

OBITUARY

John William Tierney 1952–1991

John Tierney died on 29 April 1991 after he collapsed while playing in a basketball match. There had not been any warning that he had health problems.

John joined the Queensland Department of Forestry as a Laboratory Cadet in February 1970, shortly after he had completed his secondary schooling. John remained with the same employer, later to become the Queensland Forest Service, for his whole working life; during those 21 years he developed from an insecure teenager to a self-assured, talented and truly professional scientist who was extremely popular in the workplace.

Throughout his working life, John worked at improving his qualifications through part-time study. From 1970 to 1973 he completed studies for the Certificate in Biological Laboratory Techniques at the Queensland Institute of Technology. Whilst employed as a Laboratory Technician, he commenced a BSc at the QIT majoring in Biometry but after six months altered this to Biology, an indication of his real interests. Following some interruptions to his part-time study, John transferred to BSc at the University of Queensland where he was able to pursue his special interest in mycology. He completed his BSc in late 1984 and early 1985, and was appointed to a vacancy as Plant Pathologist in the Forestry Department. But John had not finished with study; in 1990 he enrolled for MSc (Qualifying) at the University of Queensland intending to conduct a taxonomic study of *Acacia* rusts for his thesis requirements.

Because of his early background, John possessed advanced technical knowledge and skills unusual in a scientist and provided tremendous support for co-workers, both technical and professional. His pathology interests were very broad, but his passion was fungal taxonomy, especially wood destroying basidiomycetes and wattle rusts, and he was developing into a very capable taxonomist.

John's interests were not confined to the workplace; he was interested in, and was an active participant in, events that went on around him. He was very involved with the Australasian Plant Pathology Society in organising fungal forays for interested local members — in fact there was a foray organised for the weekend after he died. He had recently accepted the position of Regional Councillor for the Society. He was involved with his work union, taking on the role of councillor with the Professional Officers Association, and he was also an active member of the Queensland Naturalist's Society and the Queensland Littoral Society. He loved the bush very much and introduced his children to bushwalking and camping, hoping they would eventually share this love. His wife, Beverley, whom John had met at work, was already a convert. One of the last things John did with his family was to go for a camping weekend, just before he died. Also, he was interested in sport, playing competitive basketball. John is survived by his mother, wife Beverley, daughter Jillian (6) and son Kyle (2). He will be missed by family, friends and his colleagues at work.

**Lyn Bolland
Bruce Brown**