



John Paul Metcalfe
May 19, 1940 – January 23, 2012

John Metcalfe, former City Engineer and City Planner at Blue Mountains City Council, died on January 23 after a long illness. John was a visionary engineer and town planner who leaves a legacy of many enduring civic improvements. He worked at BMCC from 1968 to 1993 and before that at Blacktown Council and the

Forestry Commission. In retirement he continued to plan and lobby for improvements of the Mountain landscape.

Recognised as a leader in his profession, John was awarded two overseas scholarships. The first was in 1985 to study development in sensitive environments, public art, public gardens and council management and another in 1990 to study various aspects of city planning.

John's leadership was one of the driving forces that resulted in the council receiving major engineering excellence awards in 1985, 1991 and 1992. He also received a Community Service Award from the NSW Government.

John was an innovative thinker and was particularly proud of a number of community projects that were completed at little or no costs to council – these included Peter Carroll Field at Leura, Our Lady of Nativity School Oval at Lawson and the Cox's River Bridge as a training exercise at no cost to the city.

John secured numerous Commonwealth and State grants for projects in the Mountains. He was proud of public spaces he was involved in creating including the Glenbrook tourist office, its three explorer sculptures and the Wentworth Falls town centre improvements.

John, with his wife Gail, was instrumental in securing a grant to build the Greystanes Childrens' Home for the disabled in Leura. Families and staff enjoyed the home like setting and the beautiful gardens. Greystanes was home to his third daughter Josephine who predeceased John in 1997. He also contributed to a major upgrade at St Canice's Catholic Primary School where five of his children completed their primary schooling, helping to secure a \$70,000 grant for playground, and facilities.

John had a passion for community service and the arts and was a life member of the APEX club. The Queen's Birthday weekend fireworks and Australia Day Wentworth Falls Lake race were memorable events along with many hours work on volunteer projects.

In retirement John sailed some 20,000 nautical miles in Australian waters and overseas. He nominated Cape York as the most beautiful place in the world, after the Blue Mountains.

Close friends and town planning industry colleague Max Fragar said John was a great visionary professional who never stopped hatching, developing and tenaciously working towards a vision or project.

"I think I learned more from John than any other colleague, about having a vision and making it happen," he said.

Born in Wallacia to George Metcalfe and Winifred Fowler, John grew up at the foothills of the Blue Mountains. He was educated at Penrith High school, UNSW and Sydney University. John is survived by his brother Peter, wife Gail and children Gina, Lisa, Sonia, Brendan, Greg and their partners. He was fortunate to have 12 grandchildren. His life was celebrated at St Canice's Catholic Church on January 27 and he was buried at Moorland on the north coast near his father's family home.