

Cattle grazing at Springfield



Director's Update

Issue 3

It's hard to put into words the loss that we have all felt losing Payton Hansen. A much-loved member of the crew his passing was devastating for all, especially the Wave Hill team. I cannot describe how proud I am of the way that everyone came together and shared their unbelievable grief for this beautiful, cheeky fun-loving cowboy. Connie Wood's tribute to him (below) paints a great picture of the person that Payton was.

I would like to commend Matt and Connie for the way in which they dealt with this tragedy. Connie held the show together with strength and compassion for all, Matt's authentic leadership skills shone through. The response from the wider country community was overwhelming.

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Payton's family were also unbelievable at reaching out and helping with the pain that the crew were experiencing - I thank them immensely for their bravery and thoughtfulness at the worst of times for them. It gives us great peace to know how much Wave Hill and the people there meant to Payton.



Callum, Olive, Zali, Millie & Henry MacLachlan mustering on Killarney

"The greatest maxim we can give is to make the most of the hours we live" is written on a sundial in the garden here at Springfield. I feel like working on station is the epitome of this - long days in the saddle, in the cattle yards or in a Toyota. I had the pleasure of taking Skye and our five children (Millie, Henry, Willa, Olive and Zali) to visit both Killarney and Wave Hill during the school holidays. Mustering heifers out of Comet Paddock on horseback at Killarney was a highlight for all of us. Many thanks to Michael and Alex for organising this and lending some of your personal horses, days don't get much better than that.

September brings us to our 1-year anniversary as MacLachlan Pastoral Group. I'm extremely appreciative of P-J and Natalie, they're an amazing office team and their never-ending support is invaluable.

I have great pleasure in announcing David Foote as a Non-Executive Chair of Killarney. Amongst other things, David was CEO of Australian Country Choice for over 20 years. He brings a wealth of experience, wisdom and a sense of humour to the table. I value his opinion and advice enormously.

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While the season in the North has been the best on record so far, it's been the opposite in the Barossa Valley.

Shannon deserves a big shout out for drawing on every resource available to keep our breeders in the best possible condition, given a very tough winter. They have been fed three times a week all winter without missing a day. With warmer days now, the tide is turning, and the grass is growing at long last.



Skye, Henry & Millie during the muster

Our focus never drifts far from safety: the safety of our employees is always front of mind. There is nothing more important than culture in this respect, set from our management from which it filters down. A culture of looking out for each other, for letting management know where there might be flaws in our systems, for taking care of each other and especially with experienced, return employees looking out for the newer recruits with advice on how to do things better and/or more safely.

In early August we had a partners tour of Wave Hill, with all partners on board for the first time and fund manager Robert Frost's first visit. With the spectacular season having been gifted to us by the weather gods, Wave Hill very much has its party clothes on.



Millie, Zali, Olive, Willa & Skye

It was a joy to see the stock, country and people flourishing, with beautifully cool weather to round it out.

As the year flies by, we start thinking about next year and our staffing situation. We have already started putting together our lists for 2025 and are encouraged by the number of quality word of mouth recommendations received. If you have a friend who might be interested, best they apply earlier rather than later.

Callum MacLachlan

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Vale Payton James Hansen 28/02/2005 - 14/06/2024

Written by Connie Wood, Wave Hill Station

To steal the words of Chris Ledoux “There’s one less tornado in the Territory and a saddle that’s empty tonight. One hell of a cowboy in heaven, at that big rodeo in the sky.”

Payton started at Wave Hill as our mechanic, but quickly became so much more. Every morning, at breakfast he used to sit out the front of the cookhouse and give some sort of cheek to Matt over his Yeti cup filled with coffee.

From my point of view, I always knew I could count on Payton for a yarn down at the shed, or a hand doing whatever needed doing around Wave Hill, the homestead and beyond.

Sometimes Payton had eyebrows, sometimes he didn’t. Some mornings he looked like hell and had a few extra home job tattoos and a feral haircut ... but Payton always showed up for us.

He was a role model for the Wood children, he was a kid at heart himself. He always made time to chat with the kids or kick a footy or play a game, he was always happy to help the girls when Harrison was being more than a handful, whisking him down the shed to fix his bike or just generally being ‘one of his people’. Payton could get through to Harrison in those times when we struggled to.



When Matt couldn’t get to Daly Waters rodeo, and this clueless campdrafting mumma needed a hand to get our wild boy on his Poddy... there was not a moment’s hesitation when I asked for Payton’s help.

Payton kept our boy safe and he stepped in despite having his own novice bull ride later that night. Furthermore, Payton helped me sort out Harrison’s spurs and taped his little wrist up and gave him tips on how to ride.

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Harrison won his first rodeo buckle with his special mate by his side. Further to this, Payton gladly went above and beyond (as usual), assisting other little boys to do their rides. He loved every minute of it, it was just who he was. The three little boys he helped that day won first, second and third in the poddy ride!! We couldn't wipe the smile from his face.

Matt knew he could count on Payton for anything, day or night. He was our Mr Reliable. A handy mechanic, horseman and natural stockman "that little Wee-man is Athletic as f**k" to quote Matt after he had spent a few days in the cattle yards with Payton. We had planned to have Payton in the camp next year and we were both excited to have him here with us at Wave Hill for a few years yet.

Matt thinks the world of Payton, as a worker but as a top-notch human being with a huge heart and as a wonderful friend and important part of our Wave Hill family, a sentiment that we all share.



Payton's passing has left a gaping empty hole in our community here at Wave Hill... the shed, the social club and all around this place. Our hearts have been incredibly heavy and our souls have ached with sadness with so many questions left unanswered.

We continue on, and we are at peace with what has happened as best we know how. Our enduring memories of Payton are his strength and work ethic, his charisma, that cheeky smile and jaunty cowboy walk. He will be remembered for his cracking sense of humour, his ability to 'get shit done' and overarchingly as a valued, respected and loved friend and employee here at Wave Hill Station. He was and always will be a loved and valued son to Jamie and Robyn, and a cherished brother to Lane, Jackson and Joel Hansen. Our support and love continue to extend to the Hansen family as they figure out how life looks without Payton.

"Wee-Man, Wee-Diddle, Payto."

Forever young, forever in our hearts. Fly high, cowboy.

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Cattle at Sinkhole Yards

Killarney Station

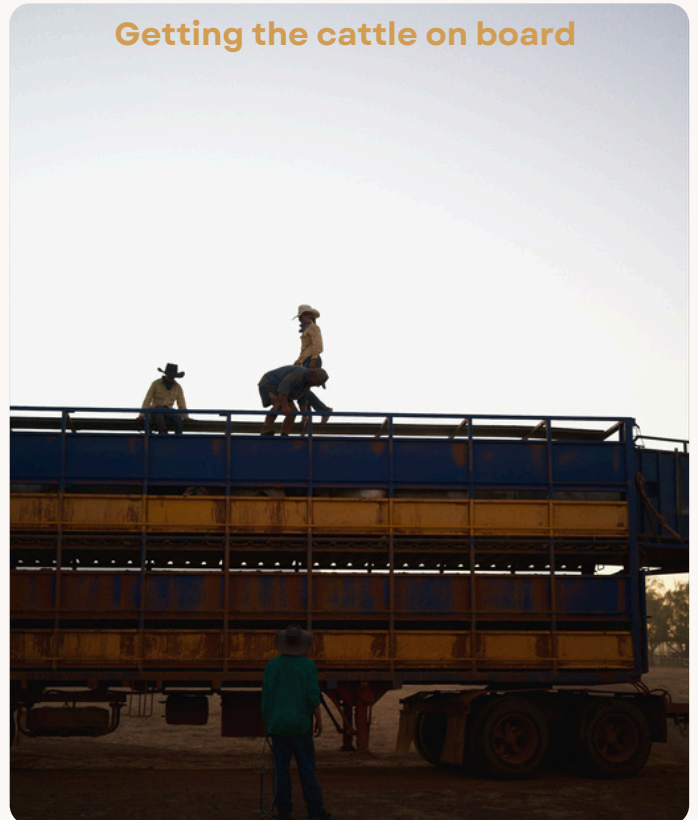
After a late finish to the wet season, the stock camp rolled their swags and headed to BJ's yard to begin mustering of breeders, it was full steam ahead getting roads graded, fences repaired, and cattle mustered, preg tested, vaccinated, calves branded, and weaners and sale cows pulled off and trucked home.

The weaner crew led by Kylie Clifford had their hands full tailing, branding, fencing and trucking sale cows in between. The crew were up to the challenge with newbies learning the ropes on the way with a smile on their faces always.

Jess working with the station horses



Getting the cattle on board



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Zoe and Jess on the job

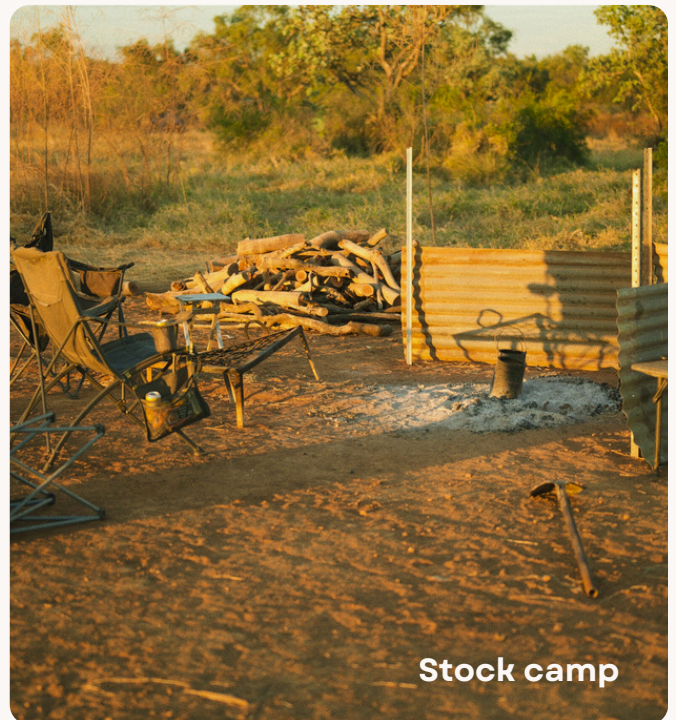
“Success is only as good as the success of your team” so thanks guys for putting in 110% day in and day out, it has been great guiding and watching you all find your place in our team and thrive.



Amy capturing the action on station

Thanks to our senior team members in Isla Smith, Kylie Clifford, Lexie Gaylard, Nancy Strutt and Sam Hukins for your leadership and patience.

From the air, Nic Brisk and to the crew; Ava Osmotherley, Casper Millbank, Clancy Nott, Hunter Fallins, Jessica Angus, Nadine Heath, Richie Neville-Smith, Emma Massey and Zoe Ferry.



Stock camp

The stock camp led by Isla, spent from April to June camped out mustering breeder paddocks.

Amy Craig, our cook spent this time based out with the crew cooking, as well as helping out in the yards whenever needed often swapping the oven mitts for a day on the calf cradle and snapping some great photos.

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Kylie checking the trailers

We welcomed Ella as homestead cook while Amy was away, Ella came all the way from Poland and fitted in well, whipping up delicious meals and taking some great photos.

As soon as breeder paddocks were completed in mid- June and weaners all processed, it was straight into mustering dry cattle, mustering in sale steers and heifers weighed into sale lines and preg testing heifers.

It was great to have the MacLachlan family on station for a week on horseback, joining the team and giving us a hand.

By mid-July we had all sale lines placed into holding paddocks ready for trucking with a good 4,000 plus already turned off, more set to go in August.

Hunter & Casper in Nelly's South breeders paddock



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Killarney crew yarding up

It hasn't been all work, with plenty of play, camp drafting and rodeo action in between, with crew attending Daly Waters, Katherine ASH, Costello and Katherine Show camp drafts and rodeos.



With some crew even managing to pick up the odd ribbon, Jess Angus bringing home a second in the Encouragement at Costello and Isla Smith a Third in the Novice at the Katherine Show Camp Draft.

We also entered a pen of the 15 feeder steers into the Katherine Show's Elders Indonesian feeder steer show and auction - managing to bring home the champion pen trophy.

A great result, a big thanks to all involved!

Kylie, Alex and Isla. Champion Pen of Steers at the Katherine Show sale presentation

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We are currently preg testing our Joiner heifers with another 3,000 plus sale and floodplain cattle set to be trucked out over the next few days before crew head to Kununurra Camp Draft and Rodeo for the weekend.

Stu Jones has been putting in another big effort as usual getting roads graded. Henvil and Wayne running bores, keeping lick up to cattle as well as ticking off many maintenance jobs. Chrissy has been keeping our beautiful grounds immaculate and is always so caring.



Kylie tailing weaners

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Also a special mention to Kirsty Putland, our Nanny/Governess to Cooper and Archie.

Thanks for being the calm in our home as well as keeping the school room so exciting.

Even helping the kids win some blue ribbons in the arts and craft section at the show!

Cooper assisting Lexie & Jess on the job



Above: Cooper taking out the Blue ribbon for his art at the Katherine Show

Left: Archie with his winning entry

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Stormy (Elders), Hunter & Ritchie with Cooper & Amy looking on



Kirsty carting Cooper & Archie with the dogs of Killarney

We are enjoying the cool days, dusting off the jumpers. The weather has been kind, the sunrises and sunsets spectacular.

We find ourselves in early August with creeks still full of water, some having only just stopped running, grass still has plenty to give. A season to remember!

Michael Stanley



Sunset over the station

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Jess & Jaye in the lead at Gordys

Wave Hill Station

The weather has turned a bit in the last week at Wave Hill, starting to warm up a bit as we move into Spring.

It has been a fantastic season at Wave Hill, on the back of a record wet; stock have done incredibly well and the country is in amazing health. How fortunate we are to have had two bumper seasons back to back, being lightly stocked. The recovery of country that has been overstocked for decades prior to our acquisition of Wave Hill is almost unrecognizable. Key perennial grasses are back, in abundance.

Jessie, Paddy & Lachie polishing the top rail



Chungamidgee Yards in action



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The big wet has not been without its challenges. Road access, constantly bogged vehicles and machinery and miles of flood fencing, to name a few.

We have only recently finished our first round in early August, some 6 to 7 weeks later than is normally the case.

It has been a really stop start program this year, which is frustrating when you know how much is in front of you.

Steers getting a drink



First round finished strongly with 55% weaned and nearly 20% calves branded back onto their mothers (to be weaned in second round).

Paddy, Harry, Tess, Jess, Jessie, Alice & Curran sending off the cattle



A crazy few weeks of late, delivering sale cattle, sorting out heifers, preg-testing and depasturing maiden heifers across the run.

As expected all weights are well above the normal, and conception rates in heifers unbelievably in the 90's.

The market has been slowly improving, though perhaps slightly less than we had hoped.

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Wave Hill crew at Mount Possum

Back: Caleb, Callum, Shay, Jess, Taine, Matt, Bernard, Paddy & Darren “Dazza”

Middle: Jessie, Izzy, Henry, Harrison, Britt, Ricki, Imogen & Ruby

Front: Lace, Connie, Maddi, Kate, Harri Wood, Harry, Lachie & Curran

In June we lost our much loved mechanic allrounder Payton Hansen in the most tragic of circumstances. It was like an atomic bomb going off in the hearts of our Wave Hill family. In fifteen years of station management I cannot recall a tougher fortnight.

This is not a business where we can put up a sign out the front and come back to work next week; things needed to keep happening at Wave Hill; and we needed to wrap our arms around our staff and help each other through.



**Blue Tree, Mount Possum.
In memory of a lost mate**

I would like to sincerely thank everyone here at Wave Hill who worked through that tragedy.

A massive thank you to Callum and Skye who responded immediately to our call for help, getting from Greece to Wave Hill in 48 hours.

Their prompt, professional and thorough response to this tragedy was above and beyond; giving us as much support and assistance as possible.

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Our team leaders and supervisors who responded with so much maturity, selflessness and understanding. And most of all my wife and Assistant Manager Connie; who selflessly set aside her own needs and emotions to look after 'her family' as she refers to everyone here at Wave Hill.

In 13 years with Connie by my side I don't know if I have ever been prouder.

She was the rock and mother to over 40 people (family, friends and associates near and far) who descended on Wave Hill at that time to grieve the loss of Payto and support us all.

Three small kids caught up in this tragedy added another aspect. So many others came to our aid; the support from the local community, the Jumbuck/MPG team, families and friends was truly overwhelming.



In memory of
Payton Hansen

Walking the weaner heifers



Payton's memory will live on at Wave Hill, for a person who was only with us for 18 months, he had become a favourite to many and we will miss that cheeky character who brought an energy to us all.

The wounds have healed, the scars will be forever with us; but I am truly heartened by how close this crew have become having been through this tragic event.

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Maddi, Lachie, Leonie, Tess, Alice, Ricki & Paddy in their Funky Friday shirts



With all the delays and hold ups this year, the maintenance period between rounds of breeders has all but been consumed. That said a few things have been knocked over. This includes some installations of troughing and plumbing on the Cattle Creek side and the installation of a repeater tower in Quinn's paddock giving us some much improved communications over Wave Hill.



Ricki, Alice, Jess, Connie & Izzy near Cameron's Bore



Izzy, Alice & Ricki on Kelman Plain

Some compounds have been erected around solar arrays at Silkys, Lawsons and Nutwood. Solar installed at Nutwood bore to name a few. A move away from electric hot water services and electric stoves allowed us to downsize to a 100kva Hino genset; reducing our diesel consumption considerably. Numerous other water and infrastructure upgrades have been conducted throughout the year.

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Connie, Imogen & Harrison Wood at Cullacabardee Yards



One highlight of the year was putting the newly completed Cullacabardee Yards in the Eastern Desert to work.

Peter Cause and his crew delivered a first class finish to a new design; and were a pleasure to work with.

The tank, pipeline and plumbing to 8 troughs in yards and holding paddocks all done by station labour; a great sense of achievement for all involved.

The result and absolute joy to work in, fast, efficient and easy on both staff and stock.

It was a bit of a reality check coming back to some of the older yards at Wave Hill. I thank CHM for allowing me to build a new design of breeder yards that I know will be a huge step forward for efficiency, safety and above all else; better for the stock.

A big thank you to our staff in 2024.

Breeder camp Head-stockman Jess Radel, now in her third year at Wave Hill; highly skilled, efficient and fantastic role model for her staff.



More Funky Friday!

Back: Maddi, Leonie, Tess, Ricki
Front: Lachie, Alice, Paddy & Jess

Her achievements at Wave Hill have been incredible and we would not have taken the herd forward at the rate it has without her input.

Overseer Shay Thackrah has continued to improve the waters situation at Wave Hill. To see it come from where it was in January 2022 to what we operate with today is hard to fathom. Well done.



First yard up at Cullacabardee Yards

MPG Newsletter

Jess surveying replacement breeders at Kelmans Yard



Weaner camp Headstockman Henry Anderson has continued to produce a line of well branded, well educated young cattle that anyone would be proud of.

Darren Wilson has had a challenging year, dodging bog holes, having constantly changing plans to suit the tricky situations we have been in and delivering a quality job in trying conditions. Thank you for your patience and understanding; you have made my life considerably easier with your can do attitude and positive outlook.

Stationhands in their second year at Wave Hill - Jessie Chester, Izzy Engel, Alice Taylor, Tess Rixon, Britt Clarke, have all stepped up and set the bar high for the first years.

Bernard Dolinski continues to assist in an all rounder capacity, as well as steering the station Cessna 182.



Lunch break at Camfield River



Britt at Kelmans Yard

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Ricki, Alice, Leonie, Tess, Jess and Izzy watering the horses

Newcomers this season to Wave Hill include Leonie Heath (after two years at Meda Station), Patrick Higgins, Harry Wright, Lachie Newman, Caleb Austin, Curran O'Donnell, Maddi Muirhead, Jaye Radel and Ricki Lyn Coates, have stepped up to the pace of life a Wave Hill and are going incredibly well.

We also welcome Brumby Forrester back into the fold here at Wave Hill.

Our new Irish Couple gardener/domestic Vicky Crimmins and Mechanic Kyle McGuinness have slotted into their roles very well and are great to have around, bringing value and good humour.

We also welcome new cook Fiona Edge who has the big job of feeding the Wave Hill army.



Maddi terrorising Matt



Harrison and friend

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Bean, Immy & Harri on the driveway



Jess & Connie on Kelman Plain



A big thanks to Governess Kate Gover and Nanny Molly Pike who arguably have the toughest gig on Wave - keeping the Wood kids in school, out of mischief (mostly) and allowing Connie and I to function at the level of intensity required to manage Wave Hill.

We say goodbye to Molly at the end of August and welcome new recruit Lucie Cummings to continue the quest of keeping the Wave Hill Wood kids safe and entertained!



Kitchen assistants - Bean, Imogen & Harrison

And last but not least Connie the person who keeps us all on track, doing the things behind the scenes that actually make the station run and manages to find a bit of time to get out into the paddock and into the yards to train and teach staff and keep things happening.

In summary the Wave Hill crew of 2024 have been a fantastic group of people who work hard, take pride in themselves and Wave Hill and do it with a smile on their face.

Thank you.

Matt Wood

MPG Newsletter

Springfield horses enjoying the Winter sunshine



Springfield Station

As I signed off the last newsletter in April, we were looking forward to some early opening rains to not only settle the dust, but kick start some much-needed forage.

However, it did not come! 2024 was the driest Autumn in the Adelaide Hills on record. It ended up being an incredibly tough calving season for the girls, in particular with the aged or heavier set cows needing more nutrition to maintain good condition. On the back of an unprecedented dry Spring, and almost half the supplement feed baled, meant that it was always going to be tough.

But with superior quality silage and premium wheaten hay from John Hogben at Manoora the cattle look as good as they can be for the conditions. This year I ended up with double the amount of poddy calves to feed, a few more stillbirths and calving difficulties than usual.



**Shannon's
newest
helper, Deni
the Kelpie,
meeting the
locals on the
station**

MPG Newsletter

With no rain forecast on the radar, we decided to look at dry seeding the pastures this year. Craig Hage from Regari returned with his speed tiller at the beginning of May to do some final leveling on the plantation block in preparation for seeding.

After picking up more rocks and sticks, leveling with a bar, speed tilling and rolling, the Plantation paddock is finally finished! By mid-May, all the sowing was done. Most of the pastures are annual ryegrass with clover and either barley, triticale or oats - apart from a small section that was sown with a perennial pasture blend. Desperate for rain before temperatures started to plummet, we finally enjoyed 14.5mm on the last day of May.



Dry with frost in June!

June brought a couple of frosts, then some decent rainfalls followed and finally some germination. All pastures were sprayed with a pesticide early and a broadleaf herbicide to follow once the clover has reached the 3-leaf stage. All cattle and horses continue to be fed 3 times a week with the Hustler feed cart, allowing not only the weaker cows but the young calves to have access to hay and silage.



Wirra Wirra Peaks

MPG Newsletter

With calving wrapping up at the end of the first week of June, calf marking commenced a bit earlier than usual.

Skye was my help again in the yards for drafting cows and man handling calves. The two of us tried something a bit different and marked the calves standing in the main crush instead of the calf cradle. With a few small issues rectified early, it worked quite well.



Skye headed North to Killarney for some time in the saddle, so Rose Ross from Glen Gillian stepped in to finish the job. Bringing cows into the yards at this time of the year can be quite tricky with stress, burning energy and harsh weather conditions. Strategic planning with feeding hay prior to moving cows and minimising time in the yards is paramount.

Rose was a terrific help over 3 days in the yards and I thoroughly enjoyed working with her again. All mobs usually come back through the yards for a drench and calves for the booster vaccine in late August. This year the lice have been quite bad and hitting the cows early, so 4 weeks after marking we had to bring everything back through. Cows and calves through the crush this time, I'm lucky Skye was back on deck to help me get it done at the right time.



MPG Newsletter

The winter rainfalls are better than last year so far, and the annual crops are starting to really take off with good growth. However, the perennial pastures are terribly slow, and feed is still minimal. A quick graze over the crops has given a small reprieve for at least a couple of weeks and given paddocks some much needed rest. We are moving mobs weekly at this time of year and grazing every bit of spare grass we can find. I think the only place the cows haven't grazed is the Homestead lawn. This week the bulls are coming out after 8 weeks with the girls and that will make moving mobs much easier.



Low cloud on the ridge

With the season clearly starting to change, the trees are starting to shoot, and the days are getting longer, the growing season is upon us. With the cows off the crops, a bit of urea has been spread to give it a boost. Let's hope the rain continues to fall through the Spring and we can get a bit of a break.

Shannon Kunst