



# SHIRE HORSE SOCIETY AUSTRALIA

INCORPORATED

*Forging the future of the Shire Horse in Australia*

## DECEMBER 2005

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER



*Helene Scarf and the famous Archie, Australia's tallest Horse celebrating Horses Birthday with Beryl, Amanda and Kelvin Taylor at The Cedars, Kangaroo Valley.*

**PATRON:**

Mr Rob Vickery President Royal Agricultural Society of New South Wales

**[www.shirehorsesociety.com.au](http://www.shirehorsesociety.com.au)**

# SHSA Members

## NEWS

**Congratulations** to our President Helene Scarf who completed the New York Marathon last month. Helene's official time was 4hours and 42 minutes, but it took her 4 mins to cross the start line, so her net time was 4.38. AND she stopped for 2 photo sessions during the race! Way to go Helene!



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If you have any information, photos, articles, requests or comments regarding the newsletter, please contact the editor. All contributions are welcome!  
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## Shire Horse Society Australia Incorporated

[www.shirehorsesociety.com.au](http://www.shirehorsesociety.com.au)

### President's Report

Time is racing away and I am very glad to report that this is our fifth newsletter. Best wishes to the foals born and yet to be born for this season. It is hard work and a long wait for mares and breeders and to finally get a healthy foal on the ground is a blessing.

Our Society (SHS Aust Inc.) instigated some very positive changes to the way in which stallions will be inspected in countries outside the U.K. This will enable all stallions the benefit of being inspected in the future by the full English Shire Horse Society panel of judges. A brief has been prepared on this topic and is included later in this issue.

The seminar planned in January 2006 at Kangaroo Valley is creating a lot of interest. All members are invited and the cost is free and catering has been sponsored by a few of our members. The seminar will include informative talks and hands on demonstrations given by horse industry leading professionals. Looking forward to seeing you there and meeting new members whom I'm pleased to say continue to join us with abundant enthusiasm.

I wish you and your families and especially all of your horses warmest Seasons Greetings.

*Helene Scarf*

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*Ed - you might remember from past newsletters the previous instalments of Jane and Noddy's education. Jane has been out of action since March, but now she is back and here is her latest news...*

## Noddy's Holiday is over....

Since the Sydney Royal, Noddy has spent months sunbaking and eating while watching me limp past his paddock. I've not been allowed to handle him or any horse (surgeon's orders) until all my bones have grown back over the metal plates. Just a few weeks ago, I was permitted to ride on the proviso that I wear various body braces when handling any animals in future.

It came as a blow to learn that I'll never be the same again and my Dressage future is now graded 'handicapped'. But don't get the violins out just yet because it spurred me on to new things.

During a heart-to-heart I had told Noddy he was now old enough for a part-time job and, guess what, he got one ... as lead pony at the racetrack! He even went to camp at Mark's place for some pre-training work and, just like the Leyland brothers, he's been ridden all over the Warragul countryside.

His first day on the job arrived, so like all good mothers, I was prepared. I put on my brace, fitted Noddy to his halter, hooked up the Cruiser's float ... and headed for the track.

Meanwhile, to keep 'my boy' company at the racetrack, I've been busy doing what up and coming Racehorse trainers do – standing at the Racecourse at 4 in morning (the only female) with a stopwatch in

hand pretending to know what I'm doing.

But at least I've worked out that Noddy will not make a racehorse – his speed in the canter over 5 furlongs is terrible, so I had to find a stable of 'specially designed' horses and, yes, Roger knows about the new additions this time!!

Next instalment ... Shire  
Accidentally Wins Caulfield Cup!!

Jane Greenman  
Victorian Branch



**Mark Marriott riding Noddy (2yr old, 19hh) on his first day back in work**

## Stallion Inspection Update

It's a year ago now since Australian Shire owners were thrown into uproar regarding the stallion inspection issue. The Shire Horse Society was planning to use Australian Shire judges, plus the vet, to inspect colts in Australia for full registration, instead of the existing system of only using the vet. Costs of the expenses of the judges, travelling to perform the inspections, were to be born exclusively by the colt owner.

The SHSA had some serious concerns about this proposal. One was that the new scheme would impose unfair costs on Australian Shire colt owners, especially with the distances in our country. Secondly, as there are only two English qualified judges in Australia, both breeders themselves, we had some serious concerns about possible conflict of interest and impartiality issues. Therefore we asked the Society in England to allow our representative to make a presentation to them on the issue, to which they agreed.

Ineke Kuiper made the presentation to the Shire Horse Society as our delegate, outlining our concerns. We suggested that the vet system had worked very well to date, and that they could request photos or a video, to be sent to England, if they were concerned about type.

We later submitted a sample video showing both the features of the

horse and a work out for further consideration by the Shire Horse Society. This was very well received by the Society who sent us a letter thanking us for our efforts.

We are waiting for official confirmation from England of their final decision on this matter, however the following article was printed in the latest issue of the Heavy Horse World....

□ The Shire Horse Society is hoping to change and improve the way it carries out stallion inspections abroad. Currently the society's inspection team, accompanied by local vets, visits colts abroad to decide on studbook registrations: in some cases judges undertaking duties at summer shows double as stallion inspectors. To reduce cost and standardise the inspections worldwide the society is now considering delegating this duty to local equine vets who would receive instruction in the society's breeding criteria and complete a detailed form for consideration by the society's appropriate committees. High quality digital images, including video, would be taken of the animal concerned to assist the process. Society secretary Andrew Mercer said the society hoped this would make the process more streamlined and affordable.

## 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](http://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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# FOALING

*By Karim Kooros (B Vet Med)*

## LENGTH OF THE PREGNANCY

The duration of pregnancy is very variable and can range between 305-400 days, although the usual length is between 335-342 days. One of the most common concerns for clients is mares going over their due date. Remember they can go up to 400 days and still be ok.

## SIGNS OF IMPEDING BIRTH

The signs can be very variable, but the most consistent sign is the filling up of the udder and teats with milk/colostrum, commonly known as “bagging up”. This can start a couple of weeks before birth. 24-48 hours prior to the foaling, dry, waxy colostrum appears on the teats (“Waxing up”). Other signs include lengthening of the vulva and loosening of muscles towards the back of the rump.

Labour is divided into three stages.

### **Stage 1**

This stage is of variable length and can start up to 4-5 hours before the birth. The uterus starts to contract and position the foal in preparation for birth. The mare becomes uncomfortable and restless and may start to sweat. She will walk around with her tail raised, may

urinate frequently, and may seem restless getting up and down constantly.

Eventually the allantochorion ruptures (water breaks) and this marks the start of stage two of labour.

### **Stage 2**

This stage involves active forceful straining and the foal is usually born in 20 minutes. The mare may lie down and strain for a few minutes and then get up and change position or rest. If there is active forceful straining for more than 20-30 minutes there may be a problem and veterinary assistance should be obtained. It is important that the foal is positioned with its two front feet first followed by the nose. If this is not observed a vet needs to be contacted.

Once the foal is born let the umbilical cord break on its own accord and let the mare rest until she is ready to get up.



### Stage 3

The placenta should be expelled within 3 hours. If it does not veterinary assistance will be needed as the mare may have a retained membrane, which can be quite harmful for your mare. You should examine the placenta by spreading it out to ensure it is intact. Note: remembering that there will

be a hole from the opening of the sack to allow the foal out.

### The Foal

The foal should normally stand within one hour and start suckling the mare within 2 hours. If it takes more than 2 hours to stand or longer than 3-4 hours to suckle contact your vet immediately.

## Classifieds

### For Sale

Spring cart in good condition, recently restored, used in local shows. Suit 17+hand horse (used for a shire) \$3000.00

Champagne Shires are breeders of registered Shires and Shire sport horses, foals available for sale Contact Kathryn McKay 02 4421 5031 or 0411 248 031

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*PUBLISHED QUARTERLY*

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# Tasmania - Return of the Shires

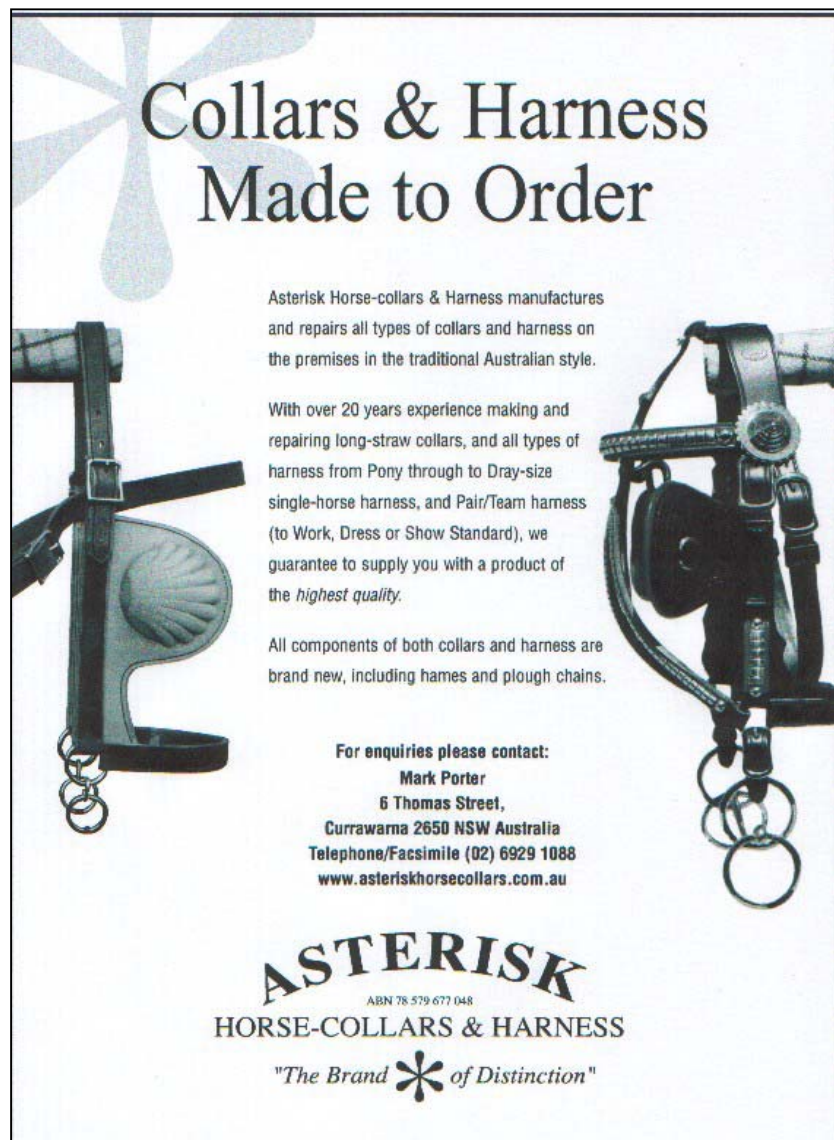
Geoffrey Blainey, in his book 'Black Kettle and Full Moon Daily Life in a Vanished Australia' (2003) states: "It is a sign of the strong but now forgotten regionalism that different breeds of draught horses were favoured in different areas. For years the Suffolk Punch was the favourite in the Hunter Valley, **the Shire Horse in Tasmania** and the heavy Schleswig horse on South Australian farms."

Tasmania is a small State, closely settled and had a cool climate, just like England. There were also a large number of English settlers there, as against the mix of Scottish and Irish elsewhere. This no doubt accounts for the popularity of the Shire in that State. It was by far the biggest Shire breeding State in proportion to it's size.

Society member, Tim Peel, has spoken to some of the old Victorian Clydesdale breeders over the last 30 years, whose fathers bred Shires. "They remembered their fathers going to Tasmania to purchase Shire stallions," Tim recalls. He added that although Shires were very popular around the 1890's and early 1900's, they had mostly died out in the 1920's. However some studs kept the

pure bred Shires going until the 1960's or so. Tim believes that there would be descendants of these horses in Tasmania today.

With such an interesting and rich history with Shire Horses, it is exciting to see some registered Shires being imported into Tasmania in the last 18 months. Max Marriott judged two Shires, Longcopy Charlotte and Ingleside Dancer, at Deloraine Agricultural Show in Tasmania recently and from now on the numbers can only grow.



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## Shire Horses on TV!

**Creature Feature**, a children's show on the ABC that reports on different animals filmed a show on Shire Horses at Helene Scarf's property at Kangaroo Valley in August. Helene, along with Amanda & Beryl Taylor and Ineke and Helen Kuiper helped the ABC film the special which will feature mares and foals, driving, showing and plaiting demonstrations. The episode is expected to go to air in January or February. Keep an eye on the 'News' section of the SHSA website, [www.shirehorsesociety.com.au](http://www.shirehorsesociety.com.au), where we will post the date it will go to air, when we are notified.



Above Ineke & the director during the plaiting demonstration.



Left The film crew shooting the showing scene.

## Retirement Homes

Through the SHSA website – [www.shirehorsesociety.com.au](http://www.shirehorsesociety.com.au) – we have received two very kind offers of retirement homes for aged Shire Horses. If you have a horse that is getting on and in need of a good home, please contact either Stephen or Diane (details listed right) for further information.

Stephen Tunley  
[stephen.tunley@jfaqua.com.au](mailto:stephen.tunley@jfaqua.com.au)

Property details at  
[www.kumbaingirretreat.com.au](http://www.kumbaingirretreat.com.au)

or  
Diane Mullaney  
8 Browns Road, Montrose Vic 3765  
0425 776 220  
or 03 9728 2756

# Free Service Directory

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*Ed: Membership. SHSA welcomes new members for both full and associate membership. Please go to [www.shirehorsesociety.com.au](http://www.shirehorsesociety.com.au) to download a membership form if you know anyone who wants to join.*

## SHSA Newsletter Advertising Rates

Full page x 4 issues \$100

½ page x 4 issues \$50

¼ page x 4 issues \$25

***The Classifieds and Service Directory are free to all SHSA members.***

If you are interested in advertising in the newsletter, please contact the Editor, Ineke Kuiper at [ine\\_kuiper@hotmail.com](mailto:ine_kuiper@hotmail.com) or 0408 669 638

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