

Stock agents say farewell to yard

By TERRY TACON
farming editor

OUT with the old - in with the new. That was the scenario last week when the 86-year-old Inglewood saleyards were closed and the Taranaki Livestock Centre at Stratford officially opened.

The Hawera saleyards have also been closed and from this week all selling of stock by the Taranaki Livestock Centre's operators, Taranaki Farmers and Wrightson, will be centralised at Stratford.

However, there is a strong possibility of sales still being held at Inglewood, with newcomers to Taranaki, Williams and Kettle, investigating establishing new yards in the town.

Williams and Kettle Taranaki manager Mike Johnston said that an approach to Taranaki Farmers and Wrightson to share the Stratford yards with them had been unsuccessful and had prompted the company to consider developing its own selling site.

"There is every likelihood of us going ahead with this project," Mr Johnston said.

The last hurrah for the Tarata Rd saleyards came last Wednesday with the regular sale attended by a sizeable bench of buyers and about 20 special guests, former stock agents who had worked for companies that had used the yards.

Among them was Hawera's Bernie Mann, a legendary figure in Taranaki stock agency circles, who got his start in the 1930s by wagging school on Thursdays and riding his pony down to the Hawera saleyards to help drovers move stock.

His keenness saw him rewarded with a job as an office boy for Farmers Co-operative Society Ltd (FCOS), beginning a career that lasted 25 years and took him through to livestock manager. Mr Mann was then involved in establishing



LAST SALE: The Inglewood saleyards, which closed last week.

Photo: PIP GUTHRIE

Wright Stephenson Ltd (now Wrightson) in Taranaki, leading to another 25-year career, retiring as commission division manager.

While he was involved more with the Hawera yards than Inglewood, Mr Mann said he thoroughly enjoyed Wednesday's get-together with his old mates.

"There were two great companies in the early days, FCOS and Newton King, and while we were strict opposition in business we were great mates with one another."

One of those Mr Mann was sorry he did not catch up with at Wednesday's sale was an old FCOS colleague, Bill Marshall, who was instrumental in having the cattle-selling pavilion built at the Inglewood yards.

"After years of selling cattle in the rain, Bill was behind the move to get the

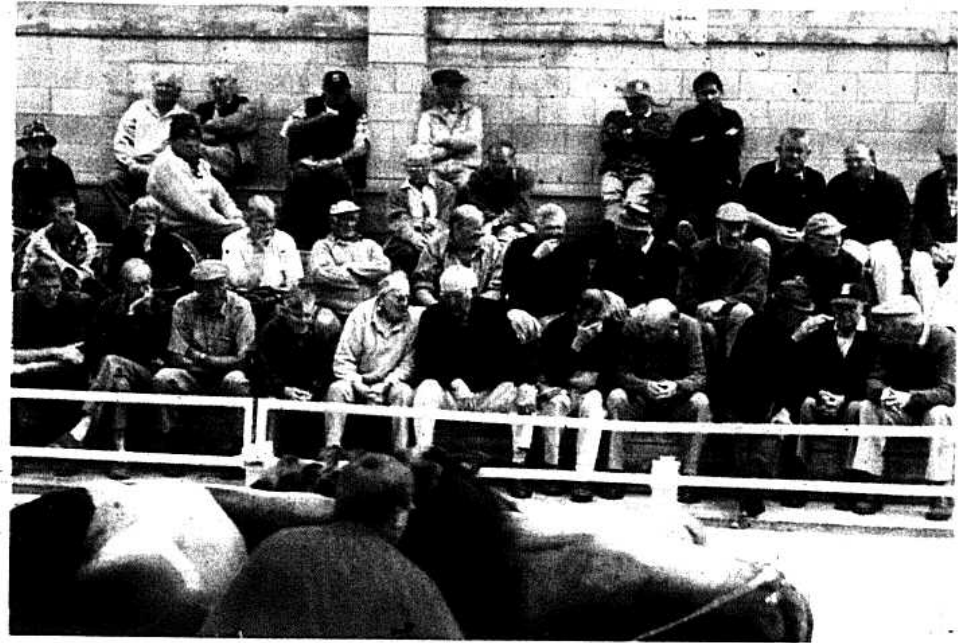
pavilion built and it was a great facility for the Inglewood saleyards."

Tarata farmer Bryan Hocken, an Inglewood sale regular, recalled attending the opening of the cattle pavilion in 1974, along with his father and grandfather.

He went to last Wednesday's sale to "sell something and buy something" to create a special memory of the occasion. He certainly did that, because a two-year-old Hereford bull he sold fetched top price of the sale at \$1500.

Another long-time Inglewood sales identity there on Wednesday was Albert Larsen, who farms in Wortley Rd these days but from the end of World War II until 1990 farmed at Uruti. He has been attending sales regularly for nearly 60 years, weekly for the last 12.

He still runs a few head on his small farm and will continue to go to sales at



SPECIAL GUESTS: Former stock agents at the final Inglewood sale last Wednesday. Front row, from left, Jack Fabish, Peter Western, Barry Bishop, Jack Sheeran, Lindsay Nicholl, Keith Newland, Trevor Terry, Dick Valentine, Bernie Mann, Norm Cloke, Bill Tatham. Back row (from behind Keith Newland) Ian Porteous, Colin Croad, Rob Dunlop, Bernie Kelly, Peter Murdoch.

Photo: PIP GUTHRIE



IN WITH THE NEW: Denny McAloon performs the ribbon cutting to declare the Taranaki Livestock Centre at Stratford officially open last week.

Photo: TREVOR READ

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