

MR RONALD ANTHONY POTTER

Citation for the conferral of a Doctor of Applied Science (*honoris causa*)

I present to you Ronald Anthony Potter for admission to the degree Doctor of Applied Science (*honoris causa*).

Today, Charles Sturt University recognises the contribution made by Ron Potter to the Australian wine industry and, in particular, his role in the development of teaching and research in wine science at this University.

Ron Potter has been associated with the Australian wine industry since the early 1950's and with wine science at this campus since the establishment of the Riverina College of Advanced Education in 1970.

A true visionary, his drive and enthusiasm have given tremendous impetus to all that he has undertaken.

Born in Young, New South Wales in 1929, the youngest son of Harry and Ann Potter, Ron grew up during the depression years in Texas, Queensland. Following the death of his mother from tuberculosis in 1934, these years were spent on the land helping his father droving and rabbiting. The three Potter children received their education at a one-teacher school in Texas. In 1942, the children became legacy wards following the death of Harry Potter while serving with the Royal Australian Army Services Corps, 9th Division at Tobruk.

Together with his brother John, he received his secondary education at the Farrer Agricultural High School in Tamworth from where he completed his leaving certificate. In 1950 he graduated from the University of Sydney with the degree Bachelor of Science and Agriculture.

Upon completion of these studies and with an eye to his future professional career, Ron Potter enrolled at the Roseworthy Agricultural College in South Australia, completing the Diploma in Oenology course at that college in 1952.

With his formal studies behind him, Ron Potter spent a year at Orlando Wines, Rowland Flat, South Australia. In 1953, he moved to the Riverina region and continues to reside at Griffith with his wife, Fran, whom he married in 1953 and with whom he subsequently shared the joy of raising four children - three daughters and a son.

His first appointment in the Riverina was as a viticulturist in the New South Wales Department of Agriculture. Within a short time, he left the Department to be wine maker at Miranda Wines, a post he kept from 1954 to 1963.

In 1963, Ron Potter established a partnership with Mr Clive May and Mr Lance Walker - *Agricultural and General Engineering Pty Limited*. A & G, as it came to be known, is now a major national and international manufacturer for the wine, food and beverage industries.

A & G became expert in stainless steel fabrication and, in particular, Ron Potter was associated with the development and manufacture of the Potter Wine Fermenter

which has made a major contribution to the international wine industry and has been installed by most wine makers in Australia and is now manufactured under licence in the United States, Spain and elsewhere.

It has been through improvements in the design and layout of wineries as well as by the installation of new and improved equipment such as the Potter Wine Fermenter, the brimstone process for de-sulphuring juice, de-alcoholising systems and the computer control of winery processes, that Ron Potter and his colleagues at A & G have made their enduring contribution to the wine industry in Australia and beyond. They have presided over, and in many cases arranged for, winemaking in Australia to evolve from an uncontrolled and imprecise process to a process today that is notable for its efficiency, control of quality and predictability. It has been these technological as well as scientific developments that have thrust the Australian wine industry to the centre of the world stage. Ron Potter and his colleagues can claim much of the credit for that transformation.

For many gathered here today, Ron Potter has made an even more significant and enduring contribution to the wine industry. I refer, of course, to the links that he has had with this campus of Charles Sturt University - links that have endured and progressed from his days on the interim council of the fledgling Riverina College of Advanced Education to today where the teaching and research centre that bears his name is home to wine science courses of international repute and bottled products of no less renown. Through his membership of the Council of the Riverina College for over twelve years and the leading part that he played in the establishment of wine science courses at the College at the Associate Diploma, Bachelors and now Masters and doctoral levels - the first courses to serve the burgeoning wine industry of eastern Australia - Ron Potter's contribution will endure through the many hundreds of graduates who are now active members of the Australian wine industry.

The decision to offer courses in wine science in the Riverina has been vindicated by the significant demand for these courses, by the international reputation they enjoy and by the research and consultancies they have accrued to the University.

Indeed, if any evidence was needed of the status of these courses it is worth highlighting that the University recently commenced offering its Bachelors Degree in Portugal with an initial intake of 24 students.

An international consultancy with China involving CSU has been established with Ron Potter under which CSU is developing a teaching program for China and providing advice on viticulture management.

Equally, CSU is at the forefront of wine research, having recently won a Co-operative Research Centre in Viticulture to a value of \$14,000,000 over seven years with the University of Adelaide, the CSIRO and state Departments of Agriculture.

These successes that we now rejoice in are due in no small part to the vision, perseverance, technical advice and philanthropy of Ron Potter. The University appreciates in particular his endowment, the scholarship for a student wine maker, and in particular a postgraduate research scholar in wine fermentation techniques.

Mr Chancellor, I present to you Ronald Anthony Potter - wine maker, entrepreneur, inventor, visionary and trusted friend of Charles Sturt University for admission to the degree Doctor of Applied Science (*honoris causa*).

Dated this Fifteenth Day of April One Thousand Nine Hundred and Ninety Three