

## **In memoriam: Prof. Franz Kuna (1933–2010)**

It is with great sorrow that we note the passing of Franz Kuna, Emeritus Professor of English and American Studies at the University of Klagenfurt, who died suddenly on December 8, 2010. EASA and its members, and Australian studies in general, have lost an outstanding scholar and colleague, and a great friend to many.

Franz Kuna took up his studies (English and German) at Vienna University, where he completed his doctorate. He established his international reputation as a respected scholar during his years in Great Britain (1958 – 1976), where he took up positions in Oxford, Birmingham, Cambridge (as a fellow of St. John's College), and East Anglia; in those years he published celebrated studies of T.S. Eliot, W.H. Auden, Franz Kafka. In 1976 he returned to Austria and became Professor of English and American Studies at the University of Klagenfurt/Austria, where he was also appointed Head of the Research Commission (1982 – 1995) and Vice-Chancellor for Research and Teaching (1995-1999).

The Department of English and American Studies whose head Franz Kuna was until his retirement in 2002 has lost a colleague who gave decisive shape to the department's research profile. He set up student and staff exchanges with Australian universities, he completed a major research project on the Australian film industry (1997 – 2000), and he introduced Indigenous Australian Studies as a unique program profile, compared with all other Austrian universities.

After his retirement Franz Kuna continued to do research in various fields of interest. In recent years he accepted a post as visiting professor at the University of Hangzhou/China, where he contributed his expertise to establishing literary and cultural studies programs. His unexpected, sudden death prevented him from going on another visit to Hangzhou University this spring.

We will not only miss his expertise and his open mind, but also his considerate support, his subtle humour and his encouraging smile.

**REQUIESCAT IN PACE!**

(Contributed by Eleonore Wildburger, 03 Jan, 2011)