



News Release

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Hubbard's irrigation leadership honoured

South Canterbury businessman and public face of South Canterbury Finance Allan Hubbard was honoured this week for his outstanding leadership in irrigation.

Hubbard was awarded the prestigious Ron Cocks Memorial Award by Irrigation New Zealand (INZ) at the industry's conference in Christchurch.

INZ chairman Graeme Sutton told the over 400 delegates of Hubbard's leadership in irrigation that spanned more than half a century.

“A man of his time for water in Canterbury, a farmer, a visionary, businessman and financier, Allan Hubbard saw water as the ‘new gold’ believing that if properly implemented and managed, both economically and environmentally, that irrigation would be the cornerstone for economic and environmental growth in New Zealand.”

Quietly behind the scenes Hubbard breathed life into ambitious water management and irrigation development in Canterbury.

“Modest about his achievements and the progressive growth he has pioneered, and continues to support through his intensive involvement in farming circles and water related groups and organisations, Hubbard's passionate enthusiasm and leadership is encouraging to all wherever he treads,” Sutton said.

Hubbard's ability has long been directed towards the development of the Canterbury region's full capacity and has contributed substantially to the development of the farming sector through his love for farm accounting.

He saw first-hand the impact a reliable supply of water could have. He inspected irrigation schemes in arid California – it was his interest in the

Californian Water Board that inspired him to bring the North American model to New Zealand.

Hubbard became a key leader in water management infrastructure for environmental and economic benefit around irrigated agriculture.

He was the driving force in establishing the Opuha Dam, articulating early the importance of conserving water in South Canterbury.

The Opuha project delivered in generating electricity and providing water for 16,000 hectares of irrigated agriculture while also supplying water for urban consumption and improving environmental flows.

A key figure in the growth of Central Plains Water, with a clear and positive encouraging view towards the importance of sustainable farming Hubbard again put his money with his passion and through his dairy enterprise Dairy Holdings he came to the rescue when the project needed money. If it wasn't for his bail out – CPW would not have obtained its consents and be where it is today. He is a director of CPW.

Hubbard's leadership and passionate enthusiasm towards economic and environmental development through irrigated agriculture had played an integral role in the development of irrigation across the region and had produced untold benefit to all sectors of the community, Sutton said.

****** Note**

Ron Cocks Memorial Award - awarded by Irrigation New Zealand for outstanding leadership in irrigation

J.R. (Ron) Cocks was a Mid Canterbury farmer, a pioneer, visionary and a leader in farming affairs. His greatest legacy to New Zealand was his leadership in water issues. This memorial award acknowledges that legacy, encouraging others to follow his leadership.

For further comment:

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Irrigation NZ – is a national body representing all irrigation interests in a unified voice to promote excellence in irrigation development and efficient water management based on the principles of responsible and sustainable water management throughout New Zealand.

