

## The Astronomical Society of Edinburgh

Journal

No 55 - March 2008

### **John Christopher Bartholomew, MA. FRSGS. FRSE.**

We regret to inform members of the passing of one of our longest-serving and most illustrious members, John Bartholomew, on January 16, at the age of 85. He was born in Edinburgh on January 15 1923, attended St Trinnean's School then Edinburgh Academy and Gordonstoun where he was a contemporary of Prince Philip. He graduated with honours in Geography at Edinburgh in 1951 then served an apprenticeship in Cartography in the family firm.

John and his two brothers were the 5th generation and last members of the dynasty to run the cartographic business Bartholomew and Sons, which had been active for about 175 years and had a world-wide reputation. It was bought by Reader's Digest in 1980. Among the many achievements of the firm were the famous half-inch scale maps for cyclists and ramblers, the *Times Atlas of the World* and the *Times Atlas of the Moon*. The many activities of the firm and of John, its Director, are given in the lengthy obituary in *The Times* of February 1st. He travelled widely in 5 continents, served as a cartographic officer with the Royal Engineers during the war, was Honorary President of the Scottish Rights of Way Society, and President of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society 1987-93. He was elected to the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1964.

He donated funds for the placing of an indicator on North Berwick Law, another on the Braid Hills, and for restoring the sundial in the Hermitage of Braid. Before he became too frail he regularly attended our meetings, went to the Scottish Astronomy Weekends, and often reported sightings of Noctilucent Clouds from the Braids.

John leaves a widow, Ginette, 5 sons and 11 grand-children. The Society extends its sympathy to them.

*Dave Gavine*