

Warman, Dr Charles Harold (1910–2008)

Dr Charles Harold Warman was born in Kalgoorlie, Australia in 1910. At 14 years of age, Charles Warman won a scholarship to attend the Western Australia School of Mines where he graduated in 1931.

In the early 1930s, he worked as a draftsman at a gold mine in Kalgoorlie, Western Australia. He saw that some improvements in slurry pump technology were needed and set out to improve the designs.

By 1938 he had made several improvements to slurry pump design and had taken out patents on his ideas. He improved the seal so that it was simple and required little maintenance. He introduced a rubber lining which could be replaced easily. The pumps were manufactured and marketed from Kalgoorlie until 1955, when they accounted for about 90 per cent of the Western Australian market.

Charles continued to improve the pump design. His company released new generations of pumps in 1950 and 1962. In the late 1950s the company moved to Sydney and built a new factory at Atarmon. A factory opened in North America in the early 1960s and in 1969 the company was taken over by a large mining group.

At the end of the century, Warman International had its main office in Sydney along with its manufacturing, marketing and distribution facilities. Warman-designed pumps were being manufactured in the USA, UK and Brazil, and there were licensees in Japan, China, the Philippines and India. There was a sales office in nearly every country in the world!

A graduate and past lecturer of Curtin University of Technology's Western Australian School of Mines (WASM), Dr Warman was one of WASM's most accomplished graduates and was named by Engineers Australia as one of the top ten Australian Engineers of the 20th century. He was inducted into the Australian Prospectors and Miners Hall of Fame on 23rd October 2009 and was recognised for his extraordinary and unique lifelong contribution to the Australian minerals industry by being awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Science in 1983. He was also awarded an Order of Australia for service to engineering, the mining industry and the community.

Just as significantly, he also played an important role in the early days of the development of iron ore mining in WA by helping to develop the Mt Newman Iron Ore operations.

Dr Warman also established MD Research in Sydney in 1969, where he supported and contributed to education, postgraduate scholarships, student competitions and infrastructure development.

Dr C H Warman passed away on 11 July 2008, aged 98.