

**Mr Charles Allen AO**  
**Citation for the Award of Doctor of Laws *Honoris Causa***

In 2007 Charles Allen became Chairman of the Florey Neuroscience Institutes, a newly amalgamated group of research institutes including The Howard Florey Institute, the Brain Research Institute and the National Stroke Research Institute. His well-developed corporate skills and experience in forging multiple corporations into one strong and viable entity were of enormous value in shaping the newly expanded Institute. It had been the aspiration of the parties to include The Mental Health Research Institute in the amalgamation with the other three institutes and on 1st August 2012 this was achieved culminating in the creation of The Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health. The establishment of this new entity created the largest neuroscience institute in the southern hemisphere. The new institute ranks in the top ten such institutes and it is the third most cited neuroscience centre in the world. The Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health is now also a department of the University of Melbourne.

While amalgamation discussions were underway Charles was leading efforts to raise additional significant funds to complete the building of new laboratories. The new facilities on the University of Melbourne campus Parkville and at the Austin Hospital in Heidelberg are testament to his determination and leadership.

His personal commitment, courteous and diplomatic leadership coupled with regular visits to the laboratories to interact directly with the scientists demonstrated his commitment to science and for the discovery of solutions to the challenges of brain diseases.

The Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health is now perfectly placed to lead Australia's research effort in neuroscience. The creation of this new entity comes at a time when the human and economic cost of illnesses affecting the brain are capturing international attention and new technologies are providing fresh insights into the human brain, its function and malfunction.

Charles Allen would describe himself first and foremost as an 'oil man' having spent the 35 years of his professional career in oil exploration and production as a geologist/geophysicist and as a senior manager working with Shell International in many parts of the world. From 1980 his last 16 executive years were as Chief Executive of Woodside Petroleum in Australia. Queried as to what he would consider his most important contribution during his working career, it would be the establishment of Woodside Petroleum as a technically competent and confident independent Australian oil company and bringing the North West Shelf Liquefied Natural Gas Project (NW Shelf LNG project) of which he was the chairman for 15 years to a successful completion. As the first LNG development in Australia and a new export industry for the nation, the NW Shelf LNG Project, a partnership of six major international oil companies, is still probably the nation's largest single income earner in the private sector.

Charles Allen came to a life of exploration from parents who had lived or worked in Central and West Africa for over 30 years in the mining industry; geology and geophysics were a logical course for him to follow. On leaving school and after two years National Service for the most part spent in Malaya with the Royal (Malayan) Engineers during the Emergency, he studied at Cambridge and Imperial College London before joining Shell International in The Hague in 1961.

Charles Allen received the AO in 1990, was awarded the Centenary Medal in 2003, the Lewis G Weeks Gold Medal in 2002, the Australian Production and Exploration Association's Reg Spriggs Gold Medal in 1996 and the Australian Institute of Energy Medal in 1992. He was elected a Fellow of the Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering in 1996.

He has long been a strong believer that Australians who have the opportunity should gain post graduate experience overseas. To this end in conjunction with the Cambridge Commonwealth Trust, he has established currently five scholarships for Australians to study at Cambridge University for PhDs and M.Phils.

Charles Allen came to Australia to establish a major new export industry, which after 16 years was successfully accomplished. During this time he participated actively in industry associations and business governance. On retirement he utilised his experience on the boards of major Australian companies and not-for-profit organizations culminating in what he would consider one of his most satisfying experiences, the successful gestation and birth of the new Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health.