

OBITUARIES

PROFESSOR WILLIAM (BILL) RICHARD MEAD (1915–2014)

Bill was born in Stewkley in 1915 and died just nine days short of his 99th birthday, on 20th July 2014. Although an academic of international stature he remained true to his Buckinghamshire roots, making his home in Aston Clinton when he retired. It was wholly appropriate that he was President of BAS from 2000 to 2008.

He was educated in Aylesbury at the Temple School, which held its classes in the room that is now part of the County Museum. He then went on to attend Aylesbury Grammar School, and later became a governor and chairman of the AGS Foundation. He took his first degree at the London School of Economics and completed his PhD there in 1946 after a five-year gap, during World War II, when he served in the RAF in Iceland and Canada.

In 1946 he was appointed as a geography lecturer to Liverpool University by H.C. Darby, a rising star in human geography. In 1949 Darby was appointed to the Chair of Geography at University College London and invited Bill to join him, first as lecturer, then as Reader. When Darby moved to Cambridge University Bill succeeded to the Chair and played a leading role in UCL Geography Department's subsequent success, during sixteen years of major expansion from 1966, and after 1982 as an Emeritus.

His contributions to the study of geography were many, and included his work on the significance of medieval ridge and furrow in the landscape. His several papers on the subject included one on Buckinghamshire, published in 1953 in the *Geographical Journal*. He was also a scholar of Finnish and wider Scandinavian studies. His first visit to Finland, in 1938, started a life-long love of the country. In the late 1940s he spent a year living with, and studying, farmers in Karelia following redrawing of the boundary between Finland and the Soviet Union. He spoke Finnish fluently and returned to Finland annually to visit friends and colleagues until recently, when his health began to fail.

Bill published two dozen books including the 'Historical Geography of Scandinavia' and over 150 academic articles. After retirement he produced

three Buckinghamshire books: 'Aylesbury. A personal memoir from the 1920s', a delightful evocation of life in a small market town at that period; 'Aylesbury Grammar School 1598–1998' and 'Per Kalm: a Finnish visitor to the Chilterns in 1748', the latter translated from the Finnish.

The honours bestowed on Bill were many. Amongst positions held were those of President of the Institute of British Geographers and the Geographical Association. He was a Vice-President of the Royal Geographical Society and Chairman of the Council of the School of Slavonic and East European Studies. In addition, he received recognition for major contributions and long service as Chairman of the Anglo-Finnish Society. Also, of course, from 2000 to 2008 he served as President of BAS.

His support for BAS was both heart-warming and sincere. His attendance at Council meetings was always welcomed and his wise words valued. He was enthusiastic about the formation of the Bucks Local History Network, and enjoyed supporting the annual conferences. He often visited the Library on Wednesdays, bringing gifts of books and articles and passing on his copy of the 'Agricultural History Review'. He generously gave us a percentage of the sales of his Buckinghamshire books. He always greeted us with a cheery smile and usually had an anecdote about a natural history or historical event. His 'President's Remarks' at BAS AGMs, in which every contributor to the running of the Society was given generous acknowledgement, contained entertaining reminiscences about the early days of the Museum and the Society.

He remained active well into his 90s, still riding his horse and walking. He continued his love of conversation and recorded in his diary the number of people he had conversed with each day! His affection for people was reflected by nearly two hundred of his friends and colleagues attending his funeral in Aston Clinton church.

Diana Gulland

JOHN HUBERT EMLYN JONES CBE (1915–2014)

Emlyn Jones was a long-standing member of Bucks Record Society, who was well-known for his mountaineering achievements. Born the son of a Llandudno schoolmaster, he climbed Snowdon for the first time when he was 10, and for the last time when he was 80. In the years before the war he was a regular climber in the Alps, and eventually became President of the Climbers Club and of the Alpine Club. In 1950 he was a member of the first expedition to be allowed into Nepal, and in 1953 he was tasked with leading an expedition which would have attempted Everest if John Hunt had failed. His own 1959 expedition to climb the 22,494 foot Ama Dablam would have included Louise, his wife, had she not been expecting their daughter's birth. The expedition tragically lost two climbers near the mountain's summit.

After Dulwich College he had enlisted in the Territorials, and his wartime service with the Royal

Engineers included bomb disposal in London and clearing mines and booby traps in France after D-Day. He ended the war as a major with a military MBE. In civilian life his career as a chartered surveyor was distinguished by membership of the Lands Tribunal for eighteen years, where he was widely respected for his legal clarity.

He remained a patriotic Welshman even though living in Ivinghoe, and his deep love of music led him to become an accomplished cellist, an organiser of orchestras and a madrigal singer. In retirement he went twice a week to London to play bridge at the Garrick Club, after lunch recalling the cases of his professional years.

Our sympathy goes to his wife and daughter and two sons.

George Lamb

KATHLEEN HAGERTY (MARCH 1921–NOVEMBER 2014)

Readers will be sad to learn of the death of Kathleen. She was a Vice-President of the Society and the wife of Bob Hagerty, who was Honorary Secretary for many years and published several articles on Buckinghamshire saints in *Records*. Kathleen entered actively into the society's life, supporting Bob in many ways (not least in stuffing numerous envelopes); she was an active supporter of the Natural History Section and also found time to be a guide at Waddesdon Manor. She was charming and modest about her life but in fact had a remarkable career. The following brief lines are taken from a memorial address given by a friend.

During the war Kathleen took a job with the Civil Service in London, eventually organising the office of Duncan Sandys, who held a ministerial

post in the coalition government. She and Bob married in 1946. Bob was a scientist at the Rocket Propulsion Establishment in Westcott, where he worked on 'Blue Streak'. In the 1960s they both moved to Paris, where Bob worked for NATO and had diplomatic status. Kathleen enjoyed life in Paris very much, became fluent in French and a great diplomatic entertainer. She met the Queen twice, as well as two American presidents and other dignitaries [Kathleen told the writer that at one point following a spat between NATO and de Gaulle, the couple were the sole official British representatives of that organisation!]. Both Bob and Kathleen subsequently transferred to Washington DC. Bob retired in 1976 and they returned to live in Aylesbury.

Michael Farley

CHARMIAN WOODFIELD FSA (1929–2015)

Having completed a degree at Birkbeck and a post-graduate diploma in Roman and Iron Age Archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology, London, Charmian worked as a field archaeologist, first in Coventry, where she excavated the Whitefriars monastic site, and then for a period in Borneo, with spells as an extra-mural lecturer. Between 1972 and 1978 she worked intermittently as a field archaeologist and finds assistant with the Milton Keynes Archaeological Unit. She became a specialist in Roman pottery, producing many reports on the subject, including a number on Buckinghamshire sites. Her other publications were wide-ranging geographically, but a particularly significant publication for Buckinghamshire was the report on the Roman site at Stanton Low on the Great Ouse (*Arch. Journ.* 146). The

site, which proved to contain several buildings, an engineered river channel (with a bridge), and among other significant finds a lead coffin, had come to light in the process of gravel extraction in 1957, and had been reported initially by Wolverton Archaeological Society. Several small-scale investigations took place on the site under difficult circumstances, notably under the direction of Margaret Jones, later of Mucking (Essex) fame. It was several years before the results could be pulled together in a substantial report by Charmian. She was married to Paul Woodfield, an architect and specialist in historic buildings, with whom she co-operated on a number of projects.

Michael Farley

JAMES VENN (DECEMBER 1921–DECEMBER 2014)

James Venn was not a member of the society, but will have been well-known to many members as an economic historian with a great interest in mills and transport history. He was also an enthusiastic photographer of what would once have been considered commonplace facilities such as gasworks, but which now rarely survive. A number of his photographs are now in the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies. A former manager of the Centre notes that his photographs were ‘meticulously captioned in very small but accurate hand writing – his railway photographs always having the railway company, the identity of the steam

engine, the exact date and even the time the train had departed from the local railway station’.

He was a great friend of the artist, photographer and mills expert Stanley Freese and he bought Freese’s house, The Kraal at South Heath, when Stanley moved to Suffolk. He himself contributed an introduction to the society’s publication in 2007, of Stanley Freese’s manuscript on Buckinghamshire watermills. His own manuscripts relating to mills will be deposited with the Mills Archive, a section of SPAB.

Michael Farley

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