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from the Editor:

As we go into the New Year of 2008, I am sure that we will contemplate what the New Year will have in store for us. There will be many new challenges in the coming year. Some of our folk have already been meeting these with the weather.

It is good to have all that electioneering out of the way. The majority of Australians made their choice and there in lies some new challenges for everybody. One thing is for sure, and that is that the so called 'conservative' side of politics are going to have to make some radical changes to capture enough favour of the Australian voter to regain power and become the progressive arm of politics.

Why is it that the so called 'green' people become popular when most people in agriculture are the best 'greenies' and environmentalists around?

I think we need to plough the old paddock, rip out the bad weeds, sow some new seeds and let a vibrant crop grow which will harvest a new era of Government for all Australians.

Phil Donges.

Chairman's Chat:

Owing to the fact that Chairman Derek is taking a well earned R&R at the Sunshine Coast with his family, sunning himself, playing bowls, catching up with old acquaintances, keeping cool with 'light refreshments' as he sits on the beach admiring the scenery and the waves roll in.....a double 'Chat' will appear in the next issue!

PS – the real truth is that he is resting and preparing to attack the Isa!

Update on current Scholars:

Jack Milbank writes..

I returned from India/Dubai/UK just before Christmas. I traveled through India with the French Nuffield scholar which was great.

We visited all the main horticultural regions, starting in Shimla in the Himalayan foot hills where we saw nectarine and apple production, a lot of floriculture, Lillies, carnations, chrysanthemums mainly. We then went down to Aurangabad – 8 hrs inland from Mumbai where there was a lot of cotton, grapes, pomegranate, eggplant and chilli.

We finished up in Bangalore visiting the Prem Nath Agricultural science foundation, several market places , (Dutch auction trading houses) and several nurseries, orchards, vineyards around Bangalore.

I then continued to the UK researching market opportunities and then continued to Dubai where I met with every sector of the fresh produce supply chain from wholesalers in the central markets to the main supermarket chains and hotel procurement departments.

I toured a few large hotels with the executive chefs inspecting the 16 or so restaurants preparation areas etc. I also met with various landscape architects who are working on sourcing ornamental plants for new streetscaping etc in the city.

All the best and hope to see you again soon, unfortunately I will not be on the northern tour as I have one more week of study in NZ followed by the conference at the end of February.

The North-West Frontier Tour

(Mt. Isa - Cloncurry)

Yes Brendan has an exciting tour planned for the 'Isa' meet, and it is looking good for a great get-together.

Brendan would like the final numbers to be confirmed ASAP so that he can put the last touches on accommodation and travel etc.

Like most areas you don't realize how many different activities go on in the district until you have a 'local' show your around and Brendan being the local, I know we are in for a real treat of interesting places and people to see.

So Mt. Isa the copper city, 'cop this' - Queensland Nuffield's are on their way!

Around the Ridges:

Warren & Carolyn Drynan – Rathdowney going from a dry season to now having much destruction from flooding with fences, crops and soil being washed away. But on the flip side the hills will turn to green and renew the pastures. On the other hand...

...Michael & Helen McKeller- Morven tell me that the last 3 months have been very kind to them and the new grass around the farm has put a real smile back on their faces.

Different story down our neck of the woods in Southern Downs, as our area has received very little rain and remain rain deficient 'big time'. But the long range forecasters tell us that our turn will come.

Oh well – '24-7 Kevin' will fix it all!

Where are they Now??... Segment looking at the life of past Scholars.

Name: Keith McLean

Scholar Year: 1958

Keith and Del, now retired, live on the Gold Coast with a Golf Course on one side and a Turf Club on the other side – both within walking distance, although these days Keith drives to his favourite pastime!

The Turf Club is Keith's passion where he served as Chairman of the Gold Coast Turf Club for 40 years. He comments that he once inspired other member to help him introduce a rule that would have the Chairman step aside when they reached

the age of 70 years – only to find that he had to step aside when he reached that milestone!

Keith did his Nuffield back in 1958, where as a dairy farmer he studied different dairy products and new marketing ideas which he brought back to the local dairy industry only to find a reluctance to accept these new ideas. Sounds like Keith was ahead of his time!

While dairying Keith and family were also involved in the catering industry and for many years ran all the liquor outlets at the Brisbane Exhibition.

Keith and Del have 4 children and 8 grand-children and share their company as often as they can.

How Nuffield Scholarships have changed.

Back when Keith completed his Scholarship, there were no mobile phones or email. Travel to the UK was by ship and the Scholar would be away for 6 months or more leaving their wives at home having to attend to all the chores of running the business and looking after the children and keeping the home fires burning. We must admire our early Scholars and spouses for their drive and determination.



Keith McLean & Phil Donges