

AUSTRALIAN LOWLINE CATTLE ASSOCIATION Inc.

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NEWSLETTER NO 2

Dear Fellow Member,

Despite my best efforts I have fallen behind with my schedule, but then, a lot has happened to cause this apparent tardiness.

When we first started out in Armidale, almost 5 years ago, even the most basic of evolutions used to take us all day, but now, then though we have so much more still to learn, those same evolutions take but a few minutes. Sure, there are those brief periods such as drenching and vaccinating that still take up a whole day, and at calving there are long days ensuring that the Dams and Offspring are OK, but in the main our days are not overstressed. But that is all about to change!

I have to confess that the level of my intelligence doesn't stretch much beyond that required to solve the Herald Cryptic 5 days out of 6, (The Australian is too difficult), nonetheless my brain does require activation from time to time.

Erica read an advertisement in the Herald a few weeks ago calling for applications for the position of Co-ordinator for the Australian Rural Education Centre, to be established at Mudgee, and she convinced me that the job statement seemed to suit my experience over the last 45 years or so. Being an obedient fellow (sometimes), I submitted a CV and as luck would have it, I was accepted.

I was supposed to start a week or so ago, but I managed to convince them that my appearance at Seymour Alternative Farming Expo 19 thru 20 Feb, was vitally important, and as a result I now start, in Mudgee, 25 Feb. For those of you who would appreciate the distance between Armidale and Seymour and the distance Mudgee to Armidale, plus preparations for the sale of a house and a removal, I trust you would also understand how my spare time is taken up.

AREC is seen as a natural extension of the Mudgee Small Farm Field Days, which has always been orientated toward education and aims to fill the needs of those people who wish to learn about a whole range of farming skills but who, for obvious reasons cannot attend at full time long courses.

We don't as yet have a forwarding address except that I can be contacted through the office of the MSFFD, PO Box 12, Mudgee 2550, Tel 063 723615 after 25 Feb. Thankfully, our secretary, Des Owens, is staying put in Canberra as the main contact point for the Association and his address is shown on this letterhead.

So much for the Pullars and their problems.

FUTURE OF THE TRANGIE HERD

Most of you will be aware that, after what was supposed to be the penultimate sale of LOWLINE cattle from Trangie, the Executive director of the Angus Society and a Consultant for the same Association wrote to the Minister for Agriculture, NSW, complaining about the sales. I have not been privy to their letter, written on Angus Society letterhead, but it seems from my grapevine sources that they were concerned that our bulls were going to be mixed up with their herds and ruin the future breeding potential, reputation and marketing potential of the Angus herds of Australia.

I guess that I have always had the feeling that this might occur, which is why I have always maintained a fairly low profile and for the same reason, we have included several ethics clauses within our constitution to hopefully appease the Angus Society Executive and their members.

The Department, in response to that complaint, made the decision that no more cattle were to be sold to the general public, even though a very reliable source informed me that the decision was by no means unanimous.

In the meantime, some of us had been quietly working behind the scenes talking with individual members of the Angus Society Council to try to gain a feel for their thoughts on this matter. I know that Bryan Ward spoke to a few and more recently Des Owens and I have spoken with another and the end result of those discussions has been that whilst they cannot understand why we should want small cattle, when as they say, everyone else is striving for bulk, they do not object to what we are doing.

What were we to do? Most of our committee felt that if we were to rock the boat too much, then even though the Society council might now be on side, they would regroup and support the efforts of their Executive Director and Consultant, to the detriment of our sincere aims and worse, they might try to obstruct our efforts to be accepted by the Royal Agricultural Society.

At the same time, the good Dr Peter Parnell was preparing Registration certificates for all our foundation Cattle and it was my feeling that if the authors of the Angus letter were to get wind of that, they might well have interfered there too.

All the Certificates have now been completed and by now some of you will have received your original copies and the rest will get theirs very soon.

Since then, a couple more items of interest have come to notice. The first is that Don Burke, at his initiative, but also on our behalf wrote to the Minister seeking a reversal of the Departmental decision, but the reply was negative. The second is that Don Burke again, on our behalf, has made approaches to the Royal Agricultural Society, and whilst it would be foolish of any of us to start cheering now, it seems that we have been received very well.

I feel certain that if you read between the lines, you will realise that this has been a most complex issue. I thought that when I retired from the Navy 11 years ago, because I could no longer stand the obstructionism of the bureaucracy, that would be the end of it, but I have now come to realise that no matter one's walk of life, these circumstances are inevitable. One can only therefore hope that one has the experience and guile to play them at their own game, with skill, with an aim to win rather than lose.

I don't know whether or not I or we have coped with this issue the right way, but it does seem that so far, we haven't done much wrong and I for one, think that our Association has a very bright and long term future as an accepted breed.

Even though the Department has made its decision, there are now about 170 female Lowline (with pedigree data to support them) and about 13 bulls of separate parentage scattered between Melbourne and just north of Brisbane and they are here to stay and expand. Remember that MacArthur started with only a handful of Merinos and he succeeded. So will we.

I would add also, that I believe we have more and better blood lines than the Dexter breeders, which can only enhance our future.

HERD BOOK

For several reasons, most of which were explained in the opening paragraphs, I am also behind in my target dates for the Herd Book, but I do now have all the foundation registration certificates from the Department. Because I will be batching Mon to Fri at Mudgee for the short term and because the flat I have rented doesn't have TV I will be able to work through the collating of the herd lists, both male and female, fairly quickly.

When I started to put all the data into my computer database, I realised very quickly that the simpler one could make the format, the better and to that end I had worked out a system for computer identification and retrieval, which excluded actual names for each animal, even though I had, I must admit, named all bulls. (No chauvinism was intended)

Since then, some of you have convinced me that naming each animal is in fact important, particularly in identifying succession from generation to generation and I will now proceed in that direction with your co-operation.

For all animals born at Trangle or Glen Innes, names should be allocated referring to the Stud name of the original purchaser.

For example, the first bull that I purchased Trangle J222, has been allocated the name BRAMBLETYE ADMIRAL and females, BRAMBLETYE..... Descendants of these animals can be given names that to a reader of the Herd Book will facilitate determining the actual bloodline of that animal and help people to better choose males or females for future improvement of their own herds.

To that end, I must now please ask that if you have bought cattle from Trangle or Glen Innes (they must be covered by a registration certificate) that you now send to me as soon as convenient, the names that you propose for inclusion in the Herd Book. It may be obvious, but please also include the Departmental Certificate ear tag identification, just so I don't get totally confused.

I will be calling for the same data for all cattle born to foundation stock as soon as possible as outlined in the first Newsletter.

TATTOO PREFIXES

Tattoo prefixes called for in the first newsletter are shown as an annex to this newsletter. If yours doesn't appear it is because you haven't given it to me as yet.

STUD NAMES

Could I please ask that you let me know the name that you have chosen for your Stud so I can include that in the Herd Book database.

MEMBERSHIP

Since Newsletter No. 1, we welcome to the Association Phyl and Des Rodgers from Burra, NSW And Moira and Keith Smith from Tarago NSW. Both families have acquired two joined cows, two joined yearling heifers and two heifer calves. We wish them lots of enjoyment in our Association and may they be blessed with a 100% drop of Burra and Kelmol LOWLINE calves in 1993.

An updated membership list is attached.

CORRESPONDENCE FROM OTHER MEMBERS

Since the first Newsletter, I have head from quite a few of our members and I would like to thank all those who co-operated with my requests for data for the Herd Book and particularly to Don Burke who has done so much behind the scenes on our behalf.

I had a long letter from Jeanette Stebbins (Ardrossen, Vic) who had several ideas and suggestions. Jeanette and her husband Peter, have been very active in the Bendigo area and they were very happy to report the successful birth of 2 calves, sired by BRAMBLETYE COMMANDER.

Jeanette and her son, Christopher will be at Seymour with a cow and calf to share space with the Pullars with their 2 very small 14 month old heifers and Brambletye Bosun, a 21 month old bull.

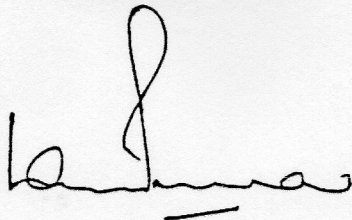
The Stebbins are keen to see the Association become involved in an education programme, particularly in the area of cattle judging and cattle selection. I certainly support their ideas and I hope that shortly after getting settled in at Mudgee, I can get the ball rolling. To that end, Sandy Yeates, who is a Beef Officer with NSW Agriculture, based in Mudgee and very familiar with our cattle, has agreed to assist. He has already produced a small booklet on Bull Selection, Conformation and Performance and as soon as I can, I will obtain a few copies for those who are interested.

Peter Stebbins, Elders Bendigo, works with various merchandising outlets and would be very willing to provide prices for such important items as halters, leads etc.

Jeanette included with her letter, a copy of "FARMLLET" a newsletter of the Small Farms Association of Australia and it makes for very interesting reading. The Association is clearly a growing one and is also biased toward education. In it, the point is made that there are now over 200,000 farmlets within Australia and while the recession continues and the number of fulltime farmers dwindles, this number is bound to grow. These people are our targets.

If you want information on how to join this Association, contact either Jeanette or me and we will gladly give you directions.

My best wishes to you all for a very prosperous 1993.



Ian Pullar
Armidale

16 February 1993

ANNEX TO NEWSLETTER No 2

TATTOO PREFIXES

Qld Atkinson
ACT Barnett
NSW Burke
Qld Darley
NSW EversonVic
Millott
ACT Owens
NSW Pullar
NSW Pringle
ACT Rodgers
ACT Smith
Vic Stebbins
NSW Tebbutt

SPV
TLS

DAR

EPM
MLS
ABF
CAS
BLS
KLS
ARD
PLS