



The College blazer still fits for EP Branch Secretary Smokey Ashton, seen here chatting with wife Cathy Sergejevs at the Streaky Bay dinner.



Tina and Barry Lawes also attended the EP Branch AGM and dinner.

Eyre Peninsula Branch

The Eyre Peninsula Branch Annual General Meeting and Dinner was held this year at Streaky Bay on March 3. Forty people were there and it was described by Peter Dunn as a "splendid success". Some 'changes to the guard' emerged from the meeting. Office bearers and committee now are: President – Mark Stanley; Secretary – Brian (Smokey) Ashton; Treasurer – Tim Ashman; Eyre Peninsula ROCA Committee representative – Peter Dunn; Committee – the Executive plus Barry Lawes, 'Fish' Cordon and Ben Ranford.

Next year's dinner meeting will be at Port Lincoln. No firm date has been set but it will be about the same time.

RAC/Hawkesbury golf day

The annual RAC/Hawkesbury perpetual trophy golf day held in October last year was again won by Hawkesbury. Numbers were down on the previous year's event but it was still an enjoyable day for all. It was pleasing to see the annual RAC trophy won for the first time by John Gurzansky who had travelled over from Tasmania.

The 2007 annual golf day will be at Nuriootpa's Barossa Golf Club on Sunday, October 21, hitting off at 9.30 am. Contact Barry Sumner on 0408 727 612.

Kind regards from the Committee.



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AUTUMN NEWSLETTER TO ALL ROCA MEMBERS

May 2007

President's message

I am sure you will find this ROCA newsletter interesting. Some of the items encourage you to make some decisions or take some action, so please read carefully.

The University of Adelaide has some important decisions to make too. Roseworthy has a proud history and we will be celebrating that again next year. Generally it has a well-deserved reputation for producing practical, adaptable people over the past 124 years. But what role will it play in the future?

Education is a competitive business these days. The University will continue to make strategic choices about the courses it runs and the research it supports. It will also make choices about how it will use campuses like Roseworthy.

As a key stakeholder, ROCA has an important role in influencing the decisions that will be made. Roseworthy built its reputation on the strength of its connections with the industry sectors it serviced. The intimate relationships ensured that its research was adopted and its graduates matched the needs of the industries as they evolved.

I expect that all universities in Australia will opt for more specialisation in the future, to enhance their national and international reputations as much as their local relevance. The establishment of a veterinary school at Roseworthy would certainly boost its animal science credentials but it may also diminish the broader agricultural focus upon which Roseworthy's legendary status has been built. Dr Phil Hynd, as the Roseworthy Campus Director, is aware of the opportunities and risks that exist right now. My feeling is that the University has not appreciated the value of Roseworthy in providing that practical industry-connected dimension.

The ROCA Committee is keen to provide constructive support as Roseworthy's future is charted. Some real vision and strategic thinking is required. Ideally its future role should build on the Roseworthy brand value that has been established over time rather than trying to create something brand new. I think it is possible. Do you? If you had the job of positioning Roseworthy in the education and research market over the next 20 or 30 years, what choices would you make?

Locky McLaren
PRESIDENT

University Council By-elections

A by-election is being held for a casual vacancy on the Adelaide University Council. It is in ROCA's interest to ensure that the University Council members are well informed about the Roseworthy Campus and the needs of agricultural education and research.

This is particularly critical in view of the demise of graduates meeting industry-based requirements and the direction that the University is pursuing (see report on agricultural education conference overleaf).

Your Committee therefore wishes to alert you to this forthcoming voting opportunity and a very worthy candidate in the person of Professor Simon Maddocks who was a Director of the Roseworthy Campus in the early 1990s. In that position he was a strong advocate of Roseworthy education activities and was responsible for many new education and research initiatives. He is a Life Member and staunch supporter of ROCA.

The ballot papers will be posted out to ROCA members with the Lumen of June 4. We urge you to vote for Simon Maddocks and return the ballot papers before the closing date of July 6.

National agricultural education conference

ROCA was strongly represented in the planning and running of the national conference, 'Tomorrow's Agricultural Scientists – Meeting Industry and Resource Management Needs', held in Adelaide in March. It was convened by the Australian Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology (AIAST) in a move to focus attention on what is seen as a major national education issue.

An alarming message to emerge from the conference was that there is a growing lack of suitably qualified graduates pursuing agriculture as a career. Only about 65% of the estimated 55 000 extra scientists needed by 2011 are likely to be available. The conference concluded that tertiary agricultural education is suffering because agriculture has a poor image.

The conclusion reinforced the view that modern agriculture needed generalists skilled in a wide range of agricultural, environmental, natural resource and social science disciplines. They also needed good understandings of commerce, systems integration, financial and risk management and commodity marketing. To be effective in this environment graduates needed to be scientifically competent, have a high level of problem solving skills and be able to develop a substantial network in the community at large.

There is concern that agricultural courses have lost their "identity and focus" and that there is a lack of farm management and marketing training suited to commercial farmers, consultants and agribusiness practitioners.

Specific needs and conclusions identified at the conference were:

- a targeted program to improve awareness of and interest in agriculture at secondary education level;
- a need for industry to clearly identify the skills and attributes needed in graduates entering employment, particularly in agricultural service industries;
- a program to convey these needs to the tertiary institutions providing agriculture-related courses; and
- scholarships to encourage enrolments in agriculture courses.

2006 Award of Merit winner

The Award of Merit for 2006 went to Brian Rex Wilson a successful farmer who has had considerable influence in developing technology that now enables profitable cropping in high rainfall regions previously considered too wet.

His fostering of this technology amongst his peers and to agribusiness, and the establishment of Southern Farming Systems, has been very successful.

2007 Award of Merit nomination

Members are reminded that nominations for this year's ROCA Award of Merit close on June 30. The 2007 award will be presented at the ROCA annual dinner at the Glenelg Golf Club on October 12. Applications containing details of the nominee's careers since leaving Roseworthy, service to industry and service to the community and ROCA need to be lodged with ROCA at Box 503, Kent Town SA 5071.

Nomination forms are available on the ROCA website www.roseworthy.adelaide.edu.au/roca/

AGM and Annual Dinner

The Annual General Meeting and Dinner will be held at the Glenelg Golf Club on Friday, October 12. Reunion group convenors are:

- 50 year (1957) – Ian Rice, Ian Short and Jack Messenger
- 40 year (1967) – Tony Clancy and Keith Pattinson
- 25 year (1982) – Ian Pickett and Bob Stacey
- 10 year (1997) – Mardi Miles.

Alumni report

Since our last newsletter the Alumni Association and Board has been disbanded. The Adelaide University Council has decided to integrate the Alumni operations into the University structure with proposals to increase support for Chapters through the Development and Alumni Office. It is also proposed to extend alumni relations programs more widely. An encouraging plan is to involve faculty staff more with Alumni activities.

Your ROCA Committee is involved in the planning of the new structure in the hope that we will be able to contribute and benefit from the new arrangements to be in place by June or July.

Campus developments

A major feasibility report into the establishment of a Veterinary School at Roseworthy has been submitted to the Adelaide University Vice-chancellor Professor James McWha and is being considered by the University Council.

The report recommends a three-year post-graduate program in Veterinary Medicine after three years of undergraduate study in Animal Science. This would mean a major injection into the Campus and eventually an additional 300 full-time students.

If the proposal is approved the first intake of post graduates in Veterinary Medicine could occur in 2008. (Roseworthy has already been taking undergraduates in Animal Science for the past three years.)

Roseworthy Campus and Student Fund

Don Moyle and Phil Laffer, who stood down as Co-patrons of the Fund, in terms of its constitution, have been reappointed and Jack Messenger has been added to the Co-patrons Board. John Rothwell and Tony Sharley have been approached to join the Board.

Roseworthy 125-year celebration

The RAC 125 steering committee has been provided with an internal memo from the University Vice Chancellor Professor James McWha indicating his strong support for the event to occur in 2008. It is his desire that the North Terrace part of the celebration be of similar status to the University's Jubilee Graduation Ceremonies.

There will also be major aspects of the RAC 125 celebrations taking place at Roseworthy Campus and other places during 2008. Committee Secretary Darren Koopman is playing a significant role in the Roseworthy events and Vice-President Dale Manson is filling a similar role with the Adelaide-based events.

A great deal of emphasis is being placed on conducting a significant RAC 125 event at the North Terrace campus and it is believed that this will pay dividends for Roseworthy 'down the track'. The event is not being badged as a ROCA initiative but a University of Adelaide event that has organisational support from a range of stakeholders, including ROCA.

Your Committee will keep you fully informed as plans for this important milestone celebration take further shape.

The Trevor Dillon Scholarship

Thirteen applications have been received and five students have been short-listed for interview.

Life membership fees

Following a resolution at the 2006 Annual General Meeting ROCA life membership fees are to be increased to \$80 effective from July 2007.