



THE GRASSLAND SOCIETY OF NSW INC.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

A *The Art of Grazing Management*



Wednesday 10th July
Thursday 11th July
1996

Wagga Wagga Leagues Club
Gurwood St.
Wagga Wagga, NSW 2650

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 11TH CONFERENCE



***PROCEEDINGS OF THE ELEVENTH ANNUAL
CONFERENCE OF THE GRASSLAND
SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES***

Invited Papers, Contributed Papers and Poster Summaries
from the Conference Held at the Wagga Wagga Leagues Club
Gurwood St., WAGGA WAGGA, NSW, 2650

July 10-11, 1996

Edited by Jim Virgona and David Michalk

THE GRASSLAND SOCIETY OF NSW INC.

**A unique blend of people with a common interest
in developing our most important resource
our Grasslands**

The Grassland Society of NSW was formed in March 1985. The Society now has 1100 members and associates, 75% of whom are farmers and graziers. The balance are agricultural scientists, farm advisers, consultants, and executives or representatives of organisations concerned with fertiliser, seeds, chemical and machinery.

The aims of the Society are to provide opportunities for members to meet in conference, at field days, or socially, to exchange information, ideas and experiences relating to grasslands.

Other aims of the Society are to advance the investigation of problems affecting grassland husbandry and to encourage the adoption into practice of results of research and practical experience. The Society holds an annual conference, publishes a quarterly newsletter, holds field days, and is establishing regional branches throughout the State.

Membership is open to any person or company interested in grassland management and the aims of the Society. Ordinary (including family or farm units), student and corporate membership is available.

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PREFACE

What's new in grazing management? No doubt this is our first thought as we read the theme of our 11th annual conference. What is new is perhaps not in the pastures we are grazing, but in our attitude to how we manage the resources we have on our farms. We as land and resource managers are, increasingly, called upon to produce more from less. Land which was once highly productive, fertile and rich in organic matter, but now less fertiliser is expected to produce greater yields than in its prime. Financial pressures are significantly greater than years ago, debt levels are higher and (with the possible exception of grain production) enterprise incomes are at one of their lowest levels ever.

It is to provide avenues of thought, insight into other peoples actions and improved technical and managerial skills that this conference has set about to show "The Art of Grazing Management". Not leaving science out, but to show by example, the skills, indeed the philosophy, required for successful grazing management.

Politicians, bureaucrats and pressure groups are forcing us, as land managers, to look at our production

systems in a more than financial way- to see ourselves as part of a larger ecological system. We have to adapt and change the way we act, often whether we like it or not, or else we could well be forced to do so! The conference committee introduced a new concept- a forum on a topical issue -SEPP 46. Information and ideas will be presented and an opportunity to comment exists.

As we move towards a more sustainable future, it becomes necessary to focus on all areas of our management. Papers on such topics as dung beetles, integrated pest control and crops for particular purpose grazing, concentrate our thoughts on how we can improve various areas of our production system.

This year, being our first conference at Wagga Wagga, may I congratulate the conference committee for their hard work in putting together such a thought provoking and informative program. Thankyou to our sponsors, many of whom have supported us for our full eleven years; your support is highly valued.

Stephen Millar
President

LIFE MEMBERS

Peter Wrigley

In 1995 Peter Wrigley, "Coombing Vale", Neville was elected a life member of the Grassland Society of NSW

Peter was the first president of the Society from 1985 to 1988 and has been a member of the management committee for the full period of the existence of the Grassland Society. Hugh Ross, our first life member, nominated Peter. Through Peter's efforts, the Grassland Society gained the support of the RAS, business, industry and farming sectors of NSW. He guided the Society through its first three critical years where membership increased from 20 in 1985 to 650 in 1988.

Peter runs a grazing property near Blayney producing merino wool and poll shorthorn cattle. He is a Director of Dalgety Australia and in his prime represented Australia in shooting at the 1956 Olympics and at the World Shooting Championships in Moscow in 1958. He served in the Royal Australian Navy from 1940 to 1946 rising to Lieutenant Commander and latterly, as honorary aide-de-camp to the Governor of NSW.

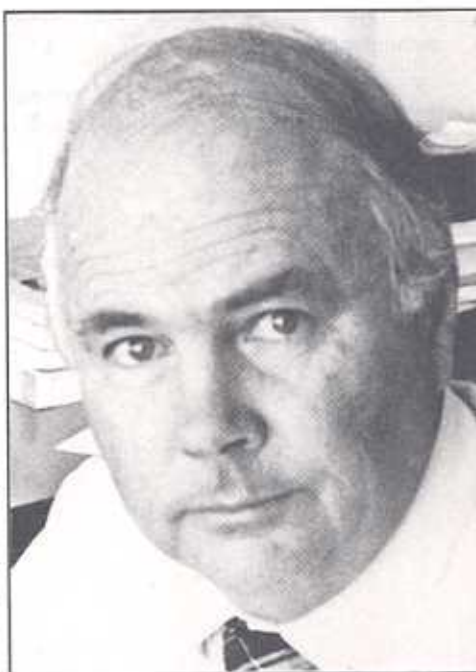


All members of the management committee join with members of the Society in thanking Peter for his work, enthusiasm and encouragement in fostering the development of the Society from a small beginning to the present membership of 1200.

Malcolm Campbell

In 1995 Malcolm Campbell, a Principal Research Scientist with NSW Agriculture, was elected a life member of the Grassland Society of NSW.

Over more than forty years of research Malcolm has made many valued contributions to techniques of pasture establishment and weed management. His research into the establishment of pastures using aerial techniques has greatly expanded the area of pastures in the tablelands and semi-arid north west of the state. For aerial sowing to be successful, it was necessary to understand the processes involved in surface germination and factors that could reduce germination and establishment. Malcolm's work on radicale growth and entry explained why some species failed to establish when aerially sown, while his study of seed-harvesting ants led to the development of treatments to protect seed without affecting germination. His research into the time of sowing, and the preparations required to control competition have provided much of the underlying principles for aerial sowing in temperate Australia. Malcolm has also successfully investigated the use of biological agents to control weeds in pastures such as goats to control Illyrian thistle and scale insects to control sifton bush. Malcolm has also added to our ecological understanding of St. John's wort, sifton bush and poa tussock and serrated tussock and has devised control plans for some of these.



For this life-time of research, Malcolm has received many public awards including: the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW Metal (1988); the Farrer Medal (1989); and a Public Service Medal in the 1990 Queen's Honours List.

In addition, Malcolm has been the Honorary Secretary for the Grassland Society since its formation in 1985. He has been a dynamo in this role. For more than a decade, Malcolm has been making sure that meetings are scheduled, keeping the minutes, ensuring that all the correspondence is answered, and making sure that the membership list is current. This role has taken up a considerable amount of time which Malcolm has willingly given to ensure that the Society provides good service to its members and ensure that our State's grasslands are protected and developed.