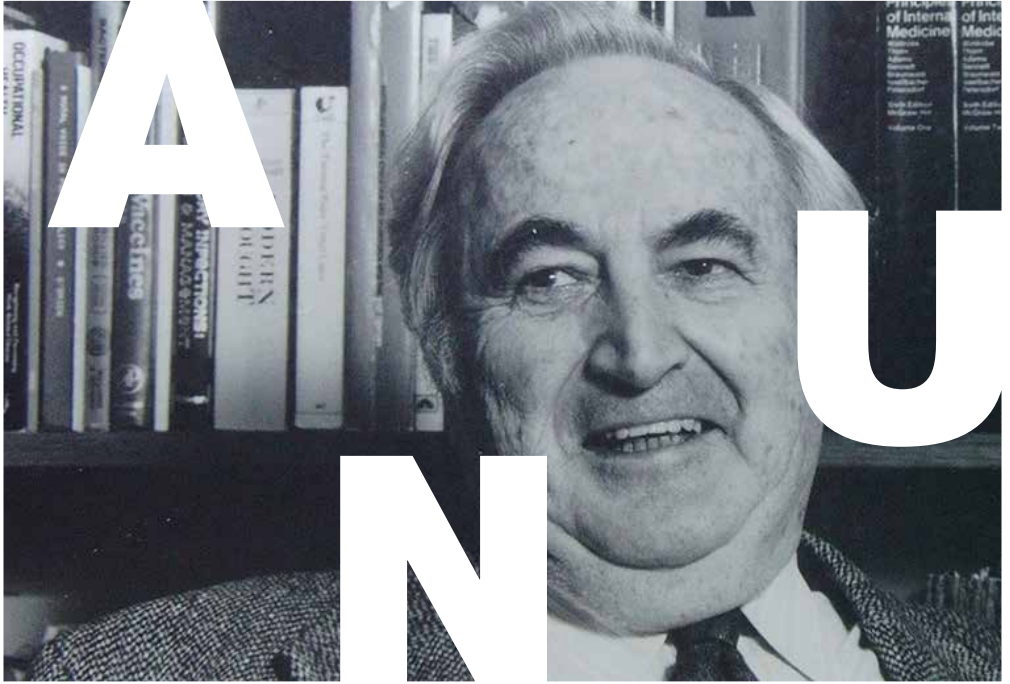




Australian
National
University



REMEMBERING
EMERITUS PROFESSOR
JOHN (JACK) C. CALDWELL AO
1928 - 2016

ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

Welcome and Master of Ceremonies

Professor Brian P. Schmidt AC

Vice Chancellor and President, The Australian National University

Professor Peter McDonald

Professor of Demography, Crawford School of Public Policy, ANU

Emeritus Professor Terence Hull

School of Demography, ANU

Dr Ann Larson

Senior International Health Specialist Abt JTA; CEO of Social Dimensions:

Visitor National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health, ANU

Musical interlude performed by ANU School of Music student

Ellen Falconer

Professor Alan Lopez

Melbourne Laureate Professor and Rowden-White Chair of Global Health and
Burden of Disease Management, University of Melbourne

Emeritus Professor Bob Douglas

Director of the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health, ANU,
from 1989 to 2001

Colin Caldwell

son of John C. Caldwell

Wednesday 25 May 2016

Common Room, University House

The Australian National University



A LIFE LIVED TO THE FULL

Emeritus Professor John Charles Caldwell AO (Jack) completed his PhD degree in demography at ANU in 1962 and was appointed as a Fellow in the Department of Demography in 1964 and as Head of the Department from 1970 to 1988. He then moved to the newly created National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health where he was initially Acting Director and subsequently Head of NCEPH's Health Transition Centre.

Between ANU appointments, he had been Senior Research Fellow in Demography and Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Ghana (1962-64), and African Regional Director in Demography and African Regional Representative in Demography, both positions being with the Population Council, New York (1967-70). He had various visiting positions at the Universities of Ife, Nsukka, Ibadan, Nairobi, Princeton, Colombo, Indiana, Southampton, Cambridge and Harvard at various times. But it was ANU, the Murrumbidgee River and sunsets over the Brindabellas that always drew him back to Canberra.

A 2009 survey of nearly 1000 demographers worldwide, named Jack Caldwell the most influential researcher of all time in the field of demography. In 1985, the Population Association of America presented him with its highest prize, the Irene B. Taeuber Award for excellence in demographic research. In 1994, he began an elected four-year term as President of the International Union for the Scientific

Study of Population, the peak international body for demography and, in 2004, he was presented with the United Nations Population Award. These are the three highest international honours in the field of demography and no other person has won all three of these awards. He was made an Officer in the General Division of the Order of Australia in 1994 and received the Australian Centenary Medal in 2001.

Caldwell's seminal work included documentation of the role of mothers' education in fertility limitation and child mortality decline and the role of circumcision in inhibiting the spread of HIV/AIDS in Africa. He is particularly noted for his "wealth flows" theory, which relates demographic transition theory to changes in intergenerational transfers within the family.

Jack married Pat Beech (nee Barrett), a young war widow, in 1948, left university early and then supported a growing family by teaching, first in Nabic on the Mid North Coast, and later in Canberra. Pat was always important to his work, and as a couple, they researched and wrote together until her death in 2008. By this stage Parkinson's Disease was also overtaking Jack's life and work. They had four sons, Peter, Colin, Grahame and Bruce.

By Professor Peter McDonald,
Professor of Demography,
Crawford School of Public Policy, ANU

IMAGE: Jordan, late 1972.



Bruce and Jack with Pat Ohadike and his wife, on the edge of the Rift Valley, Ethiopia, in 1973. Pat was Jack's first PhD student and was then at the Economic Commission for Africa at Addis Ababa.



On leaving Ibadan, Nigeria, at the end of 1973, assembled people who kept the home and research efforts going: from left the Caldwell's gardener, Ushman their cook, and his wife Caroline, Sue Soyinka and her daughter Lara (conversing with an unidentified man), Pat, Jack, Tunde, Remi and Peter Morton-Williams.



Belur Temple, Karnataka, in the early 1980s.



At the Royal Botanical Gardens Peradeniya, outside Kandy, Sri Lanka, in 1985. With the exception of the boy, Pat and John, the women were all interviewers on the surveys.

WHY JACK LOVED ANU

He could have gone anywhere. He is, as far as I know, still an adjunct Professor at Harvard. The University of Chicago begged him to head a department alongside Ted Schultz and Gary Becker. Princeton always welcomed his stay. Berkley, Stanford, Michigan, Pennsylvania ... When I was young we came within a hair's breadth of going to Johns Hopkins.

But we didn't then and he didn't subsequently. America always called, and he enjoyed his time in New York, but the siren call was always Canberra and ANU.

So why? Money of course talks – as he noted when he went to Dallas for six months, he said he needed to go for his superannuation and, indeed, it has been useful. But money was not particularly important to him. We did not have it when I was a child and he did not greatly increase his income thereafter. Staying in Canberra was much more about one's enjoyment of life and fulfilment through work.

Put simply, the conditions ANU offered were superior to any other institution. A research based institution which provided stimulating colleagues with enquiring minds allowed him to pursue ideas. No small part of the attraction of the Coombs Building was its interdisciplinary access to first rate minds working across Asia, Africa, the Middle East and the Pacific. He believed in the knowledge of others but he also believed in the power of a discipline to instil rigour in one's thinking. Demography, as a discipline, offered rigour but the Social Sciences, including

history and development studies, provided necessary breadth and ultimately depth to one's thinking.

He was not, of course, averse to shifting his field of study. When the opportunity arose to become a quasi epidemiologist, he seized it. Many of the same research ideas and skills were retained and he liked to think that applying a demographic discipline to public health produced results. But here to, with Bob Douglas and others, he enjoyed the collegial stimulation he there encountered. It lies in the DNA of ANU.

ANU has one enormous advantage over other Australian universities: it looks outwards towards the world. He never forgot, nor ignored, the importance of researching Australian topics but he did not think that truths were to be found in isolation within Australia. ANU mattered because it was, and is, profoundly Internationalist in outlook. No small part of the department he built up, and subsequently in NCEPH as well, was the fundamentally important contribution that postgraduate students from around the world made in stimulating the flow of ideas within. This benefited all. This was partly, perhaps largely, the reason he built up the number of postgraduate candidates. It contributed to developing – I think it can be asserted – the most productive demography department in the world at the time and something rather similar in terms of NCEPH later on.

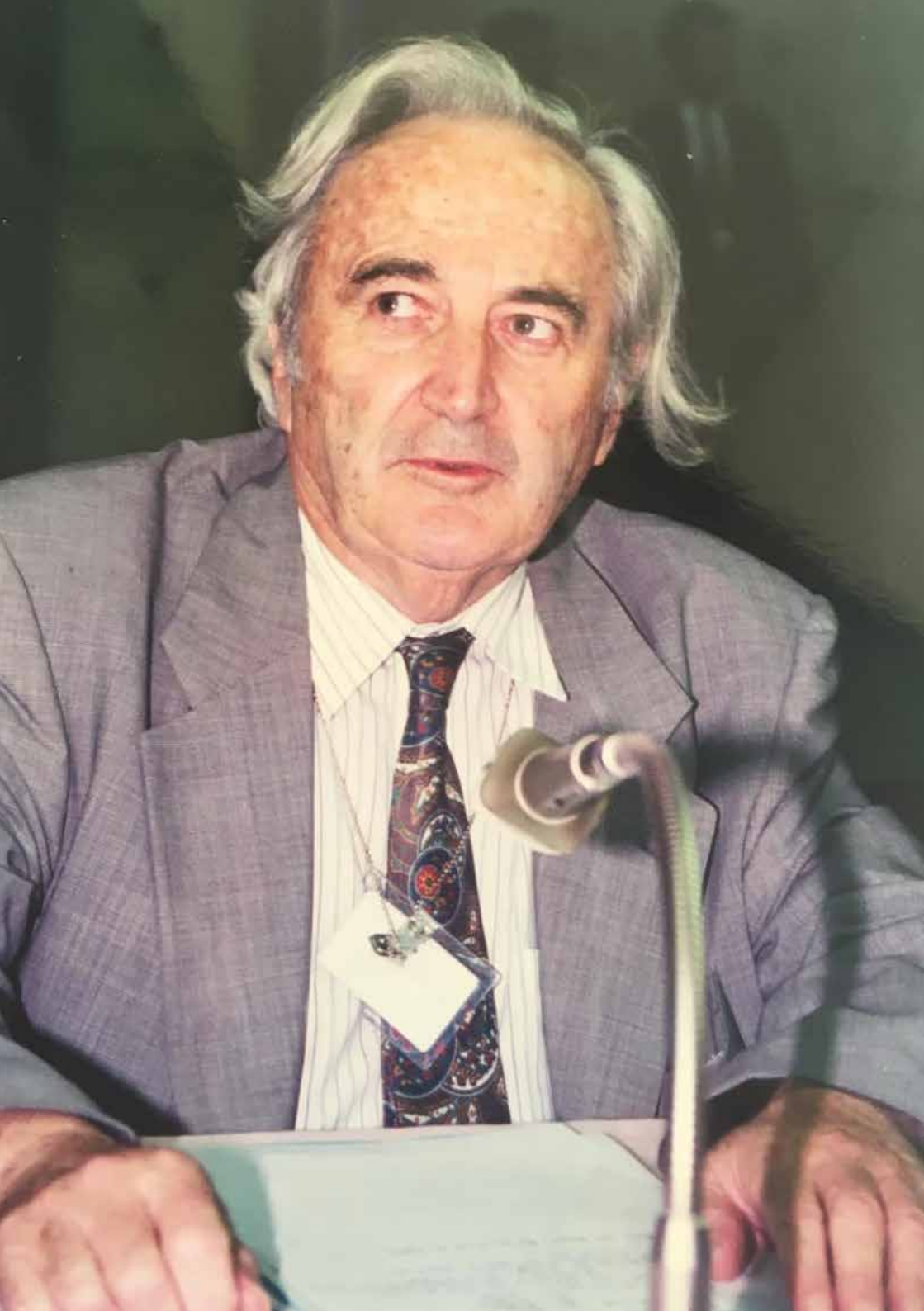
But why not Chicago? Well Mum, when it was put to them said "Chicago? I couldn't bear the weather." And he basically agreed. However it was more than this. It was not only that America always remained an interesting but slightly foreign land, but that he enjoyed wandering the hills behind Canberra. He knew all its rivers and creeks. He had climbed most of the hills and mountains. He had been exploring them for over 77 years, from the age of 10, until he died. Bruce, Indrani, her niece Kaushi, and I went and found Blue Pool, in Jerrabomberra, a couple of weeks ago. I hadn't known it existed until, while raking through photographs for the funeral, I saw Dad's photograph of it taken in the early 'forties.

But within the landscape, there was a further dimension. For him, the landscape encapsulated the Australian spirit, a land where people were fundamentally democratic in attitude, usually accepting of others, often laconic and sceptical in outlook, and it was here that he felt at ease.

Colin Caldwell
(with help from Bruce)



In the Gardens of Ninfa, south of Rome, in 2008.



“Demography will remain a distinct discipline because of its approach: its demand that conclusions be in keeping with observable and testable data in the real world, that these data be used as shrewdly as possible to elicit their real meanings, and that the study should be representative of sizeable or significant and definable populations.”

[“Demography and Social Science”, 1996]

