ELECTION OF HONORARY LIFE MEMBER

V. R. CLARK
A.I.S.T.

Vernon Raymond Clark was born and educated in Canterbury and early exposure to agriculture through family associations with farming easily decided his career.

In 1940, at age 17, he joined the Lincoln College staff as a laboratory assistant where he worked for a certain C. P. McMeekan. These early years of seven-day weeks and the stimulation by McMeekan to find practical answers set his work pattern for life.

Professor E. R. Hudson and Dr M. M. (now Sir Malcolm) Burns encouraged him to return to part-time study after four years of military service in New Zealand and the Pacific. Thus as well as a busy experimental work schedule he completed a number of degree courses at Lincoln and became the first New Zealander to qualify as an Associate of the Institute of Science Technology.

The Coop and Clark partnership in sheep research started in 1948, and continued for 20 years until Clark was promoted to the Lincoln academic staff. He became a lecturer in Animal Science in 1966 and Senior Lecturer in 1976. Professor Coop states that "Vern Clark brought to the task a keenness and willingness to work and an outstanding organising ability, both of which have been unmatched at the College."

Vern Clark's teaching skills were with the diploma students — the men who make up the core of the industry and are the innovators who turn scientific principles into financial realities. It is especially good to see so many of these old students members of this Society — thanks to his persuasion. Vern's skills are in stimulating the listener, simplifying the complex, translating the jargon and constantly questioning what it all means to practice. His background ideally suited him for this task.

Farmers loudly praise Vern Clark's ability to recommend students that will fit in with farming families. This is a task requiring great experience and knowledge of people in an all-round sense. It highlights his skills as a communicator and is a valuable service to both student and farmer alike.

Nowhere was Vern's organising skill better seen than in his share of the arrangements at the recent World Sheep and Beef Cattle Breeding Congress in New Zealand.

Clark was joint author of the early research papers from Lincoln and particularly well known by students of the sheep are those by Coop and Clark reporting the early Border Leicester crossing work that led to the development of the Coopworth breed.

His contribution to the Coopworth sheep in Australasia has been massive. This Breed Society is one of the most forward-looking in the world and has developed

greatly through Vern Clark's contribution as Secretary and the support and work Mrs Clark has provided over the years.

The Coopworth Society is ready and eager to exploit the new technology — breeders expect it, and this is clearly the stimulation again provided by Coop and Clark. Breeders express their admiration at Vern's willingness to help anyone, especially the young breeder. He will travel far and work all hours to meet his commitments. He is a life member of the N.Z. Coopworth Society and Patron of the Australian Coopworth Society.

The NZ Society of Animal Production has also benefitted from his administrative skills. He served on the executive committee from 1970-1, was Vice-President in 1972 and President in 1973. He was heavily concerned in the campaign to increase membership and he drafted the very wise and flexible specifications of the McMeekan Memorial Award. He was an effective delegate of this Society on the World Association of Animal Production when they were formulating their policy. His philosophy and that of Dr Whittlestone who also effectively presented our views, was that NZSAP should be in WAAP for what we could give this developing body, and not for what we could get out of it. This is a philosophy still defended in the Society.

For his contributions to Lincoln College, to his many students, to this Society, to agriculture and the humble sheep, Vernon Raymond Clark is proposed as a Life of the New Zealand Society of Animal Production.

D. C. DALTON