



## Tasmanian Agricultural Productivity Group

### *Summer 2018 Newsletter*

#### What's Coming Up?

##### Precision Agriculture EXPO

The fourth Annual EXPO will be held on Thursday 19 April 2018.

An important change this year is that the Venue for this popular event will be the Hagley Farm School. TAPG and the School have developed a mutually productive relationship over the past several years. The Tasmanian Agricultural Education Network (TAEN) is supported from Hagley as is the Agricultural Centre of Excellence that is housed on the Campus. Our Board believe that if we are to maximise the productivity gains available through adoption of Precision Agriculture thinking, techniques and machinery then we must work with all education and training providers to ensure that we have a trained and motivated workforce to optimise the potential productivity. The facilities at the school are excellent and will ideally suit the presentation of our one-day field event. All the usual features that past attendees have come to expect will be available. A mini EXPO based around the Potato Industry will lead off the day's Program. Commercial industry providers will exhibit the latest in both technology and machinery advances. The

practical field demonstrations will occupy a larger proportion of the program than in previous years while one of the highlights will be the activities of the “second generation” RIPPA robot that captured everyone’s imagination when it was shown for the first-time last year. Underpinning all these program features will be a comprehensive display of the education and training options available to people of all ages that will lead them to a great career in agriculture.

## What’s Been happening?

### Industry Forum and Annual General Meeting

A very well attended AGM and Industry Forum was conducted on Friday 3 November at the Waterfront Function Centre, Devonport.

The revised “Articles of Association” represented almost twelve months of effort by the Board’s working party and it was pleasing to have it endorsed by the meeting. The original document had its origins in 1989 so obviously the widespread adoption of technology had seriously dated it. The Board had the document reviewed by Shields Heritage to check for compliance issues before circulating it to the membership prior to the vote at the special meeting that was run as an adjunct to the AGM.

Our Chairperson, Mr. Jim Wilson, presented his fifth Annual Report since taking office. A copy of this document has been attached in the circulation of this Newsletter.

During the Industry Forum the following presentations were made:

- “Sensor Technology as an aid to Productivity” – Ros Harvey
- “RD&E Green Paper, an opportunity for TIA” – James Stronach

- **“Managing the Commons” – rationale for the proposed “Waternet” CRC Project - Prof. Ted Lefroy**

### **TAPG Annual Awards for Agricultural Excellence**

These prestigious awards were again presented by the Deputy Premier, The Hon. Jeremy Rockliff as a part of the AGM Program.

The Awards and accompanying Citations are shown below:

#### **Lifetime Achievement Awards:**

- **Philip Dobson – *“In recognition of his engineering excellence and innovation in developing world class agricultural machinery that not only assisted in improving the productivity of our farmers but earnt National and International recognition for the quality of practice within the Tasmanian Agricultural Industry.”***
- **Ian Folder – *“In recognition of his pioneering work in substantially establishing and developing the pyrethrum industry in Tasmania such that his company, Botanical Resources Australia, is now the predominant global supplier and reflects great credit on our Tasmanian Industry.”***

#### **Service to the Agricultural Community Award:**

- **Tasmanian Agricultural Education Network (TAEN) – *“In recognition of the Network’s effective leadership to the point where it is acknowledged as an innovative and important element within the state’s curriculum offerings that encourages educational excellence in support of future careers in our agricultural industry.”* - accepted on behalf of the Network by Secretary of the Department of Education, Ms**

**Jenny Gale, and the inaugural Lead Teacher of Agricultural Education, Mr Andrew Harris.**



**Matthew Greenhill accepting on behalf of Ian Folder**



**Philip Dobson receiving his award from Minister Rockliff.**



**Minister Rockliff presents Andrew Harris & Jenny Gale with the TAEN Award**



### **Legislative Council Select Committee on Tas. Irrigation**

TAPG submitted a response for consideration by the Committee to address the question of “Future Management of Water Rights and Associated Assets. Our submission was framed under three sub-headings:

- Current Success Indicators
- Areas for Further Development
- Comments and Recommendations

This submission was required late in December last year. Since then Chairperson Jim Wilson and I have appeared in person as part of a three-day hearing in Launceston 23 – 25 January. Copies of our submission are available upon request from our members by contacting me on: 0407 287 537

### **Tasmanian Logistics Committee – End of Year Review**

During 2017 TAPG was pleased to accept representation on this committee. While our contribution has been modest to this point we look forward to our continuing engagement over the full year of meetings ahead.

The Chairperson of the Committee is Mr. Brett Charlton, State Manager of Agility Logistics, and he provided members with an excellent summary of 2017 from his point of view. With Brett’s permission I have included several of the highlights that I thought may be of interest to our membership?

*“2017 was a pretty good year for Tasmania – any year where there are no floods or ships breaking their moorings makes for a good year! Numbers are up, trade is going well and there is a positive vibe in the state. From my point of view the international trade position looks shiny and we are seeing organic growth with our customers with some of the SME’s also venturing into the big world with smaller, but relatively significant, trades-especially into the Asian markets. We are also seeing an increase in various sectors through expenditure on plant and machinery. The reality is that we are seeing more berry growing tunnels, upgrades to plant lines, machinery to process quicker, tanks to produce more – we clear these goods through customs, so we know they are coming in – it feels like there is confidence to invest and grow from the SME end of town to the bigger players.....*

*.....2018 is looking like another positive year from all accounts. We have an election coming up, so it will be interesting to see how that plays out. The recent announcement of Biomar investment in the NW is quite important as this, along with the growth of the aquaculture industry, potentially has the ability to tap into our agricultural for an additional boost as the trend towards plant-based protein sources evolves - Tasmania will not only be an aquaculture farming growth model, but the potential as a regional fish food,*

*science and supply hub is not without merit. Our cherries, berries, fruit, vegetables, fish, dairy, wine, whiskey are going from strength to strength and there does not seem to be any abatement on the desire of international and domestic markets for our wares.”*

Let's all hope that Brett's positive view for this year is realised. I would also register my appreciation to him for inviting TAPG to membership of his committee as well as allowing his views to be shared in this manner.

### **2018 NAAE National Conference**

We have already noted that our Tasmanian Agricultural Education Network (TAEN) has received a "Service to the Agricultural Community" as part of our Annual Award Presentations.

However, from Sunday 7 – Thursday 11 January this year they also played host to the National Association of Agricultural Educators Bi-Annual Conference in Launceston.

They presented a brilliant program of relevant speakers and combined that with half and full day tours of some of our farming and business enterprises across the north of the state.

Over 100 delegates from every state and territory were present and their feedback on both the conference and the state itself was terrific. It was interesting to note as an attendee that the very recent initiatives and improvements that led to TAEN receiving our award were highly commended by the visiting educators.

I believe our Board has shown great leadership in its constant support of TAEN over the past several years and would urge our member companies to investigate how they can also support our young people into agricultural careers.

A good starting point would be to attend our PA EXPO and talk to Andrew Harris and his team about the opportunities that are available right now!

For feedback and further information on any matters reported in this newsletter please contact me at:

[terry.brient@gmail.com](mailto:terry.brient@gmail.com)

0407 287 537