

Peter Allan (1930–2016)

PROFESSOR Emeritus Peter Allan was born in Pietermaritzburg in 1930. He matriculated at Maritzburg College (first class) and in 1948 was part of the second intake of students to the newly established Faculty of Agriculture at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg. Majoring in horticulture, he graduated with the class of 1951 with a distinction in horticulture.



In 1952 he was appointed as a lecturer in horticulture under HOD Professor J.C. le Roux. From 1960–1969 he was senior lecturer. From 1970 through to official retirement in 1990, he occupied the chair of Horticultural Science, although in 1988 he stepped down from the headship of the department, which was taken over by Professor B. Nigel Wolstenholme until retirement in 1998. Since 1990, Allan was emeritus professor and honorary research associate for much of the time until recently. He took a particular interest in the horticulture section at Ukulinga Research Farm.

Allan was an active researcher in several applied fields of Horticultural Science, including vegetative propagation, ecophysiology, floriculture, cultivar selection and evaluation (including his Honey Gold papaya selection) and climate modification. He and his students worked on a wide range of fruits, including pawpaw, macadamia nut and low-chill deciduous fruits such as peach, grape and kiwifruit, as well as floriculture crops. He published some 80 refereed, and numerous other industry-oriented papers, many after retirement in 1990. His 249th and final

paper was submitted in June 2016. He supervised four PhDs and 12 MSc Agriculture students, and taught, over the years, five horticulture courses, plus contributing to other undergraduate courses.

Allan spent five overseas sabbaticals in countries which included the USA (Hawaii and mainland USA), Australia and Israel. He attended nearly 30 overseas scientific congresses, and numerous local congresses, always presenting one or more papers, often with postgraduate students. He became internationally known for his dedicated research in applied horticultural science. His awards include Fellow of the SA Society for Crop Production, honorary member and later honorary life president of the Southern African Society for Horticultural Sciences, and honorary membership of the SA Macadamia Growers Association.

Married to Elizabeth (Polly), who died in 2010, they had five children, all of whom obtained degrees and four of whom currently live overseas.

Allan presided over a particularly productive period in the life of the former Department of Horticultural Sciences and continued to support

the discipline through the profound changes in Agricultural Studies on the Pietermaritzburg campus. His wide knowledge, experience and wisdom will be sorely missed.

B. NIGEL WOLSTENHOLME