

## **T.A. Stewart Memorial Award 2024 – NOMINATION OF MR COLIN HOLLIS**

### **CITATION**

The Rose Society of New South Wales wishes to nominate Mr Colin Hollis ARA for the T.A. Stewart Memorial Award 2024.

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 Illawarra Regional Rose Society and 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. 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 Heining House, Dapto, where the Illawarra Regional Rose Society staged their Spring Rose Show. This rose garden was dedicated and opened by Colin in 1995 as a memorial to peace on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the end of World War II. In 2021 with his involvement as a member of the Illawarra Regional Rose Society and in collaboration with the Wollongong Council through the Dapto Ribbonwood Centre, the garden was refurbished, workshops conducted at the Centre library for interested community members, and officially re-opened by the Mayor Gordon Bradbury in April 2021 in the presence of the community. The garden continues to be maintained by the Illawarra Regional Rose Society.

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 coordinator and was elected as Illawarra Chair in 2004. Colin served in this role until 2012. During this time Colin enthusiastically led the region in many activities reaching out into the community in the promotion of roses, whether in stalls in shopping centres, pruning demonstrations, social activities for members and the promotion of the Rose Garden at the 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 made an enthusiastic exhibitor winning several awards at rose shows and was also successful in achieving the status of 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 enjoy the benefits of belonging to the Rose Society, and his sharing this interest with others has led to the development of four new regions. These are situated in South Highlands, Central Coast-Lake Macquarie, Southern Sydney and Upper North Shore/Hills region of Sydney. These regions brought in more than 300 new members and enabled a wider spread of interest in roses and their cultivation for many more. Not only has Colin's vision led 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. He regularly attends meetings in the Southern Sydney Region to assist this fledgling group to flourish.

Not only has the development of new regions been a key feature of Colin's leadership, but he has engaged with the community through his initiatives and enthusiasm for involvement in stalls set up at local events, and for several years sitting at the information stand, giving out information and encouraging membership of the Rose Society for eight rose days at the Sydney Royal Easter show. Colin has always been willing to attend community organisations to speak about roses in the public and this has been constant, and many, over the years. For the past five years Colin has led a group of volunteers in the maintenance and development of the Peace Park Rose Garden at Kiama. This endeavour has also drawn in people from the local community. 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 each at such shows. He has been most generous to use his skills and qualifications 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. Once again, he assisted Mrs Hurley now positioned at the Government General's residence in Canberra to find an Australian bred rose to commemorate the women who served as wives of the Governor General. The beautiful yellow rose Lady of Australia bred by the late Bruce Brundrett was selected. This effort was made during the fraught times by the covid pandemic and was launched in November 2021 with the presence of many members from the Rose Society of New South Wales.

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 novices 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 and in 2022.

Colin has as President of the Rose Society of NSW always been on the lookout for local loyal and devoted members who contribute significantly to the Rose Society and their region, often without lots of fanfare. He as President would not wish to be nominated, but with such generosity of spirit in the promotion of the love of the roses in the community, the Rose Society of New South Wales believes that Colin is to be commended and is a worthy recipient of the T.A. Stuart Memorial Award 2024.