

Professor Brian James Deverall DIC PhD FAPS FISPP FAPPS (1935–2014)

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Prof Brian Deverall was born on 3 January 1935 in Birkenhead, England. He died on 9th August 2014 after a highly distinguished career in plant pathology and University education and as a diligent servant to the international plant pathology community. His contributions were particularly to knowledge of the physiology of fungal parasitism and the mechanisms of plant resistance to disease, and to plant pathology capability development and education. He was also heavily involved in activities supporting learned societies, knowledge transfer and research publication. All who have known and worked with Brian Deverall are saddened by his death as

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we remember him as an astute, discerning and practically realistic scientist, for his work serving plant pathology, and also as a thoughtful, kindly and affable colleague.

Prof Deverall began his career after graduating with a First Class Honours Degree in Botany from the University of Edinburgh in 1957 and DIC and PhD from the University of London in 1960. He completed post-doctoral studies (as a Harkness Fellow) in the USA and then worked as a Lecturer at Imperial College, University of London from 1962 to 1970. After a brief period of research at Wye College at the Agricultural Research Council (ARC) Unit on Systemic Fungicides, he took up the position of Professor of Plant Pathology at the University of Sydney in 1973, which he held until his retirement in 2001. His career at Sydney University included service in several senior positions, including Head of the Department of Plant Pathology and Agricultural Entomology, Head of the Department of Crop Sciences, and Pro-Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, and then in retirement as Emeritus Professor in the Faculty of Agriculture. Prof Deverall's contributions were therefore at the highest levels of tertiary education in agriculture and plant pathology.

Prof Deverall's research contributions in plant pathology were in three particular areas of the discipline; outlining the role of phytoalexins in plant resistance to disease, describing factors that elicit and express disease resistance in plants and determining characteristics of systemic plant resistance to disease. In these areas he produced an extensive and highly renowned body of published research. He also authored and co-authored six monographs and books on aspects of physiological plant pathology, including detailed summaries of information on fungal parasitism, host resistance and phytoalexins. With co-authors, he published a very large body of research, which included discovery of the roles of specific phytoalexins in resistance of legumes to fungal pathogens, description of resistance factors in latent infections, and the outlines of the physiological details of elicitation and

expression of resistance to rust fungi. His published research also includes studies of biological control of fruit diseases with bacteria and characterisation of systemic resistance in plants to disease.

Prof Deverall's broader contributions to the discipline of plant pathology have been many and varied, and were diligently maintained until his recent death. He held several positions of responsibility, including Vice President of the International Society for Plant Pathology (ISPP) (1988–93) and President of the Australasian Plant Pathology Society (1987–89). He was Editor of the ISPP International Newsletter for Plant Pathology from 1994 to 2002 and 2007–2014, maintaining that key activity for the ISPP through his retirement. In his role as Newsletter Editor he also placed high priority on encouraging the ISPP Subject Matter Committees and liaison with the international community.

His contributions to physiological plant pathology and to the science of plant pathology, as well as in service to the international plant pathology community, were recognised through the presentation of the Huxley Prize for research achievements 1971, Imperial College, University of London and awards of Fellow of the American Phytopathological Society in 1999, Fellow of the International Society for Plant Pathology in 2008 and Fellow of the Australasian Plant Pathology Society in 2009.

Prof Deverall held numerous positions relating to international research and plant pathology journals, including membership of the Editorial Boards of the *Annals of Applied Biology* and *Physiological and Molecular Plant Pathology*, the Advisory Panel of the *Australian Journal of Botany*, and the Advisory Board of *Plant Pathology*. He was co-founder of *Physiological Plant Pathology*, and co-editor of that journal from 1971 to 1981.

All who associated in professional roles with Brian Deverall will remember him as a quietly spoken gentle man of friendly and diligently co-operative disposition. He combined intellectual brilliance with astute insight

and practical application, which provided numerous and ground-breaking additions to the understanding of plant disease. He also extended his contributions as a leader in university education and in national and international plant pathology fora. Prof Brian Deverall has been a diligent and loyal servant to the science of plant pathology and to the communication of this research discipline.

Brian is survived by his wife, Flora, his daughter, Sarah Deverall, and sons David and Lloyd and their families, including seven grandchildren. For additional reading see APPS Fellow (2009), APS Fellow (1999), Dann (2009), Delp (2013), Hammerschmidt (2014) and Johnson (2014).

Professor Richard Falloon, Past President of ISPP, Dr Greg I Johnson, President ISPP (2013–2018) and Professor M Lodovica Gullino, Immediate Past President ISPP.

Acknowledgements The photograph is courtesy of Dr R Daniel, University of Sydney.

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