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Media Release

Sheepvention: A Celebrated History

2018 marks a dual celebration for the Hamilton Pastoral and Agricultural Society – 160 years of The Hamilton and Western District Sheep Show along with 40 years of Sheepvention. Whilst Sheepvention is the most prominent agricultural event in the region, a full 120 years before this, the first agricultural show was held in Hamilton. This was a time long before Australia was a federation, and a year before Hamilton was declared a municipality.

In 1858 the Hamilton Pastoral and Agricultural Society was formed. A year later the first show was held. The Society's formation year was marked by two other important events in Victoria. The Victorian Acclimatisation Society, tasked with making the British settlers feel more at home thought releasing rabbits may help. So 24 rabbits were released. More favourably, was the invent of first Australian Rules Football match. And with all three of these events we have seen a stoic determination to continue despite ongoing challenges. Even the rabbits have prevailed!

Paying great respect to its' British roots Australia's citizens were keen agriculturalists. Even with the gold rush of the late 1850s and early 60s the sheep and wool industry were still the principal providers for economic development in Australia. Whilst many industries have come and gone agriculture has remained a prominent provider throughout our country and particularly in the Western Districts of Victoria.

It is incredible that an organisation with history older than Australian Parliament can continue to grow each year. Where others have faulted the Hamilton P & A Society have innovated to maintain relevance in the agricultural industry. This has been key to its' success. 160 years ago the society began due to an insurgence of farming in our district. Today, it thrives due to the strength of agriculture in our district and our desire to present a unique event to the industry and local community.

Now, 160 years later, the Society is celebrating with the biggest Sheepvention event held. The Committee are inviting the whole community to a concert on Monday evening featuring headline acts James Blundell and The Wolfe Brothers. Both artists chosen due to their family connections with farming. Celebrate with us on Monday 6 of August at Sheepvention. Details and tickets are available at hamiltonshowgrounds.com.au

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