

THE AUSTRALIAN



Simmental

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 1, No. 2.

February, 1973

SIMMENTALS SCORE SMITHFIELD CARCASE WINS

Simmental cross-bred beef cattle had an outstanding performance at the Royal Smithfield Show in London, England, in December, 1972 — the first Smithfield at which they were eligible to compete.

They provided the supreme beef carcass champion and took four other major awards in the six classes in which they were old enough to compete in the beef carcass section of the show.

The carcass champion, open to all breeds and crosses, was a Simmental x Lincoln Red steer bred at Timberland, Lincoln, England by Mr. C. L. Bembridge, a leading breeder of Lincoln Reds. This steer also gained first prize in the carcass class for steers of any type up to 15 months of age.

The champion steer was 377 days old, weighed 1 012lb. alive, and killed out at 59.09 per cent to yield a carcass of 598lb. He achieved a live-weight of 2.65lb., and a carcass weight of 1.58lb. per day of age.

Judged alive, the best steer up to 15 months old was also a Simmental cross, this time out of a Charolais x Aberdeen Angus cow. He was bred by Mr. T. P. Best of Millington, Yorkshire, a previous winner of a number of major beef cattle awards in England.

A fellow Yorkshireman, Mr. A. E. Conner jr. of East Lutton, near Malton, showed a Simmental cross heifer which was placed third alive and 1st as carcass in the classes for heifers up to 15 months old. This Simmental cross was out of a Charolais x British Friesian cow.

The British Farmers Weekly quotes the carcass judge, Mr. John Brewster, as saying the carcasses at the Show were a good deal leaner, as befitted

the modern housewife's taste, than at earlier shows. "I can remember a couple of years ago seeing 1½ inches of fat on the carcasses. But not today."

Mr. Brewster is managing director of a firm of Smithfield Market meat wholesalers and handles some 400 sides a week of Scotch beef. About a third of the carcasses he judged had in them blood of European breeds, recently imported into England.

Mr. Brian Freeman, secretary of the British Simmental Cattle Society, commented: "The first Simmental cattle from Switzerland and Germany were imported into Britain only in late 1970 and became available for breeding only during 1971.

50 Per Cent of Top Prizes

"To have won 50 per cent of the first prizes in the Smithfield carcass section classes in which they were old enough to compete at the World's premier beef show is a tremendous achievement. It has more than justified the faith of the breed's importers."

So far, some 1,000 Simmental cattle — 830 females and 70 bulls have been imported into the U.K. from Switzerland, Germany and France in just over two years. It is the fastest rate of importation into the U.K. of any "new" European breed.

The importations have been supported by Ministries and Departments of Agriculture throughout the U.K., some of which run some of the British A.I. stations from which Simmental semen is now generally available throughout Britain. The Simmental, originally a Swiss breed, is now the most numerous European breed, providing milk and beef from France and Germany through to European Russia. □

FOR

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information on recording register

As you are aware the ASBA is establishing an integrated system for registration and performance recording to be called the Simmental Recording Register. Due to the combination of several problems it will not be possible to give full details for one or two months.

However, as calves are now being dropped it is imperative I give you at this stage an idea of the

By C. R. G. BOWMAN
Councillor ASBA

information you will need to record on individual animals at birth. The following is required:

AT BIRTH you should record birth date, birth weight and calving difficulty according to the following scale:

- Dead at birth = 1
- Failure to calve = 2
- Assisted birth = 3
- Posterior presentation = 4
- Caesarian = 5

AT WEANING between 180 and 270 days of age record: weaning date, weaning weight, whether horned, polled or scured and the eye pigmentation for each eye according to the following scale:

- No pigmentation = 0
- $\frac{1}{4}$ pigmentation = 1
- $\frac{1}{2}$ pigmentation = 2
- $\frac{3}{4}$ pigmentation = 3
- Complete pigmentation = 4

If you do not wean before 270 days then collect this information when the average age of the calf herd is as close to 200 days as possible. If your calving extends over a period of greater than three months divide your herd into two groups for recording purposes, collecting this information when the average age of each half is close to 200 days.

At weaning you will also have to make a decision as to whether or not to register your heifers. There is provision for a post weaning test. Information on this section, since it is not urgent at this stage, will be provided in the Register manual.

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT IT IS MANDATORY THAT MEMBERS RECORD THIS INFORMATION ON ALL CALVES.

All information on individual calves shall be confidential, although the Association does intend to release bulked information of bulk performances as will be outlined at the end of this article.

The system will provide the following services:

A) It will allow the Association to keep a complete record of all registered animals and their pedigrees.

B) It will provide members with reports on calf pre- and post weaning performances and sire's progenies' performance in relation to both the pre- and post weaning periods to assist them in selection. These reports will contain information on weight gains, calving difficulty, eye pigmentation, hornedness, fertility and mothering ability and, optionally, grade and ultrasonic measurements.

C) A pedigree of each individual will be forwarded to breeders on registration. On this will be printed the latest performance data of the individual and his predecessors going back five generations. It will be possible for breeders to obtain further pedigrees at any age that will contain more up-to-date information. For example, if a breeder requests a pedigree of one of his bulls at, say, eight years of age, then it will have printed on it not only his weaning performance, but also his post weaning performance and a summary of the performance of his progeny so far recorded.

D) A National Sire Performance summary will be printed annually. This will summarise the performance of all sires used in Australia with regard to fertility, calving difficulty and weaning and post weaning performance. This data will be presented on a regional as well as a national basis and compare a bull's performance over heifers to that over cows.

This service will, in effect, performance test all bulls under Australian conditions over thousands of calves. The first report should be available at the end of the year.

The Council, in adopting the Simmental Recording Register has taken full account of the difficulty and expense involved for some members. We believe, however, that if the breed is to fulfil its tremendous potential in Australia then it must be soundly established and developed using the most advanced animal breeding techniques available. □

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The Australian Simmental Newsletter

EVALUATION BREEDS TOP SIMMENTALS IN EUROPE

(Newsletter is indebted to Mr. Bruce N. Burnell, Munga Park Pastoral Co., Munga Park, Frances, S.A. for the following article. Not only does it highlight the work done by Pro. H. Krusslich and the expansion of the breed in North America, but it also shows the thoroughness of European breeders in their sire evaluation programmes which bring only a few bulls to the top for approved use as sires.—Ed.).

The First World Simmental Congress, held at Munich in October, 1972 was also the venue of the 10th general meeting of the European Association of Fleckvieh Breeders, and 350 delegates from 22 countries attended. After a delightful reception at the Hofbrauhaus, where delegates renewed old acquaintances and made new ones, the Congress was opened at the Munich Hilton by Prof. Dr. Belic of Belgrad, followed by an address from the Bavarian Minister of Food, Agriculture, and Forests, Dr. H. Eisenmann.

The first paper was given by Prof. Dr. Hans Krausslich (who was recently in Australia), on the German Fleckvieh Breeding. In this address Pro. Krausslich explained how the German breeding program works. He explained how out of a total German Fleckvieh population of 4.5 million there were 2.3 million heifers and cows, of which 522,388 were milk recorded cows and 257,244 were herdbook cows from whom the A.I. bulls were selected.

From 116,000 sons of herdbook cows, in 1971, 502 bulls were selected as A.I. test bulls. Test bulls are allowed 1,000 to 1,500 first inseminations, from which a random sample of 300 to 350 are assessed for gestation period, stillbirths and calf mortality within 24 hours. Further assessments are made of growth rate and slaughter value of sons, and milk and butterfat percentage of daughter's first lactations. All of which screening resulted in 1971, in only 32 bulls being selected for planned matings as future bull sires.

We were later to see the working and results of this selection system, with its attendant computerisation, during visits to various A.I. and bull testing stations.

From the Australian point of view it was extremely interesting to hear of the experience of breeders from around the world with Simmentals in a wide variety of climates, from the Tropics to Siberia. Russia alone has 16 million Simmental.

The Australian Simmental Newsletter

Although some difficulty was experienced with direct importations into Argentina of purebreds coming from European winter conditions to arid Summer range conditions with dry feed, all reports remarked on the ready acclimatization of the Simmental that had been bred in the importing countries.

Also, the superiority of F1 crosses over the existing cattle populations, in the various countries, are showing up very well, in rate of gain, mature size, and cutability of carcass. As Dr. A. Dixon of Canada reported: "Simmental all over North America are being evaluated, and to date they have equalled or excelled all other breeds with which they have been compared."

Mr. D. Vaniman, secretary of the U.S. Simmental Soc. said: "We feel that Simmental will be one of the three most popular and populous breeds in the U.S. within ten years." The U.S. has a total cattle population of over 54 million, and in 1971 imported one million doses of Simmental semen, 700,000 from Canada, 200,000 from Germany, and 100,000 from Switzerland.

Speaking of the U.S. Simmental Soc. proformance/registry system Mr. Vaniman quoted their motto as: "Visual analysis tells you what a Simmental appears to be, his pedigree tells you what he should be, his proformance and progeny tests tell you what he actually is."

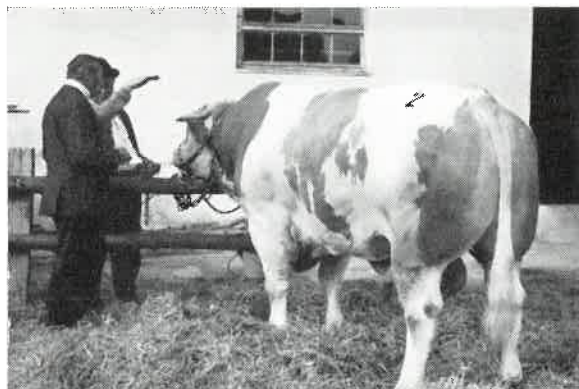
A final dinner was given to Congress members by the Bavarian State Minister for Agriculture in the Munich Hilton.

The second part of the program consisted of an excursion to typical farms to see herds and parades of bull mothers. We were greeted by a German band, which helped to give a festive air to the proceedings. The methods of judging and assessment were explained, including the attention given the proformance of the dams.

The most impressive and informative demonstration of the Baden-Wurttemberg breeding program was held. A parade of proven sires from the A.I. Station was followed by a parade of test bull mothers, then young bulls from testing stations, and bulls waiting for the results of their test matings to be assessed, before being used again (approximately three to four years).

Bull mothers were then shown with one or two of their sons. The most striking parade then followed, which was four of the senior sires in the semen program, followed by groups of their sons and daughters with up to five sons, all test bulls themselves, and up to eight daughters in each group. It was possible to see how a bull was imprinting his characteristics on his progeny.

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One of the bulls seen on the tour following the Munich Congress involved in their very thorough evaluation programme. Note his hindquarters and height.

• From page 5

The organisation behind this particular demonstration must be appreciated when it is realised that these bulls had been brought together from several stations, and the cows from dozens of small farms. There were over eighty animals in this demonstration, and the German Fleckvieh breeders should be commended for a job well done.

We have seen what can be done, what is being done, in Simmental breeding and improvement,

Sydney Royal Functions

The annual general meeting of the ASBA will be held at 10 a.m., on Tuesday, April 17, during the 1973 Sydney Royal Show. The venue will be White City, Rushcutters Bay.

Council has also decided the ASBA will hold a social function. This will be held at the White City at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, April 18. The charge is \$10 per head. □

OVERSEAS READERS

Should anyone overseas wish to receive regular copies of the Australian Simmental Newsletter, please send your name and address to the Secretary, Australian Simmental Breeders' Association Ltd., Box 4317, G.P.O., Sydney, N.S.W., Australia 2001. \$2 per annum will be charged to cover the cost of postage.

and we must realise what we must do as Simmental breeders. That is to utilise the genetic gains and progress that has been built up in Europe in the last 70 to 80 years of herd improvement, and not make the mistakes that have been evident in some of the older breeds, of using less than the best genetic material available. □



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INSEMINATOR TRAINING SCHOOLS CONDUCTED MONTHLY

TATTOO EAR-MARKING OF CALVES

Some members may be entering upon a stud breeding programme for the first time and may have had no experience in tattooing calves. The following basic instructions on tattooing as recommended by the N.S.W. Department of Agriculture will assist in giving you a clear, legible tattoo.

Each stud calf must be branded with some distinguishing mark to prevent error in identification.

Fire branding, acid branding, freeze branding and ear tagging have disadvantages. However, tattoo ear-marking has proved satisfactory over a long period. The calf may be tattoo ear-marked soon after birth without detriment to health or disfigurement of the hide. When the calf is 8 or 9 months old, fire branding will be satisfactory.

Use high-grade ink

The tattoo earmark must be distinct and lasting. Care is essential when puncturing the ear with the tattoo instrument, and the dye must be good quality. China or India ink in tube form, preferably that used by tattoo artists, is satisfactory.

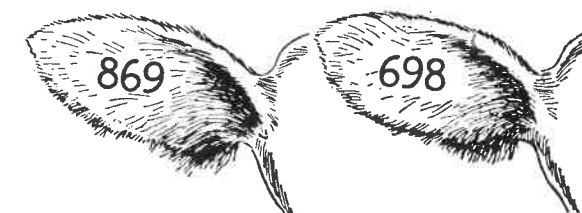
Method

Remove the natural grease from the calf's ear by cleaning it with a cloth or swab moistened with

methylated spirits. Select the part of the ear most free of large veins and hair, and smear it with ink where the tattoo is to go. Before using the tattoo, test its correctness on a piece of cardboard or the brim of an old felt hat; it is easy to insert the letters or figures wrongly. For instance 869 incorrectly inserted in the holder might read 698 and D9 could read 6D.

Puncture the ear quickly and decisively. Remove the clamp immediately to prevent the ear being torn should the calf pull away. Finally, rub more ink into the punctured area.

• To page 8



Result of careless insertion of numbers in the instrument — above left: as the figures (869) should read from the front; above right: the operator has inserted the same figures incorrectly, looking from above and behind.

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N.Z. BREEDERS ARE FORGING AHEAD

The Simmental Cattle Breeders' Society of New Zealand in their latest Newsletter reports progress in various fields, not the least being establishment of a computer programme for Simmentals. This programme is aimed at both pedigree and performance recording.

The committee setting up the all-important basic concept for the computer consists of Professor A. L. Rae, Massey University, Professor R. W. Cartwright, also of Massey and Mr. H. J. Clifford, Assistant Director of the Farm Production Division of the Dairy Board. The Council is represented by member Mr. R. A. Barton of Massey, Mr. Frank Graham and Mr. Frank Scott. The future progress of this programme will be of intense interest to Australian breeders.

East of Calving

The newsletter states that all reports so far received indicate that calving difficulties with the

From page 7

Three or 4 days after tattooing, small blisters will probably appear on the skin. Do not interfere with them — they will disappear, leaving a legible brand.

Some precautions

Unsatisfactory results can be traced to one or more of the following mistakes:

- Failure to remove natural grease from the ear before applying the ink;
- Puncturing the large veins of the ear, causing excessive bleeding;
- Applying the tattoo to the part of the ear where hair growth is thick;
- Use of poor quality ink;
- Tearing of the skin, when the instrument is not released quickly enough after puncturing the ear;
- Carelessness in inserting the numbers or letters in the tattoo pliers; remember that the brand is to be read from the front and not from above and behind the ear, which is the position of the operator when puncturing the ear; and
- Failure to puncture the ear correctly, perhaps because the chisel or needle points of the letters are worn or damaged (chisel points are better than needle points).

Tattoo age

Tattoo ear-mark calves before they are 2 weeks old; they are then readily identified and much easier to handle.

The recommended size of numbers and letters is half an inch high, as used for sheep, although three-quarter-inch characters are also satisfactory. □

first cross calves had been no more than would have been expected with the traditional breeds.

The Newsletter states: "Most reports have been verbal, but some written information and the few calf registration forms so far returned, show clearly that calving is not likely to be an important consideration with Simmentals in New Zealand. Calving among the presumably larger F2 and F3 cows, when that takes place, should not be less encouraging than the satisfactory experience with F1 calves so far."

Membership of the Society continues to grow and they now have 180 members and 106 registered herds. There are known to be 38 purebred Simmentals in N.Z. at present, 15 bulls and 23 heifers, with 10 head on the water. It is estimated that 20,000 doses of Simmental semen have been used to produce next spring's crop of calves.

Inspection for Export

Of interest to Australian breeders also is the item that the N.Z. Simmental Society has strongly supported the Charolais Society in that country to have the government tighten the rules regarding the export of cattle. In other words that no cattle be exported unless they have been approved by the appropriate breed society. This already applies to sheep.

The item continues: "The object is primarily to ensure that cattle exported for breeding purposes are up to a standard that will not damage New Zealand's high reputation for breeding stock. There is a further consideration that cattle might be exported from here at a nominal declared value and sold overseas for high prices, with a consequent loss to the country through taxation, a subject in which the Inland Revenue, Treasury and other authorities are naturally interested."

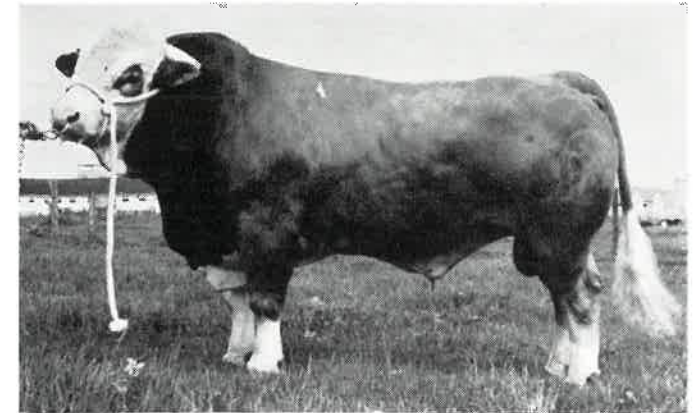
"Breed societies are concerned to see they receive the revenue from fees arising from exports of registered cattle, revenue which is used for the improvement of the breeds in this country. The Simmental Society has supported the Charolais Society's move strongly." □

VIC. STATE COMMITTEE

If members have any matters they wish to discuss with the executive of the ASBA contact your nearest committeeman.

W. R. R. Beggs (chairman), Buln Gherin, Beaufort, 3373; H. W. W. Hopkins, Wormbete, Winchelsea, 3241; T. Liley, Moonbool, Foster, 3960; P. McLaughlin, Wombargo, via Gelantipy, 3892; T. Pitman, Thalia Park, Bayley Rd., Trafalgar, 3824; T. Manifold, Woolgoolga, Ancona, 3715; J. G. Head, Grenada Park, Sunbury, 3429; K. Andrews, P.O. Box 122, Mansfield, 3722; C. Walker, Merri Park, Woodstock, 3751; D. Emerson, Alva Downs, Alva Koort, Branhholme, 3302. □

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Mr. Frank Young, of Kirkcudbrightshire, Scotland, one of the men responsible for the selection and introduction of the first Simmental cattle to the U.K. brought to Australia some interesting news on the growth and sales of Simmentals in that country.

Mr. and Mrs. Young were on a visit to their son, Mr. J. W. Young, a vice-president of the ASBA.

At a sale at Ingleston, Edinburg, in November, of Simmental breeding cattle and Grade A heifers bulls sold to 4,200 gns. and heifers to 1,000 gns. The four bulls sold grossed £9,975 and averaged £2,493.75 while the 21 cross heifers grossed £8,484 and averaged £404.

The top priced bulls was Heather Hall Adolph 83rd by Scottish Neptune, one of the 1970 importations. He was sold by Mr. Andrew Barr of Biggar to R. and M. Young, St. John's Kirk, Symington, Biggar. The other bull prices were 2,500 gns. for the 15-months old Leader Angus 43rd by Scottish Neff; 1,500 gns., the three-year-old importation, Otto; and 1,300 gns. for 2½-years-old Teddy by Napoleon.

The top priced heifer at 1,000 gns. was also first prize winner as the females were judged. She was Glenturk Beauty by Scottish Neptune and was offered by W. S. Allan. Glenturk, Newton Stewart and bought by Capt. W. H. S. Whamond, Kirkcowan.

SIMMENTAL EXPORTS WORTH £1M

The "Scottish Farmer" of November 18, 1972, reports some interesting figures on the growth of the Simmental breed in the U.K. as supplied by Mr. Brian Freeman, secretary of the British Simmental Society in their second annual report.

Mr. Freeman reports that performance statistics and easy calving records, as supplied by the SMMB, are among the reasons for the quick pro-

You may know someone who is interested in breeding Simmental cattle or receiving the Newsletter. Send his name and address to the Secretary, Australian Simmental Breeders' Association Ltd., Box 4317, G.P.O., Sydney, N.S.W. 2001.

Tick whichever is applicable.
Please place the person nominated below on the Newsletter mailing list.
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gress of the breed in the U.K. Imports between September, 1970 and August, 1972 totalled 830 females and 70 bulls.

Inseminations in the first year were 25,000, followed now by 80,000 in the second. Pedigree registrations are up to 547, roughly half of them for bulls.

First Simmental exports from Britain were on November 30, 1971 and in the past year 209 export certificates were issued, to an estimated total value of £1m. Half-a-million pounds worth of semen — 111,533 shots — were exported.

Society membership rose from 150 to 377. He said experience suggested 86.67% of crossbred Simmental progeny have white faces and "spectacles" according to the bull used, with variable body colour and distinct dewlap.

AUSTRALIA'S FIRST BORN
Wednesday, January 10, 1973 could become Simmental Birthday Day in Australia as it was on that day the first calf born in Australia carrying Simmental blood was born. A bull calf, he is by Scotland-based Scottish Neff and his proud mother is a Hereford cow. Congratulations to breeders, D. S. and R. D. Baker, Callendale, Millicent, S.A.

HISTORIC AUSTRALIAN
SIMMENTAL SALE

An historic sale in the annals of the Australian beef industry will take place next April 19. On that date, commencing at 11 a.m. at Glen Parc, Mittagong, N.S.W., the first sale in Australia of first cross Simmental calves and their mothers will be held.

The sale is being held account McLaughlin Simmental Ltd., Palaroo, Armidale, N.S.W. and 100 heifer and bull calves will be offered.

The sale is sure to create tremendous interest among ASBA mmbers and cattlemen generally. The mothers of the first cross calves are Hereford cows from famous Wallamumbi (V2V) and Congi herds.

Particulars are available from the selling agents, Animal Breeding Services (Aust.) Pty. Ltd.

S.A. STATE COMMITTEE

J. W. Young (chairman), Congeith, P.B. 24, Naracoorte, 5271; V. T. O'Grady, Box 133, Mt. Barker, 5551; D. S. Baker, 12 Belt Rd., Millicent, 5280; R. H. C. Seymour, Box 282, Naracoorte, 5271; R. J. Sharrad, Pinery, Rutherglen, 5572; P. E. Withers, Nalpa via Strathalbyn, 5255.

This Newsletter has been compiled and edited by Alan Kay for the Australian Simmental Breeders' Association, and printed by Highway Press Pty. Ltd., 42 Chapel Street, Marrickville, N.S.W.

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Know Your Council

VICE-PRESIDENT YOUNG

A feature of the Council of the ASBA is the young average age of its members, and vice-president, Mr. James Wilkie Young, 33, is no exception. Mr. Young is himself an "import" and was born and reared on his father's property, Congeith, Kirkcudbrightshire, Scotland.

Congeith, an 1800-acre property is now managed by his brother Bruce and is owned by his father, Mr. Frank Young, who has recently returned home from a four months visit to Australia and N.Z. The property, which used to be a dairying enterprise, now runs fat lambs and carries a Galloway and a Simmental stud.



Mr. J. W. Young

Mr. Young has 300 Herefords in calf to Simmentals and they will start dropping in April this year, a little later than the majority of other Simmental breeders.

He has Simmental cattle of his father's breeding in N.Z. and will bring in their first cross calves to Australia as quickly as the breeding programme will permit.

Mr. Young considers the Simmental has a big future in Australia through their conformation and milking ability and considers they will detract nothing from our commercial Hereford herds. Rather they will improve their milk supply.

Mr. Young envisages a three-herd enterprise in his breeding project. He will have a pure bred Simmental herd and a herd of Hereford-Simmental cross breeders, which, through the use of a terminal bull, will produce the third herd which are destined for the fat cattle yards. □

Vice-president Young first came "south of the border" when he came out with cattle to N.Z., where he worked for a year in 1958-59 and visited the 1959 Sydney Royal Show.

He returned to Australia in 1964 and shortly after married Christine Hudson of Naracoorte, S.A. Today, they and their family, Francis James Jnr., 3 and Anna Katherine, 1, live on their 3,300-acre property, Congeith at Naracoorte.

COUNCIL OF THE AUSTRALIAN SIMMENTAL BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION LTD.

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Queensland

Messrs. E. G. Ryland; J. J. Witherspoon,
P.O. Box 5, Ravenshoe, 4879.

South Australia

Messrs. D. S. Baker, 12 Belt Rd., Millcent. 5280; J. W. Young.

West Australia

Messrs. A. Fletcher, Dirk Brook, Keysbrook, 6206; R. W. Vincent.

Secretary:

Royal Agricultural Society of N.S.W.,
G.P.O. Box 4317, Sydney 2001

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the council of the ASBA will be held in the Cole-Dudgeon Memorial Stand in the Sydney Showground on Friday, February 23, 1973. □