
**OPENING THE 2012 BREAM CREEK SHOW
BY THE HONOURABLE PETER UNDERWOOD AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA - SATURDAY 17TH MARCH 2012.**

Now I've not been to the Bream Creek Show before but my immediate predecessors, Governor William Cox and Sir Guy Green have been to the Bream Creek Show more than once and get very excited about it. One year Governor Cox entered some walnuts that he pickled himself and his wife made a sponge cake and entered it in the Show. This year, the Chef and the Butler at Government House entered pickles and preserves, flower arrangements, shortbread and so on and the Head Gardener swore that this year the Vice-Regal pumpkin would take the prize but alas it was not to be!

So what is it about the Bream Creek Show that makes it so special? I understand that people come from all over Tasmania to visit the Show down here. The first Show was held in 1886 and by 1899 there were no less than 500 entries in all classes of agriculture and horticulture produce. But it's not longevity alone that makes the Bream Creek Show such a special Show, for the Launceston and Hobart Shows have a history as long as or longer than the Bream Creek Show. Also, I've been to the Hamilton Show, the Deloraine Show and the Chudleigh Show and although each has its own attractions none of them seem to draw the attention or the crowds that this Show does.

The Bream Creek Show began primarily as a produce and home arts and crafts show. Indeed, this is how the Mercury newspaper described the 1901 Bream Creek Show - 111 years ago:

“The attendance of visitors from the whole countryside was a bumping one, it being quite a sight to see the tremendous collection of buggies, saddled horses, and chaise carts on the borders of the show-ground. The people crowded the sheds till it was impossible to move among the exhibits without much exertion; whilst the increased size and quality of the show afforded unmistakable evidence of the past season in the Bream Creek district having been a very favourable one, and that the producers are improving their output, both as to quality and quantity. The Hobart visitors were astonished at the splendid exhibits of vegetables of all kinds, dairy produce, field crops of numerous kinds, and apples; whilst the ladies, in the way of cookery, pastry, confectionery, needlework, etc., brought together an enormous collection of articles, and there was the keenest competition.”¹

I think that the point of difference between this Show and other agricultural Shows is that the Bream Creek Show still is a produce & country home arts & crafts Show. It has successfully maintained its origins. It has very cleverly eschewed incorporating modern entertainment, lights and glitter as Show attractions, but at the same time has used modern means, such as an excellent web site and Facebook, to promote successfully its traditional ways.

¹ The Mercury Thursday 2 May 1901 page 4

Your publication "A country Show – celebrating a centenary at Bream Creek"² observes, and I quote, "In this rapidly changing world, it is reassuring that traditions like the Bream Creek Show continue to exist."³ And that's right isn't it? It *is* reassuring to see traditional crafts & skills still alive and flourishing. It is reassuring and comforting to join in a gathering that has been held almost every year for well over 100 years. As is stated in your book, people come in droves from Hobart and further afield to experience a country Show. There are "no fast foods or sample bags to entice these crowds". And so the author answers his own question, "Why do they come"? by saying⁴, "Perhaps it is to experience the warmth, the simplicity, and sincerity of rural life."

I agree. That's what is special about the Bream Creek Show. It is an opportunity to experience the warmth, the simplicity, and sincerity of rural life". So, Mr Taylor you and your committee have done it again – a successful traditional Bream Creek country produce and home arts & crafts Show. I congratulate you all and also the many volunteers and sponsors without whose generosity and support this very special event would not be possible, and I have great pleasure in declaring open the 2012 Bream Creek Show.

² Bream Creek Publishing 2001. ISBN 0-9578597-0-8

³ Supra at 16.

⁴ Supra