

TRIBUTE TO OLIVER RACKHAM OBE Died February 12th aged 75years

My cousin Oliver will be known to Fursey Pilgrims as the translator of "[Transitus Beati Fursei](#)". To many others he will be remembered as a world authority on plants and woodland. He was born in Bungay, Suffolk and from an early age showed a passion for noting down examples of changes in tree formations. In later life, on visits to country pubs he would study the timbers of fireplace or ceiling, announcing where the trees they came from had grown - much to the bemusement of the locals!

Oliver attended King Edward VI School in Norwich and won a scholarship to study plant biology at [Corpus Christi College](#), Cambridge where his studies expanded to the history of the landscape and trees in particular. He was made an honorary Professor and also became Master for one interim year. The College and its traditions meant a great deal to him, always wearing the college colour of red, even sporting red socks and tie with a dinner jacket!

His study of woods took Oliver all over the world, in particular an interest in the landscape of Crete and the effects of Dutch elm disease in America. All carefully reported in his numerous books.

Oliver's faith was a constant part of his life and he was a regular attendant of the College Chapel and St Benet's Church nearby which had originally been used as the College chapel. I know he felt honoured to be asked to translate the 'Life of Fursey' and though unable to attend our services and lectures he was always interested to hear about them.

I would like to invite you to donate to a fund in memory of Oliver. All monies received will go to the work of Wheatfen, near Norwich, which played a large part in Oliver's early life and, through the naturalist [Ted Ellis](#), his chosen career. The centre is now considered an important nature reserve and education centre. Further details can be found on the website: <http://www.wheatfen.org>

Please send your donation (cheques to be made out to 'The Ted Ellis trust') to me at 26C Shotesham Road Poringland Norwich NR14 7LG

Many thanks.

Philippa Sims