

New Zealand

RED DEVON

Cattle Breeders Association



News Letter 🌸 April 2015
www.reddevoncattle.co.nz



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President's comments.

Hello everyone,

The weather has taken a very sudden turn into autumn. For most of us it has also meant some very welcome rain. To those of you who are still waiting I hope you get some soon. As you will see later in the newsletter we have been involved with Taratahi students. It has been a positive experience watching as our cattle have given these young people confidence. I will miss their hoof and hook competition in Feilding, as I will be in Rockhampton at the Beef Australia weeklong event. If you are in Feilding please go and support the students. I will be meeting up with Vic and Ally and their stud cattle in "Rocky", along with visiting two cattle properties. Another area of interest is the various genetic companies and to meet up with the ABRI team.

This year marks 175 years for red Devon cattle in New Zealand. This is quite an achievement for the breed. You all deserve a pat on the back for ensuring our wonderful breed remains relevant. The growing legislative restrictions New Zealand farmers are now working with mean our Red Devon cattle are a good fit. We need to make sure we have stock to meet the requirements, in particular our bulls, but more importantly we need to be able to prove it. The challenge is how can we prove it.

For the benefit of our breed we need people to performance record their cattle including the commercial cattle. Do you weigh your calves? As we noticed at the property visits in January there is a range of interpretations on what people mean by "low" birth weights. It may also mean being prepared to share your kill sheet results. We often talk about the Red Devon having a high carcass yield, we need current information to back it up. All of our information is quite a few years out of date.

I would encourage you to attend our AGM on 23rd May and the property visit on the Sunday morning.

Karen Schumacher

Council:

Karen Schumacher	ph 06-756 8064	maungawhiri@gmail.com
Donald Gates	Ph 06-323 3408	karakadevons@xtra.co.nz
Arthur Beazley	Ph 09-405 0690	tuppyj@xtra.co.nz
David Harrison	ph 06-322 1805	red_cattle@xtra.co.nz
Louise McConnell	Ph 07-867 7573	mcconnell@no8wireless.co.nz
Evan Oliver	Ph 06-376 7727	evanjo@xtra.co.nz

Secretary

Linda Rule

Ph: 06-323 4484 / fax: 06-323 3878
Mail: PO Box 503, Feilding.4740
e-mail: lindar@pbbnz.com

Front Cover: A Red Devon Bull



How time flies by when you're having fun, this year brings our 175th year of Red Devons in New Zealand. We will be celebrating this marvellous achievement at our AGM this year in Taupo.

If you have any old photos you would like to display the please get in touch with Kevin Fletcher so that he can assemble some sort of display. You may like to read about some of the past events in the history of the Red Devons in New Zealand, there is an interesting article by Wayne Aspin and others on the website ([Click Here](#)). Remember to keep our history alive by letting the [Web-Master](#) know if anything interesting has happened to you or your Devons, that you may like to share with the rest of the members.

Read-a-bull

StopPress; Well-done to Karen and Graeme on becoming Semi-Finalists in the 2015 Beef + Lamb New Zealand [Steak of Origin](#) competition.

Important Dates to Remember

31 st January	Calf entry sheets cut off
30 th April	Membership Subscriptions Invoiced
23 rd May	AGM
30 th June	ADL's sent out
30 th July	ADL's Returned no later than
10 th August	Calf Entries sent out
30 th September	Annual animals fees cows invoiced
31 st December	Balance Date; end of financial year
2nd of every month	Group Run Cut off for the performance recording reports

Remember you will be charged for the cattle which are recorded on your herd records as at 31st July. We cannot give credits as PBB charge us a rate based on the cattle on our register at this date. It is your responsibility to get your ADL forms back on time.

We encourage you to enter your calving records yourself through internet solutions.

Hoof and Hook competition May 2015

Last year we confirmed to work with the local Taratahi campus by allowing them to use some of our cattle with their students. Earlier this year the fun began. We had picked out 4 suitable steers for them to break in and train up for the Hoof and Hook competition. A lot of the students are from a non-agricultural background. It has been a delight to see how they have grown in confidence around the cattle. Red Devon of course with their wonderful temperament have been perfect to help them develop stock skills. There has been a steady flow of tutors on hand to support, teach, pick up the pieces and quietly coach their students. During this week I have spent some time over at our yards watching the progress. What a difference, the students were all busy, tying up "their" steers, feeding, grooming, cuddling, talking, growling and quietly teaching their team manners. The students arrive and it's a flurry of activity as they bustle around.



The steers, well you can almost see them giving a sigh, as they tolerate it all. They have been so calm, at times bossy as they do a dive for the feed buckets, and generally just put up with it all.

The challenge will be at the end of the competition when the cattle head off to the works. Although the students all know this, I think there will be some tears.

If you are going to the Beef Expo please go and support the Taratahi students.



Karen Schumacher

A move to Greener Pastures

What a saga it has been, having decided in December 2012 that the only way we could expand our herd was by moving. Land where we were on the Rangitaiki plains close to Whakatane town was only affordable to dairy farmers, hence our search moved into the Eastern Bay and East Cape areas.

We were so close twice that we actually gave up talking about it, because it was so on, off. But now we are up in the hills behind Matata. Around 40 hectares of ex dairy support unit, most of which is



effective. Growing excellent grass and lots of it, so herd expansion is desperately needed. Fortunately for us our vendors were happy for us to start moving our small amount of stock to site after unconditional, to the paddocks that were closed up. This was very important as autumn calving was due from 28 March onwards and settlement was 26. We like adventure! First calf arrived on the 31 March, so we were so lucky to get them over early, despite the daily commute to check on stock.



Tragedy struck on only our second day, with one of our foundation cows Woodlands Angela 44th slipping about 3 metres, but hitting a fence post breaking her neck. We found her just a few hours later, no scrabbling, it was clear she went instantly, a sad loss and also of her soon to arrive calf.

Our action plan now is to buy in Devons to work with our line and add diversification, expanding the herd with good lines to further our breeding plans. Meanwhile we have also got mainly Hereford/Friesian two year old heifers from the sale yard to produce calves. This is a cross we have found works very well with Devon bulls, producing good, large chunky beasts that are very popular with buyers. Shopping has nothing on waving that bidder's number at the auction!



Gayle & John Couch

Just a few words from Cannington in South Canterbury.

What a season we have had. 2014 was a wet winter proceeded by a cold spring, resulting in very little spring growth. Then from October onwards we have had a long hot extreme summer drought. So very little hay and balage has been made for the 2015 winter season. I have had to buy in 400 round bales of wheat straw, and have been feeding out since the 7 February. I sold calves in a special drought calf sale in Temuka on the 12 March. They all sold staying in the South Island. I have retained 40 Bull calves, 45 Heifer calves, and they have been on Kale and wheat straw since 18 March. I would normally start them on kale about June!!! I have noted how well the Red Devons have coped with this drought and proved what a hardy breed they are. We have had a small amount of rain in April, along with a few early frosts so grass growth is still a bit sparse. Let's hope winter will be a mild one? We have survived these sorts of seasons before in the past, just need to work our way through this one.



Cheers to all Inwardleigh Farm, South Canterbury

Feilding Round up

After a long hot summer we have finally had substantial rain in April, 156mm so far this month and it's still very warm giving good grass growth. Having kept rain records for a long time I looked back to see when we last had that much rain in one month and was very surprised to see that it was September 2010 where we had 286mm, at that time of year on Manawatu clay soils believe me that was way too much. The Manawatu average is 1000mm, in 2014 we had 755mm, 2013 was 866mm and 2012 845mm. A lot has been written lately on the use of Nitrogen after summer droughts, everybody's situation is different but personally on our heavier soils here I prefer to make use of baleage now while conditions are good underfoot and try to build grass for the months ahead when it becomes too wet. Our cows all calved in February bar one later one and I wasn't required to help any calve at all, a very pleasing result and the bull is out again to start next year's crop.



We saw some nice Tinopai heifers at Hughan Gordons place on our visit to Hawkes Bay Devon breeders earlier this year.

We recently visited the Tinopai Stud of Wayne and Trici Aspin on the Awhitu peninsula, having never been in that part of NZ before it was great to see the Devons thriving on very dry conditions also. We were looking to get different bloodlines in our cattle and there was a great selection of bulls to choose from. It was also great to stop off at Rotorua and catch up with family on our way home.

A two year bull was chosen Tinopai WT Q Red and amazingly he arrived back here in Feilding 24 hours after leaving, the transport was excellent and he walked off the truck very peacefully.

If you like gardening like me its a great time to plan ahead for next spring's plantings, renovating dry lawns, sowing green crops in vacant areas, and of course keeping on top of weeds after the rains, Autumn is my favourite time of the year .

Well enough from me, hope everybody's stock are doing what Devons' seem to do well,

Thrive on very little.

Regards from Don and Pearl Gates
Karaka Devons.

Tapuwae Report

From a cold wet spring to a dry hot summer with day time temperature in the mid 20 to 30 celsius we are only just starting to get some light showers on a more frequent basis. 64 kms up the road at Thelmara the showers have been more frequent for the last 2months and the country is a lot greener.

We were very pleased to host Devon Breeders Jennifer and Mark Sabo and their 2 boys from America. As they have used our 635 bull it was a highlight for them to see 635 still working at our stud. As a result of their trip we are now in the process of testing for collection 2 bulls, Tapuwae 912 a twin that goes back to Ban Ban Servant out of Tapuwae Lupin 505 a descendant of the cow Ban Ban Lupin that was imported to NZ in the late 1970's. This bull is producing solid meaty offspring with the heifers that are in milk having nice tidy udders. The second bull Tapuwae 143 is a young bull with plenty of muscle, was bred from a Woodlands Bull 511, a low birthweight Bull. Woodlands 511 has the two English bulls Brightly Diamond and Cutcomb Jaunty in his pedigree.

We plan to have these bulls passed for Australia, America, Canada and Brazil.

Arthur

Northland

Clive Baker	TE WAIRERE 1745	Te Wairere 237 JV Grant Road RD 3 Wellsford 0973	p(work): 09 423 8313 Tues - Fri mob: 027 476 0232 e: clivebaker@ihug.co.nz
Arthur Beazley	TAPUWAE 9009	1888 Hwy 10 RD 1 Mangonui 0494	p: 09 405 0690 e: Tapuwae.devons@gmail.com
Pierre Benson	PURIRI DOWNS 1766	60a Cowan Bay Rd RD 3 Warkworth 0983	p: 09 422 3785 e: p.s.benson@xtra.co.nz
David & Sue Dreadon	PENCARROW 0394	81 Simpkin Road RD 2 Ruawai 0592	p: 09 439 2154 e: dreadonsd@slingshot.co.nz
Tuppy Jones	THELMARA 2005	1888 Hwy 10 RD 1 Mangonui 0494	p: 09 405 0800 e: tuppyj@xtra.co.nz
Alf & Margaret Krissansen		RD 4 Parua Bay Whangarei 0174	p: 09 436 5827
Alisdair & Jean McLaughlan		RD 2 Whangarei 0172	p: 09 433 1170 fax: 09 433 1170 e: benmohrdevons@clear.net.nz
Eileen Porter		Towai RD 2 Hikurangi 0182	p: 09 433 4737

Auckland/Central North Island

Lee Askew	SHEMSHI 1774	165 Darwin Road Inner Kaiti Gisborne 4010	p: 06 868 7985 mob: 0275 916 015 e: lee.askew1@googlemail.com
Wayne & Patricia Aspin	TINPAI 1729	187 Hatton Road RD 4 Waiuku 2684	p: 09 235 1074 fax: 09 235 1074 e: aspin@ps.gen.nz
Helena Barrio	MONTE PAHU 1788	Monte Pahu Farm 2/294 Limeworks Loop Rd Te Pahu, Hamilton 1788	p: 07 825 2655 mob: 021 133 8041 e: helenabarrio@me.com
John & Margaret Bracken		156 Te Wera Road RD1 Matawai, Gisborne 4075	p: 06 862 4522 Fax: 06 862 4521 e: brackenenterprises@windowslive.com
John & Gayle Couch	DEVAND 1750	108 Te Rahu Rd RD 3 Whakatane 3193	p: 07 308 0571 fax: 07 308 0571 e: gayle_pre@msn.com
Mike & Jenny Donovan	PAWERA 1776	31 Lakemere Way RD 1 Taupo 3377	p: 07 378 4766 fax: 07 378 4766 mob: 0272 009 426 e: moojuice@Slingshot.co.nz
John East	EAST OF DEVON 2081	10 Adrine Lane RD 3 Ohauiti, Tauranga 3173	p: 07 544 6566 mob: 027 430 1218 e: jkeast@xtra.co.nz
Alan & Joy Hargreaves	KAIPAPA 2031	RD 1 Helensville 0874	p: 09 420 2063 fax: 09 420 2063 e: alanandjoy.harg@xtra.co.nz
Matthew & Rachael Hubbard	MT TE UKU 1790	PO Box 128 RAGLAN 3265	p: 07 825 5300 fax: 07 825 5150 mob: 021 258 6051 e: mtteukustation@gmail.com
Ron Mansfield	AWH 1780	PO Box 2674 Shortland St, Auckland 1140	p: 09 235 1680 fax: 09 368 4473 mob: 021 606 127 e: ron@ron.co.nz
Greg & Louise McConnell	HAU HIWI 1719	Hau Hiwi 294A North Road RD 6 Thames 3576	p: 07 867 7573 fax: 07 867 7573 e: mcconnell@no8wireless.co.nz
Colin & Julia Nash	WOODLANDS 2015	Woodlands Road RD 2 WAIHI 3682	p: 07 863 8833 fax: 07 863 6833 e: colinnash10@gmail.com
Brent & Sue Penman	OKERERU 1771	672 Glengarry Road RD 2 Napier 4182	p: 06 839 5936 e: morgan.horses@okereru.co.nz
Stewart & Joan Power	ISCA	Isca Farm RD 1 Whakatane 3191	p: 07 312 9569 e: isca@wave.co.nz
Lindsay Scott & Linda Jones	KAWEKA SOLO 1777	1731 Puketitiri Road RD 4 Napier 4184	p: 06 839 5911 e: jones.scott@xtra.co.nz
Arnica van der Wiele & Remco Rimmelink	RIU NGA KAKARIKI 1772	209 Maratoto Road RD 4 Paeroa 3674	p: 07 862 4545 fax: 07 867 7533 mob: 0272 555 514 e: arnica@vanderwiele.nl

Taranaki

Steve & Jill Dirksen	MANU 1742	35 Manu Road RD 24 Stratford 4394	p: 06 762 8803 e: sjrdirksen@gmail.com
Stephen & Helen Foreman	RUBYFIELDS 1754	953 Upland Rd RD 2 New Plymouth 4372	p: 06 758 1285 mob: 027 424 9504 e: info@rubyfields.co.nz
Bob & Karen Schumacher	MAUNGAWHIRI 1738	556 Upper Durham Road RD 8 Inglewood 4388	p: 06 756 8064 e: maungawhiri@farmside.co.nz

Taranaki

Dean & Barbara Shephard	DENBAR 1789	225A Kairau Road R D 3 New Plymouth 1789	p: 06 756 7316 mob: 027 756 7316 e: dbshep@primowireless.co.nz
Sally Sisson	BEACON HILL 1732	PO Box 44, Patea 4545	p: 06 273 8080 e: sallysisson@clear.net.nz
Malcolm & Bridget Sutherland	SUTHERLAND 1775	424 Upland Road RD 2 New Plymouth 4372	p: 06 755 2503 mob: 021 638 459 e: sutherlandmbnz@gmail.com
Roy, Pam & Angela Wright	WRIGHTWAY 1741	482 Maata Rd RD 18 Eltham 4398	p: 06 764 8481 e: rawright@infofen.net.nz

Lower North Island

Peter & Rose Davison		Kaituna RD 8 MASTERTON 5888	p: 06 377 5979 e: moos4u@xtra.co.nz
Julian Downs	RANNOCH 1767	2 Monty's Lane RD 1 Greytown 5794	p: 06 304 9893 e: julian.downs@xtra.co.nz
Graeme Dyke	TE MAEWA 1707	1065 Pori Rd RD 6 Pahiatua 4986	p: 06 376 3966 fax: 06 376 3967 e: tm.reddevons@gmail.com
Kevin Fletcher		PO Box 251 Rongotea 4865	p: 06 3248 263 e: lunanbay.devons@gmail.com
Warwick Gardner	HEADLEY DOWNS 1787	594 Mikimiki Road RD 1, MASTERTON 5881	p: 06 372 5897 e: mariongardner@xtra.co.nz
Don & Pearl Gates	KARAKA 1769	494 Makino Road RD 9 Feilding 4779	p: 06 323 3408 fax: 06 323 3408 e: karakadevons@xtra.co.nz
Heughan Gordon	MILLSTONE 2079	1796 Waimarama Road RD12 Havelock North 4294	P: 06 874 6195 fax: 06 874 6195 e: hcgordon@xtra.co.nz
Ruth & David Harrison	HARTLAND 1709	Brandon Hall Road RD 1 Bulls 4984	p: 06 322 1805 e: red_cattle@xtra.co.nz
Chris & Briona Hehir	MAGHERA 1747	447 Taikorea Rd RD 3 Palmerston North 4473	p: 06 329 7710 e: hehir@inspire.net.nz
Leslie Kellick		Tokorangi Farm RD 7 WANGANUI 4577	p: 06 342 2823 fax: 06 342 2823 e: l.kellick@ruralinzone.net
Ken & Pru McDowall	ROKOKAWA	7 Holdsworth Drive Otamatea Wanganui 4500	p: 06 347 7860 fax: 06 347 7860 e: rotokawa.dev@xtra.co.nz
Brendan McQuade	TAUHARA 1782	75 Tauhara Road RD 9 Hastings 4112	p: 06 874 3948 mob: 021 430 202 e: brendanmcquade@hotmail.co.nz
Evan & Joanne Oliver	MAGNUM 1763	357 Millers Road RD 2 Pahiatua 4982	p: 06 376 7727 fax: 06 376 7727 e: evanjo@xtra.co.nz
Micheal Simons & Karen Patterson	SPRINGBROOK 1783	1047 Blue Mountains Road RD 1 UPPER HUTT 5371	p: 04 528 8272 mob: 021 79 79 68 e: karencpatterson@gmail.com
Wills, Don & Jeanette	WILLSNET 1786	PO Box 174. Wellington 6140	mob: Don 021 914 631 mob: Jeanette 021 025 191 88 e: don.wills@aecom.com

South Island

Ross Flowerday	TOBAIRLEE 1760	RD 3 Blenheim 7273	p: 03 578 0707 fax: 03 578 0708 e: vit.flowerday@xtra.co.nz
Harvey & Virginia Hutchison	OAK TREE 1779	89 Browns Rd Middlemarch, 9597, Otago	p: 03 464 3133 fax: 03 464 3133 e: domino.hutchison@xtra.co.nz
Sean & Melinda Leslie	FLAX GULLY 1700	Mt Ross RD 3 Middlemarch 9598	p: 03 464 3214 mob: 0275 658 233 e: sean_melinda@hotmail.com
McLennan Geoffrey & Michaela Mullen, &	1784	89 Lee Canal Road RD 1 Outam. Otago 9073	p: 03 486 2270 fax: 03 486 2521 mob: 027 4816 826 e: waterside@farmside.co.nz
John Squire & Sandra Lowrey		RD 14 Cave 7984	p: 03 614 3739 mob: 0274 355 200 e: johnsandra@farmside.co.nz
Richard & Chrisy Wright		118 Lochheads Rd RD 1 Ashburton 7771	p: 03 303 9004 fax: 03 303 9006 e: tamarfarm@xtra.co.nz

Overseas Members

Craig Bloomfield		9 Cumberland Street, East Maitland, NSW, Australia. 2327	p: 0061 2493 38338 e: c.j.bloomfield@bigpond.com.au
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