

Guernsey Cattle Society of Australia Report World Guernsey Conference Guernsey Island 2013

It gives me great pleasure to present this report on behalf of the Guernsey Cattle Society of Australia to the 14th World Guernsey Conference here at the origin of the Guernsey cow in Guernsey Island.

Like the rest of the World milk prices continue to make life difficult for many dairy farmers in Australia but still the spirit of our Guernsey members remain strong. It's this belief in the Guernsey cow that keeps us going.

Our membership numbers have remained very consistent over the last 3 years, ranging from 93 in 2010 to 96 members in June 2012. At present we have 90 members, of which 60 are still very active. The average number of animals registered over the last 3 years was 576. In 2010/11 due to a generous donation from one of our members to subsidise the registration of animals that were over 6 months of age we received an extra 347 registrations. Many of these animals included 2 or 3 generations of cow families. In 2011/12, 495 registrations were processed. Of all the Guernsey animals that are in Australian herds 80% of cows and 55% of heifers are by AI sires.

Every year 10 of our youth participate in the All Breeds Youth Challenge which is held at International Dairy Week in January. There are 3 aspects to this event clipping, leading and judging with different participants in each of the categories. Even though we have not figured in the top 3 places for a few years all the youth thoroughly enjoy it.

In April of this year the Society held a Judging school workshop followed by judging exams for placement on the State and Federal Judging Panels. Once approved at our Federal Council meeting in October, there will be another 4 names added onto the Federal Judging Panel.

We have 4 names on the Australian Walk of Fame Honour board which we started in 2009.

In recent years we have awarded 6 members Federal Life membership of the Society. The most recent Life Member being Warren Gibson of Queensland. At our AGM meeting last September Allan Clark of Sunny Valley Guerneys at Lismore in NSW was elected our Federal President.

Our State branches play a major part in local shows and Royal shows, organising calf days, On Farm Challenges, field days etc. Last year our youth organised and ran a learning camp in Queensland for 19 students, most of who were from other breeds. They were each given a Guernsey heifer to care for during this time. The 4 day camp included a breakdown of the Guernsey cow, halter making, parading,

clipping and judging. Two On Farm challenges are held each year, one in Queensland and the other in Victoria and Tasmania. These challenges seem to get bigger every year. It is well supported by Guernsey breeders because all they have to do is have the animals in a yard on their property and the Judge does all the travelling.

Our Sire Proving Committee continues to search for young Australian sires to put into AI with the help of Agri-Gene who market the semen. Currently our progeny test bull is Sunny Valley YBear Crosby, a Yogi Bear son out of Sunny Valley Magicman Croissant 3Ex 92.

Our classification is carried out by the Holstein Friesian classifiers who use Guernsey standards that are approved of by the Guernsey Type Committee.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Royal Guernsey Horticultural and Agricultural Society for putting on a wonderful conference and tour and I know my fellow Australians and I will take many happy memories of our time on the Island back with us to Australia.

I have put together a slide show of some of the top Guernsey cows that we have in Australia. These cows have been entered in our annual photographic competition. The results have just been finalised and will be in the current edition of Crazy Cow in Print which is the official journal of our Society.

I hope you enjoy the slide show.

Joyce Cleggett
Federal Secretary