

THE SUPERIOR INTELLIGENCE OF THE CONNEMARA PONY

On peaceful Saturday mornings we often let our three horses out to pick along the 400metre driveway of the rental property where we live, as no-one tends to show up on those days.

However, on Saturday 11 June a person visited the property and left the top gate open. The horses were stirred up by the visit of the unfamiliar vehicle and went running down the driveway, with the adrenalin up. The Anglo-Arab led the charge with the Thoroughbred in close pursuit and the Connemara running along for the fun of it too. The Anglo saw the gate open and thought "Whoopee, lets see where this goes," as he led the other two out of the driveway. They ran a further 300 metres to the Bruce Highway, which is a section of the NUMBER ONE HIGHWAY AROUND AUSTRALIA. At this point, the Anglo and the Thoroughbred were running on pure adrenalin and they proceeded to run across the four-lane highway and down the road, where luckily they turned off the highway onto a more peaceful road. One really amazing part of the story is that we found them both safe and well a few kilometres away. And the other incredible part of the story is that Finnegan, the Connemara, stopped and turned at the highway and ran back home. He actually turned his back on his paddock mates as they ran across the highway and decided for himself to run for home. Our neighbour's little boy actually saw him turn around and gallop for home.

I don't know if Finnegan was too afraid of the highway (being still only three years old he hasn't had a lot of exposure to traffic), but irrespective of whether it was fear that turned him back or not, it shows a capacity to think for himself and an independence of mind. It is a rare horse that would leave its paddock mates when they were all running around having a jaunt.

I have that rare horse and I am extremely proud of his good sense and ability to think for himself. By the time I've finished telling this story to everyone, they will all want a Connemara!

Anne Winning