



Grant Sutherland

Grant Sutherland was born in Australia where, after school and college, he studied biology at Melbourne University. He then moved to Europe and obtained his PhD in prenatal cytogenetics at the University of Edinburgh in 1974. Following this, he returned to Australia, this time to the Women's and Children's Hospital, a teaching Hospital of the University of Adelaide, as Head of Cytogenetics, to which he added Molecular Genetics around 1990. He stepped aside as Department Head to become a part-time Research Fellow in 2002.

His first publications were in 1967 at the age of 22 years. These publications, written in the pioneer period of clinical cytogenetics, concerned sex chromosome aberrations in prison populations and single cases of rare autosomal rearrangements. From his publication list it is evident that he gradually broadened his scientific interests without giving up areas of research in which he was already active. The next topic for him, which he began in Edinburgh, was screening for chromosome aberrations, initially in newborns, followed by studies in stillbirths and the mentally retarded. Next came biochemical and cytogenetic screening of fetuses for genetic diseases and technical developments in the context of prenatal diagnosis. Since 1976 he has worked on what became the topic that has earned him world-wide respect as a leading expert and researcher: fragile sites on human chromosomes. However, he did not stay just with cytogenetics. He once again broadened his scientific interests to include gene mapping and cloning and finally subtelomere screening and other molecular cytogenetic techniques for the detection of sub-microscopic chromosome imbalances. Throughout this period, dysmorphism and clinical cytogenetics and genetics remained part of his interests.

From 1967 up to now, Grant Sutherland has been extremely productive with almost 500 scientific publications, practically all in peer reviewed journals. One can hardly find a high-ranking journal in which he has not published: the list includes Nature, Nature Genetics, Cell, Science, PNAS, Human Molecular Genetics, American Journal of Human Genetics and, specifically for cytogeneticists, Cytogenetics and Genome Research and Chromosome Research. Equally long is the list of journals for which he served as a member of the Editorial Board, including the Nature Encyclopedia of the Human Genome. Besides contributing to dozens of books (just to mention one of them, the prominent textbook by Emery and Rimoin), he published two books himself. Both were on the topics of his main interest: "Fragile Sites on Human Chromosomes" (with Fred Hecht) in 1985 and, well known to every cytogeneticist and clinical geneticist, "Chromosome Abnormalities and Genetic Counselling" (with Mac Gardner), first edition in 1989 and third edition in 2004.

Grant played an important role in the Australian national as well as in the international genetics community. Roles fulfilled by him include membership of the Founding Council of HUGO of which he later became President, and President of the Human Genetics Society of Australasia. He has trained more than a dozen human geneticists (some of whom received awards) and post-doctoral fellows. Long is his list of major lectures and awards, particularly in Australia and in the U.S.