



NEVILLE WHIFFEN

Graduated 1928

Neville Albert Whiffen (1924 -1928) qualified in molecular Chemistry, Industrial Microbiology and Advanced industrial Management in NSW, UK, and USA. In 1943, he was appointed Senior Scientific Liaison Officer at the Australia Legation in Washington DC. At a meeting of the Joint Chiefs called by President Franklin Roosevelt at the Pentagon in 1944, Neville, the only non-American present, offered the Chairman, Admiral Furer, a report advising on the appalling state of the equipment being used to fight the war in the Pacific. As a result, he was invited to become a member of the top-level US Army-Navy Overseas Research and Development Steering Committee to on the 'tropicalization' of all wartime supplies. In 1947 he was awarded the Medal of Freedom by President Harry Truman. This is the highest civilian Honour bestowed by the President of the USA.

After the War, Neville became involved in the commercialisation of penicillin, studied at first hand developments in the US food industry, was appointed as the first Foreign Liaison Officer to the newly formed US Atomic Energy Commission and represented Australia at the UN Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy.

On his Return to Australia, Neville was appointed to as principal Research Officer with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and established the Division of Wool Technology. He became the President of the Chemical Society of Sydney University, the Foundation Chairman of the NSW Group of Industrial Chemical Engineers, and a member of the Advisory Committee of the Sydney University School of Chemistry.

Neville Whiffen was named a Member of the Order of Australia for service to chemical engineering in the Queens Birthday Honours list in 2002. In 2003 he was awarded the Centennial Medal.