

MONTHLY UPDATE DEPARTMENT OF BIOCHEMISTRY

JULY 2020 SPECIAL EDITION

EMERITUS PROFESSOR WARREN.P.TATE

The 1st of July 2020 marked a significant milestone in the career of Warren Tate as he took up his new position in the Department, as Emeritus Professor. This title is not conferred automatically on retirement, but is awarded to those who have made a distinguished contribution to teaching and research in their field, and in service to the University in general. There can be no doubt that Warren absolutely personifies these attributes, and we have put together this tribute to him, celebrating his very distinguished career.

Warren has had a long and illustrious association with the Department, having been in the Department for longer than almost everyone! First starting here as a PhD student in 1969 then joining as lecturer in 1975. That is continuous employment for a period of 45 years and appointment as Professor for more than 30 years. You can find many milestones on Warren's timeline below – thank you to Bronwyn and Catherine for constructing this.

The timeline highlights just a few significant academic achievements as well as illustrating Warren's passion for the arts and partying!

The excellence of his research has been recognised in a number of ways – FRSNZ, Marsden Medal, and Rutherford Medal to name a few. Warren has always had a long lasting thirst for new knowledge, as can be seen by the way his research interests have shifted over the years. A true scientist driven by curiosity, always asking questions -who doesn't remember his questions at seminars – which were more often than not punctuated by a pun!

Warren is highly regarded by many for the expert care he has provided to many postgraduate students. Alumni from the Tate lab have gone on to excel in many ways, all over the world. Warren has been an outstanding undergraduate teacher in the Department, contributing to multiple papers and programmes over many years.

Warren's service to the wider research community is also extensive and varied. He has reviewed many a scholarship and grant application and has been a wonderful mentor to many emerging scientists both within and outside of the Department. He has had significant leadership roles in national research organisations that have benefitted New Zealand science including HRC, MBIE, the MWC and PBRF assessing panels.



The Tate/Otago timeline

1969: Warren arrives to begin his PhD with George Petersen.

1972: Warren P. Tate, PhD.

**Research focus:
ribosomal release
factors & frameshifting**

1975: Warren returns from his post-doc in Texas to take up a lectureship.



"I remember that at lab meetings, Warren would sometimes award a prize for someone who'd gone against his advice and made the experiment work all the same. Good training for the future."

Associate Professor Craig Marshall
PhD #6

1980: Warren's first PhD & MSc students graduate.

1981: Alexander von Humboldt Fellowship

1988: Fellow, New Zealand Institute of Chemistry

1989: Professor W.P.Tate

**Research focus:
includes memory
mechanisms**

1990: Fellow, Royal Society of New Zealand

**1999: HOD Dept of
Biochemistry**

1999: Hosts 14th FAOBMB Symposium, "Genome Diversity and Bioinformatics"

**Research focus:
includes antiviral
targets**

2002: Hosts international ribosome conference: "The Dynamics of Ribosome Structure and Function"

2003: Otago Institute lecture "The double helix: a golden jubilee of a golden era."

**2005: Ends term as
Biochemistry HOD**

"Warren, I thank you most for the nurturing environment you provided, allowing us to learn and grow as scientists and people. The awesome group of students and staff around you attests to your strength of bringing people together. We had such fun! Thank you so much for your support."

*Dr Fran Adamski, Programme Manager, NZ Dairy Goat Co-operative
PhD #8*

"I remember going so often into Warren's office depressed with endless failed experiments and coming out so happy that there were so many exciting results and avenues to explore!"

*Prof. Dr. Daniel Wilson, Hamburg
PhD #17*



Warren with members of the FAOBMB



Warren at play.
He can still be seen regularly performing with the Dunedin City Choir



“To me, Warren embodied the ideal supervisor – unstintingly critical of the research and unflaggingly supportive of the researcher.”

*Dr John Mansell
PhD #18*

2006: University of Otago Distinguished Research Medal

“Regardless of how bad your western image or PCR gel looked, Warren could always find something positive to say about your experiment. No matter how discouraged you were going into your meeting with Warren, you always came away from it with enthusiasm to keep trying.”

*Dr Andrew Cridge
PhD #25*

2007: Associate Dean Research, Health Science Division



At his Rutherford Award dinner

2010: Rutherford Medal - Royal Society of NZ

2011: CNZM for Services to Science

Research focus includes ME/CFS

Receiving his CNZM from Governor General Sir Anand Satyanand



2013: Theology and Public Issues Forum on ME/CFS

2016: HRC Research Excellence Award

2017: Warren’s 33rd PhD student graduates.

2018: Marsden Medal - NZ Association of Scientists

2020: Emeritus Professor W.P.Tate.



Warren doing what he does best