

## Kerry Anthony Rodgers JP, M.Sc., Ph.D., FNZIC, FMinSoc, FRNSNZ: an appreciation



In March 2002 Associate Professor Kerry Rodgers retired from the University of Auckland after 38 years on the staff of the Geology Department. During those years he earned immense respect from the students who dealt with him as undergraduates and from those whose thesis studies he supervised, because of his dedication to providing the best possible teaching and learning environment, his overall concern for them as individuals, his careful explanations, the depth of understanding of his areas of expertise, and his willingness to assist them to meet the academic demands he placed upon them. His graduate students particularly appreciated his tireless efforts in helping them get their results published.

Kerry's own research commenced on ultramafic rocks (olivine nodules in Auckland basalts for M.Sc. and ultramafics of New Caledonia for Ph.D.) but quickly expanded in many directions and at retirement primarily centred on (1) the chemistry and mineralogy of natural processes

occurring under surface conditions, including geochemical cycling of phosphorus in atolls and aluminium and silicon in geothermal fields, and (2) providing specialized instrumental and analytical skills for mineral characterization, for studying thermal properties of New Zealand and Australian coals, and for geochemical features of the K-T boundary in New Zealand, all in collaboration with ex-students and other colleagues in New Zealand and overseas.

Over this period Kerry has published more than 150 scientific papers, teaching manuals, bibliographic monographs, etc. Of these, thirty-two have appeared in *Mineralogical Magazine*, the first, on ultramafic nodules, carried in Volume 37, 1969. They include description of a new mineral, motukoreaite (1977), and several records of rare or unusual minerals (e.g. aguilarite, awaruite, baricite, bayerite and doyleite, dahlite and whitlockite, terrugite and nobleite, and uricite). Most are jointly authored with the finder who arrived with the 'unknown' sample in hand.

As an undergraduate Kerry was unusual in that he was a double major in geology and chemistry, leading on to an M.Sc. in Geochemistry, and the only one at Auckland in our 50 years of memory. Primarily he saw himself as a traditional mineralogist. With Dana always close at hand he was happy with stereograms and the now oft ignored Miller indices. Early in his career he became highly proficient at deciphering mineral structure and elemental composition from XRD and XRF analyses. More recently he employed microRaman spectroscopy to good effect.

His research has been enhanced by various funding awards and appointments as visiting researcher to UK institutions, the Smithsonian Institution, and especially the Australian Museum, which later elected him as one of its very few Research Associates. His mineralogical work resulted in his involvement as a principal contributor to *Mineralogical Abstracts* (1982–1995) and a member of the International Mineralogical Association's Working Group on Cosmic Mineralogy (1993–1995). Kerry was a member of the International Geological Correlation Program's Project 325 on phosphorites and associated authigenic minerals. After some considerable research on Funafuti and Tuvalu he became editor of a special volume of *South Pacific Journal of Natural Science* on Tuvalu.

Kerry's research and associated activities have been recognized by well-deserved election as a Fellow of the New Zealand Institute of Chemistry (1986) and of the Mineralogical Society (1998).

Kerry has been a valued colleague, always willing to share experience and advice, eager to participate in joint projects, and bringing a valuable perspective to them. He is very much a team player and is good at coordinating the efforts of team members to reach the research objective and to find ways through when an impasse occurs. Most recently he has been an active contributor and organiser in the Auckland Sinter Programme of the Auckland Geology Department and Geothermal Institute.

Collaborative work with us has been in utterly different fields. With MRG it was several papers on bayerite and related or associated minerals identified in precipitate buildups from waste waters discharged by hydrogen generators at remote Pacific, Southern Ocean and Antarctic weather stations. Until recently weather-balloon releases at such isolated places relied on reacting caustic soda with aluminium filings.

With JAG-M, Kerry ran the Geology Department's Port Waikato field camp, an annual mapping course for second-year students, their first multi-day experience in geology. He was mentor, instructor, leader, organizer, nurse, and father confessor to them, and they responded with enthusiasm. Together we developed a field handbook, which he has seen into three or four editions and is used also by another university, and a background regional geology booklet. He always regarded this course as one of the most important of our offerings to the students, and appreciation of it became a significant reason in some students' decisions to major in Geology.

Jack A. Grant-Mackie

Murray R. Gregory

### Selected chronological bibliography

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