

# Simmentales

Targeted News from  
The Industry Heavyweights

Issue 29 ■ April 2016

## HI EVERYONE,

Hopefully you have survived the festive season and the summer has been kind to you all. With bull selling season rapidly approaching, there is a lot happening for Simmental in the near future, so here goes...

**TRU-TEST  
BEEF EXPO  
UPDATE  
13<sup>TH</sup>-17<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2016  
WWW.BEEFEXPO.CO.NZ**



Entries are in and once again Simmental has an exciting line up of cattle on offer. Finer details are on the above website, but here is a snapshot of some developments for this year's event.

Future Beef is being held over the weekend of the 14/15<sup>th</sup> May, cattle judging is on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> May, and sales are on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> May. Beef + Lamb NZ Genetics is planning a forum on Sunday afternoon, and there is a "Country Extravaganza" to be held in conjunction with Future Beef NZ on the Saturday night, which features Cam Scott. There is also the Farmlands Breed Banquet on the Monday evening, this is open to all breeds, and Greg Murphy is the speaker. B+LNZ Genetics are once again holding a Breeders Breakfast on Tuesday morning 7.30am-9.30am.

So a busy few days for all, it will be great catching up with as many of you as possible during this time.

**SIMMENTAL NZ AGM  
BREED DINNER  
TUESDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2016  
PBB BOARDROOM – 5.30PM**

This year our AGM is being held at PBB in conjunction with our Beef Expo prize giving. We will then move on to our breed dinner at Amayjen Restaurant, Fergusson Street, Feilding. The 3 course meal will cost \$55 per person and will be billed to your account.

### BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL.

Please RSVP by Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> May to Lindy Lawrence phone 06 323 0742 or email: [lindy@pbbnz.com](mailto:lindy@pbbnz.com).

This year Sarah Hammond is seeking re-election by rotation and due to the passing of Craig Martin there is a second vacancy. This is a great

opportunity to be involved with the future of our breed, so please give standing for council some serious consideration. Nomination forms have been mailed out separately.

## DNA PROFILING

A big thank you to our breeders, who are doing a fantastic job of collecting tail hairs for sample DNA. Our DNA bank is growing and this puts us in good stead should a genetic issue arise in our breed in the future. This is such a rapidly advancing branch of science, and the scope in this area expands every day. Some developments that may assist our members are that Allflex has now developed a tissue sampler which is available at a reasonable cost. This has the potential to make collecting samples much more straight forward, as you don't need to worry about having clean dry hair samples for this option. SNZ recommends wet tissue sampling for ease of management. The traditional method of collecting tail hairs is still accepted for now, but it is likely that tissue sampling will be encouraged in the near future. The service of getting this data stored on a SNP chip is has also become a whole lot more accessible. This is a useful development in terms of having our stored data compatible with future technological advancements.

## BULL SALE REMINDERS

Just a couple of housekeeping matters and reminders as you start getting organised for your annual bull sales.

- If you are including Beef Class information in your catalogue, you **MUST** state who did the Beef Classing and on what date.
- Secondly, in order for a bull to have its ownership transferred, a DNA sample **MUST** be provided to Simmental NZ. The sample needs to provide a DNA profile and Sire Verification.

## BLG PROJECT



This project is progressing well, and we are looking forward to watching the momentum gather as stock from the first cohort approach slaughter (steers) or breeding (heifers). It would be great to get more Simmental Bulls represented in this project, so if you have a possible candidate snoozing under a tree in your bull paddock at the moment, now would be a good time to collect some semen from him and get him involved. Basically, the bull needs to be fully performance recorded, and the scanning data **MUST** include IMF. If you are considering nominating a bull, talk to Daniel Absalom about the likelihood of him being selected. Alternatively,

please consider collecting semen from your new stud sire purchases while they are en route to your place.

## BEEF PROGENY TEST FIELD DAYS

The first field day series is based on weaning and provides an opportunity to see which bull performed across different traits and environments.

The B+LNZ Genetic Beef Progeny Test has now completed its second round of AI and has its first crop of calves at weaning age. With 2,200 cows inseminated in the recent mating, there is a wealth of information to come for farmers.

Each field day will focus on:

- Identifying sire groups by weaning weight (200 Day Weight trait)
- Body condition score demonstrations, data capture and comparisons to weight of calf weaned
- Potential for synchronisation and AI use on commercial farms
- New traits and opportunities from the trial

Progeny test calves will be on display.

Practical demonstrations included. No quads.

Lunch supplied (Silver Fern Farms EQ graded beef)

- Thursday 31 March : Whangara Farms, Gisborne
- Friday 8 April: Caberfeidh, Hakataramea Valley
- Friday 22 April : Tautane Station, Central Hawkes Bay
- Friday 6 May : Rangitaiki Station, Taupo
- Monday 9 May : Mendip Hills Station, North Canterbury

Registrations are essential, please call 03 477 6632 or email: [info@blnzgenetics.com](mailto:info@blnzgenetics.com).

## PHOTO COMPETITION

Thank you to those who have supplied entries for our photo competition to help Simmental NZ build a bank of photos for advertising and promotional purposes. Some quality entries so far, but we need more.... so we have decided to extend the deadline to Friday 6th May. Prize is 1 litre of Matrix triple combination drench.

We need photos of Simmental X cattle in a commercial environment. This is an open competition, so you may wish to let your clients know about this opportunity.

Email your entries to Lindy at: [lindy@pbbnz.com](mailto:lindy@pbbnz.com).

## JIM HOULBROOKE – OBITUARY

There was a great turn out of breeders at the funeral of one of our early members in January. Jim and his wife Gwen had the well-known Tokaweka Stud. Jim was living life to the fullest until the very end and thoroughly enjoyed being able to partake in the Northland Breed Tour just a few years ago. Some lovely words were spoken by Tony Thompson, Laurelle Crosby, and Jim Mackey, and I have included parts of their speeches so those who were unable to attend are able to appreciate them.

## OBITUARY

### JIM HOULBROOKE

WRITTEN BY LAURELLE CROSBY

**JAMES RONALD HOULBROOKE,  
LIFE MEMBER OF SIMMENTAL NEW ZEALAND.**

Jim to us here in Northland was the "Godfather" of Simmentals.

My first meeting with Jim was in 1987 when Ray and I started a Simmental stud. We were at the Paparoa Show with my daughter Sarah, who was competing on her horse Beau. In between the horse events I went to have a look at the cattle exhibits and I saw this most amazing bull being lead in the Grand Parade. I spoke to the gentleman leading this magnificent animal and it was Jim Houlbrooke. The bull was Tokaweka Rascallion, Supreme Champion of the Show. What a picture.

I asked about the breed and a little bit about the animal. At the time Ray and I were contemplating starting a cattle stud but hadn't agreed on what the breed would be, but after seeing Jim and Rascallion, it was definitely Simmental. Many people here today that have Simmental cattle will have had and still have this bloodline in their studs.

The week after the Show I phoned Jim to see if it was possible to purchase a cow. He was very accommodating, so Vanessa, Sarah and I went to visit Jim and Gwen at their Waipu Stud. We subsequently came away with a cow and a rising 2 year old heifer. The next thing Ray knew was a cattle truck arriving with two Simmental cows, which incidentally coincided with his Birthday. That was the beginning of a long relationship with Jim and Gwen. If you ever asked Jim for advice he was always willing and gave you his thoughts and ideas, which we appreciated.

Jim and Gwen's Annual bull sales were held at the Kauri Sale Yards in Whangarei and they attracted buyers from all over New Zealand. The bulls were a sight to behold

After a couple of years, Ray and I decided to enter two calves in the Whangarei Show. However, the next task was how do we put halters on these rather large calves and hang on to them, a slightly different proposition to a calf club calf, so Jim very kindly came out for a day and we rounded up "Forrest Gump" and "Foxy Lady" and by the end of the day and a couple of beers later, Jim had these two calves leading like champions. About six weeks later Ray and I set off for the Show, looking splendid in our white coats, but feeling a little nervous as there were a lot of exhibitors in the all breeds section, including Jim and Liz Mackey with their beautiful cattle. At the end of the day we came home with Champion bull and heifer calf. Jim was there to witness the occasion and said how proud he was of our efforts.

Jim was President while I was secretary of the Northland Simmental Club for a number of years. We had a wonderful working relationship. Jim and I would talk at length on the telephone between meetings solving all the problems of the Simmental Society and everything in between.

Back in those days we had a very active Club here in Northland. I would organise a mini bus and away we would go. There were visits to other Simmental Clubs around the Waikato, Cornwall Park

and further afield. Sometimes it was an overnight stay and other times just a day trip. At the time the youngest couple belonging to the Club were Tracey and Quentin Robinson who had the Leeanne Simmental Stud at Waitotira. I remember on one occasion Tracey and Quentin coming on an excursion and Tracey, I'll swear would have been about 8 ½ months pregnant, but we all looked after Tracey and a great weekend was had by all.

On another occasion both Jim and I, unbeknown to each other, had operations at a little private Hospital in Whangarei, known then as St Mary's Hospital. One afternoon I was creeping down the corridors all buckled and bent, and I passed this gentleman coming in the opposite direction, looking much the same, and it was Jim. We were bed mates for a week. This caused us both a bit of flack.

On a more serious note, I would just like to say what an institution Jim has been over the years in the Simmental world, and that everyone of us has learned something from him. Hopefully today's breeders can carry on the legacy Jim has left behind.

Safe travels Jim and my sincere condolences to the family.

## JIM HOULBROOKE

WRITTEN BY TONY THOMPSON

In 1970 word was that new breeds of exotic cattle from Europe were soon to be available in New Zealand.

So began the "exotic boom" with Charolais, Limousin and Simmental semen to be imported from the UK followed soon after by a selection of live imports of young females.

A group of cattlemen in the South Island were to the fore in importing the first Simmental seedstock and word soon spread that a Simmental Breed Society was to be formed. This word even spread to the scrublands and flood prone waterways of Omana near Tangiteroria deep in the North.

Here, Jim Houlbrooke, an outstanding cattleman and passionate cattle breeder immediately saw the opportunity to improve the maternal attributes, the growth rates and carcass qualities of his traditional beef herd.

So it was in October 1971 Jim rounded up Gwen and caught a plane to Auckland and on to Christchurch where they duly presented themselves at the Russley Hotel at the appointed time. Jim later reported in an article in the Simmental News – strange thing! no one else was there.

He had miscalculated. He was a day late. Not to worry he and Gwen had a few days holiday in the south and Jim was able to register his interest with the Steering Committee. So in 1972 the Tokaweka Simmental Stud was born with herd number 79. Jim and Gwen Houlbrooke became one of the founding members of the NZ Simmental Cattle Breeders Society.

The rest as we say is history.

You have already heard the story of the failed teaser bull. Jim used imported semen over his 120 traditional beef cows and over the next 10 years continued crossing from ½ bred to ¾ to 7/8 and so to full blood or bred up purebred. By the 1980s a significant number

of bred up purebred cattle were produced as Warren has already told you. One of these was a big blond bull Tokaweka Rascallion. His growth rate and carcass qualities were exceptional.

Jim's breeding skills and courage to cull any animal that didn't match his high standards put the Tokaweka Stud at the top of the NZ Simmental tree.

When the Beefplan and then Breedplan performance recording programmes were adopted by the New Zealand Society it soon became clear that no only was Rascallion the number one performance bull in New Zealand but also no less than six of the top eight highest ranked cows were owned or red by Jim Houlbrooke.

Jim's enthusiasm for, and knowledge of, the Simmental breed and his support of the Breed Society was acknowledged in 1980 when he was voted on to the Simmental Breed Society Council where he served for two three-year terms.

He was also appointed a Simmental Judge. What a busy six year, travelling to and fro to council meetings usually in the South Island. Helping organise and run field days and other activities for the Simmental Club from Brentwood to Peria here in Northland; judging at A&P Shows and Cattle Sales and running his own stud.

After retiring from Council he used his free time to make several cattle oriented overseas trips including representing New Zealand at the biennial World Simmental Congresses in Dallas Texas, Pretoria South Africa and in Brazil. He thoroughly enjoyed these trips making many friends with breeders from other countries and getting to see loads of cattle on the well organised pre and post congress Simmental stud tours in the host countries. I have thoroughly enjoyed reading his reports of these trips published in the Simmental NZ annual magazine.

1997 was stellar year for Jim and Gwen and their Tokaweka Stud. In the autumn they sold the young bull Tokaweka Dramatic for the excellent price of \$20,000. Colin Patterson, a Simmental breeder from Canterbury was the buyer and Dramatic (son of Rascallion) proved to be an excellent sire.

In November 1977 at the Gala Dinner held in Christchurch to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the NZ Simmental Cattle Breeders Society, Jim and Gwen were awarded an Honorary Life Membership of the society in recognition of the service they had given to the Simmental cause. My wife and I were at that dinner having shown cattle the day before at the NZ Royal Show. It was an honour to share Jim and Gwen's achievement.

Following the cameo female sale in March 1988 when Jim downsized his herd to only five breeding cows, he has over the latter years gradually wound down his stud operation and been able to put more time into his fishing.

I would like to close with a poem.

I mentioned Colin Patterson earlier. Colin was not only a Canterbury plains farmer and Simmental Stud breeder, he was also a poet and I would like to read you his poem titled 'The Good Old Days'.

The poem has been updated with current PBBNZ staff names.  
*Poem follows overleaf.*

## THE GOOD OLD DAYS

BY COLIN PATTERSON

A pair of boots was one and three  
In the good old days  
And suitors went down on one knee  
In the good old days  
And said my dear will you be mine  
From now until the end of time  
To separate would be a crime  
In the good old days

There was Cariboo and Springhill  
In the good old days  
And Waiwhare and Leanne too  
In the good old days  
And Emerald Dale and Helensbrook  
Tokaweka stud of Jim Houlbrooke  
Were the big names on  
the society books  
In the good old days

Linda Rule was always at her desk  
In the good old days  
Lindy Lawrence had a cheery smile for you

In the good old days  
While Helen's seen them  
come and go  
At annual sales and major shows  
Without them all how would we go  
Through the good old days.

Simmental once reigned supreme  
On Rissington  
Other breeds would not be seen  
On Rissington  
But now there's bulls of many hues  
Like Red Angus and black ones too  
More colours than an Irish stew  
On Rissington

So Jim when you reach the pearly gates  
On judgement day  
Where old St Peter sits and waits  
On judgement day  
The Simmental that you once red  
Were always cared for and well fed  
So you go through  
That's what he said  
On judgement day

## HOUSE KEEPING REMINDERS

### DNA PROFILES

Please remember to get hair samples for DNA profiling of the bulls you have used in service this past breeding season.

Remember: Calves need to be sired by a bull with a DNA profile loaded onto internet solutions in order to be registered.



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