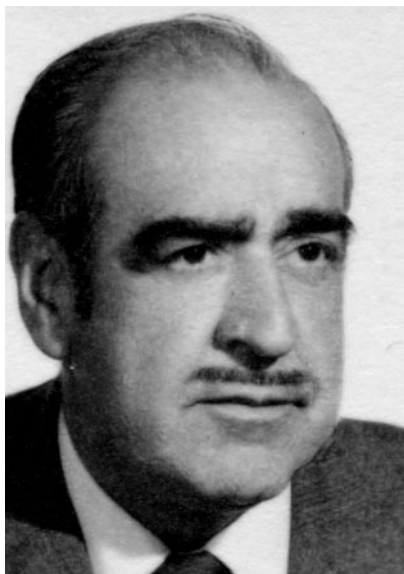

OBITUARY



Josep Maria Bosch Figuerola

La Bisbal 1917 - Prats de Cerdanya 2003

Dr. Josep M^a Bosch Figuerola died in La Cerdanya in August, where he used to spend the summers flying his kite (*fer volar estels*). This activity, which was his favourite form of relaxation, sums up the personality of Dr. Bosch (Pepe to his friends) perfectly.

Dr. Bosch was born in La Bisbal in the Ampurdan in 1917. He was very proud of his origins and would often refer to his "Greek" ancestors. He spent the Spanish civil war in a hospital unit of the Republican Army and as soon as peace was restored he went to Barcelona where, after graduating in pharmacy, he found work in a private company. In the late 1950s he became lecturer in Applied Geology in the Faculty of Pharmacy at the University of Barcelona, where he met Professor M. Font-Altaba with whom he was to form a lifelong collaboration.

When Prof. Font-Altaba was awarded the chair of Crystallography and Mineralogy in the Faculty of Geology at the University of Barcelona, Dr. Bosch joined the research teams in the CSIC (Research Council of Spain).

He became the head of the Section of General Mineralogy and Soils, subsequently the Mineralogy Department of "Jaume Almera" Institute of Geology. He fostered the development of the study of quantitative microscopy of reflection which, at that time, was a novel approach to the study of optical properties of opaque minerals. Dr. Bosch maintained close links with the research Department of Carl Zeiss in Oberkochen (Germany) and with the Department of Crystallography and Mineralogy at the University of Cambridge (UK).

In recognition of his services, the "Jaume Almera" Institute obtained considerable technical and support facilities. This enabled Dr. Bosch to supervise several doctoral theses and undertake research, the results of which were communicated at international meetings and congresses sponsored by the IMA.

In the late 1960s Dr. Bosch and Prof. Font-Altaba successfully developed and introduced scientific criteria in the norms of identification and classification of gemstones given the poor knowledge of mineral properties among many jewellers. The first courses were initiated in collaboration with some jewellers and led to the creation of the School of Gemmology at the University of Barcelona, of which the Dr. Bosch was secretary until his retirement. He devoted a great deal of time and enthusiasm to the divulgation of gemmology and wrote and translated several books, delivered lectures and formed teams to undertake research into the origin and quality of gemstones, especially diamonds and emeralds.

His puckish sense of humour and his readiness to compromise contributed in no small way to the spirit of camaraderie and friendship during the difficult years of the University and CSIC. His business experience helped to bring about a practical approach to the research carried out in the Department.

Aside from his distinguished scientific contribution Dr. Bosch will be remembered with gratitude and affection by his colleagues, who were also his friends, for his endearing human qualities his cheerful personality and his kindness.