

Obituary

Charles Walter Munday: 1915-1985

Charles Walter Munday, a member of the Association since 1952, died on 1985 August 20 in a Colchester hospital where he had been for several months. He was 70, and is survived by his wife and only son.

Born at East Runton, Norfolk, on 1915 April 8, Munday worked first at Woolwich Arsenal, studying chemistry in the evenings. His interest in astronomy developed during service as a navigator with the Royal Air Force in the years 1942-47. He then joined the Distillers Company Ltd working on instrumentation. His section of DCL became part of BP Chemicals Ltd in 1967, and Munday became head of BP's Instrument Development Section. During this time he invented the Munday Cell, which is still used to determine oxygen content in many applications.

Charles Munday became President of the Institute of Measurement and Control in 1973-74, and served as Honorary Secretary from 1977 until his death. He received medals in the UK and the USA for his work in these fields.

Although Charles Munday did not attend many meetings of the Association—because his work took him abroad a great deal—he had a keen interest in the BAA. His special interest was in photoelectric observing, and the observatory that he built at his home at Wakes Colne near Colchester was intended mainly for this work. He became Photoelectric Coordinator for the Comet Section and for the IHW UK Amateur Observers Network.

Munday had visited many of the world's observatories, both in the east and the west, and knew many leading astronomers. He had but recently visited the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California and the Charles University in Prague to discuss the Association's programmes for the observation of Halley's comet. He had been a fellow of the British Interplanetary Society since 1957.

At the time of his final illness, Charles Munday had a number of projects in hand in his workshop. All his optical, mechanical and electrical work was of a very high standard as one might expect from one who had specialised in this field during his working life. It is very sad that he did not live to see Halley's comet, or to carry out the programme he had planned for its study. His advice and experience were of great value to the writer and to other members of the BAA.

M. J. Hendrie

An obituary notice appeared in The Times on Friday 1985 August 23, and acknowledgement is made to this for information about Mr Munday's early life.