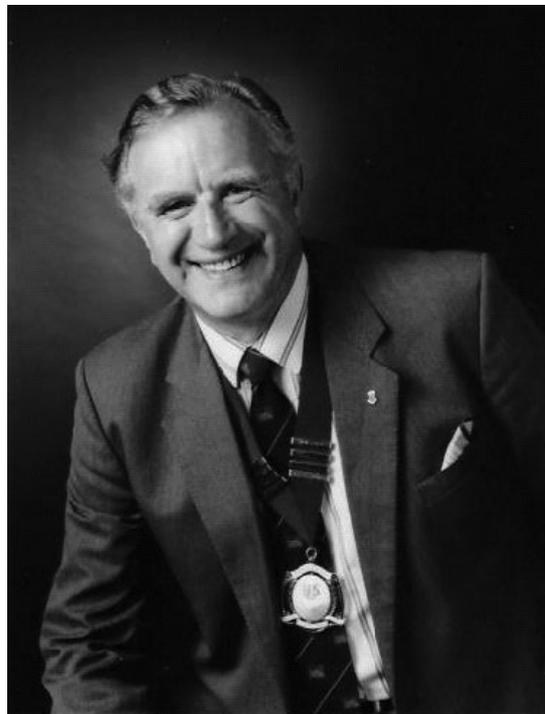


## John Frame: an appreciation

John Frame was born and brought up in Hamilton, Lanarkshire, Scotland. At school he proved to be an outstanding pupil, excelling in science and languages, which both proved to be keystones in his future distinguished career. His early exposure to farming and livestock interests was through helping with the family's retail milk business and assisting his father attend to horses. On leaving school he spent a year working on a local farm at Strathaven where he was a member of the Young Farmers Club. National Service then beckoned and John served with the Royal Air Force as a radar technician. He then enrolled at Glasgow University where, in 1954, he gained a BSc in Agriculture. During this period, John also gained the Scottish Diploma in Dairy Husbandry, the National Diploma in Agriculture and the National Diploma in Dairying with Honours, a meritorious achievement. John then moved to Reading University on a scholarship where in 1955 he gained a Diploma in Agriculture with a thesis on the cutting management of lucerne. His postgraduate studies continued at Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand, where he obtained the degree of Master of Agricultural Science with Honours, for research into the growth and development of kale. He was a long-time overseas member of the New Zealand Grassland Society.

In 1958 he returned to Scotland and was appointed to the Grassland Department of the West of Scotland Agricultural College at Auchencruive, Ayr. He remained with the West of Scotland Agricultural College, and the Scottish Agricultural College, until his retirement, when he was Head of Crop Production, Grassland Centre Leader and Chairman of the Agricultural Division. As a specialist advisor, his duties included research into the growth and utilization of the grass crop and advising practising farmers on the application of new varieties and technologies into farming systems. His research on grazing management received academic recognition in 1967 when he was awarded a Doctor of Philosophy by the University of Glasgow. In the ensuing years he became a well-known and popular figure in the UK and international grassland farming scene and remained so until his death.

John was an able public speaker and chairman, equally at home with farmers, undergraduate and postgraduate students and scientists. His advice and guidance as an external examiner and consultant were sought from well beyond Scotland and during his life he visited some 48 countries including Mongolia, China, Uruguay, New Zealand and Canada. His flair for languages gave him a working knowledge of French, German and Russian and, after spending 2 years in Argentina on secondment to the Food and Agricultural



Organisation (FAO), he was fluent in Spanish, a language which he continued to study until recently.

A prodigious writer, he was author or co-author of over 370 published papers, both popular and scientific, on grassland topics. As a long-standing member and staunch supporter of the British Grassland Society, he was awarded the BGS Award in 1987 for his contribution to grassland science and farming. In 1989 he was elected President, an honour he much treasured. He undertook editorial duties for numerous journals and scientific groups, and his patience and understanding with colleagues and students, especially for those whom English was not their first language, was widely appreciated. John was a Fellow of the Linnean Society of London, Fellow of the Royal Agricultural Societies, Fellow of the Institute of Biology, a European Professional and Chartered Biologist and a Past-President of the Scotia Agricultural Club. At a local level, he was an Honorary Vice-President of the South-west Scotland Grassland Society, of which he was founder member.

On his retirement in 1990, he received the Dr A. F. R. Nisbet Award from the Scottish Agricultural College for his outstanding contribution to Scottish agriculture and for his lasting contribution to the reputation of the Scottish Agricultural College throughout the world. In the succeeding years, with his wide horizon of interest and expertise, he was busier than ever. In support of the

European Grassland Federation, he visited virtually all the European Union states, some on several occasions, including those yet to join the European Union. His tireless input into European grassland farming issues and his strong support for FAO and the British Council in Europe and elsewhere, have resulted in many honours. He was appointed a Honorary member of the Russian Ecological Society, and Honorary member of the Polish Grassland Society and was awarded the Jubilee medal by Poland in 2003 for his distinguished service. He was an Academician of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences and Life President of the European Grassland Federation. His last visits to Spain and Poland were in May and June 2006.

His first book entitled *Improved Grassland Management* was followed by *Temperate Forage Legumes*, a link back to his early University of Reading studies and his legume trials at Auchencruive. It was a timely contribution to the revived interest in the role of legumes in efficient grassland and organic farming. In New Zealand he was tagged 'the European legume legend'. Two further books, published in 2005 by FAO, entitled *Forage Legumes for Temperate Grasslands* and *Grasslands: Development, Opportunities and Perspectives*, were co-authored and co-edited by him. John's main collaborators were Dr J. F. L. Charlton, New Zealand, Dr A. S. Laidlaw, UK and Dr S. G. Reynolds of FAO. Most recently he had been involved in preparing profiles of legume species

for the FAO website and in the production of a CD-ROM on grassland species, a far cry from the technology of his early days with a horse-drawn milk lorry.

Amidst all this hectic academic activity, John Frame was a reader, a hill walker, a photographer, a curler and enjoyed watching football and rugby. He took keen interest in his garden, particularly roses for which he won many awards at local horticultural shows. He was active in Rotary International and in 2000 was awarded the prestigious Rotary Paul Harris Fellowship, named after the movement's founder, for his services to international grassland development. Throughout his life, John was a modest, quiet and reserved person, with a wry sense of humour. Indeed, he exhibited the qualities often associated with the other noted worker from Lanarkshire, the Clydesdale horse – strong, trusty, patient, willing, eager, reliable and confident, and a hard worker, content to take the bit between the teeth and shoulder the yoke with a sparkle in the eye. At home and internationally he was respected as a devoted and responsible researcher, prepared to share his expertise for the good of others. He was a man who gave much encouragement to his family, of whom he was proud, and from whom he received the support which enabled him to pursue his wide-ranging interests.

**R. D. Harkness**