



**A&P Shows – where people get together to create something special to illustrate our agricultural reality at a glance.**

**Welcome to the April 2019 issue of my notes.**

*Approximate read time: 15 – 20 minutes*

## **Introduction**

Thanks for the positive and encouraging comments I received for the last issue. You can never be sure you are actually connecting in any way until you get comments such as, *"When I knew you were coming I did a bit of research on the website*

*and read your notes. I loved all the ideas and positive thinking."*

From the USA, *"Thanks for sending me your fantastic assessment and vision for the RAS.....I am very, very impressed...message to hit the bulleyes of the target."*

And back home, *"...what a great read invoking intelligent thought...general membership need to really think hard on it (the Strategy) to ensure future survival."*

Also, *"The collaboration part struck me most as I believe pride overrides the greater good at RAS from time to time. Collaboration among members and the different organisations it represents and works with, is absolutely one of the points that need attention. Hopefully we're not waiting for that until just before the light goes out."*

## **Cattle at the show**

It was good to see shows with cattle. Some examples included Kaitaia with a good showing of dairy cattle, Franklin had a great display on both days, and both Oxford and Malvern A&Ps also had cattle. Hopefully for the 2019/20 we will see the return of more cattle to more shows.

## **Ever vigilant in seeking opportunities**

Without exception, high performing organisations have a clear sense of strategic direction. This has been provided in your Strategic Plan.

I hope you will embrace your Strategy that has been constructed from your thoughts and your ideas, and commit to make it work. I simply refuse to believe that A & P shows should die as some would have us believe. I do believe that we must collectively redesign and rebuild for the future.

Continual small changes refresh the organisation and keep it from becoming stale. Innovation is essential, must be continuous, and part of everyone's job. New developments need to be properly funded and resourced. Sometimes those resources will come from joining forces with another organisation. Effective collaboration ensures you maximise your efforts to achieve more with your partners.

Where should we look for inspiration?

From among other places, the young people who are going to populate the future. They are learning more and they are more adept at finding answers. Their minds are wide open and eager. Our structure and way of being needs to be about unleashing their growth potential.

Working together bubbles up ideas which you would not have come up with solo. Working together will lay the foundation for a new generation of A&P Showing, expand the economic opportunity for show societies, and ensure that innovative shows have the support they need to thrive and grow in the years to come.

Securing a sustainable future will take all of you working together.

## The RAS Strategy in brief

The Strategy was designed around three questions, Why; How; What. It reflects the thoughts of the Owner / Members gathered over a period of time from August 2017.

The **Vision** outlines why we do what we do, what we aspire to be. It is future focused.

**Inspire members to promote rural excellence, sustainability and innovation**

We want to be clear on our **Values** because they determine how we go about doing things. They outline what is important to us, what is good and bad. They serve as a broad outline for the way everyone in the movement should act and how we make decisions.

**With Integrity  
In Collaboration  
Adding Value  
Hunting New Opportunities**

To achieve the **Vision**, what do we all need to focus on? What specific things do we need to do to get there?

**Be Member Driven  
Relevance  
Strengthen the Movement  
Develop a New Generation  
Professionalism**

Projects will be developed by the Executive for a national focus, and Districts have been asked to determine what they will do. We will keep you posted as the specifics of the Strategic Plan develop.

## 101 Ways with Wool Expo



Hats off to Melva and Glenda Robb for their great initiative. Thanks also to the Marlborough A&P Society for their support of this expo. It is a great idea and I have asked Melva to send me some notes on her reflection of the event held at the end of March.

I first heard about this event when I was introduced to Melva at the Rural Women's AGM in Wellington. We talked about seeing how this one went and perhaps we could promote it as a joint activity between Rural Women and some of our more innovative A&Ps to provide a more wide spread

promotion of this amazing sustainable, environmentally friendly and natural product, wool.

Such a promotion would fit well with shows that are running about that time.

An array of activities included "Have a Go" learn spinning, weaving, knitting; a live sheep display with wool samples featuring assorted breeds including the *Valais Blacknose*; Creative Fashion Parade; Bridal Gown; Fashion Display; Shearing & Wool handling displays; and the 'She Shears' movie (GA) on twice a day. There were Art, Science, Photography & Sculpture displays featuring wool from Secondary, Primary & Kindergarten children. Congratulations Melva, a great promotion of wool.

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/101-Ways-with-Wool-Expo>

## **RAS Northern online competition through Facebook**

Courtney Davies is in the Northern District and is the current RAS Rural Ambassador.

She decided to start an online competition through their Facebook page to keep their young people engaged over summer. Because the majority of their youth are passionate about cattle and as there weren't many cattle shows this season, Courtney hoped that it would give them a chance to get to know a calf a little better and perhaps develop a relationship with their animal so that when cattle shows start back (fingers crossed!) next season, it would be a little easier to get back in to it.

There was also a series of five questions over the summer months, including;

- 1) What is your top tip for the show ring? Share a helpful hint! Winner was Odyssey Travers with "Always look at the judge and stay clean"
- 2) Who is your favourite animal on the farm? Attach a picture in the comments! Winner was Georgia Tilly with her Hunterway dog Muka which she competes with.
- 3) What are some of the things you would like to see in the Youth class? Give us your ideas so we can make them happen! Winner was Amber Doggett who suggested an obstacle course for cattle/sheep including weaving poles, jumps and a "noodle arch".
- 4) What is your favourite A&P Show memory? Winners were Odyssey Travers who fondly remembered helping show her dad's cows at the Bay of Islands Show and being encouraged by the judge. Their second winner was Angel Somerville and her family who enjoyed the fancy dress classes.
- 5) Show us your favourite Christmas dress up! Winner was Sapphire Somerville who sent in a neat photo of her and her goat dressed up at the Whangarei Show fancy dress class in Christmas theme.

They had awesome prizes sponsored by Seales Winslow, FiberFresh and five sets of District Tickets to each of their Northern District Shows (prizes valued in excess of \$100). "*We hoped that giving tickets as prizes would not only draw these competitors back to the show but also in doing that, they would bring their families along and this would mean more people at our shows who may not have gone with the absence of cattle,*" said Courtney.

They hoped that by running just a small online competition they would not only keep people interested in the showing scene over summer, but also connect more people to their youth network through the Northern District RAS Youth page.

"*We constantly post updates of scholarships, judging competitions, A&P opportunities and Rural Ambassador updates,*" said Courtney. "*So many of our young people or their families are on social media so this was a great opportunity to harness this.*"

Have a look at their page <https://www.facebook.com/NorthernRASYouth/>

## **All of our arguments should be constructive, stimulating, positive experiences.**

All of us have probably participated in arguments which resulted in hurt feelings, anger, frustration, confusion, embarrassment and even broken or damaged working relationships. Such experiences may have led us to conclude that arguing is a destructive form of communication which should be avoided.

We must continually respond to controversial issues. The more critical the issue, the more important it is for us to be effective arguers.

There are two sides to argument- constructive and destructive. All of our arguments should be constructive, stimulating, positive experiences.

Arguments are best when they present evidence, logic, data, statistics, and reasoning. Without these things, we have to resort to emotional appeals, which are very chancy, increasing the likelihood of emotional responses and destructive argument.

A constructive argument is one where the effort and tension bring about a good result for those involved without damaging the relationships.

What does a good argument look like?

1. Shows what position we hold
2. Allows others to present their point of view
3. Helps us reach and understand new views
4. Does not "stomp" on people

The benefits of arguing are:

1. Stimulates curiosity
2. Increases learning
3. Reduces ego-centric thinking
4. Improves social perspective taking
5. Stimulates creativity
6. Enhances quality decision making

Here is a link to an excellent resource on Arguing Constructively. The simple model, The Inventional System of Arguing, (Problem / Blame / Solution / Consequences) at page 10 of [ArguingConstructivelyInstructorGuide.pdf](#) is an ideal framework from which to work.

And why do I think you should be thinking seriously about this? When I ask some people why they won't go on committees...well just saying, this stuff might be worth a look.

### **RAS District Youth Face Book pages**

If you haven't already, make sure you checkout the RAS Youth face book pages

Northern: [Northern RAS Youth](#)

Western: [Western district RAS youth](#)

Southern: [Southern District RAS Youth](#)

Mid-Northern: [Mid Northern District RAS Youth](#)

### **Rowing or Drilling?**

Facebook is an amazing source of information and shared wisdom. One post from a wonderful Horsewoman friend particularly resonated for me when we are thinking about trying to get people to work for a common good (as opposed to using organisations to parade their ego). She posted, "*Make sure everybody in your 'boat' is rowing and not drilling when you are not looking.*"

### **In Owen Henry's Honour**

One of the moments I particularly enjoy at the A&P Shows is when long-time supporters of the show are honoured. One of those special moments occurred at the Katikati Show. It was captured in a great article and photos in the February 28<sup>th</sup> edition of the Katikati Advertiser. I acknowledge Editor Chris Steel for the editorial copy & photo which I have used for these notes.

The Henry name has been synonymous at the Katikati A&P Show since its beginnings in 1913.

At the 97<sup>th</sup> Show this year a memorial sash was awarded in the honour of life member Owen Henry who died on February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018.



Owen's memorial sash was presented by his wife Sally to the 2019 open saddle hunter champion Fiachra, ridden by Susan Halls of Auckland. Despite all the usual tricks, Fiachra wasn't putting those ears forward!

Fiachra's sire is Coleman's Touch – John and I were part of the group that contributed to bring him to NZ, so a doubly special moment.

Owen Henry followed in the footsteps of his grandfather, Thomas Henry, a committee member from the formation of the Katikati A&P Show in 1913, followed by his father George Henry.

In 2000 Owen had served 50 years on the committee in various roles, including president, and was a life member.

It was a pleasure to be with Sally and 3 of their children, Anne, Shayne and Lynnette when they presented this special Owen Henry Memorial Sash.



### **From Australia – connecting rural youth**

In February, The Royal Agricultural Society of New South Wales and the Sydney Royal Easter Show launched their 'All Roads to the Royal' programme, to connect rural youth with the Show.

Designed by the RAS (Aus) Youth Group the program was created to improve access to the show for rural and remote high school students. The four day program will give one lucky school an all-expenses paid trip, with behind the scenes access to areas of the show.

The program hopes to trigger local show involvement, to help ensure the future of many country shows continues for many years to come.

Read more <https://www.theland.com.au/new-program-brings-country-kids-to-the-big-show/>

### **Executive & Districts Meeting**

In February 2014 we introduced the first of two meetings to be held each year between the Executive and representatives of the six District Councils. The second meeting is usually held at conference. The purpose of the meetings was to bring the two groups closer and share their thinking for the overall benefit of the showing movement.

In preparation for that first meeting a workbook was sent out to the Districts to gather some feedback we could then discuss at the meeting.

That feedback indicated District Councils saw themselves responsible for the positive promotion of and the operational effectiveness of the RAS in their respective Districts.

They felt for the relationship between the District Councils and the RAS Executive to work there needed to be mutual respect and acceptance of each other's opinions, ability to agree to disagree, providing clear reasons and understanding, and keeping in touch (not just at show time, also in person).

They also felt they should be responsible for distributing Executive minutes or a summary, and supported the Executive to bring in postal voting to increase the ability of members to be actively involved in decision making.

The communication process had been a contentious issue with Shows being very clear that the RAS should not communicate directly with their members and stakeholders. At that first meeting, the Districts were clear it was the member organisation's responsibility to communicate with their stakeholders, sponsors, entertainment, trade exhibitors, members, exhibitors, competitors, and visitors. They felt District Councils played a pivotal role in facilitating this process.

It was a meeting where the Executive asked for and received guidance on many of the existing practices.

At the beginning of March this year we held the latest Executive District Councils meeting. It was a time to look at the RAS structure and the obligations that went with affiliation/membership. Again information had been sent out so representatives could come prepared.

We asked, '*Rules and regulations are based on a majority view of those organisations that take the time to vote, yet all parties are required to abide by them. Do you agree?*' We also asked if they didn't agree, what might be a better way to operate. Generally the view was everyone had the opportunity through postal voting and good communications so regardless, the result of the vote would determine decisions.

We also asked if member breed societies should continue to have the right to determine show schedules for their respective sections. The consensus was 'yes' noting that shows should talk directly with breeds societies, and the breeds helped maintain consistency across the shows for competitors.

The question of whether or not non-affiliated organisations should displace affiliated members from A&P show programmes was also canvassed with the response being clearly, "No they should not." We all felt every effort should be made to try and resolve any issues.

It was also an opportunity to check and see if the Executive District meetings were still relevant. The Districts saw the meetings as important because they provided a forum for discussion and sharing information and ideas, making sure we were all "on the same wavelength." It was also felt that whilst we all had similar problems, getting together different people increased the opportunity to find solutions.

Given the District Councils believe the meetings are important, the Executive will look to build a stronger and more involved working relationship between the RAS CEO and the District Managers.

### **Agricultural Shows Australia national survey**

Agricultural Shows Australia recently conducted a national survey that looked at the challenges facing each Show. ASA Next Generation Director, Lyndsey Douglas highlights some of the findings.

Australians attend at least one agricultural show a year whether it's for the competitions, the livestock, the rides, the entertainment, the produce or a mix of it all. Agricultural Shows Australia's recent survey showed that over 3.5million people go to country and regional Shows each year. [Read more...](#)

### **Changes to the Charities Act**

In my January Notes I wrote..."Although they have launched their governance project 'to help charities improve their governance', my read is you had better be getting it right! And Charities Services will be working closer 'with funders and other government agencies to align our requirements.' Do you need me to spell out the implications of the word 'align'?"

The Discussion Document for changes to the Charities Act has been released and public meetings are underway.

Chris Mason (Whangarei A&P) attended the meeting up there and noted that albeit early in the piece it isn't clear exactly what changes they will come up with. However there were a couple of areas which are a concern if they came in. For example - should certain kinds of charities be required to distribute a certain portion of their funds each year? (But no mention as to what kind of charity this would be.)

Also it looks like they may want more regulation and those present at the meeting made it very clear that compliance now was an issue – especially those smaller entities – and the non-helpfulness of the Commissions website, loading reports etc.

The over-riding vision and policy principles seem to be OK. The real concern is any increase in obligations and compliance being applied to charities in the future. According to the figures in the document, over 58% of the registered charities are tier 4 (expenditure less than \$125,000) - yet it seems that the focus of the review is aimed at the 'big players' of tier 1 and tier 2.

Chris feels we need to make them aware that with over half of the registered charities being small, they will not have the resources and nor in some cases the expertise to comply with overly-burdening rules, obligations and compliance requirements. The review needs to remember who the bulk of the registered charities are, and what limited resources they have.

It seems the review wants great levels of compliance and other obligations introduced which will simply be too onerous for the majority of the charities registered – most of our A&Ps included.

So my strong advice is for members to **Pay Attention!** Get the discussion paper, attend the meetings and make a submission. The date for submissions closing is 30 April.

The RAS CEO will be attending one of the meetings and will provide a bit more insight.

In the meantime, we encourage you to read the [discussion document](#) and '[quick read](#)' summary

## **A year as the Harcourts RAS Rural Ambassador – Annaliese Goettler**

I was fortunate to win the Harcourt RAS Rural Ambassador competition for 2018. Through the year as the Rural Ambassador, I was able to meet many like-minded and passionate young people across New Zealand and Australia. I was also able to develop a strong relationship with Harcourts NZ, and was invited to speak at their National Rural & Lifestyle Conference. I would like to thank Tom Rutherford, especially, for his support of me through my time as Harcourts RAS Rural Ambassador.

I had a number of highlights, the first was attending the NZ Royal Show in Hastings in 2017, as both a competitor and as the Rural Ambassador. I enjoyed competing somewhere new with my Hunters, Dan Sur and Brookdale Boy- both winning wide ribbons in their respective classes. I also had the ability to watch the Young Judges competitions across the different sections.

It was great to see many young judges from across the country take part and achieve great results. I got to meet many people, a number of which who joined me in Adelaide as New Zealand representatives. Another highlight was being a part of the 175<sup>th</sup> Bay of Islands Show again as the Rural Ambassador and as a competitor.

Perhaps the most valuable part of the experience was travelling to the Adelaide Royal Show in September 2018. I was entirely mesmerised by the scale of the show, and the standard of competition across all sections. Meeting and spending time with the other rural ambassadors and judges, was perhaps the most valuable part of the experience.

I learned so much about different farming systems, and the challenges different areas in Australia and different industries face. We spent a lot of time comparing the 'norms' between our local shows and things we found were different.

I feel very privileged to have met the other Rural Ambassadors and share an extended network within an industry that we are so passionate about. I was proud of my effort in the competition, (as the youngest competitor by 5 or so years, I was slightly intimidated by the achievements and life experience of the other Rural Ambassadors), and I know I will cherish the experience for life.

On a more personal level, being the Rural Ambassador has enabled me to become more involved in the Franklin Show and build greater relationships between the Franklin Show and the Franklin Young Farmers Club. I have become more confident in my abilities and proven to myself that I can achieve whatever I dream to.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank a number of people for their support, my parents; Donna and Gary, my Partner; Daniel, Anne Watts for introducing me to the showing movement, Anne Hjorth and Peter Hill and all of the other competitors in the Hunter Ring that I see from show to show, Pip Beauchamp from NZ Young Farmers, Franklin Young Farmers club, Franklin A&P Society and the RAS.

I would encourage anyone who has an interest in Agriculture to apply and have a go, the skillset you gain and the people you meet is considerably unique and will be of value to you in any role in the future.

### **Royal Golden Fleece Exhibition.**

I will be heading off to Rangiora for this year's Royal Golden Fleece Exhibition hosted by the RAS and held at the Rangiora Showgrounds. It will be open for public viewing on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May. There will be the Junior Judging of Fleeces competition, displays, stalls and working exhibits.

There are 22 classes for Fine Wool, 18 for Strong wool, 6 for Black & Coloured, and 4 classes for Mohair.

Last Year, The RAS Supreme Fine Wool Fleece was awarded to Blairich Station Partnership in Blenheim. The Supreme Strong Wool Fleece was won by Rachel Humphrey from Fielding, and the Supreme Black & Coloured Fleece was won by K&L Ponsonby of Greenacres Farm from Christchurch. The Supreme Mohair was awarded to Dawn and David Sangster of Ranfurly.



## Overall winner of our RAS Livamol Thoroughbred Series



At the Horse of the Year Show in March the presentation was made to the overall winner of our RAS Livamol Thoroughbred series which is run at A&P shows and affiliated Equestrian Shows.

There are now 44 shows throughout the country running the class which is generously supported by Kerrin Beatson of International Animal Health Products, hence the title as the Livamol Series.

The series winner for 2019 was Lady's Honour RP ridden by Vanessa Everton from Pirongia. Lady's Honour is 8yr old Bay TB Mare (Duelled / Eternal Lee) owned by Regent Park.

Kerrin presented the sash and prizes and Melissa Jebson presented the RAS Medal of Excellence on behalf of the Executive.

## National Shearing Finals

It was Roland Smith's 7th win of the Open Shearing Championship title. I presented to him last year as well. This makes it 4 times in a row.

Roland will be off to represent NZ in the World Shearing Championships being held for the first time in its 42 year history in France. The runner up was Cam Ferguson and third was David Buick.



Sheree Alabaster has won the open Wool handling title 8 times before, the first time in 2004. She won it last year also.

With Sheree is the runner up Pagan Karauria.

It was both my pleasure and privilege to present the RAS Gold medals again this year.



## RAS Youth Equestrian Team

The Royal Agricultural Society have announced the Youth Equestrian Team to represent New Zealand in the forth-coming Youth Challenge to be held in the United Kingdom this August.

The team will compete against teams from Australia and England, however teams from Wales and Scotland also competed in the UK in the inaugural competition in 2016. New Zealand won the 2016 Challenge and drew the Challenge with the United Kingdom when New Zealand hosted the event at the Canterbury A&P Show in 2017.

The four member team has been selected from sixteen keen, competent riders who put themselves forward for the squad. Members needed to have excelled in Showing classes at top level and ridden various mounts as they will be riding borrowed mounts during the competition.

The 2019 team are:-

Courtney Mullen – Ellesmere A&P

Laura McNab (Waikato) Welsh Pony & Cob Society

Ashleigh Tawhera – Canterbury A&P

Maia Waretini-Anderson – Ellesmere A&P.

Non Travelling Reserve: Jordan Fairbrother – Northern A&P

The team will be managed by Melissa Jebson (Malvern A&P, Member RAS Executive, Central District Chairperson) and Tryphena Carter (Gore A&P, Southern District Councillor). Tryphena co managed the team for the first trip to the UK.

The Team is funding themselves, however if you would like to assist with funds that will go toward the uniforms, flights, and accommodation would be greatly appreciated. Funds can be sent to RAS Head Office with NZ Youth Challenge Team sponsorship in the reference line. A/C # 06-0501-0528903-00

### **Dairy Goats Royal Event**



The Oxford Show on 30 March 2019, were hosts to a Royal Event for Dairy Goats.

Over 100 Goats were exhibited which makes it one of the largest Dairy Goat Section at a NZ A&P Show.

Patron of the New Zealand Dairy Goat Breeders Association, Ron Chynoweth made a surprise visit from the North Island to present the RAS Medal of Excellence to the Supreme Champion Dairy Goat of the show – 'Tamarvale Anjelica'.

Pictured above left are Ron Chynoweth, Siobhan Carden-Holdstock parading Tamarvale Anjelica and her father Jonathan the breeder. The picture on the right is the Lineup of Dairy Goat Section Champions before Grand Parade.

### **Stop Press – Equestrian Meeting RAS / ESNZ / Pony Clubs NZ**

Debbie Cameron and I met with representatives of Pony Clubs & ESNZ looking at a wide range of issues that face Equestrian generally and how we might work together. Topics such as environmental expectations, biosecurity, microchipping, health & safety, levels of care for competitors (first aid), facilities & grounds, culture and competitor behaviour, horse welfare, the future of equestrian sport and opportunities for funding & sponsorship.

It was a good start with an agreement to share information and continue working together in the common interest of Equestrian Sport.

In the next edition I will cover my visit to the Waikato Show, District AGM's, Golden Fleece then conference, although my last official act will not be until October when I head off with the Young Judges & Handlers to the Australasian finals in Perth.

*Geoff Smith*

**Geoff Smith**  
President - Royal Agricultural Society NZ (RAS)

**A&P Shows – where people get together to create something special to illustrate our agricultural reality at a glance.**

<http://www.ras.org.nz/>



Check out the RAS -Harcourts Referral - it means \$\$\$ for your Association –

[www.ras.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/RAS-Harcourts-Referral.pdf](http://www.ras.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/RAS-Harcourts-Referral.pdf)