Fact Sheet

Roseworthy Old Collegians Association Inc.

Roseworthy

ROCA AWARD OF MERIT 2024 – Bardy McFarlane

Alistair Gordon (Bardy) McFarlane (RDA 1972) graduated from Roseworthy Agricultural College with a Diploma in Agriculture.

The agricultural training and qualifications received at Roseworthy Agricultural College, in addition to a lengthy career as a legal practitioner resulted in him making a significant difference to the world, with a lasting legacy of widespread change and benefit for others.

Joint owner of the historic Brinkley Station at Wellington East on the River Murray and armed with this formal agricultural qualification, Bardy McFarlane managed the family's 9,700 hectare Brinkley Station, transitioning the livestock management from a largely pastoral operation to a more intensive legume/grass pasture-based enterprise. The initial stage of this enterprise transition involved clearing 1,600 hectares of the unpalatable tobacco bush and replanting the area with cover crops under-sown with lucerne or medics.

In the 1980s, Bardy McFarlane studied law as a mature age student at the University of Adelaide, graduating with a Bachelor of Laws (Hons) in 1987, later boosted by the acquisition of a Master of Laws (Environmental) in 2000.

Following admission as a Practitioner in the Supreme Court of SA and the High Court of Australia, he became a partner in an Adelaide law firm specialising in Native Title and land access negotiations. One of the major achievements of Bardy McFarlane was being instrumental in ensuring financial assistance provisions were included in the Native Vegetation Act, where Heritage Agreements placed on land meant large areas were locked up for conservation purposes.

He also acted for miners, oil & gas operators, pastoralists, local government & commercial fishers in all but one Native Title claim in SA. With a passion for primary industries in the broadest sense, Bardy McFarlane worked with industry, government and environmental NGOs for a five year period to ensure the seafood industry's interests and sustainability objectives were incorporated in the new Fisheries Management & Marine Park Acts of 2007.

As a full-time member of the Native Title Tribunal, he was a key mediator and principal facilitator in negotiations between parties to Native Title claims in SA, WA, NSW and Qld, resolving claims by identifying ways to reconcile conflicting interests in land. He facilitated negotiations for agreement between the WA government and three native title claimants for a $6 billion gas processing development on the Burrup Peninsula near Dampier, WA.

He also facilitated agreement between BHP and three native title claim groups for expansion of Olympic Dam mine site in SA, in addition to being invited by the WA government to Chair the Technical Taskforce to resolve backlog in mineral tenement applications, including negotiations that resulted in agreements between four of the five WA Native Title groups and mining industry bodies.