

Australian Rodent Fanciers Society of NSW Inc.

Presidents Report - AGM 2017

I'd like to start by welcoming and thanking everyone for coming today to the AGM to support the club, take up positions and vote on decisions to aid in the continued success of our club.

I've been a member and exhibitor of the AusRFS NSW Inc. since 2011, where I attended my very first show at the Sydney Royal Easter Show, and became instantly hooked. Since then I have attended almost every show, I've learned to judge and had the privilege of helping others learn, I've also seen some dark times when our club almost ceased to exist and have worked hard with other fanciers to join in and keep it going. I'm so proud that it has not only continued but it has grown substantially. Many new faces joined us and helped us to grow larger, aided us in the running and organisation of shows, brought to us new ideas, to do tedious things like paperwork, and so much more. Thank you to all of those people who help to continue the success of our rat and mouse club, your work and willingness to help is greatly appreciated.

2017 has been a fantastic year for the AusRFS NSW Inc., we have moved to a new location, the first time since the club formed, simply because our numbers were getting too great to fit into the hall at Ermington, and now we may be looking for a few new halls to use as we are still growing and have more new people joining in the fancy.

Not only did we have a new hall for our regular shows, but the 2017 Sydney Royal Easter Show bought change for us as well this year, placing us in a new pavilion as part of a domestic animals showcase. Getting used to the new location and show day structure gave us a few bumps in the road, but like all changes this is to be expected and now we have had the chance to be at the new pavilion these minor bumps will easily be ironed out for next year. The Sydney Royal was a success this year, many of the public were keen on asking questions and many of you took the time to answer, which is ultimately our goal at the Royal; to spread the word that rats and mice make wonderful companion animals. Thank you to everyone involved in the organisation and running of the Royal, it is a large task and a long day, but it is so very rewarding. I am eager for our return next year for the 2018 Sydney Royal Easter Show.

2017 Hawkesbury Show this year once again had a small turnout, but it was a really relaxed and cosy show, giving exhibitors the chance to really engage in conversation with the public. The smaller turn out is due to the show being on a Friday, agricultural shows are a little bit different than dealing with standard hall hire, as they have limited spaces and days available, I do hope with some discussion we can try to secure a weekend day in the future, but it ultimately depends on the Hawkesbury District Agricultural Association, who run the show. Members, I ask you to check the show dates for next year that will be given out today, and pop Hawkesbury Show into your calendar early for next year, it is an absolutely wonderful day out. This show suits those of you new to the fancy and seeking feedback, a smaller show means judges are able to take the time to write some notes on your animals, have a chat to you about them in depth and really give you some solid advice. For those learning to judge this is the perfect opportunity for your first time judging as the show is a little smaller so you don't have to feel rushed. I hope to see you at next year's Hawkesbury Show.

Our regular shows this year at our new hall have been fabulous, the atmosphere has been so inviting, the displays always look fantastic and help make it more fun, we've got members of the public coming through receiving wonderful advice, and we have air-con for those warmer days. I'm also proud to see the quality of animals going up over this past year, and seeing the rats finally making a good return. Back when I joined there were barely any rats entered at all, mice dominated, then a year later mice were rare as hens teeth and we were overrun with rats. It fluctuates consistently, but to have such a long dry spell with the rats finally letting up is so good to see, and such a variety too. Congratulations to all who have won awards this year, I have seen some superb animals on the bench this year, well done.

we also saw the introduction of the Online Rodent Show Management system for entries and scoring, the brain child of Katy Jenkins. This has dramatically changed the way we enter our animals, and encompasses not only entries, ut scoring and results, contains a database of members and their details, has an online payment option integrated using PayPal, and more. Katy, thank you for your time to bring this to our club, it is simply phenomenal. I know it has caused some frustration and moments where you wanted to head bang the desk, but it has been so amazing and is such an asset to the club.

I thank you for electing me as your president at last year's AGM, although I have only taken the position for one year, I am stepping down and handing the reigns to our new president, Kath Dalton of Minion Mousery. With a new fancy under my belt which is consuming much of my time, and my health requiring more of my attention, it isn't as feasible anymore for me to hold such a large position within the club. I will still be around and continue to join in the fun with all of you, so I won't be going too far.

Thank you to the wonderful committee for 2017 and all the hours of work and brain straining you've done to ensure these shows run smoothly for all to enjoy, you are so appreciated and it has been a pleasure to work alongside you all. I welcome the new AusRFS NSW Inc. committee for 2018, may this new year for us bring more members, more good times and more memories. I anticipate great things for the future of the fancy, and of our club.

2017 AusRFS NSW Inc. President

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