

ISSUE

04

March, April & May  
2024

# THE SILVER BULLETIN

Newsletter of the New Zealand Murray Grey Society



## Welcome to the first Newsletter of 2024!!

*Hope you all had a great Christmas and got a chance to relax! It is hard to believe we are in the 3<sup>rd</sup> month of the year already!. Dry conditions are really starting to bite in places.. here is hoping we get some respite soon!*

*Calf sales are starting around the country as beef herds start to wean. There is also no shortage of female sales coming up in the calendar – it is great to see the emphasis on top cow families in the beef world – and the opportunities available to those to wish to pursue them.*

*There has been some fantastic promotion for the breed as of late, and I know we have had visitors to the stud recently who have been very impressed with what the Murray Grey cow can achieve – wait until they taste the end product!*

*Happy Autumn – Hope it rains for you all soon!*

*Caitlin Brooks – Editor*



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## FROM THE PRESIDENTS PADDOCK: BARRY MACDONALD

### Dear Members,

It's a new year and already it seems to have flown by so fast. It must be my age!!!

I hope that 2024 is treating everyone well and that we don't experience the natural travails that seemed to be in vogue last year.

Weaning time is nearly upon us and it's when, as breeders, we are able to see the fruits of and assess our previous mating decisions. It's also an opportunity to look at our herds and make those calls as to what animals will remain and those destined for other pastures. It can sometimes be a daunting task. All the best with those evaluations.

It's also that time of the year when all calf registrations for 2023 born animals should have been submitted. We have previously been lenient in allowing late registrations to be submitted without a late fee. We may have to relook at that aspect. So, get those registrations in. The council have been encouraging members to submit their calving records via the online option. By using this avenue, it helps keep down our administration costs and helps us keep to budget. If members need help in utilising the online option, please don't hesitate to contact either myself or a councilor.

On a different note, 2024 is also the year that council elections are due. All positions on the council will be up for consideration. If you feel that you have a contribution to make to the future admin/direction of the breed please consider standing for the council. Nomination notices will be issued in due course.

Back in January, I had the privilege of judging at the Royal Show in Levin. My associate judge was our own Zarrah Blackwell and we got to officiate over a number of beef cattle breeds including Murray Greys. Congratulations to all exhibitors and in particular Trevor and Sue Clarke who after many years successfully exhibiting their Yorkvale cattle are in the process of dispersing their herd. They made the show their last hurrah and what a success they had especially with their heifer calf winning the All Breeds heifer calf class. Thank you to the Clarkes for always keeping our breed at the forefront.

In conclusion: Wishing everyone a good end to summer and a gentle run in to winter.

## HOROWHENUA ROYAL SHOW – YORKVALE ON A HIGH

With Horowhenua being a Royal Show it didn't seem like a silly idea to have one last Hurrah for Yorkvale with the help of fellow Murray Grey breeder Caitlin Brooks, Rob Hall, Marg Hall and Charlotte Hunt who are new to Murray Greys (Galloways, Angus and Hereford breeders). It all started with a conversation between Sue & Caitlin about a truck coming up from the South Island and did Caitlin want to enter? It would be cool to have some Murray Greys there "I made the quick decision due to cost and how long of a journey it would have been for our show team to not go there, but instead made the suggestion to Sue to pick a couple of calves to break in and we could take those instead!. Sue and Trevor had given away most of their show gear a few years ago now, "so I offered to courier them up some supplies", and then fly up a couple days early to help give the team the finishing touches". The rest was history, Yorkvale took a small team of one cow and calf and two weaned calves a (bull and a heifer).

Murray Grey breed classes were judged by Barry Macdonald with assistant judge Zarah Blackwell on the Saturday morning. Yorkvale Ulex (weaned heifer calf) was Champion Junior Female and Supreme Champion Murray Grey with Yorkvale Upstart (weaned bull calf) being Champion Male and Yorkvale Koru being Champion Senior Female. Interbreeds was in the afternoon and Yorkvale Ulex represented the breed in the heifer calf class, under both breed judges she went Reserve Champion Interbreed Heifer Calf against some tough competition from terminal breeds. Sunday was Allbreeds judging with a different judge, Yorkvale Upstart was 3<sup>rd</sup> in his bull calf class, Yorkvale Koru was third in a very strong large line up of senior females and to top it off Yorkvale Ulex won the heifer calf class against larger terminal breeds. What a tremendous result for Yorkvale!

I would like to thank Sue & Trevor Clarke (and Helen and Greg) for making this all possible, it was a fantastic experience going to a different show and I am feeling very fortunate to have been able to show at two Royal events in a season and leading top Murray Greys around the ring flying the flag for the breed is the best feeling!

*Since writing this 5 Yorkvale ladies have joined the Stonybrook herd, with more travelling even further South to help start out a new venture at Charlotte Hunt's near Gore. It will be exciting to see the impact these females have in the future of the breed. Many other animals from Yorkvale have also been well received in their new homes throughout the country – a true testament to the dedication Sue and Trevor have had to the breed over the years.*



To read more

[https://www.nzherald.co.nz/horowhenua-chronicle/news/murray-grey-breeders-in-horowhenua-trevor-and-sue-clarke-moving-closer-to-levin/IK6Y735ZVAE7LLHDCBB4RCJYQ/?fbclid=IwAR1fqNZlxTNQGiFjF1ze4C7WKptd1iKQi\\_mDfHaL6R149WPJDnt-cuNe4pU](https://www.nzherald.co.nz/horowhenua-chronicle/news/murray-grey-breeders-in-horowhenua-trevor-and-sue-clarke-moving-closer-to-levin/IK6Y735ZVAE7LLHDCBB4RCJYQ/?fbclid=IwAR1fqNZlxTNQGiFjF1ze4C7WKptd1iKQi_mDfHaL6R149WPJDnt-cuNe4pU)





Calving might feel like ages away, but PLEASE NOTE THE YEAR TATTOO FOR 2024 IS V.

There has been some confusion about the use of a year tattoo. The recording system does not allow for an animal to be registered if the year tattoo does not correspond to the year of birth. Eg **2022** the year tattoo was **T**, **2023** the year tattoo was **U**, **2024** the year tattoo is **V**.

While animals **don't** have to be physically tattooed, they still have to be registered with a tattoo. (it's just the way the system works). You also don't have to tag your calves with the year letter if you don't want to or name them according to the year letter.



## MURRAY GREY COUNCIL MEMBERS

**President:** Barry Macdonald

**Vice President:** Zarrah Blackwell

**Treasurer:** Peter Stachurski

Carolyn McIntosh

Tony Powell

Caitlin Brooks

Hayden Fletcher

Michael Gray

*Councillors are up for re-election at this years AGM for the next 3 years... Members will be notified in due course on who is available for re-election and nominations will also be called.*

## NEWS & UPDATES FROM ACROSS THE DITCH



### 55TH MURRAY GREY NATIONAL SHOW & SALE

IN CONJUNCTION WITH  
MURRAY GREY YOUTH STOCK SHOW  
**SATURDAY 20 APRIL 2024**

ALBURY SHOWGROUNDS & WA HUB @ MANJIMUP SHOWGROUNDS

22 head of stud Murray Greys have been sold to a Royal family in the United Emirates (16 heifers, 2 cows with calves at foot & 2 bulls). Huge congratulations to Waroona Murray Grey Stud – who have been breeding Greys since 1975. The cattle flew out March 6<sup>th</sup>.

Kevin Miller, Whitty, Lennon & Co.  
**KMWL**  
EST 1982  
Livestock & Property Specialists

**Australian First!!**

**Congratulations KMWL clients Waroona Murray Grey Stud, Molong: 22 head of stud stock sold to United Arab Emirates!**

Also included in the consignment  
2 head stud stock + embryos and semen from JAD Speckle Parks Yeoval

Proudly facilitated by KMWL Stud Stock Specialist  
Josh Crosby - 0490 813 260



Recent Sale Results include a stud record for Southend Murray Greys with lot 1; Southend Tiptop knocked down at \$25,000 to Steven Sim of Aurora Murray Grey NSW. 33 of of 50 bulls sold with an average of \$7850.

### 2024 SCHOLARSHIPS NOW OPEN

- Murray Grey Youth Junior Ambassador (13 - 18 yrs)
- Murray Grey Youth New Zealand Exchange Scholarship (18 - 25 yrs)
- Murray Grey Youth Senior Ambassador (18 - 25 yrs)
- Murray Grey Youth Senior Educational Bursary (18 - 25 yrs)
- Lindsay Murray Greys Most Potential Breeder (13 - 25 yrs)

All Entries close Friday 12th April 2024



*Murray Grey Youth Australia NZ Exchange Scholarship will be awarded at the Murray Grey Youth stock show 18-19<sup>th</sup> April*

## THE INHERITANCE OF COLOUR IN THE MURRAY GREY

The probabilities of likely progeny colour are depicted in the following tables. These were compiled from the registrations in the first three herd books by Milton Grant of the Kurrawen stud in New South Wales and published in the book, "Murray Greys" by Tim Hewat in 1972. This table shows the likelihood of calf colour, according to colour of sire and dam, for the simplification of the tables the Silver and Silver Greys have been combined.

		Bull colour		Silver Grey	
Dam colour		Silver Grey	Grey	Dark grey	Black
<b>Calf colour</b>					
Silver grey		88%	12%	0%	0%
Grey		56.66%	36.67%	6.67%	0%
Dark grey		30%	50%	20%	0%
Black		0%	60%	40%	0%

		Bull colour		Grey	
Dam colour		Silver Grey	Grey	Dark grey	Black
<b>Calf colour</b>					
Silver grey		56.66%	36.67%	6.67%	0%
Grey		25%	50%	22.22%	2.78%
Dark grey		8.33%	45.83%	37.5%	8.33%
Black		0%	16.67%	66.67%	16.67%

		Bull colour		Dark Grey	
Dam colour		Silver Grey	Grey	Dark grey	Black
<b>Calf colour</b>					
Silver grey		30%	50%	20%	0%
Grey		8.33%	45.83%	37.5%	8.33%
Dark grey		0%	18.75%	50%	31.25%
Black		0%	0%	50%	50%

### So where did the colour come from?

Though the story goes that the first Murray Grey calf was born in 1905, the result of a mating between an Angus bull and a Shorthorn cow, one must go further back than these two animals to find out just why the grey colouring was so dominant in all twelve of this particular cow's calves, to different Angus sires. If we accept that only one foundation cow was involved and that she was a Shorthorn, where then did the Shorthorn originate? The Holderness cattle from the East Riding of Yorkshire, the Teeswater cattle of the North Riding were red, roan or white and said to have been descended from Dutch cattle, together with the British Wild White cattle that roamed wild in similar area to the Shorthorns. These wild cattle were white with black points.

The Angus is said to have originated from the Angus Doddie and the Buchan Humlie cattle of East-Central Scotland in the eighteenth century. They were predominantly black with some reds. The Scottish Angus herd book, started in 1862 also included the Galloway, which came in black, brown and dun, and also some with a distinctive belt of white. Some Angus have a greyish undercoat and others reddish.

Stock from Scandinavia may also have played a part in the development of the cattle in Scotland as invaders from there who later settled in Scotland would have brought their own cattle as well. Eventually the black was settled upon as the colour, possibly just because that was the preference at the time.

So in summary it can be assumed that the Murray Grey owes its origins to the combination of these particular sets of genes from the white Shorthorn cow which incorporated the Holderness, Teeswater and Wild White cattle of North East England and from the Angus bulls through which were channelled the genes from the Angus Doddie, the Buchan Humlie and the Norse cattle. Together these genes did not produce a freak or a 'sport' but a combination, which we now know as hybrid vigour and which produces a series of dominant effects such as colour, polledness, docile temperament, efficient feed conversion, great mothering and milking ability and which now breeds true to type in each subsequent generation.

from "The case of the curious colour" by W.A.Beattie in the book "Murray Greys" by Tim Hewat



## YOU CAN'T SELL A SECRET – MURRAY GREY BREED PROMOTION

### LIC Beef Genetics Catalogue gives the Murray Grey breed its first Debut feature!

Beef genetics has an important role to play in the dairy industry, normally being used across the bottom percentage of the milking herd to avoid replacements being retained, also generates greater opportunity to add value to the bottom-line vs a crossbred dairy calf whose only option is the bobby truck. With trials like Beef and Lamb New Zealand Dairy Beef Progeny Test in now in partnership with LIC the goal is to identify and prove beef bulls that produce calves that perform at all stages of the value chain. **Since 2015 the trial has collected data on more than 4,800 dairy beef progeny sired by 170 New Zealand beef sires from 17 different beef breeds.** Farmers now have the ability to select individual beef bulls on the traits that matter the most to their operation while reducing any surprises by using the DPT logo in the LIC Beef Genetics Catalogue. No longer does any beef bull cut the mustard – and more dairy farmers are choosing individual beef bulls that meet their criteria.

Congratulations to Torrisdale Murray Grey Stud with 721186 Torrisdale Quercus who combines short gestation length, calving ease, low birthweight with top quartile growth and carcass quality traits. Quercus has been profiled individually in the LIC catalogue – this is no mean feat – this is the first time a Murray Grey bull has been profiled in a dairy beef genetics catalogue and it's based on actual performance of this bulls dairy beef progeny to date.


**721186 Torrisdale Quercus**

Breeder: Torrisdale Murray Grey Stud    Individually    \$19,800


The silver bull from the deep south, Quercus has been used extensively within the Torrisdale Stud and comes to us from New Zealand's largest performance-recorded Murray Grey herd.

This Dairy Progeny-Tested bull placed in the top 10% of all beef sires in the DPT for gestation length (28.9 days) and top 20% for birth weight of his beef x dairy progeny at 36.9kg. His Breeding EBVs have him in the top 5% of the Murray Grey breed worldwide for calving ease. For the beef finished, his figures place him in the top 9% for 400 day weight, top 6% for carcass weight, and an impressive top 1% and 3% for muscling and marbling, respectively. He ranks well within the top 1% of the breed in NZ on the Murray Grey Dairy Index, indicating he is a natural go-to for dairy farmers wanting top Murray Grey genetics.

Proven Progeny Averages	
Data Source	Gestation Length    Birth Weight
DBPT	278.9 days    36.9kg
MINDA*	281.7 days




100% Polled



Dilution Carrier

Within-breed Evaluation							
Dairy Significance	EBV	99%	90%	50%	25%	1%	%rank
Calving Ease	3.2	Heavy					Easy 5
Gestation Length	-2.1	Long					Short 9
Birth Weight	2.6	Heavy					Light 30
Beef Significance	EBV	99%	75%	50%	25%	1%	%rank
400 Day Weight	54	Light					Heavy 9
Carcass Weight	90	Light					Heavy 6
Epic Muscle Area	4.2	Lean					Meaty 1
Intramuscular Fat	1.1	Lean					Meaty 3



View the catalogue here!

[https://d1r5hvvxe7dolz.cloudfront.net/media/documents/LIC Beef Genetics Catalogue 2024.pdf](https://d1r5hvvxe7dolz.cloudfront.net/media/documents/LIC_Beef_Genetics_Catalogue_2024.pdf)

### Denali Showcases bull calves at Amuri A@P Show



Hayden & Mara Fletcher with their son promoting the Murray Grey breed at their local A&P show. The bull calves are ET and sired by Denali owned bull Torrisdale Ranui R86.

## WANTED – CONTENT FOR THIS MAGAZINE!

The only way we can keep this Newsletter interesting and informative is to have contribution from our members – photos, articles on bulls/cows, updates from around the country – please make sure you drop Caitlin a line (and a few Murray Grey Photos!)

Deadline for the next Newsletter is 20<sup>th</sup> May for the June/July/August issue.

Email address for content – [whinnie456@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:whinnie456@yahoo.co.nz)

