

Chairman's Update

Our 'new' scholars are beginning their Nuffield travels this week, at an exciting time, which presents challenge and opportunity. We wish them well and know that they are well prepared and briefed for the journey.

They have received tremendous support and advice from previous scholars, about how to prepare and make the most of this opportunity.

The end of the milk quota system is something which presents a great opportunity to our milk producers who want to progress and develop. Five of our new scholars are dairy farmers, and they will benefit from the global perspective that they will gain over the coming months.

Our involvement in Nuffield International is very beneficial. This is the body that encompasses the Nuffield organisations around the world, and it provides general guidance and support to these member countries.

It has developed the Contemporary Scholars Conference (CSC) for the new scholars, and this time is also used to hold a meeting of the Board. This is made up of the chairmen of each member organization. The future role and development of Nuffield International will be discussed by the Board during the CSC, when the future direction and strategy is on the Agenda.



Bill O'Keeffe,
Chairman, Nuffield
Ireland

Bill O'Keeffe, Chairman, Nuffield Ireland.



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Scholar Travels

Visit to New Zealand

Mary Delaney—2014 Scholar

I headed to New Zealand with high expectations and deep curiosity and I wasn't disappointed! I travelled through the North and South islands and the trip included visits to dairy farms, universities, industry experts and milk processors. The type of land farmed by dairy farmers varied from converted sheep farms to some of the best grass growing land globally. The scale of these enterprises was incredible. However, they are not without their challenges, with susceptibility to summer drought, particularly in the South island posing a real challenge for New Zealand dairy farmers.

In general, New Zealand dairy farmers are moving away from the traditional low cost grass based system we associate with them. Most farms I visited were supplementing grass with bought in concentrate. The price of land is amongst the most expensive globally and the potential for capital appreciation is diminishing. Water quality has become a public perception issue and changes are required at farm level to address those concerns. A reduction in stocking rate and the construction of herd homes are likely solutions. These come at a cost and will limit rate of future expansion. The debt associated with land purchase and the move to higher cost production systems coupled with a volatile milk price is putting pressure on many New Zealand dairy farmers to stay in the black.



Clockwise from top left; Mary with Mike Hedley (Massey Univ), Michael Murphy, Enda Hawe, and with Paul Olsen.

It was great to see the share milking system in operation in New Zealand. I met the 2012 share milkers of the year Enda & Sarah Hawe and runners up in 2011, Richard & Joanna Greaves. Their expertise and commitment to the business was inspiring. Building up equity is a long term process but when you are as talented as these two individuals, the opportunities come. However, share milking is not as popular as it once was and there are less and less opportunities for share milkers. Land owners now want a bigger slice of the pie and there is an obvious move towards farm managers for many land owners. Corporate structures and multiple farm ownership is a growing trend also.

I had the pleasure of meeting Fonterra representative Cerasela Stancu and she gave great insight into "Supply Fonterra". Meeting ex Fonterra Board Member Jim van der Poel was another highlight and he gave great clarity on where Fonterra and the dairy sector in New Zealand are focusing their efforts in the next decade – consolidation and scale. China is their main market but they are growing in other markets globally strengthening their customer portfolio.

I would like to thank Mike Murphy for his assistance in planning the trip. I would like to thank all of my hosts who were generous with their time and gave me a great insight into the New Zealand dairy sector. In particular I am grateful to the New Zealand Nuffield Scholars - Mel Poulton, Paul Olsen, Lisa Harper and Julian Raine for their hospitality and assistance.

Scholar Travels

Visit to Australia / NZ / South America

Sean Coughlan — 2014 Scholar

During the months of November and December I embarked on an eight week round the world trip, researching my topic “A Transfer to Dairying, the Knowledge and Capital Required”. Countries visited included the Australia, New Zealand, Chile Argentina and Uruguay.

If there was one theme that stood out from all places that I visited, it had to be the endless, exciting opportunities to pursue a successful career in dairy farming that exist outside the EU in what I would call the “real world”, free from constraints like regulation and the soon to be removed milk quota. This has been proven by the many Irish and Europeans I met while travelling that have left to seek out success in the southern hemisphere.

The “real world” though does come with plenty of challenges also, not least milk price volatility which was a hot topic during my travels. There is no doubt that the current downturn will put some farms out of business, but any focused low cost operators I met tended to be philosophical about the challenges that it posed. One or two were even quietly welcoming the bottom of the cycle, as they planned how to turn the price turmoil to their advantage.

Climate and its effect on the availability of water is also a huge concern in certain regions especially Australia which at times is a very harsh environment for the dairy cow, but on the flip side growth rates of 24t/DM/ha are possible under optimum irrigation.

The availability of good skilled labour was an issue in all the countries that I visited, whether from competition from other industries such as mining in Australia, or the cultural differences in South America, or simply the perception among the public that dairying is a demanding and un-rewarding career for employees. Is this something dairy farmers in Ireland need to consider post-quota? How do we structure the labour inputs on our farms to create a good working environment that attracts the best employees?

While travelling I took the opportunity to visit a number of corporate dairy farming operations which is not something we have witnessed yet in Ireland or in Europe for that matter. It was interesting to see how they structure the businesses differently compared to owner-operators, in a bid to motivate staff to maximise potential. Some of them employed staff directly, some used contract-milkers, others used sharemilkers or oftentimes a combination of two or three. Ultimately, it's about putting the right people with the right skills in the right place and having the proper reporting systems in place which enable the business to be managed effectively.

Overall, I've returned full of optimism for a career in dairying, as I commence a new venture, share milking in Co. Galway. I am supplying my Nuffield sponsors Aurivo Co-op, who I'd like to sincerely thank for my scholarship. Hopefully their investment in me through Nuffield Ireland and also in the new Land Mobility Service will payoff, and the sharemilking structure will be as successful in Ireland as it has been in New Zealand in providing pathways into the industry for both land owners and young farmers.



Sean Coughlan

Nuffield Mentoring Programme **By Johnny Butterly 1998 scholar,** **and Chairman of the Mentoring Programme**

Nuffield Ireland's objective is to identify and encourage tomorrow's leaders in Irish agriculture today. To this end after many conversations with our chairman Bill O'Keeffe and many others within our network, it was decided to set up a programme to help retain our scholars and keep them involved in the organisation.

It is a huge honour to be awarded a Nuffield scholarship and there is a high level of expectation on recipients to deliver both for the trust, their sponsors and themselves. Today the opportunity afforded to recipients is greatly increased with the inclusion of the Contemporary Scholars Conference and the Global Focus Tour.

These discussions coincided with one of my many trips to the Nuffield UK Autumn conference. I usually travel with my fellow '98 Nuffield scholar Wyn Owen from Powys in Wales. I was aware of his work with a group there called Agriscop in Wales. This is an initiative to help groups of farmers develop ideas for alternative income.

Wyn's role has been to oversee the group leaders and aid a mentoring process to get the best results for members. He is an Organisational Development Consultant and has many years of experience in this field.

We discussed the process and decided it had something to offer Nuffield Ireland. Prior to our selection of 2013 scholars we laid the foundations for a pilot programme.

Wyn was invited to come across and facilitate an action learning day for potential mentors/coaches, this was co funded by IFA Skillnet. When the 2013 scholars were selected they were each assigned a mentor as a support or "go to person" for the duration of their study year. It was very important to point out that this was not a form of policing but to support them in any way possible.

The pilot programme went very well and feedback from both mentors and mentees has been very positive. Our second year has been even more successful as experience is a great teacher.

We have continued with this initiative to support our new scholars and help to make their Nuffield experience the best it can be. This will be supported with action learning days for new mentors/coaches to equip them for the job.

To date, 19 scholars (the scholars of 2013, 2014 and 2015) each had a mentor assigned to them. Each of the 19 mentors has received training for this task. The mentors are Nuffield scholars, who give their time to provide this support for the current scholars, during their 2 year scholarship. The mentors also attain a new skillset during this process.

I would like to thank all who have participated in the programme as it is a first for Nuffield and I am sure the benefits will be great for all involved.



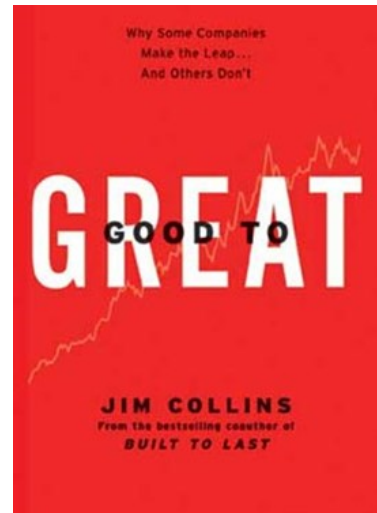
Johnny Butterly

Book Review

“Good to Great” - author Jim Collins

Good to Great written by Jim Collins is categorised as a corporate leadership book which investigates how a good company becomes a great company. However, the theories explored in the book allow it to be recommended as a career and life motivational book.

The research carried out by Jim Collins and his research team over a five year period outlines a number of concepts which are not only applicable to the management of a company but also to the management of one’s own career and personal life.



Characteristics of a Great Leader

The leaders of these “great” companies is first explored. They are humble yet driven. They are ambitious for the company not themselves and take blame for failure while giving credit to others for the successes. A good leader surrounds themselves with the right people first and then agrees the vision for the company.

A culture of discipline with an ethic of entrepreneurship, is identified by Collins as a feature of the great company. Bureaucracy, rules and systems are only typically to manage the small few who are incompetent within a company, yet these systems may in turn kill the entrepreneurial nature of the company or drive away the right people.

The great leaders studied had the ability to maintain an absolute belief that obstacles can be overcome and an ability to deal with unpleasant facts. Although simple in concept an ability to implement this mindset enabled companies to outperform their competitors during times of adversity.

Finding the Right Idea

Collins describes what he calls the “Hedgehog Concept”, which is based on the simplicity of the hedgehog’s defence system, how it rolls into a ball with its spikes protruding to defeat the cunning efforts of the fox. The concept requires the intersection of three answers for achievement of success: What are you passionate about? What can you be the best at? What can actually make you a living? To be successful all three answers must intersect. The right idea must be embraced and designs outside this idea should be ignored.

Progressing and Sustaining Greatness

Although technology was important to the leaders of the great companies for growth, it was not described as a key reason for success, but as a way to drive growth. For transformation from good to great there was no one big event or eureka moment. Instead there was a number of continuous actions and successes over a period of time resulting in the building of momentum which Collins describes as the flywheel. Having created the great company the remaining chal-

lenge is to make it last, which is explored in the final chapter “Built to Last”. Great companies are shown to preserve their core values and purpose while continually adapting to a changing world, and the great leaders will set up their successors for even greater success.

Conclusion

Those we surround ourselves with, and the role we allow them to play within our lives, can undoubtedly be key to our own personal success. Finding a career that intersects for us, our passion and ability and from which we can profit is key to our success. “When all these pieces come together, not only does your work move toward greatness, but so does your life” according to Collins.

Collins studied mathematics in Stanford University and uses a mathematical based approach to discover why some companies make the leap and others don’t. His judgements are not made on his personal opinion or that of the research team but on statistical analysis of the performance indicators as set in the study. It is this clarity of judgement that makes this book a must read.

Many of the theories proposed in the book may be viewed as lacking innovation and very simple. However, the way in which their implementation is shown to have led to the success of the companies studied makes this, not just a good book but a great book.

Reviewed by:

Dr. Eilish Broderick,

Lecturer in Agricultural Science at Institute of Technology Tralee & Nuffield Scholar (2007).

Photos from the 2014 Nuffield Ireland Conference



Karen Brosnan, Sean O'Donnell and Alo Mohan



Jim Woulfe addresses the Conference

Briefings for the 2015 Scholars

In early February, the 7 scholars of 2015 travelled to Dublin for 2 days of briefings. The purpose was to provide them with an introduction and overview of the Irish Food industry, and briefings before they undertake their travels to the Contemporary Scholars Conference and Global Focus Programmes.

The first meeting was with Justin McCarthy, Editor of the Irish Farmers Journal, who outlined the work of the Journal, how it adapts to changing circumstances/technology, and his views on the issues, opportunities and challenges facing our agri-business sector.

A meeting with Pat O’Keeffe (Deputy Editor, IFJ) followed, in which he outlined the opportunity for the 2015 scholars to write articles for the Farmers Journal, how this can be done and possible subject matter.

There was an afternoon session on Report Writing which was provided by Karina Pierce from UCD, to provide guidance and advice for the scholars on organising and writing their reports. This included the need to clarify objectives, purpose of travel to their chosen countries, organising the notes and views obtained and backing-up content on laptops etc.

The 2014 scholars joined the 2015 scholars for this session. This also provided an opportunity for the 2014 scholars to get guidance on report writing, as well as sharing their experiences with the 2015 scholars—especially about the CSC, Global Focus Programme and their travel plans.

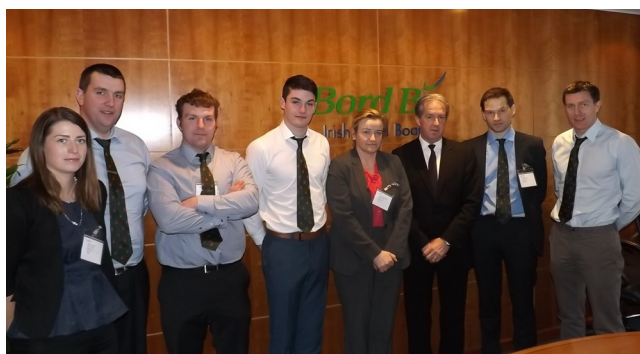


2015 Scholars with Kevin Lane, CEO, and his team in the Irish Dairy Board

In the evening the group had a discussion with Ann Derwin, Chief Economist at the Department of Agriculture, which covered a wide range of issues. This included access to land, CAP, young farmers, milk quotas and more. It was a very worthwhile briefing and gave the scholars the opportunity to hear Ann’s insight and views, outline their study area and get advice on sourcing contacts and information.

On the second day, the group was briefed by the Irish Dairy Board, and met Kevin Lane, Anne Randles, Jeanne Kelly, Mark Faherty And Pdraig Ryan. This gave an overview of the business, and insight into its strategy. There was a lively discussion on the issues facing the sector, which was valuable to all.

This was followed by a meeting with Aidan Cotter in Bord Bia for an overview of the activities of Bord Bia, Origin Green and the trends and opportunities for the Irish food sector.



2015 Scholars with Aidan Cotter, CEO, Bord Bia.

Finally, there was a presentation and discussion with Pdraig Walshe, (one of the first two Irish scholars in 1996) about what it means to be a scholar and how to make the most of the opportunity before them. Things have changed from what the early scholars faced, but what we expect of our new scholars has also changed.

Two busy days, but very valuable at this stage of their scholarship.

Travels for the 2015 Scholars

The 2015 scholars will begin their travelling on 26th February, when 3 scholars (John Buckley, Joe Burke and Kevin Moran) travel to London for a pre Global Focus Programme (GFP) briefing with the other scholars from Australia, New Zealand and France who will also be part of the first two Tours.

Following the briefing, they will travel to France for the Contemporary Scholars Conference (CSC), which will be held in Reims—which is an hour NE of Paris. Reims is a city with many historic buildings and was the traditional site of the crowning of the kings of France. It is at the centre of champagne growing.

The attendance at the CSC will include all the 2015 Nuffield Scholars from the 7 countries which make up Nuffield, as well as a number of associate scholars from China, Brazil, India and Mozambique. There will be 75 scholars in attendance. This also provides the opportunity for each of the Nuffield member countries to discuss and decide on ways to improve the Nuffield scholarship programme, share ideas and experiences and strengthen the standing of Nuffield.

The programme for the week will include future of farming, innovation, agricultural policy, communications, technology, networks, new methods, leadership and visits to innovative farms and businesses.

The CSC will be for one week, commencing on 28th February.

The GFP itineraries are as follows, and the Irish participants are listed for each.

24 February – 12 April 2015	<u>Brazil GFP</u> John Buckley & Joe Burke	UK, France, USA (Washington DC & California), Mexico, Brazil and New Zealand.
24 February – 12 April 2015	<u>Africa GFP</u> Kevin Moran	UK, France, USA (Pennsylvania and Washington DC), Germany, Czech Republic, Poland, Kenya, South Africa.
1 June – 15 July 2015	<u>China GFP</u> Aidan Gleeson & Brian Rushe	Singapore, the Philippines, Hong Kong, China, Canada, USA (Oklahoma and Washington DC), Ireland.
1 June – 15 July 2015	<u>India GFP</u> Maeve O’Keeffe	Singapore, India, Qatar, Turkey, France, USA (Washington DC) and Wyoming).
1 June – 15 July 2015	<u>Japan GFP</u> Maire McCarthy	Singapore, Indonesia, Japan, Israel, The Netherlands, USA (Washington DC and Florida).



Joe Burke, John Buckley and Kevin Moran in Heathrow at the start of their GFP 26 Feb .



REMINDER — DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

The Nuffield Ireland Conference will be held on Friday 16th Oct 2015 in the Castleknock Hotel.

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

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(Our website is being upgraded, and will be back soon)**

Scholar News

Sean Coughlan (2014 scholar) and **Julian Hughes (2010 scholar)** were among 40 participants from 12 countries in the Global Farmers Masterclass, held in Australia in November at the invitation of Rabobank.

Sean O'Brien (2014 scholar) will travel to the Global Dairy Farmers conference in Thailand and Vietnam from 10—17 March.

Nicky Mann (2014 Nuffield Australia scholar) will be in Ireland for a short visit 20—23 March, and will meet Irish scholars.

Joe Leonard (2014 scholar) was interviewed on RTE's 'Ear to the Ground' TV programme on 13th January, about managing the dairy farm in a volatile market. He also addressed the Irish Grassland Association Dairy Conference in January.

Eddie Kehoe (2013 scholar) will address the Nuffield Northern Ireland conference in March.

David Murphy (2011 scholar) was elected chairman of the Castlelyons Advisory Committee of Glanbia Co-op in January.

David Kerr (2006 scholar) spoke at the recent Irish Farmers Journal seminar in Kilkenny.

Sean O'Donnell (2012 scholar) addressed the National Dairy Conference in November, the Fertilizer Association of Ireland Annual Conference in February and was elected onto the ICMSA Dairy Committee.

Shane Fitzgerald (2011 scholar) addressed the Teagasc / ICOS Dairy Expansion seminar in January. Shane also appeared on the RTE TV Programme 'The Science Squad' in January.

Tim Gubbins (2014 Nuffield Australia scholar) was in Ireland in February.

We are grateful for the significant support of our Sponsors

