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Inviting You to Get Social with APEN

Cynthia Mahoney



Cynthia Mahoney



What would a successful APEN social media network look like to you? What could you personally do on social media that could help or support other APEN members and create a vibrant and valuable virtual network?

The APEN Social Media subcommittee connected recently to review our social media strategy. Our group is made up of a mixture of social media addicts through to some newbies who are interested in the idea but who are still getting comfortable with the technology and understanding how they could utilise it. We talked about the value we'd all get from participating in social media to tap into our APEN network to see what others are doing: share ideas, experiences and content, provide feedback and even collaborate with each other.

APEN has a website, a monthly e-newsletter, a LinkedIn group, a Facebook page and is on Twitter. Subcommittee member Cynthia Mahoney was asked to share her tips on how APEN members could use social media to connect and

we also wanted to invite you to contribute your ideas.

Cynthia's top social media tips:

- Social media is social so if you read something you like or appreciate why not give it a "like", share it around or even make a comment?
- Share your own content with your APEN network – Do you have any photos or videos or stories you could share from one of your events or projects? What might be a run-of-the-mill event or project for you might provide another APEN member in another location or industry with inspiration or new ideas to try it where they are.
- Start a conversation: ask a facilitation or design question and tap into the knowledge and experience of the APEN network – generally people love helping each other out. Or share an opinion about something you've read or an idea you want to explore further.

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The Agricultural Innovation Systems Perspective



“Start a conversation: ask a facilitation or design question and tap into the knowledge and experience of the APEN network – generally people love helping each other out.”

- Post links to interesting articles you've read that other people might also benefit from reading.
- Share your upcoming events and ask the people in your network to help you spread the word.
- If you have an idea you'd like to try but you're not sure how it will go – why not post about it and gather feedback or ideas from peers and mentors?
- If you're a blogger or produce a newsletter, we'd love to hear about it – consider posting a link on LinkedIn or Facebook or tweet us the link.
- If you've met another APEN member at an event or come across them at a webinar invite them to connect with you on social media and continue to build the relationship.
- Like our Facebook page and invite your facebook friends who might be interested to like us too - Australasia-Pacific Extension Network (APEN).
- Join our LinkedIn group - APEN (Australasia-Pacific Extension Network).
- Contribute your upcoming events to the e-Bulletin.
- Don't be shy - you're sharing your content so that others can learn and see what is working and even what isn't working.

Twitter tips:

- Follow us @APENenews
- Find other APEN members to add to your twitter network by checking out who we follow and who follows us

- Retweet and favourite our tweets
- Mention us in your tweets so that we can retweet your content and news
- Let us know what hashtags you are using at your events so we can connect and share

APEN members are engaging regularly on our LinkedIn group which is great to see and we're trying to ramp up our interaction on Facebook and Twitter. How would you like to see APEN members interacting on social media? What do you need from APEN? What are your ideas? We'd appreciate hearing from you about how we can all contribute to APEN being a vibrant, engaged and participative social network in the virtual world as well as the real one.

APEN's social media subcommittee comprises of Cynthia Mahoney, Justine Severin, Rebecca Wallis, Warren Hunt, Greg Mills, Graham Harris, Roe Currie, Denise Bewsell, John James, Lisa Stevens, Maryse Bourgault, Sophie Folder, Mike Weise, Austin McLennan and Jeanette Long.

Cynthia Mahoney and Associates is a consulting firm that works with individuals, groups, business and government in facilitation, strategic planning and evaluation. Cynthia is passionate about working with people to develop their life and leadership skills and to increase diversity and participation in decision-making in industry, government and the community. She is a strong believer in bringing people together to identify issues, exchange ideas and develop solutions that work for them, their family, their business and community.



FROM THE EDITOR

Good day everyone and welcome to another edition of ExtensionNet! As you will have noticed, this one is still on print rather than online as I had flagged in my last editorial. We thought that we would keep the distribution of the annual report as printed material, and since I have been too busy with field work to get a good grasp on the website platform, we figured that we would have one last ExtensionNet printed. I plan to have four online editions next year, and we will send you the annual report with some of our favourite articles for the year.

As always, I am looking for content for the next editions. Please do not be shy to send along small reports of what you are doing, strategies that have worked (or not!),

thoughts on issues related to our profession, etc. The important thing is that we all learn together.

I'm keeping it short and sweet this time. As you'll see, other people have had a lot to say (wink to Austin!). Speaking of Austin, I want to thank you for your leadership this past year. Being on the management committee with you has been inspiring. I also need to thank Jeanette for stepping into that role. It is definitely a role I would be a little scared to take on.

Happy reading!!!

Maryse

A Word from our New President Jeanette Long

Welcome to this edition of ExtensionNet. I am looking forward to my term as President of APEN and would like to thank Austin McLennan, the Management Committee members and Rosemary Currie for their hard work and dedication to the organization.

I have been a member of APEN for many years and have particularly enjoyed the networking, roadshows and reading ExtensionNet to keep up with what is going on in the world of extension.

During my time as President I am keen to increase the opportunities for member interaction. We are currently working on our social media strategy with Rebecca Wallis from WA taking an active role to increase our use of Facebook and Twitter. The LinkedIn groups are well subscribed with some regular interaction occurring.

We have advertised for a new Webinar Coordinator, many thanks to John James for his commitment to this role over the years. Three to four webinars will be offered over the coming year. If you have some research or practical extension examples to share, the webinars will provide a great opportunity for this. Please let Rosemary or myself know.

As a past Mentor in the APEN mentoring scheme I would also love to see enough interest to run this program again in 2015. If you know of anyone who would like to be involved as either a mentor or mentee please “tap them on the shoulder”. Mentee’s often need the support to put their hand up – the benefits for both mentee and mentor are significant.

I hope to meet many of you in South Australia at our conference next year. The final November dates will be announced soon. The theme will be “Managing Change, Innovation and Action in an Ever Shrinking World.”

The sub-committees are working hard in the background on a range of topics. These committees are made up of interested members as well as members of the Management Committee. They are a great way to become more involved in your organisation.

And finally a bit about me - my background is as a farmer, facilitator, trainer and coach. I work with my husband Bill in both our farming business, based at Ardrossan in SA, and in our consulting business, Ag Consulting Co.



I am particularly passionate about developing extension skills with a focus on people and in developing the skills and confidence of women in agriculture.

My current project work includes managing Grain and Graze 3 for East SA and facilitating for a NRM Partnerships Project, both projects are funded by GRDC. I also manage and facilitate a rural women’s leadership project, *Stepping into Leadership*, which is being funded by Primary Industries and Resources SA.

Bill and I manage the GRDC Extension Adoption Training and Support Program in the GRDC Southern Region. This program aims to up-skill experienced advisers and researchers in extension methodology. We also facilitate *How to Communicate with Farmers* workshops for the Department of Water Environment and Natural Resources in SA.

I was a founding member of the Ag Excellence Alliance in SA and am the current Treasurer. Previously I was the National Chair and Coordinator of Partners in Grain.

Please contact any of the Management Committee members, Rosemary or myself with any queries and ideas for APEN. I look forward to working with you all over the next couple of years.

Jeanette Long

I hope to meet many of you in South Australia at our conference next year. The theme will be “Managing Change, Innovation and Action in an Ever Shrinking World.”

APEN's Annual Report 2013/2014



APEN's 20th AGM was held on Friday August 29, 2014 at 2.00pm AEST by Webinar/Teleconference.

It was preceded by a webinar presented by New Zealand member, Shane Max, Orchard Productivity Manager- Global Supply, Zespri International Ltd; "Punching above their weight - The New Zealand Kiwifruit extension story". The webinar was well received by the 31 attendees from all states of Australia and New Zealand.

Twenty three members stayed on-line for the AGM. The annual reports from the Treasurer, Greg Mills and retiring President, Austin McLennan were presented and follow below.

The reports were followed by the formal election of the new President, Jeanette Long and Regional Coordinators for WA,

Qld, NT and Vic; Rebecca Wallis, Graham Harris, Warren Hunt and Mike Weise respectively. Maryse Bourgault was also formally elected as the ExtensionNet Editor.

Austin reported on the past year – starting from the Conference in Christchurch and finishing with the 2014 Roadshow with meetings, submissions, Innovation and Change webinars (thanks to John James, QDAFF and Citrix), publications and subcommittee activity in between. He thanked the Management Committee (MC), subcommittee members, cluster coordinators, members and the APEN Secretariat for their support during his time as President. Many of the attendees thanked Austin for his efforts as President through the chat box on the webinar.

The new President, Jeanette Long, thanked Austin for all his efforts on the MC and particularly as President over the past four years. She said she looked forward to his return to the MC as Past President and wished him well for his upcoming busy fruit-fly season and short leave of absence from the MC.

The other formal duties of the AGM were to confirm the appointment of APEN's Public Officer and also the Auditor for 2015/2016. They will again be Rosemary Currie, APEN's Secretariat, and Bob Travers & Associates, Chartered Accountants of Albury, NSW, respectively.

The President's and Treasurer's reports follow:

APEN President's Report for 2013/14

Austin McLennan, President



Delivered by APEN President, Austin McLennan at the Annual General Meeting of the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network held on 29 August, 2014. The AGM was held as part of webinar for APEN members, following a guest presentation by Shane Max from Zespri International Ltd on the "Punching above its weight - The New Zealand Kiwifruit Extension Story"

It is with pleasure that I present the APEN President's report for 2013/14.

Today I am looking forward to outlining some of APEN's key achievements and activities over the past year, as well as some of the opportunities that lie ahead for our organisation.

As it is my fourth and final annual report as APEN President, I also look forward to indulging – briefly I hope – in some reflection on what the role has meant to me, and my thoughts on vacating it.

However, most of all, I hope it will be clear that APEN is realising its plan to be "The (leading) organisation for extension professionals" (APEN Corporate Statement) ... and that, importantly, we have been achieving this by providing a

"Platform for Professional Development, Networking and Representation" (taken from the APEN Mission Statement).

For me, it has always been these three sign posts – Networking, Professional Development and Representation – that have provided the focus on what APEN should be doing and the direction it should be heading - to deliver the maximum benefit to our members and the broader extension and advisor community and, by extension, to the industries and communities with which we work.

Management Committee

Throughout this year your elected Management Committee (MC), comprising the President, eight Regional Coordinators, one from each Australian state and NZ, and the ExtensionNet Editor, have taken responsibility for managing the overall business of the organisation.

This last year has seen a significant turnaround with every single Management Committee role filled as we come into this year's AGM. At the conclusion of last year's AGM we had three positions vacant. But I am pleased to say that this

"For me, it has always been these three sign posts – Networking, Professional Development and Representation – that have provided the focus on what APEN should be doing..."

Table 1: Record of APEN MC meetings and member participation, 2013/14

Y = Chairperson, Y* = Face to Face

Quorum: 4 Members														
Meeting	Date	P	PP	WA	TAS	NSW	VIC	SA	NT	NZ	QLD	ED	Roe	Members
#141	27/09/2013	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	9
#142	25/10/2013	Y	R	Y		Y	Y	Y		Y		Y	Y	7
#143	22/11/2013	Y		Y	Y		Y		Y			Y	Y	6
#144	20/12/2013				Y	Y	Y	Y		Y			Y	5
#145	31/01/2014	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	8
#146	20-21/02/14	Y*		Y*	Y*	Y*		Y*	Y*	Y*		Y*	Y*	9
#147	14/03/2014	Y			Y	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	7
#148	11/04/2014	Y		Y				Y			Y		Y	4
#149	16/05/2014	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	9
#1410	6/06/2014	Y					Y		Y	Y	Y		Y	7
#1411	4/07/2014	Y		Y			Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	7
#1412	1/08/2014	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	8
Total		11	0	7	8	8	9	9	6	10	7	9	12	

changed very quickly; by January this year we had no vacancies, with special thanks to Rebecca Wallis, Graham Harris and Maryse Bourgault who came forward to fill these roles on a causal basis, and who we look forward to formally electing to their MC roles later in today's meeting.

I also look forward today to electing regional councillors for those positions declared vacant heading into this year's AGM, i.e. the NT and Victorian Regional Coordinator roles. I would like to thank both Warren Hunt and Mike Weise for their first term in the role, and am looking forward to their re-nomination from the floor later in today's meeting – along with anyone else who may wish to contest the role.

Cluster Coordinators

Ideally each Regional Coordinator is supported by one or more 'Cluster Coordinators' and this is seen as a key role in helping APEN deliver more activity on the ground in the regions. I can personally think of few better ways to develop your networks and professionalism in extension than by taking on a Cluster Coordinator role and doing it well.

I particularly want to thank those who, even if not 'Cluster Coordinators' in name, played a key role as local organisers and contacts during this year's APEN Roadshow event that toured Australia and New Zealand delivering workshops at ten different locations, from Hamilton in New Zealand, Ingham in far north Queensland, and Perth in the far west of the Australian continent.

So I wish to thank (and congratulate) those

members who are our current cluster co-ordinators, or have acted as their equivalent in 2013/14, and look forward to once again in 2014/15 meeting our goal of at least one local activity per region per year.

Subcommittees

Under the APEN constitution, we have the ability to use subcommittees to bring in talent and energy from outside the MC to assist with various initiatives. Over the last three years the APEN MC has seriously ramped up our subcommittee structure to help us progress a number of key goals. Contributing to APEN subcommittees can be an excellent way of not just contributing to your professional organisation, but enhancing your own skills in areas that might be outside your main area of work.

Some of our subcommittees come and go once the job they were set up to do has been completed. One such subcommittee that we have finally been able to put to bed in 2013/14 was the group of talented and motivated individuals who put on last year's International Conference in New Zealand, APEN ICNZ13. Once again, special thanks to the chair and APEN ICNZ13 convener, Denise Bewsell, plus her team who did such a fine job in bringing that event together.

However, as one subcommittee closes, another opens, and this year has seen the appointment of a new committee charged with putting on next year's APEN Conference, to be held in November 2015 in Adelaide. Thanks to Lauren Thompson who is currently chairing that group and the rest of her team – we expect to be hearing

much more from them over the next few months. We will also soon be recruiting a chair and committee to lead the effort towards hosting our next International Conference, destined for north Queensland in 2017. As always, there are many opportunities to get involved.

One of the jewels in our subcommittee crown is a very special group called the Education, Training and Accreditation subcommittee. Led ably by its chair, Dr Peter Ampt from the University of Sydney, one of its main purpose is to help APEN develop some higher level plans, policies and actions about improving skills development for working advisors in the natural resource management and primary industry sectors. I look forward to reporting on some of its specific achievements later in this report.

The other two main active subcommittees that we have are our 'National Extension Policy'(for Australia) and 'EFS Journal and International Initiatives' subcommittees. The latter, chaired by Roy Murray-Prior, has been especially busy at reforms to APEN's Extension Farming Systems Journal – again more on that soon.

In short, there are many opportunities to help out APEN (and help your own development in the process).

Formal Meeting Schedule

Throughout 2013/14 the APEN MC has conducted its formal business through web conferences held every month and additional meetings and correspondence as required.

Table 1 (above) outlines our schedule of

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APEN Treasurer's Report for 2013 - 2014

Greg Mills, Treasurer

This report is based upon an audit of APEN's finances conducted by Bob Travers & Associates, Chartered Accountant, Albury, NSW.

The APEN financial position at June 30, 2014 was sound with total equity of \$94,332. During the year we received \$1,710 interest from our investments. There was an operating loss for the 2013/2014 financial year of \$16,970.

Tables 1 and 2 record the profit and loss situation and Table 3 records the Assets and Liability situation. In 2012-13 APEN took on the management of SELN fund (\$8,575) which are now included in APEN audited reports.

A healthy equity allows APEN:

- to provide free copies of Shaping Change to new members postage free and to other members at postage cost only
- to allow the Management Committee to meet face-to-face yearly
- to underwrite future conferences and cluster activities and
- to be able to offer tenders for the completion of tasks needed to keep APEN operating as a peak body.

As Treasurer I would like thank Rosemary Currie for her management of the organisation's finances.

APEN activities are also supported by many organisations who provide in-kind support by providing assistance such as meeting venue at no cost. The employers of management committee members also make significant contributions through staff time commitments and in some cases assistance with travel to APEN activities. Increasingly many management committee members operate their own businesses and the time commitments away from their business activities should also be recognised.

I would also like to pass on my personal appreciation for the efforts of Austin in his leadership of APEN during his term as president. Austin's commitment to APEN achieving its full potential has been key to the continued success of APEN during this period.

Greg Mills

APEN Treasurer

29 August 2014

Table 1 Income and Expenses

	2011 - 12 Total \$	2012 - 13 Total \$	2013 - 14 Total \$
Income			
Advertising	-	-	-
APEN Conference	110 791	-	37 659
APEN Roadshow workshops	-	-	25 209
APEN Webinar local event	-	532	-
Horticulture Australia (HAL) project	-	81 000	9 000
Shaping Change Book	2 751	2 474	1 683
Membership	19 161	26 395	29 763
SELN funds	-	8 575	381
Sundry Receipts	1 398	-	32
Sponsorship – GRDC & Other re Forum, DAFF	12 104	6 250	-
Region Income	127	-	-
Interest Received	5 016	2 741	1 710
TOTAL	151 348	127 967	105 437
Expenditure			
Accountancy & Audit Fees	1 328	1 284	1 381
Administration	29 620	30 735	31 917
APEN Award	1 399	-	708
APEN Mentoring Scheme	480	188	-
APEN project AEP & Forum 07	4 429	466	3 205
Bank & Government Charges	2 541	903	1 502
Cost of Meetings	4 442	6 368	7 023
Conference/Forum Costs APEN (incl. VC to HAL)	123 310	50 387	45 865
EFS Journal	-	-	524
ExtensionNet	7 083	7 939	5 253
Insurance	377	390	400
Not In Tender	-	-	2 526
Printing, Stationery and Postage	295	741	39
Promotion (Members Directory & membership brochures, APEN Banners)	2 582	2 032	964
SELN expenses	-	552	240
Region Events Payments	533	304	13 056
Sundry Expenses	801	228	298
Tender payment	-	4 160	6 700
Website	3 791	4 291	806
TOTAL	183 011	110 968	122 407

Table 2 Profit and Accumulated funds

	2009 - 2010 Total \$	2010 - 2011 Total \$	2011 - 2012 Total \$	2012 - 2013 Total \$	2013 - 2014 Total \$
Net Surplus/Loss	-24 499	49 825	-31 663	16 999	-16 970
Accumulated Funds	76 141	125 966	94 303	111 302	94 332

Table 3 Assets and Liabilities as at June 30

	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014
Assets			
Cheque Account	26 695	20 922	34 813
Term Deposit	70 000	0	35 945
Online Saver	0	85 000	11 757
Term Deposit SELN	0	10 285	10 666
Cash	0	0	0
Accounts receivable	1 104	1 852	4 255
Provision for impairment of receivables	0	0	0
Total	97 282	118 257	97 436
Liabilities			
Accounts owing	2 979	6 955	3 104
GST owing	0	0	0
Total	2 979	6 955	3 104
Equity	94 303	111 302	94 332

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Roadshow Review: Beware of the Shiny Object!

Andrew Huffer, Facilitation and Community Engagement Specialist

I've really enjoyed partnering with APEN to run the 2014 Roadshow. This involved delivering ten workshops on 'Designing Effective Events' throughout Australia and New Zealand.

The workshop helped participants to get their message to 'stick' through understanding the basic Adult Learning principles to successfully engage people.

A key section of the workshop focused on the different types of learning modalities. In summary, there are three main forms of communication and learning - visual, auditory and kinaesthetic. We all use the three forms to some extent but, for each of us, one form is often preferred and used more effectively.

Why do you need to know this?

If you're facilitating a session or delivering a presentation we all know the importance of staying focused. A key part of our role is to keep participants on track and staying with us. Hence we need to do everything within our own super-powers to minimise distractions.



Remember, in a typical population the proportion of the styles is V = 35%, A = 25%,

K = 40%. So it's worthwhile being aware of the different styles, what stimulates their learning and involvement and importantly, what distracts them.

Table 1 below is a guide to help you.

The key message

Be aware of your preferred style and what distracts you most. Work hard to stay focused. Once you become distracted, so do your participants – distraction becomes magnetic.

If you missed the roadshow workshops and would like some background on the VAK model, contact Andrew andrew@andrewhuffer.com.au

If you attended one of the roadshow workshops and want to stay ahead of the pack, make sure you utilise the online platform that has been set up for you. Ask questions about upcoming events, get peer input and share your successes!

Andrew Huffer delivers a range of professional development programs covering Event Design, Facilitation Skills, Marketing and Succession Planning. He also assists a range of clients in the design and delivery of community engagement team planning processes. He has been involved with APEN as member and event participant since 1995.



Learning modality	Qualities	Natural enemies
Visual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like reading • Appreciate drama and art • Good at reading facial expressions and body language. • Use terms like: "I see that" and "That looks right" • When spelling they try to 'see' the word. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive movement and activity within a venue. • Activity outside the venue (e.g. movement near windows or people walking past.)
Auditory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like to listen and talk • Prefer to learn from lectures, talks and audio recordings. • Use terms like: "It sounds right" and "Listen to this." • When spelling they try to 'sound out' words phonetically. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background noise, side conversations, garden blowers, phones.
Kinaesthetic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like movement and action. • Prefer to learn by writing, acting out, pacing and gesture. • Use terms like: "I feel that is the case" and "I get it". • When spelling they try to write the word mentally to see if it feels right. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sitting still and being stuck inside. • Boredom, not being able to move

Table 1 - Learning Modalities



Opinion Letter

Your Mind and The Climate

John Petheram

I suggest that most of us were attracted to 'extension' by some altruistic notion of 'helping' farmers, or improving conditions for rural communities (or their land). We don't sign an 'extension oath', but most of us feel some ethical obligation towards guiding our clients. A second contention is that most practitioners have enough scientific understanding to accept the view of the vast majority of climate scientists - that global warming is real, man-made and dangerous. Yet thirdly, I observe that our profess is generally behaving no differently to most of the population in terms of dealing with climate change, i.e. we're failing to act or advocate for urgent action on this major threat to our society.

Of course the extension profession (and APEN) are not alone in a 'turning a blind eye' to climate change. The scientific community in general has been remarkably ineffectual in influencing public views (UCL 2014). We know a hotter climate is already affecting farm production, health and safety and water supplies, and has brought higher insurance costs and vulnerability to flood and fires (BOM 2014). To survive in an increasingly warmer world, rural producers will need major changes to transport, energy and farming systems, and governments that acknowledge the realities of climate science. Yet climate change seems to hardly rate a mention in APEN conferences or other activities, or as a factor in defining 'recommendations' for RD & Extension (see ExtensionNet, 21,1, 2014). Please correct me if I've missed something.

So what's going on in our minds?

How can we explain this dismissal of this scary scientific reality by people supposedly obligated to work for a safe and prosperous future for rural society? Our justifications probably include: *no-one wants to be the bearer of bad news; people learn best from teachers they like; or, we can't be seen to take political sides.*

According to the Australian Psychology Society (APS 2014) people experience a range of emotions and reactions when faced with serious environmental threats -- sadness, numbness, depression, frustration and anger. Most often we deal with these emotions by 'denial' - an unconscious defence mechanism against unbearable pain. When we realise deep-down that we are contributing to injustice or damage to society or nature, we experience 'dissonance' - 'a knowing yet acting otherwise'. To avoid engaging with such awful reality we draw on techniques like *splitting, projection and twisting* Ride (2014).

Splitting is used to render the climate message *bad, misguided, a conspiracy, scaremongering or idealistic*. This preserves our self-image, and fosters a cocoon of self-satisfaction and obliviousness to other views. By projection we can denigrate those bearing bad news as: *worriers, pessimists, trouble-makers, greenies, or zealots*. We may even encourage these 'others' to continue, so we can further distance ourselves from involvement, while feeling relieved someone is doing something about the problem. Freud (1918) remarked that once people can no longer avoid 'the facts', they generally adopt another plan - they recognise the facts but eliminate, by means of *twisted interpretations*, the consequences that follow.

Twisting in relation to climate change produces unsubstantiated statements: *There has been no warming for 15 years! It's cold - so how can there be global warming?* Organisations opposing climate action, invariably sponsored by carbon intensive industries (Oreskes & Conway 2010) tap into mistruths, in propaganda designed to cast doubt on climate science or the need for change: *There is no consensus among climate scientists. Climate skeptics should be given much more voice. Fixing the economy is much more important than tackling climate.*

Group influences are all powerful in shaping public opinion on climate change. *Unconscious collusion* is an

unspoken agreement by a group to think, feel and behave in particular ways (Nisenbaum 2014). Hence, disagreement in climate discourse becomes more to do with group values and world-views ...than about scientific facts. Labour and Coalition supporters thus have opposing views on climate action because of fundamental values - whether we favour social good or individual liberties, or regulated or non-regulated markets. Of course, groupthink also occurs within environmental movements, which must therefore take special care to base actions on science and not on supposition or political bias. Finding ways of ensuring objectivity, and reducing enmity between groups, are vital aspects in tackling climate change.

Facing the truth is held in psychotherapy to have great healing power. Bender (2014) explains that we live 'dangerously maladaptive' lives if we base our choices and behaviours on falsely held hopes or beliefs. Now that we confront the biggest challenge ever - the prospect of mass extinction brought about by our own negligence - how many of us will fiddle while the planet burns and floods?

So what can we extension professionals do?

Climate science is complex, and its results are unwelcomed, inconvenient and contentious: they cannot be easily rendered into simple truths (UCL 2014). Our 'adoption-diffusion' models may have application in promoting low-emission technologies, but fail badly in dealing with the emotionally and politically fraught issue of managing carbon in the 'global commons'. While participatory and social science-based extension models have application here, how many practitioners feel free to use their work platforms in this arena - despite the terrible consequence of continuing 'business as usual' ? Probably the greatest scope therefore, is for individuals and their professional groups to take greater responsibility for raising awareness in their communities. An excellent example is the group 'Psychologists for a safe climate', which formed in 2010 to promote climate

awareness and personal action on climate change (PSC 2013).

According to the PSC (2013), as communicators we can only achieve deep change when we know our audience well enough to engage with their emotions and values – such as concern for grandchildren or for a landscape, or desire for a more caring society. Only then can we determine the links to climate change that are likely to resonate and move a people towards taking action. Research by Bain et al. (2012) showed that communication to motivate climate deniers towards action should focus on how mitigation can promote a better society, rather than on the reality of climate change and averting its risks.

Climate communicators

Extensive information exists on the science of climate change, but guidelines on effective public engagement on raising awareness are much harder to find. Approaches combining social and psychology theory would seem to offer the greatest potential for promoting acceptance of the need for urgent action. Recent advice for climate communicators from literature includes:

- Knowledge of audience is paramount – their concerns, interests and motivations. Different approaches and messages are required for different groups and stages.
- However, a currently vital message is to stress that strong consensus exists among climate scientists about global warming and its dangers. Public uncertainty about scientific consensus is the largest factor sustaining public denial (McCright et al. 2013).
- Avoid undue emphasis on ‘providing information’. Rather, employ the elements of ‘narrative’; personalise your story, drawing on emotions and expressing opinions. Use dialogue to identify common purpose and foster constructive, evidence-based discourse (UCL 2014).
- Where groups (e.g. schools) do require technical explanations, use the many excellent visual learning materials available. Prepare carefully and cue yourself for likely questions (APS 2014).
- Of the scientific concepts, most important is to convey that vast

damage has already occurred, and the only way to lessen impact is to drastically cut Greenhouse emissions now, mainly through new energy systems. Keep this message as simple as possible (Halford 2012).

However, some psychologists contend that we should not take too ‘simple or soft’ an approach. It is crucial to inform people that without radical changes to energy systems now, we are heading for a 4-60 C temperature rise that will destroy our livelihoods and most of the population in our children’s lifetime. Those who believe we should ‘not scare the horses’ ignore the huge success of scare-campaigns like ‘*The grim reaper*’ – credited for reducing projected AIDS infection in Australia more effectively than anywhere in the world (Lyn Bender 2014).

Bender (2014) stresses the importance of people identifying what actions they can personally take. Some may decide to share their concerns among their friends or groups, or to advocate among politicians, while others focus on reducing emissions or promoting ethical investments. APS (2014) advise us to keep well informed of climate news, problems and solutions, and to take special care of our personal health. Joining a climate action group can provide vital support against depression and burnout.

Growing evidence of accelerating changes to climate, oceans and icesheets, shows clearly that non-radical solutions are no longer an option for action on climate (Spratt 2014). The failure of governments to develop effective climate awareness programs (UCL 2014) has been exploited by the campaigns of powerful, well-funded denier organisations (Cohen, 2013). If extension professionals, with their expertise and extensive contacts, cannot take up this challenge, there seems little hope for preventing short-sighted leaders from ruining our rural livelihoods, and then the planet. To me the alternative - of inaction, despair and letting down our children and grandkids - is not an option I can live with.

‘Our lives begin to end the day we begin to be silent about things that matter.’
Martin Luther King.

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Top 100 Women in Australian Agribusiness

Congratulations to our APEN Members

Earlier this year, Fairfax Agriculture Media and Emerald Grain launched the inaugural top 100 Women in Australian Agribusiness. We are proud to present APEN members who, by their inspiring achievements and leadership, have made it into this group. I'm also very proud to be part of an organisation that has so many members represented in the Top 100 Women in Australian Agriculture.



Liz Alexander

Based in Emerald Central Queensland, Liz shares her time between non-executive director roles and her consultancy Blue Dog Agribusiness which undertakes research, project management, strategic communication and extension delivery across eastern Australia.



Danielle England

Danielle is a part-time agricultural consultant with Planfarm Pty Ltd based in Narrogin Western Australia managing state-wide development and extension projects for both the grains and red meat industries. She has over 15 years of project management and farm management experience in both the cropping and livestock industries across Australia.



Jeanette Long
APEN President

Jeanette is a Director of Ag Consulting Co, along with her husband, Bill, and based in South Australia. Jeanette's consulting work includes facilitating a wide variety of workshops across Australia, facilitating farm family transition and project management. She is particularly passionate about developing the skills of rural women and is currently managing a Rural Women's Leadership project funded by PIRSA.



Bronwyn Roberts

Bronwyn Roberts has committed her life to the cattle industry, as a farmer, Grazing Land Management Officer, 2013 recipient of the Queensland Red Meat Industry Emerging Leader Award, 2012 Art4Agriculture Target 100 beef Young Farming Champion, and as an all-round advocate for agriculture.



Caroline Robinson

Caroline Robinson is passionate about rural business and building strong business and community networks in regional Western Australia.

Caroline runs a consulting business from her husband's wheat and sheep farm in Woollocutty, 4hrs east of Perth in the WA Wheatbelt. She specialises in strategic planning and project management for grower groups, community organisations and local government.



Robbie Sefton

Robbie Sefton is a communication specialist and rural leader committed to the future prosperity of rural, regional and remote Australia. Robbie has a dual investment in country Australia as primary producer of wool, meat and grains and as the managing director of a national strategic communications company Sefton & Associates.



Ann Starasts
APEN SE QLD-NNSW
Cluster Coordinator

Ann Starasts is a Digital Futures researcher at the University of Southern Queensland exploring learning and networks for innovation for Australian agricultural businesses and communities. She has almost 30 years as an agronomist, educator and communications specialist running farmer and industry training and information programs to the grains & beef sectors in northern Australia. She has a PhD in Agribusiness (UQ).

Editor's note: Text from laureates has been taken from Emerald Grain WIAA website.

Bill's done it again!

Jeanette Long

Twelve months ago Bill released the *Wild Radish Song*. Today he releases *Carbon Resolution*.

This time the video is a family effort with son Will playing lead guitar and daughter Alice editing and producing the video and running the new Facebook page called The Long Paddock Productions.

Bill hopes his new song will start conversations about how farmers can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and slow global warming. The song aims to encourage advisors and farmers to have a conversation about how farming practices can not only improve productivity but also have an impact on greenhouse gas emissions ultimately slowing global warming.

Carbon Resolution was launched on YouTube last November as part of an extension program to raise awareness about the agricultural sectors impact on climate change.

The Building Farmer and Advisor Knowledge in Carbon Farming Project aims to train farm advisers and improve their understanding of carbon farming. Bill wrote the song after being inspired by the success of his previous song *The Wild Radish Song*.

"What The Wild Radish Song did was create interest from growers and advisors to go and find out more information about herbicide resistant radish. This song is aimed to be the hook to create some interest in the hopes to get the dialogue between farmers and advisors going. We've spent just over 12 months training ourselves as advisers about the Carbon Farming Initiative and now it's time

to discuss the issues with the growers we work with." Bill said.

He hopes people not only listen to the song, but the message as well.

"The lyrics address the small production changes we can all make, that accumulatively as an industry, will have a big impact on greenhouse gas emission and global warming. I hope it's an "ear worm" and I hope you listen to it more than once! It's a song inspired by John Butler's Revolution, which is a catchy song I enjoy." He said.

The song is hoped to reach the current farming generation who can make a decision now to change practices.

"They're the ones that need to heed the messages. We are the last generation of farmers that have an opportunity to change practices and have an impact."

Bill believes if we do nothing this generation will be the last to hand on the farm to the next generation in a better state than they received it in.

"If we don't make changes now it will be too late."

For more information contact Bill Long on 0417 803 034 or bill@agconsulting.com.au or via the Long Paddock Productions Facebook Page. Videos for both the Wild Radish Song and Carbon Revolution are available on the Facebook page as well.



Understanding Development Economics: Its challenge to development studies

by Adam Fforde

A review by Roy Murray-Prior

For anyone interested in development work and facilitating change, this book provides an excellent, if somewhat sceptical, insight into the world of development economics (DE). Since economists dominate much of the debate and many of the decisions in development, both locally and internationally, it is essential to understand both the strengths and weaknesses of economic arguments. It is also an important book for those who are comfortable with economics theory and for those who have only a cursory knowledge of economics and mathematics. As Adam says, it contains no algebra because he wants to make it accessible to economists and non-economists, not because he is afraid of mathematics. His first degree was in engineering, with subsequent higher level degrees in economics, so he is able to make coherent and astute critiques of economic development theories. In fact, he argues that the reliance of economics on algebra as a justification for the 'rigour' and 'validity' underlying their analysis and therefore conclusions is little more than saying it is logical given 'a particular set of rules' (p. xxiv). The problem lies in the selection of the rules. For an interesting criticism of the problems underlying the use of mathematics in agricultural economics ask Mr Google for 'On farmers who solve equations' by Richard Levins.

One of the fundamental ideas any researcher has to come to terms with is the relationship between themselves as a researcher and the underlying truths, which we attempt to discover through the collection, analysis and interpretation of data. We attempt through our enquiry to develop models of reality that we use to explain why something occurs. At the core of Adam's book is an explanation and critique of development economist's views of what the key drivers of development are in comparison to the more qualitative and practice focussed views of development studies (DS) practitioners. It examines

the different worldviews of DE and DS and the methods they use to arrive at explanations of the underlying truths – a difference in worldviews between business schools and arts faculties.

I am reminded of a paper by Richard Bawden (1995) in which he discusses an orthogonal matrix of worldviews derived from two psychological dimensions of objectivity-subjectivity and holistic-reductionist. This leads to four worldviews or paradigms of inquiry – Technocentric (think experimental research), Ecocentric (think hard systems or economic modelling), Holocentric (think soft systems and community involvement) and Egocentric (think a messy combination of individual views). Using this conceptualisation, DE comes from an ecocentric perspective and 'assume an objective reality that economic theory can access' (p. xvii), while DS comes from an holocentric perspective that assumes a subjective or soft systems view of reality in which truth is relative and depends on the perspective taken.

For those of you who are interested in such things, he has an extensive discussion of the epistemological and ontological foundations of DE and its differences with DS approaches. It also discusses the changing and unstable views of DE over time and their prescriptions for development policy. He argues these have changed with the social and historical contexts. Those of you who have read about these matters or have been around long enough to remember them will recognised the various stages from 'trickle down' effect of the 60's, through the monetarist period of the Chicago school in the 70's (infamous for advising the Chile dictatorship), to the deregulation, pro-market Washington Consensus of the 80s and beyond. Other strategies with a long history that are discussed include: industrialisation, import substitution and export oriented growth, tariffs and quotas versus free trade, globalisation and so on. These discussions have current

relevance for developed countries also given changes that are occurring in income distributions, in Australia for example.

The value of the book for all involved in development and change management is a statement made by Adam in the Preface where he says: 'the value ... of this book is that, while DE should not be taken at face value, the failure of its overall approach to generate robust predictive knowledge is suggestive for wider problems in DS. The exemplar of such problems is belief in the known value of participation ... and its ability to ensure better development outcomes' (p. xx). In other words, we all need to question our own assumptions about the world and be willing to accept their weaknesses and the contribution of others with different assumptions.

Be prepared for a long read, but you can pick and choose the chapters depending on your interests. Some of you will appreciate Adam's dry sense of humour – look for the footnote to the definition of *apodictic*.

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APEN President's Report (Continued from Page 5)

Table 2: 2013/2014 APEN subcommittee meetings

Date	Committee	Present:
9/04/2014	2015 Conference	Austin McLennan, Trevor Ranford, Jeanette Long, Lisa Stevens, Lauren Thompson, Greg Mills, Roe
16/05/2014	2015 Conference	Lauren Thompson, Jeanette Long, Trevor Ranford, Austin McLennan, Roe
11/08/2014	2015 Conference	Lauren Thompson, Jeanette Long, Lisa Stevens, Austin McLennan, Roe
26/02/2014	Cluster and Regional Activities	Rebecca Wallis, Sophie Folder, Jeanette Long
15/11/2013	Education Training Accreditation	Peter Ampt, Ruth Nettle, Austin McLennan, Scott Glyde, Jeanette Long, Rebecca Cross, Roe
29/01/2014	Education Training Accreditation	Peter Ampt, Scott Glyde, Austin McLennan, Bec Cross, Rebecca Wallis, Bruce Howie, Roe
17/04/2014	Education Training Accreditation	Peter Ampt, Austin McLennan, Bruce Howie, Bec Cross, Helen Ross, Roe
14/08/2014	Education Training Accreditation	Peter Ampt, Austin McLennan, Bruce Howie, Jeanette Long, Denise Bewsell, Bec Cross, Helen Ross, Roe
12/03/2014	EFS Journal and International Initiatives	Warren Hunt, Denise Bewsell, Maryse Bourgault, Roy Murray-Prior, Roe
5/08/2014	EFS Journal and International Initiatives	Warren Hunt, Denise Bewsell, Roy Murray-Prior, Roe
8/11/2013	National Extension Policy (Aust)	Austin McLennan, Mike Weise, Warren Hunt, Jess Jennings, Roe
14/02/2014	National Extension Policy (Aust)	Austin McLennan, Jess Jennings, Warren Hunt, Roy Murray-Prior, Roe
15/04/2014	National Extension Policy (Aust)	Austin McLennan, Jess Jennings, Warren Hunt, Roy Murray-Prior, Mike Weise
29/01/2014	Social Media	Justine Severin, Austin McLennan, Roe
9/12/2013	Strategic Planning	Jeanette, Denise, Greg, Roe

meetings for 2013/14 and the participation of your MC members.

For the first time, I am also pleased to include in the President's report record of all the formal meetings conducted by our various subcommittees in 2013/14 (Table 2).

To all MC and subcommittee members who have given their all throughout the year, I would like to give my personal thanks for your diligent participation and constructive contributions, both inside and outside our formal meetings.

The MC and APEN are also extremely fortunate to have the level of administration support provided by our Secretariat, Rosemary Currie. It is clear that APEN would achieve little if we were not able to afford this Secretariat service, and we thank Roe for her consistency and constancy in providing it.

Achievements

I move now to what APEN has achieved this year within our brief of 'providing a platform for networking, professional development and representation' for the extension community in our region.

To list our completed activities for 2013/14:

- The APEN-supported "Enabling Change and Innovation" webinars continue to be a great success, with over 100 participants for each of these topical webinars. This has been a successful partnership led by Webinar Coordinator John

James, and in partnership with the Queensland Government and Citrix, though will be taking a new turn in this coming year, with APEN seeking to run more of its own webinars independently of this series. Meanwhile we continue to recommend the excellent "Enabling Change and Innovation" series of webinars, past and future, to all APEN members.

- ExtensionNet: This year has seen two editions of the ExtensionNet newsletter produced under the direction of our new and enthusiastic Editor, Maryse Bourgault. ExtensionNet has been a flagship publication to be proud of over the last few years and Maryse has made a great start on continuing this tradition. She has also been actively involved in the wider work of the MC and a great boost to the team.
- This year we also published an edition of our journal, the Extension Farming Systems journal, edited by Roy Murray-Prior and his team of reviewers, that drew on papers presented at last year's APEN conference in New Zealand.
- And we continue to make available the excellent resource that is our book 'Shaping Change' – as a side point, I believe our top salesperson for Shaping Change is Jeannette Long – a quality that is going to be very valuable in a new role she has recently agreed to take up!

- As well as these hard copy publications, APEN regularly communicates with our members via monthly eBulletins, but also increasingly via social media, especially via LinkedIn (grown to over 368 members since our AGM last year when the count was just over 240 members) and, more recently, Twitter and Facebook. I would especially urge all APEN members (and interested non-members) to get onto LinkedIn and join our APEN group as it is an ideal platform for getting a lot more interaction happening between our widely dispersed members.
- Our website also continues to improve each year, thanks especially to the effort of member Leigh Walters who has been working tirelessly in the background for several years now, especially in getting all our past publications online. Leigh's efforts have been much appreciated by the Management Committee, especially Roe and I who have had the most to do with him directly, and as he moves away from this hands-on role I want to thank him once again for his dedication and commitment to extension, and to APEN as an organisation. Thank you, Leigh. Contributions like yours are extremely valuable to organisations like ours...and rare.

Continues Next Page

APEN President's Report

To a number of special achievements in the past year,

- Our 'Education, Training and Accreditation' subcommittee achieved a remarkable feat by pulling together and publishing in one place - the APEN website – the most comprehensive listing of extension courses and training available from Australian universities, the VET sector, and a range of other professional development providers. Special thanks to Rebecca Cross who did most of the grunt work on this first edition (soon to also include NZ). To me, producing this database is a key part of APEN's platform for supporting the professional development of our members and others involved in extension. It has also enabled us to identify some gaps and start working out what APEN's role is in seeing these gaps addressed.
- The ETA subcommittee has also investigated and drafted a statement on what, if anything, APEN should be pursuing in the way of formal accreditation schemes for extension professionals, and we expect this to be released for comment to the members soon. (The short answer is: nothing at this stage). Special thanks to all ETA subcommittee members for your efforts throughout 2013/14.
- In terms of extension policy, APEN's National Extension Policy subcommittee, dealing with Australian issues, followed through on its intent to make a submission to the Federal Government's round of consultations to develop a White Paper on Agricultural Competitiveness. Thanks to subcommittee members and others who contributed input. Once again, this submission is available on the APEN website, and was an important step for APEN in delivering on both its representative role and its peak body aspirations.
- Earlier this year we also wound up a project funded by Horticulture Australia Limited that enabled a number of horticultural industry personnel to attend last year's APEN conference in New Zealand

and engage with APEN in a number of post-conference activities. The final report was completed and is available on the APEN website. This was a successful project for APEN and the committee looks forward to running similar initiatives with horticulture and other primary industry sectors in association with our upcoming conferences in 2015 and 2017.

- No overview of the year, however, would be complete without a big mention of APEN's 2014 Roadshow. Late last year the call went out for people or companies interested in delivering a series of APEN professional development workshops to all eight APEN regions in Australia and New Zealand. Andrew Huffer and Associates was the successful tenderer with his proposal for workshops on 'Designing effective events using adult learning principles' and 'Effective promotion using what's already in your kitchen cupboard'. The ten workshops attracted 146 participants, the majority of whom were non-APEN members, and gained APEN a total of 33 new members. Not only that, but our evaluations showed that the workshops were very well-received by those who attended. I would also like to make special mention of APEN MC member Rebecca Wallis, who obtained sponsorship from the Western Australian Department of Agriculture and Food to enable extra workshops in the west that enabled the attendance of many departmental staff. Finally, a special thanks to Andrew Huffer who delivered these workshops for APEN – it couldn't have happened without you!

Activities in progress

Some other key activities that are not yet completed but still actively being progressed are our, our ongoing representation role, as well as several 'nuts and bolts' issues.

Representation and policy:

Through 2013/14 APEN has had a number of unique opportunities to represent the interests of extension professionals.

- For example, in May this year I represented APEN at a national review of Horticulture Australia's investments into Education, Training and Leadership.
- At the MC's face to face meeting in Melbourne in February, the MC took time to meet with Dairy Australia's Managing Director Ian Halliday and talked about extension investments in that industry.
- I have already mentioned how earlier this year APEN made a formal submission to the working group developing the Australian Government's white paper on Agricultural Competitiveness.
- And today, practically as I speak, the chair of our Education Training and Accreditation subcommittee, Peter Ampt, is providing evidence to a senate enquiry looking at reforms to Landcare in Australia, partly in his capacity as chair of that subcommittee and drawing on input from APEN members.

I mention these activities here in the 'to be completed' section because, while the events themselves are one-off instances that the APEN MC could 'tick off', having an impact on policy development is a longer term game to play than turning up at a single meeting.

However, my sense is that APEN today has a higher level of recognition among key leaders and decision-makers (in Australia) than it did four years ago. By the APEN MC progressing such initiatives, APEN has started to get 'into the tent' with key people and organisations making investment decisions about innovation policy and strategy in Australia (mostly in the primary industries sector), and has been a voice for extension in these forums and its important role in enabling in innovation and change.

Nuts and bolts

Any organisation has a number of operational tasks that it needs to address. Some of these 'nuts and bolts' items the MC has been working on but are still on its list to complete are the need to improve our **social media presence**, despite good starts in this area, and to relaunch **ExtensionNet** as a digital newsletter.

“I am really proud of the work we have done to get our subcommittee structure not just in place, but up and running.”

We are also intending to re-run our **members’ survey** later this year to ensure that the MC remains on track in delivering value to members and responding to your needs.

We’ve also had a very active working group looking at **reforms to the Extension Farming Systems Journal** that APEN now fully owns and manages. Amongst a number of things, this subcommittee has been reviewing and refining the scope of the EFS journal and its name, and establishing a new editorial board, including Editor Roy Murray-Prior and two assistant editors.

While I cannot formally announce it today, we hope that all members are looking forward to the relaunch of EFS with its new proposed name as the **Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Journal**.

The other big item that APEN is also working towards is its **conference next year in South Australia**, with the theme of “Managing change, action and innovation in an ever shrinking world”. The bar has been set very high by the last two APEN conferences and we are expecting another inspiring event at APEN SA15.

But as if that is not enough to look forward to, the MC has also got on the front foot with planning towards the **next APEN International Conference**, and made approaches to see this hosted in a location I am sure we would all love to visit, tropical far north Queensland - with its unique mix of agricultural industries, environmental management issues, and vibrant regional communities. Only this week we received a draft proposal from a member based in far north Queensland in association with a local chamber of commerce to host this event in 2017. While there is still much to do, and potentially other options to consider, from my perspective it is wonderful to have APEN on the front foot in terms of planning towards this major event.

Challenges and Opportunities – taking APEN to the next level

I want to close on three topics, and where I believe APEN should be headed

in regards to them. These three topics are those of (i) building APEN’s capacity and (ii) reforming APEN’s governance arrangements, and (iii) sharpening our focus on what a truly representative extension network would look like, and could achieve.

Building APEN’s organisational capacity:

It seems clear that, for APEN to deliver on its potential, it needs to move to a business model where we employ more paid leadership and staff, perhaps in the form of an Executive Officer or similar type position.

The obvious barrier to doing this is the cost. However, that is not a reason for dismissing the idea, but a challenge to be attempted, and one of the reasons why APEN has invested in some business development work, and is intending to invest in more. The focus of business development for APEN must be to build the case for organisations and industry to invest in APEN, and for more individuals to join us. Success in both these areas will be critical to building both our financial and our human capacity and for laying the stronger foundations needed for APEN to grow into an even more active, innovative and influential network into the future.

Reforming our governance

Having discussed some of the things APEN needs to do, we also need to consider how APEN ought to be managed. In other words, ‘Are our governance arrangements fit for purpose?’

APEN is currently governed by an elected management committee, which is structured so as to achieve regional representation (i.e. one representative from each Australian state/territory and New Zealand). Over the last year the APEN MC has come to the view that APEN needs to transition away from our current representative-based management committee to what is commonly called a ‘skills-based board’. A move to a ‘skills-based board’ does not deny the importance of regional representation, but does say that the final determinant of who can be elected to APEN’s management body should be what that person brings to the organisation, not where he or she lives.

Of course, any changes to our governance arrangements can only be made by voting for a new constitution. This would be a big project, and it is for this reason that these ideas are being raised as groundwork for

further progressing this conversation with APEN members.

It is my strong view that these two challenges - to boost our capacity by employing an Executive Officer or similar, and to ‘professionalise’ our governance by moving towards a skills-based board - represent the next desirable steps in APEN’s evolution and development.

Sharpening our focus - Becoming THE Australasia-Pacific Extension Network

But as important as having the right structure, funding and staffing is, it’s absolutely critical that APEN has the right focus.

I know that most APEN members are very curious about innovation and extension-like processes that happen in other industry and community sectors outside agriculture and natural resource management, and want APEN to help connect them to what is going on in these fields. I absolutely agree with this, and that APEN can and should do this...

But if we think that APEN or extension can be all things to all people, all industries and all communities, I think we are mistaken.

I have sometimes heard the comment that APEN and extension as a profession seems to be stuck in the ‘agricultural and NRM’ rut, and that we need to look outside of what is happening in other sectors. Again, I would say this is absolutely true, but we are kidding ourselves if we think that people outside the agriculture and NRM sector are going to flock towards a group calling itself an extension network.

I also think we are kidding ourselves if we think that we have fully-exploited and conquered the ‘so-called’ agricultural and NRM rut. My own experience, and that confirmed by the MCs own forays into business development and market research, is that APEN has a lot of work to do to increase the recognition and esteem of the term extension, even within the primary industry and NRM sectors, let alone grow APEN’s membership beyond these boundaries.

So I would say, APEN is not stuck in an agricultural and NRM rut, rather we are barely in it.

And secondly, if you see are one of those people who see a rut, I invite you instead to see it as a swimming pool of opportunity, and it’s time for APEN to jump in, and stop worrying about the big wide ocean outside.

APEN President's Report

“APEN is not stuck in an agricultural and NRM rut, rather we are barely in it.”

I believe the opportunities for APEN as an organisation and extension as a career and profession are great, but it requires a clear focus for the MC, and a strong buy in to this vision by our members.

It also requires strong, focussed and capable leadership.

This is why I am so excited that Jeanette Long has decided to accept nomination as the next APEN President. Jeanette is not only a partner in a farming business and an agricultural consultancy firm providing field-level advice to farmers, but she also does a lot of coaching and facilitation with NRM groups, and has a strong commitment to rural and regional community issues – she is absolutely the right person to lead the APEN MC with a strong NRM, primary industry and regional community development focus.

Concluding remarks

Finally, to the MC as a whole, cluster coordinators, other dedicated members and, of course, to APEN Secretariat Roe Currie, I offer my sincere thanks.

Thank you to all our members who continue to see value in what APEN does and support the profession through your continuing membership.

Also on behalf of the MC, I want to thank our employers and families who enable us to do what we do for APEN.

As I look back on my last three President's reports I note that I always spend time pointing out what we want to achieve in the upcoming year as the MC, and that I am looking forward to working on as the APEN President. Well, this year I have to say something different.

While I am still looking forward, this year it's to taking a three-month period of leave from the APEN MC before coming back into active service as the Past President. My most important job then will be to assist our new President until she no longer wants it (I suspect she doesn't need it!) and I've also been reminded that there is always the opportunity for a bit more behind the scenes work with a subcommittee or two.

As I reflect on the last three years and seven months as APEN President, there are three achievements of the MC of which I am particularly proud, and that I hope I have had some role in bringing about.

- First, I think we have done a lot towards building a more professional approach to the MC. It's not that previous MCs haven't been that way, but we have done a lot of work to build a group culture that says it's not just enough to turn up to meetings, but that to be part of an MC that delivers, we all need to be contributing and leading as well.
- Secondly, I am really proud of the work we have done to get our subcommittee structure not just in place, but up and running. I am very proud of the awesome talent amongst the APEN membership that has been unearthed, and helping APEN do far more than it could with just a team of 9 elected volunteers (plus Roe, of course).
- Third, I am also very proud of the decision of the MC to invest in regular Face to Face meetings. Not only have these two occasions been critical to achieving all that I've been reporting on today (and why this report is so long!) – These meetings have been central to celebrating our success as a group and inspiring us to keep moving ahead! They've also been great fun.

And – to indulge very briefly – On leaving the APEN Presidency I have two final reflections:

One, I am pretty confident that I have left APEN even better than I found it.

And two, I am absolutely confident that Jeanette Long and the new MC will do even better.

Thank you – it's been a pleasure and privilege.

Sincerely,

Austin McLennan, APEN President 2010-2014

“Thank you to all our members who continue to see value in what APEN does and support the profession through your continuing membership.”

APEN CONFERENCE - November 2015 Adelaide, South Australia

***Managing Change,
Innovation and Action in an
Ever Shrinking World***

Dates to be released very soon
Keep watching www.apen.org.au for more details



Welcome to these new members who have joined since last edition. We're glad to have you all on board.

Jim Fortune	SA
Susie Green	SA
Rebecca Sexton	Vic
Heidi Broun	Tas
Jason Lynch	Tas
Anthony Shepherd	NSW
Beth Kyd	NZ
Jess Coad	Tas
Paul Edwards	NZ
Nikki Dumbrell	WA
Keith Pekin	WA
Narelle Lobdale	Tas
Alison Whiteford	NZ
John Vosper	NZ
Georgia Trainor	WA
Matt McPadden	NZ
David Ferris	WA
Nathanael Taylor	WA
Brenton Leske	WA
Kate Pritchett	WA
David Rowe	WA
Sonia Lamond	WA
Bronwyn Edmunds	WA
Jessica Turnbull	WA
Amanda Niklaus	WA
Liam Ryan	WA
Brianna Zeller	WA
Ngairé Roughley	Qld
Nick Wright	WA
Michele Buntain	Tas
Kim Storer	WA
Tim Thompson	WA
Peter Clifton	WA
Julie Alvaro	WA
Chris O'Connor	NSW
Sarah Rossiter	Qld
Andrew Docking	NSW
Lauren Celenza	WA
MD Shah	NSW
Katrina Hill	WA
Kath Bafle	WA
Liz Blair	NSW

New APEN members

If you've recently joined APEN, welcome! You'll reap plenty of professional and personal rewards. If you've been in APEN for a few seasons now, be sure to say hello to the new members.



Sarah Rossiter

I am a Senior Project Officer for the Healthy HeadWaters Water Use Efficiency (HHWUE) project which is delivered by the Queensland Government with funding from the Australian Government's Sustainable Rural Water Use and Infrastructure Program.

The HHWUE project aims to help irrigators, communities and the environment in the Queensland Murray–Darling Basin by funding irrigation infrastructure and supporting projects. The project funds irrigators to upgrade on-farm irrigation infrastructure. Irrigators contribute at least 10 per cent of the cost, either with cash/in-kind contributions or in water. The project will run until June 2017.

My position is based in St George QLD. I work with local irrigators to implement better water use in their on-farm systems. My main role is engagement with the Border Rivers and Lower Balonne catchments irrigators.

Growing up on a sheep farm in Mungindi, I just love this region. I am an active member of the local community and aim to assist the industry wherever possible.

As a Senior Project Officer, I am the local industry contact and majority of my day is engagement with current and potential irrigators. To talk to me, call (07) 4620 8123 or email sarah.rossiter@dhrm.qld.gov.au.



Lauren Celenza

Lauren was a journalist for the West Australian's regional newspaper Countryman for nearly three years before deciding to pursue her passion for broad acre science and research in mid-2011 with WANTFA (Western Australian No-Tillage Farmers Association). She has a Bachelor of Agribusiness, Certificate II in Sheep and Wool and has worked at CBH (Cooperative Bulk Handling Ltd) and on farms in WA.

Lauren is passionate about sheep and cropping and endeavours to be able to help farmers gain the knowledge and skills to improve their profitability and sustainability. Lauren graduated from the WA College of Agriculture in 2005 and was at Muresk from 2006 to 2008.

Her parents live in Koorda where they currently lease out their farm. She edits and writes articles for WANTFA's highly regarded New Frontiers in Agriculture magazine, is the extension manager for WANTFA and is involved in some research ventures including the Dry Seeding in WA project funded by the GRDC.



Liam Ryan

My name is Liam Ryan. I'm from a small farm in Toodyay, Western Australia and I work as a grains industry development officer with the Department of Agriculture and Food, WA (DAFWA). My role is to extend research outcomes delivered by industry funded (GRDC) research projects to grain growers, agronomists, advisors and farm consultants to help them manage soils for better production potential and sustainability. I collaborate with researchers from DAFWA, The University of Western Australia, Murdoch University and the CSIRO to extend information through technical workshops, rural press articles, web pages, twitter feeds, webinars, access to decision support tools and presentations at field days. The biggest challenges in this role is the breadth of personality types in farming, the variable methods by which they make management decisions and the geographic barriers between myself and the areas I have to cover. In my spare time I'm learning Bahasa Indonesian and I live between Perth and Toodyay.



Sonia Lamond

Greetings fellow Extensioners! I work for the WA Local Government Association (WALGA). As Biodiversity/Sustainability Project Officer at WALGA, I'm undertaking work that helps to build the capacity of Local Government officers working in natural area management and sustainability. This involves delivering practical tools such as the Environmental Planning Tool (EPT) - an easy to use online GIS application designed to facilitate access to environmental information relevant to land-use planning and in support of strategic natural resource management; and facilitation of Natural Area Management Network (NAMN) and Sustainability Officers Network Group (SONG) forums. My background includes working with the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority in bushland management and (back in the 90s) I even worked as a farmhand and spent years in the shearing industry – yes I can throw a fleece.

Sonia has a bachelor degree in Conservation Biology and is currently studying towards a post grad certificate in Business Administration. If you wish to contact Sonia, you may do so via email: slamond@walga.asn.au. If you're interested in finding out more about the EPT, visit: <http://pbp.walga.asn.au/Tools/EnvironmentalPlanningTool.aspx>.



Chris O'Connor

Based in Castle Hill NSW, Chris is the Policy and Technical Officer with Nursery & Garden Industry Australia (NGIA). Chris commenced this role in 2012. Prior to this Chris had extensive experience in the retail nursery sector. Roles Chris undertook included merchandise and buying roles with Bunnings Pty Ltd and Mitre 10 Australia. Chris' strong background in the retail sector has allowed him to incorporate a high degree of business acumen in his extension work with production nursery growers. Chris holds a Bachelor of Horticulture from Charles Sturt University (CSU) as well as Diploma's in Business and Quality Auditing and is currently undertaking a Master of Sustainable Agriculture through CSU.



Jim Fortune

The timeline for a lad from WA; WA countryside and Perth and then University of Western Australia for Ag degree (1977); an interesting time on environmental impact work in rangelands then to NZ for PhD in Agronomy and beginning of an academic career. Back to Australia in 1985 to VCAH-Dookie, then Muresk as it morphed into Curtin Uni. Recharged batteries in plant-animal research back at UWA as a Research Fellow until move to University of Adelaide (1994) into farming systems and extension. Involved with a range of postgraduate students, and also development of the CRC for Weed Management Systems. In 1998 my interests in Australia's unique RDC system drew me into GRDC (Canberra) as a program manager, and then GWRDC (Adelaide) as executive director; both roles involved continuous interaction across Australia and internationally. Since 2007 I have operated as an independent consultant working back with a wide range of agriculture (the breadth of agriculture being what drew me to it in the first place). A lot of participatory R,D & E training in Australia and overseas (Syria, Jordan, Egypt & Kurdistan) mainly with range of ACIAR activities having a conservation agriculture focus. Interesting strategic livestock and food security studies in Saudi Arabia since 2011. Continue to do review work in Australia, and keep my university interests going as a member of the industry advisory board for the Institute of Agriculture, the University of Western Australia.

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Seasons' Greetings

Guidelines and deadlines

Submissions should be made in MS Word 6.0 with minimal formatting. A portrait photograph of the author is required. All photographs, figures and/or tables ought to be provided as separate files (preferably TIF or JPEG; photos scanned at 300 dpi). Feature articles should be around 1000 words and minor articles 500 words. The editor reserves the right to edit submitted material to meet space restrictions. Letters to the editor or general items of news of interest to the network are welcome. Articles should be submitted at least four weeks prior to publication.

Preference is given to articles that are grounded in some form of project or event.

Editing: Maryse Bourgault

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