

ANNUAL REPORT

CONNEMARA PONY BREEDERS SOCIETY AUSTRALIA INC.

YEAR 2004 – 2005

The 34th Annual report of the Connemara pony breeders Society Australia Inc. for the period 2004 – 2005 is a mixed bag. It contains I believe, some positive areas in which strong progress has been made, whilst on the reverse side there are some areas in which the Society as a whole needs to work collectively together to improve practices and procedures.

Insurance, which has always been a problem for Past and present Committees has again raised its head. The Policy premium has risen yet again to \$3700 for the coming season. This equates to \$26.50 per member. Committee, action groups and members will have to look at how this policy can be retained and how the Society can continue to provide the service, as it obviously must, with the fact that increases in the Policy appear to be an ongoing problem.

Last year it was mentioned that the movement of paper work when ponies were sold, transferred or died was slower than regulations required with the consequent complaints to the secretary that the return of papers, transfers to new owners etc. were being delayed. A number of complaints this year re slow movement of paper work revealed that this delay in the movement of papers from owners to the Secretary still exists. The secretary is bound by the Regulations on many of the issues and is answerable to Committee if variations were found, thus unless Paper work, which includes letters, Newsletter items, transfers etc are not received, on time, delayed or in fact not included in E Mails the work cannot proceed. I would ask therefore that you all follow the Regulations re the paper work on sales, transfers etc; that material for Newsletters etc. be fully checked to see that "Attachments" are in fact included and if you feel a delay is there PLEASE ring the secretariat to determine that material is in the office or why the delay exists BEFORE a complaint is sounded.

Another matter which is causing concern to the Committee is that of members NOT bringing their concerns, ideas etc to the State representatives so that these areas can be addressed, answered or brought to Committee for information or correction. If Committee is not aware then concerns etc cannot be addressed. The Policy of this and past Committees has always been an open door to members. It has been said that Committees are elected to represent the members; if they, the Committee, are NOT kept in form then it becomes a difficult task to achieve.

In other areas such as Jo Heard trophy and the merit award scheme, these duties were disbursed to Committee to aid the secretary with her work and members should make contact with this Sub Committee when action is needed in these areas. The full work load of all Committee and Sub Committees will be printed in the next Newsletter for member information.

This year the Committee has launched a major review of a number of procedures, publications etc. A major review of the Inspection process is partially completed. Committee has looked at Procedures from a number of Equine Societies; it has looked at practices of those Societies forming part of the ICCPS and the Mother Society. The final draft of the Inspection package will be available for member comment.

The Information Booklet is almost ready for reprint. The Stud Directory also is near completion. The Website has been upgraded and as I write this report, a further upgrade is being taken by Bob Plummer. We must, as a Committee and Society members, thank Bob for his continuing support in this area. Many of the members do not realise how much work Bob puts into the Secretariat, at no cost to the Society. Similarly our Secretary Vicki is to be thanked for her work. You should be aware that Vicki is paid for 5 hours per week by the Society and both she and Bob would spend much greater time than this to ensure that the Society's work is maintained as required.

Committee has also reviewed Regulations and with the advent of DNA and its implications, amendments have been made to provide better access to the Stud book.

Work was also required to ensure a better system of DNA sampling and our work is now processed through the Australian Stud Book system by the Queensland University. The system to determine Genetic Colour has also been put into place with the Queensland University.

Committee has also pursued the genetic Evaluation of the Australian Connemara herd by Ms. Feeley. This report has now been finalised, some technical matters have been received and the final report is expected at any time. Committee has also strongly fought for the availability of the data base of the Connemara pony breeding. This was discussed at again for the 4th year running at Clifden this year. An anonymous grant to have the project launched was announced at Clifden and the process of standardisation of programs, the cleaning of records etc will begin and it is hoped that the material will be available within 1 year. The cost factor of annual upgrades to the system will be discussed later.

Also for the fourth year, Committee has again forced a discussion on the Dun/Buckskin naming system and the BEC progeny of this colour with the International group and the CPBS.

It would appear that the Mother Society and the majority of the EU groups do not see the usage of the term dun where the genetic evaluation is Buckskin as a problem nor the need to change the colour term. The CPBSA Committee will now move alone on the issue and bring to members a system to ensure that progeny from Dun and Buckskin ponies are correctly recorded within the Australian Stud Book.

Committee has varied its decision to cut the number of newsletters from 4 to 3 and will return to the 4 issues per year. This means that members will be asked to have a greater input of stories etc to enable material to be available for the 4 copies per year.

The promotion and development of the Connemara pony within Australia and thus its demand for Export to overseas countries is seen as prime target for this Society to consider and work for. The thoughts and ideas from members should be strongly sought, discussed and developed within the framework of Overseas rules and requirements to ensure that the breeders and owners of the Connemara pony in Australia can develop their programs accordingly. First to provide quality ponies within Australia and second, through these ideas continue the development of a quality pony that is sought after from for overseas markets.

If the EU Council directives to the EU Community are not changed, Ponies from Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States will be the only ponies developed to a Standard of Excellence agreed to by all Connemara Pony groups world wide and of a higher standard than can be found elsewhere, even within the Mother Country. Perhaps this could be an incentive for a greater lift in enthusiasm, effort and understanding within the CPBSA and a legacy for the new breeder of tomorrow.

John Tennant
President.