

Nuffield Notes

RR # 3 Site 3 Box 6 Innisfail AB T4G 1T8
403 227 5414/ fax: 1830 beck@yourlink.ca



Canada 

Eric Ritchie – Newest Scholar



Joe Linnell (left) presents scholarship to Eric on behalf of the board of directors and the sponsors

Nuffield Canada is pleased to announce the recipient of its 2005 Agricultural Scholarship Award, Eric Ritchie P.Ag. of Greenfield New Brunswick. Ritchie will be spending extensive time abroad looking at energy conservation and alternative energy sources for the greenhouse industry.

Late in February, Eric flew to Holland where he met and traveled with other International Scholars studying agricultural production and policies throughout Europe and exchanging perspectives on global agriculture.

As part of the scholarship, his independent research will concentrate on energy management in a closed production system. He will also be looking at the use of biofuels, and biomass sources grown as rotation crops for potatoes, to replace traditional fossil fuels.

Ritchie is an Extension Agronomist with McCain foods (Canada) at their Florenceville factory. He

is a graduate of the Nova Scotia Agricultural College and a Past President of the New Brunswick Institute of Agrologists.

Honorees in William Morris Society

Two past Nuffield scholars became inaugural members of the William Morris Society. At the past AGM Larry Yeo and Mac Sprowl were thanked for their generosity to Nuffield Canada, and received a certificate of appreciation. They became inaugural for their charitable giving to Nuffield Canada. This award was created by the Nuffield Canada to honor those who give in excess of \$5000 in cash or bequest.

Members in Good Standing

John McLean, Orrin Hart, William Cairns, Mac Sprowl, Archie Johnstone, Larry Yeo, Fred Walsh, Joe Linnell, Alvin Goetz, Jim Rickard, Geoff Bodman, Don Robertson, Richard Melvin, Marilyn Sharp, Art Petkau, Wally Doerksen, Ian McPhadden, Brent Wright, Rod Bradshaw, Jack Rigby, Doug Visser, John Lohr, Jim Clark, Barb Stefanyshyn-Cote, Barry Cudmore, Mark Wales.

We remind those who are not that 2006 membership fees are due.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS 2006 Nuffield Conference

Tours Friday Nov.3
Annual General Sat. Nov. 4

Leduc Alberta,
(Near Edmonton international Airport)

Manitoba Hosts Inbound Tour

Submitted by Wally Doerksen

In March we hosted a group of 7 Australians, 2 New Zealanders and a Frenchman. They came to Winnipeg from Washington and flew from here to Sacramento.

It was not a great time for scholars to see Canadian agriculture but we did manage to show them winter activities as well as a look at the farm side.

Brent Wright managed to find an hour of ice time in the Portage curling rink so we had everyone doing his or her slides and sweeping. I managed to round up 5 snow machines and we flattened the snow on 80 acres adjoining my farm. We took in a Manitoba Moose hockey game at the MTS centre pointing out the finer things about hockey to them.

We had a supper meeting in Steinbach where we invited four local farmers plus Art Petkau and Les Kleke to interact with the scholars. Brent did the same in Portage and we had Ian Wishart, the vice chair of Keystone Agriculture Producers speaking to the group and he and others interacting with them. Les managed to bend the ear of our Ag Minister, which resulted in our being in the provincial legislature gallery for a recorded vote and we were acknowledged by the house. Later we went to the Minister's office for a chat and a photo opportunity.

In Winnipeg, we stopped in at the CWB and the Canadian Grains Commission, Peak of the Market, Monsanto, and toured the Buhler Versatile tractor plant. Buhler had informed us that they toured only dealers so we felt fortunate that we could play the foreign farmers card and bypass the protocol. The tour guide was most informative and gave complete freedom to the group to see anything and take pictures. He did wonder why we wanted to talk about how their labour dispute had been resolved.

In Steinbach, we visited a large dairy under canvas, and with a rotary parlor. The question here was

the difference between the farm price and the retail price. They were shocked to discover the margin was twice that in NZ. We observed a live auction at the auction mart in Grunthal and then spent some time with the auctioneer / owner afterwards. I took them to my farm and showed not only chickens but also a brief diatribe on supply management versus free market. The highlight turned out to be Hytek, which went from 2 medium sized hog farms to Canada's second largest operation in 12 short years. Some of the things they did to accomplish that was to hire their bankers and make them shareholders, and set up in house operations for as many of their trades as they could, including a vet and a geneticist.

In Portage, we saw Brent's place and Don Sisson's farm where they reveled in all the new machinery. A stop at the Manitoba Food Development Centre was very informative, but the Kiwis kept on insisting that with government money in the place it was obviously tainted and less worth seeing. When somebody at the centre recalled having been to a somewhat similar facility in New Zealand the subject seemed to change. Jeffry Brothers vegetable operation was a good stop not only for its operation but because Dave Jeffries is also president of Peak of the Market which we visited the next day. Can Oat Milling, while interesting had a downside in that we could not tour the facility itself.

All told, the group was great, and the only hitch seemed to be one of participants were stuck in an elevator in her hotel for 2 hours just before the hockey game. Our thanks to the Australian Nuffield organization for making Canada part of their tour. It helps our profile, peaks our interest and is just plain enjoyable.

Ontario is looking forward to hosting five Australian Scholars in early July. The inbound scholars will visit Niagara, London and Chatham areas. Mark Wales is coordinating the tour.

Scholar raises funds for Diabetes

Don Sisson is riding in the Trans Alp Challenge this summer in Europe. He is using this race to raise awareness for Diabetes and his goal is to raise 25000.00. His team name is Syngenta Prairie Boys. The race is to begin July 15 to 22 it is 8 days and approx 800 miles. The race and results can be viewed online at www.transalpchallenge.com and if anyone would care to donate to diabetes, it can be done online www.diabetes.ca

ONTARIO SUMMER PICNIC

Clarkshome Farm, Blenheim ON,

Hosted by

Jim & Ruth Clark,

on Sunday July 16, 2006.

Come at 2pm, supper at 5pm

Meet Past Scholar - Will Cairns

Submitted by John Lohr

While at the Charlottetown meeting, it was my privilege to meet Will Cairns for the first time. Will received his Scholarship in 1952 and traveled to the UK with Herman Arason in 1953. Will has lived all his life in Freetown PEI on the family farm first homesteaded in 1852 by his Scottish ancestors. Will and Helen live on Cairns Road and now are the only Cairns family left.

They have three sons, John, Malcom and James. John lives in Hong Kong and is a writer and he has published two books. Malcom is in Australia finishing a PhD at the Australian National University in Canberra. Both are travelers just like their father.

James and his wife operate the dairy and milk 70 cows and have 400 acres of corn, barley and forage. Will tells me they have every tractor they ever purchased is still on the farm. The oldest is a 1940 Massey Harris 101 Junior, which still runs and is in good shape. They have had many collectors try to buy it. There are three front-end loader tractors, which get used everyday including a 1-year-old Case and a Versatile Bi directional.

With no rock at all in PEI, roads can be terrible in rainy weather and the spring of 1953 was no exception. Will told me that on the night he was to leave for the UK he went about five miles away to visit Helen, his girlfriend and future wife. He left Helen's early but it was dark and he got the truck solidly stuck in the muddy road. He had a jack and shovel and rubber boots, so he set to work to dig her out, but the truck wouldn't budge. After a while, a neighbor on a Cockshut 60 came along. They hooked on the tractor but it was unable to budge the truck. Will finally gave up and he walked home, being soaked in sweat and covered in mud but desperate not to miss the morning train. He had a few hours rest and his dad took him, by horse and buggy, to the 7:53 Freetown train. He later heard that when they recovered the truck the next day they found a hole under it big enough to bury an elephant.

Will remembers attending the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth in June of 1953. He said that wanting to save money he had purchased less expensive seats in a section lacking a roof. It was a cold wet day and he had cause to regret that decision. However, he was very glad to have been there and has been a Monarchist all his life. When the Queen went past, she received a great cheer from the crowd but he thought that Winston Churchill received a bigger cheer. Will said he always tried to hear Winston Churchill on the radio and admired him very much.

Will and Herman traveled together throughout England and Scotland and on the continent. Herman had purchased an Austin A 40 on the condition that it would be delivered to Manitoba after he had driven it in the UK. Herman was a good driver and navigator Will said and they still keep in touch.

Will told me that in 1967 he received a Bank of Montreal Farming Scholarship for international travel. Apparently, the Bank decided to celebrate its 150 anniversary and Canada's 100th anniversary by awarding 150 farmers a scholarship to travel. He traveled across North America and revisited England and many of his friends from 14 years prior. Ellen McLean, wife of Scholar John from Pictou County NS also received this award.

Will said that he did not remember what he studied on his Nuffield Scholarship anymore and that no one really specialized at that time anyhow. They saw lots of every type of farm. He does appreciate the opportunity he had to travel and study and has fond memories.



l-r : Fred Walsh , Will Cairns and Mac Sprowl

Jack is Back

We are pleased to announce Jack Rigby has returned to the Board of Directors and elected as Chair at the past AGM. John Lohr continues to be an active member and we thank him for his leadership over the past two years. Marilyn Sharp retired as secretary and Rod Bradshaw has taken on the task.

From the President's Desk

Summer is here, the seeding is done and the crops are off to a good start. Our daily routine is slowing down and we now have time to devote to other interests.

This past November a very successful annual meeting and tour was held in Charlottetown P.E.I. hosted by our new Scholar Barry Cudmore and his wife Ellen. The accommodations were excellent and the tour was interesting and gave us a good insight into P.E.I. agriculture. One of the highlights was the luncheon of traditional cuisine served by the Cudmores in their new home.

Our two most recent Scholars Barry Cudmore and Mark Whales presented their reports to the annual meeting. These were two of the best reports I have had the privilege of hearing. Gentlemen, well done and welcome to full status as Nuffield Scholars.

Over the past five years we have been able to fund Scholarships much better due to the commitment made by our alumni to the "Presidents Challenge". We have been awarding Scholarships on a regular basis and have been funding these at \$8000.00 each. This could not have happened without the generous support of a few of our very committed alumni. This year at the annual meeting we honoured two of our most generous alumni Larry Yeo and Mac Sprowl by inducting them into the Wm. Morris Society as it's charter members. To attain this status a person must have either donated a minimum of \$5000.00 or set aside a minimum donation of \$5000.00 in their will to be left to the Scholarship Fund. Both of these men have exceeded this goal and have set a lofty target that we can all aim for.

Since the annual meeting, we have inducted Alfred Smith posthumously as a member of the Wm. Morris Society. Alfred was a friend of Joe Linnell and at the suggestion of Joe set aside \$10,000.00 in his will for the Scholarship fund. Alfred passed away in the fall and so his funds were partially used to fund our current Scholarship, which was awarded to Eric Ritchie.

Speaking of Scholars, it's that time of year when we should be accepting applications for Scholarships for this year. If you know of anyone who would make a good candidate encourage them to apply. An application can be filled out and submitted on line at www.nuffield.ca.

Elsewhere in the News Letter, it lists those who have paid their dues and the list is rather short. For our organization to function we need members to pay their dues. Please check the list and see if you are current, if you have overlooked sending in your cheque we would appreciate hearing from you.

We hope to see a number of you at the Ontario picnic hosted by Ruth and Jim Clark on July 16th.

That's it for now.

President Jack

Reflections on the AGM Conference

Submitted by John Lohr

There was quite a gathering of early Nuffield Scholars from the Maritimes including Larry Yeo, Will Cairns, Senator Archie Johnstone, John and Ellen McLean, and Fred Walsh. As well, there was fine turnout from across the country of the Nuffield family. The meeting included a tour and two meals together on Friday and a business meeting and banquet Saturday.

On Friday morning, the group joined host Barry Cudmore tours of various agribusiness. The goat run at Jewel's family farm market was very interesting as was the discussion of business issues facing a seasonal business in PEI. We traveled to Allen's Potato Equipment Factory and where the famous Donnie Allen hosted us. There was a great deal of interest in his creation, the world's largest potato harvester. The electric drive on the machine was fascinating as was the discussion on the machines economics. Next stop was Barry and Ellen's home where we treated to a very fine meal. The delicious food was exceeded only by the warm Island hospitality.

We then traveled to the Charlottetown Research Station to hear a presentation on the Food Trust Branding Program. The scale of the program, and its success in central Canada was surprising and impressive.

The highlight of the afternoon was a tour of the historic PEI Legislature and seeing where the fathers of confederation created the Dominion of Canada.

That evening some of us attended the L.M. Montgomery play "The Strike at Putney Church", a polite, humorous 19th century call for women's rights.

Barry Cudmore and Mark Wales presented their reports at the banquet and were welcomed into the membership of Canadian Nuffield scholars. Our incoming scholar, Eric Ritchie was presented with a cheque to begin his travels with and had a great opportunity to see what Nuffield is all about.

Liberal MP Wayne Easter spoke at the meeting and impressed everyone with his grasp of the problems facing Canadian Agriculture and his commitment to finding solutions.