



Newsletter

July 2005

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Bush lore and more....

Recently retired ABC icon and renowned raconteur Colin Munro will be our guest speaker for July. Join our corporate members, Clyde Agriculture and Renard Marketing to hear Colin.

He will recount experiences from over 40 years at the national broadcaster, noting the changes that have taken place. If we're lucky we'll also get a parting shot of advice on future directions. We can count on Colin to entertain us with his wit and style. Perhaps he will retell some of the entertaining reports from the April Fool's Day episode of the radio program, then called "Always on Sunday".

Colin retired from the ABC on 7 July 2005 having joined the Rural Department in Sydney as a specialist trainee on 23 November 1964. In the intervening years he worked around the nation as a rural reporter—from Adelaide to Mount Gambier, from Melbourne to Wagga Wagga and many places in between.

Along with radio programs such as Country Breakfast Sessions and Rural Reports, Colin has presented the "Country Hour" (which turns 60 this year) and "Morning Extra", of which he was later Executive Producer. He somehow also found time to report for the TV program "A Big Country". For a time, Colin was Executive Producer of the popular Sunday program we now know as "Australia All Over" and he presented "Summer All Over" for twelve years.

Colin's commitment to bridging the city-country divide by communicating rural values and activities to a city audience pervades his climb up the corporate ladder and his active community life.



Recently retired ABC Icon, Colin Munro.

In July 1985 Colin was appointed Federal Head of ABC Rural Radio a position he held for eight years before becoming Manager Regional Promotion and Resources and then, in 1997, Manager Regional Liaison – ABC Regional Services. Colin travelled widely, interviewed many rural Australians, opened countless shows and special functions and did what he does best – entertain his audience.

His community contributions are similarly numerous and various, including his involvement in such Australian icons as the Stockman's Hall of Fame, Year of the Outback, Australia's Open Garden Scheme and as a judge of Starmaker Country Music Festival in.

Register on-line for the luncheon seminar on Friday 29th July with Colin Munro.

Corporate Members of the Month: Clyde Agriculture and Renard Marketing.

Venue: The MENZIES HOTEL, 14 Carrington Street, Sydney.

When: Friday 29th July 2005 at 12pm for 12:30pm

Cost: \$55 per head, or voucher, for members. **\$65 per head for all non-members.**

Register: BEFORE 5:00pm on Wednesday 27 July, on-line at <http://www.nswfarmwriters.org> or by emailing bookings@nswfarmwriters.org, or by phone to Fiona Dewar, (02) 8203 3856.

Late cancellations: Phone Fiona Dewar (02 8203 3856) or Jamie Graham (0418 479 434)

Website sponsored by Telstra Country Wide NSW

Bush lore and more

(cont. from page 1)

Tamworth since 1979.

Many bush parents gratefully recall the enormous support he gave the Isolated Children's Parents Association ("ICPA") in its formative years.

Our organization owes him a huge debt for countless years of committee service and, more recently, for wise counsel in his current role as Senior Vice President. Colin is also one of the band of dedicated agri-communicators who founded the Australian Council of Agricultural Journalists, which he served for many years as President.

He has been married to Muffy (who most of Australia knows as "the Black Cockatoo") for 35 years and they have two adult children, Colin and Kirsty.

His recent send off "afternoon tea" at the ABC was a testament to his popularity, with people and messages coming from all over Australia. Don't miss this opportunity to convivially review 40 years of radio journalism and to pay your respects to one of our respected rural raconteurs—

☞ To book go to the website:

www.nswfarmwriters.org/BOOKING_S.htm

Path not yet cleared

Guest speaker at our June event, Larry Acton, provided a small gathering of members with several actual examples of the failure of the current native vegetation regulation around the country.

One of his main criticisms was the lack of consistency in the administration of native vegetation policy. He said in some cases local managers were keen to impose their personal views rather than administer and adjudicate on government policy. In others, the general lack of knowledge, skill and experience within the government departments impeded resolution.

This was recently seen in the lack of urgency and inappropriate decisions when issuing permits for fodder clearing - vitally important to farmers struggling to survive the drought. He quoted instances where permits were refused for the area requested but issued for different parts of the property where the vegetation was not suitable or there was no access to water.

Mr Acton said he felt that there was pressure on some staff to make decisions they were not equipped to make.

Larry noted that farmers now generally regard government



representatives as the enemy. This contrasts sharply with the high regard in which they were held not so many years ago. Then they were regarded as the farmer's friend and a credible source of advice and technical expertise. Larry attributes this to cuts in staff in agriculture departments and the changing role that includes policing new regulations.

As Chair of the National Farmers' Federation (NFF) Land and Native Vegetation Taskforce Larry has been at the centre of NFF's push for an agreement between State, Territory and Commonwealth Governments on native vegetation.

He gave a blow by blow description of recent unsuccessful lobbying efforts and reiterated NFF's commitment to the fight.

Larry said he firmly believed that most farmers were conservative by nature and very responsible custodians of the land. They seek to improve their land asset and ensure its stable future before passing it on to the next generation. — Thank you to our corporate members of the month, AgriMedia and McGrathNichol+Partners.

Upcoming Events

September 30th: Mark your diaries NOW for 12pm on Friday 30th September when Dr Jennifer Marohasy talks about the environmental issues of the moment and the need for a new approach.

Since starting as Director of the Environment Unit with the Institute of Public Affairs in July 2003, Jennifer has perhaps become best known for her work on the Murray River. In this role she continues to work to provide an important counterpoint in public debate and discussion to the moral crusading that she feels drives much public policy decision-making. She argues that we need an evidence-based, solution-focused environmental movement that values open discussion and debate.

☞ Do you have a speaker you'd like to hear at a Farm Writers' event – or any other suggestions - email us at suggestions@nswfarmwriters.org