

SE WestReg
 HD **A brighter future on the sheep's back**
 BY SALLY Regional Roundup with Sally Hincks
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WA Stud Merino Breeders Association members and visitors recently gathered at the Ocean Beach **Hotel** in Cottesloe, where about 70 people attended the annual meeting followed by guest speakers — and some of us met the association's executive officer, the lovely Gina Lowrie, for the first time.

There were banners promoting Merino sheep and included a pic of Tincurrin farmer Don Thomson , with his words: "The Merino ewe covers all our bases as a great multi-purpose animal."

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Then there were the words of WA Livestock Exporters' Association chairman John Edwards : "The Merino ewe will play a significant role in the future of sustaining the Australian live export industry."

One of the two guest speakers during the afternoon was Australian Wool Innovation media manager Marius Cuming , who has been with AWI for five years.

He spoke on the Wool4Skool program, which he described as his pet project.

"It's a design competition for students and teachers and this year it's going to be part of the national curriculum," Marius said.

On an overhead screen, he showed a blue wool dress designed by a 16-year-old student for the Duchess of Cambridge.

The importance and promotion of wool was still supported by the Prince of Wales, he said.

"We used to say that we need every **Chinaman** to **buy** a pair of socks. Now it's that we need every **Chinaman** to **buy** a suit," he said, emphasising the importance of wool as a fabric.

"And we now have 450 brand partners celebrating wool."

Perceptions of wool across the world revealed that in **China**, wool is seen as a status symbol.

"There was a big vote of yes," Marius said.

The AWI trained 638 shearers and wool handlers last year and there is a booklet available on how AWI plans to use woolgrowers' money, which would include a drive to create new markets.

The other guest speaker at the WA SMBA afternoon and sundowner was Vince Gareffa of Mondo Butchers fame.

This man has a heart of gold, judging by the charities he supports, but initially he spoke of his time in Australia — 58 years — and his 48 years as a butcher here.

"I love the industry and farmers ... and the title of my book, if I ever write it, will be The Flesh in My Life," Vince said.

He spoke of the importance of food.

"For calming ... for seducing the opposite sex," he said.

Just then, his mobile phone went off and he said to the audience: "You never know when the Queen wants to talk."

Vince has met the Queen twice.

He spoke of his friendship with the recently retired Graham Mabury and his times on air with him at 6PR.

"The more money I have raised for Graham's charity, Lifeline, the better my life has been," Vince said.

"The game is helping people.

"It changes the way you feel."

Vince asked that as many farmers as possible who could afford to donate an animal — or two — per year, to do so.

"Not if it hurts a lot, but it's OK if it hurts a little," he said.

"I can get between \$600 and \$800 per lamb at auction — I have 31 charities on my books."

Orchestral MANEOUVRES

The Australian Chamber Orchestra (ACO2) will be playing at the Narrogin Town Hall on Thursday, April 3, with an Anzac Centenary theme.

"It is rare to have a national orchestra of such talent and ability visiting this region," ARTS Narrogin chairwoman Deborah Hughes-Owen said.

"We are confident that you will want to make the most of the opportunity to hear these superb musicians and have kept ticket prices to a minimum to make it available to everyone."

As an extra attraction, the artists have agreed to meet and greet the audience after the concert and over a cuppa.

Tickets are on **sale** now at Aris Space (next to the Narrogin Town Hall) or phone 9881 6987 between 10am and 3pm Tuesday to Saturday for more information.

DEANE Double-take

At the recent Wagin Woolorama, it was good to see Deane Allen in a new Landmark shirt, or so I thought.

It had a green logo on it, but it was the Latevo International logo — Deane is now national manager of the insurance **company** backed by Alliance and Guy Carpenter, the largest global reinsurers in the world.

The aim is to provide farmers with financial security.

Politics on a plate

Only a couple of days to go for the big Farmer on Your Plate event in Perth's Forrest Place.

Sub-headed Getting Agriculture Back on the Political Menu, it will include displays by many organisations involved in agriculture.

It is on this Saturday from 10.30am to 2pm and will be opened at noon by WA Governor Malcolm McCusker .

Represented will be WAFarmers, Harvey Fresh, Bees Neez, Australian Golden Outback, Slow Food, Loose Leaf Lettuce **Company** and more that support or are involved in agriculture.

Organisers say the days will help forge links with city people, who will gain understanding of the importance of farmers to all Australians.

There will be tastings prepared by celebrity chefs — including Vince Gareffa — and speakers will tell of their passion for the agricultural industry.

Reunion at Kings **Park**

Wheatbelt people will gather in Kings **Park** on Saturday, April 5, at the 10th Light Horse memorial **site**.

The reason? It's the 43rd annual reunion of Doodlakine and Baandee residents and includes Hines Hill people this year.

The reunion is between 10am to 4pm and publicity man Bill Henderson urges people to bring their own chairs, lunches (but there is a kiosk nearby) and a name tag, if possible.

Any memorabilia — photos, paper cuttings, historical items — and stories are always welcome.

For more information, call Alison Grimes on 9401 2535 or Evan Beresford on 9582 5097.

open artwork

Margaret River is not only known for its great wines — it has a plethora of creative artists.

And among them are those who exhibit under the title of the Margaret River Region Open Studios.

From Saturday, April 19, to Sunday, May 4, MRROS is offering a trail of discovery for all art lovers — about 80 artists and artisans at more than 45 different venues across the Capes region will open their art studio and workshop doors. This delivers a unique experience by enabling art lovers to meet the creators of their art work and the opportunity to **buy** it.

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