

Mr Harold Burnell Carter

The degree of Doctor of Veterinary Science (honoris causa) was conferred in absentia upon Harold Burnell Carter at the ceremony held at 11.30am on 1 March 1996.

Citation

Presented by the Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal Professor D J Anderson

Chancellor

Harold Burnell Carter was educated at the University of Sydney, graduating with the Bachelor of Veterinary Science degree in 1933. Awarded a Walter and Eliza Hall Fellowship in Veterinary Science, he studied the skin and wool of Merino sheep at CSIRO McMaster Laboratory within the grounds of this University.

His research provided our basic knowledge on the embryology, growth, development and genetic variation in the structure and function of the skin and the wool follicle. This work led to major improvements in wool production and contributed greatly to the economic development of Australia.

From his studies on the genetic selection of Merino sheep, Harold Carter discovered that it was the 18th century scientist, Sir Joseph Banks, who had arranged for merino sheep to be transported to Australia.

This led Carter to undertake detailed historical research into the life and works of Banks. His research was carried out under the auspices of the Natural History Department of the British Museum and resulted in a comprehensive review of Banks' contributions to science. Between 1764 and 1820 Joseph Banks wrote some 40,000 letters. With Carter's painstaking collection of this scattered correspondence and other archival material, Joseph Banks emerged as the key figure in the growth of natural sciences in Britain at the end of the 18th century. Harold Carter, in his 87th year, is still the Director of the Banks Archive Project of the Natural History Museum in London.

He has published many papers and several books on Joseph Banks including: *His Majesty's Spanish flock: Sir Joseph Banks and the Merinos of George III of England* and *The Sheep and Wool Correspondence of Sir Joseph Banks 1781-1820*.

Harold Carter has achieved international scholarly standing in two different fields, science and history.

Chancellor, Harold Carter cannot be with us today so I present to you Dr Kenneth Ferguson, a life time colleague of Dr Carter's and formerly Director of the Institute of Animal and Food Sciences of the CSIRO to receive the degree of Doctor of Veterinary Science (honoris causa) on behalf of Harold Burnell Carter.