

2013 AARES Distinguished Fellow

Bill Malcolm



Associate Professor L.R. (Bill) Malcolm grew up in a wheat farming area in the Victorian Mallee, matriculating from Hopetoun High School in 1972. He studied for a B.Ag.Econ. degree at UNE (1973-76) and subsequently worked as Farm Manager at Roseworthy Agricultural College, running a mixed dairy/cropping farm, for the years 1977-78 in addition to having a farm management teaching role. In 1979-80, he returned to UNE as a junior research fellow in farm management economics, working with Jack Makeham on a project designed to incorporate probabilities into farm loan assessment. In effect, this was an attempt to develop the analytical method later included in the proprietary software @RISK, long before @RISK was developed. The considerable talent that Bill has since displayed for writing about the history of farm management and agricultural economics in Australia emerged at that time when he wrote *Coping with Change: Australian agriculture since 1970* with Jack Makeham and Tim Christiansen.

Alan Lloyd recruited Bill to the Melbourne University School of Agriculture in 1980 as tutor in agricultural economics, to join a team that included Alistair Watson, Neil Sturgess, and John Cary as well as Alan Lloyd. Subsequently, while employed as a full time academic, Bill earned his M.Agr.Sc. in 1989 and his D.Agr.Sc. in 1996, which helped him proceed through the academic ranks to Associate Professor in 1996. Bill remains a member of staff in the Melbourne School of Land and Environment, although since 2009 in a joint appointment with Victorian Department of Environment and Primary Industries as Principal Scientist Farm Systems Economics, in their Agricultural Research Division.

Bill has been active in teaching inside and outside the classroom. He has supervised around 40 Masters and 20 PhD students, and has served as a co-supervisor to many more. He taught a final year Farm Management Economics subject to B.Ag.Sci. students at Melbourne University annually from 1985 to 2010, in addition to a range of other agricultural economics subjects.

Bill has also been a very productive writer, mainly in the area of farm management economics where he stands out in Australia. After moving to Melbourne, Bill continued to work with Jack Makeham, writing *The Economics of Tropical Farm Management*, *What Price Farm Budgets*, *The Farming Game Now*, and *The Farming Game: Agricultural Management and Marketing* with Vic Wright as an added author. Bill also wrote *Agriculture in Australia* with Peter Sale and Adrian Egan, and more recently published a Second Edition of *Agriculture in Australia* with Peter Sale, Brian Leury, and Snow Barlow as joint authors. In addition to these books, Bill has (with 75 or more co-authors) written around 150 journal articles and conference papers, numerous newspaper pieces and reports, and many consulting reports.

In addition, Bill has given 15–20 presentations to farmer and industry events every year for 30 years. He was the logical choice to give the Inaugural J. P. Makeham Memorial Lecture at UNE in 2006 on ‘Makeham Farm Management’, subsequently published in *Farm Business Management Journal*.

Bill served the Society well as president of the Victorian Branch in 1989 and co-editor of AJARE with Donald Maclaren (1990-93) and with John Kennedy (1994-96). He was president of AARES in 2004, and the Society’s Public Officer in respect of the Societies Incorporation Act (Victoria) for around 15 years until AARES became a nationally registered body last year.

Other journals have also benefitted from Bill’s editorial skills and enthusiasm for publication. He has been co-editor of both *Australasian Agribusiness Review* and *Agribusiness Perspectives* with Vic Wright and Garry Griffith since 1997, and co-editor of *Australian Farm Management Journal* since 2013, also shared with Garry Griffith and Vic Wright.

In the course of his career, Bill has conducted farm management economics training courses for farmers and Department of Agriculture and industry professionals (both in Australia and overseas), has had considerable involvement in practical farming and farm management advisory roles, has been a member of the advisory boards to several large farm businesses, and served as a member of Keenan’s Dairy Feed Company’s International Scientific Advisory Board 2007-12.