

Newsletter of the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network Ltd

ExtensionNet



APEN 2022

In Review

Vol. 30 No. 2

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The President's Corner

Dr Anthony Kachenko, APEN President

Welcome to the first edition of ExtensionNet for 2023 and what will be the 30th year of APEN.

In February, the APEN Board will come together for a strategic planning session to prioritise our focus on key initiatives to mark our 30th year. This session will include the 2023 International APEN Conference in Launceston from Tuesday, 14 to Thursday, 16 November 2023. Mark these dates in your diary now as an APEN event to attend. I am certainly looking forward to being face-to-face in Tasmania.

In this edition of ExtensionNet, the editorial team has provided an overview of APEN 2022 achievements and a reflection piece on the 2022 Book Club and Mentoring Scheme. It never ceases to amaze me how much the organisation does through its volunteers. I thank our directors, committee members and all other volunteers for all that you have contributed to APEN's 30 years of supporting extension professionals across the Australasia-Pacific region.

In my final year of President, I look forward to engaging with the APEN membership at events throughout 2023. Feel free to contact me at president@apen.org.au to discuss anything that grabs your eye in this edition of ExtensionNet or if you have any suggestions on how APEN can celebrate its 30th year.

Enjoy the read!

Kind regards,

Anthony



Editorial

It's reflection time – The 2022 APEN Year in Review

Making contact is a great way of sharing the history and the future. It is also a great opportunity for everyone to take the time to reflect on their own journey by looking inward, looking outward, and looking inward again.

Just in case you forgot/didn't have time to download and read our communication channels throughout 2022, revisiting APEN's activities across the last 12 months will give you a 'potted history' of how valuable our organisation is. What did we learn? What did we achieve? How were you involved in being an advocate for extension research and practice?

Most of us will acknowledge that we live in an 'instant age'. But is this 'world of instant', creating unrealistic expectations that at times impede our growth, limit our opportunities, and cause us to lose rather than gain perspective?

"The three great essentials to achieve anything worthwhile are, first, hard work; second, stick-to-itiveness; third, common sense." --Thomas A. Edison

As you read this issue, make time for reflection. We often need to see beyond the lens to progress our extension work. Everyone has a story to tell, a lesson to teach and wisdom to share. Let's be more active this year.

It is 30 years since APEN was formed. We are looking to compile a history of these 30 years. AND we need your help! We need stories, photos, memories – whatever you can share as we capture APEN's growth.

Our impact can make a difference in the way we grow, innovate, and sustain the future of extension.

Warm regards for an amazing, productive, and prosperous 2023.

Pat Hamilton
Editor ExtensionNet

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A brief reflection of the year in review

January

The APEN Board began the year with lots of activity as we finalised the organisation of APEN's International Conference: Facilitating Change and the Opportunity from Disruption - our first virtual conference due to COVID -19 restrictions. We also welcomed John Ladley as an appointed Director to the Board due to the resignation of Les Baxter whose hard work saw several new initiatives delivered in 2021. We were excited to bring to life the New Zealand hub in Mount Maunganui. Deep appreciation to the hard-working, creative team in NZ.

The Board revisited APEN's Strategic Outcomes for the 2022 year

Influence. Relevance. Professionalism. Organisational Stability.

ensuring our purpose can be achieved by:

- growing the engagement and reach of APEN through strategic programs so that we can influence the extension agenda and reputation of the profession and provide relevant services to extension professionals
- developing diversified income sources to enhance APEN's sustainability
- producing a realistic succession plan for the Board Directors, Regional Coordinators, Company Secretary and Editors

So that APEN can support emerging leaders and succession, we successfully applied for a Building Better Regions Fund – Community Investments Stream-Round 5, from the Australian Government.

To our excitement, we were successful.

Planning for the webinars began and the 2022 Mentoring Scheme registrations were open. Check out the information on the [APEN scheme here](#)

Our first issue ExtensionNet for 2022 Extension Chatting was published

In the words of President Anthony: 2022 is shaping up to being another interesting year globally and I hope you can turn all the challenges into opportunities and have an enjoyable, satisfying year.

February

February was dominated by the Conference, and we delivered our first webinar.

2022 APEN Conference

A first for APEN – turning our conference into a virtual platform!



APEN's 2022 International Conference - Facilitating Change and the Opportunity from Disruption held at University of Melbourne from 9-11 February was an amazing event under the awesome convening of Dr Ruth Nettle and so well supported by President Dr Anthony Kachenko and the dynamic committee. We brought together extension professionals from across Australia, New Zealand, and South-East Asia via Zoom. And our New Zealand team provided a hub

Our Conference organisers JT Production Management did a stellar job. The welcome function was great fun with Ruth's welcome and the Brunswick Rogues Choir, and a Quiz with quiz masters Sarah Thompson and Anthony Kachenko. The QR Code, scanned on our mobile phones, enabled us to connect and link with other delegates. Registrants were given a virtual gift card by APEN - it could be used for drinks and nibbles, though we've heard that one person used it to buy some fishing gear! Opening the networking rooms was a blessing for many of us in helping to set our computers and webcams properly for the rest of the conference. Our guest speakers were all inspiring and many were live streamed for some Q&A after their recorded concurrent session topic. Details of the conference are available on the [Conference website](#) including our [guest speakers](#) and [the program](#).

APEN Awards for Excellence in Extension – a citation for each can be revisited in ExtensionNet I - [Check the May 2022 Vol. 29. No3. issue of ExtensionNet](#) for the Conference wrap up

APEN Amabel Fulton Award for Excellence in Extension by a Young Professional (sponsored by Coutts J&R and presented by Dr Jeff Coutts)

- Joint Winners – Jodie Ward (Future Beef, Queensland, Australia) & Sarah Thompson (Dairy Australia, Victoria)

APEN Open Award for Excellence in Extension (sponsored by Hort Innovation and presented by Jane Wightman)

- Joint Winners – Denise Bewsell (Scarlati, New Zealand) & Warwick Waters (Cotton Research & Development Corporation, Australia)
- Highly Commended – Melissa Sowden (Silver Fern Farms, New Zealand)

Life Memberships were also presented to Dr Patricia Hamilton (SA), Dr Roy Murray-Prior (Qld) and Dr Terry Parminter (NZ) for their outstanding services to extension sector.

An Honorary Life Membership was award to Dr Rosemary Currie for her dedication to APEN as the APEN secretariat for 27 years. [Best wishes for an 'early' retirement, Roe]

Webinar

The first APEN Webinar hit the road on 21 February

Hosted by: Warwick Waters, APEN 2022 Excellence in Extension Award joint winner

Topic, Mistakes I've made that others might avoid, what's working well and new opportunities for extension.

- [PowerPoint Presentation.pdf](#)
- [YouTube Replay](#)

March

March continued to deliver our services to members

Latest REIS Journal published online

The latest Rural Extension and Innovations Systems Journal issue, Vol 17 No 2 [was published on the website](#).

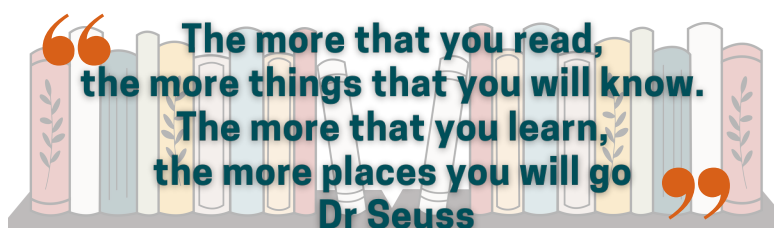
Download the following articles for some very interesting reading.

Jane Wightman, Adrian Englefield, Bron Ford, Olive Hood, Jay Cummins, Jason Hingston & Chris Purdy:

[When do we know investment in extension has been worthwhile?](#)

Rachele Osmond, Felicity McIntosh & Jillian Templeton:
[Webinars applauded by chicken meat industry during the pandemic](#)

Tracey Nelson & Gina Luci:
[Bringing utilisation-focused evaluation into effect in virtual workshops](#)



APEN Book Club

One of APEN's core values is communication enabling extensionists to share their experiences and knowledge. By building strong networks from our various strengths, we can create positive working relationships.

The APEN Book club is an excellent way for our members to get to know each other and to share our knowledge, experiences, and research skills with the wider APEN community.

It was initiated by the Regional Coordinators under the leadership of Noel Ainsworth (RC SQLD) to provide a forum for two-way discussions between members in comparison to the other information delivery initiatives. Instead of being seen as passive beneficiaries of trickle-down development of technology transfer, members should be viewed as knowledgeable and active actors who are centrally involved in both a choice of policies and technologies, and their implementation, spread and regulation.

Every session in 2022 listed, as resources, articles from a wide range of constructive ideas from various disciplines. Thus, creating a wider, inclusive, and diverse approach to stimulate conversations and grow people's knowledge and understandings. This enabled participants to ask critical questions to influence long range planning re roles, structures, and capacities.

APEN Book Club is being run by Regional Coordinators in 2022 for APEN members. We will get together to review how selected papers can be applied to our extension programs in interactive virtual discussions.

April

April became an important month in APEN's growth as we called for a Communications Coordinator and a new secretariat.

EOI for a Communications Coordinator

APEN undertakes several activities to engage with key audiences across a variety of mediums and platforms. These include the APEN website, direct electronic mail (APEN e-bulletin), electronic newsletter (ExtensionNet), along with social media posts across Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook and media releases.

The APEN Board advertised for the services of a media & communications consultant to provide an energetic, proactive, efficient, and comprehensive media and communications service to enhance the impact of APEN's work. This includes developing and managing a media and communications plan, including a focus on social media platforms, materials, messages, and relationships with key stakeholders (e.g., media).

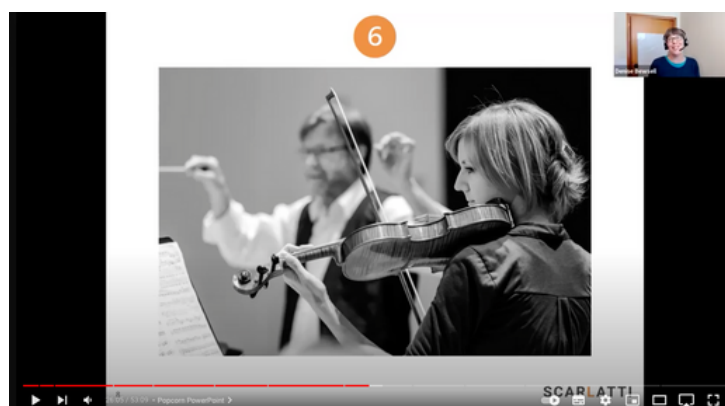
This is a unique and challenging opportunity to put your stamp on a dynamic organisation who engages and reaches extension practitioners across Australia, New Zealand and the wider international community.

Webinar

Hosted by Denise Bewsell, APEN 2022 Excellence in Extension Award joint winner

Topic, Small group-based extension and the (overlooked) art of facilitation.

- [Popcorn PowerPoint.pdf](#)
- [RMPP Snapshot Report](#)
- [Similarities and Differences with participants' experiences - Jamboard](#)
- [RMPP Action Network - Final Report](#)
- [YouTube Replay](#)



APEN's NEXT Conference - EOI called

APEN'S biennial conference is seen as a premier event for many rural and community advisory practitioners, researchers, and academics involved in extension research and practice from around the world. The conference is the heart and soul of APEN and provides an opportunity to:

- Network
- Coach and mentor
- Support and showcase students and their research
- Learn about and discuss extension theory
- Learn about new practice, new engagement, and media trends

The 2023 APEN Conference will build on the success of APEN's first ever virtual conference in 2022. There will be the opportunity to refine the conference program based on participants

2022 Members Directory

The Members' Directory was late in 2022 because of the busy period leading up to the conference in February and the busy period after the conference. Roe got it finalised and on the website in April 2022. It was one of her last tasks before retiring at the end of April. We usually try to get the Directory published closer to the start of the calendar year.

The Directory is a valuable resource. It gives details of member names, organisation, job title, email address, telephone and location in alphabetic order and it also has a section with names and email address by location using postcodes. Use the search function in the pdf to find your fellow members and then contact and network with them!

May

May was a very busy and emotional month as we farewell Dr Roe Currie, appointed our first Communications Coordinator, began the process of implementing our Growing Emerging Leadership Project, transitioned to The Association Services to deliver our organisational needs, and had another robust discussion in our Book Club. [addition] And, of course, published another special issue of ExtensionNet – the 2022 International Conference proceedings.

Roe's Farewell



Dr Roe Currie (Roe to most of us) has been a formidable advocate for extension and APEN for almost 27 years many years having held the role of APEN Executive Secretary.

As well as being the contact and communications point for APEN and looking after the membership database and finances, the role involves assisting the APEN Board and Committees and especially the President, Treasurer and Secretary. Roe has supported the organisation in everything that it has achieved including the delivery of conferences, the mentoring scheme, regional events and communications and organisational governance and the transition of APEN into a company limited by guarantee.

Roe began her career having completed a PhD from University of New England, Armidale in the field of behaviour and physiology of sheep. She then joined the Department of Science and Environment in Canberra and later the Victorian Department of Agriculture at Rutherglen Research Institute where she was a Livestock Research Officer for ten years.

During time at home with a young family, she became involved in the consultancy business run by her husband. In July 1995, Roe and her husband won the tender for the APEN Secretariat. In 1997, she took the Secretariat to her own business, Creative Management Services, and has continued in the role of APEN Executive Secretary ever since. When recognising Roe for 25 years' service to APEN, Roe indicated that she was motivated by her desire to keep APEN running, ticking along, and progressing and working closely with the APEN Board, Committees and Members.

Roe has also demonstrated a strong commitment to APEN, and to its efforts to build positive, productive relationships, networking and working with members as agents of change. Those that have worked with Roe can attest to her 'can do' attitude in driving and supporting the work of APEN through its committees, programs, and events. APEN is indebted to the contributions of Roe over her 27 years with the organisation.

To quote Roe, "Working with all the APEN Committees and Editors and getting to know them all and see them grow with experience as they work for APEN's benefit continues to be a satisfying and rewarding experience. Putting faces to APEN members' names at events is a highlight of the role."

Roe, we will miss you heaps!

Introducing The Association Specialists (TAS)

The APEN Board has recently transitioned the Management of APEN across to the team at The Association Specialists (TAS). TAS will cover many elements of our administration and Secretariat duties. The APEN Directors met with their representative, Megan Ogier, who will work with Roe throughout the transition phase.

A Communications Coordinator

The APEN Board are very excited to have an enthusiastic Communications Coordinator and extend a very warm welcome to Alice Long.

Alice grew up on a farm on Yorke Peninsula, South Australia where she developed her love of beautiful landscapes, nature and agriculture; all things that continue to inspire her today. Alice is keen to work with agricultural and rural industries to maximise the opportunity provided by today's online mediums, especially photography and graphic design.



Alice is a Marketing Specialist with nine years' experience in the wine and spirits industry and the Agricultural sector. Alice has strong arts and design skills including photography, which she has used to develop marketing material for her previous employers. She has completed an undergraduate degree in Media Arts at UniSA (2013) and is currently studying psychology at Deakin University. Alice enjoys working on creative projects that help people connect emotionally through sharing their stories through photo-based content.

Alice is passionate about creative communication (communicating complex ideas to audience in an engaging way that facilitates learning, while also being 'kind to the eye' in rural industries. and is combining her interest in creative use of media with her rural background.

APEN Succession Planning

Following our successful application to the Building Better Futures Fund Growing Emerging Extension Leaders in Australia and New Zealand, we called for an EOI to deliver the seven-month online and face-to-face program and for 10 emerging leaders to join our nine Regional Coordinators as participants. We were overwhelmed by the large number of worthy applications – an indication that we are filling a strong need. We congratulate Jeanette Long, the successful facilitator. Since the announcement Jeanette has been working with us to design a very practical, motivating program. We thank Jeanette (a past President) for her continued involvement and support of APEN.

The Book Club

Hosted by Sarah Thompson (APEN Regional Coordinator for Victoria). Sarah covered the topic of team goal setting. There was a lively discussion around some key topics:

- Why do we need team goals?
- How can we ensure 'buy-in' with these goals.
- Ensuring that our goals are SMART.
- Some examples of it being done poorly

The discussion was really impactful, and the shared insights provided considerable benefit to those who attended.

ExtensionNet

Conference issue: [May 2022 Vol.29.No3](#)



This special edition reviews APEN's first ever Virtual Conference and gives an insight of the work and people behind the scenes that brought it all together.

June

June delivered another thought-provoking webinar and a challenging book club session. It was, also a very exciting time for us as we began the implementation of our project (funded by the Federal Government's Building Better Regions Fund – Round 5).

Webinar

20 June

Jodie Ward, [APEN Amabel Fulton award for Excellence joint winner](#)

Topic: The Value of Difference

[YouTube Replay](#)

APEN Book Club

It doesn't matter if your business is you and your co-founder, or you and 200 others, setting team goals can be difficult. But despite how demanding the process can be, it is essential for the success of your business.

Topic: Aligning goal setting for teams and individuals
see reflections of 2022 Book Club on page 16

Growing Emerging Leaders in Australia and New Zealand – APEN's succession planning project

APEN advertised across Australia and New Zealand to join the current Regional Coordinators in growing their capacity, capabilities, and confidence to step up their leadership in extending the reach and engagement throughout the APEN network and beyond by:

- Interacting with Jeanette Long* for a series of interactive on-line workshops, webinars and learning in the Growing Emerging Leadership in Regional Australia and New Zealand Project – a seven-month program starting 25 July 2022 and ending in February 2023 with a face-to-face Futures Workshop and Graduation Dinner
- Joining other emerging and rising leaders to build your extension, communication, and technological skills and networks to enable change in the extension sector.

**Jeanette is an experienced trainer, facilitator, and coach with a passion to influence positive change in agriculture. She builds the capacity of those working with farmers as well as facilitating farmer groups. APEN is most fortunate to have engaged the services of this inspiring facilitator.*

July

July – the launch of the Growing Emerging Leadership Project and the promotion of the New Zealand Symposium



Growing Emerging Leaders in Australia and New Zealand – APEN's succession planning project begins

Congrats to the successful 19 applicants in APEN's Growing Emerging Leadership in rural Australia & New Zealand – funded by the Australian Government's Building Better Regions – Round 5.

NT: Sarah Hain, Michael Finey; Qld – Noel Ainsworth, Caroline Coppo, Jed Sommerfield, Ebony Faichney; NSW/ACT: Adrian Englefield, Callen Thompson, Emma Tilley, Sue Street; VIC: Sarah Thompson, Kim Price; TAS: Ossie Lang; SA: Sandy Gunter, Robyn Faulkner; WA: Karen Smith, Gemma Longford, Truyen Vo; NZ: Robin Barker-Gilbert.



We were very pleased to have launched the EOI for our Growing Emerging Leadership Project - this has the potential to make a real difference to extension in Australia and New Zealand.

On Thursday 21 July, under the awesome facilitation of Jeanette Long, we were introduced to the successful diverse group. After the two-hour intro session which enabled us to share who we are, what we do, how we will work together as a group and what would make the program successful for each of us. Although there was some apprehension concerning what the next seven months would bring along the continuum of their leadership journey, the commitment and the excitement were still there at the end of the session.

We were disappointed that we could not accommodate everyone – the list of applicants was too big!

APEN needs these rising leaders to make a difference in the world of extension as we unharness their energy, their curiosity and encourage them to soar as high as they can to be part of leading our rural communities.

August

August activities included calls for nominations for APEN Board Directors and Regional Coordinators, regional event in New Zealand registrations were open and the Northern Territory event was advertised. A webinar was delivered and there was another Book Club discussion.

APEN AGM Nominations

Nominations The APEN AGM was held on 21 October 2022, and the call for Board Director and Regional Coordinators nominations are now open. We encourage APEN members to consider nominating to be part of our dynamic board and to contribute to the direction of your organisation!

Catchment Symposium

The New Zealand Committee's Catchment Symposium took registrations for the event to be held September 27 & 28 at the stunning Mount Maunganui in the beautiful Bay of Plenty. The symposium programme included:

- Interactive sessions
- Hearing from our APEN Excellence in Extension award winners about their work
- A field trip to visit a local catchment group doing some awesome mahi (work)
- Panel discussions
- Plenty of opportunity to meet new people and catch up with old friends

Hosting Engaging Events

Our NT Regional Committee advertised the delivery of two workshop days in early October on Hosting Engaging Events

Webinar

15 August

Sarah Thompson, APEN Amabel Fulton Award for Excellence joint winner

Topic: Supporting Extension Officer Development
[YouTube Replay](#)

Book Club Ossie Lang

(APEN Regional Coordinator for Tasmania) hosted a small group looked at “How to create a fun but productive work environment”. This was following on from the previous book club where we spent some time looking at goal setting and where one of the stated goals was to “have more fun at work”.

How to create a fun but productive work environment:

Work can be stressful under the best of circumstances, and the COVID-19 pandemic has taken it to a whole new level. Workplace stress has real consequences on everything from higher health-care spending to a greater risk of work-related accidents. A high-pressure work environment can also lower employee engagement and drag down productivity. Fortunately, injecting a bit of fun into the workday can lead to a more-positive work culture, help employees thrive and increase their productivity.

There was enthusiastic discussion about the topic and, in particular, around the following key points:

- Who is responsible for a fun work environment and that there needs to be some individuals willing to drive the initiatives that contribute to making work fun.
- The Quadruple bottom line model – People, Purpose, Planet and Profit.
- Using games, a break and ensuring that fun isn't ‘forced’ fun.

As with previous groups the meeting was lively with several anecdotes shared. While a light-hearted topic, it was important none the less and everyone left with some ideas to implement in their own workplaces.

September

[September ExtensionNet Vol.30. No.1 published](#) – Dealing with the unexpected, advertised our upcoming events for 2022, and encouraged members to upgrade their membership to professional



ExtensionNet Vol.30 no.01

Each issue of ExtensionNet is a platform for sharing opinions, trends, and the world of extension. Each issue of ExtensionNet aims to capture discussion about key issues that serve to enhance our understanding and professional expertise in extension practices.

As a previous editor of ExtensionNet said, “Newsletters are part of our stock in trade. They have a lot of influence, and you can blow the trumpet of your own area or interest, modestly of course”.

(Peter Van Beek, 1995)

In this issue, we drew on the experiences experienced people who are in the field sharing their knowledge. In case, you missed the articles [perhaps, you didn't have time to read them in September], we have given you another opportunity to visit the articles

- John James (Tas) and Denise Bewsell (NZ) to share some [contemporary approaches and good ideas for extension practitioners](#) and a possible way of [designing the integration of extension into research projects](#)
- Cath Marriott OAM, CEO Riverine Plains (NSW) who challenges of realistic, relevant research
- Steph Schmidt (SA) combined her science and evidence-based knowledge as a psychologist with her lived experience as a farmer to offer a necessary tool to assist the welfare of farmers
- Jacob Betros (Qld) shared two industry frameworks to demonstrate Meat & Livestock Australia's strong commitment to sustainable pathways
- Morag Anderson (Tas) challenged us with some curiosity questions re connecting the dots.

The input from each made for very informative reading and a look through the world from diverse lenses. Sustainability is an important area for extension practitioners to be considered in terms of programs, approaches, and opportunities to drive greater sustainability outcomes across rural and regional industries

We thank all the contributors to this issue – the generosity of their time and sharing their wealth of ideas and experience. A special appreciation for widening our horizons.

Updating APEN's activities

APEN Directors and Regional Coordinators are constantly asked

- What are the contemporary challenges, trends, and debates in extension?
- How do we communicate these discussions to assist current and future extension practitioners, researchers, policy makers and our grass roots members?

To find solutions

- we tap into the wealth of experience to engage and empower our members
- we work our networks (often calling on special favours)
- our communication channels reflect the key issues that serve to enhance our understanding and professional expertise in extension practices – these are our platforms for sharing opinions, trends, and the world of extension

Watch out for the following upcoming events

- The New Zealand Symposium two days of enhancing rural communities and catchment groups in enabling change, networking and learning in the fabulous Bay of Plenty, 27-28 September
- Northern Territory - two, one-day workshops on 5-6 October 2022 in Darwin to help you engage and communicate more effectively with primary producers in your professional role. –
- Online - National Book Club with Callen Thompson (NSW RC)
- Webinars - APEN Webinars are held from 2 to 2.45pm AEDT/AEST on the third Monday of every even month
 - The next one is on 7th October – Extension for Farmers with Beef & Lamb New Zealand
 - Past webinar recordings may be found through the website here and on the APEN YouTube Channel

- The APEN Extension skills mentoring scheme is designed as a low-cost peer mentoring system, which will benefit the individuals involved, our discipline and our organisation. The APEN Extension skills mentoring scheme is available to all
- Growing Emerging Leaders Project report
- ExtensionChat 2022 – three interactive online sessions by very experienced extension specialists

October

October was an exciting month, with our New Zealand and Northern Territory Regions running their first face to face events for 2022, a webinar, and a Book Club discussion. Both events were hugely successful, and we welcome those new members that joined APEN as a result. We also celebrated International Day of Rural Women on 15 October and held the AGM.

APEN NT Regional Event Wrap Up

APEN's 'Hosting Engaging Events' workshop (the first in-person Northern Territory APEN event since the 2019 APEN Conference) attracted 23 people across two days, the 5-6 of October 2022.

Facilitated by Jeanette Long, Ag Consulting Co., the workshop attendees represented forestry, pastoral, horticultural, broadacre and natural resource management sectors and travelled from Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine, Carnarvon, and Broome to participate.

The attending extension professionals, guided by Jeanette, discussed techniques for designing, hosting and facilitating workshops using real life examples.

Thanks very much to many people who contributed to the success of these days: Everyone is looking forward to the next NT APEN event - we hope to see you there too!

Sarah Hain
APEN NT Regional Activities Coordinator

APEN appreciates the initiative of Sarah and thank her for delivering such a successful regional event



International Day of the Rural Woman

Meet APEN's Women's Leadership Team Directors, Regional Coordinators, Life Members

These eleven women have built on the incredible work of so many women who have preceded them since APEN's inception in 1993. The impact of our women members, over 30 years, has influenced the role of extension throughout Australia, New Zealand, and the wider Pacific. We celebrate the achievements of all our women members.

See [the special email](#) we sent out in their honour on the day.



Webinar

17 October

Olivia Weatherburn and Sarah Crofort from Beef + Lamb NZ

Topic: Supporting Farmers - a New Zealand Perspective of Extension

[View the presentation here](#)

[YouTube Replay](#)

21 October APEN 2022 Annual General Meeting

The Australasia-Pacific Extension Network Ltd (ABN 81 760 842 687) Annual General Meeting was by web conference on Friday 21 October 2022 at 12noon AEDT / 10am NZDT. The proceedings can be read in the [2021-2022 Annual Report](#)

We would like to thank the members that joined us for the 2022 Annual General Meeting. We recognised and farewelled Jeanette Gellard as she stepped down from the Board and welcomed Noel Ainsworth as our newest APEN Director. Robin Barker-Gilbert was appointed as the New Zealand Regional Coordinator.

November

November The Book Club, led and moderated by Callen Thompson was a very lively session. We were very excited to be delivering the very popular ExtensionChat during the last 2 weeks in November and the first week in December.

Book Club

Recruiting members when working with groups

Discussion moderated by Callen Thompson (RC NSW)

Many of us have experience working with groups in extension. Whether it be sharing experience, increased footprint of impact or an efficient use of resources, group work has many benefits.

But how do we get our target audience engaged with our group? We decided that this is a different issue from people participating – we spend time on gathering people – do we know what to do with them? The group had a very lively discussion lead by Callen Thompson (RC NSW).

ExtensionChat 2022: Skilling up for Virtual Extension

"Once a new technology rolls over you, if you are not part of the steamroller, you are part of the road" (Stewart Brand)

Session 1# Jeanette Gellard: Capturing participants conversations, content, and data in online sessions
Jeanette explored with us digital facilitation – the different types [virtual, asynchronous, and face-to face] and some of the tools that are available [video conferencing, whiteboarding/post-its, survey tools, note-taking, file storage and sharing]. We were engaged and challenged as we practised and shared the preferred tools of some participants. Stinky fish was popular.

Session2# with Jeanette Long: Bringing people together and connecting online
Jeanette engaged us right from the beginning as we put on a pirate hat and learnt to "steal" {reinterpreting and using her tools to do and apply in our own context}. Each time We entered breakout rooms it was an exciting adventure as we were exposed to a myriad of different activities and challenged to draw on our own talents while using different questions on how to communicate more effectively, including an online interview.

Thanks, Jeanette, Jeanette– we extended our digital technology knowledge and gained confidence in trying out new tools to create an engaging session online.

APEN's NZ Catchment Symposium

After developing a great programme for the New Zealand hub planned to complement the Melbourne conference, when the conference went digital the NZ team decided to run the programme later in the year as a separate event – and we're so glad we did.

Hosted at Zespri's HQ in Mount Maunganui, just under 50 people from right across New Zealand, plus APEN President Anthony Kachenko and one of our Excellence in Extension winners, Warwick Waters from Australia, got together for two awesome days of learning, fun, networking and development.

Day one kicked off with a warm welcome and some networking time, and then a few activities to help us get to know each other. We also started an ongoing challenge where four teams had opportunities throughout the symposium to earn points, with the winners earning some delicious prizes.

Anthony and Warwick started the formal part of the programme, sharing their journeys and reflections – a really powerful way to kick us off. Rather than just sitting and listening, almost half of the session was an opportunity to digest and discuss what we'd heard from them – exactly what we aim to do with our target audiences in extension.

Christina Robinson, Extension manager for environmental sustainability at Zespri, shared some background on the catchment we were going to visit for the afternoon. Wai Kōkopu is a community-led group, taking action to replenish and revitalize the health of the Waihi estuary in the Bay of Plenty. The catchment includes sheep and beef farms, dairy, kiwifruit orchards, lifestyle, and ends at the estuary which is one of the five most degraded estuaries in the country.

The group then headed out on the bus, stopping first at the estuary that the catchment group and local landowners are working hard to protect. The catchment group shared insights on their goals and the work they are supporting to achieve them, including some of the science underway to monitor progress. Participants deepened their connection with the catchment by participating in a scavenger hunt to find different plants and critters that make the estuary home. Next, we went just over the hill from the catchment to visit Kiri Tapsell, a local kiwifruit grower and beef farmer who is working with the catchment group to identify opportunities to care for the catchment and to take action.

Kiri told us how he is using cover crops and re-thinking his production systems to support the long term health of the environment, both on his land, and in the surrounding areas, including the estuary. We were then joined by other growers and farmers active with catchment work to talk together with APEN members about the journey they are on and the challenges they are facing – the conversations were going so well it was hard to get everyone back on the bus! When we did make our way back to town, we heard from the Bay of Plenty Regional Council, Zespri, Beef and Lamb and Dairy NZ about how they are partnering with catchment groups like Wai Kōkopu to work collaboratively towards common goals. It was hard not to feel inspired and hopeful after seeing first hand the community of passionate individuals working towards a common goal of a healthy estuary for the long term.

Despite some average weather which put paid to plans of beach games, the symposium dinner, sponsored by Beef + Lamb NZ, at the local surf club was a really fun evening. A relaxed atmosphere, delicious dinner, and team points up for grabs for some "minute to win it" games (resulting in chaos, laughter and some very competitive behaviour) all contributed to a great night.



Day two started with a session on facilitating and supporting change in catchment communities, allowing time to reflect on what we'd seen at Wai Kōkopu the previous day. We heard from APEN's three 2022 Excellence in Extension award winners, Warwick Waters, Denise Bewsell and Melissa Sowden, and then Sandy Scarrow and Tafi Manjala shared their experiences of running programmes (education, consulting and extension) with a requirement for 2m spacing. The day wrapped up with a session with Vicki Compton from the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) on the future of extension in New Zealand which was very lively, and we thank Vicki for her candour and willingness to listen.

The committee (Heather Collins, Denise Bewsell, Toni White, Terry Parminter, Christina Robinson and Chrissy Stokes) would like to thank the sponsors who made this event possible. Zespri provided the venue, Beef + Lamb NZ sponsored the dinner, Bay of Plenty Regional Council sponsored the field trip, and we also received sponsorship from AGMARDT. We learned a lot from this event: we should be brave enough to try something different; we don't need lots and lots of people to make it worthwhile; white space to think and reflect is really important; we need to "walk the talk" and use the same adult learning principles we use in our extension practice when we run these kind of events; and most of all, it's great to include lots of FUN!



December

Announcement of 2023 Conference, completion of ExtensionChat2023, the online interactive sessions of Growing Emerging Leadership Project completed

2023 APEN Conference

The Board is thrilled to confirm that the APEN Conference will be held in beautiful Tasmania from 14-16 November - more information may be found on the [conference page](#).

A big thank you to the John James, Conference Convenor and the Conference Committee for their hard work to get to this point. We encourage the members to participate in the [co-design survey](#) - your feedback will feed into the conference program and make it even better!



ExtensionChat 2022

Sessions 2 and 3 were delivered to a very enthusiastic group of participants.

Session3# with Denise Bewsell & John James: Effective use of online tools –the voices of experience!

There was a bonus. We, also, shared the experiences of Dana Carver (NZ) and Callen Thompson (NSW)

We shared what we tried over the last couple of weeks? What worked? What didn't? Experienced the different online tool (ZOOM/MS Teams, Polls, Jamboard, Miro. Dana provided key lessons from the Tech-enabled learning project with Dana and followed Callen using Slido at online/face-to-face / hybrid events. Then, another surprise - experiencing two mini masterclasses.

The 22 participants from a wide and diverse range of agricultural industries, farming systems, natural resource management, government departments gave the sessions lots of very positive feedback – encouraging APEN to deliver more programs in 2023.

APEN appreciate the generosity of the facilitators in sharing their expertise to help build the capacity and influence behaviour of extensionists to resolve problems and create more sustainable futures through innovation, change and learning.

Growing Emerging Leaders Project

completes the interactive online sessions from July to December.

Congratulations to all who have been involved. The commitment has been outstanding as topics ranging from understanding leadership and its different styles, understanding ourselves and our preferred leadership comfort zone using Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), different communication skills, how we can build and maintain our confidence and resilience as a leader. In between these sessions, we shared our growth in peer-to-peer sessions. Jeanette unlocked their leadership potential.

As we approach a break before we meet in Adelaide for our face-to-face futures workshop, our emerging leaders will be doing some 'homework'.

APEN is fortunate to watch the development of these women and men. They are the future – and it's very rosy in their hands.

“

Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes... including you.”

”

Denise Bewsell's Reading Brace

APEN really appreciates all the articles shared by Denise in each monthly issue of eBulletin. Often, we don't have time when our issue arrives to read the very informative articles.

As a reminder of what you might have missed, the ExtensionNet Editorial Team have collated all the articles for the 2022 year.

To quote Denise, “Sounds like a reason to download a couple of articles and have a read while having a break from whatever is keeping you busy now!”

We thank Denise for raising lots of ideas from around the world. Enjoy the reading brace – there are so many ideas to widen our horizons.

January	<p>Two books</p> <p>'Cultivate' is written by APEN member, Cynthia Mahoney, available for purchase (\$35) here</p> <p>'Farming Inside Invisible Worlds. Modernist Agriculture and its Consequences' article by Hugh Campbell</p>
February	<p>Resources associated with APEN conference guest speakers</p> <p>Caroline Welsh opened the conference - member of the Future Drought Fund Consultative Committee - the Future drought fund.</p> <p>Professor Sharon Lewin, Director of the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity, Professor of Medicine at The University of Melbourne and a National Health and Medical Research Council Practitioner Fellow - Sharon's research exploring research priorities for an HIV cure, Peter Doherty's review of the origins of SARS-CoV-2</p> <p>The Hon. Mary-Anne Thomas (Victorian Minister for Agriculture) - The Fast Break newsletter and SmartFarms</p> <p>Tom O'Dwyer (head of the Signpost programme [Farmers for Climate Change]) - The Discussion Group Facilitators Handbook is a great booklet produced by Teagasc (the Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority)</p> <p>Cathy McGowan - a farmer, extensionist and ex independent member for Indi in north-east Victoria. Her book. Her community collaboration to build participatory democracy - Community Independents Project. If you are looking for a mentor (one of Cathy's tips), the APEN mentoring scheme is available – for mentees and mentors. So inspiring – turn up, speak up and step up</p>
March	<p>Recent papers from APEN's journal, the Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Journal, volume 17 no 2</p> <p>'An investigation into the use of social media for knowledge exchange for farmers and advisors' Tom Phillips, Marie McEntee & Laurens Klerkx</p> <p>'Identifying factors that support sustainable farming practice change: application of Theory of Planned Behaviour in project evaluation' S Rundle-Thiele, C Roemer, R Anibaldi & P David</p> <p>'Training needs of rural youth for agricultural development: evidence from district Sargodha, Pakistan' Muhammad Yaseen, Muhammad Luqman, Muhammad Adnan, Muhammad Umer Mehmood & Muhammad Kaleem Abid</p>
April	<p>People as resources</p> <p>Linda Prokopy, US social scientist with a PhD in Environmental Planning Key paper, Google Scholar profile, research interests</p> <p>Julie Ingram, UK soil scientist with a PhD in agricultural extension Key paper, Google Scholar profile, research interests</p>

May	<p>The United Nations (UN) Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) extension guides Comprehensive assessment of national extension and advisory service systems. An operational guide Indicator framework for national extension and advisory service systems Scoring tool - to generate evidence on performance and outcomes – ‘The Extension and Advisory Service Systems Yardstick (EAS-Y)’</p>
June	<p>Two papers - the first outlines the exploration of innovation in agriculture while the second explores what it takes to build a successful partnership in agriculture Innovation in agriculture: An analysis of Swedish agricultural and non-agricultural firms by Lina Bjerke and Sara Johansson Co-producing better land management? An ethnographic study of partnership working in the context of agricultural diffuse pollution by Thomas Vetter (Switzerland)</p>
July	<p>Two papers looking at the theme of money, the first looks at the economic impact of learning groups, the second looks at consumers’ willingness to pay for improved environmental standards Impact of Membership of Dairy Participatory Extension Group on Farm Income: An Application of a Difference-in-Differences Coarsened Exact Matching Approach by Adewale Adenuga, Claire Jack, Austen Ashfield and Michael Wallace – more information about the groups here, more 96th Annual Conference of the Agricultural Economics Society papers Consumers’ preferences and willingness to pay for improved environmental standards: insights from cane sugar in the Great Barrier Reef region by Jeremy De Valck , John Rolfe , Darshana Rajapaksa and Megan Star</p>
August	<p>Two papers exploring failure and lessons learnt Facilitating learning for innovation in a climate stressed context: insights from flash flood-affected rice farming in Bangladesh by Kamruzzaman et al. On the (im)possibilities of being a good enough researcher at a neoliberal university by Zielke et al. (Liverpool, UK)</p>
September	<p>Two papers exploring farmers responses to 1. Climate change and 2. COVID-19 Farmers adapt to climate change irrespective of stated belief in climate change: a California case study by Margiana Petersen Rockney Farmer surveys in Europe suggest that specialized, intensive farms were more likely to perceive negative impacts from COVID-19 by 22 authors from 11 European countries, lead author Julian Helfenstein (Switzerland)</p>
October	<p>Two recent interesting papers Social integration mechanisms to strengthen absorptive capacity in agricultural advisory service organisations by Egil Petter Stræte, Bjørn Gunnar Hansen, Eystein Ystad and Gunn-Turid Kvam (Norway) Re thinking research impact: voice, context and power at the interface of science, policy and practice by Mark S. Reed and Hannah Ruhman (UK)</p>
November	<p>Recent work from Aotearoa/New Zealand - one explores the impact of indigenous values and the other support for land use change in response to a changing climate Understanding the influence of indigenous values on change in the dairy industry by Jorie Knook, Anita Wreford and Hamish Gow at Lincoln University and Murray Hemi from Tahitanga Consulting Supporting Land Use Adaption for a Climate Changed Future, report by Richard Fitzgerald.</p>

Reflections on the 2022 Book Club



Noel Ainsworth, South Qld Regional Coordinator
The regional coordinators (RCs) continued to support the book club for the rest of 2022. This followed on from the March, May and August discussions that were reported in the September edition of ExtensionNet. They included:

- looking at Sutherland and Labarthe (2022) [or similar] and discussing the importance of understanding the position of the recipient and co-design, understanding perceptions and positions so as not to increase barriers and embarking on a learning journey together ('we' vs 'you') - March
- Discussing whether we need team goals - May
- Looking at how to create a fun but productive work environment - August.

We finished 2022 with the September and November club sessions discussing 'Customer pain points' and 'Recruiting members when working with groups' respectively. Again, some very engaging exchange of views between APEN members made the events hard to wrap up in the hour allocated.

Extension professionals recognise the importance of peer to peer learning. This format has proven to be an opportunity to learn from other people in extension.

The RCs reflected on the 2022 trial at the Regional Activities Committee meeting in December and with an eye to improve the service to members, we decided that:

- While participation in the 'Book Clubs' by members was low, the concept should be continued to provide an opportunity for members to actively participate in discussions where they could share knowledge, experiences, points of view and also just simply network with other members irrespective of their physical location.
- The low participation was at least partly due to confusion created by the name 'Book Club' given members may unfortunately believe they would have to read a book, when in reality the content for discussion was usually just a webpage or a short article. An alternative name is now being sought, so keep an eye out for that.
- The low participation may also be due to a low level of publicity, normally initiated in the 1-2 weeks before the events. This should be remedied in 2023 by offering more notice and utilising social media where possible.
- Profile and participation might also be increased if the RC's linked with Enablers of Change to discuss topics raised in the EoC video blogs.
- Support would continue with facilitation to be provided by RC's with 2023 events now being planned in February, April, June, August and October.

The Board and Members thank Noel Ainsworth, Sarah Thompson, Ossie Lang, and Callen Thompson for motivating us to read more and involve ourselves in robust discussions about the breadth and depth of extension issues. Each session captured a wealth of ideas and experiences – so much to share across the diversity of extension practices everywhere.

2022 APEN Mentoring Scheme

Have you thought about becoming a Mentor or being mentored?
Check out the information on the APEN scheme [here](#)

The 2022 APEN mentoring program has seen eight pairs of mentees and mentors participate in the program. The APEN mentoring program offers mentees an opportunity to discuss challenges, opportunities, and aspirations in all areas of extension, while receiving advice from their mentor.

The program offers flexibility with on-line meeting times and topics of discussion. As a rule of thumb mentee-mentor catch ups are held monthly throughout the nine-month program.

Additional to regular mentoring sessions, 2022 program participants catch for mini-training webinars.

This year the cohort has heard from:

- Jeanette Gellard Did you make a difference? Evaluating extension activities 11 May
- Dr Roy Murray Prior Planning extension activities that achieve results 13 July
- Denise Bewsell Engaging with Farming Communities 14 September
- Adrian Englefield looking at a Theory of Change approach to extension planning, delivery and reporting 9 November

Keep an eye out in the eBulletin for future APEN mentoring program details and how you can get involved!!! The next cohort will start in early 2023.

“The APEN Extension skills mentoring scheme is designed as a low cost peer mentoring system, which will benefit the individuals involved, our discipline and our organisation.”

APEN Professional Membership

Are you looking for a community of like-minded professionals where you can grow your network and stay up to date on what is happening in your profession?

Why become an APEN Professional Member?

That is the question we recently asked the 26 current APEN professional members (APEN-PM). Half of them replied and their answers are probably not surprising:

- Recognition
- Provides evidence of my professionalism and extension capability
- Assist with career aspirations and valued by organisations
- Staying up to date and continuing to improve my skills
- Connecting and widening the extension network
- Promoting extension and supporting APEN

We also asked what APEN could do to enhance the value of its professional membership category and encourage others to join, and the three main suggestions were:

- include more details about what services APEN-PM's offer on the APEN website
- exclusive training and professional development opportunities
- more promotion of APEN-PMs to showcase and celebrate them and their expertise

Watch this space for developments.

We have also picked up some suggestions for improving the applications process – so thank you for those. And, if you are thinking about becoming an APEN-PM, hopefully, you will see some improvements soon.

[Find out more about becoming an APEN-PM](#) | [See the list of current APEN-PM's](#)

“

Leadership is about building a team to go somewhere to make a positive difference’ ”

Board News

APEN's leaders are all volunteers giving their time to support, manage and develop our organisation and network

The Directors 2022-2023

On Friday 21st October 2022 at the AGM, the APEN 2020-2021 Board was endorsed with Dr Anthony Kachenko (Tas) as the President.

Following the AGM, the new Board met to elect the Executive. We are pleased that John Ladley (NZ) accepted the Vice President role, Roy Murray-Prior (Qld) as Treasurer and Megan Ogier (The Association Services, NSW) as Company Secretary. The Executive Team will be supported by Dr Heather Collins (NZ), Dr Pat Hamilton (SA), Peter Long (Qld), Nicole Sallur (Qld) and Noel Ainsworth (Qld). It is a strong team with lots of experience in extension and a wealth of diverse skills and knowledge.

APEN Committees

Looking for a volunteering role for 2021? Perhaps you can assist APEN by being on a Board committee?

Committees are an important way for members to help APEN achieve its goals. It also means that members can become involved in areas that particularly interest them. Becoming involved along with the Board Directors in these committees is a great way to learn, broaden your network and develop yourself professionally.

The APEN Board structure includes 4 committees.

- Governance and Strategy Chair | [Anthony Kachenko](#)
- Business Development Chair | [Heather Collins](#) (NZ)
- Stakeholder Engagement Chair | [Noel Ainsworth](#) (Qld)
- Audit, Risk & Financial Control Chair | [Roy Murray-Prior](#) (Qld)
- The Regional Coordinators Chair | [Pat Hamilton](#) (SA)

That's it for 2022. It was such a busy year for us.

Whatever 2022 brought you, we are grateful to have worked or connected with you via our conference, workshops, eBulletins, projects, communication channels and hope that we can do more (face-to-face!) in 2023 – especially at the APEN Conference in Launceston.

The Directors 2022-2023



Dr Anthony Kachenko
Chair



John Ladley
Vice Chair



Roy Murray-Prior
Chair



Dr Pat Hamilton



Dr Heather Collins



Nicole Sallur



Peter Long



Noel Ainsworth



"30 Years & Flourishing"

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Together we have the power to inspire, connect and deliver on new opportunities and rich experiences that can open doors to innovation and progress while growing global economies and increasing well-being (Tae Yoo)

Guidelines and Deadlines

Submissions should be made in MS Word 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.

Editor: Dr Pat Hamilton

Layout: Alice Long

Opinions expressed in ExtensionNet are not necessarily those of the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network (Ltd.) unless otherwise stated.