

Sir Thomas William James David Dupree, Bt (1930-2013)

David's hereditary title (which came from a baronetcy that had been in his family since 1921 when an ancestor of his was awarded it for services to industry) fell to him only in recent years, and being a quiet and modest man, it was not something he advertised other than occasionally on headed notepaper. Born on 5th Feb 1930 in Hampshire, he never married and died on 29th June 2013 in Chesterfield Hospital.

He was educated at Harrow and Trinity College Cambridge, and became a BSBI member in 1953. Philip Oswald has written of him as "a close friend when we were undergraduates here from 1951 to 1954; we botanised together in Cambridgeshire, we visited the Isles of Scilly just before my 21st birthday in April 1954 and he drove me all over Scotland and Ireland in his sports car soon after we went down later that year".

He was a secondary school teacher in history and later classics, teaching at the local Stancliffe Hall School for many years at the end of his career. He was apparently a very inspiring and dedicated teacher and a number of his ex-pupils attended his funeral at the Chesterfield Crematorium.

His bungalow in Darley Dale was surrounded by a fantastic garden, the slope allowing for the major part of it to be a rockery. A series of ponds and rills carried the water from a spring at the top down its full length. He had a marvellous selection of alpine plants as well as the occasional native raised from seed so that he could check on its characteristics. A gin and tonic on the patio enjoying the view down the valley whilst dinner cooked was as memorable as some of the exciting botanical finds or being able to use his extensive botanical library.

Those who knew him describe him as a very knowledgeable field botanist who will be greatly missed; for instance he was always ready to help the current and previous county recorders in Derbyshire both on his own and at organised field meetings. He made many discoveries of new plants in the county

including *Bromopsis benekenii* (Lesser Hairy-brome) and *Juncus foliosus* (Leafy Rush).

Some members will recall the striking story of another of David's discoveries – this one a rediscovery as described by Max Walters in *Watsonia* 10: 49-54 (1974) – and be aware that such things reveal a quality more worthy than luck. Stepping across a fenland ditch in Cambridgeshire in 1972 for reasons of personal comfort he encountered *Senecio paludosus* (Fen Ragwort) which had been thought to be extinct in Britain for most or all of the 20th century. Knowing it was something unusual he collected just a single capitulum and cauline leaf, which proved to be sufficient for confirmation.

His love of plants travelled with him to places such as Majorca where his sister lived, as well as the Scottish Isles, Cornwall and the Scillies and Staffordshire, and he was happy to work on 'square-bashing' for the *New atlas of the British & Irish flora*. In August 1992, he was also a member of the privileged group who enjoyed a visit to the Castle of Mey and had tea with the Queen Mother, our Society's Patron, (see *BSBI Scottish Newsletter* 15 (1993).

The proceeds of a collection at his funeral were donated to BSBI and we understand that a significant five-figure legacy was left to BSBI in his will; as his nephew wrote; "We are all very happy your Society was mentioned in his will and will help to support more activities in a field where my Uncle was an enthusiast". We understand that arrangements are in place for his herbarium to be taken into the Natural History Museum (BM).

Compiled by C M Lovatt, BSBI Administrative Officer, from the Society's records, and the personal recollections of our members Alan Willmot, Dorothy Brookman and Philip Oswald, who knew him well.