




Aileen
Joy
Plant

CELEBRATION OF LIFE

13 • 4 • 07

A black and white portrait of Professor Aileen Plant, a woman with shoulder-length hair, wearing a dark top and a necklace. The portrait is set against a dark background and is partially framed by decorative white swirls on the right side.

A celebration of the life of Professor Aileen Plant

Order of Proceedings

Master of Ceremonies

Lisa Adams

Official welcome and message from Curtin

**Jane den Hollander,
Acting Vice-Chancellor**

Nyoorn Ceremony on behalf of the Nyungar community

Kim Collard

Aileen's achievements

John Mathews

Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing

Mary Murnane

Ministerial Advisory Committee for AIDS, Sexual Health and Hepatitis

John Kaldor

World Health Organization, Geneva

Angela Merianos

Northern Territory Health Department

Shirley Hendy

The Master of Applied Epidemiology program at ANU

Linda Selvey

International role and the Australian Biosecurity CRC

John Mackenzie

Aileen's protégés

Rochelle Watkins

Raina MacIntyre

Response from Aileen's family

Reg Parnell

Australasian Faculty of Public Health Medicine and

Curtin Division of Health Sciences

Charles Watson

The grand piano will be played by **Deborah Lehmann**,
a public health and medical colleague, and friend of Aileen's.



Tributes to Aileen

LISA ADAMS

Aileen, Your star never had a chance to wane, and it will always shine brightly like your sparkling blue eyes and magnificent golden hair. Who could forget your classic 'Aileen putting her hair up' manoeuvre? It was always a special treat when your hair was down.

DAVID HEYMANN

When we had ten minutes together in the morning of her last day in Indonesia, we discussed the work we had done together in the past - and our plans for the future. Her plans were simple - to continue to serve in whatever hamlet or island she found in need. Aileen will live on through those whom she has helped throughout the world. The world is a better place because of her life.

ANDREA ELLIS

I feel very privileged to have had that time with her. It only helped to reinforce the deep respect I already had for her. Such a super lady and a great mind.

STEPHEN PROWSE

In reflecting on Aileen's contribution and the comments I have received from her colleagues, words such as inspirational, infectious love for humanity, insightful, dedicated servant of public health, commitment, and enthusiasm all convey the admiration we felt for her.

RENU DAYAL-DRAGER

This has been such terrible news for all Aileen's friends and colleagues. I can only imagine what it must be to see her empty place. Aileen had a beautiful face that shone with her inner light and generosity to impart her knowledge and humanity. She is larger than life and will continue to inspire me.

ANGELA MERIANOS

Ails, you shone so brightly and nurtured us with your wisdom, kindness, compassion and generosity. You also had a great sense of the ridiculous and made us laugh, and an enormous intelligence to challenge our assumptions - great talents both. To borrow some words from another friend - a star has suddenly disappeared from the sky. I'm very proud to have been counted as one of your friends. I'll miss you.

Lots of love, Angela

Tea With Aileen

MOIRA MCKINNON

In a morning sunbeam flecked with gold

Madura leaves, brown lit speckles

Fell like grain from spoon to pot

Black twigs of Russian Caravan

Depth of flavour, she said

A sparkle in her ocean eyes

Green leaf on white china

Sweet and light Mountain Mist

She laughed and added some

In the garden we sipped

From delicate cups

Wondered on how and why

And watched a white cloud

Fade into a wide, blue sky.



Tributes to Aileen

HUME FIELD

People have said she was warm, generous, insightful - and these words reflect my impression of Aileen. And I'd add selfless. Sounds like she died 'on the job' and I suspect that would please her, but it's very small consolation for those of us left behind.

CHARLES WATSON

Aileen loved inventing projects to work on with her friends. And I was one of them. My clearest memories are the long days of work on our book, interrupted by breaks for tea or chocolate, and reminiscences of her time at Royal Darwin Hospital.

JOHN MATHEWS

We mourn Aileen Plant as our dear friend and colleague. She was greatly admired as a person because of her integrity, her energy, her achievements and her commitment to public health values in our imperfect world; she was also great fun! Aileen will not be forgotten. In so many different ways, the people that she has touched and inspired will ensure that her values and achievements live on. Aileen's legacy will be long-lasting through the work of her students and colleagues, and through all the organisations that she has so profoundly influenced.

RAINA MACINTYRE

She took such an interest in every aspect of my life. She always made time to come over for dinner when she was in Sydney. One night she held my daughter on her knee when she was a baby and had a good look at her eyes and said "Raina, get her eyes checked. She has a strabismus."

GAIL THOMSON

A very special person who always had time for people, no matter how junior they were, has left us. I do believe in God and I hope and pray that Aileen is now with Him. She will be up there organising everyone in her polite, diplomatatic way. With a few laughs on the way, I suspect.

TONY McMICHAEL

Her extensive knowledge and understanding of infectious disease ecology, biology, medicine and public health practice -- and her regional contacts and know-how in SE Asia -- will be much missed. We will miss her continuing occasional contacts, inputs and visits at NCEPH, and her cheerful demeanour.

ANGUS NICOLL

Many of us knew Aileen well as one of those people that we knew could be parachuted into difficult and stressful public health emergencies and would then work through and sort it all out. The ultimate public health 'safe pair of hands'. I first came across her in an EU meeting in Madrid when she was working in Geneva during one of her WHO placements. She was a breath of fresh Australian common sense, and good for us all. Seemingly eight foot tall and wide and built by the same firm that did Stonehenge, I always knew she had significant health problems. But she paid scant attention to herself and her health and never complained of what she was suffering. She was a wonderful public health person and a great colleague, always with a wicked sense of humour.

PAT DRURY

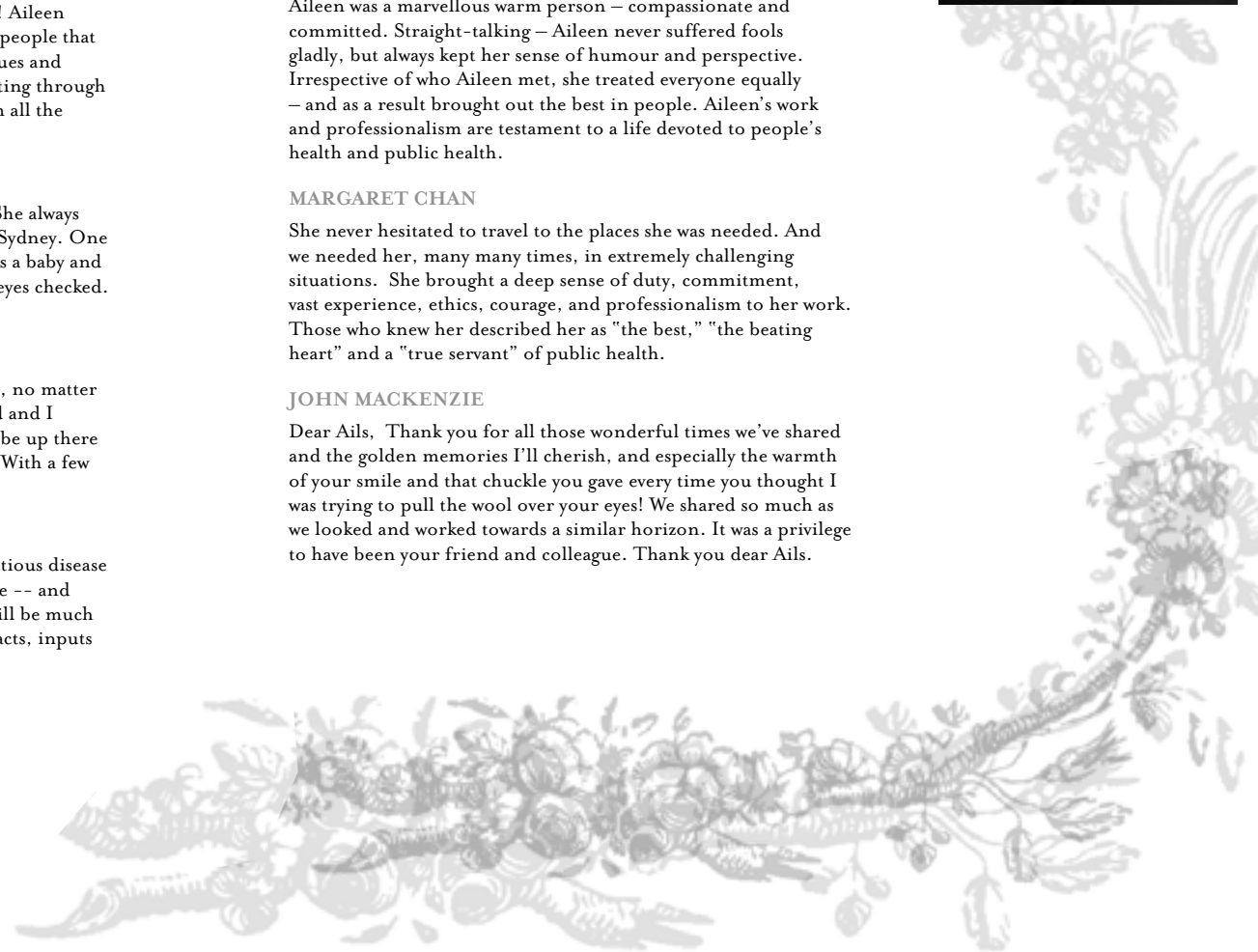
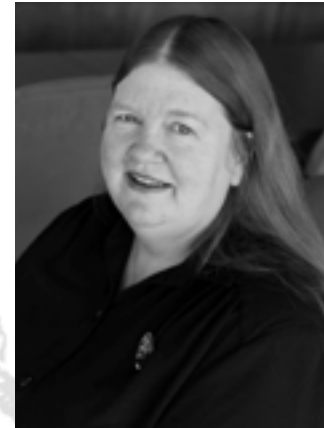
Aileen was a marvellous warm person - compassionate and committed. Straight-talking - Aileen never suffered fools gladly, but always kept her sense of humour and perspective. Irrespective of who Aileen met, she treated everyone equally - and as a result brought out the best in people. Aileen's work and professionalism are testament to a life devoted to people's health and public health.

MARGARET CHAN

She never hesitated to travel to the places she was needed. And we needed her, many many times, in extremely challenging situations. She brought a deep sense of duty, commitment, vast experience, ethics, courage, and professionalism to her work. Those who knew her described her as "the best," "the beating heart" and a "true servant" of public health.

JOHN MACKENZIE

Dear Ails, Thank you for all those wonderful times we've shared and the golden memories I'll cherish, and especially the warmth of your smile and that chuckle you gave every time you thought I was trying to pull the wool over your eyes! We shared so much as we looked and worked towards a similar horizon. It was a privilege to have been your friend and colleague. Thank you dear Ails.





Aileen Joy Plant

**Professor of International Health
& Deputy Chief Executive Officer,
Australian Biosecurity Cooperative
Research Centre, Curtin University
of Technology**

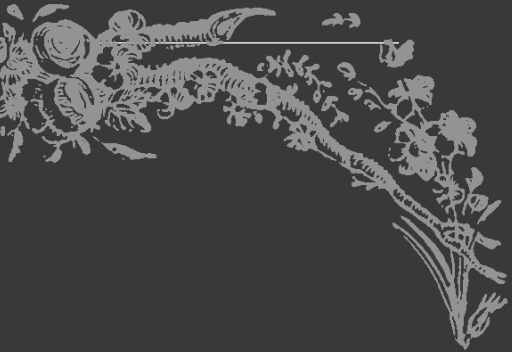
MBBS (Western Australia) (1977)
DTM&H (London) (1980)
MPH (USyd) (1988)
FAFPHM (Fellow of the Australasian Faculty
of Public Health Medicine) (1989)
PhD (USyd) (1995)

Career Milestones

- ✓ International assignments, consultancies, and advisory meetings: Vietnam, WHO Geneva, Fiji, Thailand, Egypt, Cambodia, Indonesia, Libya, China, New Zealand, USA, Malaysia
- ✓ Member, Communicable Diseases Network Australia
- ✓ Member, National Influenza Pandemic Action Committee including Chair, Research Committee
- ✓ Member, Expert Advisory Group for the Chief Medical Officer for Australia
- ✓ Member, Advisory Committee on Polio Eradication, World Health Organization
- ✓ Member, Advisory Board for the Institute of Advanced Studies, Charles Darwin University, NT
- ✓ Member, Strategic Research Initiatives Working Group, National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)
- ✓ Co-Chair, Capacity Building Grants for Population Health awards, NHMRC
- ✓ Member, Urgent Research Committee, NHMRC
- ✓ Member, National Arbovirus and Malaria Advisory Committee
- ✓ Member, both Board and Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) National Centre for Immunisation Research & Surveillance of Vaccine Preventable Diseases
- ✓ Member, Editorial Board, Australia and New Zealand Journal of Public Health



Thank You



Aileen's family wish to thank all of you for being here today. Many people travelled long distances or cancelled other commitments to be here, and we thank them especially. We wish to thank Aileen's friends and colleagues, all of whom have been wonderful in this time of grief. Our thanks go also to the Acting Vice-Chancellor, Professor Jane den Hollander, the Staff of Curtin University and the Staff of the Australian Biosecurity CRC for setting aside their grief and helping us; and for their hosting of this celebration of Aileen's life.

Above all else, we thank you all for being such wonderful friends to Ails over so many years. She loved and treasured each and every one of you; and she was right.





Aileen
Joy
Plant

1948 – 2007

