

Fact Sheet

Roseworthy Old Collegians Association Inc.

Roseworthy

ROCA AWARD OF MERIT 1993 – Robert Baker

Bob Baker (RDOen, 1943) continued studying in 1946 to 1947 at Davis University, California, Bob then worked in wineries in related areas of California. He was appointed Oenologist at the College in 1965 following experience as Senior Winemaker and Distiller at Renmark Growers' Distillery Ltd and ten years as Technical Manager with Loxton Co-op Winery & Distillery.

Bob Baker was awarded the Rudi Buring Memorial Scholarship for graduate study of Oenology in California and Europe in 1970, and the ACTIM Scholarship awarded by the French Agency for Technical, Industrial and Economic Cooperation in 1981, for cooperation with the Viticultural and Wine Industries. In 1982, Bob was granted Emeritus Membership of the American Society of Viticulture and Oenology.



At Roseworthy, Bob encouraged the use of gypsum to increase the acidity prior to fermentation, to control the growth of flor film in sherry production. He was particularly involved with fortified, sparkling and table wine production, and stressed the importance of distillation. He also managed the winery.

Whilst Roseworthy was responding to the Australian wine industry's rapid development during the 1970s, Bob Baker was promoted to Senior Lecturer and Head of the Department of Oenology. The winery and distillery were rebuilt in 1971 and furnished with new equipment, including a new glass still (now on display at the Waite Wine Research Institute, and named after him), and the Oenology course was subsequently re-written and upgraded to degree standard.

Bob Baker considered the period 1966-1971 to be the most rewarding academically; student numbers increased from four or five biennially to 20 or so admitted every year. When the last diplomate had graduated with the Roseworthy Diploma in Oenology in 1977, there were a total of 169 graduates, many of whom have made a substantial contribution to Australia's wine industry. Bob continued as Head of Oenology when Roseworthy became a College of Advanced Education and was joined by Dr Bryce C Rankine as Head of School when the 'school system' was introduced in 1978; Bryce subsequently became Dean of the Faculty of Oenology, the Oenology course being upgraded to a degree as from 1978: B.App.Sc(Oen).

Bob Baker retired from Roseworthy and the wine industry in 1982, not wanting to compete with students he had trained, but continued serving the Viticulture and Horticulture industries as consultant undertaking projects associated with coal and mining dust on grapes in NSW, and the production of slabbed apricot production at Waikerie. He then made a career change, by assisting retired people with their investments until 1990.

Bob Baker was conferred with the ROCA Award of Merit in 1993 for services to the wine and viticulture industries.