



# R. O. C. A. DIGEST

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF ROSEWORTHY OLD COLLEGIANS ASSOCIATION

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Even Old Collegians' associations have their ups and downs. At present R.O.C.A. appears to have a bit of both. Financially the association is stronger than it has ever been in the past, but from a member's point of view interest appears to be at its lowest.

At the last committee meeting the question of membership and member interest was discussed at much length. It is hoped that these discussions will be moulded into something more concrete at the next meeting.

One thing that became obvious was that it is time we changed our venue for the annual general meeting and dinner once again. It appears that once a hotel considers it has our business the service and interest wanes.

Another problem that has caught up with us is the lack of editorial material for this Digest. Our editor, Richard Cambell, has exhausted editorial reserves and now joins a long list of editors in appealing for more material.

Jobs for Diplomates could present problems during the next few years. A warning has already been issued that we are facing an over-supply of trained men in agriculture, and with the agricultural colleges attempting to take in more students, the over-supply problem could be with us for some time.

As an example of the planned increased intake of students, the new College at Orange, N.S.W., which is due for completion in 1973, will accommodate 120 students in its initial stages, and 800 when completed.

This situation was obviously worrying students I spoke with at Roseworthy last year. One or two second year students wondered if it was worth finishing their third year when there was a shortage of jobs in agriculture. Perhaps the brighter outlook which we see now could solve many of these problems.

Perhaps members would like to air their views on employment of Diplomates in Agriculture in the new issues of the Digest.

While it is still early in the year, it is not too early to be looking at nominations for this year's Award of Merit. To maintain the standard of the past it is important to have a large number of nominations to select from.

RICHARD FEWSTER

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**COLLEGE CHATTER** from Cliff Hooper

The season has treated us very well — Ray Norton made 25,000 bales of hay, managing to supply 10,000 bales to other Government departments. This was the first year that fodder rolls were made, and we have 2,000 rolls on the farm which should supply supplementary feed well into the lean period.

Harvest has really just commenced at the time of writing, and barley has yielded up to 55 bushels an acre, and wheat crops promise to be well above average. On top of all this, we have the highest numbers of sheep, beef cattle and dairy cattle ever on the College.

The vines look good for the coming vintage, and the present crop is excellent. It is hoped that this vintage will be the biggest ever.

Farmers Day 1971 saw probably the biggest attendance ever, which was very pleasing as we have struggled for a number of years without much response. The theme, "Decision Making in Agriculture", gave everybody plenty to think about. The day was opened by the Principal, who handed over to Ken Leske for a talk on methods of decision making; then the visitors split up and visited the various sections for talks with the same approach.

On Open Day, the student body once again showed what they could do to make a visit to Roseworthy College very interesting and educational. Their subject matter ranged from an exhibition of sky diving, to talks to prospective students, to the establishment of the Ray Norton Bird Sanctuary. A total of 2,000 barbecue lunches were served, and more than 600 paid to dance at night. It was pleasing to see quite a number of Old Collegians interested in the day, which for some people is booked up every year.

The Wine Makers' Day had an attendance of about 250 people, including some interstate visitors. There were many visitors from different sections of the wine industry, including research scientists from the C.S.I.R.O. and Australian Wine Research Institute. The day included practical demonstrations of analytical techniques and of the new equipment.

I suppose the main concern at the College at present is the appointment of staff as Roseworthy reorganises for Tertiary Education. At the time of writing, three appointments have been announced — senior lecturer in Plant Science, Milton Spurling; senior lecturer in Farm Management, Ken Leske; senior lecturer in Oenology, Bob Baker. The position of senior lecturer in Animal Science will be filled from Victoria. The position of senior lecturer in Extension was re-advertised, so there was evidently a lack of suitable applicants. We understand that the other positions will be announced in January.

Perhaps a comment on the present situation as it appears to me:— A student with a degree can get a position as assistant lecturer; with five years experience after graduation he can get a position as lecturer with a salary of \$9,000 a year. It has been stated that a Diplomat cannot be a lecturer, even after 20 years experience. So the fact emerges that although our College is turning out students with diplomas, those diplomas are not recognised by the College as qualifications suitable for appointments to the lecturing staff, although a student doing a degree course can be appointed.

Even if you do the fourth year RDAT, although it was recently classed as being equal to a degree, you will not be appointed. However, an RDAT holder appointed to the staff as assistant dairy instructor would soon be drawing a salary higher than the senior dairy instructor, who has many years in the industry.

So you can see why I started this article with "The main concern at the College at present is the appointment of staff." Where will present staff members without degrees fit into the new scheme? We are told that we will be managers. Will we still be required to give students a practical outlook on their subjects?

If the Ramsay Report is followed, there should be a place in the Two Year course for the

experienced Diplomat as an instructor. But at present it appears as though three years and a Diploma will not be much help in finding positions in the world. The RDAT is better, but positions appear limited.

Bruce Tunks has commenced duties as lecturer in Agricultural Engineering – a position which has been vacant for some months. He holds a Bachelor of Engineering Degree and is completing a Diploma in Business Administration. Bruce has been employed by the E&WS Department since graduation. I take this opportunity of welcoming Bruce and his wife to the College.

We will be losing some of our present staff. Roy Fairfax has departed to take up a position with the RAAF; John Nicolson, senior lecturer in Chemistry, is transferring to the C.S.I.R.O. Division of Land Research in Queensland; and Reg Hutchinson will take time off to do the fourth year.

One graduating class still have get-togethers several times each year, with Mark Babidge (the editor of the noted 'Dungey Rag') appearing to be the main organiser. They held a barbecue at Reg Hutchinson's in November with Mark, Reg, Lofty Jones, Spike Jones, John Jones, Trevor March, Gavin Eckersley, John Evans, Martin Cochrane, Peter Ryan, Bill Reddin and Barry Mortimer all turning up for what was apparently a good show.

#### OENOLOGY NEWSLETTER from Phil Tummel

Congratulations to Ian Scarborough on the arrival of his son, Jeromy. We all wish Ian and family all the best in his transfer from Saltram to Pokolbin Winemakers in the Hunter Valley.

Kevin Pfeiffer, who transferred from Loxton to Mount Ophir, Victoria, earned himself a trip to the U.S. to further his experience.

Chris Tolley has returned from Penfolds, New Zealand, and is now winemaking at the family show at Modbury. Talking of N.Z., Alec Corban of Corbans Wines gained his diploma in 1948.

Phil Waldeck is going great guns in W.A., picking up medals at all State wine shows. Congratulations Phil. Late congratulations also to Don Hughes of Reynella Wines who was recently made a director.

Gordon Nelson looked hale and hearty at the Adelaide tasting – the Loxton climate must be right up his alley.

#### SOUTH EAST BRANCH REUNION DINNER from Reg Hutchinson

I was fortunate to attend the South East reunion dinner as it coincided with a cattle transfer trip to the Struan Research Centre. The dinner was held on Saturday, November 20 at the Naracoorte Hotel. The guest speaker was Mr Gerry Fry, the chairman of SE Meats Pty Ltd, who spoke of the company's moves towards establishing an abattoirs in that district. His talk was well received by all present, who showed great interest in the project.

Lewin Robertson and Brian Hayman were re-elected to the respective positions as president and secretary. Others present were Allen Emerson, Peter Fischer, Gerry Shipway, Alec McDonald, Dick Sage, David Scales, Norman Armitage, Harry Johns, Farrel Haines and Bruce Thyer.

There are obviously many more Old Collegians living in the South East who missed out on a most enjoyable evening.

(Don't forget the Eyre Peninsula Branch reunion and family day on 26th and 27th February)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Keith F. Lawson, Box 269, Bordertown. 5268

An idea which I believe deserves discussion by College staff and R.O.C.A. is the provision of refresher courses of study for Old Collegians at Roseworthy at regular intervals.

I believe there is a need for continuous updating of information, and one good means of doing this would be for the College to conduct, say, weekend schools or schools run during College vacations. Such schools would be on the basis of one particular subject per school, e.g. beef cattle, dairying, sheep cereals, agronomy, oenology, etc.

Fees would be payable to the College for direct costs involved.

Marcus Oldham conducts such schools each year, and I believe they are very detailed studies and are highly successful.

From J. B. Laffer, Box 337, Narrogin, W.A. 6312

I was most gratified to read in the 1970 edition of "The Student" a report of the Principal's address to those who attended the annual Farmers' Day at the College. Probably the reason for my pleasure is that this appears to be the first time I have agreed with Mr Herriot.

According to the report, Mr Herriot did not parade the usual palliatives and red herrings which farmers so dearly love to hear, such as the immorality of the concept of "get big or get out", the curse of inflation, and those other near mythical problems espoused by "industry leaders".

He discounted, and I would imagine with some trepidation, the 'across the board' output subsidies, generally considered to be a cure-all for the rural malaise. If anyone is in disagreement with him in this field, I would suggest they get a copy of "A Policy for Agriculture", published by the University of W.A. as a result of a two day seminar attended by leading agricultural economists and politicians.

Mr Herriot also suggested that changes were necessary, both on economic and humanitarian grounds. The guts, I think, of his address was that there needs to be effective planning at the Federal level, not the usual slap-dash hole-plugging and politically expedient palliatives usually offered. Unfortunately, I can see no political party willing to accept the responsibility of 'asking the right questions' to get the right answers.

One point in which I do not agree with Mr Herriot is in his implication of the role Roseworthy plays in providing farm managers. By his own statistics, it appears that Roseworthy will only produce 2 to 3 p.c. of farm managers in the future. This figure I do not consider significant, especially allowing that these graduates are probably from superior farm management backgrounds, and that by completion of three or four years at Roseworthy should indicate a reasonable level of intelligence, and therefore an adequate standard of management ability without a Roseworthy education.

In these days of reasonably efficient extension by the agricultural 'technocracy', I doubt if this 2 to 3 p.c. provides an economically justifiable nucleus of rational farm management behaviour.

Basically what I mean is, is it worthwhile spending thousands of dollars training an insignificant number of farmers, when perhaps better results could be obtained training larger numbers not quite as fully?

I propose for farmer education, a series of live-in courses in the off-peak season for young farmers, or those who will inherit farm management responsibilities. Such a course should possibly run for two or three years with perhaps three months spent at the institution each year.

I will not elaborate on this, as I have no doubt there are more competent authorities in this field than me, but one of the points I am trying to make is this: if we require more honesty in the Federal sphere, surely we should not delude ourselves as to the place of Roseworthy—and this I believe is in the field of technical extension.

In conclusion I again congratulate Mr Herriot in the honesty of his address, and I make the vain plea that I hope others in authority will follow a similar and responsible line.

## FARM COLLEGE KEEPS IN STEP WITH THE TIMES

(An article by David Dale in the Sydney Morning Herald)

With the rural industries apparently collapsing around us, it would be no surprise to learn that the State's oldest and largest agricultural college, Hawkesbury, is suffering dire consequences. But in fact the opposite is true—Hawkesbury Agricultural College is booming as never before.

It is having to turn away hundreds of qualified applicants for enrolment each year. It has plans to double its student numbers over the next three years. It is engaged in a large-scale works programme which will give it some of the most modern buildings and equipment of any educational institution in the State.

Most of its graduates are getting well-paid jobs as soon as they leave the College.

And another surprise—most of its students are coming from the cities. Of 58 students who began a diploma of agriculture course at the College last year, only 15 were the sons of farmers.

Why is the College in such a healthy state in the midst of a rural crisis?

Because, unlike many farmers, the College has been willing to adapt, says its energetic new principal, Dr Graham Swain. Primary industry isn't dying, he says. People still consume eggs, meat, milk, fruit and vegetables, and wear woollen clothes. But there must be new approaches to producing and processing these goods profitably. The College is now treating primary industry as big business. Very few of its students will go on to the land and run their own small farms. The College is training men who will become managers of giant complexes owned by companies, and senior administrators in the Department of Agriculture. It is training food technologists, managers of dairy factories, soil experts and animal breeding and health experts.

And it is updating the training of men who will be needed more and more during the 'farming crisis'—rural extension, workers who advise farmers on how to readjust to the changes in primary industry.

The College's boom began in 1969, when it started to receive Commonwealth financial aid. It upgraded its courses and its staff. All teaching positions were thrown open and the College employed a number of new senior lecturers with extensive university training and experience in industry.

Several of its courses were extended from two years to three. Its diploma of agriculture course was recognised by the Public Service Board as equivalent to a three-year university degree.

A Higher School Certificate is now required for admission. The College has about 250 students, including about 30 girls. It offers four main courses—a three year diploma of agriculture course, a three-year diploma of dairy technology, a three-year diploma of food technology and a two-year diploma of poultry technology.

It also offers a one-year postgraduate diploma for rural extension workers, aimed at updating their knowledge of the sections of primary industry in which they work and guiding them in methods of dealing with people.

Last year Hawkesbury was declared a college of advanced education. There is talk of expanding it to a multi-purpose tertiary college to serve the new 'cities' like Campbelltown which are to develop west of Sydney.

But with all the emphasis on scientific methods in what is taught and how it is taught, Hawkesbury Agricultural College retains a pleasant rural atmosphere. The printed instructions for intending students specify that every student must bring a pair of riding boots, two pairs of work boots and a mosquito net.

The College is set in 3,000 green acres at Richmond, 40 miles west of Sydney. Much of its land is pasture and orchards for the teaching farm it maintains.

According to the staff, the return from what the farm produces would easily cover the farm's running costs and go some way towards running the College. But the College is not interested in making profits from the farm, just in providing the best practical training for its students. All students must spend at least one day a week working on the farm.

## THE COLLEGE IN 1885

The following are extracts from the South Australian Register, Friday, February 13, 1885. The article, written by the paper's agricultural editor, was headed 'Twenty-four hours at the Agricultural College'—

'I found myself at the Farm at about 6.30 p.m. on February 11, in company with another member of the Press. We were first introduced to our rooms, where the dust of travel was got rid of, with much after-comfort, and then we partook of tea by ourselves, as the pupils have their tea regularly at 6 p.m. After tea we had a short conversation with the Principal in order to gain an idea of the routine of the place, and at 8 p.m. a bell rang to call the students to an hour's duty in writing up their diaries of the day's proceedings.

'We found 13 young gentlemen sitting at the tables with a number of books before them, which they very kindly allowed us to inspect. Of course any stranger has no right to a privilege such as this, and I was much gratified and pleased at the readiness with which they allowed the intrusion upon their privacy, as well as with the intelligent manner in which they seemed generally to have caught up the spirit of their work.

'They keep at present four books, but the number will be increased as soon as the staff of teachers is augmented to the proper number. At present the Principal is the only one so engaged, but Mr J. E. Brown, our able Conservator of Forests, has engaged at an early date to give a series of lectures upon practical forestry, and it only remains for the Government to appoint a resident chemical assistant to fill all the requirements for the teaching staff for the present session.

'One of the books kept contains notes of the lectures given upon agriculture by Professor J. D. Custance: the second has notes upon mensuration and land surveying: the third has notes upon field cultivation (such as notes upon the soils and character of the cultivation pursued in the previous seasons as well as at the present time), the crops, time of sowing, manures applied, alterations in appearance from day to day, especially those caused by changes in the meteorological condition; the implements used, and every possible particular of a like nature.

'The next is a farm diary in which the proceedings upon the Farm, cost of each work performed, men and horses employed, &c, are recorded day by day. Books for farm accounts will be added within a short time, and when the other subjects necessary to make a perfect farmer are added to the curriculum the students will need to keep records upon many other subjects.

'There were thirteen students in the College, nearly all of whom are sons of farmers, with hands of horn, and capable of taking charge of a team or plough. There are three science students, who all volunteer to do practical work whenever needed, but do not receive or expect any pay. The advantage they will possess is, in case exigencies of the Farm require it, the practical students must attend to work, whilst the science students can abstain from labour in order to attend any lectures that may be in course of delivery—that is, with practical students a certain time is compulsorily devoted to labour if necessary, whilst with the science students it is optional.

'The practical students keep a record of the hours during which they are employed and the nature of the work, which is handed in every Monday morning, to be checked by the Farm Manager, and the amount of pay is entered to his credit . . .'

'On Saturdays and Wednesdays there is a kind of half holiday, not a real cessation of effort altogether, because there is always something to do, some back work to make up, some study, or perhaps a visit in a body to some place of interest, as there was the day before my visit, when the pupils visited the Ostrich Farm.

'At 10.30 p.m. all lights in the College are put out, and the pupils, who have done a fair day's work, recruit their wearied mental and bodily energies in slumber. I believe three or four pupils sleep in each

room, without any partitions or screens between their beds, a regulation which would not altogether be agreeable to myself. Some by paying extra fees, I think, can secure a room to themselves for a time, until the College is full, a contingency which is sure to arise before long.

'At 6 o'clock sharp next morning the tintinnabulation of a handbell aroused pupils, visitors and others to the duties of a fresh day, and at 6.30 they were all gathered at the College door, where, with a cheerful "Good morning, gentlemen," the Professor of Agriculture, &c. met them, and after an equally cordial response all proceeded at once to some of the crops and the paddocks to inspect them and be instructed.

'Coming to a nice lot of early amber cane, the Principal asked one of the pupils what plants they were: of another, what was the proper time to sow the seed: of another, how much seed per acre should be put in: of another, what were the uses of the crop; and a number of other questions. Each pupil had his notebook in hand, and the replies, if the Professor stated them to be correct, were put down. The saintfoin, which was still nice and green, the Bokhara clover, the Bengalese grass, the Cobbetts corn, pearl millet, planter's friend, mangolds, carrots, kohlrabi, and thousand-headed kail or cabbage were each visited in turn, and a number of questions and answers given, the notebook being in active requisition all the time by nearly every one of the students—(I would say 'all', but there was one who was not as earnest as I trust he will be after seeing this hint, otherwise he will prove to be no credit to the "block from which he sprang").

'I am sure that this hour before breakfast was profitable and instructive to all in a greater or lesser degree. With respect to the pearl millet it was remarked that it would probably prove to be a very valuable fodder plant; the saintfoin was still very luxuriant; the thousand-headed kail, which was cut in December last, was again sprouting very freely. Seven tons had been sold for £18 10s., and besides a lot that was then used upon the farm, there would be a pretty heavy crop of second growth.

'We all got back to breakfast at 8, and here it should be noted that the bell rings independently of the cooks or the steward, and when the bell rings for meals it means business and no delay. Each one sat down as through he had earned his meal, wanted it, and meant to do full justice to it; and I must say, parenthetically, every proposition was fully carried *nem. con.*

'After breakfast there was a short interregnum, and then we all assembled in the lecture room, where we were favoured from 9 a.m. till 10 with a discourse upon agriculture, its scope and design, with a short allusion to its rise and progress, and some remarks upon the wonderful improvements that have been made in late years with implements, and in the improvement of cereals and plants, and generally in the methods of culture . . .'

'The clumsy impractical force-pump for filling the roof reservoir has been replaced with a handy one that can be worked by one man. The yard for the servants and laundry maids has been enclosed, and the sheds also, and the open shed at the extreme back has been built in at the back and ends to form convenient stables.

'There is one matter which deserves serious consideration. There are a good many people who seem to think that the College and all its grounds are public property, to be visited at their will without consulting the convenience of the Principal. As nearly every hour of the day—nay, every minute—has its special duty it is unreasonable, unjust, and scarcely polite to intrude without first arranging a suitable time with the Principal or the Farm Manager. To trespass upon the grounds, to walk through the fields and across the crops, and even to pick the finest specimens that may have been saved for seed or any special purpose, is by no means the right thing to do—indeed, if the Principal chose to exercise his legal rights such conduct would be visited by punishment at the hands of the law.'

**REMEMBER . . .**

The Eyre Peninsula branch reunion, AGM and family day.  
Saturday and Sunday, 26th and 27th February.

Guest speaker—Mr John Brommell, Senior Vermin Control  
Officer with the Department of Lands.

These functions have always been a tremendous success and  
a good time is guaranteed for all. Contact Des Habel,  
3 Frobisher Street, Port Lincoln or phone Port Lincoln  
2 2716 after hours or 2 3634 during working hours.