

conditions. Another controversial idea was that certain features in Twin T's swallet could only be explained by being the work of snails boring up into the limestone. This idea, again, did not stand the test of time, but shows that his thinking was always backed up by meticulous field-work, in this case raising a limestone boulder above the ground in his garden and containing snails around it, to observe what went on.

His cave survey work was meticulously documented in his clear handwriting in hardbound notebooks. I borrowed these for copying a couple of years ago and he also lent me his annotated set of field maps of Mendip, containing much detailed observational data. Thanks to his generosity, these were scanned by the British Geological Survey and are now available to all via their library archive.

In later years, his attention moved somewhat from the world of caves and geology to other environmental concerns. This work culminated in a book *The Rapid Growth of Human Populations, 1750-2000* published in 2003. This is well worth a read and even if you disagree with his conclusions, you'll have a hard job arguing with the depth of his research and the vast quantity of data that he assembled.

That was Willie, hard working, methodical and an original thinker worthy of admiration. He was uncompromising in his views but difficult to argue with, as he probably had thought longer and more deeply about the subject than you had. For his enormous contributions to the study of Mendip and its caves, the UBSS made him an honorary member in 1983. But as our President, Arthur ApSimon said "the honour was to the Society".

ROGER MICHAEL JACOBI  
1947-2009



Roger was born in February 1947 of mixed German and English parentage, his father having come to this country shortly before the Second World War. An only child, he attended Merchant Taylor's School in Middlesex, where there was an archaeology society and a school museum. This clearly had some effect as he is recorded as being an associate member of the

Prehistoric Society as early as 1963. Roger went to Cambridge to study Classica and Archaeology and became a fellow of Jesus College. He finally completed his PhD on the British Mesolithic after seven years, during which time he started to accumulate his phenomenal knowledge of British prehistory. He took up a teaching post at Lancaster University and then, after that department closed, he moved to the University of Nottingham. He left Nottingham in 1994 and took a post at the British Museum, for a time. In 2001 he became project archaeologist at the Ancient Human Occupation of Britain (AHOB) project where in collaboration with the likes of Chris Stringer and Andy Currant, but especially with Tom Higham in producing a marvellous series of ultrafiltration radiocarbon dates, he set about completely changing our understanding of the Palaeolithic of the British Isles.

So much for the details but those tell you very little about what it was like to know and to work with Roger. Work with, yes, Roger had no interest in any distinction between 'amateur' and 'professional'; if you had a serious interest in the subject he would help you, advise you and collaborate with you, whoever you were. His knowledge was phenomenal; if you called him up to discuss a particular site or type of artefact then he would guide you towards new lines of enquiry, or parallels that he had seen elsewhere and could recall instantly. All this information would be offered freely. Linda and I still have a list of potential rock art sites that we need to check, at his suggestion. You could always trust what he said and could certainly guarantee that what he recorded was correct.

But it wasn't just as a professional he will be missed but as a very warm and human personality. His liking of red wine, especially Merlot, has been well recorded, but his intense dislike of technology should also be mentioned. I well remember a session of a PalMes meeting at the British Museum. Roger was due to give a presentation and even had, amazingly, a computer file of slides to show. We were fascinated to see how he would handle this. He walked to the front, pressed a couple of buttons, muttered that it wasn't working and proceeded to give an excellent talk, without notes and without any visual aids. Needless to say the equipment functioned perfectly well for the next speaker.

Roger was diagnosed with cancer last year but continued with his work as long as he was able. When he realised that he would be unable to write his promised report on the Picken's Hole lithics, he called me, not to simply withdraw but to put me in contact with someone he'd found who could do so. That is how thoughtful he could be.

Roger's contribution to prehistoric studies in this country was immeasurable. That he will be sorely missed was clear from the number of his friends and colleagues who turned up at the Society of Antiquaries in February to celebrate his life.

GJM