



## **Russell Taylor Award For Design Excellence**

### **Memorial to Russell Dalton Taylor 1927 – 1996**

Russell's memorable achievements based as they were on his unique character, have left their mark on his professional colleagues, family and friends. Although a very private person he was passionate about social and land use planning issues and in a complex way, took time to pursue answers to a range of curly questions.

His ability to cut through unnecessary verbiage both written and spoken, left most in awe. At meetings he wanted to get to the heart of the issues and at a personal level there was never any misunderstanding about his position on the matter at hand.

Russell was generous and hospitable enjoying good conversation and the company of others. Geoff Lush, Shire Planner Manjimup relates the fond memory of Russell's creative spirit at work preparing the Shire's Town Planning Scheme – often a meal, a bottle of good red and spirited conversation was the order of the day and sometimes this was taken in lieu of fees. He gave time to students, clients and friends and because of his generous nature did not expect anything in return. He established a prize for excellence in rural planning at Curtin University and encouraged professionals to take their profession seriously.





## **Russell Taylor Award For Design Excellence**

Russell always said “Walk the Site”, “talk to the locals”, “research landform and history”. Those sayings stemmed from his inherent love of the land and the environment. He insisted on doing adequate homework and working with base mapping that had been checked in the field.

Russell had fond memories of many friends and associates (too many to mention all) including Chris and Marjorie Thompson, Trevor Mowbray and Rosemary (nee Hughes-Owen). Peter Livings and his many friends in surveying, town planning and local government, John Treloar, Harcourt Long, Harry Morris were in the first planning course with Russell. Many of his closest and most recent friends are those carrying on the traditions at Taylor Burrell Town Planning and Design.

Russell was involved in the setting up of the reserve at Two Peoples Bay for the conservation of nature fauna (Noisy Scrub Bird). At the dedication the Duke of Edinburgh shook his hand and made some expletive about the wind and rain – a moment in history that gave Russell a great deal of pleasure and amusement.





## **Russell Taylor Award For Design Excellence**

Russell Dalton Taylor (born 1927), educated at Scotch College Melbourne, Surveyor (1950) Town Planner, Perth Technical College (1965) headed up the country planning section of the Town Planning Department ably supported by Alan Wilson. He was in private practice (1966) with Mike McMullen whom he had met in Esperance in 1958, and was later joined by Gary Cottrell (1968) and Bill Burrell (1969).

Russ married Lesley while still in Victoria (1950) and later moved to WA doing contract surveying around Esperance and the wheatbelt (1955). He and Gray Roughan surveyed the standard gauge railway through the Avon Valley (1961) and drove the first peg for the town of Exmouth. Lesley remembers that during their travels around the wheatbelt areas, they always camped on "rock catchments" – granite outcrops at the base of which during the depression, walls were built to catch rainwater.

In the early 1970's Russell was involved in the planning and construction of one of the first small lot housing developments carried out in the comprehensive manner involving Taylor Woodrow Corser.

His involvement with the Papua New Guinea community went beyond town planning. He sponsored the local training of one of PNG's university graduates in geography (Ray Miria) to come to Perth for practical training. He was also involved with the Aboriginal community at Jigalong east of Newman and enjoyed the liaison and association with the community.





## **Russell Taylor Award For Design Excellence**

Russell's achievements were significant in the town planning and surveying professions and include the following:

- RAPI Award for Rural Planning for the Chittering Rural Strategy (1996);
- Perth's Eastern Corridor Study;
- Numerous Town Planning Schemes – Councils of Toodyay, Northam, Chittering, Bridgetown, Port Hedland, Broome, Manjimup, Geraldton etc.;
- Urban development studies for Ley, Mt Hargan in Papua New Guinea.

However his major contributions emanate from the personal and committed way in which he sought to find better and simpler ways of achieving equity outcomes.

Russell leaves behind his name and reputation in the planning and surveying professions of Western Australia, the memory of many friends and colleagues, and the love of his wife Lesley, sons Gregory and Ben and daughters Lyn and Lee.

*Reprinted from Western Planner Vol. 14 No 1 January 97*



Australian Association of Planning Consultants