



Ardcairnie
Angus

September Scribbles 2013

24th September 2013

Dear Folk on our mailing list,

It is amazing the difference some rain makes! Since we last "wrote" in May, there have been times when we wondered if it was ever going to rain again in sufficient quantity to put some water in the dams. There had been enough to keep the grass growing; we did feed some hay though the cow mating season in August but that was just after we had a decent fall of between two and three inches (north and south—we have told you before, I think, that Maybenup is long and skinny and there's five kms between the two rain gauges!).

September has turned out to be (so far) the rainy month and the dams are at last starting to fill. The cattle are all looking well.

Heifer mating has been completed and pregnancy testing is scheduled for 15th October. Cow mating finishes 1st October, with their pregnancy tests on 15th November. In between those two dates, there's freeze branding and semen testing of potential sale bulls, 600 day weights and scans of the potential sale bulls and their sisters, 200 day weights of this year's calves and Mature Cow Weights on their Mums. Yes, busy times, but happy ones too, as we see almost every animal on the farm (apart from the herd bulls enjoying R & R time after their annual workout) and we see how the results go in the Breedplan report at the start of December which helps us make final decisions on the bull sale mob. We hope that all of you have had sufficient rains for your various enterprises and that the year is set for a productive finish.

Kind regards to you all and best wishes for a continuing good Spring.

For Jim and Pam McGregor

Those questions we asked in May—magnificent response—two to each question! We have opted out of Cattlecare Accreditation and will continue posting our occasional newsletters!

Change of our website address!

After some deliberation—and lots of advice and input from our technical advisor (our younger son Ross) we have updated our website and changed its name slightly—it is now

www.ardcairnieangus.com.au

and you will see quite a difference.

The aim is to keep it updated on a regular basis—that was always the aim but wasn't always met—keep watching to see if that aim will be now met!

Our Bull Sale 2014

Tuesday 4th February

On-farm at Maybenup

Come from 11am; complimentary lunch; sale starts 1.30pm

Rainfalls!

May 53mms north and 44mms south

June 32mms both ends; July 56 / 58mms;

August 80 / 78; September (so far) 52 / 62mms

Seepage into the dams has begun and we are hoping for overflowing dams before summer!!



If your mouth always wears a smile,
you will always feel young!
We all smile in the same language!



Genetic Defects

Since the first test for a genetic defect became available to Angus breeders in late 2008, we decided that we would only use or sell bulls free of the defect by pedigree or test. A year later, a test was developed for a second defect; a year after that, another one. Now in 2013, a test has been developed for what is called (for short) DD—basically extra limbs and a relatively rare occurrence in a herd. So we have made the decision that we will test potential sale bulls. Potential buyers can therefore be assured that all bulls in the 2014 catalogue will be either AMFU or AMF, NHFU or NHF, CAFU or CAF, DDFU or DDF. It is worth remembering that all animals (including humans) can carry genetic defects—not just Angus cattle! It matters not the genetic defect status of your breeding females—if you use only FU or F bulls, there will be no expression of the defect.

Mobs on Maybenup

Ten mobs until the end of this month when mating is completed for the 2014 calving:

- * seven of cows and calves and 1 bull each,
- * one of 2012 born (hopefully pregnant) heifers and a few steers (we sold 56 steers in June/July as we were concerned about water supplies),
- * one of 2012 born bulls (potential sale team)
- * one of the herd bulls resting or spare.

On the history front:

2013 sees us celebrate 40 years in Western Australia—Jim arrived in August; bought the Denbarker property September and moved in in October; Pam, Neil and Ross arrived November 1973. The family has increased with daughters-in-law Brenda and Suzanne, and five grandchildren Zoe, Alan, Jacob, Thomas and Libby.
We are blessed!

Murdoch students

The three students we have hosted this year brings to 16 the total number of students since we started with the EFE Scheme in 2008 and each has been a wonderful experience.

The Vet School series shown on ABC in July/August was filmed at Murdoch and it was a delight to see our very first ever student feature in the episodes along with another student from the same year we hosted in 2009.

If you are interested in participating in the Extramural Farm Experience Scheme, contact Claire McNaughton, Student Placement Officer on 9310 7495 or email c.mcnaughton@murdoch.edu.au

Contact details:

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We welcome and enjoy visitors at all times—please contact us if you'd like to see the stock at any time, even while we are working (i.e. Taking weights, the calving run—next year!!!).

2014 Sale Mob and DD

Their 400 day weights were taken on 9th June and sent off to Angus Australia.

Then the forth test for a genetic defect in Angus cattle became available, so any bull that had tail hairs already in the system (when we ran tests for any % animals in AM, NH and CA) were checked for DD. Of the 25 who tested free to the first three defects, only 4 tested as carriers for DD. We have now gathered tail hairs from the rest of the mob and will be sending them off next month. When we did a check some weeks after the initial check, there had been a great deal more testing been undertaken Australia wide and six that had shown with a % possibility became DDFU, so they won't need testing, and a couple have reduced their % slightly.

Arrangements have been put in place for the freeze branding, semen testing and the 600 day weights, scans and scrotal measurements of the mob. When the December Group Breedplan report is available, that, along with structure and temperament assessments, helps Jim make the final selection for the keepers and sale catalogue bulls. We will continue our usual practice of cataloguing every bull we have for sale so buyers have the widest possible choice of Ardcairnie genetics on sale day—Tuesday 4th February.

There's still over 20 sires represented, and we continue to have the only registered progeny of G A R Objective 7125 in Australia. At the moment, there are seven sons in the mob. The Scottish owned bull, Oakchurch Field Marshall K143 (ET) we used has given us four bulls in the mob (and three heifers in the hopefully pregnant mob!).

If you go to the Angus Australia website
www.angusaustralia.com

click on Animal Search, then put WJMH% in the Animal Identifier slot, then click Male in the first Select If slot and press search, you will be able to see what H bulls we have, their date of birth, registration, genetic defect status, sires and Maternal Grand Sire. By clicking on most of these bits of information, new screens appear with more information!

I never saw a purple cow, I never hope to see one; But I can tell you anyhow, I'd rather see than be one!

By Gelett Burgess (1866–1951) in Burgess Nonsense Book, The Purple Cow. Later in the same book, he says:

Ah, yes! I wrote the 'Purple Cow' - I'm sorry, now, I wrote it! But I can tell you anyhow, I'll kill you if you quote it!