

ANNUAL REPORT

CONNEMARA PONY BREEDERS SOCIETY AUSTRALIA INC

YEAR 2003 -2004

The 33rd Annual report of the Connemara Pony Breeders Society Australia Inc. for the year 2003 – 2004, is, contrary to that of last year and is one the Committee feels it can be a little more enthusiastic about. The Insurance situation was resolved and Activity groups were again out and about in enjoying their ponies in showing, jumping, in harness and generally letting the public see what a wonderful pony we breed.

This year the Insurance situation has changed slightly in that we are now affiliated with the Federal Body of the EFA and not the SA branch of the EFA. Insurance fees will rise slightly because of this and more importantly the Committee has to submit a Risk management program for approval BEFORE we can be accepted for cover.

Committee is putting together a program similar to that set out in the national Code of Conduct program. It must indicate ALL events that Action groups and the Society will hold; the management program to ensure safety of Horses, riders, spectators, Clothing and riding gear required etc. A little more effort, a little more thought from members, judges, spectators and riders but we are able to have activity days and obtain cover, and that is the basic action that we follow.

Committee has spent time this year looking at the regulations under which we work and taken steps to make things a little easier, more workable and to help relieve the pressure of the Secretary. Some of the changes will appear in this newsletter.

The Website has been of concern to us all. We have taken steps to remove the site from the University system where constant changes in their management had members frequently not being able to access the site. We shall soon have our own domain, easier access and a Manager who will be responsible for the general control. We intend to have all ponies for sale on the list, have the newsletter available on the site (A cost savings to the Society in postage) and access to all overseas Societies. Whilst this will be at a cost, Committee feels that savings in other areas will off set this problem.

The Society passport has been finalised and accepted by the CPBS and the ICCPS and issue of this document in Australia will begin shortly. Committee has been concerned that some of the members who have sold ponies etc have been lost from the Society and we will introduced a “Fellowship Group” system (still working on the name etc) at a fee of \$20 per person in an attempt to have the experience, thoughts and ideas of past members, owners, breeders and interested persons retained and available for comments and support within the organisation. Committee expects to be able to provide the newsletter, seek ideas from these members, keep them informed etc and thus retain their expertise and interest within the Connemara pony group.

As you know, DNA testing can now be done through pony hair from the mane etc. and this is a big savings for those members who are distanced from veterinarians. The Melbourne group that has been providing our DNA testing has closed and the work will now be continued from Brisbane.

Many of you will be pleased to know that the CPBS, after consistent pressure from the CPBSA has now agreed to include the BEC mares in their newly formatted Stud Book. This Stud book has been drafted to overcome problems within the EC Council and is yet to be accepted by the Irish Government and the EC.

The CPBS is however working on it as from this year's inspections. This acceptance is for BEC mares only and they will be entered in Class 3 of the Mares Classification system. The second generation female progeny, once passed will be included in the Stud book under class 1. This is very strongly welcomed by the ICCPS member Societies and the CPBSA can accept a large section of the praise there from for its efforts in making this acceptance occur. The progeny of Incest bred matings are also included in these new sections.

The job descriptions for State and federal representatives have been reviewed and re introduced to the new Committee. Members should see a greater contact with the Committee as a result of this program, and, the secretary should have a reduced work load as a result. The Job descriptions will be re published in the next news letter and members are asked to read these carefully and re direct many of your questions, etc through the new channels. Closer liaison means closer contact and better understanding; it will also mean an easier work load for a secretary who spends a far greater time on Connemara business than she is paid for.

Committee has discussed a draft plan to vary the regulations covering the five section of the Stud Book. This plan is a concept only. Yet, it covers some areas wherein problems with inclusion in some areas have been evident. It looks at broadening the entry requirements of some ponies and the provisions of systems whereby ponies, including Geldings could become a most viable asset for the overseas markets.

This draft will have further work performed on it and then Committee will be able to talk to you as members and gauge your ideas re the future possibility of applying the material to the CPBSA regulations. In making this concept available to you for thought, it should not be dismissed as just more changes and restrictions. Rather it would, I believe, provide the answer to a number of problems with entry into the stud book; it would bring back to the Stud Book some ponies now resting in the Sports section and bring the CPBSA well in front of what is seen as inevitable changes that will occur overseas in the future. Something of this nature and a greater use of the CPBSA website to promote our ponies will give future Owners and Breeders access to markets which are going to develop overseas, particularly in the USA and Canada.

Finally as President of the CPBSA I welcome to the Committee Garry Johnson Queensland, Zita Denholm New South Wales, Ingrid Rowe Victoria, Jo Woods Tasmania, Jo Longman Western Australia and John Dawkins South Australia. I am sure that these new members will be an asset to you as members of the Society and that they will approach their tasks with enthusiasm and work to benefit the membership generally and in particularly the Connemara pony in Australia.

On your behalf I thank Anne BUSH, Keith Swan and James Crowley for their untiring efforts in the promotion of the Pony during their terms in office. All three of these members have given their unique, individual ideas and efforts for many years in support of you as members and the Connemara pony. We wish them well in their future outside of the Society, but, each has indicated that will continue to support and help if and when their skills are needed. THANK YOU ANNE, KEITH AND JAMES.

Finally I make mention of the ill health of two of our members during the past year. Sally Withers, Committee member for many years and a breeder of quality Connemara ponies, had a very serious bout of ill health but she is now back on deck again and continuing her activities on the farm and supporting her husband in his work with the cattle Industry. Christa Jones, current Committee member, was also struck down with a nasty problem and Christa was quite ill for some time. I am please to say that she too is on the way back to normal activities, but it will take some time and we wish her well and continuing improvement.

With a new committee, and hopefully a renewed surge of energy for the Connemara Pony it is hoped that the CPBSA will continue to develop with the one aim of ensuring that the Standard of Excellence of the Connemara Pony world wide is maintained and that those organisations or groups that are eroding that standard will be checked or see the error of their ways and the Pony that we all love so much will continue to be the Unique pony that Michael O'Malley so strongly fought to maintain and develop early in the last century.

John Tennant
President CPBSA
Chair ICCPS