THE SOCIETY

Following the first exhibition in March1854, the society staged it's first annual show of stock, together with a ploughing and shearing match, in September of that year. Around 200 exhibitors and visitors arrived, some from as far as Adelaide and Mount Barker. Various categories of horse, sheep and horned stock were shown. The ploughing took place on Mr Salter's property outside of Angaston, with only one entrant, Mr J.D. Cave. For his efforts he won first prize of £5 5s and £1 1s for best plough on ground! First prize of £4 4s for shearing went to William Phillis. Talk of adding a floricultural exhibition to the calendar was reported.

Example of a ploughing match (NSW late 1800s), MAAS collection, 85/1284-70.

These March and September events continued until 1858 when Angaston amalgamated with the Barossa and Light A&H Society. Annual exhibitions were then to alternate between townships. This arrangement didn't last long and the Angaston A&H Society disbanded.

In July of 1862, Angaston residents attempted to revive the local society, with Mr Henry Holmes elected chairperson. While it was decided to have one exhibition annually in March and to remove the stock judging from the program, shows did not recommence.

In 1870 the Angaston Agricultural, Horticultural and Floricultural Society formed and held an exhibition in the basement of the newly built Institute (Masonic Hall). However, it was not until 1891 that the society finally settled as an organisation and commenced a show program that resembles what we still have today.

1891

President Mr E. Salter presided over the first Angaston show to be held by the newly revived society at the Angas Recreation Park on 4 March 1891, having been about 15 years since the previous exhibition of its kind.

The *Kapunda Herald* reported that exhibitors and spectators were arriving at an early hour from every direction and from great distances to Angaston, 'a pretty little village with a lively appearance.' The committee was content to relaunch the show in a modest fashion with livestock and machinery not included on the prize list.

In describing the day, the *Adelaide Observer* noted, *'the season proved to be unusually late and most unfavourable for fruit and the result was a comparatively poor show in some of the leading staples of production in which excellence might have fairly been anticipated. Apart from the actual exhibits was the excellent display of horseflesh on the ground. In one respect the Society is fortunate in having available such a splendid ground for its show purposes.'*

This year saw a difference in the type and number of categories: horses in action, dogs (scotch collie, sheepdog, greyhound, terrier), poultry (geese, ducks, turkeys, fowls), grain (wheat, barley, rye, field peas, chaffed hay, green fodder), and grapes.

'*At Angaston, one naturally looks for fine grapes, and it was disappointing that no more than two growers entered in to competition. It was however, not the fault of the vignerons. They proposed, but Dame Nature disposed. The grapes were not ripe, and it would have been a sin to pick them.'*

1891 Medal for Red Wine of a light character awarded to W. Heath & Son of Heathvale, Eden Valley. March family collection.

'The season also mitigated against the show of other fruits…this season has been the worst ever known in the district…While the fruit shown was not great in quantity, very little fault could be found with the quality.' Categories included apples, pears, quinces, peaches, plums, apples for export, watermelon and dried fruit.

Pumpkins and onions were in abundance, one pumpkin weighed in at 115lbs (52kgs) and there was a great deal of mangel wurzel of good quality.

Cut and potted flowers, school work, preserved fruit and jams were also shown.