



# POLWARTH

SHEEP BREEDERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

## President's Piece

### Covid-19 Pandemic

To all of our members around Australia, I hope you and your family are staying safe and well as Covid-19 continues to impact our lives, particularly with travel restrictions and cancellation of major events. For those living in Victoria, the second wave has been far more significant than the first, however at Fairview we feel fortunate to have the wide open spaces of the farm and plenty of work to go on with.

### Congratulations

Congratulations to Talisa McArdle and Joel Kerr who welcomed their third child, Max Riley Kerr on 8th August, weighing a healthy 4.42kg or 9lb 11oz in the old language. With older brothers Toby and Leo, Talisa and Joel are going to very busy in the coming years. We wish you well.

### Letter from David and Lynne McArdle

Page 2 includes a letter from David and Lynne McArdle where they thank members and provide an update since the bushfires on Kangaroo Island in early January. David has captured the essence of their appreciation, devastation, emotional ups and down and slow rebuilding process. David and Lynne, you have been in our thoughts many times since early January and we thank you for sharing your experiences with us. Best wishes with your ongoing rebuilding process.

### ASWS - Polwarth Schedule

Following an endorsement from members at the General Meeting held in July 2019, the Executive undertook a review of the Polwarth Schedule for the Australian Sheep and Wool Show.

The review had a number of aims:

- To cater for current, past, new and less experienced exhibitors.
- To take into account seasonal variation, different lambing times and different shearing times.
- To cater for the different emphasis breeders place on their enterprises.
- To fall in line with what other breeds are doing.

The schedule was completed and forwarded to the ASWS before Christmas. At that time we did not know about Covid-19 and the impact it would have in 2020. We are hopeful that the ASWS will go ahead in July 2021. To help members prepare we have published the schedule on page 4 of the newsletter. Please note that the blue indicates changes which have been made to previous schedules.

## Farmers 2 Founders Program

On page 3, Associate members Carly and Darren Noble share their experience of the Farmers 2 Founders program which they undertook in the first half of this year. From their article it is clear to see how potential ideas in agriculture/technology can be developed by involvement in such programs. Kaye was in contact with Carly regularly during the program and knows how many hours and how much effort the couple put into the program. Carly in particular used her skills and industry contacts to help develop their ideas and make some real progress. Carly and Darren have a vision to manufacture products using Polwarth/Merino wool which are 100% Australian made. We hope they can successfully bring their concept to fruition.

## Association Annual General Meeting

Historically this year we are moving into the online space to hold the Association's Annual General Meeting and General Meeting. Relevant information is included in the mail out and I hope as many members as possible will join us for this occasion.

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## A letter of thanks and update from David and Lynne McArdle on Kangaroo Island

*We are now six months since the happenings of the 9th January. New life of about 350 to 400 lambs with more still to come and green paddock feed brings a feeling of positiveness back to our personal life.*

*I would like to thank all of our friends within the Polwarth Association for your phone calls and messages of support during this tough period for Lynne and I, but we have kept our feelings positive all the long period since being burned out.*

*It was a devastating blow delivered losing and destroying about 150 sheep, but we had to carry on with help from locals until the job was done and the animals buried. We had to look at the positives of having 740 sheep, mainly ewes, left for future breeding of the Taljar flock. They could have also been destroyed as well. Their survival is a real blessing to us. The biggest blow, that those destroyed were new blood to our flock but some have survived, so we continue on breeding Polwarth sheep.*

*A very special thankyou to some of our friends who have put themselves out for us:*

- *Don Smith for your regular contacts by phone*
- *David and Wendy Dennis for your Polwarth book on the first 100 years. That was a huge loss for me.*
- *Kate and Dave Thornsteinsen—we had a wonderful week together chainsawing and fencing*
- *Douglas Hopkins and Gerry—your regular phonecalls*
- *Peter English—we have enjoyed your regular contact. Sometimes when I am feeling a bit low you have brightened me up.*
- *Kaye Potter and Dani Hogan—a big thank you for your time and effort in scanning all of those flock books. Not an easy task at all for you both. It is much appreciated by all of my family at this time. This job must have taken hours.*

*There have been others, ie Ken Arnold as well. Please take this as our personal thank you to all of you from the McArdle family.*

*We are now looking to the future and have purchased a property in town to move into until we rebuild again on the farm, hopefully in the very near future. Shedding is another priority for us be we are now sleeping in a mobile motor home and a Minderoo Foundation Pod. About 45 of these are now in Kangaroo Island until people are able to rebuild.*

*We have had mains power for about two week. Nobody knows how welcome this was to both of us. Generators are not all they are cracked up to be, let me tell you! The removal of both houses and sheds finally happened a month or so ago.*

*It was very depressing looking at the mess for so long but you felt that the removal of this wreckage was a big step in the right direction for us. At about this time our opening rains happened, Anzac Day this year, so our spirits lifted accordingly.*

*At the time of writing the Taljar flock now looks a picture. Unbelievable when you think what the animals have been through since January. The hugely hot fired left so much ash and dust in the paddocks it created a pink eye problem for several weeks from late March to early May. I have never seen Pink eye like this before in my 65 years living on farms. Again, the opening rains soon made it disappear thankfully, but it was terrible watching the poor animals whilst it was at its peak.*

*All in all, the last six months has been character building and we have certainly toughened up to life's realities. A very large disappointment to me is the stopping of the shows this year due to the world wide virus scare. I will miss the excitement of, preparation of animals and seeing friends so much. It has had a great affect on us all. I wish we could send 2020 back and start again. This year I really don't know if I'm a post, shovel or crowbar. That's all I seemed to have done at this stage of proceedings.*

*Once again, thank you to all of our friends and Polwarth Association members for all of your kind thoughts and support during 2020. This is another reason we are part of this group isn't it. We have been fortunate that our ram lambs survived; the fire burned around them in the paddock so we will be having our ram sale in early October.*

*You can be lucky can't you! Thank you all.*

*David and Lynne McArdle*

*15th June 2020*



**With burnt trees in the background, the Taljar hoggets are looking remarkably good at the end of July.**

## Farmers 2 Founders program

by Darren and Carly Noble

We joined the second cohort of farmers from around the country to be a part of the 2020 Farmers 2 Founders Ideas Program. We formed one of three teams made up of 11 farmers ready to partake in three months of entrepreneur development working with the Farmers 2 Founders team. The objective of this world's first program was to support farmers to develop and create innovative technologies and products/ventures in the area of food, agriculture and technology, using creative mind mapping strategies and following the Lead Canvas methodology which we found interesting and insightful. We worked with an amazing team of highly qualified individuals who had spent years working and developing some of the most well known brands both here in Australia and overseas. The 12 week program was to take place in Toowoomba QLD but due to the coronavirus and complications with travel restrictions and border closures, our entire program moved onto an online zoom platform. We were faced with weekly group and individual zoom meetings, conference calls and plenty of breakout time sessions with our mentors.

Carly and I joined with the idea of developing a 100% Australian owned and made wool blanket for the fire industry. However, over time we saw more pressing issues develop with the Christmas 2019-2020 bushfires and we began liaising with the fire industry stakeholders to learn that CFA uniforms were the biggest issue and the most pressing issue at that time. Despite exhausting every option we were not in the position to develop our fabric material which we had entered into the program with. Two years earlier, we had stumbled upon a yarn that we produced here on the farm that could be used in a variety of products and mediums from clothing across to wool bag sacks as well as material for hessian bags. As Carly worked tirelessly for hours establishing contacts and avenues to grow our product, we saw multiple supply chain issues which prevented us from developing the yarn in the manner in which we needed it too. At the six week mark we decided to turn our attention away from the fire industry and work to develop a clothing line using our own yarn. Fast forward to August and we have everything lined up ready to go once the pandemic eases.

All in all we found the program incredibly demanding as well as rewarding. With the assistance of Kaye Potter, Secretary from the Polwarth Association we were able to establish network connections that were very fruitful. We were able to promote the Polwarth breed to a large range of Merino breeders who were unaware of the advantages of the lustre, the fine white wool fibre which Polwarth sheep produce. A promotion we posted on Facebook in the last week of the program highlighted the need for 100% Australian owned and produced wool products for a domestic market. This gathered a lot of attention and was very insightful and important. We still believe that we may not have been able to identify the large number of customer markets had it not been for our involvement with the Farmer's 2 Founders Ideas Program. Carly and I wish to thank Kaye for all her help and that we will always be grateful for her assistance. We are also incredibly proud of the new network connections we made while in the program and the farmers that we still speak with since the program finished. We highly recommend to any one with an idea for a product/service or technology to contact the team at Farmers 2 Founders today and sign up. The advantage of the program was access to a \$3000 grant for your respective industry.

Darren and Carly Noble

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Carly Noble, top left, celebrating by Zoom completion of the Farmers 2 Founders program with the 11 other participants in their team.

**Australian Sheep and Wool Show Schedule 2021**

**Polwarth Breed**

Conditions of Entry

1. Only sheep registered in the Polwarth Sheep Breeders Association of Australia Flock Book will be accepted for entry.
2. Exhibitors may enter up to 5 sheep in any class or classes, subject to a limit in aggregate entries of the total number of sheep that could be entered by the exhibitor in any particular section on the basis of two sheep in each class.
3. Under 1½ year classes:
  - Sheep entered in 'milk teeth only' classes must show a full mouth of milk teeth, otherwise they will automatically be transferred to the appropriate 'Under 1½ years' class.
  - Exhibitors may only enter an individual sheep in ONE of the Under 1½ years classes.
  - Sheep entered in the ram and ewe under 1½ years Performance classes will be weighed and scanned for eye muscle and fat depth. Wool will be tested for micron, standard deviation and comfort factor. These results, plus visual appraisal by the judge will determine the result of the class.
4. The practice of oiling or using a foreign material to enhance the appearance of wool for showing is forbidden. Dipping for parasites excepted.
5. Shearing dates:
  - Sheep entered in the March shorn class are to be shorn in the month of March.
  - Sheep entered in Under 1½ years classes, except the March shorn class, are to be shorn after 1<sup>st</sup> August and before 31<sup>st</sup> December.
  - Sheep entered in all other classes are to be shorn after 1<sup>st</sup> August and before 31<sup>st</sup> October.
6. Exhibitors should be appropriately attired for judging.

**Ram Classes**

PW01	Ram, over 2½ years showing 6 or more permanent teeth
PW02	Ram, over 1½ and under 2½ years showing not more than 4 permanent teeth
PW03	Ram, under 1½ years showing a full mouth of milk teeth Not eligible to enter PW05 or PW06.
PW04	Ram, under 1½ years showing not more than 2 permanent teeth Not eligible to enter PW05 or PW06.
PW05	Ram, under 1½ years Performance Class Eligibility includes rams showing a full mouth of milk teeth and rams showing not more than 2 permanent teeth. Performance criteria includes weight, scanning, wool test results and judge visual appraisal. Not eligible to enter PW03, PW04 or PW06.
PW06	Ram, under 1½ years March Shorn Eligibility includes rams showing a full mouth of milk teeth and rams showing not more than 2 permanent teeth. Not eligible to enter PW03, PW04 or PW05.
PW07	Ram with best head

**Ewe Classes**

PW08	Ewe, over 2½ years showing 6 or more permanent teeth - Not eligible to enter PW10.
PW09	Ewe, over 1½ and under 2½ years showing not more than 4 permanent teeth - Not eligible to enter PW10.
PW10	Ewe, over 1½ years Production Class Ewes must have own lamb/s at foot. Exhibitors can display birth weight or date of birth in the show ring for judge to consider. Not eligible to enter PW08 or PW09.
PW11	Ewe, under 1½ years showing full mouth of milk teeth - Not eligible to enter PW13.
PW12	Ewe, under 1½ years showing not more than 2 permanent teeth - Not eligible to enter PW13.
PW13	Ewe, under 1½ years Performance Class Eligibility includes ewes showing a full mouth of milk teeth and ewes showing not more than 2 permanent teeth. Performance criteria includes weight, scanning, wool test results and judge visual appraisal. Not eligible to enter PW11 or PW12.

**Group Classes**

PW14	Group of 1 ram and 2 ewes over 1½ years bred by exhibitor
PW15	Group of 1 ram and 2 ewes under 1½ years bred by exhibitor Winner eligible for Interbreed competition
PW16	Progeny group of 3 Polwarth sheep bred by exhibitor
PW17	National Polwarth pair (ram and ewe of any age bred by exhibitor)