

The Honourable Dr Bruce Eastick AM interviewed by David Spencer on Thursday 27th of October 2016 at Bruce's home in Gawler, South Australia. Bruce graduated in 1947 with a Roseworthy Diploma of Agriculture, number 608.

Bruce thank you for this opportunity to explore a little of your past experiences at your time, when you were at Roseworthy.

Yeah...more than happy!

When I look through your CV I felt I have been almost standing still compared to your journey through life... it fairly... it had a lot of things on there. Anyway we only have a time to explore a little bit of your back ground, let's start with your early school days and go from there.

Well I was born at Reade Park (Adelaide) which was on the side of Colonel Light Gardens and therefore the primary school was Colonel Light Gardens primary school, from quite early life I used to spend a lot of the holidays and Christmas up on farms at Alford and Avon in the lower North with relatives and by the time I got to year 5 or 6 I determined that it was my destination to be a cocky and that was foremost in my mind, it followed on having graduated from Colonel Light gardens at the end of 1939 with the grade 7 examination I elected to go to Urrbrae Agricultural High School, which was the only one at that stage which was in South Australia and sort to assist people who were looking for a destination in agriculture. I used to ride a bike from Reade Park up to Urrbrae each day and was there a total of 4 years. Urrbrae had only started in 1932 so going there in 1940 was one of the early people associated with Urrbrae and the headmaster at the time was AR Hilton who had quite a destination in Agricultural training. The number of students was not as great as in other high schools and the classrooms were in rooms which were to have been part of a boarding house. So we did the first year in the kitchen, we did the second year in which was to have been the dining room, the third year which was to have been the study room in the evenings and the final year was in the maid's quarters upstairs. Um...apparently the six of us who were the largest Leaving class they had ever had made too much noise so we were pushed off to the library which was a separate room across the pathway from the main building. It was a great experience and one of the great virtues of Urrbrae with its agricultural interest was that each year even though it was war time they would take their students up to Roseworthy Agricultural College to give them an overview of what was available following the Leaving class or the Intermediate as the case may be. The first time that I ever went to Roseworthy under those circumstances was in 1942 and subsequently each year thereafter but not in the leaving class. So on completion of Urrbrae and still wanting to be a recognisable cocky, if I could put it that way, with somebody who had every opportunity to get all the training I could possibly get in Agriculture I elected to go to Roseworthy Agricultural College and applied for a scholarship which was available and subsequently was successful in obtaining the scholarship which was for 3 years at Roseworthy.

In those days there were a total of only 70 students at Roseworthy being war time the numbers were not great and the Second and Third year, Third year in particular were rather short on numbers because some people had reached the age of entry into the forces and headed off to the war. There were 35 of us who started as First yeas but not 35 finished, it was a very changeable issue. One of those people who started was a returned serviceman who decided to get training in Agriculture, he only saw the first year out as several others did.

And so by the time we graduated (Urrbrae), as I said there were 6 of us, 2 of those had undertaken the intermediate in 2 years rather than in the 3 years that the majority of us took so of the final 6 in the leaving class there was 4 who had been there for 3 years and into their fourth 2 who had reached their intermediate in 2 years which was a possibility in those days. It was interesting in that there was an element of isolation having been pushed over to the library but it was still a very rewarding experience that if we were doing lectures or waiting for a lecturer to come and we wanted more information on some subject that had been discussed earlier that day we could hop into the library and see if we could find some reference so in that regard it was a real plus. Urrbrae spent a lot of time in teaching students from the first year onwards in pruning, they had their own orchard, they had their own vineyard and as a result of that experience my pocket money during the 4 years that I was at Urrbrae was made from the neighbours, relatives pruning their trees and their vines on one occasion we even went down to one of the bigger vineyards down towards Flinders University or where Flinders University is now and spent whole days down there undertaking pruning on their vines.

I would rate my involvement with Roseworthy and the fact there was an introduction, on the way through come year 3 to a junior Agricultural Bureau which saw a meeting once a month on a Friday evening with a guest speaker specially selected to talk in terms which was suitable for young people on a range of agricultural activities and thus there was an added impetus if I could put that as an added interest in the training that we got from Urrbrae. It certainly put me in good stead for being able to apply to Roseworthy Agricultural College with a background which was well based and I was fortunate that my entry to Roseworthy was the full 3 years without any renewal of interest to get to the second year or third year, it was for the full three years.

At Roseworthy as I mentioned there was a number of people who didn't survive. As first years we were subject to I would have to admit somewhat brutal input from the senior students as part and parcel of the initiation. It taught me one thing that I still utilise today. Having reached 89 two days ago on the 25th of October I still have a cold shower every morning but after a warm one! That came about from the fact that the senior students would use the bathrooms before we would and certainly as part of the initiation ceremony when we were rolled in molasses and mud and chaff and various other bits and pieces the only way of getting clean for the rest of the night was cold water and they also ran a very interesting steeplechase The first year students were engaged to do several circuits of the oval with observation by the senior students and then the first year students were auctioned to the senior students who took one or two or more of the first year students and made sure they trained for a cross country which was through vineyards, over small fences, on bitumen and on dirt. I had the good fortune of finishing up third in the derby and was immediately dubbed in as a dark horse because my size didn't really settle to being able to reach any great destinies in the game. We were actually as a result of the work on the oval in the first instance given handicaps and my handicap is obviously an advantage for me to be able to get onto number 3. We also had the fact of quite often woken in the middle of the night by the senior students coming in and deciding to put our beds out through the windows down onto the foreground of the college (laughs). Um a disturbance that lasted for a short time and one of the other exciting activities was to line up all of the first year students, some on the shafts and others on the ropes to what was a 5 horse drag piece of equipment with all the second and third year students aboard and down the road which was dirt in those days, down the road to the school down a little further on to the road to Roseworthy.

Is that Kangaroo Flat?

Kangaroo Flat

Oh yeah

When one of the people alongside me who was in the shaft and that was David Hardy from the Hardy Wine group went under one of the wheels it was a rather quieter return to college than had been the case than the words to get to Kangaroo Flat, ASAP

Was he okay?

He was okay after a period of time on crutches but it is inevitable I suppose that if you are in an unusual situation anything might happen. It did happen but finished up okay. Towards the end of the first year the input from the higher grade students was not as great as had been.

The work groups that were formed each day that we were on outside work compared with when we were doing lectures was with senior students who were overseeing our activities particularly in the stables, in the dairy, in the piggery if we were on the farm doing chaff cutting or driving a team ploughing or whatever we were more by ourselves rather than part and parcel of a team but it was a very, very rewarding experience with an oversight by staff who had been on the College for quite a long period of time. In staff in this particular instance I am talking about those who were the outside staff who were agricultural minded people who had been farmers or who had handled students to show them how to do the right thing.

Late in October of the first year in 1944 a call went out one Sunday night from the College Veterinarian Dr Phil Schinckel to seek some assistance down in the horse area to stomach pump a number of mares and foals that had broken into a wheat crop. Several of the group had already passed away before they were found up in the paddock and it was a result of that experience, helping the Veterinarian that I said even though I wanted to be a Cocky, I'll be close to the Cocky by becoming a veterinarian.

In the evenings we would have a period from seven o'clock to eight thirty for study, we were not allowed to leave our room, first years were in dormitories up top a member of the staff would come in and tick us off to make sure we were there and doing the right thing. Mr Hickinbotham, Allan Hickinbotham's father who was very much involved in oenology and chemistry area, came in one night to mark the roll and decided to ask each of the five of us what we were going to do on the completion of the Roseworthy course. When he got to me I said "I am going to do Veterinary Science sir", forget it, there is no future in it, I was able to prove him wrong (laughs).

Just a little bit! (Laughs)

In very many ways! But it was just an interesting circumstance that qualified Veterinary practitioners were few and far between. For example when I did come back and start at the end of 1951 having graduated from Sydney University there was only 29 of us in the whole State of South Australia. When I started at Gawler and the Gawler Area at the end of 1951 it was the first qualified veterinary practice North of Adelaide out through Darwin. Today there are 9 Veterinary practices in Gawler alone with many of the country areas that were not serviced by Veterinarians in the past for example just north of here, Clare, Kapunda up to Pt Pirie, Pt Augusta and so it goes on. So my experience of travel was very fulsome, I had an arrangement with a local Holden dealer as I would change in and out of a vehicle at 20,000miles for 100 pound, and the shortest time I owned one was 13 weeks when it had its 20,000 miles up.

Wow!

You would have the situation for example that you were at Clare 3 times in the one day, early in the morning for a cow with milk fever, midday perhaps to treat a horse with Colic and going back up at night time to do a calving case. Fifty six miles from Gawler to Clare and 56 miles back times by six is a fair amount of travel. But the service also provided for assistance up the River Murray, down York Peninsula, up almost to Port Pirie and down well specifically to Salisbury because in 1951 when I started at Gawler, Gawler had a population of about 6000 people. Salisbury which came up almost as far as the Smithfield Hotel had a population of only 4000 but they did have 5000 dairy cows.

Oh Yea, Bruce we are getting ahead of ourselves, let's get back to Roseworthy and we will get back to that in a minute. Now the other day you talked about some of the dances and stuff you used to have there in the Tin Tabernacle. (Old Hall on the East side of the Gawler - Wasleys road North of Staff houses)

Some of the..?

Some of the dances you had, you had dances...

Oh yes (cough) there was an annual ball which was conducted in the dining room and the students would prepare the dining room by dusting the floor with sawdust and shuffling around to bring it up to scratch so that it was a good dancing surface, the members would then proceed down to Adelaide to pick up the car, find some means of getting their friends up to the ball and we had the situation where the staff provided a magnificent supper, we had a local band which was really wonderful in the sense of having been commonly used around the wide area for township dances. Opposite Roseworthy College and it's still there was a tin shed which we used to call the Tin Tabernacle, it had a beautiful dance floor, it was used for indoor bowls earlier in the week, and each second Saturday night it would have a local dance with local people providing the music and the local mothers would arrive with their daughters and their sons and so forth with a suitcase full of supper knowing was going to be an unusual night with quite a lot of Roseworthy College boys who didn't normally get supper so (laughs) was interesting. What the mothers didn't know or did not let on they knew was that some of their daughters were up for every dance because these second and third year people if they thought that a first year had a transgression during the week would indicate that he would have 3,2,1 whatever the case may be have dances with so and so and those persons who were nominated because they were either bigger than others or were perceived to be in need of help they might not otherwise get, spent the whole night on the dance floor (laughs). It was an interesting activity. I finished up being the MC of the Guide hall dance for the second and third year. Um, over and above the local one there were frequent dances at Wasleys, at Freeling, in Roseworthy township itself and members of the college were frequently into Gawler township which was approximately 7 miles at that stage either by pushbike or by a College jinker to have a dance. At the end of the Second World War which occurred while we were there, there was a dance for the Victory and I and many others from the College and elsewhere were present on the Saturday night when there was 738 people at the dance in the Gawler Institute to celebrate the Victory. There was also a picture theatre in Gawler and that was quite frequently attended by students only on Saturday nights because you could not go out during the week and that leads to the fact that students were only in receipt of one exit per term on a weekend they were expected to be on College not only for the work that was to be done but they were also expected to be part and parcel of the football teams, the cricket teams, the swimming team or whatever. There was a great experience of living with others people from all around the state and also in our particular case with a couple from interstate, one from Sydney and one from Perth of getting to know other people and being with them 24/7, 7days a week with just the one break to go home if home was accessible um per term.

That was another part of the great history of...there was also at the end of the term there was the matter of a graduation ceremony, when I say the end of the term, the term of Roseworthy Education commenced in March of each year and went through to February, early March the following year. This was to give the students the opportunity of preparing for a crop, putting in a crop, harvesting a crop, stacking the crop and then at the end of that you can see a complete agricultural year. So the graduation was at that particular time.

Bruce what were some of the other like routines of being a student like what time you get up, meals, study times and stuff like that. What sort of routines did you have? What sort of daily routines did you have as being part of a student?

Breakfast from my recall was at 7 o'clock but if you were on dairy duty you were woken at 4.30 you went down in a team to do the dairy work, if you were on horses, there was only 1 or 2 tractors on the college in those days, all of the farm work was done by horses if you were on horses, you were on the way down at 5.30 and you came back for breakfast at the end of that term. Lectures normally started at 8 o'clock and went through to about 4.30 - 5 o'clock um with an hour, hour and a half break for lunch. One of the other features of the week end was that the ministers of religion in Gawler were on a cyclical basis would providing a religious service in one of the front rooms of the college and the housemaster who was John Chambers at the time made sure everybody was in attendance. What he didn't know was that the senior students would sit at the back and when there was a prayer on they would go out the window (Bruce and David laugh).....I don't know what the result would have been if he had woken up to the fact but I would imagine it would have been disastrous because John was a real disciplinarian or be it a great fella and I had a very great experience of John in the sense that during the second year while I was killing a sheep for the kitchen I unfortunately slipped and cut the tendon in my left thumb and back in the days (cough) before or the very early days of Penicillin and people who were potentially going to er finish up with an infection were put onto sulphonamides. I had stitches in at Gawler, plaster on the thumb and having to take in the middle of winter two gallons of water per day and sulphonamides like wagon wheels every six hours. John Chambers was in my room 6am, midday, 6pm and midnight at night to make sure that they were. John and I had far greater experience years later, he went (cough) after Roseworthy went back to teaching in Gawler and was responsible for the Gawler Technical College and subsequently the Tafe; he was also the secretary and a fellow charter member of the Gawler Rotary Club when it started in 1954. Unfortunately he passed away some years ago whilst on holiday in London. But some person you would never forget because of the input they had to individuals or be it student's wellbeing.

Were there other staff members who you could remember had an impact on you as well?

I would say that...all of them except veterinary left an impact, I sometimes look sideways at Mr Hickinbotham after his earlier response to (Laughs) my intention to do Veterinary Science, but no they were.... The other thing is the lecturers lived on college, they were there with their families, their children were taken into Roseworthy school in the morning um their older children would come back on weekends after having been at Teachers College or University for example I mentioned earlier Alan Hickinbotham. Alan Hickinbotham was a school teacher before he went into the building industry, um he was also a great footballer. They are people you meet on the way you know.

Roseworthy even today is still a great source of enjoyment to know people that are out there, I'm amazed at the fact that what some 10...12 years ago look like the closure of Roseworthy has turned

the corner and over \$40 million has been spent on the facilities for the Veterinary course and that the chance of Roseworthy disappearing is a no-no. But it was because on the conclusion of Roseworthy College as an individual organization in its conjunction with the Adelaide University that um the Oenology people elected to head to Adelaide, a lot of the Agricultural work went to Adelaide or be it some of their students would come up and spend some time to get experience in um at Roseworthy and when students weren't required to milk cows on weekends because of the staff to supervise were going to cost between \$11-1200 for the 2 days, the dairy went, the piggery went, the individual piggery went and Roseworthy as a training centre wasn't quite the same as it had been from day one back in 1883.

Did you, talking about staff, did...you might have said the other day that the football coach was also the cook.

Yes

What was the food like? Was he a good cook?

Good cook? There were 2 cooks, the senior Jack Osborn and the next one um his name slips my memory just at the moment but the College staff with one exception was entirely male and the one exception was a girl who assisted the secretary in the main office, its rather a different world today with the balance of students and the staff and so forth, I am not decrying it at all but when I went back to Sydney in 2001 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of graduating as a Veterinary Surgeon the Dean of the faculty at an evening dinner stood up looked around quite deliberately and said "Lady and Gentlemen". He said "I realise when you went through and concluded your training in 1951 there was one female and 75 males" Now Sydney at that stage was the only University in the whole of Australasia that was training Veterinarians so that there were the Tasmanians, there were the Western Australians, South Australians, there were the Southern...Malaysia, um New Zealand, a very different world but "Yes" he said " But I would have you know that every Veterinary faculty across Australia at the present moment in every year there is between 80 and 85% female students, a very different situation and that's something which is certainly to be seen at Roseworthy at the present moment with its Veterinary course. Um the number of males going through is very minor compared to the number of females and have been for the 3 graduations which have taken place as such so far for another one to take place any time now.

When you say your student days were very male dominated environment did that influence how people behaved, or what they dressed, what they wore, was there a common outfit people wore, in those days did everyone wear ties all the time, what was the norm?

(Cough) Well you were always expected to be respectable (cough) and for the dances on the Saturday night you would at least dress up presentably in the same gear as you would wear, were you going home for the weekend the work gear was always necessary to be serviceable and well maintained.

Did you do your own washing?

Did you do your own washing on College, yes and there were lines we could take it down and back in those days the students were entirely first years upstairs in the main building and the second and third years in what's known as the corridor down just beyond the original kitchen and the bathroom. The only toilets were down almost where one of high rise duplex places is now for students so you had a call in the middle of the night and it was wet (both laugh) it was not a very comfortable experience! But that was a sign of the times, it was farm life um there was no sewerage

as we know it, there was no sewerage available it was all long drop um and it was able to be lived with if I can put it that way (both laugh).

Did you with your...like your daily routine you said you get up...breakfast was at seven, what about...was there a...did they have like a bell to tell you the times of the day, did you hear some sort of...

Yes, it would be a buzzer would go which would alert people to what time of the day it was, you sort of responded to that the start of lectures in the morning again would be a buzzer if the buzzer wasn't working you were still expected to be where you were supposed to be at the time you were supposed to be.

I can remember there used to be being an old bell hanging behind the kitchen, and did they used to use that so that you could hear it a bit further away?

Yes that would ring at the start of breakfast as a matter of course, it was more a relic of the past rather than a current method of management but some of the male members of the kitchen staff had been there for years and years and they were as much part of the history of the College in one sense as others and they rode bikes up to Wasleys where they lived or they rode bikes into Gawler where they lived, um there were only 3...only 4 of the outside staff that lived adjacent to College property on the Wasleys road and back over the hill beyond the old swimming pool, they weren't part of the...the group who were the teachers, they were the persons who were providing the assistance in the practical teaching.

So like the farm staff?

The farm staff

Oh yeah okay, can you remember any of the meals? Like I guess you had a lot of mutton and eggs and that sort of stuff, I guess most food was produced on the College wasn't it, it was either grown there or very little was bought in.

Yes, there was material came up by train to Roseworthy railway station and came out on the College ute or College truck um along with the mail for those things that had to be supplied from Adelaide, milk was produced on site, eggs was produced on site, meat was produced on site you'd say...earlier on when I was on about killing a sheep one day and suffered an injury, that was a regular training exercise um...

The...The War was on so how did they....you would have been on rations...

Rations

For a lot of things, how did they manage that as an Institution, you all would have had a ration book wouldn't you?

Yes

How did they manage that? It would have been a bit complicated.

You had to submit your documents to them, they managed them through the office.

Did you feel...were there many restrictions on...as a student during the war time do you think? I know there was not much petrol about.

Restrictions...the restriction that occurred relative to students was that it was elected...it was indicated that it was a no alcohol intake circumstance and there were grave problems for those who failed to do the right thing if they went to one of the local dances and were found out. During the final 2 years that I was at Roseworthy ex-service people were coming back to follow on their course or to start a course. What the college did was to go out to the Sandy Creek prisoner of war camp which had been an army camp for the Americans and bring in 4 of their houses or their housing units. They were placed down towards the dairy factory, way behind some bushes, further removed from the main room and where the other students were. There was an element of forgiveness for people in those areas but really it was a provision for those more senior students who had experienced army, air force, navy life and had been...come accustomed to taking alcohol as part and parcel of their weekly input. They showed some nous (laughs) in making sure they were isolated from the rest of the students.

How did they get on with the students, would have been a lot younger than them and different experiences, did they mix well?

Yes, mixed quite well. It's rather interesting that I mentioned earlier there was 35 of us started in first year in 1944. When we graduated in 1947 there were 20 of us and 9 of those 20 were ex-service people who'd come and joined the course and not only were 9 ex-service people but of the 20 there were 7 who were or subsequently married Gawler girls (laughs).

Local talent!

(Laughs) it was one of those things, it was inevitable expectation I think that having spent those years from what 16-17 through people were going to dances, meeting up with people who they were seeing over a 3 year period and as opportunity permitted yes it was quite interesting the statistics of those...that of early year in 1947. Prior to the graduation ceremony and on the last night before students were allowed to leave the college before coming back for the graduation there was always a dinner and I never forgot Allan Callahan or Sir Allan he subsequently became known, who stood up and said "Gentlemen I know some of you are going to go to the university" he said "I would have you know we have never authorised somebody go to university and then let us down!" (Laughs). It was quite a stimulus to me personally when I started at Sydney University in 1947, two weeks after I graduated from Roseworthy. That (coughs) having never undertaken physics in my life, first year physics at Sydney University was a challenge (laughs)

Academically you did quite well at Roseworthy. You had the silver medal and you got first or second class honours in third year, what happened to you?

Yes I finished up with a First Class diploma and the second in um total um...I was doing something that I really enjoyed and that it headed me in a direction of something else I knew I was going to enjoy um It was also fairly important for yet another circumstance. In those days to go to University you had to have an intermediate language and because at Urrbrae there was never an opportunity for the teaching of a language I would not have been recognized as a legitimate candidate for university. When I wrote to Sydney University explaining what my background was and that I would be graduating with a diploma they indicated that so long as the diploma had an Honours with it they would admit me on a special opportunity. And through the 5 years at Sydney University I would front up and sign in each year indicating that I was a special applicant...(Laughs).

So let's see, where are we? We're getting close to your finishing at Roseworthy that was the end of forty...

Forty Seven

Forty Seven then you went straight away to Sydney

Sydney

Sydney and you got a scholarship, what sort of scholarship? You got a scholarship to go there didn't you?

Yes the Department of Agriculture use to make available Scholarships to go to Sydney University to do Veterinary Science, the fee of a first year was one hundred pounds (approximately \$200 in 1947), 2nd, 3rd, fourth and fifth was one hundred and sixty five plus a return fare by train to Sydney via Melbourne. I was of the opinion that if you were going to do a university course it was far better to do the whole course in the one place than to break it and then go with another circle of people and I was granted the opportunity by the Department of Agriculture to do so and so I went straight there for the first year and never regreted it. The... other thing was that the scholarship which was available and I must just come back and say the Department of Agriculture did give me the second year payment for the first year because I was going to be in Sydney. The other thing is the requirement of having receiving a scholarship from the Department of Agriculture was that one would return to South Australia for not less than 3 years upon graduation and under all normal circumstances would be a member of the Department of Agriculture. The situation was changed for one person in 1950 when a former Roseworthy student, a dedicated veterinarian who went on to be a professor at both Brisbane and Sydney University, the late Rex Butterfield. Applying for the opportunity to commence a rural practice, back in 1950 the only rural practices with qualified people in South Australia were Mt Barker, Victor Harbour, Charleston where Rex Butterfield commenced, Mt Gambier and Naracoorte. And when it came to 1951 I requested of the Department of Agriculture that I be given the same privilege as Rex had received by starting a rural practice. And my wife to be at that stage and I during the year leading up to the final exams in 1951 sat down with hundreds of maps of South Australia and the results that used to be put out and I think are still put out each year for the stock numbers in all of the districts. We put a 15 mile (24km) circle around the 36 country towns in South Australia and when it was finally looked at and we took the figures out for the various animals it came down to the possibility of Murray Bridge or Gawler. Gawler had a greater diversity of livestock with quite a large number of studs, certainly the centre for British breed sheep, quite a number of horse studs and so it went on and I decided that had the...anything did happen to the dairy industry at Murray Bridge that it could be disastrous and that it was far better to look at Gawler and Gawler was accepted. Some of the senior veterinarians in the department of agriculture said "You'd be back looking for a job in six months" um...it's a little bit like Hickenbotham, he thought there was no future in Gawler. But as I said earlier, the fact of the dairy industry, 5000cows in around Salisbury, all the studs that were here, the fact there was nobody else north of here and then low and behold what should happen in 1955 and they declared they going to have a new town called Elizabeth. A lot of the earlier people moving into Elizabeth were British Airforce people, because at that stage the V bombers were out here as part and parcel of the Maralinga activities etc. and they brought with them their habits, their habits of having animals and really looking after them by seeking veterinary advice. The housing trust built a surgery for me down at Elizabeth which I moved into in 1959 and it was like the tail of the dog wagging the practice. There was a stage where I started to take on assistant veterinarians. We'd go down there on a Tuesday and Thursday night and you might have 45 people through the door with their animals, go down on a Wednesday to undertake spaying operations for the dogs and the cats and you would have 20-25 animals lined up for the surgery ahead of doing an afternoon clinical activity. It also had another aspect which was

reinforced to me by my very first assistant, my very first assistant was a lad, the son of a Latvian veterinary surgeon called Janis Priedkalns. And Janis Priedkalns was with me and at home one night having come back from the clinic, handed in the cash and so forth, stopped to have a coffee and he said "It doesn't suit me to know that I trained to save animals and I got so many people coming in wanting their animals euthanized" What the English people would commonly do is thoroughly enjoy their animal but when they were headed for home and couldn't take it, were not prepared to allow it to go to someone who might let it stray, who mightn't look after it in the same way after it had been looked after. The same Janis Priedkalns went on to do some work in the Adelaide Hills, then went overseas for different um different training, he came back here in the late 1970s, the 1970s as the dean of the faculty of medicine at the Adelaide University, quite an amazing circumstance um that his thoughts were quite understandable but on reflection the benefit of the particular animal was key in the minds of the people going back to England. That practice at Elizabeth moved up to some years ago to Smithfield and is still going as did the practice that I started at, here in Gawler up at Willaston. The first 9 months that I was in practice in this area from December 51 through we lived in a house out between Cockatoo Valley and Lyndoch. Gawler had 500 telephone lines and if you had a house in Gawler and wanted to put yourself on the telephone line you went onto a shared line and telephone calls at three o'clock in the morning and all hours of the day and night would hardly go down too well (laughs) with people you are charging with. Fortunately when a house became available here another hundred lines had been made available and so I had the great opportunity of being able to move in with my own independent line and no problems.

Things have changed a bit haven't they with mobile phones and things. You said a while ago I think that you were the back-up vet for Roseworthy when you had the Gawler practice.

Yes Roseworthy made use of my service for any clinical work that was necessary mainly on weekends or if the College Veterinarians, they'd normally have one or two but there occasions when no one appointed and in actual fact um in the early sixties I also lectured the first and the third years on veterinary subjects so I...the opportunity to get away from Roseworthy never occurred (laughs) and of course it never occurred much later when I became a member of the Roseworthy College Council and subsequently was responsible for the signature that went on the document along with Dame Roma Mitchell.

So you started that in 1983 and then through to 91, is that right?

Yes, the um, up until the decision was made in 1989 when we signed the document which came to the amalgamation um it was a matter of talking to the 3 universities which existed in South Australia, the university of South Australia, Flinders and Adelaide um there were certain virtues of similarities in some aspects of the opportunities that were available in both in any one of those conjunctions and after we had been talking for some time and getting closer to there needing to being a decision the local federal treasurer (Hon John Dawkins) arrived on the scene an ex Roseworthy College graduate and said "I have you know that there will be but one parcel of money for agricultural training in South Australia" so it automatically meant that John Dawkins was telling us that we had to go with Adelaide University, it was by no means a shock or something that we regretted because Roseworthy and Rose...Adelaide University were in conjunction with one another for quite a number of years and indeed when I was a student at Roseworthy in the forties we had agricultural graduate students up 2 nights a week getting practical on site experience um and there had been other occasions when the two organizations had been working with one another. So the discussions took place, the final decision to make the amalgamation was worked on the basis of um taking effect on the first of January 1991 and with the grace of Adelaide University, the graduation of the 1990

students from Roseworthy were permitted to be granted at Roseworthy and as a guest speaker on the day we had Sir Allan Callahan with his long experience of Roseworthy as the guest speaker. It all finished quite well. The Adelaide University made sure they had a senior officer sit on the top table, but they sanctioned it and it was much appreciated that people who had done all of their course on Roseworthy were able to undertake their graduation on site.

With the College Council was that like a broad policy group that you didn't do any day to day stuff, it was about broad policy on how the college it was run or; how did that work?

In my day as a student the Roseworthy College was almost in affect a subsidiary of the Department of Agriculture and then in the later years it was decided it would become a College of Advanced Education.

That then was 74, would that be?

Yes, and the change took place there and then instead of people from Adelaide necessarily ruling the roost or deciding what would be done at Roseworthy it became a more balanced group as a College Council. And it was in 1983 when I was appointed by the then Minister of Agriculture to become a representative of the Minister and twelve months later at the official annual general meeting I was elected by my peers on the council as the council chairman and so remained as the council chairman right up to and included the final occasion.

So when... So when in that January 91 was there any sort of, did your duties just stop then on being on the council, the University just take over everything from that day?

Yes there was no involvement directly albeit I was sometimes called upon to go to the university and give some background to what had taken place. Um... Roseworthy Students became part of the alumni of the Adelaide University and wearing another hat as a member of parliament um the university was running a special luncheon once a year for Adelaide University graduates who were members of the Federal or State Parliament and it was an opportunity once again to mix with the Vice Chancellor and the others and follow through and much the same time there needed to be a Foundation and after some considerable thought and discussion I chaired for several years the Roseworthy College Foundation which provides and still is providing opportunities for students to get scholarships. Foundations take some time to become of real value, their real opportunity to become what we might call virtually um full time is the receipt of beneficiaries of ex-students wills. In the mean time you are relying on income from any function that you run plus donations from exgraduates and whether it be at a university, a high school, a college or where ever else. There are some lengthy meetings wondering where the next dollar is going to come from but eventually it's all worthwhile and so it is with the college which was mentioned at the dinner last week.

The...you have left your mark in Roseworthy in various ways as well because you have had a few things named after you, haven't you, can you tell us about those things?

Yes the um...the first occasion and earlier this year it was 25 years ago the major library building was destined to become the Eastick Building and it was opened by Dame Roma Mitchell as a matter of fact. At the commemoration of 25 years earlier this year it was interesting to meet up with a number of the people who were on staff at that time and recollected how important the library has become plus rooms for a number of college staff um...with the veterinary degree. The...after the...um yes I think it might have been slightly before the transfer to the Adelaide University...I was enticed to become the patron of the Roseworthy residential organisation um the mayor of...or the chairman of the District Council of Light in which Roseworthy exists had been the chairman for a quite number of

years and beforehand that he was from an agricultural background out at Gawler River on his death I became the chairman. When the first veterinary graduation took place the old scholars association (ROCA) particularly with the late Fred...um Taylor not Fred...isn't amazing yeah...

Ray Taylor, Ray

...um Ray...

Ray Taylor

Yeah Ray Taylor decided they would give a trophy or an award in the name of Bruce Eastick for Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and that has taken place each year since then. On the very first occasion prior to the meeting I was walking around talking to various people and a lady came up fronted me and said "You know who I am?" I said "No" she said I was your daughter's best mate at Gawler High School" I said "Oh and your grandmother...your mother and father were amongst my first clients when I came to Gawler as a veterinarian" (laughs). She said "Yes and this is my daughter!" Low and behold who should come up and collect the prize but her daughter (Stephanie Warwick) who is now at Strath or was after graduating practicing at Strathalbyn...so the name persists in that sense. That Roseworthy is obvious I think in the discussion we've had this afternoon made quite a prominent part in my history and one which I respected and thoroughly enjoyed.

Okay, well thank you Bruce. Well, we will conclude there, we thank once again we thank you Bruce to make the opportunity to give us a bit of your past there is a lot there but we had a look at some of it and Roseworthy is certainly very grateful for your...I guess you being there, following through and supporting it and still part of to this day. So...we will meet again for perhaps another talk.

Right

Thank you Bruce

Interviewer: David Spencer

Transcriber: David Spencer (22-07-2019)