

## Professor W. Roy Jackson – A Brilliant Man and an Exemplary Supervisor\*

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I was saddened to learn of Professor Jackson's passing and regretful that I was unable to return from Switzerland to attend his funeral and extend my condolences to Heather, Tim, Martin and Catrin in person. This great man leaves a lasting legacy. He was a loving husband and father, and for me and many other fellow post-graduate students, an enduring source of inspiration.

I studied chemistry as a major subject in my honours year, aligned to the Inorganic Chemistry Department. I was fortunate enough to be awarded a Commonwealth Scholarship and sought out Professor Jackson in my quest to change disciplines. He gladly accepted, and cheekily rubbed his hands at the mischief this was creating within the department. Professor Jackson's humour and wit were infectious. He often gave us the impression of being aloof, but that wasn't the man at all. He registered everything; he just chose not to comment. Later, quite unexpectedly, he would remark or say something, which without context, may not have been important, but if you were paying attention – you, too, knew. He did not miss a single beat!

I appreciated that Professor Jackson cared about the research and especially about the progress and wellbeing of all his students and team. He was egalitarian, generous to all and inclusive. I started my research on hydrocyanations and when the initial work was not progressing, he quickly shifted my focus to hydroformylations. He was also adamant – 'you have done your 3 years of benchwork – it's now time to start writing up'. He was proud of all of us and wanted us to get out into the real world and have an impact.

Some other memorable highlights that bring a smile to me and others include:

Professor Jackson:

- The Magician – excited about the Open Day Magic Show, particularly the explosions he created
- The Orienteer – taking his chemistry team to the Grampians on walk trails that had disappeared
- The Gracious Host – building a team with a shared hiking and survival experience
- The Planner – always carrying a small notepad in his pocket to capture key ideas and actions
- The Enterprising One – he mastered breaking into his office in a variety of innovative ways
- The Researcher – he created the right balance of research and reporting, publishing papers to ensure the work was visible, the credit shared, and funds available to continue the fine work
- The Connoisseur – he zeroed in on the best wines and foods and was a welcome and entertaining member of any dinner or gathering.

I genuinely believe a lot of the success that I and others have achieved was strongly attributed to our association with Monash University under the defining leadership of Professor W. Roy Jackson. He set us on a path that enabled us to remain curious, adapt, engage, and use science and chemistry to solve the world's pressing issues. We continue to do this, and we thank him for the impact he has had on so many.

Professor Jackson will remain forever in our hearts and minds and we know that he continues to smile cheekily on us as well.

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