

Road racing speed demons

Kerri-anne and Michael Torckler recently returned from Europe where they competed in France, so I talked to the siblings about their love of cycling and road racing at a highly competitive level.

Read their replies on page 3.



While Mike (above) seems to prefer racing in the lounge, Kerri-anne takes to the streets in France (she's the rider in front, with the bandaged leg after a slide-out during a criterium race).



a peek inside

Lions' Den	4
The power of simple gifts	5
New fire station	5
TOM Sports	6, 7
Coastal Taranaki School	8, 9
35 years of gut pudding	10, 11
Classifieds	11

editorial FROM THE TOM ZONE

Last month marked a year of *TOM* Okato arriving in your letterboxes. Oh, how time flies!

I have greatly enjoyed the stories and updates from the clubs and groups of the Okato area. It is wonderful to provide a publication and voice for your community alone and even if I don't know all the people who are mentioned, I still find it interesting.

Kim and I went along to an award evening put on by the New Plymouth Soroptomists recently. Individuals were nominated for a "Women of Spirit" award. Congratulations go out to Okato local Dale Copeland, who was a recipient of this award, and rightly so.

The judges commented on how difficult their job was because of the number of nominations and I can't help but think what a difficult task it would be to choose just a few from the many worthy people nominated, because every story I read in *TOM* highlights the remarkable work a lot of people are doing. As with the recipients of the award, it is not even considered anything out of the ordinary, that's just what you do.

No matter how advanced we become with technology the human basic needs will always remain – food, shelter, love. Take One Moment with *TOM* and your love "need" will be nurtured.

Tracey

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Road racing speed demons

(From page 1)

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN ROAD RACING?

K: Since the end of 2005.

M: Three years. I was previously into running and triathlon.

WHY DO YOU ROAD RACE?

K: Because I like beating the guys, it's a challenge, and I like making people hurt!

M: Because I enjoy going down hills at 100kmph on tyres that barely touch the road. Also I love riding my bike and if I'm good enough, I will be able to make a living out of it.

DO YOU HAVE SPECIALIST GEAR?

K: Yes, a lightweight bike, special lightweight wheels, time trial equipment eg aero helmet, skin suit, aero bars.

M: Yes, there is a never-ending wish list of things to upgrade and replace!

WHAT TRAINING IS INVOLVED IN GETTING INTO THE NZ DEVELOPMENT TEAM?

K: Plenty of commitment, lots of hours of riding, discipline and a good coaching programme.

M: My week consists of 15 to 28 hours of riding, plus three sessions of core/gym work. Also trying to watch what you eat... but that one is easier said than done!

WHAT ARE YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR?

K: 1st in Oceania Under-19 Road Championship, NZ Development squad for France, Silver in Track Nationals 3000 Pursuit 2008, 3rd in National Time Trial 2008, made NZ squad to race in the World Champs at age 18.

M: NZ Under-23 team for the World road champs for the last two years, current national time trial champ.

WHAT WAS TRAINING IN LIMOUX/EUROPE LIKE COMPARED TO OKATO?

K: Huge, never-ending mountains – every road out of Limoux goes uphill. The freedom to ride anywhere and fewer traffic hassles – motorists are very considerate.

M: I find the riding very similar, with roughish roads, lots of countryside and plenty of hills. The motorists are much friendlier in Europe though and I like the harvesting season for grapes as there are no fences to stop you from helping yourself.

WHAT DID YOU ENJOY ABOUT EUROPE?

K: Food, different culture, different level of racing.

M: It was summer, living the life of a professional cyclist.

HIGHLIGHTS?

K: 7-hour ride, 175km climbing three mountain ranges (the highest was 1600m and the other two were over 1000m as well). Being able to ride with high-level riders, meeting and mingling with Pro teams, making a break away in one tour race.

M: Making the Worlds team.

HOW DID THE WORLDS GO IN ITALY?

K: I didn't make the team.

M: I had some mechanical problems at a crucial time and was unable to rejoin the race, so I had a disappointing DNF ("did not finish"). The experience of Italy was amazing though, definitely a place I would like to spend some more time.

WHO HAS HELPED YOU ACHIEVE YOUR RESULTS?

K: My brother, Michael, Mum and Dad as my main sponsors,

my coach John Dean, team mates from Better Biking – a neat bunch of guys.

M: My parents are my biggest help – helping to cover costs where I can't and all round support, my coach Silas Cullen, the club I ride for – Stratford – and all the members of that are a real help.

WHAT AND WHERE TO NEXT?

K: To be part of the development squad – Power to the Podium – on the track for the next Olympics. To be picked up by a professional team in the USA.

M: Currently I am trying to find an amateur team to ride for in France next year but right now I am riding the Tour of Southland (3 to 9 November), with the next goal being the Elite Nationals in January.

WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS?

K: Commonwealth Games, Olympic medal, being able to stand proud and display our Silver Fern.

M: Ultimately to ride as a professional, to ride in the Tour de France and the Olympics.

WHAT DO YOU DO TO RELAX?

K: Drink nice coffee, eat nice carrot cake, laugh/act the fool, relax with friends, fresh air out on the farm with my goat Trouble.

M: Eat, ride (easy), fish, hunt, chill out with mates.

HOBBIES AND INTERESTS?

K: Cycling, fishing, hunting, outdoors, beach, farming, good food and good friends.

M: Same as relaxation.

FAMILY DETAILS?

K: Dad and Mum – Brohn and Linda, one big brother – Kenneth who owns and drives a rally car really well (no bikes for him), and one little big brother – Michael

By Kim Ferens



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I thought it was time to put the ball back in your court and get some feedback.

A few people have been asking "what does *TOM* stand for?" Well, what do you think?

We would love to hear from you and what your ideas are.

You can either email it through to us at milly@thetom.co.nz or phone us at the numbers listed in the front of the issue.

ALSO

Once again we see our lovely clock re-erected at the roundabout. Maybe at long last it will tell the correct time?

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Okato Lions

Hello readers

By the time you read this November issue, Christmas will not be too far away. I will have to hunt out a urea bag to hang up next to the Christmas tree! I do hope Santa remembers us come 25 December.

Our October tea meeting at the Oakura Pub went off well. There were approximately 64 people including members and guests. The guests being the farmers and their spouses whose farms the bike ride went through back in the autumn. This is one of the ways we show our thanks to these farmers, for without their permission the bike ride would not take place.

We enjoyed the meal and guest speaker Ron Scott's talk on his motor bike ride through India, complete with slides.

Thanks to the members who helped to shift the old bus shelter from Lower Timaru Road to Wilf's cowshed. This is where we repaired it and Wilf's family painted it. It is now waiting for us to transport it down to its new home at Mid Puniho Road where it will keep a group of school children dry while they wait for the school bus.

Lions enjoy being part of these projects so if you know of a need for a bus shelter, please let us know.

As usual our tea meeting will be on the first Wednesday in November with guest speaker to follow.

New members are always welcome. Contact our President John King on 752 4374.

'Til next month

Lion

Merv Hooker

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Discovering the power of simple gifts

Kid Central, the Sunday school affiliated to Okato's New Zeal Church, has been taking part in Operation Christmas Child's National Shoebox Collection, which is a project of Samaritans' Purse. Treishka Morgan has been guiding the project, which has been helping her young charges learn about the power of giving.

On the first Sunday of the project, the group welcomed Irene Morton, who has visited orphanages in India. She showed photos of some of the children she had met there and a DVD she had made of her visits. Then she helped the group list the kinds of toys that Indian children would enjoy. And finally she made lunch, including all the treats a special guest at a church in India would receive. The children were surprised and disappointed, at first, to find that the spread consisted of boiled eggs, dry white bread and bananas. In keeping with the theme of the day, they all sat on the floor and ate with their hands. "It opened their eyes to the fact that children elsewhere live a very different lifestyle," said Treishka.

Chef Ruth Shaw was the guest speaker for the second week's lesson. She and the children wore chefs' outfits and together they made vegetable soup and little bread rolls, which they sold to the congregation for lunch. They earned \$69.20. "This gave the children a taste of fundraising for a cause," Treishka explained.

Week 3 saw the children making their own, colourful Christmas wrapping paper from computer paper, using stamps they had made from potatoes and sponges.

For Week 4's session, the group went on a field trip, armed with a calculator, to Pak n' Save and The \$2 Shop, where they bought gifts with which to fill the boxes. They came home with soap, toothbrushes, hairclips, hair-ties, balls, marbles and beads.

During Week 5, gingerbread-style dolls that had been made by members of local craft groups and one small bear arrived and the project was almost complete. The gifts were wrapped, the boxes were filled and at last they were ready to send to needy children in the Solomons.

By working together to put together simple, yet useful and exciting gifts for children who are less well off than themselves, some of our local young people had been given the opportunity to learn about and experience the joy and power of giving.

by Kerry Lilley

Treishka, Thomas and Robert Morgan admire dolls and Christmas gift boxes bound for children in the Solomons.



Official opening of the new Okato Fire Station

As most of you know, we had our Open Day for the Fire Station on 20 September 2008 and have been mentioned in the *Coastal News*, but we cannot pass this occasion without it being mentioned in our local *TOM* – for history's sake at least.

It was a great occasion, with all Fire personnel in dress uniform, and there to help in the celebration of the formal opening were several dignitaries, including Trevor Brown, Manager of Central Fire Region, Pat Fitzell, Assistant Regional Fire Commander, Mayor Peter Tennent and Harry Duynhoven, MP for New Plymouth, who unveiled the plaque situated on the wall near the main entrance.

Our four founding members – Ray Rook, Merv Putt, Howard Haylock and Allan Shotter – attended the occasion. Ray thinks the new building is just fantastic. He could not wipe the smile off his face as he reflected back on the Brigade in the past.

Both Harry Duynhoven and Mayor Peter Tennant were impressed with the completion of the building and Mayor Pete was ever so enthusiastic in the deliverance of his speech.

Barry Harvey, Chief Fire Officer made a brief speech and thanked everyone involved for their tremendous efforts in making the building what it is today.

As a member of the Brigade I think we were extremely fortunate to have had Brian Hill, our Deputy Chief Fire Officer, win the contract to build the new station. It is a huge credit to him and his employees for the excellent standard of construction of the building. It has been of huge benefit to the Brigade having Brian working on the building as he was able to understand the requirements for our new station.

The original building had served the Brigade well but it was time to bring the Brigade up to the 21st Century. A future-proof building, which I know will withstand any threatening cyclone or tornado that is for sure!

The Brigade will be having an open day in the near future, open to the community. So feel free to come along and see our wonderful new space for yourself. The open day will also incorporate a safety demonstration – a must for all to see. More details to come.

Milly Carr

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Okato Squash Club:

Report from President, Pete Morgan

Congratulations to all the trophy winners at Okato Squash Club's recent Club Championships. The list of prize winners was dominated by the juniors of the Club, which augers well for the future strength of Okato Squash.

Well done to this year's Club Champions, Daniel Charteris and Amy Simpson. Amy also went on to become the Taranaki Women's B Grade Champion – awesome – and Daniel is the current Taranaki Secondary Schools' Champion.

Although disappointing for the more senior players in the Club, it is good to see the likes of Daniel Charteris, JD (Jordan) Linn, Meisha Davies, Jason Andrews, Marcus Warren and Jamie Linn take out some (or nearly all) of the senior titles on offer.

Ten years after donating the Les Putt Masters trophy, Les Putt himself pulled off a hard fought victory over the all capable and legendary Sue Linn in the final. It was also great to see Frog Goodin, a past Les Putt Masters champion who retired from the game some years back, able to make it to the prize-giving dinner to award the trophy.

Steve Kelly, the current Mens' Club Captain, was awarded Supporter of the Year due to his tireless efforts. He ran tournaments, swept floors, helped juniors, played taxis with JD and Brooke Gray to tournaments in Taranaki and as far as Ohakune, and even milked past Club Captain Pete Gibson's cows when he was in hospital for a week!

I would personally like to thank this year's committee for the many hours of work they put in to run seven tournaments involving around 430 people this year and for helping run the New Zealand Secondary Schools Tournament with the other north Taranaki clubs.

Juniors have always been a focus for the Club and we encourage as many families to enjoy the game of squash as much as we do. We have 116 members at present but are always on the look-out for more. Currently, we have a summer membership for \$50. This remains valid until 1 March 2009 and includes a key.

For inquiries phone Pete Morgan, President on 752 4335 (work) or 752 7455, or Katrina Corbett, Treasurer on 752 4405.

Victory for Taranaki 13th Grade Boys' Rep Soccer Team

Griffin Benton-Lynne and his team-mates have won the 13th Grade section of the Lower North Island Rep Soccer Championships. This is the first time since 1995 that any Taranaki age-group team has won their competition.

Ten 13th Grade teams gathered at Petone to contest the title. The Taranaki contingent met four other representative teams (Horowhenua, Manawatu, Gisborne, Hutt Valley and Wellington) and lost only one match – to last year's winners, Hutt Valley. However, they reversed that result in a knuckle-biting final, putting up a winning performance during a storm that brought 130km gusts and horizontal rain. "It was one hell of a game," said Dad, Greg.

For more information and pictures, visit www.centralfootball.co.nz

by Kerry Lilley

Inline Hockey News

From the 24th to the 27th of October the Inter Regional Inline Hockey championships were held in Wanganui.

45 players from the New Plymouth Ravens club were selected to be part of the Central Region Teams. These are made up from the best players from the Waihi Miners, Tauranga Ducks, New Plymouth Ravens, Whakatane Avalanche, Piako Pirates, Hamilton Devils and the Mustangs.

Four of our locals were fortunate enough to attend and bring home medals in their respective grades:

Abby Bridgeman Junior Women: Gold
Nick Henderson Under 18: Silver
Kayden Gibson Under 16: Gold
Josh Gibson Under 14: Bronze

Khord Kopu who now plays for the Lower North Region has taken home a silver in the Open Mens division.

The Inter Regional trophy (strongest club overall from all four regions) was won by the Lower North Region.

From this tournament players will be selected to trial for the New Zealand team. These players will be advised as this goes to print.

We will keep you posted on this.



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Get those trainers on!

The 28th annual *Taranaki Daily News* Half Marathon was held on Sunday 5 October with 808 competitors lining the roads of Pukekura Park.

It was great to have several of our locals participating in this annual event and I spoke with a few of them about their day and the experience of taking part in a half marathon.

Sarah and John MacGregor both competed in the run. Sarah had entered into several half marathons in previous years but had taken a break of some years since the last one. The driving force behind entering this year was preparation for the Round the Mountain Cycle Challenge in January 2009.

John has been running for many years now and keeps up his fitness with jogging on a regular basis. He has competed in several marathons and has participated in many long distance running events. He completed the run in 1 hour and 43 minutes.

I asked Sarah about her training regime . . .

"To get out whenever and wherever I could, as it is rather tricky when you still have a preschooler at home. I usually slotted a run in when Sasha was at kindergarten."

Sarah successfully completed the run and achieved her goal of running it in 2 hours and 2 minutes, bettering her time in the last half marathon she ran by 57 minutes. It was a fantastic feeling, but rather painful with her calf muscle still twinging from an earlier training injury.

"I was absolutely knackered at the end of it and it wasn't long before the muscles started to seize. I must admit I slept like a log that night."

"So, will you be competing again?" I ask.

"At this stage I am not sure yet!"

Gayelene Corry and Katie Simmonds both walked the half marathon. For Gayelene this was her second event and her goal was to beat her time from last year and she did, clocking in at 2 hours and 57 mins – 2 minutes better than last year's time and crossing the line as the 30th walker! Gayelene's training involved walking most days and she extended the length of her walks as the event drew closer. The walk was extremely hard and when she hit the 11 km mark she was just about ready to give up.

"I was extremely happy when I crossed the finish line and now four days past the event I am still nursing the blisters and feeling the twinge of sore shins!" The big question – will she do it again? "NO!"

Katie Simmonds also managed to juggle her busy life as hotel owner and mother to two children under three to get out and pound the streets whenever the time permitted. Life is very busy and fitting in training was difficult at times.

This was Katie's first time competing in a half marathon and she does not hesitate when asked if she will compete in one again. "Yes, I'll be keen to do it again next year!"

"The last few kilometres of the race proved to be rather challenging and it was great to have a support crew at this point," says Katie. "My body was physically tired at the 19 kilometre mark and when I crossed the finish line I just needed to sit down. It was a good feeling but I was glad it was over." Katie is very pleased with her time of 2 hours 47 minutes, coming 21st out of 316 walkers. What an achievement.

There are other locals out there who competed and we congratulate you all on your efforts. Well done everyone.

Milly Carr

Okato Tennis Club

Thank you to all of you who purchased tickets in our recent raffle. The winners, drawn on 22 October, were Peter Burnand – 1st, Isabel Henderson – 2nd and Seal Gawler – 3rd. Congratulations to you all. Thanks to the VanderPoel family for making this happen.

We have made a good start on the painting – feel free to come along and lend a hand on the sunny days you see us there. Once again, a big thanks to the Okato Lions for their generous donation that made this possible and to Resene for the discounts and donated mis-tinted paints.

Twilight Tennis has started with a few warm up nights before we begin a round robin – 6.30pm start on Wednesday nights. Also, Ladies Wednesday Morning Tennis is well under way from 10am onwards. Come and join in – all abilities welcome at both events.

Our three Midweek Ladies teams have started their competitions and we wish them all well for the first round. Go girls!

Junior Learn to Play and For the Little More Advanced have been well attended on Friday afternoons during the school term from 3pm to 4.15pm. For further details contact Angela Phillips on 752 4451 or see you there.

Just a reminder that our Club subs this year for social non-affiliated members are \$20 per adult and \$10 for school aged children, or \$50 for a family sub. Subscriptions can be forwarded to Raewynne Lawn, Mangetete Road, RD 37, Okato or handed to any Committee member.

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COASTAL TARANAKI SCHOOL

Big win at Wearable Arts

This year Coastal Taranaki School had 22 students involved in creating a wearable arts garment for the *Daily News Wearable Arts Awards*.

After many weeks of hard work, the students were well supported by staff and families on the big night. The show was fabulous and it was really rewarding for students to see their work on stage in a professional event.

We were thrilled to have two trophy winners in our group this year. Shannen Taylor won the Pacifica students section and Ariarna Hickey and Christie Thomas blew away the judges with their "Nurturing Taranaki" creation in the Off The Wall category. Both

Ariarna Hickey's "Nurturing Taranaki".



designs were stunning and looked beautiful on the catwalk.

Chad Knowles and Corbin Mills made the final three with their recycled grim reaper made from inner tubes and old keys.

The inventiveness, creativity and problem-solving skills of our students were a credit to them. For a small school we are not short of talent – every year I am impressed with the calibre of entries from our students.

All of our entries this year were of a very high standard. We had students from Year 6 to Year 10 participating and many members of our staff and community gave their time to make this happen. Thank you all for your support.

Sharleen Burrows

Coastal Taranaki School



Shannen Taylor's with her winning "Pacifica".

"Bubbleishious" by Jana Taingahue Rongonui and Mechele Manson.



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Coastal Calf and Lamb Day

This year's Calf and Lamb Day was a roaring success as students, parents, teachers and our community gathered to watch our children parade their animals.

Some of the stars were Hazel Baker with her lamb Lavender who earned a first place for her calling and two third place ribbons, and Victoria Grayling and her calf Muffin who came first in rearing and in dairy type.

Not all animals behaved as they should on the day but most of the children were just happy to be involved in such a wonderful day.

In the junior classrooms there were displays of vegetable sculptures, floral arrangements and some fantastic Taranaki proud creations.

There were also raffles, cakes and books for sale. Staff, parents and students all worked extremely hard to make this day a success – special thanks to Mrs Lawn and Nicole Smyth for making the day so special.

Ella Beaumont and Shearyn Adlam, Year 7 reporters



*Taila Hurley
with her
calf Miley.*

Women of spirit

On 23 October the New Plymouth branch of Soroptimist International held the Women of Spirit Awards. These awards are given to 12 women who celebrate the achievement and contribution of women in Taranaki. One of these was local artist, Dale Copeland.

Dale Copeland – Artist of Puniho

Dale has achieved at a local, national and international level and given back freely to her community. She has art works in many collections, including the Govett Brewster Art Gallery, Dowse Art Museum, Gisborne Museum & Arts Centre, Massey University and James Wallace Art Trust. Dale has run the Virtual Tart Website for Taranaki artists since 1997, and put on many exhibitions showing the work of Taranaki artists.

Dale has also served on the local Creative Communities Allocation Committee.

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Dave Lilley, Veterinarian –

35 years of glamorous gloves and gut puddling

Dave Lilley has become a bit of an institution around the coast. A local lad, he was born to Kit and Aubrey Lilley, who owned a dairy farm on Ruakere Road, Warea. He went to Warea School, Okato District High School and Spotswood College. Then, having an interest in farming and animals, he started an Agricultural Degree at Massey University. By the end of his first year, he had discovered that "Farm Advisor" wasn't his calling but that he could earn \$3600 a year and have job security as a vet. The first year's course of study was common to both qualifications, his marks were good enough, he'd passed the prerequisite physics and he was accepted for the course.

Five years of hard slog and some fairly serious socialising followed and at the end of 1972, he graduated with his BVSc. His first job was in a mixed, club practice at Te Puke. Just nine months later Derek McLennan, who was operating the Okato Vet Clinic single-handed, offered him a job with the prospect of partnership after a year. It was an offer too good to refuse.

Things were somewhat primitive at first. Wives were confined to barracks when their husbands were on duty, to answer the phone and relay calls to their husbands by radiotelephone. The telephone exchange was manual and the difficulty contacting people on party lines made organising vaccination runs and the like a nightmare. On weekends and in the evenings, however, the vet would only have to tell the operator whom he was visiting and he or she would obligingly transfer any calls. These days, cellphones and a paging service give the vets and their families much more freedom.

Dave's biggest strength, he believes, lies in his practical skills and he likes nothing better than to leave the clinic behind to provide the "fire brigade service" out on the farms. And while he enjoys treating sick, injured and needy animals, his favourite chore is during the spring when, although it's a busy and often stressful time, he can get out and about and deliver live, healthy calves. He's also enjoyed treating household pets – "the smallies". He's ministered to countless cats and dogs of course, but also to rats and mice, rabbits and hedgehogs, hens and turtles, hawks and kereru. In the days before specialists existed, improvisation was sometimes needed. Many years ago, he had a call from Norah Fox, whose cat had attacked the family's pet budgie. Dave stuck the bird's head up the anaesthetic tubing to sedate it while he



Dave, up to his armpits with a bit of gut puddling.

extracted the food that was oozing out of its punctured crop and repaired it. "Thankfully, I haven't had to treat too many fitches," Dave said, cringing.

Dave earned a reputation for his surgical skills early in his career, being especially adept at orthopaedics. He's mended "a few" very severely fractured jaws and other complicated fractures and has especially enjoyed rigging up external fixations for fractured limbs. The Okato vets continue to do their share of orthopaedic surgery, but general practitioners these days are encouraged to refer difficult cases to specialist facilities.

Over the past fifteen years or so, he's developed an interest in abdominal surgery in cattle. A large animal with an intussusception (telescoped intestine) is often considered a lost cause and will die slowly or be shot. A cow with a twisted gut is often rolled in an attempt to straighten out the blood vessels. More often than not, this is unsuccessful. Dave and his colleagues now shun this conservative approach in favour of a more active, more daring, surgical one – intussusceptions can usually be treated effectively by side-to-side anastomoses. The affected piece of bowel is isolated and the healthy portions above and below are joined side by side, bypassing the blockage. Torsions are fairly easily corrected by "gut puddling" to manipulate the bowel. "On one occasion," Dave said, "I operated on three torsions in one day."

Dairy farming has always been the backbone of the local farming industry, Dave reflects, but sheep farming was prevalent on the hillier areas when he arrived. As dairying became more profitable, the sheep farms disappeared. Pigs, which were kept on almost every dairy farm to drink the whey from the cheese factories, have also virtually disappeared. Fashions come and go even in cows, and Charolais, Simmentels and Belgian Blues have all had their turn. At one stage, it was common to transfer Belgian Blue embryos into dairy cattle. The calves were usually too big, too muscular and too valuable to be born naturally and large numbers of elective caesarians were the consequence. Other animals have been popular for their novelty value, rather than the value of their products. They have included deer, goats (Saenens, Angoras and Cashmeres), ostriches and alpacas. Dave, Derek and their wives owned about two hundred goats for a number of years, doing embryo transfers on the Angoras to increase the purity of their herd. At their peak, they were worth around quarter of a million dollars. When they were sold, Dave and Kerry's share was a hundred dollars.

Asked where he thinks rural veterinary practice is heading, Dave said that it is struggling to attract people. Young vets are reluctant to become involved in after-hours work so they tend to gravitate towards city practices where there are dedicated after-hours services. And income is a major issue. Males are seeking higher paid jobs like law, commerce and marketing while females are less likely to continue fulltime in large animal practices.

Traditionally, rural practitioners' fees have been heavily subsidised by sales of "vet-only" and "over-the-counter" animal remedies. With recent moves to free up the market to allow traders to sell such remedies on prescription, rural vets' incomes will be severely eroded, forcing them to charge much higher fees for services. There is a danger that this will result in fewer callouts, less disease surveillance, and welfare problems. Finally, with the move towards farming large herds, vets are being required to concentrate more on consultancy and advisory work, emphasising preventative medicine rather than the treatment of individual animals.

I asked Dave whether he had any James Herriot-like stories to tell. Well, once, he said with a twinkle in his eye, he was called to treat a bull with papillomas (warts) on its penis. Dave borrowed the local GP's cautery machine to burn them off. Some weeks later, his mother developed a lump inside her mouth and visited the GP for treatment. When Dave asked what he had done, she replied that he had this machine... You can guess what came next!

On another occasion, Dave and Derek had been drinking at the pub together when Jackie, Derek's wife, rang to say there was a calving case that sounded like a twisted uterus and would require a caesarian. The vets raised their eyebrows and asked each other, "What would she know about it? We're the veterinaries!" Full of skepticism, they set off. It was a twisted uterus and the cow *did* require a caesarian and before the operation was finished, the alcohol took effect on Derek's bladder. It was a moonless night and raining and Derek, reluctant to venture too far out into the dark and the weather, proceeded to relieve himself from the tanker stand steps. Slowly, as his eyes adjusted to the darkness, it dawned that there in front of him was the farmer's car and that in the farmer's car was the farmer's wife!

Thirty-five years have passed and, a little wiser and a little greyer, Dave's still here. All in all, he's been very fortunate, he reckons – fortunate to have such friendly, loyal workmates, fortunate to have a supportive wife and family, and fortunate to have such a great bunch of farming clients. But now, with the increase in staff to four vets, he's winding down the job a bit and winding up the leisure activities. He's taking holidays and spending more time fishing and diving. "I can't say I'm doing more on the house though," he admits.

By Kerry Lilley

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