**Professor Newell Johnson**

It is with great sadness that we report the loss of Past BSP President, Professor Newell Johnson, who passed away on 20th January 2024, aged 85, at his home in Queensland Australia.

Newell was undoubtedly a colossus of Oral and Dental Research, who made so many important contributions to Oral Science across a very wide range of topics, particularly in the fields of Oral Cancer, Periodontology and Dental Caries. Over a long career, he published around 400 publications in international peer- reviewed journals and supervised over 30 PhD students. He received very many accolades in recognition of his work.

Newell graduated in dentistry in 1961 from the University of Melbourne. After also completing a Masters degree at Melbourne he moved to the UK and completed his PhD at the University of Bristol in 1967. In due course he held many prestigious posts in the UK. He was Nuffield Research Professor of Dental Sciences at the Royal College of Surgeons in London, Professor of Oral Pathology at the London Hospital Medical College, and founder and Director of the MRC Periodontal Diseases Research Unit. He subsequently moved to King’s College London in 1993 as Professor of Oral Medicine and Pathology. In 2005 he moved back to his native Australia to become founding Dean and Head of School of Dentistry and Oral Health at Griffith University, Queensland. He continued to be active in research until very recently, latterly as Honorary Professor of Dental Research at the Menzies Health Institute at Griffith University.

Newell was a past president of the BSP (1992 – 93), President of the British Society of Dental Research (2004- 06), of the Odontology section of the Royal Society of Medicine (2004 – 2005), and of the Experimental Pathology group of the International Association for Dental Research (IADR). He was a Fellow in Dental Surgery of the Royal College of Surgeons, Fellow of the Royal Australian College of Dental Surgery, Fellow of the Royal College of Pathology and Chair and Fellow of the Faculty of Dental Surgery of the Royal College of Pathology Australasia. He was also elected as Fellow to the highly prestigious Academy of Medical Sciences in the UK.

Newell received many awards and honorary memberships. He was appointed Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George (CMG) by Her Majesty the Queen in 2011 for services to Oral Health. He received the Distinguished Scientist Award of IADR in Oral Medicine and Pathology in 2005 and for International Oral Health in 2017.

The listing of Newell’s remarkable achievements does not entirely do justice to the man. Newell’s very broad research interests were driven by his genuine and indefatigable curiosity and a deep understanding. At times he was iconoclastic, not being afraid to challenge orthodox thinking. He was always ambitious and rarely did anything by half, as seen by the ambitious programmes he put together for any number of conferences. He had a hugely optimistic and frequently flamboyant personality and one readily knew when Newell was in the room! He readily nurtured respect, admiration and friendship from his colleagues and he was a great mentor and very generous with his support for more junior researchers and other staff. He was also a great internationalist, with many collaborators, colleagues and friends in all corners of the globe.

Newell is survived by his 2 daughters, Sarah and Nicola and 3 grandchildren Reuben, India and Aurora. He very sadly lost his much-loved second wife Jeanette to cancer in 2016, something that had a deep impact on him.

Newell was a remarkable man whose achievements speak for themselves. He leaves behind a great legacy but also the gratitude and fond memories of many people around the world who will be greatly saddened by his passing.

Francis Hughes & Mike Curtis