

Roger Fletcher (1938 - 2011)

We were shocked and saddened to hear, at the end of October, of the sudden death, in his sleep, of Roger Fletcher, long-term and very active member of the RFS. He was well known to those members who regularly attend RFS visits and in fact he had attended the visit to Huntingdonshire shortly before he died and had appeared to be on good form.

Having studied engineering at Sheffield University, Roger worked for ICI in the north east and later for British Gas at Barrow in Furness in Cumbria. Latterly he had made his home at Lindale. He enjoyed retirement to the full, and his love of furniture became a very important part of his life. Gerald Cole was giving lectures on furniture in Cumbria during the early years of Roger's retirement and invariably he would be there, soaking up as much information as he could to broaden his knowledge of the subject. He visited salerooms and dealers up and down the country, making regular tours of his favourite haunts, particularly during exhibition weeks, and forging firm friendships along the way. He attended numerous RFS visits, and the annual conference was one of the highlights of his year. He almost always brought an interesting piece of vernacular furniture to the furniture surgery during the conference and these pieces reflected a keen eye for quality and the unusual. Lately Roger was enjoying up-grading his collection and a while ago he began to focus on dated pieces, not necessarily furniture but all manner of things, each chosen with care and discernment. He had collected a dated piece for every year of Victoria's reign and had begun to do the same for the Georges.

It was not just the furniture that interested Roger at these gatherings: it was also the people. He greatly valued the social side of the RFS and always had time to talk to others about their lives and interests. He was a good listener and was very welcoming to new members of the society. His funeral, held on 11.11.2011 (a date his sister Janet explained to the congregation would not have escaped Roger's attention, as he was fascinated by dates) was well attended not only by Roger's family, including his son, Tim and daughter Charlotte, but by many friends, among them dealers, auctioneers and RFS members, all of whom will miss him very much indeed.

Jenny Cowking