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## Editorial

### *AjPP* to be relaunched as 'Functional Plant Biology' in 2002

In January 2002, *Australian Journal of Plant Physiology* will be relaunched as *Functional Plant Biology*. This is a natural progression, reflecting the changing nature of experimental plant science, with research previously falling under the heading 'Plant Physiology' now tending towards more applied biological research or more pure molecular work, always coming back to a functional level. The new title also more accurately reflects the journal's international authorship, readership and referee base. To celebrate the relaunch, many new features will be introduced to benefit authors, subscribers and referees;

- Negotiations are currently underway for members of many Societies of Plant Physiology to take out a personal subscription for 2002 at reduced rate, with a saving of up to US\$50! To date, this offer is currently available to members of ASPP, CSPP, JSPP, NZSPP, AIAST and APPS, with others to follow.
- We now ask authors to submit their manuscript in electronic format in the first instance. This enables us to send the manuscript to referees by email, giving authors much faster turnaround with referees.
- Referees may now use our 'Referee's Report Form' directly from our website, and we encourage referees to return their reports by email. This can speed up the review process considerably, leading to much faster turnaround of manuscripts.
- Non-subscribers may now purchase downloads of single papers.

Electronic communication is becoming more important in every facet of journal production and delivery. Rapid processing of manuscripts is a high priority for *AjPP*, and we currently aim for an 8-week period between manuscript submission and an acceptance decision. We do hope that you will enjoy these added benefits; the scope and format of the journal will retain the same high standards as always. Stay tuned for *FPB*!

### Congratulations to Graham Farquhar!

We are very excited at the recent announcement that Dr Graham Farquhar from ANU heads the list of the 33 Australian scientists whose papers have been most frequently cited by their international colleagues. Graham has accrued 22 citation 'classics', 5 of which are in *AjPP*! Also featured in the ISI list was Dr Neil Turner from CSIRO Plant Industry in WA, who has been associated with *AjPP* over several years through his high standard of manuscript reviewing. Both received a 'Citation Laureate' award, in recognition of publishing more than six high-impact or world-class research papers in their field.

In his acceptance speech to the ISI, Graham raised the sensitive issue of the use of citation statistics in isolation *versus* their use 'in context'. Any scientist applying for a grant, a promotion or a job will be assessed on the number of papers they published in international, refereed journals. Citation indices, in context, are a useful step in the progression from data to information to knowledge and understanding, as we all seek quality and substance in science. It follows that citation indices are valuable, extremely valuable, but not sufficient, indicators of quality.

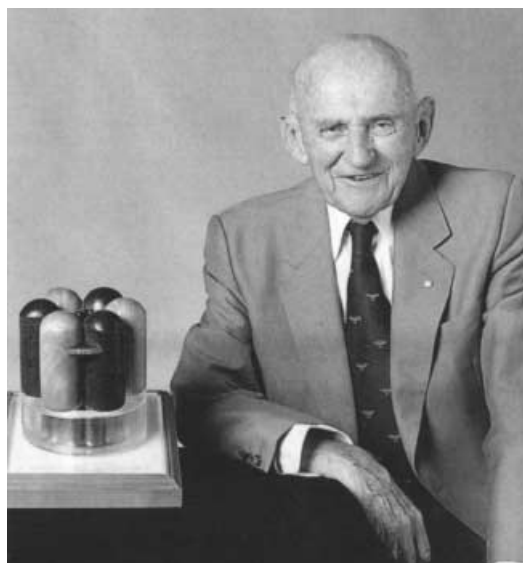
Graham went on to state while citation indices are 'objective data', they are not the only criteria for assessing the significance of either a journal or a single paper. When Hal Hatch, a Japan Medal winner for elucidating the  $C_4$  pathway of photosynthesis, was asked to write a commentary on his work for a Citation Classic article in Current Contents, he asked that *AjPP* be included in the list of journals watched by ISI. Some Australian administrators have been slow to recognise these journals as being truly international in stature, but we hope that recent events will help convince them to change their minds. There is an obvious compromise between the objectivity of citation numbers, and thereby the capacity for its automation, and the still higher-order functions associated with assessing true quality, substance and genius.

We congratulate Graham on his work and his recent ISI award, and Graham's many fine contributions to *AjPP* in the area of stable isotope research. You will have read Graham's paper with co-authors Margaret Barbour and John Andrews in *AjPP* Volume 28 Number 5; look out for Graham's review of his area of expertise in the first issue of 2002 (more later about the exciting year ahead!).

### Vale Sir Rutherford Robertson, AC, CMG: 1913–2001

Sir Rutherford Ness Robertson, 'Bob Rob', died in March 2001, aged 87. He had a distinguished career in plant physiology and biochemistry, and was a well-respected and influential leader and academic. In his lifetime he was a foundation member of the Australian Society for Plant Physiologists, president of the Australian Academy of Science, chairman of the Australian Research Grants Committee, deputy chairman of the Australian Science and Technology Council, a member of the CSIRO Executive, and Professor at the University of Adelaide and the Australian National University (where he was also Director of the Research School of Biological Sciences and later pro-vice-chancellor).

He was born in Melbourne, schooled in Melbourne and Christchurch, and studied undergraduate chemistry and botany at Sydney University. A Science Research Scholarship and a Linnean Macleay Fellowship enabled him to continue his studies at Sydney University, where he focussed on plant stomata for 3 years. An Exhibition scholarship took



(Photograph courtesy of the RSBS at ANU)

him to Cambridge University, where he studied nutrient transport in plant cells and gained his PhD in 1939.

He returned to Australia with his wife Mary, and took up a lectureship in botany at Sydney University. A collaboration with the CSIR (early CSIRO) investigated options for storage of wheat, apple and pear, as World War II had severely restricted shipping options. In 1946 he headed the plant physiology and fruit storage section of CSIR, and helped establish a joint plant physiology unit with Sydney University. His research focused on links between plant respiration and active transport of charged particles in cells, certainly an area combining biochemistry and plant physiology in a truly novel way at the time. He had an overriding interest in the biological context within which physiological responses occur.

After a period serving on the CSIRO Executive, he returned to research in 1962 as Professor of Botany at the University of Adelaide, where he was PhD supervisor for, amongst others, the immediate past chairman of the *AjPP* Editorial Advisory Committee, Dr Barry Osmond. In 1969 he returned to the Australian National University as Master of University House until his retirement in 1978. He was knighted in 1972, and became a Companion of the Order of Australia in 1980. In his 1992 paper in *Annual Review of Plant Physiology and Molecular Biology* entitled 'A dilet-

tante Australian plant Biologist', he made these memorable comments:

**'I believe that the most satisfying philosophy of life encourages unselfishness, with concern for and tolerance of, fellow humans. In this, Science can play a vital role, helping us to leave the world a better place for having lived'.**

**'Scientific understanding of ourselves and of our environment should lead us to eventual peaceful interaction, irrespective of colour, race, class, or nationality'.**

Plant physiology research both in Australia and internationally is in a stronger position today for his contribution on both academic and administrative fronts. His wife, Lady Robertson, and a son, Robert, survive him.

Jennifer McCutchan  
Managing Editor, *AjPP*