

OBITUARY

F. H. G. BEST

By the death of Frederick Best, on 1963 December 24th, the Association loses one of its most popular members. He would have been the last to

claim that he was either a brilliant observer or a profound theorist; nevertheless, his services to astronomy were very great.

By profession he was engaged on computer programming with the South-Eastern Gas Board, a firm which he joined immediately after leaving school and with whom he was still working up to a few weeks before his death. His interest in astronomy was long-standing; his knowledge was extensive, and he had the type of inquiring mind which refuses to accept anything on trust. Undoubtedly this was one of the reasons why he was so skilled at imparting his knowledge to others.

His great contribution was in his encouragement of young enthusiasts. He joined the B.A.A. many years ago; he was also one of the earliest members of the Junior Astronomical Society, founded in the 1950's, and has always been one of its main pillars—without him, indeed, the J.A.S. would certainly not be in its present flourishing state. His house was always open to young people (and others!); no boy or girl who came to him for help and advice was ever turned away. He gave up an immense amount of time, even during the last years when he was in poor health, and he never flagged. He was President of the J.A.S. from 1960 to 1962, and was Vice-President for the current session. To-day there are many, including some professional astronomers, who will never forget that it was Fred Best who gave them their first introduction to the science, and who did all in his power to help them.

His marriage was ideally happy, and his wife, Mrs. Lilian Best, identified herself with his work. Theirs was an ideal partnership, and all who knew them will wish to extend the most sincere sympathy to Mrs. Best, who is herself a member of our Association.

Fred Best made friends wherever he went. He will be sadly missed, but his work lives on.

PATRICK MOORE.