

Emeritus Professor James Patrick Quirk AO

The degree of Doctor of Science in Agriculture (*honoris causa*) was conferred upon Emeritus Professor James Patrick Quirk AO at the ceremony held at 9.30am on 30 May 1997.



David James Asimus AO and James Quirk AO (right), photo, 'The University of Sydney News', 5 June 1997.

Citation

Presented by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor D J Anderson

Chancellor, I have the honour to present to you James Patrick Quirk for admission to the degree of Doctor of Science in Agriculture, *honoris causa*.

James Quirk has had a distinguished and multifaceted career as a soil scientist, a research manager and a University administrator since he graduated from this University 50 years ago with first class honours in Agricultural Chemistry.

His scientific contributions involve the application of surface and colloid chemistry of clays and oxides to soil physics and chemistry. He has made a sustained contribution as a leader in his chosen field throughout his career.

As Director of the renowned Waite Agricultural Research Institute he negotiated with the South Australian Government the transfer of the whole of its agricultural research activities to the Waite Institute campus. This transfer resulted in a building programme and enhanced controlled environment facilities costing \$460 million. Another facet of Quirk's activities is that for the past 20 years he has been a member of the governing bodies of several Australian universities where his experience in funding and financial management has been well deployed. He is currently a Governor of The University of Notre Dame Australia.

In a broader context James Quirk has served the Australian Government in several ways. He has been a member of Government scientific missions to India, Mexico and China. He reviewed Australia's total research effort in agriculture and veterinary science for the Prime Minister's Science and Technology

Council. He also chaired a Council which reviewed Australia's water research, policies and funding for the Minister for Resources and Energy. For 10 years he was the Australian Universities' representative on the Commonwealth Wheat Industry Research Council and served for a similar period on the Council of the Australian Wine Research Institute. Internationally, he has been a consultant on many occasions, most notably as a member of the United Nations two-man team in 1975 which examined the effect of the Aswan Dam on soil fertility and water management in the Nile Valley.

James Quirk's achievements have been acknowledged in a number of ways. In 1967 the degree of Doctor of Science was conferred upon him by the University of London and in the same year he was appointed Commonwealth Visiting Professor at the University of Oxford. More recently he has received the degree of Doctor of Agricultural Science, *honoris causa* from the Catholic University of Louvain, the University of Melbourne and the University of Western Australia. He has received the Farrer Memorial Medal for contribution to the Australian Wheat Industry and the Mueller Medal for contribution to the Natural Sciences. He is a *Membre (Etranger) l'Academie d' Agriculture de France*. He is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science and a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Science and Engineering. In 1983 he was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia for services to agriculture and agricultural research.

In 1992, James Quirk delivered the GW Brindley Lecture to the American Clay Minerals Society in 'Interparticle Forces' and in 1996 he was the first person outside the United States to receive the Distinguished Service Award of the Soil Science Society of America.

Chancellor, I have the honour to present Emeritus Professor James Patrick Quirk for admission to the degree of Doctor of Science in Agriculture, *honoris causa*.