



*Welcome to this special bumper edition of the Queensland Branch Newsletter.
We take a look back over the last 10 months at what our Branch, its members and friends
have been up to. We also have a 2019 Ekka Special supplement to compliment this issue.
Please enjoy...*



It's always a difficult to decide just what to use as the front cover of the newsletter and over the last few months I have decided – and changed my mind – several times. Looking through the photos from our July training day I came across this collage created by Sharyn Hine from photos she took during the day. I decided that this really epitomised what the Branch is all about – members, friends and newcomers all out there enjoying the horses; sharing knowledge, learning new skills, making friends and above all, having fun. And at the centre of it all... the beautiful, ever-patient Clydesdale Horse.

From the Editor...

Once again, my apologies for the long gap between newsletters. I have started this edition so many times over the past 6 months but it seems every time I get into it something else happens to demand my time.

Like so many of you, the last few months of 2019 was a matter of surviving the drought. Paddocks depressingly bare, the price of hay financially crippling and sourcing enough to keep our horses fed throughout it became increasingly challenging. However, like all droughts throughout history, it finally broke (for us in mid-January) and the forecasts are now hopeful that at least average rainfall will bless us for the rest of the year.

I need not mention that Covid-19 has changed everyone's plans – and life – for 2020 and possibly beyond. New terminology like 'social distancing', 'self-isolation', 'flattening the curve' and 'contact tracing' have entered our general conversation, and 'quarantine' was something previously imposed on imported animals, not people. (We won't even mention toilet paper...) However, it does not hurt to remember that while we are all travelling through this Covid-19 journey together, we are in different vessels, taking different routes. Some will have a far more difficult – even tragic – journey than others. A little kindness, compassion and consideration goes a long way in challenging times such as these.

Here at Glengallan, life is not altered greatly (if you don't count our income being slashed). We had seven foals last season – all of them fillies – something previously unheard for us. Weaning of foals 3 & 4 is just completed which is never our favourite job but all went smoothly. We should be in our peak show season but with everything cancelled we are now enjoying more time with the youngsters which is a real bonus.

Thank you to the people who have contributed in any way to this edition – it is your newsletter and the more contributors we have the more inclusive it becomes. We have a rather overdue 'Ekka Special' but with no Royal Qld Show this year we have taken an in-depth look at 2019 and just how the Clydesdale is involved at the Ekka – it's far more than just the Sunday ring events where unfortunately, numbers have been steadily dwindling for years.

I trust you will enjoy this almost double edition... grab a cuppa, put your feet up and immerse yourself in Clydesdales for a while.

Happy reading...

Clare

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Clydesdales Queensland – CCHS Qld Branch

<https://www.facebook.com/ClydesdalesQueensland/>

Commonwealth Clydesdale Horse Society Australia

<https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthClydesdaleHorseSocietyAustralia/>

From the President's Desk

Scottish folk singer-songwriter Eric Bogle who emigrated to Australia in 1969, penned these most appropriate lyrics of the song 'Now I'm Easy' in 1980:

*For nearly sixty years, I've been a Cocky,
Of droughts and fires and floods I've lived through plenty
This country's dust and mud have seen my tears and blood
But it's nearly over now, and now I'm easy...*



while Dorothea Mackellar similarly captured the subject when she wrote 'My Country' in 1904

*I love a sunburnt country, A land of sweeping plains,
Of ragged mountain ranges, Of droughts and flooding rains.
Core of my heart, my country! Land of the rainbow gold,
For flood and fire and famine She pays us back threefold...*

Both are terrific pieces of poetry and worth reading fully. Yet each time we experience the appalling droughts and fires and floods which get hurled upon us in this wide brown land, it is all too easy to think we are the first to undergo such misery. We tend forget all too quickly that it has almost always been that way with these treacherous climatic cycles.

But those two writers also hadn't come across Covid-19 either!

What a year it has been-and no one could have predicted the national quarantine state we have found ourselves in, after February's brief reprieve for some, from the drought and fires. Any members who were able to retain their Clydesdales, their bank balances and also their sanity during the feed and water scarcity, deserved to be really congratulated: **GOOD on you!**

No shows from mid March 2020. No Sydney, Brisbane, Gatton, Junior Champs, Scenic Rim nor local ag shows or training days. No gatherings or meetings of more than two people except at funerals. This year will go down in history as a most peculiar one, with state-wide and national disasters aplenty.

We welcomed to the 2019-2020 committee a new Treasurer in Hannah Willshire, and we welcomed back Nicky Ehrich. They replaced past Treasurer, Neil Page, and Marian Bangay, whose time on recent past committees we really appreciated. The current Qld Branch committee has finalised the closure of the old 'CCHS Queensland Branch incorporated.' as per the motions and resolutions at last year's AGM, and we are now named the 'CCHSA Qld Branch', and we now operate under the CCHSA Federal Council's Bylaws and Constitution. The Federal Council is incorporated, so we still have that umbrella and insurance.

This branch closure took a bit longer than planned due to it being an unusual sort of action, but we have two new bank accounts in the new name, everything has been transferred across, the hiccups ironed out, and it is *finally* business as usual!

Just exactly *what* business that may be is a tricky one to fathom at the moment, but I'd like to thank the new Committee for their input and guidance. We have a few possible things in the pipeline to think about, but not much one can actually do when lockdown and self-isolation is still the national agenda.

We must offer our sincere condolences to their respective families on the passing of Gene Osborn, past vice president of the Qld branch for three years from 2001 to 2003, Andrea Gee, who was a keen heavy harness competitor at Gatton and on the Downs, and Bill Wade, a great character in the working horse world over the last 40 years, from Mundubbera.

To finish this report on a congratulatory or more positive note, four or five members have become parents or grandparents toward the end of 2019: Russell and Faye Robert's son, Evan, and his wife Amy had a daughter named Remy, Graham and Nicky Ehrich's son, Corey, and his fiancée Chanelle had a daughter named Daisy, Maria Hughston's daughter Kaitlin Wadey and her husband John had a son named Alex, while Hannah and Jake Willshire had a son Tommy. We'd like to wish them all much joy and happiness!

Stay safe!

Ian Stewart-Koster Qld Branch President.

Qld Branch News

In our very different world of Covid-19, any plans the committee had for this year have been either cancelled or put on hold.

- The December, 2019 training day at the Stewart-Koster's property in December was cancelled due to drought.
- Our training day which was to be held at the Southbrook property of Barry & Kath Pearce on 18 & 19 April has been postponed. We live in hope that towards the end of the year restrictions may be lifted enough for us to hold it – but we are not holding our breath.
- Our Junior Championships & Gelding Show planned for 6 June has now been cancelled.
- Our AGM and General Meeting due to be held late August/early September will be contingent on Covid-19 restrictions and the Management Committee will be looking at this closer to the date when we have a better idea of what the situation will be at that time.
- With the cancellation of Gatton and the Ekka, we do not need to ask for volunteers to help out on our stall at either event. This also takes away our two biggest revenue-raisers for the year.

As Ian mentioned in his President's report, the new Branch name and new bank accounts are now finalised after a few hurdles were cleared. Very little has changed except that the Branch is no longer incorporated here in Qld as a separate entity but now comes under the umbrella of Federal Council which is incorporated in Victoria. However, we still operate autonomously in all other ways with our own elected committee and our own bank accounts.

If you have the Qld Branch bank details recorded on your internet banking, now might be a good time to change them.

New Name... New Bank Account

Officially, we are now called

Commonwealth Clydesdale Horse Society Australia, Queensland Branch

However, this being rather long and laborious to write in full, we are generally known as

CCHS Aust Qld Branch

Our new bank details are (please update your internet banking records)

CCHS Aust Qld Branch

BSB: 124 001 (B of Q)

Acc no: 2303 6303

And just to make it complete, our Secretary, Wendy Jones, moved late last year and has a new address

255 Fowler Road, Broxburn, Qld 4356

Our email address remains the same...

info@clydesdalesqld.com.au

Federal Council Notes – April 2020

Federal Council and Covid-19

With all the restrictions in place because of Covid-19, the recent Federal Council meeting, originally scheduled during Sydney Royal, was postponed and then held by teleconference on Tuesday, 21 April. Qld was able to have its full complement of five delegates attend and the meeting was productive and flowed quite smoothly. This has encouraged Federal Council to consider having extra meetings, scheduled between Sydney & Melbourne, conducted by electronic or digital means which was welcomed positively by the delegates.

DNA Recording & Parent Verification of Female Clydesdales

After much discussion at the September Federal meeting in Melbourne regarding the DNA profiling of female horses, it has been agreed that for now, the DNA profiling of any or all female Clydesdales will be on a voluntary basis but members are encouraged to have their mares and fillies tested and on record. DNA kits are to be purchased through the Federal Secretary and must be signed off by your vet unless the DNA of the dam is already on record.

For those of you who are interested in understanding more about DNA profiling and parent verification, this link will take you to a website which explains the process – and its degree of accuracy – quite clearly.

<https://www.vgl.ucdavis.edu/services/dnatyping.php>

Members are reminded that all stallions are required to have their DNA recorded in conjunction with their first soundness inspection (usually at 2 years of age). This applied to all stallions having their first inspection from 2010 onwards.

Part Bred Clydesdale Register

The part bred register is up and running although some modifications to its rules have been recommended by the sub-committee formed to oversee its implementation. A draft copy of this was presented to the recent Federal meeting and will be circulated to the States for discussion by members. The Qld Branch Management Committee will be discussing how best to manage this and will be reaching out to all Qld members for input in the near future.

Registration of Foals

A gentle reminder to those still to register foals born in the 2019 season

- Registration forms for all foals born after 1 August 2019 must be received by the Federal Secretary by 31 July, 2020 or a late fee will apply.
- Registration forms (available on the website or from the Federal Secretary) must be completed with both a written description and drawings clearly showing white markings and other distinguishing features. Photos may accompany the application but cannot take the place of either of the descriptions.
- Registration is the responsibility of (and can only be submitted by) the breeder.
- A CCHS Aust Stallion Service Certificate must accompany the application for registration unless the breeder is (or was at time of service) the owner of the stallion.
- The sire must be a registered stallion with either a Provisional (2-4 years old) or a Life (aged 5+ years) Stallion Veterinary Inspection Certificate. This is noted on their Registration Certificate.
- Breeders must be a current financial member at the time of registration
- Fees:
Registrations: Colts & Fillies - \$60 Geldings - \$35
Additional penalty fee for late registration: Colts & Fillies - \$120 Geldings - \$70

Communication

The Qld Branch Management Committee uses three main forms of communication with members and the wider Clydesdale community.

Email *This also includes Australia Post for those without access to a computer.*

All communication directed at our members only such as a Notice of Meeting, minutes of meetings, Society issues and Branch events are sent out via a 'Members only' bulk email. Correspondence with an individual member is also conducted in this way. Unless otherwise notified, we use the email address supplied by Federal Council on the membership list so please update your records if you have changed any contact details.

Communication goes both ways and anyone (members or others) wishing to contact the Branch, please email our Secretary at info@clydesdalesqld.com.au. General enquiries can also be made by private message through our Facebook page Clydesdales Queensland – CCHS Aust Qld Branch.

Newsletter

With the emergence and popularity of social media there is often debate about the relevance of (or need for) a newsletter and the role of the newsletter has changed somewhat in light of this. Qld however, has a history of having a substantial, more 'magazine style' production which includes general interest items and member profiles along with the Society's news, show results and upcoming events. It will vary in format with different editors, but we have always encouraged member contributions to make it as inclusive as possible. This is often like trying to draw blood from a stone but we usually manage a few items each edition – and we greatly appreciate them. Newsletters are an important way of archiving show results and other events as well as profiling some of our members and studs. As such, they become valuable historical records.

How you can contribute (PLEASE...)

Members are welcome (and encouraged) to submit articles to be included. We have people out there doing interesting things with their horses and we'd love it if you shared your stories with us all. You don't necessarily have to write about yourself – you could choose to tell us about one of those 'quiet achievers' who you would love to see have a bit of acknowledgment. Maybe you've had an experience with your horse/s which you would like to share eg raising an orphan foal, combating a strange illness... there are many topics to write about.

If you don't feel confident writing yourself, you are welcome to send me photos and basic information and I'd be happy to put it together for you.

Even one or two photos of you and your horse/s (plus relevant info) at some event for our "Out & About" section would be wonderful.

We are happy to advertise member's horses, horse drawn vehicles or implements, and harness (Clydie size) for sale.

Please email or message our Facebook page with a photo and all necessary information and contact details.

Newsletters are emailed to members, other State branches, Federal council plus a number of people who have requested to be on our newsletter email list. Only members (still around 15% of our membership) who have no access to a computer receive a printed (black & white) copy in the mail free of charge.

Social Media - Facebook



The rise in the popularity of social media in recent years has been something that many people have embraced whole-heartedly while others have been more wary or shied away completely. There is no denying it though, this is a useful (and free) marketing tool which has a potential audience far wider than any other medium available to us.

The Qld Branch ventured into the world of social media in February, 2013, (the first of the currently active Branch pages) creating its Facebook page which is now liked/followed by over 2100 people from not only Qld and Australia, but internationally as well. From the outset, it was never intended to be confined to Branch information directed at

Branch members only (for this we have emails). This is our chance to reach out to the broader community of Clydesdale lovers and enthusiasts and promote our breed far and wide.

The page is used in a variety of ways as those of you who already follow it will know. We promote events, share Branch information, advertise Branch merchandise, post show results and share many photos. We do not confine it to 'Qld Branch only' but embrace anything we feel promotes the Clydesdale breed or has relevance to its health and welfare.

For our members we do offer some extra benefits

- **We are happy to advertise your Clydesdales for sale** (We limit this to horses only as we don't really wish this to become a 'For Sale' page). If you wish to have your horse listed on the Branch page, please message or email us with photos and information. Please note – I am happy to share an existing ad but it needs to be from your stud page or a 'public' post on your timeline, not a 'friends only'. Sharing from a group like Clydesdales Australia doesn't always work (don't ask me why). **Please** don't assume I will see you post and automatically share it. If it's not near the top of my news feed I will most likely miss it. Tag me into a comment below the post if you want me to see it (which will only work if we are Facebook friends)
- **We are happy to list your stallion/s standing at stud and/or your stud** including links to Facebook pages and websites (*Everything in the paragraph above applies here also.*)
- **Show results and photos or community events** If you post these publicly (not friends only) I will usually just automatically share it – if I see it. If you give me prior permission to 'steal' any of your 'friends only' events' posts then I will also share those when I see them. Once again, it's always a good idea to tag me in the comments (please, not the whole post) on anything you wish to bring to my attention.
- **Other photos of your Clydesdales – adult or foals.** If you have taken a rather nice photo of your horse/s please feel free to share it with us. It's a great way for us to keep our page active and for your horse (and stud if you have one) to get some extra attention.

Help promote our Facebook page

- If you see one of our posts, please 'like' it or better still, leave a comment. The more active the page is and the more interaction there is with it, the more likely Facebook will keep it high up in news feeds.
- Invite your friends to 'like' us - there is usually a link to do this when you visit the page.
- Share the link to the page to your own timeline – or share one of our posts.

Part of the stated object of the Qld Branch is to "promote the interests of breeders of the Clydesdale Horse" and an active, well-followed Facebook page cannot help but do that.

2020 Qld Branch Calendars

We have a number of 2020 calendars left over which would have gone on our stall at Gatton to be sold at a discounted price – with 8 months left in the year there is still plenty of time for one to grace your wall. A perfect gift for someone with a passion for Clydies and would just like some lovely pictures to look at. They are being sold

out for \$3 each - plus postage. Contact the Branch by email or through

Facebook if you would like one – or some. info@clydesdaleqld.com.au

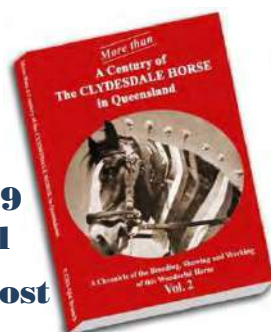
And the perfect book for social isolation – Vol 2 of our history book, "More Than A Century of the Clydesdale Horse in Queensland" - just \$20 + post.



\$3
+ post



**Covid-19
Special
\$20 + post**



Facebook

If you have a Qld stud page on Facebook and would like the link added to this list, please let us know.

Balgowan Clydesdales (Maria & Morgan Hughston) <https://www.facebook.com/Balgowan-Clydesdale-and-Shire-Stud-268712056861825/>

Duneske Clydesdales (Joan & Ian Stewart-Koster) <https://www.facebook.com/DuneskeClydesdale/>

Earlsfield Clydesdales (Noel & Wendy Jones) <https://www.facebook.com/EarlsfieldClydesdaleStud/>

Glengowrie Clydesdales (Graham & Nicky Ehrich) <https://www.facebook.com/Glengowrie-Clydesdales-888811151139531/>

Glengallan Heavy Horses (Clare Gorwyn & Peter Lowry) <https://www.facebook.com/GlengallanHeavyHorses/>

Madeegan Clydesdales (Maddie Pitstock) <https://www.facebook.com/madeegan.horses>

Rainbows End Clydesdales (Maryann & Ollie Geissler) <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1685972871724095/>

Shiralee Clydesdales (Lynda Murphy & Beth Jones) <https://www.facebook.com/shiraleeclydesdales/>

Valhalla Clydesdales (Barry & Kath Pearce) <https://www.facebook.com/ValhallaClydesdales/>

Wattavue Pilot War Animal Mascot (Alexa Waldau) <https://www.facebook.com/wattavuepilot/>

Windama Clydesdales (Dave & Aleta Pitstock) <https://www.facebook.com/Windama-Clydesdale-Stud-114893175192548/>

And, of course the Qld Branch has its own page where you can keep up to date with everything 'Clydesdale'

<https://www.facebook.com/ClydesdalesQueensland/>

Or Federal Council <https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthClydesdaleHorseSocietyAustralia/>

NSW Branch <https://www.facebook.com/clydesdalesnsw/>

Victorian Branch <https://www.facebook.com/Clydesdales-Victoria-CCHS-Vic-Branch-625167934285419/>

WA Branch <https://www.facebook.com/Commonwealth-Clydesdale-Horse-Society-Western-Australia-1886698984985721/>

Also New Zealand <https://www.facebook.com/clydesdalenz/> and Scotland <https://www.facebook.com/clydesdalehorsesociety/>

2020 – A Glance at What is Ahead

Thanks
to...



Late News...

Royal Melbourne Show
CANCELLED



Qld Agricultural Shows

Most are cancelled, some postponed and some are yet to decide. To check out the shows in your area go to the Qld Shows website and look for their Show Dates flyer. It is updated regularly.

<https://queenslandshows.com.au/show-dates/>



Queensland Shows

The 2020 Qld show circuit was barely underway when Covid-19 brought it to a screaming halt. Ironically, it was Friday, 13 March when the bad news started spreading across all forms of media. It began that morning with the cancellation of the Melbourne Grand Prix (motor racing) and by the afternoon, first Sydney Royal and then Warwick Ag Show (due to be held the following week) had also been cancelled. Over the next week or two as social distancing rules, limits on public or private gatherings and then restrictions on all but essential travel were further implemented, it became clear that shows and other events were not going to happen for some months – possibly even until the end of the year. Gatton, the Ekka, our Junior Championships and Scenic Rim all fell victim.

However, several Darling Downs shows managed to get in before the gates were locked

Stanthorpe starts the season and this year saw two Clydesdales exhibited with Glengallan Montana Sun not only winning Champion Heavy Horse, but then going on to take out the All Breeds Supreme of Show. Montana Park Damon (Sonny) competed well in harness events with just one other competitor.

Allora Show – after months of crippling drought, Allora cancelled all horse events plus several other sections due to rain.

Clifton – no Clydesdales competed. **Killarney** – no heavy horse classes

Pittsworth – Glengallan Montana Sun was the only Clydesdale - taking out Reserve Champion Heavy Horse behind one of the Kohler's Belgian Draught mares.

Oakey, the last ag show to go ahead before the restrictions were put in place, had to cancel its heavy horse classes (usually well supported) as their judge became unwell and a replacement could not be found.



Above: Pete Lowry and Glengallan Montana Sun awarded Supreme Led Exhibit at Stanthorpe Show

Left: Clare Gorwyn driving Sonny (Montana Park Damon) at Stanthorpe.

Below left: Pete Lowry with Glengallan Montana Sun being judged for Champion Heavy Horse at Pittsworth Show



Many Agricultural Show Societies are really struggling during these Covid-19 restrictions. Not only will most of them be unable to hold their annual show, but all other events, clinics or any form of use of the grounds are no longer permissible. Even their camping facilities are closed. Some of these societies may really struggle to survive financially so when life returns to some sort of 'normal' again, please find a way to support your local show. You may not be able to enter as a competitor but go along and enjoy a great family day out.

Support Your Local Community!

July, 2019 Training Day



On a sunny but chilly winter's day, 36 people gathered at the property of Joan & Ian Stewart-Koster (*pictured left*) for our 'Harness & Driving' training day. This was the second such event hosted by Ian and his family and once again, the emphasis was on the participants 'having a go' rather than too much talk, so following a brief explanation of each piece of harness, people were encouraged to try collars on horses and decide whether they fitted or not, find the right set of hames for a collar, and then proceed to fit up the rest of the harness. Mistakes were allowed – and corrected with full explanations as to the 'whys and wherefores'. A variety of harness was on hand from show quality to everyday work gear – in both Australian made leather and American biothane.

Two extra horses joined the Duneske team – “Sonny” with Pete Lowry & Clare Gorwyn (and their Meadowbrook cart) and “Bert” with Neil Hall. This meant there was no shortage of horses (about 9) for participants to 'have a go' with. Reg Hodgson and Roy Fleetwood kept watch over the proceedings as our safety officers.

The morning session saw four singles vehicles in use with everyone able to have a turn at driving at least one of them with a couple of extra horses being long reined while people waited for their turn in a vehicle. Three pairs were harnessed up (along with one single) for the afternoon session and it was wonderful to see the sense of achievement (expressed in huge smiles) spread across the faces of people who had just successfully driven a pair for the first time. Once again, the feedback has been very positive with more people expressing suggestions for the next day.



Above: The training day kicks off on a lovely winter's day (*Sharyn Hine*)
Below: Linda helping Michelle long reining Pearl (*Fiona Murray*)



Brad checking the commands while Sue (the 'horse') waits patiently and maybe just a little confused. (*Fiona Murray*)
Below: Neil Hall & “Bert” (*Sharyn Hine*)





Above left: Reg Hodgson watches on as Ian directs the harnessing up of Pearl. Right: Dianne figuring out just what this piece of the harness might be used for *(Both photos: Fiona Murray)*

Below: Pete taking Juliet through the process of harnessing Sonny with Kate watching on *(Both photos: Sharyn Hine)*



Above left: Linda with that puzzling part of the harness *(Fiona Murray)* Right: Ian explaining the differences in pairs reins *(Sharyn Hine)*



Above: Hannah driving Jess & Sugar with Morgan as co-pilot and Linda the 'back-seat driver'

Below: Pearl & Beauty about to extricate the grader from the garden

Both photos: Fiona Murray



Above: Name a view better than this...

Answer below – a pair of rumps to look over and two pairs of ears to look between



Above left: Clare & Kate with Sonny in the Meadowbrook being followed by Roy and Sharon with Sugar in the brake

Above left: Pearl 'modelling' a cab saddle - just one of the many pieces of harness explained and/or used throughout the day





Above: Kate all smiles driving Sonny with Clare taking it easy.

Above right & right: Neil and Brad with Bert in the lorry – Morgan enjoying the scenery.

Below: Ian giving tips to Dave driving Pearl & Beauty in the grader with Ollie along for the ride behind (All photos: Fiona Murray)



Below: Imogene long reining Pearl (Photo: Sharyn Hine)

Below right: Ollie's huge grin says it all at the end of a pretty big day (Photo: Maryann Geissler)



Out & About

Once again, many of our members have been out in the community with their horses. This is one of the best ways to promote the breed, re-live our heritage, support the local community and its organisations and just make people smile. The pictures tell their stories...



In 2019, Roadvale State School just outside Boonah in SE Qld, celebrated its 130th anniversary. Graham & Nicky Ehrich took "Johnny" along to give the littlies an idea of how things were done back then. Johnny, as always, attracted a lot of attention – including the "Kops in Kilts" Photos courtesy of Nicky Ehrich



Above left: Morgan Hughston & Balgowan Rumour at Highfields Pioneer Park during Toowoomba's 2019 Carnival of Flowers. (Photo courtesy of Maria Hughston)

Above: Michael Martin had Sam in the horseworks at Highfields Pioneer Park on Australia Day (Photo courtesy of Nicola Martin)

Left: Alexa Waldau with Wattavue Pilot at Canungra on 24 February, Australia's first official National Day for War Animals (Photo courtesy of Alexa Waldau)

Reg Hodgson – A Member's Profile

This is the story of my Father, Reg, and his 41 year love affair with horses and passion for all things in harness. It all started when my sister Deborah was turning into a young woman, and the love of all things horses and pony club were turning into the love of adventure with all things with four wheels, not four legs. With a growing mob of horses, and only the younger daughter just learning to ride, Reg decided to purchase an old tired sulky: a project to engage his eldest daughter, and to make good use of the growing horse stock in the paddocks.

The project sulky arrived at his local homestead named "Coolibah" which is situated at Whiteside, a quiet picturesque property on the outskirts of the growing Pine Rives Shire in Queensland. On inspection of the two wheeled wooden antique structure, the sulky was found to be in dire need of repairs, the shafts were 'stuffed', the wheels 'broken' and the harness 'poor'. Dad stood scratching his head, wondering what the hell had he got himself into!

As my father is such a man who loves a chat, he mentioned to one of his co workers at the Petrie Paper Mill, named Mick McKenzie that he'd bought a run-down sulky. Well, this was a strike of gold. Mick was a blacksmith and wheelwright. As you all know, these lost trades are an absolute God send, to someone who is restoring anything to do with harness. Mick taught Dad how to restore the sulky, with new wheels and shafts. The paper mill had everything at Dad's and Mick's fingertips, and one of them was a large steam boiler. Dad and Mick manufactured the jigs to bend shafts. This was to become Dad's advantage, especially when it came to swapping and bartering for bits and bobs in the later years.

So the time came to put good old 'Misty' into harness. This mare was a golden buckskin, and a bit of an anomaly in horse turnouts. Misty just stood there, harnessed up and Dad got into the sulky. "Walk On" and Misty, who had never been broken into harness, accommodated with trust. We loved riding in that sulky, at Pony Club camps, and Misty took the lead with the picnic lunches for all riders with my sister Deborah at the helm. We were all hooked. And the passion began. The buckskin



Reg Hodgson with Connie at the 2017 Pet Expo at Petrie

society was fascinated - they'd never before seen a buckskin in harness.

Deborah eventually left home to join the circus, and Reg joined the Caboolture Harness club, where he met his great friend and mentor Keith Houghton and the journey really took off.

Master Craftsman Keith taught Reg how to restore harness, and Reg started swapping new shafts (cheekily made at the paper mill while he was on shift) for new harness. He always had a keen eye out for any discarded farm machinery or horse drawn vehicles at any of the properties he visited on a professional capacity. Reg is an electrician by trade, and a country one at that. He had many bits of sulkies, buggies and harness stored in his sheds, the souvenirs from collecting and cultivating on his journeys as an electrician. These cultivations enabled Reg to put together a horse-drawn buggy.

A new horse was broken into harness, and Bongo was his name - a dreadfully dangerous horse to ride, but a dream to drive in harness. On one particular event Reg was having quite a lot of trouble with an anxious Bongo, he could hear the loud sound of massive hooves. The event was next door to a race track. A fellow horseman advised Reg to turn Bongo around and face the noise. Bongo settled instantly, and a new friendship began with Donny Ross.

The next chapter was with a pair of Arab geldings, Reg entered the local shows in the 'Period Turnout' events. His wife Joan was petrified of horses, but her love of dressing up made up for the fear. Reg was a leader and an innovator, and two instructors of the Pine Rivers Pony Club named Jan and Lex Young, were inspired when Reg started restoring the period vehicles and became great friends. Lex broke most of Reg's horses into saddle, Jan joined the harness societies and they are both still very active, entering their horses in harness events to this day. Jan, very musically gifted, taught me to play the piano/keyboard, too.

Dad was in hot demand on the wedding circuit. There are many funny stories of brides getting their bouquets eaten by Ace, or going out with four wheels on the horse float, only to return with three. The pair of grey Arabs were a sight to behold. To drive them was even better. Dad and I have many wedding stories. I was the lucky daughter to accompany Dad as his roustabout. He taught me how to get the horses in and out, harnessed up and down, and most importantly drive. I have had the greatest pleasure watching the beautiful brides, smiling, waving, enjoying their wedding day without a care in the world as they were safe, with Reg at the reins.

On one of his call outs for work, Reg was offered a stock horse x draught horse in exchange for his labour, as the job was bigger and unaffordable for the woman. Reg took the young gelding home, and this was one of his most loved relationships with a horse. Clyde loved Reg, and would do anything for him. He was a great workhorse in harness. Due to Clyde's good nature, he was borrowed by one of Reg's colleagues to give rides around the City of Brisbane during World Expo 88.

Reg was passionate about working history. He is one of the co-fathers of the North Pine Country Park, now renamed "Old Petrie Town". He was an integral driver of the park. He was always helping the pottery ladies, volunteered with any restorative buildings by ways of wiring them up with electricity. Reg was always participating at field days with his horses in harness, giving rides to those who remembered them as being part of every day life, and those of little ones, who just wanted a horse and carriage ride. A trio of Reg, Natalie Burrows and Fraser Smith started giving horse and carriage rides on a regular basis at the Petrie Markets. Fraser had

a beaut pair of Clydesdales, and this is where the next part of Reg's passion began. A phone call from a bloke in Boonah named Terry O'Brien, as Dad recalls him saying, "I have a beautiful quiet mare. Her name is 'Bess'."



Reg and Tevot Bess winning a Horse in Harness class at Gatton in 2002, with judge Lyle Drayton

At about this time, Dad met Ian Stewart-Koster and ventured up to enjoy participating in his many heavy horse driving schools he hosted at Jondaryan through the 1990s, meeting and forming friendships with many others in the heavy horse scene.

Reg was elected President of the Gatton Heavy Horse field days committee in 2012, and has enjoyed being on the committee and being the Horse Superintendent there for 14 of the last 15 years up to 2020.

He competed at Gatton with Tevot Bess in the late 90s in his spring cart, and then with Duneske Constellation (Connie) winning All Breeds Supreme Champion (Junior) Clydesdale in 2007 when they had separate Junior championships there, and Connie also won several All Breeds Supreme Led Championships at North Brisbane shows over the next 10 years, including at Pine Rivers and Woodford. Des Mitchell (who used to help Boney



Duneske Constellation (Connie) when she won the All Breeds Supreme award for Reg at Gatton in 2007

O'Toole near St George) broke Connie in to harness and saddle, and she was frequently asked to lead the Grand Parades at shows in the local district—something her son Sparky now does after Hannah Willshire broke him in to work.



Connie and Reg leading the Grand Parade at Pine Rivers Show in 2017



Sparky and Reg leading the Grand Parade at Pine Rivers Show in 2019

In recognition of his tireless electrical and horsey efforts at Old Petrie Town, as well as setting up the blacksmith's shop and the steam shed, the Qld Steam & Vintage Machinery Society (QSVMS) in June 2018 jointly named one of their new machinery sheds after him and fellow long-time member Bob Aird: the Hodgson-Aird pavilion. It was a very moving moment and a big surprise because Dad and Bob each thought the shed was to be named after the other one, and the secret was finally revealed on the day of the official opening when they watched Ian Stewart-Koster signwrite both their names up there!



The Hodgson-Aird machinery shed at Petrie

Reg was also on the executive committee of the Qld Branch of the CCHS in 2012, 2016 and 2017, and still enjoys helping out the branch each year at the Ekka in the Horse Breeds Expo, and talking to the public about the fun the harness horses are.



Connie with Sparky, just born, in December 2016

It was to be a big moment in his life, going to Surat in 2019 for the 95th anniversary of the last Cobb & Co coach journey, and Dad had been working Sparky to get him fit enough to do the 80km trip from Surat to Yuleba, but he unfortunately caught the flu during the Ekka a week before, and it knocked him so badly he ended up in hospital for a few days. Sparky injured his hind leg, and so he had some time off too, but Reg still travelled one leg of the journey in Ian's drover's waggonette, while I rode a saddle horse. The special significance to our family was that Reg's Great Aunt was a child passenger, on that actual last coach run in August 1924!



Reg and Andrew S-K in the back of 'Lady Pearl' near Frogmoor Changing Station, Surat.



During his years of breeding horses, some have been wonderful, and some were down right heart-breaking. But as resilient as Reg is, he still enjoys his days with his partner-in-crime Dogwood Bend Spartacus, or "Sparky". Sparky is the resident Clydesdale that the local Petrie community adores- and a very cheeky horse indeed. He is the son of Connie. Dogwood Bend, his stud name, was originally the creek name and location of the township of Miles- named when the explorer Ludwig Leichardt came through in the 1800s, and where our property is now.



Sparky examining Reg's handywork and trying to decide which one he needs to hide from next!

Reg is still restoring buggies and is currently making steel waggon wheels. Sparky and Reg will be heading to Miles to lead the Grand Parade at the "Miles Back to the Bush Festival" in September 10th-13th this year 2020. Miles is where I reside, and I cannot wait to be his roustabout once again!

Written by Sharron Colley



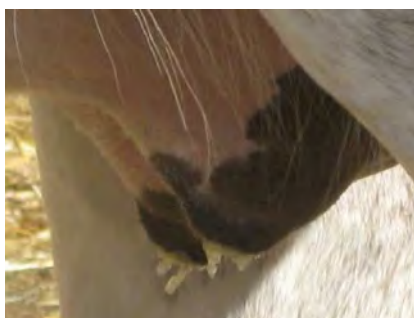
When is Your Mare Going To Foal?

This is the question asked so often during foaling season. There is one answer that many breeders will give... “Only the mare knows when she will foal... and she’s not telling.”

I started writing this section last year after I had had several people ask about milk tests, how to use them and how accurate they are. We may now be weaning those foals but the way time flies these days, it won't be long before the 2020 foals start appearing so hopefully it will give especially new breeders plenty of time to think about their approach to their up-coming delivery.

The ‘book’ will tell you that a mare will foal around 340 days from conception but as they don’t read the foaling manuals, this length of time can vary up to 3 weeks either side of ‘due date’ (with some mares hanging out even longer).

There are several indicators to give us an indication but none are ‘fool-proof’ – or should that be ‘foal-proof’. In the weeks leading up to foaling the mare’s udder will slowly fill and their rump will soften as the pelvic area relaxes. In the few days before foaling ‘wax’ generally appears on the end of the teats and the vulva will relax and swell. However, the softening of the rump is not always obvious, the udders of some mares don’t always entirely fill – even after foaling, and only maybe 7 out of 10 mares produce wax and not all of those will foal in the following days. Anyone who has been through the torture of endless nights of broken sleep, constantly checking the overdue mare that looks like she will explode but just doesn’t want to foal, will understand why breeders turn to foaling alarms and milk tests at this time of year. But just how good or reliable are they?



Photos: Left – this mare had very visible waxing for a few days before foaling.

Right – this was the only sign of wax that was seen on this mare – the afternoon before she foaled. We were lucky to see it – it had disappeared not long after the photo was taken



To read more about the signs of foaling, a Google search will give you plenty of options but here is a link to a Qld vet clinic that lists the signs in an easy to read and understand way <https://eevs.com.au/foaling-time-8-signs-your-mare-is-ready-for-birthing/>

Foaling Alarms

There are a few foaling alarms on the market and they are basically a transmitter which you attach to the mare’s halter and it detects when the mare is lying down flat. It usually has a delay of around 10 seconds before sending a signal to the base station which triggers the alarm. They are great and many breeders use and swear by them but if you have a mare that lies down often you will get many frustrating false alarms and just occasionally, a mare will foal standing up. However, the foaling alarm has allowed breeders to get more sleep than they would have but most importantly, has saved numerous foals because someone has been there to intervene or assist when necessary.

To find out more about the foaling alarms available in Australia you can click on the following links

<http://www.foalguard.com/> or <https://smartfoal.com/>



A mare that had just given birth with her foaling alarm attached to the halter. We now tape ours on after twice having had one fall off. The second time it fell in a position which didn't trigger an alarm and the mare foaled that night – fortunately with no problems.

Only someone who has experienced the foaling alarm piercing their subconscious in the wee hours of the morning can truly understand what an assault to one's senses it is. (Maybe the smoke alarm suddenly screeching while in a deep sleep would be similar.) Nicky Ehrich wrote this perfect description of her experiences come foaling season that had many of us in tears when she posted it on social media. She has agreed to share it here

NOOOO... The Foaling Alarm

A Facebook friend just posted a photo saying her other half had just given her one of these for her Birthday, I can say if my other half gave me one of these I would probably hit him over the head with it. heeee heee. Please let me explain.

This little box of joy brings so many emotions to one that has spent the last 25 years in a relationship with THE FOALING ALARM.

They say ignorance is bliss, which is sometimes true, my first foal (not a Clydesdale) was born 45 years ago, when ignorance was bliss or should I say there was no such things as sleepless nights. She was born in the wee small hours without my knowledge and I received a call from where I had her agisted to inform me I had a foal.



Move along 5 years when I would spend every hour walking up and down the paddock (pre foaling alarm) checking on mares to see if they had foaled.

25 years ago I was fortunate to be given a foaling alarm which changed our lives or I should say mine as Graham sleeps blissfully through the horrendous screeching sound it emits.

Each year as I fearfully and excitedly take it from its box being reminded of its sound as I turn it on to test it, (no wonder the sound of a smoke alarm sends shivers up my spine).

Then the fun starts (I laugh jokingly), each night I place the halter on the mares head and walk back inside thinking I must get to sleep early to try to get to sleep before it goes off.

So it starts, the sitting bolt upright, leaping out of bed, staggering around blindly in the dark trying to find something to wear (I now don't wear jammies at foaling time no point just go to bed fully clothed lol.) So with ones heart pounding you stagger down to the paddock to check out with excitement what may be coming into the world.

But as with many of our mares who decide it is fun to lay down 6-8 times a night to have a little rest, and then look at you when you shine the light in their eyes and you can hear them thinking "WHAT WHAT", Oh no, just another false alarm, pardon the pun.

I think I go through copious amounts of hay in the foaling season, as once I have checked to see if there is a foal I think I will throw the mare some hay which will keep her on her feet, while I quickly race back inside to grab a wink of sleep before the alarm goes off again, But NOOOOOOO I just lay there in bed waiting for the next time.

Then you have the nights that you wake up with a fright when the alarm has not gone off and you think something is wrong, so you walk down to the paddock to check anyhow.

Then, when eventually the happy event arrives and when you do walk down and find your mare in the process of foaling, NO it does not end there, then you sit up all night, or until dawn to make sure the foal is sucking. Sitting there in the cold and dark in the wee small hours waiting patiently, or assisting the foal to get on to the teat (I won't even go there how frustrating that can be sometimes), covered in sticky colostrum and you know what.

There are times when I send Graham down, I dig him in the ribs and say "It is your turn to check", but I might as well get up because if he is at all a little long I start to panic and think there must be something wrong so go down any way.

So do you all think I am certifiably insane, along with the rest of all you foaling mothers and fathers out there, you would think after all these years I would be over it now, we have had some joyous foaling seasons and some very sad foaling seasons, but we rock back up the following year to put ourselves through it all again, in the hope that we can breed our special horse.

Our time of breeding horses is nearly coming to an end, and we probably will only continue for a couple more years. I will miss the excitement of seeing a new foal, I WONT MISS THE SOUND OF THE B FOALING ALARM. When I do give it away I will think of all of my comrades out there in the wee small hours tending their mares and their newborns.

Good luck everyone this year with your foaling season. Enjoy

Nicky Ehrich

Milk Tests

In recent years, testing the mare's milk has grown in popularity as a way of determining how close the mare is to foaling – and therefore a guide as to when to put the foaling alarm on that mare who lies down 3 times a night, or when to start sitting up on foal watch if you don't have an alarm. There are two methods used – measuring the calcium content of the milk and testing the pH level.



The commercially available FoalWatch kit (*pictured right*) works on calcium levels and has a high degree of accuracy but is not cheap and can work out to be around \$6 - \$7 per test (that's around \$120 - \$140 per kit of 20).

PH Testing Mare's Milk

Gaining popularity now is the testing of the pH (acidity/alkalinity) level in pregnant mares in the time leading up to foaling. This method has been used for a number of years and talked about widely on some social media groups but has now been backed up by a study done in Japan followed by others in the US which found that the pH level of mammary secretions (mare's milk) dropped significantly in the days immediately before birth. Studies found that once the level dropped to 6.4 then the mare would foal within the next three days. This held true for 98% of the mares tested. As all you need to perform the test are some test strips (such as those used for swimming pools) or some pH (litmus) paper, testing is very affordable.

How does it work?

The pH (potential of Hydrogen) is a measure of hydrogen ion concentration - the acidity or alkalinity of a solution. The pH scale usually ranges from 0 to 14. Solutions with a pH less than 7 are acidic, while those with a pH greater than 7 are basic or alkaline – 7 is considered neutral.

It has been found that the mammary secretions (milk) of a mare in the later stages of pregnancy have a pH of 8 to 8.5 which drops to 6.4 or below when foaling is imminent.

As the due date draws near, milk a small amount (maybe 1 or 2 ml) from your mare. Dip the pH strip into this secretion and match it to the colour chart provided with the strips. Once the reading drops to 6.4 or below, there is a 98% chance that your mare will foal within the next 72 hours (3 days). If the reading is still above 6.4 then there is a 99% chance that she would not foal within the next 24 hours.



The photos to the right are of pH tests from a mare in the days prior to foaling. These tests were done using pool test strips with the pH test being the marker at the bottom of the strip and the top of the colour chart.



Unfortunately there is no hard and fast rule as to how quickly a mare will drop from high (pink) to low (yellow). *(Please note that if you are using a different brand of pool test strip or pH paper, then the indicator colours may be different to pink, orange, and yellow.)* Some mares may sit mid-range (orange) for some days and then drop again. We have had a mare drop from pink to orange overnight, be yellow in the afternoon and then foal that night. Another mare dropped from orange to yellow overnight and foaled at 9.30 that morning. *(Incidentally, this mare, a maiden, did not lie down flat until her foal was half way out and that was only after I encouraged her to do so, and kept her that way. There is a good chance that she may not have set off the foaling alarm had she foaled, unobserved, at night.)* Some mares will take the full three days on yellow before foaling but we have found that most will foal within 24 hours of dropping that low.



Why do we use milk testing if it's not 100% guaranteed? We find it is another, reasonably reliable guide to when the mare will foal - another tool in the toolbox. We had one mare who although looked ready in the rump and vulva, had very little udder. She was already well overdue but lay down flat out 3 times a night to sleep (thus setting off the foaling alarm). While her milk tests were mid to high range we left the alarm off and slept well. Once the pH level dropped to the 6s the alarm went on and we only had a few nights of interrupted sleep before she foaled. Her udder didn't fill until **after** foaling so no wax either.

However, not all mares will let you milk them, especially when their udder is full and tight so knowing all the physical and behavioural signs to look for is still vitally important.

Cost: Using the pool test strips is quite affordable and easily available. 50 strips are usually somewhere around \$20 (about 40c per test) and can be obtained from anywhere that sells pool cleaning and care products (Bunnings, Big W etc)

The following are links to various websites which I have used as reference. They are not long and convoluted and well worth a read.

<https://veterinarypartner.vin.com/default.aspx?pid=19239&catId=102906&id=4952321>

<https://thehorse.com/110070/mammary-gland-secretion-ph-could-predict-foaling/>

<https://ker.com/equinews/predicting-time-foaling/>

<https://gilletteveterinarian.com/use-ph-testing-milk-predict-foaling-time-mares/>



Above: pH test paper (litmus paper) can also be used for testing milk and often will have smaller increments so therefore greater accuracy.

Clare Gorwyn – Glengallan Heavy Horses



A computer generated collage of some of Qld's 2019 foals. Thanks to Maryann Geisler, Maddie Pitstock, Sioban Joly, Cameron & Kim Baird, Clare Gorwyn and Ian S-K for the photos.

Australia's Last Cobb & Co Coach Run -1924

Here are two extracts from the Australian Coach and Motor Builder from 1924 and 1925 about the last Cobb & Co coach run. The ACMB was formerly known as the Australasian Coachbuilder and Wheelwright's Journal, among many other names over time, and began its first issue in 1890, ending in the early 1950s.

Notice the bottom photo: a team of 8 with 4 in the lead, and 4 at the pole. Even for Cobb, eight was uncommon.

September 15, 1924.

THE COACH AND MOTOR BUILDER.

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THE LAST COBB'S COACH.

In a paragraph published on another page we print a suggestion made by Alderman Brooks, of Sydney, to the effect that the Federal Government should acquire, for the National Museum at Canberra, Cobb and Co.'s

mail coach, which formerly ran between Yeulba and Surat, and which has since been replaced by a motor-car.

Mr. Brooks' suggestion is worthy of commendation, but before the Government gives effect to any proposal of the kind it would be advisable to definitely ascertain whether the vehicle recommended for purchase is a true type of coach.

Cobb's mail coaches figured prominently in the early pioneering days of Australia. They supplied the recognised means of communication between early settlements which have since become our leading towns and cities. Links with the past should be retained where possible, and the Cobb coach is one of the best that could be chosen.

It is well to remember, however, that the last coach to run on any particular line may be a very different vehicle from the coach of the early days.

Since coaches were first introduced many changes have taken place. The early coaches that connected Sydney with Bathurst, and Melbourne with Ballarat and Bendigo and other great mining centres, were mounted on thoroughbraces. Though American-type vehicles, they were modelled upon prototypes popular in England in the Georgian period. In the changes that have since taken place, the old-fashioned coach has not escaped. Thirty or forty years ago, in many centres in Australia and New Zealand, the thoroughbrace coach was already being replaced by side-spring vehicles. Though known in the trade as waggonettes, or by some other name, these vehicles retained among users the old designation of "coach."

In some places in Northern Queensland and Western New South Wales the buckboard was utilised to carry passengers and mails, and wherever so used it was popularly styled "the coach." These facts point to the advisability of the Government, before purchasing the Yeulba coach, making sure that it is really deserving of its title.

Though the idea of preserving a Cobb's coach is an excellent one, it is more important to select a vehicle which is undeniably true to type than one which may have nothing more to recommend it than the claim that it is the last that served the purpose of a stage coach.

February 15, 1925.

COBB'S COACH TO BE PURCHASED.

Approval has been given by the Prime Minister, Mr. Bruce, to the request made by the Federal Capital League that the Commonwealth should purchase the last coach used in Australia by Cobb and Co. Some months ago it was learned that the coaches used by Cobb and Co., which played such a big part in the early development of Australia, were being taken off the run, and the last coach, which was used in Queensland, was replaced by a Ford car. The request was made to the Minister for Home and Territories, Senator Pearce, that the coach should be purchased and placed in the National Museum at Canberra. Senator Pearce pointed out that there was

no accommodation available at Canberra, and the request could not be entertained. The Premier of Queensland, Mr. Theodore, however, agreed that if the Commonwealth Government would make the purchase the Queensland Government would house the coach free of charge in the Brisbane Museum until such time as the Commonwealth could take it over. Cobb and Co. had a firm offer for the purchase of the coach from a private individual for £150. They have agreed to sell it to the Commonwealth for £100.



The Last Cobb's Coach in Queensland; running between Yeulba and Surat, recently replaced by motors.

Cobb & Co Reenactment 95th Anniversary Celebrations Surat to Yuleba, Qld

On 14th August 1924, Fred 'Tommy' Thompson took the reins, and drove #141, the last Cobb and Co coach and mail run in Australia, ending an amazing era. The following week, he returned on the same route between Surat and Yuleba, driving a truck.

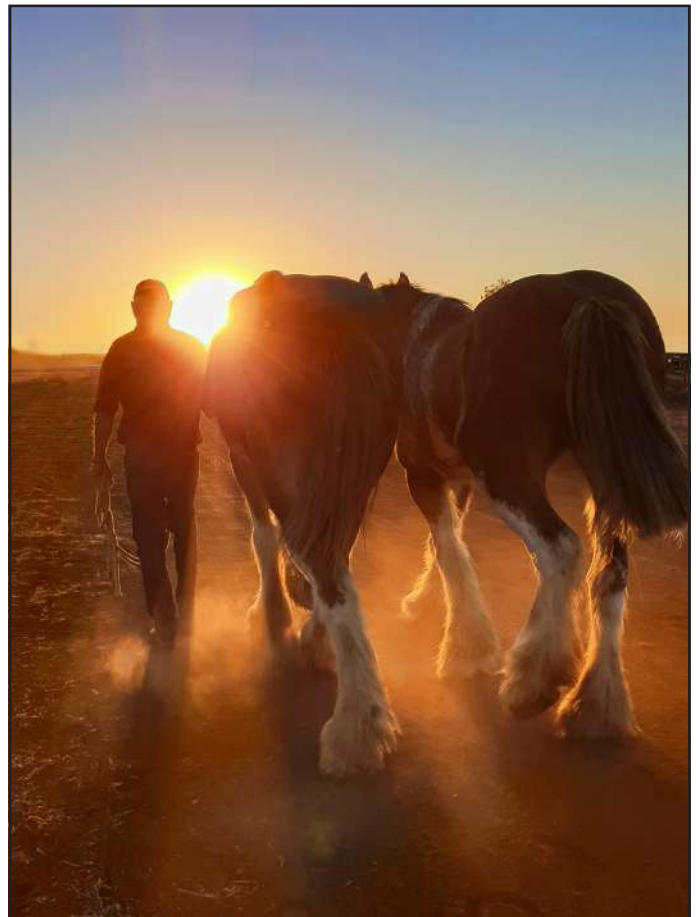
Locals in the Maranoa region have commemorated that last coach run, after the 75th, with a celebration every five years. 2019 was the 95th anniversary of the last run. The next event will be its BIG centenary trek in 2024.

At the end of August 2019, more than 2000 people camped from Surat to Yuleba and took part in the week long activities, competitions, art lessons with Kathy Ellem, bullock waggon talks and rides with Philip and Lisa Thomson, or clydie waggon rides with Kate Weldon, Millie and Molly, and Marian Bangay assisting.

The anniversary culminated with a ride or drive along the almost 80km between the two towns, stopping for organised smokos and lunches at the various old Cobb & Co changing stations along the way. Camping overnight at the halfway point, a huge country music concert was hosted. Paying public could have a ride on the Surat 'replica' coach, experiencing a hold-up with bushrangers, while the skillful hands of Don Ross helped them on their way.



Don Ross senior, and Don Ross junior with their team of five chestnuts, awaiting passengers for the coach.



Neil Hall leading Bert and Opal to find a campsite after reaching at Surat at sundown

About 200 saddle and endurance horse riders participated, along with about 30 carriages and their helpers.

Among the heavy horse and lighter carriage horse fraternity, Dave Pitstock assisted the Don Ross family with the horse changes for the big coach, Dianne and Georgia Gibson from Roma rode their pure clydie and cross the whole way, Graham Wass and Kylie Doneathy made it in sulkies, Barry and Bernadette Hall from Shepparton, Vic, came all the way up with paint horses and a small lookalike coach, Lauren Booth from Coffs Harbour with a pair of paints contented themselves to do the journey in open bridles while her travelling companions, Heidi & Scott Naylor brought a pair of minis all the way up from near Grafton to participate in this unique event.

Vicki Lawler had her pair of shetlands Anzac and Digger, (NO, they're not minis!) Lael Bruckner and others made it a family affair with sulkies in their second or third participation in these 5-year celebrations.

Reg Hodgson, whose great aunt was a passenger on that last coach in 1924, and Reg's daughter Sharron Colley joined in too. Sharron rode a hack, while

Reg recuperated from the Ekka flu, and enjoyed the scenery travelling a leg of the journey with the drover's waggonette.

Reg had planned to drive Sparky the clydesdale but an unscheduled leg injury the week before gave Sparky a reprieve.



'Lady Pearl' set up with reins and harness ready to yoke up at sunrise at the start of the 50 mile trip

Also making the effort was the Stewart-Koster family with Joan, Andrew and Ian, and joined by Neil Hall, who took a composite team of five clydesdales and 'Lady Pearl', Ian's drover's thoroughbrace waggonette out. It was not the first time for her- Doug Bunker had driven that same route in 1977 with his clydesdales, stopping for help at the Horrobin's Bainbilla Exchange. Graham Horrobin who helped Doug in 1977, was out at Surat for this 2019 reenactment and it was great to see him!

Neil and Ian harnessed the three Carseldine and two Duneske horses in the typical Cobb & Co fashion with three in the lead and two on the pole. With Ekka and other commitments in the lead up, no time had been found to practise with any of the horses as a team - only finding time to repair, and oil harness and reins, and replace six waggonette spokes, one felloe, and retyre the nearside back wheel.

Arriving on Friday night at the sports grounds a few

km from Surat, the area was filled past overflowing into the racecourse. It was filled with riders and drivers and their support crews, and another country music concert setting up. It was HUGE. People just had to find their own camp site wherever they could. Water and power might be a few hundred metres away if you were lucky. Electric fences kept most horses where they were supposed to be, but during both nights, horse, pony and/or clydesdale escapes did occur from various camps. However, no dramas ensued- and most of the culprits were ponies.

Saturday morning began with a muster near the stockyards just after sunrise, then everyone was expected to head to town and wait at about 7:30 at the Balonne River bridge for a one-time police escort across.

The clydies settled well into their role for the day within about 80 metres of starting, and were one of



Don Ross junior, driving the team of blacks from the bitumen onto a leg of dirt road, about to meet some bushrangers, below, who were seeking a coach to rob.





A prizewinning aerial shadow photo of Philip and Lisa Thomson's bullock team at the sportsgrounds at sunrise

the last carriages to get away from the sportsground. Reaching town half an hour later, the other 29 carriages, and 200 riders were still awaiting permission to hold up the traffic and cross the Balonne river.

Finally the carriage train was allowed to pass, followed by hundreds of riders, and out came the cameras-it was quite a spectacle to see them all cross the bridge, then head onto the dirt road to Frogmoor Changing Station for morning tea two hours later.

The coach, driven by Don Ross jnr, had to progress to the front, load to take the paying passengers to their meals (and robberies), then started last, overtaking the stretched-out bunch, and reaching the next meal and passenger stop ahead of most carriages and riders.

Lunch was at Bainbilla, and night was at the state forestry just above the halfway mark after a long tiring dusty day. Qld was in drought. The dust and lack of grass was very evident. Fortunately the organisers had organised a tremendous water supply at the camping grounds and throughout the forestry. Once again it was every person for themselves, as campsites and electric fences spread over several hundred acres. Support crew ferried drivers back to Surat to collect floats, trucks horse feed and swags, to bring



Lauren Booth and crew, Heidi Naylor and crew, and the Hall family from Shepparton, en route- the red dust took many washes to get out of eyes, hair and clothes!

them to the night spot. Tamar Smith was a very able taxi driver helping others in that regard.

Sunday culminated in Yuleba just after midday for those who could make it to complete the celebrations. Although quite a number of riders or drivers ferried their horses and or vehicles partway, then did only the final leg of the journey, this was an OK option for those needing an easier day, or those with smaller ponies.

All up it was a unique and memorable weekend- a lot of work to organise, and a fair distance to drive just to get there, but a totally worthwhile time. ALL participants are dead keen to be there in 2024 for the big Cobb & Co centenary drive!

Ian S-K made a Youtube video clip of about 8 minutes, explaining the significance of the event, and featuring parts of the journey, and it can be viewed via this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OEBYICjwfXA&t>



The three leaders perfectly in step, somewhat tired as they head up the Bainbilla driveway, about 32 km from the start:
Duneske Flash
Jessica, (nearside)
D.Ranger (middle)
and Carseldine Jade on the offside lead, C. Liberty and C.Opal on the pole



The driver's idyllic view of the team and reins, along the road to Frogmoor, just about to be overtaken by the coach.
The peaceful dirt road would like this for about 30 km before reaching bitumen again.



Dianne and Georgia Gibson from Roma and their clydie and clydie cross enjoyed dressing up in period costume for the occasion, riding the whole way



Joan S-K preparing a cuppa at Bainbilla Changing Station, from the tuckbox at the back of 'Lady Pearl'. The horses were unharnessed for an hour's spell, a drink and a nosebag feed. It seemed there was much curiosity and many jealous looks at the self-contained kitchen status of the old drover's waggonette!



Closeup of the camp kitchen or tuckbox, and fold-away doors and shelves, making for quick preparation of refreshments, cup of tea, or a sandwich enroute!



Did somebody say 'dust'?! It was a great, memorable weekend for all involved- can't wait for 2024! Ian S-K

Of Droughts and Flooding Rains...

We have definitely been through one of the worst droughts in Australian history – one that has been compared to the 'Federation Drought' which, given that Federation was in 1901, is now well out of living memory. It has had such an effect on many – probably all – horse owners over the past couple of years that I felt it needed to be mentioned. Not everyone's journey through it would have been the same however there are a few common denominators which most can relate to – the barren paddocks, the crippling cost of feed (and its scarcity), the dust, the smoke (and for some, the flames) and then the welcome relief of rain.

On our property, on the southern Darling Downs, we saw the drought start to take hold in 2018. Summer rain had been scant, very little (if any) run-off to fill dams and many farmers watched crops wither and die (if they had even bothered to plant). Coming out of winter, hay became scarce with big, cashed-up charities transporting B-double after B-double load of hay south, while the hay we managed to source had been brought up from South Australia. October brought us welcome rain giving us a reprieve and, thanks to some very good falls in March, 2019, we managed to scrape through well into winter.

September, 2019 was when it really hit us. For a second year in a row (previously unheard of) farmers missed out on a winter crop. Even with irrigation, the extra work and costs involved and the reduced yields per acre made it almost not worth their while. By then our paddocks were almost bare so we locked off a good percentage of the property to stop the horses denuding it completely and sacrificed the smaller paddocks closer to the house which made hand-feeding a little easier. Local towns started to run out of water, others were on severe restrictions and those on tanks faced hefty water bills – if they could afford to buy it. Thankfully our bores held well but many people spent months carting water for stock. Those of us with cattle had to make some serious decisions and many sold off most – if not all – of their herd.

The price of hay – if you could find it – sky-rocketed. Our local suppliers had long-since run out and 3x4 round bales of Rhodes grass, transported down from the Atherton Tablelands, were selling for around \$175. We managed to source large square bales of various cereal hays, brought up from Victoria and SA, which we were going through at an alarmingly rapid rate. Thankfully, our horses coped with changes of feed and this time we didn't face any losses (Other people weren't so lucky and the number of colic cases in the general horse population increased dramatically. Many wonderful horses were lost.)



The smoke-filled atmosphere from fires burning along the edge of Range (yes, it's meant to be mountains that you can see) made for some spectacular sunrises but also caused a lot of weepy, irritated eyes and dry coughs in the horses.

Stress levels rose and people went into 'survival mode'. Nothing else had much relevance at the time.

Our life revolved around feeding and managing horses (which became the equivalent of a full-time job) and making sure we had enough paid work to afford the ever-increasing feed bills. Compounding this was the smoke and/or dust-filled atmosphere – and the flies. I tried hard not to complain about the smoke because others were so much worse off and at no time were we under any threat of fire; but day after day of sore eyes and an irritated throat began to drag you down further. The days when the wind changed and cleared the smoke, which was mainly to the

east and south of us, it brought with it dust and we would watch yet more of our topsoil carried away. At times, feeding out hay was virtually impossible as the wind was so strong it just blew it away before the horses had more than a few mouthfuls.

Christmas was very quiet last year. The forecast rain did not eventuate for us (others were luckier) and for a while it seemed that 2020 was not going to get much better... and then it started to rain. By mid-January we were getting some useful falls – not heavy enough to cause damage as happened to some people - but enough to start the grass growing. Perfect follow-up rain in early February brought on a massive crop of weeds followed by grass - mainly urochloa (liverseed) -



Foals were born into increasingly barren landscapes



Green grass everywhere

Show season for us started and ironically, our local show was cancelled due to wet weather. We managed to get two outings in and a week before Warwick Show... along came Covid-19... and that is history still in the making.

Clare Gorwyn – Glengallan Heavy Horses

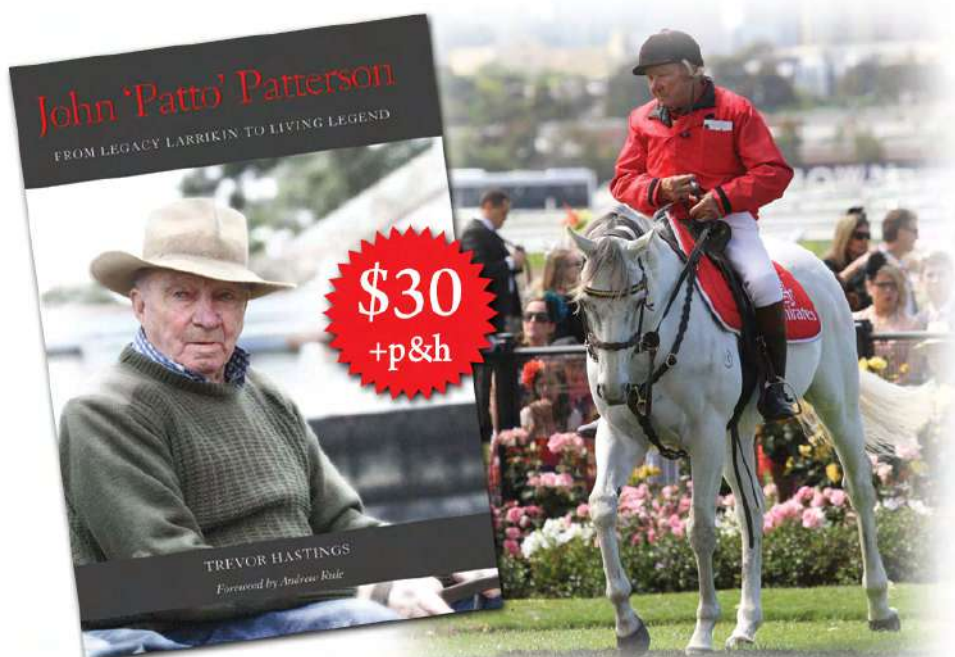
Below: Flooding on the Glengallan flats after wonderful February rain

Below right: The inevitable MUD



The very green summer grass (left) gives way to our autumn/winter grasses (above) which we hope will see them through the months ahead. A bit more rain now would be nice.

BOOK REVIEWS



John 'Patto' Patterson by Trevor Hastings

'Patto' to all who know him is an all-round gifted horseman, arguably the most respected and well-known in Victoria. His talents saw him become the state's pre-eminent horse-breaker, an extraordinarily successful and game-changing competitor at the Royal Melbourne Show, a master teacher, and a distinguished Chief Clerk of the Course for forty-five years, overseeing many Melbourne Cup Races.

A Legacy child, at school he excelled most at truancy. Ever the larrikin he was caught stealing from a train at fourteen. But then he moved to Melbourne to become an apprentice jockey and everything changed.

Patto's rough and gruff character and his wicked wit belie a heart of gold. His story, captured with much warmth by Trevor Hastings, is one of endurance and grit, passion, generosity and humour. There are good reasons why Patto is known as a living legend.

There are other clerks of the course and horse-breakers, of course, but Patto is to his profession what his late friend Roy Higgins and Bart Cummings were to theirs ... a master.

Patto is an Australian original, one of a shrinking number of authentic characters not just in racing, but also in every walk of life.

From heavy horse perspective, Johnny Patterson has broken in more clydies for others, than perhaps any

other person, and has competed *par excellence* in break classes at Melbourne Royal for decades.

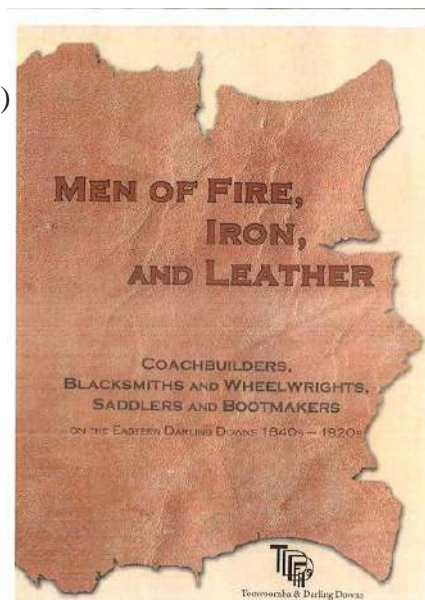
This new 240 page book is available from the author Trevor Hastings: 0427 279 500
or email hastingsct1066@gmail.com,
or from Noel Wiltshire 03 5867 3223

Men of Fire, Iron and Leather

gathers the history of 60 coachbuilders, blacksmiths and wheelwrights, saddlers and bootmakers across the 19th and early 20th centuries in and around Toowoomba.

It is available from the Toowoomba and Darling Downs Family History Research Centre, 452 South Street, Harristown (beside the cemetery) at a cost of \$20.

The Centre is open Monday to Friday 10am to 3pm. To order email tddfhs@westnet.com.au or phone (07) 4634 7377.



New Zealand Agricultural Show, Canterbury Park, 13th – 14th November 2019

Nicky Ehrich



**Champion Mare and Supreme Exhibit
Woodbury Goldie (Jim and Deborah Cook)**

Pictured here with Right to left
Judge Nicky Ehrich, Geraldine Cook, and Kylie
Northcott Trainee Judge

It was an absolute pleasure and honour to be asked to judge at the Canterbury Show.

I arrived the day before the show on an early morning flight landing at 1am to be greeted by wonderful rain, considering we had not seen or heard it for quite a while in Oz.

With a free day I spent my time exploring beautiful Christchurch, I just could not believe how green it was.

Show day – I was picked up by mini bus and transported to the showgrounds, where I was greeted by my steward and trainee judge (Kylie Northcott). I have to add the grass in the arena was SOOOO GREEN, it took all my strength not to take my shoes off and rub my feet on it.

First class of the day was best presented horse and handler, 14 beautifully presented horses and handlers lined up for me to look at, it was a tough job they were all so beautifully presented.



Donnybrook Adele (Erewhon station) with her filly foal Erewhon Alice.

1st – Brood mare in foal or foal at foot & Reserve
Champion Mare.

Best Presented Clydesdale Horse and Handler (14)

- 1) Langnevin Mack (Murray Lang)
- 2) Woodbury Goldie (Jim and Deborah Cook)
- 3) Ashtencroft Ciaran (JM & NE White)
- 4) Woodbury Conway (Jim and Deborah Cook)

Entire Horse 3 Years and Over (1)

- 1) Dayboo Oliver (John Booth)

Colt 2 Year Old (3)

- 1) Erewhon Master (Erewhon Station)
- 2) Peraki Clyde (Pauline Patullo)
- 3) Erewhon Rex (Erewhon Station)



Colt Yearling (2)

- 1) Goldenlane George (Alan Vliet Vlieland)
- 2) Erewhon Andy (Erewhon Station)

Champion Entire Clydesdale: *Goldenlane George (Alan and Margo Vliet Vlieland)*

Reserve Champion Entire Clydesdale: *Erewhon Andy (Erewhon Station)*



Goldenlane George (Alan and Margo VlietVlieland)

1st Yearling Colt, Champion Entire Clydesdale

Brood Mare, 4 years and over, foal at foot or in foal due before 31st Jan (2)

- 1) Donnybrook Adele (Erewhon Station)
- 2) Erewhon Ceri (Erewhon Station)

Mare not to foal in current season 4 years and over (6)

- 1) Woodbury Goldie (Jim and Deborah Cook)
- 2) Glen Lie Maggie (Erewhon Station)
- 3) Goldenlane Jessie (Alan Vliet Vlieland)
- 4) Glen Lie Rebecca (Susanna Izard)

Mare, 3 year old (1)

- 1) Gradhach Ceilidh (JM & NZ White)

Filly 2 year old (4)

- 1) Erewhon Amelia (Erewhon Station)
- 2) Erewhon Libby (Erewhon Station)
- 3) Hazelgrove Gwendolen (Nicole Todd)
- 4) Sanna Lodge Iona Peigie (Rowan Bartlett)

Filly Yearling (1)

- 1) Erewhon Miley (Erewhon Station)

Champion Clydesdale Mare or Filly: *Woodbury Goldie (Jim and Deborah Cook)*

Reserve Champion Clydesdale Mare or Filly: *Donnybrook Adele (Erewhon Station)*

Supreme Champion Clydesdale: *Woodbury Goldie (Jim and Deborah Cook)*

Best Yearling or 2 Year old Colt or Filly, bred by exhibitor (10)

- 1) Goldenlane George (Alan & Margo Vliet Vlieland)
- 2) Erewhon Amelia (Erewhon Station)
- 3) Peraki Clyde (Pauline Patullo)
- 4) Erewhon Andy (Erewhon Station)

Gelding, Any Age (8)

- 1) Langnevin Mack (Murray Lang)
- 2) Donnybrook Tyler (Erewhon Station)
- 3) Erewhon Ben (Erewhon Station)
- 4) Ashtencroft Ciaran (JM & NE White)

Best Walking Clydesdale (17)

- 1) Woodbury Goldie (Jim and Deborah Cook)
- 2) Langnevin Mack (Murray Lang)
- 3) Golden Lane Jessie (Alan Vliet Vlieland)
- 4) Goldenlane George (Margo Vliet Vlieland)

Best Handler in Clydesdale Section – Geraldine Cook

Best groomed and Decorated Clydesdale (3)

- 1) Ashtencroft Ciaran (JM & NE White)
- 2) Dayboo Samuel (John Booth)
- 3) Dayboo Anja (John Booth)



Once the judging was over the day was followed by a fabulous friendly get together and BBQ dinner, and auction of donated goods with all exhibitors in the marquee, which is organised by the Canterbury Clydesdale Club.

Such a wonderful atmosphere, and friendly crowd of exhibitors, stewards, family and friends.

I was made to feel very welcome.

My judges remarks, I was very impressed by the turnout of horses and the effort gone into their beautifully presented horses.

I was very taken by the Champion Mare and will keep a keen interest in how the Champion Colt goes in coming years.

I also noted that I was impressed by the top geldings in their line-up

DAY 2 – HARNESS, RIDDEN, AND GROUND DRIVEN CLASSES



Erin Casey - driving one of the Erehon geldings through the slide obstacle course



Alan VlietVlieland, driving Goldenlane Nicki through the keyhole.

Sledge Driving Class (12)

- 1) Donnybrook Connor (Erehon Station)
- 2) Dayboo Anja (John Booth)
- 3) Erehon Sam (Erehon Station)
- 4) Erehon Ben (Erehon Station)

Single Horse in a Wheeled Vehicle (3)

- 1) Erehon Mackenzie (Rebecca Stewart)
- 2) Goldenlane Nicki (Alan Vliet Vlieland)
- 3) Ashtencroft Ciaran (JM & NE White)



1st Single Horse in a wheeled vehicle
Erehon MacKenzie (Rebecca Stewart)



Alan VlietVlieland – driving Goldenlane Nicki.

Pair of Horses or 3 abreast in a wheeled vehicle (1)

- 1) Mack and Duke (Murray Lang)



Murray Land driving Mack and Duke



John Booth – 4 Horse team.



Erin Casey – driving Erehon Station 5 horse team

Team of Horses, Two or more rows in a wheeled vehicle (3)

- 1) John Booth – 4 Horse team
- 2) Erehon Station – 5 Horse team
- 3) Erehon Station – 5 Horse Team



All Lady riders waiting for instructions for ridden class, which involved an individual workout and obstacle course involving backing through poles and a small jump which every horse completed. I was very impressed by all the riders.

Ridden Clydesdale Class (7)

- 1) Erewhon Mackenzie (Rebecca Stewart)
- 2) Erewhon Sam (Ridden by Sophie Allan)
- 3) Erewhon Susannah (Sarah Nesbitt)
- 4) Glen Lie Rebecca (Ridden By Cate Smith)

Erewhon station, but that is going to be another trip in the future when I have more time, I would love Graham to see the beautiful country that NZ is, he had to stay home because of the drought. But hopefully now we have had rain we can visit NZ in the near future.



Rebecca Stewart riding Erewhon Mckenzie

I would like to acknowledge photos used in this article from Sophie Allan, Valerie Lang, Jamie Winter and others from Canterbury Clydesdale Club FB page.



Great View for myself and Kylie during the parade on the back of Murray and Valerie Langs lorry.

In closing I would like to say thank you to everyone that made me feel so welcome while I was in NZ. I enjoyed meeting all the exhibitors and judging their lovely horses.

It is so nice to see all the exhibitors getting along well and gathering together in the evening after the showing for a good old laugh and conversation. I don't have enough room to thank everyone in name but I would like to thank Alan and Margo for arranging for me to visit a few studs and breeders on the day following the show. I had a lovely day travelling around to the different studs. I would have loved to visited



Just to show I did earn my keep in NZ here I am setting up the obstacle course