

Champion of forest education dies at 85

John G. Worrall

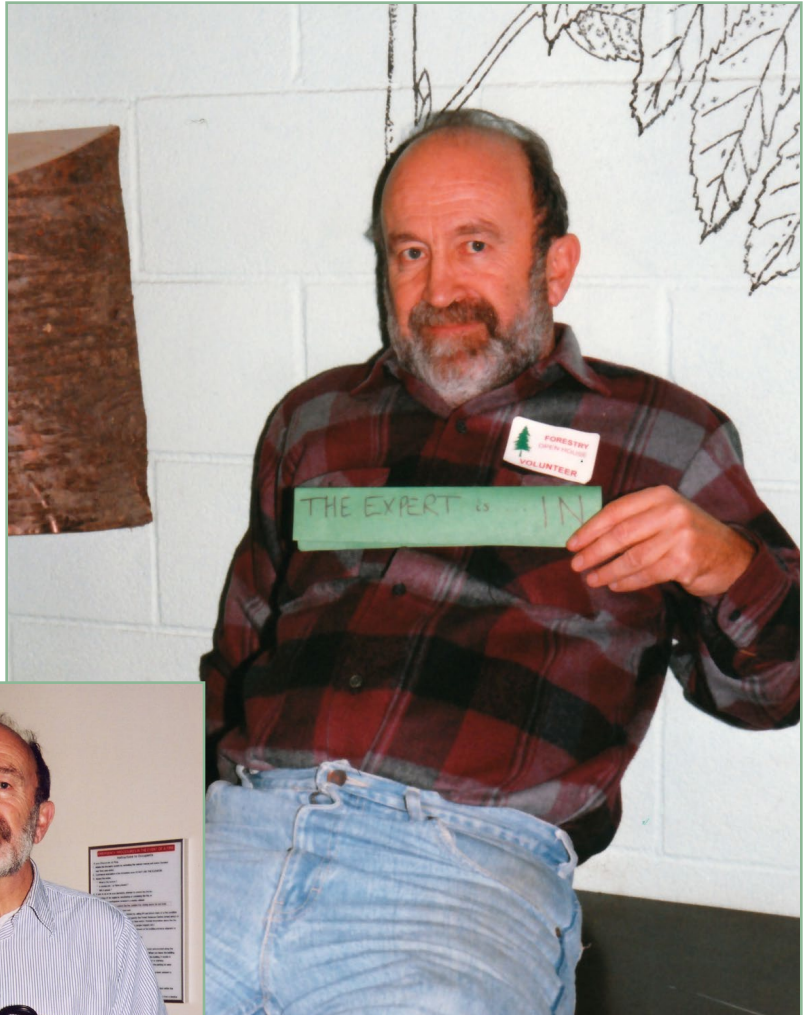
May 22, 1938 - August 8, 2023

It is with much sadness we announce that Dr. John G. Worrall has passed away August 8, 2023, after a two week stay at Vancouver General Hospital.

Worrall was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease almost a decade ago and his health has slowly been deteriorating since, and more aggressively these last 5-years. After fighting off hospital-onset pneumonia, he just couldn't recover from the after effects, and quietly slipped away on Tuesday, August 8th at 12:30 pm with his brother Richard Worrall and 'surrogate son', John Davies, by his side.

Worrall arrived in North America on a whaling ship, via the Antarctic, on which he was working as a chemist (his first degree from Newcastle University) in 1965. Upon disembarking, he jumped on a train that carried him across Canada to Vernon, BC where he had a distant relative. From there, Worrall made his way to the University of British Columbia (UBC), where he enrolled in the Faculty of Forestry and eventually graduated with a Bachelor's degree in forestry before heading to Yale University, to complete Master's and PhD (1968) degrees.

He returned to UBC in 1969 to develop, and teach the legendary (infamous?) dendrology course for first year forestry students, for which he became so well known. For the next 35 years, Worrall dedicated himself to teaching and to his students' well-being, retiring in 2003. Over his teaching tenure, he made a point of learning (and never forgetting) the name of every new forestry student – and would call on people by last name when they were least expecting it! Well



into his end of life, he still remembered names when they were mentioned to him. Usually, he could recall the years of attendance and very often some story associated with the student. None were safe from his impeccable memory!

In 2001 Worrall met Chiara Longhi and, like it or not, he was "forced" to expand his "family" to the Italian side: Matteo and Arianna grew up with John always around for holidays and celebrations and will miss him terribly. The Carson/Longhi family were the family he did not have but that had chosen him ... just like real family goes! They will miss the many game of Boggle and Scrabble played over the holidays along with Worrall's penchant for using archaic seven letter words!

After retirement, Worrall continued to 'work' within the faculty building, teaching and attending student and faculty functions, in addition to watering all his plants in the building, and playing ping pong with the students. During and post-Covid, Worrall spent his years well cared for in his home and garden where he continued to putter as he could, and bestowing tree knowledge (often testing) on visiting past students. Always the teacher.

Worrall is survived by his younger brother, Richard Worrall, nephew Boris Worrall, niece Alison Moore (nee Weeks) and Christopher Weeks (all UK residents).

A celebration of Worrall's life will be held in late September or early October and a hike will be planned to Mt. Frosty in Manning Park where Worrall wanted his ashes scattered beneath the golden larch forest of which he was so fond. Further details will be published as plans materialize.

Students or colleagues wishing to honour Worrall's dedication to teaching and students may wish to donate to the [John Worrall Tree Enthusiast Prize](#) or the [John Worrall Alumni Bursary Fund](#). Both provide funding to support students learning about trees. A cause to which Worrall dedicated his life.

