

John Gatenby Bolton died on the 6th of July 1993 after a long illness.

He had a long and distinguished career in the science of radio astronomy, and was one of its pioneers. He graduated from the University of Cambridge in time to see service in World War 2 as a radar officer with the Royal Navy. He emigrated to Australia and joined the Radiophysics Laboratory in 1947. In 1948, John and Bruce Slee and Gordon Stanley were the first to identify radio sources with galaxies other than our own, using the famous 'sea interferometer' to get accurate positions. Radio/optical identifications was a field of research which John Bolton dominated for the remainder of his working life.

In 1955 John was appointed Professor of Physics and Astronomy at the California Institute of Technology and Director of its Owens Valley Radio Observatory, where he established an innovative two-element radio interferometer. While at Caltech he was involved in the optical identification of the radio source 3C295 with a galaxy with a redshift of 0.46, a record which stood for several years; he also helped identify the radio source 3C48—the first quasar.

He returned to Australia in 1961 as the first director of the Parkes Radio Observatory, a position he held with distinction until 1971. As director,

John was responsible for commissioning the Parkes radio telescope, and for its subsequent operation. He initiated and developed projects which involved surveying, positioning and optically identifying southern radio sources and, in 1962, he participated in the lunar occultation of 3C273. This latter led to the important discovery that quasars are very luminous extragalactic objects. Between 1969 and 1973 he led the Parkes support of NASA's Apollo missions.

John Bolton's many awards include:

Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science (1969);
Fellow of the Royal Society (1973);
Fellow of the Indian Academy of Science (1973);
Vice-President of the International Astronomical Union (1976);
Gold Medal of the Royal Astronomical Society (1977);
Foreign Associate of the US Academy of Sciences (1980);
Commander of the Order of the British Empire (1981).

In 1981 he retired with his wife Letty to Buderim, Queensland, but his interest in astronomy and in the Parkes Telescope never waned. He was an honorary member of our Society and gave regular and generous financial support to our student program.

D. E. Goddard & D. K. Milne



John Gatenby Bolton 1922–1993—*in memoriam*