three major teaching hospitals in the complex, thus ensuring clinical exposure - not simply during examinations - for all students to their academic head of department. He played a major role in unifying the component parts of the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health and his successors have built admirably on his work in that regard.

John Hansen has been instrumental in developing community-based and orientation paediatrics. The establishment of Loewenstein Chairs first at the University of the Witwatersrand and subsequently at other universities, promoted such activities and were enhanced by his efforts. He was instrumental in securing the initial private funding for the Division of Community Paediatrics which from 1976 focused specifically on Primary Health Care Nurse Training in Soweto. Such endeavours pre-empted current health policy by nearly two decades.

Professor Hansen retired from his Wits University chair in 1985, retaining Emeritus status. He has been a recipient of numerous awards, including an honorary Doctor of Science degree from the University of Cape Town. Since his retirement John Hansen has continued to share his expertise through part-time consultancies at various organisations.

The profession, our universities and our country have much to be proud of and grateful for when we honour Professor John Hansen as a world-renowned nutrition scientist, as a teacher, as a paediatrician, and as a South African. It is an honour to present John Hansen for the degree of Doctor of Science in Medicine honoris causa.

HONORARY GRADUATE

Anthony Melcher

Anthony Henry Melcher was born in Johannesburg in 1927. He enrolled in the Faculty of Dentistry of the University of the Witwatersrand in 1945 and graduated with a Bachelor of Dental Surgery degree in 1949. He joined his father in general dental practice in Johannesburg, a family partnership that was to last for twelve years.

Anthony Melcher’s academic calling manifested early, so that within two years of qualifying he offered his services to the Faculty of Dentistry in an honorary capacity and became a part-time clinical demonstrator. Initially his duties were restorative dentistry but he became more and more intrigued by the new discipline of periodontology, which concerns the maintenance of the health of the supporting tissues of teeth. Melcher was also fascinated by the healing response of bone, which is an integral part of periodontology. He shared this basic science interest with Professor James Irving, Director of the then recently established Joint Dental Research Unit of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research and the University (the predecessor of the present Medical Research Council/Wits Dental Research Institute). With no urging needed from Irving, Melcher began to do research in a part-time capacity into the healing defect in bone. This culminated in a Master of Dental Surgery degree in 1969. (This quantity named doctoral level degree was replaced some years later in the faculty by the more conventional Ph.D.)

As soon as didactic postgraduate education began in the Faculty, Anthony Melcher enrolled to complete, in 1958, the Higher Diploma in Dentistry, the only clinical postgraduate qualification in South Africa at the time. Thereafter he introduced the first formal teaching in periodontics at undergraduate and postgraduate level at Wits and in South Africa.

By that time Melcher had gone as far as he could in periodontology in South Africa. In 1962 he left Wits and Johannesburg for London, where he became a Research Fellow in the Institute of Dental Surgery of the University of London, the leading centre for periodontology in the United Kingdom. Three years later, in 1964, a Doctor of Philosophy degree was awarded to him and he was appointed Leverhulme Research Fellow and senior lecturer in the Department of Dental Science at the Royal College of Surgeons in London. At the same time he was made a visiting scientist in the Tissue and Organ Culture Unit of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund. Through this his clinical skills were enhanced by a solid grounding in basic science.

Melcher remained in London to research tissue responses to periodontal disease until 1969, when he was recruited by the University of Toronto as a Professor of Dentistry responsible for periodontics. His research eminence and leadership qualities were recognised in 1973 when the Canadian Medical Research Council formed a group in Periodontal Physiology with Melcher as Director. To this day, this is the only dental research group established by the Canadian Medical Research Council.

The next change occurred in 1983, when Melcher was appointed Chairman of the Graduate Department of Dentistry at the University of Toronto; Director, Division of Postgraduate Dental Education in the Faculty of Dentistry and Associate Dean, Life Sciences, School of Graduate Studies, University of Toronto. A year later a Doctor of Science degree was conferred on him by the University of London.

Anthony Melcher’s academic career reached its zenith in 1988, when he became Vice-Provost of the University of Toronto, an office he held until his retirement as Professor Emeritus in 1993.
In addition to his positions in universities, Melcher has held high office in other organizations. In 1982/1983 he was President of the International Association for Dental Research. He served on the Council of the Medical Research Council of Canada between 1984 and 1989 and on the Council's executive committee for the last two years. Other bodies on which he has held office are the National Institute for Dental Research in the USA and the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research and the Ontario Universities Health Research Committee in Canada.

During his years in academia Melcher remained in research, performing seminal investigations into the physiology and disease of periodontal tissues. He has published numerous peer-reviewed articles, has presented many papers at congresses and has trained and inspired a generation of young researchers in periodontology.

Throughout his career Melcher never lost contact with the dental school at his Alma Mater, Wits, or with other South African dental schools. He has returned to lecture and to offer research guidance, has acted as an external examiner for postgraduate research degrees, and has been a rallying point for South African dental graduates in North America.

Anthony Melcher has made striking advances in dental research, has promoted high standards of academic teaching and has brought honour to the University, to the dental profession and to South Africa. The University recognizes the achievements of one of its own graduates in the course of a long and distinguished academic career by conferring on Anthony Henry Melcher its highest honour, the degree of Doctor of Science in Dentistry honoris causa.