

JOHN TENNANT.

John's earliest memory of being around horses was around the age of 3 years when he would sit on a wall and talk to a thoroughbred that belonged to an Uncle. From around the mid 1960's John and his Father bred and successfully raced several thoroughbreds with a couple of their mares eventually being used to breed partbred Connemaras.

April 1951 was the beginning of John's career in the South Australian Police Force which took him to many points of the compass around this State. In 1977 John became a Commissioned Officer and was Officer in charge of the Mounted Division from 1979 until his retirement from the Force in 1989.

John married Pat, the love of his life, in 1953 with this union producing three children. John and Pat are now the very proud and devoted Grandparents to six Grandchildren who give them a tremendous amount of pleasure.

Not long before John retired, John and Pat bought 20 acres of land a stone's throw out of Gawler where they built their home and set up for horses. Rupari Stud began with the purchase of two pony mares that were sent to Barwidgee Target and Noorookoo Harry. The decision was made in 1981 to obtain a purebred Connemara so John rang "M" Kelly who told him she had exactly what he was looking for in the 2 year old colt, Barwidgee Samite. Sammy was bought, sight unseen, and quickly established himself as part of the family and a firm favourite until his death in 2002. Aran Vasari was John's first purebred mare and dam of the stallion, Rupari Ronan by B. Samite. Over the years John bred several partbred and purebred Connemaras until eventually selling the non-Connemara mares and concentrating on only purebreds.

Having a very clear voice over a microphone, plus very good knowledge of most disciplines of the horse world, John was much sort after as announcer at many functions including Gawler 3 day Event, a position held for 20 plus years, horse trials, showjumping, and Agricultural Shows. Although scaling down John still announces as a few shows to help out.

Over the years John has also held positions of President, Vice President or Committee member of many horse related Committees. John has also lectured on Equine Studies Courses at Tafe and Roseworthy Agricultural College.

1990 saw John elected onto the Committee of the Connemara Pony Breeders Society of Australasia (New Zealand was at that time included in our Stud Book) and after a brief stint as Vice President John became President of the Society in 1991, a position held until October 2005. During his time in office, John has worked tirelessly and at his own expense travelled to Ireland seven times to attend the Annual Meetings of the Connemara Pony Breeders Society to put forward Australia's thoughts and requests. One huge achievement was John's continued and very determined fight to get the Irish to allow Australia to include blue eyed creams into the Sports Section of our Stud Book. This was no mean feat with the Irish being extremely prejudiced against the BEC's.

John was elected President of the International Committee of the Connemara Pony Society in 2001, a position he still holds.

Early this year the big decision was made to disband Rupari Connemara Pony Stud and sell the property due to ongoing family health. One reasonably local family who were more than happy with a pony they bought from John for their young daughters were approached to take an older mare plus a 2 yr old filly which they were happy to do, Aran Vasari, well into her 20's and no longer breeding was put down, and the stallion, Rupari Ronan, leased to Ingrid, Phillip and Claire Rowe of Newlands Stud in Victoria. With the property selling very quickly to a neighbour John and Pat found

themselves very busy looking at houses and finally settled on a lovely home in Gawler very close to all the necessary facilities.

With no animals to attend to John is enjoying being able to spend more time with Pat, keenly follow one of his grandson's career as a talented cricketer, and his other grandchildren's various activities. John should be very proud of what he has achieved during his time as President of the CPBSA as I am sure we all, the members, are justifiably proud of him.