

## MYALL, a herd on the Rise

The Myall property is situated at Brymaroo, a few kilometers north of Jondaryan on the Warrego Highway. Owned by David and Cheryl Vonhoff, and herd managed by their son, Clinton and Melissa Vonhoff. Clinton and Melissa were married in the spring of 2015. Clinton and Melissa moved into the home on the property, allowing them to be closer the action when it comes to managing the herd.



Clinton and Melissa

The property is 1500 acres, with approximately half cultivated. About 20 acres can be irrigated from an underground bore.

My first meeting with the Vonhoff family goes back to the 1960's when we both showed at shows around the Darling Downs. There was a significant difference though. Alan Vonhoff, Clinton's grandfather exhibited Holsteins with his Dora Park prefix. The Dora Park herd was recognized as one of the top HF herds in Qld, and was situated on the highway between Toowoomba and Oakey. In the 1980's this property was sold, which helped David, and his brother, Lindsay to purchase their respective farms. Lindsay and his parents, Alan and Dorothy retained the major part of the Doro Park herd.

Up to this point in time David had spent all his life in a black and white herd, now had to build up his own herd. Black and white cows were not readily available so he finished up with a mixed herd from available dairy sales, and some Illawarras being in the mix. HF cows were still the major part of the herd.

AI was used, including Illawara and Aussie Reds.

I heard very little about the Vonhoff's from the time Wilmington moved to NSW until mid-1990's. As by then I was the Illawarra classifier, and I received, rather surprisingly a listing of Illawarra Progeny Test daughters at David and Cheryl Vonhoff to be assessed.

As the years rolled by, interest in the Illawarra breed increased, and Myall became members of the Illawarra Cattle Society in the early 2000's, and selected cows were registered in the Illawarra Society Appendix system. A herd of 170 is currently being milked in a rapid-exit 16 a side herringbone, with 32 sets of cups. About 50% of the herd is mated AI. Two home bred Illawarra bulls, and a Silverleigh bull are being used. A young bull from the Tara Stud is waiting to be used.

At this point in time about 90% of the herd carries some Illawarra blood, with about 60% being red in colour. In 2016 Myall registered 69 animals with the Illawarra Cattle Society.

The farm supplies Dairy Farmers and has developed a reputation for quality milk. In 2016 Myall was awarded the Dairy Farmers top award for Queensland, and went on to be 4<sup>th</sup> placed in Australia. Congratulations, and well done.

2009 was a significant year in the development of Illawarras in the herd. At the "Celevale" dispersal sale by the Horrocks family in April, 5 cows came to Myall. A few weeks later at John and Kim Bradfield "Rosedale" stud another 10 head were purchased. Another 7 head were purchased privately from Radel's "Happy Valley" stud.



Rosedale Maxwell Jodie was one of the purchases from "Rosedale" and featured in Queensland 2016 On-farm Challenge.

In the last 3 or 4 years Vonhoff's have entered for Toowoomba Royal Show, also Gatton Dairy Spectacular. (Clinton's parents were on a cruise during Gatton 2016 so Myall could not be represented this year.) The Myall team is now attracting the interest of fellow exhibitors with regular ribbons coming their way. Their best win at Toowoomba has been Reserve Intermediate Heifer. Head sire in the herd for some years has been Moyola Jetstar from Warren Gallagher's stud in NSW Northern Rivers. Jetstar has been sire of many of the show team.



### Myall Jetstar Tinkerbell, sired by Moyola Jetstar

Tinkerbell has been the star of 2016 shows for Clinton and Melissa, winning Champion Cow, All Breeds at the Wondai Show.

Myall has recently started classifying with top cow scoring 89 points. These points went to Myall Landover Helen, sired by Llandoverly Jinny's Empire. She is a cow we have admired at recent Toowoomba Shows. Two Jetstar daughters scored 88 and 87.

At the 2016 Annual Meeting of the Darling Downs Illawarra Cattle Club Clinton was elected President. During the year Clinton and Melissa hosted a quarterly meeting of the Darling Downs Club. Those attending were pleased with the progress the Myall herd is making.

Back to Victoria: Young Colac farmer, David Ballagh from near Colac purchased 40 odd 2015 born heifer calves from Trevor and Amanda Braendler, "Clover View" Timboon. As Trevor was leaving the dairy industry, having a herd sale in January 2016, sold the heifer calves to David. He also transferred his stud prefix to David. Clover View stud goes back to Trevor's grandfather and is a very old name in Illawarras.