

# JOHN AND ANNETTE HENWOOD

Previously of FOSSIL DOWNS STATION, WEST KIMBERLEY, WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Fossil Downs Station, Fitzroy Crossing, WA. Photos courtesy of Castle Livestock Pty Ltd

WE PURCHASED our first Droughtmaster bull in the mid 80's, I was invited to attend the Rockhampton National Droughtmaster Sale by Dick Northcott of Moola Bulla Station. My wife, Annette, and my mother-in-law gave me instructions..." don't buy a bull", I promised I wouldn't. However, seeing a bull that I thought my mother-in-law would like I bid on him...I managed to secure the bull. When I arrived back to Fossil Downs, I got the biggest roasting from my wife

and mother-in-law until they saw the bull. After that I could do no wrong, buy more they said.

So, we sold every Shorthorn bull we could find, Annette and I purchased from almost every Queensland Stud...at Sales and in the paddock. We were initially given a great deal of help from Derrick Spann, with his rough sketches of what to look for in a Droughtmaster bull.

We were told by many that we paid too much for bulls we liked,

but in the early days we decided to always buy quality not quantity and continued with this policy.

Over the next ten to fifteen years, we improved our breeding program, developing the first commercial Droughtmaster Breeder herd in Western Australia and sold many chance-mated cows and heifers all over Western Australia and some into South Australia. Over a three-year period, we sold 3000 females back into Queensland. This really gave us confidence in what we were buying and breeding with the Droughtmasters, as their yield was better than most pastoral cattle. We received positive feedback from growers and Abattoirs who purchased our cattle. When Fossil Downs was sold in late 2015 the station ran one of the best Commercial Droughtmaster female herds in the Kimberley.

Currently we have 500 acres 100ks north of Perth, Western Australia with 110 breeders, we are attempting to breed bulls for the pastoral areas. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all past and present Stud Breeders, Agents, and friends we have made during our trips to the Sales and we thank the Droughtmaster Society for their support over the many years.

We hope to see you all again in Sept-Oct.

*Contributed by John & Annette Henwood*

**John Henwood was honoured with a medal of the Order of Australia for his services to the cattle breeding industry in 2018.**

