

Memories of Roy – Julie Lane

I was very sad to hear of the passing of Roy although I am glad he slipped away peacefully. In recent years his memory for the plants he loved so very much was failing which was a cause of great sadness and frustration, but his contribution to the flora of our country was enormous over the years. I am sure others will go into more detail about that side of things so I will just reminisce about a few of my personal memories of him here:

He was a gentle kind man as all botanists seem to be, with an infectious laugh. On our summer walks he was always trailing along at the back, passing on his immense knowledge to a little bunch of fledgling botanists. Sadly, I very rarely had the patience to stay behind and missed out as a result – but he still taught me so much over the years.

We shared a joint passion for teaching the younger generations about the wonders of our natural world and he often talked about his days as a schoolteacher and the many ex-pupils who had stayed in touch with him over the years.

I was lucky enough to have his constant support and friendship over the years especially during the time I was Chairman of the Society. As our long-term President, he was always there to provide support if needed – as it was at times!

He once gave me a book of *Ben Lawers and its Alpine Flowers*¹ as he knew of my love of mountain flora. I treasure it to this day. (Mary Sarre – another wonderful friend, botanist and very sadly missed member of our Society – also gave me the same book. I was so touched by both their generosity and kindness that I daren't admit it to them at the time.)

He loved *Alchemillas* – he had many varieties in his garden. We used to compare notes!

Quite recently, he dug out a list of the flora of Newton Blossomville churchyard for me which was compiled as part of his epic task to record the flora of Buckinghamshire churchyards which he carried out many years ago. He was so dedicated and as the County Botanical Recorder for many many years, he made a huge contribution.

In 2021 I requested that Roy wrote a piece for our website about his life. In true Roy style he produced a fascinating account (see Roy Reminiscences April 2012) and hand-wrote it in his, at that late stage in his life, somewhat spidery handwriting and I had quite a task to get it all deciphered and typed up for the website – but it was worth the effort to read about his many stages of life and achievements.

Finally, he had an intense fear of frogs, which I am afraid to admit always made me laugh 😊

Julie Lane
October 2024

¹ *Ben Lawers and its Alpine Flowers* (1972), ed. M.S. Campbell et al., National Trust for Scotland

