

## President's Report

## ROCA AGM 2012

I must say that I have enjoyed being the ROCA President for the last two years. I also appreciate the wisdom of the ROCA constitution that limits presidential terms to two years. While president our friends referred to my wife as the first lady, the pink and black flag on the presidential limo impressed the neighbours, although they were less impressed with the paparazzi gathering round the house in the early morning, to catch the president picking up his newspaper in his "Y fronts". Unfortunately it was not certain that his phone was tapped which is a sign these days that you had really made it. Also someone forgot to tell the airlines that the ROCA President deserves an automatic seat up grade. This may have something to do with the fact that the line in the ROCA expenditure account, headed "air travel" had remained at zero for the last ten years and more.

ROCA continues to bubble along; attendances at annual dinner have been constant, as has our membership and our financial position. We survived the GFC unscathed and we remain one of the most active groups in the University Alumni. This year we introduced, after a lapse of about forty years, the SE Dinner, with about 70 in attendance, surpassing the EP dinner by about 10. I would like to publicly thank Pat Tocaciu RDA 1976 and his son and business partner Luke for making their fine establishment available for the dinner at no charge. There is a strong rumour that a Riverland dinner will be held next year. Our membership remains at around 1400, but many of you are not notifying us of your change of address (post and e-mail), especially younger members, so numbers receiving our newsletter are slowly declining, so it is now less than 1000.

One aspect of our activity or should I say the activity of the Co-Patron deserves special mention. The Co-Patrons are a group of old collegians and other people prominent in agriculture, appointed by the ROCA committee to promote and manage the Roseworthy Campus and Student Fund, which was established by ROCA in 2006 with the cooperation of the University. The purpose of the fund is to provide a mechanism to receive corporate and private donations given to foster and promote the best agricultural technologies and science to ensure the future of sustainable and profitable agriculture in Australia. Over the last two years in particular they have been very busy soliciting financial contributions from industry and elsewhere, to fund seven scholarships for students to study, agronomy animal science, and agricultural science, to a total annual value of value of \$37,500. Details of these scholarships and the names of the winners are in the last two editions of the ROCA Digest. This is truly a fantastic effort by the co-patrons, with special thanks to Ray Taylor and John Crosby. After a special meeting of some of the Co-patrons with the then Vice Chancellor, Professor James McWha, Ray Taylor was able to announce scholarship funds for students at Roseworthy would be made available from the proceeds coming from the sale of the University properties, under the Vice Chancellor's Scheme. These are very generous awards and are keenly sought after.

The financial situation of ROCA remains relatively steady, when I took over as president members funds were at \$37,176 and this year were \$35,344. On average expenditure exceeded income by about \$1000 to \$1500 each year, due to the cost of producing the Digest, which is an essential activity for our organisation. Membership drops a little each year as those older members who fall off the perch are not replaced by new members jumping on. The committee continues to look into ways of attracting members, both from those who did not bother to join when they graduated 20 to 30 years ago and from the recent graduates. It is largely a sign of the time and a problem faced by many organisations such as ours. The University is also concerned about this and the Alumni has awarded us \$2100 to promote membership of ROCA amongst the senior students currently at Roseworthy. This evening we have a table of nine students joining us at the annual dinner.

The committee has committed ROCA to fund four major academic prizes for students studying animal science and veterinary science over the next ten years. This continues the great ROCA tradition of over a hundred years of sponsoring major academic and other prizes for students studying at Roseworthy. The 1971 graduating year has agreed to fund the first four of these awards in 2013 using proceeds gained from the distribution of their book, **The Roseworthy College Legacy and the 68 group.**

The ROCA Archives group continues to do a great job in preserving our history and records, and more importantly scanning in much of the material and putting it on-line. You can find this material by visiting [www.adelaide.edu.au/roca](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/roca) and following the links to records and archives. A record I look up frequently is The Student magazine. All the editions from 1897 to 1937 have been scanned in and are available on-line through our website. There is also a good collection of photographs.

The University Alumni office continues to offer us strong support and a good service. Our main contact person there Dr Kelly Banwell has moved to another position and we owe her a great deal for what she has done for us. She has been replaced by Ruth Rosie who is continuing her good work.

I would like to mention two subjects that are of particular interest to me. Over the next two year these will emerge as a major interest for many Roseworthians and for most Australians. These are the ANZAC Centenary, commencing on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2014 and commemoration of the contribution Roseworthians and other Australians made to the defence of this country and our values in that terrible war and other conflicts up to this very day. I am not viewing this through the lenses of patriotism and nationalism, but rather through the eye of humanitarianism, as I have seen at first hand the direct effects of war and the consequences of conflict on nations and their people, dragged unwillingly into war through the meddlings of great powers.

As I have mentioned in the ROCA Digest, University has done a magnificent job in restoring the structural integrity of the Tassie Memorial Library and is in the process of restoring the interior of the building. I would like ROCA members to become involved in some of the activities that no doubt will occur as the nation starts to commemorate events that took place a hundred years ago. The Tassie Memorial Library and the College Chapel are logical symbols upon which some of these commemorative events could be centred. This year an impromptu and informal Anzac day service took place in the College Chapel with over 80 students attending. This is most encouraging and I know some of the current staff have a great interest in these matters and in furthering the traditions built up by the students and staff over the last 130 years. I use the term Roseworthian, as the names on the WW1 and 2 honour rolls include lecturing staff and other employees of the College, as well as students. Events like war involve families and friends of students and staff and so it becomes a Roseworthy community involvement, hence the collective term Roseworthian rather than old students.

On my part, as a result of my rather belated interest in history and in particular the history of WW1, I intend to write the stories of our 228 Roseworthians who served in the 1<sup>st</sup> AIF. This should give greater meaning and context to any activities that will arise over the next seven year. Most of our 1<sup>st</sup> AIF members did not return home until 1919, with many returning to the land and it is my intention to include the post war stories of our soldiers, as well as what I can glean from the Roseworthy archives and their service records. I will need help from other Roseworthians and members of the families of our soldiers.

It has been a great honour to be president of this old and venerable association which does a lot more than run an annual dinner each year.

Richard Turnbull RDA 1969

16 Oct 2012

