

OBITUARY



JONATHAN GEOFFREY JOB—1943—1978

JONATHAN GEOFFREY JOB, whose work on icebergs constitutes a lasting contribution to the applied glaciological literature, was born in Sydney on 6 February 1943, although his family moved to Brisbane shortly thereafter. Following his matriculation at Brisbane Boys College, he won an open scholarship to the University of Queensland, where apart from graduating as Bachelor of Applied Science in 1963 and of Chemical Engineering in 1964, he won the Hulbert Bursary Medal for Sport and also for two years rowed for the State of Queensland in the Kings Cup.

Following his marriage in 1964, Jon commenced work as an investigative engineer with a spirit of inquiry and social responsibility which characterized him throughout his whole life. After three years in Tasmania with the Australian Pulp and Paper Mills, he returned to the University of Queensland as a Professional Research Officer. Here he worked on such diverse problems as the obtaining of liquid fuels from coal and options for industrial development in north-west Queensland. During this period he became increasingly concerned with environmental devastation in Australia and the need for research on energy and water resources.

The death of his first wife, Pamela, was a severe blow and left Jon with the responsibility of caring for two young children. Nevertheless he took his family to Cuba, where his two years of research for the Sugar Research Institute led to the establishment of a UNESCO experimental plant for using sugar-cane bagasse in the manufacture of paper products. He and his children learnt Spanish and participated fully in all aspects of Cuban daily life, including additional voluntary work. Those who have had the good fortune of participating

in joint research with Jon Job in later years reaped the benefit of this disciplinary experience which led to his often becoming the "work-horse" of a team.

From 1973 to 1974, Jon travelled in the U.K. and the U.S.A. following his private research inclinations, particularly on the development of ideas on iceberg utilization. It was at what may have been the first significant meeting on iceberg towing in New England, U.S.A., in 1974, that he first made contact with other members of the International Glaciological Society.

Having married again in 1974, he returned to Australia at the urging of Professor W. P. Rogers of the Australian Academy of Science, who had been instrumental in organizing that body's continuing Science and Society Forum. The Academy organized its Committee for the Investigation of the Feasibility of Utilizing Icebergs in Australia. Jon Job was the most productive and underpaid member of that Committee. In order to survive, he augmented his minute stipend by accepting a Post-Graduate Research Scholarship at the University of Adelaide, where his work on forced convective heat transfer in the Department of Chemical Engineering was fortunately not without relevance to the question of the lifetime of icebergs in temperate oceanic waters.

The Australian and the international media gave considerable prominence to the work of the Academy's "Iceberg Committee" and Jon became well known even before his participation in the definitive international meetings which commenced with the workshop called at the request of Prince Mohamed Faisal al-Saud of Saudi Arabia, at Marly le Roi near Paris in June 1977. Here Jon Job was quickly identified by his newly-found peers as being both competent and truthful. At the first International Conference on Iceberg Utilization which followed in October 1977 at Iowa State University, U.S.A., the initial impression was confirmed. The input to this definitive forum on the utilization of icebergs covered the full spectrum from unresearched fantasy to rigorously calculated evaluation and during the debates following many of the presentations Jon Job's well-articulated voice was frequently heard during the course of his aims to adhere to reality and achieve a fundamental plan of action.

During the early part of 1978, Jon polished those publications which have now appeared posthumously. He was also invited to Paris by Georges Mougin of Iceberg Transport International (I.T.I.) to assist in the co-ordination of a definitive international experiment on the dynamics of icebergs. This experiment had been formulated in one of the initial reports of the "Iceberg Committee" of the Australian Academy of Science and refined at meetings of the international working group sponsored by Icebergs for the Future (I.F.F.). In June 1978, Jon visited Iceland for the Reykjavík meeting of the I.F.F. working group. It was to be the occasion of his final contributions to science, for in spite of his obvious enthusiasm for the matter in hand as well as the exciting Icelandic environment, he was clearly in pain and accordingly perturbed. On his return to Australia he underwent diagnostic treatment and it was characteristic of this strong man that when faced with the seriousness of his condition he should be apologetic about his inability to take up a newly-created Iceberg Research Fellowship at the Flinders University Institute for Atmospheric and Marine Sciences.

Jonathan Job returned from Adelaide with his wife, his older son and daughter, and his newly-born son, to his parental home in Queensland. As his wife Peg watched him finally fade away in October 1978, after an active life of only 35 years, he left behind memories of visions of an Australia revitalized by major schemes of afforestation for which icebergs would have been the life-blood. His own formerly bare, three-hectare property in the Mount Lofty Ranges near Adelaide showed what one determined man could do by planting trees. When icebergs finally reach Australia, that country will have cause to remember Jonathan Job.

PETER SCHWERDTFEGER