

Lewty, Mark (based on obituary in the Forester October 2014)

Mark was born in Inglewood, Queensland. He attended school there before completing high school in *'the big smoke'* of Toowoomba. There he obtained a highly sought after and contested State Cadetship with the Queensland Forestry Department. He undertook first year Science at the University of Queensland in 1975 before moving to Canberra's ANU to study forestry and was one of the top three students each year.

Mark did a concurrent honours degree working with the late Professor Eric Bachelard on a tree physiology project.

His final year at ANU was in 1978, with a BSc Forestry graduation in 1979.

Being a scholarship holder Mark was guaranteed a position in the Queensland Forestry Department. He started in Monto where he worked in general forestry management. More importantly, it was here he met Robyn.

In 1981 he transferred to the Forest Research Centre at Gympie where he commenced his interest in silvicultural research, specializing in weed control. Mark was always keen on expanding his knowledge, and he won support to undertake a PhD program at the University of Queensland. He was the second of the class of '78 to undertake such studies. He achieved his PhD with innovative work on the physiology of pine seedlings titled *"Response to soil flooding of two Pinus species and their hybrid"*. This was a busy period for Mark as, in 1986, he was awarded the Max Jacobs Award for travel and work associated with his PhD subject. He continued in physiology when he returned to Gympie in early 1989 as leader of Silviculture Research (plantation establishment and the use of sap-flow meters to measure water use. As a result of Mark's work here, and that of others, in 1992 the Queensland Forest Service received a Banksia Award for Pollution Control Technology.

Mark was adaptable, with work stints in Indonesia and Vietnam. This is where Mark headed in 1994.

Four months later, six Lewtys returned initially to Lake Toba and then to Riau Andalan Pulp and Paper (RAPP) mill in Kerinci in Riau Province. As Research Manager, he headed R&D for a very large acacia plantation project that needed to 'feed' a pulpmill using over 20 000 tonnes of wood—that's per day. Rod Meynink, also from the class of '78, met Mark at the end of his tenure (or more correctly end of his tether) in Kerinci.

On his return from Indonesia in 1997, Mark was recruited once again by the Queensland Forestry Research Institute (QFRI) at Gympie. As the Leader of the Silviculture Program, he made a large contribution as he was a skilled and highly adaptable research leader. When funding became available for a hardwoods' research program, Mark enthusiastically took on the leadership of the program. This involved a large team of researchers, covering genetics, silviculture, soils and sustainability, entomology, pathology, wood science and timber processing. His leadership of this diverse research program was exemplary. He made an excellent contribution both to operational forestry and to scientific knowledge during this period. The practical implications of his work were always a major focus.

In 2002 the QFRI team lead by Mark received two highly commended awards in the 2002 Premier's Awards for Excellence in Public Sector Management. After this QFRI post ended in 2003, Mark moved to the forest policy unit within the broader Department and made a significant contribution there for several years.

This was followed by some solo-project work back in Indonesia at RAPP from 2007 until mid-2010 and consulting work in Vietnam from mid-2010 until mid-2012. Mark returned to Australia and he and Robyn moved to Darwin in mid-2012. Here he was responsible for rehabilitation activities at Energy Resources Australia's (ERA's) Ranger uranium mine. This was cut short by his diagnosis in 2013. Not surprisingly, Mark left detailed planting plans for the successful revegetation of the mine site, provided they followed his specifications. Mark was very proud of his work here and was frustrated that he was not able to see it to completion.

