

Dear Friends,
2019

August 6, 2019

We feel ashamed that we have not updated our Web Page for so long.

So much has happened during the last 7 months but the over riding factor has been the drought. No one has ever seen the New England look worse. So much of the men's time is taken up feeding stock and playing draughts trying to work out if there is more feed in one paddock or another. (and there isn't) Like everyone else we have destocked dramatically. We have sold 2/3rd of our breeding cows and are feeding the rest every day as they are calving. We have held onto yearling heifers so that when we get grass we can breed up again.

As for the sheep we are 1500 down with more going as we write this note. We kept some wethers as they are bale fillers but have had to feed them so can't hold any longer. We finished shearing last week and although the fleeces were shorter and a percentage tender we were amazed as to how well the flock had come through. (so far) Still no sign of rain and water is becoming a problem. We were so lucky at the end of March we were desperate for ground water and in the throes of making big decisions when that " big black cloud" descended and dropped very heavy rain for about an hour and filled or replenished most of our dams. Not everyone has been so lucky and many in our area have had to destock altogether. Where they will find stock to start again is anyone's guess.

Twelve months ago we made the decision to take a trip to England this year. We started the plans along with our two daughters and their husbands. When decision time came we decided to go ahead and take the trip as at our age who knows what is around the corner.

We spent all of May wandering around the south of England up into Wales across the water to Nth Ireland for 5 days then back through the Lakes district and home. It was a wonderful trip. We saw the England of old and experienced the pubs, water ways, cliffs etc that one doesn't see on a guided trip. Only problem was it was spring in England so green and the farmers were making silage and hay and the stock looked in great order. Mind you we won't swap our sheep for theirs.

We had a quiet Easter Show this year but we did get 2nd in the Stonehaven Cup which gave us a thrill. We have just received a Grand Champion Ultra Superfine Fleece Award at the Bendigo Show, This was big thrill as there is huge competition down there from all over Australia.

We are down to two local shows in the New England now. Tenterfield run by John & Lios Holley and Walcha run by Jock McLaren. This is a good way to sum up the standard of your sheep before Sydney and it will be a pity if we lose more opportunities to show our stock.

We know so many of you are "doing it tough" .Please hang in there for we are sure that better times must be ahead and perhaps we will come out the other end a little stronger. Some good must come of all this pressure.

Kind regards Leo & Judy