

The Dairy Shorthorn

The winter 2016 newsletter of the Dairy Shorthorn Association of
Australia - www.dairyshorthorn.com.au

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Tasmania welcomes the AGM

Members of the Dairy Shorthorn Council, president Karen Doggett and Malcolm and Ian Douglas, flew to Tasmania on the Friday before the meeting to prepare for the weekend which included not only the Annual General Meeting, but farm visits to meet up with Tasmanian members on their properties and admire their Dairy Shorthorn herds. Tasmanian councillor Tony Parker was the navigator and so it was into the people mover and off to Henrietta to inspect

females for foundation registration for the Harrison family. A meal at the Mt Gnomon farm was planned but did not eventuate so the group called it a day.

Next day, Saturday, saw the AGM at the Devonport showgrounds where the poultry club rooms were kindly lent for the occasion. It was one of the best attended AGMs for some time with eight Tasmanians and three Victorians present. Perhaps they heard that Mrs Parker was catering for the event – whichever way, that meant that the team was well fortified for their visit after the AGM to the Ellis's farm. That proved to be quite an adventure because the Dairy Shorthorn cattle had been running with a mixed herd in a 10,000 acre blue gum plantation. Thankfully Grant and Sandy had mustered the cattle the day before the visitors came to see them. Have a look at the photo on the front page which shows just a few of those Dairy Shorthorns. Saturday evening saw a dinner get-together of Victorians and Tasmanians including Shorthorn breeders and long-time friends of the association, Alec and Barbara Loane.

Cattle feeding on the mainland meant Karen had to return home on Sunday morning which left Ian and Malcolm to take the people mover to Michael and Carol Lefevre's property about three hours from Devonport before flying home from Launceston on Sunday evening.

Karen (who took the photo below so isn't in it!) passes on her thanks to everyone who helped organise the weekend and to the Dairy Shorthorn breeders who opened their doors to visitors.



Now, over to Uruguay...

Dairy Shorthorn Association council member, senior vice- president Malcolm Douglas, was the sole Australian representative at the 15th World Shorthorn Conference held in Uruguay.



Above: Gauchos work cattle and Malcolm Douglas tries a mode of transport quite foreign to him.

It was a long way to go to get there, but well worth the travelling time, Malcolm reports.

The first day in Montevideo was a free day for the delegates so Malcolm and others took a bus trip around the city which is one of contrasts between the modern and very old. The country is home to three million people, half of whom live in the capital city.

The first evening saw the delegates driven to a reception at the British Ambassador's residence. The next day the first farm visit was held one hour's travel out of the city where the main activity was cropping which they refer to as 'agriculture'. The farm runs a herd of 70 breeders. All stockwork on the farms is done on horseback by gauchos – highly competent horsemen.

The next farm visited that day was a large commercial operation of 1600 hectares running 1500 head of breeders. Malcolm reports that he was impressed by the temperament of the cattle which were brought out of a corral and walked past the delegates by gauchos. Lunch was a traditional barbecue Uruguay-style - beef cooked slowly for six hours. Malcolm described this as 'beautiful'

which was just as well because it was the style of food served to the delegates at nearly every farm visit! Next stop was Colombia where there were no farm visits but the UNESCO heritage listed Spanish and Portuguese quarters of old really impressed.

Back in Uruguay and Malcolm reported that the stocking rate for the country is roughly eight head per hectare but at one farm visited the rate was two head per hectare. "The spoil was not of the best type hence cattle lacked size and condition," Malcolm said. Another point to note is that the productive life of cows is three calves. The females are generally calved down at three years but they break down in the mouth. "But they don't sell them immediately. Instead they try to fatten them before going to slaughter," Malcolm said. The next property visited was such that the bus couldn't reach the house so everybody was taken in by pick-up truck. Malcolm noted that the farm was on poor soil and the cattle in poor condition but doing a good job off calves. Their end value is around U.S. \$800.

Because of poor weather the next herd of cattle were brought to the saleyards for inspection."Saleyards is a loose description," Malcolm said. "Certainly not what we are used to."

An overnight trip to Rivera was interesting because of the fact that on one side of the street you are in Uruguay and on the other, Brazil. A 60 kilometre trip to a stud took two hours over very poor roads – in fact Malcolm described them as "shocking". However, delegates were rewarded at the end of the rough drive by the sight of a herd of top quality Shorthorns which the farm ran along with Romney Marsh sheep. Other studs visited used this stud's Santa Maria stud Shorthorn sires, Malcolm noted. Genetics from around the world were used to breed the bulls on their home property.

Uruguay, Malcolm said, is basically a flat country with no mountains and rolling country with an average rainfall of 48-50 inches and very windy.

Other visits to studs and a judging competition entertained delegates in following days then came the first day of the conference itself. The Beef Shorthorn report was presented in the morning session followed by the Dairy Shorthorn report in the afternoon (Malcolm's report follows soon....so keep reading!) Frank Milnes of the UK association was retiring and so came the end of his many years as World Council Secretary. A presentation and a standing ovation marked the delegates' sincere thanks for all his work.

The last day of the conference also had an Aussie input. A video was presented as an invitation to delegates, and hopefully many others, to come to Australia in 2019 for the next Shorthorn World Conference.

Now, here's Malcolm's report to the conference in Uruguay...

On behalf of the President, council and members of the Dairy Shorthorn Association of Australia, it is with much pleasure that I give this report to the 15th world conference.

Three years have elapsed since we all gathered in New Zealand for the 14th conference – the world moves on and so does the Dairy Shorthorn Association of Australia.

The popularity of the breed continues to grow albeit at a moderate pace. In the last 12 months two prominent stud herds were dispersed at public auction. Both had galleries in excess of 200 people which shows the increased interest in our breed. Total clearances were achieved with cattle being sold to commercial buyers as well as to stud herds. In respect to the latter of the two sales, the Tuerong herd achieved a top price of \$6000 and created new Australian record. Average price for the auction was \$2630. Cattle semen sold to most parts of Australia.

Although no breed likes to lose members and herds, it is pleasing to see that our association has in excess of 10 new members joining our ranks. Our members in the dairy sector are experiencing poor returns with prices on the world market for dairy product being depressed. Coupled with poor climatic conditions in Australia, some areas are having a prolonged dry spell making it hard to produce milk. Areas that have irrigation available to them to grow pasture are also experiencing difficulties with the price of temporary water being too expensive to buy thus also affecting production. With forecasts for the new milk season, prices are expected to be lower still.

On the beef side of things, as will be reported by our sister Australian society, the prices being received are at an all time high. Some producers are taking advantage of this by disposing of many cull females and bulls and replacing them with new purchases thus improving their herds with new genetics and thus there is a stronger demand from stud stock producers for top quality females and bulls.

The Dairy Shorthorn Association of Australia continues to receive benefits from their relationship with the World Shorthorn Council. In this regard, and I don't know if all delegates are aware, but Mr Frank Milnes is set to retire. This will be Frank's last conference. Our association would like to thank Frank very much for his many years of tireless work and dedication. Our breed has been

involved with the last two conferences, this one is our third and we thank Frank for his efforts in helping our association come back into the fold of the World Shorthorn family. I personally have been lucky to get to know Frank well and have been able to seek his advice and wisdom in regards to our breed's benefits...

In closing this report, we are pleased to tell the rest of the Shorthorn family that as a breed we are going along pretty well! If we could get better prices for our dairy products and if the weather becomes more favourable, confidence will increase and investment in our breed will follow.

In ending, I would like to mention that the 17th World Conference will be held in Australia in 2019. I would love to see as many as possible come to be given an Aussie welcome to what I think is a great country!

I won't say goodbye but "See you later".

Sale of the year



Tuerong Dairy Shorthorns held its second stage dispersal sale, pictured above, at Shepparton (Vic) late July.

Last year Ian and Malcolm Douglas dispersed their milking herd which sold to excellent prices and this year the results did not disappoint. They were joined at the

sale by guest vendors Norma and Lorna Fry who were dispersing their Turramurra herd after 58 years and Karen Doggett who sold a number of you stock from her Dryden's Run herd.

Top price for the Tuerong herd was \$5400 for spring calving heifer Tuerong EP Princess 6 with bloodlines from Lubra Bend Supreme 27 and Twells Heaather King 15 (UK). She was bought by Dairy Shorthorn Association member Sophie Tomkins from Gollan in NSW. She also purchased the top priced bull, Tuerong Regal Barry 2 for \$3250. He is by Turramurra Lord Barrington 2 out of Tuerong Lady Melba 19. All up Tuerong's average for 29 head was \$2575.

Norm and Lorna Fry's cattle were snapped up by buyers keen to purchase animals with distinguished pedigrees from many years of breeding first as a milking herd and then from the mid 1970s, as a beef herd. The Frys have had enormous input into the Dairy Shorthorn breed both through their cattle at home and in the show ring where Norm has been a judge and a highly successful exhibitor attending 40 Royal Melbourne Shows where broad sashes were regularly awarded.

Norm now joins a highly select group of people. At the July sale, he was made a life member of the Dairy Shorthorn Association, an honour afforded to only two other people.

He is pictured below with the association's senior vice-president Malcolm Douglas and president Karen Doggett.



The three vendors at the sale saw their cattle sold to herds across a wide area of Australia to both milking and beef herds. There was also a demand for semen straws with top price going for straws from the long-ago UK bull, Maxton Enterprise. They fetched \$200 each and were purchased by member Philip Cooper of Orange, NSW.

New secretary

As most members will be aware, the Dairy Shorthorn Association has a new secretary. She is Wendy McInnerney. Her contact details are in part on the front page of this newsletter. The association address is now PO Box 1020, Brighton, Queensland 4017. Phone Wendy on 0407 659 501. Leave a message if not answered and she will return your call.

And the executive is...

At the recent meeting (back in Victoria) of the Dairy Shorthorn Association, Karen Doggett was re-elected as president, Malcolm Douglas as senior vice-president and Ian Douglas as junior vice-president.

City cow meets country boy

The Tuerong bred cow who resides in the city at the Collingwood Children's Farm is enjoying life in the wide open spaces right now and the company of a gorgeous fella – sounds like a reality tele show, doesn't it? The fact is, the cow, known to her Collingwood pals as Daphne, needs to calve so she can continue being milked (a popular demonstration at the farm) so is running with Tristan Hornbuckle's favourite bull, Scatterbrook Thunder Run, at Timmering in northern Victoria. The clatter of little hooves will no doubt be a delight to city folk early next year.

Letter for 2016

The letter for all those ears this year of F – will that herald a mass of Fionas, Flossies, Fredericks and Ferdinands?