

NEW ZEALAND GRASSLAND TRUST ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

JOHN CARADUS
Chairman, NZGT

The New Zealand Grassland Trust was established in 1964 to commemorate people who have made significant contributions to grassland farming in New Zealand. The objectives of the Trust are to encourage, promote and foster the advancement of grassland farming. This is achieved through the granting of study scholarships and the recognition of excellence by way of farming and industry awards.

Levy Student Scholarships

The Levy Scholarships now in collaboration with the T.R. Ellett Agricultural Research Trust are awarded to two second-year students enrolled for a Bachelor of Agriculture degree, or a Bachelor of Applied Science degree in agriculture from both Massey and Lincoln Universities. Each scholarship is for \$3000 over one year. The Grassland Trust continues to work constructively with the Ellett Trust to encourage the best of our youth into a career that will grow and improve the New Zealand grassland industries. The Levy Scholarships were awarded to Shelby Wilson and Tayla Hill from Lincoln University, and Jessica Gooding and Troy Bosher from Massey University.

Farmer Awards

Each year the Trust makes up to two awards for excellence in grassland farming within the designated NZGA Conference region. The main criteria of selection include good farming practices and performance; uptake of new grassland innovations; sustainable resource management; and contributions to the community. This year, the two awards at the Napier Conference went to **John and Jan Bayly** – who own a number of farming properties on the East Coast, including Cricklewood Angus Stud, Te Tiki Station and Tahaenui Station, and **Ivan and Sue Knauf** – own and operate Wairua Farm a dairy/dairy support/beef rearing irrigated farm in the Maraekakaho District west of Hastings.

John Bayly through his supervisory role in the Bayly Trust group of properties, has demonstrated what can be achieved on a large scale over multiple properties with good management. He demonstrated successful land development through the smart use of fencing, fertilizer and sowing with modern grasses and clover. John has made a huge contribution to corporate governance, has been a great supporter of local community organisations and is greatly respected in the wider Wairoa Community. The opportunity to work on a Bayly property, starting

as a young shepherd, led many to a career path within the organisation and in the wider farming community. John has made an outstanding contribution to pastoral farming in the Wairoa/East Coast region.

Ivan and Sue's largely dryland farm is bordered by the Ngaruroro River has been progressively enlarged and developed over the ensuing 20 plus years into a large scale, highly productive dairy farm milking 1600 cows and employing 12 staff. Ivan is the dairy farmer representative on the Hawke's Bay Regional Council TANK (Tutaekuri, Ahuriri, Ngaruroro & Karamu catchments) collaborative stakeholders group. This is a 30-member community group which has been meeting since October 2012 tasked with making plan change recommendations to council, on the catchments. In 2016 Wairua Farm won four awards - the dairy section winner of the Ballance Farm Environment Awards, Water Force Integrated Management Award, Hill Laboratories Harvest Award, Ballance Agri-Nutrients Soil Management Award and the LIC Dairy Farm Award.

Grassland Regional Award

This award recognises exceptional service to grassland farming in the region where the NZGA Conference is held. **Maurice Gray** received this award at the Napier conference in recognition of his commitment and contribution to extension and consultancy on soil fertility and agronomy, although he has been involved in a wide range of disciplines that extended from East Cape to the Wairarapa. Maurice has an intimate knowledge of farming of the East coast and he has probably visited more farms in the region than anybody else. His work has extended to contract projects for AgResearch and a variety of companies, but mainly fertiliser and pastoral seed entities. For many scientists, Maurice has been the 'go to' person in the East Coast region.

David Scott Award

The David Scott Award will be available to be presented annually to a person who is a mid-career and developing scientist /agribusiness specialist/ innovator associated with the pastoral farming industries who seeks to undertake travel for conference attendance or further (postgraduate) study with a focus on hill country or high-country research. The Award will provide \$3,000 per annum plus a framed certificate. The inaugural award was presented to Holly Phillips.



Holly Phillips (right) being presented the inaugural David Scott Award by NZGT Chair John Caradus



Gavin Sheath (right) being presented the Ray Brougham Trophy by NZGT Chair John Caradus

Holly is currently undertaking a PhD degree in Animal Science at Massey University whilst working as a Forage Agronomist for PGG Wrightson Seeds. Her research has been nicknamed “Forages for Fat” and is investigating the quality and fat characteristics of meat from lambs finished on different summer forages. Holly plans to present her findings at one of two conferences; the International Congress of Meat Science and Technology, held in Orlando, Florida on 2–7 August 2020 or the XXIV International Grassland Congress held in Nairobi, Kenya, October 25–30, 2020. Both conferences host world leaders in animal science and it will be an incredible opportunity for Holly to not only attend and learn about the latest worldwide research and innovations but to also present her work.

Ray Brougham Trophy

This award was instituted in memory of Dr Ray Brougham. His family donated a bronze statue of a seed sower and this is awarded annually to a person who has made an outstanding national contribution to the New Zealand grassland industry.

This year, the award was made to **Gavin Sheath** for his work on pasture management and sustainable farming systems and a leader advocating for New Zealand pastoral research over the past 40 years. The optimisation of beef cattle and lamb finishing on-farm management systems is central to much of Gavin’s effort and ultimately his research covered the entire meat value-chain. Improved adoption and adult learning practices were fostered by Gavin through the development of a new approach (Study Groups) to study and conduct on-farm monitoring and collective learning. Far from being an observer, Gavin has actively participated in study groups of farmers and agribusinesses throughout New Zealand on topics of farm system development, sustainability and added-value. He led the establishment of new research

capability teams (e.g., Social Systems, Mathematical Modelling) that were unique to AgResearch and New Zealand research institutions at the time and was also a key player in the development of a range of on-farm decision support tools.

It is fair to say that Gavin has at times been a polarising figure but that is common to individuals who want to drive change in any area and particularly in agriculture. His involvement in the NZ Grassland Association has been second to none! Throughout his career he has published more than 30 NZGA papers, was on the NZGA executive for a decade resulting in being NZGA President in 1985. He was a NZ Grassland Trust trustee for 33 years from 1985 to 2018 and was the Chair of the Trust from 2013 to 2017. For his services to the Association, Gavin was made an Honorary life member in 2001.

In a break from tradition, largely driven by the fallout from COVID19, the seminar series usually presented by the Ray Brougham Trophy winner this year was run as an interview using an electronic media platform. Liz Wedderburn led the interview and the infrastructure to make the whole event happen was provided by Jenna Heller and her team from AgResearch, for which we are appreciative. This allowed the event to reach nearly 500 attendees from not just New Zealand but also internationally. How we exploit this option in the future to increase our impact will be considered.

NZGT Activities

The Trust continues to actively seek a closer working relationship and co-operation with the NZ Grassland Association Executive. The proposed NZGA/NZGT Farm Systems joint Symposium has morphed into a meeting to focus on resilient pastures. NZGA has established a steering group that is chaired by David Chapman that is looking to develop symposium themes/topics; programme; sponsorship; and possible venues. NZGT will seek to provide financial support.

Financial Position

The Trust has investments in a balanced portfolio of New Zealand and overseas funds and shares. This investment is managed on the Trust's behalf by Forsyth Barr. At the end of June 2020, the market value of the investments was \$695,884 compared with \$695,243, and equity was \$605,968 compared with \$617,334, at the same time last year. Net earnings for the year, largely from interest and dividends, were \$19,793 providing a deficit of \$11,366 after expenses.

Appreciation

Thanks to all Trustees who have contributed to the Trust's affairs during the year and to Bruce Belgrave who continues to provide effective administrative support in his capacity as secretary/treasurer. Current Trustees are – John Caradus, Errol Thom (Ellett Trust), Derek Woodfield, Anders Crofoot, Bryan Guy, David Stevens, Pat Garden, Jacqueline Rowarth and Alan Stewart. We appreciate Warren King's attendance at Trust meetings representing the NZ Grassland Association.