



SHIRE HORSE SOCIETY AUSTRALIA

INCORPORATED

Forging the future of the Shire Horse in Australia

AUGUST 2008
OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER



*SHSA Committee member Jane Greenman's Shire Horse
Luscombe Nodram
The world's tallest horse at 20.1hh & mascot of Equitana 2008*

PATRON:
Mr Rob Vickery

www.shirehorsesociety.com.au



Shire Horse Society Australia Incorporated

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President's Report

Today is August 1st which is the horse's birthday. So big birthday wishes to all of your horses.

It is also very notable as today is the official launching date for 'The Australian Shire Horse Stud Book'.

This may seem like a small step in the horsy scheme of things but it's a giant leap in helping to preserve the Shire horse breed in Australia which is considered a rare breed. This is another step in Shire Horse Society's Australia's mission in 'Forging the future of the Shire Horse in Australia'.

The Society is committed to working closely with its members and assisting in any way with all of your general enquires and questions about registrations. Horse owners can continue to register their horses in England if they choose to, however, you will be able to take up our offer for dual registration at absolutely no cost in the initial stages, as a promotional offer. You will receive a beautiful Australian Registration Certificate which comes in its own self supporting show case for free.

The next exciting event on the Shire Horse Society's calendar is our major fundraiser dinner and auction on the last weekend of September in Port Kembla. We need to raise money to fund our newly acquired state of the art Stud Book programme from America and for the Stud Book running costs.

Shire Horse Society Australia would personally like to thank

Lizzy Williams for donating her restaurant Romeo's as the venue for this event. It's not too late to donate a prize, no prize is too small as gift baskets containing lots of small prizes will be made up and auctioned off at the dinner. Thank you to all of you who have already donated prizes. The Society appreciates the work of its committee and sub-committee members for all of their hard work so far in finding prizes.

Lastly we have received an affirmative response from Ross Carbery who is a renowned champion heavy horse and harness exhibitor. Ross will be conducting the harness sessions at our annual Shire Horse Society's seminar in January 2009. Ross is also on our judge's panel and he has had a lifetime of experience judging, breeding and exhibiting heavy horses. He is very well respected in the horse industry in Australia and overseas.

Please consider donating a prize for our fund raiser and come along for a great night of entertainment and delicious Italian Cuisine.

Helene Scarf

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The Australian Shire Horse Stud Book

Open for registrations!

We are excited to announce that the Australian Shire Horse Stud Book is now open for registrations!

Our mission is to provide a convenient, friendly service for Australian Shire owners to encourage the breeding of our rare horses in Australia.

There is no requirement to be a member of the SHSA in order to register with the stud book, nor is there a penalty fee for non-members.

Visit our web site www.shirehorsesociety.com.au and follow the link to Stud Book to find all the information and forms that you will need. If you have any queries there is an enquiry form which goes to our Registrar Deb Buckland.

Last year the Royal Agricultural Societies of NSW and Victoria agreed to recognise our stud book. This means that you can show your Australian registered horses at both Royal shows and local shows. Please let us know if you would like to show Australian registered horses at other Royals – we are happy to apply for recognition on your behalf.

The RAS have stringent requirements for the recognition of stud books, and it is a tribute to the hard work and effort that your committee has put in to develop such a professional stud book that meets these standards.

In line with a RAS request, we have introduced micro chipping for all foals in the breeding register born after 1st August 2008.

At this point, non-breeding horses, and horses born prior to this season are not required to be chipped, but we do recommend it. The Sydney Royal Easter Show will no longer accept entries from non-chipped horses and it is strongly recommended by the Departments of Primary Industries.

As well as making horse identification much easier and more accurate, it is also good insurance against theft and may be the only way of proving ownership if necessary.

Opening offer - Free new & dual registrations

If your horse is already registered with the Shire Horse Society (UK), you can dual register in our stud book for FREE. Simply send in a photocopy of your horses' passport, along with the appropriate form (available on the website) and we will register your horse and send you your new Australian registration certificate.

This is an introductory offer only, so get in quick!

Thanks to Andrew Gunter of ITA who worked so hard developing our forms and getting all the studbook information up the SHSA website

SHSA 2008 Fundraising Dinner – Saturday 27 May, 2008

Romeo's Restaurant, Port Kembla

Tickets are only \$40 and for this you get an excellent Italian banquet dinner.

Items already donated include a weekend getaway Kangaroo Valley, with accommodation, meals and activities, as well as a weekend ski trip to PerisherBlue!

This will be our major fundraising event for the year, so please support us in any way you can. Donations for auction items – no matter how small – are very welcome.

Contact Helen Kuiper for more information, tickets or donations

2009 SHSA Seminar

Lock in the dates – 10-11 January

At the last AGM, members requested we organise a harness driving component for our next seminar.

Well, ask and you shall receive – we have tee-ed up Ross Carbery cover this topic. Ross has many years of experience and show success in heavy horse harness. He has been exhibiting at Sydney Royal since 1981 and has enjoyed success in both the led and harness classes driving everything up to four in hand.

He has been an official heavy horse judge since 1985 and is on the Percheron, Clydesdale and Shire judging panels. We are really excited that Ross has agreed to speak at the seminar, and he hopes to bring up some quiet horses for a 'hands on' component.

Ross achieved great results at this year's Sydney Royal Easter Show in the heavy harness classes. Although there were no led heavy horse classes this year due to the equine influenza outbreak, Trade Harness was included in the reduced program

Ross showed Carbery Estate Ranger –

a $\frac{3}{4}$ Belgian sired by Ross' imported Belgian stallion – in the Medium Delivery Horse classes. Ranger went on win Champion Delivery Horse which is fiercely contested and a great achievement.

Ross also won the Pair turnout, with his Percherons.

"These horses have been bred in Australia from my imported bloodlines, and they have never been defeated," Ross said.

"The pairs vehicle originated in Victoria and I have completely rebuilt and painted it."

For the Delivery Horse Classes, Ross uses American Show Carts, which have been used in the USA for over 100 years but are still uncommon here.

"These light weight carts enable the horse to be shown to it's full potential," Ross said. His results this year bear witness to that.

Ed: Many thanks to Gregory and Helene Scarf, who have again invited us to their fabulous property, The Cedars, for the weekend.

The Clydesdale

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SHIRES Today

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Equine Laminitis – Current Concepts

Republished courtesy of RIRDC. Author: Chris Pollitt
For the full report, visit the RIRDC website: www.rirdc.gov.au

Laminitis (or founder) is the second biggest killer of all horse breeds and the most serious disease of the equine foot. It causes pathological changes in anatomy that lead to long lasting, crippling changes in function.

Due to its devastating nature and lack of effective therapies, equine laminitis has been a priority for research funding. Equine Laminitis – Current Concepts is the culmination of nine years of research projects aimed at providing a better understanding of laminitis and developing more successful treatments for horses suffering from the disease.

What is laminitis?

Laminitis is the failure of the distal phalanx (also coffin or pedal bone) to remain attached to the lamellae that line the inside of the hoof. Specialist intervention is required in the treatment of laminitis, but the response to therapy can be unpredictable.

For care-givers, laminitis is the source of much disappointment and frustration as many horses and ponies endure prolonged suffering and yet still face euthanasia when existing treatment options fail.

Symptoms

Early clinical signs of laminitis include shifting weight from one foot to the other, high hoof temperature for a prolonged time and bounding pulses in the digital arteries. As the deterioration progresses, foot pain increases and the stance and gait of the horse will alter, with the forefeet placed well forward so that the heels are loaded more than the toes.

What causes laminitis?

Laminitis can result from a variety of seemingly unrelated pathological events occurring

elsewhere in the body. Most often, it involves pathology of the gastrointestinal tract, such as with grass and grain founder, but colic and diarrhoea can also precipitate laminitis. Non gastrointestinal causes such as retained placenta, septic metritis, pneumonia/pleuritis, septicaemia and endotoxemia can also cause laminitis. Horses that severely 'tie up' may also develop laminitis for reasons that are currently unexplained. Forms include:

Grass founder

Ponies, and occasionally horses, will develop laminitis while grazing on pasture. This is caused by the level of a soluble sugar, fructan, which can reach very high concentrations in the stem of grass. When consumed, fructan is rapidly fermented by hindgut micro-organisms, triggering a gastrointestinal disturbance that somehow leads to laminitis.

This form of laminitis may be controlled with the use of the antibiotic virginiamycin (Founderguard, Virbac Australia), which knocks out the hindgut bacteria that causes the fermentation. When given to grass fed ponies four days ahead of access to risky pasture, Founderguard prevents laminitis in situation where the risk is normally high.



The laminitis stance

Grain founder

Grain founder occurs following the consumption of excessive amounts of grain, either from accidental access by the horse, or due to a dietary increase by its keeper. Although the amount of grain required to induce laminitis varies, the likelihood of laminitis following grain consumption is linked to the starch content of the grain, the amount which passed undigested to the hindgut and the rate at which the undigested carbohydrate is fermented. Grains such as wheat, sorghum, corn and barley are considered to be most dangerous, as is gorging on bread.

Equine metabolic syndrome

The term equine metabolic syndrome refers to horses with a history of laminitis, insulin resistance, cresty neck and increased adipose tissue* deposits in the wither and dorsal area of the back. Insulin toxicity (hyperinsulinaemia) appears to be a key factor in triggering equine laminitis. Horses and ponies at risk of laminitis should be blood tested for the early detection of hyperinsulinaemia.

Equine Cushing's disease

Older horses and ponies sometimes develop a problem with their pituitary gland, which enlarges and becomes dysfunctional, resulting in Equine Cushing's disease. The hormone imbalance creates insulin resistance that disturbs hoof metabolism promoting an insidious, relentlessly developing chronic laminitis. Symptoms include a coat that grows unnaturally long and is not shed at the usual times, a pot belly and wasted top line, bulging supraorbital fat and a susceptibility to infections and laminitis.

The laminitis developed by animals with Cushing's disease is usually difficult to treat; however promising results have been obtained using pergolide mesylate (Permax), a drug registered for human use.

Hyperlipaemia

This is a state of rapidly occurring negative energy balance, often precipitated by some form of stress.

Supporting limb laminitis

Laminitis in a single hoof can occur whenever a horse's limb is required to bear weight unilaterally for prolonged periods of time. This can occur when an injury (bone or joint fracture) or disease process (septic arthritis) in the contra lateral limb is so painful that weight bearing is impossible for two to three days.

This form of laminitis may be prevented if the supporting limb is firmly wrapped in an elastic support bandage and shod with an effective support shoe. The horse should be provided with a deep bed of wood shavings or sand. The injured limb should be treated promptly and fitted with a cast or splint so that it can begin to take its share of weight bearing. Pain should be controlled with analgesics for the same reason.

Medical Therapy

When the laminitis process is triggered there is virtually nothing, by way of drug therapy, that will stop its relentless progress.

Inflammation and foot pain can be reduced with the use of a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID), like phenylbutazone*. However the effect is only palliative and will not stop the development of laminitis. When NSAIDs are in use, the horse should be confined to a stall with deep bedding.

Since laminitis usually develops as a sequel to disease, it is of paramount importance that the primary disease is treated urgently and effectively. Fluid and electrolytes, antibiotics and NSAIDs should be administered as required.

Cryotherapy is a proven preventative for horses at risk of developing laminitis. The resilience of the equine

distal limb to prolonged, extreme cold can be harnessed to successfully prevent the disease. Standing horses with their limbs in tubs or boots of ice and water is used clinically on horses at risk of developing laminitis.

Effective mechanical support, using frog/sole support devices, should be provided early to a horse developing laminitis to improve the outcome of the disease. Frog/sole support devices can be taped to the foot to temporarily support the distal phalanx until digital support shoes are applied.

There are a number of effective devices for providing mechanical support, including the heart-bar shoe, wedges, the Steward Clog and the Equine Digital Support System. A supportive sole cast, made using a two-part silicone based impression material, provides additional support to the back part of the foot.

Cooperative liaison between veterinarian and farrier is required for effective application of mechanical support options.

Prognosis and future directions

Recovery from laminitis is unpredictable, but is generally directly proportional to the extent of displacement of the distal phalanx and the resultant lamellar pathology that occurs.

The return to a normal looking hoof takes time and prolonged aftercare will often be required. Few horses return to their former athletic soundness after chronic laminitis.

Research is continuing into discovering the mechanism by which the basement membrane and lamellae separate, because prevention of this terrible disease represents a better option than trying to repair the gross anatomical dislocations once they have occurred.

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Eulogy – Cedars Blossum 145837

Dec 1994 – 10 June 2008



Blossum was fourteen years old and had given birth on 27 December 2007 to the last of three filly foals. She was the closest mare I'd ever become friends with.

I was there at her birth and then four days later her mother Peplow Lady Christina died. When I found her, little Blossum was sucking her teats, not knowing that her mother was dead.

I started to panic, as in those days Greg and I had to go back to Sydney during the week and I didn't know what to do with my new orphan foal. We stumbled across an angel that day when we rang the local WIRES lady Helen George. She had never reared a foal before but was willing to give it a go.

I rode on the back of Greg's ute holding Blossum with my arms stretched around her grasping the wire netting at the front of the tray hoping she wouldn't do anything stupid and fall off.

We made it to Helen George's place where she immediately put together a feed of Wombaroo powdered milk made especially for horses. She was so hungry she didn't need to be taught how to drink out of a bucket and practically inhaled the milk out of sheer hunger and necessity.

Blossum grew up to become a beautiful and friendly horse. She won the top prize at the 2004 Sydney Royal

Easter Show to become the Best Shire Exhibit.

On 9 March this year Blossum went down and couldn't get up. Greg had to pick her up with the tractor using the sling we use for cattle. After several vet visits, blood tests and horse chiropractor visits over the next few months, we couldn't put a finger on exactly what the problem was. Blossum was going down about once every nine days and she needed to be picked up by the tractor. This happened eleven times. We treated Blossum with Pentosan (to treat arthritis) weekly at first then fortnightly then three weekly, bute twice a day, and, for good measure, added apple cider vinegar to her two feeds a day.

On the day we had to put her down, I was with her from late morning until her death at 4.15pm. She had her breakfast around 8.30am and trotted around the corner to her feed. A very welcome sight! When I discovered she was down later that morning I called Greg to get her up, but the tractor was out of service.

At 3pm the cold hard reality struck me that I might have to call the vet to euthanize Blossum. I realised that I had been delaying this decision for three months because I wanted to give her the best possible chance.



*Best Shire Exhibit
Sydney Royal Easter Show 2004*

She struggled the whole time I was with her trying to get up until she was fully exhausted and flopped back onto the ground groaning. She showed no improvement in strength or mobility in being able to get up since she started on the medication.

The hard part of making this decision was that once we got Blossum on her feet she seemed to be just fine. She had difficulty walking down hill and cantering was completely out of the question but she could manage a slightly uncoordinated trot. After to

speaking to three different vets I have come to the conclusion that she must have had some minor spinal damage giving birth to such a big foal that resulted in some nerve damage.

She was my best and most favorite mare of all time and I will miss her so very much. She will have a memorial at the Cedars and I'll never sell her three foals. They will have the security of living their whole lives at The Cedars with the same love and care we gave to their dear and darling mother.

Classifieds

Sydney Regional APSB Society Show

Sunday August 17, 2008

Luddenham Showground

Now including Shire Horse classes:

Led Stallion or Colt

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Led Gelding

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Download the program at:

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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. Each page is allocated a direct email enquiry link. 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.

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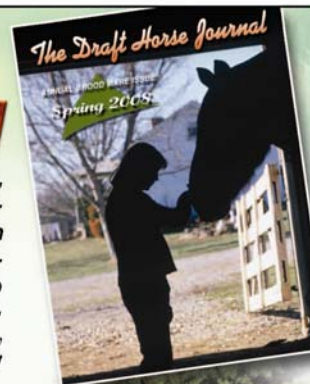
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07 5599-4463 or andrewg@ita.com.au

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Full page x 4 issues - \$100 ½ page x 4 issues - \$50 ¼ page x 4 issues - \$25

The Classifieds and Service listings are free to all SHSA members.

Ed: Membership. SHSA welcomes new members for both full and associate membership. Please go to

www.shirehorsesociety.com.au to request a membership form if you know anyone who wants to join.

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