

July 14, 2003

A New Era for Ruston Roses

Mr David Ruston, OAM, world renowned rose expert, today announced that his niece, Anne Ruston, has purchased Ruston Roses, a business he founded over fifty years ago.

Mr Ruston said “he was delighted that his life’s work will be continued and most particularly by a member of his family.

“With the input of new ideas and enthusiasm I’m sure Anne will be able to take this business to a whole new level”, he said.

Ms Ruston, who has a background in marketing and project management, will commence her responsibility for the business at the beginning of August.

“I am excited at the prospect of taking over what has been described as one of the world’s top five rose gardens. It is an Australian icon and we intend to ensure that it remain that way.

Part of our charter will be to protect and develop the valuable genetic base that David has built up since 1948.

“The garden had over 4,000 different varieties of roses including some not found anywhere else in the world. We intend to use this genetic base for an expansion of the budwood business.”

“One of the major selling points with the roses grown in the garden, when compared to glass house grown roses, is their strong perfume. We are already working on marketing initiatives to exploit this advantage.

“I am pleased that David has decided to stay in the business and will be giving his input on future strategies, flower arranging, speaking to groups and general industry liaison and I am delighted that he is excited about some of the ideas we are already planning.

“We have plans for significant investment of funds into the garden to ensure its future and viability and included in these plans are more efficient horticultural practices, a new tourist facility and sales outlet.

“We are currently putting the final stages to a five year business plan which is addressing a range of issues including tourism, expansion of the cut flower and budwood businesses, more efficient irrigation practices, mechanical pruning and micro management of plant nutrition,” she said

“Water restrictions are of major concern for the future of the business, which because of its intensive nature and high production output relies heavily on good supplies of quality water. We plan to examine new way of maintaining flower production without jeopardising production or the survival of the 50,000 plus rose bushes which make up the garden.

“We also intend to have a major focus on environmental sustainability.

“You can gauge the potential of this business when you consider that the garden supplies over 500,000 buds to rose propagators around Australia each year and a further 500,000 rose blooms are sent to florists.

“Another exciting feature of the garden are the plantings of David Austin roses. Currently these rose varieties are in great demand and the fact that David saw to plant David Austin roses a number of years ago will enable us to capitalise on this new market opportunity”

“I have a strong background in the tourism and travel industry and tourism marketing and plan to use this to advantage in the future development of the property.

We see the promotion of the garden as a Riverland tourist destination being one of our main focuses. We plan to actively work with the local tourism industry to raise the profile of the garden both within Australia and overseas.

One very important event we will be pleased to continue supporting is Riverland Rose Week. This is a fantastic event for the Riverland and one which deserves the support of all the community.

Ms Ruston said that it was not often the businesses like Ruston Roses came onto the market. The fact that the enterprise had been developed by someone who was passionate about roses and set out to develop one of the most diverse rose gardens in the world made it a fantastic base for future and ongoing development.

“I doubt today with tight economic conditions that it would be possible to achieve the same collection and diversity.”

To arrange an interview please contact Anne Ruston on 0419806116.