

# November Narrations 2013

November 27th 2013

Dear Folk on our Mailing List,

That (nearly) four inches of the wet stuff that came from the heavens in September helped all the dams on Maybenup be of use again, although some of them are not quite as full as we might wish. A diviner is booked for January to see if we can find some underground water to tap into.

The freeze branding of the potential keeper and sale bulls as well as all the data gathering that needs to be done has been done, apart from semen testing which is scheduled for early December. We now await the December Breedplan Report!

We extend to all readers our best wishes for a very safe and happy festive season with your families and friends, and for a bountiful 2014 in all facets of your lives.

Kind regards.

For Jim and Pam McGregor

## **Our website:**

**[www.ardcairnieangus.com.au](http://www.ardcairnieangus.com.au)**

is updated on a monthly basis (sometimes later in the month than early!) so is another way to keep up-to-date with what's happening at Ardcairnie Angus. We will still be sending our occasional newsletters by Australia Post though—not all of us have computers! If you decide you would rather have this newsletter by email rather than by Australia Post, please let us know—we have two folk who prefer it that way, so easy to add more.

## **Our contact details:**

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## **Our 2014 Bull Sale Tuesday 4 February**

On-farm at Maybenup  
Albany Highway, Kojonup  
Come from 11am; complimentary lunch;  
sale starts 1.30pm.

Catalogues posted January 9th;  
Details also on the Angus Australia  
and Elders websites

## **Your assurances from Ardcairnie Angus**

We choose to spend a reasonable amount of money to ensure that our buyers have the best chance of trouble free progeny, so we test all potential keeper and sale bulls for the four genetic conditions for which tests have been developed, and cull any bulls who are carriers for any of them. That way, even if you have females with some potential for the conditions in your herd, the defect will not be expressed, as only bulls free of all four conditions are kept for use in our own herd or offered for sale. We also take ear notches to ensure that there are no carriers for BVDV in the keeper and sale team.

Then vaccinations—we use Ultravac, Vibrovax and Pestigard as further protection for our clients, as much as for the bulls—and females. We have a herd-wide vaccination regime.

Semen testing is the last test and the keeper and sale bulls have to be capable of settling females out in the paddock.

It probably doesn't need to be said but all the way through their lives, we cull for unacceptable structure and temperament. And finally, if there's any problems with an Ardcairnie bull that is our problem, then we deal with that as soon as we can—our sale has no credit system.

## Mobs on Maybenup at the end of November:

One of the potential sale and keeper bulls  
One of 2012 born pregnant heifers  
One of the resting herd bulls  
One of cows and calves

### The cow and calf mob:

Mid November, in what turned out to be quite a long day, Jim weaned the calves by putting in the nose rings we use so that the calves can still have the company of their Mums although they are unable to suckle. In a couple of weeks, the mob will be gathered in to the yards again and the nose rings removed, and possibly the bull calves split from the heifer calves before they start having ideas about their future role in life!!

Jim was pleased with the way most of the calves were looking when we took their 200 day weights on 4th November; at the same time, we took their Mums Mature Cow Weights so no drafting required as every animal in the mob was weighed. All that information is emailed across to ABRI—the Animal Breeding and Research Institute in Armidale, NSW which processes all the weights and scan information to produce our Breedplan Report. We use the Estimated Breeding Values and \$Indexes in the report to help make final decisions about whether or not the animal (generally the keeper and sale bulls) is fit, in our opinion, for the breeding chain.

### The Ardcairn Breeding Programme

Using artificial insemination gives Ardcairn access to a good diversity of bloodlines. Focus is placed on genetic improvement as measured by the Angus Group Breedplan Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs) and \$Indexes. Our aim is to breed the sort of animals that everyone in the beef chain, including the breeder, can make a dollar from! Because we want to maintain our planned grazing rotation and because we are dealing with reasonably big numbers (all the cows—as you know—are run in one mob most of the year—360 cows and heifers in the calving mob this year), the cow AI programme is done on natural heat in the paddock; the heifers this year for the second time was on natural heat also. The heifer AI programme is July; calving starts mid-April; cow AI in August so calving starts mid-May.

### On the home front,

Jim has been very busy whippersnipping around the homestead and shed areas, preparing for summer. The orchard has blossomed so we are looking forward (hopefully) to home grown apricots, peaches, pears, apples and nectarines over the summer. When the orchard was planted so were posts over which Jim put piping to support the net to keep the birds out but let the bees in. Definitely a worthwhile strategy.

And next week, the retic people are coming to start a lawn out the front—it will be good to have green there instead of dried grass!

Or dried weeds!!

### Potential Keeper and Sale Bull Mob

As usual, the big yearling bull mob results in a fairly rigorous period in their development as they jostle for their place in the pecking order. Working off some of their energy and testosterone obviously plays a part and as a result their weight gains are influenced by how much energy they expend in being a young and entire male.

We have thought about this situation a lot and while we appreciate that the bull must indicate his potential growth and performance during this period, which is also the period we look for significant performance in the bulls' progeny. We also expect that bull to be fit and athletic enough and have the constitution to mate up to 50 or more females for a reasonable number of years. This is why we have presented our sale bull mob in what is probably about Score 3 condition, but we also provide as much additional information on their performance as possible,

### From Life's Little Instruction Calendar:

Nov 27th: Use the good silver

Nov 29th: Don't expect life to be fair.

Dec 10th: Get your priorities straight. No one ever said on his deathbed, "Gee I wish I had spent more time in the office."

Dec 25th: Count your blessings.

Jan 21st: Be prepared. You never have a second chance to make a good first impression.

Jan 27th: Keep it Simple, Sunshine. (Pam's favourite!)

### Students from Murdoch University:

We are looking forward to hosting three more vet students—one this month for two weeks and two in January—one for two weeks and one for one week.

If you might be interested in sharing what you do with student vets through the Extramural Farm Experience Scheme, contact Claire McNaughton, Student Placement Officer on 9310 7495 or email [c.mcnaughton@murdoch.edu.au](mailto:c.mcnaughton@murdoch.edu.au)—she would be very pleased to hear from you!