

R. O. C. A. DIGEST

M. J. Seeliger



OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF ROSEWORTHY OLD COLLEGIANS ASSOCIATION

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Richard Stewart

Reg Hutchinson

Gavin Eckersley

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AWARD OF MERIT

MR. A. J. K. WALKER B.AG.SC. R.D.A. •

After graduating as Gold Medalist from Roseworthy Agricultural College, Lex Walker achieved an outstanding academic career completing a B.Ag.Sc. at the University of Adelaide in 1939.

Since graduating, his work has been associated with agronomy and related research, with overseas visits to many countries. As Chairman of the Australian Barley Board in 1973 and 1974, he visited Japan and Middle East countries to promote or maintain markets for Australian grain.

Lex Walker has been either a Committee Member or Chairman of a number of committees dealing with agricultural problems.

Lex Walker was presented with the Award of Merit Medallion and Certificate by the Old Collegians President, Gavin Eckersley, at the annual Reunion Dinner in September 1974.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

GAVIN ECKERSLEY

After an extremely successful year during which we believe the goals we set ourselves were achieved, our last committee was extremely disheartened with the attendance at the 1974 A.G.M. and Reunion Dinner at Angle Park.

Only about 30 members attended the Annual General Meeting and only approximately a further 70 members were at the dinner. These numbers were down on last year, and this at a time when every effort had been put into committee work during the year to achieve certain objects of the Association. (The President's report included in this Digest outlines the work carried out.)

The 1974-75 committee and myself accept this challenge. We realise that the Annual Reunion Dinner is an integral part of the Association and we have therefore set our sights on correcting the trend in declining numbers. To this end a Sub-Committee was appointed at our first committee meeting for this year in office. Dave Suter has been appointed convenor and the terms of reference for the sub-committee are:-

- 1) To investigate the reasons for the declining attendance at Annual Reunions of the Association.
- 2) To make recommendations to the R.O.C.A. committee on the venue, format, time, time of the year, programme etc. which in the sub-committee's opinion will improve attendance.
- 3) To canvass for a wide range of opinion from members on 1) and 2).

I can assure all that serious consideration will be given to the adoption of recommendations which will reverse this trend by providing members with the reunion that they require.

We would appreciate any assistance through suggestions to the Secretary of R.O.C.A. or the Editor of the Digest.

I would also like to correct an oversight on my part during the last A.G.M. In attendance at that meeting was Ray Taylor, who is now Federal President of A.T.A. I must apologise to Ray for not recognising publicly his election to this distinguished office. I offer you the congratulations of the Association Ray, and my personal apologies for the oversight.

COMMITTEE 1974-75

ELECTED SEPTEMBER A.G.M. 1974

President	Gavin Eckersley(1965-68)
Vice President	John Jones(1965-68)
Past President	Geoff Norman(1949-51)
Secretary	Ian Rice(1954-57)
Treasurer	Reg Hutchinson(1965-67, 1972)
Honorary Auditor	B.C. Philp
One member of graduating year	No nomination
One member who left College more than one and less than 10 years ago	Doug Clifford(1970-73)
Four ordinary members	Ross Dawkins(1965-67)
	David Suter(1940-43)
	Harry Stephens(1945-48)
	Richard Stewart(1967-70)

THE AWARD OF MERIT

This Award has been presented each year, since first conceived in 1960, for recognition to members with outstanding service to any form of agriculture, including Association affairs.

Previous recipients of the Award are :-

1961	Rowland Hill	1968	Denis Muirhead
1962	David Riceman	1969	Jack Reddin
1963	Len Cook	1970	Ron Badman
1964	W.J. Dawkins	1971	Rex Butterfield
1965	Frank Pearson	1972	M.R. Krause
1966	A.R. Callaghan	1973	R.H. Kuchel
1967	Bob Herriot	1974	A.J.K. Walker

I am sure that many of you know an old Collegian who is worthy of consideration for the Award of Merit.

If any member is in doubt regards a nomination contact the Hon. Secretary, Ian Rice, C/- Agricultural College, Roseworthy, 5371.

All nominations must be presented in a form similar to the below.

Even though some section of the form cannot be filled in due to the lack of information, do not hesitate to send in your nominee, the Hon. Secretary will seek further information.

1. Name
 2. Address
 3. Age
 4. Period at Roseworthy College
 5. Supporting Data
 6. Academic Qualifications
- Proposed by
- Seconded by
- Date

* Nominations to be sent to the Hon. Secretary of R.O.C.A. by 31 May, 1975.

ANNUAL REPORT : GAVIN ECKERSLEY

1974 has been an eventful year for Roseworthy College, The Association and Agriculture.

We have seen an unprecedented rise and fall in Agriculture particularly for the meat producer, with amazingly good prices being received late last year, and this year quite the reverse on today's market. The College has officially become a College of Advanced Education, and as such is now within the portfolio of the Minister of Education, whereas previously it was the responsibility of the Minister of Agriculture. The Association through the Committee has also had an eventful year, perhaps not as productive as we would have liked but nevertheless much has been achieved and a solid foundation has been laid for future years.

The work of the committee for the past year can best be summarised under the respective objectives which were set at the beginning of our year in office:-

- 1) To ensure that during the restructuring and re-direction of the College as a learning institution the needs of agriculture are being married to the envisaged courses.

The committee felt that we had a responsibility at this time of change at Roseworthy to represent the interest of the employers of diplomates and South Australian agriculture generally by being sensitive to this change and ensuring that the change was being correctly directed. It was not our intention to become involved in the affairs of the College or the newly appointed Council, but merely to maintain an oversight and not be apathetic to what was happening.

To this end we met with Mr. Hudson the Minister of Education late last year and were able to gain first hand knowledge of his department's attitude to agricultural education and Roseworthy in particular. We informed him of our association and impressed on him our willingness to support agricultural education at all levels and our intention to remain vitally interested in the Roseworthy contribution to S.A. agriculture.

Since that time the developments at Roseworthy

have been discussed at each committee meeting and I have also had discussions with Mr. Ray Taylor of A.T.A. and a member of the College Council.

In conclusion I can say that, we believe Roseworthy is certainly heading in the right direction and we commend the work of Dr. Williams and the Council.

- 2) To promote a greater interest in R.O.C.A. amongst the student body, thereby encouraging graduating students to actively participate in the Association through their membership over the last few years.

The decline in membership over the last few years by graduating students had been noted and the committee felt the best method of reversing this trend was to keep the association before the student whilst at Roseworthy thereby giving the association a function and a purpose.

As President I therefore attended the Third Year dinner in December 1973, which was an outstanding success. The students were sceptical in acceding to the committee request for representation but after the evening recognised our sincerity to get closer to the student body.

An Old Collegian Sponsored award has also been introduced to the sporting awards at the College. The terms of this award are,

- 1) that an annual award be made to the student who has made the most outstanding contribution to sport, not necessarily in active participation.
- 2) the recipient to be decided by the College Blues Committee.

The R.O.C.A. sports award for 1974 went to Richard Flockhart.

During this year we informed the Student Union Council of this objective and invited a representative of the council to our committee meetings. However we received no reply to our correspondence and we are led to understand that greater co-operation will be forthcoming from the Student body next year.

We believe that despite this initial setback next year's committee must pursue this course vigorously.

- 3) To revitalise the Digest and ensure that once

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again it becomes the necessary communication link for members.

I am pleased to report that the Digest is now well and truly back in business. Early in the year a new management committee was appointed and since then three issues have been published. The necessary mechanics are now operative for the Digest to be successful however much depends on the members themselves through contributions, suggestions, guidance and interest.

It is now apparent that the management committee if at all possible should be divorced from the executive of the association as all energies need to be directed to the Digest. I also feel that in future the Digest will expand into reporting on items of general agricultural interest - "widen its horizons", however this is purely a personal opinion.

Therefore I feel justified in saying that much has been achieved however there are clear cut tasks ahead for the coming committee following on from this year's efforts.

Also during the year a visit was made to Eyre Peninsula branch where a lasting impression was made on me by the enthusiasm and vitality of the members and their branch.

I must also make mention of the Award of Merit. This year we received four nominations for the award and all were of an extremely high calibre. Mr. Lex Walker is indeed a worthy recipient and his success is made more meritorious by the standard of this year's nominations.

Finally I wish to thank my committee for the tremendous efforts put in through the year. I have been very gratified by the attendance at each meeting and the enthusiasm of all towards the work we had before us. I would like to pay particular thanks to Ian Rice, on whom a major burden has fallen. Ian has handled the position extremely well and has been of great personal support to me.

In closing I must thank the association for affording me the opportunity and honour to serve as president, and I can assure all that I have been most grateful for this honour.

EYRE PENINSULA BRANCH

The venue for this year's Branch A.G.M. and Dinner was again changed. The secretary, looking for the most suitable place and trying to keep up with inflation, finally settled for the Pier Hotel. The attendance was equal to the past with an even distribution of local members and visitors from the mainland. The distances travelled by some are great and their presence is much appreciated. As has been our practice in the past few years, there was a good representation of visitors interested in the remarks of the guest speaker.

Toast master, Peter Dunn, carried out the task in his usual efficient manner. To commence the dinner he called on Pat Marrie, president for the last ten years, to say grace and then give the address of welcome. It was pleasing to see Pat in attendance after his recent illness. All members hope he soon makes a complete recovery. The opening remarks were somewhat shorter than usual, lacking the assortment of stories.

Members were asked to rise in turn and introduce themselves, giving their year and relating some of their College highlights. There is no doubt students gained far greater education than that presented by diplomas, not in the least a comradeship which is unique.

Ian Newland proposed the toast to the Association to which Gavin Eckersley responded. The ode of remembrance was in the capable hands of Bob Horne. Alan Lawes in his toast to the College, related the total benefits derived from attending the College. Ian Rice in response, gave those present a summary of changes taking place at the College.

The guest speaker this year was Mr. C. Warren Bonythan, president of the National Trust, who gave an address on conservation in the country. Later he answered questions to the satisfaction of all. Conservation is at present a very controversial topic on Eyre Peninsula as so much land is being set aside as reserves. Jack Jones expressed appreciation to Warren for his address.

Adelaide & Wallaroo Fertilizers Ltd. again provided the menus and to them our special thanks. The pouring and delivery of many wines for the dinner and picnic by Andy Michelmore is greatly appreciated by all, adding to the success of the dinner.

E.P. 1976.

For those wishing to plan a trip to Eyre Peninsula in time for next year's Branch Reunion and Family Day, the dates proposed are Saturday, 28 February 1976 and Sunday, 29 February (leap year, Ed.) 1976.

CONSERVATION IN THE COUNTRY

Article reproduced from PORT LINCOLN TIMES

Conservation of the environment, land generally, soil, water, vegetation, wildlife and minerals were the main factors in resource conservation in the country, as in the cities, Mr. C. Warren Bonython, president of the National Trust of South Australia said in Port Lincoln on Saturday night.

Mr. Bonython was addressing the annual reunion dinner of the Roseworthy Old Collegians at the Pier Hotel.

He said conservation was the development of our resources to obtain the best result in the long run. It was maintaining the quality of our environment and retaining sufficient of our resources for the reasonable needs of the future.

"It is keeping the world a place fit to live in - therefore it is basically common sense", he said.

Mr. Bonython said in the past the pressure of our resources was less, and the challenge to our way of life posed by their over-exploitation hardly existed or was not noticeable.

Therefore we should not blame our forebears for many of the conservation problems of today.

No excuse

"We have gradually been learning of these problems, and today, when many of them are looking us straight in the face, we have no excuse for evading them further," he said.

Our environment has been a neglected and forgotten factor in our lives. Until recently, it has been conditioned mainly as a by-product of the many economically - based actions that happen in a free enterprise, profit - making society.

"It is not surprising therefore, that if we take such a negative approach to our environment, it leaves much to be desired."

Mr. Bonython said we should now take a more positive approach, deciding just what sort of environment we want and then be adjusting our way of life so that we can achieve it.

Balance

Basic to the conservation problem was keeping a proper balance between ourselves and nature.

He said our problems began when we started to fall out of harmony with nature. Thousands of years ago we did live in harmony with nature.

"We were poor struggling creatures, fearful of the natural forces round us and overawed by them. Dwelling in the woods, let us say, we were camped in the midst of nature, we could not get away from it, still less overcome and destroy it.

"We lived in harmony with our environment which was - and still is - a complex interaction amongst air, water and earth, animals and plants. We were part of the ecology as we now say.

Was Stable

"This environment was usually a more or less stable one - it changed only slowly in the course of a generation - and we had little power to initiate change.

"Then we started to make what we call 'progress'. Progress, or development, really started way back in time - 8 000 years ago with the beginning of the Agricultural Revolution, (5 million people in the world). This was when we changed from hunting to cultivation.

"Population rose to 500 million 3 centuries ago, 1000 million by 1850, 3600 to 7700 million by year 2000."

Mr. Bonython said in the last few centuries progress started to gain some momentum and finally through the scientific and technological advances of this century we forged ahead, and instead of being poor creatures intimidated by natural forces we began to gain ascendancy over nature.

We built powerful tools - typified by the bulldozer - that enabled us to start changing the face of the earth in a short time. Man the Fearful had now become Man the Master.

Abundance

At first there were no apparent ill-effects; forests yielded abundant timber, grassy plains fattened great herds of stock, rivers and lakes were tapped to provide ever-increasing supplies of water, and more and more land was cleared and cultivated to yield ever expanding harvests.

In America there developed the Myth of Superabundance; Francis Ratcliffe has called the Australian version "Big Country Mistique", no matter how hard the land was exploited, nature was limitless and would continue to confer its bounty.

"However the final cutting-out of complete forests, the falling productivity of fast-eroding cultivated hill slopes, the silting of dams and rivers and the appearance of dust bowl conditions eventually exploded this myth, but the steps necessary to correct the position were resisted," he said.

"It was really a moral problem of our use - actually our mis-use - of tools that the scientists had forged for us.

"In spite of our recent experiences we do not seem to have learned the lesson that we must contrive to live in harmony - in harness with nature.

"In Conservation therefore several underlying principles, one being that a living resource may not be exploited at a rate faster than its capacity to replace itself and continue to do so year in and year out. This is called the sustained yield concept.

Land Use

"The next concerns the use of land, our most important natural resource.

"We must go back to our Australian pioneering days to realise why conservation failed to gain acceptance then, and why it has taken until nearly now for it to come of age.

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"Our forebears found themselves in a new often hostile land and were faced with making a living out of it.

"In wresting this precarious living they were unable to foresee the results of their actions. Many things were done which changed, and often did not improve the environment."

Mr. Bonython said scrub clearing for opening up new agricultural and pastoral land developed greatly this century under mechanization, and the industry gained such momentum that it has proved hard to stop.

"Have you seen a grazing property where every vestige of tree and shrub growth has been cleared, where the homestead stands open to every wind that blows, and where the stock have no shelter from the element?"

Shelter Belts

"Would you rather see properties with timber left lining their creeks, with natural shelter belts fenced from stock, and shrub and grass surrounded dams holding clear water and carrying their share of waterfowl and fish?"

"The native wildlife will scarcely survive in cleared country because their habitat has been destroyed. They would have had a chance, though, if each property had set aside and fenced a proportion of its area to remain in the natural state. "These reserves or islands are stepping stones that migratory fauna can make good use of."

He said there was no doubt that both pleasure and economic and aesthetic profit could be gained by retaining a proper balance of the farm between domestic and native animals and birds.

"I want to say that now there is much understanding of the need for conservation and sympathy towards it.

"A great deal of goodwill obviously exists on the part of rural interests and a particularly important part can be played by them in regard to such matters as the restoration of natural cover in fenced off areas and waterfowl breeding on dams," Mr. Bonython said.

1975 PORT LINCOLN LADIES REPORT - JOYCE HABEL

Another "R.O.C.A. end of February" week-end at Port Lincoln has passed and again the wives and children of old scholars enjoyed the functions we attended with the weather made to order.

The happenings commenced with the gathering at the "Lincoln" Hotel on Saturday morning when probably more of the women folk than ever before came in for coffee, many with their children who settled for coke. Ken Hayman did the honors introducing Mr. Warren Bonython, guest speaker at the men's dinner, and President Gavin Eckersley to the locals along with the wives of the visitors, Josie Eckersley, Beverley Rice, Valda Muller, Phyl Edge, Marlene West and last, but not least, the always welcome Elizabeth Michelmore.

The local long distance travellers were Christine Giles (Ceduna), Pam McFarlane (Cowell), Marlene Shipard (Penong) and Hazel Jones (Cleve).

Many of us spent Saturday afternoon at the races with one of the winning horses helping to pay week-end expenses. Much excitement by a certain party when the numbers went up.

That night eighteen wives wined, dined and enjoyed each others company amidst the elegance of Port Lincoln's "Hilton". The lottery ticket has yet to be bought, so at the moment we do not know if next year's dinner will be paid for by a win.

The Family Day at Billy Light Point was again held in brilliant sunshine with the men doing the cooking while the women swam, paddled with youngsters or just relaxed. The refreshments were consumed at a convenient time to allow everyone to get a reasonable start for home before the night closed in - some years it has been a job to get the men to make a move.

From the women's point of view it was a most enjoyable week-end. R.O.C.A. Week-end is something that over the years we have enjoyed and look forward to its next occurrence.

BILLY LIGHT POINT

The weather was fine and warm at Billy Lights Pt., there was plenty to eat and the beer was icy cold, -- No wonder the E.P. Family Day on Sunday 23 February was such a success. This year's attendance of over 100 at the picnic was certainly a record and can be attributed to the steady increase in size of some of the younger families and also to the importance and popularity of the picnic, which has certainly become a highlight of the weekend.

The barbeque chops and sausages were superbly cooked by head chef, Jeff Eime and his team of volunteer cooks. However, J. Eime's shirt, which boasted "Beef builds beautiful bodies" looked slightly out of place as he cooked lamb chops, and so it was unanimously decided that his shirt should read "BEER builds beautiful bodies" !

Once again Andy Michelmore provided some samples from the Barossa vintage, which proved most palatable with the barbeque, and became even more so towards the end of the afternoon when Jack McFarlane finally consumed the last bottle of beer, and Barry Lawes finally finished, not only the last drop of claret off, but himself as well !!

Our thanks must again go to the Ladies for supplying home-cooked tarts for all to eat, and to the untiring efforts of Des Hable, for his organisation of an extremely successful day.

B.A. LAWES

ATTENTION

1950 and 1965 graduating years of agriculture, dairy and oenology are the 25 year and 10 year ago groups respectively, for the 1975 September annual Reunion. More details in next Digest.

VUDAL

DARRYL MIEGEL writes that after spending five years in general extension in the New Guinea Highlands he has taken up the position of a Livestock Lecturer at Vudal Agricultural College.

Darryl's time is divided between lecturing first year students and assisting with the running of the College pig and poultry units and 220 head of cattle.

Vudal is running Brahmans, Droughtmasters and a small herd of dairy Jerseys. In addition, they also have 30 head of buffalo which he says are doing extremely well and may prove to be a better village animal than any of their tropical breeds of cattle.

CALIFORNIA

BILL WATSON (1966-68) writes that after National Service he decided that his Diploma was probably no longer current so he took the plunge and enrolled in the Agricultural Economics course at the University of New England. He found the approach there a little more rigorous and theoretical than the Roseworthy course but says that the concepts and knowledge gained from R.A.C. gave him quite an edge.

Bill graduated from U.N.E. last December, and along with his wife and 18 month son left Australia to take up a position in the Ph.D. School at the University of California - Davis where he hopes to carry out what will be his 'final studies'.

He says that Davis, famous for its wineries and horticulture, although over 10,000 miles away, has a Mediterranean climate similar to our own.