

## **DR DAVID CHARLES GOLDNEY**

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

David Charles Goldney was born in Adelaide, South Australia, the youngest of six children and a fifth generation Australian. His father was a Methodist Minister and his mother actively involved in fledgling women's movements. David grew up in a house that was filled with music, books and parents who encouraged all of their children to be the first generation to receive a university education.

David was educated at numerous primary schools throughout South Australia, and at the Mount Barker and Adelaide High Schools. He attended Adelaide University from 1958 to 1962 where he completed a science degree majoring in Botany and Biochemistry. David later completed a Graduate Diploma in Education then taught for one year at Norwood Boys Technical High School before accepting a lectureship at the Wattle Park Teachers' College. David met his future wife and long-time partner of 35 years, Joan Chapman, at the Mount Barker High School in the Adelaide Hills, and they married in 1965. Joan and David have two children — Alex and Jodie.

In 1968 David accepted a tutorship in the Botany Department of the University of Queensland, enrolling concurrently for a Masters Qualifying exam and gaining first class honours. He then gained a Commonwealth Postgraduate Scholarship and enrolled as a Doctoral student, investigating the role of ethylene in the ageing of leaves.

In 1972 David accepted a science lectureship at the newly established Mitchell College of Advanced Education (MCAE) in Bathurst, planning to live in this provincial city for three years before moving back to Adelaide. Thirty years later, he and Joan are established "Bathurstians". Despite high teaching loads and the underlying philosophy of CAE's not to encourage research, David and a number of colleagues set up a range of research projects and actively involved student teachers in field ecology programs. With the help of grants from the Commonwealth Government and the National Trust, David provided the first overview of the conservation values of the Central Western Region. By the mid-1980s he had carried out defining studies on the distribution, abundance and status of every vertebrate species in the region and had set up long-term vertebrate studies and sites that continue to this day, including one of only two mark-recapture-release studies of platypuses in Australia in 1986.

During the 1980s, David began to conceptualise his understanding of the relationships between nature conservation and production agriculture and to alert the community through public speaking, newspaper articles and media appearances, about the interconnected twin evils of land degradation and biodiversity losses across the major agricultural landscapes of Australia. His central thesis that the process underlying Australian agricultural landscapes is 'desertification' was a prophetic call, not always received kindly, but now with salination rampant and agricultural landscapes malfunctioning, one that is widely accepted. Over the last 20 years David has spoken to thousands of landholders, numerous Landcare and community groups from Bathurst to Tumut, Warren and beyond. This extension work with landholders culminated in the major publication of a 'Save the Bush Toolkit' in 1997, a team effort driven by David to facilitate landholders using simple but effective observation methods to assess their farms' natural resources and to instigate repair measures where possible.

The dissolution of the CAE sector and the formation of Charles Sturt University provided David with the chance to work with postgraduate students and a range of staff from other disciplines across the university campuses, in an environment that encouraged and recognised the value of research. David developed a number of multi-disciplinary research teams to investigate the links between nature conservation and production agriculture. Since 1990 he and his colleagues have obtained \$860,000 from competitive grant sources and an additional 1.3 million dollars from other grant bodies or industry consulting. David currently supervises six postgraduate students. He was principal supervisor of four postgraduate students who have graduated, has supervised a diverse range of honours projects, headed two research teams, was involved in major educational initiatives with landholders, and conducted long-term studies on platypus ecology in the Oberon and Kosciusko National Park areas.

In 1996, he received an award for Outstanding Contribution to Environmental education from the Government of NSW.

David is a member of seven learned societies, on the editorial boards of two international journals as well as a referee on a regular basis for many others, and is a member of numerous natural resource committees. He was the foundation head of the Environmental Studies Unit and an Associate Director and later Director from 1997 - 1999 of the Johnstone Centre, one of the largest designated research centres within the university.

David has published widely in academic journals as well as regularly communicating important scientific outcomes via the media to the general public. He has 43 refereed publications, is the joint author of three major conference proceedings, has given over 50 conference presentations, is the author of 27 major consulting reports for national and international companies plus numerous minor reports for councils and conservation groups.

David is very active in a range of community activities including the Uniting Church where he is a lay reader, the National Trust of which he is a member, Amnesty International and numerous conservation groups. He is Deputy Chair of the Central West Catchment Management Committee. Since his retirement from the university David has been appointed a Professorial Associate and continues to supervise postgraduate students on a part-time basis as well as remaining actively involved in ongoing research. David has been granted a travelling fellowship worth \$28,000 by the Commonwealth Government to investigate "the integration of nature conservation and production agriculture" in North America, the United Kingdom and Northern Europe and to report back to governments on the relevance to Australia's worsening land degradation and bio-diversity losses scenarios.

Chancellor, I present to you for conferral of the award Doctor of Science (*honoris causa*), David Charles Goldney, who has served this university and rural Australia with distinction.

**Dated this Twentieth Day of April Two Thousand and One**