

## Chairman's Update

Nuffield Ireland has had an intense period of work since our previous Newsletter at the end of August. We have been in consultation with our sponsors about their support for our 2015 scholarships, and we are very grateful for their continued support. We welcome the addition of Glanbia as a sponsor.

We have gone through the selection of our new scholars in September and October, which brings the number of Irish scholars to 71, since our first scholars in 1996.

Our Annual Conference took place at the end of October, and was very well attended, and received very positive feedback. This was an opportunity to demonstrate what Nuffield is about, and we had excellent presentations of reports from our 2013 scholars. The attendance at the conference included finalists of the FBD Farmers of the Year, as well as a number of "students of the year" in Gurteen, Pallaskenry and Gurteen Agricultural Colleges, and a number of final year Agricultural Science students from UCD.

The Induction of the new scholars took place on the eve of the Conference, and the beginning of the Mentoring Programme for these scholars commenced on 24th November, and I am very grateful to the scholars from previous years who are giving their time to this programme. This will make for a more complete scholarship experience for the new scholars.

We are delighted that one of our 2013 scholars, Sean O'Donnell, was chosen as the FBD Young Farmer of the Year for 2014. This is a fantastic achievement. Sean was also a panelist at the recent National Dairy Conference which was organized by the Department of Agriculture and Teagasc.

Our website is undergoing reconstruction, which will take a little time to complete. We apologise for any inconvenience.

**The Nuffield Ireland AGM will take place on Mon 15th Dec at 7.30pm in the Horse and Jockey Hotel. I hope that you can make it.**

**Bill O'Keeffe, Chairman, Nuffield Ireland.**



Bill O'Keeffe,  
Chairman,

**F|B|D** Trust

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## Nuffield Ireland Conference 2014



Bill O’Keeffe, Jim Woulfe, CEO Dairygold, keynote speaker and Geoff Dooley, session chair

The 2014 Nuffield Ireland Conference was held on 31st October in the Castleknock Hotel, in Dublin. With an attendance of over 125, it was the largest Nuffield Ireland Conference so far. There was a real buzz about the event, and a strong sense of positivity and energy throughout the day. We are grateful to our Main conference sponsor, Zoetis and supporting sponsors Agrinet, Farm Relief Services, Grassland and Irish Dairy Board, and dinner sponsor AIB.

The six scholars of 2013 made presentations on their reports and on what they had learned from their experience. These presentations demonstrated very good communication skills, ability to get their message across, and a thorough grasp of the topics.

The reports were

**Karen Brosnan** — Leadership Development Pathways for Irish Agriculture .

**Eddie Kehoe** — Maximise Utilisation of Grazed Grass in Beef Production to Meet Market Demands of the Future.

**Alo Mohan** - Thinking Different - Encouraging the Transfer of Knowledge in the Poultry Sector.

**Sean O’Donnell** - Farm Fragmentation in Irish Dairying - Overcoming and Adapting to it.

**Seamus O’Mahony** - Is there a Future for the Traditional Multi-purpose Co-operative?

**Mark Rochford** - Developing People on Irish Dairy Farms.

The full reports are being published on the Nuffield International website, [www.nuffieldinternational.org](http://www.nuffieldinternational.org). Two reports are uploaded already and one further report is being added each week.



2013 Scholars—after Presenting their Reports

“Become Brilliant at the Basics” - Jim Woulfe

### Guest Speakers

Keynote Speaker at the Conference was **Jim Woulfe**, CEO of Dairygold Co-op gave an excellent insight into Leadership—his personal perspective. Jim gave a frank and open view on what he believes are the essential components of Leadership—Passion, Moral Character and Vision.

He is a strong believer of the importance of getting the basics right, and cited the example of the Vince Lombardi, the new Head Coach of the Green Bay Packers (American Football Team) who he was asked what he was going to change. The players, the plays, how they train? When asked how

## Nuffield Ireland Conference 2014 (continued)

was he going to turn this team around after years of bad football? Lombardi responded, “I am not going to change anything. We will use the same players, the same plays and the same training system. But we will concentrate on becoming brilliant on the basics. Before I am finished, we will be the best team in the League in kicking, passing, running and catching. We will run our moves with such precision that even if the other team knows what we are going to do, they will not be able to stop us. We will be brilliant on the basics.”

Jim’s address covered the importance of good communications, building a Team, establishing Core Values, Developing a Strategy and Driving a Performance Culture aligned to the Business Strategy. The address was followed by a fascinating Q&A session.

The second Guest speaker was **Ken McKenzie**, from Publicis, who is a psychologist and strategic planner. His address covered approach to recruitment, self development and thinking differently.

## 2015 Scholars

The conference introduced the 2015 scholars. Each of the new scholars gave a 3 minute presentation about themselves and what they plan to do during their scholarship. The new Scholars are;

**Maire Ahern McCarthy**; A dairy and beef farmer from Cork and qualified Financial Adviser working with South Western Services. Maire’s study topic is **Exploring Innovative Ways of Financing Farm Gate Requirements**. **Twitter:** @Ahemmail

**Joe Bourke**; A beef and livestock manager with Bord Bia, he is closely involved in the family beef farm in Co Limerick. His study is on **profitable, sustainable beef production using dairy-bred animals**. **Twitter:** @joeburkebeef



2015 Scholars - Left to right Maire Ahern, Aidan Gleeson, John Buckley, Kevin Moran, Brian Rushe, Joe Burke and Maeve O’Keeffe.

**John Buckley**; A dairy farmer in a farm partnership from Bantry, milking 190 cows, he is FBD Farmer of the Year 2013. His study topic is **Satellite Farm – Building a Team for Success**. **Twitter:** @johnbuckley86

**Aidan Gleeson**; A suckler and beef farmer from Co Limerick. His area of study will be **the challenges of leadership in the beef industry, and how to encourage improved efficiency, innovation and better communication in the sector**. **Twitter:** @AtAidan

**Kevin Moran**; From a dairy farming background, Kevin is a new entrant to dairying in Co Galway in 2012, and now milking 100 cows, with plans to expand even further His study topic is **Methods by which young farmers can obtain capital and establish their own enterprise**. **Twitter:** @morankevin797

**Maeve O’Keeffe**; A dairy farmer from Co Cork, farming in partnership with her parents, Maeve is founder and CEO of Inspect 4 Hoof Trimming Ltd, she has extensive experience of milking and working with large herds in NZ. Her study topic is **To investigate Lameness in Irish Dairy Cows**. **Twitter:** @inspect\_4

**Brian Rushe**; A new entrant to dairying in 2013, from Co Kildare, Brian is converting the family beef and tillage enterprise to dairying. His study topic is **Effectively Advocating for Agriculture and the Agri-Food Industry**. **Twitter:** @brianrushe81

## Scholar Update—Donal Maguire, 1988 Scholar

Back in 1988 when I was awarded my Nuffield Scholarship in the UK, the world of salmon farming was very different. There were lots of small companies competing with one another. We were all trying to grow and everyone was a bit of a pioneer, testing new ideas and developing new ways of doing things.

I had been running salmon farming companies in Scotland for five years by then and I had just started to dip my toe in the complicated arena of representing farmers interests to the various national bodies, including the wonderfully named, Crown Estate Commissioners, who governed, levied and adjudicated on our then infant industry.

I was fortunate and honoured to be awarded the Charles Ross Memorial award, a scholarship endowed by the McConnell Salmon

Farming Company, in memory of an outstanding young salmon farmer who had passed away as a result of cancer some years previously. McConnell salmon itself is a forgotten name now as they merged with Marine Harvest, the world's biggest salmon farming company some years later.

The project I had proposed was to go to Norway for eight weeks, travel about and compare and contrast the Norwegian industry with its Scottish and Irish counterparts. At that time Norwegian salmon farmers were largely to be found only in Norway, their subsequent Viking-like invasion of the global industry was only just beginning then, and we Scots and Irish were still naïve enough to see them as simple competitors and to believe that we were going to be better at salmon farming than they were.

So off I went and what a trip and what an experience it turned out to be. To those of you who have never been to Norway, let me simultaneously recommend it highly but also sound a word of caution. It is not an easy country to get around because of its geography and the Norwegians, whilst very polite, are by normal habit a somewhat aloof and quite serious race of people. Having said that, Norway is an extraordinarily beautiful country, it is rugged and dramatic with quite breath taking scenery. That very scenery, centered around the deep cold saltwater fjords, which extend all along Norway's western coastline is why it is such an excellent country for the farming of Atlantic Salmon.

I rapidly realised that while God had made Norway a great place for salmon farming he hadn't given equal consideration to the needs of a young Irish man, masquerading as a Scottish salmon farmer, and operating on a shoe-string budget in terms of how to get around this wonderful country. Its coastline is deeply indented by the fjords, many of them more than one hundred kilometres long and mostly too deep to bridge or to tunnel under. Behind them are mountains,



Donal Maguire

steep austere and beautiful. That topography, like Donegal crossed with the Himalayas and on steroids, makes getting from one place to another one hell of a challenge.

Flying, the sensible way to cover the ground, was prohibitively expensive, so I drove everywhere. I went from the far north, deep inside the Arctic Circle (it was springtime), right down south to Oslo the capital which is situated at in or about the same latitude as Inverness in Scotland. That meant driving forever around the edges of the vast fjords, jumping on a seemingly endless number of small ferries to cross them where they were narrow and then going through so many tunnels, some short, some interminable under the mountains that it made my head spin. Norwegian road builders must, without doubt, be the most accomplished and tenacious practitioners in the world. All along the way I visited salmon farmers, academics, fish vets, breeding stations, feed plants, processing plants and all of the places where the industry had put down roots and was starting to flourish. It was an eye-opener!

I learned so much as I went along, and it was the sort of learning that you don't get just by reading about a place or an industry. It was a deep seated realisation, based on my encounters with fellow salmon farmers and all of the other people who were working to support, what was then, still an emerging sector and not yet the stock market driven behemoth it is today. This was and continues to be the real beauty and the deep seated worth of a Nuffield Scholarship, it represents a genuine 'once-in-a-lifetime' opportunity to immerse oneself in a place, and a sector, to a level of detail that would never be possible again, due to all of the constraints that life inevitably winds around us as we move on in our careers. My experiences in Norway made possible by the Nuffield Scholarship certainly changed my professional view completely and it also made a profound impression on me from a personal point of view.

I gained one other important insight as I went along, my kind but somewhat distant Norwegian hosts underwent an extraordinary character transformation on the rare occasions when they imbibed. I reckon the Vikings must have stopped rowing their longboats just offshore before they started their historic raids, for a 'wee snifter'. Otherwise it is impossible to explain how today's polite and courteous Scandinavians were once the scourge of Ireland's saints and scholars!

***Donal Maguire is Head of Aquaculture Development at Bord Iascaigh Mhara—Irish Sea Fisheries Board.***

***Email: [Maguire@bim.ie](mailto:Maguire@bim.ie)***

**Donal Maguire: Originally from West Clare. Went to school at Glenstal Abbey. Then to UCC and graduated in 1981. Emigrated to Scotland in 1983. Came home to Ireland to work for BIM in 1997. There since, heading up the fish farming development department.**

## Tommy Moyles, 2014 Scholar — GFP Experience (Mar– Jul 2014)

The best description of The Global focus program that I can come up with when asked is its the Big Brother TV show without the cameras. Our group consisted of five Australians, one French a Canadian a New Zealander and myself.



Travelling with a group of Aussie and Kiwi farmers was an eye opening experience. At times when it came around to farm talk I felt a little embarrassed. They focused so much on their farms assets and how to get the most from challenging environments, whereas we largely look to get the most from our CAP payments. First and foremost to them, farming was a business, with no supports - it is a case of adapt or fail. Continuously being immersed in this environment is one of the best parts of the program. It is also one of the biggest challenges as not all personalities can adapt to group situations.

South Africa and Kenya have land redistribution issues and it was interesting to hear both sides of the argument. South African government policy is to create more small holders. They consider a small holding to be between 10-1000Hectares. In some ways the land issues in the African leg of the trip mirrored a lot of what happened in Ireland from the land wars through to the early years of independence.

In Moscow we met former Russian agriculture minister Victor Semenov who left us in no doubt as to his views on the Russia/Ukraine stand off. Political challenges and corruption especially at local level made jobs like driving a tractor on the road difficult. We made our way west through Poland and the Czech Republic seeing how corporate farming had stepped into the vacuum of the old communal farming systems.

It was fantastic to meet up with another GFP group in Washington DC for a few days taking in the sites and getting a political background on US agriculture.

Our final week was spent in the heart of the corn belt in Nebraska. This was an excellently balanced week and gave an insight into the corn and cattle world that is the US Midwest.

Each country provided stereotypes and surprises and looking back now it's hard to believe it happened. These few words don't do justice to what a GFP is. It has to be experienced to be believed.



I would like to thank Jim Geltch and Nuffield Australia for coordinating this initiative.



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**Our Website is currently under re-construction, and should be up and running again soon.**

**Apologies for any inconvenience.**

**Tadhg Healy** (2008 scholar) was at the Nuffield Australia Conference in Tasmania in September 2014.

**Johnny Butterly** (1998 scholar), **David Kerr** (2006) and **Karen Brosnan** (2013) were at the Nuffield UK Conference in Ashford, Kent on 20/21 November.

**Sean Coughlan** (2014 scholar) has been in Australia for the past few weeks and has moved on to NZ until about 10 Dec. Then on to Chile, Argentina and Uruguay, before returning home just in time for Christmas.

**Mary Delaney** (2014 scholar) has just completed a visit to NZ, and is now on her way home,

**The Nuffield Ireland Conference will be held on 16th Oct 2015.**

The Contemporary Scholars Conference for the 2015 scholars will take place in Reims, France from 28th Feb to 7th March 2015.

Next years Nuffield UK Conference will be held in Belfast on 25th—27th November 2015.

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