

# LONGREACH SHOW SOCIETY INC.

Established 1895

## President's Report 2017

It is with pleasure that I present this report on the activities of the Longreach Show Society for the year 2017.

As I reflect on this year's activities, I am firstly reminded of another failed wet season, our 5<sup>th</sup> consecutively, and which has greatly affected the morale and financial position of the entire community. I am then reminded of the resilience of this community, under great stress, and in turn, of the great generosity of our sponsors. The Show simply could not "go on" without their support.

Under threatening skies that amounted to nothing, the 2017 Show kicked off on Friday with the Horse Section starting at lunch time and late that afternoon we unveiled, at a well-attended ceremony, the Graham Isles Drive. This was a very special event, as Graham has been a Show stalwart for over 60 years, doing the heavy lifting in many Sections over those years...In particular, the Horse Section, the Bar and as our Space Manager. Graham's contribution to this Society has been enormous, and we were delighted to be able to recognise this in such a way.

This event was followed by a very well attended Sponsor's Drinks, our thanks to Boyd and Mandy Curran for generously contributing to this.

Then for the first time in the Show's history, we had an exciting Team Penning Competition held in the Rodeo Arena on Friday night. It was well attended despite some down town competition, and I have every confidence that this has the ability to grow further. Our thanks to Lawrence Monize and his great team of helpers. Also, our thanks to the ever supportive Rotary team, who provided the barbeque.

This year, we hosted a Droughtmaster Feature Show. We were very appreciative of the Studs that attended, as they travelled long distances to Longreach with very little certainty of sales. We had 110 cattle in total on display, and my sincere thanks to Neil Donaldson the Droughtmaster Australia's CEO, who travelled up with Judge Matt Welsh to attend. It was a considerable expense for them, and a great effort for the Longreach Show. My sincere thanks also to Dean Allen, who managed very competently this Feature Show, and to Kiri Broad and Bill Seeney, who ably assisted him.

What a joy the Sheep & Wool Pavilion turned out to be. We were all missing the anticipation and excitement of the State Sheep Show that was held there last year, and that had so well filled our superbly renovated Pavilion with those magnificent Merinos. However, Mary Ann Ringrose's Merino Markets did the job just as well, and there was so much talk and retail therapy going on, that I don't think we missed the animal version at all. Thank you so much Macca, you did a brilliant job. I'm still hearing comments about how good they were... the variety, the quality and the fashion parade.

And to add to this exciting new section, was Paul Grams excellent display of wool in the Pavilion. 175 fleeces... a huge effort for a district that has been plagued with 5 years of drought and unprecedented

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wild dog numbers. Once again, wool from neighbouring districts competed, adding additional interest to the Wool Court. Thank you to Paul and your stewards, this was a great effort in your first year, and we did appreciate it.

The Arts and Crafts Pavilion is always a joy, and so full of interest. Thank you Julie and your hard working team for running this pavilion so seamlessly. We have been very fortunate to have received a Grant of \$35,000 to renovate this Pavilion. It has been long overdue, and I know the Pavilion girls are looking forward to working in a much improved pavilion.

Thank you to the Horse Section's Heather Atherton, Kirsten Forrest, John Arnold, Tony Rayner, Nikki Gay, Jo Thomas and all their hard working stewards. These are very big sections, big jobs and keeps us on our toes! We were very pleased to have won a \$35,000 Grant last year, that enabled us to purchase new jumps, dressage arenas, and a magnificent trailer to carry them all. My thanks to Kirsten Forrest for organising the purchase of these and to Tony Rayner, for overseeing the building of our very smart new lizard. A special thank you to Nettie Deane, a very efficient trophy steward, and also to Casey Kent who did a fabulous job sourcing some very generous trophy donors. How fabulous did the Arena look, with the new jumps and more competitors, thanks to the better prize money.

My thanks to Peter Oakey for managing the hassle free Poultry Pavilion...how good are those coloured chickens, to Russell Poole for running the Flock Ewe Competition in difficult times and Peter Thomas for managing all those Pastoral College students in the Junior Judging Competitions. All very valuable Sections of our Show.

The Trade Displays were much better this year, thanks to Russell Lowry's efforts. It's such an important part of our show and I know it will only get better with Russell's management. Thank you to Desert Channels Queensland, Leanne, Simon and Doug for their drone display and competition. This was a great addition to the show, and I'm hoping it will continue. We need to be displaying new technology and information, as our industries become more and more reliant on them.

And overseeing all the sites and making sure there was room for everyone was Tony Emslie. Tony you always do a great job, unflappable, courteous and accommodating. Thank you so much for managing this very important job so well, and for the considerable time you give us.

The Production Wether Competition...Doug Allpass, I can't thank you enough for running this big, valuable and interesting competition as seamlessly as you do, especially in our drought stricken district. Thank you to those who help you, and my thanks to the Longreach Pastoral College who have been running the wethers this year and for making their shearing shed available for the shearing day.

I also can't thank Tony Jackson enough for another seamless performance with both Sheep Dog Trials. 74 dogs in the Central Western Qld Championships including some from interstate. 12 in the Short Course Trials on Show day. I'm always sorry the Championships can't run concurrently with the Show,

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as the trials are interesting, and there are some very well trained dogs with a congenial group of owners travelling the circuit.

Thank you to David Grant who very generously gave two shearing demonstrations during the day. This continues to promote the Wool Industry and is an interesting display for the many tourists who visit our Show. It also reminds us what a skilled shearer David is....and who is always a pleasure to watch.

My thanks to Lawrence Monize and his band of helpers for running the very popular Dog High Jump. Another unofficial World Record for Sasha this year at 3.29 metres (The Official World Record is 2.95m.) ... it's such a crowd pleaser.

Thank you to Mick Bichsel, Russel Lowry and Scotty who came to the rescue at the last minute with organizing the Grand Parade. It was very late due to unavoidable technical problems with the PA System. Our thanks to David Littleproud for Opening the Show so well, and our thanks to Richard Kinnon for transporting the Official Party and the Show Girl Entrants onto the Arena in his restored Whippet.

My sincere thanks to Sharon Grams for coming to the rescue at the last minute, to provide all those delicious meals from the Canteen. Many appreciated the extra shade under her marquees, and I was so grateful for her rescue. To the Pastoral College Students who were very helpful and punctual... we all commented, and to the State Primary School P&C who did a very efficient mighty job, running the bar so well.

The Roof Top Express evening entertainment was fabulous, a great draw card for the community, and it's going to be difficult to replace them next year. Thank you to Tony Jackson who sourced them for us.

And now to another very exciting addition to this year's Show, our Longreach Miss Show Girl, Claire Jackson, won for Longreach for the first time in the 35 year history of this State Competition, Miss Queensland Show Girl. What a thrill. She was enchanting to watch, so poised and natural. Longreach can be justly proud of her. Meg Bassingthwaighte who won the Longreach Rural Ambassador also represented Longreach admirably in Brisbane, and I hope we can manage a celebration dinner for them early next year. Thank you to Andrea Crothers and Ally Dyer, who ran this competition beautifully, seamlessly, and I know you were great mentors and provided so much support to the entrants.

We had 2,074 adults and 849 children through the gate this year. Our sincere thanks to the Firies who do a great job as always, manning the gates, and to the Longreach Regional Council who, in their sponsorship, made it possible to reduce the adult's gate entry to \$5. Our sincere thanks also to St Brigids who sponsored a free gate entry for the children, plus a very welcome food voucher for them.

We have 45 members, up on last year, but it would be nice to grow that figure further next year. We have \$96,588.32 in our bank account as of yesterday, though approximately \$30,000 is Grant money for the A&C Pavilion...\$5,000 having already been spent on cabinets. We have \$10,000 in the George

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Avery Bursary account. A total of \$76,588.32 as we move into planning for next year's show. Up on last year, but on par with some previous years. We need to be careful, as Longreach Shows have sometimes been rained out, and Rain Insurance doesn't cover everything.

I mentioned at the start of this report, the great generosity of our sponsors and especially in such difficult times. We thank them and appreciate very much their wonderful support, when they are all struggling themselves. In particular I want to thank the Longreach Regional Council, who has been so generous in their sponsorship to us, and with David Perry's management they have provided much help with infrastructure, including the cementing of another area in the Sheep & Wool Pavilion. Also, a big thank you to Tony Rayner and RESQ for their very generous sponsorship, and with the help of their able workforce, they have helped so much again this year with infrastructure. What an improvement the Cattle and Rodeo Yards are. This support has not only been a great help to the Show Society, but also to other organisations in town. We are indeed in their debt and that of the Drought Relief Funds, that are benefitting the whole community.

And there still seems so many to thank... those not on Committee but who have run competitions, displays or demonstrations on Show day, those who transport stock, fodder or equipment for us... often free of charge, food providers, stewards, judges, and so many volunteers and helpers on the day. We simply could not run this Show without their willing help and support.

Regrettably, we are farewelling Committee Members Jake Gneiding and Michelle Hampson, who are both transferring to other positions in the State. I've loved having Jake on Committee, he's young and has been such a diligent Committee member. He has hardly missed a meeting and has been so conscientious with any job he has taken on. Thank you so much Jake.

How much is the whole community going to miss you Michelle, your gentle nature and your beautiful thrush like voice. We have all loved listening to you, thank you for the beautiful moments you have given us. I still remember your rendition, with Renee, of "Freedom" at the Show Opening this year. Goose bumps stuff. Thank you too for your contribution through the State School Choir and Band.

We wish you both well, and look forward to you returning to Longreach one day.

My sincere thanks to this wonderful Committee, who have contributed so well at every meeting, and in your particular Sections. To the Executive, the two Vice President Tonys, who have given me so much support throughout the year, I have appreciated that very much. To Mineke who was very generous to take on the Treasurers role, thank you for the time you have given the Society this year, and thank you to Amelia, our outgoing Secretary, who was so efficient, professional, and did sharpen our pencils.

We had 4 worthy applicants for the position of Secretary in July, and this Society is so fortunate to have had Ingrid Miller apply for the job, and to be the successful applicant. Within this first month, I am

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already learning just how skilled she is. I'm looking forward to working with her and I know she'll be a great asset to the Show Society.

I could not have wished for a better team. You have contributed with effort and resolve to produce a great day for everyone. This show is a major event for the community each year. It gives a great opportunity to show case Longreach and District, and to provide the community with competition, exhibition, information and entertainment.

Thank you all.

*Margie Webb*

President

Longreach Show Society Inc.