Tocal College to celebrate its 50th Anniversary in 2015

Tocal College will celebrate its 50 years of education on the Tocal property at Paterson in the Hunter Valley next year with a number of activities including a “Back to Tocal” weekend on the 25-26 July 2015.

Tocal College Principal Dr Cameron Archer said the College had grown over the years to now be one of Australia’s largest and most diverse agricultural colleges.

“The college was established by the Presbyterian Church as the CB Alexander Presbyterian Agricultural College and first accepted 15 male students in March 1965,” he said.

“Its operation was transferred to the NSW Department of Agriculture in 1970 and it continues to be operated by the NSW Government through the Department of Primary Industries (DPI).”

Dr Archer said the original College was consolidated in 2006 with the former Murrumbidgee College of Agriculture to form Tocal College and it now delivers programs throughout NSW.

“Tocal has gained an enviable reputation in agricultural education with a particular focus on farming and land management.

“It now provides training including skills recognition in around 20 courses with up to 400 people graduating each year. “

Dr Archer said the College plans to celebrate its 50th Anniversary through a number of activities including a ‘Back to Tocal’ weekend on the 25-26 July 2015.

“This will be an opportunity for past staff, students, industry and community members to visit Tocal and renew friendships and acquaintances.

“The weekend will be a joint initiative of the College, CB Alexander Foundation, Tocal Ex-students Association, Friends of Tocal and Tocal Field Days - organisations that have contributed to make Tocal what it is today,” Dr Archer said.

“The College is fortunate to be located on the wonderful Tocal estate, one of the first land grants in the Hunter Valley with the Indigenous name of the locality now being the name of the College.

“We understand Tocal meant ‘plenty’ or ‘big’ in the local dialect of the Gringai Clan of the Wonnaruah people,” he said.

“The celebration of 50 years is important for the College and for the local and wider community who have been so supportive of the College for the past 50 years.

“We therefore are keen to open the doors and gates of the College and farm for all to see at the July open weekend.”

Ongoing contact for the event can be made through registering with Ms Robyn Papworth on 4939 8865. Other initiatives proposed for the Anniversary year will be revealed at a future date.

Media contact: Phil Bevan 0429 458 053

Follow us:  http://twitter.com/#!/nswdpi