

Australian Rose Award 2019 (ARA)

Colin Hollis ARA - New South Wales

The Rose Society of NSW Awards Committee unanimously recommended Mr Colin Hollis to receive the Australian Rose Award.

Colin Hollis' interest in roses and horticulture in general has been very much a feature of his life not only since his significant involvement in the Rose Society of NSW, but even during his career as a representative in Federal Parliament as the member for Throsby. During this time in the 1980's he grew bushes at his home, and mentored by Sue Kingsford OAM, his neighbour and friend, his interest and expertise grew. His office in Canberra was frequently graced with a vase of his roses from home. This interest and growing expertise came into the foreground with his involvement in the

refurbishment of the Old Parliament House Rose Garden to which he contributed roses and his time. He has continued to be a Friend of the Old Parliament House Rose Garden to this day, and until recent years attended their meetings and updated a booklet of information on the Rose Garden.

During these years he also supported the development of special rose gardens in his electorate, with the sponsorship of the bed of roses for a Peace Garden at Heinger House, Dapto, where the Illawarra Regional Rose Society staged their spring Rose Show. This rose was dedicated and opened by Colin in 1995 as a memorial to peace on the 50th Anniversary of the end of World War II

On retiring from politics in 2001, Colin continued to enjoy roses and joined the Illawarra Rose Society in 2002 and served as the show bench co-ordinator and was elected as Illawarra Chairman in 2004. Colin served in this role until 2012. During this time Colin enthusiastically lead the Region in many activities reaching out into the community in the promotion of roses, whether in stalls in local shopping centres, pruning demonstrations, social activities for members and the promotion of the Rose Garden at Peace Park Kiama where pruning demonstrations were held. It was during this time also, that Colin organised two rose tours to New Zealand with the late David Ruston, which were highly successful and very much enjoyed by members from across the State. Colin also became an enthusiastic exhibitor winning several awards at rose shows and was also successful in achieving the status of a junior Rose Judge.

It is as President of the Rose Society of NSW Inc that Colin has contributed significantly. He was elected Vice President in 2008, and President in 2013 and since that time the membership of the Rose Society in the State has almost doubled. His enthusiasm for



enabling as many people across the State to enjoy the benefits of belonging to the Rose Society, and for sharing this interest with others has led to the

development of four new regions. These are situated in the Southern Highlands, Central Coast-Lake Macquarie, Southern Sydney and Upper North Shore/Hills Region of Sydney. These regions have brought in more than 300 new members and enabled a wider spread of interest in roses and their cultivation for many more. The Hunter Valley Region has been revitalised under his leadership and many new members have joined to share in the expertise and love of roses of the members of that region. Not only has Colin's vision lead to the development of these regions, but he has tirelessly travelled many kilometres across the State to visit and support these Regions, all at his own personal cost.

Not only has the development of new regions been a key feature of Colin's leadership, but he has also engaged with the community through his initiative and enthusiasm for involvement in stalls set up at local events. These have been in numerous areas, the most recent being a Rose Stall at the Auburn Cherry Blossom Festival, and others such as the Woronora Memorial Gardens Festival, the Bowral Home and Garden Show, and for a number of years sitting at the information stand giving out information and encouraging membership of the Rose Society for 8 rose days at the Sydney Royal Easter Show. His support and promotion of our sponsoring partner Neutrog is very well known.

Colin has also supported the local agricultural shows, encouraging members to exhibit roses at these shows, and this has enabled the sustainability of the rose exhibits at such shows. He has been most generous to use his skills and qualification not only as a rose judge but also as a horticultural judge by travelling to these many shows to assist with judging. At the Albion Park Show he has also generously given of his time to act as Steward for the flower and garden section over many years.

Colin has engaged with other public officials, such as with the NSW Government House through Mrs. Hurley, wife of the Governor to respond to her request for a rose that commemorates the contribution of wives of Governors of NSW in the past. This rose – The Governor's Wife rose, bred by Richard Walsh now blooms beautifully in the rose garden at Government House after being planted in August 2017 by Mrs Hurley. Other engagements have been with the Wollongong Botanic Garden and the development of a rose bed for Australian bred roses, and a refurbishment of the Peace Rose Garden at Heining House Dapto.

Colin has promoted the education of people in growing roses with numerous rose workshops conducted over the past four to five years. This has also included workshops coordinated by Rosalie Vine on the exhibiting of roses for novice exhibitors. The first Miniature Rose Show in Australia in 2017 was promoted through his leadership and since then the second Miniature Rose Show was held in March 2019.

On the National and International scene, Colin has attended the National Rose Championships and AGM over many years, and he also attended Conventions of the World Federation of Rose Societies, as in recent years at Nanyang China, Copenhagen Denmark and Lyon France. Colin also played a significant role in the coordination of the National Rose Championships and AGM held in Kiama in 2009.

With such generosity of spirit in the promotion of the love of the rose in the community, Colin is to be commended and is a worthy recipient of the Australian Rose Award.