

# YOUNG FARMERS AMBASSADORS

## SCOTTISH REGION

### NEWSLETTER MAY 2019

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**ROYAL  
HIGHLAND  
SHOW**

**YFA Scotland invite all present and past YFA members to a Drinks Reception on the ground floor at the Young Farmers Centre**

**Friday 21st June 6.30pm**

#### CHAIRMAN'S BLOG



As most of you will know, a farmer is never happy with the weather as I write this we are finally getting some rain in the far north. The crops and grass are needing it; however, the good weather does make it pleasant to calve cows in. We had our

meeting in Stirling not that long ago followed by some tenpin bowling, remember folks you are all more than welcome to come along even if it's just for the activity afterwards, it would be nice to see you there. There have been lots sorted out for the incoming exchangee away day and cheques issued to all the outgoing exchangees, all of whom I wish a magical trip. The Highland Show is nearing us at a ferocious speed; I hope that the rain stays away for that. Our reception will be in the Young Farmers Centre so come in and cool down for a wee while! See you all then. **Neil Brims**

#### AGM 2019 UPDATE

The Young Farmer Ambassadors Scottish Region AGM was held on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March at Carnbo Village Hall. Stovies were kindly provided by Harold and Julie. The Office Bearers and Committee elected are as follows:

**Chairman & Treasurer:** Neil Brims

**Vice Chair & Newsletter Editor:** Katie Punler

**Secretary:** Mary Turner

**European IFYE & World Contact Member:** Neil Brims

**Committee:** Meg Findlay, Elaine Meikle, David Paterson, Caroline Robertson, Alison Ross, David Stevenson, Elaine Mowat, James Gray, James Law & Kirstie Black

**Auditor:** Shoena Brember

David Lawrie – representative from SAYFC

Thanks to the following people who gave their presentations:

**James Gray** – Norway 2018

**David Lawrie (SAYFC Chairman)** – European Rally 2018

#### OUTGOING EXCHANGEES 2019

**Heather Murray** (Lower Nithsdale) – Montana

**Ellie Kirkland** (Bankfoot) - Finland

**Anne Ashworth** (East Fife) - Norway

**Jenny Burton** (East Fife) – Switzerland

**Ellie Kirkland** (Bankfoot) - Finland

**Jessica Tetlow** (Isle of Arran) – Ireland

**Nicole Walker** – Ireland

**Gemma Bruce** (Udny), **Lorna Edward** (Keith), **Abby Forsyth** (Stewartry) and **Shona McHarg** (Ayr) – European Rally in England

#### STROKER, CRANKER AND TWEENER

Who knew there were three widely recognised delivery style categories in 10-pin bowling? I didn't! Isn't Wikipedia a great thing!



The YFA held a bowling social on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May at AMF, Stirling where 11 of us tried not to get too competitive.

I hadn't been bowling for a few years and I'd like to use that as my excuse for the number of shots which resulted in my bowling ball taking to the gutter instead of hitting any pins however as I recall, I wasn't great at it in the past either!

A grand way to spend a Sunday afternoon - bowling, blethering and eating - the lunch provided as part of our group booking was very tasty and plentiful. It was a great way to catch-up with everyone and no-one was in a rush to leave as much talking was had after the games as well.

Congratulations to Simon Mowat for the double win in his group and well done to Meg Findlay and David Paterson who each won a game in their group. No trophies to take home for the mantlepiece, just the happy satisfaction of knowing you'd beaten everyone else :) **Elaine Meikle**

## IFYE AUSTRIA SKI TRIP

In March this year, Neil and I headed off to Saalbach, Austria to represent Scotland at the IFYE Austrian Ski Weekend. We arrived in Salzburg where we met with fellow IFYEs Franz Winkler from Austria and Carolyn Gehrke from IL, USA. We stayed at Franz's parents farm in Seekirchen for the first night. Austria was celebrating Mardi Gras Carnival whilst we were there – a celebration to mark the beginning of Lent. To celebrate, we joined Franz's traditional Austrian dance group for a night of Austrian bowling in fancy dress and ate some traditional Faschingskrapfen – a delicious apricot filled donut.



We spent the next day touring round the beautiful city of Salzburg before travelling to Saalbach for the ski weekend to begin. We picked up our snowboarding equipment en route and arrived at the Hfopsonton Resort ready for the weekend. On the Friday night we got a lift to the top of the Mountain by the ski track machine and spent our night in the bar catching up, enjoying the company and sampling some local Schnapps. We enjoyed some classic Apres-ski games including hammering nails in to a giant log with the flat edge of a hammer and then outside for a big snowball fight. After a few hours in the bar, we then grabbed some sledges and raced down to the bottom of the mountain. What an adrenaline rush sledging down the mountain in the pitch dark with no breaks or steering... My highlight of the whole weekend!



We were up bright and early the next day to hit the slopes first thing. It was snowing very heavy in the morning which made visibility going down pretty challenging. We spent the day between the slopes and the bars and had an excellent day snowboarding. Being a complete beginner, I was worried I wouldn't be able to enjoy it as much but we just went for it and had an absolute blast. There were plenty of falls and bruises to show for it but the day was great fun and the views up in the mountains were incredible. We finished the day in the bar at the bottom of the mountain where we enjoyed the music and sampled a few more drinks, including a unique shot of tequila with cheese wrapped in bacon.

That night we went for dinner in a local restaurant where we cooked our own food on a burning metal 'hat'. The food, schnapps and company were top class that night and it seemed the trip was coming to an end all too quickly.

The hospitality and food we experienced in Austria was excellent and the weekend was a great laugh from start to finish. I will definitely be looking to attend future IFYE Ski Weekends and would recommend anyone, skier/snowboarder or not to give it a try. [Katie Punler](#)



## RACHAEL BAILLIE'S TRIP TO NEW ZEALAND 2018

On 11th June I landed in a very rainy Auckland, where I was met at the airport by Pip Beauchamp, the Territory Manager for the Northern Region. Pip was one of 6 Territory Managers for New Zealand Young Farmers and their role included supporting the effective delivery of the NZYF Clubs and School Engagement Strategy. As part of this, Pip had a strong involvement with TeenAg clubs throughout his region. TeenAg is a programme run under the NZYF umbrella, the clubs are run through schools and aim to introduce and promote a positive picture about agriculture and agricultural careers from an early age. Our first stop was to a TeenAg meeting at Rosehill College in South Auckland where I chatted to members about Scottish Young Farmers and my experiences. After a busy first day followed by a one-night host stay, I was then hosted in Albany and Mangawhai for another 2 one-night stays, where I met some of the local young farmers.

### Waikato/Bay of Plenty



I got collected by Pip at 6:30am the next morning to head down to Fieldays, the largest agribusiness event in the Southern Hemisphere which attracts over 130,000

people every year. It felt very similar to our Royal Highland Show, minus the livestock! I spent the day wandering around the event before meeting my next host Richard Waugh in the afternoon. Richard lived on a dairy farm just outside Matamata, and I got a quick tour of it before heading into town for dinner with YFC. The next morning, we headed to nearby Hobbiton for a set tour on Alexander Farm, a fully operational 1,250-acre sheep farm in the heart of the Waikato. Even for someone who isn't the biggest Lord of The Rings fan, this was a super cool place. We spent the afternoon in a very sunny Tauranga, and climbed Mt Maunganui

which gave some fab views. In the evening we went to the Fieldays Party in Hamilton.



The next day we drove to Cambridge to meet my next host, Rose DeHaan, who took me to her 2,000-hectare family farm outside Otorohanga where I would be staying for 4 nights. It was interesting to compare the set-up of their sheep and beef farm to my own family farm. Whilst there, we went goat hunting with a family friend, a first for me! The goats were hunted regularly to be used as dog food. My second day with the family was spent with sister, Sarah. Sarah worked at nearby Waitomo Adventures and so was able to put me on a 7-hour caving trip free of charge. It started with a 100m abseil and finished lying on rocks looking at the glow-worms on the roof of the cave. This was definitely one of my favourite days of my trip. My final day was spent with mum, Doreen, visiting the local Kiwi House where I got to see one of the famous birds up close.

### **Taranaki/Manawatu**

I got a bus to Palmerston North to meet my next host, Tara Miller. Tara had recently started working for her brother James, on their dairy farm outside Stratford. I spent a week with Tara, and although the weather was not the kindest to us, I got to see a lot including the annual Hereford and Angus stud bull sale. A Hereford topped the sale at \$10k with the top Angus price being \$8.5k. That evening I attended South Taranaki YFC new members night, the average age for these new members were about 10 years above that of ours at home. I also spent a day with Tara's friends, Demi and Mick who kindly let me ride their horse, a small taste of home. During my time with Tara I also visited Rotokare National Park, here there had been \$2m spent on pest proof fences allowing for high level restoration.

### **East Coast**

I travelled by bus to New Plymouth where I was met by Fletch Edwards, whose partner, Kim Shaw, I would be staying with that night. Fletch was a member of the Ashley Clinton YFC. Kim stayed in Waipukurau and so on the journey across we stopped at Te Apti windfarm- it had 55 turbines and was the first in NZ to supply to the grid. We met Kim in the late afternoon and headed out to visit the nearby longest place name in the world before dinner.

Next host, NZYF board member and runner up FMG Young Farmer of the Year 2017, Hamish Best. I spent a day with Hamish, who was a Field Rep for PGG Wrightston, an agricultural supply business. We spent the morning measuring and working out dry matter percentages of kale which would be used for winter grazing. In the evening I was picked up by my next host, Kahlia Fryer, and taken out for dinner with Tikokino YFC before heading to spend the night on her 150-hectare dairy farm.

Next day Kahlia took me to her friend Izzy's work place, a deer farm. This was a new experience for me and I found it very interesting. Deer farming was a lot more common in New Zealand and this particular farm was one of 3 units owned by the same farmer in the area. The afternoon was spent helping Hamish dagging lambs (the removal of dirty, wet wool from around tail of sheep), another new experience for me.

The following morning Hamish took me to meet Nick Bailey and his partner Kerriann just outside Masterton; the family moved from England to New Zealand 15 years ago, having fallen in love with the place. After dinner Nick took me to meet my next host, Sarah Crofoot. Sarah's family owned Castlepoint Station, a 7,290-acre beef and sheep farm on the Wairarapa coast. However, I spent the next few days in her apartment in Wellington, where she worked for Federated Farmers. It was a chance to explore Wellington.



### **Otago/Southland**

The next morning, I was met in Invercargill by Ngaire Peek, my host for the evening. Ngaire currently worked as a bank manager but was in the process of securing a job as a shepherdess on a farm near Inverness.

On 5th July I attended the opening ceremony and parade for the FMG Young Farmer of The Year Grand Final in Invercargill. FMG Young Farmer of the Year is the flagship event for New Zealand Young Farmers and is held in high esteem among the rural community, and every year up to 300 contestants battle it out for the top spot. Throughout the country 22 District Finals are held between October and December. The top contestants from each District Contest and Skills Day progress through to their local Regional Final which are held from February to April. The seven top Regional Finalists become the Grand Finalists and will battle it out in July for the title – FMG Young Farmer of the Year. The contestants were battling for over \$300,000 in prizes from ten sponsors. That evening I attended the 50th Year Celebration Dinner at Stadium Southland where all previous winners were presented with celebratory medals.



The next day I attended the practical day where I watched the finalists work on their farm let's as well as various modules including land surveying and electrical safety. The day finished with the 'agrisports competition' which was effectively a farming obstacle race including shearing and felling trees. The practical day also included the national stockjudging, fencing and clay pigeon shooting competitions. I thoroughly enjoyed my time at Grand Final and would go as far to say it was the highlight of my trip. It was nice to be able to see my hosts from weeks previous again as well as meeting new people. I strongly feel a competition of this size and scale is something SAYFC should look at introducing.

### **Aorangi**

The next morning, I left with my next host, Nicola Blowey who lived and worked on a dairy farm outside Fairlie and was a member of



Mackenzie YFC. We broke up the long journey North with lunch in Dunedin and a visit to the famous Moeraki Boulders.

I spent 5 days with Nicola and during this time she kindly gave me her car so I could do some solo exploring. On my first day I drove to nearby Lake Tekapo and Lake Pukaki, as well as heading up Mt John to the observatory to get a better view. The lakes were fab and made for some very cool photos.



### Tasman

I had a couple of one-night host stays, including a visit to Christchurch. We explored the city and saw the devastating damage from the earthquake of 2011. My next host, Cheyenne Wilson in Culverden had recently started managing a dairy farm and had been a finalist in Young Maori Farmer of The Year 2018. The next couple of days were spent pushing heifers onto the rotary platform for the first time, this was hard work taking up most of our days, however it was good to get hands-on on the farm.

On 19th July Cheyenne drove me to meet my next host, Marty Bates and partner Vanessa, in Woodend. The next day I went exploring the area with Marty. He took me to Lake Coleridge and the power station, New Zealand Governments first hydroelectric power station. We also went to Castle Hill, a piece of farmland which was once named the "spiritual centre of the universe". The area had also been used in scenes of Narnia. Now to my last host Rachel, who lives in Christchurch and we spent the day exploring more of the city, with Rachel taking me a drive around the areas that had been 'red-zoned' after the earthquakes, meaning people's homes had been demolished and the areas lay derelict. Rachel had been in Christchurch at the time of the earthquakes and so it was interesting to hear first-hand accounts. Time to go to the airport for the long journey home



With thanks to all organisations, including YFA for their contributions to a wonderful trip, **Rachael**

## MOIRA JOHNSTON (STODDART) AUSTRALIA 1969

Fifty years ago, in 1969, Brian Shaw from Lockerbie and myself from Penicuik, were privileged to be selected to travel to Australia on an exchange visit representing Scotland. The other YFA ambassadors to Australia from UK were Sue Crawley from Buckinghamshire, Anna Dunn from Bangor, NI, Bob Richards from Gloucestershire and Neville Stangroom from Norfolk.



We sailed to Australia on board the P&O ocean liner "Oriana". The journey took 25 days from Southampton to Melbourne via South Africa and was sponsored by P&O shipping line who transported the six of us from the UK, as first-class passengers, free of charge. That in itself was a fantastic journey!



We were paired to tour two States as follows: Bob Richards and I, Victoria and Western Australia; Brian Shaw and Sue Crawley, New South Wales and South Australia; Anna Dunn and Neville Stangroom, Queensland and Tasmania.

From the end of April until the end of July, as a guest of the Senior Young Farmers of Victoria, I stayed with six host families for two weeks at a time. Three dairy farms I stayed on in Victoria were: 1) 70 miles SE of Melbourne at Kongwak, Gippsland with hilly terrain which had been cleared of timber by the early settlers; 2) in the most easterly point of Victoria at Cann Valley heavily forested with gum trees on the surrounding hills and high rainfall of 40"; 3) mid north Victoria in the Murray Goulburn region near Shepperton which was flattish terrain requiring irrigation. All had jersey cows and most of the milk was turned into butter and cream. Whole milk cost 1/6d a pint (7½p) and butter cost around 5/- (25p) per lb, which was expensive in those days. I stayed on a poultry farm on the outskirts of Bendigo in central Victoria with a flock of 6,000 indoor kept Leghorn X Australorp laying hens. There were very few large

poultry units in Australia apart from around the major cities. Eggs sold for 6/- to 7/- per dozen. I stayed on two wheat growing farms, one at Buckrabanyule in north west Victoria which also had sheep, the other had Hereford and Murray Grey beef cattle at Edenhope in west Victoria close to the border with South Australia. Merino fleeces yielded 10 to 13lb of wool which sold for 4/- per lb. A shearer could shear a sheep in 3 minutes earning £10 /100 sheep.

During my time in Victoria we rode horses to check the cattle and sheep which I revelled in. I even saw a team of 10 Clydesdales, harnessed side by side, sowing wheat. Amongst other things I visited a wool grading store, coal mine, appeared on TV and was interviewed by newspaper and radio reporters, gave talks to schools, WI's, young farmers and even girl guides. Flew in small aeroplanes over the Victorian countryside, the Murray River and Snowy Mountains of New South Wales. I enjoyed a fabulous trip by car into South Australia viewing the beautiful Blue Lake, Mt Gambier, the limestone caves at Naracoorte and superb Hereford cattle and Merino sheep. I watched Aussie Rules football, attended the Young Farmers State Conference, local dances and balls learning the Gypsy Tap, Tangoette and Parma Waltz. Very different dances to those I was used to!

At the end of July, we six UK exchangees were invited to a reception and lunch in our honour in Sydney as guests of P&O. We really enjoyed meeting up again and spent a few days free time exploring Sydney and Canberra. I then took a bus trip up the east coast to Brisbane for 4 days, before flying back to Melbourne to take the trans Australian train 2,000 miles across Australia via Adelaide to Perth in Western Australia. Journey took 3 nights and 2 days. 1st class travel paid by the Australian YFC!

By this time, it was August and Western Australia was already in the grip of a horrendous drought. My host families were all sheep and beef cattle farmers. I never saw a dairy cow in Western Australia. I stayed at Bruce Rock, Munglinup, Geraldton, Jerramungup and Wyalkatchem. Some of the farms were extremely remote. One family had been living in a shearing shed for 4 years and had just moved into a brick- built house not long before my arrival. Another host family lived 70 miles from the nearest town, in a cluster of two mobile home units and a caravan with no phone or electricity. I worked more on the farms in WA which I really enjoyed, despite the flies, dust and +35C temperatures day after day! I visited Perth show, a brush clearing demonstration using massive machinery which made our UK tractors in those days look like Dinky toys, attended a two day YF rally, incorporating all the usual competitions we are familiar with in Scotland, plus speechmaking, drama, and debating finals, a state ball and finished off with a BBQ and football match. Exhausting weekend!!

On 21st November the six of us met up again on P&O's flagship, Canberra, which had sailed to Perth from Sydney with Anna, Brian and Sue on board. Neville had previously driven over to WA and met up with Bob and I. On the way home we disembarked at Durban, hired a car and, with each of us taking our turn at the wheel, drove 1,200 miles down the East coast of Africa taking 2½

days of hard driving, to re-embark on Canberra at Cape Town. So glad we decided to make that trip.

Canberra docked at Southampton on 14th December and we all went our separate ways. The exchange visit and journey to and from Australia were fantastic. I am so grateful to the SAYFC, The Rural Youth and Young Farmers of Australia, P&O, and my parents for giving me the opportunity of a lifetime.

Some statistics relating to my exchange visit:

Total miles travelled	51,362
Cars travelled in	158
Times packed my case	64
Beds slept in	44
Slide shows and talks given	28
Times interviewed on TV	2
Times interviewed on radio	4
Letters and cards written	304

Cost of trip, excluding sponsored travel and accommodation, £600 including contribution to SAYFC of £153.

Anna, Sue, Brian, Neville, Bob and I all kept in touch and have met up several times over the last 50 years. Sadly, Anna died aged 46 but she is still very much in our thoughts, especially earlier this month when we met up in Yorkshire for a 50th reunion. Fifty years on and still friends – Bob, Neville, Sue, Brian & Moira below.



Moira Johnston (Stoddart)



## WHAT'S NEW?

Alan James of AJ Engineering & Construction Services Ltd., were awarded the trophy as the Scottish winner of the Federation of Small Business (FSB) Employer of the Year. Held at the Playfair Library, Edinburgh, Alan can be seen in the middle of the photo with the FSB Director of Communications Louise Stewart and Helen Robertson of the Skills Development Scotland Co Ltd.



Alan was an exchangee to USA in 1977

We all understand how exchange trips forge long lasting friendships and a recent example of this was a week-long reunion of the **1981 group to the UK from Down Under**. All 6 Aussies and the surviving Kiwi, Ron Monk spent a week together on a couple of houseboats on the River Murray in South Australia. They all first met up after 30 years, then 5 years ago and now this year –



Maybe you recognise some of them - they are Leean Leverington, Colin Daley, Ron Monk, Jenny Guttler, Neil Comben, Helen White and Paul Browning. Helen attended the Drinks Reception in June 2017

### *Congratulations to*

Mairi Dick (Canada 2007) and James – a son, Sonny  
Isobel Swanson (Euro Rally 2013) and Jamie Welsh – a daughter, Joanna  
Libby Stewart (Ireland 2010 & Canada 2014) married Allan Laing

**Sadly, UK YFA have lost two members recently:**

**David Pittendrigh** (the Netherlands 1957) originally from Aberdeenshire, David had been living in Suffolk for many years, he never lost his Aberdonian accent - David and Davida have

been regular attendees these past 10 years at the UK YFA Reunion.



**Donald Spencer** from Wales was an exchangee to the USA in 1950, and had recently attended IFYE Conferences in Wales and at Gordonstoun, as well as some YFA weekends. The photo below shows son Keith, Donald and grandson Andy – all exchangees



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### Exchangee Away Day

Wednesday 12th June 2019

### UK YFA Reunion Weekend 2019

**25th–28th October 2019 Holiday Inn, Newport, Wales.** Details and costs will be released from the Welsh organising team in the coming weeks – hope you have the dates in your diary.

### Future IFYE Events



**61<sup>st</sup> European IFYE Conference 12 – 18 August, 2019** to be held in Hamar, Norway – now fully booked, but 22 lucky Scots will be there to enjoy the fun at this reunion.

**2020 – Myerscough College, Preston England, from 8 – 15 August – more details to follow**

**2021 – Sweden**

**2022 - Finland**

**2022 – Austria – this will be a World Conference**

**YFA Raffle Tickets** are available. Money Prizes of £100, £50 & £25 with lots of other prizes. Please get in touch if you wish to buy some.

## CONTACT US:



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**YFA MEMBERSHIP:** If you haven't already paid your membership for 2019 – the £10 can be paid by standing order or £150 for lifetime membership – please get in touch for more payment details.



# YFA DRINKS RECEPTION

YFA (Scottish Region) invite you to attend our annual **Drinks Reception at the Royal Highland Show on Friday 21st June at 6.30 pm.**

A special mention is given to the undernoted people who are celebrating special years since their exchange trip. We really hope that as many as possible can join us, it will be a great opportunity to renew old friendships and reminisce about the time you were on exchange! It will also give you a chance to meet the incoming delegates from all over the world.

The event will be held on the ground floor at the **Young Farmers Centre** and although it is an open invitation, responses back are much appreciated to assist us with the drinks order.

1959 (60 yrs)	Shenadh Watson, Tom Neilson, Beth Paterson (Aitchison), Margaret Morton (Steven), John Fettes
1969 (50 yrs)	Elizabeth Lang (Jolly), Robin Wardhaugh, Jim McCrae, Liz Miller, Mary Tyson (Waugh), Wilson Mitchell, Robert Lamont, John Gill, Moira Johnston (Stoddart), Brian Shaw, Sandy McLaren, Alasdair Cameron, Judy McGowan (Biggar), Jean Lennie (Graham), Jim Simpson
1979 (40 yrs)	Brian Gibson, Linda Ross, Jan Ireland (Smith), Nancy Sloan (Hodge), Helen Jamieson (Sloan), Mary Weir (Lyon) Margaret Callander (Templeton), Leslie Shepherd, Mona Hendry (Johnston), Gordon Gray, Robert Barr, Aileen Auchnie (Jamieson), Barbara Robertson, Alastair Gall, Mary Bayne (Brewster)
1994 (25 yrs)	Pamela Anderson (Fullarton), Ann Redpath (Caldwell), Christine Carruth (Lindsay), Caroline Cuthbertson, Lorna Dickson (Nicoll), Margaret Baillie (Millar), Tom Neill, Kathleen Craig (Geyer), Iain Maceachen, Jean Kennedy (Lindsay), Lindsay-Anne Graham (Boyd), Allison Bisset (Kemish), Marion Gilliland, Lynne Anderson, MaryAnn Fleming (Young), Gerald Robb, Helen Donald (Paterson), Robin Traquair
2009 (10 yrs)	Jennifer Stott, Libby Templeton, Jane Steel, David Brewster, Wilma Struthers, Helen Willis (Bruce), Karen Stewart, Linda Sloan, Lisa Young, Laura Fleming, Pamela Morris, Kevin Robison, Jennifer Wilson, Sally Heggie, Lizzie Main
2014 (5 yrs)	Meghan Bremner, Beth Massie, Stephen Currie, Inez Brown, Patricia Scott, Anna Sloan, Libby Laing (Stewart), Kim Taylor, Ross Mair, Robert McBride, Robert McKechnie, Jennifer Jones, Andrew Baird, Miriam Brackenridge, Andy Ireland, Leanne Walker, Julie Slater

**We are extremely grateful to Aldi for their generous sponsorship towards the Drinks Reception, as well chocolate and crisps provided by Mackie's of Scotland**

