OBITUARY

Mary Gregory (1932–2017)

Mary Gregory, botanist, editor and bibliographer and from 1980 Honorary Member of IAWA passed away unexpectedly on 20 August at the age of 85 at her home in Kew, England. Throughout her career Mary helped hundreds of plant anatomists with literature references on their subject of study, either in person through correspondence, or through the bibliographies she wrote, or the bibliographical international database maintained by the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew which she helped to establish.

Mary began her career at Kew in September 1961, when she started work in the original Jodrell Laboratory, a cottage-style building that was demolished in 1965 to make way for a modern laboratory. The first years she assisted C.R. Metcalfe with the editing and writing of the early volumes in the *Anatomy of the Monocotyledons* series and the second edition of the *Anatomy of the Dicotyledons* series. Later she assisted David Cutler as editor and the authors of later volumes in these series, and became an editor in her own right. She also co-authored a number of important anatomical research papers. Mary retired officially from Kew in November 1992, but remained working there as an Honorary Research Fellow. Her last day at Kew was only six days before she died.

Mary Gregory was one of the early UK female graduates; in 1955 she was awarded a degree in Natural Sciences (specialising in Botany) from Girton College, Cambridge. She was an Assistant Science Editor at Oxford University Press from 1955 to 1961,

when she joined Kew. Mary was a pioneer in bibliographic databasing; she set up the innovative and influential Plant Micromorphology Bibliographic Database (PMBD) on index cards (over 70,000 of them in her neat handwriting) and subsequently organised its transfer to computer. Today, it forms part of Kew's Electronic Plant Information Centre (ePIC) and remains a unique online source for many references via Google Scholar. Before Mary started at Kew she had already co-authored a bestselling Oxford Book of Wildflowers, first published in 1960.

Mary was an extremely thorough editor, able to spot inconsistencies in text many pages apart. She wrote three indispensable bibliographies for wood anatomists and palaeobotanists: *Wood Identification: An Annotated Bibliography* (1980); *Bibliography of Systematic Wood Anatomy of Dicotyledons* (1994), and *Fossil Dicot Wood Names: an annotated list with full bibliography* (with Imogen Poole & Elisabeth A. Wheeler; 2009), all published in the IAWA Journal or its predecessor the IAWA Bulletin. These bibliographies were and are especially appreciated by palaeobotanists, and in recognition of her contribution, a Cretaceous (Turonian) wood was named for her – *Gregoryoxylon*.

Since her official retirement, Mary dedicated herself to databasing Kew's internationally important microscope slide collection. In 2009, she was awarded Kew's Aiton Medal for her work in organising and training volunteers, a testimony to how much she was valued by her many friends and colleagues at Kew.

We will remember Mary for her kindness and modesty, and her fine sense of humour. She was a wonderful and faithful friend who will be greatly missed. Through her work she made us all look better scholars than we actually were. Our Association loses a very worthy Honorary Member, but her legacy will continue to be of great assistance to all of us, for many years to come.

Peter Gasson
Paula Rudall
David Cutler
Barry Tomlinson
Elisabeth Wheeler
Pieter Baas