

Obituary

MARTIN F. GLAESSNER

1906 – 1989

We deeply regret to report the death of Martin Glaessner at the Royal Adelaide Hospital on November 22nd, after a brief illness. The following account has been kindly made available by Prof. Brian McGowran—*Ed.*

“At the insistence of his father, the distinguished chemist Dr. Arthur Glaessner, Martin took his first doctorate at the University of Vienna in law—crabs, turtles, cave bears, anthropoid apes and sundry other palaeontological and geological pursuits seemed to require other means for their sustenance. That legal training was seen in the next sixty years in his characteristic crispness, incisiveness and clarity (but never pedantry).

Already well established as a ‘classical’ palaeontologist, Martin developed his next career as a micropalaeontologist and especially in its application to petroleum geology and basin analysis, in Vienna and Moscow, with Anglo-Iranian Oil Co. in London, and then in Port Moresby and Melbourne. The influence of ‘Principles of Micropalaeontology’ was felt for decades.

Invited to Adelaide in 1950 by Professor Sir Douglas Mawson, he embarked in the 1950s on his next major research programme—the study of the Ediacaran fauna and its place in the early evolution of animals. His last scientific preoccupation was initial work on the requested second edition of ‘The dawn of animal life’.

Martin Glaessner’s career has been remarkable for its numerous strands, each sustained through decades with profound and significant achievements, and for its balance between basic research and service to the profession, to education and to the promotion of geology’s role in national development and particularly in petroleum exploration. He cared, and cared deeply, about his students and about his science and its practitioners.

Martin is survived by Tina, his wife of 53 years, and by his daughter, Vera, son-in-law, Ian, and granddaughter, Sian-Christina, all of London. The eulogy at his funeral was delivered by his friend and distinguished South Australian geologist, Mr. Lee Parkin.

Comfortable in four languages, immensely erudite and cultivated, Martin Glaessner sustained his production of scholarly papers and books for no less than sixty-five years. We have lost a great colleague, but we certainly will not forget him.”

*University of Adelaide
Adelaide, S. Australia*

BRIAN MCGOWRAN

Mrs. Tina Glaessner’s address is : 28 Taylor Terrace, Rosslyn Park, S. A., 5072.

Professor Glaessner was elected as Honorary Fellow of the Geological Society of India in the year 1969.