

Breeders Visit

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Australia and New Zealand



This set of Angus bulls was on display at Hazeldean. The sheep stud at Hazeldean was founded in 1865 by James Litchfield, great-grandfather of present owner-manager James Litchfield. Registered Angus were added in 1952, and Hazeldean today has one of Australia's outstanding production-tested herds.

Cruising Sydney harbor are Myron Woolever (left), American Angus Assn. president from Unionville, Mo., and Jess and Gayle Bontecou from Millbrook, N.Y.



The ease of raising livestock in New Zealand and the beauty and lushness of this fairy-tale island country contrasted sharply for Angus visitors with the vastness of Australia, its fascinating animal life and sometimes harsh beauty of an island continent the size of the U.S. but with only 14 million people.

Some 60 U.S. Angus breeders toured a corner of Australia for 11 days in March and attended the National Angus Show, the Suzuki Classic, before flying to New Zealand March 15 to join another 28 U.S. Angus enthusiasts in Auckland for a 2-week tour that concluded with the World Angus Forum in Christchurch, New Zealand, March 24-28.

Impossible Journey

Seeing Australia in 11 days is as impossible as seeing the United States in that amount of time. The U.S. Angus breeders didn't try. After landing in Sydney, the group slowly worked their way southwestward to Melbourne, a beautiful cosmopolitan city of some 2.6 million people on Port Phillip Bay. In between were sandwiched Angus herd visits and sightseeing in New South Wales and Victoria, Australia's two most populous states and the home of a great number of its beef cattle.

A highlight of the tour was a visit to Hazeldean Angus and Merino sheep studs, established in 1865 and still operated by the Litchfield family. The state (ranch) is located on a treeless plain some 3,000 ft. in elevation near Cooma. Sheep and Angus cattle, both registered and commercial, are run at Hazeldean, and performance records both on the cattle and sheep have played a major part in the breeding and improvement of the herds, according to general manager James F. Litchfield.

Also at Hazeldean, U.S. visitors were thrilled by their only opportunity to see a "mob" of wild Kangaroo that live in the wooded brushy area not far from the Hazeldean headquarters.

After a tour of Dick Johnson's Brookfield Park Angus Stud near Cooma, the tour went through the Snowy Range mountains to Albury and Wodonga, twin towns set on each side of the Murray River in the rich beautiful Murray River Valley. Wodonga is the home of the Suzuki Classic, Australia's national Angus show and sale.

for World Forum and Tour

The day before the show, the group visited Victoree Stud at Benally and sat in on the beginning of its annual sale, then made a stop at one of the outstanding and historic wineries in the area. Victoree is an excellent registered Angus operation with a performance records program patterned after that of Wye Plantation.

The Classic

The Suzuki Beef Classic featured some 82 bulls and females. Judge of the "led" classes was Horacio Gutierrez, president of the Argentina Angus Society.

The grand champion bull was Te Mania Poundmaker X10, shown by Andrew Gubbins of Te Mania Stud at Barangaroo West, Vic. The bull sold for a record \$28,000 Australian (\$1 Australian equals \$1.18 U.S.). Te Mania also had the grand champion female, Te Mania Lowen W 47, that sold for \$4,759 (Australian). The owners of Te Mania recently purchased a bull from the herd owned by George E. Block, M.D., Yorkville, Ill.

From Wodonga, the tour continued to Melbourne—which included visits to the Healsville Wildlife Sanctuary and an opportunity to see a duckbilled platypus and take close-up pictures of Koala bears—before continuing on to the Lubra Bend Angus Stud. The following day, after a tour of Melbourne—the group departed for New Zealand, the primary tour destination.

Farming is king in New Zealand, providing 75% of New Zealand's total exports. During the tour, the U.S. congress was debating whether or not to change the import rules for New Zealand casine, a milk-derived product used in the manufacture of adhesives, paint and other products. Most Americans were not even aware of the congressional debates, but it was big news in New Zealand.

There are some 64 million sheep, including more than 46 million breeding ewes, in New Zealand and 5 million head of beef cattle, including 1.8 million cows and breeding-age heifers. There are more than 20 sheep for every person, the highest sheep-to-people ratio anywhere in the world. Sheep and cattle are run together. Until around 1960, cattle were more or less a by-product of the sheep industry. They mowed (ate) the tall tough grass the sheep wouldn't consume, which helped promote

growth of new tender grass for the sheep. Only when world prices for beef began to climb did cattle raising become a profitable business on its own. New Zealand exports two-thirds of the beef it raises, 85% to North America. There is virtually no market

for cull cows (dairy or beef) in the country. Most are boned, frozen and shipped to the United States and Canada for hamburger and manufactured beef.

Freezing Beef

Freezing beef for shipment in New Zealand is so common that their slaughter plants are known as "freezing works." Because of the distance to markets, meat exports from New Zealand were nearly impossible until the first refrigerated ship was put into service to Great Britain in the 1890s.

All cattle and sheep, even dairy cows, are raised on grass alone. They receive almost no supplemental feed other than hay. Dairy cattle receive some silage in the South Island, where frost stops the growing season for a few months of the year. New Zealand "prime beef" is marketed at about two years of age, and because it is mostly Angus, it is fairly well marbled. The taste, however, is different from our grain-fed beef. To the American palate, it is not so desirable. There is some indication that the New Zealanders look at it this way, too. Beef is not the favorite meat there; that honor goes to mutton, which generally comes from an



This Maori guide explains her people's traditions to U.S. visitors in Rotorura, New Zealand.

Dick Johnston (left), owner of Brookfield Park Angus Stud at Cooma, Australia, chats with Henry Gardiner of Ashland, Kan.



older animal than the lamb we eat in this country and has more flavor. When people eat out, most tend to prefer seafood to steak or mutton.

The best New Zealand Angus are large even by American standards, although without our extremes. Breeders have been increasing the size of their cattle the last few years in response to market demand and with some push from the importation of European exotics. New Zealand Angus, even the large ones, are short-legged, big-bodied and many are heavy-fronted. But they are obviously efficient. At bull test stations, the best bulls gain 2.5-3 lb. a day on pasture alone.

Maori

From Auckland, the group of 86 headed

for the country and a tour of both the North and South Islands. Before leaving Auckland, they made a 2-hour stop at the War Memorial Museum, which contains the best display of Maori artifacts and culture anywhere in the world. The Americans left with a better understanding of the history of the original New Zealand settlers, a delightful people with whom we had considerable contact in the next few days.

The first day included stops at the studs of Clive Williams at Tirau and Rod McGregor at Putaruru, then on to Rotorua, the thermal center of New Zealand and one of the centers of Maori culture. In addition to a tour of the area and the Maori cultural center, there was a visit to the herd of Dennis Patullo. Patullo runs a stud sheep and

Angus operation on land the government cleared and planted to grass some 20 years ago, then made available for purchase to qualified young farmers. The first of this reclaimed land was offered to New Zealand's World War II veterans, Patullo said, and he was one of the first non-veterans to be included in the program. Much of New Zealand's rough country and the roads into this area have been developed since the second World War.

Dennis Patullo is a progressive young stockman who depends heavily on performance records to help select and breed both cattle and sheep. He also has the first two embryo transplant calves born in New Zealand. The rainfall on his farm totals 60 inches a year, "well spaced," which means animals stay outside and graze year around. The major expense each year, as it is throughout New Zealand, is top-dressing the pastures with about 300 lb. of super phosphate per acre. Super phosphate this year costs about \$180 per cwt. before application by airplane or helicopter. Nitrogen is very expensive and seldom used. Nitrogen needs of the pastures are supplied by white clovers grown in combination with ryegrass.

World Secretariat Meets

Establishment of an International Angus Youth Exchange Program was approved by members of the World Aberdeen-Angus Secretariat at its meeting March 26 in Christchurch, New Zealand.

The meeting of 29 delegates and official observers from Argentina, Australia, Canada, Denmark, Ireland, South Africa, Great Britain, the United States, New Zealand and Zimbabwe met in Christchurch's beautiful Town Hall Center in conjunction with the Fourth World Angus Forum. Several international topics were discussed, and the group voted to hold the Fifth World Angus Forum in 1985 in Edmonton, Alta., July 17-20.

Representing the American Angus Assn. were delegates Myron Woolever and Henry Gardiner. Keith Evans, director of communications and public relations, was the official observer.

The Angus youth exchange program will establish procedures to allow qualified young people from one country to visit and work on farms and ranches of the country of their choosing for up to three months. They might visit only a single ranch or several operations in the host country during this time. Briefly, the program will work like this:

1. The Angus association in the youngster's home country must recommend him as qualified to participate.
2. The host association will place the youngster in a good home, where he will have the opportunity to learn, travel and, of course, work with Angus cattle.
3. The stay in the host country will be for no more than three months total and usually will include visits to more than one Angus herd.
4. The host Angus breeder will provide board and lodging and in addition pay the youngster according to his ability.
5. Either the breeder or the youngster can request that the arrangement be terminated before the agreed-upon time and the student moved on to another herd if for any reason the arrangement doesn't work out.
6. The youngster will be responsible for all his travel and other expenses, not the host country.

Young Angus breeders from the United States who have an interest in working in a foreign country should contact Jerry Lipsey, director of junior activities for the American Angus Assn.

In other action, the official delegates voted to hold their next meeting in the United States in 1983 in conjunction with the American Angus centennial celebration in St. Joseph, Mo.

Alex Darling, president of the New Zealand Angus Assn., was elected chairman of the secretariat; and Stan Esam, secretary of the New Zealand Angus Assn., was elected secretary of the international organization. They will serve until 1983. The treasury of the secretariat will remain at the American Angus Assn., where it has been since the secretariat was organized in 1969.

The delegates issued a vote of thanks to the American Angus Assn. and to Lloyd Miller, retired executive secretary of the American Angus Assn., for formative work and support offered to the World Aberdeen-Angus Secretariat in its early years. Miller was secretary of the international organization from its founding to 1979. Dr. C.K. Allen served as secretary from 1979 to 1981.



Lloyd Albers (right), Clearwater, Fla., looks over the cattle records of Dennis Patullo at his farm near Reporoa, New Zealand. Patullo raises registered Angus plus Romney, Border Leicester, South Hampshire and border cross sheep.

Changing Landscape

North of Rotorua, in the Bay of Plenty area, the landscape is changing. What once was one of the top livestock-producing areas is being slowly converted to intensive farming. Small tracts of land on which kiwi fruit will grow are going for \$10,000 per acre, and many cattle producers are selling out and moving to other parts of the country.

An example is the herd of Lindsey Johnstone Sr. and Jr. The elder Johnstone planned to disperse his herd soon after the world forum. His herd of cows, the result of a lifetime of skilled breeding, was one of the best seen on the tour. Lindsey Johnstone Jr., who is very active in the Angus business, has sold his farm in the area and moved his operation inland. This type of move-

ment helps account for the fact that it was no longer possible to purchase land in New Zealand and pay for it from the production of cattle and sheep. Inflation, with the lure of land as an inflation hedge to investors, is also playing a big part in land inflation—an all too familiar problem to U.S. farmers.

From the Bay of Plenty the group headed southeast to the Poverty Bay area, which actually has a richer farmland in many respects than the Bay of Plenty. The names of the bays and the areas around them came from Captain Cook. When Cook landed in Poverty Bay, short of supplies and water, unfriendly natives ran him off and injured some of his crew. Cook sailed on up the coast and found refuge and help from the natives in the Bay of Plenty, hence the descriptive names.

Corn Country

At Tekaraka, not far from Gisborne, the group visited the farm and Rangatira Angus Stud owned by J.C.L. Dowding & Sons. This area is the heart of the maize (corn) growing area in New Zealand. Corn is used mainly for feeding pork and poultry. Yields run 150 to more than 200 bu. per acre in the rich soil. But because of the cost of planting and harvesting equipment and the high cost of nitrogen, growers say they need a yield of almost 200 bu. per acre to make maize profitable.

Another of many interesting days, despite sometimes heavy rain, was the visit to the Kaharau Stud of C.S. Williams and to the oldest Angus breeding establishment in New Zealand, the Turihau Stud of Bill and Marcus Williams.

Kaharau Stud is the home of Massive of Kaharau, the bull imported into the U.S. by Dave Canning a number of years ago. Owner Collin Williams, a distant cousin to Bill Williams, has the best known herd in New Zealand. In the herd's last production sale, two Kaharau bulls by Diana's Massive of Kauere 32705 sold for a New Zealand record of \$70,000 each, and 20 sons have sold the past two years for an average of more than \$19,000. Based on what the tour guides say, Kaharau breeding is used in more New Zealand herds today than any other. Kaharau bulls are used also in Australia; and through Massive of Kaharau, the produce of Collin Williams' herd is also found in the U.S. and Canada.

Turihau Stud

The Turihau herd of Bill and Marcus Williams, managed by Peter Brown, is celebrating its 75th anniversary in 1981. They have bred some two-thirds of the sires used in their herd. Other sires have come from New Zealand, Scotland, England, Canada and the U.S. After inspecting many of the cattle and herd bulls, seeing a sheep shearing contest and a sheep dog exhibition, the group went to Bill and Elizabeth Williams' beautiful home for cocktails and another reception sponsored by local Angus breeders. The home and the farm headquarters, which have been in the Williams family for generations, overlook a



Fred Johnson (left), Summitville, Ohio, and Myron Woolever, Unionville, Mo., inspect a field of kiwi fruit that is grown on a wire trellis much like grapes. The fruit, which comes from the Orient, was originally called Chinese gooseberry.

beautiful beach on the Pacific Ocean (with not a resort hotel or tourist attraction in sight). This is characteristic of much of the coastline of New Zealand—long stretches of unspoiled beach and coastal area as far as the eye can see. Most of the coastal area appears to be free for the public to use and enjoy.

The following day provided an enjoyable introduction to the customs and hospitality of the Maori people. After brief visits to two Angus studs owned by David and Jim Hall and by W.T. Powdrell & Co., managed by Rowley Powdrell, the group was given a traditional Maori welcome at the Tikitimu Marae (Maori meeting house) in Wairoa on Hawkes Bay. Upon arrival at the Marae, Myron Woolever, as leader of the Angus group, accepted a symbolic challenge from the chief of the tribe, then the group was lead into the meeting house after touching noses (a traditional Maori greeting) with the welcoming committee. Following the traditional welcoming ceremony and a mostly unsuccessful attempt to teach the left-footed Americans a Maori dance, lunch was served in an adjoining social hall before the tour headed south for Napier on Hawkes Bay.

More Herd Visits

After an early-morning visit to Topdell Bros. at Petance just outside of Napier, the group visited Bruce Clayton's herd at Dannevirke and viewed a group of bulls from the Hawkes Bay Angus bull performance test. After lunch on Clayton's lawn, the tour traveled southeast through the livestock-raising town of Palmerston North and on to Wellington, the capitol of New Zealand on the southern tip of North Island.

New Zealand's South Island has a wider variety of terrain than its northern sister. The most unusual attractions are its mountains, called the Alps, which run almost the length of the island. The highest peak is Mt.

Cook at some 12,500 ft. After flying from Wellington to Invercargal, the group went by bus to Queenstown for two days of sight-seeing and rest, including side trips to Milford Sound, with its Scandinavian-type fiords and majestic scenery. Then it was back to Invercargal and a flight to Christchurch for the World Angus Forum.

Christchurch, a city of some 200,000 people, still reflects its English heritage. The river Avon flows through the center of the city and is bordered by parks almost the entire way. At other places, homes have back yards bordering the quiet, gently flowing river. The Church of England Cathedral dominates the city square.

Antartic Display

Many of the expeditions to explore the Antarctic left from Christchurch, and the municipal museum has an outstanding Antarctic display. Also in the museum is a fascinating display of New Zealand wildlife, including skeletons of the country's extinct flightless birds, the most unbelievable of which was the giant moa that stood 9 ft. tall. All that are alive today of these unique flightless birds are the Kiwi, the national emblem, and another lesser known small flightless bird. Both birds are nocturnal and hard for man to catch—and not much of a meal even when caught—so they survive, although their habitat is slowly being eroded.

Most of the Americans visited two additional Angus herds in the Christchurch area. These were Te Mania, owned by Frank Wilding, and the herd of Stan Chambers, which was included in a tour to the Gould and Guinness Research Station (where extensive work is being done on grass variety improvement) and a visit to Lincoln College.

The forum provided an opportunity to relax and unwind from the trip and to meet Angus breeders from all over the world be-



Chatting with Collin Williams (second from right), owner of Kaharau Angus, are (left to right) Bob Sitz, Harrison, Mont.; Bill Roche, Galt, Calif.; Duane Warden, Council Bluffs, Iowa; Williams; and Raymond Barton, Edmond, Okla. Despite the rain, the U.S. Angus breeders enjoyed their visit to one of the best-known Angus breeding establishments in the world.

fore flying to Auckland again and boarding jumbo jets for the 13-hour flight to Los Angeles.

World Forum

Calls for better use of performance records to speed Angus breed improvement world-wide, and the need for more modern forward-looking Angus associations to support Angus breeders and make Angus registration certificates more valuable highlighted the Fourth World Angus Forum March 24-28.

More than 600 Angus breeders from all over the world attended the event in Christchurch's modern Town Hall Center. Two presentations by R.R. Trotter, chairman of the Board of Directors of Fletcher-Challenge Corp., a livestock service industry, and Henry Gardiner, Angus breeder from Ashland, Kan., and a member of the American Angus Assn. Board of Directors, drew the most attention among Angus breeders and the New Zealand press.

Controversial and well informed, Trotter told the audience that the forum would be better off debating "what a breed society is for and what are its objectives." He criticized some of the world's breed organizations for being too conservative, too slow to change, too interested in preserving the status quo.

Controversial Recommendations

Recommendations by Trotter that caused the most comment, particularly among the more conservative breed organizations represented, were:

1, Insist that all registered cattle be per-

formance tested and all animals below herd average be culled. 2, Open the herd book on a controlled basis to allow use of commercial cattle and even to introduce blood from other breeds. 3, Encourage artificial insemination and embryo transplants to accelerate production of quality breeding stock.

Henry Gardiner, a leader in U.S. performance testing and past chairman of the Breed Improvement Committee, made the U.S. the envy of performance-conscious Angus breeders around the world as he outlined the performance programs sponsored by the American Angus Assn. and passed out copies of the association's Field Data Sire Evaluation Report and samples of the performance registration certificate.

Some of the more conservative cattle breeders attending the meeting were jarred slightly when Gardiner said, "I believe purebred cattle breeding has been a hit-and-miss vocation for the last 100 years. If a breeder used one good bull in his lifetime, that was about all he could expect. Now it will be possible (through A.I. and use of performance records) to use a good bull every time we select a new one . . . Just as a fine chef does not prepare a dish without knowing the amount of each ingredient, so will a master breeder of tomorrow use all the genetic information available to him to produce the superior animal."

Height

Gardiner also took a realistic look at cattle height. "Roy Wallace of Select Sires has observed in recent years that, after a bull

reaches a certain height, he will bring \$10,000 more for each inch he is tall," Gardiner said. "Unless we expect our cattle to start playing basketball, we in the U.S. will probably need to quit asking them to be taller and taller. The taller animal is not necessarily the heaviest animal. The taller animal will probably be an animal that will mature sexually at a later date, and selecting for this later-maturing animal could affect fertility. It is time we let the animal tell us how tall it should be after it achieves a certain goal of performance."

The world's Angus breeders were warned, however, that the use of all these modern tools changes the complexion of the business of breeding Angus cattle.

"If we switch to a new breeding concept where most of the sires we use are capable of rapid genetic change, we must use the utmost caution," Gardiner said. "The driver of an ox cart is all of a sudden at the controls of a supersonic jet. The breeder in the driver's seat of this genetic jet had better have his goals well thought out and have a system of early-warning signals available for use to avoid straying off course. Some of these alarm signals might well be a decrease in fertility, a decrease in maternal ability, a decrease in functional efficiency or a decrease in consumer acceptance."

It is easy to become despondent in the cattle business, said Gardiner. "However, I am very excited about the opportunity cattle breeding will offer in the future. I consider it an exciting challenge and a privilege to be an Angus cattle breeder." 