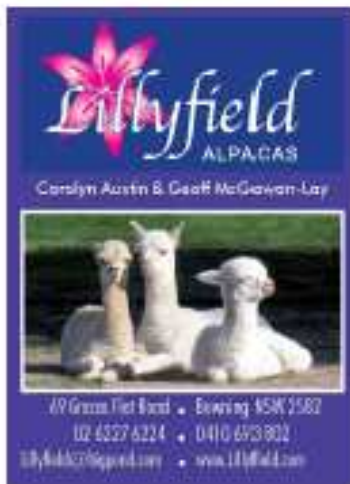


All About Our Members - Lillyfield Alpacas



Lillyfield Alpacas has been operating since 1997, 15 years of watching a fledgling industry now move into the phases of commerciality and we could not be happier. We are situated on 60 plus acres, right on the Hume Highway near Bowring south of Yass. The land is undulating, permanent creek water, has excellent tree cover and when it rains we have lots of native grass for our herd to graze on.

We first bought alpacas because we had some land, some time, some money & I talked Geoff into it having seen them at a small farms expo, never under estimate the power of an event like Murrumbateman Fields Days – the effects can last for years.

Through the following years both Geoff & I have served on the Regional Committee, I was the Regional President for a number of years before a stint on the AAA Board as National Treasurer – I have also been the AAA representative on Rural Industries Research & Development Committee (RIRDC), the AAA is part of a series of funding initiatives that support Alpaca research projects. We have been the convenors for the Royal Canberra Show, EPIC, Murrumbateman Field Days & Boorowa Show for so many years we loose count.

Very early on we became associated with Blue Grass Alpacas, Arthur & Julie Mavros. Blue Grass were our mentors, shielding & guiding us through decisions good and not so good – culminating in the purchase of a number of our best matriarchs and Blue Grass Bollinger. From day 2 when Geoff first saw Bollinger, that was the boy for us – he was an animal the type we had never seen before, he had such incredible density & bone in a cria so young, we were so taken with the cria - little did we realise the quality of his dam (Purrumbete Vanilla) who would go to produce a National Supreme Champion (Blue Grass Centurian) and so many other National champions – she is the dam of all the Leading Lady lines and could only be described as a champion maker. This lesson learnt was that champions not only come from champion sire, but you need champion dams as well.

Bollinger is now 13 years old and his direct progeny, sires progeny classes and now grand progeny have all been extremely successful – Bollinger dominates the back line of the highly successful Lillyfield Show Team, so Geoff was right all those years ago. Now add the rest of our team of elite males to the mix, all of whom are making huge impacts on quality and predictability – and the future is truly bright for our breeding program; In 2011, 2012 & 2013 the Lillyfield Show Team was awarded 41 Championships, 8 Sires Progeny awards, 13 Best Colour awards & 5 Supreme Championships.

For a number of the early years we were cursed with the production of males, couldn't breed a female to save ourselves, so we started to buy them – at first young ones, then if they were successful with the males we owned we would go back & buy their sisters, mothers & aunts. The next lesson learnt early on was that lines do matter and that some styles do fit together and others don't. If you are successful with a part of the line, try & get some



The situation today is one of concentrating on the elite part of the herd, substantial as that still is, with Izaak & Fiona making sure we are not doing something they don't agree with, being part of a fleece marketing and collection program, continuing to run the Boorowa Show and for that part with Izaak & Fiona being mad crazy showers, we firmly believe showing is your first step to marketing.

Finally why "Lillyfield", our dog at the start of our journey was Lilly a lovely old Keiple cross with a heart of gold & the land we had freshly bought at that time had no trees, just a big field for Lilly to run around in- hence Lillyfield. Not all that grand a notion I know, but selecting a name and creating an identity with advertising and consistent badging is the best advice we could give a prospective buyer wishing to be successful in the alpaca business – and of course develop a good eye for what you like, hold to that goal, an attractive well balanced, well fleeced animal is a commercial necessity as well an aesthetic pleasure.

Carolyn Austin & Geoff McGowan-Lay Lillyfield Alpacas