



# POLWARTH

SHEEP BREEDERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

## Time for Reflection and Looking Ahead

As 2022 draws to a close it's timely to reflect on the year that's been and to look forward to what's in store for 2023.

### La Nina Impact

Around the states we have all been affected by the La Nina weather pattern which delivered high spring rainfall with a vengeance, particularly to some parts of the country. Just out of Bendigo, Peter English's property Moorabbee which lies adjacent to the Campaspe River experienced major flooding. Wisely, Peter and his son moved the sheep to higher ground as a precaution. It was just as well, because the sheep would not have survived the flood waters which inundated the property.



Above: Peter put his trusty alpaca midwives out on the road verge thinking they would be safe from the rising waters. However the next morning the water had risen beyond expectation and they were no where to be found. Fortunately, he found them at the yards where the amount of debris on young Suri indicates they swam/waded through flood waters during the night to get to higher ground. More on page 3.

**Special thanks to members who contributed a fantastic array of pics for our December newsletter including Carinya Haven, Fairview Moorabbee, Narang, Newley Vale, Mingara, Murrawooda, Mt Crawford, Riverview & Taljar.**

## Sheila - 89 years young!

Mt Crawford's Sheila Gordon still skirting fleeces at 89 years of age. More pictures on page 2.



## October Ram Sales

### Taljar and Taljade (Kangaroo Island, SA)

Held on 12th October, Taljar and Taljade had a most successful sale with an excellent clearance rate of 50 out of 54 rams.

The top priced ram sold for \$2600 with a healthy sale average of \$1320.

Pictured below is Jared and David McArdle with the agent and new owners of the top priced ram.



## October Ram Sales

### Mt Crawford, SA - Open Day

Kate and David Thornsteinsen organised an all round experience for visitors to their Open Day on 17th October. Nine young stud rams were available for private sale while groups of stud sheep were also on show. Visitors had the opportunity to check out Mt Crawford's accommodation options which include camping and Tiny Rosie which has amazing views. Nomad farms, SA who buy and process Kate and David's Polwarth wool were also onsite with a range of their products.

Clockwise: (1) Open Day set-up. (2) 89 year old Sheila Gordon still in the shearing shed skirting! (3 and 4) Tiny Rosie accommodation with amazing views. (5) 14 year old Laece Amunsden, keen as mustard to learn about sheep/ Polwarths. (6) The young hogget rams curious as always. (7) Lambs at 4 months old.



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## Post flood update from Moorabbee

*By Peter English*

Apart from the low lying areas, things have pretty well dried out and I'm now able to access most parts of the farm. There is plenty of feed and amazingly, the clover is still green as we approach mid December.

The flood was fierce, leaving minimal debris lying in the paddocks. There is a bit of debris up against fences but most of it has gone over the top. Jokingly, "I suspect the debris has arrived at Kangaroo Island by now and I will send an account for firewood delivered to some people I know there!"

Fencing is the go at the moment with a combination of propping up, repairing and replacing short sections of 40-120 metres. I have a contractor booked for the new year to replace an 800m section of fencing.

The mosquitos are prolific! Lifting up debris from the downed fences results in a multitude of mozzies fiercely attacking you.

The farm/sheep schedule is running 4 to 6 weeks behind normal. Managed to finish shearing two weeks ago. Sold the first draft of White Suffolk X lambs two weeks ago for a most respectable \$203. The cull ewes are off to market this afternoon.

The wheat crop will not be harvested until mid January as some parts of the crop were under water for weeks, however remarkably, the majority looks okay.

With only one paddock available for 4-5 weeks, I had to put the ewes and freshly weaned lambs back together again which they were most appreciative of.

I usually join early December, however the lack of paddocks has limited me to joining 40 Polwarth hogget ewes and 100 White Suffolk X ewes.

Two paddocks of wheaten stubble will become available mid to late January which will give me more options for joining the remainder of the Polwarth ewes.

In summary, Moorabbee faired much better than neighbours who lost cows and calves. Repairing the fencing is good exercise—well that's what I keep telling myself.

Top: During the flood water reached the top of the white posts.

Middle: As the water receded the road into Peter's property is revealed again.

Peter was isolated by flood waters and spent a couple of nights glamping in the on-farm shed which has been fixed up to a respectable standard and enables him to stay on farm at various times during the year.

Bottom: Taken from higher ground, the flooded Campaspe River completely engulfs Peter's river flats.



### October Ram Sales

#### Fairview, VIC

Fairview held their 3rd Annual Ram Sale on 21st October via Auctions Plus.

Rams were available for inspection in the morning and were then sold by Helmsman system after lunch.

Fifteen of 25 rams sold to a top price of \$3050 with a sale average of \$1286.

Pictured right before the sale is Greg, Kaye and Sam Potter with grand-daughter Dulcie.



### Local show spruce up for Mingara ewes

Warwick and Olga at Carlsruhe, VIC sent through this pic of two ewes in the shed for a spruce up prior to their local show.

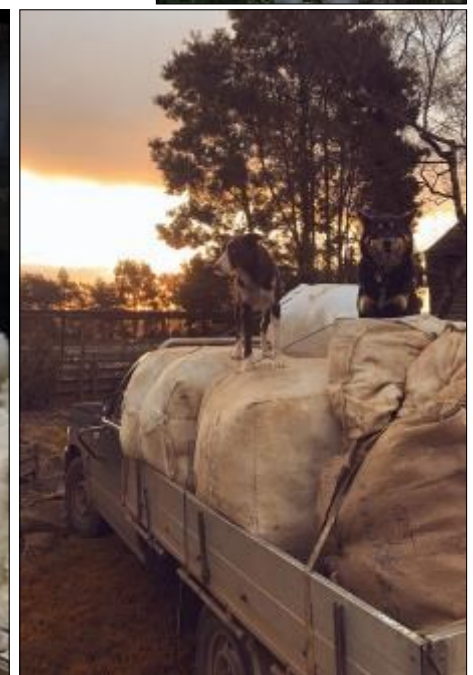
Is it just me, or do you also like the combination of light and shadow, plus the natural elements of wool, wood and corrugated iron. A great pic thanks Olga!



### Over the ditch at Newley Vale

#### Thank you Chris from Kelso, TAS

Below anticlockwise: (1) In Chris' words, "me in a decent crop". (2) A rams fleece. Editor: We never get tired of seeing beautiful white soft Polwarth wool rolled up on the wool table. (3) The big clip with indispensable helpers on the back of the ute. (4) Cuteness overload! Just love those faces.



## The Shows were Back

After two years of cancellations due to Covid-19, the big and local shows were back up and running.

Fairview and Riverview represented the breed at the Australian Sheep and Wool Show with entries in the fleece competition from Catherine McAuley College, Fairview, Moorabbee and Riverview.

Over in South Australia, Mt Crawford, Taljade and Taljar attended the Royal Adelaide Show while Bel-Antha entered the fleece competition.

Down in Tassie, Riverview attended the Campbell Town Show, as well as, their other local shows.

Members and life members were also active at the shows taking on organisational roles, as well as, stewarding and judging.

Above right: Back in July, Riverview's team cut a lonely sight as they were the first and only sheep in the massive shed at the Australian Sheep and Wool Show in Bendigo. Fitting in with the Spirit of Tasmania schedule, probably meant they were last out of the shed as well!

Right: In September, Sam Edwards and Josh Wiltshire from Murrawooda Polwarths in SA, enjoyed much success with their 5 month old ram lamb who won all of his classes plus the Interbreed competition at the Murray Bridge Show. We look forward to following his progress.



## MLA — Genotyping Project

This year, a number of Polwarth breeders were invited to participate in a Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) genotyping project conducted in conjunction with the University of New England, NSW.

The project, sponsored by MLA seeks to genotype breeds with insufficient reference populations. Foundation breeds of popular composites have been targeted for sample collection including, Polwarth, Romney, Finn, Aussie White, Cheviot, English Leicester, Perendale, East Friesian, Prime SAMM, Damara, Lincoln, Van Rooy, Rambouillet and Wiltshire Horn breeds.

I'm delighted to say that the project had an excellent response from Polwarth breeders who were required to select animals from a range of bloodlines within their flock. Breeders were supplied with equipment to take ear tissue samples from selected animals which were then returned to UNE for processing.

While not guaranteed at the moment, we are hoping that participation in this project may lead to ASBV's (Australian Sheep Breeding Values) for Polwarths, or indeed, other research and development which could benefit our breed.

## ASWS - International Judges in 2023

We are delighted to announce that our judges for the Australian Sheep and Wool Show to be held in Bendigo, VIC from 14-16 July will be Joaquin and Fernando Martinicorena from Uruguay.

We last saw Joaquin and Fernando in 2019 where they were special guests at our Centenary celebration afternoon tea.

It would be great to have as much support as possible from breeders, be it in the show ring, or the fleece competition.

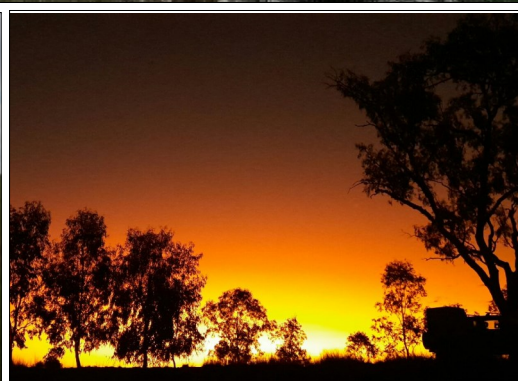
## Adelaide Show—Polwarth Feature Breed

Another event we are looking forward to in 2023, is the Royal Adelaide Show on 2nd September where the Polwarth and Corriedale breed are set to share the Feature Breed.

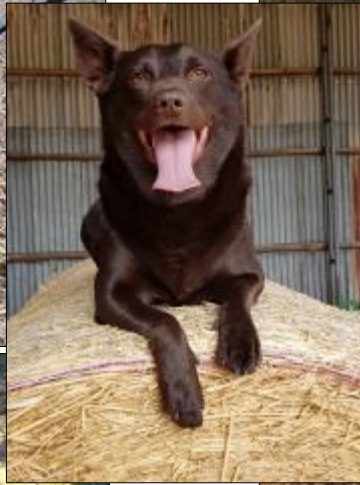
As with the ASWS, we look forward to support from breeders both in the show ring and the fleece competition. Shearing date is on or after 31st August.

## Carinya Haven - thank you to the Aisthorpe family near Roma, QLD

- (1) Emiley giving last year's poddy lamb a big cuddle
- (2) Guardians with greener pasture
- (3) Dams have filled
- (4) Creeks are running
- (5) Stunning sunset
- (6) Green paddocks with plenty of feed for all
- (7) Dust in the yards at sunset
- (8) Good seasonal conditions means more lambs
- (9) The guardians on patrol in all seasons



Narang - thank you to Peter and Caroline in the Adelaide Hills, SA



## I don't know what they said, but boy it must have been funny!

Recently, David Dennis (Tarndwarncourt), Greg Potter (Fairview), Ken Arnold (Life Member) and Al Dennis (Tarndwarncourt) met for a coffee at Tarndwarncourt. Although the work is never done, it's good to sit around and have a decent belly laugh once in a while.



The Association extends warm wishes to all members and life members for a very happy Christmas and safe new year. Thank you for your contribution to the Polwarth breed in 2022 through participation in meetings, shows and newsletters or simply staying in touch. We look forward to reconnecting with you in 2023.

