

Citation for Mr William Mortimer Muirhead AM
Wednesday 18 April, 2018 at 10:30am

Officiator: Hon John Hill, Pro Chancellor

Award recipient: Mr William Mortimer Muirhead AM

Award being conferred: Honorary Doctor of the University (DUniv)

Citation delivered by: Mr Nigel Relph, Deputy Vice Chancellor and Vice President,
External Relations and Strategic Projects

Pro Chancellor, the University of South Australia awards the Honorary Degree of Doctor of the University to a person of eminence who has made a distinguished contribution to public service, or a field of academic endeavour or artistic pursuit. It is my pleasure to present Mr William Mortimer Muirhead AM for the honorary degree of Doctor of the University, in recognition of his distinguished service to the community.

Mr William (Bill) Muirhead AM is an influential advertising executive and highly successful Agent General for South Australia in London. Throughout his distinguished career, Mr Muirhead has worked with prominent clients such as British Airways, Qantas, The Conservative Party, Toyota, BP and News International. He grew up in Adelaide and moved to London as a teenager where he studied at the Institute of Marketing. He has maintained a close connection with South Australia – particularly over the past decade in his role as Agent General.

Mr Muirhead's advertising career began in 1970 with international advertising, marketing and public relations agency Ogilvy & Mather. He joined global communications and advertising agency network Saatchi & Saatchi in 1972, becoming one of the agency's first account handlers. He went on to become Group account director and was subsequently appointed chairman of Saatchi & Saatchi Europe with additional responsibility for the London agency, which was at that time the biggest advertising agency in Britain. In February 1994, he moved to New York as Chief Executive and President of Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising Worldwide.

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In 1995, Mr Muirhead co-founded M&C Saatchi, alongside three other senior executives from Saatchi & Saatchi. He remains an executive director on the board of M&C Saatchi.

Mr Muirhead has a keen interest in political advertising and has worked with the Conservative Party on key election campaigns, stretching back to Margaret Thatcher's first victory in 1979. He led the advertising team that helped the party win the 1992 election and M&C Saatchi went on to act for David Cameron's Conservatives at the 2010 and 2015 General Elections.

Mr Muirhead was appointed Agent General for South Australia by then Premier Mike Rann in 2007. In 2015, his tenure was extended to 2017.

As Agent General, he organises the South Australia Club, which he established in London in 2011 as a networking forum to help promote South Australian exporters and encourage foreign investment. The University of South Australia's sponsorship of the South Australia Club has provided a range of opportunities for engagement with prominent United Kingdom institutions at events in London and continues to facilitate the development of business connections in the UK and Europe.

In 2013, Mr Muirhead became a Member in the General Division of the Order of Australia, for significant service to the community of South Australia through the promotion of international trade.

Mr Muirhead was instrumental in the establishment of the first international campus of University College London in Adelaide in 2010 and played a significant role in establishing the Royal Institution of Great Britain in Adelaide in 2009.

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