
David Dickson 1936-1992

Dave Dickson died at the relatively early age of 55 after a short illness which was borne with great courage. He was a Scotsman and he graduated from Aberdeen University with a First Class Honours degree in forestry.

He then came to the Department of Botany at Queen's University in Belfast as a post-graduate student. He

completed his Doctoral Thesis on the classification of blanket peat in Northern Ireland, relating the vegetation to the nutrient content of the peat.

He joined the Chemical Research Division of the then Ministry of Agriculture in 1962. Dave was responsible initially for experimentation to determine the nutrient requirements of Sitka spruce on blanket peat. This was important pioneering work, as large areas of blanket peat were being planted in the 1960s. Later in his career, he became associated with experimentation into the effects of ground limestone on the physical and chemical characteristics of peat and the growth of Sitka spruce plantations.

During his 30 years work in research, Dave published a number of research papers in various forestry journals. He was widely regarded as one of the leading research workers in his particular field. He enjoyed showing other research workers and foresters around his experimental areas. He had the ability to explain complex results in a lucid manner, using his many graphs. He always encouraged discussion about his work and enjoyed a good argument, even at a late hour after a day in the field. He was very good company and had a good sense of humour and an infectious laugh.

Dave's other main interest was sailing and he spent many holidays and weekends sailing his boat up the west coast of Scotland, where he had friends in the many ports of call.

He was an active member of our Society and often contributed to seminars and day tours. His passing leaves us with a great sense of loss but we will retain very warm memories of him. To all his family, the Society extends its sympathy.

Bill Wright