This is an interview with Derek Mitchell by David Spencer on Tuesday, the 19th of August, 2025 at the Port Adelaide Library as part of the Roseworthy Agricultural College Oral History Collection. Derek had a pivotal part in a pre-entry program called PASRAC, a Program for Aboriginal students at Roseworthy Agricultural College established in the mid 1980s for indigenous students. And PASRAC presented an opportunity for indigenous students as a gateway into tertiary study.

**Now, Derek, let's start with how you got involved in this program.**

**Derek:** Yes. David, the... I had a long relationship with an Aboriginal community controlled college in Adelaide, the Aboriginal Community College, which then became Tauondi College [Tauondi Aboriginal College Pt. Adelaide SA], and I was contacted by the principal alerting me to the fact that Roseworthy College was looking for ways in which they could provide academic assistance, practical assistance, research assistance to Aboriginal communities, particularly of course, in the dry land and arid zone. So, I contacted their student counsellor, Kent Hallett and it went from there.

**So I guess there was a lot of people involved in getting the ball rolling, was it was a big step to do this? So, could you give us a bit of detail on how that all came together?**

**Derek:** Yes, it was firstly a matter of going to the college and getting a bit familiar with its culture, academically I mean, and then figuring out ways in which to find a model that would work on a couple of levels. One, that it would enable Aboriginal people to come down to the college and see what the courses were like and get a bit of an idea of what it would be like living at the college or in Gawler, living away from their communities. Some of them were professionals in Land Councils or Community Councils. So, the first thing was an opportunity for people to come down and just check that, yes, this would suit their ambitions and needs and this is what it would imply for them. So, we established a thing in the first instance called preselection, which was three days visit to the college and meeting staff, getting a taste of the courses, having a look at accommodation and so forth. Then the second step, if... and we assessed them academically of course, if that was all agreed, then the next step was for them to come to a term, the third term of the year. And we called that "Orientation." And so it was a... Yeah, taste it and see what it's like, experience it. And if at the end of that two and a half to three months the college was satisfied that I'm confident that they were good candidates for study, undergraduate study, and if they themselves had their affairs in order, it suited that time

of their lives or whatever then, yeah, they'd go for it. Then they'd come back and be undergraduates, yes!

**And so the first, I guess the first lot that went through would have been, you know, the guinea pigs for this course. How did that work out? How many people came in and what sort of backgrounds did they have?**

**Derek:** Yes, I'm not sure of the exact numbers, but somewhere around, you know, a dozen or 15 or so. It's a while back, they came from... some of them came because they were members of... the active members of Aboriginal Land Councils, particularly Central Land Council, Northern Land Council and one of the councils in Queensland. They also included people who had positions in management of local communities, for example down at Raukkan in the Coorong, and they had ambitions to exert their own energies and their own choices themselves for enterprise and management in their areas. And this was seen by quite a few of those candidates as yes, this is exactly what we need, exactly what we want!

**So what were the practicalities of getting going? You had a student centre and you had housing in Gawler. Could you give us a bit of detail on that sort of thing?**

Derek: Certainly with accommodation the... what was then the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, the State Department, Peter Buckskin was the CEO at that time, I'm talking with him. He was very enthusiastic about the notion and very supportive. So he negotiated with South Australian Housing Trust, some housing in Gawler for those who didn't want to live on campus, which was most of them in the first instance. So they were share houses. The Commonwealth government was the funding support for this and they included some recognition of the need for transport possibilities and so on. The... Then of course there was communication with the staff at the college about what it might imply, or people not sure whether they should be careful or boom along or what was going to happen?

**So how did these people, they came down from wherever they came from and stayed in these houses? Did they... did you bus them into the campus every day or how did that work?**

Derek: There were two. One, the college had a bus that ferried between Gawler...because there was some of the non-Aboriginal students who came up by train or whatever, so there was a bus between Gawler and the college. Some of the Aboriginal students used that. There were occasions, however, where I needed to get out to there where they were or maybe help them

get down to the city for appointments or medical appointments or whatever, so the Commonwealth provided us with a van, a small van to ferry those issues.

**You mentioned to me in earlier talk about you had a couple of tutors lined up to give them help in... I guess working through the course of how to learn and how to do assignments and that sort of stuff. Was that... did that work out well?**

**Derek:** Yes it did, both of the tutors were Roseworthy...recent Roseworthy graduates, and it enabled... you can imagine you're in a new place in a new society, new community, whatever, is... how do I do something? Or do I do it this way? or is it, am I being a bit of a dill doing it this way or whatever? There's this sort of academic journey if you like. Then, of course, there's things like the language, the words and the phrases that many of them weren't familiar with or assured, self-assured about. So those things were important as it is. And then, of course, there's simply the "I missed something in the lecture. What was that? I didn't quite get it!" [laughs] So those three planks were really quite important. And also, because the tutors were recent graduates or recently students themselves, they could provide personal you know, I'm not up to this or this is too much or this is no, no, no, no! And they could provide that personal experience for the students, yes.

**And did they... You talked about collective learning, that sort of stuff as a group. So, they did that a fair bit?**

**Derek:** Oh yes. We ran tutorial sessions. Well. More... yeah, as you say, more a sort of a collective seminar, almost, for them to catch up because acknowledging that some of them were from the arid zone from the centre of Australia, some from subtropical up the top from Queensland and so on. So, yeah, that... those conversations between them as a group, were actually quite important and there are also other elements in the background for them about traditional proprieties, who speaks about country, who speaks about this aspect, who speaks about those men and women? Is it... do you have to be a recognised senior in the community? All those contemporary issues that face them as potential graduates?

**So how did they sort that out? That sounds I mean, that's a... I understand a little bit of that we just talked about in terms of this traditional way of working through things so that would have been a little bit confronting sometimes. It would have been challenged by someone else saying things which normally they would think that person doesn't, shouldn't say that sort of thing or shouldn't discuss it. How did they work around that?**

**Derek:** That was... they saw... inevitably, they came to see themselves as a group, quite a unique group from all over Australia, sitting there in a room and considering those sorts of issues. So they were exploring their own, professional/cultural dynamics when they get back to their communities, which was actually proved to be quite important.

**Terrific. And you talked about, I haven't talked about whether you had... you set up a centre, didn't you, on the campus? Where was that? What did you do about that?**

**Derek:** Ah yes, that was a... It was right in the centre of the college and it was an old... The old applied science laboratories [next to the Tassie Library] and we...that in fact is where the student counsellor was housed and we were given the occupation of all of that within a very short time. You can imagine the laboratories with slabs of slate for desks and, you know, benches and what have you. So, the group... myself and the group used to get in there on weekends and pull it apart and paint it and reorganise it. And I think at some point we... That's right, one day we altogether... They all gathered and we named the building 'PASRAC Building' and put a sign up on the... Every building had a sign on it and a name and in fact, way down the road, they...I wasn't aware of this, but they'd got together and made a little plaque called the 'Mitchell Building'. We all know there's a Mitchell building on North Terrace. So, there was a bit of a ceremony when we put that up on the building, Yeah [laughs]

**You'd be interested to know that sort of naming of buildings as being quite a traditional thing at Roseworthy and whenever there was a new building opened, the students always had an informal opening of it as well. So, they followed Roseworthy tradition! [laughter] So that... just for the benefit of our...especially the Roseworthy Old Collegians, this building, was that the one next to the Old Tassie Library? That was...**

**Derek:** Yes. Yeah.

**I think it had a lecture theatre and then it had the labs next door.**

**Derek:** That's right. Yeah. Yes.

**Yeah. And... Because we visited that a few months ago and found out it's been completely demolished and disappeared.**

**Derek:** Yeah.

**So, it's only a dent in our memory now that... That's where it was.**

**Derek:** It's just a footprint, yeah.

**So, let's move on a bit more. so your... your role was, I guess, fairly broad. I guess that was... undefined to start with and you had to fill the gaps as things went along. That must have been an interesting journey for you to ride this new, you know, new program and sort it out as it went. Can you talk a bit about that?**

**Derek:** Oh, yes, it was indeed and it wasn't like just putting together a recipe and then... or a plan, and then getting that out. There was a lot of discovery to do, and I... from here in 2025, I look back and I do salute the staff, the academic staff and the administrative staff, in their willing enthusiasm, their appetite for it, it really made... and I'm not kidding, it was quite something. It made my initial job a lot easier, a very special place. And so, yeah, thinking... and some of that also involved... I travelled to... I went to Alice Springs. I went up to Darwin, with some of the community councils to discuss what their expectations, their hopes and their concerns might be. From that came the observation that while all this was growing and while the Aboriginal students were there, it was important to keep a link... some traffic going with the land councils and the community councils to let them know what was happening. Not providing reports on what their person was doing, but on what was happening and what sorts of things they were studying. So they came along with the journey a bit as well.

**And later on you got involved with a bit of lecturing as well, didn't you?**

**Derek:** Yes, I did after a few years and the engine for this... the insect that started singing first actually came from one of the faculties that there should be some recognition, that it would be that the undergraduate courses would be richer and more contemporary with that inclusion. So, it was... the faculty agreed to.... well they offered, suggested really, a third year subject called 'Aboriginal Land Use and Management'. We put that in and that included getting... which became my responsibility. They made me an associate lecturer, and that enabled me to get practitioners from the field to come down and talk with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal undergraduates about contemporary land management around Australia and land use. Yes!

**That's terrific.**

**Derek:** Very, very, very applaudable. Yeah.

**And what about some of the other staff? You have... There's a whole list of people you talked about before. You talked about Kent Hallett and Peter Buckskin. There were some others in the Resource Management course. And who were some of the staff that you interacted with a lot?**

**Derek:** Yes, well, right across the board, I would say for in one arena, the student services aspect of it. Peter Darwin ran the student services and he was very, very positive and proactive and very, very welcoming, very helpful. That was good stuff. Those...Morrie Zobelle was the campus manager, he was very helpful. He it was who helped us with the premises on the old lab and getting all that fired up. Graham Brookman was the student... I'm not sure of his title, but sort of student service bloke, he too, very very supportive. And then there were, oh look, even down to Joe Chandler I mean, down to, I shouldn't say that. Joe Chandler was the cleaner, and he was a really important figure for all these visitors, these Aboriginal students coming into the college, there were, particularly in the natural resources management course... which was looking around, it was very active and vigorous. It was a relatively new course. I didn't know any of these things when I got there, but they were... had a real appetite for the college to be offering courses that were contemporarily relevant and powerful and they were good drivers.

**Was Megan Lewis involved with that?**

**Derek:** Yes, Megan was quite important with that right through. And she was a notable supporter of the introduction of the third year course, for example. Yes. Very, very positive energies.

**So, what resource... Natural Resources Management was one area which was a natural affinity for. What other courses did they have a go at or do part of?**

**Derek:** Well, agriculture, the degree in Agriculture, yes. But the advanced diplomas in…one is Farm Management, the advanced diplomas were in agriculture, were the practitioners courses, which was where most of these candidates, aboriginal candidates wanted to start, for those who were not into environmental management, which was the other big. You can predict it was the other big appetite and the other big need in communities around the place. So the practitioner agricultural courses and the Natural Resources Management conspicuously.

**So did... out of these people who went through, did a lot of them complete the whole course or just parts of this and that, depending on what their needs were?**

**Derek:** Yes. No, most of them completed the courses. By most of them, I mean, almost all of them they were there for a purpose. They knew what the purpose was because they'd been for preselection, had a look around, tried it on, tried the coat on for a month, as it were, three months in orientation. Yep. That's what we want to do. They relayed that to their communities. Their communities said, "Yes please" and they came down and went for it. Yeah.

**So, what would be some of the... besides the tertiary aspect of this program, what about some of the other personal outcomes that would have come from being involved in this program?**

**Derek:** Yes, some students, for example came and did orientation course, which gave them the... some experience of what it was like to be an undergraduate, what it was like to be away from their community, their home, their family, whatever and one, for example, went straight into Adelaide University and enrolled in law and has been a very successful... worked in Attorney-General's Department in the Northern Territory with an important role. There were people, in other words, who had no idea previously about what their capacities were or how they would be seen out in the wider world. Several of them went to Canberra and the public service and established good, quite impressive professional journeys there. Most of them with a focus on assisting their communities to identify their needs and wants and articulate those and get them met. Yeah, lots and lots of different outcomes.

**Did the communities give you any specific feedback on the impressions they got from their members participating in this program?**

**Derek:** Uh, not quite in that way. I guess looking back at it, you would figure... I mean, whose Roseworthy Agricultural College sort of thing? They're way down there or over the hill. Not over the hill, but what became apparent to me was that it was important for the College to show a reciprocal interest in the community's needs. And I must say, I do take my hat off, the staff in the particularly in the agriculture and natural resources faculties were very, very strong and proactive in doing that. And even things like identifying small projects within communities, which the college staff could help them, could assist them with, which gave them another window into the world of Roseworthy College.

**And so some of the students, they could tailor an assignment based on an issue or a thing of interest back in their community?**

**Derek:** Yes, yes. A contemporary issue that was frustrating a community, or they just didn't have... they didn't know what the right lever was to either do it themselves or to be able to transact through external people. So that was very strong and very vital.

**Yeah. So, when you think about, well they come into Roseworthy but there was a two-way thing. So, what influence did they have on...you said, they said that Roseworthy itself was more outgoing towards looking at where they're coming from. What's involved, what other influences did they have on various groups and bodies and so forth?**

**Derek:** Well, yes. What it meant was or what it entailed, one of the outcomes was that Roseworthy College became an identified organisation for a lot of community organisations like Land Councils and what have you and there was some increasing confidence because of mutual experience. There was increasing confidence from the Aboriginal world out there in contacting the College with as their own substantial proposals with queries or concerns about big, you know, big contextual issues and dynamics. And that was just a door that the College and the communities created between them, which was really... it was so impressive and so powerful, and its potential was just astonishing.

**Was this program funded by the Commonwealth Government?**

**Derek:** Yes.

**So, did you have to give reports or feedback to them as to how it was going on? So, how? Do they come down and have a look or talk to you or interview students.**

**Derek:** Yes they did and one result of that fairly... I think within three years of starting up it was Roseworthy or the program there was identified as the "National Centre for Aboriginal and Islander Students of Land Sciences", which was... That's, you know, quite admirable and a statement of great confidence. And the door was open any time for those people to come and have a look.

**Was seeking funding... Was that difficult or was it reasonably straightforward? Most times everyone has to sort of lobby and apply for stuff.**

**Derek:** Well, yeah. It's always a bit of a jungle, bit of a thicket. You'll get a focus within a bureaucracy. And the funding is attached to that so you're constantly trying to expand that perimeter so that it can include things that they're not familiar with so the initiatives that the programme was taking and the positive response from staff and the college itself enabled a very dynamic thing.

**So, did you catch up with any of the graduates as they moved on? Do they reflect on things that they really appreciated, post course?**

**Derek:** Yes, I was surprised, but those graduates then stayed in touch. Not all of them by any means, but quite a few of them stayed in touch for years and years. I mean, more than a decade afterwards, which was quite something. And they... all of them had a really positive, personal observation about their personal development, not just their academic achievement, but how it changed their outlook and their image of themselves and so on.

**That was pre email time so did they sort of... how did they communicate with each other like meeting up or just phone calls, that sort of thing.**

**Derek:** Phone calls ... I think at one stage there were some of them who got together in Darwin under their own steam. They didn't form a sort of Old Collegians... Aboriginal Old Collegians group. It was personal, but I remember one of them said it was the most significant experience, personal experience he'd had to date. And it had made a man of him without any carry on about that. I've been contacted by a couple of them within the last year, and that's 30 years ago. [laughs] Yeah, yeah.

**Yeah well, that experience of being a wonderful place to be, that's shared by many postgraduates right across the board. It's because Roseworthy is a special place. And yes, that's interesting that they also reflected in that way.**

**Derek:** Yes. Well the camaraderie you know, there was no, you know, mean nasty nothing stuff going on. There wasn't any pomp and ceremony or whatever amongst students or staff. Quite a surprising and very, very admirable culture.

**There would have been ... How many students were there? I mean, overall, at the time it would have been hundreds of students. So, it would have been quite a busy, noisy place with**

**all sorts of people. What about some of the... when you think about, like, in terms of challenges that we talked a bit about them a bit already, but what are some of the challenges that you think, when they came down and then they worked through some of them, say for 3 or 4 years, what were some of the challenges that they met to overcome?**

**Derek:** For, I suppose, the most... Well, there's personal and then there's sort of social with their own communities. One, their communities were, could be a bit concerned about their absence. Suddenly they're not there for four years or whatever and that's got a conspicuous impact... Sure they come back, whatever, for the summer vacation and couple of occasions in the middle, but that's not quite the same thing. And the engines of communities in terms of the dynamics change during that time. Some members of their communities would be quite suspicious of what they were doing. Were they indulging themselves or were they really coming back to help? They were losing their presence. "We're losing their capacity". So those things were quite strong personal issues for some of them. There were also, in some cases, some concerns about, say, sending your daughters down to an agricultural college in... Where is it? South Australia. Whereabouts is that? You know way away! There were some concerns about that and how they behaved, if things had changed a little bit in their attitude and they got back. So those things were real.

**But what about the... some of the day-to-day stuff? Like, I mean tertiary students, there's a lot of time management involved, and assignments are due and exam times and stuff. A lot of those things are non-negotiable. So did they manage to work through all that sort of new culture of, I guess, strict timelines?**

**Derek:** Yes. No, that's a good one that was part of the commission of the orientation, the Pre-entry program the... So that if something backfired or if you weren't on time and you know, or you got a shocking mark for your paper or whatever, all those things. No, it's not a tutor or a lecturer having a crack at you or they're not singling you out or whatever. And what was missing or what was the answer to that? Well, that's what our tutors were doing with them. So it was a self-analysis, but also an... The opportunity with the orientation was that they could have a look at their own performance and have a look at interpreting whether staff were being, you know, how come... I'm... How come he's a lecturer? He's... I'm not allowed to talk in a lecture. And he carries on bark, bark, you know, pompous old whatever. No, no, that's not what's going on. Authority isn't, all those subtleties, authority isn't just foghorn and whatever. There's a reason why we acknowledge and pay respect. And so people could find that those values in their own, and dynamics in their own, communities applied here as well.

**So, what was the age group? Was it a semi-mature group or these people like 18 year olds, or was it mid 20s, or what sort of group dynamics was there?**

**Derek:** Yeah, it would be mainly 20s through to mid 30s. Yeah.

**So they're already there... Well, I mean they've got a mature outlook. They're organised, they've been through independence and stuff. So they were, you'd say they should fit in quite easily without having to learn all sorts of the rules. When you're eighteen year old, it's a bit different compared to being mid-twenties and stuff.**

**Derek:** Yes, indeed, and as always, one of the things was purpose. You know, what's your driver, what's your purpose in coming here? And so that was another element in the orientation program to discuss how does what you've seen out here on the campus, in the lecture rooms, in the tutorial rooms, how does that fit with the driver that brought you here on behalf of your community or on behalf of yourself for a future? And so it was a bit of self-analysis as well.

**Would you do that as part of a group chat or was it just an individual thing you do?**

**Derek:** More individual, yeah.

**So was that like a program thing, that you'd every couple of months you would meet individually with each person and go through that sort of...**

**Derek:** Yes. As I was saying, the answer really is these weren't orchestrated meetings. This was more, catch someone when they've got the appetite, when it's pressing them. And to make sure that myself and our tutors, two tutors, were seen as proper places and strong places, good places, trustworthy places to go and express concerns or confusions or whatever.

**Yeah. So, it's like a coaching style and that's... that obviously worked well. So that... You've got that down to a fine art.**

**Derek:** Yes! Yeah. [laughs]

**What about the... they had to...I am not too sure in terms of where they came from but they moved into a share house. And I guess you're talking about, a shared house means you've got**

**to have responsibilities and share chores and all that sort of stuff. Did that work okay? Was it a bit of a learning curve for some of them?**

**Derek:** Yes it did work well. There were no major dramas. There were a couple of instances of people stepping out of line in terms of their own ethics or their community ethics, or whether they had an affair with another student or something. But no, predominantly they got on with it and settled down. And remember too, that acknowledge too that, you know, being a tertiary student, really it's not just five days a week, 9 to 5. As well at the time, you've got assignments to do and all of those things. So, no that worked very well.

**All right. So, some of them were there for four years, so they would have been the longer-term students. Some would have come and gone before that. So, was there a support or did you... In the houses, for instance, did you put in experienced students with newcomers as a way of helping them, I guess, set the tone or encourage them as well?**

**Derek:** That wasn't...That's a good question. It wasn't a deliberate strategy, but that's the way it sort of settled itself out. And if there were tensions then amongst themselves, because there was more than one house they, I think it only happened on one instance on one account, they'd say, they'd agree amongst themselves, "Well Derek, you head over there and we'll get David to come over and stay with us."

**With... Was there any repeat community? Like they sent down one member and then that went really well so then they encouraged another person to go down, that sort of thing.**

**Derek:** Yes, which was very reassuring. And also a snapshot that whoever it was, Central Land Council, whoever it was, that they had confidence, they'd come to have confidence in the College and its journey for their people. So, that was a really important bell, to note that confidence. And going back to what we were saying earlier, that a community's confidence, a community council whatever, their confidence to contact the college about an issue that they had outside of what the student was doing, yeah, which I saw as a real... that was a real sign of enormous achievement and vitality, good.

**Well, did the... these land councils, did they... was there anybody writing up anything about this in their circles of communication or...**

**Derek:** I don't know. I'm not aware of it.

**Interesting to see. I mean, I know it's a long time ago, but be interesting to see the perceptions at the time and the feedback. Because things build, as you said, once the thing gets going and it's good, people you know, people come to join it and see the benefit of it.**

**Derek:** Yeah. I was sort of hoping that figuring the marker of that confidence would be to what extent councils and land councils and responsible community groups were contacting the College one way or another and the nature of their... the nature of the issues that they wanted help to resolve and they got higher and higher, which was a mark of great confidence. Yes.

**You mentioned that they introduced a unit into the Natural Resources Management about land management. Did the PASRAC students... did they get a chance to lead tutorials and that sort of thing? Like giving... I mean, they're from that area, so they could give real examples and some technical information or traditional information, which would be useful to other students. Did that sort of thing happen?**

**Derek:** Not from the students directly but they were welcome and encouraged to provide information, views, whatever about the information and the... all the stuff within the subject itself. They were... welcome, most welcome, encouraged, begged to provide into that, but not to present it themselves. Yeah. It's just trying, trying to keep them pacing along, the same as any other student.

**And that, you know, brings us to the 90s where unfortunately things sort of became a bit unravelled with the amalgamation on the horizon and some other issues happening. It just... I know that the thing came to an end, but can you just walk us through that last couple of years of the program.**

**Derek:** Yes. The...there weren't... well I wasn't approached by anyone about where the Aboriginal program would sit within the merged institution and nor about its reportage requirements or, indeed you can hear we've been talking about a lot of things that aren't strictly within the academic boundary, the person or the community. There are all sorts of things, which was a richness. No one...there was no sort of pursuit of any of that. We didn't really hear... we didn't really hear anything much about what plans were going on, what would happen to it in the future.

**So, how did it end up winding down. Did it just stop, just stop with the amalgamation or before that actually happened or...?**

**Derek:** No, we kept going. I was on fixed term contracts because of the nature of funding and when my contract was running out I... Yes... My contract ran out, just ran out, and it was "That's it", have your front door keys back and there was nothing more than that.

**So, was there some...there must be some students halfway through a particular course, I guess. So, what happened to them?**

**Derek:** Oh they would... I don't know personally... they would have continued. There was, I think maybe about two years or 2 or 3 years while the merger details settled down between the two, between the College and the University, so they would have continued and graduated and where it went from then I'm not sure.

**So, I suppose...I mean, you weren't alone. There were other courses too, which were phased out. The Horse Management and Natural Resources Management, I'm not too sure, Wine Marketing, maybe. There was... there was a number there.**

**Derek:** The Advanced Diplomas went.

**Oh, right, so they sort of cut those, well, they just weren't continued and it's a pity... It's like a void, which was left, with no one else where it's filled up again.**

**Derek:** Very much, yes.

**So, was there any...I wonder was there any move for someone else to pick... pick up on this idea that you generated, even the University of South Australia or Flinders sort of stuff, was there any other interest shown by anybody else to....**

**Derek:** I don't know, because I became involved with another Aboriginal organisation in the city fairly soon after my contract with University of Adelaide finished so I'm not sure what things remained, but I would imagine... I'd predict that back then, because it's important for an outsider contacting the College, they ring David Spencer, "Could I speak to David, please?" And it's you. And they're confident with that. They know they're talking to the right person who can tell them. You don't just ring a switchboard and state your case sort of thing. It's a very... It

relies on that confidence and experience and that disappeared, of course. So, no, I don't think so.

**Well, it's a pity that this thing built up steam and got really well organised and then it sort of disappeared. So, yes, it's a pity. I mean, Flinders University had an Environmental Science program, I think something like that could have possibly picked it up. But anyway, that's water under the bridge.**

Alright Derek, well we might wind it up there. Look, I thank you for this insight into this course, which I think a lot of people were unaware that it actually happened and stuff. So, being part of this oral history programme, it will enlighten a number of people, especially Old Collegians who share your same enthusiasm for the place and it's nice to hear that. So, we'll look forward to more news perhaps with some old participants in another time.

**Derek:** No thanks for the opportunity. It was very important, and I say again, I so much admire the openness and the spirit of the organisation at that time. I discovered a lot myself working with that mob and that, not just that, but that it was alive. Like I say, the academic staff getting involved in small research projects on community after talking with them about their concerns or their, their needs, that sort of live lively connect, was so, so impressive. So much mojo, really good!

**Yeah, terrific. All right, we'll leave it there.**

**Derek:** Thanks Dave!

**Thank you. Okay, bye.**

**Derek:** Okay.

END OF INTERVIEW
Interviewer: David Spencer
Transcriber: David Spencer (30-11-2025)