

**BIOGRAPHY of
Carolyn McKinlay
*16th April 1963 - 28th May 2009***



Carolyn's professional life started with her employment by BHP (Port Kembla) as a trainee chemical technician. Here she learned the finer points of wet chemical analysis and was introduced to the joys of instrumental analysis while she completed her Chemistry Certificate at Wollongong TAFE in 1981. She continued to work for BHP, as a Technical Officer, in a number of different capacities, gradually assuming more responsibility as she gained in experience, through to 1992. She then spent a few months in the EAST Laboratories, as a relief laboratory manager, before moving to work in the Department of Chemistry at the University of Wollongong (1993-1997).

In the Department of Chemistry she assisted with the running of the analytical, physical and environmental laboratory classes. Staff and students alike benefited from her commitment and extensive knowledge of the practical aspects of these courses. She was also enrolled in her Bachelors degree at this time and in her final year research project most importantly received her initial exposure to mass spectrometry. She was an excellent student and developed her expertise in mass spectrometry to the point where Professor Margaret Sheil offered her a chance to do a PhD.

Unfortunately, this coincided with her husband, David, being offered a job within the TV broadcast unit at Parliament House in Canberra. So fate intervened at this point and the family moved to Canberra

In Canberra, Carolyn had a long association with the ANU, almost twelve years, starting with her employment at JCSMR (1997 – 1999), then Biotron Pty Ltd (2001 – 2004). This association was broken by a 16 month spell as a Professional Officer with the ACT Government Analytical Laboratories (1999 – 2001). For the last five years she worked at RSBS in the Mass Spectrometry Facility (MSF). Carolyn made a major contribution to the successful operation of the MSF and played a very active role in the organization and running of the Analytical Workshops and the Annual Symposium put on by the MSF. She was a worker with considerable initiative in the facility and it was at her instigation that a successful collaboration with the conservationists at the Australian War Memorial, investigating firstly the chemistry of canvas wing coverings and, most recently, paint on steel helmets, was established. Carolyn was also happy to volunteer a helping hand in the RSBS store and in manning the front desk if needed.

Her work in the MSF, as a First Aid Officer and as deputy Chemical and Radiation Safety Officer in RSBS broadened her network of friends and colleagues across the school and campus. This was greatly valued when needing to track down particular instrumentation or expertise.

Outside ANU, she served the Australian and New Zealand Society for Mass Spectrometry (ANZSMS) in the important role as Public Officer and a member of the Executive Committee of the society for many years. She was also heavily involved in the behind the scenes organisational side of CORC (Canberra Off Road Cyclists), having been introduced to the sport by her sons, and became an instrumental part of the team organising the 2009 Mountain Bike World championships, held in Canberra shortly after her passing.

Carolyn was a very caring person who took a genuine interest in the people around her. She went out of her way to welcome new staff and students and to actively promote a community feeling within RSBS, regularly involving herself with school social events. The high regard in which she was held was evidenced by the very large attendance from across the campus at her memorial service on the 5th June. Her combination of technical expertise and commitment to university life will leave a large gap that we will struggle to fill.

Charles Hocart and Margaret Sheil