



Ruth and Dave Roth overlook the Waikata Valley where thousands of sheep graze.

Energy is as much a subject of concern and study in New Zealand as it is in the United States. This solar heating system on an experimental dairy farm was inspected by visiting Americans.

Perry County dairy farm couple tells of tour through New Zealand on agricultural mission

By DAVE and RUTH ROTH

LOYSVILLE — While snow and ice covered much of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and other parts of the United States, we were enjoying the sunny skies and balmy temperatures of Australia, New Zealand, and the Fiji Islands. We count it a privilege to have been a part of the 33-member delegation of the Pennsylvania Agricultural Leaders' Goodwill People-to-People Mission. We feel that each of us was truly a "Goodwill Ambassador" as we exchanged ideas and talked with people in our many day-to-day contacts.

As we visited people on their farms and in their homes and as we talked with leaders of farm organizations, cooperatives, agricultural colleges, Embassies, and as we chatted informally with workers, we felt that we had common goals: peace and a better understanding among the peoples of the world and "the good life" for all of us. We both feel that we learned a great deal from the persons whose lives we touched and who shared themselves so generously with us.

We had many advantages on this trip. We all spoke a common language, English. We had a somewhat similar European heritage with the people we met. The climate was pleasant; the seasons are reversed in the South Pacific and it was Summer there then. The surroundings were beautiful with colorful flowers, beautiful trees, and unique animals and birds. There was a great variety in the physical geography with the mountains, valleys, lakes, waterfalls, and lovely countryside. The food was delicious and interesting, with an abundance of fresh fruits, vegetables, roast lamb, and beefsteaks, as well as fish. Transportation was efficient in both their luxurious airway service and in their practical coach service. The accommodations and services were good. People were friendly everywhere.

We will never forget the beauty of the countries and the unique flora and fauna we found there. We see in our minds' eyes thousands of sheep on the hills and in the valleys. Likewise, dairy and beef cattle grazed contentedly on the never-ending pasture lands. In Australia, because this continent was severed from the Asian mainland millions of years ago, we found very unusual, native animals, birds, trees, and plants. We enjoyed watching the koalas as they fed on the eucalyptus leaves of these gum trees. Great grey kangaroos, red kangaroos, wallabys hopped around near us so that we could touch them. We watched the platypus, with its webbed feet & its bill like a duck, from a greater distance. The native birds were a delight. A few of us remember, standing under an old gum tree and watching the koaoburras up in it, and singing an old camp song, "Koaoburra sits in the old gum tree, merry, merry king of the bush is he, laugh, Koaoburra, laugh, gay your life must be." The emus, large flightless birds and about 6½ feet in length, marched proudly near us. The lyrebird, the cockatoo and other kinds of parrots, flock pigeons, and fairy penguins caught our attention.

The trees in Australia are beautiful and useful. The karni tree compares to the California redwood. It is giant in size and very fine furniture is made from it. The tall wattle, with its yellow blossoms, has many uses: bark for tanning, twigs and branches for fences, and furniture. The bottle trees get their name from the shape of their trunk. The eucalyptus trees have many uses: timber, decorative wood, medicines, etc. There are thousands of wildflowers all around. The waratah, a beautiful red flower, is the floral emblem of New South Wales.

In New Zealand, we enjoyed the animals, birds, trees and plants also. The Kiwi is a native bird and is viewed as their national bird emblem. It is a flightless bird and the only known bird with nostrils in the tip of its bill. It came to New Zealand 70 million years ago, it has nocturnal habits. Its egg is ¼th of its own body weight; it lays the biggest egg of any species. We listened to the songs of the tu bird and the bellbird. They have several species of bats. They have no snakes. Deer, rabbits, pig, as well

cattle and sheep, were brought from other countries. Salmon and trout are abundant.

New Zealand has beautiful trees. The Mamaku tree ferns are unusual. New Zealand is called "the land of the fern". The fern frond is a New Zealand emblem. The kauri trees are tall and yield excellent, fine quality timber for furniture and other uses. The Pohutukawa is called the Christmas tree. It has beautiful red blossoms and grows near the sea or a lake. There are many kinds of pine, beech, and evergreen trees. There are many palm trees. These and many other mental pictures come before our eyes as we re-live our experiences.

We noted some interesting differences as we traveled about these countries in the South Pacific. The drivers of the coaches and motor cars drove on the left-hand side of the road. Instead of yield signs, there were "Give Way" signs. Instead of a pharmacy, the sign read "Chemist". Instead of a dentist, the sign read "Dental Mechanic". We learned some new words in our vocabulary: A ranch or farm is a station. A meadow is a paddock. A flock or herd is a mob. An elevator is a lift. An automobile is a motor car. A bus is a coach. The interior region is known as the backblock or bush.

Despite the almost unbelievable fact that we traveled 25,600 miles on our 23-day Mission, some people at the places we visited now seem quite close to us. These places on the map have a "personal" meaning for us now because of the people we met there.

We would like to mention a few of these people-to-people contacts we had that were especially meaningful to us. We will take our illustrations from our experiences in New Zealand.

Our stay at Christ Church on the South Island will long be remembered. Dave met some fellow Holstein breeders from Colorado, Maryland and other places in the United States. They had a good time renewing friendships and comparing notes. I especially enjoyed the dinner with the counterparts there because we sat with a school principal and his wife. I learned a great deal about the New Zealand system of education. Dave had a very good conversation with the general manager of a large farmers' co-op in that area.

We'll never forget how great it was to feel the warm breezes blowing as we stood on the wagon and rode leisurely over the John Gallagher sheep station "Rukahuri" and saw how he took care of his 4,000 ewes, hoggets, and rams. We were heartened by John's positive attitude toward "his one-man farm operation". He took such pride in carrying on the best of their previous family traditions and in using the best research and knowledge he could find to improve his operations.

We really enjoyed our stay on the North Island. The Inn was a perfect resting place. Outside our room were tropical trees and shrubs. Beyond was a lovely swimming pool. We were not far from downtown. We shopped in a real consumer-owned co-op grocery store. We felt much at home with labels similar to those at home.

Further downtown, we bought a variety of their stamps at the post office. The man that waited on us seemed to be glad for "our attitude" toward New Zealand. "I'm so glad to meet people from the U.S. who know something about New Zealand and want to know more. Some foreigners come here, and they think we live in grass huts," he said.

We had a good time buying white sheepskin rugs here for members of our families.

Massey University is one of the most outstanding educational institutions in the southern hemisphere. They have eight "faculties" or colleges: Agriculture and Herd Science, Technology and Food Science, Veterinary Science, Science, Social Science, Humanities, Education, and Business Studies. They have 4,780 full and part-time students and 6,100 students enrolled in correspondence courses. We learned a great deal about New Zealand agriculture here. New Zealand has more than 60 million sheep and almost 9 million cattle. It has about 25 times as many farm animals as people. (The NZ population is

3,183,000. It is about the size of Colorado — three per cent as large as the U.S., excluding Alaska and Hawaii). Dairy products account for a large share of the nation's income. Barley, corn, oats, and wheat are the chief grain crops. They grow large quantities of apples and pears. The dairy industry is controlled by the New Zealand Dairy Board. This body exercises stringent control over the farmers. It tells them how much milk to produce and how much butterfat to have.

The next day we visited Milk Processors Ltd. and a dairy farm. The farmer was quite knowledgeable. He seemed to enjoy talking to Dave and asking him questions, especially at the counterpart dinner that night.

We visited the Awahuri Breeding Centre. Dave felt quite at home with these men. They know about Kingpin and Elevation over there, too. Their AI service began in 1950. One-half of the dairy farmers use AI. They are now seeing an upsurge of Friesian (Holstein) cattle. Before that, Jersey and Guernsey were predominant. Now Friesians account for 54 per cent; Jerseys; 45 per cent. All of the cows are on the computer. They have a sire-proving program. It costs only \$2.00 to breed a cow. They pay \$400 for the bulls they buy for the stud.

Rotorua, on the North Island, was a "fun place", a "tourist paradise". One of the biggest things that our stay here did for us was to greatly increase our interest in Maori history, traditions, life, customs, education and religion. The Maoris are truly a great people who came to New Zealand 600 years ago (or earlier). They are combining with the Europeans who came in the last 100 years to make a rich culture and a noteworthy people.

As soon as we arrived at this unique spot, we immediately donned our bathing suits and went into the warm, thermal hotel pool. It was a beautiful feeling to float and swim in this naturally warm water with water dripping down a small waterfall into the pool. Steam was seen coming up from the thermal basins around the countryside.

The next day we visited the Whakarewarewa Thermal Reserve. A special Maori guide showed us the work of the apprentice Maori carvers at The New Zealand Maori Arts and Crafts Institute. We were amazed at their artistic ability and the precision of their work. Our guide demonstrated the making of a grass skirt from the native plant. The Maoris are an intelligent and religious people. We saw evidence of this all around. They made handsome wood carvings, jewelry from native shells, and religious carvings for their meeting houses.

The guide then took us on a tour of an ancient Maori village. There we saw primitive houses, meeting houses, store places, and other evidences of their ancient culture. From there, we visited the Thermal Reserve. As we hiked by the geysers, the thermal pools, and the mud pots, we were reminded of our own Yellowstone National Park. Pohutu Geyser is similar to our Old Faithful.

We walked through the Rainbow Trout Springs where brown and rainbow trout swam in crystal clear water. We saw many of New Zealand's native birds and animals. The trees and shrubbery there are some of the most beautiful we have ever seen. We had a barbeque lunch at Hamurana Springs beside a lovely stream. We watched the ducks and sought shade from the hot Summer sun.

We then went to an Agrodome Show where 19 of the top breeds of New Zealand sheep were on display. Their places in the New Zealand economy were described.

The experience of the evening was the highlight of our stay in Rotorua. We had a delicious and abundant buffet dinner of Maori foods, including roast lamb, beef, and chicken, kumaras (sweet potatoes), and dozens of other native fruits, vegetables, salads, desserts, etc. We watched the preparation of the roast lamb before dinner in one of the "hot springs" adjacent to the hotel. The cooks had placed the meat in the natural boiling water, had