



Nuffield Australia Farming Scholars  
**NUFFIELD UPDATE**  
**May 2009**

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## The Chairman Writes

The Nuffield program has many similarities to growing a crop. We pick the variety, sow the crop, watch the progress and then harvest the reward. We are fortunate enough that we have just witnessed a harvest in Cairns at the Autumn Tour, where we had presentations from returning scholars that could only be described as excellent. The enthusiasm from the scholars, their findings and the personal development that has occurred leaves Australian Agriculture in good shape.

I might add, at this point, that the Autumn Tour in Cairns was a great success. It was well attended, the visits were interesting and it showcased the diversity of the Australian landscape with world heritage areas seemingly around every corner. One of the sticking points for me was Mackay's Banana Farm at Tully, who in the week previous to our visit had had 340 mm of rain and they were going to start irrigating the following Monday. The significance of this is that we had Scholars on the tour who had not had 340 mm in the last two years. It certainly drove home the vagaries of our climate.

We have another crop growing right now, with the 2009 scholars in the middle of their travels. The February group have completed their Global Focus Program and the June Group will be meeting in Canberra on the 31<sup>st</sup> of May for their pre tour briefing before departing on their Global Focus Program. Judging from the feedback from the February group, the Global Focus Program was an excellent learning experience. We wish all these Scholars the best in their travels, and look forward to their safe return.

As stated before, we get to choose a new variety every year, and that brings me to applications for the 2010 scholarships. Applications are now open, closing on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June. I urge all Scholars to actively encourage applicants. It has been proven over the years that our network is our most successful marketing program.

In conclusion, we held a strategic planning workshop in Cairns to set the path for Nuffield Australia for the next five years. This process included a phone survey and a gathering of 24 Scholars in Cairns at a workshop. The Board and Management have taken the findings of this and will be meeting again in June to complete the strategic plan. I thank all of the participants for their time and suggestions.

Finally, I draw your attention to Ian McIntosh's comments on page 4, expressing the importance of the Nuffield Network. Ian is a past Nuffield Chairman.

I wish you all the best for the coming season.

*David Brownhill (Chairman)*

## Worth Sharing

Copies of Stan Schur's latest DVD of the autumn in Cairns are available from the national office for a small fee. DVD's of previous tours are also available

On Page 5 you will find Part 3 of "Nuffield the Man" by Caroline Nixon. Part 1 can be read in the 2009 Australian Directory, Part 2 in the Autumn 2008 Newsletter.

Nuffield Scholars, Dr Tony Hamilton 2004 and Cam McKellar 1992, were honoured recently by Scots College Sydney, as inspirational Old Boys of the School. They were featured as a part of the Scots College Sustainable Futures Program.

The 2010 AUTUMN TOUR will be held in the Northern Territory and the Ord River Scheme in March/April 2010

The 2011 International Conference will be held in SA and WA from the 25 September to 9<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2011

# Around the Branches

## Victoria

Victorian Nuffield held a successful farm tour and AGM on Tuesday May 12<sup>th</sup> in the Central Gippsland region. The day started with a visit to Paul and Lisa Mumford's dairy farm at Won-Wron near Yarram and Paul, the 2009 Gardiner Foundation Scholar, gave a great overview of his Nuffield travels.

Our group then had lunch at Tarra Bulga National Park before heading to Ben and Tanya Morris's, North of Traralgon. Ben is the 2009 Rural Finance Scholar. Ben showed us over their dry-land operation before heading over to his family property, with whom they share machinery and workload. The Morris's farming business is in a predominately dairying area surrounded by the Macalister Irrigation Scheme.

We then travelled to Traralgon for the AGM and dinner. The newly elected Executive comprises: Chairmen, Mr Peter Best, Secretary, Ms Nicola Raymond and Max Jelbart staying on as Treasurer. A great day was had by all and I wish the newly elected office bearers all the best.

I would like to thank Jim for his support and help of the Victorian branch and hope we all have the seasonal conditions of our liking for the coming year.

*Trevor Caithness (Secretary)*

## Western Australia

The season of 2009 is taking a long time to get to Western Australia with very unseasonal warm and dry weather. The current weather has caused decisions to be made and it is interesting to note that some croppers have started dry seeding. Even fruit is not ripening and no change is in sight. This follows on from last year which was very much a mixed bag (at best), with the reason for poor yields being equally split between the dry winter and the frosts that affected the crops. When the rains finally do come, we are all hoping for a good year.

Our four WA Scholars are into their travels and research and it appears they are realising and appreciating the benefits and memories that are part of their Scholarship year.

WA held its AGM and Sponsors Luncheon on Friday, February 13<sup>th</sup> and it was a success. The Executive was re-elected for another year and all sponsors attending commented on the excellent quality of both the returning Scholars and their presentation and the new Scholars embarking on their Scholarship year.

Congratulations to the Nuffield Scholars involved in the Queensland Autumn tour; it was well organised and a fantastic event. Finally, a reminder to all Nuffield Scholars to be on the lookout for any potential applicants.

*Murray Gmeiner (Chairman)*

## Tasmania

The Tasmanian Branch has been very quiet after hosting the Spring Tour in October last year. I would like to congratulate Rob and Kathy again on the exceptional effort they made in organising that event.

Thank you also to everyone else who helped out during the tour. One of the highlights for me was John Bignell's commentary during the bus tour from Bothwell up onto the lakes. He gave us a great insight into the personalities in the area including one local who was willing to help out a couple unable to have children.

Rob Bradley and Tom Francomb are at home after having travelled to the UK for the Contemporary Scholars Conference. They are both heading off soon for the June Global Focus tour. We wish them all the best.

At present we have only one Tasmanian enquirer for a 2009 scholarship so I would urge everyone to try and contact at least one potential candidate. There are many scholarships open to Tasmanian farmers this year.

The season is shaping up a little better this year with some areas receiving good autumn rains. Some areas like Bothwell are still in need of significant rainfall to make a decent season. Lets hope for the wet winter we have been missing for a few years.

Our AGM will be on the 13<sup>th</sup> of June at JJ's Bakery in Longford at 10.00 am, so I hope to see you all there.

*Richard Gardner (Chairman)*

## New South Wales

Welcome to the NSW Branch of Nuffield's newsletter.

As this goes to print we are seeing a pleasing response to the 2010 application drive from NSW farmers. We would still love to have many more applications so, once again, if everyone could look about their district and throw up a name that might be a potential scholar, that would be great.

NSW Nuffield has been hard at work pulling together the details of the Spring Tour to be held in the Windsor area. The group has put together a great series of visits that will keep the focus on modern farming and information gathering. For those of you that are coming to the Spring Tour could you please note our NSW AGM will be held during the Tour.

Good luck to Julie Brien and Jennifer Hawkins who are getting ready to depart on their GFP and Stuart Barden, James Hassall and Bruce Watson who are soon to commence their study tours. We all look forward to hearing the information you bring back!

*Jim Friend (Chairman)*

## South Australia

The conclusion of 2008 saw another well below average season for SA making it three in a row. As I write this article, SA has had one of the best general openings in years with the cropping season well under way. Fingers crossed for the season to continue.

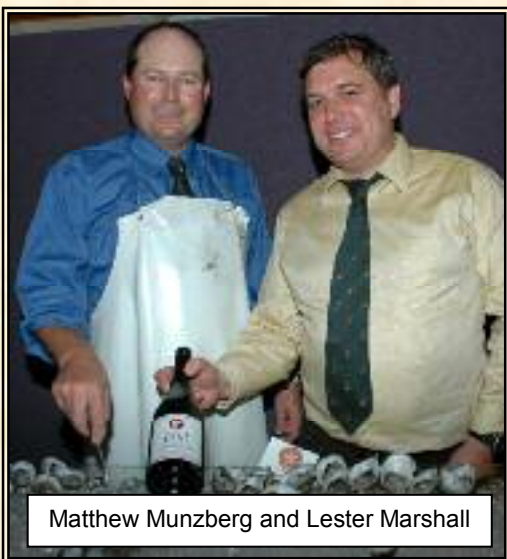
Office bearers this year are, Chairman – Andrew Johnson, Secretary – Mark Modra and Treasurer - Graham Clothier who gave rest to David Shannon after many appreciated years.

The last six months is Nuffield SA's dormant period with the build up beginning now for attracting new scholars, AGM and State Tour. In December we had our annual Christmas Show which was well supported and kindly hosted by Neil and Carolyn Andrew in Adelaide. 16 scholars and families rolled up in what has become a feature social event on our calendar.

Adam Butterworth, our only Scholar this year, will be departing in June for his travels, having gained the Fisheries Scholarship. He will be studying land based seaweed (macro-algae) systems. We wish him safe and successful travels.

Thank you to all in SA helping to promote and attract potential scholars for this year. State selection interviews will be held on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> August and, like last year, we expect a good number of applicants.

Congratulations to Matthew Munzberg and Lester Marshall who gave their presentations in Cairns on branded products and marketing. Both were informative and entertaining and had obviously maximised their Nuffield experience.



Matthew Munzberg and Lester Marshall

Our AGM and State Tour will take a slightly different format this year. The date is yet to be confirmed, late July early August is the probable time. We wish to organise a high impact day including a small tour centred close to Adelaide, some presentations of recently returned scholars, AGM, dinner with a guest

speaker and involving sponsors. We look forward to a successful day and a good roll up.

We wish you all a successful year ahead and another vibrant year within Nuffield, "Good luck"

*Andrew Johnson (Chairman)*

## Queensland

Queensland was the host and Cairns the destination for a successful Autumn Tour preceded by the Strategic Planning Workshop. Our autumn tour was supported by some 80 Scholars and partners. Record rainfall in north Queensland preceded our tour but somehow Jacko organised perfect weather for the visit.



Special thanks to the organizing committee of Brendan Kersh, Derek Schultz and Marc Jackson supported by the professional services of Jim Geltch and Liz Mann.

As a first time event, we were especially fortunate to have three NZ Scholars attending. Craig Mackenzie, Ben Todhunter and John Wright were also supported by their families.

The tour included areas of Tully, Mossman, Innisfail, Mareeba and points in between. Farm visits included Barramundi, tea and coffee farms, banana plantations and an organic DAIRY farm. We were also fortunate enough to be able to visit the fabulous Daintree Rainforest and Green Island.

On the Friday we were privileged to listen to eleven enthusiastic returning scholars present their reports, all of which were quite infectious. We were also addressed by Hayley Moynihan; Rabobank, Senior Analyst, Dairy and Animal Proteins (NZ) Food and Agribusiness Research and Advisory. Hayley spoke about the Global Financial Crisis and Agriculture's position.

An SOS has gone out to all the alumni to identify potential scholars for this year's scholarship. I would like to welcome my new fellow scholars Camilla Phillip and Tim Harslett onto the Qld executive and I am sure we will use all their enthusiasm and ability to the full.

*Michael McKellar (Chairman)*

## Northern Territory

A quiet time for the NT with one enquiry to date. Our State specific scholarship is technically not until 2010, so a potential candidate this year is a bonus.

Plans are getting underway for the top end Autumn Tour in 2010 with, probably, a split tour between NT and the Kimberley Regions. (Probably no dairy farms....)

Ashley Severin (Chairman)

## Nuffield- Some Thoughts

Nuffield in Australia has grown in strength and reputation for 60 odd years. It is the best scholarship scheme in Australia and part of the best network of its kind in the world.

Why? Because it is underpinned by an active, strong and well managed network. This network is its strength and should be the focus of all future planning.

The network:

- Ensures continuity of standards
- Helps find potential scholars of quality
- Maintains VIP contacts
- Maintains scholar support
- Maintains sponsor support
- Maintains ongoing scholar education and interest
- Provides PR for the scheme and much more.

It is therefore fundamental that the network is always nourished by regular activity.

To do this:

- State committees and tours must be regular.
- National tours/meetings must be regular
- Scholars must always travel (for a period of not less than one month) together to build firm friendships for future networking.

Ian Macintosh

## Scholar Reports

*(Published recently on the Nuffield website)*

**Andrew Heinrich** 2007 Scholar "Objective Measurement in the Australian Prime Lamb Industry"

**Camilla Philip** 2007 Scholar "Supply Chain Efficiencies And The Growth Of Category Management In The Horticultural Industry"

**Ben Forsyth** 2008 Scholar "An Ecologically Sustainable Semi-Arid Rangelands in Australia - investigating rangeland rehabilitation & regeneration techniques in semi-arid environments"

**Rob Kestel** 2008 Scholar "Intensive Meat Chicken Farming - A Comparative Analysis in the Reduction of Industry's Environmental Footprint"

**Murray Scholz** 2008 Scholar "Integrated Weed Management and the implications of herbicide tolerant crops"

**Tim Harslett** 2008 Scholar "Some Future Trends For The Production Of Vegetables In Australia"

**Mathew Munzberg** 2008 Scholar "Regional branding and marketing as a tool for improving returns to agricultural producers"

## Vale

Neil McNeill 1951 Scholar

Don Hoskins 1971 Scholar

Stephen Bullock Former UK Director

## 2009 NUFFIELD EVENTS CALENDAR

DATE	EVENT	VENUE	HOST
2 <sup>nd</sup> June - 12 <sup>th</sup> July	Global Focus Program	International	Nuffield Australia
30 <sup>th</sup> June	Applications close	National	Nuffield Australia
27 <sup>th</sup> July	State selection	Launceston	Tasmanian Nuffield
29 <sup>th</sup> July	State selection	Melbourne	Victoria Nuffield
31 <sup>st</sup> July	State selection	Brisbane	Queensland Nuffield
3 <sup>rd</sup> August	State selection	Sydney	NSW Nuffield
5 <sup>th</sup> August	State selection	Adelaide	SA Nuffield
7 <sup>th</sup> August	State selection	Perth	WA Nuffield
31 <sup>st</sup> Aug - 1 <sup>st</sup> Sept	National selection	Melbourne	Nuffield Australia
21 <sup>st</sup> October	Scholar briefing/debrief	Sydney	Nuffield Australia
22 <sup>nd</sup> - 25 <sup>th</sup> October	Spring Tour	Western Sydney	NSW Nuffield
23 <sup>rd</sup> October	Scholar presentations	Sydney	Nuffield Australia
23 <sup>rd</sup> October	Nuffield Awards Dinner	Sydney	Nuffield Australia

## Remember, Farmers Feed us All

by Paul Myers April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2009

If there's one industry in Australia that needs some decent PR, its agriculture. There are 175,000 farmers who feed Australia and contribute significantly to global nutrition. But they have lost the hearts and minds of the people who depend on them. Their status has sunk to an all-time low, and they are now regarded, variously, as environmental vandals, cruel managers of livestock and economic opportunists.

How times and attitudes have changed. Fifty years ago farmers (or more so, graziers) were at the top of the social and economic pecking order. It was a status symbol just to belong to a farming family, or to have relatives on and connections to the land. Not now. In a world where the lines between perception and reality are blurred, all types of farming are viewed as being bad, and taking water to grow food and fibre is worse. Using fertilisers, herbicides and pesticides is untenable.

The farming community seems incapable of overcoming this negativity, incapable of working out how to make a public argument that sustainable food production is a national and global necessity.

A good starting point would be abandoning the word agriculture. Agriculture is no longer sexy. It is widely seen, inaccurately, as an outdated industry with anachronistic low-tech practices - one that the best young minds are increasingly avoiding. Producing food and fibre may be a simplistic way of describing what farmers do, but there is an astonishing gap between what the public thinks of as farming and maximising food production. Many farming critics don't seem to understand that inhibiting farmers' capacity to produce food limits the global supply, increasing the need for imports, making scarcer food more expensive and taking food away from those who need it more. That arrogant disconnect is far graver than whatever environmental irresponsibility's farmers may or may not practice.

The planet has more than six billion people, but only enough for five. By 2050, nine billion people - the vast majority living in cities and towns - will compete for scarce food produced from less agricultural land than we have available now. Nutrition has to come from somewhere and farms seem an obvious choice for continuing to meet that need. But the prospect of widespread food shortages does not, apparently, engender any greater understanding of the vital role of farming in the future of both the planet, and humanity.

Some of us who live in the developed world - with full bellies and ready access to cheap, wholesome food - are among the strongest critics of modern farming, yet many don't look beyond their next meal. Certainly not in Australia, and Sydney in particular, where planned urban developments will remove three-quarters of the Sydney basin's food production capability. It is a significant capability still, and

removing it means a lot of poultry, eggs, Asian vegetables, fruit and specialty crops will have to be produced elsewhere and transported, or not grown at all. Agriculture - or whatever it should be called - urgently needs to start talking to its customers, not just to itself and governments. It needs to explain what's right, sustainable and good, and why. Not doing so threatens Australia's future food supply.

Take, for example, the way the Federal and NSW Governments trashed the reputation of responsible riparian pastoralists when they bought Toorale station in Western NSW last year. Government and environmental spin machines went into overdrive to convince us the purchase was necessary "to restore water flows to the Darling River".

Not true. Farmers can take water from regulated rivers like the Darling only when there are certain flows and river heights downstream. They can't, and don't, take water when there isn't enough. Until recent rain, little water had been extracted by Toorale or nearby properties for years. When farmers are allowed to take water, either so much flows that there's virtually no "return of water" to the river, or it spills out on to floodplains (where it is available for productive agricultural practices) and some returns to the river naturally. The lack of water in rivers is more because of the lack of rain than farmers taking the water, although water has been over-allocated on the Murray. When properties like Toorale store water in the wet times, river flows are much better than when there are marginal amounts of water available.

Toorale is to become a national park, and will not be cared for like a private property. Within a few years it will be overrun by weeds and feral animals, to the detriment of the property, the neighbours and everyone. The property has been taken out of production to satisfy an agenda that doesn't pass scrutiny. It was a \$24 million stunt. But it may be the policy blueprint for future food and fibre production and, as such, is an ominous signal that producers will ignore at their peril.

A vocal minority can quickly sway a debate, as happened with mulesing, a debate the wool industry comprehensively lost. The same outcome threatens the next big-ticket issues: carbon trading and genetically modified foods. Farmers will lose this battle if they don't take the initiative and sell it to the people they feed. The world will lose. We need it to eat, prosper and survive.

Extreme views about agriculture are biting farmers hard, but losing control of the food production imperative will be disastrous for everyone. Farmers may have lost some battles, but the planet can't afford them to lose the war.

*Paul Myers, a freelance journalist, is a former editor of The Land and an Australian Trade Commissioner in Canada.*

# Nuffield the Man Part 3

## Upwards & Onwards

Undaunted by the episode with the Oxford trams, Morris's brain tussled with plans for four-seater cars. But costs concerned him and competition with the American market would be challenging. In 1913 he resolved to visit America inviting Frank Grey, the young lawyer so helpful in the tram battle, to accompany him. But in the event Morris travelled alone on a Cunard ship out of Liverpool determined to learn all he could about his powerful rivals. True to form, he itemised his daily outgoings. Everything was recorded down to 3d for a newspaper. Also noted was "Winnings of ten pounds" which could well have been a harmless wager on the time the ship would arrive at its destination. Morris enjoyed a small gamble which represented no real threat should he lose, but his greater enjoyment, one suspects, was outmanoeuvring the other players!

Armed with numerous calling cards and introductions, Morris's prime destination was Detroit, motor capital of the United States. Most prominent of his contacts was the Continental Motor Manufacturing Corporation who could produce an engine at less than half the price of White and Poppe in Coventry, England. Returning home, he harnessed the services of White and Poppe's designer, Landstad, and returned again to America. This time Morris travelled first class visiting Landstad's cabin to discuss designs. Landstad, not a good traveller at the best of times, found the sea swell, combined with the fumes from Morris's chain-smoking put further attempts to plan ahead on hold until their arrival.

The outcome of their combined ideas and designs, allied to information garnered in America, resulted in another motoring household name, the Morris Cowley. British made, but with parts and ideas imported from the 'enemy' which challenged the mighty Ford Company, this indeed was entrepreneurship at the gallop. The first quarter of 1914 surpassed production for the whole of 1913. By July, 763 cars were built, only exceeded by the likes of Ford, Rover, and Singer. But business was about to face a major foe. In August 1914 Great Britain declared war on Germany.

Previously boosted by prosperous Edwardian years and great advances in innovation matched by the demand for these products, Morris was largely his own master. He dealt with problems as they arose. But war has its own brand of uncertainty largely beyond our control. He experienced personal sadness within his family at this time and failure again abounded in the motor industry to the stage where his mighty rival, Austin, was braking for its life. But important lessons were learnt and the British Government's restriction on foreign competition put Morris in the box seat when peacetime came, to become the dominant force in the British motor industry.

But the war did bring restrictions and Morris, adapting to new wartime regulations, tendered to make 18 pounder shell cases but landed instead an order in 1915 for hand grenades! His enterprise was to excel in another area when he designed a new device much needed for naval mines in the North Sea. Traditional methods used at the Portsmouth dockyards, with a workforce unwilling to modernise, produced only 40 devices a week, not nearly enough to meet the needs of the area covered by the war at sea. Morris won the contract, moved operations to his workshop in Oxfordshire and, by the end of 1918, his factory was dispatching 1,200 devices a week.

Understanding the mechanics of supplies and the intricacies of the munitions industry proved beneficial with Government departments and peacetime industry alike. However, when war ended in 1918 Ministry-owned machinery was removed leaving Morris with his own ageing pre-war equipment. His health deteriorating, largely due to wartime stress, Morris was to lose his father and other close family members during this time. Some modest financial support for bereaved family members came from Morris and his wife, but largely they backed away from closer involvement or help, and family discussions were confined to his office. Their philanthropic image was not enhanced during this time.

In 1919, suspected diabetes resulted in six weeks at a German health spa. Much against his patriotic nature, only the assurance that this was the sole clinic offering the required treatment convinced him to travel there. To his credit, Morris not only volunteered that they were kind to him at the clinic, but declared he returned with "an almost entire restoration to health". But he returned to find his business, factory and even suppliers in disarray. Numbers of car companies once again faced disaster at the end of the Great War but despite these setbacks, and the ensuing difficult times of the twenties and depression of the thirties, middle-class Britain surprisingly found the money for car ownership and Morris proved, once again, the man with the drive and know-how to market what they wanted.

He was also innovative and far-sighted; alongside new designs came the first inclusion of auto parts such as spare wheel, lights, free insurance, a Morris Owners magazine and the first manufacturer to provide a "money back" guarantee for dissatisfied customers! Morris offered these 'extras' as part of the package of ownership. Somewhat resembling the philosophy of the Butlin Holiday Camps, so popular after WWII, family holidays were fully paid in advance, were inclusive of all accommodation and, from the moment of arrival, all the 'fun of the fair' could be enjoyed with no costly surprises. Both enterprises offered shrewd and successful marketing to hard-pressed families with carefully budgeted income.

*To be continued.....*

*Caroline Nixon*

## A Taste of the Tropics

Approximately 80 Nuffield's and partners celebrated the 'Autumn Tour' with four days of exhilarating adventure of tropical farming and sightseeing in North Queensland, a region that receives much more annual rainfall than any other area in Australia.

As the group came together on our first evening we headed out for dinner along the Esplanade to a local restaurant where it was a pleasure to see International Chairman Peter Nixon celebrate his birthday. He enjoyed the moment to a chorus of birthday wishes and a magnificent cake to be shared by all.

Day 1. Headed south of Cairns to Mourilyan near Innisfail where we took in the barramundi farm of Marty Phillips. They have developed a successful operation, growing the barramundi up to 8kg.; harvesting and packing it in ice and sending to markets all around Australia.



Simon Tiller gets personal with a Barra

Into Tully, we were greeted by 'The Giant Gum Boot' – standing some 8 meters tall – the amount of their annual rainfall!



Tully centres on sugar and has a farmer owned sugar mill. Dick Cammilleri – Chairman of Tully Sugar, gave the group an oversight of their industry. On average the harvest area of cane supplied to the Tully mill is 23,500 Ha, producing 2 million tonnes of crushed cane, and around 250,000 tonnes of raw sugar.

Travelling through the area reveals the ongoing damage of cyclone Larry which ripped through the

area two years ago. Spikes of dead timber standing out above the surrounding tropical rainforest reveal how disastrous the forces of nature can be. Not only did the forests receive destruction, the sugar cane was damaged and a large area of banana plantations were destroyed, severely cutting production for 6 months until new suckers grow and produce a new crop of bananas.

Mackay's banana farm was visited, is the largest in Australia – employing some 250 people in the peak



of the season and selling fruit all over Australia, supplying Woolworths and some to Coles as well as other markets. With quality being so important, up to 20% of fruit is culled out to present an unblemished product for the consumer.

A Nuffield tour would not be complete if a dairy farm was not included! – so yes – up to Milla Milla on top of the range. One could be in New Zealand or the Victorian high country, amongst the fog and light rain showers. Rob Watson and family's Mungalli Creek organic dairy farm produces rich creamy milk yoghurt, and cheeses.

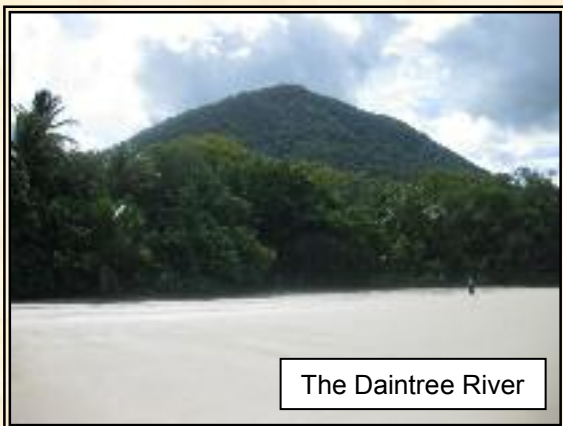
Day 2 – Friday. Starting with the Returned Scholar's Presentation Day where the keynote speaker was Hayley Moynihan, Senior Analyst – Agribusiness – Rabobank in New Zealand. Hayley spoke of the Global Financial Crisis and how it will affect agriculture. The day continued with 11 presentations of returned Scholars (including one New Zealand scholar). All Scholars kept the audience well entertained with the high quality reports that revealed their findings and how they will apply the learning's to their own farms and agriculture in Australia.

Lester Marshall embarrassed Dave and Liz Brownhill



Lester Marshall demonstrating to David and Liz Brownhill how an ovster should be eaten

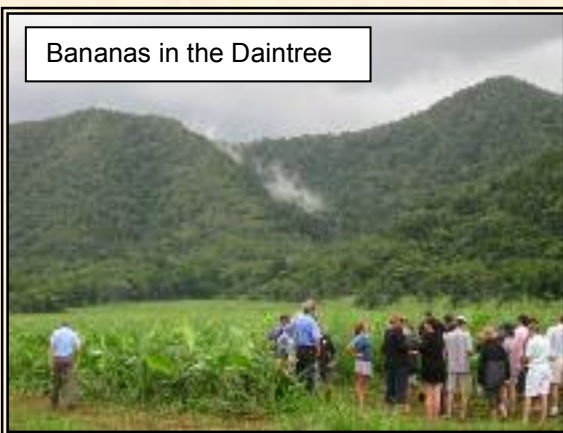
with his oysters that Dave was to pass to Liz – mouth to mouth, to improve their love life! Only problem – Liz is allergic to oysters! Unfortunately, Dave had no other takers from the audience to help him out! Lester treated scholars and guests to a wonderful entree of Coffin Bay oysters before the evening dinner.



The Daintree River

Amongst the many highlights of the day were two gems from Graham Finlayson – *'it takes high hurdles to achieve high goals'* and Tim Harslett *'good farmers don't make excuses'*.

Day 3 – Saturday morning. On board four mini buses, we wound our way north along the coast passing by Port Douglas, Mossman and crossing the Daintree River by barge and to an organic banana farm – one of 14 banana farms operated by Dole – an American owned company managed by Nuffield Scholar – Marc Jackson. Being organic in the tropical environment has had its challenges with grass and weeds, insects and fungus all being a problem. The farm is slowly overcoming these problems and is supplying a quality fruit close to the quality of non-organic bananas. Between rain showers and mud we inspected the plantation which borders the Daintree River where crocodiles make their home.



Bananas in the Daintree

It was a short distance to the Daintree Tea farm which was started in 1978 by the Nicholas family, and claims to be the only 100% Australian owned, grown, processed, and packaged tea plantation. It is an ideal area to grow tea with well drained soil and good rainfall in the growing season. Tea is produced

at around 1 tonne/acre/year and it is said that a tea bush can last up to 100 years.

Visiting the Daintree Discovery Centre is a must while in the region, giving visitors an insight to the tropical rainforest, ecology, flora, and fauna. A look over the tree canopy from the 23 meter tower was well worth the effort. It was lovely to have lunch alongside the beautiful beaches and walk along the sand, getting the feet wet in the cool waters flowing down the creeks and entering the sea.

Returning back to Mossman we headed inland up the range via Mt. Molloy to Mareeba and to the Howe farms at Walkamin. The rich red volcanic soil of the farm has irrigation water supplied from Lake Tinaroo. Once a large tobacco growing area, which no longer exists, they now grow bananas, peanuts, avocados, and coffee. This is another large family farm that is a credit to the owners, sending produce all over Australia and employing 150 people.

With the light fading we travelled to Jaques family Coffee Plantation. Originally from Tanzania, Robert and Linda established the first coffee plantation in Australia in 1974. Having had a bumpy ride with high interest rates in the 1970's and 1980's, and a destroyed crop in the 1990's by misused chemical from a State controlled fruit fly spraying programme, they now have a top coffee farm and have value added with farm tourism complete with coffee shop and cafe. The Jaques also built the first mechanical coffee harvester in Australia.

We had the pleasure of viewing the plantation by night, travelling on board the big red 'Bean Machine'!

Final stop on the way home at Kuranda Resort was a well deserved dinner of seafood and other tropical culinary delights, capping off 3 days of wonderful Nuffield fellowship and learning.

On Sunday the remaining scholars took a boat ride to Green Island to enjoy viewing the coral reef from glass bottom boats.



Full credit to the Queensland team headed by Marc Jackson with the help of Liz Mann. Thank you to all the presenting Scholars as well, who have done themselves and Nuffield proud.

Phil Donges