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## PETER JOHN FRY (1935–2010)

Although not well known to the membership as a whole, Peter Fry played an important role in the BSBI's work for many years. From 2006 until his death he was listed in *BSBI News* as 'Hon. Assistant Secretary', but he had, in fact, occupied this post for many years before.

Peter was born in Yeovil, Somerset, but spent most of his life in Essex, where he initially worked as a teacher at Westcliff High School for Boys. Here he inherited a 'dig for victory' garden and assumed responsibility for the school's gardening club. This led to an interest in plant communities, and he joined the BSBI in 1966. Later in his career he was seconded to the Nuffield Foundation as materials co-ordinator of their A-level biology project, he also spent some years as Chairman of the Biological Board of Studies of the Cambridge Institute, and ended his career at a teachers' training college, where he cheerfully tried to instil enthusiasm in groups of students of varying ability. During this time he regularly brought groups of students to visit the Natural History Museum, to see how plant specimens were prepared, plants were classified, and herbaria arranged. Occasionally one or two students displayed brief flickers of interest, but Peter obviously enjoyed his contact with the Museum. Thus when he retired and found that someone was required to sort through the BSBI mail which arrived at the Museum (the Society's official address), Peter volunteered for the job, and, despite increasing disability and discomfort, travelled in regularly from his home on the Essex coast to go through the mail.

He did not use a computer, and neither did many of the individuals who wrote to the Museum address, so they received prompt, hand-written replies to their queries. Over the years as the use of computers increased fewer and fewer personal enquiries were sent to the Museum, but the amount of junk mail – offering the Society elaborate meeting places, or parties with tribute bands, all at unaffordable prices – grew. Peter took particular pleasure in dealing with enquiries from people who sought information on botanical training courses. He also forwarded enquires to appropriate officers or other Society members.

Peter served on the Society's Council from 2003 to 2007, and was elected to Honorary Membership in 2005. With his wife Mary he attended most Annual Exhibition Meetings, and these events provided his main contact with Society members.

Further details of Peter's life can be found in the profile prepared by Gwynn Ellis to mark his election as an Honorary Member (*BSBI News* **103**: 52, 2006).

We record our thanks for Peter's efficient quiet work over many years, and send our sympathy to Mary and his family.

ROY VICKERY



Peter Fry. Photo J. Fry © 2009