

**PAYING SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO THE LATE PROFESSOR MARGRET MACPHERSON  
WHO DIED ON AUGUST 12, 2011**

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**A SPEECH BY PROFESSOR APOLO NSIBAMBI, CHANCELLOR OF VICTORIA  
UNIVERSITY ON 14<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2011 AT ST. FRANCIS CHAPEL, MAKERERE  
UNIVERSITY AT 2.30 P.M.**

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I discovered Professor Margret Macpherson when I joined Makerere University in 1961.

Initially, I pursued Economics but when I discovered that our Professor of Economics was a bright but an eccentric alcoholic, I switched to another course.

Unlike a number of Professors who were inaccessible, formalistic, daunting and atheistic, Professor Macpherson was accessible, friendly and was a practicing Christian who was disciplined. She possessed effective communication skills which enabled her to capture the attention of naughty and curious students like John Nagenda, Lydia Mugambi, Okot p'Bitek, and David Rubadiri. She was very articulate and used simple English to teach English Literature. Her passion in dramatic scenes in Shakespeare's Othello and the poem Tarantella by Belloc animated students even from other courses. Indeed, she extended the drama to other areas of Uganda. She taught her students to pronounce words properly and to acquire the right accent.

As a Professor she fulfilled the following cardinal requirements of a University teacher. First, she taught and captured the attention of students who passed her subject very well and performed effectively in public life. She marked their scripts with zeal and made educative remarks on their scripts. Second, she carried out relevant research and published books. These include the following: ***They built for the future, 1922-1962***, a

book which captured the history and development of Makerere University. It was not a chronology of events, but she interpreted the events and episodes very well.

She also published the following:

1. Co-authored with Erisa Kironde, Kintu
2. Let us make a play
3. If it worked, it is right (a theatre manual).

She was the Editor and publisher of Old Makererean which kept us informed of what was happening to the University and of what was happening to former Academic and Administrative staff.

Fourth, she encouraged the culture of reading books to her students whom she allowed to borrow her books from her library. It is a pity to observe that many Ugandans lack the culture of reading and writing. Indeed, after office hours, some flock to bars to irrigate their throats with alcohol. It is not surprising to note that Professor Macpherson produced influential and articulate political leaders, professors, civil servants and poets. They include the following: H.E. Dr. Mkapa, a former president of Tanzania, H.E. Milton Obote, a former president of Uganda, Professor Rubadiri, a former Vice Chancellor of Malawi University, Professor Senteza Kajubi, a former Vice Chancellor of Makerere University, Mr. John Nagenda, a Senior President Adviser and a great communicator, the late Professor Rhoda Nsibambi, my late wife, Professor and Mrs. Lydia Mugambi, Vice Chancellor of Nkumba university, Professor Wangusa, a former minister of Uganda, Dr. Okot P'Bitek, a great poet, Professor Bukenya and Dr. Robina Kyeyune.

May the Almighty sustain the bereaved.

**Sincerely: Rt. Hon. Prof. Apolo R. Nsibambi, Chancellor of Victoria University**