

ROCA AWARD OF MERIT 2002 – Dr Graham Mitchell AO

Dr Graham Mitchell AO (RDA BVSc FACVSc PhD FTSE FAA) was originally from Crystal Brook. Graham graduated from Roseworthy with Second Class Honours and a high distinction in Dairying. This was followed by excellent academic results at Adelaide and Sydney Universities; graduating in Veterinary Science from Sydney.

At the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research (WEHI) he made discoveries in cellular immunology, and obtained a PhD in 1969. After post-doctoral experience in California (Stanford), England (National Institute for Medical Research, Mill Hill) and Switzerland (Basel Institute for Immunology) he returned to Australia in 1973 and established a new program in the immunology of parasitism at WEHI. This program became a major component of the global effort to develop new tools for the control of parasitic diseases, and of the 'biotechnology revolution'. He was instrumental in establishing a long-term program to deal with the disease, schistosomiasis, in the Philippines.

In 1990 Graham was appointed Director of the historic and prestigious Royal Melbourne Zoological Gardens where he introduced a number of new initiatives in local and regional conservation.

In 1993 he returned to biomedical research as Director of Research in the R & D Division of CSL Limited, Australia's largest developer, manufacturer and marketer of ethical human biological and veterinary products. He was responsible for identifying and assessing new opportunities for CSL, nurturing external research collaborations of the company, and the research component of new product development, including vaccines.

Graham was recognised as one of Australia's leading biological scientists. His expertise extended over a wide range of science and technology. He had detailed knowledge of the academia-industry interface, worked in many overseas countries and was involved with the World Health Organisation for many years. He was an author of more than 350 publications, received numerous awards for scientific achievements and, in 1993, was

Source: ROCA Digest, Spring 2003

appointed an Officer in the Order of Australia for services to science, in particular immunoparasitology.

Graham was the Principal Advisor in Science, Engineering and Technology to the Victorian Government. In another government role the Principals of Foursight Associates Pt Ltd, including Graham, jointly acted as Chief Scientist for the Department of Natural Resources and Environment. He was a non-executive director of Peptech Ltd and AMBRI Pty Ltd. He was involved with several Cooperative Research Centres and was Professor Associate of the University of Melbourne.

Graham is married with two children and has interests in Australian flora and fauna. He was described as "the complete man", who enjoyed his work, was respected by people around him, excelled in various sports and made a significant contribution to his community, and to agriculture in Australia and beyond.



Published November 2006