

Dr Janet McCredie AM

The title of Honorary Fellow of the University of Sydney was conferred upon Dr Janet McCredie AM at the Medicine graduation ceremony held at 2.00pm on 13 April 2007.



The Deputy Chancellor Emeritus Professor Ann Sefton AO conferring the title upon Dr McCredie, *photo, copyright Memento Photography.*

Citation

Deputy Chancellor, I have the honour to present Janet McCredie, AM for the conferring of the title of Honorary Fellow of the University.

Janet grew up knowing about radiology. Her father was an obstetrician and her mother, Marjorie Dalgarno, was one of the early pioneers of radiology in Sydney.

She graduated from Medicine at the University of Sydney in 1959 and began working as a Resident Medical Officer at Rachel Forster Hospital that year. She completed her postgraduate studies in Radiology in Britain, and was made a Fellow of both the United Kingdom College and the Australasian College of Radiologists. From 1965 to 1972 Dr McCredie was Staff Radiologist at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney, becoming a Senior Staff Radiologist in 1973, then Visiting Medical Officer, a position she held until 2000.

In 1970, whilst investigating radiographs of thalidomide children, she worked out how thalidomide acts to cause malformations in the newborn, and uncovered a previously unrecognised mechanism of embryogenesis.

Dr McCredie's findings were published in *The Lancet* in 1973 and in the *Medical Journal of Australia* in 1974. Shortly after, she presented her theory to the hospital staff at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. She had later conferred upon her the degree of Doctor of Medicine by The University of Sydney for the thesis "Neural Crest Defects" in recognition of the importance of this discovery.

In 1975, she took up a Senior Lectureship in Surgery (Diagnostic Radiology) at the University of Sydney, but remained a Visiting Radiologist at both the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and The Royal Alexandria Hospital for Children. In 1980 she was appointed Associate Professor of Radiology within the Department of Surgery at the University.

Concurrent with her appointment in the Faculty, she was appointed Senior Education Officer in the New South Wales Branch of the Royal Australasian College of Radiologists, a role which encompassed the planning of postgraduate courses for radiologists.

In the University's Neurological laboratory, her research team identified quantitative changes in peripheral nerves of newborn rabbits, thus establishing the site of thalidomide's action at the neural crest.

As a result of her research, Janet was elected to Membership of the International Skeletal Society, which

enabled collaborative and ongoing research into thalidomide embryopathy. With the Marcus Singer Symposium she is a member of a small group of international biologists who work on regeneration of limbs, mainly in amphibia. This association with biologists has enabled her to develop further her theories of birth defects.

In 1994, Dr McCredie was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for services to diagnostic radiology and medical research. She remained Associate Professor until her retirement from The University of Sydney in 1990, and was made an Adjunct Associate Professor thereafter. She retired from private practice in 1996, and from Royal Prince Alfred Hospital four years later.

Since 2001, she has been writing a book on Neural Crest Defects which will be published this year.

Dr McCredie has been a staunch supporter of women's education and has maintained a long association with The Women's College, since her own residency there as a student. She was a Member of Council from 1965 to 2006, serving as Honorary Secretary, Deputy Chairman and Chairman.

Chancellor, I present Janet McCredie; I invite you to confer upon her the title, Honorary Fellow of the University.