

ROCA President's Report, 2016

Welcome and Acknowledgements

It was a great honor to be elected as the President of ROCA in October 2014 and I have thoroughly enjoyed the past two years in this role. From the outset, may I thank my fellow ROCA Committee members and the broader ROCA membership for entrusting me with this position. It is indeed a wonderful achievement to reflect on the fact that like-minded Roseworthy Graduates have continued to see the value of ROCA, 118 years after its formation.

Having spent the past few years on the ROCA committee and engaging with fellow graduates and the University of Adelaide staff, I appreciate the commitment and dedication that goes into maintaining this wonderful organization and its progressive endeavors.

ROCA Membership

Our overall net membership numbers continue to increase and stand at just under 2,000. We believe that we are now capturing the majority of students graduating from Roseworthy each year and I thank my fellow Committee members for their ongoing efforts to bring our colleagues, mates and contacts into the fold. Many will be surprised to know that ROCA has the largest membership base within the University's Alumni, but we believe that there remain around 5,000 Roseworthy graduates still alive and not a member of ROCA – our challenge and opportunity is to bring these graduates back under the ROCA banner.

ROCA Committee Members

I would like to thank the returning ROCA Committee Members and congratulate the incoming office holders as they take ROCA to the next level.

The ROCA committee meets every second month but a power of work is done throughout the year by the members – all contributing to the growth, influence and success of the Association. I again acknowledge and thank each member of the ROCA Committee.

ROCA Finances

The financial affairs of the ROCA have been significantly boosted over the past few years with the signing of national sponsors and the success of our "Plonky's Pick" wine sales fundraising program.

Nonetheless, as our Treasurer will shortly report, despite these new sources of income, our reserves have dropped slightly over the past 12 months. Thus, if we are to continue to publish our bi-annual ROCA Digest, support new and existing Agricultural Scholarships and academic prizes, it beholds upon all of us to think carefully and creatively as to how we increase the revenue line of our organization.

May I again thank the suppliers of our excellent Plonky's Pick wines – Oleary Walker Wines and ROCA Committee Member Fiona Hill for their terrific commitment at this fundraising initiative.

National Sponsors

Our national sponsorship agreements with Agribusiness specialist, William Buck, Chartered Accountants and Advisors and Piper Alderman Lawyers are greatly appreciated and we encourage your custom of their wide array of services. These sponsorships are an integral part of the ongoing financial success of ROCA and allow us to significantly broaden our reach and impact as a group.

ROCA and the University of Adelaide Alumni

2016 marks the 25th Anniversary of Roseworthy College joining the University of Adelaide. In speaking with Old Collegians and agribusiness people from across the country this year, there is no doubt the sense of pride that our colleagues have in seeing the global agricultural education and research powerhouse that our University has become. We are delighted to have the President and Vice Chancellor of the University, Prof Warren Bebbington, here with us tonight. On behalf of ROCA, may I thank him for his significant leadership throughout the University, but with a particular focus on the agricultural related pursuits of the organisation

Could I also welcome and acknowledge the contribution of our new Alumni representative, Lisa Taplin. Lisa and her team work feverishly and diligently to assist ROCA's activities throughout the year.

ROCA has recently secured an Alumni grant that will see us use social and traditional media to profile 25 Roseworthy graduates, in 25 weeks to highlight the past 25 years of success. This program is unashamedly about raising the profile of our graduates, Roseworthy and the University but also to encourage graduates to reconnect with ROCA as members.

Key ROCA Activities of 2015

Regional ROCA reunions were held at Kimba and for the first time in many years, in Clare, during the year and were all well attended by ROCA graduates and their families.

To coincide with the annual Clipsal 500, ROCA, FREE Eyre and seven agribusinesses partnered with 60 Eyre Peninsula farmers to enjoy the Clipsal race and raise funds for a new agricultural scholarship for an Eyre Peninsula Student. This scholarship will commence in 2017 and we hope that this will be the start of many other regional groups coming together, with the help of ROCA, to create new agricultural scholarships.

ROCA Award of Merit 2015

It is our great honor to congratulate David Lewis for receiving the ROCA Award of Merit for 2016. David graduated from Roseworthy in 1976 (RDA) and 1977

(RDAT) and along with his year group assembled here tonight, is celebrating 40 wonderful years of contribution to Australian agriculture.

Roseworthy Campus and Student Fund

May I begin by acknowledging the passing of our dear friend and founding Chairman of the RCSF, Ray Taylor – our thoughts continue to be with his beloved wife Joan and family. Such was Ray's passion and commitment to the RCSF, he was still calling me from his hospital bed with ideas and strategies to draw more contributors to the Fund, just days before he passed.

During the past 12 months the RCSF has been renamed the "Agricultural Education Fund". The aim of this name change was to move towards a Fund that encapsulated and centralized agricultural related scholarships aimed at students studying agricultural related programs at either Roseworthy, Waite or the Adelaide Campuses.

It is pleasing to report that the AEF had another positive and productive year, contributing to the funding of worthy students and their education through the University of Adelaide.

In closing, I reiterate my sincere thanks to the ROCA Committee members for their ongoing commitment and passion for the Association and all that it strives to achieve.

There is no doubt that the importance of agriculture to this state and country. Other industries will ebb and flow, but agriculture will continue to provide the backbone of our economy and as an Association, we have a tremendous opportunity to help shape that future.

I thank all ROCA members for their ongoing support and wish them well for the year ahead.

Mark Rodda
President
ROCA Inc.