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Cattle legends bid farewell

■ Final sale of mighty Witherswood Angus ends 25 year bloodline journey



BY SHANE
DOUTHIE

sdouthie@
nemedi.com.au

THE hammer came down for the final time at the iconic Witherswood Angus Lodge at Taminick when the last of the renowned bloodstock was sold on Tuesday.

Forty-five of the highly coveted bulls sold during the sale and another dozen soon after with the remaining expected to go within a week.

The top price was for lot 1 for \$7250 to Goldsworthy with the average sale price \$4450 although a number of other bulls sold for \$7000 with Kingdom and Reality bloodlines.

The Witherswood stud was the former home to Australia's most expensive Angus bull Kingdom K35 but after 25 years in the industry, John and Joan Woodruff have decided to sell up and head to the big smoke.

John and Joan have dedicated almost three decades of their life to developing the best bloodlines in Australia, most notably when Witherswood joined a consortium to buy Millah Murrah Kingdom K35 for \$150,000, the most ever paid for an Angus bull in Australia.

Also purchased at the same auction by the Witherswood consortium was Millah Murrah Klooney K42 for \$80,000, the fifth highest ever recorded for an Australian Angus bull at the time.

John said he was happy with

the prices reached at the sale considering the dry season experienced across Northern Victoria and most of the country.

"Last year we averaged just over \$5000 so we're very happy to get all the stock cleared at an average of \$4450," John said.

"In the last few markets in the district a lot of bulls have not been sold."

A large crowd gathered for the historic sale and not all were buyers.

"It was a big crowd to give us a send off," John said.

"There were a lot of people there who bought at the female sale who came along just to say they were impressed with what they had purchased from us over the years.

"We had also some family here as well, including cousins from WA, my younger brother from Mackay, and my two daughters and their families."

He praised his stock agents, Corcoran Parker and Elders, who had served the property so well over the years.

The home property is expected to go up for sale in a few months which will be followed by a clearing sale where everything representing 25 years of farming will go under the hammer.

John had mixed feelings about the impending move.

"Apart from our own enjoyment living on such a lovely property and the great friends

we have in the industry, for the rest of the family it was a second home," John said.

"But we are in our early 80s and we want to get on with life and help other people where we can."

They are looking forward to living in an inner city apartment in Melbourne.

"We will find other things to do and fill out time pretty easily," he said.

"We are looking to do a lot of travelling and making new acquaintances but also keeping in touch with my other cattle breeders."

So it's almost farewell to two legends of the local beef industry but their mark will stay on not only at the property they leave behind but also in the progeny of those amazing bulls they bought with such vision all those years ago.



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TIME TO MOVE ON: John and Joan Woodruff (pictured above) say farewell to their final bloodstock.
IN DEMAND: A large crowd attended the final Witherswood stud bull sale at Taminick on Tuesday.

PHOTOS: Mel Guy