

THE BULLOCKIES' BELL



Journal: **THE AUSTRALIAN BULLOCK DRIVERS LEAGUE INC**

March 2015

AUSTRALIAN BULLOCK



DRIVERS LEAGUE

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COVER: Donna Evans, Tasmania, with her steers Tick and Buoy.

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AUSTRALIAN BULLOCK DRIVERS' LEAGUE Inc.

Chief Teamster's Report

Hello All

It has been a long, hot Summer that seemed to start in September and is still going in March. We are all looking forward to the cooler weather of Autumn which is yet to arrive. The temperature has been nudging forty degrees a lot of the time, not very conducive to outside work. I worked the bullocks last weekend for a couple of hours in the morning for a feller who wanted to film them and we were all cooked when we finished. Fortunately the rain I wrote of in December continued and we ended up with ten inches in December and seven in January. February was dry with the exception of the night of Cyclone Marcia when she dumped almost eight inches in a few hours. Although it filled a couple of our dams with poor catchments, the rain also broke one dam of ours and many others around the district. A neighbour lost four of five on one of his blocks. March has also been dry so far. The good news is that we have beautiful grass and cattle to eat it as I resisted selling in Spring when things were looking grim. You would not want to be restocking now, cattle prices are high.

We have started a program of monthly workshops on forgotten or innovative farming and kitchen skills. It is amazing what falls into the category of forgotten. This month people are coming along to an afternoon of jam making and preserving with the last of the summer fruits from Stanthorpe. In May I am holding a full weekend workshop on driving and training bullocks, maybe a few new bullockies will be unearthed. If you know of anyone who might be interested please pass on our contact details to them. By the beginning of April it will hopefully be cool enough to begin another new initiative – regular Saturday afternoon bullock team displays, followed by afternoon tea of camp oven damper or scones and billy tea, finishing off with a farm tour in the late afternoon. The idea is to bring more people to the farm and create interest in what we are doing. We want our customers to come and see the story of where their food is coming from. This year we will be selling grass fed beef and lamb in addition to our pork, ham and bacon so we need to be growing our customer base. We are all looking forward to June when Fiona's job finishes and we will have more time at home together. In the meantime progress on all our projects is very steady but at least we know what we are working towards. We have a new video of our farm which you can watch at <http://youtu.be/fKzXmF8celo>



Chief Teamster's Report Continued

We are really looking forward to having everyone here next month. It's not easy for us to get away to things so the best way to be there is to host them. About half the week will be playing here on the farm and the other half touring the Burnett district. It would be good to know how many people are coming and where they are staying so that we can work out food for each meal. Some meals we will cook for everyone, some we will organise to be somewhere to buy and the rest can be had wherever everyone is staying. We are happy to organise the in between meals for anyone who will be staying here in Gleneden. We will appreciate some help with the food when everyone arrives as there is really only Fiona and me. Please bring along a cake or biscuits if you can. We have plenty of room for campers and swags here and a few bedrooms available. The program below is mostly confirmed although we may have to adjust/swap some days or times if one of our destinations requests it. Do you want us to dry hire a small bus for the days when there is more driving? Let us know your opinion. Would you like to stick to your cars or share the cost of a bus for the longer trips?

Friday 17th – Setting up and bullock play

Saturday 18th – Morning – Remembering everyone's name. Afternoon – Bullock team display, camp oven dampers and farm tour. (open to the public)

Sunday 19th – Morning – Gayndah Museum. Afternoon – Bullocks in Gleneden

Monday 19th – Morning – Biggenden cattle sale. Afternoon – Brahman Stud, meeting?

Tuesday 20th – Day in the South Burnett – timber industry building, second hand shops, museum, bush pub lunch

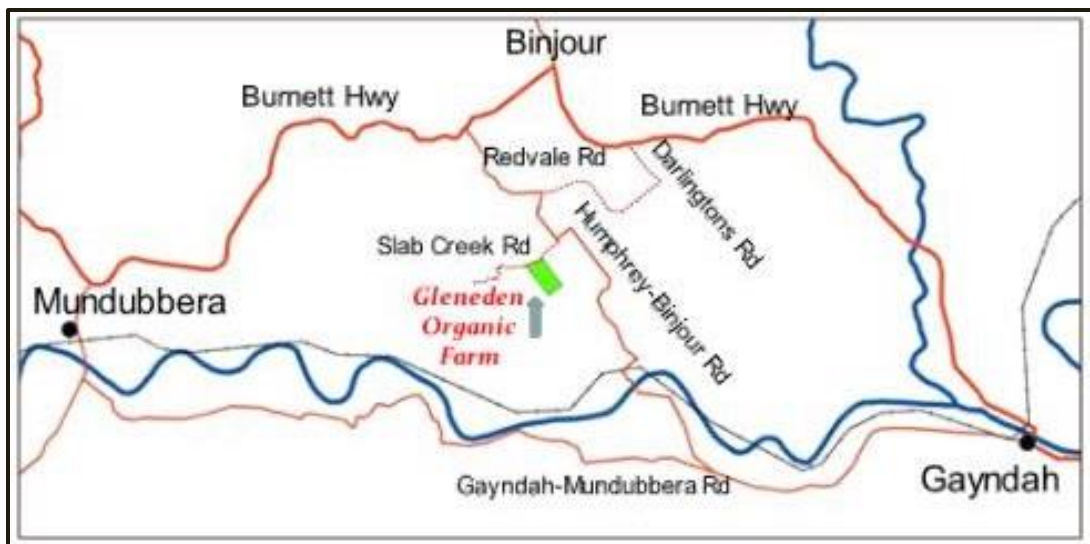
Wednesday 21st – Morning – Bullocks in Gleneden, meeting? Afternoon – Wades' farm – Percheron horse breeders, bush saddlers, harness makers, whip makers, cart wrights, wheel wrights, blacksmiths, founders, farm relic collectors etc.

Thursday 22nd - Morning – Citrus orchard. Afternoon – Citrus packing shed and Bugs for Bugs biological control facility.

Friday 24th - Morning – bullocks, whip competition, meeting? Afternoon – bullocks, pack up

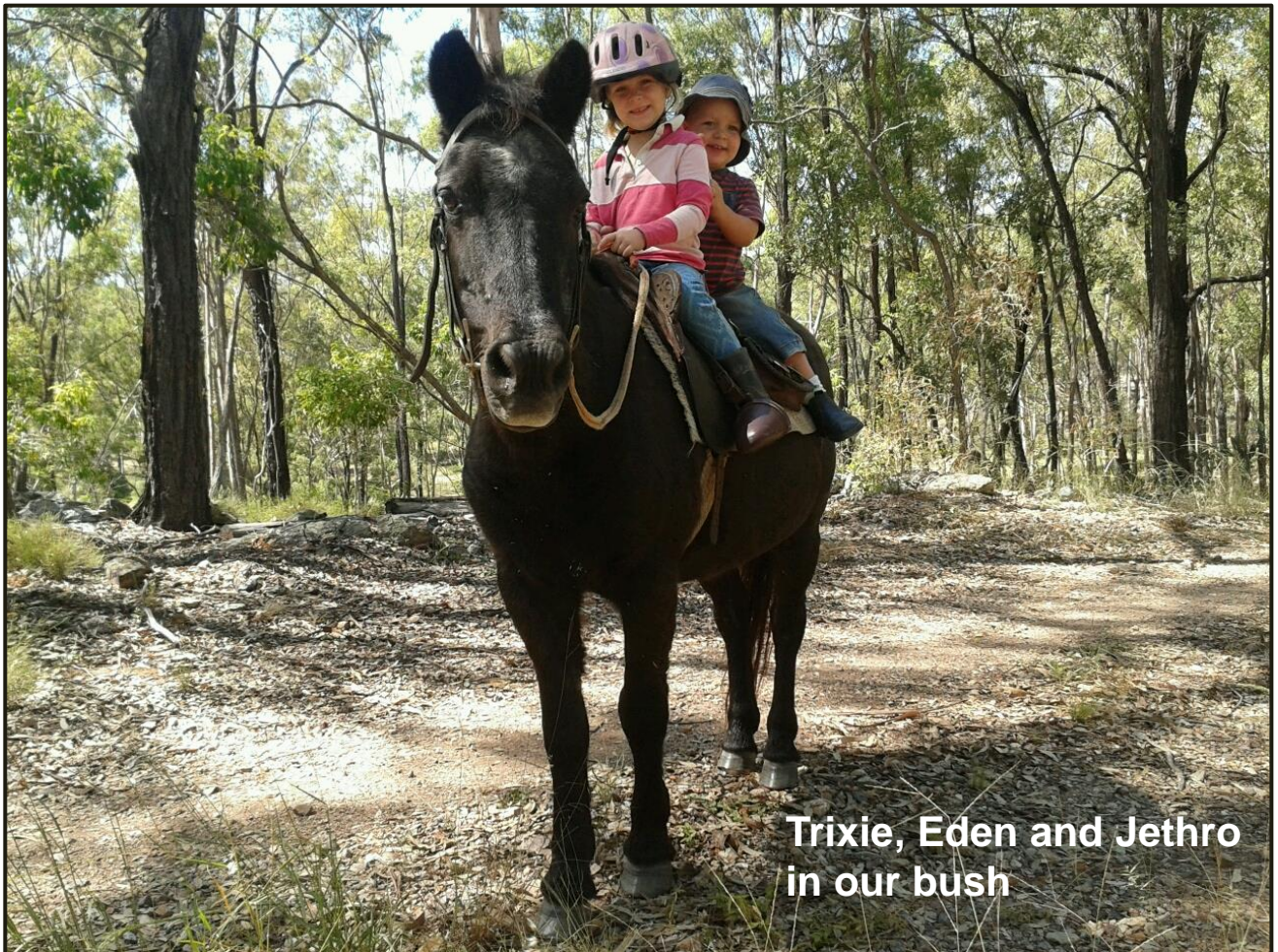
Saturday 25 – Anzac day in Gayndah, Mundubbera or Boondoomba Homestead Bush Balladeers Festival <http://www.boondoomahomestead.org.au/media/pdf/spiritofthebush2015.pdf>

You are welcome to arrive earlier or stay longer if it suits your travels.



Gleneden Get-together Accommodation Options

Town	Place	Telephone	Website	Single	Double/Twin	Note
Gayndah	Gayndah A Motel	07 41612500	www.gayndahamotel.com.au	\$90	\$98/\$105	
Gayndah	Country Roads Motor Inn	07 41612211	www.countryroadsgayndah.com	\$115	\$130	Pensioner discount
Gayndah	Colonial Motor Inn	07 41611999	www.gayndahcolonial.com.au	\$98	\$110/\$115	
Gayndah	Grand Hotel	07 21611200	www.grandhotelgayndah.com	\$50	\$75	3 people - \$105
Mundubbera	Billabong Motor Inn	07 41654533	www.billabongmotorinn.com.au	\$103-\$110	\$118-\$122	
Mundubbera	Mundubbera Motel	07 41654399	www.mundubberamotel.com	\$99-\$109	\$114-\$124	
Mundubbera	Three Rivers Caravan Park	1800 800341	www.threeriverspark.com.au		\$95-\$109	Villas, units & cabins
Mundubbera	Jerakala Bed & Breakfast	07 41654909	www.jerakala.com.au		1 room \$125 2 rooms \$175 3 rooms \$225	3 room house nearest to Gleneden 7th night free



**Trixie, Eden and Jethro
in our bush**

Off-siders Piece

Well, it's not too many more sleeps till the Gayndah Get-Together and it seems like no time since you were all here for the last one. We've had some nice rain at just the right sort of intervals to keep the garden watered and the grass has really grown. The bananas are well over 2metres high now and we've had quite a few comments from visitors. It is rather unusual in this neck of the woods. I still don't know what we're going to do with about a tonne of bananas. Any suggestions?

I've been busy of late painting Ron's top-loader log wagon. It was half black and half white when Ron bought it which led us to think it was made from parts of two different wagons put together, but it turned out, when Ron took the wheels off, to have matching front and back axles (stamped "Gilpin 1909") so we're fairly sure it really is one wagon. Anyway it now has a very handsome new coat of yellow paint with red wheels and black trim. I know it won't look immaculate for long once Ron gets his hands on it, so I'm going to take photos when it's finished and then not look at it again. Ron will be taking it to Corryong for the Man from Snowy River Bush Festival on the 10th, 11th and 12th April. I'm not going as I can't be away from work for that time as well as the Queensland trip, but Ron's going to have a great time. He'll be away for 5 days at the MFSR Bush Festival then home for 2 days before we head for QLD. Then after the Get-Together it didn't make sense for him to travel all the way back to Tomerong then 2 days later go back to QLD to go to the Gatton Clydesdale & Heavy Horse Field Days with Philip on the 2nd & 3rd of May. So he's going to stay at Philip's. He'll end up being on "holidays" for nearly a month! That should be good for lots of brownie points for me! I'm just wondering how I'll use them...

We've been busy at work and Ron has been very busy with the bullocks, going to lots of shows as well as organising cattle dog trials and working dog demonstrations at Nowra Show. He gets the odd little order of timber to cut too so at a time of our lives when I thought we'd be slowing down a bit we seem to be doing more and more!

Tim Peel sent us this photo of Mick Carey, Aberdeen NSW with his pair of bullocks. Tim bumped into Mick when Tim was conducting a heavy horse seminar at St Heliers, Muswellbrook, NSW.

That's all for now. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at the Get Together.

Ruth



Around the Ridges

New South Wales

Tales from Tomerong

So far this year we've done five shows and we're off to Adelong next weekend for No 6! The bullocks all behaved well; Jimmy is settling in to the nearside lead, although no-one except me can go near him. It's definitely an interesting feature of the team; everywhere we go someone has seen Jimmy on "Landline" and he seems to play to the crowd, standing very tall and holding his horns up high. I have to be always on the watch-out for spectators who get too close.

We took six bullocks and a wagon to Berry and had a good day demonstrating pulling a load alongside a team of six heavy horses, showing how the equipment and style of pulling differ between horses and bullocks. I'm now taking my Kelpie dog, Darcy, along to any shows that have a dog high jump. He got second at Berry and then followed that up with another second when we went to Nowra Show the following week. There was also a cattle dog trial at Nowra and he came second in that too. At Nowra we also had six bullocks and did log-loading demonstrations over the two days as well as bringing the showgirls into the main arena on the back of the wagon on Saturday night.

My next show was Kangaroo Valley where I off-sided for Geoff Cochrane with his team. Kangaroo Valley is Geoff's home town and he really enjoyed taking his bullocks there. It was a great show for Darcy too – he had his first win in the dog high jump! He's an amazing jumper, but he doesn't really want to do it – he gets bored after the first 3 or 4 jumps and then can't be bothered any more. I'm trying to figure out how to get him more motivated. The only thing he really wants to do is work cattle and as I can't put a mob of cattle on top of the high jump it's a bit of a battle.

We then had a big trip to Gundagai with 12 bullocks, including Geoff's leaders. Josh Stannard came too and Tim Peel was there for the day on Saturday as well. The weather was hot and, surprisingly for Gundagai, humid but we had a good day anyway. Tim had our camp in order with the billy boiling for morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea. This along with the usual great yarns and stories made the day very interesting and enjoyable. The only bad bit was having to drive all the way home afterwards. We'd got to Gundagai just before midnight on Friday night and after settling the bullocks in only had a few hours sleep before a very big day Saturday. We didn't get home till midnight Saturday night. Meanwhile, Ruth took Darcy to Milton Show and got another second place in the dog high jump.

Last weekend Josh and I took six bullocks to Robertson Show and had a great day. I reckon it's the best show that we go to. They run an old style sort of show with lots of simple fun. People come from Sydney and all over the place to experience it and the bullocks fit right in. To put the icing on the cake (yes, you've guessed it...) Darcy won the dog high jump!! If anyone is interested I have a red Kelpie (dog) pup for sale – Darcy's half-brother, 6 months old and started on sheep and cattle. We may also have his sister, a black bitch pup, for sale too, but Ruth wants to keep her and I'm not too sure if I'll have the time to put into working her. I've been culling my bullocks lately and I'll soon be getting some new Illawarras from Geoff Cochrane as I want to get back to Illawarras rather than so many Ayrshires. So my time will probably be taken up with breaking in bullocks, not working dogs.

Geoff has a big project coming up; he's taking six bullocks to the Sydney Easter Show for 16 days with Josh Stannard off-siding. This should be a great experience and will really put bullocks on the map. Geoff's team should be well and truly educated by the end of the show.

We'll see you at Rohan's next month! Ron

Bega

Hi Rohan,

Attached are a couple of photos of my steers. Four of them were chained together for the first time last Saturday. The other two are still coupled together in training. They are still a little small to put the yolk on. At this stage they are going reasonable well but had to change my leaders.

Rod Sirl



Queensland

Natural Bridge

Philip Thomson has been busy with a movie job requiring four pairs of bullocks each to pull a cart. The pictures show; Nevin Hinde with his bullocks Star and Ringer, Dave Farrell with Joker and Digger, Graham Mills with Gilbert and Syd (both drivers making their international film debut), and Philip Thomson with Nimble and Nelson. Ritchie Wells also drove bullocks on the movie.



Tasmania

The Edith Creek Bullock Team

It was quite a busy winter with young bullocks, the weather was nice and kind with lots of sunny days to yoke them up. We spent lots of time with the team in the bush pulling firewood logs and some craft wood timber back to the log dump. It gave us the opportunity to get the team more consistent with pulling, staying straight and working around stumps and trees, lots of repetitive work which enabled me to do more driving from the rear of the team. The work was rewarded with the first three outings going very well. A role in the movie *The light between oceans* a 1925 setting which earns us \$8500. I purchased a tip dray for the movie and also purchased a 10 ton wool wagon in very good condition.

Work has been done on two more pairs they will be added in the coming weeks and hope to get more pairs doing a bit of leading.

It was a pleasure to meet up with Doug and Gaye Sawyer at the Stanley Show and we had an invite to Doug's grandson Alex Eatts to see their young team at work, they are coming along quite well.

Looking forward to seeing you all at the get together. Ritchie Wells



Western Australia

Dear Bullocky Friends

We have had to make the sad decision not to come to the get-together. This year the folks who look after our place are both indisposed.

Doug's two MRI bullocks are coming along very nicely. He has them in a quad bike wagon, very handy for carting in wood. We have had a plague of Marsh flies and in the photo Doug is busy keeping them off the bullocks

It is extremely dry in this part of the state. We have had a couple of mls since early November. We had a wonderful trip to Tassie to see the family in early December. Doug and Alex made new gear for Alex's team. He is doing very well with them. It's a whole family activity. Over the school holidays they have been working them every couple of days, going out into the bush and carting in their winter wood supply.

Our orchard and garden are producing well. I keep myself busy preserving, drying fruit and making jams and chutneys.

Have a wonderful get-together, we will be thinking of you all.

Doug & Gaye Sawyer



New Zealand

Hi Rohan,

After much ado I think I have this right. Hi, Lew and Julie Pickens would like to put our name on the list for the reunion again this year. Lew has spent his time since our last visit working with his new bullock team and getting so much enjoyment, he now has six pair going really well and has another pair to be added shortly. I hope I have included the ok photos, Lew has made several new yokes for the younger bullocks we purchased and has restored a lovely old cart with he pulls with the two Reds at the back of his team Red and Patches, he also has taken to recording the history of the Bullock teams in the North of NZ, worked by his grandfather and father and I will send over a copy to you over the next week or so as time allows. We enjoy receiving the bell and sharing it with our farm manager who we have encouraged in to bullocks and he and his wife now have three pair working well. Regards Julie

Julie & Lew Pickens
Waione Station



The Australian Bullock Drivers' League thanks our many contributors to this issue. It is very good to see so many bullocks working in so many places. Those of you in Victoria and South Australia need too find some apprentices to get bullocks going there again too. See you next month.