

CFIG 35th Year Celebration

What a fantastic evening we had celebrating 35 years as a grower group. It was wonderful to see so many familiar faces join us at the Corrigin Recreation Centre last Thursday. Founding members Rob McMiles, Graeme Downing and Lawry Pitman, and longtime members Wes Baker and Tony Guinness enlightened guests with memories of the formation of CFGI and what was achieved in the early years of the group.

A small group from Corrigin (R McMiles, R Wallace, J Matthews, Clive Johnston, E Abe, S Jacobs and L Pitman) attended the “Rip, Spray or Bust!” two day seminar by the Kondinin Group on the 18th and 19th March 1981 at Hyden. When they returned, a special meeting was organised and well attended on the 13th of April 1981, and local farmers set out to form the Corrigin Farm Improvement Group. A president and committee were elected and the group was later incorporated on the 10th October 1983.

Guests were reminded of the Lupins: Pod to Bin seminars and harvesting demonstrations, and the AgriChem days held in 1991, & 1993 where speakers and manufacturers came together to discuss and display their products. In 1987 the group purchased a Chatfield tree planter to the value of \$6000 and yes, it is still operating today nearly 30 years on. There were many more memories shared during the evening. Celebrating our 35th year has helped reaffirm our values and vision that has not changed a lot since day one, however how we do things has changed since 1981.

This is a significant milestone and rates Corrigin Farm Improvement Group as one of the most sustainable and successful grower groups in Australia. This achievement says something about the model in which the group has been run over the 35 years and the people involved in the group. There have been some terrific events over the years and continuous learnings, research and information exchange. The group has had many supporters during the years with DAFWA early on and more recently industry.

The real success and sustainability of the group is its ability to provide a social setting in which information can be exchanged in an open, safe and generous manner. The group is the people who are involved, so that says something about our members and community and their generosity to contribute their time and effort. The group is there when tough times occur and it has been effective in allowing support for one another during these times.

The founders of CFGI, the leaders and early committee members, many of whom attended the celebration, are often spoken of fondly by the current committee. We are very grateful that these farmers formed this group, which has operated so successfully for so long, and provided the format for growth of our local agricultural and farming community.





Top Row: Wes Baker, Tony Guinness, Lawry Pitman. Bottom Row: Rob McMiles, Graeme Downing, Simon Wallwork

