

LAND TALK

Newsletter of the 'Centralian Land Management Association Inc.' (CLMA)

G'day all, hope you enjoyed the festive season and got some valuable time off. 2006 looks like an excellent year for CLMA. Coordinator funding has been extended for 21 months and we need to recruit a weeds officer for the second part of the Sandover Weeds project. We may even get more soil conservation funding – the decision will be announced around the time you get this newsletter.

*It's membership time again, and the price is still only \$330 including GST. Apart from everything else you get with membership remember there's a **big** discount on the laser truck!*

I'm really getting the hang of this coordinator position now, so a big thanks to Jo and Andrea for all the help they gave me. It was great to meet so many people in the local pastoral industry at the recent Mt. Riddock field day, and hopefully I'll be making lots of bush trips in the next few months so I can have a yarn with all of you!

Cheers, Adrian.

“MT. RIDDOCK” ROTATIONAL GRAZING FIELD DAY ATTRACTS HUGE CROWD



The recent *Rotational Grazing Field Day* at “Mt. Riddock” was hailed as a great success by the many pastoralists who attended.

An overwhelming number of seventy-five landholders, interested government pastoral industry staff, land management organisations and stock and station agents were updated on the commencement of the “Mt. Riddock” trial as part of the *Central Australian Grazing Strategies Partnership*.

Trial participants, Steven and Rebecca Cadzow outlined their reasons for participating in the trial, what infrastructure they have installed and what outcomes they hope to achieve from the trial.

Maximising the utilisation of Buffel grass pasture by intensively rotationally grazing eight paddocks for 21-28 days each, with approx. 400 hd of Poll Hereford steers, is the predominant aim of their trial. Another 100 hd of steers grazed in a set-stocked paddock will be used as a

control for weight comparison analysis to gather data during the trial.

This aim includes using grazing to continue pasture growth, reduce stalking and thus lower the risk of fire, and also to achieve a better balance between the native grasses and the predominant Buffel grass. Overall they wish to gain a better understanding of Buffel grass and its effectiveness within a sustainable rangeland production system.

Other presenters eagerly sought after by pastoralists included Alison Kennedy and Chris Materne, *Alice Springs DPIFM Pastoral Production*, who demonstrated the variety of monitoring techniques which have been used to assess the pasture status before the commencement of the trial and which will be repeated in the same areas annually to monitor the impact of the rotational system on the trial paddocks.

Cory Wilson, *Saltbush Agricultural Software*, demonstrated the latest herd management software available to track cattle history. Combined with the NLIS reader and weigh scales, this software is NLIS compatible and is designed to be used to facilitate marketing decisions and increase ease of stock handling, time management and lower animal stress. Steven and Rebecca have installed this equipment to efficiently record animal data throughout the trial.

OBSERVANT remote telemetry products were also a source of curiosity for local pastoralists. Matthew Pryor and Anthony Kahn discussed managing water resources by remote, solar powered, radio equipped telemetry units and software. They demonstrated products designed to decrease time and diesel costs, in particular, eliminating unnecessary bore runs to waterpoints, which are running smoothly and require no attention. Steven and Rebecca are also keen to install this system within this

trial to increase the vital water monitoring at the trial site.

The Cadzow family and station staff provided a fantastically-equipped shaded venue and delicious smoko and lunch for hungry pastoralists and observers, who travelled from as far south as the southern border region ("Mulga Park", "Victory Downs", "Lilla Creek"), north to Tennant Creek ("Kurundi") and east to Queensland ("Greenhills"). Many people commented that it was incredible to see such a positive roll-up from a vast cross-section of Central Australia's pastoralist community. The *Central Australian Grazing Strategies Partnership* looks forward to holding further innovative Field Days at "Idracowra" and the NT Government Research Station "Old Man Plains" during the project.



A New Peter in the Laser Truck

Our new laser truck operator, Peter Armstrong, is now ready to fix erosion problems and increase water infiltration and pasture cover. Peter has been living in central Australia for 3 and a half years and previously spent 39 years running properties in NSW.

"I am looking forward to working with station owners and managers, using the laser truck to set out ponding banks, repair wash-outs on roads, along fence lines, slowing the flow of water off slopes etc. (to create more grass, more profit and more peace of mind)."

"I have farmed in NSW, developing properties, growing crops, rearing a family and running livestock – sheep, cattle, goats and horses. I worked with S.A. T.A.F.E. in the AP Lands for 2 and a half years, teaching carpentry, joinery and being involved in many aspects of community life, before we moved to Alice to be near our three grandchildren and their parents. When I heard of this job at CLMA I thought that would be something I could get myself involved in and return a little to this land."

If you would like to know more about what Peter can do for your property with the laser truck, just call the CLMA office on 08 8953 4230.



Towards the end of this month, the eighth Envirofund round will open. This gives land managers the opportunity to get some extra funds for local, on-ground projects aimed at sustainable resource use and biodiversity conservation. Previous projects in the area have included weed control, and fencing sensitive areas for better grazing management. Do you have any ideas? Projects aren't limited to just weeds and fencing (although those *are* good ones). The upper limit on funding is \$50,000 for each project. As usual, CLMA staff will be happy to help members with applications and fulfilling the reporting requirements. So don't be a stranger, give us a call and tell us your project ideas.

Are You Water Smart?

Watersmart is a project run by the Desert Knowledge Cooperative Research Centre. Its aims are to improve the economic and environmental effects of water use in arid-land pastoral production by finding out the best technologies and management practices and making them available to all pastoralists. The project will operate in western Queensland, northern South Australia and the southern part of the NT. It's a big project with lots of field trials, involvement from equipment suppliers and a lot of input from pastoralists. One of the many outputs will be a comparison on the cost, reliability, ease of use, maintenance requirements, and benefits of a range of water-supply equipment. So if you'd like to save time and money, and improve the environment on your property, come to the information day at the Arid Zone Research Institute on Monday March 27th starting at 9:00am and finishing with lunch at 1:00pm. The project officer, Cameron O'Neil, is keen to learn about your experience in pastoral water use in the Red Centre.

For further information please do not hesitate to contact the Project officer on the details below.

Cameron O'Neil

Water-smart Pastoral Production

Project Officer

Desert Channels Queensland

PO Box 601 Longreach Queensland 4730
Ph: 0746 580 600



GLM Course Coming to Alice

To forward Jo Rodney's work in developing the Central Australia Grazing Land Management Workshop, Ellena Hannah has commenced as the Grazing Land Management Officer (GLMO). Ellena will be responsible for coordinating the delivery of the course. This includes preparing participants for the workshop by discussing achievable outcomes with them and compiling relevant information on each station.

It also extends beyond the 3 day workshop to include follow up support to implement grazing land management tools introduced during the course which will aid in achieving outcomes on ground: transferring the classroom into reality. For inquiries on GLM and the role of the GLMO please do not hesitate to contact Ellena at the DPIFM on 08 8951 8143.

DPIFM Consults

Senior departmental officers from the Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines will hold community consultations in Alice Springs in the week beginning 20th March. They want to hear about the issues regional Pastoralists have, and your views on the department's business planning. I'd be more than happy to represent our members at the consultations. If you'd like to express something regarding:

- DPIFM's activities – what works and what doesn't;
- Give your views on current priorities;
- What DPIFM's long-term role should be; or
- What DPRIFM's priorities should be

let me know by the middle of March.

You can tell me by phone, fax, email or in person as I'm (hopefully) touring the region.
- Adrian

MEMBER PROFILE

This year in LandTalk, we have decided to introduce you to fellow CLMA members and comrades in industry. To get the ball rolling, we've started with your CLMA President and his family!

Names: Jim & Stacy Napier
Station: Tanami Downs, 600km NW of Alice Springs
Family: 3 boys Brock, Jamie and Dusty
Station statistics: Total lease area is 4200km
Cattle: 5000 head Santa Gertrudis

Market to: Southern feedlots
 The station is owned by the **Mangkururpa Land Trust**

Jim & Stacy have been managing the property **for 3 years**

Station projects of interest to the CLMA: Fencing Lake Ruth to control grazing around the wetlands in aim to improve soil and water quality.

Favourite cut of Tanami Downs Beef:
Scotch Fillet

Jims' secret to looking so young:
Hard work

Famous for: driving the Big Bad Ford down the rough Tanami Highway to get to meetings to the sounds of Eminem.

Why we like Jim as President of the CLMA: Jim is a bloke who says what he means. Jim and Stacy have lots of enthusiasm for the positive progress of their industry, and despite the huge distance they have to travel to town, make a great effort to get to the meetings and workshops that concern them. Jim & Stacy plan their station work and stocking goals on Tanami Downs to ensure good long term pasture management – we think this is great!!!

Our apologies for not having a great photo of Jim and Stacy to publish, but the recent weather around Tanami Downs has caused a few delays. Let's hope more properties get some of the same!

N.B. Parts of this article were written by Andrea Tschirner and may not accurately reflect the *real* Jim Napier.

HELP WANTED

CLMA is looking for a suitable person to be our new Weeds Project Officer. It's an 18 month contract, and a well-paid, constructive and rewarding job. We'd really like someone who has some basic computer skills, experience in remote bush work, can communicate really well with pastoralists and Aboriginal communities, can work independently and is hard-working and reliable. If you know anyone like this who's looking for work, ask them to contact Adrian on 08 8953 4230 or clma@clma.com.au. The job description and selection criteria are on the web at www.clma.com.au

IN OTHER NEWS...

Weeds

For those of you listening to the Country Hour in early January, you would have heard the good news about the future of weed wacking in the Sandover region. Over the Christmas break, the NT Natural Resource Management (NRM) Board announced successful projects to be funded in the New Year. CLMA was lucky to have a major project application approved to continue with Phase II of the Sandover Weeds project. To date, CLMA and land managers in the upper regions of the Sandover and Bunday have been using Landcare funding to map and control major weeds including Parkinsonia and Rubberbush. This second lot of funding that has been approved will help continue with monitoring and follow-up work in the upper catchment. Then we'll get busy further down stream from Ammaroo Station. If you are in the region, or would like more information about getting help with weed control on your station, please contact us here at the CLMA office.



Dozer

All financial members will receive an information slip with this newsletter regarding the CLMA Dozer. As a financial member we ask for your input into deciding the future direction of CLMA projects and equipment. Please contact Adrian, or members of your Executive Committee for more information.

W.A. Field Trip

Due to a lack of interest and people's sparse time late last year, we have postponed the CLMA Field trip to WA which was originally planned for October 2005. Through the National Landcare Program last year, the CLMA was able to secure funding for a trip taking central Australian Producers to the Gascoyne-Murchison region in WA. The trip was planned to include visiting and meeting allies in industry, and a visit to several successful station projects addressing soil conservation and sustainable grazing methods. If you are still interested in being involved with this voyage (most travel expenses will be covered by the

project), and are able to commit to getting away in May/June for 10 days (dates to be negotiated) please let us know. If there isn't enough interest, funding will be returned.

December AGM

CLMA held its' AGM at the NTCA office in mid-December. Thanks to everyone who made an effort to get in to town, hopefully this year will see a few more (and new) faces to our CLMA meetings as we plan to work them in with a few more field days and station visits. If you have any great brain waves about field days or station visits you'd like to do...let us know in the CLMA office.

Congratulations and welcome to the elected members on the Executive Committee for 2006:

President	Jim Napier	<i>Tanami Downs</i>
Vice President (nth)	Liz Bird (Acting)	<i>Indiana</i>
Vice President (sth)	Angus McKay	<i>Umbearra</i>
Treasurer	Benny Hayes	<i>Undoolya</i>
Secretary	Rod Cramer	<i>Temple Bar</i>
General Committee	Steve Cadzow	<i>Mt Riddock</i>
	Chris Nott	<i>Alcoota</i>
	Rex Fuller	<i>DeRose Hill</i>
	Stewart Weir	<i>Ammaroo</i>
	John Kilgariff	<i>Erdunda</i>
	Jamie Evans	<i>Hamilton Downs</i>

Memberships Due

Yep...it's time to pull out the cheque book again and renew your annual membership for 2006. Please fill out the form attached and return to the CLMA before the 31st of March.

You can now make membership payments via EFT if you have Internet Banking Please don't forget to let us know via email, fax or phone if you have paid with EFT so we can identify your payment in our banking records.

Another Farewell from CLMA

As you may have heard, Andrea & Kurt have been offered a job in WA and will be moving to White Wells Station in early February. Jo left for Queensland in December, so Adrian is going to take over full time Co-ordinator duties until the end of March 06. By this time, the Executive Committee will have made a decision about re-advertising the Co-ordinator position.

For all general enquiries at the CLMA, **Adrian James** is now your full-time contact. Ph 8953 4230 or clma@clma.com.au

Andrea's Rangeland Expedition

During our time away, we were fortunate to visit several cattle properties around Northern Australia, and see some great country. Starting in western Qld, we were spoilt with vistas of lush green Mitchell grass and a couple of weeks camping around the Diamantina flood and channel country that looked brilliant following good winter rains in much of Western Qld. It was great to travel through some of the county which NAPCO have been managing as part of a Conservation agreement with the QLD Government. In one flood-out on Glen Ormiston Station, we counted over 100 Brolgas all hanging out near a Turkey's nest.

During our stay in Qld, I attended the State Landcare Conference in Barcaldine. It was great to meet with many other Landcare Co-ordinators and hear the ideas, concerns and aspirations of pastoralists from many regions around the state....they are nearly all the same as yours! A major part of the Conference which I learnt a lot from, was a session on looking into the dynamics behind "Generation Y" and how we can encourage young people to stay working with and for our industry (some of these ideas will challenge many of you who are still thinking "that's not the way we did it when I was a young'un"!!!)

Some interesting things I learnt about during our travels and visits included seeing how grazing trials were using camels to knock back prickly weed species in badly infested areas. I also quickly came to appreciate how relatively weed-free we are in central Australia...we are very fortunate to be in this situation.....let's keep it that way! There are many parts of Qld where introduced weeds have significantly impacted on grazing profitability. The biggest eye opener for me was the Prickly Pear....it was all over the place. Luckily for most areas, Mr. Cactoblastis is fighting hard and doing a good job, however it really highlighted the potential impact of an outbreak of nasties without any easy method of control. During our trip, we were lucky enough to use up some frequent flyer points and spend a week abroad in Fiji....can you believe that I found a lone Rubberbush plant in a remote coastal village. It had been planted for it's pretty flowers. Yep, they will grow anywhere!!!



WEEDS WILL GROW EVERYWHERE!!! Andrea with a giant prickly pear growing on a rocky ledge on the top of Mt Lambert, Carnarvon Station

After scooting around the top end to avoid the worst of the build-up season, we headed to WA where we stuck to the coast for most of the way south. Many stations in WA with access to aesthetic features (ie. great coastline, rivers, Gorges) have been getting serious about income diversification with station-stays, and incorporating tourism into their business. For many, this works well, especially in recent times of uncertain wool and export markets. Many leases are changing over to an all-cattle enterprise after decades of wool production. The impacts of heavy grazing by sheep and goats has been detrimental to a lot of pastoral land, and it was great to hear of numerous projects which were addressing the legacy of past management and drought. Goats are still a major issue in the West, especially now their export value has been recognized, and at one stage we passed about 150 head in one paddock alone on a public 4WD track.

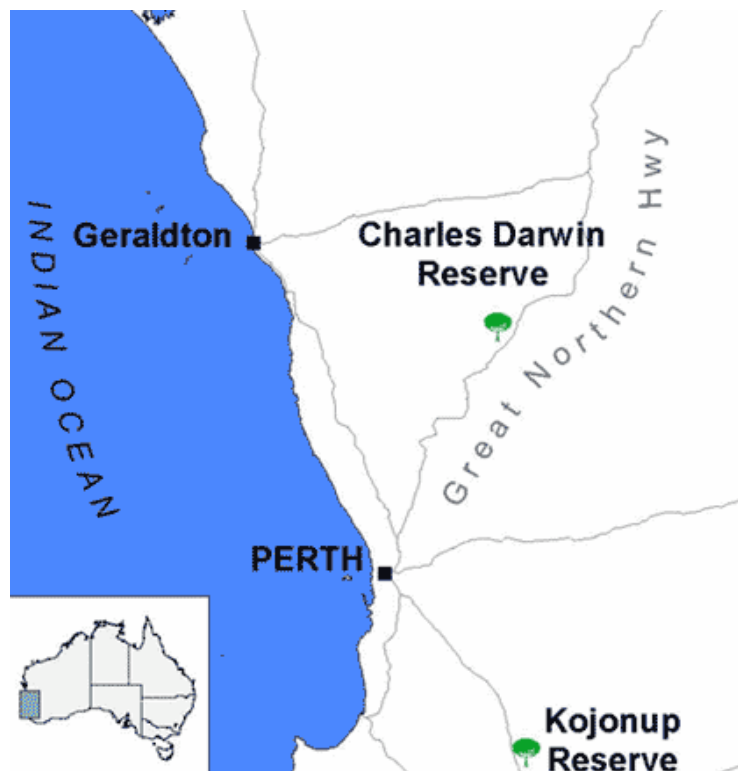
All in all, we have had a fantastic trip. It has been great to learn about and visit the many places which make up an integral part of the north

Australian beef industry. During our trip I was able to draw many industry parallels between the regions we visited, to central Australia. However, the one thing that stands out in my mind the most, is the terrific amount of support and resources that producers in central Australia (and the NT in general) have access to. No other region we visited, has the number of committed Government agencies, research results, on-ground projects or access to conservation project funds like the Alice region (for the number of families and leases). I think this is probably something we all take for granted a lot of the time.

CLMA is part of this great pastoral resource story in Alice Springs, and many pastoralists and industry people I met during our travels knew about the CLMA and it's progressive history. I hope that the good reputation that CLMA is founded on will continue into the future, but I believe this is only possible with membership support and input. Any team is only as good as what it's players are willing to contribute.

I have really enjoyed my rewarding (however brief) time with the CLMA and will miss Alice and the friends I have made here. Thankyou to all members who have made my time memorable and helped me to learn more about the industry and the great country in which you live.

Wishing you a successful 2006, and looking forward to your continued support to the CLMA for the coming year. Be sure to drop in on us at White Wells if you happen to be visiting the WA!



Where is White Wells?

White Wells station was purchased by the Australian Bush Heritage Fund in 2003, the property lies off the great Northern Highway which runs NE of Perth toward Mt Magnet.

Andrea & Kurt will be managing the property for the Bush Heritage Fund in a team position, enabling them to work with a new bub (due in April.) Be sure to drop in and say hello if you are travelling through the West



CENTRALIAN LAND MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION
PO BOX 2534
ALICE SPRINGS NT 0871
Phone: 08 89534230
Fax: 08 89523824

Print Post Approved
545270/00015

**SURFACE
MAIL**

**POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA**

For general enquiries, & to contact Adrian clma@clma.com.au
For info about EMS, & to contact Dionne ems@clma.com.au
For info about the Central Australian Grazing Strategies Partnership, & to contact Jillian cagsp@clma.com.au

If you know of any new additions or other news – let us know!