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AWIA activities are reported extensively in the newsletter The Buzz. Copies of The Buzz, or copies of this
Annual Report can be obtained from Administration Manager Lou Rankin, Ph 07 5533 3537, Email
lourankin@winshop.com.au or Editor Jenny Foxton, Ph 07 4697 9202 or email rfoxton@bigpond.com
NATIONAL BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Jan FitzGerald
- President, General Member
Clair O'Brien
- Vice-President, Northern Territory Representative
Sue Wainwright
- Secretary, General Member
Deborah Thiele
- Treasurer, South Australia Representative
Jane Allwright
- Tasmania Representative
Karolee Wolcott
- New South Wales Representative
Joy Deguara
- Queensland Representative
Fionnuala Frost
- Western Australia Representative
Christine Thompson
- (interim) Western Australia Representative
Jo Eady
- General Member
Katrina Rainsford
- Victoria Representative
Cathy McGowan
- Immediate Past President

INAUGURAL LIFE MEMBER

AWIA's inaugural life member is Dorothy Dunn AO. Dorothy was a member of the steering committee responsible for AWIA's formation, and founding president from 1993 to 1997.

SUPPORT STAFF

Lou Rankin
- Administration Manager
Jenny Foxton
- Editor
President's Report

It gives me great pleasure to present the 11th Annual Report for Australian Women in Agriculture (AWIA) Ltd.

The year has been one of highs and lows both for rural Australia and for the members who make up Australian Women in Agriculture Ltd. It has been a challenging time as we faced drought, floods, fires and more drought. It seems that for rural women in particular, our time is becoming a scarce commodity that has to be balanced carefully.

While more and more rural women were forced to work off farm to keep food on the table during times of drought, or to keep children at school, the demands of the farm and farm accountability also took its toll. The ever-increasing amount of legislation that is impacting unfavourably on the farm workload and the uncertainty over water-rights and other related topics is causing serious concern in the bush and taking up more and more precious time for farmers.

This has been reflected in the increased level of debate on the Forum by AWIA members on such issues as GMO's and the relevance of farmer organisations today. My email request to the Forum asking members to contribute stories and solutions to Australia's extreme climatic events received a huge response. The results were formalised into three papers dealing with exceptional circumstances, the Farm Management Deposit Scheme and health and stress issues. These were presented to Senator Judith Troeth and also placed on the agenda for the National Rural Women's Coalition (NRWC). As a direct result the Managing Drought-Managing Solutions Forum for rural women will be held by the NRWC in Dubbo later this year.

AWIA has continued to work with industry through avenues such as Women in Grains and the National Farmer's Federation (NFF). We have also maintained our partnership with AFPA, through a new “Building the Future – Sharing the Work” Project that we anticipate will further develop our capacity to have on-line Forums on specific topics with industry partners.

The National Learning Network has laid the foundation for members to participate in industry and related rural sectors such as health and education. A number of Reference Groups have been formalised to support member's interests and a series of face-to-face workshops focusing on communication and strategic planning, have been held around Australia. The project now moves into on-line learning. My thanks to project managers, Janet Bailey and Deranie Jackson for the effort they are putting into this project.

AWIA has continued to provide a number of workshops and training days for members, particularly on Trade &

Globalisation and GMO's. Members were keen to support the Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women's series of facilitation workshops and also supported the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in their presentation of a number of Globalisation seminars. Through our partnership with AWB Ltd we were also able to support a number of initiatives by members, who ran workshops focused on a particular need in their community and we were also able to support life-long learning for some members through a number of partial scholarships. I would like to thank AWB Ltd for the generous support which made this possible.

Undoubtedly, the 3rd World Congress for Rural Women held in Madrid in October was the highlight of the year. Board members, supported by a number of AWIA members who were able to attend the Congress, worked together to produce the Leading change towards 2006 Report, which was presented to Senator Troeth in Canberra. We are now progressing some of the ten recommendations made in the report.

AWIA continues to draw its membership from all sectors of agriculture, its support industries and all age groups. We have had to increase the cost of membership this year, although the Board has decided to give some assistance to members who have been suffering severe financial hardship from the prolonged drought. In the true spirit of AWIA, a number of other members have given donations to the organisation. I would like to thank those members. Your generosity has enabled a number of members to continue to be a part of AWIA.

This year the organisation held two General Meetings, one in Queensland and one in Canberra. There was also one Ordinary Meeting in Victoria and an increasing number of groups around Australia are meeting regularly. Due to a lack of administration funds, Board members have been unable to meet together for a planning session since our last Conference. We have been relying more and more on technology to keep the business of the organisation moving forward and have been concentrating particularly on upgrading our corporate accountability. A focus on AWIA guidelines and governance to ensure the smooth and transparent operation of the organisation and compliance with government regulations has been a key area for Board Members. This year three Board members are currently completing the Australian Institute of Company Directors' Course.

In 2002 we welcomed Jo Eady, Katrina Rainsford and later, Christine Thompson, to the Board of AWIA. Due to family reasons, it was with regret that we accepted the resignation of WA Board member Fiona Mua Frost during
the year and we now farewell Sue Wainwright as well. Thank you to all Board Members for your hard work and willing contributions of time, skill and knowledge and good luck to Sue as she takes up new challenges in her life.

I would also like to thank our Administration Manager, Lou Rankin and Editor, Jenny Foxton for the dedication they have shown in the interests of AWIA. The organisation has benefited greatly through the application of their many skills.

Our partners and corporate supporters are also very much appreciated and I would particularly like to thank the Australian Primary Superannuation Fund as a valued ongoing and major sponsor for the year.

In conclusion I would like to quote one of our members who said recently, “AWIA does not prioritize policy - rather AWIA prioritizes WOMEN then they do what they feel they must to make the world better, happier, safer and sustainable for our grandchildren’s grandchildren. We may disagree on policies, but we always support each member’s sense of fun and achievement. It’s as simple as that!”

I am proud to be a part of such a unique organisation.

Jan FitzGerald addresses a post-Spain trade forum in Brisbane in December 2002 watched by Suzanne Kelly of the Qld Dept of Primary Industries and Prof Ray Collins of the University of Qld Gatton Campus.

This photograph taken in March 2003 depicts the stark landscape surrounding Canberra following the earlier devastating fires in the ACT and other states. [photo courtesy of Lou Rankin].
This last year AWiA has provided opportunities for members to participate in activities and policy development. AWiA continues to pursue its goal of uniting and raising the profile of women in agriculture while working to ensure a sound future for agriculture in Australia.

Company Secretary

Sue Wainwright, Darwin, NT

It has been an interesting year of experiences, changes and challenges for AWiA, both as a company and for opportunities for the individual membership. Generosity from state and federal government departments, most particularly AFFA in Canberra, and our very supportive corporate sponsors, gave many of our members the wonderful opportunity to be part of the III World Congress of Rural Women in Madrid, Spain in October 2002. We acknowledge their support and thank them for the opportunity to share their recognition of women as important contributors to rural development and sustainability.

As company secretary for a growing and learning organisation, I have been actively pursuing the understanding of, and implementation of the system of corporate governance as the structural framework for the organisation. In this rapidly changing era of corporate and public responsibility, it would be both prudent and responsible to adopt the preferred procedures now accepted, instituted and promoted by government, industry and corporate business.

AWiA is supporting the directorship courses by the Australian Institute of Company Directors, initially promoted by AFFA as $5,000 grants. Following the lead taken by Jan FitzGerald, I have recently completed their excellent diploma program, and have forwarded relevant instructional material to all other Board members to assist them to understand corporate governance as a simple working system. I believe that our National Learning Network is the perfect teaching medium for introducing this important management structure to interested members, thereby giving confidence to the various business and corporate associates with whom this organisation forms working partnerships.

Administration Manager

Lou Rankin, Beechmont, QLD

The role of Administration Manager in Australian Women in Agriculture continues to be a busy and demanding position.

As Administration Manager I deal with all the day-to-day inquiries from members, Government, business and the general public. I disseminate AWiA information and act as a conduit for the Board of Management.

There are at present just under 600 individual members of AWiA along with eight corporate members and three affiliated organisations.

During the year the Board of Management held 13 meetings and seven executive committee meetings. I introduced some changes that make monthly reports, agendas and information more standardised and streamlined for the operation of the Board.

In the past year we had an election for the position of Victorian Board member. The AWiA web page and email discussion forum were moved to a new Internet Service Provider and after a few teething problems the forum is now a lively and informative forum for over 200 members.

A quick check of the database of membership reveals that over 400 of our members are connected to the internet.

The AWiA web page is up-to-date and in the very near future will be re-launched with new functionality that will make it a truly interactive and vibrant communication tool for our members and the wider agrifood business sector.
Treasurer

Debbie Thiele,
Loxton SA

Partnerships
In February 2003 AWIA successfully concluded our 'GOLD Sponsorship' with AWB Limited and presented to them a comprehensive final report.

Some of the highlights from this report included:
- Four travel scholarships provided for AWIA members to attend the III World Congress of Rural Women in Madrid, Spain.
- Over 300 participants in a range of workshops run by members across the country, and four individual learning scholarships awarded to members for courses ranging from an MBA to the Company Directors Course.
- Major sponsor of 2002 AWIA Annual Conference held at Cedar Creek Lodge, Tamborine Mountain, Queensland in August 2002. The funds also helped with production of The Buzz, meetings and administration expenses.

One of our major sponsors over recent years has been Australian Primary Superannuation Fund. At our annual conference in August 2002, one of the APS board members spoke entertainingly about women managing their own finances and superannuation. Not only has Gina Collins joined AWIA herself, now the whole of the APS organization is keen to see that all rural women are empowered with the knowledge and skills to manage their own finances and superannuation.

This and other experiences led the board to consider that what we need with agribusiness, is not so much 'sponsorship', as working 'partnerships', where all members have the opportunity to gain from the association, and where the organization learns more about the needs of rural women.

We are therefore delighted to announce a two-year partnership with Australian Primary Superannuation Fund for 2003-2004. Throughout this time opportunities will be explored to increase members' knowledge and access to information about superannuation and financial services for rural women. APS is also the major sponsor of the 2003 annual conference in Tasmania.

Spanish scholarships for members were not only provided by AWB ltd, but also by Australian Primary Superannuation Fund which provided two scholarships, and Meat and Livestock Australia which provided another four. This year's annual report is once again proudly sponsored by John Deere and I encourage all members to check out the 800 and 900 series Tractor brochures that I love, not only for the size of these machines, but that they feature women driving and maintaining them.

Membership
I would like to congratulate all members who have renewed their memberships at the new higher level. As the letter included in the renewal form says, we are now on our own with no support grant for administration from Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Australia (AFFA). AWIA is our organization and its existence depends on each of us supporting it financially, as well as with our own personal involvement.

The Board is making considerable efforts in 2003, to increase our corporate membership. This has been a neglected area of involvement in our organization from a wide range of agribusiness that we all support through our own farms, properties and activities. If you know of any companies and organizations committed to the advancement of Australian primary production, rural industries and communities with respect for the core values of AWIA, then they are eligible to become corporate members of our organization. AWIA will then work to develop partnerships of benefit through our NEW corporate membership program with them.

Publications

Jenny Foxton,
Perseverance, QLD

AWIA has several forms of communication with members, potential members and sponsors as well as with many industry and government bodies.

Its flagship membership newsletter - The Buzz - is a bi-monthly publication featuring news from and about members, rural industry announcements, photos and cartoons. With a distribution of around 700, it includes articles relating to pre-determined themes, member profiles and regular sections. Some of the recent themes have included fresh water, rural health, agricultural trade, and the III World Congress of Rural Women.

Many members with email access also enjoy the immediacy of AWIA's own chat list, forum@awia.org where current issues such as drought, fires and genetic engineering are openly discussed. Administration manager Lou Rankin manages the chat list.

The annual report, sponsored by John Deere, gives a profile of the organization and an overview of the previous financial year.

Input from AWIA's Communication Committee ensures that publications and the website remain relevant and current. The aim is to have publications that are member-friendly and accurately reflect the interests and views of a diverse and professional group of agricultural women.
Communications & Media

Jane Allwright, Cliftonvale, Tasmania

I watched a recent TV program which featured some elderly but none-the-less astute women. They were both asked what the most important things in life were and one replied "the art of communication and the need to foster good communication skills". I couldn't agree more. AWIA has been working very hard at improving just that and it has not been without its difficulties.

Our aim to promote interaction between members and also with potential members, sponsors, potential sponsors, state and federal government and peak industry bodies is being achieved. This is not only the responsibility of the AWIA Board but all members.

The AWIA email forum brings forward many topics of interest to members. It is also a tool to keep all informed as to what is happening around the country through reports on events. The Buzz, our official AWIA magazine, gives feedback from members as well as keeping us informed on many and varied issues.

The Communication Committee, through consultation with members, has initiated an 'AWIA Communication Strategy' that has been ratified by the Board for the next six months and highlights our need for good communication skills.

Extensive work has been done to improve the email facilities and website for both AWIA and the NLN. Media has not taken a high priority but the use of our industry and community networks have helped to raise the AWIA profile. I would like to congratulate the hard-working committee for their continued commitment and enthusiasm as we look forward to the challenges ahead.

Annual Conference Queensland 2002

Theme: Across Our Great Divide
By Linda Munster, Organising Committee Chair

The 2002 AWIA annual conference and AGM were held on August 1-3 at the picturesque Tamborine Mountain area of Queensland's Gold Coast hinterland.

A packed program included guest speakers former parliamentarian Tim Fischer, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Senator Judith Troeth, EWRRDC Chair Bobbie Brazil and a host of AWIA's own talented members.

Skilled trainer and keynote speaker Velia Nicholls used a workshop exercise to demonstrate 'Shifting gears in a changing world' while on another level, AWIA member and young Queenslander Deb McLucas introduced the newly formed Future Farmers Network.

An 'Open Space' session provided delegates with an opportunity to share their passions and feed into AWIA's management processes and style. A session on mentoring, some inspiring dinner speakers and many networking opportunities added to the packed program and left delegates with much 'food for thought'.

Being a member of the AWIA 5th National Conference organizing committee provided an opportunity to learn more about the organization and to use and develop skills in this area. I would like to thank the members of the organizing committee for their hard work and dedication to the conference. Team leaders of each area were:

Linda Munster
Jo Eady
Annie Pfeffer
Narelle Kleinschmidt
DI Gresham
Megan Ford
Suzanne Nation

Convenor Secretary
Conference Program
Sponsorship
Treasurer/Registrations
Media and Budget
Venue & Social
Photo Competition

Pictured at the 2002 annual conference trade fair are Australian Primary Super representatives, from left Tony Sichina and Gino Collins talking with Queenslander Cindy Hartwig.

This photo taken by Joan Bannock of Victoria won first prize in the AWIA 2002 Conference photo competition.

These team members freely shared their enthusiasm and expertise, which resulted in a very well received conference.
Leading change towards 2006

AWIA’s report on involvement in the III World Congress of Rural Women in Madrid, Spain, October 2002

AWIA’s official report on its involvement in the III World Congress of Rural Women was launched in Canberra in March 2003.

Titled ‘Leading change towards 2006’, the report was presented to Senator Judith Troeth, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry by AWIA president Jan FitzGerald.

The report provided a statement of AWIA’s leadership and involvement in the congress and identified key findings and implications for change from that involvement.

Several significant recommendations were made in the report:

1. AWIA to support Australia’s endorsement of CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women).

2. AWIA to promote a sponsored Australian speaking tour by a nominated representative of the African conference organizing committee, to promote understanding of developing/developed countries in the lead-up to the IV International Conference for Women in Agriculture to be held in Africa in 2006.

3. AWIA to invite AFFA, DFAT, Austrade and AusAID and industry organizations to partner in a national education initiative to raise women’s awareness of trade and social issues surrounding trade, including the role key players, eg the United Nations.

4. AWIA to host and facilitate a series of ‘Food Chain’ information activities to encourage increased understanding and involvement by women of the integrated nature of food and agriculture.

5. AWIA to promote member involvement and discussion in activities to increase understanding of global change on women in agriculture via the AWIA International Trade Reference Group and world conferences and summits.

6. AWIA to recommend that AFFA commission a statistical update and analysis of women’s work in agriculture in readiness for IV International Conference, ensuring Australia presents relevant data and changes which have taken place.

7. AWIA to work with the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) and other organizations to establish an email discussion support group to support international discussion and input leading up to the IV International Conference.

8. AWIA to lead the establishment of a preparatory IV International Conference group, including representatives from federal groups, AFFA, DFAT, Austrade, AusAID, industry and state rural women’s networks.

9. AWIA to coordinate preparation of and lead Australia’s involvement in, and attendance at the IV International Conference with the goodwill and support of funding from key stakeholders such as AFFA, NGOs, the corporate and agribusiness sectors, and individuals.

10. That the fourth international conference be named the IV International Conference for Women in Agriculture.

Over a third of the Australian delegation and three of the six Australian speakers at the III World Congress were AWIA members – president Jan FitzGerald, Karolee Wolcott and Sen Judith Troeth.

Seven women from the Swan Hill district of Victoria attended the Congress. Pictured are from left, Colleen Concliffe, Christie Tyquin, Yromne Jennings and Terri Scott. (Photo courtesy of Julie Slatyer)
# Cash Flow Statement

AUSTRALIAN WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE A.B.N. 85 081 705 204

For year ended 30 June, 2002 (in Aus dollars)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CASH RECEIVED</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2002</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conferences</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Melbourne - 2001</td>
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<td>30,651</td>
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<td>- Brisbane - 2002</td>
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<td>2,270</td>
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<td>Grants</td>
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<tr>
<td>- AFFA</td>
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<td>- AFFA - Farmbis</td>
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<td>Interest Received</td>
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<td>Membership</td>
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<tr>
<td>- General</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Corporate</td>
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<td>Other Income</td>
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<td>Sponsorship</td>
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<td>- Aust. Primary Super Fund</td>
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<td>- Australian Wheat Board</td>
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<td>- Cox Inall</td>
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<td>- John Deere</td>
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<td>- Meat &amp; Livestock Corporation</td>
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<td>- Other</td>
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<td>- Rural Ind. Research &amp; Dev.</td>
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<td>Workshops</td>
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**TOTAL CASH RECEIVED**

101,926

374,466

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<td>- Printing</td>
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<td>Australian Securities Commission</td>
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<td>Bank Fees &amp; Charges</td>
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Conferences

- Brisbane 2002
- Melbourne 2001

18,729

755

19,257
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<td>333</td>
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<td><strong>Meeting Expenses</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Accommodation</td>
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<td>- Meals</td>
<td>280</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Other</td>
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<td><strong>National Learning Network Project</strong></td>
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<td>- Production</td>
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<td>- Printing</td>
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<td><strong>Scholarships</strong></td>
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<td>- Australian Wheat Board</td>
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<td>- Spain</td>
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<td>- Teleconferences</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL CASH PAYMENTS</strong></td>
<td>194,871</td>
<td>273,244</td>
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**Surplus (Deficit) Cash Flow from ordinary activities before income tax.**

(92,945) 101,222

Income tax revenue relating to ordinary activities

**Surplus (Deficit) Cash Flow attributable to the association.**

(92,945) 101,222

**Total changes in equity of the association**

(92,945) 101,222

Opening retained earnings

81,293 (19,929)

**Surplus (Deficit) Cash Flow attributable to the association.**

(92,945) 101,222

**CLOSING RETAINED EARNINGS**

(11,652) 81,293

AW&LA Board member Karolee Wolcott shows what is possible with some determination and initiative. Karolee is pictured at Newhaven Station in the remote Northern Territory working on her laptop with the aid of a solar panel powering a 12 volt battery, inverter and voltmeter. This enabled her to keep up with happenings, both in Australia and around the world.
Balance Sheet

AUSTRALIAN WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE A.B.N. 85 081 705 204
As of 30 June 2003 (in Aus dollars)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CURRENT ASSETS</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash Assets</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Account</td>
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<td>Admin. Account</td>
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<td>Conference Account</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Investment Account</td>
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<td><strong>Total Cash Assets</strong></td>
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<td>Current Tax Assets</td>
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<td>GST payable control account</td>
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<td><strong>Total CURRENT ASSETS</strong></td>
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<td>159,270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
<td>66,325</td>
<td>159,270</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Net Assets</strong></td>
<td>66,325</td>
<td>159,270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members' Funds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opening Balance - beginning of year</td>
<td>77,977</td>
<td>77,977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accumulated surplus (deficit)</td>
<td>(11,652)</td>
<td>81,593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS</strong></td>
<td>66,325</td>
<td>159,270</td>
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**INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT**

To the members of Australian Women in Agriculture Ltd.

Scope:
We have audited the financial report of Australian Women in Agriculture Ltd for the year ended 30th June 2003 as set out on the attached pages. The National Board of Management are responsible for the preparation and presentation of the financial report and the information contained therein. We have conducted an independent audit of the financial report in order to express an opinion on it to the members of the Association.

Our audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the financial report is free of material misstatement. Our procedures included examination, on a test basis of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures, in the financial report, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether, in all material respects, the financial report is presented fairly in accordance with Australian accounting standards and relevant statutory and other requirements so as to present a view which is consistent with our understanding of the Association’s financial position, the results of its operations and its cash flows.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Audit Opinion
In our opinion, the financial report presents fairly, in accordance with applicable Accounting and Auditing Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements, the financial position of Australian Women in Agriculture Ltd. as at 30th June 2003 and the results of its operations for the year then ended.

BARTISCH & CO

Robin B Bartisch, FCPA

By Janet Bailey, Stage II coordinator

The NLN vision is of ‘A network of confident, skilled, well-informed women participating effectively in all facets of rural industries and rural communities’.

Stage II of the NLN project has the following goals:

- A network of at least five reference groups with an industry or issues focus established by August 2003.
- An information package for the establishment of reference groups developed by February 2004.
- A learning organisation culture including a program of skills development, both formal and informal – 80 reference group members to have completed at least four leadership training modules by December 2003.
- Develop guidelines for the conduct of groups over distance using electronic communication by December 2003.
- A shared method of accessing the skills and experience – each group develops a skills profile of its members and guidelines for the use of the information by October 2003.
- An established method of sharing information within and between reference groups – develop protocols for information sharing by August 2003.
- Each reference group to have completed two projects in their interest area by February 2004.

To date seven reference groups have been established:
- Beef
- Grains
- Health & Community Development
- /Healthy Communities
- Horticulture
- International issues
- Natural Resource Management
- Sheep & Wool

A cotton and natural fibre group is being developed. The groups are currently putting together strategic plans as a focus for their future activities.

The information package, christened ‘Reference Groups without Tears’, will be a summary of the lessons learnt from the establishment of the groups. To date these include:

- Training in technology use is essential to many members participating effectively
- Invitations to participate in group activities are most effective if they include both hard copy and electronic format
- Guidelines for the dissemination of information and contact details within the group are essential
- Shared, cohesive strategies are essential
- A culture of tolerance and acceptance of others’ needs is essential.

Workshops have been held in all States except Tasmania and the Northern Territory. To date venues have included Freemantle WA, Roseworthy SA, Melbourne and Wodonga Vic; Cowra and Armidale NSW; Adora Downs Qld. There is one workshop to be held in Moree, one in Katherine and the possibility of another in Darwin. Seventy-three members have attended the workshops to date. We are optimistic of achieving the target of 80 members undertaking training in four modules by the end of August 2003.

The workshops ran over two days and included:

- Strategic planning, including developing visions, goals, action plans, and techniques to evaluate and modify the plans where necessary;
- Personality typing to identify individuals’ strengths and weaknesses;
- Communication preferences for different types;
- Working in groups effectively, using type to ensure groups are balanced and have the capacity to undertake the project successfully; and
- Working with remote groups, utilising telephone and email protocols for successful communication.

Online training will be available from mid-August. The delivery program will be based on a needs analysis conducted by each reference group. An average of two modules will be offered each month for the next six months.

The development of guidelines for groups over distance is in its early stages. Profiles of general information on reference group members have been exchanged as part of the introduction process for the groups. A skills audit will be undertaken by the groups as one of their first activities. Decisions on how this information will be used have yet to be made.

1. Information is being shared principally within groups using specific discussion groups. This was set up by Lou Rankin using the same method as the AWiA forum and is working effectively. There is an additional discussion group made up of coordinators, support coordinators and the project management team.

2. Specific projects for each group are being identified as part of the strategic planning process. These are still in the planning stage.
Reference Groups

Some AWiA members meet regularly to work on issues, discuss topics of interest or to network. These reference groups can be regionally or industry-based or draw together members interested in a particular activity.

Wahgunyah Group

Jill Briggs, Wodonga, NSW

The Wahgunyah group’s meetings during the year have been varied and stimulating. There is no point in denying the fact that having well networked members increases the calibre of guest speakers and activities.

- Most recently a group of women from the region attended the Learning Network workshop held in Wodonga, congratulations to the organisers for putting on the day for members and non-members.

- During April members heard Sharon Burrows speak of women’s roles in defining our future.

- A meeting during the second half of 2002 provided a opportunity for women who attended the International Women in Agriculture to share their experiences.

As many continue to struggle with the drought conditions, I reflect on how getting together and sharing our lives brings positives to our families, businesses and communities.

International Activities

Karolee Wolcott,
South West Rocks, NSW

The III World Congress of Rural Women turned out to be a major project for me over the past two years. Australia’s participation as a lead member in this and the previous two international conferences, has demonstrated the accomplishments of Australian women to the world.

AWiA is now working on several initiatives as a direct outcome of the III World Congress. Each of these aligns to AWiA’s commitment to promoting women as equal partners in agriculture. These initiatives include:

- Seeking opportunities for a sponsored Australian speaking tour by a nominated representative of the African conference organising committee leading up to the IV International Conference for Women in Agriculture.

- Working with the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) and other organisations to establish an email discussion group to support international discussion and input leading up to the IV International Conference.

- Inviting IFPA, DFAT, Austrade and AusAID and industry organisations to partner in a national education initiative to raise women’s awareness of trade and social issues surrounding trade, including the role of key players, such as the United Nations.

- Promoting member involvement and discussion in activities to increase understanding of global change on women in agriculture via the AWiA International Trade Reference Group.

- As a member of the International Reference Group of the Office of the Status of Women, I participated in a teleconference in February that discussed:
  - participation and access of women to the media and information and communication technologies, and
  - women’s human rights and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls.

- Rowan O’Hagan is coordinator of the International Trade/Issues Reference Group, with the assistance of Pennie Scott. They will have some exciting issues to discuss in the near future, including foreign trade, the GM debate, AusAID, to name a few.

- The Canberra meetings in March were a great success. Several of us met with representatives from DFAT, Austrade, and AusAID. We now have contact people within those organisations with whom we can keep in touch.

- In May and June, DFAT Trade Advocacy and Outreach section, together with state offices and AWiA involvement, held community workshops in regional and metropolitan locations throughout Australia. Over 800 people attended the nine workshops, all of which generated lively debate. The feedback from those who attended suggests they appreciated the opportunity to meet to discuss an issue of concern to all Australians.

Northern Territory

Judy LeMesurier,
Berry Springs

The NT Women in Agriculture group met on a monthly basis during 2002. We alternated our formal meetings with farm visits. Once again this group was able to present an award for excellence to the top female agriculture student at a Northern Territory High School. In 2003 Berry Springs member, Lee Berryman, facilitated a one-day training session for AWiA members in the NT. Members involved in the fishing, cattle and horticulture industries travelled in to Darwin to take part in this excellent program. We enjoyed participating in assertiveness training, stress management techniques and financial planning.

I have enjoyed my time as president and it has been a privilege to represent this group of Northern Territory women. I will hold on to those memories as I look forward to new challenges and take on other roles. On 21 May Northern Territory Women in Agriculture disbanded.
State Reports

Members in each state and territory are represented on the Board of Management by one member who they elect for a two-year term. This brings diversity and a balance of opinions to the voice of AWIA when speaking nationally and as a focus for regional issues.

Western Australia

Christine Thompson, Wagin

Over the last 12 months, Western Australian members have been actively involved in making things happen at individual, regional and state levels to raise the profile of women and create awareness of the issues confronting rural and regional communities.

Following the resignation of Fionnuala Frost, I have represented WA members on the AWIA Board in an interim capacity. Fionnuala has been very generous with her time and expertise and we thank her for her significant contribution to AWIA. Fionnuala had a vision to honour the multi-faceted aspects of the lives of rural women which came to fruition through the Arts in the Outback program.

The Arts in the Outback tour to the Murchison region in July gave rich opportunities for social and cultural growth. Merle Bardwell’s passion to improve art and photography opportunities to rural women was well supported and culminated in the “What Happened in Cue” Art Exhibition held in Geraldton in April. The exhibition featuring art, photography, poetry and oral histories will also be exhibited in Perth in early August during Local Government Week. Well done Merle.

In July last year, WA members held a World Trade and Globalisation forum at UWA. An exciting program included Sophia Murphy from the USA Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Lisa Wilson from AWB and Cathy McGowan. Special thanks to members Sue Middleton and Fiona Haslam-McKenzie whose contribution guaranteed a successful event with participants travelling from throughout WA to attend.

Three regional events were held throughout the year. In October, Kukerin hosted a World Trade and Globalisation day and in Koorda, Colleen Scally organised an event to coincide with World Rural Women’s Day celebrations. In March, Kuth Colegate organised the Mingenew gathering bringing together 56 women who enjoyed a program focused on relationships and making connections.

In February, WA members hosted a GMO Forum in response to a challenge given to us by the Minister for Agriculture Kim Chance to provide a forum where balanced information could be presented representing all aspects of the debate. Over 150 people attended the Perth forum with many more taking advantage of the ABC’s audio streaming of the day. This event would not have been possible without the significant efforts of Mary Nenke, Wendy Newman, Fiona Haslam-McKenzie and Sue Sutherland. A set of four videos is available of the debate.

In June, 13 members attended the National Learning Network workshops with Deranie Jackson held in Perth. The enthusiasm and wealth of knowledge shared by members augers well for the ongoing development of the NLN reference groups.

Congratulations to our members who achieved an accolade this year— Suzanne Woods from Calingiri as the inaugural winner of the RIRDC Rural Women’s Development Award 2003, Betty Heitman from Morawa on her appointment as a grower representative on the CBH Advisory Board, and Kerry Dunn, Ros Hegarty, Cathy Bowen and Cherie Doyle on being awarded scholarships to attend the Spain Congress.

Victoria

Katrina Rainsworth, Hamilton

Victoria hosted an AWIA General Meeting at the Melbourne Museum in October 2002. AWIA vice-president Clare O’Brien chaired the meeting of nine members. Senior Veterinary Officer with Gippsland Department of Natural Resources & Environment, Dr Sue Hides was guest speaker and spoke on animal welfare. Members enjoyed the opportunity to tour the museum with complementary passes organised by museum curator Liza Dale.

Membership 2002
Victoria has 156 financial members with 24 listed as recently non-financial members.

Spanish Trip
Victoria was well represented in Spain, with our members returning to deal with a severe drought affecting 40% of Victoria, the trauma of rural youth suicide and the loss of family in the Bali bombing. Networking and support for
our valued members during these difficult times has been impressive and provided me with a sense of pride in belonging to AWIA.

**Victorian Network**
The last twelve months have seen me settling into the position of Board member and working to understand the various networks within my State. Victoria has strong regional women's networks and I am working to identify these and establish a local far southwest AWIA group to complement other networks. I have developed a Victorian AWIA internet mailing list.

Working within the NLN framework will be a high priority for next year. As the Sheep NLN support board member for Marjorie Stephens, I have a job to assist in this reference group and would like to bring the NLN communication workshop to Western Victoria.

In May I made a Community Cabinet Submission in Horsham to the Minister for Women's Affairs with respect to maternity leave and part-time work in rural agencies, in particular the Victorian public service where I have spent six years after twenty years in private practice. There is much talk about paid maternity leave and I am also interested in the management of the workload when staff are taking this leave.

**Draft Privacy Policy**
In 2003 I prepared a Draft Privacy Policy for AWIA which will be finally presented to the board at our August meeting.

The season continues to be dry in a good 60% of the State with more shires declared drought affected and the Federal EC declarations coming on line. The Wimmera and Mallee however, were not included in the initial federal announcements, which have caused some local response.

I attended a rural leadership dinner at Marcus Oldham College on behalf of AWIA. Attendees from four States and representing a broad cross-section of agricultural industries were completing a five-day in-house leadership course. First hand reports were excellent and this Marcus Oldham course is one that AWIA members should look out for.

A very successful women's gathering was held at Yarram in March. AWIA held a meeting which was well attended and chaired by Jeanette Severs in my absence. Discussions lead to the setting up of a group of members across the State to consider the feasibility of a State structure to support Victorian involvement in AWIA.

May was launching time for the NLN and two workshops were organised in Albury Wodonga and Melbourne thanks to the efforts of Sharon O'Brien. New members signed up and glowing reports were received about the quality and value of the workshops. Cathy McGowen, Alison Brimson and I are keen to investigate running more workshops in regions that express an interest.

I look forward to the next twelve months working with AWIA, my fellow partners in rural Australia.

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**New South Wales**

*Karolee Wolcott, South West Rocks, NSW*

My first two-year term, encompassing my NSW/ACT responsibilities and the III World Congress of Rural Women, has been incredibly busy!! I look forward to new activities and interests in the next two years.

I encourage everyone to seriously consider standing for a Board position. It is a wonderful opportunity to work with fantastic women and to learn more about the management of a national organisation.

My activities over the last year have included:

- I was on the Host Committee for the III World Congress of Rural Women, presented a paper at the Telecommunications Workshop, and assisted in getting more than 160 Australian women to Spain;
- Participating in the NSW Spain Debrief in Dubbo on 21st August. Nancy Ford, Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry Australia, attended and presented the briefing material;
- Unfortunately, I missed the Bourke Women's Gathering that was held on 27-29 September (I was on my way to Spain!). Over 300 women attended and a great time was had by all, despite the drought;
- The next NSW Gathering will be held in Temora on 10-12 October 2003. You can contact Margaret Duck on 02 - 6977 1497 for further details;
- A Christmas luncheon for AWIA members and friends was held in Taroom on 4 December;
- Being able to attend most of the NSW Department for Women Peak Women's Organisations meetings that are held in Sydney quarterly. They are always interesting and it is a great opportunity to promote AWIA and to learn more about the other organizations;
- Spending three months on a very isolated property five hours northwest of Alice Springs. It provided an opportunity for me to speculate on the wonders and hardships women have encountered in outback Australia. I recommend it to everyone!
- Participating in Eco-Innovate 03 - young innovators creating a sustainable future. This event (at the University of NSW in Sydney in early July) is a new and exciting forum that will switch young people to the ultimate sustainability challenge – turning 'eco-innovations' into viable applications.
South Australia

Debbie Thiele,
Loxton

I have been very proud of the 'give it a go' attitude of many South Australian AWIA members who have joined with other members who they know, (or they have encouraged to join), in a host of activities.

A lot of these activities, from tours around local enterprises to workshops, have featured in The Buzz. I'd like to thank Pat Hamilton - our 'roving reporter', and Judy Wilkinson, our 'roaming photographer', for their contributions.

It was wonderful to have the National Learning Network project happening in South Australia, with the two day workshops held at the Roseworthy Campus. We have two very capable, energetic and passionate co-ordinators residing in S.A. Both Jeanette Long (Grains) and Pat Hamilton (Sheep/Fibre) have helped to create a great start to their groups. We are all looking forward to future NLN opportunities that we create for ourselves as members of national reference groups.

Members in S.A. are active in a variety of ways, and several who work in the media, have facilitated communication about the organization to a wider audience. Our affiliate group – Women in Agriculture and Business (WAB) - were able to utilise the AWIA workshop funds from AWB Ltd to run a very successful media training workshop, facilitated by Ian Doyle. It was very well attended and enjoyed. Those who participated said that, for any one who wanted to communicate their ideas to a wider audience, it was extremely useful.

In summary, this year I have been delighted to see in S.A. the wonderful thing about AWIA as it empowers all members to make the most out of THEIR organization through their own actions.

Tasmania

Jane Allwright,
Cliftonale

For the last eight months there has been a coming together of AWIA members in Tasmania as they commenced organising the next Annual Conference and AGM at Grindelwald. This has also been an important step for AWIA to become more visible within Tasmania. TWIA has, through its affiliation, always been supportive of AWIA. TWIA has had a very busy year and its work with the youth in our state at Agfest has shown how keen our young men and women are to be involved with farming. Once again we had a successful Young Farmers Competition, a credit to TWIA members.

Earlier this year TWIA hosted a group of 20 Nebraskan farmers. It was an opportunity to network, learn and exchange knowledge with people that not only understand but share many of our problems and ideas. They were very interested in the diversity of enterprises that occur in Tasmania. It was a highly successful two week exchange and it is hoped that Tasmanians will visit Nebraska USA in 2005.

I have been kept busy on the Board with other members as we work towards improving our communications both internally and externally. This has been a learning process for myself but one which I hope will help me in my time on the Board. I look forward to the next two years on the Board of AWIA in my capacity as the Tasmanian Representative, and to meeting more of our members from all states and territories.

Queensland

Jay Deguara,
Nebo

The past year has been a busy one as life seems to continually become more hectic. After the last AGM and conference, I was fortunate enough to obtain a Meat and Livestock Australia bursary to assist me to join numerous other AWIA members as part of the Australian contingent attending the III World Rural Women's Congress in Madrid, Spain. Following our return, Queensland Department of Primary Industries, AWIA and Queensland Farmers Federation formed a partnership to conduct five forums around the state, with some members who attended the Congress being invited to be guest speakers and share their experiences. Jo Eady, another Queensland Board member was the AWIA organizer of the events and I was able to participate in the Townsville forum.

On the home front, the majority of my time with AWIA during the past year has been spent working with the National Learning Network project. The project was divided into two stages and we found it necessary to seek a new project manager for stage two. We were fortunate to obtain the services of Janet Bailey who is assisted by Deranie Jackson to implement Stage 2 of the NLN Project. Janet and Deranie are both enthusiastic AWIA members who have extensive experience working with agricultural women and who are farming women themselves.

I have recently been involved in an Agriculture Fisheries
Forestry Australia (AFFA) project entitled Building the Future - Sharing the Load. AWIA along with three other national rural women's groups have been invited to participate in this project which aims to encourage industry and organisations to work together on projects. Our project involves the development of a website to provide our industry partners with opportunities of working with us through activities such as online forums. The pilot online forum is planned for later this year and we are currently negotiating with potential industry partners to work with us on this project.

Although AWIA, like many other organisations is suffering through lack of resources, we find as our profile continues to be raised there are more requests being made of us. It is a privilege to work with AWIA Board members, NLN coordinators and general members who contribute an enormous amount to make AWIA the organization it is.

Northern Territory

Clair O'Brien, Mataranka

Our membership continues to grow in the Northern Territory. The NTWiA (Northern Territory Women in Ag) group as such has disbanded but this does not mean that AWIA has folded in the NT. It simply means that we failed to sign on as a formal Reference Group. Now individual members will continue to meet informally as and where they can for specific purposes, thus still uniting and raising the profile of women in agriculture.

There was no travel scholarship for 2002 but I'm pleased to say that two have been awarded for this year's AGM and Conference in Tasmania. Congratulations to the recipients, Wendy McWaters and Julie Yoeman. It is rewarding for me to have more NT members attending and through their participation, gain some exposure to national issues and that level of management.

I am excited about Stage II of the NLN project and am currently looking forward to hosting Janet Bailey for a workshop in Katherine to learn more and to lead us to a closer involvement with the project and various reference groups right across Australia.

I have also enjoyed working with president Jan FitzGerald, as AWIA joined with other NGO's to form the NRWC (National Rural Women's Coalition) and hosted the establishment Round Table for the National Rural Women's Secretariat.

I sincerely thank everyone for their endeavours and support for me in my position as NT rep and for respecting my decision not to stand for president after being vice-president. I look forward to a productive 2003/04 year ahead for us all.

AFFILIATE MEMBERS
Women in Agriculture and Business of South Australia Inc (WAB)
Tasmanian Women in Agriculture (TWiA)
Queensland Rural Women's Network

CORPORATE MEMBERS
Rendell McGuckian - Victoria
Murray Darling Basin Commission
WinCott – Women's Industry Network – Cotton
PIBA Western Australia
Victorian Rural Women's Network – (Department of Natural Resources)
AWiA acknowledges the following generous sponsors for supporting the organization throughout the year

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Annual Report 2002 - 2003
AUSTRALIAN WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

is committed to:

• uniting and raising the profile of women in agriculture;
  • addressing rural and agricultural inequities;
  • working to ensure the survival of agriculture for future generations;
  • securing local, regional and international recognition;
  • achieving the status of a political and economic force.

Core Values of AWiA

• caring for people, rural families and communities, and the environment;
  • enhanced development to ensure the viability of future agricultural productivity;
  • respect for the culture, beliefs and philosophies of other people;
  • communication to enable women to share their experiences and develop strong networks;
  • leadership to facilitate change in the community.

The AWiA Annual Report is sponsored by

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