4fbf82c2-6205-4621-ad75-5b44b7aef402.html

https://www.thenassauguardian.com/opinion/bahamian-womens-rights-advocate-passes/article_b3b83f90-4331-4739-9b40-a5b10e995658.html

Sue Burke
(-2025)

Sue Burke worked with the Secretariat from 1972 to 1986. Her posts included Chief Project Officer with the Management Development Programme and Project Officer with CYP.

- I'm sorry to have to inform you that Sue Burke, who I believe worked in the Youth Division, passed away on 27 November. **David Blake**
- My condolences to the family. Indeed she worked in the Youth Division.
Rickie Sankar
- I was very sorry to read of Sue's passing away. Sue did indeed work in the Commonwealth Youth Programme for many years, several of them when I was Director. She was a loyal servant of the Commonwealth and was very helpful to everyone she met. She was a warm personal friend to my wife Rosanne and me too and we met in each other's homes several times.

She was a member of our Association from its inception but her more recent work was with charities in India and that perhaps prevented her from joining us as frequently as she might have wished. May she rest in peace. **Raja Gomez**

- I, too, am sorry to learn of Sue Burke's death. I did not work directly with Sue but got to know her socially through her good friends Mary Mackie and Dorianne Wilson-Smillie. She always struck me as a warm, pleasant and gentle personality who was

dedicated to her work at the Secretariat and to the Commonwealth. I send sincere condolences to her family and friends. **Lorna McLaren**

I'm very sorry to hear about Sue Burke. She was the first colleague I met at the Secretariat and we even shared an office for a while in Quadrant House way back before it was refurbished. She was always very supportive and helpful to me and was dedicated to her work at Comsec. May she rest in peace. **Roy Chalmers**

- I too am sorry to hear of Sue Burke's death. We worked together on workshops in Barbados and Tonga and I always found her helpful, charming and committed. I hope her husband Eric, who has not been well himself, will manage without her. Condolences to her family and friends. **Antony Ellman**
- I was saddened to hear about Sue Burke's death after a lengthy illness. We both worked at the International Planned Parenthood Federation together for several years before moving on. Four years later we were reunited at ComSec where she was working in the Youth Programme and later the Management Development Programme. Later she managed the GEN project focused on rural development in Rajasthan, India before ill health meant she had to resign. Sue was dedicated to development, supportive, considerate and was always kind and friendly to those she worked with. She will be sorely missed.

I would like to send my condolences to her husband, Eric, and her family. **Jane Wonham**

- I greatly valued Sue's friendship and her positive outlook on life. The wonderful walking tour in Spain that she took us on will always be fondly remembered. Sue will be much missed. **Mary Mackie**

Mr K B K Rao

(1938-2025)



Mr K B K Rao worked in the Economic Affairs Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat from the 1970s-1990s.

- It is with great sadness I am informing you of the passing of my father K B K Rao. **Harish Rao** on behalf of the Rao family

- I'm sorry to hear the news and have forwarded the email to members of the Commonwealth Association. If you send me the details of the funeral and wake, I will forward them to colleagues. **David Blake**
- Please pass on my condolences to the family. I remember KBK very well from the Secretariat. **Rickie Sankar**
- I too was very sorry to read Harish Rao's message which came to me and other ComAssoc members via David.

KBK and I had worked closely together for many years in EAD during the 1970s-90s and I always found him to be a very warm and friendly colleague whose work could always be relied upon completely. He will be much missed.

I would be most grateful, David, if you would kindly pass on my deep condolences to Harish and other members of Krishna's family. **Ian Thomas**

- I am very sorry to hear of K B K's passing. He was such a warm and friendly person and a very supportive colleague. Please convey my deepest condolences to the family. **Madhuri Bose**
- I join others in extending my deepest sympathies to Harish and the family of KBK Rao. Our paths crossed regularly during my time in Sir Peter's office. He was always keen, always focussed on his work and always a most amiable colleague. With deepest condolences. **Lorna McLaren**
- I too am deeply saddened by the news of KBK's passing. He was a wonderful human being, who will be deeply missed. May his soul rest in peace and may the family have the strength to reconcile to his loss. In sorrow, **Amitav Banerji**
- I am also immensely sad to learn that KBK has passed away. May he rest in peace. He and the Rao family are in my thoughts and prayers.

I worked closely with KBK in the Economic Affairs Division for several years and he was a wonderful colleague and friend. He was deeply committed to his work and was particularly admired for his expertise and encyclopedic knowledge of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations - he played a major role in the Secretariat's policy work on the many complex issues it raised. I also have warm memories of the many times he and I would share a bottle of wine at the ICA bar at The Mall (Carlton House Terrace) on Friday evenings after work! I deeply regret that we lost touch after he left ComSec. With great sadness and in solidarity, **Krishnan** (Chandrashekhar Krishnan aka Chandu Krishnan)

- I am also both sad and shocked to hear of the passing of KBK. I was in EAD from Monday, 12 October 1981 to about 1995 and (with others) typed for him in the EAD Typing Pool/Word Processing Unit during this time. He was a nice and pleasant boss. I

hope you will let us know of the funeral/wake arrangements when you get them David.
My regards and condolences to KBK's family. **Annie Carlton** (née Anita Matin)

- A lovely man and greatly respected colleague. I am saddened to hear he has passed away. **Chris Bowman**
- I am truly saddened by the news of KBK's passing away. He was a true servant of the Commonwealth and with his warm and engaging personality, KBK was able to encourage many of us in our own work. *May he rest in peace. Please pass on my condolences to the family.* **Raja Gomez**
- My heartfelt condolences to the family of KBK Rao. I worked with him closely when working with the then EMD division. He was a very knowledgeable person deeply committed to his work. **Anant Vijay**
- I too share in the sadness at KBK's death. Although I didn't work with him directly, I remember his professionalism and his good nature, especially over his involvement in the Commonwealth initiative to push for an agreed conclusion to the Uruguay Round, later embodied in the Marrakesh Agreement. This was a considerable achievement.

Once retired, he was a convivial and regular supporter of the Commonwealth Association, though less so in recent years. My condolences to Harish and the family.
Stuart Mole

Professor James Mayall
(1937-2025)

James Mayall, Professor of International Relations, University of Cambridge, was a devoted Commonwealth watcher and attended many CHOGMs between 1983-97. He was a longtime and much-valued member of the editorial board of The Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs. Further information is available at:
<https://www.commonwealthroundtable.co.uk/general/james-mayall-1937-2025/>
<https://www.commonwealthroundtable.co.uk/general/history/james-mayall-the-commonwealth-and-the-round-table/>

Dr Kwasi Kwarteng Snr
(1941-2025)



Mr Kwasi Kwarteng worked as Economics Officer in the Economic Affairs Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat. Further information is available at the following link:
<https://asaaseradio.com/dr-alfred-kwasi-kwarteng-senior-1941-2025/>