

DR BRIAN JOHN CROSER

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

Brian Croser, Winemaker and Executive Chairman of Petaluma, has been intimately involved in the evolution of the Australian wine industry. Over the past decade, it is doubtful if any single individual has made a greater contribution to the administration, education and operation of the Australian wine industry than Brian Croser.

Brian was born and educated in South Australia, graduating as Bachelor of Agricultural Science from The University of Adelaide in 1969. He subsequently pursued postgraduate studies in oenology at the Davis Campus of the University of California.

On his return to Australia, Brian worked as a research and development officer and subsequently Head Winemaker for Thomas Hardy and Son before establishing the course in wine science in 1976 at the then Riverina College of Advanced Education.

This course in wine science and its companion viticulture course have now developed to make the School of Wine and Food Sciences at Charles Sturt University the largest provider of degree level wine education in Australia, if not the world. The School has made and continues to make a major contribution to the development of the intellectual knowledge base of wine industry personnel as well as providing new graduates for the industry. The success of the programs initiated by Brian can be measured by the large number of graduates who occupy senior management positions in the Australian wine industry.

Following his role at Riverina College, Brian established Oenotec Pty Ltd to provide technical consultancy services to the wine industry in Australia. He simultaneously commenced the vineyards and winery business which is now Petaluma Ltd with extensive vineyard operations in the Clare, Coonawarra and Adelaide Hills regions of South Australia. The success of Petaluma can be measured by its public listing and by the subsequent acquisition of other wineries in South Australia and Victoria. Brian is at present the Executive Chairman of Petaluma.

Over the last twenty years Brian Croser has made a very significant contribution to education in the Australian wine industry. Following his early career at the Riverina College of Advanced Education, Brian became an important force in the creation of the Australian Society for Viticulture and Oenology. He was instrumental in the concept, under the auspices of the Australian Society for Viticulture and Oenology, of large scale tasting seminars which ran in the latter part of the 1980s. He was an initiator of an advanced wine assessment course and he has continued his involvement in short course education programs for the Australian wine industry.

Brian Croser is a person of vision for the Australian wine industry and this vision has culminated in the wine industry's development of a thirty year plan known as Strategy 2025. His strong commitment to research and development, innovation, quality and style has been a major influence in the success of the present day Australian wine industry. In international markets, Brian Croser's high profile and reputation for integrity and quality has created significant opportunities for other exporters through the associated enhanced image of Australia as an international wine producer of world standing.

Brian Croser's vision and leadership over the past decade has contributed strongly to the current growth and status of the Australian wine industry, domestically and internationally. His leadership in change management has brought about sustained company profitability for many Australian companies. Brian was President of the Winemakers' Federation of Australia from 1991 to 1995 and was recently re-elected President in 1997. As the most prominent and influential wine industry leader in the last decade, he has contributed in a number of areas that have led to all publicly listed wine companies delivering outstanding performances.

Brian has driven the Australian wine industry's quality ethos which has led to a repositioning of the Australian wine image at the quality end which in turn has brought about a massive restructuring and investment program.

International recognition of Brian Croser, and of his contribution to leadership of the Australian wine industry, was highlighted in the award to him of the prestigious international White Winemaker of the Year Award. This 1993 award was coupled with the announcement, in 1994 by the Australian Financial Review, of Brian as Chief Executive of the Year in South Australia.

Brian is a past President of the Australian Winemakers' Forum which he founded in 1984. He was a member of the inquiry into the wine industry set up by the Industry Commission and he has been Director of the South Australian Development Council.

Not content with the boundaries of Australia, Brian is also Chief Executive and Founder of the Dundee Wine Company based near Portland, Oregon, USA.

Commitment to the Australian Wine Show system has been a hallmark of Brian's career. He was previously Chairman of Judges at the Adelaide Wine Show and remains a senior judge at the Sydney and Canberra wine shows.

Brian played a significant role in the development and presentation of the arguments for the creation of the Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Viticulture. His persuasive arguments led to the success of the bid. In particular, his insights into the relationship between education and research in the wine industry were an essential and integral part in the success of the bid for the CRC for Viticulture.

Brian Croser is one person who understands the full value of education in all its forms for the benefit of the wine industry.

The University is delighted to recognise Brian John Croser's achievements as winemaker, wine educator, industry leader and friend of Charles Sturt University, with the conferral of the degree of Doctor of Science (*honoris causa*).

Dated this Twenty Third Day of April One Thousand Nine Hundred and Ninety Eight