



The Australian Rangeland Society

RANGE MANAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

An official publication of The Australian Rangeland Society

ISSN 0812-4930

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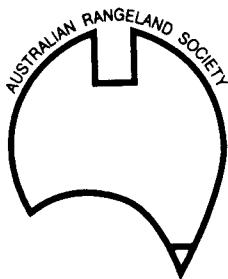
If cited it should be in the form:

Bastin, G. and Allan, G. (2012). After the smoke has cleared: 2011 fire in Central Australia. In: Range Management Newsletter (Ed. N Duckett). 12/2:3-6. (Australian Rangeland Society: Australia).

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ISSN 0812-4930



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Range Management Newsletter

No. 05/1 May 2005



Registered by: Australia Post - Print Post No. 545270/00001

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FROM THE EDITOR

Noelene Duckett, 7 Belcarra Place, The Woodlands, Texas, USA, 77382. Email: nduckett@ozemail.com.au

Welcome to the first *Range Management Newsletter* for 2005. I am sorry that it has arrived a little late – a few things worked against us this time around!

This newsletter begins with an article by Alexandra Harper summarising some of the achievements of the Gascoyne-Murchison Strategy (GSM), a \$45 million dollar rural adjustment program carried out in part of the Western Australian rangelands. Since the GSM was implemented in 1998, a number of projects have been carried out to help achieve the Strategy's aim of achieving a socially and economically viable community involved in a diverse range of activities. Alex's article details some of the most successful projects and shows how they have helped landholders in the region "create a new lease on life".

In the next article, Ian Plowman discusses the differences between rural towns in decline and those prospering, based on information collected from eight country towns in Queensland. While Ian's research highlights a number of differences between these two groups of towns, one of the key findings of the study was that it is the people that makes the difference – the more innovative towns have an inflow of people bringing new ideas and experiences while in the less innovative towns it is these innovative people that leave. Why don't you read the article and see if you agree with Ian's list of the different characteristics between more and less innovative towns? Feel free to contact me with your opinions!

Katie Vargo has also submitted a short article providing information about the Desert Knowledge Cooperative Research Centre. This Alice-Springs based centre, a partnership involving industry, communities, government and research institutions, is developing cutting edge ideas to export to the world's desert regions. Further details about the partners involved and current projects are given on page 6.

This issue also contains a number of items directly related to the Society. I am pleased to include the financial report for the year ending December 2003 – these figures have just been finalised by the auditors and the report is hot off the presses! Also included is the usual Council report, written this time by the new Communications Officer Matt Bolam, as well as information about membership renewals and an update on the electronic publishing of *The Rangeland Journal*. The AGM of the Society is also coming up on the **18 May 2005** – see page 9 for more details. Also, please note that the deadline for applications for the ARS Awards has been extended until **30 November 2005** – further information about the awards is given on page 18.

The next issue of the newsletter is due out in July so I would appreciate receiving your articles by late May. In particular I would be keen to receive any longer articles – why don't you make time to complete that article that you had been promising yourself that you would write!

THE GASCOYNE-MURCHISON STRATEGY: WHAT HAS IT ACHIEVED?

Alexandra Harper, Gascoyne Murchison Sustainable Agriculture Facilitator, Natural Resource Management Centre, Carnarvon WA 6701.
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The Gascoyne-Murchison region of Western Australia, which covers some 57 million hectares, has greatly benefited from one of the biggest regional adjustment strategies in Australia. The Gascoyne-Murchison Strategy (GMS) had a total projects spending of 45 million dollars.

The GSM was implemented in 1998 as a response to the declining economic and environmental conditions facing the region's pastoral industry. Specifically set up and supported by the Commonwealth and State Governments to address the critical local issues the GSM's ambitious vision was to achieve a socially and economically viable community involved in a diverse range of industries under the banner of "creating a new lease on life".

It has gone a long way towards achieving this vision through encouraging a shift in pastoral enterprises from wool to sheep meat production and beef cattle production; assisting in the diversification of pastoral businesses into tourism, horticulture, irrigated pasture and aquaculture; and providing opportunities for improved natural resource management.

The four core component programs of the GSM were the Business and Industry Development Grants, Industry Research and Development, Voluntary Lease Adjustment, and Regional Environmental Management Programs.

The GSM's aim right from its inception was for funds to "hit the ground", with the main mechanism being Business and Industry Development Grants. The strong focus of these was on implementing business plans and tools to improve land management. A summary of the on-ground works implemented with GSM support is given in Table 1.

Projects of considerable success, and to the benefit of pastoralists in the region, were the rehabilitation of the Carnarvon Artesian Basin, the Horticultural precinct development, the participation in workshops and research to learn more about wool production, the introduction of Total Grazing Management (TGM) Systems and the purchasing of land to enhance the Comprehensive Adequate and Representative (CAR) reserve system.

Table 1. On-ground works implemented with GMS support.

Productivity-enhancing measure	Quantity	No. of stations	GMS funding
Total grazing management yards	1350 yards/ 860 waters	64	\$1,620,000
Water supply development to aid conservation	170 sites	7	\$80,000
Water supply development for production		44	\$983,000
Fencing to protect fragile land systems	770 km	18	\$395,000
Fencing for improved sheep management	360 km	16	\$208,000
Fencing for improved cattle control	1240 km	20	\$503,000
Fencing for domesticated goat control	1040 km	19	\$593,000
Stock handling yards	26 yards	14	\$134,000

Source: Department of Agriculture (2004), p. 16.

The Carnarvon Artesian Basin Rehabilitation Project

The Carnarvon Artesian Basin stretches along the far most western strip of Australia from Karratha to Shark Bay and contains some 120 artesian bores. Only 70 of the original bores continue to flow.

The Carnarvon Artesian Basin Rehabilitation Project (CABRP) was a voluntary project that encouraged pastoralists to reduce water wastage by rehabilitating and controlling artesian bores and replacing associated bore drains with pipelines and troughing.

An Advisory Group was established with four pastoral members and three government representatives. This Carnarvon Artesian Basin Advisory Group set directions and guidelines for the planning of the program.

Chairman of the Rehabilitation Program and local pastoralist Ken Baston says the project has been a great success, leading pastoralists into many areas of diversification.

“To start with, some pastoralists were sceptical as they thought the money was only going to be for environmental works, but once they realised the money was for capping and reticulation they came on board with what has turned out to be a very successful program” he said.

The \$6 million project yielded total water savings in the basin of 50 million tonnes per year – equivalent to 10 per cent of the entire water body of Sydney Harbour.

Overall the Carnarvon Artesian Basin Rehabilitation Project has geophysically logged 43 artesian bores and produced 19 artesian water management plans, resulted in the drilling and relining of 15 artesian bores, decommissioned 57 previously flowing bores on 17 pastoral stations and increased management of total grazing pressure.

Phase I of the project has been completed and the future of the Carnarvon Artesian Basin was secured recently with the State Government agreeing to match the Federal Government commitment of \$1.35 million towards Phase II.

This means with pastoralist contribution, Phase II will direct a further \$3 million with a focus on the decommissioning of a further 56 bores. Pastoralists who were unable to be involved during Phase I will now have another opportunity to address basin management issues on their own leases with the possibility of eight new bores to be drilled.

The outcome of Phase I and Phase II will be a saving of almost 100 gigalitres of water per year and will overwhelmingly bring extraction back within sustainable yield.

Horticulture Precincts

The Gascoyne-Murchison region of Western Australia is a sparsely populated area and depends entirely on groundwater for water supply. Over the last three years the GMS has funded and coordinated a study aimed at identifying new large-scale irrigated horticultural precincts.

The study covered an area of approximately 55 million hectares of central Western Australia extending inland from the coast. A total of 54 prospective areas were identified throughout the study area with three key areas being selected for further investigation.

Inland adjacent to the Wooramel River

Investigation approximately 80 kilometres inland from the Wooramel River mouth has identified significant water resource for horticulture development. The site looks promising given the proximity to deep free draining soils, as well as Carnarvon's existing horticulture infrastructure and major roads.

Studies suggest that this significant water resource had the potential to increase the value of horticultural production in the region by more than \$20 million. Drilling indicated the presence of up to four gigalitres of water, enough to support 400 ha of horticulture.

The encouraging initial work secured State Government funding of \$600,000 to confirm the water resource and undertake the final stage of drilling. A pre-feasibility study will be undertaken to establish the costs and ultimately the viability of the project.

Inland on the Gascoyne River

Some 35 kilometres inland from the mouth of the Gascoyne River another area has been identified for horticulture development. Investigations at this site indicate that it will be capable of supporting 410 hectares of irrigation.

The GMS took responsibility for advancing the development site with the end result being a precinct that will likely consist of 8 x 50 hectare allotments.

Local horticulturalist Tim Hyde from Wooramel Horticulture believes that the possible development of these areas will boost the economy amongst growers in the region.

“These new areas will not only provide opportunity for local growers but add scale that we badly need to the local horticultural area. The other thing that it does is allow us to use the latest and greatest in technology where products such as the Martinez Open Hydroponic Technology (MOHT) Systems can be put in to these greenfield developments.”

“The amount of water used per kilogram of fruit produced can be halved using MOHT. In citrus, using conventional farming, 200 litres of water is normally required per kilogram of fruit, however MOHT cuts water usage down to 100 litres of water per kilogram.”

As of September, and following assistance from GMS, Tim has begun piloting MOHT on his grapes and he believes that it has the capacity to lift production levels by 30 to 50%. “This will obviously make a big difference to the industry’s gross margins” says Tim.

The new precinct, east of the existing irrigation area in Carnarvon, is expected to generate about 240 jobs. Mangoes, bananas, grapes, citrus and/or sweet corn are expected to be grown there.

Headwaters of the Lyons River

Mt Augustus station is situated 600 km east of Carnarvon with approximately 120 kilometres of the Lyons River supplying water to the property via an aquifer system.

This large calcrete aquifer was confirmed by geophysical survey and drilling and determined to be a viable resource for either tourism and/or horticulture.

Depending on the annual average recharge of the aquifer, the available resources at Mt Augustus may be in the order of 1-2 gigalitres per year and the State Government has committed \$65,000 to further assess the resource and to fund a review on the range of diversification options.

It is believed that the bigger potential is tourism, and the board of the GMS is encouraging State and local government agencies to help local proponents develop the precinct.

A tourism development at Mt Augustus would allow the Gascoyne-Murchison region to showcase its spectacular natural features such as the Kennedy Ranges and Gascoyne Junction.

Rangelands Fibre and Produce Association

This association is comprised of 7 station enterprises in the Mt Magnet region situated in the southern rangelands of Western Australia, some 600 kilometres north east of Perth.

The area has been a predominate wool growing region of Western Australia since the 1880’s however since 1999 it has been in severe drought.

The aim of the group was to educate themselves on wool production and the value adding products or markets that derive from chemical free wool. As a consequence the GMS funded the group to undertake market research on wool. This represented their first step towards developing a better understanding of the supply chain and the steps involved in turning the wool from a sheep’s back into a high quality garment.

One of the projects included a review of the Japanese market where it was ascertained that while customers were prepared to pay extra for chemical free food, chemical free clothing was only considered for baby and children’s wear.

The outcomes of these activities were that it opened people’s eyes to the fact that there is a lot of technology and skill required in value adding to raw wool, and that what happens in the wool shed is critical to wool quality.

Fran Dowden from Challa Station near Mount Magnet was directly involved with the Rangelands Fibre and Produce Association and says that her family would have found it difficult to achieve their station improvements without the help from the GMS.

“From a grower group perspective we were able to do a full investigation of the supply chain of wool. This project opened our eyes to the very peculiar way wool is marketed and the intricacies of its progress through the supply chain. We were able to produce wool jumpers from one bale of wool and fabric from another.”

“From the Group’s perspective we are more determined to keep producing some of the best wool in Australia.”

Total Grazing Management (TGM) Systems

One of the major problems facing pastoralists in the region is controlling both domestic and feral animals to prevent overgrazing of their property. The extent to which stock evenly grazes an area greatly depends on the supply of permanent and accessible water.

The main areas that are grazed by livestock and feral animals are within walking distance from bore drains or waters and overgrazing of these areas can lead to erosion both from wind and water.

A TGM system is a management and control regime for domestic stock and feral and native animals to ensure the rangeland resource is effectively protected and aid the viability of station enterprise.

TGM yards consist of a walk-in-walk-out one-way gate that traps animals onto the waters, allowing for management of all graziers. Not only does this decrease the amount of pressure placed on water points by stock but it also significantly reduces the cost of mustering and handling livestock and allows greater capacity to control vermin such as camels and donkeys.

1,350 TGM yards have been constructed across the region on 860 waters – which equates to an estimated 10 per cent of all artificial waters being equipped. While there is still far to go, the industry has been provided with the technology to both improve economic and environmental performance, and should be expected to finance continued implementation of this effective approach to management.

CAR Reserve System

The Comprehensive Adequate and Representative (CAR) reserve system in the Gascoyne-Murchison region began in 1998 with approximately 1.4 million hectares of land in the conservation reserve system.

Almost four million hectares of pastoral land with high conservation values has been acquired for inclusion into the system over the past few years. This brings the total amount of land managed for the conservation of biodiversity to 5.4 million hectares in the Gascoyne-Murchison.

In addition to land formally protected under the reserve, the GMS initiated the off-reserve conservation project to assist pastoralists map and preserve biodiversity, critical features affecting pastoral resources, and other values such as cultural heritage.

The activity has evolved to become the Ecosystem Management Unit, or EMU project, and is an on-going learning process whereby pastoralists can recognise, manage and monitor a range of values on pastoral lands. It is an entirely voluntary process allowing land managers to put their expert knowledge into a landscape ecology framework and learn about processes at work in the landscape and the interactions between them.

While there has been some criticism of the program, Mark Lewis, Director of the GMS, was asked why the original steering group incorporated it as a major project in the strategy. “Market access, plain and simple. If we look forward 20 years to when we will need to demonstrate that we can produce a product in an environmentally responsible way, we will be able to. It is that simple. When asked, we will also be able to say that we have our biodiversity intact in reserves - and we are probably the only production system that can currently say that” he said.

Conclusion

The projects that the GMS have implemented have had significant economic benefits to pastoralists in the region. They have greatly impacted on their way of life through on ground changes such as allowing them to diversify into meat sheep and beef production and to recreate their production cycle using the TGM system. It has also been beneficial from a benchmarking point of view and for informing communities about available opportunities to increase the capacity of their pastoral leases.

At the end of the day people have to be able to see that something will make a difference at the enterprise scale. This is where the capacity and willingness to manage resources actually exists. Strategies like the GMS can only offer a carrot - which in this case the pastoralists of the region accepted to “create a new lease on life”.

Further Information

More information about the Gascoyne-Murchison Strategy can be obtained from the GMS website (www.gms.wa.gov.au). This website also includes links to the following two reports (available as pdf files):

Department of Agriculture (2004). Gascoyne-Murchison Strategy 2003-2004 Annual Report and Final Report. Department of Agriculture, Carnarvon, Western Australia.

URS (2004). Final Evaluation of the Gascoyne-Murchison Strategy. Unpublished report prepared for the Department of Agriculture and The Board, Gascoyne-Murchison Strategy.

WHY DO SOME TOWNS THRIVE WHILE OTHERS LANGUISH?

AN INVESTIGATION OF INNOVATION IN EIGHT RURAL QUEENSLAND TOWNS

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Background

Rural Australia is under increasing social, economic and environmental pressure and there is a perception of rural Australia struggling to adjust. Nowhere is this more evident than in some of Australia's rural towns.

In the midst of the dark clouds of rural decline, some communities seem to defy these trends. Positive energy, optimism for the future, alternative income sources, and growing businesses is the norm. Yet not far away there are other towns, faced with very similar economic and geographic circumstances, which are doing it tough. For them, apathy, loss of energy, declining populations and empty shops are the norm.

Why is it that some towns demonstrate resilience, optimism and growth, whilst not far away there are other towns in decline? New ARC-funded research conducted by a partnership of UQ Business School, the University of Queensland and the Queensland Department of Primary Industries has suggested some surprising answers to this question.

Eight Queensland country towns, ranging in size from 600 to 10000, participated in the study. Though their identities remain confidential, two of these were from the South West, two from the South East, two from Central Queensland and two from North Queensland.

Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected during the study. Information was gathered by structured interviews, surveys and census data.

Findings of the Study

One of the key findings of the study is that it is the people that make a difference between the towns, the attributes of those people, and the critical mass of those attributes. For example, net inflows bring diversity of ideas and experiences. The least innovative towns have net outflows, and it is the most innovative people that leave. Evolutionary psychology explains why. The more innovative towns are also differentiated by younger average age, higher levels of education and greater frequency of overseas travel, all sources for new ideas.

Also differentiating the more innovative towns are higher proportions of home ownership, signalling a willingness to invest in that town. The least innovative town has the

highest proportion of its residents renting, despite average occupancy of 30 years! Contrary to popular wisdom, the least innovative town has the highest proportion of leaders while the most innovative town has the lowest. Yet the most innovative town has a much higher level of distributed leadership and civic responsibility broadly shared. Also surprising is that the most innovative town showed the lowest inclination towards pursuit of funding.

The more innovative towns were differentiated from the less innovative towns through a number of characteristics outlined below. Innovative towns were perceived to have these characteristics in greater abundance:

- adequacy of products and services available to their residents;
- administrative and managerial capacity to run and promote the town;
- adequacy of availability of a variety of experts to provide the breadth of services that residents expect;
- up-to-date professionals, experts who are constantly upgrading knowledge and skills;
- decentralised decision making;
- managerial attitude towards change;
- freshness of management and leadership;
- adequate administrative capacity to organise whatever needs to be done;
- slack resources, made available by members of the community for collective benefit;
- have a healthy exchange of ideas internally;
- have a younger population;
- have a higher average level of education;
- frequency and duration of overseas travel of residents;
- have residents who had lived in this present town the least average amount of time;
- have a higher proportion of residents who had lived elsewhere;
- have a higher proportion of residents whose prior town was larger rather than smaller or same size;
- have an upward population growth;
- have an upward trend in employment and a downward trend in the percentage of population not in the labour force;
- have a higher proportion of owner-occupied accommodation and a lower proportion of rented accommodation; and

- have a higher proportion of residents working in the so-called 'creative class' occupations and industries and a lower proportion working in lower skilled areas.

It should not be inferred that any of the listed differences 'cause' some towns to be more innovative than others. This research is unable to 'prove' causes - merely reports on emerging differences and invites the reader to draw his or her own conclusion as to the relevance of those differences for innovation.

Recommendations

The research report contains recommendations for communities, for Councils, and for State and Federal Governments. Many of these are implementable immediately without cost. One that is likely to generate debate is the suggestion that no person should hold any civic position, be it President of the Show Society, Secretary of the Sports Association, or local Mayor, for more than one term. Leadership is a two edged sword. It is an act of civic responsibility; it is also an act of denying someone else the opportunity to gain civic experience. The more broadly that understanding of civic experience and responsibility is shared, the healthier and more innovative is the town.

Please note that the full report of this study can be found on <http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/business/14778.html>.

For further information please contact:

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ARS MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Membership renewal forms have recently been posted by the Subscription Manager, Ian Watson. If you haven't received yours (perhaps you have changed jobs or moved house?) please contact Ian at your earliest convenience.

Ian's contact details are as follows:

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WHAT IS THE DESERT KNOWLEDGE COOPERATIVE RESEARCH CENTRE (DK-CRC)?

*Katie Vargo, Networking and Communications Officer,
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Desert Knowledge, our collective know-how about thriving in the hot, dry and isolated conditions of inland Australia, will become the Outback's next billion dollar export industry. This is the vision driving the Desert Knowledge Cooperative Research Centre, a virtual network of researchers and practitioners in 28 organisations nationwide.

Drawing on both traditional knowledge sources and modern science, the Alice Springs-based partnership of industry, communities, government and research institutions is developing cutting edge ideas to export to the world's desert regions. An estimated 1.5 billion people worldwide stand to benefit from Outback technology, housing, communications, transport, healthcare, education, minerals, tourism, food, water, power and other services Australians deliver over vast distances.

The partnership embraces Charles Darwin, Curtin, Griffith, James Cook, Murdoch, South Australia along with seven other universities, the CSIRO, the governments of Western Australia, the Northern Territory, New South Wales and South Australia, the Central and Northern Lands Councils, the Desert Peoples Centre and companies like Newmont Australia and Optus.

Research being undertaken by the CRC includes:

- helping to develop bush foods, medicines and indigenous knowledge into new opportunities;
- advanced low-cost telecommunication technologies for isolated regions;
- networks that link businesses across Inland Australia for export;
- better ways to use and manage fire in the Central Deserts;
- better ways to deliver and maintain power, water and waste services in remote communities;
- better defining the demography and needs of Outback communities and their residents;
- improving arid landscape management for multiple uses, including conservation;
- new approaches to sustainable grazing;
- developing sound indigenous enterprises and community governance; and
- better housing and building design for desert conditions.

"Desert Knowledge is about being clean, sustainable, profitable and technologically savvy in all that we do in the Inland. It's about forging a global reputation as the people who do this best in the world," says Dr Stafford-Smith.

"For example, the Royal Flying Doctor Service is exporting air surgery services to Saudi Arabia and Canada, opening up new export markets – while the returns help improve services to Outback Australia."

"And the pastoral industry has a huge array of solutions, technologies and skills for running a sustainable grazing enterprise in hot, isolated regions."

"But even the simple things we do – how we design our homesteads, manage water and power, handle communications and transport – are all potential exports which can generate prosperity for the inland."

Dr Stafford Smith says the DK CRC is on the lookout for ideas, leadership and partners from the Inland to identify the opportunities, technologies and products which will make Australia's Desert Knowledge the most sought-after in the world.

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YOUNG RESEARCHER AWARDS: 2004 ARS CONFERENCE

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The future of the Australian Rangeland Society depends on the participation of its young researchers. To encourage this participation, the Society presents awards at its biennial conference for high quality posters and papers.

Categories and award recipients for the 2004 ARS Conference in Alice Springs were:



Best Social Poster:

Andrea Johnson



*Best Environmental
Poster:*

Jill Aisthorpe



*Best Spoken
Social Paper:*

Dana Thomsen



*Best Spoken
Environmental Paper*

Kate Richardsen

Because of the large number of excellent posters presented at the conference, runner-up categories and award recipients were:

Co-second Social Posters:

Brigid McCallum

Trudi Oxley

Co-second Environmental Posters: Vanessa Alsemgeest

Alex James

I thank David Wilcox and John Ludwig for serving as judges, who noted the difficulty of selecting award recipients because of the very high standard of the papers and the many posters presented by our Society's young researchers. The future of our Rangeland Society is solid.

REPORT FROM COUNCIL

Matt Bolam, Communications Officer ARS, PO Box 4845,
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New Communications Officer

Hello, I am your new Communications Officer. This report comes to you from sunny Darwin, where I am currently working as the State Landcare Coordinator for the Northern Territory, hosted by the NT Cattlemen's Association. I look forward to providing an effective link between the Council and the members of our society.

Thanks heaps to Merri for providing communications from Council to members whilst the position was being filled. Whilst we are on that topic, we are still looking to fill one more position on Council, so we look forward to hearing from any ARS members who would like to make a contribution to their Council.

News from the December Council Meeting

Council has had one meeting by teleconference since our last newsletter and members have been working on issues in their areas of responsibility.

ARS Conference 2006

The 2006 ARS Conference is planned for 4-7 September 2006 in Renmark, South Australia. Pencil that one in right now! The organising committee will be meeting shortly to kick off preparations, so look out for contact from Merri on this one.

Publications Review Committee and Electronic Publishing

Membership of the committee that will be reviewing the societies' two publications (journal and newsletter) is currently being finalised. The review committee will be looking at the content, scope, format and presentation of both publications as the society takes the steps towards a future in electronic publishing. Two recent recruits to the committee are Ian Oliver from the Ecosystem Processes and Biodiversity Unit of the NSW Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources in Armidale and Kate Andrews, from Land and Water Australia in Canberra. Their contribution will be very welcome and will further enhance the substantial skills base and interests of the committee.

There is a large amount of work to be done in the move to electronic publishing. The first "electronic" issue of The Rangeland Journal will be available in July. Members however will still receive a hard copy of the journal for the next 3 years plus having access to it on-line.

Membership

Ian sends his apologies for the late posting of membership renewals. He has been working with CSIRO Publishing to synchronise our respective membership databases. This will ensure that in the move to electronic publishing we

won't lose any members through the cracks and that we can ensure that members are placed in their appropriate membership category.

All renewals were recently posted. It should be noted that the cost of membership has not risen in the last three years and represents excellent value for money.

ARS Awards

Vanessa Bailey has been working to improve the awareness of the ARS Travel Grants and more generally identifying and investigating the networks of communication between all those with an interest in rangeland issues, e.g. local newsletters such as CLMA's Land Talk and email newsletters such as Sci Info Bulletin.

Communications

I have been looking at the way the ARS communicates with its members, others with connections to our fabulous rangelands and the public in general. I am keen to understand how we can increase the value of services provided to current members and also increase participation in the ARS from all "rangeland-o-philes". You will be hearing more from me on this one.

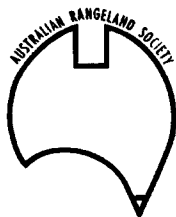
Please feel free to contact me with any questions or queries on ARS Council business.

THE RANGELAND JOURNAL GOES ELECTRONIC

Following the move to electronic publishing, *The Rangeland Journal* can now be found on the CSIRO Publishing website (<http://www.publish.csiro.au>). This website contains general information about the Journal, instructions for authors and referees and also information about how to access the Journal on-line.

Currently the two issues of the Journal from 2004 are available on the website as pdf files. Earlier issues will be added to the website over the next few months.

As was indicated in the November issue of the *Range Management Newsletter*, members of the Society will have electronic access to the Journal as well as receiving a single hard copy of each issue.



The Australian Rangeland Society

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING REMINDER

The 2005 Annual General Meeting of the Australian Rangeland Society will be held on

Wednesday 18 May 2005

at 5 pm WST

Department for Planning and Infrastructure, Midland, Western Australia

The agenda will include:

- minutes of the 2004 Annual General Meeting
- receive the Council's report
- receive the annual accounts
- election of office-bearers
- motions on notice
- general business

Any financial member wishing to **nominate for a position on Council** must ensure their nomination form is lodged with the Secretary by 10 April 2005. Nomination forms have been sent to members, and are available from the Secretary.

Any financial member wishing to place a **motion on notice** before the Annual General Meeting must ensure that the signed motion is lodged with the Secretary by 4 May 2005.

Forms and motions should be posted or emailed to:

Sandra Van Vreeswyk
Department for Planning and Infrastructure
PO Box 1575
MIDLAND WA 6936
Phone: 08 93475120
Fax: 08 93475009
Email: sandra.vanvreeswyk@dpi.wa.gov.au

The AGM will be followed by light refreshments. Please let Sandra Van Vreeswyk know if you will be attending.

NEW MEMBERS

Nicole Cranston
116 Tiwi Gardens
TIWI NT 0810

Peter Alexander
Botanic Gardens of Adelaide
North Terrace
ADELAIDE SA 5000

Daniel Ferguson
2/67 Boonkai Street
QUILPIE QLD 4480

Prof Iain Gordon
CSIRO – Davies Laboratory
PMB PO Aitkenvale
TOWNSVILLE QLD 4814

Dr Ian Oliver
DIPNR
PO Box U245
University of New England
ARMIDALE NSW 2351

Jane Blackwood
PO Box 636
RAVENSHOE QLD 4888

Melissa Driscoll
35 Richmond Hill Drive
HUGHENDEN QLD 4821

Richard J Makim
Moredun Station
Moredun Road
BEN LOMOND NSW 2365

William Dunstone
178 Palmerston Street
PERTH WA 6000

Kate Andrews
6 Dugdale Street
COOK ACT 2614

Jeffrey Mills
'Melrose'
MORINISH via ROCKINGHAM QLD 4702

Annabel Walsh
Moorna Station
WENTWORTH NSW 2648

Gladys McPherson
Brookside
BYROCK NSW 2831

Athol Farrant
11 Summerfield Place
GOOSEBERRY HILL WA 6076

Philippa Clarke
Consolidated Pastoral Co.
Newcastle Waters Station
NEWCASTLE WATERS NT 0862

David Murry McQuie
Bulga Downs Station
via SANDSTONE WA 6639

Francis Bright
PO Box 1674
KUNUNURRA WA 6743

Gillian McCloskey
Building 42, Charles Darwin University
Casuarina Campus
DARWIN NT 0909

Jenny White
Melinda Downs
CLONCURRY QLD 4824

Nicki De Preu
74 Arkaba Street
HAWKER SA 5434

Michael Whiting
20 Duggam Drive
ALLIGATOR CREEK QLD 4816

Jenny Cleary
12 Tassie Street
PORT AUGUSTA SA 5700

Linda Anderson
PO Box 867
KARRATHA WA 6714

Newmont Tanami Operations
PO Box 8020
ALICE SPRINGS NT 0871

INFORMATION SNIPPETS

Do you have what it takes to become a DustWatcher?

DustWatch is a community-based project designed to monitor the extent and severity of wind erosion across Australia. It is an Australia-wide network of volunteer observers who make simple observations (similar to those used by the Bureau of Meteorology) about the timing and characteristics of dust storms.

The observations by *DustWatchers* are then combined with data from satellite imagery, meteorological records, field measurements of dust concentrations and models to better understand wind erosion.

This project utilises the local knowledge and observations of *DustWatchers* to achieve a higher level of understanding of the severity and extent of wind erosion. The observational data will allow the production of more detailed regional scale wind erosion maps and will increase understanding of wind erosion across Australia.

For more information about the project and on how to become a DustWatcher visit the Dustwatch website at www.griffith.edu.au/centre/riverlandscapes/dustwatch/.

Update on Rangelands Australia education courses

As many of you may know, Rangelands Australia, a national body for the exchange of rangeland knowledge and learning, commenced its educational programs in 2004. Did you know, however, that the centre now has four short courses and three postgraduate coursework programs available with additional courses under development for introduction in semester 2, 2005?

For those of you who don't know, Rangelands Australia is based in the Faculty of Natural Resources, Agriculture and Veterinary Science (NRAVS) on the University of Queensland Gatton Campus, an hour drive west of Brisbane. However, programs are delivered in the rangelands and not on campus.

Recently, Rangelands Australia received some great positive feedback from students completing the first postgraduate courses (run in the second half of 2004). The students were asked to rank the courses on the basis of relevance, practicality, quality and delivery.

If you are contemplating undertaking a course now may be a great time. Enrolments for Semester 2 enrolments for the postgraduate program in Rangeland Management close 30 June 2005.

More information about Rangelands Australia and its educational programs can be found on the Rangelands Australia website at www.rangelands-australia.com.au.

Strategic plan to attract tourists to the outback

A new tourism strategic plan to help Outback communities attract more visitors, the Outback Destination Management Plan, was recently launched by Tourism Queensland.

Over the next three years, Tourism Queensland will focus efforts on the issues identified within this plan.

Specifically these issues are to:

- strengthen the position of the Outback region as an attractive and desirable holiday destination in key markets;
- grow Outback tourism by building on current market strengths and developing new special interest market opportunities;
- ensure sustainable growth and profitability through effective and cooperative marketing of Outback tourism information, products and services;
- identify commercial opportunities for the distribution of Outback product/packages via the travel trade;
- encourage new product development that is matched to market trends, and visitor needs and interests;
- facilitate a sustainable approach to the development and management of natural tourism assets;
- facilitate effective partnerships and alliances with all stakeholders having an interest in the sustainable development of tourism in the Outback; and
- conduct relevant tourism research to better inform marketing, planning and development activities.

More details about the plan are included on the Tourism Queensland website at:

<http://www.tq.com.au/industry/knowledge-banks/outback/outback-destination-management-plan/>.

Eureka Prizes on offer again

Entries have once again been invited for this year's Australian Museum Eureka Prizes, Australia's premier science awards. A record 23 prizes worth almost a quarter of a million dollars are on offer in 4 categories - Education, Innovation and Leadership, Research and Science Communication.

Seven new prizes have been launched in 2005 including awards:

- for leadership in business innovation;
- for leadership in science;
- schools prize for agricultural journalism;
- for photographic journalism in science, technology and the environment;
- for bioinformatics research;
- science schools prize; and
- for research which replaces the use of animals or animal products

Most prizes carry a cash reward of \$10,000. The British Council Eureka Prize for Inspiring Science involves travel, accommodation and program assistance for a study tour to the UK to the value of \$10,000. The Australian Museum

Eureka Prize for Leadership in Business Innovation brings not only prestige and distinction but also immortality to the winner, who will have a newly discovered species named after them through the Australian Museum's Immortals Program.

Be part of the biggest ever Australian Museum Eureka Prizes by entering yourself or nominating someone for one of these prestigious prizes. Entries in all prizes close on Friday 13 May 2005.

For more information visit the Australian Museum website at <http://www.amonline.net.au/eureka/>.

Encouraging Indigenous participation in Natural Resource Management

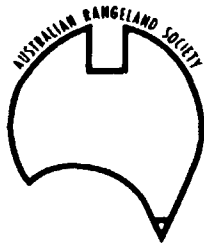
Regional natural resource management (NRM) groups have different management plans for diverse settings throughout Australia.

Indigenous people throughout Australia have links to the land and sea that are historically, spiritually and culturally strong and unique. In respecting these links, the Australian Government is encouraging regional NRM groups to engage and form partnerships with Indigenous people so that their interests are incorporated in regional planning and the implementation of plans.

While many regional NRM groups have already established their group membership and are well underway in implementing plans, it is not too late to encourage Indigenous people's involvement.

A recently released brochure highlights some guiding principles for encouraging Indigenous participation. The brochure includes a list of issues that need to be considered as well as some suggested positive approaches.

For more information visit the Australian Government NRM website at <http://nrm.gov.au/indigenous/>. The brochure can be downloaded from <http://nrm.gov.au/indigenous/publications/participation-guidelines/index.html>.



The Australian Rangeland Society

ABN 43 008 784 414

2004 ANNUAL REPORTS TO MEMBERS

[Ed. This report is additional to those presented in the July 2004 and November 2004 Range Management Newsletters]

FINANCE AND AUDIT OFFICER'S REPORT

Tim Ferraro, ARS Finance and Audit Officer, c/o Central West Catchment Management Authority, PO Box 227, Wellington NSW 2820. Email: tim.ferraro@cma.nsw.gov.au.

Just over 12 months ago, the Society's financial statements for 2000, 2001 and 2002 were published in the *Range Management Newsletter*. The following pages contain extracts from the audited 2003 financial statements and summarise financial performance, financial position and cash flows for 2003.

The financial statements have been produced by Lee Green and Company Pty Ltd and are in accordance with Australian accounting standards. Complete copies of the financial statements can be obtained by contacting the author.

The 2004 financial statements will be available prior to the Annual General Meeting in May 2005.

Please note that Society's financial year is the calendar year.

Financial position

The positive impact of the biennial conference means that the Society's financial position fluctuates substantially every two years. In 2003, the Society recorded a profit from ordinary activities of \$35,605. This compares with a small operating loss from ordinary activities of \$1,138 in 2002. The total equity of the Society has risen from \$112,472 in 2002 to \$148,077 in 2003. The Society held just \$150,000 in assets at the end of 2003 (\$119,717 in 2002).

Subscriptions

Membership fees for the Society increased from \$26,052 in 2002 to \$34,811 in 2003. Membership numbers in the two years have been similar but because funds are received at different times of the year, amounts collected in each financial year vary. The average membership income over

the last five years has been \$34,660 and the 2003 income received is very close to that figure.

Membership numbers are now reasonably stable and these cover most of the operating expenses of the society.

Journal and Newsletter

The Journal and Newsletter continue to be major the expenses of the Society. As previously reported in *RMN*, the Publications Committee has recommended that the Council pursue an electronic publishing option. While there will be an initial negative financial impact of this decision, it is expected that in the long term the decision will generate additional funds for the Society.

Investments

The Society earned interest of \$3,926 in 2003, up slightly from 2002. Funds are only invested in interest bearing deposits.

Purchases

No significant capital purchases were made in the three years.

Looking forward

The Society is in a reasonably sound financial position with membership fees almost covering operating expenses. Well run conferences continue to supplement the operations of the Society – in 2003 the Kalgoorlie Conference contributed a profit of nearly \$34,000.

The ARS Council remains committed to securing additional membership and other revenue so that it is less reliant on conference income.

Early in 2003, the Society employed Mr Don Blesing to review its corporate compliance and funds management. The Council agreed to implement the majority of Mr Blesing's recommendations and the reporting and funds management have been significantly strengthened as a result.

THE AUSTRALIAN RANGELAND SOCIETY
ABN 43 008 784 414

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2003

	Notes	2003 \$	2002 \$
CLASSIFICATION OF EXPENSES BY NATURE			
Revenues from ordinary activities	2	131,521	83,481
Journal Costs		(11,071)	(27,181)
Conference Costs		(56,479)	(41,314)
Newsletter Costs		(4,337)	(5,860)
Other expenses		(24,029)	(10,264)
Profit/(Loss) from ordinary activities		<u>35,605</u>	<u>(1,138)</u>

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2003

	Notes	2003 \$	2002 \$
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash Assets	4	<u>149,296</u>	<u>119,797</u>
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		<u>149,296</u>	<u>119,797</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Payables	5	<u>1,219</u>	<u>7,325</u>
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>1,219</u>	<u>7,325</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>148,077</u>	<u>112,472</u>
EQUITY			
Retained profits	6	<u>148,077</u>	<u>112,472</u>
TOTAL EQUITY		<u>148,077</u>	<u>112,472</u>

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2003

	Notes	2003 \$	2002 \$
CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Receipts from members and others		127,596	80,220
Interest received		3,926	3,261
Payments to suppliers		(102,023)	(73,557)
Net Cash generated from operating activities	7(b)	<u>29,499</u>	<u>9,924</u>
Net Increase in Cash held		29,499	9,924
Cash at Beginning of the year		119,797	109,873
Cash at End of the year	7(a)	<u>149,296</u>	<u>119,797</u>

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2003

1. Statement of Accounting Policies

This special purpose financial report has been prepared for distribution to members for the purpose of fulfilling the director's financial reporting requirements. The financial statements comply with those Accounting Standards and UIG Consensus Views (if any) deemed necessary by the director in the circumstances to meet the objectives of the special report. The Society is not a reporting entity.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historical costs and does not take into account changing money values or, except where stated, current valuations of non-current assets. Cost is based on the fair values of the consideration given in exchange for assets.

The following is a summary of the material accounting policies adopted by the Society in the preparation of the financial report. The accounting policies have been consistently applied, unless otherwise stated.

a. Income Tax

The Society is exempt from income tax.

b. Cash

For the purposes of the statement of cash flows, cash includes cash on hand and at call deposits with banks or financial institutions, investments in money market instruments maturing within less than two months and net of bank overdrafts.

c. Revenue

Membership fee is recognised when it is receivable. All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

d. Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Tax Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of the acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables in the statement financial positions are shown inclusive of GST.

e. Members' Guarantee

The Society is limited by guarantee. If the Society is wound up, the Articles and Memorandum of Association states that each member including those members ceasing membership within one year of that date is required to contribute a maximum of \$10 each towards the meeting any outstanding obligations of the Society. As at 31st December 2003 the number of members was 397 (2002: 386)

	2003 \$	2002 \$
2. Revenue		
Operating activities		
Conferences	90,456	51,662
Journals	2,318	2,506
Membership fee	34,811	26,052
Interest from banks	3,926	3,261
Others	10	-
	<u>131,521</u>	<u>83,481</u>

3. Profit from ordinary activities

Profit from ordinary activities before income tax expense has been determined after:

a. Expenses

Bank Charges	<u>2,081</u>	<u>2,151</u>
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4. Cash Assets

Main Cheque	131,895	119,797
Alice Springs	11,329	-
ARS WA	558	-
Journal Account	5,514	-
Cash at bank	<u>149,296</u>	<u>119,797</u>

5. Payables

Sundry creditors	465	7,161
GST Payable	754	164
	<u>1,219</u>	<u>7,325</u>

6. Retained profits

Retained profit at the beginning of the financial year	112,472	113,610
Net Profit/(loss) attributable to members of the Society	<u>35,605</u>	<u>(1,138)</u>
Retained profits at the end of the financial year	<u>148,077</u>	<u>112,472</u>

	2003	2002
	\$	\$
7. Cash Flow Information		
a. Reconciliation of Cash		
Cash at the end of the financial year as shown in the statements of cash flows is reconciled to the related items in the statement of financial position as follows:		
Cash at Bank and on Hand	149,296	119,797
b. Reconciliation of cash flow from operations with profit from ordinary activities after income tax		
Profit/(Loss) from ordinary activities	35,605	(1,138)
Changes in assets and liabilities, net of the effects of purchase and disposals of subsidiaries		
(Increase)/decrease in receivables	-	3,738
Increase/(decrease) in payables	(6,106)	7,324
Cash flows generated from operations	29,499	9,924

8. Related Party Transactions

During the year, honorariums amounting to \$2,155 (2002: \$6,697) were paid to N Duckett, M Howes and I Watson. There was a CPI increase in the honoraria approved by the Council. The CPI increase has been a Society policy. Council has reviewed this policy and will recommend to the next AGM that increases be considered by Council on a case by case basis.

AUSTRALIAN RANGELAND SOCIETY AWARDS

The Society has two awards to assist members with either:

- studies related to the rangelands; or
- travel expenses associated with attending a conference (or some other activity).

Applications for each award will be considered on a yearly basis. Any member of the Society interested in either award is invited to apply.

Australian Rangeland Society Travel Grant

This grant is intended to assist eligible persons to attend a meeting, conference or congress related to the rangelands; or to assist eligible persons with travel or transport costs to investigate a topic connected with range management or to implement a program of rangeland investigation not already being undertaken. The grant is available for overseas travel and/or travel within Australia. It is not intended for subsistence expenses.

Australian Rangeland Society Scholarship

This scholarship has the purpose of assisting eligible members with formal study of a subject or course related to the rangelands and which will further the aims of the Australian Rangeland Society. The scholarship is available for study assistance either overseas or within Australia. It is not intended to defray travel expenses.

How to Apply

Members interested in either grant should submit a written outline of their proposed activity. Applications should clearly address how the intended activity (ie. travel or study) meets the aims of the Society. Applications should be brief (less than 1000 words) and should be submitted to Council before **30th November 2005**. Application forms and guidelines can be downloaded from the ARS website at <http://www.austrangesoc.com.au>. Those requiring further information should contact the ARS Secretary, Sandra Van Vreeswyk, Phone (08) 9347 5120 or sandra.vanvreeswyk@dpi.wa.gov.au.

Conditions

Applications for the Travel Grant should include details of the costs and describe how the grant is to be spent. Details of any other sources of funding should be given. Those applying for the Scholarship should include details of the program of study or course being undertaken and the institution under whose auspices it will be conducted. Information on how the scholarship money will be spent is required, as are details on any other sources of funding.

Applications for either award should include the names of at least two referees.

Finally, on completing the travel or study, recipients are required to fully acquit their grant or scholarship. They

are also expected to write an article on their activities or experiences for the *Range Management Newsletter*.

Eligibility

No formal qualifications are required for either award. There are no age restrictions and all members of the society are eligible to apply. Applications are encouraged from persons who do not have organisational support.

Travel or study assistance can be made available to a non-member where Council considers that the application meets the aims of the Society, and is of sufficient merit.

Overseas Travel and Study

There is a restriction on both awards for overseas travel or study assistance in that the applicants must have been members of the society for at least 12 months. The grants can be for Australian members travelling overseas or for overseas members to study within Australia.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM



The Australian Rangeland Society

TAX INVOICE / RECEIPT ABN 43 008 784 414

Please complete and return to the Subscription Manager, Ian Watson, PO Box 483, NORTHAM WA 6401
Ph (618) or (08) 9690 2179: Fax (618) or (08) 9622 1902: iwatson@agric.wa.gov.au

I, [name]

of [address]

Postcode..... Email address

Phone Fax

apply for membership of the Australian Rangeland Society and agree to be bound by the regulations of the Society as stated in the Articles of Association and Memorandum.

☐ Enclosed is a cheque for \$AU..... for full/part* membership for an individual/student/institution* for the calendar year 2005.

(* delete as appropriate)

☐ Charge my Mastercard VISA Bankcard AUS.....for full/part* membership for an individual/student/institution* for the calendar year 2005

Card No.:_____ Expiry Date:

Signature:..... Date: Cardholders Name:.....

If you were introduced to the Society by an existing member please include their name here

Please list details of your institution & student number if you are applying for student rates

Membership Rates; GST inclusive

Australia

Overseas Airmail

Individual or Family -

Full (Journal + Newsletter)/Student
Part (Newsletter only)/Student

\$80.00/\$60.00
\$45.00/\$30.00

\$100.00/\$80.00
\$55.00/\$35.00

Institution or Company -

Full (Journal + Newsletter)
Part (Newsletter only)

\$110.00
\$60.00

\$135.00
\$70.00

- All rates are quoted in AUSTRALIAN currency and must be paid in AUSTRALIAN currency.
- Membership is for the calendar year 1st January to 31st December. Subscriptions paid after 1st October will be deemed as payment for the following year.

Australian Rangeland Society Privacy Statement. Consistent with national privacy legislation, the Australian Rangeland Society (ARS) will only use members' personal contact information for keeping its records up to date, and enabling member access to ARS products and services e.g. meetings, events, newsletters, journals and conferences. ARS will not use members' information as supplied to ARS for any other purpose and it will not disclose the information to any other party without the member's consent. This will be achieved through email communication or any other means as appropriate.