

MARY J. GARSON

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Mary Garson is a Professor of Chemistry at The University of Queensland in Brisbane. She arrived in Australia as a Queen Elizabeth II Research Fellowship at James Cook University of North Queensland (1983-1986) after undergraduate and postgraduate work at the University of Cambridge, UK. She undertook postdoctoral research in Italy (Overseas Research fellowship of the Royal Society), in Cambridge (college research fellowship), and as a medicinal chemist in the pharmaceutical industry before progressing to an academic appointment at the University of Wollongong. She moved to The University of Queensland in 1990, and was promoted to a professorial position in 2006, serving as Deputy Head of the School of Chemistry and Molecular Biosciences from 2005-2009.

Professor Garson has published widely on chemistry, ecology and biosynthesis of bioactive metabolites from marine organisms, mainly from sponges and mollusks. A second active area of research explores the chemistry of South East Asian medicinal plants in collaboration with overseas colleagues. An unusual form of professional recognition is the naming of a new flatworm species that she first collected at Heron Island as *Maritigrella marygarsonae*.

She has been President of the Queensland branch of the Royal Australian Chemical Institute (RACI), as well as chair of the International Relations Committee of RACI and member of the National Committee for Chemistry. She was the Executive Secretary of the World Chemistry Congress/IUPAC General Assembly held in Brisbane in 2001. From 2002-2005 she was Chair of the Board of Australian Science Innovations, formerly the Australian Science Olympiads, and led a unique university-government-industry corporate partnership that organized the 15th International Biology Olympiad in Brisbane. She arranged a chemistry-biotechnology symposium within the World Chemistry Congress (Torino, 2007) and was co-chair of a major international natural products symposium held in 2011 in Brisbane.

Since 2006 she has been a Titular Member of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC), Secretary of Division III (2008-2011) and is the incoming President-Elect (2012-3), assuming the Division Presidency and an IUPAC Bureau position for the 2014-2015 biennium. She created and led a global networking breakfast *Women sharing a Chemical Moment in Time* as a pre-launch event for the International Year of Chemistry (2011); worldwide, >5000 women chemists from >40 countries participated, making this one of the largest (virtual) gatherings of women scientists ever held. Professor Garson has been a passionate advocate for women in chemistry for many years, and has published on this topic, as well as on issues of access to biodiversity.

Professor Garson received the Leighton Medal of RACI in 2011 in recognition of her eminent contributions and leadership to the chemistry community, both within Australia and overseas.