

Vale Dr Brian Mee



Brian was a generous mentor, a teacher with an amazing depth of microbiological knowledge, and a good friend to his academic and technical colleagues in the Department of Microbiology at UWA.

Brian received his PhD from Melbourne University in 1968 on his thesis entitled 'Biosynthesis of histidine in *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*'. He followed this with a post-doctoral position at Columbia University, College of Physicians and Surgeons, Department of Biochemistry where he continued to work on bacterial genetics.

In 1971, he started as a lecturer at the University of WA Microbiology Department, situated at Royal Perth Hospital, which then moved to its current location at the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre in Nedlands in 1973.

At the time, there was almost no bacteriology in 3rd year microbiology and Brian was instrumental in setting up these elements of

the major. As a teacher Brian had a huge influence on the structure and content of the courses in microbiology, especially in bacteriology and genetics, and more recently in molecular biology. Many of the experiments he introduced into undergraduate laboratory classes are still in use today. He had a deep knowledge and understanding of bacterial genetics, physiology and biochemistry, and was the person everyone went to for advice and explanations of tricky points. You'd know that if you went to Brian asking for help, he would provide his time and expertise with great generosity, and that you could confidently rely on him knowing the answer!

In research, Brian supervised and mentored many Honours and PhD students. He inspired generations of students to pursue research, and many of these have gone on to great careers in Perth and elsewhere in the world. He published widely in aspects of bacteriology ranging from R plasmids to environmental biofilms, bacterial virulence factors to transcriptional response regulators, and melioidosis to *Helicobacter*.

Brian contributed much to the development of microbiology in Perth, being active in the Australian Society for Microbiology, and President of the WA branch for two years in the mid-1980s. He had numerous sabbaticals around the world at Bristol University, Nottingham University, Southampton University and McGill University.

He later retired to Denmark in WA in 2006. Brian will be very much missed by his family and by former colleagues in microbiology.



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