

Introduction

To honour the work and the memory of John Gatenby Bolton, a one-day symposium was held at the Parkes Observatory, Parkes, New South Wales, on 10 December 1993. This special issue of the *Australian Journal of Physics* contains most of the papers given at the symposium, and presents work, ideas and memories which, directly or indirectly, relate to John Bolton's scientific work over more than thirty years.

This special issue has been divided into two sections: papers of historical and human interest, and scientific contributions. But it is clear from *all* contributions that John Bolton had enormous influence on the people who worked with him.

John graduated from the University of Cambridge and spent some time as a radar officer with the Royal Navy. In 1947, he emigrated to Australia after being appointed to the CSIRO's Radiophysics Laboratory by E. G. (Taffy) Bowen. He worked for J. L. (Joe) Pawsey on investigating radio 'noise' in the southern sky, which introduced him to the field of radio astronomy while it was still in its infancy.

Except for the six years between 1955 and 1961, when he went to the California Institute of Technology to build the Owens Valley two-element radio interferometer, he spent his research career in Australia. His Australian work can be divided into two periods: 1947–55, when he worked in or near Sydney, and 1961–81, when he was closely associated with developing the Parkes telescope as a world-class instrument. With the Parkes telescope, he made major contributions in the field of extragalactic astronomy and quasar research. In particular, his work in finding accurate positions for radio sources and subsequently identifying these sources with quasi-stellar-objects did much to develop the field of extragalactic astronomy.

John Bolton was Director of the Parkes Observatory from 1961 until he retired from the CSIRO in 1981. He died on 6 July 1993.

At the opening ceremony to this symposium, a small garden and sundial near the Parkes Observatory's visitors centre were dedicated to his memory. At the request of his wife Letty, the occasion was commemorated by a nip of his favourite malt whisky for all who were there.

Dorothy Goddard and Raymond Haynes
Guest Editors, July 1994