

## OBITUARY

THOMAS WILLIAM DAVIES (1915-1990)

Thomas William Davies, a Charter Member of the Lepidopterists' Society, died on 19 August 1990, of lung cancer, at his home in San Leandro, California. Through self-education Tom developed an extensive knowledge of the world Lepidoptera, and he assembled a very large private Lepidoptera collection. Employed by the California Academy of Sciences between 1966 and 1990, Tom was the Academy's authority on Lepidoptera. It was Tom's wish that his collection become a part of the Academy's collection and in May 1988 it was transferred from his home to the Department of Entomology.

Tom was born in Stockton, California, on 29 April 1915, the eldest of three sons of William Thomas Davies, a native Californian from Stockton, and Catherine "Kitty" Blanche Davies, who was of Scottish ancestry but born in England.

Tom attended public schools in Oakland and graduated from Roosevelt High School in 1933. Tom's brother Stanley recalls that Tom was actively "collecting butterflies and all sorts of other things" when he was 12 or 13 years old. Stanley, who was three years younger than Tom became skilled in collecting butterflies for his older brother and later made some significant collections for Tom. William "Bill" A. Hammer, Tom's lifetime friend and lepidopterist colleague for over 55 years, a retired engraver, also of San Leandro, California, recalls that they first met through a mutual friend, Verner Carlson, when they were seniors in high school. Tom and Bill were interested in collecting butterflies and the eggs of wild birds. At that time one could easily go into the Oakland Hills to shoot squirrel and cottontails with BB guns and .22 rifles, which they did. When birds were shot, Bill, who was interested in taxidermy, would mount them in a professional manner. Later they turned their interest more to the collection of Lepidoptera. Their first collections were made in the Oakland Hills near their homes, and then in the Santa Cruz Mountains, using Bill's Stutz touring car for transportation.

Following graduation from high school Tom's first job during the depression years was with a bakery in Oakland. He lost it for having given some day-old bread to a disadvantaged person—the company did not want to attract poor people to their premises. Then followed various employment, including carpenter and welder. In 1940 he started employment with the Southern Pacific Railroad Company in Oakland, working in the switching yard, where he became a foreman. During the Second World War Tom was not drafted into the military because railroads were considered essential industry and vital to the war effort.

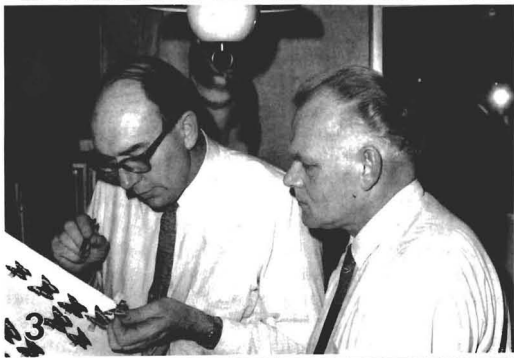
Tom married Mary Alice Little on 20 September 1938. Mary Davies has commented that she was unaware that Tom collected butterflies until after they were married.

In 1955, a tragic accident in a railroad yard nearly ended Tom's life, and yet the loss of both legs below the knees did not deter him from living a very full and active life thereafter.

Following his recovery, persons who met Tom were unaware of his use of prosthesis, and it certainly did not deter him from the extensive field work that he undertook both in this country and abroad, including Australia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, and other parts of the tropical world.

In order to acquire Lepidoptera Tom's early correspondents included Robert G. Wind, of Berkeley, California; Pedro Paprzycki of Satipo, Peru; M. Spelman, of the Nature Room Supply House; and W. F. H. Rosenberg, of Edgware, England. Later it included Rodrigo Rodrigues, of Palawan, Philippines, and many others, who might supply butterflies, especially world Papilionidae, including the birdwings, and the *Delias* in the Pieridae. Tom also exchanged extensively and sold duplicates from his collection. In addition he acquired many of the basic books and papers to identify butterflies and moths, including the Seitz series.

Tom was 24 years old when he first visited the Entomology Department at the California Academy of Sciences in 1939. On 9 August he had written to the Department of Entomology, and received a response from the curator, Edward Payson Van Duzee, that he would be welcomed to visit the department. It was some 25 years later, in the mid-1960's,



that Tom, on the suggestion of Lloyd L. Martin of the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History, began volunteering in the Academy's Department of Entomology. After a year or two, funds became available for his employment as a result of a U.S. Department of Agriculture grant that I had received. Fortunately, after these funds expired, the Academy, which urgently needed Tom's talents in Lepidoptera, funded his employment on a part-time basis to curate its Lepidoptera collection.

Tom's early collecting colleagues in the Bay Area were William A. Hammer, Robert and Clo Wind, Rodney Davis, and his brother Stanley Davies. His later Bay Area Lepidoptera associates included Richard M. Brown, Robert L. Langston, C. Don MacNeill, Jerry A. Powell, Herman G. Real, Harriet V. Reinhard, Jon H. Shepard, Jeffrey A. Smith, James W. Tilden, Keith Van Wolfe, Tom's son William T. Davies and myself. Tom's notebook indicates that he visited the elderly lepidopterist and retired police officer, Mr. James Edward Cottle (1861-1953) of Hayward, on 30 April 1946. Tom was later to receive through his friend Bill Hammer a fine series of the extinct Xerces Blue and other butterflies from the Cottle collection that Bill in turn received from Kenneth Rand. Other collecting colleagues and guests to Tom's home included Dr. Jean Marie Cadiou, J. Donald Eff, Isao Hashimoto, Lloyd M. Martin, Dr. Charles L. Remington, P. Sheldon Remington, Dr. Laurent Schwartz, Raymond Straatman, Dr. Norman B. Tindale, and Colin W. Wyatt.

With the advent of the Second World War, Tom's brother Stanley was inducted into military service and in 1943 was stationed with the 9th Station Hospital on Guadalcanal Island in the Solomon Islands. Stanley had earlier collected for Tom, including the Acapulco area of Mexico in 1939. With his earlier training in collecting Lepidoptera, Stanley decided to make a collection of the butterflies of his area of Guadalcanal for Tom. Even though there was a tight censorship and the use of APO numbers at the time, with the shipments of butterflies received from Stanley, Tom knew by the taxa received where his brother was stationed in the Pacific. Stanley later in 1943 collected also in Okinawa.

Tom's first field notes recorded a trip to collect butterflies on 8 July 1933 to Highland Creek, Sand Flats, 6500 feet, above Dorrington, in California's Sierra Nevada. Tom was to make hundreds of collecting trips in the following 55 years, in California, Arizona, Nevada, Colorado, New Mexico, Montana, Wyoming, Alberta, and overseas, including the Fiji Islands, New Caledonia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Australia, and New Zealand. Some of Tom's favorite collecting areas in the Bay Area included Mitchell Canyon, on Mount Diablo in Contra Costa County, and Frank Raines Park area in Del Puerto Canyon, east of Mount Hamilton in Stanislaus County.

In the early 1950's Tom and his friend Bill Hammer joined Lloyd Martin and Dr. W. P. Comstock, in summer field work in Madera Canyon and other areas in Arizona.

As a result of Tom's and Mary Kay's (his daughter) visit to the Bishop Museum's Wau Ecology Institute, on the island of New Guinea, in 1970, Mary Kay met and subsequently married Peter Shanahan, an entomologist/naturalist and neighboring coffee planter to the Wau Ecology Institute. Since Tom could not be present at the wedding, Dr. J. Linsley Gressitt gave the bride away in a garden wedding ceremony in 1971. Tom was to make

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FIGS. 1-7. **1**, Left to right, Thomas W. Davies, Colin W. Wyatt, and William A. Hammer, San Leandro, California, 10 January 1959; **2**, Thomas W. Davies with drawer of birdwing butterflies at his home in San Leandro, California, March, 1962 (Morning News photo); **3**, Charles L. Remington (left) and Thomas W. Davies examining specimen of Nymphalidae at Tom's home in San Leandro, 1968 (photo by Paul H. Arnaud Jr.); **4**, Isao Hashimoto (right) and Thomas W. Davies at Nami Creek, Mount Kaindi, Morobe District, Papua New Guinea, 2 April 1973 (photo by Peter Shanahan); **5**, Thomas W. Davies and grandson Thomas W. Davies at light table at home, San Leandro, 1983 (photo by William T. Davies); **6**, Thomas W. Davies photographing paper wasp nest, Butterfly Lane, Kuranda, Queensland, Australia, 5 July 1984 (photo by Mary Kay Shanahan); **7**, Photography session, Southwestern Research Station, Portal, Arizona, August, 1985, left to right, Thomas W. Davies, Robert W. Mitchell, Edward S. Ross, and Paul H. Arnaud Jr. (photo by Paul-Henri F. Arnaud).

two subsequent visits to Wau in the 1970's prior to the Shanahan's move to Australia in 1975. These visits which totaled over six months, permitted Tom to collect extensively in the region of Wau/Bulolo. Tom's collection which included over 26,204 (7486 spread, 18,718 papered) Papua New Guinea Lepidoptera, mostly butterflies and skippers, as well as the specimens collected by Peter and Mary Kay Shanahan, are acknowledged by Michael Parsons (1991) in his recent book, *Butterflies of the Bulolo-Wau Valley*. Some of Tom's favorite groups in Papua New Guinea, in addition to the Birdwings and other Papilionidae, were the *Delias* of the Pieridae and the Jewel Moths of the genus *Milionia* of the Geometridae. Fine series of these become a part of his collection both from his own and the Shanahan's collecting.

Between 19 March 1965 and 1990 the California Academy of Sciences received from Tom 153,628 insect and other arthropod specimens in 607 dated transactions. Of these specimens at least 91,026 were Lepidoptera (43,544 spread and 47,482 papered).

In addition to specimens deposited in the California Academy of Sciences there are many Davies' specimens deposited in other institutions, as the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History and Yale University, and private collections.

Tom prepared the specimens for the impressive display of "Rainbow of Butterflies" that first greets the eyes of visitors to the Academy's Kathryn Clarke Kendrick Insect Room Exhibit, which was dedicated on 13 February 1981. These were prepared so as to avoid the presence of pin marks that can result from the spreading of specimens. In February, 1986, Tom designed and prepared over 250 specimens used in the decoration of permanent displays of butterflies in the Majestic Hotel, at 1500 Sutter Street, in San Francisco. He also prepared entomological material that was displayed by the Academy at the United Airlines Terminal of the San Francisco International Airport.

Tom's first quality camera was a German-made EXA that he acquired in July 1954, but he did not undertake serious biological photography until the later 1960's. With advice from the Academy's nature photographer, Dr. Edward S. Ross, Tom expanded his interest in insect and nature photography. He built a large file of 35 mm colored slides, including many lepidopterous life histories, as well as slides of natural history subjects from both western North America and his foreign travels.

Tom's photographs have appeared in books published by Audubon, Chanticleer Press, Inc., GEO, Grolier, Inc., National Geographic, Pacific Discovery, Silver, Burdett, & Ginn, Inc., Stokes Publishing Company, and Time-Life. He donated some colored slides to the Academy's Department of Entomology for its use, but the greater part of his photographic collection is with his son, William T. Davies.

Tom's publications covered the oviposition of *Archilestes californica* MacLachlan (Davies 1972); the treatment of the genus *Polygonia* (Davies 1975) in Howe's *The Butterflies of North America*; a list of the butterflies of Mt. Kaindi, New Guinea (Davies 1978); on a remarkable aberrant female of *Speyeria nokomis nokomis* (Edwards) (Davies & Arnaud 1967) with a colored plate; obituaries on Robert Grant Wind (Arnaud & Davies 1976) and Hardin Blair Jones (Arnaud & Davies 1981); and on *Entomobrya kanaba* (Wray) as an indoor house pest in central California (Arnaud & Davies 1980).

Several insects were named in Tom's honor, including *Melitaea leaneri daviesi* Wind, 1947 (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae, from Strawberry Lake, Tuolumne County, California); and *Pararhodia daviesorum* Lemaire, 1979 (Lepidoptera: Attacidae; from summit of Mount Kaindi, 13 miles S of Wau, Morobe District, Papua New Guinea; named after Tom and his daughter Mary Kay).

Tom is survived by his wife Mary Alice Davies to whom he was married for nearly fifty-two years; a son William Thomas Davies of Norden, California; two daughters, Mary Kay Grosvald of Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Nancy Susan Davies of Bell Canyon, California; his brother Stanley G. Davies of Burson, California; and three grandchildren, Erin M. Chavez of Bell Canyon, and Thomas William Davies and Cathryn Alyssa Ardith Davies of Norden.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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