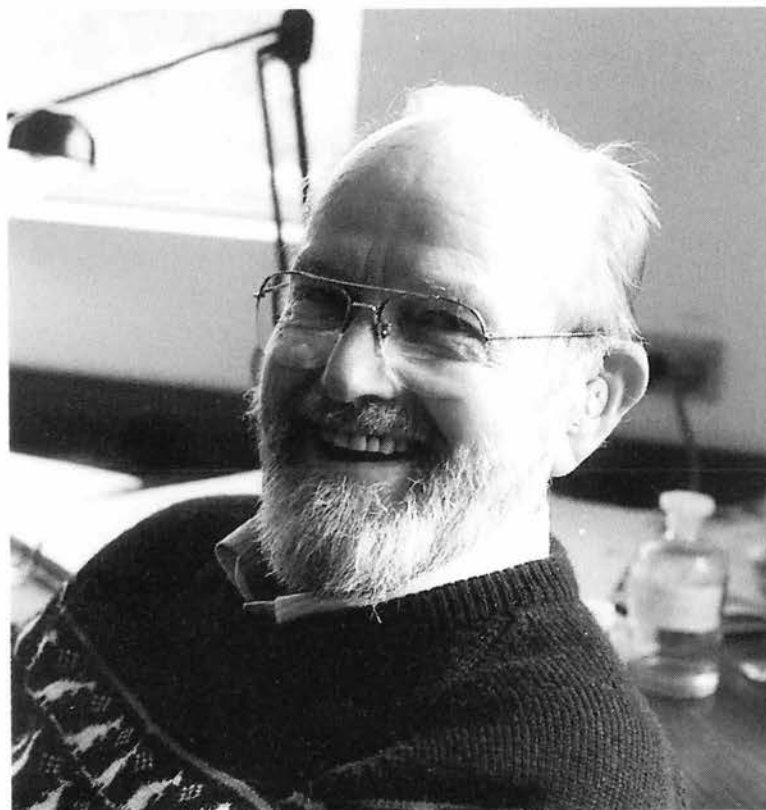


DEDICATION TO RICHARD SOMNER COWAN

23 January 1921 – 17 November 1997



It is appropriate that this issue of *Nuytsia*, which is devoted entirely to *Acacia*, be dedicated to the memory of Richard Somner Cowan.

Richard commenced work on *Acacia* at the Western Australian Herbarium (PERTH) in 1986, at a time in life when many other people would have considered retirement. He arrived in Australia after ending an illustrious career in the United States of America where, among other things, he had become a distinguished student of neotropical caesalpinoid legumes, had co-authored with Frans Staffleu the second edition of the monumental seven volume *magnum opus* "Taxonomic Literature", and had assumed the Directorship of the Natural History Museum of the Smithsonian Institute in Washington. During his 11 years at PERTH Richard worked tirelessly and diligently to complete twenty publications dealing with the taxonomy, typification and nomenclature of Australian *Acacias*. The majority of these papers were published in *Nuytsia*; his final two papers, *Acacia* miscellany 17 and 18, are included in the present issue. These studies were directed primarily towards providing a sound scientific base for the "Flora of Australia" treatment of *Acacia*. The Flora manuscript was completed in 1995 and the two Flora volumes containing the *Acacia* account are scheduled for publication in late 1999. These volumes will include around 200 species descriptions and 70 new taxa for which Richard is the author or co-author.

Apart from his work on *Acacia*, Richard published a "Flora of Australia" treatment dealing with other genera of Mimosaceae in 1998. He also prepared Flora treatments for a number of the so-called "orphan genera" of Fabaceae (as yet unpublished).

Richard Cowan has made a significant and lasting contribution to Australian botany. Our learned, highly disciplined and good-natured friend and colleague is commemorated in the granite rock wheatbelt species, *Acacia cowaniana*.

Bruce Maslin, Principal Research Scientist, Western Australian Herbarium