

HORACE SANDERS, AN APPRECIATION

1910 - 2011 by Carol Payne

Horace Sanders was a remarkable man, a fact acknowledged by Bath Geological Society when the members commemorated his approaching centenary towards the end of 2009.

Horace was born in South Staffordshire in 1910, and was old enough to remember the privations of the 1st world war and Zeppelin airships. His love of geology started young and by his early teens he was already quite an expert; a fact acknowledged by his school where he was known as "Horace the Rocks". Making geology a career was not an option so he became a metallurgical engineer and achieved considerable success in that field, not least his contribution to the development of Pilkington Glass's float glass techniques, now taken for granted worldwide.

In 1937, Horace married Julie and set up house in Erdington - they remained happily married for 65 years and had three daughters: Elizabeth, Catherine and Vivian.

The young couple soon befriended the Callomon family, recently arrived in Birmingham from Berlin. Horace took their young son, John, under his wing. Horace's enthusiasm for geology was infectious and together they began to make geological excursions into the surrounding countryside on bicycles. The Midlands' rich geology and the thrill of finding trilobites (the "Dudley Bug" - *Calymene blumenbachii*, in particular), and ammonites in situ under Horace's tutelage captured John's imagination. Such was Horace's influence that John went on to become a world authority on Jurassic Ammonites. "Perhaps the best thing I ever did", remarked Horace. John always acknowledged Horace's profound influence on him and they remained friends to the last.

Success in his chosen field meant that Horace was able to travel widely, including Russia, the United States and Sweden where he lived for a time. In the early sixties his geological interests led him to take part in the seismic measurement of the Eyjafjallajökull volcano in Iceland which even then posed a potential threat. He was not at all surprised when in 2010 it erupted so dramatically. Horace remained a keen cyclist all his life. In 2010 Sustrans Magazine wrote: "And remember, you are never too old to cycle. At the age of 100, Horace Sanders from south Staffordshire is one of Sustrans' oldest supporters and has been cycling for the past 90 years!".

Horace's passion for geology, and Jurassic Ammonites in particular, was lifelong. At 100, he was an active member of the Geological Society, Bath Geological Society and the Wessex Cephalopod Club and regularly participated to field work, earning another title, "Horace the Crowbar".

Horace died in Chippenham on 12 January 2011.

