

Churchill Chatter

Churchill Fellows Association of South Australia Incorporated

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Australian Government Eureka Prize Winner *Dr Rob Morrison*

Promoting Understanding of Science Award For Sustained Leadership in Promoting and Communicating Science



For 36 years, zoologist and ecologist Dr Rob Morrison has successfully initiated science programs at all levels, achieving national, international and local recognition as an outstanding science communicator. Presenter and co-writer of *The Curiosity Show* (Nine Network) for 18 years, Dr Morrison has been described as the '80s pin-up-boy of science and is a household name in the nation's playgrounds. Indeed, in its time, *The Curiosity Show* was the only science education many Australian primary students received.

Dr Morrison's work has added profoundly to the promotion and understanding of science in Australia. In gratitude for his boundless energy and inspiration, Dr Morrison has been awarded the \$10,000 Australian Government Eureka Prize for Promoting Understanding of Science.

Australian Museum Director, Frank Howarth says, "Dr Rob Morrison's success reflects his unique skill as a scientist in his own right and a communicator with an outstanding level of media awareness. He is a national treasure and a well-loved ambassador for science."

In the past 12 months alone, Dr Morrison helped establish *SciWorld* - a new science centre in Adelaide which runs exciting education programs for all South Australians; commenced programs for thousands of schools students showcasing careers in industry and developed six regional science fairs and shows including Adelaide's National Science Week.

For 25 years, Dr Morrison has been one of the familiar faces of science television through appearances on *The New Inventors*, *Nexus*, *Science Magazine* and Radio National's *Ockham's Razor*.

"I like teaching - making complex things understandable to the novice. This is pretty important in science communication. I don't like the idea of a scientist having all the answers", says Dr Morrison.

Dr Morrison is a passionate Zoologist and President of the Royal Zoological Society of South Australia. Under his Presidency, the Society has trebled its membership in 6 years to 17,000.

As a practitioner of Zoology, he devised the nation's *Wanderer Butterfly Project*, inspiring thousands of young Australians in scientific monitoring of butterfly migration and *The Nestbox Project*, involving thousands more in the making and installing nest boxes to benefit native wildlife. *Cont p. 4 ...*

Emu Ridge Eucalyptus Distillery Award Winner

Congratulations to Churchill Fellow, Larry Turner, and his wife Bev who manage the Emu Ridge Eucalyptus Distillery on Kangaroo Island.

They provided a display at the Paskeville Field Days on the Yorke Peninsula, winning 1st prize for the best site in all the pavilions.

They also won 3rd prize in the Royal Farm Expo pavilion at the Adelaide show.

Larry was awarded a Churchill Fellowship in 1997 to further his knowledge in Eucalyptus oil production from Kangaroo narrow leaf mallee (*Eucalyptus cnerifolia*).

Dene Cordes

Presidents Report *Greg Chambers*

As president, I have the privilege of working with good friends and incredibly hard working people who all give their time freely to make up the state committee. In many respects our positions allow us special privileges such as, keeping in touch with many other fellows including all new fellows, state committees and regional boards. Our committee meetings also allow us to come together socially as a group, usually at a breakfast or evening meeting over a meal.

The report of the president each year is only as good as the people you have who form the committee:

Last year the committee decided to embrace the concept of holding the 2008 Churchill Fellows Gathering. Most of us can appreciate the time and effort that goes into organising such an event. This task has been taken up by a sub committee made up of Gillian Weiss, Graeme Adcock and Bill Prior. All have put in substantial time over the last few months to start what we know will be a wonderful three day event on the long weekend of October next year. Gillian has agreed to be our conference convenor, this will be a partially funded position thanks to the generosity of the Churchill Trust, who have agreed to help us by generously donating a total sum of \$18000.00. Included in this financial generosity we are able to establish our own website, which will showcase new fellows each year starting with the 2008 fellows. It will also allow us a registration point for next years gathering.

This year our AGM/dinner was organised by Loris Glass, Chris Morris and Gillian Weiss.

Peter Elder continues to do a job which I believe he will have for life, that of treasurer. Rebecca Knol as you all know is the Editor of the Churchill Chatter, if any of you have ever been editor you know how frustrating it can be at times and I know that she has had her fair share of frustrations. I would urge you all to support her with articles especially new fellows when you return from your overseas trips.

This year the committee decided to hold our information evening for new fellows before the AGM. It gave the committee a chance to meet most of the new fellows socially and be able to give them helpful advice from past fellows experience. Tony Phillips is largely responsible for compiling this information and while most of us have travelled overseas pre receiving a Fellowship there is a valuable information package which all new fellows receive specific to the Churchill Fellowship.

Elizabeth Koch is also a valued member of our committee.

Early in July this year I read with interest as I'm sure some of you did that Churchill has been cut from a list of key historical figures recommended for teaching in English secondary schools. A spokesperson said and I quote; "*Of course, good teachers will be teaching the history of Churchill as part of the history of Britain, the two are indivisible*". Churchill's grandson Nicholas Soames, also a Conservative MP, described the move as madness. After reading this I described the move slightly more colourfully, I as we all do have much to thank Sir Winston Churchill for.

Finally, I would like to announce some really good news. Ever since I have been on the committee we have talked about having a member of our committee on the South Australian selection panel for new fellows. Over the course of the last few months and thanks to Robin Layton I am pleased to inform you that our new committee representative on the selection panel will be Christine Morris.

Thank you all very much for your continued support of the SA Churchill Fellows Association. I look forward to seeing many of you at the 2008 Gathering.

Editors Desk...

This edition we digress from the normal profiling of returning Fellows to showcase two past Fellows—Dr Rob Morrison & Larry Turner—who have received prestigious awards in recent months.

We await the return of a number of Fellows who are currently travelling the world and look forward to hearing about their adventures.

We enjoyed a fabulous AGM/Dinner this year at the University of Adelaide. It was a great night. Included in this edition is Greg Chambers address and a report by Loris Glass.

I would personally like to thank you all (and I am sure Peter Elder would join me) for such a prompt response to our call for subscriptions this year. In addition to over 100 Fellows renewing their subscription we received \$380 in donations which goes towards the award of an SA Fellow in 2008. I was also thrilled to receive so many email addresses (now over 100 Fellows) as this considerably reduces our newsletter costs.

I would also like to thank Tony Phillips (*Churchill in Denmark*), Dene Cordes (*Emu Ridge Eucalyptus Distillery & obituaries*) and David Hobbs (*Eureka prize winner*) for providing articles for inclusion in the newsletter. As an editor it is always a delight to receive articles unprompted!

Graeme Adcock has been in New Zealand for a couple of months but will update us on the organisation of the 2008 National Gathering—SA in the next newsletter.

Finally, this edition includes details from Pat Toolan (Past Fellow 2002) on a Californian Garden Tour which she is leading. Pat was awarded her Fellowship to study preservation & conservation techniques for old rose and plant varieties.

Rebecca Knol
Editor

AGM/Dinner Report

Loris Glass

A stellar evening it was on Thursday 9 August as another eleven Churchill Fellows shared their passion to change the world or at least their part of it.

President Greg Chambers welcomed fellows old and new and their guests to the Equinox Room at the University of Adelaide. On behalf of the committee Greg expressed our pleasure in being able to introduce Meg from the National Office who so many of us have 'spoken' to on email. It was Meg and her mother Connie's first time at our dinner and a warm welcome was also extended to Chief Executive Paul Tys and SA Chair of the Selection Panel, Hon Justice Robyn Layton.

Greg's address included a couple of exciting recent developments:

- Association committee member Chris Morris was selected to join the Selection Panel
- the Trust has offered very generous financial support to South Australia for the 2008 National Gathering and committee member Gillian Weiss had accepted the role of Convenor with remuneration.

The 2007 fellows shared their plans, hopes and dreams during their interviews with committee members Chris Morris and Loris Glass. Once again their stories of hard work and deep understandings in their fields of expertise and their passion to push the boundaries to explore new territory had us all thinking, laughing, crying, and feeling totally awed and inspired that another group of fellows were setting off to do the Winston Churchill Trust and Australia proud.

A comment from a past fellow from 1982 summed it up brilliantly: "*Churchill Fellows make change happen*". And these Old Fellows (the capitals indicate pride and status!) Bruce Emsley and Kevin Handrek continue to share entertaining stories, write books with multiple editions, record sound scapes and experiment in backyards and sheds, all the while clearly identifying that it began with a Churchill Fellowship.

Robyn's expert re-election of the committee clipped another few seconds from previous AGM record times! (16 seconds)

The evening began with harp and flute, canapés and drinks, and much chatter, and concluded with further celebration as at least two new fellows won raffle prizes and a third tried his luck at a raffle refund!

If you weren't one of the nearly one hundred people who were entertained and dined on a delicious smorgasbord (of both food and ideas) don't miss next year's AGM.

Study preservation and conservation techniques for old rose and plant varieties - USA, Germany, South Africa

Obituaries

Milton Bernard Spurling

Milton Bernard Spurling—CFA Regional Trust Committee member—died at 80. Milton is survived by his wife Nancy and his children Robert, Andrew, and Christopher

Ronald Hallam Badman

Ronald Hallam Badman, (Churchill Fellow 1967) died at 94. Described as one of nature's gentlemen, Ron was a Fellow who personally sponsored a Fellowship in appreciation for all that he had achieved through his own Churchill Fellowship. Ron is survived by his children Barrie and Lindsay.

George Mitchell Driscoll

George Mitchell Driscoll (Churchill Fellow 1992), died on 8 May 2007 age 71. George introduced thousands of South Australians to the delights of bushwalking. He was a well known author of best selling walking books and in 1983 became the general manager of the Scout Outdoor Centre. Under his management it became one of the biggest outdoor goods retailers in Australia.

His fellowship in 1992 took him around the world looking at best practice in outdoor retailing. In 1993 he opened Annapurna Outdoor shop applying the lessons learnt from his fellowship. He was responsible for setting up the Pathfinders Walking Group and was a regular columnist in The Advertiser Getting Out supplement in the late 80's and early 90's.

He authored *40 Real Bushwalks Around Adelaide* and following its popularity wrote *50 Real Bushwalks Around Adelaide*. It ran to five editions. After moving to Sydney to manage the Outdoor Life Group he wrote *50 Best Bushwalks Around Sydney* which was published last year.

George was also a driving force behind the Lavender Federation Walking Trail which is still under construction. It runs from Murray Bridge to the edge of the Barossa Valley on a snaking 550km course to the Clare Valley.

George is survived by his wife Elfi, sons Toby & Harry.

Churchill in Denmark

Tony Phillips

We were recently fortunate to visit old friends in Denmark. It was also very pleasing to hear how popular 'our' Princess Mary is over there. She seems to have behaved impeccably!

Whilst in Denmark we came across a Churchill Park close to the Royal Palace in Copenhagen. The Danes think very highly of Churchill and he is one of the very few non-Danes awarded their highest honour of The Order of the Elephant. The park is also immediately adjacent to the Danish Museum of Wartime Resistance and well worth visiting if you are there. It seemed that just about all Danes speak English which makes it a very easy and friendly country to visit.

In contrast, new UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown has just decreed that Churchill and his life is to no longer to be taught in British Schools and will be replaced by studies in Urdu, Arabic, Global Warming and Good Nutrition. This, of course has not gone down at all well with the locals. As is so often the case, political correctness has exactly the opposite to the desired effect and ends up causing great resentment amongst the indigenous population!



Australian Government Eureka Prize Winner

Dr Rob Morrison

Cont from P.1...

In 2002, as part of the *Science Committee for Encounter* - a celebration of the combined voyages of Matthew Flinders and Nicolas Baudin - Dr Morrison initiated and named the *Lesueur Conservation Park* on Kangaroo Island. This Park now preserves a large section of some of the most biodiverse wilderness in SA.

Dr Morrison is author of 30 books on science and natural history. He wrote the first *Field Guide to the Tracks and Traces of Australian Animals* - the only book to deal with all Australian taxa. The book was awarded the Adelaide Festival of Arts Literary Prize. As a result, he was an expert witness on animal tracks and dingo behaviour for the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Chamberlain Convictions.

The \$10,000 Australian Government Eureka Prize for Promoting Understanding of Science is awarded to an individual or group for outstanding work of science communication and outreach that has been personally delivered to a live audience or audiences in an interactive way. The prize is sponsored by the Minister of Education, Science and Training through the Science Connections Program (SCOPE) of the Department of Education, Science and Training.

(Editors note: article courtesy of Eureka prize website <http://www.austmus.gov.au/eureka/index.cfm?objectid=B8572580-0A36-C3C9-8175AA7518CA7AC5>)

Rob Morrison was awarded a Fellowship in 1972 and has been a strong advocate for the Association ever since.