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## PERSONAL PROFILE - NEIL BURROWS

Born in 1954, I was the third generation of my family to grow up in the Murchison gold mining and pastoral town of Mt Magnet. My family moved to Karratha in 1972 prior to the closure of Hill 50 Gold Mine. As there was no high school in Mt Magnet, I completed my secondary schooling as a boarder at a country hostel attached to Northam Senior High School. Failing to gain entrance into the RAAF Academy at Point Cook, Victoria, I took time off before going to University and worked on cattle stations in the Kimberley and on iron ore mines in the Pilbara.

During my travels, I met a South African forester who convinced me that forestry was a great occupation. I successfully applied for a Commonwealth Forestry Scholarship, even though during the interview I had to admit that I had never seen a karri tree and that the only tree I could identify with certainty was a mulga tree! After one year at UWA, I spent the next three years in Canberra at the ANU, completing a BSc (For.). I am currently completing a PhD program with the same University on the topic "Experimental Development of a Fire Management Model for Jarrah Forest".

After graduating in 1976, I joined the WAF Forests Department as a fire researcher based in Manjimup. Guided by Paul Jones initially, and assisted at various times by Bob Voutier, Bob Smith, Alex Robinson and Bruce Ward, I had a great time researching a variety of topics associated with fire behaviour and fire effects in *Pinus radiata* plantations in the Blackwood Valley, and in southern and northern jarrah forests. We developed several applied techniques for ameliorating hazard including mechanical reduction of fuels, grazing and prescribed burning, and made a contribution to understanding forest fire behaviour under dry conditions and some fire impacts.

In Manjimup I met and married Rae Chittleborough, a Geographer who was working as a Recreation Officer with the W.A. Forests Department. We have two daughters (beautiful of course!), Kimberlee, who is 9, and Stacey who is 5. We lived and worked in Manjimup for eleven years and although vastly different to my home town of Mt Magnet, I grew fond of the tall wet south-west forests and enjoyed the friendly and varied work environment of the Southern Forest Region. I was Research Centre Manager at Manjimup for about 4 years and soon after the formation of CALM, I transferred to Woodvale (and Rae to Kelmscott) and was fortunate enough to join a team of scientists working on fire behaviour and fire ecology in the arid zone. The fire behaviour research resulted in a Mk. I version of a spinifex fire behaviour model which has been used to plan and execute patch-burns in various nature reserves. This work led to my involvement in the project "Desert Dreaming", the primary aim of which is to determine the cause of the modern decline in arid zone fauna. However, I maintain a research project in the southern forests to investigate the effects of various fire regimes on the floristics and structure of jarrah forests.

Outside of work, I enjoy weekend trips into the jarrah bush with my family, growing trees on our small "hobby farm" near Pemberton, genealogy, photography and football.

