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Dean, Walter; Fritz, Sherilyn C.; Whitlock, Cathy; and Watts, William, "In memoriam: John Platt Bradbury (1936–2005)" (2005). *Papers in the Earth and Atmospheric Sciences.* Paper 123.
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Journal of Paleolimnology (2005) 34: iii–iv
DOI 10.1007/s10933-005-2506-1
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In memoriam: John Platt Bradbury (1936–2005)

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John Platt Bradbury, a former United States Geological Survey (USGS) geologist, and a long time and much valued editorial board member for the *Journal of Paleolimnology*, died of cancer (abdominal mesothelioma) on August 15, 2005, in the log home that he and his wife Vera Markgraf built in the mountains near Monte Vista, Colorado. Platt's interest in paleolimnology developed during his graduate school years at the University of New Mexico, working with Roger Anderson and Walt Dean. He received his Ph.D. in 1967. He went on to do post-doctoral research at Yale University under G. Evelyn Hutchinson and then became an Assistant Professor at the University of Minnesota Limnological Research Center, where, among other projects, he worked on a multidisciplinary study of the Klutlan Glacier, Yukon Territory (Bradbury and Whiteside 1980). In 1975, he joined the Paleontology and Stratigraphy Branch of the USGS, where he offered a primary specialty in continental diatoms and secondary specialty in Quaternary palynology. Platt's work focused on developing a continental diatom biostratigraphy for Miocene through Quaternary sediments and on paleoclimatic reconstructions from lacustrine records.

Platt had wide-ranging interests and talents within the fields of diatom studies, paleolimnology, and paleoclimatology, and his research areas included North America, South America, Australia, and Asia. He was the author or co-author of over 100 publications. He had a keen eye for detail and was serious about diatom taxonomy, faithfully describing the messy complex of *Stephanodiscus* species that inhabited nutrient-enriched Minnesota lakes (Bradbury 1975) and the diatoms of Neogene and Quaternary fossil deposits, together with colleagues Ed Theriot and Bill Krebs (Krebs et al. 1987; Theriot and Bradbury 1987; Bradbury and Krebs 1995). He even created a taxonomic shorthand for common western diatoms, so that his non-diatom colleagues could recognize and gain ecological information from the 'beer-can diatom' (*Aulacoseira*) or the 'potato-chip diatom' (*Campylodiscus*). He was a

Platt cutting peat in Tierra del Fuego (Photo by Vera Markgraf).

Platt and Vera on Lago Menéndez, Argentina, February 2002 (Photo by Cathy Whitlock).

true pioneer in the paleolimnological community and was responsible for classic studies describing human impact on North American lakes (Bradbury 1975; Bradbury and Winter 1976; Bradbury et al. 2004a); long Quaternary records of large lake systems in western North America (Bradbury et al. 1989, 2004b; Bradbury 1991, 1997); the complexities of climatic interpretation from fossil diatom records (Bradbury 1988, 1989); and the studies of Elk Lake, Minnesota, that set the stage for our current emphasis on high-resolution analyses and the use of multiple proxies for interpretation of environmental history (Bradbury and Dean 1993).

Platt also took a life-long pleasure in Latin America and its cultures, and he spoke Spanish well and traveled widely. He studied aspects of the Basin of Mexico (Watts and Bradbury 1982; Bradbury 1989, 2002), and after retirement in 1999, he and Vera worked together on the paleoclimatic history of South America (Bradbury et al. 2001; Markgraf et al. 2003).

Platt's many friends will dearly miss him. He was a true individualist, who will be remembered for his often acerbic wit and humor; his creativity as a scientist, woodworker, and blacksmith; and his sense of adventure. We will miss his hospitality at their cabin and those evenings talking about life, love, and science over home-made chokecherry wine. He is survived by his wife Vera; daughter Kate of Wheatridge, Colorado; son, John Wymond of St. Helena, California; stepdaughter Michelle of Denver, Colorado; and four grandchildren.

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