



# Grassland Society of NSW Inc

## Newsletter

Welcome to the new look Grassland Society of NSW newsletter. While we have made changes to the size and the look we haven't substituted style for substance, so as always we will strive to deliver informative and interesting articles.

Congratulations to Cathy Waters, Kathi Hertel and their committee for organising a very successful conference at Dubbo in July. The program and bus tours had something for everyone so I am sure no one went away disappointed. Members who couldn't attend will have received their proceedings in the mail or can access them on the website.

A big thank you to our sponsors whose support enables the society to run events such as the conference. The sponsors for 2010/2011 will be acknowledged in this and upcoming issues of the newsletter.

One of the highlights of the conference for me was

catching up with past Grassland Society of NSW Secretary - Malcolm Campbell. Malcolm has always been an enthusiastic and dedicated member of the society and probably knows better than anyone the history of the society. So it was only fitting that Malcolm was asked to and delivered a very entertaining presentation on the "First 25 years of the Grassland Society of NSW" at the conference dinner. Malcolm has also prepared an article on this subject which appears in full in this newsletter.



Past Grassland Society of NSW President, Stephen Millar (1994-1996) (left) and past Secretary (1985-2002) Malcolm Campbell discussing the history of the Society at the Conference dinner in July

A key point that Malcolm made in his address was that the Society had been so

successful over the past 25 years (where others have failed) because of the support of the members - particularly those who have volunteered on a committee (state, conference or local branch) but also those who have attended the conferences and field days or contributed to the newsletter. Membership is vital to sustaining the society.

Although our membership is relatively healthy (450-500), new members with fresh ideas are always welcome. At the AGM, the President, Mick Duncan challenged all members to sign up at least one new member over the next year. A big challenge to be sure but nothing ventured nothing gained ..... so encourage all your friends and neighbours to join up. Membership forms can be found at the website [www.grasslandnsw.com.au](http://www.grasslandnsw.com.au) Once at the site click on membership.

*Carol Harris*  
Editor

### Letter to the Editor

Dear member,  
I wish to publically thank our president, Mick Duncan and the committee of the Grassland Society for the exceptionally kind remarks in From the President (Volume 25 No 2). I greatly regret the necessity to resign from the committee but, now, my very restricted mobility precludes me from attending any committee meetings or conferences. I miss them very much.

I wish the Society every continued success in their communication to and support of the pasture based industries of NSW. Thank you for the opportunity to serve this excellent Society.

Kindest regards & best wishes

*Haydn Lloyd Davies*

### In this newsletter

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# History of the Grassland Society of NSW - the first 25 years

Malcolm H Campbell (Grassland Society Secretary 1985-2002)

In 1968 an organisation, “Men of the Land,” initiated the first Grassland Society of NSW (Read et al. 1995). Their initial activity was a field day at Ingleburn on 1 December 1968. Chairman of the Society was Professor Hector Geddes and his committee: F. A. Varley, P. Gardiner, O. Carter, T. Atkinson, W. Paton, R. Hart and A. Fleck. Although “Men of the Land” had 970 members it could not sustain the Grassland Society and it failed sometime between 1968 and the 1980s.

## Birth of our Society

In 1983 Drew Wright, Principal Agronomist Pastures with NSW Agriculture, canvassed support in country NSW and as a result an investigative committee met in Orange on 7 June 1984 and commissioned a survey of 270 landholders to ascertain whether a Grassland Society was a worthwhile venture and whether they would join, pay a membership fee of \$20, attend a two-day conference once a year and stand for election to committees. A brave 42 landholders expressed their interest and were invited to the inaugural meeting at the Royal Agricultural Society (RAS) showground in Sydney on 30 March 1985 (Read et al. 1995).

At this meeting chairman Hugh Ross, “Glengarry”, Orange, supervised a successful motion from Drew Wright to form the Grassland Society of NSW and to elect the following: President, Peter Wrigley; Vice President, John Read; Secretary, Malcolm Campbell; Treasurer, Jim Dellow (elected later), Editors, Warren McDonald and Ray Ison; and Committee, Hugh Ross, Drew Wright, Jack Warner, Roger Dance, Sam Stephens, Frank Crofts and Stephen Millar.

The objects of the Society were to promote: the transfer of innovative information from leading landholders to other producers; the investigation of pasture problems; the incorporation of research findings into practice; the transmission of

information in plain English (Hugh Ross and Jack Warner were keen of this) and; the publication of pertinent information.

The Grassland Society of Victoria (25 years service and 800 members in 1985), the New Zealand Grassland Association (54 years service and 1000 members in 1985) and the Tropical Grassland Society assisted the birth of our Society by providing images to copy and practical guidance. Of these, the Grassland Society of Victoria was closest to our concept because it was geared to landholder interest (65% producer members in 1985) whereas the other two Societies were concerned more with publication of scientific papers. The constitution of the Grassland Society of Victoria was used by John Read and Drew Wright as our model. The RAS, mainly through Hugh Ross, provided encouragement, meeting venues, our first President Peter Wrigley, as well as later help.

The first activity of the Society was a field day south of Orange and an inaugural dinner on 17 October 1985 both attended by 90 members. Guest of Honour at the dinner was Sir Laurence Street, Acting Governor of NSW and guest speaker was

Roy Watts, Director General of NSW Agriculture, both organised by the RAS. Roy Watts, taking a veterinarians aspect, provided a graphic account of the poisonous qualities of an avalanche of our best pastures species which challenged the very substance of our new Society and from which we only just survived.

## Personnel

The Society has been sustained volunteers on the executive (Table 1), conference and branch committees since the beginning. Outstanding service has been recognised by the endowment of six Life Memberships (Table 1). Every endeavour was made to enlist producer Presidents and to that end Peter Wrigley, Graham Brown, Stephen Millar, Haydn Lloyd-Davies (25% producer, 75% CSIRO scientist and professor at University of NSW) and John Coughlan were elected. John Read and Frank McRae were from NSW Agriculture and Mick Duncan from industry. Originally the President’s term was for three years but in 2008 the constitution was amended to lengthen it.

## Logo

Our logo was designed by John Read and professionally fashioned by an artist in NSW Agriculture in 1986.

*Table 1. State Executives and life members over the first 25 years of the Grassland Society of NSW*

Presidents	Peter Wrigley 1985-88, Graham Brown 1988-91, John Read 1991-94, Stephen Millar 1994-97, Haydn Lloyd Davies 1997-2000, Frank McRae 2000-03, John Coughlan 2003-05, Mick Duncan 2005 -
Secretaries	Malcolm Campbell 1985-2002, Nicole Griffin and Rosemary Sweet 2002-04, Dianne Smith 2004-08, Janelle Witschi 2008-
Treasurers	Jim Dellow 1985-2001, Howard Sinclair 2001-02, Greg Condon 2002-05, Linda Ayres 2005-09, Frank McRae 2009-
Newsletter Editors	Warren McDonald 1985, Ray Ison 1985-89, Alan Andrews 1989-93, Drew Wright and David Michalk 1993-2001, Haydn Lloyd Davies 2001-09, Carol Harris 2009-
Life Members	Hugh Ross, Peter Wrigley, Malcolm Campbell, Haydn Lloyd Davies, Warren McDonald, Jim Dellow

In 1989, in response to an impassioned conference paper by Frank Crofts on the value of subterranean clover, a delegate at the AGM “moved” that our logo and title be changed to represent the “Subterranean Clover Society of NSW”

### Conferences

Our first conference in 1986 at Hawkesbury Agricultural College, Richmond was attended by 180. Since then we have held conferences in 11 venues (Table 2) substantiating our aim to involve as many producers as possible in the Society. We held a joint conference with the Victorian Grassland Society at Albury in 2003 and our first coastal conference at Taree in 2009.

Conferences are our shopfronts and provide leading producers the opportunity to deliver papers detailing their methods of running their properties. This is our most important contribution to agriculture as no other organisation provides this invaluable information.

The producer papers deliver practical and proven information that can be readily adapted by other producers to their properties.

They have proved a major attraction, not only in substance but also in the entertainment provided by talented speakers. Papers from research and extension personnel and from industry augment these deliveries. Conferences are also a platform for enlisting new members and for industry and government reps to extend their information through posters and static displays.

The conferences are organised by local committees that include: convenor, secretary, treasurer, editors, sponsorship, competitions, venue, catering, publicity, trade displays, tours, master of ceremonies and general committee, usually a team of 30 which means over our 25 years we have had 750 helpers.

A survey conducted at the 1997 conference in Dubbo revealed that 46% of the delegates were producers, 37% extension and research personnel, 11% teachers and students and 6%

environmentalists. Delegates obtained details of the conference from: the newsletter 53%, the conference brochure 17%, word of mouth 16% and the media 14%.

Most conferences are profitable but in 2000 we lost \$23,000 which emphasises the need for reserve funds to cover contingencies. In 2002 Haydn Lloyd-Davies rewrote David Kemp’s 1988 instructions on how to run our conferences into “Guidelines for Grassland Society of NSW Conferences”.

### Other Societies

In 1989 it was resolved that the President of the Victorian Grassland Society, the NZ Grassland Association and the Tropical Grassland Society attend our conferences free of registration and dinner fees and that membership fees be waived for members of those organisations. This arrangement was reciprocated by the three societies. In 1989 the Australian Wool Corporation invited eight of our members to a conference at Ballarat on weeds, insect pests and diseases of sheep pastures.

### Poster presentations

In 2002 Haydn Lloyd-Davies instigated a scheme that allowed authors of posters a one-minute slot on the dais to present their case. Jim “Banjo” Virgona presented his Caucasian clover case in a one-minute rhyme, the last stanza reading “Now it’s come to the end of my ditty; I hope you’re not bored, sleepy or upset; I’ll tell you some more if you come over to chat; at

my little poster, it’s just up the back.”

### Proceedings

Conference proceedings are circulated to members, libraries, Universities, TAFEs, schools and grassland organisations. In 1993 we had proceedings lodged in 27 libraries.

In 2001 it was resolved that the Society keep two copies of each proceedings. Complete sets are now secure at Agricultural Research Centre, Orange, the National Library, Canberra, the State Library, Sydney and with the Secretary. In 2000 the proceedings from 1985-2001 were indexed by the secretary on a subject and author basis. Editor Carol Harris has redone this indexation and extended it to cover 1985 to 2009. A number of publishing houses, e.g. the Kondinin Group, reproduce papers from our proceedings.

### Newsletter

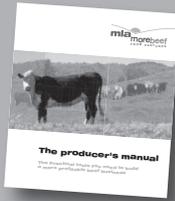
Seven editors have produced the Newsletter since 1985 (Table 1). Between 1993 and 2001 Drew Wright edited copy and then forwarded it to David Michalk for presentation. Full sets of newsletters are held at Agricultural Research Centre, Orange and with the Secretary.



Table 2. Conference venues over the first 25 years of the Grassland Society of NSW

Venue	Year
Orange	1987, 1988, 1991, 1993, 1998, 2005
Queanbeyan	1990, 1994, 1999, 2007
Tamworth	1989, 1992, 2008
Armidale	1995, 2000
Wagga Wagga	1996, 2006
Dubbo	1997, 2010
Richmond	1986
Gundagai	2001
Forbes	2002
Albury	2003
Gunnedah	2004
Taree	2009

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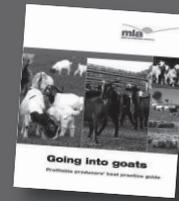
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### Branches

In the late 1980s Jack Warner insisted that we establish as many branches as possible and to that end branches started or sustained were: southern and northern tablelands; central; north-western and south-western slopes; central-western plains; Hunter and Lachlan Valleys; and Albury-Wodonga. Active branches held field days on a multitude of topics, e.g., the NW slopes branch held one on tropical grasses at Purlewaugh in March 2010 at which 150 attended. Branches still operating in 2009 were: southern tablelands, northern tablelands, central and north-western slopes.

Committee members that ran these branches included: Peter Simpson, Noel Teys, Mike Keys, Hugh Dove, Col Langford, Ian McLean, John Coughlan, Warren McDonald, Stephen Millar, Lester McCormick, Mick Duncan, Rob Eccles, Alison Bowman, Jim Virgona, Carol Harris, Jeff Howe, Nigel

Phillips and many others. Peter Simpson led the southern tablelands branch for 16 years after predicting in 1986 that such an organisation would not work; so, in effect, he laboured for 16 years to disprove his own theory. The presidents of branches were ex-officio members of the executive.

### Membership

The founding membership of 28 (Read et al. 1995) increased to 80 by August 1985, to 250 by July 1986 and to 1200 in 1996. Thereafter there was a steady decrease to 450 by 2010.

### Sponsorship

For all of our 25 years we have had immense assistance from sponsors in producing our conferences (e.g., 32 and 23 sponsors, respectively, in 2009 and 2010) and in subsidising our membership fees of \$50 per year (2010). Treasurer Linda Ayres analysed, that in 2006, sponsorship contributed 41% of our income compared to 49% from membership

fees. Over the years sponsors have promoted competitions for: direct drilling, pasture quality and establishment, hay and silage, pasture and weed identification and, many others.

### Specialties

The Society is non-political but presented a balanced case to authorities in such negotiations as: the Native Vegetation and Conservation Act; lack of funding for research and extension; sustainment of aerial agriculture; and a number of other issues. The Society also sponsored publications such as: pasture species booklets; weed control in lucerne; pasture legumes and grasses; and others.

### Scholarships

In 1996 President Stephen Millar announced that the Society would award a four-year scholarship to a member's son or daughter who was accepted by a University to study

agriculture or veterinary science. There were few applications over the ensuing years but those received were outstanding. Our first scholarship of \$1500 per year was awarded to Bruce Watson in 1997 to study agricultural science. Bruce had a stellar university career and was offered three jobs at graduation in 2000, taking one at Price Waterhouse, before returning to his property. Our second scholarship was awarded to Bruce's sister Katrina in 2000 to study agricultural science at Sydney University. After transferring to Marcus Oldham College she graduated with a Bachelor of Business in 2002.

### Travel grants

In the first 25 years of the Society over 30 grants were awarded on a budget of \$4000 per year with a maximum grant of \$2000 to an individual but many of \$250 were awarded. Most grants were given to members to attend the Victorian Grassland Society or the NZ Grassland Association conferences but other grants were made for International Grassland, Asian-Pacific Weeds and RAS conferences, study sojourns on pasture species, specialist pasture and animal production courses and many others.

### Fellowships

The first and only Grassland Society of NSW Fellowship was presented on 18 October 2000 to outstanding CSIRO

scientist Alf Anderson, who discovered the effects of molybdenum on pasture growth, fittingly, at the Boffin's Restaurant in Canberra.

### Internet site

The first mention of establishing an internet site was made in 1997 and by 2000 Rob Eccles had organised an operator in Armidale to establish a site and provide upkeep. By 2001 our site was finished and incorporated with that of the Victorian Grassland Society. It was planned to set all papers and contents of proceedings on the site and sell papers for \$5 and proceeding for \$10.

In 2005 Linda Ayres and Leah Lane organised a new site where, by 2010, papers or proceedings could be obtained through the secretary. In 2010 credit card facilities were established for paying subs, conference fees, etc.

### Future

Our Society has been sustained for 25 years by volunteers from government, industry and producers. An estimate of the numbers involved in the executive and branch committees might come to 300. When added to the conference committee numbers of 750 (see above) it is evident that a large number of volunteers have supported the Society and its aims over this period.

It is essential that this support continues for our Society to prosper. However, with the demolition of personnel in the agricultural section of Industry and Investment, such support may be in jeopardy. In 2009 President Mick Duncan stated that, "although it has been a tremendous partnership, we can't keep relying on the above department to the same extent as in the past." Thus economies such as biennial conferences and other labour-saving strategies may have to be adopted.

Taking into account the above, there is now a greater need for the Grassland Society of NSW than ever before. So here's to the volunteers that will carry the Society to even greater heights over the next 25 years and beyond.

### Reference

Read JW, Wright WA, Campbell MH and McDonald WJ (1995) The birth of the grassland Society of NSW Proc. 10th Conf. Grassld Soc.NSW, Armidale, p.8.



## *Australian Agronomy Conference - New Zealand November 2010*

In a unique and exciting 'fusion of minds' the 15th Australian Agronomy Conference will this year be held at Lincoln University, near Christchurch, New Zealand, as a joint conference with the New Zealand Grassland Association, the Agronomy Society of New Zealand and the New Zealand Soil Science Society. The Conference theme is "Food Security from Sustainable Agriculture" and within that there are plenary sessions on "Food security, climate change and research", "Food security and resource use" and "Agricultural resources and challenges of the Canterbury plains". The last of these provides the lead-in to an afternoon of mid-conference tours which show typical Kiwi flair in covering topics as diverse as "Cropping and high-input dairy production", "Wineries and conservation" and "Mutton to mussels". In addition to these tours, the Tuesday afternoon also provides an opportunity to tour research establishments in the Lincoln area.

On behalf of the organising committee for this joint event I invite you to join us in Christchurch in the spring, for what will be a 'first' for the societies involved and which promises to be an informative, exciting and enjoyable event. For further information and for registrations (soon to appear), keep watching at the website of the Australian Agronomy Society (<http://www.agronomy.org.au/events/2010/>)

*Hugh Dove*

## Successful second year for silage competition

Forbes farmer, John Cole, has been awarded the top prize in this year's NSW Grassland Society hay and silage competition with an outstanding wheaten silage.

Industry & Investment NSW pasture specialist and competition organiser, Neil Griffiths, said with more than 60 entries the competition was close.

"The prize-winning winter crop silage was rated very highly by the I&I NSW Quality Feed Service - 19 per cent crude protein and 11 mega joules (MJ) of metabolisable energy (ME) per kilogram," Mr Griffiths said.

"John was able to resurrect a wheat crop after it was hit by stripe rust and turn it into high quality feed on which his lambs performed very well.

"It was inoculated and special care was taken to roll and seal the silage which was covered with plastic and tyres."

Prizes from New Holland, Integrated Packaging and Pioneer in another five categories were awarded to:

\* The Bake family's Bangalara Dairies, Coffs Harbour for inoculated kikuyu silage harvested at four-leaf growth stage and stored in a pit

\* Wirrallee Partnership, Dungog for winter pasture - baled ryegrass silage, mowed before seed heads emerged, tedded and baled within 24 hours

\* Philip and Robert Ensbey, Grafton for maize silage made from Pioneer 33V15, stored in a Harvestore Tower and used to finish cattle for 60 to 90 days

\* Andrew McCrae, Ungarie for hay made from Morgan field peas cut when flowering prior to seed pod set

\* No prize was awarded in the lucerne

hay or silage section but I&I NSW's Trangie Agricultural Research Centre was credited with producing the highest rating sample - lucerne silage tested at 9.6 MJ ME and 24.4 per cent crude protein.

Neil Griffiths said it was great to see farmers take the opportunity to have their hay and silage analysed through the Feed Quality Service in Wagga Wagga so they really new what they were making rather than guessing about quality.

There was a clear trend with the awards that in all crops the highest quality hay or silage was made from young, high quality crops that were wilted and cured quickly then stored correctly. Well made silage or hay can produce double the meat or milk compared to lower quality feed he said.



Hay and silage competition sponsors and winners line up on the big night at the NSW Grassland Society dinner in Dubbo last month, (left to right) New Holland's Peter Russell, Integrated Packaging's Justine Baird, overall winner John Cole, section winner Andrew McCrae and Industry & Investment NSW pasture specialist, Neil Griffiths. Photo by Jenene Kidston.

# Successful Silage - the Manual

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*Further information is available for Topfodder courses (free to Primary Producers after FarmReady reimbursement) see [www.profarm.com.au](http://www.profarm.com.au) or phone 1800 025 520. Further information is available at [www.dpi.nsw.au](http://www.dpi.nsw.au) and search silage.*

### **2010 LOCUST CAMPAIGN**



As a result of improved seasonal conditions the locust plague this spring is predicted to be the worst outbreak in at least 30 years.

**SO WHAT SHOULD YOU BE DOING RIGHT NOW?**

**Look for egg beds:** look for signs of locust egg beds on your property within crops & pastures. Egg beds are typically found on bare patches of compact soils. Egg pods contain 30-70 pale yellow eggs (5-6 mm long and 1.5 mm in diameter). **REPORT** any egg beds or hatchings to your local LHPA.

**Check equipment:** check chemical equipment to make sure it will be in working order if required.

**Check situation updates:** keep up-to-date with locust hatching reports talk to the LHPA and neighbours

**FURTHER INFORMATION**

[www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/pests-weeds/insects/locusts](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/pests-weeds/insects/locusts)  
[www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/locusts](http://www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/locusts)

*The Grassland Society of NSW would like to thank the following major and corporate sponsors for their support in 2010/2011*



**Wrightson Seeds**

## Yass Valley wool grower selected for national climate champion program

Farmers from across Australia have joined forces to help their neighbours better manage risks associated with climate variation.

Yass Valley wool grower (and Grassland Society of NSW member), John Ive is one of just over 30 farmers recruited by the national Climate Champion program. John's job is to communicate research about new technologies and practices for dealing with climate variability and climate change to other farmers in the Yass region and beyond.

The innovative program, launched at the end of March 2010, gives farmers and opportunity to help improve communication between scientists and farmers about managing climate risk in their local areas for their specific commodities.

John assisted by wife Robyn and family run a specialist ultrafine wool enterprise in the Yass Valley area between Yass and Canberra. John joined the Climate Champion program because he is interested in sharing knowledge with other motivated farmers and learning from others better ways to adapt his own farming practices to an increasingly variable climate.

The program, which is being run by the Managing Climate Variability program, is funded and run by the Grains Research & Development Corporation, and Meat & Livestock Australia.

"This exciting initiative gives us an opportunity to help raise awareness and discussions within farming communities about new innovations for managing variable climate conditions such as declining and

more erratic rainfall which combined with increasing temperatures is leading to reduced soil moisture and consequently uncertainty over future pasture production prospects," John says.

"I'm participating in the Climate Champion program because climate is the biggest constraint to realising on-farm production potential and the more one understands these drivers the better one is placed to make informed decisions and minimise risk exposure and uncertainty. The program offers the opportunity to interact with like-minded farmers both locally and in other regions and will provide a valuable link between farmers like ourselves and the research and resource agencies with responsibilities in climate issues."

Participants in the Climate Champion program will have direct access to the latest climate-related research findings, allowing them to influence the development of new climate risk management tools and technologies and run trials on their own farms. Through their own networks, they will share information about the research with other farmers, along with their own experiences of adopting different tools and practices.

The 34 farmers who have signed up for the program are from across Australia and represent most of the country's agricultural commodities including grains, meat, wool, sugar, dairy, horticulture, grapes and wine, farm forestry and honey. The participants are all interested in managing risks associated with climate and weather to improve productivity on their farms.

Farmer and Chair of Managing Climate Variability, Ian McClelland, says the program reflects research findings that most farmers gain new knowledge and adopt new practices through interaction with their peers, rather than directly with scientists. "Farmer's value the knowledge and experience of other farmers more than from anyone else, including advice provided by agricultural consultants and researchers," Mr McClelland says.

For more information on the Climate Champion program see the website at: [www.climatechampions.net.au](http://www.climatechampions.net.au)

For tools and information to help farmers make decisions about their farm business see: [www.climatekelpie.com.au](http://www.climatekelpie.com.au)

To find out more about the Climate Champion program please contact John Ive [talaheni@webone.com.au](mailto:talaheni@webone.com.au)

*Editors note:  
In the next edition of the newsletter John will write about his experiences with soil moisture and vegetation changes under climate change*



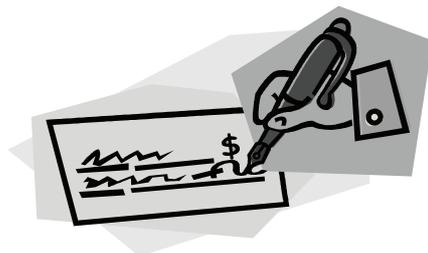
## WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

*Katie Austin, Armidale  
Adam Bush, Scone  
Shane Andrews, Gilgandra  
Robert Gill, Darlington Point  
Brett Wesley, Coolah  
Christine McRae, Mudgee  
Bruce Kirsop, Gilgandra  
Felicity Cox, Orange  
Malle McLeod, Tamworth  
Richard Madden, Forbes  
Adrian Keith, Forbes  
Aaron Giason, Forbes  
Ian & Pauline Freeth, Dubbo  
Penny Kater, Allynbrook  
Matthew O'Neill, Nevertire  
Stuart Squires, Loomberah  
Kathryn Pengilley, Goulburn  
Sven Koljo, Georges Creek  
Graham Truscott, Arimdale  
Graham Stevenson, Guerie  
Malcolm Barden, Gilgandra  
Mr & Mrs Wally Motley, Warialda*

*Phil Cranney, Orange  
Peter Hall, Gilgandra  
Christopher Hincks, Mullaley  
Karl Andersson, Orange  
Alicia & Bryan Piper, Cassilis  
Greg Thomas, Gilgandra  
Tim Wright, Eugowra  
Mark Holman, East Guyong  
James Armstrong, Cassilis  
Elaine Gillooly, Huntley  
Nathan Ferguson, Tumut  
Lachlan Jefferes, Armidale  
Robert Edwards, Tullamore  
Ray Haigh, Trangie  
Matt McRae, Forbes  
Jenene Kidston, Mudgee  
Jan & Douglas Robertson, Tooraweenah  
Mitchell Hughes, Armidale  
Ian & Jennifer Painter, Dungog  
Ray Lord, Warialda*

## Is your Membership up-to-date?

The 2010/2011 membership subs of \$50 are now due



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## From the President

The conference at Dubbo has come and gone and was another great event in the life of the Society.

Congratulations to Cathy Waters and Kathi Hertel who as convenors, with much valued assistance from various committee members, put together a stimulating program of formal sessions, farm tours and a very enjoyable conference dinner. Elsewhere in this newsletter you will be able to read Malcolm Campbell's address on the occasion of our 25th birthday and Neil Griffith's report on the hay and silage competition.

Dubbo provided an excellent venue for producer and technologist papers on efficient use of native pastures. With the obvious exception of lucerne, improved pasture species are less prominent in this locality compared with higher rainfall areas of the state. With the usual cost price pressures all producers are regularly facing, it is not surprising that innovative strategies for improved management of our native pasture base is such an important topic in this part of western NSW. This year's conference proceedings contains a wealth of information of interest to producers throughout the state, with excellent articles on native and improved pastures, soil carbon and livestock management.

Next year's conference is to be held at Bathurst. This location will provide an ideal opportunity for the organizers to put together a program focusing on new and traditional pasture types as well as more efficient livestock management in a higher rainfall, tablelands environment. More on the Bathurst program in subsequent newsletters.

### President's Report – AGM Dubbo July 2010

I thank you for the opportunity to

serve as president of the Society. I have again enjoyed the experience of working with the committee and meeting with Grassland members across the state.

As I have suggested in previous years, our Society is an increasingly important in traditional extension of pasture and animal science. As government agencies, in the past the principal extension agents, continue to experience budgetary pressures, the Society is likely to be presented with an increasing demand to take up the slack in conjunction with those agencies or in a stand alone position.

#### Significant activities during 2009/2010

\* The 2009 conference at Taree was a very successful event, catering for beef and dairy producers and featuring topical aspects of animal nutrition. It was a first for the Society, meeting at a coastal location rather than the traditional tablelands or slopes venues. The program was very well received and produced much favourable comment. Congratulations to Ray Johnston and his team for a great outcome.

\* Membership hovers between 400 and 450. A good number but we need to constantly seek new members.

\* This year we have awarded a travel grant to Dr Mark Norton to attend a conference and discuss aspects of his temperate grass research in New Zealand. I encourage members to apply for financial assistance to attend topical and relevant activities.

\* Our newsletter editorship of Haydn Lloyd Davies came to an end after 8 years. Owing to ill health, Haydn reluctantly decided to retire. The Society owes Haydn and Helen an enormous "thank-you" for this mighty

effort as well as his three years as president. We welcome and thank Carol Harris for taking on this important task.

\* The Society contributed in technical and financial terms to the widely respected "Pasture Varieties Book" soon to reappear in an updated form. We also contributed to the more detailed "Temperate and tropical pastures book" in conjunction with I&I NSW.

\* The Society assisted with senior high school student work experience activities through the PICSE program and has committed to continuing this support for the next 12 months.

\* Our internet site under the expert management of Leah Lane continues to grow with an increasing range of material of interest to all members.

\* Many thanks to our commercial sponsors, I&I NSW and other government agencies for tremendous assistance during the year. Without this support the Society would not function, leaving a big hole in technology transfer across NSW. A full list of sponsors appears in the conference proceedings and quarterly newsletters.

\* Finally my thanks to Janelle Witschi for her valued secretarial support and both Linda Ayres and Frank McRae for looking after our finances. In addition, I thank Keith Garlick for many hours spent organising our sponsorship and the state committee members who willingly attended regular meetings, often at individual expense and contributed so well to the functioning of the Society.

*Mick Duncan*

#### Disclaimer

While every effort is made to publish accurate information the Grassland Society of NSW does not accept responsibility for statements made or opinion expressed in this newsletter.

Inclusion of an advertisement in this publication does not necessarily imply an endorsement of the company or product of the Grassland Society of NSW.

***The Grassland Society of NSW Inc is a unique blend of people with a common interest in developing our most important resource - our Grasslands***

The Grassland Society of NSW was formed in March 1985. The Society now has approx 500 members and associates, 75% of whom are farmers and graziers. The balance of membership is made up of agricultural scientists, farm advisers, consultants, and or executives or representatives of organisations concerned with fertilisers, seeds, chemicals and machinery.

The aims of the Society are to advance the investigation of problems affecting grassland husbandry and to encourage the adoption into practice of results of research and practical experience. The Society holds an annual conference, publishes a quarterly newsletter, holds field days and is establishing regional branches throughout the state.

Membership is open to any person or company interested in grassland management and the aims of the Society. For membership details go to [www.grasslandnsw.com.au](http://www.grasslandnsw.com.au)

***Office Bearers of the Grassland Society of NSW - 2010-2011***

State Executive

Mick Duncan (President)  
Lester McCormick (Vice President)  
Janelle Witschi (Secretary)  
Frank McRae (Treasurer)  
Carol Harris (Editor)

Committee: Linda Ayres, John Ive, John Coughlan, Hugh Dove, Philip Stacy, Keith Garlick, Cathy Waters, David Harbinson

Branch Representatives

Loretta Serafin (North West Slopes)  
John Coughlan (Central)  
Hugh Dove (Southern Tablelands)  
Mick Duncan (Northern Tablelands)  
Cathy Waters (Central West Slopes and Plains)  
Vacant (South Western Slopes & Riverina)

If you are interested in reactivating an old branch or forming a new branch please contact the Secretary at [secretary@grasslandnsw.com.au](mailto:secretary@grasslandnsw.com.au)

***Grassland Society of News***



**Pasture Varieties used in NSW 2010 - 2011 now available at the website.** This publication is a joint venture between I&I NSW and the Grassland Society of NSW. It provides information on species and varieties of pasture grasses, legumes and some herbs used in pastures. Varieties are listed together with suppliers and other relevant detail such as plant characteristics, sowing rates, suitable soil types etc. that may assist producers in selecting suitable pasture varieties.



**Evergraze field day at Orange - October 27.** The field day will focus on the results so far from the Evergraze site at Panuara where a grazing systems experiment based on native grasses is being conducted. Guest speaker will be Jim Virgona who will talk about his research on how best to integrate native and introduced species. More information on the field day is available at the website.



**Next newsletter** - The next issue of the newsletter will be circulated in early December. Articles will include "Disentangling management from farm ownership" by Geoff Daniels, "Germination of temperate perennial grasses" by Anthony Leddin and "Soil moisture under climate change" by John Ive. If you wish to contribute to the next newsletter please contact the Editor, Carol Harris at [carol.harris@industry.nsw.gov.au](mailto:carol.harris@industry.nsw.gov.au)

***Grassland Society of NSW website - [www.grasslandnsw.com.au](http://www.grasslandnsw.com.au)***