

SIR ARTHUR WARD AWARD 1999

D. C. (Clive) Dalton

B.Sc. (Hons), Ph.D. (North Wales)

The work of a scientist is not complete until the results of their science are applied within the industry to which they are affiliated. The New Zealand Society of Animal production recognises excellence in the application of the principles of animal production with The Sir Arthur Ward Award.

It is appropriate that the recipient of the Sir Arthur Ward Award in 1999 is Derek Clive Dalton for his services to agricultural extension, specifically communication to scientists, students, farmers and the general public. Clive's professional career has spanned 40 years of which 30 have been in New Zealand. Throughout all of this time, Clive has been continually to the fore, explaining, cajoling and encouraging his "audiences" in diverse fields of agricultural endeavour from animal breeding to post-natal lamb losses to over worked farm employees. His mediums of extension have been diverse. They have ranged from the spoken word of one to one, to speaking to audiences, to radio, to television and to the printed word in pamphlets, articles and books. A communicator *extraordinaire*, who has enlightened the public on a diverse range of agricultural issues.

Although not raised on a farm, Clive has had a lifelong association with agriculture. He commenced his formal agricultural training at the School of Agriculture, University of Durham at Newcastle upon Tyne in England under Prof. Mac Cooper. He majored in animal breeding and was awarded a post-graduate research scholarship to study for a PhD at the University of North Wales, Bangor. Clive then began his true apprenticeship and for eight years lectured students and ran farm classes in animal production at the University of Leeds.

In 1968, Clive and his family immigrated to New Zealand and he accepted a position at the Whatawhata Hill Country Research Station where he remained for 11 years. It was while here that his communication skills came to the fore. Clive was a source of encouragement to the young scientists, technicians and field staff at the Station as they began their careers. He established linkages to our principal sheep and cattle breed societies as he initiated joint evaluation trials. Linkages which others have been able to build on for the long term good of New Zealand animal breeding and production. These were the times when large-scale breeding schemes were being established against extreme pressure from some quarters. Clive was to the fore at farmer and business meetings communicating the intricacies and advantages to New Zealand agriculture. During the 70s Clive played a key role on the technical advisory committees for Sheeplan. Such schemes are now taken for granted, due in large part to Clive's efforts in profiling their advantages. A major thrust of extension at Whatawhata was their biennial Field Day. Clive was in his element and he was actively sort out by the attendees "to get the good oil". He was continually being approached to speak to groups, from Federated Farmers to the local spinning and weaving groups, on a range of topics agricultural. His willingness to share knowledge, mostly



in his own time, still continues.

Clive enjoyed the liaison role and in 1979 transferred to Ruakura as their Scientific Liaison Officer extolling the virtues of wider aspects of agriculture to a wider audience. His prime role was to get information from scientists to the farmer so it could be applied. In 1980, he expanded his skills further, becoming Technical Editor and Manager of the

National Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) Display Unit in Hamilton. In this role he covered information transfer in its broadest concepts for all ten divisions of MAF. It was during this time that AgLinks were launched with Clive as a product champion. AgLinks were brief "fact sheets" relating to the cause and control of a raft of problems throughout the agricultural production industry. Over 1400 titles were produced. A new medium Clive conquered at this time was the TV camera as he fronted several slots on "Farming Today" under the production eye of Collin Follas. This stood him in good stead for later use of this medium.

Clive continued in a similar role after the formation of MAFCorp with an added role of Public Relations for all the MAF businesses. This was especially important during outbreaks of exotic pests and diseases, as well as natural disasters. He played a special role in helping to promote the hygiene and animal health aspects of the dairy industry and featured strongly in news releases of fruit fly and bee disease outbreaks and the Canterbury snow crises.

In 1989, Clive returned to what could be described as his first love – teaching students. As a Tutor at the Waikato Polytechnic Clive has trained and motivated young entrants to the dairy industry. This has been a big challenge as he has tried to get the students to focus on the positive aspects of the industry when they are surrounded by negativity. During this time Clive has been able to act as commentator on local radio raising the profile of young agriculturists within the community and agricultural issues at large. His unique accent is recognised in many Waikato homes as "the man from the PolyTech"!

In seeking to "spread the word", Clive found the written word the most enduring. In his early years while a "practising scientist" Clive authored, or co-authored, many science papers. He also wrote two books on applied aspects of animal breeding, in layman's language especially for farmers. More importantly he helped other scientists present their work to a wider audience. This is probably best reflected in the book he co-authored with the late Ron Kilgour on "Animal behaviour of farm animals".

Throughout his time in New Zealand, Clive has supported other agricultural journalists. He has been an Executive Committee member and President of the New

Zealand Guild of Agricultural Journalists who presented him with a “Rongo Award” in 1984 and a “Waitaki Award” in 1987 for excellence in agricultural journalism. In 1992 he was awarded the Landcorp Communicator of the Year Award.

A personal interest of Clive has always been man’s best friend – the working sheep dog. He authored a series of AgLinks on their care, training and welfare, and maintained a regular feature on sheep dogs in the New Zealand Farmer for several years.

Clive is known from North Cape to the Bluff for his ability to explain the science of farming to the people on the land. A worthy recipient of the Sir Arthur Ward Award in 1999 for services to agricultural extension.

R. M. W. Sumner

G. B. Nicoll