

A CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF PROFESSOR AILEEN PLANT

1948-2007

On 27 March 2007, while working in Jakarta, Professor Aileen Plant passed away suddenly. Professor Plant was one of the World Health Organisation's leading experts in outbreak investigation and a medical epidemiologist, as well as a professor of international health at Curtin University of Technology. Professor Plant also held the position of Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Biosecurity CRC for Emerging Infectious Diseases.

Within her extensive experience in outbreak investigation, her main interests were in the applied research and policy aspects of infectious disease control. She was passionate about her work and travelled extensively, often with great risk to herself, to help people and countries in need of her expertise.

It was her vast experience in the field of infectious disease control which prompted the WHO to invite her to join an expert investigation team being assembled in Vietnam to investigate the outbreak of a deadly virus, later to become known as SARS. Professor Plant and the medical investigation team in Hanoi worked tirelessly to identify the virus and to develop a method for its control, again at great risk to their own personal safety.

In recognition of her leadership during the SARS epidemic, Professor Plant was awarded the National Medal of Honour by the Vietnamese Government for her leadership of the SARS outbreak control program.

Professor Plant was a leader in her field and a person of great compassion. She will be sadly missed by her many colleagues and friends at Curtin and internationally.

A web site in tribute to Aileen has been established at: <http://memorial.curtin.edu.au/aileenplant/index.cfm>

Condolence messages can be read or added at: <http://memorial.curtin.edu.au/aileenplant/messages.cfm>