

publication of Proceedings and to assist field study or expeditions by members, particularly undergraduates. He remained alert to threatening clouds on our horizon, ready to preside at meetings when needed, briefing and giving much needed advice and counsel to a new president.

It would be ungenerous not to mention here the many warm and enduring friendships formed with colleagues, those with whom he worked, notably Louis, Mary and Richard Leakey in Kenya, and members of the Society, including Martin Hinton and his wife, Dina Dobson Hinton, then our vice-presidents, to whose house in Wrington, he was a frequent kind and supportive visitor in their later years. Though he was Martin's literary executor and thus best placed to know what part if any he may have played in the Piltdown forgery, Bob always maintained a discrete but teasing silence on the subject.

With humour and friendship also went personal courage and fortitude and a strong sense of responsibility in caring for family, for friends and for the Society's affairs. His physical and intellectual energies had appeared unabated in retirement so that his fatal illness, the first signs of which appeared at the end of 1997, came as a sad shock. Despite its rapid worsening, he completed work in progress and set his affairs in order, even to the detailed arrangements for his funeral, including the valedictory greeting recorded by him and the ecologically responsible choice of a wicker coffin. The tributes, on behalf of his family, the University, the Geology Department and the National Trust, spoken at the funeral ceremony, to which so very many came to bid him farewell, were ample testimony of the esteem and affection in which he was held.

In 1969 he married Shirley Coryndon, who was a specialist in fossil hippopotami, hence the numerous amusing hippo figurines that decorated their house. Tragically this happy marriage of shared goals and interests was cut short by her early death in 1976. Our sympathies are with his family in their grievous loss.

A.M.A. and D.T.D.

BENTON, M.J. 1994. Professor R.J.G. Savage: an appreciation. *Zoological Journal of the Linnean Society* (1994). **112**. p3-p12.

MISS E.M. (MOLLY) HALL 1910-1998

Molly Hall, christened Edna Mary but always known as Molly, who died in Paulton Hospital just before Easter, had been a member of the Society for sixty-seven years. She was very much a local girl, born in Paulton where her father was a mining engineer employed in the Somerset coalfield, attending school in Paulton, reading English at Bristol University, returning to teach for most of her working career at Paulton Secondary School, latterly in Midsomer Norton and then finally at a private school at Cranmore.

She was one of four children; her younger sister Brenda is happily still very much alive. Molly had been a baby-sitter for Bertie and Marjorie Crook's eldest son, Peter, and went with them when they moved to Timsbury, living as one of the family for over 40 years. When the 'Laurels' was sold after Bertie's death in 1973, Molly moved next door to 'Little Orchard', made available to her following a wish expressed in Bertie's will. There she lived first in a trailer caravan, where she contrived to be marvellously hospitable until the cottage became

vacant and was modernised and made very snug for her. Molly wrote the obituary notice for Marjorie in Proceedings and took pains to ensure that her treasured collection of flint implements came to our museum and to find good homes for her archaeological books.

In retirement, Molly remained active in good causes; she was local organiser for the Blood Donor Service and worked with the British Red Cross, becoming the local Assistant Commandant. For many years she did a regular weekly stint as a guide at the American Museum on Claverton Down, Bath, and also happily helped behind the bar in the Cheshire Home at Timsbury, while her presence at Paulton School reunions was regularly demanded.



*Molly at Drunkard's Hole, in the 1930's. Blenkinsop is to her right and Rogers to her left.
Photographer Bertie Crook?*

Molly was introduced to caving and to the Society by Bertie and Marjorie (she was a committee member in 1931-32) and was for many years an enthusiastic caver. In the post-war period their holiday expeditions extended as far afield as Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, often with caving districts as venues, making contacts with local cavers on serious cave trips and visiting show caves and archaeologically important caves, particularly the cave art sites of France

and Spain, where the Society's name often opened doors closed to ordinary mortals. With the Society she caved in a wide range of areas as well as Mendip, but the highlights of those experiences were the first Society trip down G.B. cave and the trip down Polnagollum on the expedition to County Clare in 1951.

During the war and early post-war years, Bertie and Molly were among the small group of senior members who helped keep going the Society's caving activities on Mendip. For many years the high points of the Society's social calendar were their Saturday visits to the hut at Burrington, often preceded by a caving trip or a visit to the current archaeological dig, and generally followed by an expedition to the Swan at Rowberrow or the Miner's Arms at Shipham (the favourite), and the annual New Year's dinner at the hut with Bertie as surgeon carving the turkey. In later years, after Tratman came to live at 'Penrose Cottage' in Burrington village and very much took over the running of the Society as his personal fief, their often bi-weekly visits were mostly to play bridge with Trat and with friends such as Father Lee from Downside Abbey or John Crickmay, with a visit to Reg and Mary Pope in the Plume of Feathers at Rickford thrown in. Though Molly became less well known to younger members, she nevertheless retained her lively interest in the Society and the doings, scandalous or otherwise of its members, as well as in the fortunes of her many friends, among them the late Dr John Field, who had been her contemporary at Bristol, Rodney Pearce, Charles Barker and John Pitts and his late wife Joan.

Molly was a close personal friend of Tratman, but declined his proposal of marriage. Molly said much later that although she was very fond of Trat, she was too settled in her teaching and life at Timsbury and both of them too strong in personality and too set in their ways to change. They nevertheless remained affectionate friends and she was very distressed by the deterioration in his health in the months after his first heart attack.

Molly always retained a wonderfully youthful air, and was sometimes mistaken by students for one of them, as when the then Secretary walked her in the dark, in high heels and long frock, through the Rickford brook, and her outraged fury was only assuaged by an apologetic narrative poem composed collectively by the members. Age continued to be kind to her almost to the end, only months before her death she was happily playing family cricket with the younger generation.

At heart a very serious and private person, Molly delighted in light-hearted teasing (J.K.P., "gently mocking") of Trat, who could be rather stuffy, and in the risqué jesting of the more raffish members, while her popularity led to cries of "Moll for President!" before his election *in absentio* at the A.G.M. in 1948. The writer treasures affectionate memories of her friendship, which with that of Bertie and Marjorie and their family, made 'The Laurels' seem almost like a second home. Molly was much loved by both her own and the Crook families and the packed congregation at the funeral service in Timsbury church, including members of the Society and many former pupils, showed the warmth of feeling for her memory.

The writer is grateful to Mrs Brenda Lucocq and to David Crook for their help and for a copy of the obituary notice by David's daughter Sophie (Manton), the only current caver in the Crook family.

A.M.A.