

A profile of Dr Stephanie Warwick

Stephanie Warwick, born in 1989, was in the first cohort of Doctor of Veterinary Medicine graduates at the Roseworthy Campus in 2014. As the top student her graduating year Stephanie was the inaugural recipient of the Hon Dr Bruce Eastick Prize in Doctor of Veterinary Medicine.

Born and raised on a family farming property at Back Valley on Fleurieu Peninsula Stephanie's motivation for become a veterinarian can be traced to the animals on the farm and the influence of James Herriot.

As a teenager Stephanie, somewhat daunted by the six years study required to become a veterinarian, had other thoughts on a career but thoughts returned to veterinary as she approached the end of her secondary schooling.

On matriculation from Victor Harbour High School Stephanie applied for and was accepted into the veterinary program at Murdoch University in West Australia but decided on a gap year, travelling in the United States which included working at a kids summer camp in Texas, before moving to Perth.

As fate would have it, during the gap year the University of Adelaide announced the introduction of a veterinary program at its Roseworthy Campus. Concerned that spending six years away from family studying in Perth, with the possibility of becoming a permanent resident of that State following graduation, Stephanie applied for and was accepted into the Roseworthy program.

After attending the first year of the program at the University's North Terrace Campus, Stephanie spent the next three years in the Residential College at the Roseworthy Campus before living off-Campus for the final two years of the program.

Following graduation Stephanie worked for three years in a mixed veterinary practice at Strathalbyn before spending a non-working six months in Zimbabwe in Africa.

On return to South Australia Stephanie locumed in a number of areas of the State before returning to the to the veterinary practice at Strathalbyn as the Veterinary Director, a learning experience having never been trained in people management. At the time of her return to the practice, it had become part of the Greencross Vets network.

Whilst Stephanie appreciated the networking opportunities that came from working in a Greencross Vets practice her major interest was and is large animal work.

Along the way Stephanie married Justin Robertson (B Ag 2012). Stephanie and Justin now have two boys and live on Stephanie's family farm property at Back Valley, which they leased and then purchased in 2020.

Stephanie spent a further four years at the Strathalbyn veterinary practice. With the challenge of regularly being on call whilst running a farm some distance away, and

approaching parenthood, Stephanie commenced looking at options for, in her own words, a dream job.

Stephanie is now employed by Elders as a 'livestock production advisor', working out of the Strathalbyn branch, the only veterinarian in the team of animal scientists and advisors. Stephanie provides livestock production advice to primary producers across Kangaroo Island, the Fleurieu Peninsula, the Adelaide Hills, the Murray Mallee and the Upper South East.

Much of Stephanie's work is now animal health and nutrition, generally at a flock or herd level. Stephanie says it's her as her dream job because, it's large animal, the frequent rewards for good outcomes as a result advice given and followed, the high level of engagement with farmers, and no out of hours call outs!

Stephanie currently works in the position three days a week. Stephanie's role brings her in frequent contact with Roseworthy graduates.

Stephanie's three-word description of her career thus far are: Varied – Challenging – Fun.

In 2019 Stephanie undertook a twelve-month ruminant nutrition course at the University of Sydney, delivered online with one course get together at Corowa in New South Wales.

Stephanie's most vivid memory of her time studying at Roseworthy was struggling to attend Wednesday morning animal nutrition lectures, which she alleges was a result of frequently being led astray by Ag students in the Campus Tavern on Tuesday nights.

Stephanie says a valuable lesson from her career is the importance of effective communication, explaining and empowering decision makers, giving farmers the confidence to follow her advice when faced with a critical flock or herd health challenge.

Not surprisingly given her current role, Stephanie's current enjoyment from being part of the veterinary industry is the opportunity to be outdoors; to meet people and experiencing the varied landscapes she travels through each week.

Stephanie's advice to a younger person would be not to take life too seriously and to be open to opportunities, and favourite memories from her career thus far are participating in the 'community of veterinarians', and those positive outcomes that come from treatment advice given and acted on.

Stephanie hopes that in the future her dream job remains in the large animal space with an increasing emphasis on improved animal welfare through research and production efficiencies.