

Mavis Orpen (d. 2008)

Mary Burton, Black Sash Trustee, pays tribute to Mavis Orpen. Mavis was a long standing member of the Black Sash. She passed away on Friday morning, 13 June 2008, a few months before her hundredth birthday.



Mavis lived at Whitehall Court in Rondebosch for many years, and her niece Judy Drew arranged a tea party there in her memory, at which family and friends paid tribute to her. Mavis was generous and energetic in bringing friends together, and dozens of people had met at her lunch parties over the years.

She had also kept in touch with old friends with regular visits. Her lively and interesting conversation made her excellent company.

She was generous too in her support of others, quietly helping where she saw a need, and in particular encouraging artists whose work she admired.

She was an accomplished poet, with work published in anthologies and journals.

There were a number of Black Sash members present at the memorial gathering, reminiscing about Mavis as a member of the Rosebank Branch. Her dedication to the goals of the organisation was unshakable, and her high standards in all that she said, did and wrote, were an example and inspiration to her colleagues.