

## OBITUARIES



**John Andrew Mulrennan, Sr.**  
1906-1985

Following a very brief illness, Dr. John A. Mulrennan, Sr. died on November 20, 1985 in Jacksonville, Florida. A native Floridian, he was born and brought up on a cattle and citrus farm in Hillsborough County, Florida. He left home in 1928 to attend the University of Florida where he earned a B.S. degree in 1932 in entomology. Upon graduation he worked as an entomologist for L. Maxcy Inc., a large citrus company. After one year he accepted a position with the Rockefeller Foundation in Tallahassee, Florida working on malaria vector control. Thus began a unique career in public health which spanned almost 50 years and earned John A. Mulrennan a place in the annals of mosquito control not only in Florida but the nation. He left Florida in 1935 to work for the Texas State Health Department as a malariologist but returned in 1938 to the Rockefeller Foundation to work on mosquito control in Florida. In 1941, he was named chief entomologist and director of the Bureau of Entomology of the State Board of Health (now Health and Rehabilitative Services). In cooperation with the U.S. Public Health Service, the Rockefeller Foundation and the County Health Departments, malaria control programs were established throughout the state. Since 1948 no indigenous malaria has been found in Florida. This was done by writing two state laws which created state funds for mosquito control in counties and districts. Similar mosquito control projects and laws have been carried out in other states which were copied after Florida's system. Since the 1953 State Aid Mosquito Control Law was enacted, tourist business in Florida has increased from less than one billion dollars annually from winter travelers to almost ten billion dollars from a year round industry. Salt marsh mosquitoes no longer scourge the public during the summer months in the coastal areas of the state.

He also had the foresight to realize that insecticides were not the long range solution to vector control. He persuaded the legislature to create two research centers, the Florida Medical Entomology Laboratory in Vero Beach, Florida and the West Florida Arthropod Research Center in Panama City, Florida. These laboratories work on the basic biology, physiology, genetics and ecology of mosquitoes, sand flies, midges and flies as well as new control techniques. Because of his tireless efforts in this field, Doctor Mulrennan Sr. is considered the father of Mosquito Control in Florida.

He also drafted the first state law in 1947 for regulation of the structural pest control industry and worked hard to upgrade this industry for the benefit of both the industry and the public. This law forced the unscrupulous individuals to leave the field and upgraded the industry to the level of integrity it now enjoys in the state. The Florida Pest Control industry is one of the most progressive in the nation due to the guidance and regulations created by John Mulrennan. He was honored for his productive career in Entomology with a Doctor of Science degree in 1972 from the University of Florida. Although he retired as Director of the Bureau of Entomology in 1976, he continued to be actively involved in entomology through his work in professional societies. He was a member of the American Mosquito Control Association (Past President), Florida Anti-Mosquito Association (Past President and Secretary-Treasurer), the Florida Pest Control Association, Florida Public Health Association (Past President, and he was presented Meritorious Service Award, 1971); Gamma Sigma Delta, Hyacinth Control Society, Phi Sigma and Alpha Zeta.

Dr. Mulrennan is survived by two sons, Dr. John A. Mulrennan, Jr., and Joseph P. Mulrennan; two daughters, Annie M. McCarthy and Sandra C. Jansen; 11 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He is also survived by four brothers, Joseph B., Michael M., Francis D., and Timothy C. Mulrennan; two sisters, Annie M. Mulrennan and Helen G. Young.

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