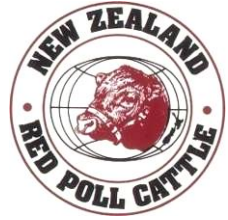


# RED POLL NEWS



**Autumn Edition**

**March 2026**



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### **Front Cover Photo:**

Rosemarkie Emir Alec G14-12, by Dawn Mist Bell's Emirate out of Rosemarkie Trounce Yulan, C8-08. Historic photo from Editor's files.

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**Closing date for next newsletter is July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

## PRESIDENT'S PAGE



Hello All,

I hope as breeders that the climate has been kind to you all since the last newsletter.

The prices for lamb and beef have been very buoyant, most probably the best I have seen in my farming career. However, as fuel prices rise this will directly affect the nett result due to increased freight, fertilizer and eventually inflation and interest rates. Let's hope the overall demand remains high.

This year's AGM and tour is in Canterbury starting on the 18<sup>th</sup> of April and finishing with the AGM on the 20<sup>th</sup> at the Crate and Barrel in Leeston. It will be great to see familiar faces, and new ones too, over the three days.

If any breeders have surplus stock for sale, as in yearling heifers, in calf heifers etc., please let the secretary know and we can spread the word and hopefully initiate some new herds.

*Cheers*

*Ian Fleming*

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### 2026 RED POLL AGM & HERD TOUR ITINERARY

Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup> April	9.30am Meet at Doug Pitsch's 4 Diamond herd. Morning tea	106 Waikari Valley Rd, Waikari	Approx. 1 hour from Christchurch
	Travel to Oxford Lunch Eugene Thomson	64 Crallens Drain Road.	
	Dinner @ Flemings	48 Panama Cres. West Melton	
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> April	Meet at Ian Fleming's Strathwell Herd. Morning tea 10am	178 Selwyn Lake Road.	Lunch @ Panther's Rock Country Pub, Mayfield. 15km.
	Travel to Ashburton to Sarah Elliot's Inny Vale herd	1563 Maronan Road Lismore	
Annual Dinner	Crate & Barrel 6pm	3 Market Square Leeston	
Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> April	Lunch following the AGM at the venue		
	Disperse after lunch.		



## **SECRETARY'S SAY**

It's now about a week until the 2026 AGM, and I hope as many of you as are able will attend some, if not all, of the tour.

The itinerary has been sent out and is also included in this newsletter. Any queries please get in touch.

I'd like to welcome two new associate members, Amelia Opie from Motueka and Eugene Thomson from Oxford.

I'm getting together figures for the 2025 calving and registrations and will have these for the AGM, but at this stage it is looking like we are not progressing as a breed society. I'm at a loss as to what we can do about this, so would welcome any and all ideas on how we can further the breed.

Please either bring your thoughts on this matter to the AGM or send me an email with them.

I would appreciate having your Herd Reports emailed to me before the meeting if possible so they can be read out at some stage.

I look forward to seeing you at the AGM. It looks as though a good programme has been put together by the Canterbury breeders.

*Warwick Potts*

Registrar/Secretary/Treasurer  
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## **PATRON'S PAGE**

### **Oracy, technology and AI**

This year primary schools have been implementing new curricula in maths, reading and writing. All of that is intended to improve student performance levels in those subjects. I have no quibble with the intentions which have underpinned these government driven actions. We really do need to have a population which is numerate and literate; which can read, write and compute.

What I have concerns about is a major gap in the programme which fails to place emphasis on oracy; that is the skills required in oral language with speaking and listening. To my mind, those are basic and underpinning skills upon which all other learning is dependent. The great majority of our lives are spent in talking. In conversations, in listening and learning to read the visual clues associated with those key elements of human interaction.

We all are subjected to, and have available, limitless spoken language broadcast across countless platforms. Learning to help children manage that is incredibly important as is the need to have every child able to communicate orally in the family, school and public settings.

I am struggling to find where those essential skills are catered for in the current language curricula. That is a huge deficit which becomes far more important if a child enters schools with very few effective oral language skills so being terribly handicapped in all learning areas until that is remedied.

The other gap in the programmes is any attempt to bridge the present and the future especially as AI (Artificial Intelligence) is going to increasingly be an ever-present part of the future. In my book, I believe the students of today need to come to grips with a rapidly changing work, recreation and political environment, all increasingly filled with created AI material purporting to be real. There will be the increasing pervasion of robots and robotics and a new world in which many existing jobs will disappear, and new ones will sprout and wither regularly.

And how does this all relate to farming and our Red Poll domain you may ask? All of the above applies to us adults. We must increasingly become more adept oral communicators as our world morphs on a daily basis. We increasingly will need to communicate across national and cultural borders and learn to meet our daily changing world-wide markets. We need to be able to handle and manage robots and technology which expands daily around us. For those of us with young families we need to keep pace with their learning or better still keep ahead of the play. If we fail to meet these challenges, then we will be in danger of becoming the peasant farmers of the future.

*Robin Shepherd QSO  
Patron*

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## **A BIT OF HISTORY #1**

### **RED POLL CATTLE**

Waipa Post, 5<sup>th</sup> October 1920 (National Library, *Papers Past*)

At the Red Poll Cattle Society's council meeting held in June at Norwich, England, encouraging announcements were made concerning the continued progress of the breed. The growth of the society in members has been such that the total strength is now treble what it was in the early part of 1918. It was pointed out that the display of the breed at Salisbury show had done much to further the interests of the breed in the South and West of England. A keen interest in Red Polls had sprung up in Cornwall.

A letter from Durban showed that Red Polls were making a steady advance in Natal. Major H. W. Quin, the owner of a herd of 700 purebred Red Poll cattle in the Orange River Colony, wrote that it had been decided, in the growing interests of the breed and owing to its growing popularity, to form a Red Poll Cattle Society in South Africa. Red Polls had proved their great hardiness during the recent severe drought.

They appeared to have a bright future in front of them. A breeder in Colombia, South America, wrote stating that Red Poll were the best cattle to stand the heat in his country, while an Englishman in Brazil says that the breed was becoming increasingly popular there. It was also mentioned that constant inquiries for stock had been forthcoming this year from Australia and New Zealand.

## ATHBEY REPORT

Following our report, Red Poll News December 2025, of the rather gloomy conditions on our farm, conditions have improved remarkably, beyond all expectations, but not before we had purchased a small number of wrapped silage bales and 43 big square bales of hay.

As late as it was, early December we got a summer crop of Pasja and turnips sown. Now mid-March it is having its last grazing with the hope of getting the new grass sown before having a day or two off farm at Central Districts Field days.

With the good late summer grass growth, the 7<sup>th</sup> of March saw us harvest 45 big squares bales of hay. Certainly, a good feeling to see that hay shed full, with winter not too far away.

Registered Red Poll numbers are stabilizing at around 24 cows and 2-year heifers to calve spring 2026, 6 mixed age bulls and 8 R1 heifers.

Looking forward to catching up with you all at our AGM conference tour.

Kind regards  
*Athol & Betty Sowry*



*Athbey cows with heifer and steer calves*

## **STRATHWELL REPORT**

This summer has been very wet, allowing us to have ample grass for grazing sheep and cattle. Three hundred Romney ewe hoggets were grazed through to December and then replaced by 400 store lambs, which will stay on until prime.

We ended up with 21 calves born and out of these 14 have been registered – 11 heifers and 3 bulls.

The good growing season has allowed us to sell lucerne silage, and lucerne hay for chaff. A total of four cuts which helps with cashflow.

We also have one paddock of radish this year which won't be harvested until Easter. Considering the wet summer, we have been lucky to have enough sunshine hours to allow sufficient bee activity for pollinating of the male and female flowers.

We have sold heifers to Rusty Rhodes in Ward and Doug and Sharon Pitsch in Waikari and are also leasing bulls to Rusty Rhodes and Eugene Thomson in Oxford.

Both Anita and I, along with Anita's parents, Doug and Julie, spent Christmas in Perth, Australia visiting our son Trent. We had two swims before lunch on Christmas Day then had to retire back into the house as the temperature climbed to an unbearable 43.5 degrees centigrade. We were lucky to have some shade as we had purchased two sun umbrellas the day before from Bunnings. It certainly is a different climate from back home and makes you appreciate the ability to irrigate if needed.

We are going to visit our daughter Brionne and her boyfriend Reece in June; they are both working in London after a six-month stint in Europe. Also, we will be staying with my sister Rachel and her husband John who we haven't visited since 2009 which happened to be the tail end of the Jamaican Red Poll Tour. We also will be looking forward to seeing Kate and Paul Fardon and Terry and Helen Mancey who will be showing at the Three Counties Royal Show in the Greater Malvern area on the 13<sup>th</sup> of June.

Finally, we look forward to hosting Red Poll friends on the Canterbury tour this April. It will be great to catch up. The tour offers a variety of topography from the hills of Waikari and Oxford to the flats of Irwell and Ashburton.

*Kind regards  
Ian & Anita Fleming*



*Strathwell Y11. Sire is Rosemarkie Mort's Ash (J4).  
Dam is Strathwell Christina B14. Sold to Amelia Opie of Motueka.*

#### *From Amelia to Ian*

'Poor bull had quite the run around in the end. There was an accident on SH7 and the driver said he was stuck for over 4 hours before they were turned around to come a different route, so he had the night at the yards in Richmond. The driver said he had put him next to some calves so he wouldn't be too stressed overnight and commented on what a nice nature he is.

As soon as we let him and his girls out of the yards, he seemed relieved and he seems to be settling in well. The other girls are in the paddock right next door, so he has met everyone now and he has already chosen his favourite. She is also a 2 year old. Our eldest has named him Bertie. He is a lovely looking bull, thank you!'

[Amelia has mainly half Red Poll cows from previous years of breeding using Red Poll bulls. – Ed.]

## **OPOUTERE RED POLL REPORT**

(See page 34 for more on steer processing)

Greetings all Red Poll enthusiasts. As we head into Autumn, and reflect on the last few months of Summer, we are inclined to agree with the holiday makers, surfers and swimmers, and say, "what summer?" & "when did it happen?"

We had a good spell of weather in early December, giving us the opportunity to get silage in and some early hay.

January started off in typical early summer fashion and then the rain arrived, the heaviest being 550 mm over two and a half days. Several roads were closed with slips and blocked culverts so all contractors were very busy, however eventually all roads were open again and we could get drains cleaned out and mud carted away.

Because of the persistent rainfall there is grass everywhere, not quality feed but mainly paspalum, and various summer type grasses, but all cattle are very round looking and carrying a lot of weight.

We will sell our steer calves as weaners in April and carry the heifer calves through the winter. We did not keep any male calves as bulls this season, there is just no interest in yearling bulls apart from bull beef. We did have one yearling bull for sale in September last year and had enquiries about him. Could we send photos? Could we send a video of him moving around? All fair enough, but then to be told that no way could the would-be purchaser justify spending \$1800 on a yearling bull. I just find it so frustrating to deal with people like that, when anyone who reads the farming newspapers would know that a half decent Hereford or Angus yearling bull would cost at least \$3000.00.

We will not be attending the herd tour and AGM in Canterbury this year.

Sadly, both Helen and Allan have had a few health issues in the last few months, we have sent our apologies to the Secretary.

Wishing everyone an enjoyable time at the AGM and all the best for the next season.

*Helen & Allan*

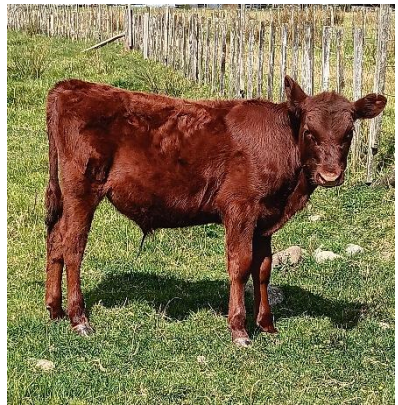
## KAIHINAU REPORT    March 2026

Our season continues to be kind with still abundant grass. We are cutting 2 paddocks for hay this afternoon.

We are on top of the storm damage cleanup, with plenty of firewood, many thanks to everyone involved.

Please find 3 photos, each one pertaining to possible profit margins within the growth rate of 3 animals farmed during the 25/26 season.

The first photo is a breeched birth steer that lost its mother and was reared solo on milk powder, 3 bags costing \$400. Comparative growth rate to a suckling calf can be seen proportionally by photo 2.      *Photo 1* ➤



◀ *Photo 2*

Also, in photo 3 are the rising 2year heifers of 20 months. The sale of rising 2year heifers previously was the mainstay of beef exports to the UK and Europe called the "1/4 Beef Trade". Killed at 20+months, the trade stock was killed and weighed out at 380-420 lbs.

As a teenager, Kelvin operated the scales at the Co Op Wholesale Society, Longburn, whose retail outlets were the largest in Britain. He became conversant with the expectancy of producer and buyer. (On one day, a crew of 13 highly skilled butchers knocked down 420 cattle beasts.)

As farmers, we are obliged continually to have an appraisal of food availability vs outcome, as well as the costs vs income. From my general experience and results achieved from other breeders, there is no weight gain in cattle that is any greater than in Red Polls.

Estimate of current sale yard values would put the hand reared steer at \$1100 max. The mixed heifer/steer calves off mothers at between \$1400-\$1600. The hand reared steer to gain the weight of a 20month animal will take another 6 months after its second winter.

The suckling calves off dams are by far the more viable package.

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in Christchurch. With greetings and safe travel until then.

*Kelvin and Kath*

*Photo 3 – Some of the 20month heifers ▼*



## STONEY ACRES HERD REPORT Autumn 2026

Hello Fellow Breeders

Again, it's time to give a brief detail of the happenings here at Stoney Acres farm. The herd now has 87 Red Poll animals to keep me sane.

There are 30 cows, 4 x r3 heifers, 2 steers, 3 bulls and twenty weaner heifers. Also including this year's calves which are just waiting to go to the weaner fair on Tuesday.

In the Wairarapa we have had a fantastic season growing grass with over 125 bales of baleage. There was a very brief dry spot to allow the contractors to get my hay baled on my lease blocks - a mere 50 round bales and excepting an Autumn drought, the same as last year which has not come yet.

My cows and calves are now home from grazing down the road at a sheep farm and then at winery on paddock tidy up duty. They have done very well.

I have weighed the weaner calves a couple of times now, getting ready for the weaner fair and have sold steers to a former Red Devon breeder who also bought x2 of my Red Poll r3, in calf heifers to enable a comparison of the breeds.

The fertiliser truck has been booked for autumn lime and the airfares booked for the AGM in Canterbury. I hope to see you all there.

All the best,

*Neil Wilton*



**RED POLL INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS & TOUR**  
**9<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024 Part Six**  
**17<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL RED POLL CONGRESS**

*Dorothy & Albert waiting for the bus in comfort. ➤*



**Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> April, Day 8**

After a good breakfast at the Coachman, we were driven out to Massey University's #1 Dairy Farm where we were to hear Doctor Nick Sneddon speak. Thanks to Massey University website for the following information. –

*"The farm is a working farm that aims to provide smart, sustainable dairying solutions through university research projects. The farm is situated on lighter river accretion soils next to the Manawatū River. A dairy herd was originally established in 1929. The farm is 142 hectares with about 119ha being effective. 32 ha has irrigation available. In February 2004 almost 90% of the farm was inundated with flood water which left silt deposited after the water receded.*

*Genetics and breeding*

*The long-term plan for the herd at Dairy 1 is to have a herd of 240 cows composed of:*

- *80 Jerseys*
- *80 Friesians*
- *80 crossbreds.*

*As of the 2013/14 dairy season, the Jerseys are mated to Jersey sires, Friesians to Friesian sires and the crossbred animals are mated to crossbred sires. Bulls are selected on the Once a Day (OAD) selection index developed by LIC. (Livestock Improvement Corporation)*

*A new culling decision index is now being developed for OAD milking using the data obtained from the cows at Dairy 1.*

*The following are all being evaluated for the breeds:*

- *production – milkfat, protein and lactose yield per cow*

- *productivity – milksolids/hectare*
- *efficiency – milksolids/kilogram of liveweight, milksolids/tonne of dry matter.*

*The milking facility is a 24-aside herringbone shed equipped with Westfalia metatron. The feed pad is concrete with a 200-cow capacity.”*

The farm is divided into blocks for the 3 herds with varying pasture species. Up to 19 different pastures species have been sown with 16 coming through. Interestingly, as we spoke on more diverse topics, he suggested that many people may not be lactose intolerant but rather beta casein intolerant. People from Asian or West African backgrounds are more likely to have this.

After this most informative visit it was back to Palmerston North city for an 'own choice' lunch. The Plaza was a popular venue with shops to stroll around as well.

The New Zealand Rugby Museum was the next item on the itinerary. The square where the bus was parked had a temporary ice-skating rink set up for the school holidays. An outdoor chess set was popular and of course ducks around the pond. The Museum was very interesting to stroll around although there was a lack of places to sit when one had seen enough!

Statue outside the door is of Charles John Munro who introduced the game of Rugby to New Zealand when he returned to NZ as a 19-year-old from the UK. He persuaded the local football club to adopt the rules of Rugby School in the UK.



*L-R Cheryl, Doug, Calvert, Anne & Alan leaving the Rugby Museum*

After time for a break at the hotel it was off to dinner at the Palmerston North Cosmopolitan Club. A fairly ordinary meal. Back to the hotel by 9pm.

## Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April, Day 9

On the bus at 8.30am. Some of us swapped our seats around to talk to someone different for the trip to Rotorua via Taupo. Still no sign of the mountain tops! First stop was at Taihape for a loo break and morning tea. Brown Sugar Café did a good trade, with most of us going there. Everyone took the opportunity to stretch their legs. On the road north out of Taihape the steam train mural on the woolshed was pointed out – world famous in Taihape.

We carried on to Taupo. The aircon in the little bus was not great and the temperature warmed up. The lunch stop at Taupo was very welcome with the Burger Fuel Café a popular stop.

*L-R Dorothy, Warwick, Helen, Robin, Albert & Aileen ➤*



**Photo:** –Wikipedia ➤

After lunch the renowned Huka Falls was the next destination. It is the most-visited natural attraction in New Zealand. "Huka" means foam in Maori. From the Encyclopedia of NZ - *"The Huka Falls are the largest on the Waikato River and lie 3 miles below Taupo and 2 miles above Wairakei. The falls occur when the Waikato*



*River, after flowing over a comparatively wide bed, is abruptly confined for about 250 yards to a narrow rock-bound chasm less than 50 ft wide. At the lower end the whole discharge of the river is precipitated over a cliff 35 ft high into a deep circular basin."*



◀ *Erick takes advantage of the lack of people to get a photo*

After the Huka Falls stop, we travelled a little further up the Rotorua Road and turned off to visit

Kitenui Deer Farm. A working deer farm of 187ha with a small tourist park as part of it. We learnt that New Zealand is host to seven species of deer: - Fallow, Red, Rusa, Sambar, Sika, White tailed and Wapiti (Elk).

The owner of the property is Murray Matuschka, helped by his grandson Gary Mansfield and extended family. A ride around on the trailer behind the tractor took us alongside a magnificent herd of Tahr (only one in the North Island), several species of deer, a zebra and a lone bison.



◀ *A Sika stag, one of several stags we saw.*

They also have a "trophy" hunting block further away on another farm.

We saw Murray's art; paintings, models and magnificent sculpture's, many of them maquettes for later bronzes. He also had some outdoor models made from whatever came to hand.

*Murray showing us an antler from one of their stags. ➤*





◀ *Sculpture of a bull Tahr*



*Outdoor models* ➤

*Near life-size sculptures of a pair of deer and a small one of a Bison. Very real.*



The maquettes are initially made of plasticene, and metal frames.

From these some are then cast in bronze once an order has been confirmed.



*Farewell to Kitenui Deer Farm. Murray on the left ▲*

Back on the bus to go to Rotorua. The seats over the rear wheels are very cramped!

We are staying at the Sudima Hotel. It is huge. It caters for the many tourist buses that travel down from Auckland, most full of Asian tourists and those from cruise ships.

Once we had all settled in with bags etc we went out for tea to "Eat Street". This is a large covered in area with a good variety of restaurants featuring local and international foods. Very hard to choose which one to patronise!

*To be continued*

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### **JAMAICA UPDATE** [Editor] ▲

Sad news that Jamaica decided they cannot host the next World Congress. Hopefully they are making progress with their no doubt massive clean-up. Having hosted them on the Congress tour here in 2024 we heard they were making great progress with their cattle and farms. They will be hosting in the future I'm sure as they want to show off their lovely cattle, as do we all.

The good news is that the UK have taken up the challenge and will be hosting the Congress in September 2027, subject to aircraft fuel still being available!

## ROSEMARKIE REPORT

Hello Everyone

We have just been on a short road trip up north, and among other relatives and friends, we called in to see Helen & Alan Bridson at Opoutere and stayed a night with them. They have had their younger son Roddy home lending a hand for a few days. Alan is not in the best of health at present. It was great to catch up with them both. We missed most of the bad weather too.

We have just sent a couple of cull cows away, one a smaller 3 year old and one a 2019 born cow. We waited to wean their calves before sending them away. They averaged \$1900 each. Have not weaned the main mob yet, but not far away. We will be yard weaning as we have for the last few years. It certainly makes a difference to how they move through the yards as adults, much more freely and calmly.

We mated 27 females this year – about 3 more than we really want but it is very hard to cull good cows. Just over half went out with Dawn Mist Ferd's Tristram. This will be the fourth year we have used him but are getting some nice heifers from him. He is available to anyone who wants to buy him for this year's mating. The other bull we used was a young one bred by us, Rosemarkie Al's Zambezi, V17-23. He is by R. Tonka Alem, R13 who was by Gravel Pit Tonka (AI) by (Raedean Maximus #NZ4439 out of Tamihana Elz Favouring #12623). Zambezi is out of Evanlea Rema #12754. I expect we will use him again this year.

Our bull that we leased to Jodie & Sean Squires, T18-23 has arrived home in very good order. We weighed him a few days ago and he was 722kg. He was born in 2023.



*Rosemarkie Red Admiral  
T18-23.*

He is out of Tamihana Va Elisa T123 (by Tamihana TK Vail) and by Tamihana Red Max (AI) who was by Raedean Maximus (Australia) out of Tamihana CP Selena.

*Warwick & Helen*

**PHOTOS FROM CHARLES HARVEY, SHIWA NG'ANDU, ZAMBIA**



*Red Poll cross cow with a Boran cross calf*



*Red Poll and crossbred cows head up the road.*

## UK NEWS

### **Review of the year 2025– J.R. Williams, Society Chairman**

The year started off with the Bluetongue virus hanging over us with the problem of different zones in the country, and what effect this would have on the movement of stock and effect on shows. Due to these problems Council decided to cancel our National Show. Some breeders vaccinated against Bluetongue as a precaution. As the year went on the virus seemed to be controlled and zones altered and, in the end, only the Royal Welsh Show had restrictions.

In the western side of the country, we are still contending with TB with most farms on 6 month or 12 monthly testing.

The price of cattle, especially finished animals, has increased, this affecting the store and pedigree breeding stock values which is all very encouraging.

The Society has been working very hard to promote the breed with attendance at many shows and at Groundswell, which was a great success. Thank you to everyone who helped in attending these events.

Several shows throughout the country have Red Poll classes, these have been generally well attended. This is a great way to show and promote the breed, thank you to all the exhibitors who attend these shows and also those who attend shows which have "Any Other Breed classes" or "Minority breed/ Rare breed" classes, this can be very challenging against other breeds but very rewarding when placed.

Registrations for the year were 652 Registered Females, 24 Grading Females together with the 31 Bulls making a total of 707 animals, these are from 99 breeders.

Society membership stands at 359 members. The makeup of the membership is therefore: 246 Registering / Life Registering, 90 Associate / Life Associate, 7 Overseas and 14 Student / Junior

The Society held its Annual Field Day at Longley Farm (Tyers Hall Herd) by the kind invitation of this year's Society President, Jimmy Dickinson. This was a

great success with not only the herd being viewed but also an excellent tour around the dairy.

The National Herd Competition took place with a great number of entries, and The Large Herd winners were The Wicklewood Herd of the Goodings Family, Wyndham, Norfolk and the Small Herd and Overall winner being The Wheatfield Herd of Anthea and Jeff Daw, Newcastle Emllyn, Dyfed.

The Annual Dinner was held at The Angel Hotel, Chippenham, Wiltshire. This was a very well attended enjoyable and successful evening, A big thank you to Gill Martin for all her work arranging the dinner.

Finally, a very big thank you to all Council members for their time and involvement in the running of the Society, and a very big thank you to Ray and Anne-Marie for their work involving the day to day running of the Society.

*Wheatfield Fantastic Crocus*



## **A BIT OF HISTORY #2**

National Library *Papers Past*. Matamata Record 10 January 1929

### **RIVALS TO THE JERSEYS, THE RED POLLS**

**Profitable Dual-Purpose Cows** (Abridged by the Editor as some statements in the general history of the breed are no longer thought to be correct.)

#### **A Walton Herd**

Most prominent in the Matamata district as a breeder of Red Polls – and indeed known throughout the Dominion in breeder circles – is Mr. C.F. Schrafft junior, of Campbell's Road, Walton, an enthusiast possessing the necessary knowledge and perseverance to rise well above the ruck. The following are some statistics of individual latest performances: -

Tutamai Jeanette, 7065lb milk, 356.34lb fat; Tutamai Wendy, 9135lb milk, 356.31lb fat; Tutamai Faith, 11,580lb milk, 495.61lb fat; Tutamai Peggy, 8345lb milk, 340.67lb fat; Otahuna Mabel, 4455lb milk, 168.14lb fat. The last named was injured and did not complete the season, but the results are very encouraging. Mr Schrafft has purchased from the Feilding Agricultural College the pair of yearling heifers that were second at the last Dannevirke Show. These are very nice animals, one in particular being of exceptional quality. Mr Schrafft hopes to field a team at the next Royal Show, and is somewhat disappointed that show hereabouts do not provide a Red Poll class. The figures are the returns from the Herd Testing Association.

Although it would be a poor breed indeed that would not do well on Mr Schrafft's excellent pasture, the fact remains that, if needs be, the Red Polls can be kept on the poorest of country and roughest of feed. They will thrive where other cattle would starve.

One of the most important features of the Red Poll cattle is their comparative freedom from disease. Mr Schrafft's cows have never been troubled even with a hard quarter; there has been no mammitis, no "mysterious" disease, the herd and other cattle on the farm happily free from all such troubles. It is held that the Poll is particularly resistant to attacks of diseases which lay other cows low. They certainly appear to be a fine healthy lot, robust, well quartered and remarkably quiet and tractable. Mr Schrafft has as sires for his herd some of the famous "Otahuna" (Sir Heaton Rhodes, M.L.C., of Tai Tapu, Canterbury)

strain; in one case the bull has over 5000lb of butterfat on the dam's side and also on the side of his sire's dam.

### **For Butter And Beef**

The Red Poll breed of cattle is the only breed that is recognised as a serious competitor in the London Dairy Show and the Smithfield Show. At both these shows Red Polls always perform well and in some classes they have on occasion come first among all breeds. However, their consistent success year after year in both shows proves them as dual-purpose cattle.

The world's record for a Red Poll cow is 20,280lb of milk and 891.581 of butterfat – not a bad record for a cow weighing over 1700lb. [*771.10kg*]

There are some who are confident that the Red Poll is going to become a serious rival to the Jersey, being more hardy and therefore less subject to ailments, a good producer of butterfat, and highly saleable as beef when her butterfat days are done. As an instance in point, and a telling conclusion, may be mentioned the report from a canny Scot in Otago: "In 1926 I sold a steer at Burnside market for £16 7s 6d [*\$2,457.73 today*]. He was out of a grade Red Poll cow that had given up to 75lb of milk per day".

Obviously, cows of good butterfat production whose male calves may become so valuable for beef are bound to forge to the front.

### **From the NZ Red Poll history by Michale Condon: -**

#### **The "Totara" Herd of C F Schrafft Junior, Walton**

The Totara herd was founded in 1925 by the purchase of the bull, Tutamai Tactics from Arnott Anderson and the female, Otahuna Mabel, from Sir R. Heaton Rhodes. Four Tutamai females were added in 1926 and in 1927, the bull, Tutamai Targuin, and three more Tutamai females were purchased from Arnott Anderson. IN 1928 two Class AA heifers were purchased from Feilding Agricultural High School and the Class AA bull, Waimai Reflector from Wilson Bros.

Cattle were registered in Volumes III - VII of the Herd Book. The Totara herd dispersed in 1932.

## UPDATE FROM KENYA

I have to report that we are downsizing our Red Poll Stud substantially. We have had to sell some land, about 20%, and may possibly be selling off 80% of the balance before too long. My herd will be reduced from 1,100 head down to about 120 head.

Additionally, we continue to have a continuing challenge of ticks, which are acaricide resistant, on the animals. We have decided to do more cross breeding with our Red Poll cows, mainly to Boran bulls which are more tick resistant. I am not sure if it is a function of day length, but our cows do not shed their coats even in hot weather. We are on the Equator at 5000 feet above sea level with temperatures of 31 degrees max and 15 degrees min., so not cold. The woolly animals attract ticks like a magnet to iron filings. I have some very slick coated Senepol crosses, and these also attract the ticks. That RP blood must be really sweet!

My efforts to find plants that will help towards controlling ticks and minimising usage of chemical anthelmintics continues. We have not done blanket worming of the whole herd for about 4 years, and no calves are sprayed with acaricides prior to weaning. Mortality and culling rates are higher, but I feel (hope?) we are moving in the right direction.

Our younger daughter is now working in Auckland, so who knows, perhaps a trip to NZ in the not-too-distant future, for us.

*Kind regards,  
Jimmy Brooks*

Famous quote from Tom Lasater, developer of the Beefmaster Breed in the USA:

"Cattle breeding is a relatively simple endeavor. The only difficult part is to keep it simple. "

Notice these early day certificates:

Breeder, year of birth, color, identification number.

No pedigree, no ratios, no epds, no indices, no scan information. You better have a good eye.

23 Feb 2017

## **\*\*AUSTRALIAN 2025 RED POLL YEAR IN REVIEW\*\***

The 2026 Red Poll Annual celebrates a year of resilience, achievement and steady progress for the Australian Red Poll breed. In his President's message, Alan Couch highlighted the society's strengthened financial position through major cost savings, including a new Genetic Hub contract at roughly one-third of the previous rate and trials of AI for meeting minutes. While database and genomic API development has been slower than hoped, the focus remains on accuracy and member accessibility. Couch thanked the volunteer executive and members who embraced new technologies, promising improved communication throughout 2026.

### **\*\*Awards and Young Talent\*\***

Carlie Mackelmann of Glenwyn Red Polls received the prestigious Matthew George Young Stockman Award, recognising her passion, community involvement and commitment to youth education. Brittany Abbott of Turanga Red Polls won the Victorian State Final of the Beef Cattle Young Judges Competition and will represent Victoria at the 2026 national finals. Albert Hancock of Kookabookra was awarded Life Membership for more than three decades of service, including regional leadership and youth camp support. A moving tribute honoured the late Priscilla "Cill" Hancock for her show-ring dedication and love of the breed.

### **\*\*Carcase Success\*\***

2025 delivered outstanding results on the hook. Lynbarry Red Polls claimed Grand Champion Carcase at Whittlesea and Reserve Champion at Yea. Detailed round-ups from Sydney Royal, Royal Adelaide, Royal Melbourne, Swan Hill and other shows showcased strong placings, high EMA scores and school involvement, with purebred and crossbred Red Polls excelling in lightweight, heavyweight and export classes.

### **\*\*Genetics and Export\*\***

Turanga Red Poll Stud led international progress, exporting semen from three sires to eight countries. Genomics testing and navigating biosecurity rules enabled slick-coated, myostatin-negative animals suited to warm climates, proving that private studs can succeed without major semen companies.

## **\*\*Youth and Community\*\***

The SA Junior Heifer Expo and the National Red Poll Youth Camp at Glen Innes again proved highlights, with hands-on workshops, parading, clipping, nutrition and judging. Red Polls featured strongly at regional and Royal Shows, while Queensland breeders demonstrated the breed's adaptability in tropical conditions.

## **\*\*Show Champions\*\***

Glenwyn (Sydney), Omega 3 (Brisbane), Red Cactus (Melbourne) and Karradace (Perth) dominated the major Royal Show rings, underlining the breed's consistent quality.

Overall, 2025 confirmed Red Polls' versatility, carcass merit and global potential. With financial stability secured and youth engagement thriving, the breed enters 2026 with quiet confidence, three new members and a clear path forward. We look forward to ongoing engagement with our NZ friends in 2026 and remain certain that the Red Poll breed has much to contribute to the cattle industry.

*Ross Draper of **Red Cactus Stud**, Stud, Australia with his highest point steer at Melbourne Show. ▼*





*Red Poll steers and handlers at Adelaide Show*

***Glenwyn Stud's*** highest scoring EMA purebred at Sydney



*The Melbourne Show Borthwick team* ▼



## THOUGHTS ON THE BREED

*By Ken Elliot, (first published in the August 2011 NZ RP News)*

I would like to make some personal observations about where the Red Poll breed 'fits in': I have always thought of the breed as a medium framed animal able to survive in a range of conditions. To see where they have come from and where they have spread to does give optimism. Being small in number is a major drawback. This often leads to the thinking that the breed is not worth as much, therefore, we will pay less for them and led to a 'short arm, deep pocket' syndrome. Too many poor-quality cattle are then kept and this further reduces their image. Cross breeding with other breeds of smaller stature has not helped especially when cleared through sale yards. Generally speaking, the breed has not been adulterated too much by inter crossing and developing a new breed from eg Senepol. Likewise it has not had other breeds put into its genes to change it away from the original animal registered like the Angus has. Therefore, its original purpose of providing milk and beef in a cropping region – East Anglia – has been successfully developed in other parts of the world.



It should not be expected to compete with Welsh Blacks on the sparse hills of Wales or Friesians on rich grasslands. It should be able to compete with other cattle breeds on spring summer grass/rangeland and autumn straws/hay. It has, or should have, a large rumen area where quantities of poorer grasses can be converted into growth, milk and meat. It should produce a calf every year for 10 years. That this can be tweaked by breeding and management should be accepted.

What has crept into the breed in the last 30 years, and has an acceptance of, is so-called 'heavy muscle'. This manifests itself as a distinct seam (muscle division) around the rear end to the point of going from round muscle to double muscle. This is a major fault. It has probably always been there as in other breeds. When breeding for extremes this fault comes out. I first noticed it in Australia where the emphasis was on selling weaner calves off mum as veal. Close breeding to get so called "more muscle" in reality is a myth as every animal has the same muscles in them and making them shorter and wider gives no more muscle but just the illusion of. I was told that this trait was not

observed in UK Red Polls until after a shipment of cattle came in from the USA. What, in my mind, has made this trait acceptable in England has been the introduction of European breeds that were selected for heavy bone, round muscle with high growth rates and this being related back to their use originally as draft animals. When a butcher comes around and says he will pay more for a lean, seamed animal producers are guided by their pocket. If it makes the difference between selling a finished or store beast and not selling a beast it is of vital importance. The big 3 French breeds have been very successful in pushing their type to the butchers, but it must be admitted that it does not come from grass/rangeland alone. The desire to finish in a feedlot rather than a paddock of grass may be severely tested in the future as demand for edible crops is taken up by humans.

Round to double muscling is here and I guess fits into the realm of the 'no fat on the meat' desire of overfed people. Flavours and enhancers can replace, for the chef, what is normally determined in the field. In the end it comes down to economics, and this would have to be in the longer term. Greenies are making us very aware of distortions to the environment.



◀ Example of extreme 'heavy' muscling in a Red Poll female. This animal was in the fattening pen in the UK.

**Photo:** Editor

If the cattle industry, apart from dairy and its followers, is to go back to the basics of the animal utilising poorer quality roughage in all parts of the world then

there will be a need to swing back to the type of animal that is productive in the environment. I am saying that the round/heavy/double muscle will not. When breeders went down the cattle rows at the Suffolk show the only breeds there on display that would fit the above [*being productive in the environment*] were the Red Poll, Hereford and Long Horn.


## WHAT'S NEW?

On looking at Papers Past I found this advertisement for Birchwood stud's Red Poll cattle in the Press of February 1986.

It is apt to have come across it now as we will be visiting Eugene Thomson's **Birchwood** property to view his cattle on the Herd Tour this year and to enjoy his hospitality for lunch.

He is Gordon & Thelma's son and recently became a new Associate Member with the purchase of a **Strathwell**-bred bull.

**BIRCHWOOD**  
**Red Poll Cattle**



*Gordon & Thelma Thomson welcome members of  
the 4th World Red Poll Cattle Tour to the  
South Island*

The Red Poll cattle at Birchwood are bred for  
body, length, height and leanness of top quality  
red meat, bred on hard hill country.

*Enquiries to:*

**G. D. THOMSON**

**Bush Road, Oxford, Phone (0502) 24080**

## COMPARE RESULTS

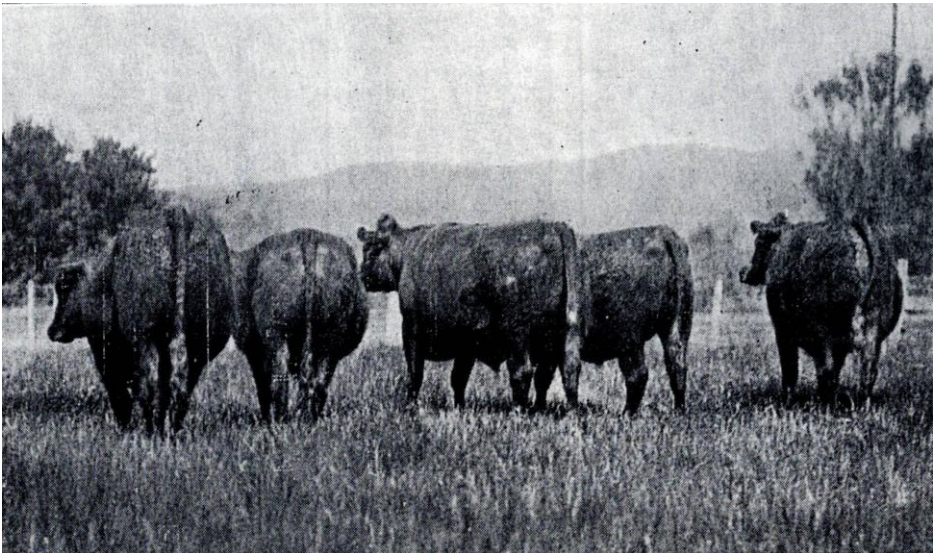
At the beginning of April this year, Allan & Helen Bridson sent away to the Works two prime steers.

The results are below.

<b>Wgt Range</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>Dead Wgt</b>	<b>Rate/kg</b>	<b>Amount/head</b>
<b>STEER</b> 320.01 - 380.01	P2	1	363.2kg	\$9.35	\$3,395.93
<b>STEER</b> 380.01 - 400.01	P2	1	382.1kg	\$9.25	\$3,534.43

Taking off processing costs & inspection fees & adding GST of 15% -  
Total payment was \$7,889.21

The steers below were 4-year-olds so at least a year older, so more feed used.



*Four year old purebred Red Poll steers, bred by Mr JW Harding, Mount Vernon, Waipukurau and sold in November 1928 for £17/15/- each.*

This would equate to approximately \$2,181.77 in today's money according to the Reserve Bank's online Inflation Calculator. Until circa 2024 this is what Allan's steers would probably have fetched. Prices have jumped up in the last year or so.

## Red Poll Society (UK)

If you would like to join to the Red Poll Cattle Society (UK) contact [secretary@redpoll.co.uk](mailto:secretary@redpoll.co.uk)

or write to:

The Secretary, 48 Mayfield Road, Writtle, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 3EL, England.



The overseas associate membership subscription is £30 sterling; includes three printed issues a year of the newsletter. The newsletter is also available to view on-line, gratis.



## NZ Red Poll Badges Available

These are well made and beautifully finished and each one comes in a lovely presentation packet.

\$15 each + p & p (About \$3.50 for up to 6 badges). Size is approximately 3cm by 2¾cm.

Order from the Secretary, Warwick Potts, who will supply an invoice and the badge/s.



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## Photos Back Cover

**Top:** Steer from GM & KJ Abbott's **Turanga Stud**, Australia, highest scoring EMA at Melbourne Show

**Bottom:** Red Poll line up at Sydney Show, 2025

