



# AUSTRALIAN SUPERFINE WOOL GROWERS' ASSOCIATION INC

ABN: 41 338 467 905

Victorian Wool Centre, 691 Geelong Road, Brooklyn Vic 3025

Telephone: 03 9318 0399

e-mail: [aswga@woolindustries.org](mailto:aswga@woolindustries.org)

Facsimile: 03 9318 0877

16 March 2010

ASWGA-10-059

## ASWGA Goulburn-Yass Region Report November 2009

After a series of poor Spring conditions over the past decade, Spring this year came as a welcome change. Following a mild winter with good rain in June and July, but a scratchy August (although good shearing weather), regular falls from 18<sup>th</sup> September to 26<sup>th</sup> October provided the break farmers had long awaited. In the 35-day period rain was recorded on 19 days, although it was a case of 'just in time' rather than any substantive falls. Nevertheless good pasture growth under warming conditions lead to substantial hay-making in the Region before conditions rapidly hayed off once the rain ceased under unseasonably hot and drying winds. While seasonal conditions have provided some relief to wool growers in the Region, the continued depressed prices for superfine wool remain a major concern to committed superfine wool growers.

The Region conducted its Annual Wool Feature on 25<sup>th</sup> October at Yass Soldiers Club. The program included presentations from Dr Tony Peacock, CEO Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre, Dr Eva Bennet-Jenkins, CEO Australian Pest & Veterinary Medicines Authority and Ms Brenda McGahan, CEO Australian Wool Innovation. While attendance was down from similar events held over recent years, those who did attend were very appreciative of the informative presentations given by the three speakers and the opportunity the event provided to meet and discuss issues of interest one-on-one with the speakers.



Dr Tony Peacock, CEO Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre addresses the Wool Feature on developing control measures for rabbit, fox and wild dogs.



Dr Eva Bennet-Jenkins, CEO Australian Pest & Veterinary Medicines Authority takes questions from the floor after having given a presentation on the protocols involved in registration and monitoring of veterinary medicines and farm chemicals.



A committed Brenda McGahan, CEO-AWI addresses the Wool Feature covering issues relating to the Operational Plan developed to resurrect an ailing AWI and putting the case for a 2 percent levy vote in WoolPoll-2009

The Wool Feature was preceded by the Region's Annual General Meeting which was attended by 15 members and National President ASWGA. After the formalities of reporting on the year's activities and financial position, elections of office-bearers for 2009-10 were undertaken. The Chairman having served more than three-years did not seek re-election however in the absence of any nominations undertook to continue as Chairman with the proviso that three-months notice would precede resignation. Kevin Rattigan after more than a decade as Secretary and-or Treasurer stood down from the Regional committee with Andrew Ledger taking over as Treasurer. The committee welcomed Ian Bush as a new committee member with all other positions retained.



Chairman making a presentation to retiring Regional Treasurer and past Secretary, Kevin Rattigan in recognition of more than a decade of quality service to the Region. Wife and husband, Beverley (current Regional Secretary) and Tim Webb (Regional Vice Chairman) applaud in support.



An appreciative Barry Walker after receiving a presentation from the Region in recognition of being awarded Honorary ASWGA Life Membership and Order of Australia Medal. A tie-wearing Wally Merriman, Chairman AWI watches on from the rear.

The Region was well represented at the Australian Sheep and Wool Show in July 2009 with at least six members making the trip to Bendigo; Michael Corkhill, John Ive and Robert Peden successfully exhibited sheep and-or fleeces. The Region also provided promotion for ASWGA with its banner prominent in the judging area.

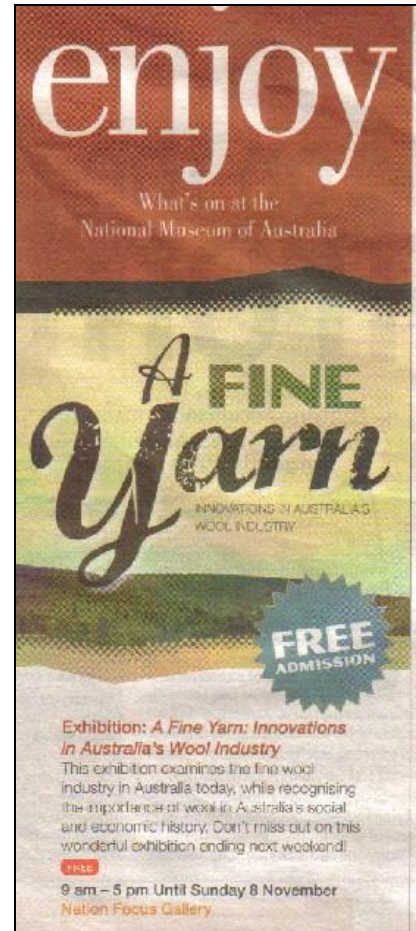


A successful trip to Australian Sheep & Wool Show (Bendigo, July 2009) for Robert Peden with the sashing of a Poll Merino Ultrafine ram. Robert gained a first and second in the Ultrafine Poll Merino ram and second in the horned Superfine Merino ram classes.



Brenda McGahan, AWI-CEO addresses attendees at Australian Sheep & Wool Show, Bendigo against the back drop of ASWGA banner.

The display initiated by the Region at National Museum of Australia ran from 22<sup>nd</sup> July to 8<sup>th</sup> November under the theme *A Fine Yarn: Innovation in Australian Wool Industry* which was widely promoted by the Museum. Despite some alarm over the Museum's original intention to include a black-wool fleece in the exhibition, the Museum were grateful for the assistance provided in initiating and back-grounding the exhibition:



*"The exhibition has come together as a very attractive and colourful exhibit. The background information on the wool industry you provided to me was of immense value in helping shape the theme and content. I hope you might get the chance to visit over the next three months.*

*Thank you, not only for your contribution to the success of this project, but in fact for generating the original idea."*

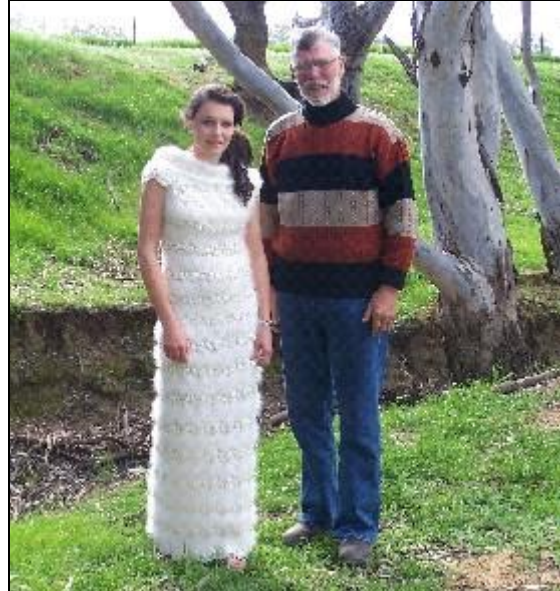
*Edwin Ride, Curator NMA*

The Region also had a major presence at Henty Machinery Field Days Fashion Parade which this year had a strong focus on garments and accessories featuring natural fibres in recognition of United Nations International Year of Natural Fibres.



*And the finalist are ...* After prolonged pre-judging, the finalists are finally assembled before undertaking their decisive walk down the catwalk before the searching eyes of the judging panel in the Henty Machinery Field Days Fashion Parade which focused primarily on garments and accessories made from natural fibres in support of United Nations International Year of Natural Fibres.

The Region promoted the event over the previous 12-months and received prominent promotion during the Fashion Parade.



*A perk of office?* Katelyn Govan models a cream angora and wool with metallic-thread wedding gown created by Judy Bond which won a Natural Fibres award at the Fashion Parade. For the purist, the gown was hand-crocheted in the round. A Chevron pattern incorporating raised bobbles has been used to provide the unusual effect.

On 16<sup>th</sup> November the Chairman was presented with a framed first-day issue of the pre-stamped envelope developed to commemorate the United Nations International Year of Natural Fibres for efforts in initiating events in support of the year.



Casey Dunn, Senior Policy Officer- Wool and Dairy Section, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and Simon Murnane, General Manager- Livestock Industries and Animal Welfare Branch, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry flank Chairman John Ive after he was presented with a framed first-day issue of the pre-stamped envelope commemorating United Nations International Year of Natural Fibres for efforts in promoting the year.



The framed pre-stamped envelope commemorating United Nations International Year of Natural Fibres; identical framings had previously been presented to Director General of United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, Dr Jacques Diouf and Regional Representative for United Nations, High Commissioner Richard Towle by Australian Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Hon. Tony Burke.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> October, three member-families (Armour, Ive and Rattigan) were among a group awarded ISO14001 compliance for their environmentally sensitive farm management practices having participated in Australian Land Management Systems workshops in April 2008 and October 2009.



Gary Armour (fourth from left) describes the consequences in terms of wool characteristics from introducing different genetics to his flock as part of the on-farm assessment leading to awarding of ISO14001 compliance by ALMS, while assessors Peter (far left) and Darren (far right) and Robyn Ive and Kevin Rattigan take it all in.



Hansie Armour does battle with the computer documentation as part of achieving ISO14001 compliance during on-farm assessment workshop conducted by ALMS.

During recent months a number of members of the committee have participated in radio interviews in the lead up to the Wool Feature and WoolPoll 2009.

The Chairman was an invited attendee to the Sheep Cooperative Research Centre sponsored workshop on 30<sup>th</sup> October in Albury. The ewe and lamb management information workshop was attended by a diverse range of sheep and wool growers from a wide area of southern New South Wales and northern Victoria and focused primarily upon ewe nutrition as a critical driver to increasing overall productivity and profitability.



A penny for their thoughts. Having been through shearing for the first time these ten-month old unmulesed hoggets ponder their future like many wool growers are currently doing as the previous 'deadline' on mulesing rapidly approaches and mixed messages appear daily from various parties. We can but do our best.