

## **SMEDG Life Member Medal to Garry Lowder**

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**At the**

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For meritorious service to the exploration community of NSW, SMEDG awards the SMEDG Life Member Medal to **Garry Lowder**.

Dr Garry Lowder, a Sydney boy, received his Honours degree from Sydney University. Since then he has had a diverse career including roles in research, exploration, corporate and government. This eminent career has touched many of the SMEDG community and much of the following relies on memories of his long-time friend and colleague Russell Meares.

As was the case with many geoscience notables, Garry was originally a trainee in the Geological Survey of NSW and then worked as a geologist in the Hydrogeology group of the Survey over 1965-66. He then pursued a doctorate at UCLA Berkley on the volcanic terrain of the Talasea Peninsula of West New Britain. A source of great inspiration was his PhD supervisor, the eminent volcanologist Professor Ian Carmichael. His 1970 thesis was titled "Studies in volcanic petrology". He then joined Kennecott in their South Sulawesi porphyry search working with John Dow and Mike Turbott. Then there was his time as a petrologist at AMDEL in Adelaide where he worked with, amongst others, Peter Moeskops. As a consultant petrologist, he went on to advise Geopeko in NSW and he played a key role in the Northparkes and Lake Cowal discoveries. His Kennecott days proved immensely valuable in this work which exposed him to the rock suites associated with porphyry systems.

Onwards and upwards went our Garry. Next he was Group General Manager at Pancontinental Mining reporting to Tony Grey, and here he worked with such notables as Angus Collins, Bob Close, and Russell Meares, and he played a role in the discovery of the Paddington (Au), Wodgina (Ta), and other deposits. He also completed the Harvard Advanced Management program at this time.

In 1993 he was appointed Director General of the NSW Dept of Mineral Resources. Garry's contribution here had a profound impact on NSW and Australian geoscience, and on this I can speak with some authority. This was a time of great change in government geoscience. Ross Fardon had only recently convinced the South Australian Government to fund the South Australian Exploration Initiative, the precursor to the immensely successful PACE program. The newly established NSW Geological Survey Advisory Committee chaired by Jacob Rebek sought to seed a program to "turbocharge" exploration investment in NSW with a modest \$1m investment. It was 1994 and Garry, oblivious to the bureaucratic naysayers, stormed ahead with a bid to Treasury for \$40 million over 6 years. Astoundingly, he was

successful! The rest is history. High resolution airborne geophysics, detailed gravity, seismic programs, stratigraphic drilling, accelerated mapping, collaborative research, on-line information systems including DIGS and MinView all resulted. Discovery 2000 launched a geoscience knowledge revolution in NSW, and almost a quarter of a century later the New Frontiers program continues Garry's ground-breaking legacy.

Over the past twenty years he has held numerous board positions including Chairman of Straits Resources, Founding Managing Director and Chairman of Malachite Resources, Chairman of Queensland Mining Corporation, and he is currently Chairman of the Board at Dome Gold Mines Limited.

Garry served on the SMEDG Committee for 13 years and has been an important mentor for young geoscientists. He has strong personal values, and is known as a man of integrity and intellect. He is also a budding author having recently completed an unpublished whimsical memoir on his substantial career

Garry is indeed a very deserving recipient of this SMEDG Life Member Medal and we thank him for a diverse and immensely productive career that has very positively impacted NSW exploration. Indeed, he is a worthy role model to all aspiring explorationists.