

Citation—Professor R.D.B. (Wal) Whalley AM

Professor Wal Whalley was appointed to the staff of the University of New England (UNE) as a Lecturer in Botany in 1965 and retired as Head of School of Rural Science and Natural Resources and member of Botany in 1998, with 33 years of paid service to the University. Since that time, Professor Whalley has continued to actively serve UNE exceptionally across research, teaching, and outreach as an adjunct of UNE, and via his sustained work in various roles for Robb College, UNE.

Professor Whalley has made an outstanding contribution to UNE through his research, postgraduate student supervision, publications and industry impact across plant ecology, plant taxonomy and agronomy, mostly focused on Australian native grasses. He has authored 4 books, 10 book chapters, 127 refereed journal papers, 19 refereed conference papers, and 26 other conference presentations. His publications have had considerable research impact and led to commercial domestication of several Australian grasses. His work on the four editions of the 'Grasses of New South Wales' has had a profound impact on teaching agronomy at UNE and on the learning and skill set of UNE's Agricultural and Rural Science graduates, as well as the broader community. Professor Whalley is currently working on a 5th edition of the book. His contribution to the working knowledge of native grasses has contributed to the adoption of native grasses in Australian pasture systems.

Professor Whalley's exceptional contribution to research and research impact, especially in regard to his work on Australian native grasses, was acknowledged in 2007 by the award of an AM (Member in the General Division of Order of Australia) in the Australia Day Honours list "for service to conservation and the environment, particularly through research into Australian native grasses and the promotion of their use for pasture, lawn, and revegetation of degraded natural landscapes". This honour was richly deserved and brings kudos to the University.

Professor Whalley has supervised to successful completion some 30 PhD, 10 MSc, 10 MLitt, 10 GradDip, and 25 Hons research students at UNE. For many of these students he was principal supervisor. Many of his former students hold or have held senior positions in Australia and overseas. He has continued to be an active co-supervisor of research students since his 'retirement'.

Professor Whalley has provided UNE with an extraordinary level of service across the gamut of University and external roles, including being Head of Department of Botany, Head of School and Dean. He has held every position of contribution and leadership in the *Australian Rangeland Journal*, now *The Rangeland Journal*, including Editor-in-Chief. Professor Whalley has made an enduring contribution as an assessor for the Australian Research Council, and served several professional societies, the CRC for Weed management Systems, The National Lippia Working Group, Chair of the Moree Plains Regional Vegetation Committee and various other governmental and industry committees. He is highly respected in the agricultural industries. He is a fellow and elected life member of the Australian Rangeland Society.

Professor Whalley was a successful and popular lecturer in plant ecology and agronomy. He ran many workshops on grass identification for government agencies, farmers and the public. These workshops also contributed to the University and Botany scholarship funds.

Professor Whalley's involvement with Robb College and its students since 1969 to the present has been profound, contributing to the success of many students and of UNE by fostered connection of many alumni with the University. 'Wal' is considered a legend by the wider Robb College community of which he is a Life Member. Professor Whalley's distinguished contribution and commitment to the students at Robb has also been recognised in the John Pigram—Wal Whalley Academic Shield.

In recognition of outstanding leadership in research and service, and contributions to the academic life of the University, especially via Robb College and his discipline nationally and internationally, the UNE Council is pleased to award the title of Emeritus Professor to Dr R.D.B. 'Wal' Whalley AM.