

Rigsbee Translated Nobel Laureate

Mark Powell
Communications

St. Andrews Presbyterian College Writer-In-Residence Ron Bayes called David Rigsbee first thing Thursday morning to inform him Joseph Brodsky had won the 1987 Nobel Prize for Literature. Rigsbee was happy for his former associate.

"I'm happy for him; I think it's a brave, good choice to pick a 47 year-old poet," Rigsbee said. Rigsbee is the director of the St. Andrews Press and the Associate Dean of St. Andrews.

"Brodsky is a 20th Century Metaphysical poet — he's a Russian reincarnation of John Donne," Rigsbee said.

Rigsbee knew Brodsky was an innovative, powerful poet when he translated parts of the Russian poet's last major book of English poetry, "A Part of Speech." That was in 1980, but the translation came after a long friendship and association with the Nobel laureate.

It began when Rigsbee was studying with Pulitzer Prize winner Carolyn Kizer in his undergraduate years at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

"I was originally an English major at UNC; then Carolyn suggested there would be a lot more money in translation than in writing poetry," Rigsbee explained in his office on the Laurinburg campus. "She suggested I study Russian."

Rigsbee did study Russian, later earning his bachelors degree in it. His early project in Russian, about 1968, was the translation of poetry.

"At the time, Yevtushenko and Voznesensky were by far the most popular

and most translated of Russian poets," he said. "I wanted to translate someone that hadn't been translated yet."

That someone turned out to be Brodsky — a young, little-known poet at the time. Brodsky's first translator was George Kline of Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania.

At Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Md., where Rigsbee got his master's degree in creative writing, he translated Brodsky's poems as part of his master's thesis.

"Right after I graduated from Johns Hopkins, Carolyn Kizer called me from Columbia University saying I should come visit Brodsky there, where was visiting at the time," Rigsbee said. "I flew up there and we struck up a friendship immediately; he was very flattered that I had translated his poetry.

"Joseph was, and is, very funny and comes up with very original things all the time; he's capable of talking on any topic and will launch into a speech out of nowhere."

Rigsbee said all during the 1970s the two had an almost fraternal friendship. "I was like his younger brother, he telling me that he would teach me all the things a poet needed to know about," Rigsbee said.

"I visited him often in New York; we would read poetry together and spend our summers driving around, seeing the country."

Rigsbee, the author of five books of poetry with a 6th due out in December, credits the publication of his first book to Brodsky. Entitled "Stamping Ground," Rigsbee's book was published in 1976 by Ardis, the premier publisher of Russian

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Knights Pickle Mt. Olive

Buck Tredway

The rains let up just in time for Knight booters to take a soggy 2-0 win over Mt. Olive College in an inter-divisional soccer match Tuesday afternoon. It was the Knights second consecutive victory which equals their longest winning streak of the season.

One goal was scored in each half of play and both goals were scored by seniors.

Matt Wilson opened the scoring with a breakaway unassisted goal 15:46 into the first half. St. Andrews took 6 shots on goal in the first half while Mt.

Olive managed only 1.

Rob McLean scored the second half goal on an assist by Kris Deal at 20:48. Deal placed the ball in perfect position for McLean's mid-air sidwinding kick, which rocketed the ball into the left-hand side of the net.

The Knights had 9 second-half shots on goal while Mt. Olive again managed only 1.

Mt. Olive College, which plays in NAIA District 26, drops to 4-11. The Knights improve to 5-11 and play their final game of the season November 4 at home against Warren Wilson College.



Associate Dean and St. Andrews Press Director David Rigsbee was among the first to translate the works of 1987 Nobel Prize for Literature winner

Convocation Was Perkinson's Last

Patrick Savage

On October 22, St. Andrews bid farewell to President A.P. Perkinson as he presided over his last formal ceremony at the special autumn convocation in Avinger Auditorium. Perkinson, citing a "point of personal privilege," told those assembled of his good memories of St. Andrews since he became president on May 1, 1975. With a reference to the convocation, he stated "It has been my privilege to have attended over 40 such public occasions at St. Andrews."

Two honorary degrees were also awarded at the convocation. A Doctor of Divinity degree went to Douglas Wayne Oldenburg, president of Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Georgia, and former Chair of the Board of Trustees. A Doctor of Literature degree went to Samuel Talmadge Ragan, poet laureate of North Carolina and editor and publisher of the Southern Pines Pilot.

Thomas L. Benson, Vice President and Dean of the College, was the convocation speaker. Benson's address, entitled "Foster the Light", after a Dylan Thomas poem, touched on many topics, most importantly the state of higher education in the United States. Benson criticized the "supermarket model" mentality of some higher education institutions, while reiterating St. Andrews' struggle to main-

tain its ideals to learning, stating that St. Andrews must "keep the torch ablaze, that torch which represents our commitment to learning." The St. Andrews Chorale performed "Gloria" at the convocation, as well as the Alma Mater. The St. Andrews Honor Society served as ushers, marshals, and standard bearers, while William Caudill led the procession on the bagpipes.

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