

Obituary

Major John Bowen, RAAMC

by
Glen Farrow



"It is with great sadness that we must record the passing of Major John Bowen, who died suddenly after recent surgery. John had only recently retired from the regular army after 20 years of service and was looking forward to a new career and life with his wife Mary.

John was first appointed as a medical undergraduate in January 1978, and completed his medical degree (MB, BS) at the University of Tasmania, including a Bachelor of Medical Science (B Med Sci), in 1984. Early postings included 11 Field Ambulance and RMO 8/9 RAR before being posted as SMO to the Australian Defence Staff in Papua New Guinea in 1986. His duties included those of personal physician to the Australian High Commissioner and his family, and he was promoted to Major.

In July 1990, he was detached to the AATPT Papua New Guinea for a short period. His service in PNG included research into malaria earning him a CGS Commendation. Returning to Australia in 1991, he served in various appointments, including Officer Commanding 3 Camp Hospital and Officer Commanding 6 BASB Medical Company, after taking extended leave in France developing his language and wine appreciation skills. During his extended leave, John lived in Provence, grew a goatee, and travelled around Europe. He became fluent in Pidgin, French, Indonesian and Esperanto and read widely. John was an interesting character, always affable and cheery, but aware that he had Foibles. He was genuinely concerned for the welfare of others and was always very approachable. Along the way he also obtained the Fellowship in the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (FRACGP).



After a posting as the Assistant Director Medical Services at Defence Centre Melbourne, John was posted to the newly formed Area Health Service - Victoria Central where he became involved in writing medical policies, an aspect of the medical services that he really enjoyed. After completing his twenty years, John decided to move on to a new career as a civilian and outside of medicine. He bought a house in Carnegie which he was busy renovating and was proud of his gardening skills. One of his proudest moments was when on holiday with Mary recently he tried out on a trapeze and successfully completed a somersault and catch -

he thought it was terrific. That was John, a bon vivant, a caring doctor, a serving officer and a friend to those in need of advice. He is survived by Mary and his children, Rachael and Elliott.

Vale John Bowen.”