



# NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2020

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# STATE PRESIDENT REPORT

**G'day! What a whirlwind the last three months have been, Christmas and New Year, clubs being flat out attending local shows, members attending working bees, training courses and recently our State Ball being held in St Helens.**

Early January saw Rural Youth members attend a Media Workshop lead by Kim Miller. The day was well presented, and everyone took home much needed advice for when undertaking interviews and such like. The last two months have seen both Forklift and EWP courses undertaken which will enable more volunteers to be upskilled in machinery for FREE! These have been provided to our members from money provided by Skills Tasmania partnering with Youth Futures.

It has been great to see the member base growing and we are currently sitting at just over 200 members, which is a great achievement for Rural Youth. In January Brady and I travelled to Nubeena to officially open the reformed Tasman Club. Over 25 interested people attended and they are now already organising ute shows and events in their area... Keep an eye out for this club as they are on a mission!

The State Ball was an absolute success, over 50 members attended the evening at Tidal Waters in St Helens. The night was full of laughs, singing and later in the night everybody was hitting the dance floor! A highlight of the night was the awards, Callie Barber won the Marcus Oldham Rural Leadership Scholarship, Kingborough-Huon took out Top Club winning \$500, Caitlin Radford was named Rural Youth's Best New Member, and finally Jocelyn Patmore took home Most Outstanding Member for 2019. The commitment from our members to our organisation is unrivalled and I can't express how proud I am to present these awards to such great applicants.

As you would now be aware, a unanimous decision was made by the Agfest Leadership Team, and the Rural Youth Board to cancel the Agfest 2020 event. While this was a significant decision to face, nothing is more important to us than the health and wellbeing of our volunteers, staff, and external stakeholders. While no one could predict that this is how 2020 would begin, it also offers us an opportunity to use this time now to grow as an organisation, find opportunities, and make the 2021 event bigger and better than it has ever been before. I speak on behalf of the Board in saying that while we are grieving for Agfest 2020, we are so excited for what the next few months hold, and we are looking forward to taking this journey forward with you - the members.

Despite our plans changing- the next three months will be just as busy, so stay safe, keep an eye out on our social media pages, and if you have any ideas on things you would like to see happen, get in touch!



**JAKE WILLIAMS**  
State President



Photo courtesy of the Tasmanian Country/Mercury, Hobart





# CEO REPORT



**This is not the report I originally submitted for this newsletter - as you are no doubt aware the Rural Youth Board and Agfest Leadership Team made the courageous decision to cancel Agfest for 2020 as a result of COVID-19.**

Everyone involved is acutely aware of the ramifications of this decision for our members, staff, organisation and community, however it was unanimously agreed, the correct one.

This decision was made after careful consideration of all options, including proceeding and postponement. The admiration I have for the members involved has risen (again, if that is possible) for the way they have conducted themselves under incredible and real pressure. The leadership they have shown throughout this process has been a shining light in what can only be described as a pretty bleak time. To say Jake and Ethan have been thrown in the deep end and told to swim is the understatement of the year, what they have had to deal with has been enough to bring seasoned professionals undone, let alone a volunteer. They have been more than up to the task!

As always, the staff have been amazing! Selena, Linda and Kylie have worked hard to support the members and prepare for all eventualities, while bearing the brunt of frustrated stakeholders during this time. To add to the challenge, we have also been short staffed, I don't know how to express my gratitude to the members who have taken time off work or given up their days off to help in the office – thank you does not even begin to cover it.

Changing gears for a moment, I want to mention the positive:

The Tasman Club is up and running again – good luck guys, I know some of your plans will need to change in light of the current climate, but if enthusiasm counts for anything, you will be fine!

The accommodation and ablution block are both now finished and look amazing! A lot of blood, sweat and maybe the odd tear has gone into this project. Many have contributed over the past couple of years, but none more so than Dale Hayers, he has done an amazing job as Project Manager from 200 odd kilometres away. Thank you so much, between this and the wastewater plant, I hate to think of the number of hours you have dedicated, safe to say it would be in

the hundreds over the course of several years. Thank you also to the group who worked so hard on preparing the site for the Official Opening – it looked brilliant – with a special shout out to Jake and Dylan for spending many hours ensuring the Ablution Block was up to scratch.

The State Ball was a success, Callie Barber and Ash Reynolds confirmed they have great organising skills yet again! Congratulations to all our award and Marcus Oldham winners – the judges had a hard time this year – the calibre of entrants was extremely high! Callie, Jos, Caitlin and KH were all incredibly deserving.

We have had a few staff changes since January. Max Griggs has retired, ex member Jade Hall has taken on the role of Caretaker, which we are excited about. Many of you would know Jade from his years as a Committee member and volunteer at Agfest. Vicki O'Grady and Ellie Fielding have resigned to take up roles in other industries, Kylie Mackrill is now full time and Luci Scott will be joining us on March 30.

We are now in uncharted waters, prior to the cancellation of Agfest, the Rural Youth Board, Agfest Leadership team and staff were working hard on plans for the future of Agfest and Quercus. These will need to be revised, but regardless of the circumstances all of our efforts will be focused on strengthening our organisation and supporting our members. We are also talking with Government and working on alternatives for our 2020 exhibitors before we come back bigger and better in 2021!

We are far from done and dusted! We will keep you updated as we navigate this new world we find ourselves in!

Best wishes,

**KAREN ROBINSON**  
CEO



# QUERCUS ACCOMMODATION OPENING

**Rural Youth Tasmania were excited to welcome distinguished guests and members past and present to Quercus Park for the official opening of our long-awaited accommodation facility on February 28.**

Liberal Senator Claire Chandler represented Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development Michael McCormack and the Australian Government who provided \$96,685 in funding for the \$193,370 project under the Building Better Regions Fund.

Senator Chandler noted that “Rural Youth does a fantastic job supporting the next generation of our vital agriculture sector as well as putting on the sensational Agfest event each year. This new facility allows them to expand their reach and become more sustainable into the future”.

The Tasmanian Government were well represented by Mark Shelton and John Tucker, both Members for Lyons and Janet Lambert stood in for Brian Mitchell, Federal Member for Lyons who was unable to attend.

The occasion allowed us to acknowledge all who were involved, particularly our Tasmanian contractors, and showcase the finished product. It was exciting to have Craig Perkins (Regional Development Australia – Tasmania), David Edgar and Adam Sproule (Events Tasmania) present to see the project firsthand and discuss future plans.

The completion of this project marks a major milestone for the Rural Youth Board and organisation at large, we are all extremely proud of the result and look forward to the future. The facility will be available for bookings from June onwards.



**KAREN ROBINSON**  
CEO



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# AGFEST CHAIRMAN REPORT

**G'day everyone, well this is not the report I thought I would be bringing you after the Christmas break.**

As you would all know by now, the Agfest Leadership Team along with the Rural Youth Board made the heartbreaking decision to cancel Agfest 2020 due to COVID-19. I want to assure you that this decision was not made lightly; a concerted effort was made to engage with health authorities, government, subject matter experts and stakeholders before a decision was made.

Whilst this will have a financial impact on not only Rural Youth but also the broader Tasmanian community, I am confident that we will come back stronger than ever in 2021.

Despite this disappointing news I want to recognise all of the hard work that has been done by our members to date and thank you for supporting me in my time as Chairman so far.

The committee members, you have worked so hard in your respective roles to bring Agfest to life. We had some fantastic changes and additions coming to the event this year that you have all been integral to. Even though we won't get to see them this year, they will create a positive impact for years to come. I hope that you have all learnt something from your roles and that you will consider continuing through to Agfest 2021.

To everyone who has given up their time to attend working bees or volunteer in another capacity, thank you for all the improvements you have made out on site. The care and maintenance means that we are left in a stronger position as we begin to look towards the future and what happens post the COVID-19 pandemic.

I would also like to take this time to thank our hard working office staff. They have been extremely busy over the last few months. They started out the year with the normal rush entering and finalising all exhibitor information from successful applications and

in recent weeks have spent a considerable amount of time dealing with exhibitor enquiries, pulling together financial modelling and helping us to navigate what has been a truly difficult time. Their commitment to the organisation is outstanding and we are lucky to have such a loyal group of people to work with.

When COVID-19 looks to be dying down we'd love to pull together another event to celebrate you and our local community, so have a brainstorm about what that could look like while you are practicing social distancing and email [admin@agfest.com.au](mailto:admin@agfest.com.au) with your ideas.

I urge you all to take some time for yourselves in the coming months to relax and reflect. Reach out to your mates and don't lose your passion for Agfest or Rural Youth. This is what makes us different and sets us apart from others. Agfest 2021 will be our biggest yet and I can't wait to hear all of your ideas on how we can achieve this.

That's all from me for now, till next time.

Cheers,



**ETHAN WILLIAMS**  
Agfest Chairman



# RY PAST MEMBERS ASSOCIATION

**We have received many complimentary comments from people who attended the Agfest Reunion Dinner in October last year and many have asked for another opportunity to gather in the future.**

To this end we will organise an event later this year in the north, which will include a dinner or cocktail party and industry and specialist enterprise visits.

If you are a past member of Rural Youth and haven't joined the Association, please do so as it is important to build our database to enable contact so that we can let you know when an event is being organised. If you're not a member, you may not hear about it and miss out. Membership forms can be downloaded from the Rural Youth website.

A full list of members is available on the Rural Youth website – "Membership".

We absolutely applaud your bravery to cancel this year's event and now that the announcement has been made by the Tasmanian Government to shut our borders, it has proved to be the right decision. Certainly as one who was involved in development of the field days and 33 years thereafter, it is a shock to digest, but the innovation of Rural Youth is second to none and we have confidence that new opportunities will come out of this adversity.

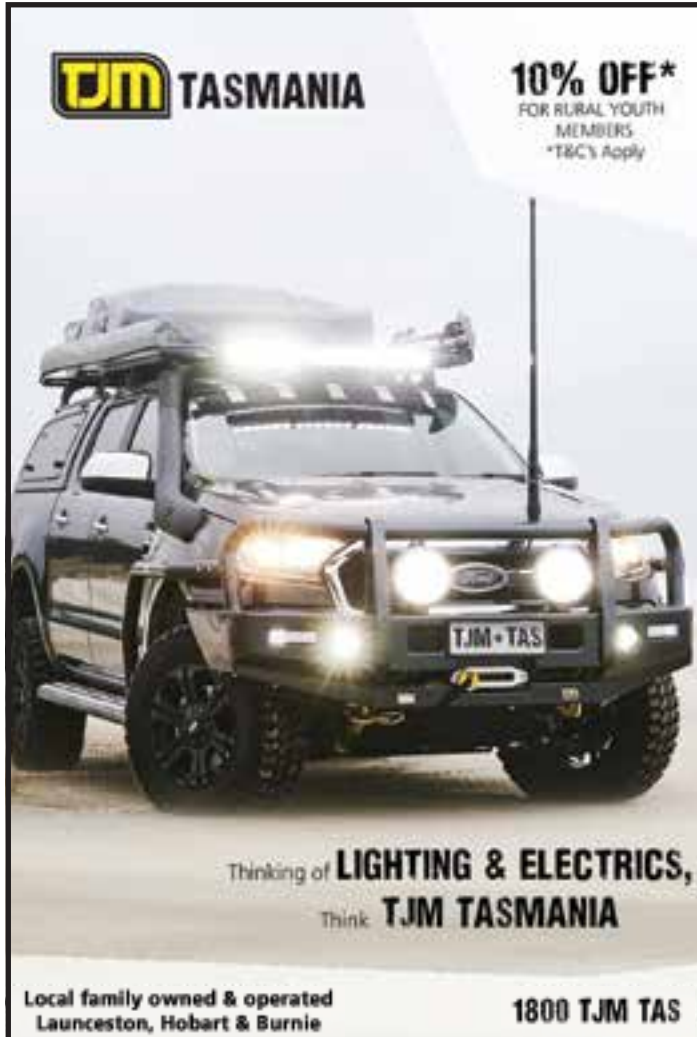
Well done to everyone concerned and we look forward to hearing what comes next.

**NOEL BEVEN**

Convenor

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# STATE BALL HIGHLIGHTS

## A great night was had by all at the State Ball on February 22nd.

More than fifty members ventured to St Helens and made a weekend of it with the Ball and beach 4WDing the next day!

Congratulations to all of our deserving award winners – all of the nominations were worthy, and the judges had to make some hard calls.

The winners were: Caitlin Radford (Best New Member), Jocelyn Patmore (Most Outstanding Member), Kingborough-Huon (Top Club) and Callie Barber, this years recipient of the Marcus Oldham Scholarship.

A big shout out to everyone who helped organise the weekend, particularly Callie Barber and Ashleigh Reynolds – thank you.



# FEATURED CLUB REPORT: OATLANDS

**G'day everyone! We hope you all had an amazing Christmas! We trust that Santa found you all as he did us.**

After Christmas we were expecting to have a slow start to the year, but we were wrong! It's been quite a busy three months, with multiple meetings to attend and following up some commitments from last year and some exciting new events coming up for the Oatlands area!

The New Year has also seen our members helping with working bees at Quercus where we have been achieving amazing things!

Joel took full advantage of the forklift course that Rural Youth offered and is now a licenced forklift operator.

State Ball, what an amazing weekend everyone had on the East Coast! We headed up on Friday night to make a full weekend of it! A huge congratulations to KH on winning Top Club and a big well done to Caitlin, Callie and Jocelyn for winning their respective awards!





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# NORTH MOTTON CLUB REPORT

## For the past three months the North Motton Rural Youth Club have been busy!

We had a Christmas get-together in December, and we were lucky to meet a Canadian and Austrian that Ethan Williams met on exchange in Canada in 2018. In January we had a pot luck dinner and meeting at Ryan and Brigid's house.

This month we went to In The Zone laser tag in Burnie. It was great to have members come from the northern and southern end of the state to attend! We have welcomed new members and now have 19 members in our club.

In March we will be having a dinner followed by a meeting. Then April will be an activity, details still to be discussed.



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# KINGBOROUGH-HUON REPORT

## What a marvellous way to start 2020 for Kingborough-Huon!

Highlight for the club has certainly been receiving the Rural Youth Top Club award for 2019 at the State Ball in St Helens! We were humbled to receive this award which recognises the dedication and club spirit of our members.

In addition, club member Jocelyn Patmore was awarded Most Outstanding Rural Youth Member for 2019! Jocelyn's commitment to the organisation at any level has not been anything less than exceptional, particularly at a club level where her enthusiasm and engagement within the community has strengthened Kingborough-Huon! We are indebted to Jocelyn's involvement over the last five years and look forward to seeing her contributions in a different capacity as her direct Rural Youth journey comes to a close later this year.

Her commitment continues to be strong as Jocelyn was unable to accept her award in person as she and Dale held the fort for Kingborough-Huon at the Huon Valley Relay for Life which was held the same night as the State Ball.

By this time the club will have hopefully held the Southern Region Go-Karting Championships to be held March 3rd! We can't wait for

an action-packed night filled with entertainment and inter club rivalry!

We will have also attended Sorell Rural Youth's Quiz night. Our members have also been very busy with their state commitments particularly with Agfest! This is only going to get busier as the countdown shrinks! A special mention to members Dale and Owen who have worked tirelessly alongside the Board and PMWG to deliver the new accommodation block at Quercus which will have officially opened by the time you are reading this!



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# HAGLEY CLUB REPORT



## February especially has been a busy month for Hagley as we ran two events.

These events included a successful Ute Competition at the Tasmanian Truck Show, held at Quercus Park with very good looking trophies up for grabs! Thank you to our major sponsor Taylor Global for helping out.

More recently you would have also seen Hagley Rural Youth at the Chudleigh Show, running the dog high jump. A fantastic huge crowd cheering on the dogs jumping higher and higher each time.

With a few BBQs and laser tag sessions Hagley has been kept busy and we are looking forward to what the future holds!







## CIRCULAR HEAD CLUB REPORT

### Ready for a big year!

Since starting in January 2019, the Circular Head RY Club have been trying to better engage with our community, in hope of attracting new members to our newly re-established club. 2019 saw us join in on a few NW events - members Jacob, Jacinta, Samantha and Jessica ran a stall at the Burnie Show (at the Agriplex), and Jacob also coordinated a laser tag trip to Burnie for a group of local young people.

Over New Years most of the members spent some time volunteering at the Smithton Rodeo on the gate. It was great to be part of such a big local event and we even bumped into a few other RY members who were attending the event! Being part of the rodeo was a great start to the new year and we hope to have an ongoing presence at the event.

Following the excitement of the rodeo, Jessica, Samantha, Nakore and Callie manned a stall at the Twilight on the Duck - Australia Day event in Smithton. A huge thanks to Callie for organising this and the Bendigo Community Bank for allowing us to use their tent and supplies.

Most recently, Nakore and Callie attended the State Ball in St Helens and had an absolute blast - thank you to all who were involved in the planning and organising of the event, we hope to have our whole club make it to an event soon - maybe next year's ball?

We would like to congratulate Callie on receiving the Marcus Oldham Scholarship, it is wonderful to have her join us in Circular Head and we look forward to hearing all about her experiences in the coming months.

Coming up for the club, some of our members will be teaming up with the 'Feathers and Flannel' Relay for Life Team on March 14th,

with others already participating with other teams - it is always a great event so we look forward to representing RY there.

We are having bi-monthly meetings in 2020 and on the other months we plan to have regular social meet ups and would love to have any RY members join us at the Tallies Draw (Thursday nights 6-8pm). We also plan to up our presence on social media so the community can see what we're up to and when we're meeting up.

If you would like to visit and join us at any time please look us up on Facebook or message any of our members (details found on the page).

**VISIT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE:**  
[www.facebook.com/CircularHeadRuralYouth](https://www.facebook.com/CircularHeadRuralYouth)







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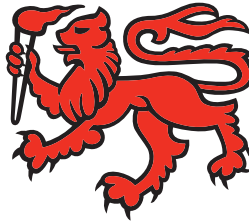
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