

## WAITE ARBORETUM FACT SHEET: Dr B. COOMBE AM 1927 – 2014

(Arboretum seats, memorial seats, history features)

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# Dr BRYAN GEORGE COOMBE AM 1927 – 2014



Source: Daily Wine News, 8/1/2014

### 1. NAME - DOB – DOD: Dr Bryan George COOMBE AM, 21 June 1927 – 6 January 2014

- **Occupation:** viticultural officer, research assistant, lecturer in horticultural, science educator and pioneer
- A career which began as a "... viticultural officer with the then SA Department of Horticulture (the first such position in Australia)."
- "In 1956, he then became a research assistant within the Department of Enology at the University of California, Davis,...".
- Lecturer in horticultural science at the University of Adelaide.
- Researcher with an emphasises on "the growth and development of the grapevine, especially the grape berry..."
- An "educator and pioneer of physiological and developmental research on grape berries" (Daily Wine News, 8/1/2014).
- "... Lecturer 1959; Senior Lecturer 1964; Reader 1974 -. Chairman of the Viticultural Section, International Horticultural Congress 1978. *Viticultural physiology* (Edgeloe, 1984,p.184).
- **Seat location:** – enter second gate on the left of Walter Young Drive from Fullarton Road (just past the second gate on the south side. Inside the gate walk north – west at a 45 degrees angle.
- **Nearby tree species:** #1639 C3 *Corymbia eximia* Yellow Bloodwood MYRTACEAE N.S.W. 1951



Photos: Terry Langham

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Photos: Terry Langham #1639 C3 *Corymbia eximia* Yellow Bloodwood MYRTACEAE N.S.W. 1951

**2. QUALIFICATIONS:** Graduated from university in 1948, “*PhD California, MAgsc: Lecturer 1959; Senior Lecturer 1964; Reader 1974 - . Chairman of the Viticultural Section, International Horticultural Congress 1978. Viticultural physiology (Edgeloe, 1984,p.184).*”

### 3. AREA OF RESEARCH

*“... built a long and successful career around grapevine research.”*

*“His research, done in conjunction with a large number of colleagues and graduate students, emphasised the growth and development of the grapevine, especially the grape berry, and led to 152 publications, of which 106 were refereed journals”.*

*“With Dr Peter Dry he edited two volumes on viticulture practices and resources for Winetitles, publisher of Grapegrower & Winemaker, and which have become this group’s most sought-after books” (Daily Wine News, 8/1/2014).*

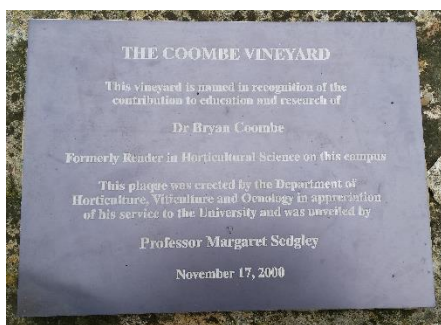
### 4. RESEARCH SPECIALITY:

- Grapevine research, a pioneer of physiological and developmental research on grape berries.
- As above

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#### **The Coombe Vineyard plaque**

*"THE COOMBE VINEYARD: This vineyard is named in recognition of the contribution to education and research of Dr Bryan Coombe - Formerly Reader in Horticultural Science on this campus - This plaque was erected by the department of Horticulture and Oenology in appreciation of his service to the University and was unveiled by Professor Margaret Sedgley November 17, 2000"*

## **5. FURTHER INFORMATION - SOME WORDS OF HUMOUR, INTERESTING FACTS, ETC**

*"Dr Coombe was also the first wine industry recipient of a Fulbright Scholarship.*

*The American Society of Enology and Viticulture honoured him with Best Paper awards (in viticulture in 1987 and enology in 1991) and honorary research lecturer in 1991.*

*On his retirement at the end of 1992 Dr Coombe was created an honorary visiting fellow at the University of Adelaide, a position he held until his death.*

*Recognised as a world leader in the field of grape berry development, Dr Coombe was awarded an Urrbrae Memorial Award in 1990 for his outstanding contribution to Australian agriculture.*

*That contribution derives from both his research activities and his training and development of university graduates.*

*In 2000, the vineyard at the Waite campus, which is used by students and researchers, was named after him in recognition of his service to the university (Daily Wine News, 8/1/2014).*

*While honorary visiting research fellow at The University of Adelaide, Dr Coombe was also made a Member of the Order of Australia for service to the development of the Australian grape and wine industry, particularly as an educator and as a pioneer of physiological and developmental research on grape berries.*

*Dr Coombe was the Australian Society of Viticulture and Oenology's first life member and in 2012 the ASVO appointed him its inaugural Fellow of the ASVO" (Daily Wine News, 8/1/2014).*

**John Steed: "... to get the camera and return in enough time to get the job done,...".**

- *"In those days all of the Department of Agriculture research staff in the Horticultural Branch was based in Adelaide and they used to make visits to places like Berri to conduct research projects either on the Orchard or on other properties in the district.*
- **Bryan Coombe was the Viticultural Research Officer** and I can remember helping in some of the early work he did to induce setting in Zante currants without having to go through the laborious task of hand cincturing.
- *The new procedure which was very successfully developed following the research, involved spraying the vines at the correct stage of flowering with a growth substance. I remember Bryan being meticulous in his work.*
- *Once we were harvesting currants in a trial down at Barmera and he needed a camera to photograph the samples that afternoon (Steed, J. 2013).*
- *He calculated how long it would take him to drive to Berri to get the camera and return in enough time to get the job done, and was able to do all of this successfully" (Steed, J. 2013).*

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*“Bryan later obtained a PhD and eventually became a lecturer in Horticulture at the Waite Institute. He has an excellent and worldwide reputation as a viticulturist” (Steed, J. 2013).*

## 6. PERSONAL INFORMATION

Bryan Coombes was a former Department of Agriculture cadet (Zeitz 2015, p.44).

## 7. PHOTOS:



Photos: Terry Langham #1639 C3 *Corymbia eximia* Yellow Bloodwood MYRTACEAE N.S.W. 1951

## 8. REFERENCES

Daily Wine News, 8/1/2014, *Dr Bryan Coombe dies*, [Online accessed 22 April 2016]. URL: <http://winetitles.com.au/dwn/details.asp?ID=13276>  
<http://winetitles.com.au/dwn/details.asp?ID=13276> Dr Bryan Coombe dies

Edgeloe, V. A. 1984, *The Waite Agricultural Research Institute: The First Fifty Years 1924 - 1974*, The Waite Agricultural Research Institute, Adelaide, p.184

Radio Adelaide, 27 August 2014, *The Life of Late Dr Bryan Coombe*, University of Adelaide, [Online, accessed 18 April. 2016] URL:

- “This episode of Harvest we pay tribute to the late Dr Bryan Coombe, one of the world’s most eminent viticulture research scientists, who passed away in January 2014. Dr Peter Dry looks back at the career of his mentor, Dr Bryan Coombe, and contribution to the field.
- *Featured in this episode: Dr Peter Dry, Associate Professor of Viticulture, University of Adelaide* Copyright Radio Adelaide 2016, University of Adelaide”.

Steed, J. 2013, *History of Agriculture: Some of My Experience at the Berri Experimental Orchard* © Primary Industries and Regions 2013, [Online, accessed 2 May 2016] URL: <file:///C:/Users/Terry%20Langham/Documents/History%20of%20Agriculture%20in%20South%20Australia%20-%20Bryan%20Coombe.htm>

Zeitz, I.D 2014, *The Waite: A social and scientific history of the Waite Agricultural Research Institute*, Barr Smith Press, Adelaide.

