

Speech delivered by WA Chapter Convenor, **Ken Perry** MBA'80, when introducing UWA Vice Chancellor Alan Robson at **Joint Harvard-Oxford-Cambridge Alumni event** held on 3 June 2009 at UWA Club

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome. My name is Ken Perry and I am the Convenor of the Harvard Club Chapter in WA.

I may be unique that in that I have actually been to all four Universities represented here tonight. In alphabetical rather than pecking order we have Cambridge, Harvard, Oxford and Western Australia. Only two of those universities granted me degrees, the other two had good restaurants and I enjoyed my day long visits.

Although Oxford can claim to be the Oldest University represented here tonight, Cambridge is certainly the oldest University represented here whose name starts with C and I can say with some conviction that Harvard is by far the best University represented here tonight, that is based in Boston.

I went to UWA and Harvard, both a long time ago, but it is probably a fair reflection on my enjoyable experiences at both of these august institutions, that I very much look forward to the opportunity to gather with my birds (and blokes) of a feather.

Tonight we have the inaugural joint function in Western Australia between the Oxfordians, the Cambidgians and the Harvardians. We have been overwhelmed by the response and have had to turn a number of people away. Perhaps we have identified a need or an opportunity? This might be a worthwhile topic to discuss later.

We are blessed through the generosity of the University of Western Australia and the University Club that have provided both the fine food and wine and the venue tonight. I thank them on your behalf for this wonderful initiative. In particular we must thank Gary Ellis and his staff at the University Club. In addition special mention must be made of efforts made by the lovely Meredith Eddington, and the staff at my office and Mark Paganin's office for coordinating and administering the event.

We are also blessed tonight to have the Vice Chancellor of the University of Western Australia to join us and he has been persuaded to say a few words. It is my main function tonight to introduce Professor Robson to you.

Professor Robson is the University of Western Australia Vice Chancellor since 2004 and is the Hackett Professor of Agriculture. Prior to his appointment as Vice-Chancellor in 2004, Professor Alan Robson was Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost of The University of Western Australia from 1993. He has also held the positions of Foundation Director of the Cooperative Research Centre for Legumes

in Mediterranean Agriculture (CLIMA), Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, Head of the School of Agriculture, and Professor of Agriculture (Soil Science) at The University of Western Australia.

He also has a quite a few letters after his name, very few of which mean anything to me, but the list is so extensive and the audience here so diverse and knowledgeable, I should list them all so that he can be embarrassed and we can potentially find something we can relate to.

- AM
- BAgrSc Melb
- PhD W.Aust
- FTSE
- FACE
- FACEL
- FAIAS

And now also WACOTY Professional Division. This is Professor Robson's most recent award where he was recognised on last Saturday night as WA Citizen of the Year in the Professional Division. Given his growing list of credentials I am glad he wasn't competing in the Amateur Division. You can also see why the printing on his business card is in a tiny font.

Tonight Professor Robson will briefly address us on some research undertaken recently by University of Western Australia on what makes a world class university.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Professor Alan Robson.