A TRIBUTE TO MODERN PIONEERS

Celebrating trail-blazers and innovators in the Banana Shire

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INTRODUCTION

The Banana Shire is a diverse and plentiful place, filled with beautiful expansive landscapes and rich in resources. But it's most valuable asset are the people who call this place home; a hard-working, warm and generous community, dedicated to making this small spot on earth a wonderful place to live.

There is no shortage of brilliant stories, lists of achievements and positive contributions by people of all ages and upbringings throughout the Banana Shire. *A Tribute to Modern Pioneers* aims to highlight just a handful of these people, to share their story and promote the achievements of Regional Queenslanders beyond our community. The term *Modern* being utilised to highlight the ongoing innovation, trail-blazing and unique work that is being undertaken throughout Regional Queensland to continually build the area and it's industries, ensuring their relevancy in today's world.

Photographer Rachael Baskerville was tasked with travelling around the Shire to meet the Pioneers and to capture them in their own environment. By listening intently and taking in their stories, combined with her photographer perspective, she has captured an honest and everyday snapshot of each Pioneer in their element. The images hold Rachael's signature warmth, light and appreciation for everyday moments.

From building international businesses to maintaining local heritage sites, the commonality with all of these Pioneers is that of ongoing legacy. They all have the desire to make a positive mark on the world out of genuine interest, passion and with a constant drive for improvement.

Shanna Muston

Arts and Cultural Officer
Banana Shire Regional Art Gallery

A NOTE FROM THE MAYOR

It is my pleasure to be asked to contribute to *A Tribute to Modern Pioneers*.

As a man who has spent his entire life on the land, I can relate to and appreciate Modern Pioneers and the stories that this exhibition is depicting.

The photography of Rachel Baskerville captures very different and yet very engaging stories. I feel that Rachel has demonstrated the very essence of the *A Tribute to Modern Pioneers* project, her images portray aspects of life in the Banana Shire; through our past, present and our future. The subjects of the exhibition are neighbours, friends, family and workmates who have achieved great things within the realms of their chosen field or environment. This exhibition pays homage to those people whilst providing an interesting take on life in our region.

I would like to personally thank Shanna Muston our Arts and Cultural Officer for curation of this great exhibition. The result not only benefits our community but also pays tribute to the many 'Modern Pioneers' who live and work in the Banana Shire.

The Banana Shire Regional Art Gallery assists our community in many ways; through social, educational and cultural opportunities. The fact that our gallery holds on average fifteen exhibitions a year is testament to the hard work and dedication of our staff and volunteers. The gallery is a place for all community members to enjoy and an exhibition such as this, appeals to a wide audience.

It has been an interesting process watching the *A Tribute to Modern Pioneers* project grow into the professional exhibition that we see today.

I hope that you enjoy this exhibition as much as I have.

Nev Ferrier

Mayor
Banana Shire Council

Do not follow where
the path may lead,
go instead where there is no
path and leave a trail.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

MYLES BREITKREUTZ

DEBBIE ELLIOT

FIONA HAYWARD

BURNETT AND LOUISE JOYCE

AUDA MACLEAN

HAZEL MANN

JANE PARKER

DAVID TREVILYAN

MYLES BREITKREUTZ

A career from the ground up

Growing up on his parent's property at Dixalea, Myles Breitkreutz had plenty of practice on the tools, so it seemed only natural when he took up studies in mechanical engineering, before heading to work at the coal mines in Central Queensland.

Myles' career choice saw him constantly on the move until eventually, he accepted a stint with a group located in Canada's north. It was here that Myles would expand his flying career. Even as a boy, flying had been an ambition. With small aircraft commonly used to cover the large distances, and lots of lakes on which to land a floatplane, Canada offered Myles the perfect opportunity to realise his dream.

On returning to Dixalea, Myles was determined to use small powered light aeroplanes for recreational use and flying training. If he wasn't fixing aircraft, Myles was building them, and the family farm soon became headquarters for his new venture, Balantree Aviation. It was the start of a life-long crusade.

For almost thirty years Myles served on the Board of Recreational Aviation Australia. In that time, he also helped to form the Callide Dawson Flying Group Inc., one of the region's first incorporated flying clubs. The first fly-in was held in the spring of 1989 at the Central Queensland Gliding Club airstrip at Dixalea, prior to the Club's move to Thangool Airport. That initial fly-in inspired the Old Station fly-in at Raglan, which is now an annual national event.

In recent years, Myles has continued to lobby for the interests of recreational flyers and the smaller end of the general aviation sector. These groups had found themselves entangled in an expensive and unwieldy system without a real voice. Myles established Experimental & Light Aircraft Aviators Australia (ELAAA). As an alternative organisation with the aim to keep flying simple and enjoyable for all recreational flyers, he managed to gain the ear of influential politicians and administrators, ultimately realising that goal.

PHANTO

DEBBIE ELLIOTT

Community health champion

When Debbie Elliott learned that health authorities planned to close Moura Hospital, she knew she could not let it happen. Too many people depended on the hospital, and from a community perspective, it was vital to have major medical services close to home. However, the 40-year old building had outlived its purpose, and while maintenance costs rose, facilities fell well below contemporary standards.

Faced with the option of 'treat and transfer' facilities, the Moura community rallied to stop the proposal. Debbie stepped forward to lead a Reference Group, giving a voice to the concerns of local health consumers. The top priority was for the community and government to work together to keep Moura Hospital open.

As the spokesperson, Debbie was suddenly thrust into the spotlight. She talked to community groups, forums, conference groups, politicians and news media. With a fellow community member, Debbie maintained a Facebook page, using it to link with more than 2000 people across the region, keeping them informed of events and milestones, and celebrating successes.

While steadfast in her aims, Debbie also knew to get the best outcome for the community would mean some give and take. Through the engagement process, her willingness to work with others and negotiate in the interests of all parties found common ground and won her widespread respect and support. Under Debbie's stewardship, the initial reference group transitioned to the Moura Community Advisory Group.

The Advisory Group, along with health officials finalised the plan for an innovative new community hospital. Under the catch-cry, 'Strong, Smart, Sustainable' Debbie and her team delivered on its commitment to the Moura community with the official opening of the new hospital in March 2016.

Stronger than ever, the work of the Advisory Group is ongoing. New dental services and improved woman's health facilities are in the pipeline and true to her community spirit, Debbie is leading the way.

MOURA COMMUNITY
HOSPITAL
ENTRANCE

MOURA COMMUNITY
HOSPITAL
ENTRANCE

FIONA HAYWARD

Pioneer legacy holds true for today

Like her forebears, Fiona Hayward is as dedicated to running her beloved family property, historic Kilburnie Homestead. Built in the late 1800s, the homestead is the focal point of the 124sq km property. One of only two Heritage Listed buildings in the Shire, the rambling weatherboard and its surrounds are filled with the vestiges of Fiona's long and unbroken Campbell family heritage. While some might feel it a burden, Fiona is proud of her pioneer roots and enjoys the role of modern grazier. Preserving the past is as much a passion for her as protecting the future. These are the values that shape every aspect of her life.

Kilburnie Homestead stands adjacent to the Boundary Hill South open cut coal mine. Mining is an important industry for the Shire, but when a new cut threatened the homestead, the underground water, and her livelihood, Fiona was quick to act. She researched and successfully challenged newly introduced legislation that aimed to silence the landowner's voice on mining encroachments. Her deposition changed the legislation for the better and saved the family legacy. With that fight behind her, Fiona is continuing work on a program to replace traditional clear and burn methods with sustainable farming techniques. Under a gradual rollout plan, changes include feeding select numbers of stock on native grasses and improved pasture in forest and open country.

In her 'spare time', Fiona combines her many talents to help develop young hearts and minds. She teaches speech and drama, supports the annual Eisteddfod and is a Taekwondo martial arts instructor. As an accomplished musician, Fiona plays in a band with other family members, appearing at local festivals and venues. From April until September, she opens her Homestead doors to the public to host regular festival days of history, art and music, creating connections with the past and giving them new meaning for today.

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BURNETT AND LOUISE JOYCE

Couple at the forefront of DNA exploration

Gyranda is one of the early pastoral properties to follow European settlement in the mid-1800s. In 1926 the property sold to the Joyce family, passing down through the generations to its present owners, Burnett Joyce and his wife, Louise.

Since then, Gyranda has earned international acclaim for its innovative cattle breeding program. One of the first graziers to import purebred Santa Gertrudis cattle from America, Burnett's father cross- bred the new stock with his Hereford herd. The hybrid produced more tick resistant and weather resilient cattle with faster growth rates and the ability to adjust to different environmental conditions. The progeny was considered the most progressive, functional and elite seed stock available and their genetics were in hot demand throughout Australia and the world.

Implementing Breedplan in 1982, Burnett continued to research and develop breeding performance measures. These included bull fertility and semen morphology for fertility, growth, carcass and other stock improvements, in partnership with tertiary and government bodies. In 1992 Gyranda joined with the Cooperative Research Centre for Beef Genetics and Meat Quality Technologies to breed cattle under contract in one of the world's largest beef progeny testing programs. Outcomes of the program provided enough new information to develop a blueprint for the genetic and non-genetic improvement of beef cattle in Australian herds.

Burnett was the first Australian grazier to DNA fingerprint all stud calves, allowing superior attributes to be identified and tracked. DNA fingerprinting also enables the use of multiple sires in herds, while retaining full pedigree of the calves. In 2006 Burnett received the highly prestigious RW Vincent Award, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the Australian beef industry.

With Louise at his side, the couple has had an enduring influence on the Shire's commercial success, including its fisheries. At one time, a private fish researcher had used Gyranda's stock dams to study the breeding habits of fish species in captivity. Findings revealed Saratoga bred well in ponds while Yellowbelly did not. Little did the Joyce's know how important this research would become.

Decades later, when cattle prices hit rock-bottom, Louise could readily supply Saratoga to a booming fish market at prices that compared in the value to a steer. For years, Gyranda exported fingerlings to Japan, Indonesia and Germany. The high demand led to research into an efficient way to identify fish gender so that pairing could be managed to maximise stock levels. When the export trade dwindled, it was Queensland fishing groups that benefitted from having a reliable local source for fingerlings to restock dams. With fishing competitions crowding the Shire's annual event calendar, recreational fishing is an important economic driver for the region, and Gyranda's fingerlings are at its heart.

3X

AUDA MACLEAN

The bush and the brush

The pioneer spirit runs deep in Auda Maclean. As a fourth-generation descendant of Banana Shire pastoralists, the Becker family, the accomplished artist's local heritage harks back to early European settlement. Born in Baralaba during the Great Depression, Auda's formative years were spent in the relative sanctuary of her remote bush home. Sprawling landscapes and meandering waterways were her playground and from an early age, the inspiration for her art.

While self-taught, Auda's illustrations showed great promise. She was an artist in the making and others were taking note. At the age of 12, a gift of oil paints, palette knives and brushes from a family friend was all the incentive Auda needed to launch her career. Experimenting with new textures and colours, Auda's artistic eye and natural talent flourished and expanded beyond the brush to the camera. Again, self-taught, her passion for photography allowed her to explore her subjects with a fresh perspective.

Whenever possible, Auda spent time with other artists in the region. In the 1970s, these friendships eventually helped to form 'The Dawson River Artists'. Thirsty for knowledge and keen to help others, Auda teamed up with fellow artist Bev Johnston to offer regular art classes in Baralaba. She organised quarterly *Flying Arts* workshops, often featuring teachers from top art schools, encouraging her network of local artists to keep learning and working on their skills. For Auda, the learning never stops. Her creative energy and desire to do more with it are irrepressible.

Auda's love for the bush is as profound as her legacy to the Arts. Her works continue to attract regional and national attention. With many accolades to her name, Auda exhibits across Australia, and her paintings are held in corporate, private and public collections.

INVISIBLE

FONDLIGHT

HAZEL MANN

At the heart of community arts

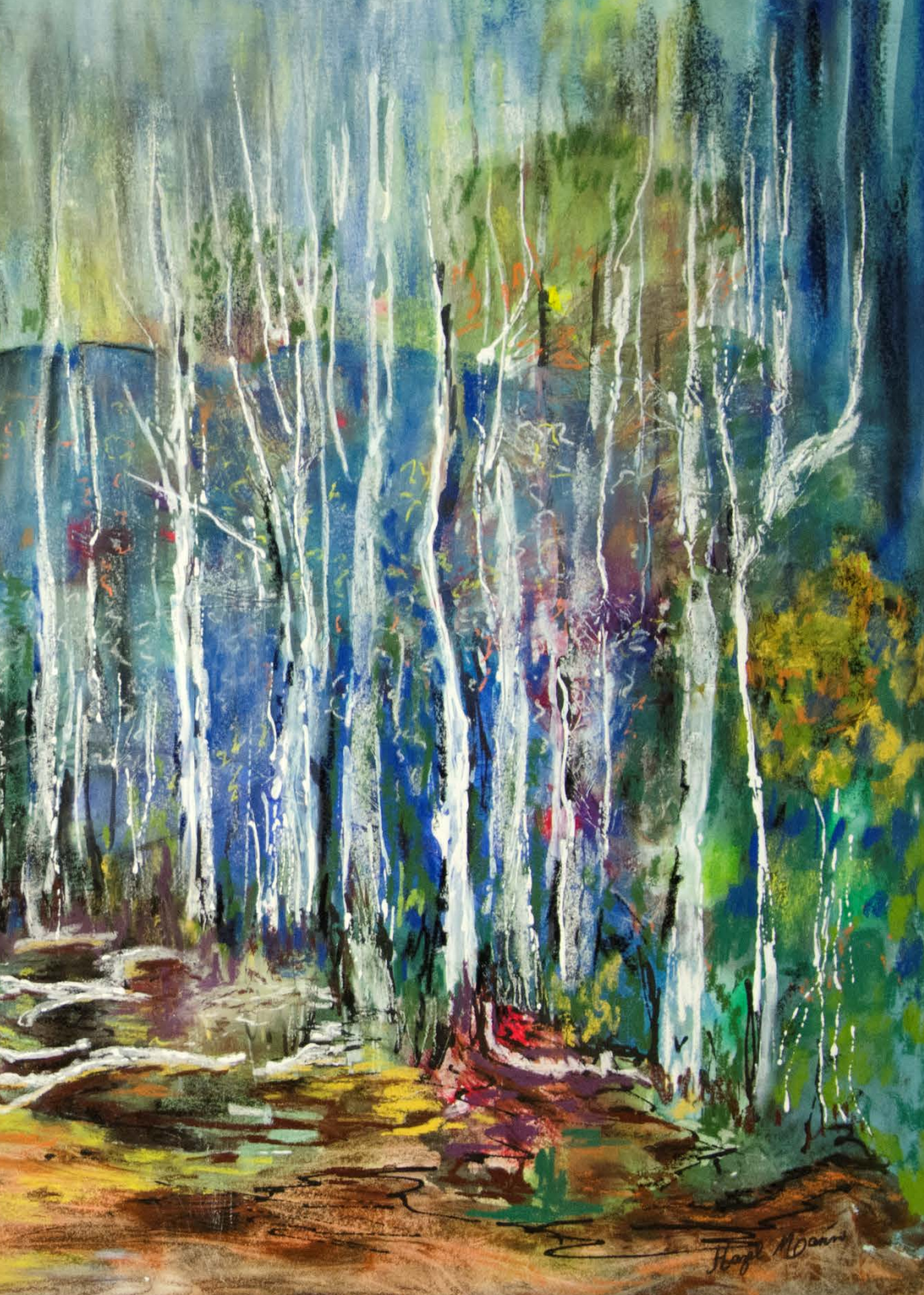
Born and raised on the Darling Downs, Hazel Mann spent much of her childhood helping her parents run their busy dairy farm. Daily chores and set routines followed the turn of the seasons, and for a young girl full of creative spirit, life often seemed tedious and confined. Luckily for Hazel, she found her outlet in painting.

With art schools in neighbouring Toowoomba offering her plenty of scope to develop her talent, Hazel's teenage years were transformative. She threw herself into learning and honing new skills. Painting became her life's purpose - it was her 'everything'.

In the 1950s, marriage and a move to the Banana Shire prompted the now young mother to find others who shared her interest. Before long, Hazel's home had become the regular meeting place for a group of 15 women artists, later moving to the Thangool School of Arts as the group evolved. Most members painted for their own pleasure. However, with tutoring from the Flying Arts School, their pastime took on new meaning. A new breed of artists was emerging, and keen to exhibit their depth of talent, Hazel and her friends founded the annual Brigalow Arts Festival. By the 1970s, the Festival had helped to launch the careers of several local artists.

Hazel kept up her efforts, always exploring ways to involve more of the community in the arts. She turned her attention to teaching art to school children, while also being a driving force in establishing what is now the Banana Shire Art Gallery Association Inc.

Hazel's works are rooted in her experience of the world around her. They depict local landscapes, particularly the Callide Dam and other Shire waterways. Now retired, she used her career success to help create the vibrant arts hub that exists today and features the works of outstanding local artists, promoting them to the world.



JANE PARKER

The seeds of success

When Jane Parker arrived in Australia in 1982, little did she know how her life was about to change. The young Scottish immigrant and her husband were farmers, and the Callide Valley offered new opportunities and a place to put down roots. Settling in Thangool, their cotton farm quickly thrived with the couple earning Cotton Grower of the Year 1983/84. However, the early success was short-lived.

Soon after, like other farms in the district, Jane's property was the target of massive cuts in water allocations. The move threatened the livelihoods of not only Jane and her husband but the many friends they had made since moving to the Shire.

Determined not to be beaten, Jane joined the Department of Primary Industries as a research officer and began investigating environmentally sustainable and marketable crops suited to Callide Valley conditions. She came up with herbs.

Leading the charge, Jane encouraged others to help establish a new herb industry in the area. Persistent and resourceful, over the following two decades Jane and her colleagues cultivated more than just their crops. They brokered partnerships, piloted the manufacture of new product lines and carved out lucrative distribution channels through the brand *Gourmet Garden Herbs & Spices*.

Today, Callide herb farms generate millions of dollars into the Australian economy, supplying high-quality produce for domestic and export markets.

Jane is still at the forefront of the industry. As Grower Liaison and Development Manager for McCormick, the world's largest manufacturer of herbs and spices, Jane is making her mark in ever-widening international markets. She also continues to play a strong role at home through her position as Director of the Australian Herb and Spice Industry Association and Chair of the St George Levee Advisory Committee.

DAVID TREVILYAN

A man and his machines

David Trevilyan builds big farm machinery. He has done for most of his life. Naturally gifted with an astute mind and fervent imagination, even as a youngster, David's ingenuity took others by surprise, including his father. At the age of 15, when left for several weeks to tend the farm on his own, David quickly reengineered his father's two ploughs into one larger plough, managing his daily workload in half the time. He sat on the front tractor and drove both together. When his father got back and saw what David had done, he had not a word to say on the matter.

David initially set up a workshop on the family property, where he worked on new designs. He experimented with various types of equipment and through trial and error continued to take unique and innovative machines to the marketplace.

When he eventually settled on his own farm at Banana in 1957, he established a factory with a team of up to 15, working on custom-made models for domestic and international distribution. Since then, his many achievements include:

- Building the world's largest Seeder (65m), and a 36m Seeder, which holds the Guinness World Record for the most hectares of wheat sown in a 24-hour period.
- Building the world's largest Stickrake (24 pin wheels).
- Invention and manufacture of the Multiplanter, Multiworker Hydraulic Chisel plough, Multiworker Renovator (heavy and light versions), Pin Wheel Stickrake, Cotton Stalkpuller, Cotton Mulcher and Cotton Puller/Mulcher.

David's practical knowledge of farming has given him the edge on competitors. He believes in 'no till' farming, letting his massive machines do the hard labour. His ability to invent or adapt machines to do very specific tasks under often extraordinary conditions has seen him tackle seemingly impossible challenges and win.

MULTI FARMING
Broadacre & Row Crop Treatment

MULTI FARMING SYSTEMS
TOYOTA

RACHAEL BASKERVILLE

Capturing the magic

Rachael Baskerville is a Brisbane based editorial and lifestyle photographer. She is inspired by incredible locations, culture, community, adventure, and passionate individuals.

I love to work with anyone who creates, innovates, or has a story to tell. Integrity is undoubtedly the most photogenic quality.

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THANKYOU

A Tribute to Modern Pioneers is a project of the Banana Shire Council through the Banana Shire Regional Art Gallery.

Banana Shire Regional Art Gallery sincerely thanks:

The Modern Pioneers for their generosity and time towards this project, and for inviting us into your workplaces and homes to share your stories.

Rachael Baskerville, photographer extraordinaire.

Louise Yates, for your editorial eye.

Maggie Simms, for her original song *What Tomorrow Brings*.

Frank Smallwood, for initiating the idea and project guidance.

And to all who have been involved along the way in bringing this concept into reality.

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Banana SHIRE
SHIRE OF OPPORTUNITY

Queensland Government

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Banana Shire Regional Art Gallery