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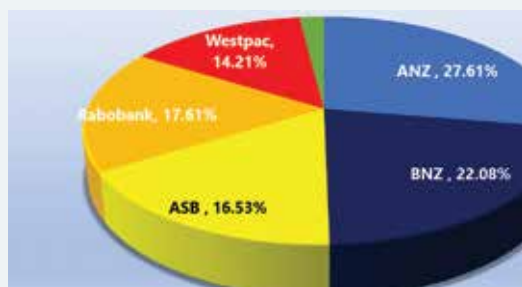
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# Fieldays –

## you have me hook, online and sinker!



NZME's Glenn Dwight is as happy as a pig in mud to hear that Fieldays is going online this year.

**W**hen I heard Fieldays was going online this year and wasn't in Hamilton, I was happy! Happy as an online-pig in virtual-mud.

Not because I have anything against Hamilton or Mystery Creek; in fact, quite the contrary – I was born in Hamilton and I love a good June Fieldays FOG. I have always thought that Hamilton should actually *promote* the fog – 'Hamilton: we put the *MIST* in Mystery. But I digress, this article is about the joys of Fieldays Online.

The main reason word of Fieldays being online was so exciting to read was that it meant I could again attend this event. You see Fieldays has always held a very special place in my heart as it does for anyone who attended school in 'The Tron'.

This is because Fieldays was the unofficial official 12th public holiday and a day off from Silverdale Normal School (the 'normal' had something to do with allowing teacher college students back then – they were different times).

### The Disneyland of farming

As a school, we would all head out to Fieldays, explore and discover the Disneyland of farming. If you got lucky, you would get to travel with Derek's dad. This was important because he drove a gold Holden and there was no better way to arrive at the Fieldays than in a chariot of GOLD. It also had a stereo, so we listened to 1ZH in super-mono on AM radio. Glorious!

So after a fog-filled ride we would arrive at rural Rainbows End and it was ALL ON! A gaggle of schoolchildren running between stalls, high on sugary treats and discovering new and amazing things.

We'd watch tractors pulling stuff, diggers pouring cups of tea, sculptures carved by chainsaws and were generally in awe of all things agriculture.

These were truly happy days and truly great memories and that is before I even think of all the free loot we would drag back to the Holden. A length of Alkathene made the perfect dueling sword and yes, the helium balloon was a must!

### New accessibility

So with all these tangible memories, why am I so excited to attend this event online?

The answer is simple. I now live in Christchurch and it's almost impossible to attend this great event in person. Yes, I know I could organise tickets, flights, accommodation and transport, but that is admin and not one of my strengths.

So, like Rose in the movie *Titanic*, I am ready to go back, back to Fieldays, back to the event that brought so much joy to a young Glenn.

### The spark is still there

Am I worried it will not be the same; am I worried I will be disappointed? NO. Because the spark that was ignited in me all those years ago is still there, just older and more mature (ish).

The agricultural sector is a sector that inspires; it has and will always show innovation and capture the number 8 spirit of this country, the spirit that this country was built on and in recent times, the sector New Zealand has relied on.

Oh and yes, there is also just the joy of looking at machinery, BIG MACHINERY; machinery that makes you want to put on high-viz and saddle up!

### 'It's in our DNA'

I admit that I am no farmer; in fact, I have only milked a cow once in my life – and was average at best. But to use a very over-exposed phrase, 'it's in our DNA'.

Fieldays Online is a great way to reconnect with our rural roots. As urbanites, it's something we often drive through or past but never take the time to stop and think about.

So I challenge everyone this year to go online, to explore Fieldays; I guarantee you will not be disappointed. Everyone can explore all the joys without feeling like an outsider for having the wrong gumboots – you can even check out Fieldays Online in your slippers if you feel like it.

You might even find some lovely new possum skin slippers... or nipple warmers – yup, 12-year-old Glenn remembers them!

Fieldays Online 2020, see you there – she's gonna be a ripper! ■

*NZME Creative Director Glenn Dwight is counting the sleeps to a fog-free Fieldays Online 2020.*

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