

RED POLL NEWS



Winter Edition

August 2016



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NB: This newsletter is on the website in a PDF file

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Closing date for next newsletter is November 15th, 2016

Cover: Senior herd sire at Dalley family's lease block. He is by a Birchwood bull out of an Elmwood cow.

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PRESIDENT'S PAGE



We are now at the time when feeding out or organising the grass or the lack of grass for the rest of winter. So far the winter has been favourable to most districts around the country.

Our AGM was held in Canterbury this year and was attended by nineteen members. The constitution has been ratified and the rule book has been circulated to all members. The hospitality offered was once again of a high standard and was appreciated by all. One of the highlights was the bus tour around the CBD of Christchurch giving an insight into the future plans for the city. It was very pleasing to see some new faces joining us. While Canterbury has had a very dry summer the cattle we saw were in very good order and those who welcomed us should be well pleased with their stock.

Our next AGM is to be held in Northland so now is the time to think about whether you will be able to attend.

Calving is about to get under way and I hope all members have a successful time with this.

I have had a number of enquiries for yearling heifers this year and also had an E-Mail from Canada regarding Red Poll cattle. Most of those have found out via the website or our Red Poll News. This is pleasing as we need more breeders if we have a growing market to supply.

If any members have stock to sell, they can be listed on our website, our Secretary has all the details.

If any members have spare time, please consider showing our breed at your local shows, or consider the Royal Show.

Royal Show Schedule now available on line. Google "Royal Show Hastings 2016" and then go to "competitions".

Graeme Evans



SECRETARY'S SAY

The days might be lengthening out, but I suspect there's still a lot of wintry weather ahead – apart from a few heavy frosts, the winter has been too kind to be over yet.

AGM: The recent AGM and Herd tour in Canterbury went very well with about 20 members attending. All members should have received a copy of the Minutes and a new Rules Book.

DNA profiling: Under registration of cattle, Rule 1/ reads; All bulls used for siring registered cattle are to be parental DNA profiled. This means that a bull calf selected as a prospective herd sire needs to have his sire and dam tested to verify his parentage, as well as a profile of the calf itself, ie 3 samples required. Our preferred supplier of DNA testing is Zoetis, P.O Box 5520, Dunedin. 9058.

Their website for sampling forms and information is www.zoetis.co.nz/genetics

Please request a copy to be sent to the secretary. A list of DNA profiled bulls will be published in the Herd Books.

Australian AGM and Herd Tour: Some of you may have received a notice about this tour to be held in South Australia on 22nd/23rd October 2016. It will be an enjoyable way to see that area and visit some excellent herds.

If you are interested in learning more, email Peter Wilson at pcklwilson@hotmail.com

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FROM THE EDITOR

Hi everyone



I had two answers to the question, "what was the C.O.R system?" The first answers are from a reader of the newsletter on our website; the second is from member, Robin Thomson:-

"I am sure you have already had an answer to this. It was before my time, but off the top of my head the Certificate of Record (C.O.R.) system was one of (I think) 4 herd testing systems used by NZ dairy farms. Under this system, milk yields were recorded daily and fat percentage was recorded monthly.

The Official Herd Test (O.H.T.) system recorded milk yield and fat % monthly. This is the system that is done now, but protein % is also recorded. The amounts are then calculated back so many days and forward so many days to (eventually) give a season's total. I believe herd testing was also undertaken in some guise or other by Dairy Research Institute and Herd Improvement Association.

Further to my email. I am presuming that, with the COR system the daily milk yields must have been recorded by the farmer on farm, weighing the milk on scales. The monthly record of fat percentage would have been undertaken by the official milk recorder as she (usually a young single woman) as she was doing her rounds of farms for the OHT. I don't know when all these various systems of Herd Testing just became the one OHT, but COR testing was going well into the 1940s and, I wouldn't be surprised if it went on for another decade or two. When the dairy goat farm I was on in Matamata started Herd Testing in mid-1970s they were doing OHT.

*Regards
Carolyn Powell*

Second reply see page 8



PATRONS' PAGE I

Well, the world is in turmoil though I suspect that we are just more aware of it with instant news and a predilection of the news media to focus on the negative.

From a farming perspective there are things happening out there that will inevitably have effects on us.

The withdrawal of Britain from the EU will have effects although at this stage we can only guess as to what those may be.

Should Donald Trump lead a Republican government in the USA there is potential there for our trading arrangements to be turned on their heads.

The opening of the enlarged Panama Canal will improve shipping access to USA Eastern Seaboard and to Europe, but the balance there might well be, that those super-sized container carriers might not call at New Zealand ports and our produce will have to be transhipped through an Australian hub.

The depressed international market for dairy products looks like it will not improve any time soon

Substantial climate changes will continue to affect our weather requiring farmers to modify their current practices.

While beef prices are currently high and prospects look good there is no assurance that we will continue to hold our niche markets. We are after all, a small supplier on the global scene and we are a long way from our major markets all of which adds to costs in the supply chain.

On the bright side I can report that New Zealand Boot Throwers recently won the world Men's title and earned a silver medal in the women's section so that must surely give hope to our rural Red Band economy.

Robin Shepherd

PATRONS' PAGE II



*Patron Peter Fleming enjoying the sun with Doug D'Oliver (Australia)
at McSweeney's on the 2016 Annual Tour*

C.O.R continued: -

You asked the question, "what was C.O.R.?" (Certificate Of Record)
Well before my time, (I think it finished as an option around 1947, by memory) but how it worked was basically, you nominated individual cows that were tested for volume & butter-fat, independent of the rest of the herd. The object being, with privileged feeding & care, you could see, not how good they were, but how good you could make them. (a bit like show cattle to-day) with the other similarity being, you picked out your best before you started. Dairy Stud Breeders used it to promote the productive ability of the Dams of the bulls that they were selling etc.

Robin Thomson

Well, so now you know!

Helen

EVANLEA REPORT

This season has been very different from the norm as there is no mud and I have been able to drive over all paddocks with tractor or ute without making any marks. We may pay for this later on as rainfall is only 730mm over the last 12 months. We usually receive about 940 to 1050mm.

Feeding out has only just started as the grass growth has been good since early May. We have had some good heavy frosts but growth is still happening which is unusual for this time of the year. Some eastern areas are very dry and dams are low. South of Masterton feeding out has been in progress for some time and good rain is required.

All cattle have gone into winter in good condition, and some would say a little too good, but it is easier to farm an animal with condition than one on the light side.

Looking forward to calving this year as we leased a bull from Rosemarkie as well as a home bred bull.

Yearling bulls are doing well and have a number of enquiries for them in the spring.

There is a lack of cattle in general around the whole country and this is probably the reason for more enquiries than normal.

Hope all breeders have a good calving and the season treats you well.

Regards to all

Judy & Graeme Evans



RANGITIHI REPORT

Yukkkk. How I hate floods which have been frequent visitors, along with mud, and at present there is more than enough of it around. Luckily we have some drier hills on which the dry cows have been parked along with heifer calves which have not yet been weaned. The steer calves were sold out of the paddock in May to a very keen buyer. Currently we have 28 cows in calf due to start calving in late October. We have nine rising two year olds with six of those spoken for by a farmer willing and keen to try cross breeding. We might be able to entice him to take up associate membership.

We will be looking for another young bull before October. The Ken Elliot breeding of Houtu Quaid is proving to be good with some excellent calves. All stock are in good condition despite the tight feed conditions.

As Gena and I contemplate forty years of Red Poll breeding we feel extremely comfortable and delighted that we chose these animals as our beef preference. More than ever we enjoy the positive attributes of the breed – docility, great mothering capabilities with generous supplies of milk, heat tolerance, low incidence of tick infestation and high quality beef.

Gena & Robin Shepherd



Winter afternoon calories for these “Rangitihi” 20 month heifers.

Photo: R Shepherd

DAWN MIST REPORT

We thoroughly enjoyed the recent Herd Tour in our area, which was made all the more enjoyable by the good weather. It was especially nice to catch up with Helen and Sarah Maxwell, who joined us on their way down South.

The dry winter down our way makes feeding out and break-feeding so much easier on these hills, but we will be wanting rain before the Spring. The cows are all in very good condition and, although there's still a good amount of crop to get through, the baleage may not last until the Spring growth arrives.

We enjoyed good prices for our prime cattle in the Autumn, but it will be interesting to watch the markets over the next few years, as "Brexit" unfolds.

Mike has been working off farm for a builder recently, so his days are long, but he certainly has no trouble sleeping at night.

Our son Brad, and his wife, Megan, have recently had their first child – a son, Austin Robert was born on 21st July. Until 15 months ago they lived in Brisbane, but are now in Geraldine, so it is lovely having them so close.

We recently spent time in Melbourne visiting our 8month old granddaughter (and her parents) and hope to get over there at least twice a year to enjoy her progress. We currently have 6 grandsons and 2 granddaughters and we're hoping there will be a couple more before the families are complete!

All going well, we hope to be off to the World Congress in USA next June (unless Donald Trump becomes President and turns the world on its head).

Anne & Mike McSweeney

'You look at a herd of cattle and well, they all look the same... but they know. They all have an individual personality, and those personalities change from day to day. They can have their grumpy days and their happy days and their serene days. But it's unpredictable. You can't be off in outer space when you're dealing with animals.'

Chris Cooper

PHEASANT HILL

Greetings from Pheasant Hill stud on a blustery July Sunday afternoon. We are having to feed out to our girls and a good supplement is the reject kiwifruit available for free from the packhouses this time of year. We thought



we would like to share the sight of our Red Polls being tricked into eating kiwifruit mixed with hay.

Thanks to all involved in organizing the AGM, we thoroughly enjoyed the experience and came away with new insight and well fed! See you all next year.

Beat Murer & Anne Marie Fouche



Find the kiwifruit? Contented Pheasant Hill cows

Photo: Anne-Marie Fouche

PROPOSED TOUR OF URUGUAY 2018

Dear Red Poll friends,

I have floated this idea with some of you unofficially prior to putting it to Council next year in USA and you have asked me for my ideas so here goes! Officially the 2020 slot for a Conference is South America but I will be 80 and probably gaga by that time if I'm still in this world. So something informal I think fairly soon? It will be my swan song and I'd like to do it. Frankly I can't see anyone else doing a tour in this neck of the woods in the foreseeable future for RPs.

I learnt a lot from the tour we did in 2000. We tried to do too much and with five frontier crossings and different hotels almost every night and 85 overseas visitors it was a bit too stressful for all concerned. So the idea this time will be a bit more laid back. Obviously the prime objective will be to look at cattle but as always there would be a 40% tourism built in. If anyone has any ideas for other arable interests we can take that in too, given time. Costs will be kept reasonable- no five star hotels but comfortable. Bus travel would be a 45 seater coach with seating equivalent to aircraft business class. Some travel is inevitable considering the distances involved but I would try and stay in each hub for about four days in the same hotel.

So when? Idea is either March or October 2018. Cattle here are not at their best in Oct as we are coming into spring after winter and its calving time. For northern hemisphere its their preference but? Your ideas please!

Genetically we haven't got much to offer you but on the contrary South America is an opportunity to sell yours. Nevertheless I hope to visit at least one world class Angus herd in Uruguay on the tour.

Its early days yet but I have more or less got a provisional team together to make your trip as interesting and memorable as possible with the maximum interchange of ideas between the participants.

So, a provisional itinerary of 16 days. Start at Florianopolis Brazil. There are good connections through Sao Paulo to Africa, USA and Europe though Oz

and NZ folk might like to break their flights direct from there to Chile for a day or two in Santiago, (can be arranged).

The first day would be on a beach to get rid of the jet lag with a show in the evening. Next, look at a couple of Red Poll or other cattle herds in the area. Bus to Gramado up in the Serra gaúcho, very pretty, google it if you like. Then work south to the Porto Alegre area. Rather depends on our Brazilian friends on this leg.

Then to Uruguay, based in my town of Tacuarembó, and bus from it out to various farms from there each day. One of the ideas I have is that if you ain't been to gaúcho country and haven't been on a horse.... thinking of arranging about twenty saddled quiet horses for an hour's ride around a typical Uruguayan estancia. For those who don't wish to eat their breakfast off the mantelpiece next morning SUVs would be laid on or a shopping trip for those not interested to Rivera.

From Tacuarembó there would be an overnight trip up to Iguazu Falls on the triple frontier Paraguay/Argentina/Brazil. One of the wonders of the world, and lots to see and do for two or three days. Highly recommended and it won't be too hot.

Plenty of connecting flights home from either of the two airports but if you want to prolong your stay elsewhere in S. America I can arrange through our travel agent. You should arrange health cover in case of accidents and check on what visas if any you need for Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay.

Lots of ideas more but let me have your own ideas so let me know if you have any preferences of what you would like to see and do and I will try and tailor them in.

Talk soon on skype once you have digested this sketch plan. Places would be limited to one bus load.

Cheers,
Bill Hays

NZ ANNUAL TOUR & ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

April 2016, Canterbury

The Tuesday before the Tour began, the Evanses, Warwick and I travelled firstly to Wellington by train from Wairarapa, then bus out to the Airport and finally flew down to Christchurch. Judy had found 'Apex', a very economical car hire firm, near the Airport. Once we had picked up the car and were on our way the 'satnav' wars began with Graeme and Judy both having a cell phone with satellite navigation ability but slightly different real time maps and voices. Eventually we arrived in Lincoln safely. Once we were sorted as to accommodation we contacted Peter and Eleanor Fleming and all went out to see them for $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour or so. It was lovely to catch up with them both.

Wednesday 20th April, Day 1

As the Official Tour did not start til midday the Wairarapa contingent and Kelvin and Kath Lane went for a 'tiki' tour out to Sumner. 'Satnav' wars were over as Judy travelled with the Lanes and we went with Graeme. There was still a lot of earthquake damage visible to quite a few buildings. At present the containers protecting the roadsides from rock fall are still stacked up although I see in the Christchurch Press they are going to be replaced with a more attractive safety fence before too long.

We also went to see 'the Tannery' complex (after a few errant memories of mine saw us looking in the wrong area). This is a series of old industrial buildings now totally refurbished as a beautiful arcade, with about 30-40 boutique shops and a café or two; including a hairdresser, second hand bookshop etc in the principal building, with other buildings across the parking area. Apparently the restoration had begun before the two big quakes. Everything seems of the finest materials. We can recommend this as a place to visit next time you're down in Christchurch.

From there we drove out to **Anita and Ian Fleming's** 'Strathwell' Stud to meet the other tour participants. Great to see some new faces on the tour - although not new members - Ruth and Andrew Pinfold from Woodville, and Anne-Marie & Beat Murer from Katikati, and our regular Australian visitor, Doug D'Oliver. Good to meet up with Gordon Thomson, Birchwood Stud, again too.

Anita and Ian had organised a lovely lunch (Red Poll roast beef - nicely pink - and Red Poll sausages with salads, and delicious cakes for afters) and then we all went out to view their sizeable herd of pedigree cattle.

The cows with the bull calves were penned in the yards, along with Strathwell Optimist (see back cover for photo of him). Cows with heifer calves and other older heifers were in a small paddock for easy viewing. Favourable comments were heard from all sides.

Next stop was the **Dalley family's** certified organic farm at Hororata. We were greeted by Gareth and Reagan, then taken out to see the fattening stock at home, and from there to a nearby lease block, where the breeding cows are being strip grazed on a herbal ley; which includes a mix of yarrow, plantain, cocksfoot, red & white clovers, chicory, fescue, timothy and a bit of lucerne. (see back cover for photo of cows)

The paddocks are around 7 - 8 hectares. Gareth stressed that back fencing the blocks is essential for pasture to come away again as soon as possible.

The cow herd consists of around 35 Red Polls and 9 Welsh Blacks and the odd crossbred. Those of you who knew Nicol (Gareth & Reagan's father) will know how he was also very keen on Welsh Blacks. The family consider both breeds are ideal for their non-irrigated, organic farming system.

I was impressed by the very quiet temperament of the cows as we walked among them. They were in very good condition and making the most of the herbage before them, even though, to many non Red Poll farmers, it may have looked unappetising at first glance.

Hororata area has several smaller organic farms and a truck comes around and picks up stock from each of the properties once a week. Dalley's supply one prime animal a week to local trade and get a premium for being organic.

We were able to see their three Red Poll bulls in a paddock alongside the road as we left the lease block. The biggest was by a Birchwood bull out of an Elmwood cow. (front cover)

Gareth and Reagan have not dismissed the idea of registering some of the cattle from the older tagged cows in the future.

From Dalley's we returned to Leeston to **Paul and Sacha McDonald's** 30 odd acre property. They also lease a block of about 7 acres. Sacha and Paul have four lovely young daughters: Evie, Lila, Lucy and Tilly.

A builder by trade, Paul, along with his father and brother, also breeds and trains Standardbred horses. We viewed a colt awaiting export that they have recently sold to Australia.

The small stud consists of about 5 cows plus their weaner calves, all in very good order on grass that most of the tour members would have loved to see at their homes farms, which are currently very dry. They were running with a Fleming bred bull, Strathwell Fitzwilliam.

Sacha put on a very welcome cuppa and cake. We had time to enjoy getting to know the McDonald family better as they are also fairly new members and have not yet been able to participate in tours away from home.

Back to Lincoln and off to the Famous Grouse Hotel for a tasty bar meal.

Thursday 21st April, Day 2

We met at 9am ready to travel to Christchurch for an hour's double-decker bus tour of the inner city to see the earthquake damage and gaps left by demolished buildings. It was great to see the progress made with new buildings, and the progress of restoration for the lucky few which were allowed to remain standing. The gaps were very noticeable, with a lot of the land cleared and grassed over or being used as car parks, pending future development.

The outing was completed with a coffee from a nearby cafe and delicious homemade muffins supplied by Anita and daughter, Brione.

Back into our cars and off along the road down to Geraldine to view McSweeney's cattle. Just south of Ashburton, at Tinwald, there was a vast yard absolutely crammed with kilometres of coiled alkathene ready for

irrigation on farms. It really brings home the hold dairying, and to a lesser extent cropping, has on Canterbury farm land.

We were blessed with fine weather throughout the Tour and it set Anne & Mike's visit off beautifully. Looking over to richly coloured Red Polls on lush green grass in the warm sun really gladdened one's heart.

Firstly we viewed a couple of senior sires as we went up the drive, then the cows with heifer and steer calves, followed by time with the select group of cows who had entire bull calves at foot. It was great to see Mike's calves by the Australian bull, Ketlang Monarch. They look like they will grow into very solid sires with the potential to help keep improving the national herd.

Lunch was a veritable feast of delicious quiches and salads. Unfortunately it was high impossible to sample every dish. Wow!!

After reluctantly leaving the good conversation and beautiful outlook at McSweeney's it was back on the longish trip to Lincoln for dinner at the local craft brewery and restaurant, 'The Laboratory'.

Owned by English migrants, Martin and Lisa Bennett, this is the second incarnation of this business, as it had not long been established in Christchurch, when it was hit by the earthquakes. The Bennett's were not able to retrieve their brewing equipment for over a year.

Seeing this as an opportunity rather than a catastrophe they went looking for a new site and settled on Lincoln. After the usual delays with planning permission etc they have built this wonderful brewery and eatery with a separate room for small conferences/functions. Built of virtually all recycled materials from earthquake damaged buildings; while the materials were cheaper, getting them cleaned, situated and oiled was somewhat more expensive than a completely new build.

The dinner began with sample dishes of food to each table eg battered prawns, pulled beef, short ribs, yummy crispy chips, three types of olives (Beat loved the salty ones) and a grain dish – these were quite filling and then

out came two types of thin crust pizza – a vegetarian one and a salami one. Very delicious and we were all replete!

After dinner, Martin gave us a talk on the development of the brewery and its beers. He was able to answer a question or two too – what was the difference between lagers and ales? Lager uses lager yeast and ales are made with ale yeast but also fermented at a warmer temperature. New Zealand draught beers are mainly amber lagers.

They do a lot of brewery tours for social groups and businesses and schools. There was an interesting diagram of the brewing process on the walls which made his explanations easy to follow. Many of the drinks had unusual names such as 'sprained ankle' – dark with a good head. Warwick had a golden lager. We were all able to walk back to our accommodation. (Meaning it was nearby, not that we weren't drunk!)

Friday 22nd April, Day 3

Most of us had a slow start to the day as the AGM was not until 10am. Being flat, Lincoln was ideal for an after breakfast stroll.

Eighteen attended the AGM with apologies from several more – the minutes will tell you what took place. Those of us staying that night dined at the Hotel.

Evanses, Sowry's, Lane's and Warwick and I, were not due to fly out until mid afternoon Saturday so spent the morning at Wigram at the Air Force Museum. This was a very worthwhile excursion. We can recommend it to anyone with an interest in NZ military history; lots of restored planes, photos, mementoes and a great café.

We saw some of the good work they do with children when we witnessed a young birthday group handed over to an "airforce corporal", then put into mini overalls and taught to stand at ease and attention (with much seriousness and some levity) and marched around before going to see the planes – great stuff. Both they and we enjoyed the show!

The museum is fairly handy to the Airport too.

NZ TOUR & AGM PHOTOS 2016



Females at Ian & Anita Fleming's stud, "Strathwell"



Anne & Mike McSweeney, Graeme & Judy Evans at McSweeney's



Graeme Evans & Gareth Dalley



Viewing the cattle at McDonald's



Women In Black - Ruth Pinfold & Kath Lane at Dalley's lease block



L -R: Assn. President, Graeme Evans; Secretary, Anne McSweeney; Kath Lane & Ian Fleming, at the AGM

PHOTOS AUSTRALIAN TOUR OF NEW SOUTH WALES, 2014



Ibis at Western Plains Zoo



Bus troubles after Armidale



Windy Station, part of largest shearing shed in southern Hemisphere



Dean Anderson (Canada) obviously hasn't got the right hat!



Cows & calves, of Nick & Prue Lee's "Omega Stud"



Youngsters at Glen Innes Showgrounds

RED POLL INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS 2014

NEW SOUTH WALES Part 1

Friday 7th November, Day 17

A foggy morning in Canberra as we readied to board the bus to leave for our 398km journey north to Dubbo and our visit to the Taronga Western Plains Zoo for lunch and viewing the animals. It is an adjunct to Sydney's Taronga Park Zoo. Western Plains Zoo has welcomed over eight million visitors since it opened in 1977. It enables more natural life styles for large animals such as elephants and rhino's, and open space for larger breeding groups of plains ruminants etc.

Leaving ACT we passed through wine country; past the Yass Valley exit. Lots of aircraft con trails in the sky above. We turned right onto Lachlan Valley Way. The road to Boorowa was a bit rough. The main street of town was lined with bright scarlet roses. From there we were into cherry country and good sheep country, lots of weeping willows and eucalypts. Had a brief loo stop in Cowra, no time for morning tea! There was a large rose garden which some had a quick look at while waiting for the others. Cowra was the site of a prisoner of war camp for both Italians and Japanese in WWII. Like Featherston Prison Camp in NZ, there was a major riot by Japanese prisoners which resulted in the deaths of 4 Australian guards and 231 Japanese.

As we headed toward Bathurst we were advised that two well known Red Poll studs had been based in the area – that of Jack Perry, "Bundaleer" and Brigadier Hurst's "Larkhill". Apparently there was powerful rivalry between the two.

The next main town we drove through was Canowindra – the hot air balloon capital of Australia – it is also famous for fish fossils from the Devonian Paleozoic period. They were first found in 1956. Brick houses, phoenix palms and skate park. Lots of the smaller towns build the latter in an effort to keep their teenagers amused. We passed Banjo Patterson Way – he was born in Orange, a neighbouring township. Fifty two kms from Dubbo we arrive in Wellington, famous for its caves and market gardens.

Finally, Dubbo; drop off the bags at the motel and then to the Zoo. The Zoo has 800 hectares of land and another block where they grow fodder trees. They provide 'glamping' and cabins outside the zoo grounds. Animals found at the zoo include 2 packs of African Hunting dogs; black rhino's, solitary animals – browsers not grazers; Oryx, giraffes, Eland, White rhinos – prefer to be in small herds; Persian onagers; Sumatran tigers; Banteng cattle from Bali; Addax antelope; Black buck; Barbary sheep; Simiang gibbons and Przewalski's horses – the latter have bred so well they were able to send seven mares back to Mongolia. There are lots of other smaller species too numerous to mention. Also a large (far too large, they are planning to cull some) number of ibis mooching around.

My favourites are the Chapman (Plains) Zebras which have more of a fawn coloured coat with black stripes, although some adults have dark brown stripes.

Back to the motel, still pretty warm but at least not humid. Went for a walk and on return joined McSweeney's, Manceys and Rachel Hancock at Sail's Bar for a cooling drink. The meal that night was a bit average, but very comfortable beds made up for dinner.

Saturday 8th November, Day 18

On the bus; bag and baggage, by 8.45am, temperature's warming up. Heading off to the Liverpool Plains to see the largest shearing shed in the Southern Hemisphere at 'Windy' Station (West Warrah). We passed through the small township of Coolah – one of three contenders for the origin of the term "beyond the black stump". The road into the station was metal and very dusty. This station was once owned by the Australian Agricultural Company. The shed had 44 stands when mechanized. It is considered a very historic building. The current property of 21,500 hectares was purchased by the Romani Pastoral Company in 1997. They run a substantial beef operation, feedlot and continuously farm around ten thousand hectares with both summer and winter programs, growing winter cereals, canola, sorghum, lucerne, corn, and sunflowers under irrigated and dryland systems. We had a lovely "finger food" lunch put on by Prue & Nick Lee of 'Omega Three' Red Poll Stud who we were visiting next on our list.

"Bindaree", Quinrindi, is the home of Nick & Prue Lee's "Omega Three" stud, also on the Liverpool Plains. The black soil is regarded as some of the best cropping country in the world. The landscape was dry with a hint of green. Nick and Prue have around 50 stud females, independently assessed for structural soundness. They founded their stud in 2009 with some females from Red Cactus and many from Eurimbla. They are gradually finding a market for the Red Poll bulls in the local Poll Hereford herds who are seeking easy calving and good carcase attributes.

The property is run in two blocks, with one being home to a crossbreeding programme, in which all Red Poll females are joined to Red Angus bulls and the 1st cross females then go back to the Red Poll. Even though the country was very dry the cattle were not receiving supplements. Some of Nick and Prue's surplus cross bred heifers go into the Elders' Killara feedlot which we passed on the way through to our next accommodation at Tamworth.

Tamworth has a population of about 50,000. It is situated midway between Sidney & Brisbane. As well as being famous for its 11 day country music festival, it is the "Equine Capital of Australia" with many specialist horse events and the National Equine Centre of Australia built about 9 years ago. Tamworth is also known at the "First City of Lights" as it was the first place in Australia to use electric street lights in 1888.

Dinner was at the Cascadia Restaurant. Prawn cocktails were on the menu, with me choosing a main of barramundi followed by tiramisu (the delicious latter, rather too large, but managed to force it down!)

Sunday 9th November, Day 19

About to board the bus and coach captain Dave says he's having a few problems with a twisted belt in the engine. He rang HQ and they said to take to mechanic once gets to Glen Innes. ETA to Glen Innes is about 2 ½ hours.

We head off, Jacarandas and "Lion" grevilleas flowering in many roadside gardens. Further out we travel alongside the Great Dividing Range. Murrays Williams thought for the day is "practice contentment" something which becomes necessary a bit later on.

Rachel Hancock welcomed us to New England and read a couple of popular modern Australian poems, "Turbulence" which was very amusing, and "Rain" which was very thought provoking. The poet is Murray Hartin – he comes highly recommended and can be found reciting his poetry on You Tube.

As we passed through Armidale Rachel said a Red Poll breeder, Tim White, kept his herd in the area. Rachel works in Armidale. It is home to the University of New England, which has 60,000 students, of which 60% are extramural. Height above sea level is about 1,000 metres. The summer weather is circa 30°C with about 5 days hotter. Can get snow in winter. No Winter growth, average 34" to 35" rainfall annually. About this time, the bus's air conditioning was not working as well as it might, but we pressed on toward Glen Innes and the mechanic. The main route north is on the coast but traffic can be diverted through Armidale if necessary.

Shortly after Armidale (10.15am-ish) the bus ground to a halt. Fortunately there was plenty of room to pull off the road. A replacement bus (school bus!) came along about 11am and off we trundled again. We passed through the township of Guyra, famous for the wildlife reserve, "Mother of Ducks" lagoon and for producing 11,000,000 kilos of tomatoes annually, none of which are for export, all are used in Australia. As we travelled along Rachel filled us in on the Red Poll Youth Camps which she helps organize along with Tim Light. They are held at Glen Innes Show Grounds annually. The participants (ages 7-25 years) are taught to select cattle for both purchase as breeding animals and to show; preparing them for the show, training as a handler for the show, what the judge will be looking for etc.

The district we were passing through was called Ben Lomond. Produces prime lamb. The countryside was nice rolling hills with a tinge of green. Glen Innes is known as the "Land of the Beardies" because local history has it two early stockmen lived alone away from civilization and did not get to shave. Because of their long residence in the area settlers were referred to them as a source of local knowledge. The town now has an almost annual Beardie Festival. There is even a Beardy River. The district used to be mined for sapphires, quartz and topaz. Glen Innes has a population of around 5,000 people.

We arrived at the Glen Innes Showgrounds very ready for a cup of tea and lunch.

After a sit down meal we went out to see the Youth Handlers and their cattle. They had real classes judged by Miss Ann Starr. These included classes where the young handlers were judged on their ability with stock and then a class where they got to judge stock and had to give their reasons for placing them as they did. It was a wonderful turnout and those young handlers sure know their stuff. Rachel and Tim (and parents etc) are to be commended for the incredible work they do in leading and teaching these youngsters and also in fostering their association with Red Poll cattle.



Some of the Youth Handlers showing cattle during the Glen Innes visit

Albert Hancock gave us an interesting demonstration about linear measurement of cattle and how he selects his stock guided by this method. He also talked about the yellow flakes often found in the tail hairs of the Red Poll cows. He said they could be used as a butterfat indicator with the yellower and more widespread the better.

From here we re-boarded the bus, along with some of the youth group members and travelled about 27km north of Glen Innes to the Rangers Valley Cattle Station feedlot. [See next issue for article on feedlot]

SOUTH AFRICAN RED POLL NEWS



Left: This is the cover of the September, 2015 issue of the Farmer's Weekly, an agricultural magazine in South-Africa. The article was done on Anzabeth Nieuwoudt, "Woodrose Stud" farming near Schweizer-Reneke.

[Some of you will remember Anzabeth from the UK Tour]

What a great piece of publicity for Red Polls!

For those of you on Facebook you can join Face Book: Red Poll South Africa

UPDATE FROM URUGUAY (24TH APRIL 2016)

[Just missed the previous newsletter, Editor]

Greetings, from a very wet Uruguay. We have almost forgotten what the sun looks like. The problem has been the Nino, added to something called the Atlantic Convergence, which has meant that it rains for weeks on end. So floods and even a rare tornado last week with considerable stock losses and almost 10,000 folk flooded out of their homes.

The rice crop was down a month late and only 40% has been harvested and it's of poor quality. The soy farmers have only 2% harvested and much of the crop is sprouting in the pod. As to dairy, no need to remind you folk about milk prices, though the last two Fonterra auctions have shown a slight improvement.

Beef prices are also down, but not catastrophic, and still above Australian prices. It's not often farmers have a good word for their national Ministry of Agriculture but ours has done a pretty good job. All our 12m cattle are electronically tagged at birth and this is followed through to slaughter and beyond. So a customer in any supermarket knows from the code details of the animal's life story on any cut he is buying.

But all is not doom and gloom, as lots of grass, though trying to make hay hasn't been easy. Cows look good so we hope for a good Spring calving

On my own farm last year I had a PD of 86% with 85% marking and zero assists. So Red Polls certainly work for me! Should one try for a higher percentage? I don't think so, as there is a danger of the herd becoming too much inbred, as the genetics are not renewed from outside. A moot point, as some cattlemen, prefer a closed herd.

In general RP breeders in South America are crying out for an infusion of new blood but importing is a nightmare and somewhat expensive. An example is a breeder in Columbia. Jhon Garcia has a farm there at 6,000 feet in the tropics and milks his RPs getting about 24 litres a day from his cows and wants to import milking strain genetics. I thought I had found a suitable English bull from Simon Temple's herd that would suit him but Columbia has no veterinary protocol with UK so that fell flat. Anyone have any suggestions?

The Brazilians imported some semen from Raedean (Aus) and also Fedw Stig (UK), about two years ago, but I have had no feedback on the results.

Last year a group of Uruguayan and Brazilian breeders clubbed together and imported 500 straws from NZ, Tamihana Toms Kingsley. The cost of doing so meant that we had to charge three times what Robin received at the farm gate and even so we were able to piggyback the consignment on a large consignment of AA semen. Not to mention the bureaucratic hoops, many of which are still unresolved, as Uruguay moved the goalposts on the protocol halfway through.

But anyway the semen is now in the cows and I hope the file is now dormant and rotting gently in some government office. We will have to wait till spring calving to see how we got on. Haven't been able to PD my herd as the yards are full of mud and the vet can't get into my farm because of the floods. If this goes on I will have to consider building an Ark!

Looking forward to catching up with you in the USA at the next congress. We had the Shorthorn World Congress here last week. It's a small world as I discovered many mutual friends in the cattle world from NZ, UK and Oz among the visitors. A really great world family; a bit like ours.

Bill Hays.



Some of the Red Poll cow herd belonging to Alison MacIntyre, Uruguay

BACKGROUND TO THE HAYS/MACINTYRE ESTANCIA

Alison is my sister-in-law and is the senior member of the MacIntyre/Hays family. She has been on every Red Poll tour since 1992. She is a very quiet lady who has an excellent eye for good stock.

First, a bit of family background. The first antecedents were Scots and came to the River Plate area in about 1824 as traders in hides and also horses for the army. Over the years they acquired land in Argentina and Uruguay. However when my father-in-law Hugh MacIntyre returned from service in the last years of the First World War he found that the family fortunes had pretty well evaporated and had to start again, finally buying the current family estancia in 1928. At that time there were almost no roads or bridges so it was a two days journey from railhead to the farm, a trip now done in an hour by pickup truck.

Also there were very few fences and any stock was pretty well feral. Many of the gauchos lived on the estancia receiving food and maintenance for themselves and families and working when called upon.

As an example when Hugh bought the place the previous owner's stock had to be rounded up for sale and this I think took about a fortnight. A stockade was built and the gauchos would camp the night out in the woods so that they could lasso the cattle when they were still grazing at dawn. As each one was delivered to the corral the buyer from the Fray Bentos meat works would hand over a gold sovereign and after that it was up to him to get the cattle across country to the railhead for shipping. This needed about twenty horsemen for the job.

A rule of thumb as to land prices then was that every two acres was equivalent to the price of one fat cow. Hugh was one of the pioneers in stock improvement and being a Scot went for Angus cattle, importing seed stock from Perth sales when he could.

As each herdsman lived on his beat in a cottage with his numerous family it was a problem to supply them all with milk cows. He started with Jerseys but nobody wanted their progeny and they were pretty well unsaleable. At that

time there were a few RP herds, which were all milking strain, mainly near urban areas. As such they produced a more saleable carcass so Hugh bought some in and our Red Poll story starts there.

When he started there were very few remedies for treating cattle and most years until 1947 a plague of locusts stripped the farm bare. Tick borne diseases were endemic and cattle were dipped in an arsenic bath. At the time it was illegal to vaccinate against foot and mouth and the vaccine had to be smuggled in from Brazil by light aircraft. As there was no ice to keep it cold once it landed they would be vaccinating through the night by the light of Tilley lamps to get the job done. Fluke was dealt with by tetrachloride. None very effective but it was the best they had. So, how is it today? The estate, while divided among different family holdings is still extant within a ring fence. No mains electricity and access is often curtailed by floods.

There are three main types of land. First riverine bush, of about 500 hectares. The productivity index here is low, varying between 4% and 32% so suitable only for cattle. We try to keep these native woodlands and marshes as pristine as possible though at one time they were extensively exploited for charcoal burning so are mostly secondary growth. Owing to extensive poaching, much of the wild life is sadly depleted, but hopefully is slowly coming back. The big marsh deer and the jaguars have gone forever but there are occasional rumours of sightings of pumas, anteaters and the South American wolf in the area. Brouchet deer are quite common but you hardly ever see them and the capybaras are just about hanging on. Anyway it would take several chapters to go into the diversity we have, particularly the birds.

The adjoining flats are dedicated to rice production with pastures as a bridge rotation. We have an irrigation dam of 100 hectares which supplies water to about 240 hectares of rice annually which is farmed by tenants. Straw is baled for cattle forage.

The rest of the farm is open rolling grasslands (productivity about 90%) and will carry about 0.75 cow units per hectare. We used to have a big flock of 3,000 Polwarth ewes but with labour problems, stock theft and the arrival of wild boar on the farm this flock has been much reduced.

Alison breeds horses, Suffolk Punch, criollos and some Shetlands; around 300 head. No quad bikes so each gaucho also needs at least three horses to do his work. Alison has zero machinery on her farm and only uses contractors as required. Otherwise all jobs are by horse and cart. A fencing team is employed almost permanently.

Her basic production is a herd of 1,000 cows 70% Angus and 30% Red polls, plus replacements. Steers and cast cows are fattened and some bulls sold locally and depending on the market many calves are shipped for export entire to Turkey or Jordan.



Another shot of some of Alison's Red Poll cows.

While our cattle prices are not what they were a couple of years ago they are still better than most of our global competitors, including Australia. Uruguay is not a cheap country and costs have risen dramatically. As an example we have a 22.5% Value Added Tax on almost everything. The price of diesel and petrol is one of the highest in the world.

All that said Uruguay for all its faults is a great wee country and I wouldn't live anywhere else. Of course we moan about the government and sometimes the weather, but what farmer doesn't?

Saludos, Bill Hays

MEETING MARKET SPECS

(contributed by Prue Lee, Omega Red Polls, NSW)

Richard Murphy, a buyer from Bindaree Beef Abattoir and Myola Feedlot explains what they want in the cattle they purchase. He uses their current cow grid as an example and focuses on two major points.

1. Knowing your cattle
2. Improving your cattle.

Jason Siddell, Senior Land Services Officer for Livestock, Glen Innes, then points out some of the tools available to producers to do this.

Receiving carcase feedback and understanding it really comes down to 2 major points for the producer.

Richard

1. Knowing your cattle - There are still many producers that do not understand processor payment grids and do not assess their cattle properly prior to sale. I'll use our current cow grid as an example.

WEIGHT	6 - 22mm	0-5mm	23-30mm	31-40mm
400 - 425.9 kg	5.10	4.97	4.95	4.72
300 - 399.9 kg	5.20	5.07	5.04	4.81
275 - 299.9 kg	5.15	5.02	5.00	4.76
250 - 274.9 kg	5.10	4.97	4.95	4.72
225 - 249.9 kg	5.00	4.88	4.85	4.63
Under 225kg	6 - 15mm	0-5mm	16-22mm	23-30mm
200 - 224.9 kg	4.85	4.73	4.70	4.49

If a producer thinks that their cattle will weigh 310kg with 8mm of fat then they will receive \$1612/hd but if the cattle are actually 290kg with 5mm fat then they will receive \$1455.60. A massive difference of \$156.40.

2. Improving your cattle – What are the carcase traits that I can improve through genetics to receive a greater return? These vary depending on your market/environment but can include selecting earlier maturing genetics to finish cattle faster for a trade weight and avoid and lean penalties. Also by

finishing the cattle faster ie still at milk teeth as opposed to 4 or 6 teeth. There will be a correlation in a lower ossification score which will also increase the eating quality and therefore the MSA Index.

High IMF genetics – Increasing marble scores in finished cattle is a great way to increase return. Not only does it improve the MSA Index score but it may make the carcass eligible for a Marble score premium (often a 2+ is needed to achieve this).

Temperament – Although there is no direct premium for quiet cattle vs stirred cattle, the results can be evident in the Meat Colour part of MSA assessment. If the animal is stressed by either being stirred itself or in a pen with a stirred animal it can result in the 'dark cutter' (high PH and dark Meat Colour).

By combining both MSA and carcass feedback the producer can make more informed decisions for both future genetic selection and marketing decisions for slaughter cattle.

In regards to feedlot cattle, producers should ask if they can receive some performance data from the feedlot, although sometimes this may not be available as part of a company policy. This may include Average daily gain/ conversion/ marbling. By understanding how your cattle performed, a producer can understand why they received a certain price for their feeders. It may also be used to demand a premium e.g. on current rations a performance difference of 0.1kg/day can mean 10-15c/kg HSCW difference for an animal fed on a 100 day program.

Jason

I agree producers should be sourcing and analysing feedback from the processors and feedlots they have supplied cattle to in the past. By identifying potential areas of improvement such as growth, fatness, eating quality and yield, producers can look for these traits when considering bulls for purchase, while being mindful of maintaining or improving calving ease, fertility and mature cow size in your female herd.

The problem that commercial beef producers have is that even if they run their cows in single sire joining mobs very few producers will match the steer and heifer progeny back to the dams. Hence they would be accessing

feedback and making heifer replacement decisions on half the story. So in my view information needs to be related back to sires and dams to truly make change.

In regard to visual muscling the results from the NSW DPI Muscling Herd Project at the Glen Innes Research Station (Angus Herd - 24 years of study) has shown an increase in one muscle score i.e. D to C will increase the dressing percentage of a steer by about 1% and the Retail Beef Yield by 1% and be worth an extra 0.21c/kg liveweight when selling the animals through live selling systems.

Muscle Score assessed visually has moderate to high heritability, & low genetic and phenotypic correlations with weight and fatness traits. It can be selected for at a young age because of the very high genetic correlations between weaning & yearling measurements. The research has shown muscle score does not affect female fertility (except cows with 821del11 under nutritional stress) or meat quality, but improves feedlot feed efficiency, dressing percent, retail yield, meat:bone ratio.

Therefore with the introduction of value based payment systems, carcasses that are high yielding with superior eating quality will be in high demand and selection of sires with increased visual muscling (C+, B-, B or B+), high growth (lower ossification), high Carcase wt, high IMF and adequate rib and P8 fat will be highly sought after.

Prue

I've looked at the Breedplan figures too and they can help us to know our cattle, for example 200 and 400 day growth figures help us to breed cattle with the growth potential to ensure good outcomes at the abattoir or in the feedlot. The carcase EBV's including IMF, EMA, Retail Beef Yield, positive or negative fat figures also give breeder's the information needed to support good breeding decisions. Currently very few Red Poll breeders are scanning their cattle for these traits, although this is improving gradually.

Information from Richard Murphy, Bindaree Beef, Inverell Jason Siddell, Senior Land Services Officer Glen Innes, Prue Lee Omega 3 Red Polls.

ROSEMARKIE RED POLLS REPORT

We've had some much needed rain but probably still nowhere near enough to make up for the dry winter of 2015 and the dry-ish summer of early this year. Warwick actually mowed the back lawn today, usually it languishes as a hay paddock over winter, as it's too wet to mow! Stock is all in passable condition. Calving is not due for a while yet and lambs not til the 20 of August or thereabouts.

Had an unexpected visit today from a woman, Mary, who grew up on our farm, and her husband, Wayne. Izzy, our dog, was going berserk and when I looked up there was a lovely maroon coloured car parked by our garage. After introducing themselves I took them around the garden and learned several things about who had planted some of the trees, built sheds etc. Amazingly Mary told me that their beautiful old car, a Ford Customline, had lived in the little garage beside our front gate which Mary's dad had had built specially to put this car in. Warwick has never put our car in it as he said it is too small – Mary said they used to "all have to get out before Mum put the car away as they could not open the doors in the garage"! They have recently reacquired the car after seeing it advertised on Trade Me. Mary confirmed the number plate with her brother in Australia and they managed to purchase it. She said it used to be grey and in the future they hope to have it repainted in the original colour. Wayne has recently put in a decent heater and updated the wipers from the original vacuum-run system to more modern ones. The motor runs beautifully.

Helen & Warwick



Warwick, Helen & Wayne beside the Customline

Photo: Mary

UK & BOWLANDS STUD NEWS FROM SIMON TEMPLE

Here in England, the weather has been very variable. May was warm and dry, June was much wetter and colder and July is not much different. Hopefully, we will get some decent summer weather soon.

The showing season is well under way and we had our National Show on the 21st June. There had been quite a bit of rain and I had to be towed onto the showfield! However, the weather improved overnight and it turned out surprisingly good. In fact some of the time, it was really too hot for showing and the Horse Flies were out in force, upsetting many of the cattle.

This year, following Mike McSweeney last year, the Judge was Ernest Mackey from Ireland. He had a hard job but eventually gave the Breed Championship to Watergate Foxglove, a homebred heifer from the Hunt Family. The Male Champion and Reserve Breed Champion went to Chorlton Lane Albert, bred by Helen Arthan and now owned by Mick Paddock and Sarah Marsden.

Although we did not win the Championship again this year, the Bowland Herd had a very successful show. Bowland Yolande (last year's Champion) again won her class and her calf, Bowland Giselda, won best suckling calf. In the class for the best Progeny Group (3 animals by the same bull or out of the same cow) I had 3 heifers out of Bowland Yolande. They came second, which was very pleasing, especially as the youngest was this year's calf. [I am looking forward to next year!] We also had a second in the pair class and won the best group of 3.

I was particularly pleased by how well my young Bull, Bowland Ferdinand, performed. This was only his second outing, his first being last year when he was only 6 months old but was Reserve Champion in the Any Other Beef Breed section at a local Show. This year at the National he won Champion Junior Bull, Champion Junior Red Poll and he was Reserve Male Breed Champion. Not only is he good looking but his Performance figures are exceptionally good - his 200 and 400 day growth figures and his Beef Value are all well inside the top1% nationally!



Bowlands Ferdinand,
by Gedding Badger out
of Bowland Annette.
*He does not carry the
Myostatin gene.*

The week before the
National, at the Royal
Three Counties Show, it
was very satisfying to

see the pair of Red Poll cows with calves at foot tapped out Reserve Champions for the Burke Trophy, which is awarded for pairs of Dual Purpose and Dairy Breeds. Although judged by a Holstein Judge, it was won by a lovely pair of Gloucesters. In gaining Reserve the Red Polls beat all the other Dairy and Dual Purpose Breeds. The cows were owned by Helen Arthan and Liz and David Blunt.



White coats only - Helen Arthan (left) and Terry Mancey (holding cow) and Liz and David Blunt (holding bull). The Judge [whose name I cannot recall] is the one to the left rear and I think the other man is the chief Executive of the show – Simon Temple

A Bit Of History

RED POLL CATTLE

NZ Herald, 14 July 1930, National Library 'Papers Past'

The remarkable trade for Red Poll sires grows apace, says an English contributor. While they have gone to North and South America, and have also been imported into Australia in the last 12 months, the extraordinary demand with South Africa, East Africa and South-West Africa, continues unabated.

It is explainable when, according to the statement of a big ranch owner in one of the driest parts of South Africa, the Red Poll has proved a type of cattle desirable for semi-tropical countries, because of its strong constitution and ability to produce butter and beef. The same farmer states that experience has shown him that the Red Poll has best served his purposes for cross breeding, and he emphasizes the value of a dual purpose breed, owing to what, as he says, has proved the unwise policy of having bred for the pail, thereby leading to the production of far too many long-legged animals of poor constitution.

GLORIOUS INSULTS #10

'The guy's no good – he was never any good....
his mother should have thrown him away and kept the stork.'

Mae West 1892- 1980

Photos Back Cover:

Top: Red Poll cows being break fed on organic herbal ley during dry summer at Dalley Family property, Hororata, Canterbury, April 2016

Bottom: Strathwell Optimist owned by Ian & Anita Fleming

