

compressor used by the Cave Diving Group; he paid for the colour plates in recent issues of *Proceedings*; he founded (and largely funded) the Paul Esser Memorial Trust that provides an annual major lecture on a sporting topic in memory of a cave diver who lost his life in Porth yr Ogof.

How then can we summarize Oliver's contribution in the world of caves? He did not himself achieve a lot in the way of cave research, nor did he publish many papers of significance in cave science. What he did do, and do well, was to catalyse others. Sometimes it was Oliver who first aroused their enthusiasm for caves; more often it was he who kept their interest going over the years by personal contact and constant reminders of what needed doing. He had strong views on the way in which things should be done, too, and he could be exasperating at times. Particularly as he got older, he did so many of the thankless tasks such as editing and administration that enabled other people to do the more exciting active work and that channelled their findings towards systematic recording and publication. Above all he enjoyed life and his enjoyment was infectious. I would say that we miss him, except that he seems to be still with us – in spirit.

T. R. Shaw

PROFESSOR R. F. E. W. PEEL (1912-1985)

The death occurred in Cambridge on 21 September 1985 of the Society's Fourth President, Emeritus Professor Peel.

Ronald Peel was born in 1912 and studied Geography and Anthropology at Cambridge, becoming a lecturer in Geography at Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1935. Three years later he joined R. A. Bagnold (later to become Brigadier Bagnold, founder of the Long Range Desert Group in the Sahara and author of the standard work on movement in sand) as a surveyor on the first motorized expedition into the Sahara. They travelled west from Cairo to the Gilf Kebir on the Libyan frontier. This expedition fired Peel's enthusiasm for arid zone geomorphology, a subject on which he was to become a world authority. In subsequent years he journeyed to virtually all the world's deserts and wrote extensively about them.

After military service during the Second World War, Ron Peel was successively Lecturer in Cambridge, Professor in Sheffield and then in 1957 came to Bristol as Professor of Physical Geography. He retired in 1977.

Until 1982 the Society was housed in the basement of the Geography Department and Ron Peel took a fatherly interest in our activities. He was a close friend and great admirer of Tratman, so it was no surprise when he accepted the Presidency of the Society in March 1972 when Trat stepped down. Prof. Peel held the office for five years until March 1977. He was diligent in looking after our interest in the University; his friendly voice in high places smoothed out many a difficulty.

R. J. G. Savage