



SHIRE HORSE SOCIETY AUSTRALIA

INCORPORATED

Forging the future of the Shire Horse in Australia

SUMMER 2006

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER



Foaling season in Tasmania... Member Deb Buckland's new Shire Foal

PATRON:

Mr Rob Vickery President Royal Agricultural Society of New South Wales

www.shirehorsesociety.com.au

SHSA Members **NEWS**

2007 SHSA Seminar

After the success of last year, preparations are under way for the 2007 SHSA Seminar. The speakers this year will be focusing on successful breeding and growing of Shire Horses, an area that is of vital importance for every Shire Horse stud. For more details, refer to the ad later in this edition...

When: Saturday 13 &
Sunday 14 January 2007

Where: The Cedars,
Kangaroo Valley

Wine for Life

Fundraising for SHSA

With Christmas just around the corner, now is the perfect time to buy some wine at **bargain** prices and raise money for the SHSA at the same time! James Estate have generously offered this fundraising opportunity for the SHSA – every box of wine sold will result in \$30 for the Society. Tell your friends – the more we sell, the more money we raise... and it is quite a nice drop to boot!

Running Mad...

Congratulations to Darren Somerville who recently completed the Oxfam Trailwalker – one of the worlds toughest team challenges – 100km cross country – finishing in 22hours! Fantastic work Darren!

Shire Horse Society

Australia AGM

The AGM will be held on Sunday 14 January 2007 at the Seminar. Please come along if you can and have your say in the running and direction of your Society.

Easter Show

Please remember that this year the dates and times have changed – Shires are now on after lunch on Wednesday 11 April. Entries close **THIS MONDAY** the 6th November, so if your entires are not in by now, you have probably missed out! Don't despair – there are always other exhibitors that need a hand if you want to be part of the action.

Title Challenge

The 2007 Sydney Royal Easter Show is going to see the inaugural challenge for Australia's Tallest Horse. The challenge will take place during the show with the measurements taken by the official RAS Measurers. If you think you have a contender, come and take on the current title holder Cedars Archibald during the show.

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Shire Horse Society Australia Incorporated

www.shirehorsesociety.com.au

President's Report

Greetings to all members! SHSA is very pleased to announce that the RAS of NSW has chosen our nominated American Shire Horse judge Brit McLin for the 2007 Sydney Royal Easter Show. Brit will not only be judging the Shires, but also the Clydesdales, Percherons and Heavy Harness.

For Shires this is a first. We have been lucky to have had English Shire judges for the past three years but as all of our foundation horses have come from English stock it will be a refreshing change to have an American judge at the Show.

Brit McLin has been involved with Shire Horses for the last 38 years buying his first registered Shire in the seventies. He has been driving Shires since 1968. He and his wife Sharon have been very involved with the American Shire Horse Association and they have both served as President and Sharon also as Secretary for that organisation. Brit is on the English Shire Horse judge's panel and has judged all breeds of heavy horses both in-hand and in-harness throughout the United States. Sharon has a Masters Degree in genetics and both she and Brit run a very successful Shire Horse stud 'Midnight Star Breeders' in Colorado, USA.

To date Australia has yet to import Shire semen or horses for that

matter from the United States, but with new friendships and contacts about to be made with Brit and Sharon McLin it may open the door to broadening our future breeding possibilities.

Another first for Australian Shire horses is the birth of a colt foal through embryo transfer from the Shire mare 'Ingleside Kaitlyn' by 'Luscombe What's Wanted' into a thoroughbred mare. The foal was born on the 17th October 2006. Both the mare and foal are reportedly doing well by equine vet David Searle who was present at the birth. It will be interesting to see how long it takes for the foal to outgrow its surrogate mother. This initiative was instigated by the late Kathryn McKay. She would be very proud of the outcome.

It is also a pleasure to announce the arrival of the beautiful silver horse to be mounted on a timber plinth and presented at the 2007 Sydney Royal Easter Show as the 'Kathryn McKay and Greg Hosa Perpetual Memorial Trophy' and will honour the memory and contribution the couple made to the development of Shire Horses in Australia. Shire Horse Society Australia Inc. is very honoured to have had Kathryn and Greg as founding members and we are proud to have been part of the instigation of this trophy. Thanks go to Ineke Kuiper for her research to discover the silver sculpture worthy

of this trophy. Finally it was found in the UK. The trophy will be on display at 2007 Sydney Royal in the trophy room.

This last year passed without major incident and although there were some deaths especially around foaling season the herd of Shire Horses in Australia has continued to increase. This is truly a testament that our dear Shires are, in size

huge yet in nature docile, patient yet willing to please a caring friend, intelligent yet humble in attitude. They have now become part of the rural landscape bringing much joy to those who chose to love them.

Wishing you all some rainfall and a fruitful breeding season.

Helene Scarf

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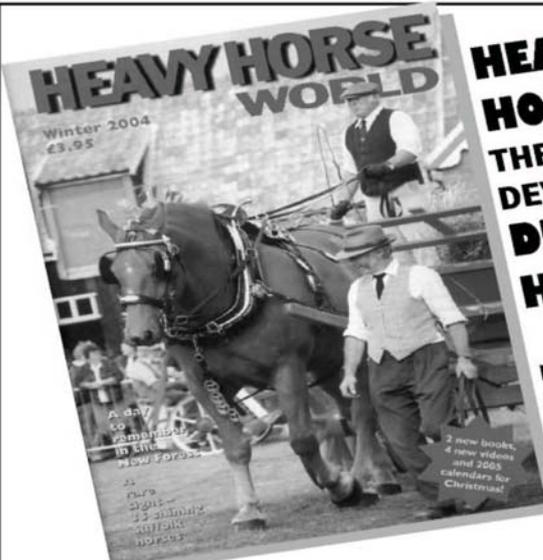
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Noddy 'WINS' at Caulfield Racecourse....

The Spring Carnival - Australia's premier horse racing season - draws racehorses and visitors from around the world. And making his debut at Caulfield Racecourse was one of our Shire Horses, 'Noddy.'

Noddy (Luscombe Nodram) stood a giant among the racehorses at 19.2hh. The grey gelding, only 3 years old, took the crowd of 15,000 visitors, continuous flash photographers and TV cameras all in his massive stride. The talk of the day was who will qualify for the Melbourne Cup and 'Who is that grey giant at the main gate!'

So, the young Shire left his farm and became famous - all in one day. Every racehorse wishes it was that lucky! The racing world, the people and the media loved him, with requests for future appearances rolling in. Noddy's media coverage spread as far as Singapore, Japan, USA, Dubai and beyond. Australia's tallest horse and in fact, nearly the world's tallest, has found a career.



Jane Greenman, owner and a Trainer said, "I always wondered what job to give him and he's found it himself. From the time he arrived at the racetrack he worked the crowd like a movie star. It shows you don't have to be the fastest to win the day."

When asked about his future Jane laughed, "I don't want it to go to his head. He needs to mature more and perhaps pull his weight around the farm for awhile."

The Australian racing community are waiting for him to finish growing so he can be put forward for the world record. Looks like there's less than an inch depending on the shoes. If you wish to see Noddy he will be featured at Equitana 2007 held in Melbourne's Exhibition Centre. Information and photos will be featured on Equitana's new website (coming Dec '06) or by searching the web for 'Noddy shire horse' and other hits.



Helene and Gregory Scarf would like to invite all SHSA members to...

SHSA MEMBER SEMINAR/SOCIAL WEEKEND: BREEDING THE SHIRE HORSE

SATURDAY 13TH & SUNDAY 14TH JANUARY

2007 10.00AM START

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Shires Turn-Out for Burnie Show (Tas)

Burnie Show (in the north of Tasmania) was held on Saturday October 7th. Ross Marriot from Murroka Clydesdale Stud in Victoria was the judge for the day. There were approximately 20 horses forward, of which three were registered Shires. Without considering this seasons foals, there are only four registered shires in Tasmania, so this was a wonderful effort.



Longcopy Charlotte & Southern Cross Boxer

Two of the Shires were entered in the 2-3 year colt class. Ingleside Dancer (owned by Debbie and Steve Buckland) stood first, with Southern Cross Boxer (owned by Alyssia and Steve Turner) second, and a clydesdale colt placed third.



Longcopy Charlotte Ridden

The mare, Longcopy Charolette, owned by John Steers, but leased by Alyssia and Steve Turner, stood first in a line up of 4 mares in the dry mare 4 years and over class.



Alyssia Turner & Southern Cross Boxer

Unfortunately neither the winning colt or mare could place for any of the championships. Longcopy Charolette was also entered in the Fancy Dress and Ridden classes, both of which she won against good competition.

Ed: Thanks to Deb Buckland for the article and both Deb & Alyssia for the photos.



Left: Alyssia & Charlotte in Fancy Dress

Below: Deb Buckland & Ingleside Dancer



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By John ZAWADZKI

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Early Signs Of Joint Disease In Foals

by John Kohnke BVSc RDA

Rapid growth rates, fuelled by a high milk intake during the peak of lactation in a mare from 4-10 weeks after foaling, can result in excessive increase in size and body weight in the nursing foal. A large 500-550 kg mare can produce up to 20 litres of milk a day at the peak of lactation, which can be readily consumed by a "good doing" foal. Milk can be low in essential trace-minerals, including copper, zinc, manganese and selenium that are important for cartilage and subchondral bone development.

A rapidly growing foal will take in enough energy and protein to fuel growth, but if the mare's diet is not supplemented with essential trace-minerals, the heavy body weight can lead to damage to the developing joints. The tendons and joint cartilage are fully developed by 5 months of age in growing foals, and the formation of "weak" cartilage and underlying bone in the fetlocks, knees and hocks, as well as shoulder and stifle joints in grossly overweight foals, can lead to Developmental Orthopaedic Disease or DOD for short. This syndrome includes Osteochondrosis (bone and joint cartilage inflammation and swelling) with joint swelling and bent legs caused by epiphysites in the fetlocks, knees and hocks.

In more severe cases, devitalisation of joint cartilage and subchondral bone due to excess body weight loading the area of bone contact surfaces within the joints, with cartilage death and subchondral bone

collapse, referred to as Osteochondritis dessicans or OCD. This causes severe lameness due to bone to bone contact within the joint resulting from death and erosion of the joint cartilage layer that bears the weight in foals that grow "too big, too early" during the first 5 months of age.

Heavier breeds of horses, including thoroughbreds, quarter horses and many breeds of warmblood foals, are particularly prone to DOD and OCD due in part to rapid growth rate and genetic susceptibility.

The primary lesion of cartilage defect usually involved the fetlock joint or fetlock and knee epiphyseal growth plate cartilage. The signs of early osteochondrosis is often seen as **stiffness in the joints, pain on flexion of the joint and varying degrees of lameness and discomfort.**

Early Signs of Joint Pain in Young Foals

It is important to regularly observe young foals that are growing rapidly on high producing mares for signs of developing joint disease before the joints themselves become enlarged or the growth plate enlargement of epiphysitis is obvious.

You should observe all foals on a daily, or at least twice weekly intervals, particularly good doers that are "too big, too early" for the early signs of developing joint disease.

Signs include:

- ★ More time spent lying down, especially after paddock exercise, than other foals – a sign of joint cartilage pain and joint discomfort.
- ★ Minor joint swelling, in the front fetlocks, stiffness and difficulty in keeping up with the mare or other foals in the paddock.
- ★ Tendency to stand with the front limbs slightly bent, forward of the knee, with a straighter pastern and more upright conformation (often described as “Contracted Tendons”) in the front limbs, because of low grade joint pain resulting from a developing cartilage defect.
- ★ Attempts to lie down instead of standing still after activity, with bending forward at the knees and difficulty in lying down comfortably.
- ★ Progressive development of upright conformation – straight pasterns, ‘up on the fetlocks’, as fetlock osteochondrosis is frequently seen in young foals up to 6 months of age.

Management

Step 1 – Restrict the exercise in a foal exhibiting the early signs – confine to a small yard with its mother. Limiting exercise will reduce the trauma and loading on the devitalized joint surfaces.

Step 2 – Limit the foal’s milk intake by hand stripping the mare 2-3 times daily and discarding the milk will reduce the volume of milk consumed. It is also helpful to reduce the mare’s feed intake by 10% - do not restrict feed or water as the mare is likely to ‘dry up’ in 3-5 days.

Note: It is not beneficial to deny the foal access to nursing, by separating the mare and foal with

drink to consume more milk when reunited with the mare.

Step 3 – Fortify the mare’s feed, and shared feed, with calcium and bone minerals, trace-minerals and vitamins to ensure the foal received adequate for bone and joint development. Although feeding extra essential trace-minerals for joints including copper, zinc and manganese supplementation will help ensure that the milk secreted by the mare will contain normal levels of all the important trace-minerals. However, the only copper concentration will be marginally increased above normal levels in milk by supplementation, but shortfalls of other trace-minerals on an otherwise deficient diet will be corrected.

A product, such as Cell-Grow®, contains calcium, trace-mineral and vitamin

Supplet® pellets to the latest standards to correct low or inadequate levels in the diet.

Step 4 – Consult your farrier or vet for advice on the need to trim hooves to correct front limb deviation.

Step 5 – Monitor the foal’s growth rate, behaviour and comfort when standing and improvement in gait. Consult your vet for advice if necessary.

Step 6 – Usually 3-4 weeks of restricted exercise and a slow down in the growth rate will improve the gait and overcome the primary cartilage defects. Once the foal improves, it can be let out into a larger paddock for short periods to avoid excessive exercise and risk of overload of the joint cartilage and subchondral bone.

Ed - You can see John at the Seminar, as well as Karim who has contributed several previous articles

Win For Members on Stallion Inspections

One of the factors which led to the formation of the SHSA was the intention of the UK Shire Horse Society to change our current stallion inspection process. They wanted Australian colt owners to pay additional costs for two English qualified Australian judges to travel the country and inspect colts. This would be AS WELL AS paying for the vet inspections as we do currently. We (the SHSA) lobbied the Shire Horse Society in England personally on this matter and made three main points.

We insisted that in such a large country as ours, paying for two judges to travel to inspect colts, would be cost prohibitive to Shire Horse owners and therefore would be detrimental to the best interests of the breed in Australia.

Secondly, we argued that the few English qualified judges in Australia owned imported stallions and/or imported semen, and would have a pecuniary interest in having the power to decide whether Australian bred colts were allowed to be registered as breeding stallions.

Finally, we requested that if the Society proceeded with this change, we should have the same opportunities as the English breeders, that being they pay a fee of £100GBP (approx \$250) and this covers the 2 appointed English judges

as well as the vet inspection. The UK Society subsidises the rest of the costs.

We are extremely pleased to announce that we have heard from England that, in response to our presentations, the Shire Horse Society has left the system for Australia unchanged, except that now photos of the colt will be sent to the UK along with the vet's report.

Australian Shire Horse owners are indebted to Kathryn McKay, now deceased, who went in to bat for us with the UK Shire Horse Society on this issue. Thank you Kathryn!

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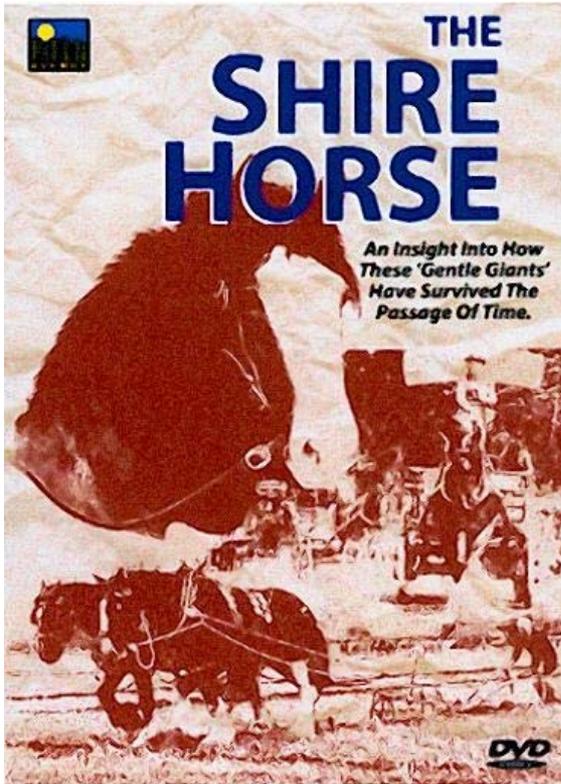
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Ed - we have this on video and it is very interesting

Shire Horse Society Australia Inc Official Panel of Judges

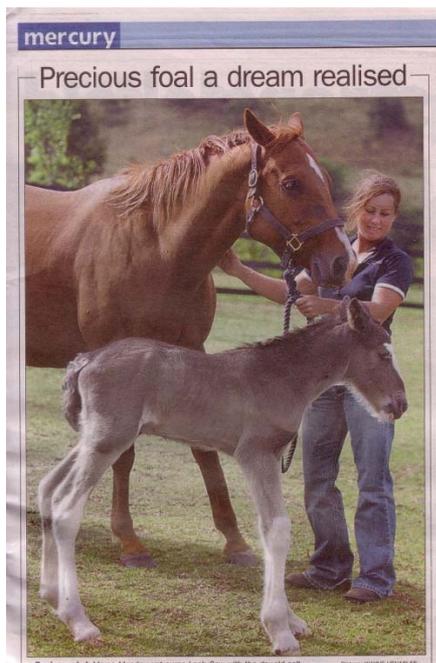
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Ian Stewart-Koster	Highgrove Oakey-Cooyar Road Nutgrove Via Peranga Qld 4352	07 46928292

Ed: All judges are internationally qualified with experience and interest in Shire Horses. They are helping to develop an Australian Shire Judging Accreditation Scheme, as well as happy to share their knowledge of Shires at your local show. Please pass these contact details on to your show societies to help them find experienced judges.

Mt Kembla Festival Success

The SHSA supported the Mt Kembla festival in October – organised by members Liz Williams & Karen Mitchell. It was a fantastic day – everybody had great fun. The street parade was a great success with several horses in harness (thanks Bob & Mandy) a bullock team and the fabulous

'Postie Bike Precision Drive' which has to be seen to be believed. Thanks to Carina, Jasmine and Reece who worked hard all day selling raffle tickets, raising over \$300 for the Memorial Trophy.



mercury

Precious foal a dream realised

Picture: Meroo Meadow vet nurse Lesh Gow with the day-old colt. Picture: WENNE MENDELIS



Carina, Reece & Jasmine in the SHSA booth

Embryo Transfer Foal Born

Kathryn & Gregs final legacy to the Shire Horse world – story in the Illawarra Mercury this week.

By ANDREW DRUMMOND

KATHRYN McKay will never see her most treasured shire horse trophy - a special silver and white foal born this week.

Ms McKay and her husband Greg Hosa were murdered near Nowra in January and 10 months later the pair's dream to use science and technology to breed shire horses has come true.

In an Australian first, at about 4am on Wednesday at Meroo Meadow a shire colt weighing 54kg was born to a surrogate mother.

"Kathryn's idea was to increase the shire (horse) population in Australia and seeing as there are actually very few shire mares around and that she wanted to be able to keep showing the mares she had, she turned to embryonic transfer," equine vet David Searle said.

"Kathryn's shire mare was artificially inseminated and seven days later the egg was

taken from the mother and put in the surrogate mother. Eleven months and 11 days later she foaled."

Embryonic transfer is a common method of horse breeding but it has never been used with the shire breed.

"For me it's a great buzz ... it's the first time it has been done in Australia," Dr Searle said.

"I'm just disappointed that Kathryn's not here to see it. I was thinking that if this birth was not successful we may never have the chance to do it again - I'm so glad it went so well."

Dr Searle said that the foal and surrogate mother bonded immediately.

"She is a maiden mare ... she's never had a foal before," Dr Searle said. "But she has just been a perfect mother - not too over protective but caring and let him (the foal) feed straight away."

News of the as yet unnamed foal has spread quickly through

shire horse circles and Dr Searle expects a crowd of visitors to see the newborn.

"All the shire people are over the moon about it," he said.

"They may be surprised because he is a smallish shire foal but that's because in horses the size of the womb regulates the size of the baby quite a lot."

"In three or four months he will be bigger than (the surrogate mother)."

Shire horses are a breed of draft horse known for their size and strength, and were commonly used to tow carts or machinery.

Ms McKay and Mr Hosa were founding members of the Australian Shire Horse Society. A memorial trophy in their names will be presented for the first time at next year's Sydney Royal Easter Show.

Legal proceedings against five people charged in relation to the pair's murder continue later this month.

Society Services

Ed: Here are some useful bits of information for you. The SHSA (with some help from the SHS in England) are providing the following services to help out members

Website Advertising

The Shire Horse Society Australia offers stud advertising for members only on our very successful website at a generous price. For just \$200 per year you can have a full page promoting your stud on the website with up to 5 photos on the page. We already experience many hits on the web site and get numerous enquiries. Please visit the website at www.shirehorsesociety.com.au to see for yourself. If you are interested in participating, contact our President, Helene Scarf for more information. (See committee contact list.)

Registrations

Shire Horse Society Australia is now able to provide the DNA bags and the identification forms for the registration of foals with the Shire Horse Society in England. This saves members having to contact England for these items. If you require any of these, contact our Vice President, Helen Kuiper. (See committee contact list.)

Breeding Information

Did you know that the Shire Horse Society in England offers a service to members where you can request the pedigree of registered Shires and also a progeny list for registered Shire stallions? They will print it out and post it to you. For more information contact the Shire Horse Society.

Spring is in the air – 2006 Shire Foals...



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