

George Isaac Maurice Bloom, 1916 - 2007

M and R Bloom

(This obituary first appeared in the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre Summer 2007 Newsletter)

George Isaac Maurice Bloom was born in 1916 in Weston-super-Mare. Soon afterwards his family moved to Sheffield where he attended King Edward VII Grammar School. After obtaining several awards plus a scholarship from St John's College Oxford, he read Chemistry there and gained a 1st Class Honours degree in 1938. He commenced post-graduate research for a doctorate but it was curtailed by the outbreak of WWII. To help the war effort he obtained a post as Research Chemist with ICI Plastics Division, where he worked on the then new material Perspex, used for aircraft windows. He spent all his working life at ICI, mostly in Hertfordshire.



George had a lifelong interest in botany, and was active for many years in the Botanical Society of the British Isles as well as being a founder member of the conservation charity Plantlife in 1989. After he retired he specialised in bryology, gaining a good knowledge of the mosses and liverworts found in the UK. He served on the committee of the British Bryological Society, becoming its President from 1986 to 1987. He worked on collecting bryophyte records in north Hertfordshire until 1981 when he moved to Abingdon in Oxfordshire. It was there that he did most of his work, obtaining several new records for this area of Oxfordshire, which included part of the old county of Berkshire. A remarkable 2906 records held by the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) were collected by George. He was designated County Recorder for this area, a position he held until 2002. Bryologists he

worked with included Harold Whitehouse in Cambridge, and Eustace Jones and Jacqueline Wright in Oxford. In January 2005, Jacqueline founded the Oxford Mossing Group for the teaching and encouragement of new bryologists and invited George to be its Patron. His work is acknowledged in several books on bryology and in local Floras where his records are included. George was an active member of the Abingdon Naturalists Society and also a committee member of the WEA for many years. In 1983 he and his wife Ruth helped to found the U3A (University of the Third Age) in Abingdon and enjoyed contributing to its activities.

Despite his many talents, George was modest and unassuming, although it pleased him when his work was acknowledged. He is survived by his wife, son and daughter.