

Highland FLING

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All you need to
know about the

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Highland

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Highland FLING

The official publication of Australian Highland Cattle Society

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EDITOR/DESIGNER

Katie Stone

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Opinions expressed in the Highland Fling are not necessarily the official view of AHCS Inc.

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To preserve heritage, protect integrity and advance Highland Cattle in Australia through herd registration, education, promotion and fellowship

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome...

I hope everyone has had an enjoyable summer and as we enter March, I want to welcome you to the Autumn 2025 edition of the Highland Fling. This issue rounds up the past six months of news, from show ring successes to expert advice on sire selection and selling Highland beef.


Inside, you'll find part two of Steve's trip to Scotland to attend the Oban Spring Show, alongside three inspiring member spotlights showcasing the dedication behind our breed. Whether you're just starting out or you're experienced member, our contributors share invaluable insights to support your journey. We hope you enjoy this edition and welcome your stories and feedback.

Katie Stone | Editor & Designer



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PRESIDENTS REPORT

Welcome to 2025 and the latest edition of our Highland Fling.

The Australian Highland Cattle Society's mission is to preserve heritage, protect integrity and advance Highland Cattle in Australia through herd registration, education, promotion and fellowship.

In recent years, our Society has grown, and we have seen a significant increase in the popularity of the breed across Australia and thankfully, our cattle registrations have increased dramatically – something we should all celebrate, as we work to preserve the Highland Cattle breed in Australia.

During this time of growth and change, I believe it is important to bring focus and reflect on what has been achieved, but to also ensure that the strategic direction of the Society is clear and relevant for the future.

In early December, our Council team, along with our Executive Officer, Nikki Ward, were joined by facilitator Sarah Millen for a Strategic Planning Workshop in Melbourne. Sarah generously gave her time and expertise to the process, which is genuinely appreciated. On behalf of our Society, I would like to offer our sincere collective thanks to Sarah for her time to facilitate the session and valuable insights.

The session was positive and included a review of the Society mission and vision statement,



highlighted key support areas and objectives, whilst working on the development of an action plan, suitable for the next five years, as we continue to grow.



TOP: Council members at the Strategic Planning Workshop in December 2024, from left: Jeanette Rawlings, Mollie Agostino, Lesley Harris, Nathan Hersey, Tim Wright, Nick Radford. Absent: Brad Crompton.

The workshop brought focus to some key strategic building blocks and focus areas of development, identified as follows:

- **Maintaining the breed integrity**
 - Improving the genetic diversity
 - Ensuring female pedigree animals are maintained in active folds
- **Advancing the breed**
 - Establishing a Highland beef subcommittee
 - Improving AI and ET accreditations and providing members with pre-approvals

- **Supporting through education**
 - Creating new and easy to access resources, education material and offerings
 - Promotion and marketing at a Society wide level
 - Tackling scams and protecting our shared interests as breeders Highland Cattle owners
- **Effective communication**
 - Engage members through outreach and improve service standards
- **Lean processes and systems**
 - Review registration process
 - Improve the website, classifieds and user experience
 - Improve systems and processes around the annual National Show.

There are a handful of short-term improvements that will be implemented around communication, promotion and active assistance to members, that I hope to benefit us all as members.

Noting that there has been a significant change in the registration process over the past year, the AHCS Council and State Reps will be reaching out to members, to see if assistance is needed with registration and the collection of DNA samples. If you know you need immediate assistance with registration of your animals, please feel free to contact the Society to see what practical help can be offered.

It has been identified that a clear area of interest by many members is the commercialisation of the breed, which may occur through actively promoting and marketing of Highland beef in Australia. There is a lot of work that will need to go into seeing Highland beef become a well-known product in Australia and potentially elsewhere in the world. The AHCS is keen to explore the possibilities in this area, with a focus on research, education, and marketing strategies to drive success.

Expressions of interest are currently being accepted by members to join the Highland Beef Subcommittee, to work on a way forward and make recommendations to the Council. If this is of interest to you, please contact our Executive Officer to register your interest.

With plenty of work and time invested already, we are currently finalising the new Strategic Plan, which will be shared with members in due course.

Membership update and registration numbers

Our Society continues to grow, with an increase in membership, seeing 105 new members for the 2024 calendar year, bringing the overall membership to **439 members**.

New members joining us in 2024 are as follows: Full: 67; Heritage: 28; Commercial: 5; Junior: 5

Animal registrations have slowed, but overall an increase was still recorded for the year. Understanding that there is a more robust system now in place for animal registrations, I anticipate that registrations will again increase as the process becomes more familiar. It is also worth noting that there are larger numbers of animal registrations being received in batches, which is likely a result of DNA collection practices.

The total new animal registrations for the 2024 calendar year are **350 animals**.

2024 animal registration numbers by grade are as follows:

FIB Female	70
FIB Male	35
FIB Steer	3
Purebred Female	90
Purebred Male	21
Purebred Steer	10
Grade A Female	5
Grade B Female	44
Grade C Female	72

We are truly lucky to have such a wonderful breed of cattle to promote and protect.

Thank you to all our members for the strong and ongoing dedication to the preservation of heritage, the protection of the *integrity of the breed and commitment to advancing Highland Cattle in Australia*.

Nathan Hersey

President, Australian Highland Cattle Society

NEW State Reps



Samantha Wakerley

Which State do you represent?: QLD

Fold Name: Narraburra

Property Details: Recently tripled in size to 570 acres, we are located in Kooroongarra on the Southern Downs.

Fold size: Almost 40

Primary Focus of your Fold:

Temperament is incredibly important to us. While we always strive to buy and breed animals that are true to type, our main customers are hobby farms and wedding venues etc and we do lots of work with children with disabilities, so gentle, friendly animals are a must.

Background/About:

I have to admit, I had zero interest in cattle up until three years ago, when we purchased our first Highland, Evie of Loxley. Since then, she has given us two beautiful calves (both in nature and in appearance) who are my pride and joy.

What are your hopes as State Rep?

I hope to encourage more Queenslanders to join the Society and register their cattle. I'd also like to hold more workshops and field days. We'll also be holding our first QLD State Show in conjunction with the Royal Toowoomba Show in 2025, so I'm pretty proud of that.



Amanda Loadsman

Which State do you represent?: QLD

Fold Name: Cademuir

Property Details: Located within the beautiful Sunshine Coast Hinterland within the historic town of Mapleton. My 34 acre property is nestled between the Mapleton National Park and has Obi Obi Gorge as its back border.

Fold size: 6

Primary Focus of your Fold:

Heritage Breed Preservation.

Background/About:

I first encountered Highland Coos when I was living in Sweden. I spotted these hairy, ginger beasts in a paddock and couldn't resist stopping to take a closer look. From that moment on, I was completely smitten.

When I later purchased acreage in the Hinterland, I began exploring into ways to utilise the land. With a deep passion for regenerative farming, I realised that Highland Coos would be a perfect fit – not only because of their positive environmental impact but also because of my love of these magnificent animals.

What are your hopes as State Rep?

I love the unified togetherness we have in Queensland and I'd like that bond to continue and grow.



Tom Robinson

Which State do you represent?: SA

Fold Name: Hoyles Plains

Property Details: 3000 acre Grain Farm, Growing Wheat, Lentils, Barley & Canola. Run Trade cattle on multi species cover crops. Halbury, South Australia.

Fold size: 11

Primary Focus of your Fold:

Structure, Docility, and a loving nature.

Background/About:

I farm with my wife Cassi, where we grow grains, fatten trade cattle and raise Highlands. What started with Cassi wanting just one Highland, quickly turned into a deep love for the quiet nature and unique personalities of these animals.

What are your hopes as State Rep?

I hope to give support to all SA AHCS members, old and new, on current issues facing the breeders in our wonderful state.



Erica Smith

Which State do you represent?: VIC

Fold Name: Glenstrae

Property Details: I have a small, 5 acre property in Latrobe Valley, Victoria. I live in a suburb on the outskirts of town and have lovely neighbours who also let me use their paddocks for cows, giving me another 20 acres.

Fold size: 19

Primary Focus of your Fold:

To selectively breed using AI where possible, in order to improve each individual animal for future stud or show purposes.

Background/About:

My involvement with the breed began in 2013 when I was searching for a beef breed that would suit our family's needs, which included two members with special needs. The Highland's gentle temperament won me over right away and it remains one of the things I love most about the breed. While their iconic looks and impressive horns will always stand out, the calm and friendly nature of the Highland is truly the foundation of my fold.

What are your hopes as State Rep?

As a regular exhibitor at shows including Canberra, Melbourne and Adelaide Royals, I hope to continue promoting the breed at these events, while encouraging others to get involved. One of my goals is to see more junior participation within the AHCS, as juniors are the key to our future and we need to nurture their passion and interest as much as possible.



Hugo Howse

Which State do you represent?: VIC

Fold Name: Cambus Glen Highlands

Property Details: Approximately 170 acres near Framlingham in South West Victoria.

Fold size: A little less than 60 animals.

Primary Focus of your Fold:

Breeding quality stud stock, showing and raising pasture raised Highland beef using regenerative farming practises.

Background/About:

Cambus Glen is owned and operated by Hugo Howse and Lesley Harris. We left engineering jobs to pursue our shared passion for the environment, livestock welfare, and great steak. Our business is centered around our fold of registered Highland cattle who are perfectly suited to the rugged landscapes and harsh winters of our farm. Our aim is to breed structurally sound, medium-framed animals for sale, showing, and beef, while maintaining the breed's distinct characteristics. We place a strong emphasis on temperament, feet, legs, and excellent udders, and our cattle are raised to perform on grass alone.

What are your hopes as State Rep?

I am committed to supporting both new and existing members of AHCS, just as we were guided on our journey by the generous support of seasoned breeders. As the current President of the Victorian Highland Breeders Group, I actively contribute to advancing AHCS's mission of promoting education, advocacy, and fellowship throughout Victoria.



Andrew Rawlings

Which State do you represent?: NSW

Fold Name: Mholach Carlin

Property Details: Bonny Groves, located in the foothills of Brown Mtn in Southeast NSW, is surrounded by mountains with stunning views. Our 155-acre property features undulating land, with some steeper areas and two main gulleys fed by permanent springs. The land has salt and pepper granite and a few outcrops. It requires extensive work, as it was not well-maintained before we arrived, and the work continues.

Fold size: 34

Primary Focus of your Fold:

Mholach Carlin is about breeding true to type with a focus on structure, temperament and heritage. We do not aim to breed animals that are comparable to your classic European breeds in size or stature, rather in keeping with the heritage of stout versatile animals that thrive in any conditions that are sound in their frame and friendly and playful with you, their owner!

Background/About:

I grew up in the Central Tablelands of NSW, working on family properties. In high school, I showed animals donated by Susan Elder for our Ag program. After graduating from Longreach Pastoral College, I worked on several properties, including Boonoke in Deniliquin. When Jeanette and I bought our own property, Highlands was a must. We quickly realized the breed's uniqueness and are dedicated to promoting and preserving it.

What are your hopes as State Rep?

As a State Rep I hope to assist all new members with their journey into owning Highlands however they might need it. For established members, I see myself helping with the changes that Council have brought in.

I also hope to assist Council in bringing their message to the members and, for me personally, to help bring the National Show to its full potential.

Highland Fever hits **BONNIE GLEN HIGHLANDS**

I have logged more kilometres and hours in a vehicle in the last 12-months than I have in all my almost 30-years of living combined, all since owning Highland cows.

By Anna Buckley of Bonnie Glen Highlands

I am typing this as I sit in the back seat of my parents' car for the second 20-hour round trip in a 6-month period, towing a new little addition in the back, shaking my head, and wondering how we got here.

In February last year, Bonnie Glen Highlands didn't exist. Our 80-acre property in Central West NSW was winding down stock, we had more money in our pockets, days off that were actually days off and not nearly as many discussions about semen over the dinner table. Until a harmless visit to a nearby fold (Springside Highlands) had us pondering getting a Highland as a pet, 'wouldn't that be lovely, a nice little paddock ornament' we thought. Oh but of course you can't get just one...

Flash forward to now, there are 13 Highlands in our paddocks (14 if you count the one in the back of the trailer), a semen tank filled with liquid nitrogen and 40-year-old bull semen sitting in a fully decked out, purpose built, dedicated Highland cow showroom. Did I mention the artificial insemination kit wrapped under the Christmas tree? And the cherry on top, a giant Highland cow adorning the front gate, just in case you didn't catch that yep, we have Highlands.

Whilst the layman (and my husband) may think we've lost our minds, those similarly affected understand the condition.

The diagnosis?

A severe case of... Highland Fever.



LEFT: Tom completing his Orion artificial insemination course in Wagga Wagga. **RIGHT:** Tearlag 2nd of Yatarna (AKA Charlotte) awarded Supreme Champion Highland Exhibit at Bungendore Show.

Whilst not fatal, the disease can be entirely life altering with common symptoms including (but not limited to) a complete loss of inhibition, an insatiable hunger for more cows and the insufferable need to bring up Highland cows in every. single. conversation.

What's more, it's highly infectious, and sadly my parents have also come down with the affliction. The heart and soul (and enablers) of this venture, Julie and Tom, promptly sold all their existing stock to make room for the Highlands, spent countless hours finding each individual animal's favourite treat (strawberry donuts for Butterscotch) and have awoken at the crack of dawn on more than one occasion to venture to the ends of the earth to find the perfect hairy coos to add to the fold. They've got it bad.

So, what does life look like now?

Well since Highland fever is incurable, all there is to be done is lean into the chaos of the disease, and that's exactly what we've done.

2024 has seen Bonnie Glen Highlands make its foray into the showing scene with the formidable *Tearlag 2nd of Yatarna* (AKA Charlotte) strutting her stuff in the local rings with plans to sashay her way onto the national stage in Canberra and Sydney in 2025 – hopefully accompanied by little miss new addition currently in the back of the trailer.

On the breeding front, our goal is to breed structurally correct cattle with a focus on temperament whilst also reflecting the true Highland breed characteristics. With this in mind, we have some exciting calves expected throughout 2025 through AI to the Supreme Champion Dawson Arrow of MacAnLeister and boasting Cruachan, Ennerdale and Bairsley lines. Using these distinguished foundations to create our own Highland genetic line, Bonnie Glen has plans for embryo transfer on the horizon and have trained to conduct our own AI breeding program utilising some well-established UK genetics – once that kit under the tree is unwrapped of course.



Highland fever is well and truly still in its incubation stage amongst the Bonnie Glen team with clinical signs only likely to intensify. Whilst it's true weekends are now spent road tripping to the back of whoop whoop to pick up cows, and days off are in the yards training or in the paddocks walking amongst the girlies, and our bank accounts are crying and I now say semen at least once a day (to my parents no less)...

...I can honestly say it's the happiest we've ever been.

There's nothing quite like celebrating with your family when you win over one of these magnificent creatures by finding their favourite scratch spot, or finding out that one special heifer is pregnant and scheduling your entire life around her calving time or getting that Supreme Champion ribbon – even if you're the only one in the ring.

Highland people get it.

So, you best look out because Highland Fever is catching... and you may be next.



TOP: Tom, Anna and Julie in their Bonnie Glen merch before their first Show. ABOVE: Tom, Anna and Charlotte after a successful Cowra Show.



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


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PRODUCING & SELLING HIGHLAND BEEF

By Hugo Howse & Lesley Harris
Cambus Glen Highlandse

While Highland beef is undoubtedly remarkable, it's important to note that the breed itself is not magical. Producing high-quality beef requires knowledge and attention to detail. Without proper care, the beef can fall short of expectations.

Selling this beef to the public involves navigating numerous legislative challenges in processing and distribution. In this article, we'll share our experience producing and selling Highland beef in Victoria, though we believe these challenges are similar across Australia. Some of our insights will also apply to those raising beef for personal consumption.

"There was, however, one steak that I could not get out of my head: that red slice of Scottish loin from the bank of the River Earn, barely marbled, silky even when raw, its fat the colour of butter. Angus Mackay's Highland rib-eye was the most flavorful steak I'd ever eaten. It was also the juiciest steak I'd ever eaten, and the tenderest, too."

– Mark Schatzker in *Steak: One Man's Search for the World's Tastiest Piece of Beef*

What we do

We produce 100% grass fed and finished pasture raised Highland beef with no added hormones or systematic antibiotics. We employ rotational grazing techniques, promoting natural ecosystem function and protecting our soil. Our cattle graze on low input pastures managed with no artificial fertilisers, pesticides or fungicides.

It takes time to make a premium beef that is lean yet well marbled and tender and all steers are taken to 40+ months to develop optimal flavour and marbling. The beef is dry-aged for 21 days – the dry aging process improves the eating quality of the beef. It deepens the flavour and enhances the tenderness and texture. As part of our paddock-to-plate philosophy, we encourage nose-to-tail eating and the full utilisation of the carcass. The hides are turned into rugs and offcuts are processed into dog treats.

We process only a small number of animals per year – between 6 and 8, and our beef is sold at selected restaurants, farmers markets and online when available.

We are committed to animal welfare and believe that a more natural stress-free environment provides our cattle with the best quality of life. Our cattle are handled using low stress cattle handling techniques and we interact with them daily.

Why Beef?

The reality of breeding Highland cattle is that half of the animals will be male – and most of these should be steered. While some steers are sold as pets, this depends on their temperament and market conditions. All breeders will eventually face an excess of mature steers, and occasionally, there are heifers or cows with fertility issues or structural flaws that need to be culled. For us, the decision to process these animals for beef was part of our commitment to taking full responsibility for their life cycle, ensuring sustainability on our farm. We also chose to sell the beef to the public because our production far exceeds our own consumption needs. Additionally, selling Highland beef allows us to showcase the unique attributes of this exceptional breed. This does not preclude us from our duty of care and compassion toward every animal.



Producing Quality Beef

We believe the key factors that make Highland beef exceptional are the breed's non-selective grazing habits, medium frame size, slow growth rate, insulating double coat, and generally calm temperament. Highland cattle are excellent grazers, feeding on a wide variety of grass, forbs, bushes, and trees. This diversity in their diet contributes to the distinctive flavour of the beef. Their moderate frame size enables them to maintain good condition even on less fertile pastures where larger commercial cattle might struggle. The slower growth of Highland cattle contributes to both the flavour and tenderness of the beef. Their double coat encourages the development of intramuscular rather than subcutaneous fat, adding succulence to the meat. This marbling is essential—good Highland beef should not be lean but well-marbled. The calm temperament of Highland cattle plays a crucial role since animals that are highly stressed during handling and processing can produce undesirable dark-cutting beef.

So, what are the key requirements for producing good beef?

1. **Maturity:** To achieve optimal beef quality, the animal must be sufficiently mature so that it begins to deposit fat after achieving most of its frame growth. Highland cattle take time to mature, with steers taking a minimum of three years and heifers only slightly less.
2. **Conditioning:** To reach suitable processing condition (known as finishing), cattle need access to high-quality feed that is digestible and rich in soluble carbohydrates. The quality of the pasture, including forage species, growth stage, and soil conditions, will determine the animal's finishing success. Finishing typically requires several months, and the goal is a weight gain of around 0.7 kg per day during this period. Highland breeders often rely on pasture grazing, but during dry periods, the use of hay, silage, or grain supplementation can help extend the finishing season.

3. **Temperament:** Calm, trusting animals are essential. Time and effort must be invested early on to ensure that animals are comfortable with human interaction and used to working in yards. Stressed animals will produce lower-quality meat.
4. **Processing:** Even the best-finished animal can be ruined by poor processing practices. Finding suitable processing partners is often the biggest challenge.

Options for Finishing

Understanding the nuances of beef labelling is essential, particularly for producers wishing to promote their product effectively. In Australia, beef labelled as “grass-fed” refers to animals that have been fed primarily grass or forage. However, Australian labelling laws allow beef to be labelled as grass-fed even if the animal is finished in a feedlot, provided the animal spends less than 60 days in the feedlot. Grain-fed beef comes from cattle finished in feedlots on a high-calorie grain-based diet. Feedlots are intensive, high-density operations where cattle have little space to move and no access to grass. Cattle in feedlots are often subjected to the systematic use of antibiotics and hormonal growth promotants. In contrast, grass-finished (also called pasture finished) beef refers to cattle that have been raised and finished entirely on a diet of grass or forage in open pasture. This is ideal for the Highland breed, which thrives on unimproved or marginal pasture. Grass-finished beef not only promotes animal welfare but also lends itself to environmentally sustainable regenerative grazing practises. Additionally, research suggests health benefits from consuming beef raised this way.

For consumers, the choice between grass-fed, grass-finished, and grain-fed beef ultimately depends on personal preferences, health considerations and their interest in sustainable and ethical meat production.



Which Animals Can Be Processed for Beef?

Steers typically represent the bulk of cattle processed for beef. However, cull heifers or cows can also provide excellent meat. Age is not always a limiting factor as long as the animal is in good condition—there are reports of older cattle producing fine beef. Bulls are generally not processed due to their size and because the beef is tougher and leaner with very little or no intramuscular fat, and some people find their flavour less favourable. We’ve processed mature bulls for personal use, and while the meat was fine for mince, stir fries and slow cooking, we didn’t consider it suitable for premium steaks. Castrating a bull may improve tenderness and marbling, though opinions on its effectiveness vary.

Processing the Animal

Processing the animal refers to the transport, slaughter, hanging and butchering of the animal to the finished product. In Victoria, meat processing is regulated by PrimeSafe, and this section lists some of the regulatory requirements that need to be adhered to:

- **Slaughter** – If you intend to sell meat to the public, you will not be able to slaughter (or butcher) the animal on-farm. This is unfortunate, as on-farm slaughter (or home-kill) is the least stressful way of processing an animal, but Australia has strict regulations that prohibit the sale, bartering or trading of meat from on-farm slaughter. This means that an animal must be transported to a licensed abattoir, which is inevitably a stressful experience for the animal and requires access to a suitable livestock trailer, towing vehicle and on-farm loading facilities. The animal is typically dropped off a day prior to slaughter, and without companion animals this can be highly stressful. Our greatest challenge is that very few abattoirs in Victoria accept a small consignment of animals (typically termed a service kill) which can result in very long travel times to an abattoir – in our case a 7hr round trip. This is further complicated by the fact that most abattoirs will not accept a fully grown animal (typically a 650kg liveweight limit) or animals with horns (see later). Once the animal has been slaughtered, the abattoir will expect the carcass to be collected two days later, and the carcass must be transported in a licensed Meat Transport Vehicle to where it will be butchered. Depending on where the abattoir is relative to your preferred butcher, it can be impossible to arrange commercial transport of the carcass, and for this reason we were forced to invest in a licensed coolroom trailer with a carcass carrying capability.
- **Butchering** – The body must be butchered at a licensed meat processing facility (usually a butcher with a Butcher Shop License). You will need to find a butcher willing to process the carcass, and artisanal butchery

is recommended to ensure you extract the optimal value from the carcass. It is important to become conversant with all the different beef cuts as there is so much value and flavour available in cuts that often just end up in mince (for example bavette, flat iron, chuck-eye, skirt and blade flap steaks). Most butchers are also not able or willing to age the carcass for any length of time or have suitable carcass aging facilities.

“In the past 5 years, 81% of small-scale producers have lost access to their nearest abattoir, and 21% now have no other choice but to travel at least 250km to the next closest facility. Decades of industry consolidation has been followed by several multinational acquisitions, leaving small-scale farmers with few, if any, remaining slaughter options. Six abattoirs have closed their doors to service kills in just the last four months: Cowra, Booyong and Canowindra in NSW, DBC and Tammin in WA, and Hardwicks in Victoria.”

– Australian Food Sovereignty Alliance

In this section we have touched on a few concepts that need some clarification:

- **Aging** – Aging is the process by which microbes and enzymes break down proteins and connective tissue in the meat, improving tenderness and flavour. Beef is typically dry-aged, where the carcass is stored in a temperature- and humidity-controlled environment. Dry aging can last from 3 to 6 weeks, and while it enhances the meat's flavour, it also results in significant moisture loss, which reduces the yield. In Victoria, dry aging must take place at a suitably licensed facility, typically your butcher, but generally a butcher will not have sufficient space in their coolroom to keep the carcass for such an extended period, and the aging conditions (temperature stability, humidity) might not be ideal. It is worth noting that most commercial beef is only dry-aged for a very short time or is wet-aged, a process where the fresh carcass is broken down to primals and then vacuum sealed in a plastic bag.

- **Dehorning vs. Disbudding** – Most abattoirs no longer accept horned cattle for slaughter. This means that mature animals with horns need to be dehorned. It is a legal requirement under the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Cattle that appropriate pain relief is used when dehorning cattle over six months of age – this is performed by our veterinarian with suitable restraint, appropriate analgesia and anaesthesia, and postoperative wound management. Be aware that this is a distressing and brutal process for the animals (vet and owners!), and it often takes several weeks for the animals to recover.

Our preferred approach is to disbud the animals between two and six weeks of age. From a production and animal welfare perspective, best practice is veterinarian disbudding, which involves the sedation of calves, cornual nerve blocks using local anaesthetic and long-acting pain relief. Other procedures, such as ear tagging, vaccination and castration can easily be done while the calves are sedated. Disbudding is typically with a hot iron to cauterise the developing horn bud. The young animals recover very quickly and generally show no ill effects. Note that, at worst, disbudded animals can be also sold through commercial sale yards.

Sales

We sell our Highland beef through multiple channels, including online sales, into a local restaurant and at local farmers' markets.

A licensed mobile coolroom is required for transportation and preservation of beef for sale at markets. In Victoria, local council approval for the coolroom is required.

Another challenge is that while steaks tend to sell themselves, traditional stewing and roasting cuts can be harder to sell, particularly during the warmer months. We have navigated this challenge by targeting retail customers for these less popular cuts and by transforming them into value-added small goods and pies (a few of our readers may have had a few at the National Show in Geelong).



Other alternatives are to use a full-service butcher or selling the carcass (or portions) directly to a butcher or restaurant.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Highland beef is a premium product that showcases the unique attributes of this breed. However, producing beef for public sale involves careful navigation of complex legislative and logistical challenges.

With the right knowledge, practices, and partners, small-scale producers can successfully bring this exceptional product to market.

HIGHLAND BEEF PITHIVIER

Serves 2

If you're looking to impress, this Highland Beef Pithivier with Mushroom Duxelles is a showstopper that brings together the richness of the finest Highland beef and the earthy depth of a traditional French filling. The Pithivier—golden, flaky, and crisp on the outside—encases a savory blend of tender beef and a delicate, aromatic mushroom duxelles. Whether you're celebrating a special occasion or simply craving something decadent, this dish combines the warmth of rustic flavours with the elegance of fine dining.

Mushroom Duxelles

1 tablespoon butter
1 shallot, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, finely chopped
400g mixed mushrooms, finely chopped
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 tablespoon chopped parsley
1 tablespoon cream

Herb Crêpe

¼ cup plain flour
1 egg
¼ cup milk
10g chopped dill
10g chopped chives
Pinch of salt
1 teaspoon melted butter (for cooking)

Beef & Pastry

1 tablespoon vegetable oil
250g Highland beef fillet
20g Dijon mustard
Salt & freshly ground black pepper
1 sheet puff pastry
1 egg + 10g cream, beaten (for egg wash)

Method

1. Prepare the duxelles – Melt the butter in a pan over medium heat. Add the shallot and garlic, cooking until soft.
2. Add the mushrooms, salt, pepper, and thyme, and cook until all moisture has evaporated. Stir in the cream. Set aside to cool.
3. Make the crêpe – In a bowl, whisk together the flour, egg, milk, herbs and salt until smooth. Heat a small pan over medium heat and brush with melted butter. Pour a thin layer of batter and cook for 1 minute on each side. Set aside.
4. Sear the beef – Heat the oil in a pan over high heat. Season the Highland beef fillet with salt and pepper, then sear on all sides for about 1-2 minutes. Remove and coat in the Dijon mustard and let it cool completely.
5. Assemble the pithivier – Lay the crêpe on a flat surface. Place the beef fillet in the centre and wrap the crêpe around it to form a tight parcel. Compact the duxelles on top of the beef and crepe parcel and try to form a dome like shape.
6. Wrap in pastry – Preheat the oven to 200°C. Cut two circles from the puff pastry—one slightly larger than the other and big enough to encase the beef. Place the smaller circle on a baking tray.
7. Place the wrapped beef on top, then cover with the larger pastry circle. Press the edges together and crimp with a fork.
8. Brush with egg wash and score a decorative pattern on top.
9. Bake – Bake for 20–25 minutes, or until the pastry is golden brown and the internal temperature is 45°C. Rest for 5 minutes before slicing in half.
10. Serve with your favourite sauce and enjoy!

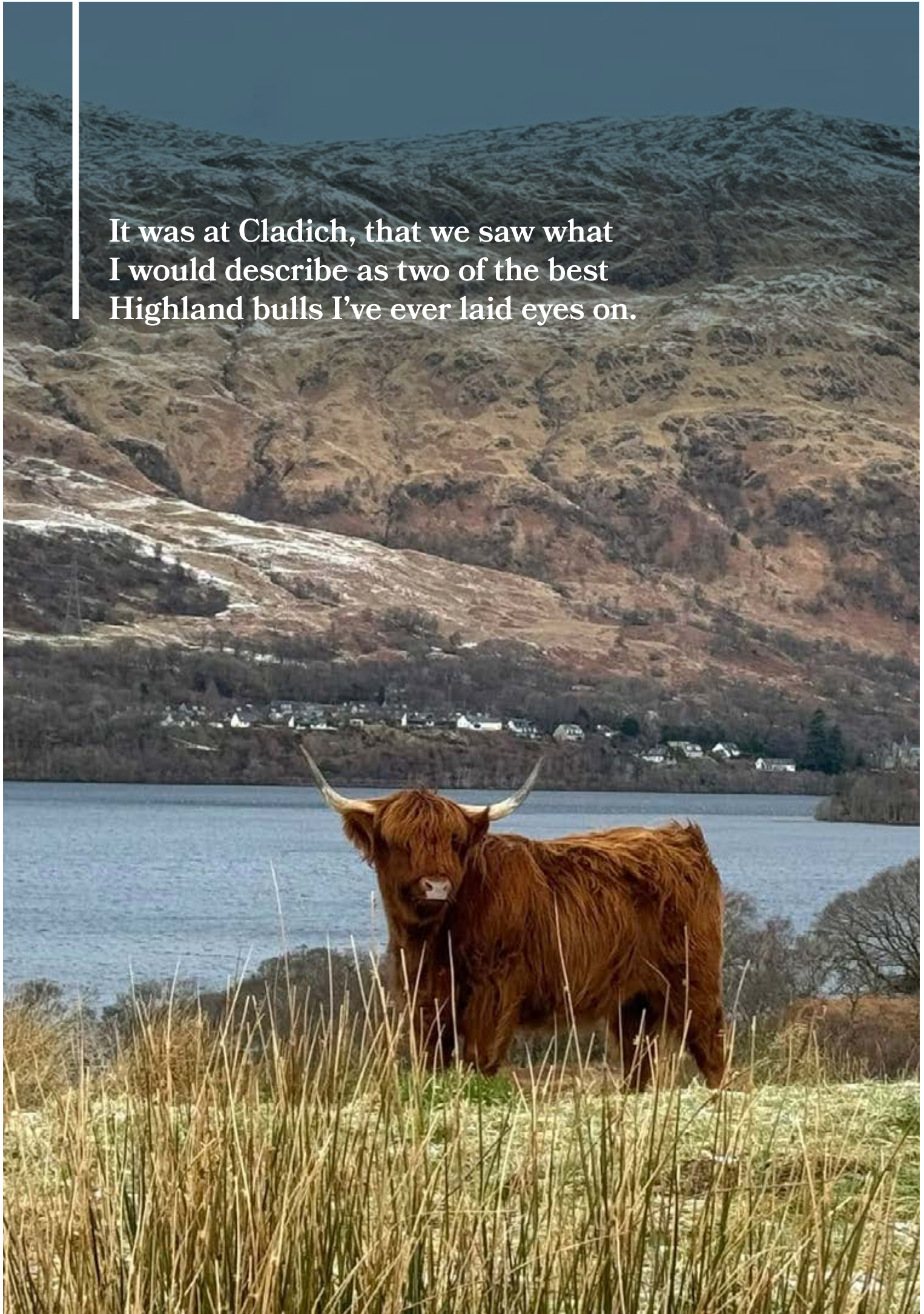


Meet the chef

Connor Turnbull is an English born chef now based in Victoria, Australia. He has experience working in Melbourne institutions Vue De Monde and Society and is now the head chef of Neeri Nuff in west Gippsland which has recently been awarded 1 Chef's Hat in the 2025 Australian Good Food Guide after less than 4 months of being opened. Prior to coming to Australia in 2023, Connor worked in multiple Michelin starred kitchens and luxury hotels across Europe and has also catered around the world whilst working in Formula 1.



It was at Cladich, that we saw what
I would describe as two of the best
Highland bulls I've ever laid eyes on.



OBAN SPRING SHOW & SALE

A trip worth taking.



*By Steve Wakerley,
Narraburra Highlands
Queensland*



In the last Highland Fling edition, I spoke of the hospitality shown by Scottish breeders to a couple of visiting Aussies and the professionalism on show at Killochries Fold near Glasgow including their work to improve the breed and how they use their Highlanders for conservation projects that are already showing great results.

After Killochries, we made our way north into the heart of the Scottish Highlands, towards Glencoe. There were reports of snow falling through the mountains, so we decided to traverse the A82 from Glasgow to Glencoe and on to Fort William, this time from the south. Sam and I have done a lot of road trips over the years, but there can be no doubt that this road through the highlands is one of the most scenic and amazing roads in the world taking in the Glencoe mountains and valleys, lakes and lochs, little towns, amazing streams and breathtaking lookouts.

We were headed for the seaside town of Oban on the west coast of the Scottish Highlands and had

booked accommodation for the next week. We had arranged one more personalised visit to one of the world's best Highland breeders and also planned to get out on to the Isle of Mull, one of the Hebridean Islands a short ferry ride from Oban. But we were excited, knowing that towards the end of that week was sure to be the highlight of our trip to the UK, the Highland Cattle Society's Oban Spring Show and Sale.

Oban is a vibrant and spectacular town, with plenty of great restaurants, pubs and shopping, especially souvenir shopping.... yes, of course I bought a kilt. It was to prove a great base for the next week.

Isle of Mull

From Oban we caught the ferry across to the nearest island, the Isle of Mull. Getting around on the island in our hire car couldn't be easier with pretty much one road heading north and south along the eastern coastline through great little fishing villages. We hadn't arranged any breeder visits but had heard that the famous Glengorm Fold in the north of the island ran a very popular café at the Glengorm Castle on their property, so we headed for there.

Glengorm Fold is more than 170 years old and no doubt many Australian breeders aspire to have their bloodlines included in their own folds. Glengorm Castle is a grand building with great views of the coastline. Close to the castle is a bustling little café and farm shop.

When we entered the café, it was packed with about ten staff busy tending to dozens of customers. We found a little table and perused the menu...roast Highland Beef and gravy toasted sandwiches...yep, that'll do me.

We got chatting to our waitress and found out she was the daughter of the owners of Glengorm Castle and Highland Fold and she pointed out her mother, who was also busy working in the cafe. It dawned on me that there was no "life of privilege" for the kids in this family despite the grand castle they owned, just a typical farming family working hard to make a living. Dad had already headed across to the mainland with their cattle for the Oban Show and Sale.

Cladich Fold

About a 45-minute drive east of Oban, on the banks of Loch Awe, lies a Highland Fold that many breeders around the world likely recognise the name of, Cladich Fold of Highland Cattle can be traced back to the 1870s. When current owners Queenie and Jon acquired the property and Fold in 2001, there were only five cows remaining, so they set about rebuilding to once again become a premier fold of international standing. Queenie proudly recounted how she sought out and

purchased back Cladich bloodlines from across the UK, even from the Queen's Balmoral Fold, no doubt a challenging and expensive exercise.

It's unlikely that you could find a more friendly and vivacious couple of breeders anywhere in the world than Queenie and Jon.

Queenie spoke of and showed off her Highlands to us with immense pride. Her enthusiasm was contagious, and she knew every one of her cows and bulls. Later that week, at the Oban Show, we observed Queenie sitting high atop the cattle panels immediately surrounding the show ring for hours, pen and notebook in hand, no doubt doing her research for future purchases and bloodline acquisitions.

Queenie and Jon are helped out on their property by Farm Manager Stuart Campbell, another great character and all-round top bloke. We got to spend a good few hours with Stuart and a more Aussie-like Scotsman, you'll not likely find. He blew us away with his knowledge of Australia and particularly Queensland and had me thinking he was just exceptional at Australian geography, until he let it slip that he previously lived in Toowoomba (near to where we are located) while married a few years back to an Australian girl.

At the welcome function the night before the Oban Show and Sale we enjoyed a few beers with Stuart, and although his reciting of Aussie slang that night left a little to be desired, we enjoyed his company immensely. It was also obvious, the respect the other Scottish breeders held for Stuart and a few of them, Queenie and John included mentioned to us that he is one of the best in the business when it comes to Highlands.



ABOVE: Spectacular scenery on the hills at Cladich Fold.

It was at Cladich, that we saw what I would describe as two of the best Highland bulls I've ever laid eyes on. Main herd sire, Angus 2nd of Sorne was enormous and weighed in at 1,096kg, with Queenie mentioning she'd like to get a few more kilos back on him after working the season!!! But it was Murchadh Dubh of Luruha, Cladich's so called "Junior Bull" that impressed the most. A big, strong, black bull that was as docile as they come, even gently lifting his rear leg for a scratch from Stuart while we stood beside him in the pen. This bull was enormous and had serious thickness and depth to his structure. He will no doubt produce amazing calves for Cladich for many years to come.

Oban Spring Show & Sale

The highlight of our trip however, was attending the 133rd Annual Spring Show and Sale of the Highland Cattle Society.

It's hard to describe in words just how impressive the cattle were, but what really stood out was the quality and growth rates of the local Scottish Highlanders compared to our cattle in Australia.

The line up, particularly of two and three-year-old bulls really hit home how well suited Highlands are to their native Scotland. Without disrespecting any Australian breeders, I have never seen such a selection of quality, thick and fast-growing Highlands in our country.

When the two-year-old bulls were paraded, I thought they must have been five years old, they were that big. At the time, we had our own two-year-old bull who had ribboned at the National Show, and he would have been half the weight of these rising two-year-olds being paraded. The quality on show just simply blew us away and had me wondering why their cattle appeared so far superior to Australian Highlands.

Obviously, the Highland is native to Scotland, so you could expect conditions there are ideal for the breed but to reference an internationally authoritative handbook on cattle I have sitting in my home library:

"The frame size of Scottish Highland cattle varies dramatically based on the soil quality they grow up on. Scottish Highland cattle are one of the few breeds that can maintain overall health by limiting frame size to compensate for lower nutrients."

– *Grass-fed Cattle: How to Produce and Market Natural Beef* by Julius Ruechel, 2006

This explanation, which I discovered some 12 months after returning from Oban, clearly displays some of the challenges we have as breeders of this ancient breed in a harsh, dry, and ecologically much older continent with soils that are subsequently among the most nutrient poor anywhere in the world. Perhaps, however, this breed specific ability to maintain health by limiting their frame size on poorer soils, makes the

Highlander ideally suited to Australian conditions. I'm going to run with that anyhow, the next time I'm asked why I choose to breed Highlands instead of Droughtmasters.

The day following the Show, all stock were auctioned in the Annual Spring Sale, and it was a condition of entry in the Show, that your cattle go up for sale that day. Surprisingly, prices were very comparable to those in Australia notwithstanding the aforementioned size and quality of the offerings.

**The urge was certainly there
to throw my hand in the air
when the auctioneer was selling
off some of the best bulls,
I'd ever laid eyes on for such
a reasonable price.**

Of course, it would be logistically impossible and outlandishly expensive to get one back to Australia. Scottish and UK breeders can't even transport their cattle across the channel anymore since Brexit stranded dozens of Highlands that had been sold to European breeders just prior. We learned that there are European breeders still paying agistment in Scotland for cattle they had purchased some three or more years earlier, only to discover they can't bring them home.

Perhaps one day, we will just try and convince our Aussie come Queenslander come Scot mate Stuart to hang on to one for us at his place, and we will return to the Oban Show and Sale and excitedly grab ourselves a bargain.

Thank You

We absolutely recommend Australian breeders make the journey to Scotland to visit and learn from the best Highland breeders in the world (a group of Victorian breeders headed over just a few months ago). You will find the Scots incredibly hospitable and welcoming, and all you need to do is send them an email via their website contact details.

They will welcome you into their homes and kitchens and show you around their farms and operations. You will learn enormous amounts and you will marvel at the number and quality of Highland cattle they have.

But even better, you will make contacts and friends you will likely have for the rest of your life and you will come away with a sense of pride in our breed that comes with knowing that breeders all over the world are striving for the same thing, to promote, protect and preserve the heritage of this world-famous breed.

Sam and I would like to say a special thank you to those breeders in Scotland who made us so welcome, especially Grace Noble of Aberdeenshire Highland Beef, Iain and Sheena Graham, Derek Wilson and Sandra Lima da Silva of Killochries Fold, and Queenie and John Strickland and Stuart Campbell of Cladich Fold.

**We look forward to the day
we can return the favour
and welcome you into our
home here at Narraburra
Highlands.**



**Advertise your fold with
a banner on our website!
See website for details**

Newly reformed in late 2024, the New South Wales Highland Breeders Group is a vibrant community of Highland Cattle enthusiasts, dedicated to the promotion and preservation of Highland Cattle in New South Wales.

What We Do

- Events: cattle handling clinics & field days
- Zoom webinars, to provide members with education & support
- Promoting the breed via presence at regional shows & festivals

Check out the events calendar on the website!
Members from all states are welcome to join.

Contact Us

info@nswhighlandbreeders.org
www.nswhighlandbreeders.org

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

CLUANAG FOLD

From Grange Hill Farm, Lower Barrington,
Tasmania

By Dave Roberts



FAR LEFT: Gailleanne enjoying the afternoon sun.
LEFT: Our Granddaughter Grier and a 2 day old calf.

A tree change, a need to slow down and a desire for back-to-basics living drove my wife, Cat, and I to move from our high-pressure careers in Queensland to Tasmania in 2012. Having both grown up on farms in Queensland, a move to the fertile soils of Tassie was just what the Doctor ordered.

Our property sits on a small hill, and as 'Cluanag' is Gaelic for 'small hill,' Cluanag Highland Fold it became.

We sourced our foundation stock from a wonderful nearby Fold, Lachlan Mhor. Our beautiful fullblood girls Morag, Hairy Mary and Flora were duly delivered, and we were off and running.

The next couple of years saw our fold grow with the addition of Peigi and Lili after a successful calving.

Then, as life often does, we were presented with an opportunity, 100 acres down the road! Make hay while the sun shines, or in this case, make coos when the space grows.

Being the way I am, nothing moves forward without an excessive amount of research. What direction our newly expanded venture, Grange Hill Farm, incorporating Cluanag Fold, was taking, became the topic of the month.

We would continue breeding purebred stock, but in parallel turn off stock for the domestic beef market.

Right about now you're shaking your head at the folly of trying to realise money through sale yards with long horned and hairy coos! But fear not! We had a plan!

Psst! – Ever heard of Luing Cattle?



During our 'how can I make a commercially viable Highland?' research, we considered a new idea: instead of Shorthorn crosses, why not use Australia's own Murray Grey? Thus began our 5-year adventure into supplying top quality beef via the traditional beef market route.

Is the resulting progeny any good? A resoundingly yes! Hybrid vigour – Tick; Shorter coat – Tick; Polled – Tick; did they all look identical regardless of mother's coat colour? – Tick. Did commercial beef breeders come running to our door after seeing our amazing cattle in the paddock? – er, no. Why you ask? – Because they weren't Angus. Evidently only Angus are edible in Tasmania, everything else is poisonous!

Comedy aside, we had a great time, and our stock agent was always flabbergasted at the meat scores and weights we could get with our



ABOVE: Tuigseach Mir (Morag) the Fold Matriarch.

Highland-cross oddities. But alas after 5 years at the mercy of fluctuating commercial beef prices and wanting to maximise both our returns and the number of purebred Highlands bred, we again surveyed the wider market and saw increasing opportunities for purebred cattle, and the premium return for paddock to plate beef sales.

Coinciding with our daughter's family, including 4 grandkids, moving from Queensland in 2022 to join us on the farm, we took the decision to stop supplying the traditional market, retire Kingsley our Murray Grey bull, and go paddock to plate Highland.

Paddock to plate sales are not easy. Knowledge in social media, marketing and the laws and regulations to allow such sales is required. We are fortunate in having a daughter who is savvy in all of this. It's her countless hours that have gotten our expanded operation to where it is today.

In 2023, as part of enhancing our breeding program, registered purebred bull Dougal of Tasman and cow Gailleanne Albanach of Alltshellach were acquired. We'd always wanted to add white genetics and now we had two, which soon became three when Gailleanne calved a white heifer Sorcha of Cluanag.

Subsequently further additional purchases arrived, and our fold rejuvenation had begun.

The importance of your fold's genetics can't be understated and during the rejuvenation process a lot of thought was placed into what lines we wanted to introduce.

We are very fortunate to have a small private abattoir and butchery located in our district. With relationships established, it was full steam ahead for Grange Hill Farm beef – a premium, ethical and low food mile product.

We have always championed Highland Beef for its amazing Low Cholesterol, Low Fat and High Protein qualities which it has over all other breeds. It really is the Beef Superfood!

We've been truly amazed by the response. Our registered stock sells exceptionally well, and our beef frequently sells out long before the slaughter date. At present, we offer registered offspring (heifers and conformation-selected bulls) alongside our exclusive paddock-to-plate beef boxes, delivered directly to our loyal customers.

In our never-ending drive to use as much of our stock as we can, we now supply a steady stream of customers with fat for tallow, bones, horns and of course our hides, which are processed into floor rugs and leather products and sell as quickly as they are produced.

We strongly believe in valuing the life of the cattle that provide us with our products and that means using all of them where you can and being thankful.

Like all farms, diversification is crucial, and it's where Highlands really make a difference. In the last two years, in addition to our beef products and live sales, we've expanded into agri-tourism, farm photography, and portraiture—all driven by the unique charm of the Highlands.

Highlands are an exceptional breed, and I'm preaching to the converted here, but it's important to recognise that what we have today is the result of the care and stewardship of the breed's custodians from centuries past.

Hardy, docile, magnificent of silhouette and dual of purpose. A bountiful supply of all things necessary to survive and thrive in the Highlands of Scotland. They truly are the most wonderful of cattle.

What does the future hold for us? We are excited to integrate AI into our genetic improvement efforts for both our beef and show lines, while also beginning our journey into the show-ring and forging new friendships along the way.

For further information:

Grange Hill Farm

www.grangehillfarm.net/our-story

Luing Cattle

www.luingcattlesociety.co.uk/the-luing



ABOVE: Portrait and Family Photography on farm, another income stream.

*Join us for a weekend of education, fun,
fellowship and celebration.*



**AUSTRALIAN HIGHLAND
CATTLE SOCIETY INC**

NATIONAL SHOW

6-8 JUNE 2025

**TALUNGA PARK,
MOUNT PLEASANT SA 5235**

FOR ENQUIRIES

Erica Smith 0427 536 629 | Scott Carter 0438 815 610

show@australianhighlandcattle.org

WWW.AUSTRALIANHIGHLANDCATTLE.ORG

Join us for the **2025 NATIONAL SHOW**

of the Australian Highland Cattle Society Inc, taking place
in Mount Pleasant, SA from June 6th to 8th, 2025.

Mount Pleasant is located in the beautiful Barossa Valley, a region renowned for its wine tasting. The showgrounds will be available to exhibitors from Wednesday 4 June 2025. We encourage exhibitors to schedule their arrival early so they can take advantage of the Friday workshops and also have time to explore the region.

FRIDAY 6 JUNE

- Workshops
 - Sawdust Bedding Best Practice
 - Washing Products and Demonstration
 - Fitting (incl Drying)
 - Ringcraft – School Paraders
 - Structural Assessment
 - Ringcraft - AHCS members
- Scavenger Hunt
- Welcome BBQ

SATURDAY 7 JUNE

- Judging of Paraders, Junior Judging, Calves and Costume Classic
- Dinner

SUNDAY 9 JUNE

- Pipe Band and Scottish entertainment.
- Judging of stud animals by an international Highland judge.
- Banquet dinner and awards presentation.

Once again the National Show will be live streamed to allow family, friends and fellow enthusiasts from all over the world to participate. This event offers a delightful mix of Highland cattle exhibits, educational activities, fun and opportunities for fellowship. The highlight is Highland cattle judging by an internationally renowned judge, ending with the Supreme Exhibit.

The show promises to be an exciting gathering for exhibitors, AHCS members, Highland cattle enthusiasts and the Barossa Valley community. A variety of stalls will offer delicious food, drinks and unique wares, with a vibrant Farmers Market on the grounds Saturday, providing even more local delights for visitors to enjoy.

Sponsoring the 2025 National Show provides a unique opportunity to connect with Highland cattle breeders, enthusiasts and a wider audience from across the region. Sponsors will enjoy a range of promotional opportunities and are encouraged to contribute marketing materials for inclusion in our exhibitor packs. With the show live streamed over the weekend, social media views are expected to be 5,500 from Australia, UK and USA, with an event attendance of approx 2,000. Opportunities are also available for sponsors to have a trade stall during the weekend for marketing, promotion and sale of products. Sponsorship can be offered as cash, in-kind (goods and services), or a combination of both. Donated items may be used for the online auction, a major fundraiser for the show to be held in April 2025, or as raffle or exhibitor prizes, at the discretion of the committee.

We are happy to tailor a sponsorship package that best suits your business needs and goals. Our team is committed to ensuring that your involvement in the event provides maximum value and exposure.

HIGHLAND HERD SIRE SELECTION

Criteria for keeping or castrating bull calves

By Jacob Larson

The rapid rise of Highland cattle popularity in the past few years has been a great benefit to Highland breeders worldwide. While it is exciting to see the herdbooks gain a lot of numbers, there are some hidden negatives to this success.

With popularity and high demand has come an increase in the number of inferior male calves being kept as breeding sires. Lately the Highland gene pool is being flooded by the influence of bulls that really never should have been kept as bulls. While this has always been a tendency, we have never seen as many bad bulls registered as we are now seeing in the US. I have heard that the situation is similar in Australia and other countries as well. This article is aimed at helping Highland owners become better educated on the traits that are essential for a good bull and those factors that would automatically disqualify a bull calf from graduating to sire status. My hope is that this will help empower breeders to make good choices for your cattle business and the genetics of the Highland breed in general.

Before we get into the specifics I would like to make a couple general comments.

First, bulls always need to be held to a high standard of quality since one bull is capable of siring many calves in a year. His genetic influence is therefore much greater than any single cow and his traits are going to be much more influential in the breed (for better or worse). Only one bull is needed to breed about 25 cows on average. This means that the breed population would not decline even if only one bull calf was registered for every 25 females registered! Yet the current ratio seems to be far higher than necessary on the male side. Even if we account for the smaller average Highland herd size, the ratio still would not need to be more than 1 bull for 12 cows. When you consider these numbers along with the fact that the ratio of male and female calves is 50/50, it quickly becomes obvious that the majority of bull calves are not needed for breeding.

Furthermore, the majority of bull calves will not meet quality standards for bulls regardless of the population requirements.



ABOVE: Each of these bull calves were above average in multiple categories but were castrated because of issues that were not obvious at a glance. One was not masculine enough, another had structural problems that appeared after weaning age and the third calf's dam had poor udder quality.

So, what are the quality standards for bulls?

I have listed a few qualifications below that should make this clearer.

- The first and most foundational requirement is **fertility**. Every bull needs to have two uniform testicles and enough libido to do his job well. 26cm is a minimum scrotal circumference I use for calves at weaning and this measurement should be over 32cm by a year old. 40+ cm is normal for a mature bull. The size of a bull's testicles determines his potential rate of sperm production and therefore the number of cows he can breed in a given time frame. His desire to do the job is equally limiting. Libido can be observed and evaluated in a group setting and scrotal circumference tapes are easy to use and can be found online for purchase.
- Another necessity is **correct skeletal structure**. That starts at the foundation with a solid hoof and a deep heel. Athleticism is particularly important for a bull since he will need to cover some ground to locate cows and have the ability to mount all those cows. Without good structure longevity is potentially limited, in which case all other points of breeding quality are no longer useful, and profitability is cut short. Breeders should pursue knowledge of bovine anatomy and get familiar with what quality structure and movement looks like. I have developed a visual guide to structure and breed character that is specific to Highlands in an effort to help breeders gain a better understanding of these things. That resource will be available on my website <https://gathering-farm.com/jlarsonhighlands/> in the coming months.
- **Breed Character** is another important consideration. A bull calf might have many of the utilitarian criteria for beef and breeding but lack that set of characteristics that make him uniquely Highland. If we are honest with ourselves, most of us got into Highland cattle, at least in part, because we loved the way they look. Their beauty is a selling point and a major factor in the present surge in



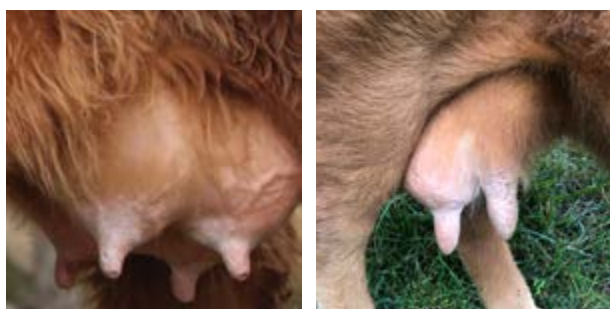
LEFT: Example of good body depth. **RIGHT:** Ideal female hip and pin structure as an example of what your prospective bull's dam and daughters should look like.

the breed's popularity. Unless you are strictly producing beef it is unwise to neglect to select for aesthetic quality in your young bulls. The Australian Highland breed standard would be the best source of information for comparison.

- Look for bull calves that have a **long history of quality breeding** behind them. There are many "one hit wonders" in the world of cattle breeding but your odds of achieving consistent quality in the calves' produced increases with the number of good ancestors stacked in their lineage. This is a particularly important consideration with Highlands because of their higher degree of genetic diversity as compared to many other breeds that are heavily line bred to achieve uniformity. A good pedigree is not a stand-alone criteria for keeping a bull but it can make a big difference in the consistency and quality of his offspring.
- **Ease of fleshing and growth** are also important traits to look for. Can a bull grow and fill out on the resources available to him? Will his steer calves fatten well? Will his female offspring calve, lactate and re-breed in a timely way or will they have trouble keeping enough body condition to do so?

- Keep bull calves that exhibit **balanced traits**. It is a common and easy mistake to get tunnel vision on a single point of quality such as growth, muscle or breed character and neglect to screen for other significant attributes. Extreme cattle are sometimes useful ingredients in a breeding program that is seeking to moderate opposite extremes, but the ultimate goal is balance since that results in the highest level of functionality and profitability all around. The quicker you can find or breed bulls with balance the better.
- It is important to look at **carcass traits** since that is the ultimate end of our cattle but as you do so also be thinking about a bull's **potential to sire daughters** with structure and maternal traits that will make them great brood cows. Good breeders learn to extrapolate between the appearance of a sire's structure and the female version that his daughters will express. You need to see the cow in the bull so to speak. Ask questions like "Will he pass along a broad hip and pin set and a deep rib that will allow his daughters to be easy calving and efficient with their resources"?

- Another good question to ask is “what was his dam and paternal grand dam’s **udder quality**”? Are there any full sisters that are lactating that could be evaluated for teat and udder structure? Since the bulls you keep, or buy in, will be sireing many future cows you will want to be sure that they have the genetics to sire daughters that will have good udder longevity. Having the genetics for ample milk production is also a good thing so long as it is accompanied by strong udder structure... if not, you just have a recipe for a pendulous udder and blown out teats around half their normal life span.



LEFT: Example of quality teat and udder structure
RIGHT: Example of poor udder and teat structure.

- Last but not least, a **good disposition** is a must since this is essential for management and safety in general. However, care should be taken to not lose a bull’s respect through too many treats and cuddles. Balance is necessary.

Above I have listed many of the positive things to look for but I think it may be just as useful to look at the reasons owners commonly keep inferior bull calves intact.

- “He’s cute”.
- First bull born on a place and the owners are sentimental.
- Poor understanding of functional bovine structure.
- Breeders are blinded by pedigree expectations/ predictions.
- Inadequate knowledge of breed performance statistics.
- Ignorance of negative traits in the lineage. Udder genetics, heavy birth weights etc.
- Buyers waiting and there's money to be made.
- Bull calves sold pre-weaning before their quality can be fairly assessed.

- Ignorance of line breeding/ inbreeding and its negative effects.
- Tolerance of poor dispositions or emotional bonds to calves. I know it’s not easy, but the best breeders are those that can remain objective.

3 Stage Evaluation Method

I employ a 3-stage evaluation method that may be of use to you as you look at your calves. The stages/ages are at 3, 6 and 9 months:

- Evaluate at **3 months** give or take and band as many as possible at this young age. Weed out obvious issues of phenotype and/or genotype.
- Re-evaluate at weaning. Bulls should be weaned at **6 months** or no later than 7 months. Take weaning weights and compare to breed data.
- Evaluate again at **9 months** to a year old to make a final decision. Ask yourself questions like:
 - Has he maintained growth, structure and disposition? Or does he show adequate libido?
 - Stay as objective as possible at all three points and be willing to castrate a bull candidate at any point.
 - The best calf at weaning is not always the best calf at a year and the longer you keep him the greater the potential for bias. Take measurements.

To Do List

- Learn castration techniques.
- Learn cattle anatomy/structure. There are many resources available, and I also specialize in teaching this to Highland breeders privately and in association hosted lectures.
- Learn the pedigrees of your cattle and the traits that various farms and lineages are known for.
- And finally, sell your best bull calves strategically...you don’t want to waste those few good bull prospects that get to keep their nuts! If they graduate from your stringent program you aren’t going to sign them up to work a pointless job, right??

If you have questions or want further details on any of the points, I’ve made here feel free to reach out on FB messenger or email me at **CjLarson08@gmail.com**

My journey with HIGHLAND CATTLE

By Will Pierce

My name is Will Pierce, and I'm 23 years old. I am the proud owner of **WillRockU Highland Cattle Fold**. This has been a big dream of mine, and in November 2023, it came true when I got my two Highland steers, **Rocky** and **Freddie**.

For as long as I can remember, being around cattle has made me happy. When I see them in a paddock, I feel calm and safe. I love Highland cattle the most because they are smaller than other breeds and have a gentle nature. I enjoy brushing, feeding, and cuddling my cattle—it's a special time for me. I have an intellectual disability, and a rare genetic condition called **SCN2A**, which makes some things, like talking to people and working with cattle, harder for me. But Rocky and Freddie make it easier. We have our own way of understanding each other, and they respond to me really well.

I've been lucky to have lots of help along the way. The **Australian Highland Cattle Society** taught me how to care for cattle and how to show them at competitions. Some of my best memories are from those shows. In 2020, I even led the **Supreme Champion Highland** at the Royal Canberra Show!

When I moved to Queensland, I started working towards my biggest goal: owning my own cattle.

Rocky and Freddie are my first and only steers, and they mean so much to me. I named them after **Freddie Mercury** and the Queen song *We Will Rock You*. Over the past 14 months, I've learned a lot about how to care for them, and we've built a strong bond.

It hasn't all been easy. Not long after they arrived, Freddie got very sick with **lantana poisoning**. He was so weak he couldn't even stand. My family and the vet worked together to nurse Freddie back to health. We gave him electrolytes and injections, and little by little, he got better. He's healthy now but smaller than Rocky because of how sick he was.

Living on the **Sunshine Coast** has been a big change for all of us. The weather here is very different from where Rocky and Freddie came from on the **Darling Downs**. There's been heavy



CAPTION: Will Pierce enjoys spending time with his two steers, Rocky and Freddie.

rain, ticks, and buffalo flies. Luckily, Highland cattle have long coats that protect them from the flies much better than other cattle like Dexters.

Now, Rocky and Freddie are a huge part of my life. Every day, with help from the **Compass Farm** team, I go to the farm to feed them, brush them, and check them for ticks. When they hear me arrive and call out to them, they walk to the yards to see me. Spending time with them makes me feel happy and calm.

I'm also getting them ready for their first cattle show at the **Redcliffe Show** in June. I've started walking them on leads every day. I even have custom-made leads because tying knots can be tricky for me.

Looking after Rocky and Freddie has taught me so much. They've given me confidence to do other things too. I'm really proud of what I've achieved, and I know that with the support I have, **I can keep learning and reaching my goals.**

2024 MELBOURNE ROYAL SHOW

1–6 October 2024

By Erica Smith
AHCS VIC State Representative

After a ten-year absence, Highlands returned to the competition ring at the Melbourne Royal Show from 1–6 October, 2024. This was the first time we had competed at Melbourne since 2014 when the AHCS National Show was held in conjunction.

Six Highlands from the Arcadia, Glenstrae, Serenity and Spargo Folds attended, backing up their success at the Royal Adelaide Show a few weeks earlier. (See the SA State Report for details). Ben, Tanika, Lincoln and Isla Butler were also on hand to assist.

Juniors Lincoln Butler, Isla Butler and Lachlan Adams competed in the Ausmectin Youth Feature Show, with Isla placing 3rd in the Junior Paraders class YP02.

Competing in the All Other Breeds section of the Melbourne Royal, Murphy's Law of Arcadia, owned by Serenity Highlands was named Supreme Exhibit, while calf Morpheus of Serenity was crowned cutest calf in the Interbreed Competition.

Lorcan Angelo of Glenstrae (AI) was Grand Champion Bull, while Sassafras Skye of Glenstrae (AI) was Junior Champion Heifer and the Reserve Champion Heifer was Laudean Angela (AI) of Glenstrae, owned by Spergour Highlands.

Lachlan Adams represented the Bendigo Agricultural Show in the Victorian Agricultural Show Finals also held at Melbourne Show. Lachlan placed first at the Bendigo Show in 2023, earning his place among the top handlers in Victoria competing in the VAS Finals.

The Highlands were placed in the front row of the cattle shed, with full access to the crowd at all times and plans are underway to return in 2025 with more Highlands to compete. 10 animals are required to have a Highland class so all members are encouraged to consider participating.



TOP: Junior Champion Female Sassafras Skye of Glenstrae. **BOTTOM:** Grand Champion Bull Lorcan Angelo of Glenstrae.



ABOVE: Highlands returned to compete at the Melbourne Royal after a 10 year absence. Pictured from left: Ben Butler, Tanika Butler, Isla Butler with Ailsa Belle of Arcadia, Lachlan Adams with Sassafras Skye of Glenstrae (AI), Lincoln Butler with Laudean Angela of Glenstrae (AI), Jacqui Palk with Lorcan Angelo of Glenstrae (AI), Erica Smith, Glenn Adams with Murphy's Law of Arcadia and Steph Bolte with Morpheus of Serenity (AI).



ABOVE: All Other Breeds Supreme Exhibit Murphy's Law of Arcadia, owned by Serenity Highlands. Pictured are paraders Glenn Addams and Steph Bolte.

2024 ROYAL HOBART SHOW

24–26 October 2024

By Craig McSwain
AHCS TAS State Representative

The 2024 Royal Hobart Show was another great success with a record number of Highland exhibitors participating in the Beef Cattle competition. As the state representative, seeing the growth in Highland representation at our Royal Show has been very rewarding.

Judge Peter Collins of Merridale Angus (VIC) gave detailed critique to breeders and it was refreshing to see him comment on the head-shape and horns of the Highland exhibits in addition to assessing the beef attributes of each animal. Mr Collins was particularly encouraging to the first-time exhibitors and junior handlers, both in the ring and the sheds. After the classes, it was really nice to see the buzz he got from spending time with our up-and-coming junior breeders, answering questions and providing feedback on breeding goals and show preparation.

Seeing the future of showing and breeding during the Junior Handlers' competition is a highlight of the event for me. It was wonderful to see young

novice handlers Zoe Howard from Heilan Coos Homestead, with her shorthorn-cross heifer Millie, and Makayla Free from Tullamill Rise Farm, with her purebred Highland steer Harley, conquer their nerves to enter their first handling competition, both entering in the commercial led exhibit, junior paraders and fancy-dress classes. Although she wasn't quite yet confident to handle a Highland heifer, Zoe did an amazing job and earned 3rd place in the 9–12 years Junior Paraders class with Millie, in a line-up of seven handlers. Next year, we might see Zoe in the ring with a Highland in hand!

RESULTS

Highland Breed Classes

Junior Heifer born 1/3/23–31/5/2024

- 1st** Prunella of Dùn Airchill (10254)
Exhibitor: Craggy Island Highlands
- 2nd** Piobar Dhubh of Dùn Airchill (10257)
Exhibitor: Craggy Island Highlands

Champion Junior Highland Heifer

Prunella of Dùn Airchill (10254)

Reserve Champion Junior Highland Heifer

Piobar Dhubh of Dùn Airchill (10257)

Senior Heifer born 1/3/22–28/2/23

- 1st** Hazel 2nd of Tasman (10201)
Exhibitor: Donnigel Hill Highlands
- 2nd** Margaretta of Tasman (9691)
Exhibitor: Fern Lea Highlands
- 3rd** Willow 2nd of Tasman (10200)
Exhibitor: Heilan Coos Homestead



ABOVE: Senior Highland Heifer class (F-B): Hazel 2nd of Tasman handled by Chelsea Bennett; Margaretta of Tasman handled by Bronte Howard; and Willow 2nd of Tasman handled by Mollie Fenton (Murton Charolais).

Senior Cow born before 1st March 2022

- 1st** Jeannie of Dùn Airchill (8789)
Exhibitor: Craggy Island Highlands
- 2nd** Peigi of Dùn Airchill (8556)
Exhibitor: Craggy Island Highlands

Champion Senior Highland Female

Jeannie of Dùn Airchill (8789)

Reserve Champion Senior Highland Female

Peigi of Dùn Airchill (8556)



ABOVE: Champion Senior Highland Female Jeannie of Dùn Airchill handled by Hespera McSwain, with 7mth old bull calf Jameson Arrow handled by Bronte Howard.

Grand Champion Highland Female and Supreme Highland Exhibit

Prunella of Dùn Airchill (10254)



ABOVE: Grand Champion Female and Supreme Highland Exhibit Prunella of Dùn Airchill – judge Peter Collins said of Prunella: “this young female is fantastic” – “a wonderful specimen of the breed.”



ABOVE: Craggy Island Highlands’ Junior Breeders Pair and Sire’s Progeny Pair – heifers Piobar Dhubh of Dùn Airchill handled by Melody Moroni and Prunella of Dùn Airchill handled by Hespera McSwain.

Breeders Junior Pair

- 1st** Craggy Island Highlands

Sire’s Progeny Pair

- 1st** Gilbruc Arrow of MacAnLeister (8985)
(Craggy Island Highlands)
- 2nd** Ghost of Cawdor (6818)
(Craggy Island Highlands)
- 3rd** Carnival Spirit of Mac-Ladanae (8184)
(Heilan Coos Homestead)

Commercial Section (All Breeds)

Led Commercial Steer or Heifer <=380kg

- 3rd** Harley of Tasman (Highland steer)
Exhibitor: Tullamill Rise Farm



ABOVE: Fancy Dress (L-R): Makayla Free (Tullamill Rise Farm) with Highland steer Harley as “Beauty and the Beast”; Zoe Howard (Heilan Coos Homestead) with shorthorn-cross heifer Millie as Road Construction Workers; and Bronte Howard (Fern Lea Highlands) with Highland heifer Maggie as an equestrian and her horse!

SHOW RESULTS

2024

ROYAL ADELAIDE SHOW

31 Aug – 8 Sep 2024

By Tom Robinson
AHCS SA State Representative

RESULTS

Cow or Heifer, 14 months and under 18 months

- 1st** Sassafras Skye of Glenstrae (10360)
(Erica Smith)
- 2nd** Laudean Angela of Glenstrae (10361)
(Spergour Highlands)
- 3rd** Kari Henriette of Glenstrae (10363)
(Erica Smith)

Junior Champion Highland Cow or Heifer

Sassafras Skye of Glenstrae

Cow, 18 months and over

- 1st** Nylah Grace of Amrabull Park (10247)
(Amrabull Park Heritage Breeds)
- 2nd** Murphys Law of Arcadia (9607) (Glenn Adams)
- 3rd** Willowdean Skye of Glenstrae (9161)
(Erica Smith)

Senior Champion Highland Cow

Nylah Grace of Amrabull Park (10247)

Grand Champion Highland Female

Sassafras Skye of Glenstrae (10360)

Bull, 14 months and under 18 months

- 1st** Lorcan Angelo of Glenstrae (10362) (Erica Smith)

Junior Champion Highland Bull

Lorcan Angelo of Glenstrae (10362)

Grand Champion Highland Bull

Lorcan Angelo of Glenstrae (10362)

Breeders' Group

- 1st** Erica Smith

Supreme Champion Highland Exhibit

Sassafras Skye of Glenstrae (10360)

Most Successful Highland Exhibitor

Erica Smith, Glenstrae Highlands



TOP: Junior & Grand Champion Female – Sassafras Skye of Glenstrae. MIDDLE: Junior & Grand Champion Bull – Lorcan Angelo of Glenstrae. BOTTOM: Senior Champion Female – Nylah Grace of Amrabull Park.

TAS

STATE REPORT



*By Craig McSwain
AHCS TAS
State Representative*

The past 12 months have seen several Tassie breeders out and about with their Highlands at a variety of public events, including some 'firsts' for a couple of breeders. It's great to see more members taking the plunge into public exhibition and promotion of the breed. This collaborative effort has not only increased the visibility of the breed in the state but also fostered a strengthened sense of community among members.

Grange Hill Farm Public Debut

A breeder to be newly featured in our Tassie State Report this edition is Cluanag Fold from Lower Barrington in NW Tas – although Dave & Cat Roberts have been actively breeding since 2014, operating a combined purebred and cross-breeding operation, supplying both live animals and beef under the banner of Grange Hill Farm (read more in their Fold Profile feature), they have more recently started more public breed promotion. During 2023, Grange Hill Farm ventured out to the monthly local farmers' markets with a variety of produce, including Highland coo themed merchandise, tanned hides and beef. Following on from that, and with daughter Tameka taking the plunge into halter-training their 2023 weanlings, they were soon able to take their first live Highland

out on exhibition with them – their white heifer Sorcha of Cluanag. Sorcha's first outing was on the 2024 Australia Day Long Weekend to A Day in the Paddock hosted by Almost Heaven Clydesdales in Sheffield. This event aims to educate and engage the community in the rich history and traditions of traditional farming, and Sorcha, with Tameka's training and the helping hand of 5-year-old daughter Olivia, was a perfect testament to the intelligent and docile nature of the Highland breed as the public swarmed for pats.



TOP: Olivia and Sorcha at A Day in the Paddock.

BOTTOM: Tameka and Sorcha in the Vine Rows during TrailGraze Tasmania.

With their first public exhibition under their belt, Tameka and Sorcha decided to take on something a bit different for their second outing – participating in TrailGraze Tasmania in April 2024. TrailGraze is a weekend-long celebration of Tasmania's foodbowl and enables the public to experience a variety of farmgate produce along Tassie's Tasting Trail. Tameka and Sorcha spent the weekend at the House of Hargrave Vineyard, wandering the beautiful vine rows and enjoying some of Tassie's best food and wine!



ABOVE: The Craggy Island Highlands 2024 Bushy Park Show Team (L-R): Hespera McSwain with Sadie of Dun Airchill, Alison Scott with Posie of Dun Airchill, Melody Moroni with Piobar Dhubh of Dun Airchill, first-time handler Imogen Monks with Binneas Airgid of Dun Airchill and Naomi McSwain with Bocan Gheal of Craggy Island.

2024 Bushy Park Show (Feb 2024)

The first show for the year and all-interbreed show saw six Highlands on display with two breeders entering. Craggy Island Highlands took the opportunity to exhibit five freshly trained weanling heifers, three for whom it was their first public outing, along with one Junior Handler also making her debut in the show ring. Junior AHCS member Bronte Howard (Fern Lea Highlands) again had her trusty senior heifer Maggie in the ring, behaving beautifully as always up against some much larger beef cattle cows.

Judge Cade Ebdon had some encouraging comments for the Highland entries, commenting on the quality and consistency of the heifers entered, and much to the surprise of onlookers, awarded first place to the Craggy Island Highlands 8–9mth old heifers Breeders Pair over some almost mature-age Murray Grey and Charolais bull-cow pairs.

TAS Junior Beef Expo 2024 (Feb 2024)

The Tas Junior Beef Expo is Tasmania's pinnacle Junior Handler Camp held annually in Deloraine. A total of four Highland handlers entered this time round, Bronte Howard and Aleaha Dare from Heilan Coos Homestead and Naomi McSwain and Hespera McSwain from Craggy Island Highlands. It was Aleaha's, and her heifer Willow's, first time in the show ring and after some initial nerves (mainly from Willow), Aleaha did a great job in adjusting her handling technique and learning some new skills so that by the end of the camp Willow was behaving much more calmly in the environment.

Our Highland handlers all handled their heifers commendably in the ring, with the following earning placings in their respective sections of the Handler competition:

- **Novice** – Aleaha Dare 3rd
- **Sub-Intermediate** – Bronte Howard 5th
- **Intermediate** – Naomi McSwain 3rd

It is always hard for the Highlands to get a look-in in the TJBE heifer competition, up against a wide range of quality heifers of different beef breeds, but this year Craggy Island Highlands' heifer Primrose of Dùn Airchill, handled by Naomi McSwain, was awarded 3rd place in the 20–24mth old heifer class. The judges commended her on being good-footed with generous thickness and topline. This marked the first time that a Highland heifer had taken out a class placing in the Tas Junior Beef Expo.



ABOVE: The 2024 Tasmanian Junior Beef Expo Highland Team (L-R): Craggy Island Highlands' Naomi McSwain & Hespera McSwain with their heifers Primrose and Pepper, and Heilan Coos Homestead's Bronte Howard & Aleaha Dare with their heifers Hazel and Willow.

2024 Burnie Show (Oct 2024)

With the return of Beef Cattle classes to the Burnie Show and with their Fold based less than 10 minutes away from the showground, Stone Ridge Highlands took the opportunity to make the 2024 Burnie Show their debut into the formal show ring. Bravely entering two cows with calves at foot, they made a commendable effort for their first time in the ring with all four family members – Tim, Gillian, Lachlan & Taj Wright – getting into the cattle-handling. Although the numbers were low, the Highlands from Stone Ridge held their own in the interbreed competition up against some quality Murray Grey exhibits. Good work Stone Ridge!



ABOVE: 2024 Burnie Show Champion Highland Female and Reserve Champion Interbreed Senior Female Conailbhe Odhar of Stone Ridge.

2024 Brighton Show (Nov 2024)

Brighton Show is always a well-patronised country show, popular with families of all ages and with both city- and country folk coming along to catch a glimpse of all things rural. Following on from the Hobart Royal (see separate Feature report), Heilan Coos Homestead and Craggy Island Highlands again were out on exhibition each with a pair of Highland females, Heilan Coos Homestead representing the Senior section and Craggy Island Highlands the Junior.

Both folds competed in the Highland breed classes as well as the Interbreed competition, with Craggy Island Highlands' pair of junior heifers being awarded 2nd place in both the Interbreed Junior Pair and Sires Progeny classes, in a field of eight interbreed pairs. The judge, Chelsea Rayner of Kidman Downs Simmentals & Shorthorns, said she really liked the type and commended the pair on being very even and uniform, with structural soundness, and possessing strong commercial attributes whilst adding shape and style.



TOP: Bronte Howard and Aleaha Dare of Heilan Coos Homestead stand up their heifers Maggie and Hazel in the Senior Highland Female class at the 2024 Brighton Show. **BOTTOM:** 2nd Place Interbreed Heifer Pair Prunella of Dùn Airchill and Piobar Dhubh of Dùn Airchill from Craggy Island Highlands, handled by Naomi McSwain and Alison Scott.

Circular Head Show 2024 (Nov 2024)

The Circular Head Show is an agricultural show steeped in history, with 2024 being its 114th year. Two AHCS breeders entered in the Stud Beef Cattle competition with a total of eight young exhibits all out for their first show – Craggy Island Highlands making the long trek up from the south and Stone Ridge Highlands venturing out again for their second foray in the show ring since their debut at Burnie in October. It was great to get the south and the north together for this show. Being such a competitive beef show, the Highlands did not rate a mention in the interbreed section, but the judge did commend the winning breeders' group in the Highland classes on their evenness and structure and thanked the exhibitors for bringing them out.



ABOVE: Circular Head Show Highland breed classes broad sash winners, from Craggy Island Highlands (L-R): Champion & Reserve Champion Junior bulls Pollok Arrow of Dun Airchill and Jameson Arrow of Dun Airchill; Champion & Reserve Champion Junior Heifers Prunella 2nd of Dun Airchill and Persia of Craggy Island.

NSW

STATE REPORT



*By Andrew Rawlings
AHCS NSW
State Representative*

There has been a big push by members to revitalise the Breeders group here in NSW which kicked off with a Revitalise NSW RBG planning meeting in early September to which all NSW members were invited.

In late September 2024 we had our first meeting (Via Zoom) to form the new committee for the NSW Regional Breeders Group (RBG). We had a great turnout with ten people present who put their hand up to join the committee. It was a great mix of established members and some very new members as well as a few councillors as well. Jeanette Rawlings was voted in as President, with Sarah Vaughan as Vice and Sophie Rice our Treasurer!

Given the increase in membership, bringing NSW up to 138 members making it the largest membership base, we decided to run a survey to get a feel for what NSW members were after. We had a great response from the survey with some interesting and informative feedback received.

Following the survey there were some fantastic discussions on what we wanted to do for the members of NSW. Some of these ideas have already been put into action. One of these is the NSW Regional Breeders Group website. It is a great place to advertise your Fold and keep up to date with all the workshops and webinars that we will be running in 2025 and beyond!

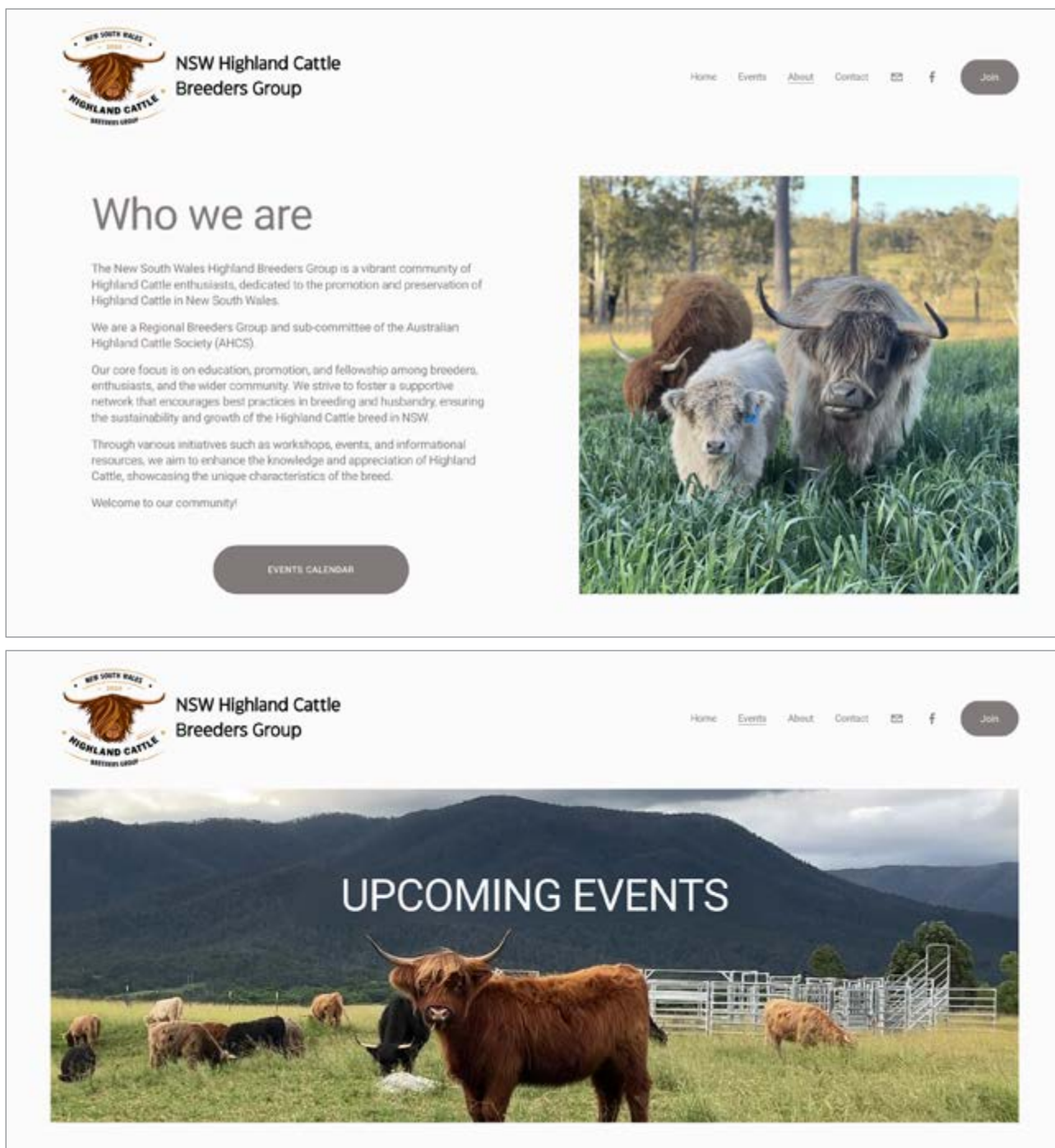
We are looking to run a number of workshops over the year. Some of these will be webinars and some of them will be on farm field day workshops. Below are some of the topics that we have come up with.

- Basic husbandry
- Nutrition
- Yard designs
- Working Calmly and Effectively with your cattle
- Bull selection
- Scammers – How to avoid them
- Welcome to Showing Highlands (basics)

These are just some of the ideas that we are working on at the moment. If you missed the survey or have had a brilliant after-thought please head to our NSW Breeders Group website and let us know. While you're at it sign up for our newsletter!

There also some on-farm Field Days coming up. By the time this goes to print there would have already been a Cattle Handling Clinic with Bree's Bovine Behaviour at Hardwil Homestead near Goulburn in March. A Field Day is currently being planned in Southern NSW on the October long weekend. Keep an eye out on the RBG website and Facebook for more details.

**Our goal as a RBG is to:
"Be an active and engaged
Regional Breeders Group, that
provides education & fellowship,
and promotes Highland Cattle,
across the state of NSW."**



ABOVE: NSW Regional Breeders Group website, About and Events page.

As always Sarah, Jane and I are here to help in any way we can. Do not hesitate to get in contact should you need help.

I would personally like to thank Sarah Vaughan for all her work in getting the NSW RBG website up and running so quickly and looking brilliant!

<https://www.nswhighlandbreeders.org/events>

Further thanks to Brad Crompton for being the stalwart fella who has kept the NSW breeders' group quietly ticking along and to Brenton Earl who has been also running the NSW Breeders Group Facebook page.

VIC

STATE REPORT



By Hugo Howse
AHCS VIC
State Representative

Victorian breeders did not take long to recover from the National Show and have had a busy few months.

Royal Geelong Show

Highlands made a return to the Royal Geelong Show on the weekend of 18–19 October. Four Folds were represented, with cattle from Arcadia, Glenstrae, Serenity and Spergour Highlands.

Murphy's Law of Arcadia once again topped the competition taking out Supreme Exhibit over Junior Champion Female Ailsa Belle of Arcadia. Lorcan Angelo of Glenstrae Highlands (AI) was again Grand Champion Bull.

Victorian State Show

The 2024 Victorian Highland State Show was held in conjunction with the Bendigo Agricultural Show, from Friday 24 to Saturday 25 October. Five Folds were represented this year, with cattle from Bairnsley, Cambus Glen, Jazala, MacAnLeister and Russllyn Highlands. This was a couple down from last year but there were still 19 animals on display, by far the largest breed contingent at the Show.

Exhibitors arrived on Friday and got straight into show preparation – washing, blowing and grooming, in a mad rush for some of the juniors to take part in the Paraders competitions. As is tradition, once Friday's program was completed, exhibitors and breeders group members made their way to the Bendigo RSL for the dinner, popping out at 9pm to watch the Bendigo Show firework display.



TOP: All Other Breeds Supreme Exhibit Murphy's Law of Arcadia, owned by Serenity Highlands.

MIDDLE: Junior and Grand Champion Highland Male Clifford Arrow of MacAnLeister (10304).

BOTTOM: Junior and Grand Champion Highland Female and Supreme Exhibit Jeelie Bean of Cambus Glen (10641).

The Highland feature show took place on Saturday morning and the results were as follows:

- **Junior Champion Highland Male:**
Clifford Arrow of MacAnLeister (10304)
- **Junior Reserve Champion Highland Male:**
Salen Aenghos of Bairnsley (10654)
- **Senior Champion Highland Male:**
Kingsley of Jindabyne (9618)
- **Grand Champion Highland Male:**
Clifford Arrow of MacAnLeister (10304)
- **Junior Champion Highland Female:**
Jeelie Bean of Cambus Glen (10641)
- **Junior Reserve Champion Highland Female:**
Valda of Russllyn (10591)
- **Senior Champion Highland Female:**
Aubrey Bow of MacAnLeister (9134)
- **Senior Reserve Champion Highland Female:**
Jinty of Cambus Glen (9680)
- **Supreme Highland Exhibit:**
Jeelie Bean of Cambus Glen (10641)

Noorat Show

A number of Highland breeders from Victoria and South Australia got together to show our beautiful cattle at Noorat Show in South-West Victoria. The VHBG organised a small Highland Feature Show to run before the main Beef Interbreeds (and before the heat arrived!).

Jeelie Bean of Cambus Glen (ET) backed up her success from the Bendigo Agricultural Show, once again taking top honours as Supreme Highland Female Exhibit.

Reserve Champion Highland Female was Magaidh Bron of Cambus Glen. Champion Highland Bull was Clifford Arrow of MacAnLeister and Reserve Champion Highland Bull was Phoenix of Russllyn.

Some of the junior Highlands went on to take part in the main beef show. The Noorat Show has a large beef section so it was exciting to see the smaller statured Highland's give the commercial beef breeds a run for their money! Jeelie Bean of Cambus Glen (ET), placed 2nd in Heifers under 12 months, while Clifford Arrow of MacAnLeister placed 3rd in Bull 12-14 months.



TOP: Champion Highland Bull: Clifford Arrow of MacAnLeister (10304).

BOTTOM: Supreme Highland Exhibit Jeelie Bean of Cambus Glen (10641).

Kyneton Show

Cleugh Burn Highland Fold proudly represented the VHBG with a display of Highland cattle at the 2024 Kyneton Show. The Highland cattle were a big hit with spectators of all ages, drawing crowds from near and far who loved getting up close to brush and touch their horns and fur. We received so many curious questions from the kids about the animals and how we farm.



ABOVE: Kyneton Show

Camperdown Show

Russllyn Highland attended the 2024 Camperdown Show in SW Victoria with a highly popular display of Highland cattle.



By Amanda Loadsman
and Samantha Wakerley
AHCS QLD State Representatives

TOP: A big turnout at Mostyn.
MIDDLE: Bagpiper at Mostyn's Breeders
Gathering, Will at Mostyn. BOTTOM: Rathad
Oir of Narraburra with Eloise and Haylee at
the Australian Camp Oven Festival, Evie of
Loxley and Eidheann of Narraburra at The
Australian Camp Oven Festival.

Since the last edition of The Highland Fling, we have held **"Breeders Gatherings"** at Mostyn Fold (near Toowoomba) and Carondale Fold (near Warwick). Both days were well attended by current and aspiring breeders, and they are a great chance for the Queenslanders to get together and catch up with old friends and make new ones. We got to tour the properties and meet their cattle. The days were topped off with Bagpipers, demos by Cattle Reproduction Services, and loads of fabulous food. Thanks to Hazel, Raymond, Lisa, Denise and Aaron for hosting us and putting on a great spread!

Highland Cattle also visited the **Australian Camp Oven Festival** in Millmerran back in October. The festival attracts almost 10,000 visitors to Millmerran every second year. Evie of Loxley, her daughter Eidheann (Ivy) of Narraburra, and granddaughter Rathad Oir (Goldie) of Narraburra were very popular with the crowd. Goldie even took a stroll through the markets. A big shout out to the Brady family from Yobhonden Highlands, and the Armstrong / Colgan family from Vagabond Highlands and Rosewood Coos for helping out over the weekend – and not just with the cattle. Steve had them out the back, youtubing camp oven recipes!

By the time you read this, the Queensland Ladies will have attended the inaugural **"Girls Just Want to Talk Highlands"** event hosted by Keans Agri – Leyburn Stud. This will be a day of learning, sharing and connecting for the Queensland Girls.

This gathering is designed to foster a sense of community among women interested in Highland ownership and to provide a platform for sharing knowledge, experiences and insights.

Guest speakers will share their personal journeys, offering valuable lessons and inspiration to attendees.

We will also have held our first **Queensland State Show** in conjunction with Toowoomba Royal Show. Toowoomba is the second largest royal show in Queensland behind The Ekka (officially known as the Royal Queensland Show). Highlands were the feature breed for the first time at the 2024 show. We had 14 entries from 7 breeders, and we are hoping to increase that in 2025, with some first-time breeders, new purchases and new calves ready to strut their stuff in the ring!

We are also fortunate to have a **Bree's Bovine Behaviour Clinic** coming up in May, hosted by Yobhonden Highlands at their new farm in Harlin.

We will report on these three events for the next issue.





*By Tom Robinson
AHCS SA
State Representative*

My name is Tom Robinson, and I am the new state representative for South Australia. Alongside my wife, Cassi, we operate a mixed enterprise farming business in Halbury, South Australia where we grow wheat, lentils, barley, canola, and grow multi species cover crops for grazing and hay. We are passionate about soil and animal health, practicing zero-tillage, controlled traffic, reduced pesticides, and foliar trace element feeding our crops. Our livestock includes rotationally grazed trade cattle on cover crops and a herd of Highland Fold cattle, for which we make hay.

Firstly, I would like to thank Scott Carter for his years of dedication to the Highland breed and all his work on behalf of SA Highland community, and the current positions you hold with everything you do for the Highland breed.

I would like to welcome the newest members to the Australian Highland Cattle Society (AHCS) in South Australia – we had 7 new members join in 2024, taking us to a total of 31. Please do not hesitate to give me a call or an email if you have any queries about the AHCS or your Highland cattle, we have a wonderful community here in SA that are willing to share their knowledge.

It has been a long dry year for most of South Australia, with most regions recording lowest rainfall readings since records began. Low pasture and crop growth has kept hay and feed grain prices high. Knowledge is key when supplementary feeding, please seek advice from an expert animal nutritionist, or experienced local producer that can guide you through the process.



TOP: Trying to fix the drought

Open Day

On the 2nd of March 2025, Trevor, Robyn and Nathan Perry of Mac~Ladanae Highland Cattle Fold, hosted an open day on their property in the Barossa Valley. The open day involved all things Highland Cattle, including handling and breaking in techniques, drought feeding and cattle management. Thank you to the Perry family for putting on this day to help support and educate Highland breeders.

2024 Royal Adelaide Show Results

- **Junior Champion Highland Cow or Heifer:**
Sassafras Skye of Glenstrae (10360)
- **Senior Champion Highland Cow:**
Nylah Grace of Amrabull Park (10247)
- **Grand Champion Highland Female:**
Sassafras Skye of Glenstrae (10360)
- **Junior Champion Highland Bull:**
Lorcan Angelo of Glenstrae (10362)
- **Grand Champion Highland Bull:**
Lorcan Angelo of Glenstrae (10362)

Congratulations to all those who took home ribbons, it was fantastic to see entrants from South Australia and interstate.

2025 Royal Adelaide Show

The Adelaide Show will be held from 30th August to 7th September. Be sure to mark your calendars!



2024 Mil-Lel A & H Show, TOP LEFT: Supreme Exhibit – Jeelie Bean of Cambus Glen TOP RIGHT: Champion Bull – Clifford Arrow of MacAnLeister BOTTOM LEFT: Champion Female – Jeelie Bean of Cambus Glen BOTTOM RIGHT: Interbreed Champion Bull – Clifford Arrow of MacAnLeister.

2024 Mil-Lel A & H Show Results

- **Supreme Champion Highland:**
Jeelie Bean of Cambus Glen (10641)
- **Champion Highland Female:**
Jeelie Bean of Cambus Glen (10641)
- **Reserve Champion Highland Female:**
Josie Bow of MacAnLeister (10303)
- **Champion Highland Bull:**
Clifford Arrow of MacAnLeister (10304)
- **Reserve Champion Highland Bull:**
Titan Arrow of MacAnLeister (9888)

A big congratulations to all SA and interstate entrants for their success.

2025 AHCS National Show

The 2025 AHCS National Show will be held from 6th to 8th of June at Talunga Park, Mount Pleasant, South Australia. Further details will be shared via email. For more information, please contact show@australianhighlandcattle.org. We hope to see you there!

Thanks again for your continued support of the AHCS and Highland cattle in South Australia. I look forward to working with you all in the year ahead.

WA

STATE REPORT



By Jackie DeLuis
AHCS WA
State Representative

WA Highlands on Display

October was a huge month for Highland displays in WA. Fundraising for the WA Breeders Group was in full swing and in the North, **Thistle Doon Highland Cattle** and **Rhantz Barn** worked together in displays at both Bindoon and Gidgegannup Agricultural shows. Robin of Currie Park, Freya Kathleen of Thistle Doon, Artura of Orange Stone and Cammi of Little Hill were a big hit with the crowds who eagerly lined up to meet the cows and get a cuddle and photo. Both events were a remarkable success with many sales of merchandise and raffle tickets. Thank you to Kristi from Thistle Doon Highland Cattle for her behind-the-scenes organisation of the displays, the raffle and for also donating merchandise to sell, as well as Grant Cox and Rhani Miller of Rhantz Barn for ensuring the raffle was a huge success. **Hairy Coos** for donating merchandise and Kristi Pernechele of **Pernopark** for helping out at the Gidgegannup show.

In the South, **Southern Coos**/Highland View Farm were invited to display cattle at the Tronox Spring Out in Eaton, an annual children's event, and also the Brunswick Agricultural show. These events were both to be hands on, so we went equipped with brushes and carrots and plenty of energy to answer the many questions asked. Charlotte of Koonunga Hill, Oich Dubh of Bairnsley and Magaidh Bhuidhe of Southern Coos were all very popular with huge crowds gathering around our display for a cuddle and brush.

In October Nathan & Genna Gibson of **Glenorchy** were invited to attend the Bull and Barrel Festival in Dardanup.



ABOVE: Charlotte of Koonunga Hill at Brunswick Ag Show

WA fundraising efforts a success

Fundraising by the WA Breeders Group is directly benefiting the inaugural WA Highland State Show in April 2025, a huge thank you to all members that have donated their time and/or prizes to benefit the group.

Special thanks to our generous **raffle prize sponsors**, we are so grateful for your support!

- Willowwood Highlands and Willow Wood Glamping Retreat
- Rhan'z Barn

Stay tuned for more updates and mark your calendars for the WA Highland State Show in April!

Barrel Festival, Dardanup

by Genna Gibson

The festival is a yearly event for all ages and had over 150 stall holders/displays on the day, with live music, rides, and its trademark giant wooden bull that is set alight at the end of the festival. This festival marked the 21st birthday of the event, and Glenorchy's fourth time attending. In the past it has been a five-minute drive to get there but having just moved an hour and a half away, and having a newborn baby at the time, this one was a bit of a mission! We (with some help from our three kiddos and our parents) took our bull Balerion of Glenorchy, along to be part of the Rare Breeds Trust display. It was a great day, and our display attracted a huge number of people. Balerion was a true gentleman and on his best

behaviour letting kids and adults alike, give him pats and scratches while he munched on his hay. Once we had him back in his paddock for the night, we were able to return to watch the lighting of the "candles" on the giant wooden birthday cake and enjoy the show.

Special Day with Make-A-Wish Foundation

by Kristin Pernechele of Pernopark

Located in the Perth Hills, Bailup Ford Farm has been operating for 18 years, with all entry fees being donated to charity. For the last three years, Bailup Ford Farm's chosen charity has been the Make-A-Wish Foundation, an Australian children's charity that grants life-changing wishes to children with critical illnesses.

To celebrate the amazing achievement of reaching \$121,000 in donations, we held a family fun day for the families and volunteers of Make-A-Wish. To make the event even more special, some of Bailup Farm's other residents made an appearance, including a few of the Highland cattle. Marshmellow, Coco, and Storm stole many hearts and were a big favourite among the guests.

It was such a beautiful experience to share the love and joy these majestic animals bring, and to see the smiles they put on the faces of some very deserving children and their families. With classic cars, firefighters, face painting, and farm animals, it was a wonderful and successful day filled with laughter, smiles, and even a few tears.



ABOVE: Make A Wish Foundation at Pernopark.



ABOVE: Mac-Ladanae at Optus Stadium.

The Wild West Scorchers family event

By Nathan Perry of Mac-Ladanae

Heritage Livestock Australia had an amazing opportunity to bring our Highlands to Optus Stadium for the Perth Scorchers game on December 15th. It was the first time cows had been at the game, and to make it even more special, they were Highlands!

The day started early on the farm, where we cleaned and prepped for this huge event, bathing Jackson, Ann, and baby Violet. Once they were ready, we headed to Optus Stadium. What a drive it was—so many people stopped by to comment on the cows, it was hilarious!

When we arrived, we began setting up, and before we were finished unpacking, we had people lining up to see the Highlands. We unloaded Baby Violet and Ann first. Little Violet, only three weeks old, was already turning heads with her fluffy coat—she did great on her first trailer ride! Ann came off the trailer running, full of energy, while Jackson, as usual, was more relaxed, thinking, "Okay, another show—where are my carrots?"

The smiles on everyone's faces when we said they could come in and pet the cows were absolutely priceless. We answered so many questions and took countless photos—it was an overwhelming and heartwarming experience.

For a gold coin donation, visitors could feed the two big cows a carrot, with all money raised going to the Perth Children's Hospital. The three cows did an amazing job all day, interacting with the crowd and spreading joy.

A big thanks to the Perth Scorchers for having us!

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members that joined the Australian Highland Cattle Society during the 2024 year. Thank you for supporting our mission to preserve heritage, protect integrity and advance Highland Cattle in Australia through herd registration, education and fellowship.

Full

RAY & KALAIR CORRIE,
GLENOGIL FOLD, QLD

SEAN BRENNAN & SAMANTHA
ROBINSON, **BRENGOOL PARK
FOLD**, SA

ADAM & SAMANTHA
GREENSLADE, **HILLSLADE FOLD**,
QLD

SHANELLE THOMASON,
SHEMRIC FOLD, NSW

ROBERT & MICHELLE MURRELL,
SCOTCHWOOD FOLD, WA

MARTIN & NERINDA McCONNON,
LIFFEY RIVER FOLD, TAS

JENNA McATAMNEY,
SPRINGSIDE FOLD, NSW

JORDAN WATLING & CHRIS COX,
ADINA VIEW FOLD, SA

ALANA & ROBBIE McNAUGHTON,
WYAMBAH FOLD, NSW

THOMAS & ANNA FENLON,
BONNIE GLEN FOLD, NSW

DEAN & KARA MORRIS,
KD HIGHLANDS FOLD, QLD

AUSTIN & JO RUGLESS,
HOPE FOREST FOLD, SA

PAUL & MEREWYN PARTLAND,
OORONG HIGHLANDS FOLD, NSW

JOSIAH MACPHERSON & BOBBIE
HITE, **CLUNY FOLD**, QLD

KYLIE MEALING,
TULLYMORE FOLD, NSW

WILLIAM PULVER,
MONA FARM FOLD, NSW

ZULMIRA MELO, **BELLA VISTA
FARM FOLD**, QLD

SARAH CANNING & MARK GILES,
NORTHVIEW FOLD, QLD

LUKAS & KELLY MORSE,
THE RANCH CASTELLA FOLD,
VIC

TRACEY WILLIS, **KARIBU FOLD**,
NSW

LAURA MELLON, **SHAWSHACK
FARM FOLD**, WA

ALAN & SHANDRA COPPARD,
GLENIFFER FOLD, NSW

KARYN LEGUEN,
COBDEN FARM FOLD, VIC

GLEN & CHRISTINE MOLKENTIEN,
MONTANE HIGHLANDS FOLD,
QLD

MEL SPENCER & KYLIE BYRNE,
BOGAMBLE FOLD, VIC

LOUISE MESCHIATI,
LAKEBROOK FOLD, WA

MATTHEW & TRACEY SEAMAN,
NORTHWOOD FOLD, NSW

JULIA ORMOND,
BALDHILL FOLD, VIC

LARA O'REGAN,
LITTLEFIELD FOLD, WA

BRAD & BECC MORRISSY,
CAMDANA FOLD, VIC

GAVIN & FIONA MILVERTON,
JORTAN MAJESTICS FOLD, VIC

VANESSA ASHFIELD,
ORARA FOLD, NSW

JASON & JULIE ENTWISTLE,
SPRING PONDS FOLD, NSW

ROBYN KOSKI, **KELKU FOLD**, NSW

NICOLE LEWRY, **KARYLDAN FOLD**,
NSW

VALERIE & BARRY STAMMERS,
VALBRY STENSON FOLD, VIC

SOPHIE CHARD & LIAM GREIG,
ELLENESSE ACRES FOLD, SA

MARLENE RUTH HEWSON,
LANDERYON FARM FOLD, NSW

WAYNE & SHARON DICKSON,
SUNRISE FOLD, QLD

CATRIONA WILSON,
HIGHLAND SKYE FOLD, VIC

PIP SUMMERVILLE & JAKE
HOGAN, **GUANABA CREEK FOLD**,
QLD

SCOTT & RAELEE BIELENBERG,
BIELO'S FARM FOLD, QLD

JANE GILLHAM & SIMON BOLTON,
BOLTHAM DOWNS FOLD, WA

AMANDA JEAN FREEMAN,
TERRICA VALLEY FOLD, WA

DAMIEN DREW, **ABIGALE
HIGHLANDS FOLD**, QLD

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KANE & MARLI DI VIRGILIO,
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RETAN FOLD, VIC

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OWEN CATTLE CO FOLD, QLD

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NAUTIYAL, **BLACKJACK FOLD**,
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FOLD**, NSW

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MARTIN, **BULLAX VALLEY FOLD**,
VIC

DEBORAH & CLYDE DAVENPORT,
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HEATHERFIELD FOLD, NSW

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COWIN, **COCO HIGHLANDS FOLD**,
NSW

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FERN LEA HIGHLANDS FOLD, TAS

KELSEY SCRIVEN,
KELSEY BRAE COOS FOLD, VIC

OSCAR CAMERON,
NOREMAC FOLD, VIC

KIRA KAYE,
EVERGREEN FARM FOLD, NSW

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UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL 2025

26 Harvey Agricultural Show –
WA State Show (WA)

JUNE 2025

6–8 2025 AHCS National Show (SA)

AUGUST 2025

30–7 Sep Royal Adelaide Show (SA)

SEPTEMBER 2025

25–5 Oct Royal Melbourne Show (VIC)
27 Murray Bridge Show (SA)
27–4 Oct Perth Royal Show (WA)

OCTOBER 2025

11 Dardanup Bull & Barrell Festival Display
12 Mil-Lel Show (SA)
11–12 Port Elliot Show (SA)
11–12 Taree Show (NSW)
18–19 Camden Haven Show (NSW)
23–25 Royal Hobart Show (TAS)
24–25 Bendigo Agricultural Show
24–25 Mount Gambier Show (SA)
25 Brunswick Agricultural Show (WA)
25 Kapunda & Light Agricultural Show (SA)
31–1 Nov Busselton Agricultural Show (WA)

NOVEMBER 2025

15 Noorat Agricultural Show (VIC)
21–22 Bulahdelah Show (NSW)

ADVERTISING RATES

Size	Non member rate	Full member rate (20% off)
Back Cover FP	\$400	\$320
Inside Cover FP	\$330	\$270
Internal FP	\$270	\$220
Half Page	\$140	\$110
Quarter Page	\$70	\$55
Sponsor a Page	–	\$22

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Full Page No Bleed: 180mm x 262mm

Half Page Horizontal: 180mm x 128mm

Quarter Page Vertical: 87mm x 128mm

Ads to be supplied in CMYK with all imagery at 300dpi. Acceptable file formats are PDF (preferred) or high resolution JPG.

Invoices for advertising will be issued by AHCS.

**Secure your placement
and send advert to:**
marketing@australianhighlandcattle.org

Advertising design rates (optional)

For a professional edge, we offer design services. All copy to be supplied. Logos to be supplied as vector EPS/PDF files or high resolution TIFF/JPG. High resolution photographic imagery to be supplied as JPG, images need to be 300dpi when printed.

Size	Price (inc GST)
Full page	\$160
Half Page	\$120
Quarter page	\$77

AHCS CONTACT DETAILS



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Vacant, to be appointed

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(as at AGM, 25 May 2024)

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Tim Wright | TAS
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Secretary

Lesley Harris | VIC
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