

TG HUNGERFORD CITATION

BOYD ROBERT JONES

Boyd Robert Jones was born in Wellington New Zealand on 25th December 1943. Throughout history, many special, successful people have been born on December 25th, such as Sir Isaac Newtown (1642), Conrad Hilton (1887), Humphrey Bogart (1899), Rod Serling (1924) just to name a few. And, at the risk of embarrassing Boyd, I contend that he is in very appropriate company.

You might ask why people born on December 25th often do so well at their chosen occupation. I have a theory – they have a chip on their shoulder! This goes back to their childhood, as they only get presents once a year! Thus, they learn early in life to work harder and more frugally for the really important things. I call it the Scrooge Hypothesis. But for whatever reason, there is no doubt this humble and industrious Kiwi has made an exceptional impact on veterinary medicine (including veterinary continuing education) in Australasia, North America and Europe. I would go as far as to say that of all the people honored by the Hungerford Award to date, Boyd's impact has been by far the most global. It's been quite a job preparing this oration – Boyd's CV is longer than the last Master's thesis I examined. It contains over 160 peer-reviewed publications, and another 30 book chapters.

Boyd did two years of Agricultural Science before transferring to the veterinary programme at Massey University where he graduated with distinction in 1968. He was the dux in final year and was awarded five prizes through the course. He spent two years in mixed practice on the west coast of the south island of NZ, before moving to Werribee, where he was appointed Junior Lecturer in Veterinary Medicine at the University of Melbourne. Interestingly, he also became head of the small animal hospital. This was a productive period, with many clinical publications on a wide variety of different topics. Clearly he was interested in everything, and keen to investigate difficult cases and write about them.

Boyd returned to Massey University where he spent the next 22 very productive years. I don't know for a fact, but I think his patriotism took him back to Massey. They were halcyon days. Incredibly productive, with many papers on a wide range of topics, including Canine Medicine, Feline Medicine, Anaesthesia, Physiology, Infectious Diseases, Endocrinology, Epidemiology, Neurology and even Surgery. During this period he also worked and developed strategic links with two internationally famous Vet Schools – at Gainesville, Florida (USA) and Bristol (England), where he was a visiting scholar on sabbatical and developed mentors which evolved into lifelong friends. He rose through the ranks from Lecturer through to Reader and developed wonderful camaraderie with a brilliant group of clinician colleagues. To top that off – he took up a Chair in Veterinary Medicine at prestigious University College Dublin, where over five years he helped build one of the finest clinical groups in the UK, almost from scratch. He was subsequently elected Dean where he served for a further five years, and then returned to the university clinic for a swansong performance of two years before returning to NZ in semi-retirement as an Adjunct Professor back at his alma mater.

When one reviews Boyd's CV, one is compelled to be impressed by the BREADTH and DEPTH of the publications. All body systems are covered. There is no bias as to species, although in my heart of hearts I always think of Boyd as a cat vet, a personal bias if you know this speaker. I try to forget he is also a pug owner. They say LUCK FAVOURS THE PREPARED MIND, and I am sure that's the case with Boyd. All clinicians, including academic clinicians see intriguing clinical cases. But only the smartest can RECOGNISE the diamonds for what they were, and develop the strategic links that let you progress from single case studies to deep meaningful investigations that break new ground.

In Boyd's career, arguably his greatest contribution has been the discovery of five novel, previously unreported, entities. The complete disease entity was characterised in seminal studies, often spanning five or six publications. The entities included (i) the first case of Zollinger Ellison syndrome in the dog, (ii) familial hyperchylomicronaemia in the cat, (iii) feline myotonia building on his earlier work on Chows, (iv) muscular dystrophy due to truncated dystrophin and (v) CNS demyelination due to feeding of irradiated cat food, which has proved to be especially topical in Australia recently. The lipidaemia story he took from a single clinical observation, through the establishment of a colony of affected cats to an international collaboration that determined the genetic defect at the molecular level - one of the first disorders in the cat to be so elucidated. And I heard about it in a seminar in the Evelyn Williams Building many years ago that gave me a road map for doing similar studies in relation to other genetic diseases of cats and dogs.

As well as making a huge contribution to the NZ veterinary association, he was also one of the first Fellows of the Australian College of Veterinary Scientist (in Canine Medicine), and served as the College's President from 1991 to 1993.

So in terms of the Hungerford Award – first and foremost he has created an incredible number of new insights into canine and feline internal medicine. As well as teaching two generations of undergraduates, he has co-presented an Internal medicine programme for CVE. Who knows where he found the time!?! But there is no doubt that colleagues undertaking the course were tested by his intellectual rigor and they realized that their tutor had an immense veterinary mind of international stature. As well – he has contributed to veterinary education at the highest level in Europe, North America and Australasia as a Head of Discipline and Dean. I believe few people currently on the planet have a greater insight into the many facets of the veterinary profession and the conflicting demands of higher education and our profession.

But what I have said so far says nothing about the man. Boyd has no airs. He doesn't wear flash clothes. He isn't interested in fancy cars. Yet in 30 years of knowing him, or knowing of him, I have never heard a bad word about him - only good things and respect. It's not that he is a saint, indeed I have it on good authority that he is a man to be feared when he rarely loses his temper! But without doubt he is a man of principle and a person of integrity. He doesn't mind calling a spade a bloody shovel, and luckily he doesn't have a strong kiwi accent. On an individual basis he has made strong and enduring friendships with luminaries of the profession, people of the like of Michael Schaer, Tim Gruffydd-Jones, Andy Sparkes and David Church. He has mentored generations of Massey graduates and academics – Grant Guildford (former Dean, now a Dean of Science) and Hillary BurrIDGE immediately come to mind, but if you spend time at Massey now you will find lots of younger examples, like Fraser Allan (their new Dean), Nick Caves and Else Acke, plus people who have moved onto academic jobs elsewhere like Caroline Mansfield. It's a great legacy – to have influenced so many of the next generation of veterinary academics.

Perhaps the last word should go to a woman – a good friend of mine and PhD student Joanna White who is currently at Massey. After meeting Boyd for the first time she sent me an e-mail. It went something like this "He is amazingly up to date for a Professor. And why didn't you tell me he was so funny?"

Dean Taylor, I pass onto you to present this wonderful award to a super person and an illustrious beacon for the profession – Boyd Robert Jones.