

FARM GATE ROUNDUP Saturday 17th February 2007

Alan Eagle: 02 45 671206 (Farm) 0415244477 (M)

Alan Good Morning,

Good Morning Ian. What a week of weather we have had in the Hawkesbury. Dams are filling and the countryside looks terrific. We need more though and we need in the right places.

Where are you today ?

Ian, I have driven up to Shields Orchard at Bilpin this morning and I thought the listeners would enjoy hearing directly from the Farmer.

Just before I had you over to Bill Shields a bit of back ground on their family. Shields Orchard is predominately an Apple farm, but they do grow Peaches and Plums as well.

Bill is a second generation farmer his family moving to Bilpin in 1955 from Becroft. Bills grandparents had a farm in Epping and were forced to sell it off during the depression. Bill has a lot of interesting yarns about farming and agriculture in the region.

Good Morning Bill,

G'Day Ian

What was the Farm like when you arrived 55 years ago?

We had 16 acres of mostly of old ornamental apples and passionfruit.

We initially took our fruit to Sydney and used the central marketing system but with the dominance of the larger supermarket chains the margins were reducing and we stumbled into the concept of pick your own.

How did that happen?

Well Ian, in the early 90's a car load of Australian – Philippinoes arrived at the orchard. They never had picked an apple of a tree before. I am always amazed when I hear this so I let them wander down the back and take a few from the trees.

Well the rest is history they told their friends and over the season 8 to 10 car loads of their friends were turning every week up to Pick their Own.

Over the next decade we replanted a broader variety of Apples plus some Peaches and Plums to cater for this concept.

What are those varieties of Apples?

Gala, Jonathon, Delicious, Pink Lady, Granny Smith etc.

As you have been farming for a while what do you think is the biggest influencer on Agriculture?

Education by far. I visited England in the 70's under a scholarship with the Rural Youth Organisation and spent 8 months working on farms and studying world leading farming techniques. When I arrived back in Australia I reckon we were about 20 years behind the rest of the world.

A bit similar to the work that David Mason has just completed on the study into Urban Agriculture.

Yes, exactly.

What is the Rural Youth Organisation?

It is a club based network of 10 –30 years old who share an interest of all things rural, not just farming. They work together on projects related to rural issues, learning along the way. It is still in place today, albeit a bit smaller than when I was involved.

What is the future for farming of Apples and other produce in the Hawkesbury?

The Hawkesbury, as Sydney's food bowl, is important and should be key strategic issue into the future for all governments. Education and Agri – Tourism are the key to the ensuring that it stays that way. Hawkesbury Harvest is working hard on all fronts to bring the foods of this is fabulous region to the people of Sydney and beyond.

Do you have family to carry on the farming tradition?

Yes, my son, who is studying Ag – Science, but it will be his call if he stays on the farm. You know what they say Ian, if they stay home they mirror the father and that's not a pretty future and if you send them away for education they come home and argue with you as I did with my dad.

You are a volunteer for the local RFS, a Captain I hear.

Yes Ian is a rewarding role and at times very busy. The changes in communications and technology over the last 40 years have been amazing. With broadband and the internet much more relevant information is at hand and we used that to contact people who are potentially at risk.

Thanks Bill, Can you hand me back to Alan

Alan, what is happening with the rest of the produce on the trail.

Plenty of Stone fruit still around in both the Dural and Hawkesbury region. Fresh vegies are plentiful. The rain we had this week will freshen things up. We also have Game, Duck and other cuts of meat, plenty of flowers and geraniums.

And don't forget the Walnuts and Chestnuts at Mount Irvine. They will start to appear in early March. There are two properties on the Farm Gate Trail where you can pick your own. When you arrive on their properties they will give you a stick and a red bucket and away you go tapping the branches and picking up the nuts as they fall from the trees. What a day out. This is only about a 6 week season, so go early.

Wrapt in Wool Open Day at Virginia Farm at Annangrove on the 4th of March.

There will be plenty of demonstrations of wool spinning straight from the sheep's back.

Arabian Horse Open day at King Estate International.

If you like horse this is a event for you.

One and all are welcome to the Open House today at Ebenezer. A bbq and drinks on arrival (all free) will be followed by a presentation of some of the worlds most beautiful and accomplished Arabian, Andalusian and American Miniature horses. Kicks of at 3pm Sargents road Ebenezer

Listeners can get a [free Farm Gate Trail Map](#) and all this information on the website by going to

www.hawkesburyharvest.com.au

Listed below are some of the members of Hawkesbury Harvest that would be happy to see you.

Dural Galston Area.

Place	Address	Telephone	Opening Hours	Map #
The Geranium Nursery and Cafe	828 Old Northern Rd. Dural	0296520475	7 Days 9am – 5pm	34
Nati Bros Roses	790 Old Northern Rd. Dural	0296511375	7 Days 8am – 5pm	35
Berry Good Farms	53 Arcadia Rd Galston	0296531311	7 Days 8am – 5pm	37
Lauders Loft	14 Black Rd Arcadia	0296532422	24 Hours	38
Galston Strawberries at 359	359 Galton Rd Galston	0296531082	Fri, Sat –Sun 10 am – 3 pm	36
Balanced Essential	3046 Old Northern Road Glenorie	0296520555	Weekdays only, other by Appointment	44
Alpacandes Alpaca Lodge		0296531693	By Appointment	

Darling Mills Farm		0296551339	By Appointment	
Virgina Wool Farm Works		0296541069	By Appointment	
Waddells Packing Shed	377 Galston Rd Galston	0296531331	Open till mid April	

If you are interested in a tour of the Farm Gate Trail: Ryan Thompson from Good Az Gold Tours can organise a personalised tour of your choice. Please contact Ryan on 0408973267 or Hawkesbury Sightseeing Tours, Janice Hart. 0408751422

West River Run

Place	Address	Telephone	Opening Hours	Map #
The Orange Spot	247 Wilberforce Rd Windsor	0245772763	Thurs – Sun 9am – 6pm	26
M& A Butchery	62 King Road, Wilberforce	0245751233	Mon-Fri 7am – 6pm, Sat 7am – 2pm	27
The Hawkesbury Vegetable Farm	13 Carrs Rd, Wilberforce	0245763529	Saturday Only 9am – 3pm. or ring for appointment (0417443057)	28
Tizzana Winery	518 Tizzana Rd, Ebenezer	0245791150	Sat –Sun 12noon – 6pm. Weekday by Appointment.	29
Talai Estate	748 Wisemans Ferry Rd. Maroota South	0245728493	Fri, Sat, Sun 10am – 6pm	51
Renaissance Rocking Horses & The Loft at Rocking Horse Lodge	143 Pitt Town Road Pitt Town	0245778697	7 Days	50
The Strawberry Farm	271 Windsor Rd. Vineyard.	0245776545	7 days 9am – 5pm.	
Hawkesbury River Prawns		Troy Ireland	0407664756	
Desert to Bush		Michael	0419127599	
Gary Howard's Hawkesbury River Prawns		Gary	0245754009	
St Albans Gallery	17 Wharf Road St Albans	0245682286	11am – 5pm Sat Sun & PH	
Deschamps Delights	241 St Albans Road Lower McDonald	02 45 664 530	10am - 4pm Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday	53

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North River Run

Place	Address	Telephone	Opening Hours	Map #
Pepes Ducks	17 Walker St South Windsor	0245 774233	Mon-Fri 8am – 3pm. Open on Sat from Oct – 7am – 12noon.	21
Penrith Valley Oranges	800 Castlereagh Rd Castlereagh	0247762332	Jan – Jun 9.00am to 5pm 7 days	20
Breewood Gallery	310 Windsor St Richmond	0245789100	Mon-Sat 9am - 5.30pm	19
Panthers North Richmond	33 Beaumont Av North Richmond	0245711757	Daily from 11.30am	18
Tanglin Lodge Alpaca	128 Tennyson Road Tennyson	0245766929	By Appointment Only	16
Enniskillen Orchard	753 Grose Vale Rd Grose Vale	0245721124	Wed – Sun 9.30am – 6pm	15
Sebel Resort and Spa Hawkesbury	61 Richmond Rd Windsor	0245774222	Every Day	23
Blue Mountains Natural Spring Water	11 Grandview Lane Bowen Mountain	0245721275	Mon – Fri 9am -5pm. Weekend by Appointment	
Packing Shed Patchwork	201 Cabbage Tree Road Grose Vale. (street on map)	0245721126	By Appointment	65
Kurrajong Kitchens		0245773299	By Appointment	

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Mountains Run

Place	Address	Telephone	Opening Hours	Map #
Fernbrook Garden & Botanical Gallery	2 Queen St Kurrajong Heights	0245677330	Fri – Mon 120am – 4.30pm. March to December	11
Pine Crest Orchard	2549 Bells Line of Road	0245671143	Mid Jan - April	6
Mount Tomah Botanical Gardens	Bells Line of Road, Mount Tomah	0245672154	Mar – Sept 10 – 4pm Oct- Feb 10 – 5pm	2
Loxley on Bellbird Hill	993 Bells Line of Road, Kurrajong Hills	0245677711	7 Days	12
Lochiel House	1259 Bells Line of Road, Kurrajong Heights	0245677754	Wed –Sun 10am - 3pm, 6pm -9pm	10
Sassafras Creek	83 Old Bells Line of Road Kurrajong	024573 0988	Hours: 7 days a week 9 am to 5 pm until Christmas	61
Toque Restaurant	85 Bells Line of Road	02 45732724	Wed – Sun	62
Shields Orchard	2270 Bells Line of Road	02 45671206	7 Day, in Season Jan – Mid may.	64
Town and Country Gardens		0245672026	Open 10am to 4pm, Sun and Mon in Oct, Nov, Jan, Feb and Mar or by appointment at other times	66
Mt Tomah Farm	Bells Line of Rd Mt Tomah	0245672029	By Appointment	