

One of the founding fathers of MLAIC passed away in January 2021



Bill Curtis 1931-2021

It is with great regret that I have to inform you that William "Bill" Curtis, one of the founding fathers of MLAIC, passed away a few days ago.

All our deepest sympathy goes to his wife Mary, to his son Reg and to the whole family.

The MLAGB and the MLAIC have lost a very valuable adviser and friend, but we shall all honour his memory.

Who could write a better obituary than one of his old friends and longtime companion? David, thank you so much for your brief description (hereafter) of our late friend.

Bill Curtis, one of the founding members of the Muzzle Loaders Associations International Committee, passed away peacefully on 4 January 2021.

It was in June 1971 that the Arquebusiers de France held an International Muzzle Loaders Championship at Vaudoy en Brie. Here opportunity was taken to arrange a meeting of an International Muzzle Loading Committee, which was to be the founding meeting of the MLAIC. Bill Curtis was the representative from Great Britain.

William (Bill) Scott Curtis had served with the Royal Artillery, worked in insurance, joined the Muzzle Loaders Association of Great Britain in 1956 and held various posts within the Association, represented his country at home and abroad in numerous international muzzle loading championships, served on the NRA(UK) Council and was a curator of their museum. On retirement he established his own publishing house, W.S. Curtis Publishers Ltd. His mission was to reprint rare books that were significant contributions to small arms history and shooting.

Bill was a prolific collector, not only of muzzle loaders, but bayonets, powder flasks, NRA memorabilia, early cartridges, Victorian gunsmithing tools and literally anything to do with the Crimean War. He had a library on muzzle loading small arms and shooting that is widely regarded to be unrivalled anywhere in the world. He was always keen to use it too, he spent literally decades of his life answering questions and helping others with their own research. The pursuit of knowledge and preservation of the past drove him and I think he inspired many in the same vein too; the latter was certainly true for me.

I knew Bill for over 20 years, corresponded with him, chatted with him and visited often - his council and friendship will be greatly missed.

Bill is survived by his wife Mary, and their only son Reg (*whom I thank for some of the preceding detail*).

David Minshall

For the MLAIC

*Gerhard Lang
Secretary General*