



GPO Box 1108
Sydney, NSW 2001

23 October 2006

Ms Susan Madden
Secretary
Farm Writers' Association of NSW Inc
GPO Box 1108
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Ms Madden

Farm Writers' Association of NSW Inc – Annual Report 2005/2006

I am pleased to submit the following report on the activities of the Farm Writers' Association of NSW Inc ('Farm Writers') for 2005/2006.

Committee.

The following members were elected to the committee at the annual general meeting held on 28 October 2005 or joined the committee since that date. They have subsequently undertaken responsibilities as shown below:

Bev Jordan	President	
Colin Munro	Vice President	
Suzie Ward	Vice President	Corporate Member Liaison
Susan Madden	Secretary	
Stuart Hutton	Treasurer	Immediate Past President
Richard Hincks	Treasurer	Co-opted
Jamie Graham	Committee	Front of house
Sandy Grieve	Committee	
Margaret McCullough	Committee	Membership Secretary
Camilla Hunter	Committee	Newsletter
Oscar Pearse	Committee	Member Recruitment

Sarah Robson	Committee	Venue Liaison	
Mick Keogh	Committee	Website Liaison	
Sally Edgar	Committee	Newsletter	Co-opted

I wish to thank the out-going committee for their cheerful commitment to the Association and their hard work in securing an interesting group of speakers, managing the function venue and doing all that is required to ensure the seminars ran smoothly. The achievements of the year would not have occurred without that effort. I thank them all – particularly Stuart Hutton, Suzie Ward, Richard Hincks and Colin Munro - for their support in my first term as President.

Susan Madden, Sandy Grieve, Oscar Pearse and Camilla Hunter have advised that they will not stand for re-election. Their decision was accepted with regret. They have each made a unique contribution to the Association for which we are grateful.

We owe Sandy Grieve a special vote of thanks. He must surely be the longest serving committee member on record and has served in many positions over the years with the only break, to the best of my knowledge, being one taken in order to organise an IFAJ World Congress in Australia. An event that is apparently legendary in IFAJ annals. He is a past President, ACAJ and IFAJ champion and font of all historical knowledge.

Financial

The Association Treasurer, Richard Hincks, will present a full financial report to members. Suffice for me to say that I am pleased to report that the Association again recorded a small profit.

With the start of 2006, the costs at our regular venue increased. The Committee canvassed several options only to find that the Menzies offered the best deal. It is hoped that efforts to contain audio-visual costs and a modest rise in seminar fees with effect from 1 July 2006 will allow us to cover costs at future monthly functions. (Fees were last increased in June 2004).

I would like to record my thanks to Richard Hincks and to Stuart Hutton for the efforts they have made to improve our processes and ensure that we run a 'tight ship'.

Functions

Farm Writers held eleven functions during the year, which were attended by 674 members and guests – an average of 61 per seminar (60 the previous year). A full schedule of seminars, including details of guest speakers and corporate members of the month is attached to this report.

This year we had a varied program. The skill and standing of our speakers and the currency of topics discussed are reflected in the support from members and their guests. I take this opportunity to again thank all of our guest speakers who entertained and challenged us with their high quality presentations.

Farm Writers competes with a number of other organisations, both agricultural and non-agricultural, in seeking to attract high profile speakers who are time poor. This continues to present a challenge to find the best speakers – but one I like to think we will continue to meet.

In the spirit of co-operation with other agricultural focussed associations operating in Sydney and in line with the resolution of the 2004/2005 annual general meeting, Farm Writers' now has a mutual arrangement with the NSW Branch of the Agribusiness Association of Australia and the NSW Division of the Australian Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology to circulate notices of each organisation's events to our respective membership.

Website

I am pleased to announce that Telstra Country Wide have continued their generous sponsorship of the Association's website for the financial year 2006/2007. The website is particularly important to our operations as it is a key vehicle for publicising our functions and marketing the Association. It also provides the booking mechanism for our functions – and is the main source of bookings. We are grateful to Telstra Country Wide for their continued support.

Membership

Membership remains stable and we continue to attract new corporate members. Support from our corporate membership continues to grow and includes the introduction of a significant number of guests to those functions whose topic is of particular relevance to the corporate member involved. The committee appreciates this support and will continue to facilitate and recognise this support.

ACAJ and IFAJ

Farm Writers continues to provide financial and personnel support to the Australian Council of Agricultural Journalists (ACAJ) and its programs. Vice President, Colin Munro is the immediate past president of ACAJ and continues to serve on the ACAJ Executive.

It has been customary for Farm Writers' to provide financial support for delegates to attend the International Federation of Agricultural Journalists (IFAJ) annual congress and we intend to continue to provide such support for attendance at future congresses from time to time as our resources permit. This year the financial support was allocated to the winner of the NSW Rural Writing contest.

Star Prize 2006

For the first time in more than ten years, the Association presented an award for rural writing in NSW. To mark the launch of the award, the Association provided funding for the winner to attend the 2006 IFAJ World Congress in Norway. The value of the prize in future years will be determined each year and will depend on funds available.

The award was structured to conform to the rules of the IFAJ Star Prize for farm writing so that the winner could be entered as the NSW finalist in the ACAJ's competition to find Australia's entrant in the international contest. Each IFAJ-member country is asked to enter the best story published in their country in a particular year.

Only one entry is permitted from each member country. This year John Deere sponsored the Australian competition providing a prize of \$1,000.

The NSW competition was won by Neil Lyon for an article entitled 'Family team a powerful force' and published in *The Land* on 17 November 2005. Neil went on to win the Australian competition and a presentation was made at the June luncheon. Neil represented the Association at the IFAJ World Congress in Norway in August 2006 and his report will be available shortly on the website. I wish to again congratulate Neil on an outstanding article.

Alltech/IFAJ Young Leaders in Agricultural Journalism award

Another first this year was a search for a young journalist to attend the IFAJ World Congress. Australia and South Africa were the first countries selected to receive this award, sponsored by Alltech and part of IFAJ's professional development program.

Northern Territory Country Hour presenter Adrienne Francis was selected by ACAJ from a select group of finalists that included Lucy Skuthorp, a journalist with *The Land* and a former Farm Writers' committee member. Lucy won the NSW finalist's berth from a strong and larger-than-expected field of applicants. Lucy was presented with a plaque to mark her win at our 40th anniversary luncheon in September 2006.

I wish to record congratulations to Lucy and my thanks to life member Don Jones and Lucy Broad of corporate member, Cox Inall who judged the competitions.

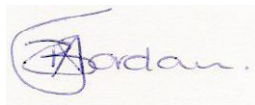
I am pleased to report that Alltech Australia has agreed to sponsor the Young Leaders award again in the coming year.

The coming year

If re-elected I propose, with the support of the new committee, to continue to pursue the challenge of providing an interesting program of high profile speakers on topical issues. We will continue the awards initiated this year and seek other opportunities to recognise and encourage excellence amongst our members. We will hold another regional broadcast in November – similar to the one of our 40th anniversary celebration and again provided by Telstra Country Wide. I would like to establish a regular program of regional broadcasts as this provides a unique opportunity to extend our excellent forum so that our regionally based members and guests, particularly country-based media, have the opportunity to hear our influential guest speakers and participate in our discussions.

In closing, I wish to thank the members for the opportunity of serving as President and assure you that, if re-elected, I will apply the same effort to the tasks ahead.

Yours sincerely



Beverley Jordan

President.

bevjordan@msn.com.au

mobile: 0408699656