

# OBITUARY

MAX DAVIES

Max Davies, who died in March 1995, was someone who gave generously of his time and knowledge not only to the Society but to many other organisations in Bucks and Oxfordshire.

He joined the Society in the late 'sixties after a varied career. He was the son of Emil Davies, a Fabian Socialist who was Chairman of the London County Council (and like his son a lifelong vegetarian). After school at Wycliffe College he read law at University College, Oxford but went into the steel industry as a trainee manager then moved to the British Iron and Steel Research Association. When the war came he volunteered for the Royal Artillery with whom he served for seven years taking part in the D-Day landings and in the relief of Holland. He was proud of his war medals and helped the British Legion in Yorkshire in his last years.

He returned to the steel industry and worked mainly on scientific journals and Public Relations. He edited the *Operation Research Quarterly* and, after moving to Shell, the *Petroleum Times*. Shell posted him to Nigeria where he rose to be head of their operations in West Africa. At Lagos he took up sailing with enthusiasm and success.

When he retired in 1967 he and Peggy moved to Long Crendon where, at The Old Crown, they created an outstanding garden. His energy and wide knowledge meant that he was soon involved with several organisations which had an interest in conservation. For the Chiltern Society he edited their Newsletter; he was much involved with the newly-founded Friends of the Vale of Aylesbury. When he heard of plans to restore Quainton Windmill, derelict since 1900, he not only resolved an obscure village feud, found a grant and set on foot a



successful restoration. He did invaluable work in the archaeological surveys preceding the construction of the M40 motorway.

He joined the Society's Council in 1972, and became its chairman three years later until he was elected Secretary in 1979. To this he brought energy, tact and efficiency – no one could have served the Society better for those five years, at the end of which he became a Vice-President. After his wife's death he moved to Pocklington to be near one of his daughters and there he kept up his interests, especially in music, almost to the end.

E. V.

## TERESA, LADY BRISCOE

Teresa, Lady Briscoe died peacefully in her sleep, aged 76, on November 23rd, 1995, following a brave fight against cancer.

She married Sir John Briscoe in 1948 and lived in Stoke Poges from 1959 until his death in 1993, when

she moved to St Michael's Green, Beaconsfield.

She was much respected for her tireless work as president of the Buckinghamshire British Red Cross she was awarded the OBE in 1971 for her work.

She was equally well known and admired for her original and valuable contribution to archaeology.

A self-taught prehistorian, she field-walked the area around her home in East Anglia. When ploughing brought to light Anglo-Saxon pottery she became interested in the decorative stamped impressions on them. Encouraged by Tom Letherbridge of the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology, she pursued this interest, which only an amateur would have time to research.

For the next 20–25 years, as well as her Red Cross and domestic duties, Lady Briscoe continued drawing and recording all available Anglo-Saxon pottery stamps. Her expertise was increasingly in demand and her help was asked in analysing the Anglo-Saxon pottery for the large excavation at Mucking. Together with Tom and Margaret Jones

she experimented in making permanent casts of the stamped imprints and started serious classification. As a result of her work she was invited to attend symposiums where she read papers and was much consulted by German and Scandinavian archaeologists.

Thanks to her tireless research, a new tool for Anglo-Saxon study is available, ie identifying tribal areas and pottery grouping etc.

Her archive contains over 20,000 classified casts and is available to archaeologists and students.

Her daughter Diana, who has been involved with her mother's work for many years, will be continuing in her footsteps. She also leaves a son, Edward and four grandchildren.

B. S.

#### COLIN Le MESSURIER

Colin Le Messurier, who died in April 1995 at the age of 80, was one of that band of self-taught scholars with a background in engineering or science, to whom students of the past in Bucks owe so much. Though he never held office in the Society he was an active member, always pleased to help a friend, and generous with his time to those who sought his help, especially children.

He was born in Essex, and went to Northampton Coll by London, where he obtained a B.Sc. in Engineering, and then joined the Sound Department of Alexander Korda's London Film Productions. He worked on *Things to Come* and *The Ghost goes West*, and then in 1939 was commissioned in the Royal Engineers. He was badly wounded at Halfaya but he was not a man to give up, and was back in action by the time of the battle of Alamein. With the sappers of 51st Highland Division he helped to clear the minefields between the lines: "Safest place to be, between the armies", he commented, "and the best firework display I've ever seen". In 1943 Colin landed in Sicily and came up through Italy into Germany, where his company overran the Belsen concentration camp, of which he found himself the commanding officer for four days.

After the War he went back to the film business, and joined the Sound Department of Pinewood Studios, where he worked until his retirement in 1977. The films he worked on include *Genevieve*, *Eld Cid*, *Dr No*, and *Ryans Daughter*. When he married Janet his aside to the photographer was "She's mine now; I've paid 7/6 for her".

He lived for many years at Tatling End, in Denham, and it was here that his abiding curiosity led him to the history of the place, and his study of the Manor Court rolls. It is hoped to publish his study of the effects of the Black Death in Denham.

One of his sons writes, "When I was at school I was too young to appreciate the scholar in my father, (but) he made a lasting ingression on my school teachers. I always admired my father's tolerance of ideas and behaviour different from his own. He taught me that life can always be fun, that there is always much to be learnt, and how to differentiate between the few things that really matter and the overwhelming number of things that do not"

J. C T.

J. D. BROADBENT of Penn worked hard for several Bucks organisations particularly the Penn branch of the Council for the Protection of Rural England and the Bucks Historic Buildings Trust; he was consulting architect for the Gerrards Cross Church.

Mrs JANE WRIGHT of Beaconsfield was the founder of the Church Recorders Section of N.A.D.F.A.S.

Miss G. MEAD made a generous bequest to the Museum.

E. B. DORRANCE had been Headmaster of Grange School, Aylesbury and Chairman of the National Trust Centre.

Other deaths recorded were:

J. W. D. CAWTHORNE,  
DAVID ANDERSON, Mrs BETTY KNIGHT,  
Mrs LEAVER, and J. H. P. ROBERTS.

*E.V.*