

RED POLL

NEWS



Summer Edition December 2016



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Closing date for next newsletter is March 1st, 2017

Cover: Rosemarkie E6 (R. Trounce Purirau) and heifer calf L14 (R. Monty Kowhai) by Dawn Mist Zeus Montana. Bull is Rosemarkie Emir Alec (G14) by Dawn Mist Emirate out of Rosemarkie Trounce Yulan (C8)

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PRESIDENT'S PAGE



It is that time of the year when workloads increase as the run up to Christmas is just around the corner.

As I write this I can't help but think of all who experienced a very severe earthquake at Midnight on 14th November. It seems to have been felt over the greater part of New Zealand. Only a small bit of damage in the Wairarapa but other areas didn't get off so lightly.

The main calving for most breeders will now be over and the bulls are out or close to going out. I hope your calving has gone well and all calves are thriving.

The weather pattern has been different this year with some areas very wet and some still need more rain before summer arrives.

Demand for cattle this year is at an all time high with prices being paid for most types of stock at record levels. This is pleasing to those who run mainly cattle and I hope you are able to cash in while this lasts.

Many farmers have been or about to put in fodder crops for the summer. It is noticeable the change back to these crops over the last few years when grass, hay and balage ruled the winter farming pattern.

Dairy prices look better than the last two years and may help those who sell Red Poll Bulls to be put over dairy heifers.

I would encourage any breeder who has surplus stock to sell to get in contact with our Secretary and place them on the website.

Our annual herd tour next year will be held in the far north and I hope a good number of our members will be able to attend. This allows you see how our breeders are improving their herds and see the different conditions they have compared to other areas.

The World Congress is being held in the USA in June next year. If you are thinking of going contact our Secretary for all details. Registration closes 1st January 2017.

As this is the last Red Poll News for this year I wish one and all a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Graeme Evans

SECRETARY'S SAY



Just when nature had provided North Canterbury with a generous amount of rain to help relieve drought conditions and lift farmers' spirits, it literally brought things crashing down with a powerful earthquake. Nature can be heartbreaking. It is remarkable how quickly the nation responds with aid of all sorts by air and sea – water, food, clothing, equipment and thousands of chemical toilets (who'd believe we'd have such a stock of these). It is going to be a very long time before life returns to some sort of "normal" for many of those affected.

Registrations: These are very slow to come in this year. If you have queries about DNA sampling your current herd sire, ring Pfizer Animal Health on 0800 228 278 and they will send you information and sampling kits.

Congratulations to those breeders who had success in the show ring this season.

Welcome to the following new members: -

Neil Wilton, Carterton
Brian Bell, Hamilton
Matthew Littlejohn, Hamilton
Clinton Tamati, Amberley

Anne McSweeney

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2017 AGM and HERD TOUR
19th to 21st April, 2017

Robin Shepherd is organising the itinerary for next year's Herd Tour and as we will start near Whangarei, he suggests those who are flying could fly into Whangarei airport.

We will probably visit two or three farms in the Dargaville area and then stay in Opononi. The second day will include two farms in the Kaitaia area and another visit of interest, and on to the Taipa Resort for our annual dinner and accommodation, then the AGM on the Friday morning.

The nearest airport for flights out is Keri Keri/Bay of Islands airport.

There will be a more detailed itinerary and accommodation information posted to you in early February, 2017.

Anne McSweeney



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & HERD TOUR 19-21ST APRIL, 2017

I have been asked to organise next year's Red Poll Tour in Northland.

So far I have not finalised all details but I can confirm that on the Wednesday we will be concentrating on Red Polls in the area East of Dargaville and then travel north through the Waipoua Forest to Opononi Resort Hotel for overnight.

Thursday has visits to two Red Poll herds in the Kaitaia area and a visit to the Far North Museum and Te Ahu Centre in Kaitaia with overnight at Taipa Resort with the dinner there in the evening and the AGM and auction there on the Friday morning.

Robin Shepherd

FROM THE EDITOR



Hi everyone

What a great achievement for the Evans family of *Evanlea* stud. They are among the elite group who are still on their original family farms after 150 years. [See *Evanlea Herd report for close-up of plaque*] NZ Century Farm & Station Awards is the non-profit organisation running this award, modelled on similar awards in the USA. Based at Lawrence in Otago, it is in its 11th year.



In the photo Judy is holding the sesqui-centennial plaque & Graeme the certificate. Extended family were also present, with only the three older grandsons absent. Far right is Jo Goodhew, Associate Minister for Primary Industries, who made the presentation.

Thanks again to all who have provided information for this newsletter. Finally I have completed the series on the 2014 World Congress in Australia – did I hear a sigh of relief??? It will be a smaller issue next time unless more of you put pen to paper or supply photos!!

Thanks to those overseas breeders who voiced your concern about the effects of the earthquakes in the northern South Island and lower North Island, it's nice to know others in the international Red Poll world care.

Warwick and I are hoping to attend the USA Tour next year so maybe there will be a write up about that to fill the next few issues after that. Don't forget to take your cameras!

Helen

PATRONS' PAGE I



Well, for the last few months I have followed the greatest Mickey Mouse show ever.

It has masqueraded as a democratic process to elect a new president for the USA.

It seems that the process broke all previous conventions by putting up a Republican candidate who the establishment in the party did not approve of and whose apparent claim to fame was TV show and his father's money, along with that he brought baggage of unpaid taxes, bankruptcies and a very sleazy reputation.

On the other hand the Democrat candidate had to deal with baggage including professional indiscretions and the tarnish of a husband who had acted badly.

While all of this was filling the political sky with dirty black smoke any real and constructive policies got very little airing except for Trump's left-field ranting against trade deals, migrants, Muslims Mexicans, trade deals and his seeming intention to re-shape the world and make America great again.

All of this has potential down-stream affects for New Zealand especially in our formal relationships with the USA and the potential for us to be viewed as lackeys of USA should we be seen to go along with Trump. There will undoubtedly be some trade effects should Trump instigate a tariff regime in his attempt to boost internal USA farming and industry. There is also the potential to disrupt many of our arrangements for New Zealand companies who currently operate in the USA.

Looking into the crystal ball fails to reveal just what will happen and that brings uncertainty to the markets with down-stream effect for us and the value of the New Zealand dollar.

Our beef trade to the USA and our dairy product markets there could be heavily impacted.

The Mickey Mouse show seems to be likely to continue for some time and if it was not such a serious matter then it would be a hilarious comedy.

Robin Shepherd QSO

PATRONS' PAGE II



I asked Peter to write a few pages about the bulls imported from Australia by Willow Lea stud over the years. This is the first of those articles. - Editor

Conmurra Balalaika

In 1969, even after Mal Quatermass (a Tasmanian Red Poll breeder with Larkhill bloodlines) wrote to me offering *Conmurra* Balalaika as a sire to import, I had also discussed with Alan Wilson about *Oakwood* Atlas. I thought Atlas was the perfect sire, but Alan could not keep him indefinitely and regulations did not allow cattle from mainland Australia to be imported into New Zealand. As we did not know when the regulations would allow Australian bloodlines into New Zealand we decided to import from Tasmania which was allowed. So we imported *Conmurra* Balalaika in early 1969 to Willow Lea.

I, along with Ray Bedford of Woodlands Park, came to an arrangement to share the cost of *Conmurra* Balalaika. Unfortunately Ray was not able to see the results of the breeding as he was suffering from cancer and passed away.

We imported Balalaika from Mal Quatermass because we had had no success in our efforts to acquire semen from a more beefy Red Poll bull. We hoped the infusion of *Larkhill* bloodlines would develop the hind quarters of our Red Polls.

Conmurra Balalaika was used for the first time by Willow Lea in 1970, producing 13 replacement heifers and 5 bulls. I remember that all the heifers were beefy but small in conformation. The bulls were similar and they were sold for breeding. Alan Wilson commented favourably on the heifers. *Conmurra* Balalaika was used again in 1971.

These heifers continued to influence the Willow Lea stud when mated to other sires. We believe that *Conmurra* Balalaika spent the rest of his days at Woodland Park.

Peter Fleming

RANGITIHI SPRING REPORT

We are enjoying that exciting time of the year when we can see a crop of new calves on the ground with 20 now born and eight more to go. They all look like excellent advertisements of their various lines.



An hour old bull calf at Rangitihī

We are venturing into cross breeding with nine rising three year olds being mated to a Charolais bull. It will be interesting to see how this works out. The rest of our

herd will again be mated to Houtu Quade.

We have 14 Red Poll yearling heifers waiting for a buyer with several people keen to take them off our hands. We much prefer to sell by private treaty as we then have some opportunity to meet the buyers. Our weaner steers sold readily at prices as good as we have ever had.

I am helping with the planning of next year's tour in Northland over 19th – 21st April which is in the first week of the school holidays. The plan should accommodate those who need to fly in to Whangarei and out of Kerikeri.

Gena & Robin Shepherd

'I was so afraid to go out west to my aunt's ranch. But the only choice my mother gave me was to go for two weeks or all summer. I wound up staying all summer. And that's where I learned about cattle. I could relate to their behaviour, their fears.'

Temple Grandin

RED POLL INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS 2014 NEW SOUTH WALES

Day 19 continued briefly – we returned to Glen Innes where we stayed at the Rest Motor Inn. We were waiting for the new bus to arrive with our luggage. We went to dinner at the Hereford Steak House – which was part of the motel. Our bus and luggage finally arrived about 11.15pm.

Monday 10th November, Day 20

We left the motel about 7.45am bound for *Tanamerah Stud* of Jill Bockman and John Rhea at Deepwater. While waiting to board I counted 13 different jet trails in the sky – a bit busier than the Wairarapa skies! The pastures we passed had a tinge of green but no length. Along the way we saw some thin cows with young calves and then a Hereford stud with quite thin cows. Oops, we just passed the turn off (a typical Red Poll Tour move!). As we approached their road there was a sudden flush of wallabies bounding along near to the bus. The river, alongside, looked deep and slow moving. After negotiating a narrow gateway with the guidance of the Jimmy and Eric (Dave, the Coach Captain, said, “it’s not my bus, I have to look after it” – this one had only 22,000km on the clock unlike Dave’s with over 1,000,000km) we passed Jill and John’s yards on our way to breakfast at their neighbours’.



When we got there it was to see a yard full of Longhorn cattle belonging to John & Jan, the breakfast hosts. They were the first to import Longhorns into Australia – in 1987. They breed them mainly for the rodeos. They were in the process of importing a new bull from Canada. They had no luck trying to interest Kiwi breeders in the import venture. The Longhorns

have great longevity. John and Jan also run Merino sheep. The wool is only 13micron and is exported to Italy, with the dags and pieces going to China. Breakfast was superb, catered by a local children’s health charity.

Back on the bus to Jill and John's; "Culgoa" consists of 1300 acres. Earlier Jill had told us that they bought that farm as they were assured it was a drought free zone - and they have had drought virtually since they arrived there! They fill their dams with water pumped from the river – a real saviour.



Cooeeyana Rookie with caprine friend at Jill & John's

They have been breeding Red Polls for 14 years [*now 16 years – Editor*] and normally run 150 odd breeders, bulls and replacement heifers. At the time of our visit they had decreased the cows by one third, sold most replacement

heifers and all surplus bulls and were supplementing the cows.

Jill said they had more recently bought in some sires hoping to improve commercial gain in their cattle.

It was great to see the cattle looking in such good order considering the circumstances of the drought.

We then left to set off on the drive to Casino for our next visit.



Moyle Park Zeppelin on display at Jill and John's

First stop was Tenterfield, about 45 minutes from Jill's, for a quick break. Apparently this town was fated to be a battlefield if the Japanese invaded Australia during WWII. In 1942, thousands of Australian troops were assembled in the surrounds, just in case.

From Tenterfield it was 126km to Casino. We began by climbing the Great Dividing Range, reaching a height of 912 metres before descending from into the Clarence river valley. We passed through the townships of Drake and Tabulam – the road being pretty rough in places. We then climbed again and came down into another sparsely grassed valley – that of the Richmond river. Finally as we near the wonderfully named town of Mummulgum we hit dairy country with a herd of Jerseys. Lots of Jacarandas, grevillea *robusta* and conifers that looked like they were something out of Dr Seuss; just branches with tufts of needles.

Casino vies with Rockhampton for the title of Beef Capital of Australia. A beef week is held annually which includes rodeos, a competition for Beef Queen, Races and even cow pat lotto. It is also a large rural service centre.

Upon arrival in Casino we went straight to "Richmond Dairies" to view the factory and then to a lunch put on by Longley Red Poll Stud. Both the Factory and the Stud are owned by the Longley Farm Group (UK). The chairman of the group is Mr Jim Dickinson. He has had [*I quote from the Red Poll Beef Annual, 2015*], "a long standing interest in milk production from Jersey cows and has herds in England and Uruguay." He is hoping future trials will prove the value of using Red Poll bulls over the Jersey cows and enable the surplus calves produced to be grown on for the beef trade, under extensively farmed conditions. The Longley stud had 22 breeding females at the time of our visit, sourced with assistance from Jill Bockman and John Rhea. We did not get to see the cattle.

The tour of the factory was very interesting. Because of our numbers we went through in two groups. The company mainly produces dairy commodities for export such as skim milk and evaporated milk for yoghurt making. All milk is tested for antibiotics and bacteria, then cooled before it is unloaded from the tanker. The tankers are all owned by contractors. External laboratories are

used as farms are sampled every day. The cut off for somatic cell counts is 400 although they aim for 250. Since 2001 they have only thrown out 1 tanker of milk on quality. They use ultra filtration for specialty products. Waste goes to bio filters where residues are removed so water can go into council sewer system. Detergents can be recycled; they try to reuse them. Rinse water is abandoned. The plant runs on gas now, it used to run on sawdust.

Farmers have open contracts, with all that they produce being accepted. In 2014 the base price was 53cents per litre plus a payment for quality and fat content. Some can receive up to 80 cents in the Winter. All the herds that supplied them were Jersey herds. In the local area there is 1 Brown Swiss, 1 Guernsey and the rest Holstein herds. There is a slight protein bonus but they really want the fat content. 700,000 litres can be stored. At that time they were processing 1,200,000 litres per week but have handled up to 4,000,000 including some for other companies.

Product is all sold for export – no retail. Cream is sold in 10kg packets, Yoghurt is freeze dried and the powder put into 1,000 litre containers. Frozen cream is exported to South East Asia and the Middle East.

The thanks were given by Erick from Kenya. He said at home he separated 20 litres of milk at a time and his pasteurizer was wood fired. He was very interested to see how a large dairy business was operated.

From the factory we went over the road to where lunch awaited us, set out in large open sided tents. Lovely burgers (dare I say it – they were Simmental beef!) followed by various fresh fruits on platters.

From there the bus left for our last herd visit *Namoona Trig*, the Senepol herd of Colin and Janelle Godfrey. Senepol were developed in the Caribbean on the island of St Croix in the very early 20th Century. The Northwest African N'Dama cattle were crossed with the Red Poll. ‘The result of infusing the Red Poll was a combining of the N'Dama's superior traits of heat tolerance, insect resistance and ability to thrive on poor quality forage, with Red Poll's carcass

quality, high fertility, feed efficiency, quiet nature and renowned maternal and milking ability.' [Latter info from the Australian Senepol cattle website.]

The home farm, Fairy Hill, is 270 acres but they also have a 2,700 acre forestry block run off. The climate is sub tropical - high rainfall and high humidity. The stud had been going for 8 years when we visited (2014). At time of our visit they had 150 registered purebred cows representing 40 different sires plus female youngstock. They hoped to increase their numbers to 300 purebred cows eventually.



Young Senepol bulls at Godfrey's

The cattle on display were all very laid back and in lovely condition.

It was good to be able to see the contribution Red Poll has made to the development of a breed able to cope with heat, humidity and insect pests and still be very feed efficient and have all the required carcase traits.

Well, we're on the last leg of the tour now – to the Sofitel Hotel at Surfers Paradise. We passed through Lismore via an industrial area and car yards. The houses in the residential areas were all up high off the ground – this assists ventilation and helps keep the termites at bay apparently. It also lets water from heavy rain run straight through without damage to the house and contents. This type of building is known as the Queenslander with their being a low set and a high set type. We travelled through to the bypass and on out of town. We were heading towards the town of Bangalow where we were supposed to join on the main highway – oops missed the turn! With nowhere obvious to turn the bus around, we stayed on the scenic route toward the coast. The houses along the road are about 1 million dollars each – even the decrepit ones - as no one wishes to sell. We ended up driving through Byron Bay township. Cape Byron is the most easterly point of the mainland. We finally got back to the Pacific Highway and started to make some real progress and suddenly nearly everyone wanted a loo stop!

Sugar cane was visible in the fields alongside the road as we came into the Tweed Valley. We are still in NSW but not for long. We passed a sign saying Brisbane 99kms away and shortly thereafter passed over the border. There was a mural of leaves and people near Tallebudgera Creek. We turned off the motorway and down into the town of Budgeeraba. We all put our watches back an hour. We arrived at the Sofitel Hotel at Broadbeach about 6pm and debussed. Warwick & I had a room on the 18th floor – never been that high before. We all wore our blue NZ Red Poll shirts that evening.

Before dinner we had gathered outside (the allocated area was right beside the noisy restaurant) to listen to a few speeches. The three Red Poll scholars thanked various mentors, people and societies. Dr Karl Wellington spoke on behalf of the Jamaicans, followed by some of the others. They were leaving for the airport at 11am. Eventually we went in for dinner. The mains were great but dessert was pretty dire; strawberries (OK) and some inedible pieces of rock hard hokey pokey drizzled with chocolate sauce – hardly anyone ate the latter – we valued our teeth too much. There was quite a long wait between courses with us not finishing until about 10.30pm and then another 15 minutes fare-welling the Jamaican contingent.

We had a nice breakfast but tables only set up for two people so not very conducive to socialising. We joined Bridsons for a walk down to the nearby beach. Helen and I went paddling and got thoroughly drenched below the knees by a larger than expected 7th wave. We then went to the "Best Exotic Marigold" Indian run café/restaurant. Following that we returned to the Hotel and checked out, leaving our luggage with the concierge.



Helen & Allan Bridson on the beach

Those of us still present were all meeting for lunch in the "Broadbeach" room. It was a barbecue style buffet with tiramisu and coffee for afters. Richard Daley said a few words, followed by those of us

who felt we had something to say – all very positive, about the great tour. After many goodbyes it was time for us to join Schmiesings and Temples for the courier to the airport to drop off Dan and Mary Jo and to continue on to Brisbane for Temples and us. We were accompanied most of the way by overly loud classical music on the driver's selected station. There were some young folk on the courier too – I'm sure they would have been put off classical music for life!

Warwick and I were booked in to the beautiful old Rendezvous Hotel. (We can really recommend this gracious old lady, nice and central, and right beside the railway station.) We arrived and were promptly told we'd been upgraded to a suite – not fancy, but great all the same – including a washing machine/dryer – wish we'd had access to that several times on the tour.

We had a brief look at Brisbane the next day and then took the courier to the airport and the flight home.

Big thanks to all those Australian Red Poll breeders involved in organising the Tour. A wonderful trip, great memories. *Helen - Editor*

STRATHWELL REPORT

This year's winter was a mild one which allowed growth during the months leading up to calving. This year we had 22 calves from 22 cows with no deaths. The calves on the ground this year are by Strathwell Optimist. They are looking good and doing well.

During the autumn a dozen R2 Steers and heifers were sent to our local Butcher in great order demanding a great price. We have sold a couple of R2 bulls up North and leasing some locally.

At present this year's spring has been great with periodic rain, so far I haven't done any irrigating. Unfortunately the milling wheat price is low at \$340.00 a tonne and malting barley at \$340.00 so with a great deal of balage made hopefully we can run more stock over winter.

Wishing everybody a great Xmas and New Year.

Cheers,
Ian & Anita Fleming



Last of the summer wine Red Poll style? L – R: Mike McSweeney, Gordon Thomson, Peter Fleming & Warwick Potts, NZ AGM Photo: Anne McSweeney

EVANLEA REPORT

Mid November and the rain keeps coming. It was a very easy winter with no mud and just enough moisture to help fill underground aquifer.

Calving finished end of August and all cattle doing well. Even with good weather over winter stock struggled to maintain their condition. Enquiries for bulls this year have been good and sold to some new clients recently.

We are having a good spring with ample grass but there is a shortage of store stock both sheep and cattle in the lower North Island. It is hard to find yearling beef steers under \$1000.

A Kale crop has been put in this year for cattle but will have sheep on as well. Since the crop was sown it has rained every day so hoping this will not drown the seeds.

Have been waiting for balage to be done for the last four weeks but the weather is not playing its part.

On 21st May this year Judy and I received a Century farms award in Lawrence (Otago). The farm has been in the family since 1858 and we are the fourth generation to have farmed it. If any members of the association have had their farm in the family for 100 years or more I would recommend they consider applying for this award.



Regards to all
Judy & Graeme Evans

HOUTO REPORT

It has been busy spring for me this year and all the spring calving cows have calved with no problems but unfortunately I lost my herd sire, Omanawhenua Evers II, with a twisted bowel. I had brought him from Norman and Olwyn Sherwin to replace my herd sire and show bull, Houto Pompey. The bad luck seems to be continuing with my bulls. To add insult to injury the Vet bill for the vet to come out and say there was nothing he could do for him came to the grand total of \$331.00. This was heart breaking, as I was very impressed with Evers, and had hoped to get some really good calves from him. I was lucky enough to have used him over the Autumn calvers so there is still some hope that he will throw some good calves from them.

All of this now meant that I was in dire need of a new bull with mating just around the corner! I decided to ring Graeme Evans to see if he had any rising 2 year old bulls as I needed some different blood lines and he said he had a bull available. Then came the big decision, do I buy it sight unseen or do I go down to look at it first. As things were pretty quiet at home on the farm and I had my son staying who was able to mind the farm and all the stock, I decided to go down to Masterton. This turned out to be quite the adventure as I had never driven that far before on my own.

I set out with a fair bit of trepidation as I don't own any of these flash gadgets like GPS and new cell phones which can tell you the way to go. I just relied on my sense of direction and memories of the towns and roads I needed to travel, didn't even need the map. I dread driving on the motorways so getting through Auckland was pretty stressful, and the new bits of motorway were a bit tricky, but once I got going it was a really good trip. I set off from home at 6.30 and got through Auckland just after the morning rush hour then headed down country. Travelled down to Palmerston North, planning to stay with my brother for the night but when I arrived he wasn't there as he had misunderstood which Monday I was coming down.

I then decided to drive across to Masterton to Graeme and Judy's, arriving at about 6 o'clock. Even though they weren't expecting me till the next morning, they were wonderful hosts and Graeme cooked me dinner as Judy was out at a school meeting, very yummy dinner Graeme!!

In the morning we went out to look at all of Graeme's stock and did a tour around his farm and local area. It was quite different to be on such flat land and to see so much feed for the cattle and sheep, very unlike what I am used to. It was really good to see all his cattle in prime condition. Graeme showed me the young bulls that he had for sale and I really liked what I saw.

Graeme also drove me over to Helen McKenzie and Warwick Pott's *Rosemarkie* Stud to look at some of their young bulls before he would let me decide which bull I wanted. It was really great to get out and visit some of the other breeders as I am usually too busy at home on the farm at the usual times that the herd tours are on. Graeme was a wonderful tour guide for the day and drove me all around Masterton and the surrounding area, which was very interesting as I had not been back to Masterton since I was a young child of 12, when my father was the Lighthouse keeper at Castlepoint. I stayed overnight and then set out the next morning on the long drive back home.

I decided to go back home via the east coast road and travelled up to Napier and then across to Taupo, then back to Auckland and home to Tangiteroria. Quite a long road trip, 11 ½ hours all told, but quite enjoyable apart from the numb bum. Saw a whole lot of the North Island and was surprised at how good the roads were in comparison to our roads here in Northland.

I am eagerly awaiting the arrival of the new bull as it's been a bit of a mission to get him trucked up here because none of the trucking firms want to do the trip for just one animal so he needed to catch a few rides on different trucks as part of a backload. He should arrive today.

This spring has been very wet up here in the north, and is only starting to dry out now, so will be interesting to see how the summer goes.

Wishing everyone the best season possible.

Regards Nina



STONEYACRES REPORT

Hi, I am Neil Wilton. Just a brief piece about me and why I'm now one of the newest Red Poll breeders, with a small herd of eight Red Poll cows and calves.

I was brought up on the family farm on Wiltons Road, Carterton, which was a small dairy farm running stud Jersey cows on very stony flat land. I was schooled in Masterton, worked and trained as a wool buyer and then had a short stint contracting. After that I retrained as saw doctor at a local mill, followed by some time up north at Kaitaia.

I came home to Masterton and back to the local mill - with any spare time that I had, being spent on the farm with my parents up until the passing of Dad.

I then purchased the remaining cows, which were initially from Rosemarkie blood lines, but after a few generations they had no papers. I got to see over this time how well the Red Polls handle the stony flats and poor pastures; the Summer drought and the green dry Winter. Then Mum passed away, not long after Dad.

I decided to buy some purebred cows from Helen & Warwick, and start my own small herd, as the Red Poll cows are very well suited to the stony conditions and poorer grass type and the dry summers on the farm.

I had to decide on a stud name so back to some more family history. *Stoneyacres*, the name I have chosen was my grandfather's farm name from when he used to run sheep on this farm at Wilton's Road. I hope to be able to have some stock entered in the next Wairarapa (Carterton) Show (2017) and to be able increase the stock numbers to 10 pure bred cows over time.

Unfortunately if this year is anything to go by it will be a slow process – four bull calves out of the four in-calf cows bought from Helen & Warwick; three by Dawn Mist Zeus's Montana and one by Rosemarkie Mort's Ash.

I hope to meet other breeders at the 2017 Red Poll Northland Tour.

Cheers, Neil

DAWN MIST REPORT

After another reasonably dry winter, the recent heavy rain has been welcome, but the cold temperatures are not appreciated. We have a 30 degree day this week followed by a 12 degree day!

We had a visit from Norman Sherwin at the end of September and we were fogged in for almost all of the 10 days he was here. In fact it was so thick and disorientating that when he drove the 10kms to Geraldine he got lost on the return trip! It was great to see him and he was impressed with South Canterbury, even though he did not get a great view of the mountains.

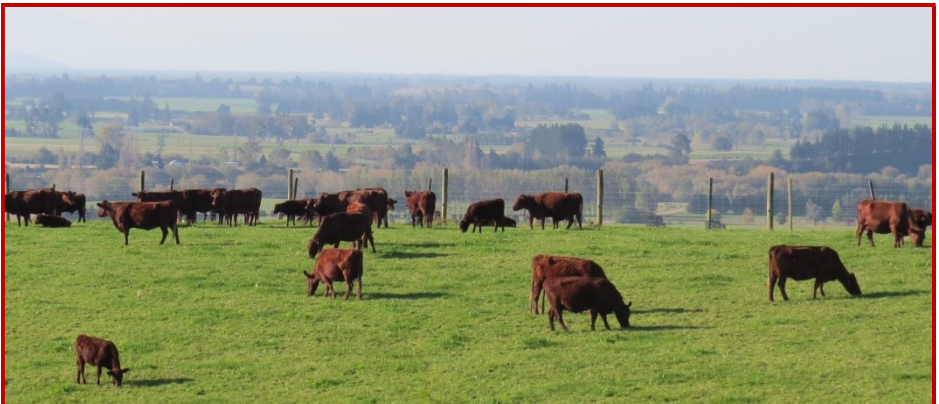
Calving has gone well with over 60% heifer calves. We are impressed with our yearling bulls from imported semen, (especially the Ketlang Monarch offspring) but are not doing AI this year as there seems to be little market for them.

We have recently sold heifers and a bull to a prospective new member in North Canterbury, so we hope they go well for him.

As we prepare for Christmas, I wonder what sort of Christmas those in the northern part of the South Island will have this year. With badly damaged homes and farms and huge issues with the road damage cutting them off from others, I can't imagine things will be much fun for a while.

Wishing you all a happy, relaxing family time over Christmas and New Year.

Anne & Mike McSweeney



Red Polls and the view at McSweeney's during the AGM Tour

TAMIHANA REPORT

Luckily we decided not to A.B. this Spring as the season, since June, has turned out to be one of the wettest recorded and the front paddocks where the A.B. mob usually run are not much better than a swamp, with the grass struggling to keep up with the 70 feeder calves being reared.

Used to run 200 calves & up to 20 A.B. cows on the same area in seasons gone by. Running half the herd with Speckle Park, and the other half with a Tom's Kingsley son from a Favourite Charlie daughter out of Woodcocks Verily this year.

All cows calved unassisted with 40 per-cent heifer calves. Sixty cows & heifers running with bulls this Spring, which means about 20 cows for sale, if anyone is interested.

Hope your season is being kinder than ours.

Cheers

Robin & Ann



Australian Congress Tour members at breakfast in the woolshed at "Coolamon", Deepwater; Jill Bockman and John Rhea's neighbours.

OPOUTERE REPORT

Greetings, fellow Red Poll breeders.

At long last the rain has stopped, and the grass is growing. It has been one of the most difficult winter /spring periods for many years.

However the sun is shining now and morale of man and beast is good. As it was a tough winter, our cows calved in fairly store condition, and consequently we had a trouble free calving. Cows are now gaining weight and milking well, which is reflected in the calves shiny coats.

A client who had purchased our yearling bulls in the past, cancelled his order this season, because of calving problems the previous season with the Red Poll bulls over his jersey heifers.

We sold our yearling bulls at the Tuakau sale for an average of \$1135.00, which was a better price than what we would have expected, had we sold them in the paddock.

Our local trade heifers have been slower to finish this season, because of weather conditions, however we have started to shift some in the past few weeks.

We had a three year old Red Poll/Shorthorn cross steer that had a carcase weight of 429kgs and returned net \$2199.00. Oh to have a unit load like that instead of just the one.

We had a very pleasant visit last weekend, from Richard and Kay Daley, those of you who were on the Australian tour in 2014, will remember Richard for the great tour he and members of the Australian Red Poll society organised.

It was good to hear their news, and hear of the exciting ideas that are being put forward, for the improvement of the breed in Australia.

We have finalised, and booked our flights to the USA for the 2017 World Congress. We are looking forward to this, and are sure Dan and his helpers will make this a trip to remember.

Talking of trips I had been asked if it was possible to include a visit to Chris Biddle's Angus stud on our North Auckland tour in 2017. The request has been forwarded to the organising committee, but I have had no reply.

Chris has been to the forefront of the "Steak of Origin" competition several times and at his recent bull sale sold 96 bulls at an average of over \$3000 each. He must be doing a few things correctly, and I am sure it could be an interesting visit, where most of us could learn a thing or two.

Wishing all readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Allan & Helen.

A Bit of History **RED POLLS AS MILKERS**

NZ Herald 24 June, 1927 [*National Library, Papers Past*]

An East Midland herd owner who has a Red Poll dairy herd of considerable size was minded to make comparisons with another breed of essentially dairy character and in view of an increasing milk business purchased a number of commercial cows of another breed. Results are particularly interesting, the more so as they establish beyond all doubt that the Red Poll cannot only be depended upon to produce beef but to do well in milk yielding on commercial lines. The owner's dairy manager, it appears, has complained that this year he has had to use at least four to six pounds more milk to make one pound of butter than last year when there were none but Red Polls on the farm. This result has led to butterfat tests being made and from these it seems that the average butter fat for the Red Polls was 4.3 per cent p.m. and just over 3.7 percent a.m. against 3.8 per cent p.m. and 3 per cent a.m. for the cows of the other breed. The result is that the owner has decided to concentrate entirely on Red Poll cattle and to cease investing in commercial cows of a recognized dairy breed because it is stated they spoil the quality of the milk. Furthermore, the same breeder who is enthusiastic about the results of the Red Poll breed in both the Dairy and Fat stock shows makes this further observation, "My twenty Red Polls last week averaged 4lb. per day more in their milk yields than the other breed indicated".

RED POLL INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS 2014

RANGERS VALLEY CATTLE STATION FEEDLOT.

We were met by Don Mackay, the Managing Director of the whole plant. He joined us on the bus as it drove around the vast feedlot. He spoke and answered any questions as we went.



The Station began life as a sheep station in 1839. It, and the Feedlot, have been owned by the Japanese "Marubeni" meat trading company for around 27 years. The station consists of 4,700 hectares, 1000 metres above sea level and averages 37" of rain per annum. Winter is their difficult period as in the summer the unshaded yards stay dry. Current capacity is 33,500 although they are licensed for 50,000. Japan uses approximately 40% of the beef produced. They export beef to 25 countries internationally, they even have one distributor in Monaco!

The feedlot was originally bought as a 5,000 head feedlot. Improvements have been built on the Japanese system. Mainly open pens. The surfacing of the pens is critical. They have a gentle slope on the floors so rain and manure can run off. Pens are cleaned on a 45-50day cycle. Annually they produce 45,000 tonnes of manure, of which they use half as fertilizer on the property, and sell the remainder.

The property has 5 centre pivot irrigators. They grow wheat and barley with the cattle being fed 35,000 tonnes of corn silage annually, along with cotton seed, cottonseed hulls, straw and pollard. They like to have 60,000 tonnes of silage in storage. The cattle are fed twice a day – 40% in the morning and 60% later in the day. Any leftovers are removed daily. Routine is very important to keep animals from being stressed.

The plant specializes in long fed Angus (15,000 animals) – all purebreds. They have regular marbling of 5+. They also have purebred Angus which get fed

for only 100 days. One hundred of the latter a day are supplied to Coles Supermarkets in Australia.



Wagyu X – very well fed!

There are also Wagyu and F1 Wagyu crosses. The Wagyu are all fed at least 1 year (average about 380 days). The Wagyu are killed at about 790kg L/w. The week previous to our visit they had killed an extra large Wagyu X Holstein animal. The

carcase weight was 650kg with marbling of 9, and it fetched \$10,000! This is the exception rather than the rule of course. The meat is aged about 21 days after cutting and packing. It is dry aged and packed in calico wraps, not vacuum packed.

All cattle are all DNA'd on arrival at the feedlot. The DNA sampling enables traceability back through the meat processor, the feedlot and the original supplier. All suppliers of animals and feed have to supply documentation confirming what chemicals, pesticides etc have been used on the animals or in their feed. Their biggest health issue is bovine respiratory disease. Generally Wagyu have good health, with mortality of .02%, eg 2 per thousand animals. Riders on horseback go through the pens daily with every animal seen every day. They are not looking for sick animals; they are looking for those that look like they may be sick tomorrow. Any suspect animal has its temperature checked, is put in a recovery pen and then returned to the main pen the following week.

The site uses 1.9 megalitres of water a day – the allowance is 60 litres per day per animal. All effluent must be captured in a pond. It is planned to use some of this in a methane digester. About 50% of the energy in the effluent dissipates within 7 days. A very interesting visit.

KENYA NEWS

Condolences from NZ Red Poll breeders to Erick Otieno Owino on the passing of his father in July. (*Erick was on the Australian Congress Tour*)

Jimmy Brooks reported on the show he went to earlier in the year – it just missed the August newsletter. He also sent a later update - Editor]

We did indeed take some animals to the Show. It was embarrassing on the first day, as my handlers lost their heads completely and forgot how to lead the animals. They also put the head collars on some of the animals upside down. I have seen a photo on Facebook that makes me cringe!!! That unfortunately was the RPs. We were competing against some very ordinary Brown Swiss animals. American Genetics, so a very dairy type, and we managed to get the Supreme Champion for a cow and the Reserve went to one of our bulls as we entered as dual-purpose animals. Not my proudest moment! I look forward to the day when I can win the DP classes and also go head to head with Charolais and Angus animals in the beef classes. I hope that with my pending importation of semen from Australia, this might happen.

On the second day the Borans were judged and we did get a 1st and 3rd for two bulls in a young class for 24-30 month animals. The Boran showing was very strong in all classes, with some fantastic animals.

On the last day we showed a couple of RP x Boran cows that we milk. This class must all be F1 cross Boran females. Ours were both 10 years old, still with good udders, considering they have had somebody tugging on them for the last 7 years (hand milked). Unfortunately our regular competitor did not bring his Friesian crosses due to drought, so again no competition.

As Show Chairman, I saw little of the judging because of one crisis or another, so no time to take photos.

I have heard about the Uruguay trip from Bill. Sounds exciting, hope we can make it, also hoping to be in the US next year. My family say that I will only go on holiday if there are cattle to be seen. However, we are off to Spain and Portugal in September for about 3 weeks to see our elder daughter who is

working in Portugal and do a bit of touring. Never been there before. If I see a few cattle, it will of course be an added bonus. I won't be running with bulls in Pamplona, though. That is over for the year.

November Update

Very bad growing conditions, without enough rain to give us good grass growth and it has been hotter than normal, throughout our cold season. We are now approaching the hot season and just hope that the springs, on which we rely so much, do not dry out too soon.

An election coming up next year which of course will impact on us with uncertainty, fanned by politicians, causing havoc. Fortunately, at present we are not affected where we are, but most of my ranching friends have been suffering invasions of their property by pastoralists for several months. These people have overgrazed their own areas and now demand the right to come onto private property with thousands of head of large and small stock. Fencing strong enough to stop elephants, and walls, are being destroyed; well managed grazing destroyed, and the local politicians looking for votes are encouraging this. The rule of law is fast breaking down.

All this, backed by automatic rifles in the hands of the invaders, and the security forces without the will to check it. In fact, injuries to the security forces are a daily occurrence and even a couple of deaths, I believe. I am surprised they have not mutinied. What makes it even sillier is that these same pastoralists comprise a very small proportion of the voters and the next people to suffer after they have finished with the handful of ranchers will be the smallholder farmers, who comprise the majority of the voters. Very short-sighted!

Both my wife and I hope to get to the US next year and Erick is hopeful about coming too, although he says he will see what Mr. Trump's new immigration policies are going to be.

Jimmy Brooks

UK NEWS

Hello to everyone in New Zealand

2016, as usual, has been a challenging time for the industry in the UK what with the weather, new disease regulations, Brexit and the general un-stability with regards to where the country is going. I'm sure it will all work out in the future but the not knowing is the worst thing.

The Society in the UK is ticking along, registrations remain stable at about 1000 a year, however, membership is going down which means balancing the books is a challenge. I have had a busy time as is usual, attending various shows, attending farm walks, Herd Competition Presentations and visiting the membership in general. It never ceases to amaze me at the different management systems that our breed thrive in, a real tribute, and testament to the diversity and versatility of the breed.

The National Show, this year held at the Cheshire County Show, was an excellent event, somewhat spoilt by new movement regulations concerning bovine TB, which reduced the number forward, however there were still over 40 cattle forward. The Champion was *Watergate* Foxglove, who was shown suckling her first calf. Congratulations to the Hunt family for this excellent achievement.

The Herd Competitions still prove to be popular with this year Overall Winner being the *Underhills* Herd of Rosemary Philipson Stow. I have attached the Judge's report which I feel makes for first class reading.

Ray Bowler
Secretary



Red Poll Cattle Society, National Herd Competition 2016

Report by Judge, Mr Philip Dale

First of all I would like to say how pleased and honoured I was to be asked to judge the competition. I would also like to state my thanks to all of the 8 breeders who I visited for making me so welcome and spending the time to show me their herds. Everyone, without exception, was very enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the breed and in what they were doing. I have to say that I have judged a few competitions over the years but this was by far the most interesting, and in the end the most difficult decision to make.

All the cattle, without exception, were of excellent quality which represented a true reflection of the breed. I suppose I shouldn't have been surprised at this as these were already winners in their own areas. The herds that I visited were all managed differently, were in differing climatic conditions and kept in different environments but the quality came through in all of them, whatever the management system employed.

However one herd stood out for me and that was the *Underhills* herd of Rosemary Philipson-Stow. They were an excellent even herd of cows, strong, long, rangy cows with excellent udders and the uniformity of the herd was unparalleled. The calves were very shapely, the youngstock outstanding and the bull, Canute Darwin, of excellent type as well. Rosemary had a very quiet, relaxed presence with the cattle which complemented by plenty of excellent grazing, made the herd what it is. Everywhere else where I went I couldn't get these cattle out of my mind. Therefore I award the Large Herds, and Overall Herd Competition, winner to the *Underhills* herd.

The reserve in the Large Herds was the *Bowland* herd of Simon Temple. This herd, managed in a completely different environment, consisted of a herd of excellent shapely cows with good udders. The calves were exceptional, the young bull, *Bowland* Ferdinand, I was very impressed with, It will be interested to see how he matures as he has the making of a really good sire of the future. The way the cattle perform, in this somewhat harsh environment, is a credit to Simon and his stockman. Simon is obviously very positive and knowledgeable about recording schemes and in only keeping the

best heifers for himself. He markets his surplus stock mainly in local markets, which is doing an excellent advertising job for the breed in the North West. He attends many shows which also does an excellent job in promoting the breed. The other large herds, the *Ladlers* herd of James Rea, and the *Pochin* herd of John Pochin, both had some excellent animals, with differing management systems. James's running on conservation grazing in Hatfield Forest, and the *Pochin* herd on beautiful park land. These two management systems; combined with differing outlets for the steers, made for a fascinating comparison, both having merits. However as I said earlier I couldn't get Rosemary's cattle out of my mind.

In the Small Herds category I found the competition even harder as all four herds comprised of very good quality cattle, managed on completely differing systems but all having their attributes. Craig Smith's *St Mary's* herd, fairly new to the breed and with the future in mind, selling to local retailers and looking to expand, breeding very good animals and very positive about the breed, Terry & Helen Mancey's *Morton* herd, grazing land on the edge of the Peak District, and *Trentham Gardens* with some first class cattle doing a very good job. They also do a good promotional job for the breed by showing locally. Rebecca Charley's *Ruscombe* herd, comprised of good strong cows with first class udders, selling the beef locally in boxes and being really enthusiastic about the breed. However my winning herd for the Small Herds is the *Hinwick* herd of Virginia & Richard Dawes. This herd comprised of large big framed cows, once more with good udders, and suckling excellent calves. The herd were grazing on first class pasture. There were some excellent steers ready for slaughter, they also carry out some showing which assists in the promotion of the breed. These things combined just about gave them the nod over the second placed *Ruscombe* herd.

As I have already stated it was an honour to judge the competition and thank you to the Society for asking me. The Society offered to pay my expenses however Mr. Paul Rackham has kindly agreed to sponsor my expenses so thank you to him as well.



Above: *Rosemary Philipson-Stow* winner of the *Large Herds and Over All Herds* competition

Below: Some of the winning *Underhills* herd



ROSEMARKIE REPORT

Calving went reasonably well this year with 1 dry cow and 1 lost a calf. Those two have been culled to the Freezing works. On the up side we had a set of twin bulls. Amazingly the heifer, H10, recognized early on that she had two calves and proceeded to be an excellent mother. Other sets we've had over the years we've had to bring the cow in and remind her she definitely had two calves and was expected to rear both. This set was by our show bull Ash (J4) and it is looking like one of them may be "double muscled", something I do not want overtly in the herd. We have not had this appear before and none of his other calves are showing this trait so will be interesting to see how the calf develops over time.

The other group of cows went to *Dawn Mist* Zeus Montana. Their calves are all looking good.

We took Ash to the Wairarapa show in late October. He was the only senior bull (he's just turned two) and although he packs plenty of muscle he was perhaps not as tall as he could be (no show feeding here!). He looked nice and didn't embarrass us – that's all we ask really. He is out with half the cows again this year and the other half are out with R. Emir Alec by *Dawn Mist* Emirate. We've mated the two yearling heifers we're keeping and opted to sell 3 others that we had thought we might have kept.

We wish you all the best for a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year. If you're travelling through our area we'd love to see you, always a spare bed here.

Helen & Warwick

Photos Back Cover:

Top: Family group of Red Polls at new breeder, Neil Wilton's, *Stoneyacres* stud. Bull (centre) is Dawn Mist Zeus Montana

Bottom: *Young "Tanamerah" bulls and caprine friend at Jill Bockman and John Rhea's, "Culgoa", Deepwater*

