



FOR THE AWARD OF A GOLD MEDAL OF THE PHARMACEUTICAL SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND

Sir Graeme Douglas, Gold Medallist

The Gold Medal of the Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand is the highest award that the Society can bestow on a member, and is now most fittingly awarded to Sir Graeme Douglas.

Sir Graeme began his career in community pharmacy in Auckland in the suburb of Te Atatu South. He recognised an opportunity to import niche pharmaceuticals that the multi-national corporations had deleted but for which community pharmacy had still a requirement. From this modest beginning, the company acquired several agencies for distribution in New Zealand, which over a 15 year period provided steady growth for the business.

In 1980 the company decided to embark on the development of its own dosage forms and established a manufacturing and laboratory facility in Stoddard Road, Mt Roskill. In 1990 it acquired the manufacturing facilities of Warner Lambert at Banks Road, Mt Wellington to complement the Stoddard Road activities. At that time the company opened its first office in Australia. Originally dedicated to the promotion of the internally developed Karicare brand of infant formulas, over time, Douglas Pharmaceuticals has expanded into the supply of prescription medicines in the Australian market.

In the early 1990s the company developed a new office and warehouse facility, followed by an expanded manufacturing facility in Central Park Drive. It is now the largest employer in Waitakere City.

During this time Sir Graeme has always remained a great supporter of his profession and his country. It would have been financially advantageous for Graeme to have shifted the business off-shore but Graeme chose to remain in New Zealand and provide pharmacy with ready access to the services of his company.

His successful company has endured many challenges from an unforgiving pharmaceutical strategy that caused some of the largest pharmaceutical companies to leave New Zealand, much to the demise of the profession. Due to Graeme's vision and determination, or as he puts it "bloody mindedness", the company continued to expand and grow.

As well as his commitment to pharmacy Sir Graeme has also been a keen supporter of the community of West Auckland. Despite his growing business he found time to successfully compete as a weightlifter as well as in track & field events. He has been one of the major sponsors of the Waitakere City Stadium and the field and all weather running track bears his name.

Sir Graeme also sponsors the Going West Literary Festival & is the major sponsor of the Guide Dog Services.

Sir Graeme has never wavered in his support for a strong industry base in New Zealand and indeed Graeme's contribution to pharmacy has been extensive over the years and his commitment to the profession is nothing less than extraordinary. Douglas Pharmaceuticals is always a major sponsor at all pharmacy conferences and symposia and supports the work of the Society and pharmacy in general. Organisations such as the New Zealand College of Pharmacists owe much of their success to his benevolence and wise counsel.

A 'gentleman' of the old school, Sir Graeme still writes congratulatory and thank you letters when the appropriate occasion arises. He has a presence and manner about him that makes him stand out in a crowd. He is highly regarded by all members of the profession throughout New Zealand. Many pharmacists speak warmly of Sir Graeme's support and interest in their careers.

What has come through again and again when people talk about Sir Graeme is a picture of a modest, unassuming gentleman who is always concerned for the welfare of others and passionate about pharmacy. I do not think there is any pharmacy event that the name of Douglas Pharmaceuticals is not up there amongst the major sponsors. It is not however for his financial contributions that Graeme is remembered but for his interest in pharmacy and the people committed to our profession.

Today we recognise in some small measure the contribution that Graeme has made to pharmacy with this award.

A gold medal for a gold pharmacist.