



LIFE MEMBER CITATIONS

Three prominent members of The Rose Society of South Australia were awarded Life Membership of the Society on 14 July 2026 for rendering “special, outstanding, and exemplary service to the Society.

They were Geoff Eckermann and Marjorie Todd from South Australia’s South East, and Penelope Schulz who has been active in Adelaide and the Barossa Valley.

Their addition to the exclusive list of Life Members was announced by Society President, Gavin Woods ARA SMA, at the 118th Annual General Meeting of the Society, held in the Goodman Building at Adelaide Botanic Garden.

Life Members now include: Malcolm Watson OAM WRA ARA NSA SMA WFRS Gold Medal, Patricia Wilhelm, Ruth Watson WRA ARA, Gordon Nolan, Peter Burton ARA SMA, Brenda Burton, Mary Frick ARA, Robert Gregory AM, Mervyn Trimper, Sue Zwar, Maureen Ross, Aileen Scott, Diane vom Berg ARA, Gavin Woods ARA, Coleen Houston OAM, Elaine Schier, Wendy Trimper, John Humphries, Angus Irwin ARA, Chris Kelly, Geoff Eckermann, Penelope Schulz, Marjorie Todd.

Citations that accompanied the most recent of successful nominations follow.

GEOFF ECKERMANN

Geoff Eckermann joined the Rose Society in 1994 when the South East Branch was formed. He was a committee member from its outset and has served as President on two occasions, from 1997 – 2000 and again from 2018 until 2021.

Geoff and Jill have opened their garden on many occasions both for Rose Society meetings as well as special events for the Rose Society. They have also hosted visiting speakers for the Rose Society as well as the judges for the Rose section of the Penola Show.

Geoff has been very active in promoting rose showing and has demonstrated the finer details at talks he has given to our South East Branch, as well as being guest speaker at both the Naracoorte and the Mt Gambier Garden Clubs. In July 2016 Mt Gambier held an exhibition named ‘Endless Pleasure – the art of Gardens and Gardening – from Past to Present’ with the South East Branch invited to participate to help promote the rose. Geoff assisted Jill, using rose hips in amazing giant urns, and Geoff also did an indoor presentation at the Main Corner in Mt Gambier where he demonstrated how to prune and show roses.

He has been very involved with the Penola Hospital rose pruning each winter when a small group of South East branch members prune all the roses around the hospital as well as demonstrating to newcomers the art of rose pruning and advocating they join the Rose Society. In 2008, the brain child of Glenys Mulligan, Geoff and Brian Wagner, the Babies Garden, within the grounds of Penola Hospital, was designed and planted as an aid to help those who had suffered the loss of a child. It wasn’t long before Geoff was solely responsible, and he has continued to maintain this garden which evokes such peace and tranquility. It is only this year that poor health has dictated he give up responsibility.

Geoff has been a life member of the Penola Show Society for many years, part of his responsibility being a steward in Rymill Hall where flowers, especially roses, are shown and judged. As well as holding workshops for the Show Society on exhibiting roses. he has always been there to help folk present their roses correctly and has himself won the Grand Champion rose three times with ‘Chicago Peace’, ‘Gold Bunny’ and ‘Sheila’,

no mean feat with all the competition! Penola 's Rymill Hall at show time has an enormous reputation with \$1000 first prize for the champion rose as well as the magnificent floral decorations that Jill Eckermann presents with the aid of Geoff doing all the fetching and carrying.

At the amazing Garden Extravaganza in Betty & John McKee's garden in April 2008 Geoff helped substantially, manning a 'rose table' and drinks stall – very popular – as well as donating a night's accommodation in their cottage at Robe. Whenever we have held functions in a private garden, Geoff always seems to come to the fore when it comes to manning drinks stalls!

For the two years that the South East Branch of the Rose Society manned a stall at the Lucindale Field Days, Geoff was one of the folk who helped with promoting our Society there. He was also one of the South East Branch committee promoting the South East Branch at Wagners Open days, held for two years before COVID 19 put a stop to them.

Geoff has always helped with displays for the Rose Society. At the Adelaide Rose Festival in 2002 and at the Spring Rose Show in Adelaide, "A Celebration of the States", when each branch had a pedestal to decorate. Geoff assisted Jill and they did a beautiful job with the theme, 'wine & roses'. At the combined branches weekend in November 2017 Geoff and Jill did all the floral decorations as well as having their garden open. Both Geoff and Jill were very active during the World Rose Convention in 2022, beautifying the Convention Centre with Jill's beautiful paintings.

Geoff has always loved roses and, through his involvement with the Rose Society of South Australia Inc., has successfully transmitted this love to others making him an ideal choice for life membership.

PENELOPE SCHULZ

In the early 2000's - for something to do - Penelope Schulz first exhibited at an Angaston Rose Show. Little did she know how involved and dedicated she would become in the 'World of Roses'. This was the beginning of something...as from then on, she has worked diligently to bring the 'Love of the Rose' to thousands of people.

The Rose Society of South Australia Inc.:

Since joining the Society in 2007, Penelope has been an active member taking on many roles. She joined the Society Council in 2015, taking on the positions of Treasurer in 2016-2017 and Vice President in 2020. Penelope is the Liaison Officer for the Society's Chaffey Rose Club Branch. She has attended many of the Branch meetings and events, assisting and encouraging the continued success of the Branch.

Penelope assisted on the Gift Shelf for many years, then when Sue and Heather 'hung up their aprons', Penelope stepped up and took on the role of Gift Shelf Manager. From 2018 to 2021, Penelope loaded up her small car and took the Gift Shelf to Society and Roses in the Heartland events.

In 2024 Penelope again stepped up and became the Speaker's Programme Co-Ordinator. At some Member's Meetings Penelope conducted tours around the International Rose Garden and Botanic Gardens.

As a Society Accredited Rose Pruner Penelope has travelled – including to Roses on Eyre - to assist members and the public with their pruning.

Penelope is an Accredited Rose Judge having judged roses at Society Spring and Autumn Rose Shows, BR&FS, Mt Barker and Uraidla. On top of this, she has assisted in the setting up and dismantling of these shows as well as exhibiting. Recently she also judged at the Parndana Agricultural Show (KI)

For Guest Speakers gifts and members' purchases, Penelope instigated and organizes bottles of wines and labels. She labels all these bottles of wine herself...by hand.

At the setting up of the *Celebration 22* 19th WFRS Convention, 8,500 roses from Meilland International arrived. With no-one available, Penelope took on the huge task of unpacking, trimming, refreshing and displaying the roses from early evening till the Convention Centre closed then returned at opening next morning to finish the task.

Penelope also:

- Is a Volunteer in the International Rose Garden
- Assisted in identifying and labelling roses in David Ruston's garden (2015).
- Collected roses from Gawler, Oakbank and Woodside then travelled down to Cape Jervis to catch the ferry to Kangaroo Island for the Parndana Agricultural Show where she and Gavin Woods set up a rose display. This was a huge undertaking which promoted the RSSA to a wider audience.
- Instrumental in the sale of the RITH show trestles to the Tanunda Show Committee and securing the 'lend back free of charge' when required. This led to the use of the trestles for the 2025 RSSA Spring Rose Show held in the Barossa Mall, Nuriootpa.
- Is the contact person for the proposed 2027 New Zealand tour.

Roses in the Heartland:

Penelope has been an invaluable member of the Society's Branch, Roses in the Heartland from its inception in 2012 until its closure in 2024.

- 2012-2024 - Vice President
- 2012-2024 – Organized activities, excursions, garden visits, lunches etc in numerous Roses in the Heartland areas. Penelope organized the events for the successful RITH 10th birthday weekend.
- Since its beginning, was heavily involved in the running of the Barossa Rose & Flower Shows.
- Assisted at the Kadina Rose Show which included being David Ruston's 'side kick'.
- Member of a small RITH group who pruned and deadheaded the 800 Firestar roses on Menge Road. Plus, the removal and replanting approximately 60 of these roses.
- Together with Rosie Sherwood organized Children's Workshops for the Barossa Rose & Flower Shows.

Penelope has worked tirelessly for both The Rose Society of South Australia Inc. and its Branches. Her enthusiasm, commitment and dedication for the promotion and prosperity of The Rose Society of South Aust Inc. is second to none. She is a most worthy candidate for Life Membership of The Rose Society of South Australia Inc.

MARJORIE TODD

Marjorie Todd joined the Rose Society of South Australia in 1993, a year before the South East Branch was formed in 1994 and since that time she has been a very active and enthusiastic member.

She became President in 2013 until 2015 and again from 2021 until 2025 during which time she did her utmost to advertise and promote South Australia's running of the World Rose Convention in 2022. She attended and helped at the conference as well as taking part in the post conference tour

Marjorie held the position of Treasurer from 2009 until 2013 when she organised Neutrog orders until Neutrog itself took over. Marjorie is an expert at organising raffles, one of the most successful being Jill Eckermann's painting of *Rosa laevigata*, done in aid of the David Ruston Sculpture in 2010, raising over \$5,000 due mainly to Marjorie's mammoth efforts in coordination. Any time a raffle is suggested, Marjorie volunteers to run it.

Marjorie has participated in most of the State Christmas get togethers promoting our South East Branch. In June 2014 Marjorie was instrumental in the success of our 20th anniversary at St Mary's Winery while she also helped in organising the success of our 30th anniversary in 2024 when Coonawarra Hall was overflowing with roses donated by Brian Wagner. The other branches in South Australia helped celebrate over the weekend with local beautiful gardens to visit.

Marjorie was instrumental in promoting the Rose Society at the Lucindale Field Days where she set up a marquee next to Wagners for 2015 & 2016 and then participated in the annual Autumn Open Day at Wagners promoting the South East Branch until COVID 19 put an end to the open days.

She also helped organise rose pruning days, both in Naracoorte and Bordertown, promoting the benefits of belonging to the Rose Society.

The regard that Marjorie is held within the Rose Society was shown after the home and farm where she and Rodger had spent their entire married life, was devastated by fire in December 2021. In recognition of the work Marjorie has done for the Rose Society, Neutrog very generously donated quantities of their products which helped in the recovery of Todd's beloved roses. Marjorie was also very touched when the Governor General's wife, Mrs Hurley, also gave her a rose in recognition of Marjorie's community contribution and of the terrible tragedy. Two years later the South East Branch visited Marjorie's garden to see for themselves the transformation that had taken place.

We feel that Marjorie's passion for roses and commitment to The South East Branch of the Rose Society makes her worthy of life membership.