

Brian Harris

We are sad to announce the death of Brian Harris, who loved the Meadows and was a loyal member of FOMBL, working as a volunteer with us for many years, and always on hand for botanical advice.

Born in Neath, South Wales, in 1929, Brian went to the Neath Grammar School for Boys and then to Aberystwyth University, where he studied agricultural botany and became an expert plant scientist. Later he undertook a PhD. He shared interests in natural history with his wife Sine MacLachlainn, from Mull, who was also a botanist. Brian was eventually appointed to teaching posts with his wife. Together they worked in several African universities including those in Ghana, Nigeria and Tanzania.

Brian and Sine had two sons: Peter, a medical consultant, and David, a natural scientist. As well as his contribution to FOMBL, Brian was also Treasurer to the Morningside Justice and Peace Group until recent years.

FOMBL was not Brian's only volunteering gardening activity. In 2009 he joined the 'Guerrilla Gardeners' to improve a neglected piece of land between the northern half of Marchmont Crescent and Roseneath Place. Because it was banana-shaped it became known as the Green Banana, and gained support from the City Council, from which donations of plants were obtained. The Eden Project in Cornwall also donated plants. In 2014 Brian was 'highly commended' in the Civic Champion section of the Scottish Civic Trust's annual 'My Place' awards, which celebrate community projects.

Recently he had suffered from cancer of the larynx, from which he was recovering, but sadly he died after a short illness on 20th April 2017. We send warmest sympathy to his family, and we will remember him fondly for all he contributed to FOMBL. The last contact I had with him was when he rang up recently to let me know that birds had been eating the newly planted seeds in the wildflower plot near Leamington Walk, and that remedial action was needed. He cared for the green environment to the last. We shall miss him.

Heather Goodare