

# CO-OPERATIVES WA NEWS

## JUNE 2008

### ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2008

The most important Conference of the past 10 years will take place on October 16<sup>th</sup> 2008. Make sure you have strong board and management representation at the 2008 Conference.



Tony Addison

- Tony Addison of Addisons Solicitors, adviser to a number of NSW co-operatives, will speak on the many ways to use Co-operative Capital Units.
- Delegates will learn from a retired SAS Squadron Leader how to improve their management and leadership skills.
- Timetable for transferring to the new co-operatives legislation will be explained.
- Conference to return to round tables format.

### ***"Dare to Win"***

Put the 16<sup>th</sup> October date in your diary.

Get all your delegates to do the same.



### Co-operatives WA Annual Conference

**Date:** Thursday 16th October 2008

**Venue:** Tompkins on Swan  
Cnr Dunkley Avenue and  
Canning Highway, Alfred Cove

**Dinner:** Viva Restaurant - Applecross

### Welcome to Ravensdown Fertiliser Co-operative

The Board of Ravensdown, one of New Zealand's leading co-operative companies will be meeting in Perth during July. The operations of United Farmers Company Co-operative were merged into Ravensdown in January 2008. The Board visit is in recognition of the importance of the WA operations within the Ravensdown business.

Rhys Turton of York and Gary Cosgrove are both Members of the Ravensdown New Zealand Board, travelling regularly to Christchurch, the head quarters of the trans-Tasman co-operative.

### Councillor Handover



Wally Newman

Congratulations to Wally Newman on his election as Deputy Chairman of Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. Vern Dempster will now represent CBH on the Council of Co-operatives WA. Vern was a Councillor back in 2002 as the representative of United Farmers Co-operative Company Limited.



Vern Dempster

## Retailers Forum

Rural co-operatives provide very valuable retailing services throughout Western Australian covering such things as food, hardware, electrical, farm input supplies and fuel.

As a way of keeping in touch on industry matters that impact on retail businesses a Co-operatives WA Retailers Forum has been established. The Forum will operate using teleconferencing facilities that will help businesses from the Kimberly to the south coast to stay abreast of what is happening in rural retailing without leaving their office. An annual face-to-face workshop is also planned to build on the 'co-operative' retailing business model.

Co-operatives WA will be supporting the Forum through a central secretariat for the 11 retail co-operative retail Members.

The Forum will take networking between Members to a new level, identifying and addressing key issues on a year-round basis.

The Retail Forum model will be rolled out to other groups of Members who have areas of common interest and who would benefit from improved networking.

## Co-operative College - UK

Co-operatives WA is working in conjunction with the Co-operative College of Manchester UK, to provide strategy workshops and key training programs to WA co-operatives. Senior staff from the UK College will be in Perth mid-August with a number of Members having already arranged in-house training for directors and senior staff.

The key to a successful workshop is having interested and involved attendees willing to discuss issues and explore solutions. As co-operatives we have a very strong business model. However, like any business co-operatives can't be left to self-manage. They need

strong board direction, committed management and ongoing support from their Membership.

If your Co-operative is interested in being part of a general one day workshop on 13<sup>th</sup> August, email or telephone Peter Wells today on 9368 5155.

If you want more information go to the Co-operative College 2008 Australasian Program brochure.  
[www.cooperativeswa.org.au/workshop](http://www.cooperativeswa.org.au/workshop)

## Did you know?

- Co-operatives WA Members have a combined annual turnover of over \$2 billion!
- Co-operatives WA Members provide employment for around 2,500 people.
- There are close to 37,000 members of co-operatives that make up Co-operatives WA, many of whom run very successful businesses that employ many more people throughout Western Australia.

## Co-operative Business Model in Agriculture

Co-operatives WA was instrumental in having the Federal Government review its new wheat marketing legislation to ensure growers could export bulk wheat through their own co-operative. Geraldton Fishermen's Co-operative and Namoi Cotton Co-

operative Ltd in New South Wales have both received prestigious awards in the last twelve months for their excellent work on behalf of members. There is no reason co-operatives can't do the same for wheat growers.

## Munro's Up-date

Barry Virgo of Munro's has announced his retirement effective 30 June. Barry has provided co-operative clients with accounting and tax advice for many years. We wish him a long and healthy retirement which we understand will involve plenty of golf.



Ian Arblaster

Ian Arblaster - a long time Director of the Munro's team will take over Barry's co-operative client book and continue the Munro's commitment to meeting the needs of Members of Co-operatives WA. In addition to accounting and taxation support Ian will also be available to provide business advisory services to Members.

## Vale Jim Hughes

It is with great sadness that the Ord River District Co-operative advises the wider Co-operative circle of the sudden and unexpected passing of CEO Jim Hughes.

Jim came to the Ord River Irrigation Area in 1968, only 5 years after commercial farming commenced. Appointed Managing Director in 1983, Jim later became Chief Executive Officer, a position he held until his premature passing on 16 March 2008.

Through his enthusiasm, dynamic personality, business acumen and "can do" attitude, the Co-operative grew from strength to strength through diversification in not only agricultural merchandising, produce exports and grain processing operations but by undertaking the operation of the Wyndham Port facility, commodity storage and handling and importation and distribution of bulk fuel. In fact that

growth lead to a recent business restructure and the formation of Cambridge Gulf Limited, a public unlisted company with the new Ordco (Ord River District Co-operative Ltd), carrying on the traditional business of the iconic co-operative known to the region, handling the agricultural merchandising and grain processing operations.

Jim's largest and undoubtedly greatest business achievement was facilitation of the feasibility study and business planning that established the sugar industry and a sugar mill in the Ord Valley with the farming fraternity considering Jim the father of the sugar industry.

Of the many who have contributed to the success of the ORIA Jim Hughes was certainly a major contributor.

## Mt Barker co-operative continues to grow



Members of the Mt Barker co-operative will soon enjoy even better shopping facilities with plans to build a rural services building announced in June.

The Co-operative works in partnership with Elders Rural to provide members with a comprehensive rural merchandising service. The decision by the Co-operative's Directors to locate rural services at a more accessible location will improve the logistics of moving goods in and out of the store and make it possible to expand the product range on offer.

"The move will see the new building out of the town centre with easier access for farmers" said Mt Barker Co-op chairman, Chris Enright.

The co-operative has a history of being proactive in providing services to people in the Plantagenet and surrounding shires. Chris Enright and Norm Mills, Co-op general manager were recently pictured in the Albany Advertiser's Great Southern Farmer lift-out symbolically "turning the first sod" for the new facility.

Norm Mills, general manager since 2003 said "The Co-op is focused on providing good customer service and retail facilities for its shareholders and customers and currently provides supermarket, newsagent and hardware facilities as well as fuel for shareholders, all of which will benefit from relocation of rural services."

Co-operatives WA congratulates Mt Barker on their forward planning and commitment serving the needs to their members. Initiatives such as these demonstrate the "co-operative difference" to doing business.