



AGRICULTURAL BUREAU OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA  
ANNUAL REPORT

2016-17



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REPORT  
2016-2017

CHAIR'S REPORT

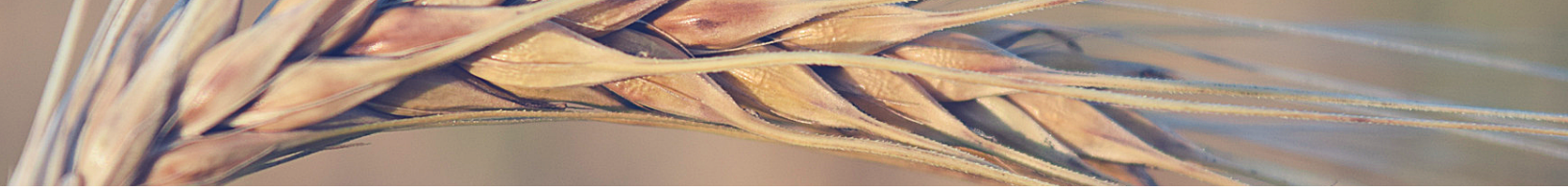
*Achievements, awards & sponsorships*

MEMBER AWARDS

*More than 80 members clock up milestones*

FARM FIREFIGHTING SUITS

*Owen members rally community support*



## 2016-17 HIGHLIGHTS

The **Annual General Meeting** was held in Adelaide in October, followed by the **Spirit of Excellence in Agriculture Awards** presentation dinner on 13 October 2016.

**The Rural Youth Bursary was awarded to Matthew Howell**, a pasture and crop agronomist in Meningie. Matthew plans to use the bursary to study high value irrigated crops being grown in Tasmania and New Zealand that may benefit the Lower Lakes district and Meningie community.

**Marrabel's Chris Hallion was awarded the Peter Olsen Fellowship**, which he will use to fund additional intensive study through the University of New England and agronomic tours to learn more about managing constraints on broadacre production systems.

Baramba Agricultural Bureau member **John Reid was recognised for his Service to Primary Production** and longstanding contribution to primary production. John has been instrumental in changing the face of viticulture and horticulture in the Riverland and further afield.

The 2017 winner of the **Lois Harris Scholarship was Bradley John Katemis**.

The Bureau **managed project funding of \$196k** to increase the adoption of evidence based sustainable production methods.

**Sponsorship of \$39k was received** towards Bureau member projects.

**Two hundred firefighter suits were distributed** by members of the Mallala and Owen Bureaus, thanks to generous local businesses following the 2015 Pinery fires.

Ag Bureau SA: Bridging the gap between scientist, agribusinesses and primary producers by supporting current projects in regional South Australia.

## ABOUT US

The Agricultural Bureau of South Australia (the Bureau) is a not-for-profit organisation run by farmers for farmers.

With a proud history in South Australia, the Bureau has assisted primary producers since 1888 and is the only farmer network group of its kind remaining in Australia.

Membership is open to anyone who is associated with, or has an interest in farming, agricultural development and education.

The Bureau supports agricultural development through the provision of information and expertise to producers and the wider community via an extensive network and works in close co-operation with the Government of South Australia, namely Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA) and Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR).

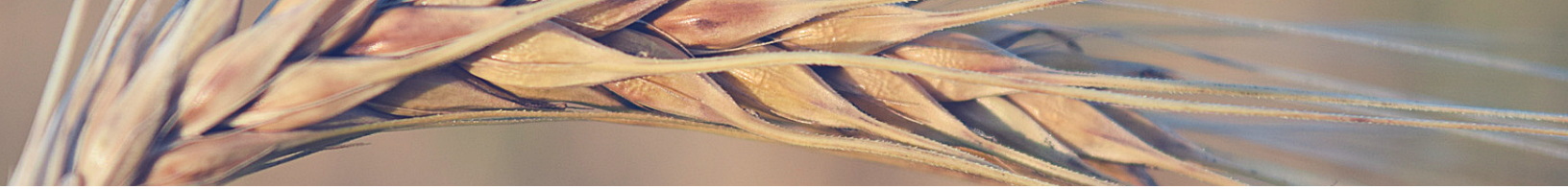
There are over 1500 members of the Bureau across 70 branches throughout South Australia. Membership of an Ag Bureau branch provides opportunities for professional development, growth and a chance to network with local farmers.

In particular the Bureau provides opportunities for young farmers to be mentored and encouraged as they learn from the experience of other members.



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# LONGSTANDING MEMBER AWARDS

The Board recognises and congratulates the following longstanding members on reaching their milestones. Thank you for your continuing contributions to our work.

## 60 years

Rowlands Flat

**Alan Modistach  
Eddie Schild  
Kevin Schiller  
Reg Robinson**

Moonta

**Donald Bagshaw**

## 50 years

Lowbank & Districts

**Denis Paschke  
Glynn Schmidt  
Trevor Kuchel**

Mallala

**Don Tiller  
Peter March**

Angaston

**Murray Klemm**

Lone Pine/Tanunda

**Kevin Graue**

Moonta

**Brian Cross  
Dennis Ford  
Phillip Woodward**

## 40 years

Lowbank & Districts

**Allen Buckley  
Warren May  
Wesley Kalisch**

Mallala

**Paul Angus  
Roger Davies**

Rowlands Flat  
Angaston

**Keith Hoffmann  
Ronald Grossman**

Freeling

**Neil William Schuster**

Lone Pine/Tanunda

**Ian Lange  
Neville Pfeiffer**

## 30 years

Angaston

**Richard Evans  
Geoff Linke  
Graham Koch  
Ian Koch  
James Graetz  
Mark Grossman  
Max Kroehn  
Melvin Rosenzweig  
Rick Steicke  
Ronald Grossman  
Stephen Schiller  
Trevor Kroehn**

Freeling

**Gavin Anthony Schuster  
Graeme John Seymon  
James Duncan Cawrese  
Kevin Arthur Schild  
Mark Anthony Schuster  
Neil Willaim Schuster  
Neville John Kernich  
Peter Rosee Heinjus  
Phillip Charles Winchester  
Wayne Keith Standish**

Koonunga

**Brian Graetz  
Colin Kurtz  
Des Nietschke  
Elmore Braunack  
Frank Gallash  
Glen Becker  
Glen Schiller  
Glenmore Nietschke  
Jeffrey Hoffmann  
John Kurtz  
John Nietschke  
Ken Kleinig  
Kevin Braunack  
Laurance Jericho**

## 30 years

Koonunga

**Leon Nietschke**  
**Marcus Kleinig**  
**Marcus Schulz**  
**Matthew Schiller**  
**Merv Fiegert**  
**Mervyn John**  
**Murray Andrezke**  
**Peter Kleinig**  
**Philip Nietschke**  
**Royce Kleinig**  
**Rueben Noack**  
**Wolf Heiser**

Lochaber

**Mr Robert Williams**

Lone Pine/Tanunda

**Jeffrey Rosenweig**

## 20 years

Lowbank and Districts

**Andrew Leske**  
**Brenton Kroehn**  
**Craig Duffield**  
**Trevor Schiller**

Mallala

**Brian Tiller**  
**Geoff Curnow**  
**John Blacket**  
**Paul Blacket**  
**Richard Verner**

Angaston

**Graham Koch**  
**Lincoln Grocke**

Boors Plains Bureau

**Ron Liebich**

Freeling

**Geoffrey Lamshed**  
**Damien Amery**  
**Tony Milanese**

Lone Pine/Tanunda

**Jeffrey Rosenzweig**  
**Melva Ratsch**

## Where would an Ag Bureau Bursary take you?

From the fisheries of Norway to the mountains of Montana, our Spirit of Excellence award recipients have traveled the globe to experience the latest trends in primary production.

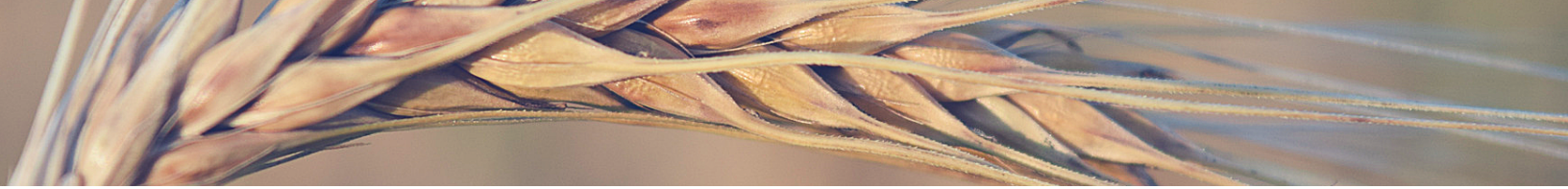
Each year, our awards provide two young people with the opportunity to open doors, chase an idea or follow their dreams.

The \$8000 DEWNR Sustainable Agricultural Scholarship for Young Farmers honours the memory of Peter and Wendy Olsen, former members of the Whyalla Ag Bureau branch who died in the Whyalla Airlines crash of May 2000. It is open to primary producers aged between 18 and 35.

Anyone aged 18-30 and living in a rural area can apply for the Rural Youth Bursary. The winner receives \$5000 to spend on a project or study tour to further their career opportunities.

Applications open in July 2018 and nomination forms will be available at [agbureau.com.au/awards](http://agbureau.com.au/awards).





## CHAIR'S REPORT

On behalf of the Board I am pleased to present this report of our Bureau's achievements for the 2016/17 financial year.

It has been a year dominated again by extreme weather events, but rather than bushfires we have seen severe flooding in many areas across the state. The storm events around the October long weekend certainly were dramatic and our emergency services volunteers (including members of Bureau branches) were again extremely busy. We are so thankful for their efforts.

Positively, this year's cropping season was a bumper one in most regions after adequate rainfall in July 2016. Mother Nature changed her tune 12 months later though and 2017 was one of the driest starts to the season in five years.

At the time of writing this report, the first deliveries are being made to silos. With crop forecasts being lower than last year, we wait with baited breath to find out how yields have been affected by the seasonal conditions.

The new board for 2016/17 was announced at our AGM and I am pleased to welcome David Edwards representing the Yorke Peninsula and Mid North region, Janette Ridgway returns to represent the South East.

Geoff Page continues to represent the Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu Peninsula and Kangaroo Island, Karen Baines is representing the Eyre Peninsula and I remain as the Chair and representative for the Barossa/Light region. We are still eagerly seeking a representative for the Murrayland/Riverland region.

Many of our branches celebrated milestone anniversaries this year. Paskeville branch reached their 125th, Monarto branch commemorated their 30th anniversary since reformation and both Lone Pine/Tanunda and Mundulla branches clocked up 100 years. Congratulations to all!

Mundulla members enjoyed a smorgasborg birthday dinner provided by Mundulla Primary students – what a great way to bring younger and older communities together and highlight the sustaining role that agriculture has in South Australia for future generations.

The Ag Bureau of SA is committed to encouraging and supporting rural youth who are working not only in primary production but in careers that sustain rural communities, so our annual Spirit of Excellence in Agriculture Awards were offered again in October 2016.

We awarded three bursaries and scholarships to help three young rural people continue developing their careers in agriculture (Pictured right with me is Bradley Katemis, who was awarded the Lois Harris Scholarship.).

For the 2017 Awards the Bureau is pleased to have the support of both the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) and Primary Industries and Regions SA, which allows us to provide these prestigious scholarships. Having DEWNR on board will mean we can offer these Awards in a refreshed format.

The Owen and Mallala branches have continued to provide incredible support within their communities in the recovery from the Pinery fires of November 2015. Their efforts are to be commended.

We are pleased to have SA Water agree to increase their sponsorship of the Ag Bureau in 2018. It means the Bureau will look to provide sponsorship to branches to provide bus trips. SA Water's support is greatly appreciated and should be acknowledged for the efforts to provide access to their water infrastructure to third parties, as they have successfully done with grape growers in the Clare and Barossa Valleys.

We look forward to continuing our work in the agricultural industry in 2017-18, representing our members in providing an independent voice to government departments, agencies and partners.

We thank all Ag Bureau members for their ongoing support.

**Mark Grossman**  
Board Chair



Lois Harris Scholarship winner for 2016, Bradley Katemis, with Mark Grossman.

## GOVERNING BODY

The Board of the Agricultural Bureau of South Australia comprises representatives from each of the Bureau regions, augmented with members from government, agricultural education and research bodies.

The Board represents the interests of South Australia's farmers to government and contributes to the extension of agricultural research and development through the management of projects.

On behalf of its members, the Board manages the Spirit of Excellence in Agriculture Awards which comprise four awards which recognise achievements in the agricultural field. The Awards provide opportunities to young people to pursue a career of excellence in agriculture and are an avenue to promote Bureau membership to a younger audience.

As the governing body the Board is responsible for the following:

- Managing and administering finances, insurance, awards and projects;
- Preparing and distribution of submissions on industry relevant issues;
- Facilitating the implementation of research, extension and training programs that enhance agriculture, business management and sustainable natural resource management;
- Promoting the aims, objectives and achievements of The Ag Bureau and the importance of agriculture and sustainable resource management to the broader community; and
- Providing a view forward to industry bodies and Government departments on behalf of members.





"Agriculture is the most healthful, most useful and most noble employment of man."

George Washington

Since 1988 the Ag Bureau of South Australia has provided farmers and landowners with a meeting place to discuss issues of interest to their local region.

Branch activities have evolved to include hosting technical and extension trials, organising grower bus trips and supporting communities affected by natural disasters.

At branch meetings members exchange ideas, discuss farming practices and work together to identify inventive solutions to issues. Members of our 70 branches attend branch events and activities and contribute to the sustainability of the industry by taking part in the latest projects and trials.

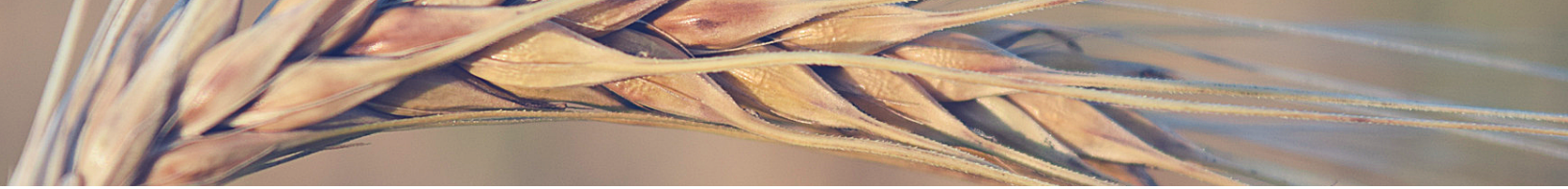
The Ag Bureau also provides two-way communication with government departments, regularly advocating for the needs of Australian farming communities.

We also support the next generation of landowners through the annual Spirit of Excellence Awards.

Find out more at [www.agbureau.com.au](http://www.agbureau.com.au).

**Agricultural Bureau**  
of South Australia Inc.  
**PATHWAY TO IMPROVEMENT**





## 2016-17 HIGHLIGHTS



LEFT: Laura Ag Bureau member Andrew Kitto demonstrates the new firefighting suits.

## OWEN BRANCH BACKS FARM FIREFIGHTING

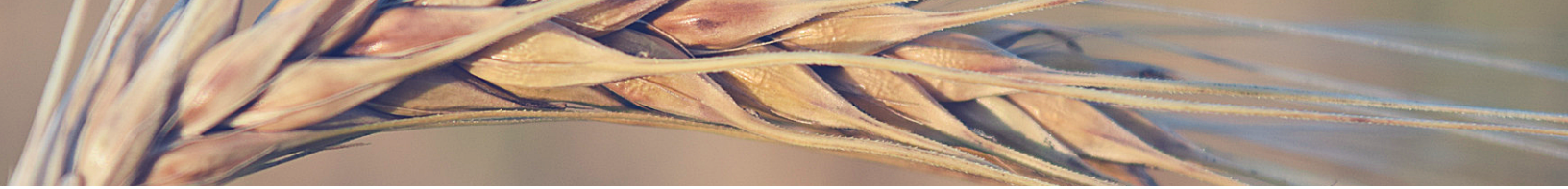
Through the generosity of a number of local businesses and the coordination of members of the Owen Ag Bureau branch, \$50,000 was raised to purchase PPE for those in the district who have invested in farm fire units and firefighting equipment.

The PPE includes fire garments that comply with Australian Standards contained in a fluorescent bag for storage in a farm vehicle, easily accessible at short notice.

The fire garments provide protection from heat and embers and will help distinguish

farm unit operators from CFS personnel. The project was driven by members Mark Heaslip, Michael Brougham and Clinton Tiller.

We continue to remember those who suffered loss from the Pinery tragedy.



## NEW SPONSORSHIP FUNDS SECURED

The pursuit and securing of additional sponsorship support for the Ag Bureau's activities and events has been a major focus during 2016-17.

Pleasingly, negotiations with both SA Water and the Department of Water Environment and Natural Resources (DEWNR) resulted in extra funding being allocated towards our Spirit of Excellence in Agriculture Awards and for educational bus tours by branches.

DEWNR has thrown its support behind our 2017 Awards Dinner, earning the naming rights to this pinnacle on our events calendar.

The \$8000 DEWNR Sustainable Agriculture Scholarship is in memory of both Peter and Wendy Olsen to recognise the couple's collective contributions to agriculture and landcare.

We remember Peter and Wendy's passion for environmental management and advocacy for sustainable farming practices.

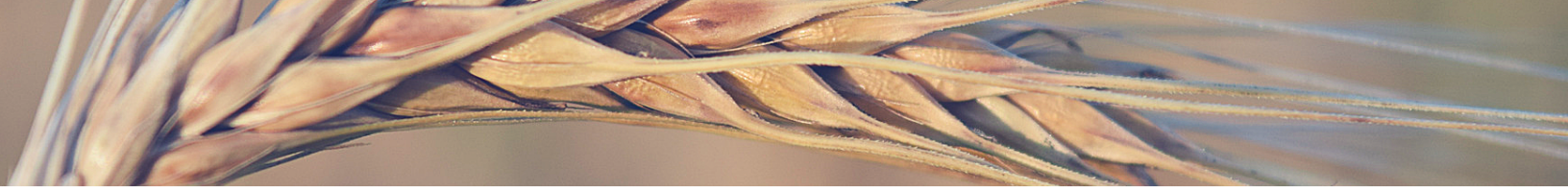
This year is the first year the former Peter Olsen Scholarship has been sponsored by DEWNR, with a focus on sustainability of the natural resources that underpin primary production.

SA Water has upgraded its Ag Bureau sponsorship to Bronze to facilitate more educational bus tours for branch members. Branches will be able to apply for a share of these funds to run trips in local areas.

We also acknowledge the ongoing sponsorship of Primary Industries SA (PIRSA), which enables us to offer the Rural Youth Bursary.

We thank Rural Business Support as well for their contribution to our Spirit of Excellence Dinner.





# SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2016

Our Spirit of Excellence in Agriculture Awards offer young farmers and rural youth the opportunity to pursue personal and professional development to ultimately benefit their local communities.

**Christopher Hallion**, a production assistant at a broadacre cropping enterprise in Marrabel, was named winner of the **Peter Olsen Fellowship** for 2016 and **Matthew Howell**, a pasture and crop agronomist from Meningie, was the recipient of the **Rural Youth Bursary** sponsored by Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA).

Christopher, who moved to the mid-north to gain work experience on a large farming enterprise plans to use the

\$8000 fellowship for additional intensive study and agronomic tours to learn more about managing constraints on broadacre production systems.

"As an external student at the University of New England, the Fellowship will provide opportunities to learn from peers and participate more fully in university life.

"So far during my degree I've been equipped with valuable research, knowledge and a

good base to start exploring the science of agriculture.

"So far during my degree I've been equipped with valuable research, knowledge and a good base to start exploring the science of agriculture.

"The Fellowship will allow me to attend on-campus intensives, practicals, participate in field trips and learn lessons for problem solving out in the field," Christopher said.



Back row (L-R): Mark Wilson (SA Water, Bureau Sponsor); Mark Grossman (Ag Bureau SA Chair); Brett Smith (Rural Business Support, Awards Dinner Sponsor); Daniel Casement (PIRSA, Rural Youth Bursary Award Sponsor)  
Front row (L-R): John Reed (Barmera Ag Bureau, 2016 Service to Primary Production Award); Jana Dixon (Clare, 2016 Lois Harris Scholarship); Matt Howell (Meningie, 2016 Rural Youth Bursary); Chris Hallion (Marrabel, 2016 Peter Olsen Fellowship)



Winner of the **Rural Youth Bursary** sponsored by PIRSA, **Matthew Howell**, is a pasture and crop agronomist for Platinum Ag Services in Meningie. Matthew chose to use the \$5000 bursary to study high value irrigated crops being grown in Tasmania and New Zealand that may benefit the Lower Lakes district and Meningie community.

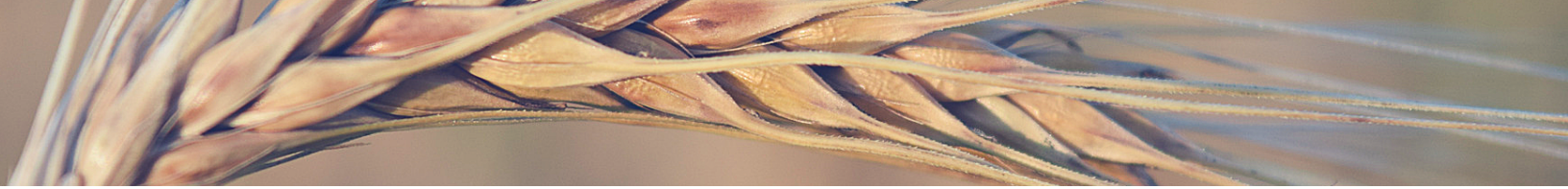
“The use of maize, brassicas and fodder beet (in New Zealand) is cutting edge and there are immediate applications for this information in my area.

“The ability for people to grow higher value crops under irrigated areas will have enormous flow on effects to the community. When local farmers are doing well there is job security and a reason for people to stay in the town”, Matthew said.

**John Reed** from Barmera was awarded the **Services to Primary Production Award** for his contribution to primary production over a significant period of time.

The applicants for this year's awards were of extremely high calibre and it was a difficult job to choose just one winner for each award.

We chose the applicants who were best able to demonstrate how their study will benefit the wider agricultural community.



# BUREAU BRANCH HIGHLIGHTS 2016-17

## AUSTRALIA DAY HONOURS

Keyneton's James Graetz was named Citizen of the Year for his community commitment for the past 50 years.

Mayor Dave Burgess said James had made significant contributions to the CFS, particularly during the 2014 Eden Valley fire.

“His commitment stood out during the fire, not only at the height of the emergency, but for many weeks after managing crews to handle the many flare-up and extensive debriefing with local and state authorities.”

For 30 of his 50 years with the Keyneton CFS, James led as captain.

James became the sole parent to his two children Kym and Sally after his beloved wife Carol passed away 12 years ago.

From there, he continued to run his household and their farm, and upheld his commitment to community duties with humility.

Congratulations James on receiving this honour.



ABOVE: James Graetz (left) was acknowledged for his dedication to the community in the Mid Murray Council's 2017 Australia Day honours. Pictured with Mayor Dave Burgess.

## BAROSSA BUREAU MEMBERS CONTRIBUTE TO INQUIRY

Barossa Ag Bureau members had the opportunity to voice their concerns over issues affecting the Barossa's retail supply chain at a government led inquiry in Nuriootpa in June 2017.

Concerns voiced included trade terms through to power and water hikes.

RIGHT: Schubert MP Stephan Knoll, Colton MP Paul Caica, Light MP Tony Piccolo, presiding member and Little Para MP Lee Oldenwalder, Davenport MP Vincent Tarzia and Hartley MP Sam Duluk.



## AG BUREAU PROJECTS 2016-17

The Bureau has a long and proud history of managing projects that benefit members from State to local level. Funding is from a variety of sources including the Australian Government and the Government of South Australia.

### Projects completed

Fleurieu Forward Farming - Innovative approaches to managing soil health and fertility (Adelaide Mt Lofty Ranges NRM \$20,350)

Parawa Agricultural Bureau

#### Stage 1

Consolidate current and past research and development work and producer knowledge in the topics of interest (see adjacent) carried out on Fleurieu Peninsula, as a means of identifying priorities for further evaluation and/or demonstration work in any future stage 2 project.

Topics of interest include productivity and sustainability of existing production systems, the management of soil health and fertility, improved management of pastures and options for better management of increased climate variability.

Fleurieu Forward Farming – Innovative approaches to managing soil health and fertility (Adelaide Mt Lofty Ranges NRM \$33,825)

Parawa Agricultural Bureau

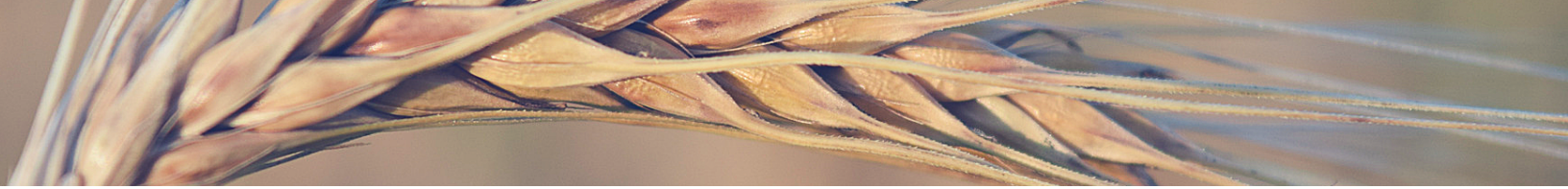
#### Stage 2

Expand on and further develop the knowledge gained in stage 1.

Evaluate and/or demonstrate potential solutions to a number of current challenges affecting the long term sustainability of farm business and the region's natural resource base.



ABOVE: Janette Ridgway (right) at the Lucindale Field Days.



# AG BUREAU PROJECTS 2016-17

## Projects commenced

Fleurieu Forward Farming – Resilient soils make resilient farms. Benchmarking soil health under alternative systems, monitoring biochar trial, and group support (Adelaide Mt Lofty Ranges NRM \$118,287)  
Parawa Agricultural Bureau

### Stage 2b

This project aims to provide a regional understanding of the impact of alternative and chemical fertilisers on soils moisture holding capacity, growing season length, soil acidity and other soil health parameters such as active microbial biomass (mainly bacteria and fungi), fungi: bacteria ratio, free living nematodes and organic carbon and pasture production by using six case study sites and one replicated trial.



Members of our 70 branches attend branch events and activities and contribute to the sustainability of the industry by taking part in the latest projects and trials.

## Board Members

### **Mark Grossman - Chairman**

#### **Barossa & Light**

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### **Geoff Pages - Deputy Chairman**

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#### **Eyre Peninsula**

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## Ex-Officio Members

### **SARDI**

#### **Dr Phil Davies**

Senior Research Scientist, Biotechnology  
and Plant Cell Culture

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### **University of Adelaide**

#### **Dr Ashlea Doolette**

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### **DEWNR**

#### **Tim Herrmann**

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### **PIRSA**

#### **Greg Cock**

Regional Engagement

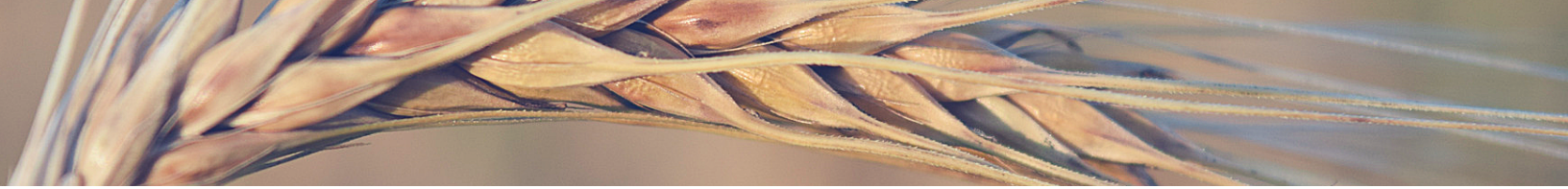
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### **Rural Business Support**

#### **Brett Smith**

Chief Executive Officer

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## ABOUT OUR BOARD MEMBERS

### Mark Grossman, Chair

Mark represents the Barossa and Light region and has been a Bureau member of the Angaston branch since 1982 where he held all office positions. He operates a family primary production partnership with enterprises including sheep (self-replacing merinos, 1st cross ewes, prime lambs and operating Koonawarra white suffolk and border leicester studs), cattle, cropping and viticulture. The farming properties are situated in the Angaston and Sedan regions. Other community involvement includes board member of Australian White Suffolk Association, elected member of the Barossa Council and President of Angaston AH&F Show Society.

### Geoff Page, Deputy Chair

Geoff represents the Hills & Fleurieu region on the Agricultural Bureau of SA Board which is where he resides and has his own farming business that produces cut flowers, certified organic vegetable and herb seedlings which are sold at farmers markets. The farm also produces prime lambs and hay for sale. Geoff works part-time at the University of South Australia as the student Ombudsman. Geoff has academic qualifications in education, agriculture, agricultural economics and land valuation.

### Janette Ridgway, Treasurer

Janette returned to the Board this year as Treasurer and representative for the Upper South East Agricultural Bureau branches. As a farmer, Janette works on a mixed farming enterprise with her husband and son. Their farm is east of Bordertown, in the district known as Pine Hill. They grow broad acre crops, have a sheep enterprise as well as a horticulture business growing gladiolus bulbs. Janette has a passion for agriculture, community and family and brings these skills and understanding to the Board along with a desire for learning and sharing of information.





### David Edwards

David is a fifth generation farmer at Minlaton on the southern Yorke Peninsula with his ancestors taking up the land in 1880. David's cropping rotations have changed over the last fifteen years from barley pasture rotations working the land five to seven times, to no till farming, sowing three hundred hectares each of wheat, barley and canola. David is seen the significant changes in farming over the past ten years and is very positive and optimistic about the future of farming.



### Karen Baines

Karen farms with her husband on 1200ha north west of Ungarra cropping wheat, barley, canola and lupins. Karen loves the farm life and is also a mother of two. She is a passionate Advocate, volunteers on several committees as treasurer and grant writer, and is a farm safety and compliance consultant in her spare time. Karen brings to the Board a variety of business qualifications and experience, information, communication technology skills and a no-nonsense approach to dealing with issues affecting agriculture. She has a Diploma in Rural Business Management and Occupational Health and Safety and is the administrator of the farm business including their heavy vehicle accreditation in the National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme.

*\*Karen will complete her 12-month tenure with the Board in October 2017.*

**Agricultural Bureau**  
of South Australia Inc.  
**PATHWAY TO IMPROVEMENT**



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