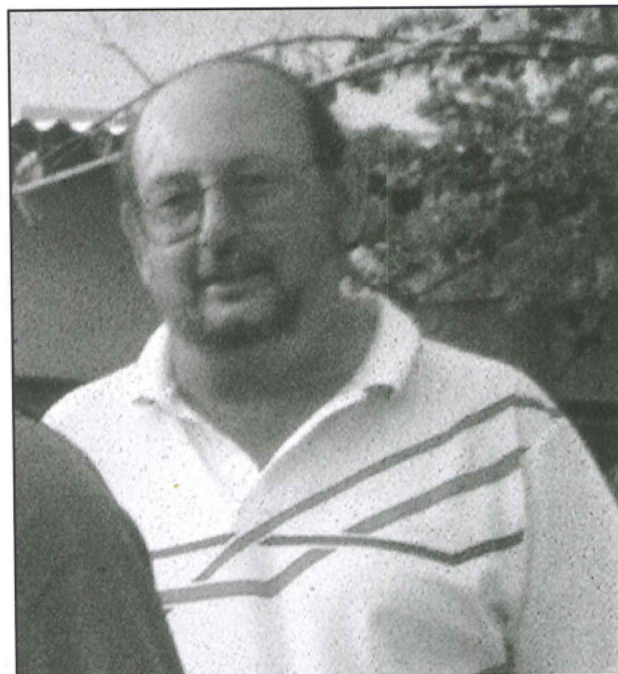


OBITUARY JOHN HEAD (1943-2003)

John Head, who passed away suddenly on July 11, 2003, was a pioneer in the development of techniques of radiocarbon dating. He helped to build chronological frameworks for prehistoric Jordan, as well as in his native Australia. Working with geological colleague Phillip Macumber, and indeed with many archaeological staff of the University of Sydney's Pella team, he specialised in the dating of small freshwater gastropods in the Jordan Valley margins. John was instrumental in devising the chronological framework of the well-known Pleistocene archaeological sequence in Wādī al-Ḥimmah, and he contributed to many articles on the archaeology and geology of Jordan. John also carried out fieldwork in other regions of the world, including Western China.

John Head was born in Whyalla, South Australia, on February 14, 1943. After serving his apprenticeship in the mining industry in his native state, he was educated at the University of Adelaide. Later he took higher degrees at the Australian National University (ANU), a path which led to his long association working at the ANU's radiocarbon facility. John also worked in dating laboratories at the University of Wollongong in New South Wales, and further afield in Beijing, China.

John loved to travel and share in fieldwork experiences. He accumulated more frequent flyer points than anyone I have ever met, and his family joked that his address was "c/- Qantas". Though John was a shy and modest colleague, he had a



ready and quick wit. His was a congenial companionship around the dig table, or the fireside, after a hard day's fieldwork. He had the knack of inserting one of his instructive and good-humoured correctives into any discussion, always preceded by a hearty chuckle. His gentle camaraderie will be missed by many.

Phillip C. Edwards

