



## May "Mumblings" from the Chairman, The Mulloon Institute

The weeks fly and I've moved from "Antics" to "Mumblings" as this month's update on happenings at The Mulloon Institute and our Mulloon Community Landscape Rehydration Project (MCLRP). At the end of April I attended a Federal Government Smart Cities Summit in Melbourne in one of my other capacities. A very interesting day of discussions but it also allowed me to speak with both Environment Minister, Greg Hunt, and Cities and Digital Transformation Minister, Angus Taylor. I was able to further update them on our work and particularly our role within the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (UNSDSN).

Perseverance is having a positive effect as Greg Hunt used us as an example of an innovative approach to catchment management in a recent interview he did with the Australian Water Association. You can find the article at [http://digitaledition.awa.asn.au/?xml=Water\\_Journal\\_Secure&iid=141373#folio=24](http://digitaledition.awa.asn.au/?xml=Water_Journal_Secure&iid=141373#folio=24) where Greg lauds The Mulloon Institute and our selection by the UNSDSN.

During May we also received a small grant from the Federal Department of Primary Industry and Water Resources that will allow us to take our message beyond the Mulloon Creek catchment. While it might be a small grant, in many ways it is a big step forward in promoting landscape scale rehydration as part of the grant is to work with other communities and help them commence similar projects. This is very good recognition of the value of creek restoration and the subsequent landscape rehydration by the Federal bureaucracy.

Early in May we had a "brainstorming" session at the Home Farm as part of the development of what we are calling our "How to Guide" on landscape rehydration. As part of our partnership with South East Local Land Services (LLS) on the MCLRP we will be running a series of workshops for landholders and the "How to Guide" will be an important component of those workshops and it will then be available for use in subsequent education programs conducted by The Mulloon Institute. Peter Hazell facilitated the "brainstorming" and Luke Peel, Peter Andrews, John Troughton, Naomi Rea, Martin Royds, John Fry, Bill McAllister and Wendy Fitzgerald were the other "brains". And I was there as well! It was a very beneficial day and I am grateful for the excellent contributions from everyone. Initial curriculum work will now be put together by Naomi and Wendy, to be followed by further detailed development.

As foreshadowed in my April "Antics" Rose and I met Tony & Toni in London earlier in the month primarily to engage with Rothamsted Research regarding the UNSDSN. John Crawford, a member of our Advisory Council and Science Advisory Council, is an Associate Director of Science at Rothamsted and has played a critical role in the UNSDSN and The Mulloon Institute's involvement. While it was a short trip, there and back in two weeks, it was certainly very rewarding with some very interesting inspections, discussions and important contacts made for the future.



Some of the highlights included a day at Prince Charles' Duchy Home Farm with his farm manager, David Wilson and CEO of the UK Food Trust, Patrick Holden; a meeting with Australia's High Commissioner to the UK, Alexander Downer, enlisting his support for cementing Australia/UK/Mulloon/Rothamsted relationships; meeting with innovative online media people who are running sustainable agriculture and nutrition programs and want the Mulloon story included; two days touring Salle & Holkham Farms in Norfolk with their Farm Director, Poul Hoveson, Rothamsted Director, Achim Dobermann and Sir Gordon Conway, an agricultural ecologist and professor at Imperial College London; visiting Rothamsted Research during their open day highlighting 160 years of continual monitoring and measuring their Park Grass Experiment; and a day in Oxford with Susan Graham & Matthew Ritchie, two entrepreneurs who have a start-up developing drone technology for vegetation planting.

While the UK and Australia have very different climates and environmental challenges, there is much to learn from each other with surprisingly common principles and our future partnerships at the UN level will be important in solving many global challenges. There is too much to include in these "Mumblings" of the many things we saw and learnt but let me know if there is anything specific you would like to know about any of the experiences we had. I'll be providing more technical information to The Mulloon Institute Board and Councils.

We also had the opportunity to meet Lord John de Ramsay, a significant farmer in the UK and Chairman of the Lawes Agricultural Trust (owner of Rothamsted Research properties) at a lunch hosted by one of our Development Council members, Kate Dowling, and her husband Jens. Wonderful lunch Kate and stimulating conversation. We also caught up with the Schwarzenbach family who own farms in the Liverpool Plains and Harden districts in Australia.

So back in Australia Peter and Luke have been progressing the MCLRP with further development of the application to the Office of Water and piezometers set to go in the ground in the next weeks. Still plenty to do.

As part of our partnership with LLS we will be holding a field day on the 19<sup>th</sup> June at the Home Farm, starting in the barn at 9.30am. Details are on the website [www.themullooninstitute.org](http://www.themullooninstitute.org) This will be a great day and will include onsite inspections and also an expert panel discussion. Fundraising continues to be a major focus and I was pleased to receive a message this week from our State Member of Parliament, John Barilaro, informing me that we had been successful with a grant from the NSW Environment Trust under their Restoration and Rehabilitation program. This will go towards our MCLRP.

With our "Virtual Water Tank" fundraising project, there is a little over three weeks left in that campaign but the [www.chuffed.org](http://www.chuffed.org) site is only showing a \$250 increase on last month's total. So only one more "tank" has been bought since my April "Antics" although two further "tanks" were purchased by people who sent us a cheque directly. That makes \$3000 a long way short of our first target of \$50,000!

The Hon Gary Nairn AO, Chairman    Ph: +61 419 420 108  
Email: [garynairn@themullooninstitute.org](mailto:garynairn@themullooninstitute.org)    Web: [www.themullooninstitute.org](http://www.themullooninstitute.org)  
3585 King's Highway, Bungendore, NSW 2621, Australia



So as we come closer to the end of the financial year now is the time to re-contact all your colleagues, family and anyone else you could email and suggest they do something good for the environment, farming and society, and get a 100% tax deduction, by buying one or more "virtual water tanks" for just \$250 each. Let's have a real try at raising that \$50,000 as it will be a major boost to the on ground works for the MCLRP.

Finally, this week our Founder, Tony Coote AM, was recognised "for service to agriculture, and his lifelong commitment to developing and implementing sustainable farming techniques" at John Barilaro MP Monaro Service Awards. Congratulations Tony!

Until June "J????", all the best.

Cheers,  
Gary Nairn AO  
Chairman