

# ‘The Infinitive History of Veterinary Practice in Scone’

*Aka ‘Hippomedon Hyperbole’ and/or ‘Nomius Nexus’*



Andrew Murray Bain

‘Hippomedon Hyperbole’

Author:

W. P. Howey

## CONTENTS

## Dedication

I wish to dedicate this book in infinite perpetuity to:

*Morag and Fiona*

W. P. Howey  
Author

Foreword

Judy White



## Acknowledgements

There are hundreds if not thousands of people I would like to or should thank for assisting me in this 'Herculean' task! Does that sound like hyperbole? Well, hype at least! Perhaps I should 'begin at the beginning' which is a good place to start something and work forward while hoping and praying not to miss anyone! This is of course impossible and I offer my profound, sincere and abject apology if any person has been inadvertently slighted in any way! I assure you it is by error rather than by design. Then of course there might be some who would rather not have been included in the pantheon and might have chosen omission if given the choice and then there are those who would be greatly relieved by exclusion!

The inspiration came initially from my professional association with the two major pioneer protagonists Andrew Murray Bain and Frank Leslie Williams. Judy White provided impetus by requesting a contribution to what would have been a 'Bicentennial Book' in 1988! It's only taken twenty years approximately Judy! John Reginald George Morgan and Richard Nairn Fraser may never have consciously perceived themselves in 'inspiring mode' but they both did well to stay alive during 'construction'. Jackie Druery painstakingly typed the original hand written manuscript of my interview with Frank Williams in 1986 which provided the background to the discourse. I gratefully acknowledge her superlative hieroglyphic deciphering dexterity as well as her immaculate typing skills. Jeannie Crawford and Carolind Pike/Strong were both willingly forthcoming when asked for information and are themselves 'pioneers' in their field. I am greatly indebted to close friends and racing journalists in the late Bert Lillye and extant Brian Russell for their writings on Murray in particular by the former and myself by the latter! I promise this was not the journalistic equivalent of 'cash for comment'!

The following people are also included in no particular chronology, clandestine pecking order or value ranking: Ross and Paul Williams, Mace, Morag and Fiona Bain, Julie Rose, David Warden, Anne Quain/Fawcett, Shona Murphy, Ron Jeffries, Harley Walden, Cliff Ellis, Archie and Betty Shepherd, Bev Adams, Don Scott, John and Doug Bryden, Pat and Frank Farrell, Tim Henderson, Jim and Shirley Gibson, Cathy Finlayson, George Bowman, Lorraine Skinner, David Bath, Alan Simson, Mark Wylie, Jamie Barnes, the late 'Bim' Thompson, Tom and Audrey Payne, Nan Tooth, John Paradise, Alan Anderson, Chris Winter, Rita Newman, Helen Sinclair, Treve Williams, Tom Hungerford, Hilton Cope, 'Carrot' Bowen, 'Blue' Brotherton, Trish Searle, The Scone Advocate, The Thoroughbred Press, The Australian Bloodhorse Review, Anne McMullin for the onerous task of indexing. Lastly I owe an unencumbered debt of gratitude to my lovely wife of over 30 years Sarah who has not only endured my irascibility for that long but also the internecine vicissitudes of this production!

## References:

The Star Kingdom Story by Peter Pring: The Thoroughbred Press, Sydney  
The Australian Bloodhorse Review, April 1995: Richmond NSW  
The Spirit Within – Scone's Racing History by Harley Walden: Hunter Valley Printing  
The Scone Advocate, Supplement 29 August 1996: Rural Press  
Backstage of Racing by Bert Lillye: John Fairfax Marketing  
Horses in the Hunter by Judy White: The Seven Press, Scone  
Australian Country Style, December 2005: The Federal Publishing Company  
The Inn; The Dentists and The School; Mace Bain, Roger Humphreys BDS and Gillian Blandford Hayes: Federation Publication No. 2, Published by Scone and Upper Hunter Historical Society  
The Veterinarian, July 2002: [www.theveterinarian.com.au](http://www.theveterinarian.com.au)

# ‘The Infinitive History of Veterinary Practice in Scone’

*Aka ‘Hippomedon Hyperbole’ and/or ‘Nomius Nexus’*

## Introduction

It’s been a long time coming – and even longer in the making!

The concept for this ‘history’ has been multi-factorial and eventually it’s happened. I am indebted to Judy White for writing the foreword and also for providing some of the impetus and acting as a catalyst for its production. As Judy well knows writing is no easy task! However Judy is ideally suited to provide objective commentary on the unfolding scenario having lived the era and known its original protagonists. Additionally she has an almost incestuous if not nepotistic relationship to the profession with a son-in-law as a member of the cadre.

I have divided the book into sections and some are from ‘left field’. Having deliberated on the name I have decided on ‘The Infinitive History of Veterinary Practice of Scone’. In this context I adduce ‘infinitive’ as an adjective [‘The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English’] and pertaining to ‘boundless, endless or very great’ because it is only the beginning! This is based largely on the memory of the late Frank Williams and I trust is factually accurate. I had played with the idea of ‘Nomius Nexus’ where ‘Nomius’ is ‘guardian of the flocks’ in deep Greek mythology and ‘nexus’ is a ‘bond, link or connection’. I also toyed with ‘Hippomedon Hyperbole’ where ‘Hippomedon’ is ‘lord of horses’ and ‘hyperbole’ is just that – exaggerated! There are elements of both. I felt the former related more to Frank and the latter to Murray!

Then there are sections on ‘Pioneer Profiles’, ‘Testimonial Tributes’, ‘Anecdotal Reflections’, ‘Culture Shocks’, ‘Philosophical Perspectives’, ‘Unreliable Anecdotes’ and ‘Philosophical Peregrinations’. This provides adequate license to write almost anything – and I have done just that! Where I have ‘plagiarized, plundered or purloined’ from other usually more erudite sources this is duly acknowledged. Some of the views expressed are ‘subjective’ but I accept total responsibility for anything and everything printed and/or published. Inevitably there are elements of autobiographical subjectivity, solipsism and sophistry but I have tried to limit ‘talking about oneself’ and describe the ‘bigger picture’.

I have provided an ‘Executive Summary’ as a ‘leader’ which also forms part of the introduction.

W. P. Howey  
01/01/06

## Executive Summary

### History of Veterinary Practice in Scone

Established Veterinary Practice in Scone embraces a period of over 50 years beginning in 1949/1950. Prior to that time there had been a number of 'visiting' veterinarians who travelled from Sydney and serviced the needs of a few established thoroughbred studs notably Kia Ora and Widden. Major Norman Larkin from Bondi Junction was one of these early peripatetic pioneers who originally came to Widden after graduation in the mid 1930's. After war service he recommenced his journeys to the Upper Hunter and with admirable prescience recognised an emerging 'window of opportunity' to provide a local service in the area. In 1949 he appointed army colleague Frank Williams as the inaugural incipient veterinarian based in Scone. NZ based Scots graduate Murray Bain had delivered a scientific paper at the AVA Conference in Sydney in 1948 and also came to the area. He returned in 1950 to join Norman Larkin and Frank Williams in partnership. For geographic and other reasons this tenuous union did not last and Murray and Frank struck out on their own account soon to be joined by recent 'Kiwi' Sydney Graduate Jack Francis. Jack was initially employed as private veterinarian at Sledmere Stud. The Bain, Williams and Francis era was to endure and dominate for almost 25 years although not as a single entity or with a unique identity. The 'second era' may be loosely defined as the Morgan/Howey/Fraser entity of the last quarter of the century.

In the early 1960's John Bryden and later Treve Williams [later AJC Chairman] joined the team subsequently to sequester into two units: Bain and Partners and Williams and Francis. The former concentrated on thoroughbred stud and cattle work while the latter dealt primarily with dairy and beef cattle as well as stud and other horses. For a brief period in the mid 60's Murray Bain and Percy Sykes of Randwick formed a union as Sykes, Bain and Partners in an attempt to 'marry' thoroughbred stud and stable practice. The union was short lived and a somewhat acrimonious 'divorce' ensued! Murray found himself as divorcee 'in limbo' when John and Treve elected to join Percy in Sydney. Peter Beiers was with Murray from 1965 – 1967 before pursuing other veterinary interests and later a career in medicine. With commendable foresight and brilliant strategic planning Murray established the first private rural veterinary diagnostic laboratory in Australia in Scone in 1965. Shona Murphy arrived from NZ via Camden to fill the new position at the clinical pathology facility. Male domination of the varying facets of veterinary practice was to be progressively challenged from this time ultimately culminating in the reverse situation extant today! Until this time veterinary practice in all its facets other than administration was almost 100% male dominated. The pendulum has swung in the inchoate 21<sup>st</sup>. century to an approximate 80% female majority.

While all this was happening to Murray, Frank and Jack attracted first EFA and 1964 Tokyo Olympic veterinarian Norman Judge and 'new' graduate Angus Cunningham to their 'opposition' team. Norman left for the USA from 1968 – 1970 and Geoff Adams arrived from the Riverina as his replacement. Dr. John Egloff from the USA provided 'seasonal' assistance while resident at Widden. Jack Francis returned to Sydney essentially to secure better secondary education for his young family. Angus also set off for 'greener pastures' initially in Armidale and later rural Victoria. Marshall Thornton was employed as 'ingenue' veterinarian by Frank and Geoff to fill the gap left by their departing professional colleagues. With strong nepotistic family connections

David Parry-Okeden arrived soon after graduation as resident veterinarian at Widden while also fulfilling his obligations as a conscripted national serviceman in Papua/New Guinea. The Widden Valley always features very prominently in any discussion involving veterinary practice in Scone although the practice headquarters shifted within town from Liverpool/Main Street to 'Chivers', Main Street, Kelly Street, 'The Top Block' and back to Liverpool Street [2 locations].

Meanwhile Murray was pursuing a new strategy of employing imported ['shuttle'] veterinarians from the UK mainly from his *alma mater* the Royal (Dick) Veterinary College of the University of Edinburgh. Beginning with Murray and for over 50 years veterinary graduates from this venerable academic institution have been working continuously in Scone. There have been as many as four at varying times. James Crouch from Newmarket spent the 1967 spring breeding season in Scone supported by a Horse Race Betting Levy Board Scholarship. Bill Howey and Richard Greenwood also arrived at this time. Bill was to stay while Richard subsequently returned to a stellar career in Newmarket, UK. John Morgan 'shuttled' from that location in 1968 and emigrated permanently with his family in 1969. First Tony Parker and then Nairn Fraser with Warren McLaren made up the 'Bain Team'. The first female employees were Wendy Paul/Miller/Lapointe [Locum 1971] and then Sue McCubbery [Assistant 1973]. Angus Campbell also joined the fray at this time. Current PGFVS Director Michele Cotton was the initial female undergraduate student. Murray had a distinctive proclivity for young, nubile, attractive and alluring lascivious females! Murray's untimely and tragically early death in March 1974 heralded the next significant 'era' of veterinary practice during the 'ultimate quarter' of the twentieth century.

The Morgan/Howey/Fraser partnership endured from 1974 for most of the remainder of the dwindling century. Recognising the folly of prolonged vituperation Frank Williams was invited to rejoin the 'new union' although Geoff Adams remained independent. Many outstanding veterinarians including Bill Stewart, Jamie Barnes, Alan Simson, Paul Adams, Nigel Scott, Mark Wylie and Jim Rodger enlarged, enriched and enhanced the team from this time. Many of these were also 'reverse shuttle' veterinarians who returned or recycled to the Northern Hemisphere and were in great demand in practices and studs in Ireland, England, France and the USA notably Lexington, Kentucky. At about this time the practice reached its geographical zenith with regular services being provided from the Horton Valley, Barraba in the north to Kulnura, Central Coast in the south. This is about equivalent to the full geographical extent of England. The western extremity began to contract from Mudgee and Coolah as veterinary services became available from these locations. In the late 1980's when the number of brood mares in the ASB 'peaked' at about 48,000 the Morgan/Howey/Fraser partnership had on its 'books' more thoroughbred mares than there were in England and Ireland combined at about 10,000. The practice also supplied services to Lawn Hill Station [owned by the Mackay family] in the Gulf Country when the BTEC scheme was operational. Sue McCubbery spent a hectic winter in the north in 1974. 'International' contributions [Nigel Scott] were made in Papua New Guinea on behalf of the 'Rosemount' interests of Bob Oatley.

One other by product of this period of growth was to help in repelling the very real possibility that Mudgee would evolve as the acknowledged centre of thoroughbred breeding in NSW and Australia. This situation was very much 'in the balance' with the egress of some major national and international breeding establishments in the Mudgee/Gulgong area. One impediment to the universal acceptance of this development was the relative 'minority' of veterinary services close to

the action around Mudgee. The other 'portent of doom' successfully resisted was the assumption that private 'on stud' veterinarians would prevail. While most major thoroughbred breeding operations retain one or more 'employed' veterinarians there is still the great need - and demand - for specialist services provided only by large 'cooperative' practices. This situation is equivalent to that found in the other major thoroughbred breeding regions throughout the globe and one suspects it is 'here to stay'.

Scone Veterinary Hospital was to emerge from this period of unprecedented growth in the thoroughbred breeding industry as the largest veterinary practices in Australia [and indeed one of the biggest in the world] and one of the 'elite' of its type on an international scale. While a 'break away' practice evolved at Scone Veterinary Hospital consolidated its global position providing expert services in surgery, imaging diagnostics, intensive foal care as well as all other facets of rural veterinary practice. Concomitant with the embellishment of veterinary services has been the emergence of astral careers in equine veterinary nursing. Beginning with pioneer Jeannie Crawford there has been a long 'continuum' succession of outstanding nursing practitioners with eclectic skills. Again the established principle of 'dual hemisphere shuttle' has accelerated the development of these 'new age' professionals including Carolind Pike [Strong] and Sascha McWilliam. Administration, management and supervision also endured the pangs of drastic expansion, revision and overhaul. Lorraine Skinner, Marge Gillett, Jackie Druery and Jan Brabant were 'solid foundation rocks' on which the 'administration governance' edifice was constructed. John Flaherty's unique combination of skills enabled the gradual evolution of the 'bricks and mortar' construction component to flourish under his expert tutelage. The companion animal specialist area demanded more detailed attention from the time visiting shuttle veterinarian spouse Helen Eaton-Evans developed this sector in the 'Jubilee Clap' season of 1977. Her successors have been Patricia Wilkinson/Carney and notably Jenny Jenkins. Facilities for companion animal care have evolved in 25 years from non-existent ['ridiculous'] to superlative ['sublime'].

The final decile of the 20<sup>th</sup>. Century heralded the era of increasing specialisation. Large animal [equine] surgery was the great growth spectacular where there are now several specialist equine surgeons operating in pristine facilities. There used to be none. The largest Neonatal Intensive Foal Care Unit in the Southern Hemisphere evolved at 'Clovelly Stables' with Karon Hoffmann the initial driving force. Catherine Chicken and latterly Jane Axon have nurtured the 'baby giant' into its current pre-eminent position. This spectacular growth could not have happened without a concomitant rise in the evolution of specialist veterinary nurses and/or foal care attendants. At all times the unit at Clovelly has been supported by an annual influx of equally dedicated professionals from northern climes mainly the USA.

At the time of writing [23/12/05] there have been approximately 180 veterinarians operating short or long term in Scone over a 50+year period from 1950. At present there are some 30+ veterinarians employed at various locations including Denman in a total work force exceeding 90. Many are specialists in their field. This figure does not include those engaged in private practice at Scone Veterinary Clinic or individuals employed on local studs. The cohort today is vastly different to the 'hard working, fast driving, hard playing, fast living and hard drinking good old 'rigger buggers' of yesteryear! The gender, generic and genetic core has endured a paradigm shift from the 'good old boys' to the 'precious pumpkins'.

There is no doubt veterinary practice and veterinarians in Scone have had enormous social, scientific, economic and cultural impact on the community, town and district as a whole. It is not inconceivable that over a fifty-year period veterinary practice has contributed in excess of \$120 million to local coffers and this figure is rising exponentially. This has come from income generated via 'thoroughbred' clientele resident intrastate, interstate and internationally. Because 'so many veterinarians have come from so far' they have imported with them rich diversity with lasting edifying and intellectual legacies for posterity. These will endure for as long as their superlative skills and expert services are required. The 'veterinary industry' has emerged as one of the major businesses in the town and district and a 'jewel in the crown'. I think it is fair to claim that health services available for animals in 2005 might even challenge or rival those offered in human care? This could not have been claimed in 1950! Having outgrown its present premises the vast new expansion heralded for Scone Veterinary Hospital in 2006/2007 is the harbinger of the next great era!

### **'Nomius Nexus' and/or 'Hippomedon Hyperbole'**

[Gr. Mythology: Nomius = 'Guardian of the Flocks'. Hippomedon = 'Lord of Horses']

## **The Definitive History of Veterinary Practice in Scone and the Upper Hunter**

This is the accurate chronology of the history of veterinary practice in Scone as resourced from the various interviews, letters, press cuttings and ‘reflections’. I vouchsafe for its ‘purity’ and equivocate about its veritable ‘veracity’? I think it is pretty well right? I have called it ‘definitive’ in that it defines the people, the time and the places. The rich tapestry surrounding the bigger picture is encapsulated elsewhere within the ‘infinite’ boundaries.

### **Background**

Fortuitously and perhaps presciently I recorded the following interview with then extant colleague Frank Williams on February 26, 1987. I had conceived the idea of recording for posterity a history of veterinary service in the Scone area and this was further promulgated by Judy White’s suggestion for a ‘Bicentenary Book’ to be published in time for celebrations in 1988. It has been a very long incubation period and prolonged confinement! Let’s hope the eventual ‘birth’ and delivery makes it all worthwhile! It was painfully evident that Frank’s good health was waning at this time and this fact expedited the importance of recording in some form the ‘anecdotal reflections’ of someone who had seen it all and ‘lived the life’. Frank was just the person and I dedicate this portion to the memory of this fine man and his family. His great personal contribution and ‘sacrifice’ is acknowledged elsewhere.

I did not use a tape recorder and wrote down in hurried barely legible long hand the essential elements of our conversation and deliberations. I turned for assistance not for the first time to exquisite typist Jackie Druery who laboriously and painstakingly ‘deciphered’ the mass of barely intelligible hieroglyphics and committed it to type. Thank you Jackie – yet again! Frank was invited to ‘edit’ the product and did so also making further additions, subtractions and adding some embellishments. I supplied this ‘concatenated’ document to one time employee Cathy Finlayson when she worked as a journalist. The content formed the background for Cathy’s article which appeared as a supplement to ‘The Scone Advocate’ and published on Thursday, August 29, 1996. Cathy’s title was: ‘A History of Care for All Creatures Great and Small’ which has a nice heroic ‘James Herriott’ ring to it. It encompassed the history and also a detailed descriptor of Scone Veterinary Hospital at that time. I wish to thank and acknowledge Cathy and ‘The Scone Advocate’ for their combined contribution.

The adaptation appearing here uses ‘unedited’ comments originally related by Frank but ‘retrieved’ by him on further deliberation and perusal. Enough time has passed and Frank is no longer with us. I think the ‘warts and all’ version presents a more valid account unencumbered by ‘fragile sensitivities’. The intention is ‘to tell it as it really was’ and I think it is now safe and expedient to do so! Some of the dialogue later crosses over to the author’s monologue.



## **Pre-Second World War [<1939]**

Mr. Viv Davis of Sydney had established a liaison with Mr. Bert Riddle who was Manager of Kia Ora Stud. This association dated back to their 'trotting days' in Newcastle. As a result Mr. Davis used to visit Kia Ora periodically.

At this time in the late 1920's or early 1930's a recent graduate Mr. E. N. Larkin had been employed 'on a pittance' by Mr. John Stewart of J. R. Stewart and Sons of Randwick. Mr. Stewart had an association with Mr. A. H. Thompson of Widden following which he made infrequent visits to Widden Stud with his young assistant. Apparently he always insisted on opening the gates. Unsubstantiated rumour has it he liked a 'small swig' from his hip flask especially on cold winter mornings! The 36 gates between Scone and Widden must have proved some marathon of endurance as well as in maintaining sobriety! Possibly because of the arduous nature of these journeys and potential 'injury to health' Mr. E. N. Larkin was established as resident veterinarian at Widden for a few years in the early 1930's. It was at this time that Mr. Larkin developed a very strong affinity with the late Mr. Frank Thompson who was schoolboy then.

## **Post WWII [>1945]**

Mr. Joe Berryman later to be QTC veterinarian in Brisbane had been employed as Veterinary Stock Inspector with the Pastures Protection Board. However he had little contact with horse studs and left soon after cessation of the war. A non-graduate Registered Veterinarian Mr. Brown had been previously practicing in Scone. According to the late Mr. Walter Singleton he had a unique method of anaesthesia which may or may not have included a stout piece of 4" x 3". A bitch was presented with advanced mammary tumours and 'anaesthesia' applied. On enquiry it was revealed the operation was wholly successful but 'the bitch failed to recover from the anaesthetic'. Accidents still do occur but techniques have certainly improved!

In about 1947 – 1948 Mr. Rex Hartwell as a veterinary trainee to the NSW Department of Agriculture arrived in Scone. He was bonded for \$1000 [500 pounds] to the Department. Rumour has it that the late Mr. W. J. ('Knockout') Smith of St. Aubins bought out his bond and installed him as resident veterinarian at St. Aubins Stud. For a short period he also operated a part time veterinary practice with messages to be taken by the Chemist. Rex Hartwell was the first **graduate** veterinarian to practice in Scone.

From about 1945 the now Major E. N. Larkin had established himself as a thoroughbred breeder. He further developed his association with Frank Thompson and other Committee Members of the NSW Thoroughbred Breeders Association. He began to provide a service to studs in the Upper Hunter on a Tuesday to Friday basis from his home base at Bondi Junction. These studs included Widden, Tinagroo, Oak Range, Kia Ora, Sledmere, Alabama, Segenhoe, Baramul, Carrington, Holbrook, Oakleigh and Woodlands. On Monday nights Major Larkin conducted the 'unofficial' jockey's apprentice school at Randwick. On Saturdays he had to be back in Sydney for the races although still in an 'unofficial' capacity.

Major Larkin then traveled to the UK at the behest of the NSW Thoroughbred Breeders Association to learn and develop new techniques. These methods had been 'discovered' by Mr. Frank Thompson on a visit to the USA where he met the famous veterinarian Dr. Dimock in Kentucky. Major Larkin met up with Mr. Fred Day in Newmarket and Dr. John Burkhardt of the Animal Health Trust. These two people respectively developed manual pregnancy testing of brood mares and hormone therapy in sub-fertile animals. Major Larkin also used his time to purchase stallions on behalf of clients notably Mr. George Christmas [Oak Range] and Mr. Syd White [Carrington].

As a result of Major Larkin's expeditions it was decided to employ a competent graduate veterinarian based in Scone to provide a local service to Hunter valley horse studs. Mr. Frank Williams who had met Major Larkin in army service was appointed to the position. Frank Williams moved to Scone with spouse Beth and small sons Ross and Paul in 1949.

At about this time some NSW Thoroughbred Breeders had visited New Zealand where Mr. Seton Otway of the famous Trelawney Stud at Cambridge was the major force. Amongst others Trelawney stood 'Foxbridge' who was the 'Sir Tristram' of his day. Mr. Otway recommended a young Scottish veterinarian Andrew Murray Bain who was then employed at Sir James Fletcher's 'Alton Lodge' Stud.

Murray Bain after graduation in Edinburgh in 1937 practiced in Hereford UK for two years and then joined the army. Six years were spent with cavalry in the Middle East and Italy. Close friendships developed with several UK horse identities. After demobilization ex-Major Bain spent nine months at Claiborne Stud, Lexington, Kentucky, USA with Mr. A. B. 'Bull' Hancock and Dr. Sager, resident veterinarian. Claiborne was where the late Dr. E. A. Caslick did much of his work and his brother Dr. W. Caslick was also resident in 1948. The following three years were spent at Alton Lodge, New Zealand.

In 1948 Murray was special guest speaker at an ordinary general meeting of the NSW Division of the Australian Veterinary Association. This meeting was held at the Veterinary School of the University of Sydney on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup>. April 1948. It was attended by 27 members, 2 student members and 5 visitors. The President was Mr. D. F. Stewart of Randwick and several eminent veterinarians were present including Norman Larkin, Professor Stewart, Doug Blood, Professor Larsen and Bill Monk who was later STC veterinarian. The title of Murray's talk was 'Problems Associated with Infertility in the Brood Mare'. He adduced his experiences in Kentucky and New Zealand, cited Fred Day of Newmarket and dealt with oestrus detection, teasing, optimum time of mating, speculum examinations, variations in the oestrus cycle, infections of the genital tract and breeding hygiene. The content of the talk was riveting and surely prescient knowledge which still makes very good sense today? A record of the discussion period makes fascinating reading! One suspects the long internecine period of philosophical and polemic division between Norman Larkin and Murray Bain began about this time! Perhaps Murray deduced that his premier 'competition' on this side of the Tasman was 'deficient'?

In 1950 Murray and new spouse Mace visited NSW and in particular the Upper Hunter Valley. They stayed at Eaton's Hotel in Muswellbrook on this trip but decided Scone was preferable. As a result of this visit Murray Bain joined Frank Williams to form the Larkin, Bain and Williams Partnership. Mr. Larkin was based in Sydney and Frank and Murray in Scone.

### **1950's – 1960's**

Due to geographic and other factors the Larkin/Bain/Williams association was soon dissolved and Bain and Williams established practice in Scone on their own account. Mr. Reg Killock was at this time employed as resident veterinarian by Mr. Maurice 'Morrie' Point at Sledmere. Reg's father had trained the great galloper 'Beauford' in Newcastle for W. H. Mackay of 'Tinagroo'. Reg Killock was replaced at Sledmere by Jack Francis in about 1954.

Mr. Killock was invited to join Bain and Williams but did not stay in Scone and Jack was 'persuaded' to join Murray and Frank to form Bain, Williams and Francis in the mid-1950's. This practice was based at 'Chivers' and proved to be a very successful union for a number of years.



*St Aubins Arms, the Bain family home  
Photograph by David Croaker, 1968*

### **'Chivers' in 1968**

The 'practice' operated out of facilities at the rear of the main homestead.  
Access was from the NEH via a road at the far right of the picture.

Some of the main opposition came from lay-operators with 'bush-vet' skills and were often highly competent and quasi-scientific. Notable amongst these was the late Mr. Scott Johnston of 'Tyrone' and 'notoriously' the late Mr. Cliff Duncombe of 'Kingsfield'. Reg Watts was a proficient castrator.

Bob Titcher, a graduate veterinarian of Singleton, also practiced in the Valley and did some work for Lionel Israel at 'Segenhoe'. Peter Dawkins established a practice in Muswellbrook as part of a mainly dairy conglomerate including Singleton and Maitland..

### **1960 – 1970's**

Bain, Williams and Francis were joined by John Bryden in the early 60's. Not long after the single veterinary practice was divided, not without acrimony, into two partnerships. These were Williams and Francis, and Bain and Bryden.

### **Williams and Partners: 1960's – 1970's.**

After division Frank and Jack were joined by Norman Judge, formerly of Maitland and also EFA and Olympic veterinarian. Angus Cunningham also served as assistant. The practice was based in Main Street.



88 Main Street

Norman Judge left to go to Texas A & M University, Austin, Texas, USA from 1968 – 1970. Geoff Adams came as replacement at that time. Other part-time or visiting



veterinarians and assistants were Marshall Thornton, David Parry-Okeden and notable tobacco chewing *aficionado* Dr. John Egloff (USA) in 1968. Early in the 1970's Frank Williams' long time association with Widden Stud came temporarily to an end.

### **Bain and Partners: 1960's – 1967**

After splitting from the old partnership with Williams and Francis, Murray Bain formed an association with Percy Sykes who had made a significant reputation for himself at Randwick. This became Sykes, Bain and Partners with John Bryden and later Treve Williams in Scone with Murray Bain. For reasons very similar to the Larkin-Bain-Williams conflict division was inevitable. Sykes and Bain parted company in the mid 1960's. John Bryden and Treve Williams elected to go to Sydney with Sykes. Peter Beiers joined Murray Bain as assistant in 1965 and stayed until 1967.

### **Bain and Associates: 1967 – 1974**

This practice was based at 'Grazcos' in Kelly Street. This later became Rose, McCallum and McCallum and Company (and today is McCallum Inglis).



Kelly Street looking due north

The 'old' Bain and Associates was housed in the building on the right shown as McCallum and Company. It was formerly known as 'Grazcos'

The Coffee Club Inn [*aka* 'Wounded Buffalo'] was in the Potter McQueen building. The 'hole-in-the-wall' gang occupied the flats directly opposite in the 1960's and 1970's.

James Crouch, on a Horse Race Betting Levy Board Scholarship from the UK, arrived in Scone in August 1967 for about four months. Shortly after Bill Howey and Richard Greenwood came to Scone as assistants to Murray Bain. Hank Anderson (USA) also spent 18 months with Murray between 1968 and 1969. In 1968 John Morgan was sent from Newmarket, UK as visiting assistant. John returned permanently with Sally and

family in 1968. Together with John Egloff at Frank Williams this formed the harbinger for the 'shuttle' veterinary program now extant between the two hemispheres. Ray Gooley acted as locum assistant in 1970 while Bill Howey accompanied the 'Baramul' mares to America.

Wendy Paul (later Miller & Lapointe) spent a short time as locum assistant also before pursuing an academic career. Wendy was the very first female veterinary employee albeit for a short time only. Tony Parker ('The Sheikh') joined Murray, Bill, Richard, and John from 1970 – 1974. Nairn Fraser and Warren McLaren ('Vulgorilla') arrived in 1971, Warren for a short time only. Angus Campbell joined the practice in 1972 followed by Bill Stewart (NZ) in 1973 with Sue McCubbery. Sue was the inaugural full-time female veterinarian employed in the Valley. This was quite an event at the time and Sue was certainly 'pioneer' material. About this time Murray became seriously ill and a partnership formed, Murray Bain and Partners including John Morgan, Bill Howey, Tony Parker and Nairn Fraser. Murray died in March 1974. This era marked the most prodigious period of growth of almost any practice anywhere at any time. The exponential expansion was more or less matched by an equivalent contraction in the other Scone practice.

#### **Morgan, Howey, Fraser and Partners: 1974 – 1977**

After Murray's death a new partnership was formed which had various names culminating with that above. Ray Gooley who had been a locum in Scone in 1970 returned as partner following four years as Manager of Narrung Stud, South Australia. Hugh White and Jamie Barnes arrived soon after with Jim Rodger (UK 1977), Alan Simson (1978) and Nigel Scott (1979).

#### **Murrurundi and Merriwa**

During this period Ray Biffin established a private practice in Murrurundi having worked for brother-in-law Ian Knight in Quirindi. Rick Cheatham did the same in Merriwa. They were initially branches of already established practices in respectively Quirindi and Coolah. There was also 'territorial' encroachment from Mudgee. Essentially the geographic area once covered by the 'Scone pioneers' began to diminish. This was no bad thing because the distances traveled were extraordinary and frequently involved average annual mileages of 70,000+ much of it on unsealed roads. This represented gradual inevitable 'encroachment' into traditional 'Scone' veterinary territory from all angles. Perhaps it is timely to remember when Vic Cole set up in Dubbo in 1945 he traveled as far as Sandy Hollow! Whose territory?

#### **Union: 1978 - 1990**

During the early 1970's Frank Williams moved his premises from 88 Main Street to Liverpool Street from where Chris Winter now operates his barbers shop. In 1977 Morgan, Howey, Fraser and Partners also 'shifted camp' to the present premises at 106 Liverpool Street. Very soon the benefits of 'union' between the two practices became

apparent. In early 1978 Frank, Bill, John and others agreed they should merge. Frank joined as Senior Consultant within the one large practice essentially going the 'full circle'. Geoff Adams had in the meantime branched out on his own operating from his home base 'Sans Tache' Stud at Dry Creek, Parkville.



Morgan, Howey, Fraser and Partners  
This later emerged as Scone Veterinary Hospital

Patricia Wilkinson (now Carney) responded to advertisement and came to Scone a small animal 'specialist'. Paul Adams and Bruce Young arrived in 1980 with Bruce only staying a short period. Mark Wylie (1981) and Jenny Jenkins (1983) completed the personnel at this time.





‘As serious as it gets’!

Dual Hemisphere ‘Shuttle Vets’ Angus Campbell, Nigel Scott and Alan Simson

Eminent academics and veterinarians of international calibre to have visited Scone include Professor Des Fielden [NZ], Professor John Hughes [USA], Professor Bill Pickett [USA], Professor Harold Drudge [USA], Professor Leo Jeffcott [UK], Professor W. R. ‘Twink’ Allen [UK], Dr. John Hughes [Ireland], Professor Peter Rossdale [UK], Professor Jim Becht [USA] and many more in recent times.

Frank Williams is actually the founder of private veterinary practice in Scone having arrived as the first permanent resident graduate veterinarian in 1949. He was very proud of this fact and viewed subsequent developments with great satisfaction. The growth of private veterinary practice has been very closely intertwined with the expansion of the thoroughbred industry in the Upper Hunter especially in the environs of Scone and the Widden Valley. There has always been a unique association between Scone veterinarians and the Widden Valley Studs. Services have been provided throughout the Upper Hunter District covering the whole of the territory now embraced within the Upper Hunter Shire boundaries. Historically this was an even greater area and included Mudgee, Coolah and the Liverpool Plains to the north.

On one day in the late 1980’s John Morgan was servicing a regular client in the Upper Horton Valley near Barraba while Angus Campbell was at routine call to a Stud at Kulnura near Gosford. I estimated that this was an area approximately the length and breadth of England! In addition I have been with Murray Bain on consultations to Delungra in the New England and Boorooma in the Southern Tablelands. Nigel Scott and Jim Rodger worked as ‘delegates’ in Papua New Guinea while Sue McCubbery was involved in a large scale BTEC eradication program for the Mackay family at Lawn Hill Station in the Gulf Country in the mid 1970’s. In the heady halcyon days of tax evasion schemes John Morgan and Shona Murphy were also involved with a group known as



‘Brighton Nominees’ and provided out-of-season advice and service to selected Studs in Ireland. All these services were provided under the aegis of the Scone Veterinary Practice.

### **Scone Veterinary Hospital [SVH]: 1990 – 1999**

Scone Veterinary Hospital in one form or another has maintained its identity at 106 Liverpool Street since 1977 and represents the longest period of prolonged ‘inhabitation’ by any of the various practices since inception. It has been an excellent facility and undergone and survived a number of ‘metamorphoses’ in both personnel and renovation. It has been augmented by the evolution of ‘Clovelly Stables’ and complemented by the establishing of Denman Veterinary Clinic in Ogilvie Street, Denman. There has always been a ‘presence’ at Widden Stud. SVH has by now earned iconic status as one of the world’s great equine veterinary practices. It is replicated in only a few areas of the globe notably Newmarket in the UK and Lexington, Kentucky in the USA.

The range of facilities provided far exceeds those available in the ‘early days’ and with new and ever developing technology is well out of the range of the ‘pocket’ of other than large group practices or ‘cooperatives’. I always aspired to see the fruition of such a natural development and it has happened although my own input waned somewhat for intense personal reasons towards the end of the first 50 year period.

As veterinary science especially surgical techniques rapidly develop along with technological advances so ever greater demands are made on learning and the provision of adequate diagnostic procedures and facilities. Unlike human medicine and surgery these have to be provided in the ‘market place’ and within normal practice financial scope. Due to media and other exposure the general public has far greater expectations of what should be provided although the willingness or ability to pay may not be of equal proportion!



Scone Veterinary Hospital 1996

Part of the team (back) Pual Adams, John Flaherty, Andy Palmer, Angus Campbell, Gaye Lucas and (front) Jeannie Crawford, Margie McEwin, Sascha McWilliam, Catherine Chicken, Jo Holt, Cheryl Hugo

The following is a practice profile for mid 1990's:

## SCONE VETERINARY HOSPITAL

26 Ogilvie Street  
DENMAN NSW 2328  
Tel: (065) 47 2222  
Fax: (065) 47 2887

PO BOX 280  
SCONE NSW 2337

106 Liverpool Street  
SCONE NSW 2337  
Tel: (065) 45 1333  
Fax: (065) 45 2903

International Code: Tel: (61) (65) 45 1333 Fax: (61) (65) 45 2903

### Practice Profile

The Scone Veterinary Hospital (SVH) was established in its existing form over 30 years ago and has continuously serviced the thoroughbred studs in the Hunter Valley until the present day. These studs vary from small one stallion operations to highly commercial enterprises standing up to 10 International Stallions.

During the breeding season the practice is responsible for the reproductive performance and welfare of more than 6000 mares and 100 stallions in addition to the care of some 4000 foals. Also, there are about 500 horses in work and 1000 yearlings being prepared for sale.

The expertise necessary to attend to this volume and diverse nature of requirements is well met within the practice. The senior partners have over 20 years experience each in Australia as well as New Zealand and the major thoroughbred breeding areas of Ireland, the UK and the USA. The majority have completed post graduate examinations in equine medicine.

The younger associate members are encouraged and supervised to attain excellence in their professional ability to cover all aspects required of them by the most discerning of clients. This is achieved by "hands on" experience and in arranged exchanges with northern hemisphere high profile equine practices. They are encouraged to further expand their knowledge in presenting for membership of the Australian College of Veterinary Scientists by examination in equine medicine.

It would be possible to supply a veterinarian from within this group who would satisfy your requirements. Additionally, there would be instantly available referral and consultative advice. For more serious or complicated matters, a senior 'specialist' could personally attend at short notice.

Remuneration for such an undertaking will require serious consideration and evaluation. However, this can be achieved if the above proposal is favourably considered.

Please communicate all correspondence to the Practice Manager at the address and/or Tel/Fax numbers above.

## Personnel

### Professional - Veterinary - Partners

Dr. A. C. Campbell  
Dr. P. L. E. Adams  
Dr. A. C. Palmer  
Dr. R. M. Wylie

### Professional -Veterinary - Associates

Dr. C. Chicken  
Dr. M-M. McEwen  
Dr. G. Mitchell  
Dr. L. Brown  
Dr. C. Collins

### Professional - Veterinary - Consultants

Dr. W. P. Howey  
Dr. R. N. Fraser

### Para-Professional - Veterinary Nurses

Jeannie Crawford  
Carolind Pike  
Sacha McWilliam

Cathy Finlayson had intimate knowledge of the practice at this time and its personnel having worked as a veterinary nurse, in industry and also administration. I acknowledge Cathy's input into the following debate and discussion purloined - as usual – from the supplement to the Scone Advocate prepared by Cathy and which appeared on Thursday, August 29, 1996.

### **‘Developing and Growing’**

### **‘A History of Care for All Creatures Great and Small’ - August 1996**

According to Angus Campbell the success of the practice is all to do with providing service thus echoing his late father-in-law Murray Bain who always stated *ad infinitum* 'provide the service and you get the work'. "We've stuck to it through thick and thin and have stuck to the basics," he said. "It's all about providing service. If you provide the service you get the business. We have survived." Do I detect a nice subtle mildly Freudian differential between Angus's statement and Murray's?

Former partner John Morgan said there have been no downsides, just highlights. "It's been very satisfying," he said. "We're successful because the people involved like doing it. That's the essence of it."

The development and growth of SVH does not appear to have been affected by the 'absconding' of Sandy Racklyeft to establish Satur Veterinary Clinic. The following is a synopsis of the range of facilities provided updated to 2005\* and counting.

### **Laboratory**

The diagnostic laboratory has been absolutely fundamental to the provision of veterinary services and has more than anything else underpinned the success of the venture emphasizing Murray's far reaching prescient vision. Shona Murphy arrived in Scone in 1965 to set up a laboratory at the Scone practice and since that time it has been recognized as a world class facility.

Over the years the service provided by this department has been extremely beneficial. In 1977 Shona identified the CEM bacterium [Contagious Equine Metritis] which caused infertility in mares and stallions. According to Bill Howey very few people at the time would have had the skill and knowledge to be able to grow and identify this bacterium.

Because of this identification any occurrence of CEM in the Hunter Valley (which was suspected to have been brought in by imported stallions) was "quickly jumped on and eliminated", preventing serious outbreaks similar to those experienced in the northern hemisphere the previous year.

For a time since 1993 the laboratory was run as an independent unit under the direction of Dr. Angela Begg. It was known as Scone Diagnostic Veterinary Laboratory and was relocated to the new Hunter Valley Equine Research Centre adjacent to the race track. The laboratory was returned to SVH when Angela left the Upper Hunter in the early 2000's where it continues to provide a comprehensive 24/7 laboratory and pathology service.

### **Companion Animal Department**

In 1978 Patricia ('Trish') Carney [nee Wilkinson] came to the practice as an assistant in the laboratory but soon the need for a full-time small animal veterinarian became apparent. Helen Eaton-Evans with small son Thomas lived in the flat above the office while spouse Bill was shuttle vet in the 1977 season. Helen was a veterinarian who

offered to do a few small animal consultations. The outcome was a clientele who wanted this service! At the time small animal facilities were basic as were nursing staff. Trish did everything from autoclaving to accounts and said she was really “Jack of all trades”.

Jenny Jenkins took over from Trish in the mid 1980's and stayed for several years. Prior to Margie McEwen taking over in 1994, vets working in this department included Sandy Racklyeft and Selena Graham.

The small or companion animal department has developed into a modern and well equipped part of the practice and now has an X-Ray and hospital and surgical unit with 24-hour emergency service.

### **Surgery and X-Ray Department**

A major advancement was the building of the large animal surgery and X-Ray department in 1986-87. Prior to this the majority of elective surgery cases were sent to Sydney. The establishment of this facility has provided the industry with a very valuable service.

Today, the surgery at Scone Veterinary Hospital is well equipped. It is world class in terms of surgical procedures and offers anything from orthopaedic surgery to arthroscopes, elective caesarean sections and colic surgery. With the facilities at nearby Clovelly to provide neonatal attention and post-surgery hospitalization, after-care of these patients could not be better.

Senior surgeon and partner in the practice Paul Adams said he is proud of the way the surgery facilities are developing and looks forward to expanding the facility even further next year with the services of a specialist surgeon.



Senior Surgeon Paul Adams scrubs up for large animal surgery





‘Gun’ surgeon Paul Adams

Paul lifted surgery to ‘new heights’ when the equine surgery was constructed



Surgeon Mark Wylie studies X-Rays

### **Denman Veterinary Clinic**

With the Scone practice going from strength to strength and also the thoroughbred industry the need to expand became evident. In order to service the Widden Valley and Denman area more efficiently the Scone practice opened a clinic in Denman in 1988 which was headed by Jim Rodger. The clinic has grown and there are now five vets plus the auxiliary staff based in Denman.

The Denman clinic provides a range of services including: large animal veterinary practice – equine and bovine medicine, surgery and reproductive management, small animal clinic, surgery and hospitalization, drug and merchandise supplies, provides veterinary services to Jerrys Plains, Martindale, Denman and surrounds, Muswellbrook and the Widden Valley.

### **Class ‘A’ Hospital Classification**

In 1990 the Scone practice upgraded its facilities to qualify as a Class ‘A’ Hospital which is the highest classification under the Board of Veterinary Surgeons in NSW. To have this classification approved a number of specifications had to be met. These included the provision of fully qualified and professional staff, be able to provide equipment and facilities for large and small animal medicine, surgery, hospitalisation and intensive care on a 24-hour basis for both large and small animals and have isolation facilities.

### **Foal Intensive Care Unit**

The Scone Veterinary Hospital’s Foal Intensive Care Unit at ‘Clovelly Stables’ hits top gear every year from August when the first of the foals are born and provides an invaluable service. The unit was built in 1990 and since that time has seen an increasing number of sick horses. In 1995 the staff at the unit treated 120 sick foals and 40 adult horses.



Catherine Chicken in the ‘early days’  
1995 VRC Oaks Winner ‘Saleous’ was an illustrious ‘graduate’ from ‘Clovelly’





Foal unit head nurse Carolind Pike, work experience student Greer Schoenfelder and Foal Intensive Care Vet Catherine Chicken treat a premature foal

The unit operates from August through to January and not only caters for local horses but is also a referral centre drawing horses from a large area which takes in Tamworth, Quirindi, Maitland, Newcastle and Mudgee. The unit is staffed by Dr. Catherine Chicken and her team of local and international nurses who work around the clock to provide their patients with the best possible care.

“The unit provides a great service,” Dr. Chicken said, “Many studs do not have the time or the manpower to provide the care that these horses and foals need.”

The foal unit is both cost and labour intensive and while the practice aims to cover costs the service that is provided is invaluable.

The Foal Intensive Care Unit is the first privately owned and operated unit of its kind in Australia and since its inception, a wealth of experience has been gained, placing the unit on a world par with percentages of successful outcomes.





### **International Connections**

Many overseas and visiting assistants have worked in the various Scone practices and the more recently developed Denman Veterinary Clinic. Apart from the early ‘pioneers’ between 1967 and 1987 these have included Richard Greenwood (UK - who returned for a ‘season’ in 1972), Joe O’Donnell (Ireland), John Noonan, Terry Lowis (Canada), Sheila Laverty (Ireland), Andrew Edgar (UK), James Crowhurst (UK), Bill and Helen Eaton-Evans, David Dugdale (UK), Paul Ferguson (UK), Evan Campbell, Janet Fraser (UK), Mark Buckerfield, Robyn Woodward, Euan Haith (UK), Adam Hittamnn (NZ), Selena Graham, Peter and Jane Gorman, Sandy Racklyeft, Angela Begg, Karon Hoffmann and Karim Kooros (Brunei).

The majority of these were ‘exchange assistants’ with Newmarket and Scott-Dunn practices, UK. Many have subsequently progressed to very high office indeed throughout the world! Similarly ‘reverse shuttle’ assistants from Scone were in great demand in northern climes. Nigel Scott, Paul Adams, Alan Simson (3) and Mark Wylie (4) all made reciprocal visits some of them several times as indicated. Angus Campbell and John

Morgan have made regular 'excursions' as have Robyn Woodward, Adam Hittmann and Cameron Collins. This exchange program began in the late 1960's and since then exchanges have become *de rigueur* for most emerging ambitious young equine veterinarians and it is almost a 'right of passage' for them.

## Personal Profiles

### Partners

**Angus Campbell** graduated from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland in 1970 and after working to two years in mixed practice in Derby, England came to the Scone practice and has been there ever since. Angus is now a partner in the practice and does mainly horse and cattle work.



Angus Campbell searching for the perennially 'used glove'

**Paul Adams** graduated from Melbourne University in 1974. After working in northern Victoria for six months he traveled to Canada where he worked in large private practice for two years where he commenced large animal surgery. From there he had a stud season in Newmarket, UK doing equine medicine and surgery and then came to Scone. Paul is a partner and senior surgeon at the Scone practice. He is a member of the Australian College of Veterinary Scientists.

**Mark Wylie** graduated from the University of Sydney in 1979 and came to Scone six months later because of his interest in equine reproduction. Mark had a 'couple of stints' in Newmarket and Ireland and since being with the Scone practice has spent a lot of time as resident vet in the Widden Valley. Mark's connection with Scone was cemented when he married a local girl. He is a partner in the practice and also as surgeon who specializes in large animals.

**Andy Palmer** graduated from the University of Sydney in 1972 and has been with the Scone practice for eight years. Andy spent time in Walcha and Gunnedah and had two years at the Colorado State University in the US. Before coming to Scone he was a partner in NZ's largest equine practice for 14 years. Andy is a partner and specializes in equine reproduction, artificial breeding and large animal surgery.



Andy Palmer with Jeannie Crawford

### **Consultants**

**Nairn Fraser** graduated from the University of Queensland in 1966 and came to Scone in 1971 after nearly five years in a mixed practice in NZ. Nairn became a partner in 1973 and having always been interested in racing his expertise lay in commercial thoroughbred breeding, particularly brood mares and foals. Nairn is still heavily involved in his roles as both veterinarian and practice consultant

Bill Howey's association with the practice goes back to 1967. He arrived in Scone after graduating from Edinburgh in 1966 and spending 12 months in Ireland. Over the years Bill has seen many changes within the practice and in veterinary science.

Major developments have included ultrasound, drug innovation, management aids, the building of the surgery and intensive care unit and vast improvements in surgical techniques and anaesthesia. "We've come from the dark ages to the age of enlightenment," Bill said. He remains involved with the practice as well as being a valued member of the Scone TAFE Campus.

### **Associates**



**Margie McEwen** graduated from Sydney University in 1989 and after two years in a Victorian mixed practice and two years traveling in Europe, Asia and the UK, came to Scone in 1994. Margie does the bulk of the work with companion animals, some horse surgery and all the general anaesthetics. She has always ridden and been involved with horses and loves her work, finding it challenging.



Margie McEwen with Sascha McWilliam and 'Biggles'

**Catherine Chicken** graduated from Sydney University in 1987. She spent a year working at a Wingham mixed practice, a year doing her internship at Camden in the large animal faction at Sydney University, nine months in Quirindi and some time in Newmarket before coming to Scone in 1993. After another season at Newmarket in 1994 and a few months in the UK and USA looking at foal units last year, she returned to Scone. Catherine now heads the team at the foal unit and said she enjoys her work. "There is an amazing case load with a lot of scope to do high quality work," she said. "I particularly enjoy the post operative care of hospital cases and intensive care of foals. We have a good team and considering the workload it's a very relaxed working environment."

The team at the foal unit will be joined in September by veterinarian Simon Waterhouse.

The **Denman Veterinary Clinic** has five vets: Greg Mitchell (Sydney University 1985), Cameron Collins (Queensland University 1991), Les Brown (Massey University NZ 1985), Jo Holt (Queensland University 1990) and Rowan Sedgwick (Queensland University 1991). Les, Jo and Rowan are all new to the practice this year.

### **Stable Manager**

**John Flaherty** is manager of 'Clovelly' and has been with the Scone Veterinary Hospital for nearly 15 years. He has worked with horses all his life, five years as a jockey and 18

years at Brooklyn Lodge Stud before coming to the practice. With building trade experience as well he has been responsible for the building of both the large animal surgery and intensive foal care unit. John was this year awarded the Hunter Valley Thoroughbred Breeders Association's Service to Industry Award. He is helped at the practice by part-time Kenny Rodgers.



John Flaherty at 'Clovelly'

### **The Nurses**

**Jeannie Crawford** was born and bred in Scone and has been with the practice for many years. She started at the practice aged 12, working after school, and in 1981 after finishing school she was put on full time. She has worked in foal units in Kentucky USA, a large animal practice in Ireland and at Woodlands Stud. Jeannie completed her vet nursing course in 1986 and as well as being head nurse is also teaching part-time at Scone TAFE campus.

**Carolind Pike** is also a local girl who started at the practice in 1989. She completed her vet nursing course in Tamworth in 1991 and since then has spent three seasons at Pennsylvania University in the USA. Carolind spends from August to January as head nurse at the foal unit and the off-season at the surgery. She hopes to spend a couple of months in Japan next year to assist in training nursing staff.

**Sascha McWilliam** has been with the practice for 18 months after completing the Horse management course at Orange, spending a year on a western Queensland station and a season at Woodlands Stud. Sascha is now in the second year of her vet nursing course at Tamworth and hopes to travel to the USA or Japan in the next two years.

**Michelle Snelling, Penny Nichol, Rhonda Murphy and Lisa Fidock** will complete the nursing staff for the 1996 season

## **Office and Administration**

**Kim Budden** heads the office and administration team, responsible for the financial concerns of the practice. She has been with the practice for three years after arriving from Newcastle seven years ago.



Kim Budden with Jo-Ann Cox on the telephone

**Jo-Ann Cox** is the receptionist/accounts clerk with a long association with the practice. Originally from Muswellbrook, she started in the Denman clinic in 1988 as receptionist/clerk and vet nurse and came to Scone at the end of 1993.

**Cheryl Hugo** came from Newcastle in 1989 and has been secretary at the practice ever since. She described the partners as 'a really good group of guys to work for'

**Jodie Murray** is a Sydney girl who has worked at the practice for three years as part-time accounts clerk.

**Gaye Lucas** from Willow Tree is the newest team member employed as full time data manager to help through the busy thoroughbred breeding season.





Cheryl Hugo, Gaye Lucas and Jodie Murray

### **Media Interest in Scone Vets**

It would seem that the Scone Veterinary Hospital's reputation as a world class facility is spreading rapidly in the media world. Last week the television series "Talk to the Animals" spent two days filming there. Two other television series "Animal Hospital" and "Burke's Back yard" have also shown interest on doing stories.

### **Points of Interest [1996]**

- Scone Veterinary Hospital is one of the biggest rural practices in Australia with a staff of 13 vets, seven administration and office staff, two maintenance staff plus nursing staff
- The Scone practice has acted as honorary veterinarians for the Scone Race Club since racing first started at White Park in 1947
- Scone and its surrounds is the largest thoroughbred breeding area in the southern hemisphere and the Scone Veterinary Hospital services the majority of studs in the Denman, Scone and Widden areas.
- It is estimated that the practice provides veterinary services for up to 4000 thoroughbred mares
- Dog vaccination runs were started in the early 1980's to give outlying areas in the Moonan, Timor, Bunnan and Ellerston areas a valuable service which continues today
- The Scone Veterinary Hospital averages 350 horse surgeries a year and X-Rays around 570 horse every year

- The Scone Veterinary Hospital has run a pet show for the last two years which has proved to be very popular
- The Scone Veterinary Hospital business is 90% horse work, 6% small animals and 4% cattle work
- For nearly 30 years the Scone Veterinary Hospital has continued to provide high quality service and expertise to the ever growing and changing demands of the community and local industries as si required in modern day veterinary practice

### **1999 'Fifty Years On'**

We have to remember Frank Williams set up in Scone alone in 1949. Five decades later there has been a 'massive amount of water down Fig Tree Gully' and mounting! The following represents a concatenated practice profile for 1999.

## **SCONE VETERINARY HOSPITAL**

26 Ogilvie Street  
DENMAN NSW 2328  
Tel: (065) 47 2222  
Fax: (065) 47 2887

PO BOX 280  
SCONE NSW 2337

106 Liverpool Street  
SCONE NSW 2337  
Tel: (065) 45 1333  
Fax: (065) 45 2903

International Code: Tel: (61) (65) 45 1333 Fax: (61) (65) 45 2903

### **Practice Profile**

Please communicate all correspondence to the Practice Manager at the address and/or Tel/Fax numbers above.

### **Personnel**

#### **Professional - Veterinary Partners**

Dr. A. C. Campbell SVH  
Dr. P. L. E. Adams SVH  
Dr. A. C. Palmer SVH

#### **Professional - Veterinary - Consultants**

Dr. C. Chicken SVH  
Dr. R. N. Fraser SVH

#### **Professional -Veterinary - Associates**

#### **Para-Professional - Veterinary Nurses**

Sandra Ollerton  
Jenny Gizler  
Sascha McWilliam  
Virginia Henderson

#### **Clovelly Nurses**

Michelle Vincent  
Bernadette Haines  
Alison Parker  
Jamie Hobbs



Dr. C. Collins	SVH
Dr. L. Brown	DVC
Dr. J. Holt	DVC
Dr. R. Sedgwick	Widden
Dr. A. Adkins	SVH
Dr. Conor Cashman	Woodlands
Dr. Jamie Thompson	SVH [SA]
Dr. Clare Simpson	Clovelly
Dr. Mandi Murphy	Anaesthesia
Dr. Jane Axon	Clovelly
Dr. Nigel Woodford	Collingrove
Dr. Alan Clarke	Baramul
Dr. Roger Lee	SVH/DVC
Dr. Graham Knowles	SVH [SA]

### **Practice Manager**

Kim Budden

### **Reception**

Catherine Gorman  
Jeannie Harris

### **Pharmacy**

Lisa Fidock

Karen Flynn  
Jess

### **Office Administration SVH**

Linda Mobbs  
Kylie Alley  
Cheryl Hugo  
Cathy Cone  
Caroliind Strong

### **Clovelly Stables**

Stephen Wright  
John Flaherty  
Phil

### **Office Administration DVC**

Julie Hansen  
Lisa Harris

### **Domestic Service SVH**

Margaret Morris

### **A/H Telephones**

Joanne Wright

This represents a total of 45 people ‘on the pay roll’ in one form of other. This figure was to double in the next six years (2005). What would Frank Williams have thought when he ‘rocked up’ in 1949 if he could visualize it today?

### **Scone Veterinary Hospital [SVH]: 1999 2005\* ‘Into the 21<sup>st</sup>. Century’**

The humble beginnings in 1949 were founded on a combination of practical ‘hands on’ service and a willingness to embrace new technology. Its successful evolution to the present day is tribute and testimony to the initial ‘pioneers’ and subsequent proponents and exponents. The following exposition is unashamedly plagiarized from the Scone Veterinary Hospitals’ excellent promotional ‘glossy’ to herald the new millennium and its veterinary services.



**Denman Veterinary Clinic**  
**26 Ogilvie Street**  
**DENMAN NSW 2328**  
**Tel: (02) 6547 2222**  
**Fax: (02) 6547 2887**

**PO BOX 280**  
**SCONE NSW 2337**

**Scone Veterinary Hospital**  
**106 Liverpool Street**  
**SCONE NSW 2337**  
**Tel: (02) 6545 1333**  
**Fax: (02) 6545 2903**

**Website: [WWW.SCONEVET.COM.AU](http://WWW.SCONEVET.COM.AU)**  
**Email: [svh@hunterlink.net.au](mailto:svh@hunterlink.net.au)**

**International Code: Tel: +61 2 6545 1333 Fax: +61 2 6545 2903**

Scone Veterinary Hospital is proud to continue the established tradition into the inchoate 21<sup>st</sup>. Century by providing primary and advanced care for clients in the Hunter Valley and a specialist referral service for veterinarians and studs in surrounding areas. Patients range from foals and brood mares to stallions and performance athletes, and from thoroughbreds and ponies to pleasure and sports horses. Companion animals range from the 'greatest' Great Dane to the 'minutest' marsupial mouse.

The Class 'A' hospital and equine intensive care unit are currently housed on two sites and are staffed by specialists in surgery and medicine with a team of over 30\* [31/12/05] veterinarians and 60 support staff. In the near future the new hospital facility will allow improvement in services by transferring to a single location.

The large new site on the outskirts of Scone will accommodate a purpose-built veterinary complex with state-of-the-art surgical facilities and a world class equine intensive care unit. It will also include barns, laboratory, pharmacy, administration unit and a companion animal clinic, all with an option for expansion into the future.

Scone Veterinary Hospital maintains a progressive approach to incorporating the latest techniques and advances in equine and companion animal health. The focus is on service, professionalism and leadership, values clients have come to expect and a commitment to provision of veterinary needs into an exciting future.

## Equine Surgery



‘Action Adkins’

Equine Surgeon Dr. Angus Adkins and Ancillary Staff

The equine surgical facility at Scone Veterinary Hospital is the busiest equine surgery in Australia with over 1000 cases undergoing a surgical procedure annually. The facility has the very best of equipment and personnel. Currently there are two full-time veterinarians who are dedicated to equine anaesthesia, four equine surgeons and four surgical nurses. The surgeons including specialists in equine surgery Doctors Angus Adkins and Troy Butt have a diverse range of surgical experience and skills which ensures ‘best practice’ for surgery in horses. The staff members are always willing to ‘talk anxious clients’ through any procedures and provide regular updated information on post-operative progress.



Routine Aseptic Surgical Operation

The surgery has a hydraulic surgical table that is fully padded and designed to provide the most comfortable position aiding smooth anaesthesia and recovery. There are two surgical units: one for routine surgery and one for sterile surgery ensuring the highest level of sterility. There are two full padded (both walls and floor) recovery stalls to enhance smooth recovery. Occasionally assisted recovery is needed and the rooms are designed to allow manual or rope assisted recovery. The surgery is equipped with the latest high-tech instruments which allow full utility of surgical skills including diagnostic arthroscopy and fracture repair. Lessons from advances in human fracture repair techniques and equipment now permits the successful repair of many broken limbs in horses which would once have been euthanized.



## **Surgical Fracture Repair**

The surgical procedure on a horse is only one step in the successful return of an animal to the breeding paddock, racetrack or performance ring. The second step is the post-operative care which is undertaken at the Intensive Care Unit [ICU] enabling access to the best equipment and personnel in the field. For example, in a caesarean section there are two surgeons, one anaesthetist, two ICU veterinarians and four veterinary nurses involved in the process. This level of care and attention to detail enables achievement of excellent results in the successful delivery of foals and recovery of the mare.

The surgeons and anaesthetists are dedicated to continuing education and regularly attend or present lectures at veterinary conferences. This ensures they are up-to-date with rapidly developing and ever changing surgical techniques.

### **Equine Anaesthesia**

Over 1000 surgical cases each year require general anaesthesia at Scone Veterinary Hospital. Each horse receives individual attention by a dedicated veterinary anaesthetist. Patients are monitored closely prior to, during surgery, and until the horse has recovered from the anaesthetic. Equine anaesthesia is challenging compared to dogs, cats and humans in part due to the horse's size and temperament but also due to responses to anaesthesia and physiology of the horse.

Typically horses are premedicated with sedatives before anaesthesia is induced with intravenous administration. An endotracheal tube is placed in the horse's trachea (windpipe) and anaesthesia is maintained using specialised machines to administer anaesthetic agents and oxygen.

The team of experienced anaesthetists plays a crucial role and complements the surgical team in providing 24 hour service, seven days a week. From routine surgery to more complicated emergencies, including caesarean sections and colic surgery, patients are monitored closely with specialized, modern equipment. This includes: four anaesthetic machines, ECG, blood pressure monitors, capnography monitors and pulse oximeters (to monitor blood oxygen levels). Such equipment along with the skill and experience of the anaesthetists helps to make anaesthesia as safe as possible for the equine patient.

### **Scone Veterinary Hospital Intensive Care Unit [ICU]**

The Scone Veterinary Hospital Intensive Care Unit [ICU] is a specialized facility providing 24-hour service for equine patients. Since its inception in 1990 the caseload has expanded dramatically with over 900 horses treated in 2004. Both medical and surgical patients are catered for ranging from critically ill neonates to orthopaedic and colic surgical patients as well as the more obscure and frustrating such as ill thrift.





‘Axon in Action’  
Dr. Jane Axon attends to a foal

The intensive care unit is under the supervision of Dr. Jane Axon who is a registered specialist in equine medicine. Jane with the assistance of a team of veterinarians and qualified nurses and ancillary staff ensure the patients have the best possible veterinary and nursing care. The team caring for each patient may include other veterinarians within the practice and specific reproductive and surgical care when required.



Comfort Plus!

The neonatal component of the intensive care unit is one of a kind within Australia. The success rate rivals that of hospitals and universities overseas. Two thirds of the cases are admitted during the breeding season with the majority of these being critically ill neonates. Foals are treated for a number of conditions ranging from prematurity, septicaemia, nervous system problems (“dummy foals”), bone and joint infections, diarrhoea and pneumonia. New born foals may be afflicted with a variety of these symptoms requiring 24-hour intensive care in the form of fluid therapy, oxygen and a variety of medications. In particular around the clock monitoring is critical to a successful outcome with every patient in the intensive care unit receiving individual care and treatment.



Feeling better!



Jane Axon and ‘minor’

The intensive care unit provides support not only for owners and stud personnel but also veterinarians from other practices around Australia. Veterinarians, nurses and students from around Australia and overseas regularly visit the intensive care unit. Scone Veterinary Hospital conducts programs in association with universities and equine hospitals in America and England which enables veterinarians and nurses to gain experience in emergency medicine and intensive care both overseas and in Australia. An annual scholarship is sponsored by the hospital and local breeding farms enabling a nurse from within the practice and a nurse from a local breeding farm to work at the world renowned equine hospital in Kentucky.



Back on its feet and straight to the 'milk bar'

Through this regular contact with veterinary and intensive care specialists the latest diagnostic procedures, treatments and nursing care are made available at the intensive care unit.

### **Equine on Farm Service**

Technology, drugs, surgical procedures, medical knowledge and hospital techniques continue to advance. Equine veterinary science 'on farm' is a largely 'hands-on' set of skills based on careful observation, experience and an understanding of diseases and conditions that affect the horse. These skills allow the veterinarian to make the best use of technical advances.

Scone Veterinary Hospital veterinarians are involved with patients on farm before they are born and immediately after birth, as they develop and mature, perform and compete and as they retire to stud. A veterinarian's day on farm may involve any or all of the following conditions: placentitis affecting a developing foetus, a difficult foaling, a premature neonatal foal, a foal with a chest infection, a weanling with an eye injury, a lame yearling, a racehorse with a respiratory condition, a broodmare with an infected hoof, a stallion with a skin condition or a teaser pony with a tooth problem.





Cameron Collins Scanning

Scone Veterinary Hospital veterinarians are available for on-farm advice on preventative medicine and herd health programs to help improve the efficiency and quality of service the farm offers its clients.



‘On Farm’ Terrible Hollow

### **Diagnostic Imaging**

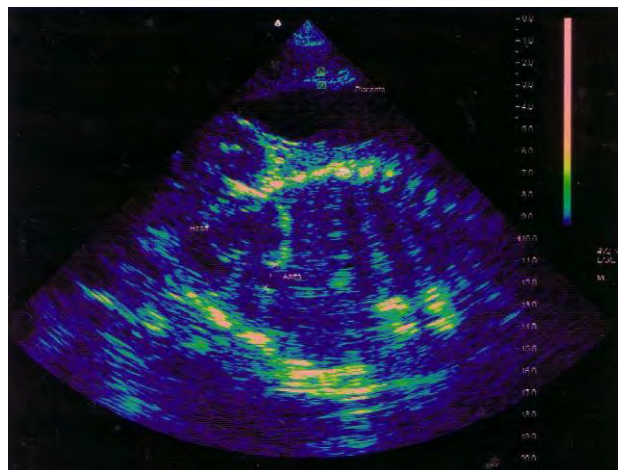
Diagnostic Imaging refers to the use of equipment such as ultrasonography or radiography. The equipment helps to provide a diagnosis of an ailment or injury which ultimately determines the most appropriate treatment. With the advances in human technology and associated cost savings the veterinary profession now has access to much of this equipment.

Ultrasound is now a routine part of any internal reproductive examination of a mare and it has revolutionized the industry allowing a stallion's "book of mares" to significantly increase. Ultrasound is also a routine part of the care of an animal either in the ICU, companion animal facility or equine surgery.



'Inspector' Cameron Collins Investigates

Scone Veterinary Hospital now has Doppler ultrasonography. This technology allows observation of blood flow in various colours giving an assessment of speed and direction of blood flow. This has many applications including assessment of holes in the heart or tissue viability.



Interpretation? That is the question!

Radiology is a routine part of most assessments of lameness, limb problems or ailments such as teeth infections or pneumonia. Digital radiology is now a part of Scone Veterinary Hospital's imaging unit. This technology has benefits in diagnosis, patient and operator safety and the ability to send images via email.

As with any technology it is only as useful as the hands that direct its use and evaluate its findings. It is the art of interpretation that is so important. Scone Veterinary Hospital is able to provide access to the latest diagnostic tools and level of interpretation by highly qualified and dedicated veterinary staff.

### **Podiatry**

Scone Veterinary Hospital does not employ a farrier but utilizes the services of a number of highly qualified farriers in the area. The large practice has multiple veterinarians with a diversity of skills and interest. Therefore utilization of a number of farriers provides similar benefits.

The old saying "no hoof no horse" still holds a lot of truth as it is well recognised that most lameness is due to foot soreness. Foot soreness, in the form of post-operative laminitis can be a devastating complication following successful surgery. As such the importance of the horse's hoof is of paramount importance. The best level of care is provided and there is an excellent relationship with a number of local farriers to ensure this happens.



Radiography helps in diagnosis and treatment

## **Pharmacy**

The Scone Veterinary Hospital Pharmacy supports its in house veterinarians, its large client base and veterinarians from other practices with a wide range of prescription/no-prescription medications, surgical materials and veterinary supplies.

The Pharmacy stocks a comprehensive range of animal health supplies at competitive prices. As one of the largest veterinary practices in Australia products are purchased in bulk and the savings passed on to the clients. Daily stock deliveries to the Pharmacy Manager ensure prompt delivery overnight. Upon request the Pharmacy Manager is able to source additional products not normally kept in stock.

Scone Veterinary Hospital's Pharmacy orders may be made by telephone or in person. Over-the-counter pharmacy items are also available online through the website: [www.sconevet.com.au](http://www.sconevet.com.au) . Prescription only medicines must by law be prescribed by the attending veterinarian.

## **Equine Dentistry**

Most horse owners understand the importance of regular dental care for their horses. Oral and dental health will impact on a horse's general health, well-being, performance and longevity.

A major ageing factor in all herbivores is dental deterioration and decay. By placing bits in horse's mouths and by feeding 'artificial' diets that nature has not designed the matter is complicated further.



‘Crook’ front teeth

Owners expect and demand maximum performance from their horse's whether they are at work or at stud. Regular dental maintenance should begin as part of a general health



check in the first months of life as it is useful to find problems early to be able to correct them successfully. This should continue on a regular basis throughout the horse's life.

Scone Veterinary Hospital has experienced veterinarians who are trained in equine dentistry to ensure the continued performance, comfort and well-being of horses in their care by maintaining properly functioning and 'comfortable' sets of teeth.



Spot the difference

### **Veterinary Chiropractic and Acupuncture**

Scone Veterinary Hospital offers a new approach to veterinary care through Integrative Veterinary Therapy. This combines the best of traditional diagnostics and treatment with chiropractic and acupuncture therapies.

Acupuncture aids the body's own healing process by stimulating a specific point on the body. Chiropractic methods work in a similar way on the spine which has a close relationship to the central nervous system. Dr. Leanne Le Claire is fully qualified in Veterinary Chiropractic and Veterinary Acupuncture and is keen to offer these therapies for both equine and companion animals.

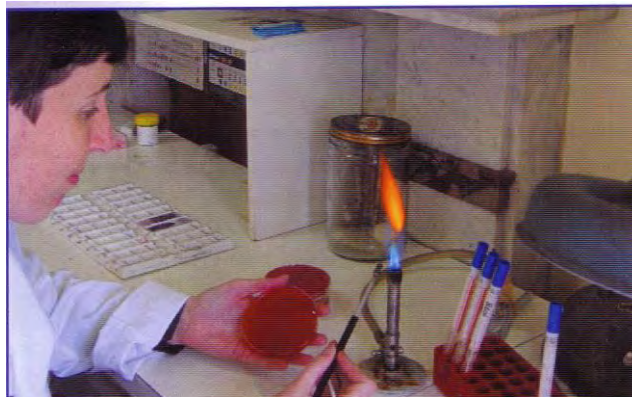
These therapies in conjunction with the current comprehensive range of diagnostic and treatment options can offer an alternative pathway in some cases. By combining the best of traditional veterinary diagnostics and treatment with chiropractic and/or acupuncture a more diverse therapy and improved result may be achieved.





Leanne Le Claire and patient  
**Scone Veterinary Hospital Diagnostic Laboratory**

The Scone Veterinary Hospital Diagnostic Laboratory provides 24 hour service for the majority of laboratory tests used in veterinary medicine including heamatology, biochemistry, microbiology and cytology. These services are available to in house and referring veterinarians.



The laboratory is well-equipped with up-to-date analysers which enable accurate results and prompt turnaround times. The laboratory is staffed by experienced technical officers and administration staff. Dr. Joan Carrick is a specialist in Equine Medicine and complements the laboratory staff. The staff is/are dedicated to providing an efficient and professional service catering to the time constraints of veterinarians and patients. The laboratory provides a 24 hour service which is an integral part of ensuring the Intensive Care Unit, Equine Surgery and Companion Animal departments can ensure the very best in animal care.



The laboratory offers a post-mortem service which is essential in disease monitoring and also provides vital evidence in insurance claims. This service is provided by Doctors Joan Carrick and Catherine Chicken who are experienced and qualified equine clinicians.

### **Equine Reproduction**

Improved stud management, increased veterinary input and advances in technology have combined to improve reproductive success rates and provide more opportunities to get mares in foal.



Cameron Collins 'On Farm Stud Work'

Most commercial thoroughbred stallions in the Hunter Valley serve over one hundred mares each stud season. To allow for maximum breeding efficiency Scone Veterinary Hospital veterinarians visit almost all their client's farms virtually every day of the week. Mares are examined to confirm their service bookings to stallions, to collect pre-breeding swabs and treat reproductive problems, to check for ovulation and post-breeding complications and to scan for pregnancy.

Breeds such as Quarter Horses, Stock Horses, Standardbreds, Arabians and Warmbloods utilize assisted reproductive techniques such as artificial insemination and embryo transfer to improve reproductive efficiency and variety. Scone Veterinary Hospital veterinarians collect semen from stallions for transport to farms around Australia and receive chilled and frozen semen from various centres for insemination of mares which have been monitored and set up to receive it at the optimum time for conception. Embryo transfer is now a well established technique in horses.

With attention to detail, understanding the complexity of the process and realistic expectations very good results can be achieved for those clients who wish to undertake this rewarding option.



A good result!

### **Scone Veterinary Hospital Companion Animal Department**

The companion animal department of Scone Veterinary Hospital is dedicated to enhancing the health and well-being of dogs, cats, birds, rabbits, guinea pigs, rats and mice and any 'pocket pets'. The staff is/are caring and sensitive treating all animals with respect and sensitivity while creating a friendly and relaxed atmosphere.

The department offers a full range of veterinary services including preventative treatments such as vaccination, medical treatment with excellent comfort levels in hospital, full radiology service and full surgical facilities. Pets staying in hospital receive a climate controlled environment, high quality food, clean, soft bedding with pain relief a priority. Surgical procedures range from routine desexings to specialized orthopaedic operations. There is up to date anaesthetic and monitoring equipment and an experienced nurse monitors the animal at all times with veterinary supervision. Dental scaling, polishing and extractions are also carried out. Difficult cases are discussed with specialist veterinarians and, if necessary, animals can be referred to specialist hospitals in Sydney.

There is a full range of over-the-counter products available such as flea control, heartworm prevention, worm treatment, premium dog and cat food, collars, leads, toys and shampoos. These products come with expert advice from trained staff. The nursing staff also runs puppy pre-school classes with advice on early behaviour management and training.





‘Moggy’ Magic

### **Denman Veterinary Clinic**

Denman Veterinary Clinic is a branch of Scone Veterinary Hospital and services both equine and companion animal clients from Jerrys Plains to the Widden Valley. The staff consists of three multi skilled nurse receptionists and from three to seven experienced veterinarians depending on the time of the year.

### **Equine Services**

Denman Veterinary Clinic provides a complete medical and reproductive service to the many thoroughbred (and other) studs in the district. There is also provision for a multitude of specialty services for performance horse clients including radiography, endoscopy and ultrasonography. Lameness, poor performance and pre-purchase examinations are carried out by veterinarians experienced in this field. Artificial insemination and embryo transfer procedures are also offered.





Flexion Friction

The Denman Veterinary Clinic also provides quick access to the referral facility at Scone with specialist medical and surgical back up available when required. The Clinic provides a prompt, efficient and professional service to all clients and 24 hour emergency service 7 days per week

### **Companion Animal Services**

Full consultation and surgical facilities for dogs, cats and other small animals are available very week day by a dedicated experienced small animal veterinarian with access to referral specialists. Saturday morning consultations are available on request.

Additional services include: puppy pre-school, grooming (clipping and bathing), free dental checks and puppy packs as well as quarterly house call runs to outlying areas.

### **Scone Veterinary Hospital Personnel – Beyond 2005**

The skills and expertise of the people make the Scone Veterinary Hospital what it has become in 2005/2006. The team of qualified and specialist veterinary and support staff ensure its reputation as among the leaders in the industry.

Scone Veterinary Hospital employs Australian and international people whose experience and commitment make them elite in their field. Ongoing professional development and training for all staff members ensures Scone Veterinary Hospital is up to date with the latest technical and veterinary advances.

Scone Veterinary Hospital's highly prized veterinary internships attract applicants from all over the world allowing employment of the best interns in Surgery, Medicine and Anaesthesia. Scone Veterinary Hospital also provides international training and specialist

nursing opportunities including an annual Veterinary Nurse's Scholarship to Kentucky in the USA. It also provides work experience and placement for many veterinarians and university students world wide and more than 80 students from TAFE colleges throughout NSW every year. In recent times the practice has also become involved with the Darley Flying Start program for 12 selected scholars each year on rotation around the globe.

The strength of the business is its commitment to strive for excellence driven by the people who are Scone Veterinary Hospital.

### **Scone Veterinary Hospital Practice Profile 2005 and Beyond**

In the new enlightened age it is all too easy to check out the practice profile and meet the team. Simply go to: [www.sconevet.com.au](http://www.sconevet.com.au) . It's all there!

### **Scone Veterinary Hospital Industry Plaudits**

The print media were very quick to latch onto the exciting announcement in mid 2005 by Scone Veterinary Hospital of a new facility to be constructed in 2006/2007.

'\$6 million Veterinary Hospital World Class' was a mainstream headline at the time. The new hospital will be constructed on 11 hectares on the northern outskirts of Scone. It will cement and consolidate the Hunter valley as one of the world's big three thoroughbred breeding centres alongside Newmarket, UK and Lexington, Kentucky, USA. With 'shuttle' stallions and improved travel and quarantine arrangements thoroughbred horses have become increasingly 'globalised' and effectively 'currency'. More and more interstate and international thoroughbreds congregate in the Hunter Valley during the southern hemisphere breeding season. It is intriguing to contemplate that the big news item in the town and district in the early 1900's was the establishing and equipping what was to emerge as the Scott Memorial Hospital as tribute and testimony to the exceptional physician – and sportsman - of his day. Almost exactly one hundred years later the big news item is the evolution of the veterinary hospital. Ideas anyone?

The new facility will include a 'world class' advanced equine intensive care unit to complement the two sterile surgical facilities, four recovery rooms, stabling for up to 60 horses, a specialized neonatal intensive care unit, podiatry and lameness centre and an advanced reproduction unit. The burgeoning thoroughbred industry in the Hunter Valley has brought a growing demand for access to 'world's best practice' veterinary care.

Saving valuable thoroughbreds can amount to millions of dollars. Well and truly gone are the days when a minor leg fracture meant a horse had to be immediately destroyed. Head of Ingham Bloodstock Trevor Lobb was very keen to applaud the announcement of the new veterinary hospital saying 'it would be a major boon for Australia' thoroughbred racing industry. Access to the best veterinary care is more important than ever for the thoroughbred industry and is a key factor in where owners from around the world choose to bring their business' Mr. Lobb said. 'You only need to consider the enormous worth of

some individual animals – some of them valued in millions of dollars – to understand how vital it is to have access to the expertise to keep them in prime condition and good health’ he added.

I wonder what Murray and Frank would think ‘if they could only see us now’? After 55 years in the making and 200+ veterinarians later – and still counting – I would like to believe they would wholeheartedly approve!

## Pioneer Profiles

This section is literally a ‘cornucopia’ of anecdotal and factual information on the principal pioneer protagonists accumulated from wherever I could resource it. In some cases such as Murray Bain it is somewhat ‘fragmented’ as I have used a lot of the expatiating rhetoric recorded by Bert Lillye and also Tom Hungerford. There is significantly more written about Murray than any other veterinarian before or since. In other cases I resorted to various eulogies and obituaries embellished by empirical observations resourced from friends, relatives and acquaintances.

### Cornucopia of Lillye’s

#### ‘The Best of Bert’

There is little doubt the Damon Runyon of sports journalism in Australia during the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup>. Century was the late Bert Lillye. Universally acknowledged by his peers, admired and even adored by his expansive readership Bert was also a great friend of Scone and passionate about the Scone Cup Race Meeting. He is famously on record as saying he would rather come to Scone than attend the Melbourne Cup. His regular ‘Around the Studs’, ‘Backstage of Racing’ and ‘Lillye on Legends’ feature articles in the Sydney Morning Herald were an absolute ‘must read’ for more than just his avid fans and those who did not confine their interests merely to thoroughbred racing and breeding. Bert Lillye wrote about one legend of his acquaintance more so than any other and that was Murray Bain.

Bert stated his most unforgettable character in racing was Andrew Murray Bain. When this gangling, kind-hearted Scot died on March 17, 1974 he wrote: “A large warm slice of Scone died last Sunday because Murray Bain was Scone. If ever a man could be described as a thoroughbred, it was Murray Bain”. This was lavish praise indeed from a hard-nosed Sydney racing journalist! More so than anyone else Bert captured in words the quintessential Murray and occasionally added the ‘warts’ as well! The following ‘eclectic’ is unashamedly plundered, purloined, plagiarized, pummeled and pulverized from the ‘very best of Bert’. I do not think it is possible or even appropriate to attempt to improve on the eloquence of Bert Lillye’s pen.

#### Andrew Murray Bain

“It did one good to spend a little time with this remarkable veterinarian whether he was at work or leisure. He came from Bonnybridge in the Shire of Stirling north of Edinburgh yet was anything but a dour Scot; and he had every reason to be just that. For 23 years night and day he put himself at the beck and call of man, horse and most animals in the vast Hunter Valley and beyond. It was Bain who founded and then became principal of the large veterinary practice that serviced the Hunter Valley which is one of the largest thoroughbred nurseries in the world. It was always refreshing and educational to find that my friend Bain retained his enthusiasm for horse raising and racing no matter what. It is not difficult for any man to lose his enthusiasm when it means leaving a warm bed on a

cold rainy night to travel 100 kilometres and more over dirt roads to succour a sick cranky mare.

Murray was a graduate of the Royal (Dick) Veterinary College at Edinburgh, Scotland. Soon after his graduation he enlisted in the Shropshire Yeomanry and rose to the rank of major at one period serving as acting lieutenant-colonel. He served as a veterinary officer during World War II with the British Cavalry in Egypt but on discharge went to the USA where he gained invaluable experience working on 'Bull' Hancock's Claiborne Farm in Kentucky. He always described it 'as the best commercial stud in the world not a rich man's plaything but a highly commercialized project'. From there he went to New Zealand where for three years he managed the Alton Lodge stud for Sir James Fletcher.

'Alton Lodge was the showplace of New Zealand breeding' he said. 'We bred at least one champion each year I was there – Tauloch, Gold Script, Dalray and Zenith to mention just four'. Murray was still employed by Sir James Fletcher when he made his first visit to Australia on holidays. 'I came to Scone to study the stud routine and compare it to that in New Zealand. I was amazed to discover there was no veterinary surgeon in residence at Scone' he recalled at our first meeting. 'So I went back to Alton Lodge, resigned, and then returned to Scone where I set up practice in September 1950'. He remained there until his tragic death.

Murray Bain had the most expressive eyes of any man I have ever known. They could flash the warm fire of friendship or the cold steel of anger but he did not harbour a grudge. His veterinary work load was hard but he loved nothing better than to spend a relaxing late afternoon hour with his friends at the Scone RSL Club playing a game of snooker or enjoying a quiet drink. It was then you saw the warm soft side to the Bain temperament as he enjoyed a quiet but never harmful joke at his or another's expense.

It became an ANZAC Day and St. Andrews Day Race Meeting ritual for Murray to produce a bottling of his own make; a silky, slinky drop of creamy velvet known as Atholl Brose. He took weeks to brew the ingredients and it slipped down a man's throat with the taste of ambrosia although it contained the kick of two mules as many of the 'innocents' who tested it can verify. If for no other reason the legend that grew around Atholl Brose made friend Bain an institution at Scone.

Murray had other interests but many channeled into the world of horse racing and breeding. He was Vice-President of Scone Race Club and it was his enterprise that enabled the club to secure more land to improve the racing circuit. Murray had big plans for his beloved Scone Race Club as he did for setting up his own commercial breeding farm. It was Murray's planning and knowledge of bloodlines that led to his widow 'Mace' breeding and racing Dark Eclipse, winner of the 1989 Golden Slipper Stakes at Rosehill. Murray bred many earlier winners and those that he raced himself carried the famous Black Watch tartan. Brood mare Ragged Blossom was given to Murray by Jim White of Edinglassie when he selected her from a group of 12 cull mares and against the advice of the owner who considered her a hopeless proposition. Ragged Blossom produced Tod Maid, Derelict, Valediction, Scarlet Kingdom, Little Gum Nut and Obelia.



One of the last foals bred by Murray Bain was the Biscay – Obelia filly born on November 8 1973 which was about the time the gentle Scot went to Sydney for his first operation that killed him. It was not long after Murray's death that they found Obelia's little filly foal entangled and mangled in wire and mesh ..... and in a bad way. She had taken fright during the night and in her panic had crashed through the fence. One leg was fractured below the elbow, the other carried along gaping wound ripped open by the wire. I was in Scone when Murray's fellow veterinarians worked hard to mend the little filly's injuries. They had a special incentive to save their friend's horse and they did; but she would never race. I must admit I was shaken when I first saw the filly. It could have been said she was marked by the hand of fate! Running almost the length of her face was a curiously shaped white blaze. Believe me when I tell you that it was in the shape of a Scottish thistle!

You will walk many a crooked mile before you come across professionals who are more dedicated to their calling than veterinary surgeons and the horsemen on the large thoroughbred breeding farms. Theirs is a life devoted to the well-being of the horse in all its stages; from embryo to foal, to weanling, to yearling; then as broodmare or stallion. It is a life that embraces long tiring hours and being on call at all hours of the day and night. I like nothing better than to relax with the vets and stud workers in the cool of the evening and yarn over a can of beer, or two. I had spent the day at Murrurundi. We came back to Scone to relax and talk got around to that magnificent man, the late Murray Bain, a tall Scot with his own sense of humour, propriety and indignation. Get Murray mad and he would draw himself up to his full height, then give forth with a roar that would make a Black Watch sergeant major resemble a timid field-mouse. But Murray could charm the lace-up boots off a suffragette if the mood took him and no one appreciated a good joke more than he, even if it was played on him.

Murray, who had no peer when it came to veterinary skill with breeding thoroughbreds, had magnificent flair and he exercised it in everything he did. There was his won particular way of describing to the stud laymen the condition of the follicle when he tested mares waiting to be bred to the stallion. Murray would use his expressive big hands to better his explanation that the follicle in its early stage was the size of a grape, then a golf ball and, when the time was near, a 'ripening orange'. This routine would be carried out day after day during the breeding season and it became part of the daily boredom until 'Curly' had a thought to liven proceedings. When Murray's car was seen on the horizon the next morning and heading towards the stud 'Curly' went to work. He cleaned out the mares' tract then carefully inserted an orange followed by a golf ball. The mare was then placed fifth in order of entry to the crush to await Murray's inspection. They say that Murray's face when his probing fingers closed around a golf ball then an orange was a picture no artist could capture! There is a sequel to the story. Murray put the orange on the side of the crush and went about his work but only after he had enjoyed the prank as much as the onlookers. Later that day one of the stud workmen came along and took a fancy to the orange. He knew nothing of the prank so you don't have to be told what happened!

The vets who service the expansive thoroughbred breeding centres such as the Hunter Valley of necessity work as a team which generates great comradeship and respect for each other. Murray Bain they loved because it was he who started many young vets on the way to highly successful careers; but young men fresh out of college can be high-spirited. At times they loved nothing better than to prod Bain's majestic manner but always in good fun and respect. There was the time a studmaster brought in a worm for identification. One of the juniors offered the opinion that it was an immature round worm. Murray came back with the crushing reply; 'if that's an immature round worm, I'm the Archbishop of Canterbury'! The worm was sent off for further examination. When the report came back it was confirmed as an immature round worm. No one said a word when the letter arrived at the Scone clinic with the verdict and Murray did not broach the subject. The next morning when he entered his office there was a memo on his desk. It was addressed, 'Your Grace.....'! 'Cheeky young bastard' was the predictable retort! [The author was the 'junior vet'!]



Mr. Bert Lillye, turf writer for the Sydney Morning Herald, presents Mr. J. W. 'Bim' Thompson of Widden Stud with the owner's trophy, who accepted on behalf of himself and co-owners Messrs F. L. Bragg, W. Parry-Okeden, F. Wilson, F. Thomas and R. Mann after their horse 'Idol' won the Bert Lillye Lightning Stakes  
Wednesday May 16, 1979

### ‘She Bears the Mark of Fate’

The following is an unabashed plagiarising of the original masterpiece penned by Bert Lillye in his ‘Around the Studs’ series in the Sydney Morning Herald. This emotional tribute was printed in the SMH on Saturday 8 June 1974 although it contains some mildly embarrassing ‘self-aggrandizement’ references.

“In the dark days of superstition they would have said the filly was marked by the hand of fate. An unusual white blaze begins in the centre of her forehead and runs down her sad face. Study it closely, use the smallest bit of imagination and you will recognize it as a Scottish thistle. Which must make you wonder, when you learn that she was bred by the late Murray Bain, the grandest Scot I have known. And there is more.....



The Biscay-Obelia Filly with her intriguing “Scotch thistle” marking

The Biscay-Obelia weanling filly was born on November 8 last year (1973), on the lovely little thoroughbred property Murray and his wife Mace were setting up on the outskirts of Scone town. He had been struck down with a dreaded, crippling illness. But November 8 was about the time they took Murray to Sydney for hospitalization and operation. Murray came home to Scone – to die, on March 17 a wasted figure far removed from the merry gangling Scot his friend shad known so well. And it was not long after this they found his little filly foal entangled and mangled in wire and mesh ..... in a bad, bad way. She had



taken fright during the night and in her panic had crashed through the fence. One leg was fractured below the elbow, the other carried a long, gaping wound ripped by the wire.

A veterinary surgeon could not have been blamed if he had ordered the filly's destruction. In the past it would have been automatic. But not Bill Howey. As a friend and veterinary associate of Murray Bain, he had a special incentive to try to save the filly. So he treated her injuries, then tranquilized her with drugs so that she would lie on the ground and not aggravate her injuries. He next enlisted the help of Betty and Arch Shepherd, animal lovers extraordinary and good friends of the Bains. They were happy to stable the filly close by their home so that she would not be disturbed by other horses and where she was under constant surveillance. Each morning Bill Howey came to dress the wounds. All through the day the Shepherds applied physiotherapy to the wasting shoulder and leg muscles. In the morning they bodily lifted the filly to her feet; at night they laid her down to rest. There was always feed close by the filly's head because she had taught herself to eat lying down. The filly will never race but she is getting stronger by the day. Bill Howey and the Shepherds, by their devotion, have saved her life and she will breed a treasure trove in itself because the filly comes from one of racing's most successful families.



On her feet at last. The bandage protects the 10-inch wound, but also strengthens the leg which has to take the weight from the leg that was broken. Note how the shoulder muscles have withered above the leg that was fractured below the elbow

All this had its beginnings in 1958 when Jim White, in disgust, gave Murray Bain a mare who had disappointed him first on the racecourse, then at the stud. Her name was Ragged Blossom and her only racecourse success in 16 starts was in a \$50 maiden at Muswellbrook. Then she failed to get in foal in her first three matings. But, in fairy book fashion, Ragged Blossom became a priceless orchid for her new owner. She produced him 10 foals eight of which he sold for \$63,575. The two he kept were Obelia and Little Gum Nut. Obelia won five races for \$13,265 in stakes for him, then produced the promising two-year-old Little Obelia and her ill-fated “thistle” foal. Little Gum Nut, now also at stud, won for her breeder three races and \$21,105 in stakes. So who’s to say that the Scotch thistle is not a better talisman than a four-leafed clover”.



Changing the bandages. The author and Betty Shepherd at ‘Trevors’.





Physiotherapy. The author and Betty Shepherd at 'Trevors'.

## Hungerford Encomium Epistle

Andrew Murray Bain



If Sir Ian Clunies-Ross is the 'Bradman' of the Veterinary Profession in Australia then T. G. ('Tom') Hungerford is his able deputy and 'second on the batting averages'. Tom is legendary throughout the country and indeed the globe for his seminal treatise 'Hungerford's Diseases of Livestock' now extended to nine editions. His exceptional professional career also embraced periods of practice with poultry, horses and general pastoral enterprise. Additionally Tom was lecturer at the 'old' Hawkesbury Agricultural College at Richmond NSW and as such exerted enormous influence on successive generations of young men embarking on a career in agriculture. Murray together with Tom, Vic Cole and Ron Churchward of the AVA were largely instrumental in establishing the Post Graduate Foundation in Veterinary Science within the University of Sydney. Tom also 'doubled' as a dynamic lay-preacher and committed Christian of exceptional repute.

On 24<sup>th</sup>. November 2001 I received a covering letter (and copies of other letters) from Tom completely 'out of the blue' which I adduce verbatim as follows:

*Tel. (02) 9487 2732*



*Dr T. G. Hungerford*, OBE, BVSC, FACVSC, HDA  
Veterinarian

*"Furleigh"*  
38 Burns Road,  
Wahroonga, 2076

24.11.01

Dr. Bill Howey [*He actually misspelled my name 'Howie' – not uncommon!*]  
Director  
Post Graduate Foundation in Veterinary Science  
University of Sydney

Dear Bill

Murray Bain's daughter has sent me a magnificent letter, enclosing a write up of on Murray which I sent 27 years ago. I enclose both.

Murray, I feel, has never been sufficiently acknowledged. Maybe (or maybe not) you could make some use of it.

Anyhow I send it on impulse only. W. P. B. it if you feel the letter has had its day, @ no harm done. [*W. P. B. = 'Tomspeak' abbreviation for 'waste paper basket'*]

Best wishes

*Tom*

P.S. If you used the letter at all maybe you should get Morag's permission first.

T. G. H.

The letter was written in Tom's precise lucid hand writing but bearing evidence of the rather scratchy 'scrawl' of an aging person. I retain the original.

The copy of Morag's letter is the most eloquent tribute by a daughter about a father I have ever read. The large clear hand writing and expression are also 'unmistakably and indelibly Morag'. The letter is repeated with her permission exactly as herewith:

16 Mantwood Drive  
Lennox Head 2478  
22<sup>nd</sup> November 2001

Dear Mr. Hungerford,

Over my life I have heard people speak so highly of you and today I understood why. I had the privilege of reading a letter you wrote to my mother Mace Bain, over 27 years ago, following the death of my father Murray. The letter came into my possession as Mace has moved into a Hostel close to me as she has Alzeihmers [*sic as spelled*] Disease. I suppose I always knew there were a lot of letters but the time had never seemed right to read them. As I read yours. The tears streamed down my face as they did with my children's faces.

What a wonderful gift you gave us. I have photocopied the letter and given copies to Fiona for herself and her 3 children and to my 5 children.

My dad was my hero; I was his shadow and it was an incredible loss that I still find hard to deal with but your letter has filled my heart with so much warmth. I thank you for writing it. It is a priceless possession.. I spoke with Bill Howey today and he informed that you were still at the same address. He said that you are now 90! How wonderful and congratulations. Please know that the letter you wrote so long ago will be treasured as part of the life of AMB by his children, grand-children and soon to be great-grandchildren. May God bless you and keep you safe, happy and well.

With fondest wishes

*Morag Borsje*

Morag Borsje

PS. Unfortunately I wasn't blessed with Dad's gift for writing and this does not express my true thoughts and gratitude as well as I would have hoped, but thank you again.

M.

When I received copies of these letters I knew 'destiny had beckoned'. This is the eventual outcome.

At the time of Murray's death Tom was inaugural Technical Director [CEO] of the Post Graduate Foundation: a post he filled with great distinction. Tom attended Murray's funeral in Scone and the day after sent the following letter to Murray's widow Mace on his richly embossed letterhead resplendent with the Hungerford 'Coat of Arms'. The letter is characteristically redolent of Tom's eloquent rather prolix prose style. The original is retained by Murray's eldest daughter Morag Repard-Borsje who supplied this copy by facsimile and also via Tom. It was with considerable emotion I was able to tackle the task of re-formulating the letter for publication.



*T. G. Hungerford BVSc FACVSc HDA*  
*"Farleigh"*  
*38 Burns Road*  
*Wahroonga 2076*

21<sup>st</sup>. March 1974

Mrs. Mace Bain  
297 New England Highway  
SCONE NSW 2337

Dear Mace,

Yesterday, at the Presbyterian Church at Scone, I thought what a mighty tribute it was to Murray. The assemblage of people from far and near, with such a great number who had come specially 350 miles return from Sydney to honour him, passed off like “a glorious roll of drums” to mark his outstanding career.

The Church filled 10 minutes before the service, extra seating was brought in, and then there was an overflow of people. These were from hundreds of miles away, busy practitioners, academic leaders with a full life, business men under stress of time, and so on. It portrayed the honour and esteem felt for this leader of the profession, as an outstanding horse and cattle veterinarian, and as a great man.

I did not include your family circle, but thought I would write to express my deepest sympathy to you, and Morag and Fiona.

Twenty years from now, the thought crosses my mind – will the children of Morag and Fiona wonder about their unknown grandfather. I know I do about mine, Thomas Hungerford, a pioneer at Baerami Creek, three times a member of parliament – quite a man, died twenty years before I was born, and I would desperately like to hear an appraisal of him by his colleagues – fellow graziers, fellow members of parliament, and soon, who knew him as the leader he was.

With this in mind, I thought I would write a letter at length about Murray which, with the splendid write-up in the “Herald” and the write-up which will no doubt appear in the Australian Veterinary Journal, can be placed amongst the papers with the information for Murray’s descendants. If this seems silly, just waste-paper-basket this letter, and no harm done.

Murray Bain only entered the veterinary scene here about 1950, and yet from 1950 to 1974, he had such an impact that when the saga of veterinary science in Australia is told, he will always have a high place in it. He is one of the great clinicians – perhaps the greatest.

I commenced veterinary science in 1930. For 50 years before this was the era of the equine veterinarian, proverbial for precise, accurate, detailed, clinical observation and acumen. So much that an idiom of the English language was coined – thus “to vet” something, means to scrutinize it and check it over with absolute perception. From 1930 onwards, this great habit and precision was almost lost to the veterinarians as they drifted



away from the horse era. There were several from 1930 to 1950 who specialized in horses, but from 1950 onwards, there came one – Murray Bain – a Scotsman, in the full tradition of the acute, shrewd, and discerning veterinary surgeons of old. His nature was balanced, kindly, and dour. His motivation was that of compassion, of “caring”, and of concentration of the task in hand. His background was that of the discipline of the Army, of learning from the Royal (Dick) Veterinary College, Edinburgh, and of greatness of character inherited from his Scots forebears. He was nobody’s fool. He was a leader who would take charge of every trainer and every owner, to guide and motivate their thoughts, to direct their attentions, and to guide them in the paths of action which they should take in their own interests, and in that of their horses. He was a clinician wrapped in his subject, wise in experience, profiting from the contact with his fellow professionals to a maximal extent, perceptive in diagnosis, and unfailingly wise in advice. As I heard another great clinician at the funeral (a winner of the Gilruth award\*) say, “Murray was quite a bloke”. In the context of the terminology used, this was the highest praise that one Australian can give another, and Murray, though a Scotsman, was truly an Australian, having adopted the best traditions of both cultures and races. He adorned them both.

As a veterinarian, he was outstanding amongst his fellows in that he thought individually, and failed to limp in futile imitation of others. He pioneered new approaches in everything he touched (things such as regarding worm infestations as the cause of foal pneumonia\*\* and equine colics\*\*\*. and other revolutionary concepts, which are invariably proved right, or partly right). Not only was he a great veterinarian, he was a great teacher. Seldom is a practitioner and clinician able to break into the teaching of his fellows in the profession. Murray was sought after by the Australian Veterinary Association, by the Post-Graduate Committee of the University of Sydney, by the Faculty of Veterinary Science, and by similar organizations in places other than New South Wales\*\*\*\*. His impact through lectures and articles in New Zealand and in Australia, and through the veterinary journals, was strategic and impressive.

I recall being invited with Murray to lecture to the final year students in veterinary science at Sydney University on “The Successful Running of Mixed Practice”. Murray was speaking on “The Successful Running of Equine Practice”. I gave my lecture and then sat down to listen, charmed by such an exposition of how to run an equine practice as I had never dreamed of hearing. I, as a fellow lecturer, became the student at his feet, and plagued him with questions as much as all the rest of the students for more than an hour at the end of his lecture. He was a maestro.

One of the great features of his outstanding capacity, knowledge and acumen, was his overriding humility. The saying, “A man wrapped up in himself makes a very little bundle”. Murray was a great man. Never did littleness or any taint of being “wrapped up in himself” mar the great picture of his character and stature.

I feel that every colleague who worked with him in his practice, every member of the New South Wales Veterinary Association, who heard and watched him at demonstrations, is the great gainer. The gain is not only in knowledge and know-how, but in attitude and approach.

Murray adorned our profession in that he lifted its ethical standard, he lifted its image in the eyes of the public and he gained the love and respect of every client to whom he rendered service.

Research men can be honoured with doctorates, academics with a professorship, and there are noteworthy awards for all except the clinician. The clinician/practitioner is the man who determines the esteem of the profession in the eyes of the public, and if we could have only 10% of practitioners as noble as Murray, then the standard of our profession would steadily rise.

The write-up in the “Herald” is a beautiful little “cameo” of his life but is necessarily inadequate. The few remarks made by the Minister at his funeral service were only a small fraction of that which was being said by his colleagues for the next half hour outside. Taken altogether, the truths spoken would compound into a picture of one of the outstanding men that has graced the veterinary profession.

We think of men like Max Henry, Gilruth, Ian Clunies-Ross, Seddon, Bull, and perhaps five or six “greats”\*\*\*\*\*, and Murray’s name will join this list as one who has stabilized and uplifted veterinary practice in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup>. Century.

He has presented a vision of service to his fellow man of care and help to horses and animals he loved, and of value to the Australian nation that he adopted.

Mace, no great man can make the grade without the support of his wife, and you can take great credit as you look back on this professional pageant of triumph. Morag and Fiona can look back with a flow of pride and appreciation on this their father, a leader in his profession.

May God’s grace and comfort enfold each one of the three of you.

Very sincerely yours

*Tom G. Hungerford*

T. G. Hungerford

\* The Gilruth Award is one of the most prestigious granted by the Australian Veterinary Association. The speaker was almost certainly pre-eminent veterinarian V. G. (‘Victor’) Cole who was associated and promoted by (Sir) Ian Clunies Ross early in his career. Vic and Murray were very close friends and professional colleagues. Tom, Muray and Vic were the prescient driving force behind the formation of the Post Graduate Foundation in Veterinary Science of the University of Sydney. I fell immensely privileged to have enjoyed the benefits of a very close association with all of them and to have followed Tom – eventually – as third Director of the PGFVS. According to a story promulgated by

Vic Bill Rose's mother-in-law was the only person to momentarily divert Murray's passion for the PGFVS!

\*\* This referred to a seminal paper published in the New Zealand Veterinary Journal where migrating Habronema larvae were demonstrated to be closely associated with severe lung pathology and the development of acute 'Rattles' [*Corynebacterium equi*, *Rhodococcus equi*] in a young foal.

\*\*\* Murray was a great advocate of the work of Glasgow Veterinary Parasitologist and researcher Dr. Jim Duncan who elucidated the arcane trammels of the migration of *Strongylus vulgaris* [Large Redworm] larvae throughout the horse's body.

\*\*\*\* Murray spoke at the British Veterinary Association Conference in Edinburgh in 1965 which is when I first heard of him and 'sowed the seed' for what was to become my journey in life. I attended as an impecunious final year undergraduate student. His paper was entitled "The Role of Infection in Infertility in Thoroughbred Broodmares" and planted the name Scone, Hunter Valley, NSW, Australia firmly on the 'International Map of Veterinary Science'.

\*\*\*\*\* Tom very modestly omits his name from this list. It would probably rank second in the pantheon.



Dr. 'Hughie' Gordon was another iconic contemporary and friend of Murray's. He is seen here with the author at his 'Fairlight' home a few months before he died. Hughie is displaying the 'Golden Fleece' awarded for his contribution to the Australian Wool Industry. Dr. Gordon was also a guest speaker at the 'Scone Scots'.

Murray was a vocal and avowed atheist but may have wavered near the end? He was temporarily recuperating following the first bout of surgery and chemotherapy in the Seventh Day Adventists' Sanitarium at Fox Valley Road, Wahroonga. I used to visit him there after routine work at Woodlands every Wednesday. It was long day! He said to me: "you know these people here (the nurses) are special and might have something". I think you might have reached him Tom?

### Swanney Tribute

Andrew Murray Bain

The following obituary was printed in the British 'The Veterinary Record' on April 13 1974. It was supplied by Mr. Jim Swanney a fellow Scottish veterinarian whom Murray befriended in New Zealand between 1947 and 1950.

Bain In a tribute to the late A. M. Bain Mr. J. Swanney writes:

The veterinary profession has lost a distinguished member and many of its members a very good friend.

Murray, as he was universally called, came to occupy a unique place in bloodstock breeding circles, not only in his adopted country of Australia, but in most countries of the world where horse are kept.

He was born in the Stirlingshire town of Bonnyrigg and educated there and at the Royal "Dick". He qualified in 1937 and graduated BSc at Edinburgh University in the same year. While in practice with Captain Barker in Hereford, he joined the Shropshire Yeomanry as a trooper and was called up for military service at the outbreak of the war. Later he transferred to the Royal Army Veterinary Corps and saw considerable active service in the Middle East. These years were to set the seal on the future pattern on Murray's life, namely to work with horses. In New Zealand he took charge of Sir James Fletcher's stud at Alton Lodge, an unusual position for a veterinary surgeon. Very quickly his professional approach to his work attracted widespread attention and soon his particular skill in the reproductive field of bloodstock breeding became established. During these years he became a familiar sight, dressed in immaculate white overalls driving his jeep with the corn bucket swinging from the rear hook.

Australia, however, fascinated him and after a few years he moved to the Hunter Valley to start his own practice in Scone, New South Wales. There, he continued to expand his work, and his opinion was frequently sought in areas far removed from his normal practice district. But it was in other fields also that he will be so sadly missed by his friends; firstly, for his great sense of humour and secondly for his love of children. On many occasions one could be involved in serious professional conversation, but as children appeared the discussion had to stop. Another characteristic, which he inherited from his father, was his love of wild life. Nothing gave Murray greater pleasure than to

roam through the wilder and remoter parts of his native country with a pair of field glasses. His knowledge of wild birds was quite outstanding.



Bain Family at Surfers Paradise 1961  
Murray in his element with his beloved family and 'feathered friends'!

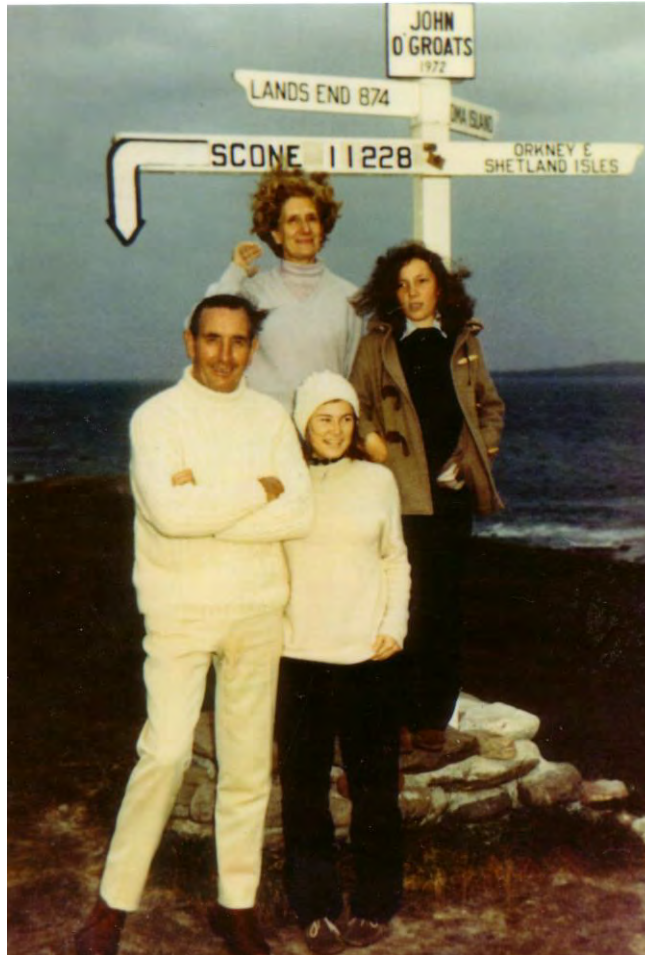
Some years ago, he turned to bloodstock breeding on his account and here again he was soon rewarded with remarkable success. More recently he acquired a property and was in the process of establishing a pedigree Aberdeen-Angus herd. It was a wonderful experience to accompany him on his rounds in practice; to watch his skilful approach to his work; to discover the high regard in which he was held by his clients. Whilst he never lost the common touch, he was not the one to suffer fools gladly. Woe betide the smart groom who tried to mislead him.





### Murray Bain and 'Birthday Card' 1964

Murray Bain had such an infectious zest for living that all who knew him felt it was a great privilege to have his friendship. Our deepest sympathies go to his widow, Mace, and his daughters, Morag and Fiona.



### The Bain Family at the 'Top End'

The occasion warranted a mandatory call to see Jim Swanney in Scone, Perthshire. Murray was temporarily mortified when Morag announced just prior to leaving on this trip to an esoteric Scone gathering: "Daddy is taking us back to Scotland so we can learn to speak properly"! Just for a fleeting moment even Murray was lost for words!

Jim Swanney returned to Scotland and earned enduring fame as the principal of the world renowned AI Bull Breeding Centre at Scone, Perthshire. It was he who interviewed the author on behalf of friend Murray at Glasgow Airport in 1967 for 'suitability' to emigrate to Scone NSW. I managed to impress on Jim a few 'fine malts'. It must have impaired his judgement because the report was favourable ['He has a sense of humour which will stand him in good stead'] and I was offered the job! I still retain the 'aerogramme' letters typed by Murray [Mace?] with details of the job and his expectations. Murray had been

‘amazed’ to receive my application within 7 days of his having placed the advertisement in the ‘Veterinary Record’ [UK]. Remember this was 1967!

“Chivers”  
Scone NSW  
Australia

12 June 1967

Dear William Howey

Many thanks for your letter and I wonder if you could give more details. As this practice is largely thoroughbred horses with a nice balance of beef cattle work, a little bit of height in the practitioner is useful in dealing with thoroughbreds. I have written to a friend of mine Mr. Jim Swanney, Veterinary Surgeon, A. I. Centre, Perth, Scotland and I have asked him if he could see any applicant on my behalf. If necessary, would you be prepared to go over to Perth to see him at my expense?

With regard to coming out to Australia, you can have an assisted passage. The Government proviso is only that you stay for a period of 2 years. I do not think you would find that hard when you see Australia.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully

*Murray Bain*

A. Murray Bain B.Sc. M.R.C.V.S.

In the interim I had my interview with Jim Swanney at Glasgow Airport as we agreed to meet ‘part way’. I had traveled from Strabane, C. Tyrone NI and flew from Belfast. I don’t think I ever retrieved my traveling expenses! As I explained Jim Swanney’s report was well ‘lubricated’ and I soon received the following correspondence.

164 Kelly Street  
Scone NSW  
Australia

24 July 1967

Dear William Howey,

Thank you very much for going to see Mr. Jim Swanney who wrote me details of your meeting.

Would you be prepared to come to Australia as soon as possible? In this coming season the work will be almost entirely with horses and there will be numerous opportunities to learn and become proficient. There is actually a stud outside Sydney [*Kirkham Stud, Narellan*] at which I have been asked to do consultation work and who are prepared to accommodate someone like yourself to do routine work. Naturally, you would not be left there all the time nor would we put you there before giving you a good grounding but it would be one of the places where, for a young person, like yourself, a spell of 2 or 3 weeks watching teasing and doing all the rectal examinations required, would provide just wonderful experience.

The salary to start with would be \$5000.00. There is a very nice flat available for rental in Scone and a car will be provided.

I am sorry about such short notice but if you are coming out it is essential you are here as soon as possible. The season starts in September and by mid September we will be very busy indeed.

Would you please cable me immediately your acceptance or otherwise and if you require any help with regard to Australia House or coming out, please let me know.

It will be necessary to emigrate by air at a cost of 10 pounds sterling. I presume you will have enquired re. this from Australia House, London. The only contingency is that you are prepared to stay for two years. I am sure you will like Australia.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

*Murray Bain*

A. Murray Bain B.Sc. M.R.C.V.S.

In retrospect after almost 40 years it is amazing how rapidly the 'wheels turned'. I arrived in Sydney via the USA and Pacific on 3<sup>rd</sup>. October 1967. I later discovered that local Scone neighbour and staunch Bain family friend Sir Alister McMullin of St Aubins may have played some part? Sir Alister was then President of the Senate. That could explain how the delegate from the Australian Consulate in Belfast came to Strabane, Co. Tyrone to see me rather than the customary reverse situation! He told me 'there is some urgency in processing your application and it seems you are required in Australia very soon'. This was much to the chagrin of some of my 'boozy' pub mates in Strabane many of whom had been waiting for eons for even a response from Australia House! It used to take 12 – 18 months to process the average application from a prospective '10 Pound Pom'!

It was with some trepidation I made the hasty journey! I had very few resources - like minus 250 pounds sterling! I did have 19 pounds in my pocket! When I arrived I discovered the Bain section of the Scone veterinary fraternity also lacked human

resources! There had been a recent acrimonious 'schism' in the Sykes/Bain veterinary partnership. Both John Bryden and Treve Williams opted to leave Scone. Assistant Peter Beiers had just had his contract 'terminated'. James Crouch was on a Horse Race Betting Levy Board [UK] Scholarship for 3 months and had arrived a few weeks before me. He was the only other person in the practice. James was the first unofficial 'unwitting' shuttle veterinarian! To a certain extent with his Newmarket experience he was the 'saviour' that season. Later to achieve justified fame in Newmarket Richard Greenwood arrived 2 weeks after me in mid-October. The rest as they say is history! I never did go to Kirkham Stud but there was never an explanation.

The 'opposition' practice at this time comprised Frank Williams, Jack Francis [about to leave for Castle Hill], Norman Judge and Angus Cunningham. Level playing field?

Treve Williams went on to become Chairman of the Australian Jockey Club. John Bryden achieved enduring professional cachet in Melbourne. Peter Beiers set up practice in Charlestown, Newcastle where he was very successful. When the opportunity arose he studied medicine at Newcastle University and at one stage was Frank Williams' consulting physician in the John Hunter Hospital! I believe he has nurtured an auspicious career in human medicine.

## Frank Leslie Williams



Frank Williams 'in his element' at George Christmas' Oak Range Stud 1950's

Frank Williams was one of the finest gentlemen I have met during my extensive professional career. Where Murray was patrician, patriarchal and somewhat dogmatic Frank was gentle, avuncular, sedulous and kind. Uncle 'Flank' [tiny tots are never good with their 'R's] must have seemed like Santa Claus everyday to my young son Hugh! Because of the well documented 'rift' at the time of my arrival [1967] it was a long time before I made the acquaintance of Frank and learned of his rich qualities. He and Beth were kind enough to invite Bill Rose and me to one of their special soirees at their always hospitable home at 'Garthgowan' in Main Street very early in the peace. It was the genesis of a long friendship which only concluded with Frank's early and untimely demise in 1988.

Although Murray generated and assembled the higher profile in the local community and also much wider scientific society Frank established an enviable reputation among his peers and senior clientele. Carl Powell of Brooklyn Lodge was never backward in stating his best year ever was when Frank had done the reproductive stud work. This was partly



to 'put one firmly in one's place'! Similarly 'Bim' Thompson for perhaps similar reasons impressed on me 'there was nothing wrong' with 'Uncle' Frank's left arm! This mildly barbed riposte usually came when things appeared 'not to be going too well'! All junior vets have to go through this rigid evaluation process!

When we purchased the premises at 106 Liverpool Street in 1977 Frank was the sole partner and occupant of the building across the road at 103 Liverpool Street. Beverley Pittman was the loyal administrator. John Morgan and I were delighted when Frank agreed to 'join forces' and he moved into 106 in 1978. Although well past his prime due to progressive ill health Frank imparted incredible intellectual *cachet* during the time we spent together. This was especially appreciated by the 'young gun generation' of their day notably Bill Stewart, Jamie Barnes, Alan Simson and Nigel Scott. Very much more has been written about Murray Bain than Frank Williams and this rather short encomium barely does him justice. Frank had some wonderfully colourful and poignant sayings including his vivid description of Santa Gertrudis Cattle introduced into the Widden Valley in the 1950's: 'Santas are cows built around a fanny'! Many young veterinary graduates can attest to the wisdom of that aphorism! The wise pronunciations always carried additional cant by the way Frank would slowly stroke his 'Mo' in a downward direction while delivering his carefully constructed maxim in his characteristic slow gravelly cadence.

V. G. ['Vic'] Cole was a compatriot and close personal friend of Frank and Murray as well as confidant, advocate and friend to me. I turned to him when I needed some 'inspiration' when seeking early information on Frank. It was Vic who supplied the following obituary for Frank with some 'massaging' by me.

*Scone Advocate*, 25 August 1988

Frank Williams died recently after 39 years in veterinary practice at Scone, in the Hunter Valley of New South Wales. He was one of the pioneers of rural veterinary practice in Australia. His practice was based on thoroughbred horses and cattle in which he maintained an unflagging interest throughout his long career. He maintained a similar interest in his clients, some of whom were Australia's leading thoroughbred breeders.

Frank started practice in Scone in 1949 with Norman Larkin at a time when the district was served by veterinary surgeons who had to travel from Sydney. The practice developed well and in 1950 he was joined by Murray Bain. Not long afterwards, Norman Larkin relinquished his interest in it and Jack Francis joined Williams and Bain. In early 1960, the original practice was re-organised into two practices with Frank Williams and Jack Francis remaining together while Murray Bain headed the second practice. He was joined in the late 1960's by John Morgan and Bill Howey. On Murray's death in 1974, the practice became Morgan, Howey and Fraser.

In the late 1970's the two practices merged again, and Frank Williams became a senior consultant with the one large practice, which now has a number of other partners. Frank's interest in horses and his association with Norman Larkin, which had led to him spending his working life in Scone, stemmed from his service in the Army in World War II when he was a veterinary officer.

In recent years he suffered from a debilitating disease, which took a heavy toll of his strength. He remained proud of the fact that he was the founder of veterinary practice in Scone, and had served the district for almost 40 years. He had a great talent for friendship and the enjoyment of life for which he will always be remembered

He will be sadly missed by his wife Beth, sons Ross and Paul, and grandchildren, to whom we offer our very sincere sympathy.

V. G. Cole  
W. P. Howey

Frank had indeed enjoyed a rich and fulfilling life. The following 'timeline' for Frank was supplied by son Paul whom I contacted when I started to research the archives for production of this book.

#### Timeline - Frank Williams

Frank was born in Roseville on 25 September 1918 and attended North Sydney Boys High School where he made the 1<sup>st</sup>. XV representing two years 1934 and 1935. While studying Veterinary Science at Sydney University [1936 – 1939] he played with Gordon Rugby Club and made first grade in 1939. His first job on graduation in 1940 was as Veterinary Officer with the NSW Department of Agriculture based in Sydney. Like many of his generation Frank responded to the call of arms and enlisted in the CMF on 1 September 1941 with the rank of Captain. He served initially with the 3 Australian Auxiliary Horse Transport and transferred to the AIF in September 1942. He found time to marry Beth Bennett of Mosman on 29 October 1942!

On the event of an outbreak of Swine Fever Frank was seconded back to virtual 'civvies' with the NSW Department of Agriculture between January and April 1943. He transferred 'back to frontline action' in July 1943 with the HQ Northern Territory Force for the next two full years. His duties included meat inspection for the Australian Army in abattoirs across NT and WA from the Gulf of Carpentaria in the East to Broome and Derby in the West. He was in the area when Darwin and Broome were bombed by the Japanese and this only ceased on 12 November 1943. Norman Judge was a driver and inspired by Frank to study veterinary science on discharge from the armed forces. They were later to join forces in civilian Scone.

In October 1945 Frank transferred to the 1<sup>st</sup>. Australian Mobile Veterinary Survey Unit and undertook disease eradication for nine months in New Guinea following the legendary 'Kokoda' hostilities in that country. After discharge from the AIF in July 1946

Frank returned to the NSW Department of Agriculture as Veterinary Officer. He was based at Glenfield Research Station for part of his period and renewed his passion for Rugby and the Gordon Club coaching reserve grade in 1949.

In late 1949 Frank responded to a 'call from the bush' and commenced veterinary practice in Scone living at the Golden Fleece Hotel while establishing himself and looking for a home for his family wife Beth and sons Ross [6 years] and Paul [6 months] who remained in Sydney. Today this would rank as a 'tree change' and must have been quite a 'culture shock' for the essentially urban Williams family despite Franks' outback wartime experience. In early 1950 the family moved into a house at 240 Liverpool Street. This was located near the present Police Station and Court House and was the very first veterinary practice premises in Scone. Murray Bain joined Frank in September 1950 operating from the Liverpool Street address as the rural acolytes of Norman Larkin who was based at Bondi Junction! According to son Dr. Paul Williams the original block went from the Police Station to the corner and then to Park Street where it covered two blocks again. The 'Old Horse Yard and Stables' were down the back just before the tennis court. The house [no longer No. 240] now sits on about 1/5 of the original land. The laundry was the separate building across from the house with a well in between and a pump that worked in the early 1950's! The dispensary for the practice was in the laundry. The laundry was about 4 – 5 squares.

In the winter of 1958 Frank took a trip to the UK, Ireland and USA with Frank Thompson looking at thoroughbred breeding stallions and Santa Gertrudis cattle at King Ranch in Texas. Edmundo [Imp.] was purchased and Santa Gertrudis cattle introduced to Widden following the seminal inspection. Norman Larkin had left partnership by this time and it operated as Bain and Williams. Jack Francis subsequently joined the partnership and it was known as Bain Williams and Francis. Jack came to Scone initially to work as private Stud Veterinarian at 'Sledmere' then operated by Maurie Point. Jack lived on 'Sledmere' at that time.

In March 1964 Murray indicated his wish to leave the partnership. A clause in the original agreement preventing any partner exiting the practice setting up in the area was on legal advice seen not to be enforceable. Murray set up his own practice in the Scone area essentially in competition with his previous partners who operated as "Williams and Francis".

The latter practice re-located to a house refurbished as a veterinary surgery in Main Street. During the next few years Norman Judge arrived and departed as did Geoff Adams and Angus Cunningham. Jack Francis also left and relocated to Sydney in order to address the secondary education problems of his expansive brood. Effectively the practice was downsized when it re-located to 103 Liverpool Street before the two major practices merged again in 1978. Geoff Adams was operating independently in his own account from his stud 'Sans Tache' at Dry Creek Parkville



The house in Main Street from where Williams and Francis operated in the 1960's



The author with Paul and Ross Williams discussing their late father Frank at Sydney University 2002  
Dr. Paul Williams is an eminent research scientist in endocrinology at Sydney University



Beth Williams and 'young gun' Alan Simson  
Christmas Party 1990



## ‘Jack Be Nimble’

Jack Francis



Jack and Wendy as they must always be remembered!  
The occasion was the wedding of daughter Sally and veterinarian Hugh White

‘Jack Flash’ was always in a hurry because he was a very busy man and in great demand! It was in his nature to rush. He was backing out at Widden one day and asked his young passenger son Jamie if anything was behind. “Nothing Daddy”.... (Jack was already in reverse mode and crashed into the tree directly behind at 80kph)..... “.....but a tree” said Jamie completing the sentence he only began a split second before!

Jack was very popular in the west and the Merriwa district in particular. The administration staff at Pitt Son and Keene used to accept and filter messages for the visiting veterinarian from Scone on specially allocated days. Jenny was a particularly attractive nubile young lady of admirable proportions and exquisite *cachet*. No wonder Jack liked Merriwa! If Murray Bain could ‘charm the lace-up boots off a suffragette’ then Jack was not far in his wake! You know what the ‘rumour mill’ is like in small country towns fuelled by manual ‘party-line’ telephone communication! You don’t need to crash your car accompanied by an *elite esoteric debutante* to start the millwheel grinding! The truth is immaterial! Why let facts spoil a good old fashioned country scandal!

Jack and Wendy were invited out dinner to celebrate Christmas Eve. The Scales family lived the other side of Cassilis and always put on a great show! Jack was 'on call' but it was the festive season, things were quiet and with the promise of an excellent party it was certainly worth the risk. Jack and Wendy completed the journey to Cassilis in 1.5 hours. Most circumspect people allowed a comfortable 2 hours! Sadly a call to a 'Milk Fever' at Parkville came in at 10:00pm just when things were really warming up! Jack was nothing if not resourceful! Close friend medico Dave W. was also on duty at Scone. One quick 'bush telegraph' message and all was fixed! Dave W. decided he needed the moral support of professional colleague John P. Dairy farmer Alan A. was more than perplexed to find two medical practitioners on his door-step late at night just before Christmas! No one in the family was ill! Very quickly credentials were established and appropriate treatment *very* carefully administered to the facile recumbent cow. She brightened up immediately but still disdained to rise. 'What do we do now' asked John? Pragmatic Dave knew from hearsay if you gave a gently kick and tweaked the tail it might work. ('They jump on her tail'). Miraculous! She rose! To this day Dave claims it was the most spectacular response he ever elicited by administration of medicine to any patient. He boasted a lot of experience with many! Jack and Wendy enjoyed a splendid unencumbered Christmas Eve!



*Photo courtesy of the Scone Advocate*

Dr. Toby Barton, Dr. David Warden and Dr. John Paradice with a graduate nurse at Scone's Scott Memorial Hospital in 1968

Dr. John Paradice and Dr. David Warden were to surprise dairy farmer Alan A. on Christmas Eve! Both physicians modestly claim an enviable 100% success rate with milk fever! Beat that if you can if you're a veterinarian!

The same dairy farmer Alan A. has just told [22/12/05] me in Kelly Street he had a big opinion of Jack and regarded him as a 'tough bastard'! On one occasion Jack had visited a 'crook' cow. 'It has 'wire' [traumatic reticulitis] and if it dies I would like to do a PM' said Jack. The reticulum 'magnet' treatment was administered. A short time later Jack's initial diagnosis was proved to be very accurate and morbid prognosis 'spot on'. The cow died. Jack turned up for the autopsy and it may have been after a party! On exposing the pericardium 'a gallon of pus presented' recalled Alan A. Jack promptly vomited an equal execrable amount of stomach contents at the scene of the devastation. 'The only time I ever saw him a bit the worse for wear' said Alan A!

The now redundant Upper Hunter Picnic Races at Skellatar Park, Muswellbrook were always an absolutely imperative annual social fixture. Tom and Audrey, Dave and Isobel together with Jack and Wendy were 'meandering' their way back to Scone in intimate personal propinquity cramped within a single trusty 'jallopy' model following an incandescent winning day. Jack had his leg out the window 'just for show'. Maybe he had chilblains? It might be safe to assume the lubricious cloistered ambience incited lascivious proclivities but perhaps this was not so? The abundantly available vintage champagne at the races added fuel to the incendiary mood of the gregarious extrovert sextet. You probably think there is a prurient possibly concupiscent conclusion to this elaborate charabanc charade? You'd be wrong! Under such circumstances 'exquisite' discerning judge 'Aunty Audrey' was pensively reflective on the tactile sensitivities of the sociable male protagonists. Modesty and decorum prevailed! 'Her lips were sealed'! Just as well! I wonder who was the driver?



Elegance, grace, poise and style – country fashion  
The sociable quintet at the Muswellbrook Picnic Races in 1964  
Murray Bain, Julie Coutts [NZ], Mike Moses, Mace Bain and Judy White comprise the  
eclectic group. *Très soignée!*



Percy Sykes and family in similar party mode

The Sykes Bain veterinary partnership was to endure for a few short years in the early 1960's. Percy was not too keen on the 'bush circuit' and much preferred the urbane suave, sophisticated, refined, cultured and debonair ambience of the Champagne Bar at Royal Randwick!

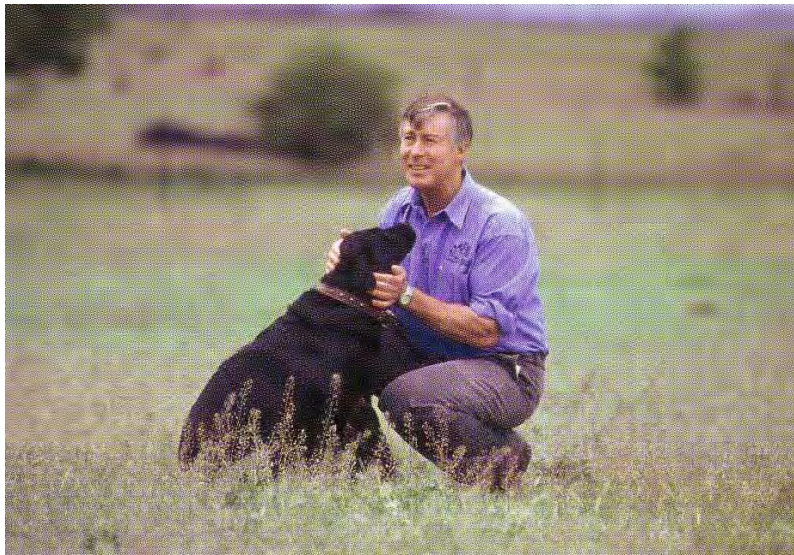
Jack was gently wending his way home one day along the New England Highway in November when accosted by a highway patrolman mounted on a 'new age' motor cycle. 'Sir you were doing over 100 mph' was the insistent charge laid! Recognising perceived guilt and never short of an answer, Jack responded quickly; 'He was hurrying to an urgent foaling'! Much to Jack's chagrin the gallant officer immediately offered to provide a police escort to ensure speedy unencumbered progress to the 'hypothetical' distressed mare! As he had really been heading for a leisurely lunch there was only one thing for it! Jack had to 'burn off' the chivalrous knight errant! He was very good at it but just to make sure he quickly shot into the back of Frank Williams' garage, locked the door and escaped out the front! Nice one Jack but a hell of a way to arrive for lunch!

Betty Shepherd also recalls Jack and his driving and social antics. 'We used to do terrible things to Jack! One night he'd gelded a horse in the top stable. We had a few drinks after and Jack backed his car into the fence and no one would push it off for him. We made him stay there! Someone took one of his shoes. He had to get up first thing in the morning and drive to Merriwa with one shoe! Everybody picked on him. Jack was a person who had been on the stage in New Zealand. He was used to acting and 'knocking all the scenery all over the stage'. He was rather like that when he was doing the horses always trying to do something extremely quickly'!



Ron Jeffries was Manager at Woodlands. “I was telling Jeremy Francis the other day about an English Mare with tetanus and pregnant. Old Jack [Francis] pumped her full of antibiotics; anaesthetised her to finish her off and did a caesarean at the same time. A black colt jumped out of her straight to his feet. Two weeks later he had tetanus contracted from her and we lost the lot”. It was a very good try Jack!

#### ‘The Graduates’



Hugh White

*Photo curtesy of Australian Country Style*

The world of veterinary science can be incredibly incestuous and extraordinarily nepotistic! ‘Here’s to you Mrs. Robinson’! Hugh White spent a memorable season in Scone as an undergraduate student and endured a torrid baptism of fire into rural veterinary practice under the tutelage of the author and ‘Vulgorilla’. He was the battle ravaged survivor of a prolonged bout in the ‘Linga Longa’ in Gundy on one eminently forgettable occasion featuring the castration of a cat on the front bar! Undeterred, undaunted and undiminished Hugh returned for a ‘spell’ as Assistant Veterinarian in the early days of Bain and Associates. Prior to that time he had lost his heart to Sally (daughter of Jack and Wendy) when ‘seeing practice’ with Jack in Dural. Sally was very young and not yet ready to make a long term commitment. It was not until Sally returned to her birthplace Scone as Kindergarten Teacher that Hugh was to finally ‘win her hand’ and ‘secure her promise’. “What’s made to go around comes around”. As if drawn by an invisible magnet Sally’s elder brother Jeremy had also been drawn back to Scone as owner of a Pharmacy. Hugh had spent time in Dungog and England as well as a research assignment at Sydney University. He and ‘new’ wife Sally moved on to Kempsey before cementing their future together in Armidale.

Hugh was later joined in New England by yet another erudite Scone graduate in Nigel Scott. Nigel had been a contemporary of Hugh’s at Sydney University as well as Alan



Simson. All three were 'inducted' as undergraduates in Scone. Nigel has spent seven very fruitful years in Scone as Assistant and Partner with Morgan/Howey/Fraser before the 'call back to the land' in Forbes. The family farm looked good at the outset but prevailing drought and low commodity prices forced Nigel, wife Belinda ['Bee'] and family back into veterinary practice. They were enticed to Armidale by Hugh and Sally in 1993 and have since forged a very successful partnership together. I like to believe their 'education' in Scone paved the way for their life's work?



Nigel Scott

*Photo curtesy of Australian Country Style*



Nigel Scott and Hugh White

*Photo curtesy of Australian Country Style*

Hugh and Nigel have survived as 'elite' graduates of Scone and indeed prospered!

## Norman Guildford Judge



Virginia Osborne Norman Judge and Shona Murphy

The occasion was an AVA meeting in Scone with Malcolm Turnbull as the guest speaker  
Norman was revisiting Scone for the first time in many years

Norman Judge was born in Glen Innes on 2 May 1923. His primary school education was completed in Glen Innes and his secondary schooling at the Kings School, Parramatta. Just out of school he enlisted with No. 3 A.H.T. at Liverpool, NSW and remained there from September 1941 until March 1942. He joined the RAAF in 1942 and saw active service until termination in the European Theatre with the Pathfinder Force as a Pilot flying Lancasters. His active service was with No. 463 Squadron Lincoln and 83 (P.F.F) Squadron, Coningsby, UK. He was awarded the D.F.C. At some stage during training the young Norman Judge encountered Captain Frank Williams then operative in Northern Australia. Frank was to fire Norman's enthusiasm for veterinary science.

On demobilization Norman entered the Veterinary School, University of Sydney in 1946 and graduated in 1950. He began private practice in Maitland in 1951 and remained there until 1964 when the practice was sold. He accompanied the Australian Equestrian Team to the Tokyo Olympics in September of that year as official veterinarian. The Australian team won the Bronze Medal in the Three Day Event. The medal winning team included Bryan Cobcroft of 'Parraweena', Willowtree riding 'Depeche'.

On returning from Japan Norman became a partner with Frank Williams and Jack Francis in Scone. He also accompanied the Australian Equestrian Team to Mexico in 1968. From 1968 until 1970 he spent two years as visiting adjunct professor at Texas A & M University at Austin, Texas USA. Inevitably in Texas Norman was fired with enthusiasm for American Quarter Horses. He entered into an import/export arrangement with some

American entrepreneurs. This cadre imported some of the first Quarter Horses to come to Scone and they held a sale at White Park in August 1970. It was an innovative promotion! Norman was to remain a devotee of Quarter Horse for the rest of his professional life. With wife Lorna Norman they had established the first 'Horse Hospital' at their place of abode 'The Top Block' at the pinnacle of Moobi Hill on the outskirts of Scone. Although modest by today's standards this was the harbinger of things to come.

With a paucity of Quarter Horse activity in Scone where thoroughbreds and stock horses ruled Norman and Lorna decided to 'up sticks' and moved to the urban periphery of North West Sydney. Sadly Norman had developed a strong nicotine addiction not uncommon in his military milieu and before its ravages became fully apparent or acknowledged. Sadly he died too early of protracted lung cancer as a result of his smoking habit.



Emeritus Professor Rex Butterfield, the author and Jenny Jenkins  
AVA Meeting Scone 1987

Geoffrey William Adams  
1926 – 1982



I am indebted to Mrs. Beverlee Adams for the following eulogy in favour of her late husband.

Geoff Adams was born in 'Denniston' in the South Island of New Zealand. He was educated at Nelson College where he represented his school in Rugby Union, Athletics and Swimming. Hew was 'Head Boy' or in Australian terms – School Captain. From Nelson he went to Canterbury University to study Engineering but after working on Ken Austin's horse stud in the University Holidays he decided to study Veterinary Science. He worked for a year before entering Queensland University whence he graduated with Honours and the prize for Animal Husbandry in 1952

His first practice was in Mackay based around a TB contract from the Government and general practice. During his years in Mackay he tested and transported three shiploads of cattle which were bought with Japanese reparation money and sent to the Philippines. The first load suffered from inadequate ventilation and Geoff went to Hong Kong with the empty boat and supervised the restructuring of the ventilation system. Consequently the next two trips were successful and the third trip created a world record at the time as not ONE LOADED BEAST died on the voyage and all the calves born lived. This was a true testament to Geoff's skill as a Veterinarian.

However his love of "thoroughbreds", his knowledge of their bloodlines and their 'time form' was his main interest and after working in South Australia and Albury he moved to Scone in 1968. Whilst in South Australia he acquired an interest in "Comic Court" and he did extensive stud work which stood him in good stead in Scone where he worked with Frank Williams, Norman Judge and Angus Cunningham.





When the practice split up Geoff remained a lone Veterinarian operating from the home farm 'Sans Tache' at Dry Creek, Parkville. However Diabetes Mellitus had begun to wreck his body and he died in the Scott Memorial Hospital in Scone on 29<sup>th</sup>. January 1982. The large gathering at his funeral was an eloquent tribute to the affection and esteem in which Geoff Adams was held by people from all walks of life. He was a gifted Veterinarian, a man who loved animals and his life, short though it was, had been dedicated to their care.



Geoff and Bev Adams at daughter Jackie's graduation



## Retrospective 'Rumination' Perspectives

This section began as part of 'Anecdotal Reflections' but I felt these opinions were too subjective to be compatible with the objectivity of 'reflections'. I therefore created an additional 'compartment' to accommodate this expression.

John Morgan



There is little doubt that following Murray Bain the most influential veterinarian to practice in Scone has been John Reginald George Morgan [JRG M]. Not a great deal has been written about him but John offers the following 'pearls of wisdom' laced with 'just a little bit of (characteristic) latitude'. This is the 'quintessential Morgan' rather than the 'mad dog' variety! Bill Stewart, Sue McCubbery and Jamie Barnes did concoct an aphorism relating to 'Morganization' and being 'Morganized'? I have always speculated cognitively on the real meaning of this epithet?

Reminiscences and Ruminations of a 'Guru'



I came to Scone for a 'shuttle season' in 1968 and had been working in Newmarket in the oldest, biggest practice there named Reynolds and Partners. This was regarded as the best equine practice in Europe at the time. Two former army colleagues of Murray Bain's in Fred Day and Bob Crowhurst were legendary long term partners. [Bill Howey and John Morgan had briefly been in college together in 1961 – 'Bill Howey as a snotty nosed brat', enthused John!]. I had farmed for seven years after leaving school and entered University at age 26. Farming in England was good in those days. You played Rugby and you hunted! There wasn't much of the week left! It was a very pleasant way of life if you had access to it. I returned to Scone accompanied by my family in 1969. [Then four-year-old Daniel is now a local 'legal eagle' and President of Scone Race Club.]

The exchange system was very mutually beneficial. There was much more 'hands on' experience here than in England. Places like the Widden Valley were a long way from anywhere and we were expected to do and share everything. Studs always look for someone that might suit them. It suited us very well to do it. People from this practice were also exposed to different methods over there.

Every day was a challenge. You didn't really know what we were going to see. You had to put your best foot forward every day. There were no excuses for bad workmanship. You had to set standards and maintain them. The vet made 100 or 200 on-the-spot decisions a day – really a decision making machine.

The other day at the hospital they had a foal come in – in the old days we would've seen it at the Valley. We had to fix it in such a way that we wouldn't be called back that night. Perhaps that way of life was more stimulating than "ship-it-into-the-hospital-and-pass-the-buck"; the end result really is not much more improved but the bill is a very great lot bigger!

1977 was the year of the 'Jubilee Clap' [CEM = Contagious Equine Metritis]. I actually came back from a UK visit with special knowledge that year. We were forewarned and fore-armed – so we knew what to look for. That year when I was in France with an employee of ours [Sue McCubbery] and she said 'Funny thing, we've got two mares out

of the stud, they're not in foal and they won't let us bring them home'. I thought; 'Hello, that sounds to me like they've got CEM'!

I said to Bill: "Any suspect stallion we'll only serve two mares and any imported stallion we will swab the mares after the second or third day". In the case of one imported stallion the first three mares covered were found to be oozing pus and CEM was diagnosed. The interesting thing was that two stallions in France sent to America had CEM and spread it to forty stallions on the farm in Kentucky. Sadly they weren't doing what we were doing with aseptic precautions in horse serving and separate washing jugs. Because of the knowledge and the setup and early decisions made we avoided a full-scale epidemic as they had in America in Kentucky.

When I came here the hygiene levels on the stud implemented by Murray Bain were much better than at Newmarket. Speculums were sterilised in between mares. That raised the general standard. Murray had stated that one day something will turn up that is transmissible mechanically and he died before it turned up but it happened. Quite a few mares incubated anaerobically. It was suggested that maybe the reasons that we in the Hunter were sterilising our gear and culturing anaerobically was because we had prior knowledge of this organism. It wasn't true. We just practiced sterile technique as far as possible. Cynics abound!

Scone in 1969 was small community. Everyone knew each other. You only wanted the slightest excuse for partying. There really was a lot of comradeship and everyone in the main stream and the practice got on well. We tended to get on well with other practices because we had nothing to fear from them. We were just busy doing our own stuff. AMB could be a difficult bastard! He could also be entirely unreasonable. We all saw that and occasionally bore the brunt of it. He had a great belief that what he thought was correct. I think everyone's entitled to that but frequently he built it into he was right and you were wrong! In his most vituperative mood he could be an 'avatar of malice'.

AMB was perfunctory with trade people coming around. A salesman of a MIP [Mare Immunological pregnancy] Test explained it and claimed that at 42 days this is a 99.5% sure test. AMB pulled himself to his full height and said 'I am 100%. Go away and perfect your product'! (No arguing!).

We worked hard and played hard. But we all really enjoyed what we were doing and enjoyed each other's company by and large. We worked as a team and we used to fully support each other. There were ritual difficulties and late calls and coming back from Widden Valley and then having to go back again. We put a lot of pressure on ourselves by just working too hard and not working the business side of things too well. Luckily we all survived and didn't succumb to car accidents or depressions although we all had brushes with the 'black dog' at times and jousts with alcohol! You can't control your emotions and how you feel but you can control how you behave.



‘Blues Brother’ and ‘Molls’ at Practice Party! ‘All work and no play’?  
Jenny Jenkins, Paul Ferguson, Karon Hoffman, Mark Wylie



‘Corporate’ Wisdom!

Astute observation and being acutely percipient are keys to success but some of it is just very sound common sense. For example treat every lame or ‘proppy’ foal as ‘joint ill’ until proven otherwise.

The seven years I spent farming and going to markets were with a fairly dry difficult lot. It prepared me psychologically for the job ahead. ‘Manageress Lorraine Skinner thought that Siegfried Farnham [‘All Creatures Great and Small’ TV] and John Morgan were so alike it was untrue’.

Difficult clients! Talk about lessons in life! Brian Maher – Oh my god. Lionel Israel. Alan Morrisby. Brian Maher was a ‘big time criminal’ and said he’d build us a practice. We said; “We’ll do that but probably finance it ourselves”. We did not want to play into his hands.

I think one of the good things for the people working for us is that we used to give them a lot of latitude and preferred it if they came back and discussed anything with us. They could have time off to go somewhere even on their weekend on. You can’t have it all ways. We expected them to give 200% in the breeding season and you’re there 7 days a week. We got ourselves a bad name in some areas because it seemed the sort of person we’d like to come in and work for us and be able to deal with clients well would be the ones who were still playing Rugby. We did incline to employ people who had played and were still playing because it suited us better. At one stage everyone played Rugby except myself so the only person on call on Saturday afternoons was me. 1986 was the twenty year celebration of Scone Rugby Union. It was a very satisfactory arrangement mainly employing males and the sort of work we did. There was a lot of drenching, pregnancy testing cattle and physical stuff just like an ‘endurance race’ every day. You got the satisfaction of a job well done with the absence of noise and a smooth flow. You know it’s going well if there’s no-one yahooing and yelling.

It was difficult for partners. One day during the famous party at the ‘Castle’ I left the kids at the swimming pool without supervision. Some man had picked them up at the pool. No one knew who he was or where they’d gone! It didn’t affect me all that much because I’d just managed to get home and I fell asleep. I left it to ‘my other half’ [Sally] to sort it out. Somebody had taken them home. She had no help from me. A fair few of us were ‘unhelpful’. We didn’t need an occasion. Bill put on a party and might I add that BH did not do things by halves! There’d be enough alcohol for a week just in case there were floods or something. There were people passing out everywhere. Not a great advertisement for temperance but not unpleasant! [Happy note: Good neighbour Norman Smith had ‘recognised the signs’ and retrieved the Morgan brood for safe keeping!].

We had one or two good if not great practice parties. We traditionally hosted one in the Scone Cup Week in May. We would invite everyone to come. They were legendary and literally came in hundreds. Bert Lilley and his crew got stuck on the verandah at 106 Liverpool Street and just ‘chundered’ into the street. When Tony Parker left we had a terrific party. When I came to Scone in 1968 I lived in the ‘hole-in-the-wall’ [Kelly Street] for a few months. One didn’t spend a lot of time there. One went there just to sleep and get up and then get going. We used to leave quite early to drive to wherever we were going to. You could find yourself late on a Saturday night with a hundred miles to come back.





Party Mode! Naturally blurred!  
Christmas 1992

I got in very hot water because when I came back with my family in 1969 2 or 3 people said; 'We didn't even know he was married'! It was a harmless remark but I don't know what Sally construed into that. You couldn't be pining away by yourself. You'd have to have a beer and debrief in the RSL Club. The place shut at 7pm in those days. 'Comeuppance' stopped me going to RSL. Rebecca was about 4 years old and had been here about 2.5 years. I'd been away all day said 'I'm just going for a drink'. She came up with a bottle and said; 'You don't have to go away, we have a beer here'. That finished me! [Sally intuition? - WH]



Reflective Mode – JRGM and Paul Adams

[At University JM failed physics and his lecturer took him for a drink to a bar where you could write on the paper cloth. He wrote down the exact questions from the post – two weeks before he sat it! JM was always extremely resourceful!]



Now just listen up – or else! JRGM and Robyn Woodward



Grandfather 'Claus'

## Bill Howey

I could never have written about myself! I am totally indebted to my close friend and eminent racing journalist Brian Russell for the following biographical contribution. It is taken almost *verbatim* from Brian's excellent pioneer publication 'The Australian Bloodhorse Review'. This article appeared in the April Edition, 1995. It was written just after the closure of the 'old' White Park Race Course in Scone. I have Brian's absolute authority and complete consent to 'purloin' it although modesty almost demands a degree of editing if not considerable censorship! Rather like Bert Lillye Brian has a unique writing style and special idiom with words and prose. I would not even presume to attempt to 'improve' the original. When I asked Brian's permission to use this information he was typically modest and genuinely understated. He said: 'I would be honoured if you used my humble effort'! *BRIAN*.

The Australian Bloodhorse Review, April 1995



*Brian Russell profiles Bill Howey – already an elder statesman of Australian equine veterinary practice.*

A closer inspection may have revealed some moisture around the eyes also, but irrespective of this there was a definite quiver in Bill Howey's voice as he announced to the big crowd in attendance at Scone's White Park late on Saturday afternoon, 22 October [1994], that the club flag would no longer flutter on the flag pole of the racecourse.

In publicly presenting the flag to the veteran of Scone Race Club management Jack Johnston Bill was putting the final nail in the coffin in which was buried the Hunter Valley horse town's White Park racecourse, one which presented its first race meeting back in 1947.

Although the huge crowd which had gathered at White Park for its wake meeting on that Saturday was fare-welling an historic racecourse, it was by no means a farewell to Scone as a racing centre.

Since that final meeting, Scone has galloped into the 21<sup>st</sup>. Century with the opening of a new facility which has been developed at a cost of some \$5 million into a state of the art racing centre, the like of which Australian country racing has never before seen.

Although veterinary surgeon Dr. Bill Howey, a former president of the Scone Race Club and long-term committeeman, lamented the loss of White Park, the opening of the new racecourse was a proud day for him, and for so many others who worked so tirelessly to bring the multi-million dollar complex to fruition.

Many of these were people who had spent all their lives in the Scone region; but Bill was a 'blow-in' of 27 years standing, an Englishman-cum-Scot with a good dash of Irish, who foraged in his youth in the north of England in the Northumberland County just across the border from Scotland.

Despite this, there were very few on the racecourse that day who did not know and respect Bill Howey, such is the impact he has made since arriving from England to join Murray Bain's veterinary practice, serving the Hunter Valley from its base in Scone.

Prior to writing this profile of Bill Howey, I sat with him in the courtyard of the historic home in which he now resides with wife Sarah, a member of the Mackay clan – one of the great Hunter horse breeding families – at Scone and within a stone's throw of the mare and foal sculpture which adorns Elizabeth Park and which symbolizes the town's role as the horse capital of the Valley.

He was as usual very busy – organizing the Scone Race Course Wake, with the help of a vigorous committee; contributing to the arrangements for the opening of the new course, and at the same time attending to his new career path, a unique involvement in animal breeding and rearing, with emphasis on the horse.

Little did he contemplate 27 years ago when he read an advertisement in a veterinary journal for an assistant for a practice at a place called Scone in Australia on the other side

of the world, that it was to lead to a significant niche in Australian horse breeding and racing.

Although he is only middle aged, this descendant of a farming family who had dwelt in the small Northumberland village of Hepple for generations, is revered as an elder statesman of equine veterinary practice.

Bill Howey had an association with horses from childhood with the family being involved in breeding and also providing spelling facilities; as well, his grandfather had a Clydesdale stud.

“We were members of what was called the Hunter Improvement and Light Horse Breeding Society,” he told me, pointing out at the same time an interesting service provided in the fifties by the Duke of Northumberland. His stallion would be taken around the district in a horse float and serve customer’s mares on their properties.

“I was always fascinated with horses, handling them in a small way as a lad and accompanying the family to National Hunt and Point-to-Point meetings. One meeting was the Rothbury Cup and Dad was the local chairman of the committee.

“I remember Phillip Payne-Galwey running horses, and riding them, at this meeting,” he said.

Bill later came to know Sir Phillip well – he became titled – as one of the great personalities of English racing and breeding as a representative of the British Bloodstock Agency.

Growing up, Bill could see that farming was in for a difficult time and decided he would have to look elsewhere to develop a career – and veterinary science was his first option. In consequence he studied at one of the best known veterinary colleges – the Royal Veterinary School at Edinburgh.

Whether it was the fact his mother was Irish or that it gave him the chance to rough it with the cattle, goats, pigs and sheep, Bill spent his formative years as a veterinarian in the north-west of Ireland.

“I wanted to be involved with large animals. I didn’t consider myself a small animal person,” Bill told me. “I always nurtured a desire to be involved with horses, and responded to the advertisement for an assistant in the Scone practice”.

The advertisement had been placed by Murray Bain, a legend in Hunter Valley equine practice. Bill said Murray was amazed to receive his response within a week of the advertisement being placed, and this may have helped him get the appointment. Of course Murray being a graduate of the same Royal Veterinary College, may have been of help.



Bill had heard Murray present a paper on the role of infection in infertility in mares in Australia, at a British Veterinary Association Congress held in Edinburgh – and was very impressed.

Before going to Australia the late Murray Bain – he died in 1974 – had served in the Royal Army Veterinary Corps in the Middle East during World War II, and then spent brief periods gaining experience in thoroughbred breeding in Kentucky, USA, and New Zealand before settling in Scone in 1950.

He built up a large group practice, based primarily on work with thoroughbreds and cattle. His particular interests were infertility in mares, diseases of newborn foals and the many managerial problems of thoroughbred breeding.

Murray Bain was a foundation member of the Post-Graduate Committee of Veterinary Science of the University of Sydney, and was awarded the Seddon Prize by the Australian Veterinary Association for major contributions to clinical veterinary medicine.

Bill Howey said that Bain introduced new techniques and different thinking to the rearing of horses in Australia. Some practices had changed very little in a 100 years and there was room for innovation. Murray brought this to the Hunter Valley.

“He was a fantastic person to be involved with – a very dogmatic person. There was no grey....only black or white.....then he could usually back it up,” Bill Howey said in tribute to Murray Bain who was not only his mentor but also that of John Morgan and Jim Rodger – two other veterinarians who came from the other side of the world to join the Scone practice. [*Note: Jim Rodger actually arrived in 1977*].

Bill Howey looks back with great satisfaction and pleasure on his association with horse breeding and racing in the Hunter Valley. One regret is that Star Kingdom, owned by a partnership of Stanley Wootton [STW], Alfred Ellison [AOE] and Reginald Moses [RFM], died just before he came to this country.



Star Kingdom and Noel Hennessy at ‘Baramul’

“However, I feel very privileged to have known the three owners of Star Kingdom, in their own way very astute men indeed, very knowledgeable in different ways.



#### AOE at Flemington

“For instance Mr. Ellison said he might not have been a very good stockman but he was a very good gardener, and farming was gardening on a larger scale.

“R. F. Moses may have had only one eye, but he saw a hell of a lot out of that one good eye, while Stanly Wootton was a legend. In fact they all were in different ways.

“I picked up a lot of wisdom from R. F. Moses, also Lionel Israel, Frank Bragg, V. C. Bath, ‘Bim’ Thompson, Bill Harris, Alec Terry, Alan Morrisby and George Ryder – the best racing administrator of his time, to quote Tommy Smith – and so many others.



#### R.F. Moses with Harry Plant



Stanley Wootton's expression says it all — admiration, affection, appreciation — on a visit to inspect his champion colt Todman at Maurice McCarten's stables in Sydney. Wootton selected both Todman's sire and dam, Star Kingdom and Oceana, for stud duty in Australia.

### S.T. Wootton and 'Todman'



Stanley Wootton inspecting the mares on one of his many visits to Baramul stud.

### S. T. Wootton at 'Baramul'

He could identify individuals he had only seen as foals several years before.

*Photographs courtesy of 'The Thoroughbred Press'*



Above: Lionel Israel, owner of Segenhoe since 1938. Below: Part of the stallion complex at Segenhoe.

### Lionel Israel at Segenhoe

*Lionel could be brusque! One day Murray told him rather proudly a bushranger had once been shot outside his house 'Chivers'. 'That's nothing – one lives there now' was his immediate retort!*

*When AOE's proclivity for courtesan companionship became fairly common knowledge LBI reputedly responded: 'Hey Alf – they tell me you're doing three of them these days'! AOE was somewhat more restrained! He said: 'Lionel is a dear, dear friend of mine but Lionel can be a little coarse'!*

"Murray Bain told me you will pick up pearls of wisdom all the time if you listen closely enough. Murray said if I would listen and pay attention, he would give me a short cut to 10 years in knowledge," Bill said.

One piece of wisdom which paid big dividends came in a letter from Stanley Wootton saying a galloper by the name of 'Bletchingly' and who he had in work with Angus Armanasco, was a nice little horse and would make a very good sire one day.

When Bletchingly retired to Widden Stud the Howes' bought a share in the son of Biscay for a modest \$3000. They later sold the share for more than \$100,000, but not before breeding several smart horses by him including Bletchingly's second stakes winner, Bakerman, a colt with a flaxen mane and tail out of a \$1000 mare by the name of Breadline.

Bill said he remembers having a look at the first Bletchingly foals, including three colts gathered in one paddock at Widden. They were the youngsters who were to become Bakerman, Pilgrim's Way and Kingston Town.

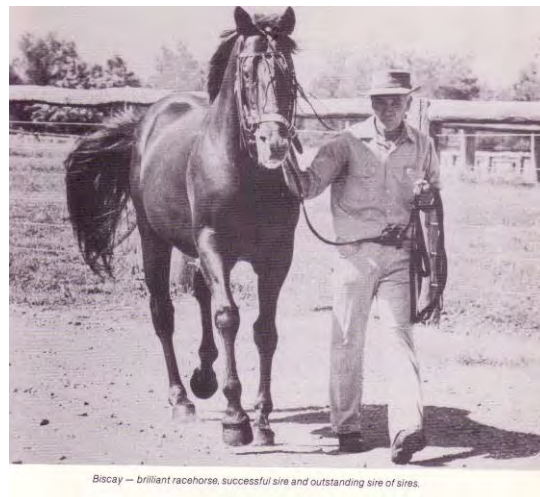
He recalls Kingston Town's dam as a big plainish mare, more like a German warmblood than a thoroughbred. The horse she went to, Bletchingly, was not all that impressive physically either: "When I first saw Bletchingly, I thought him very plain, rather ugly, dumpish and small. He appeared short reined, big headed, big jowled and looked heavy topped," said Bill.



### Bletchingly

Referring to Bletchingly's sire Biscay, he said his near fore was turned in quite dramatically and he understood that when Biscay was a foal he had a slight touch of joint ill. However, his mother, the Makarpura mare Magic Symbol, had one of the biggest backsides you would ever see on a mare.

Biscay had the distinction of standing at three different studs in each of his first three seasons, starting off under Mr. Ellison at Baramul, moving to Segenhoe for one season and then transferring to Bhima at Scone.



### Biscay at Bhima with Peter Gleeson

Mr. Ellison had sold all his mares to Americans Rex Ellsworth, and Dr. Franklin — the man who uplifted many Hollywood stars, through breast implants — after Biscay's first season at Baramul. Bill Howey accompanied them on their boat trip to USA.



Ellsworth and his team, by the way, were sneeringly referred to as cowboys when they traveled east from California with a horse by the name of Swaps in the mid fifties. Out of a mare by a sire, Beau Pere, who stood for a time at Scone, Swaps got the last laugh!

Bill Howey has seen a great deal of change in the veterinary field and the way things are done in the industry, since he arrived in Scone in 1967. He referred to ultrasound scanning as being on the list of valuable developments, and also the availability of new and more efficient drugs.

“When I first came here, Star Kingdom and Todman rarely had more than 45 mares each a year. It was common practice to serve every second day during standing heat, or twice during a heat period.

“That of course is no longer standard practice, so the most popular commercial stallions can have double the number of mares than they had before. Also the management can be much more selective as to when those mares will be covered, and the new technology is helpful towards this,” Bill said.

He pointed out that when you study fertility figures, despite developments, they show that live foal results have not risen significantly overall. However, it is becoming evident that with the more popular commercial stallions, particularly the shuttle horses, who are getting say a 100 mares, conception rates in the nineties are not uncommon.

“Certainly at the major commercial operations which have better facilities and bigger professional staff, the fertility has improved – especially with the advent of scanning. With this in use you can diagnose pregnancy as early as 11 or 12 days, but customarily 14-15 days. It is a great help to be able to show the mare in foal two weeks after she has been covered,” he said.

The value of scanning was underlined in September when Wakefield Stud’s Golden Sword was shown to have failed to get his first mares in foal. Prior to the arrival of ultrasound scanning, it could have taken two months before management was aware of the problem.

Bill Howey said he had been very privileged over the years in veterinary practice in the Hunter Valley, to have been associated with horses such as Todman, Pipe of Peace, King of Babylon, Sostenuto, Biscay, Kaoru Star, Gunsynd, Baguette, Vain, Bletchingly and Marscay.

He has the dubious claim of being the actual ‘executioner’ of four very famous horses – Pie of Peace, King of Babylon, Gunsynd and Biscay. He had to put them down because of ill health.

Bill gained a lot of satisfaction from a professional point of view as a veterinarian in that in 1977 he and his colleagues encountered the challenge of contagious equine abortion.

“At the time, it happened simultaneously, with the first abortion storm due to equine herpes virus.

“I think we met the challenge very well. By doing so we were able to say for example, that in the Hunter Valley – and collectively throughout the industry – we could manage these problems. It made us think we had a very safe and healthy place in which to rear horses,” he said.

He added that he believed Australia is one of the best climates in the world for the rearing of horses. “We have our share of disease problems, but we are fortunate we are free of equine influenza, which can be devastating in some northern hemisphere countries.”

Bill Howey sees the development of the practice of horses being used in the Northern Hemisphere season and then flown to Australia for our season, as very beneficial.

“The shuttle has made a huge difference,” he said. “I think someone in England or Ireland said it was going to be a disaster. In actual fact it has got to be a great benefit Australia, for what we have lacked in the past has been superior genetic material.

“Now we are getting access to some of the best genetic material available – at least from the UK and Ireland. It can only upgrade the mares, the racehorses and the Stud Book in general.”

In the late eighties Bill Howey decided he wanted to take action on his career path before he was forced by age to reduce veterinary practice. “I saw a window of opportunity with the developments taking place in the Hunter Valley including education, and joined the TAFE organization.

After intensive training in Sydney and some teaching in the horse section at the Scone branch of TAFE, he was elevated to the position of curriculum development officer with the NSW TAFE Rural and Mining Industry Training and Fisheries Division.

“We are charged with the responsibility of developing courses involving animal care, including of course, horses,” he said.

The major base for Bill Howey’s operations in the future is to be a multi-million dollar new TAFE campus adjacent to the new Scone racecourse. He described the new college, due to open at the beginning of 1996, as a centre of excellence in rural and equine studies.

It will be the major centre of its kind, and is expected to cater for between 700 and 800 students each year, including trainees from Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Japan.

Bill Howey sees Asia playing a major role in a big leap forward in Australian racing and breeding industries – greater interest stimulated by the beaming of our racing overseas by telecast.



Scone Cup Presentation 1981  
 Bill Doodie [Owner of winner 'Bridgeman'], Ray Moir and Bill Howey

*Thank you Brian from the bottom of my heart! I could never have written this myself! I feel extremely humble having just read it fully for the very first time! I knew its content because 'Tiggy' Moses rang me after publication to thank me for the kind words I said about his father!*



Mr. A. O. Ellison at Randwick races in the 1950's with his personal secretary of over 40 years Miss Nora Elliott

Not long before he passed away Mr. Ellison gave me some of the most cogent advice of my life. In his very clipped best Barrister's tone he said: 'Bill, let me tell you, you have to be a very wealthy man to go chasing thoroughbred horses'! Not long after I withdrew from the 'big poker game' while still in front! Miss Elliott gave me the cheque for the sale of my share in 'Bletchingly'!

## ‘Culture Shocks’

‘Culture Shocks’ represents a slightly embellished and mildly enriched record of my initial impressions of veterinary practice in Scone, NSW, Australia. It was quite an ‘immersion shock therapy’ type of introduction having left NW Ireland on the last Thursday in September 1967 and commencing in Scone the first Tuesday in October 1967 after a prolonged migration flight via the USA and the wide Pacific Ocean.

### Culture Shock 1

I was reminded of my initial cultural expose on arriving alone in Australia from NW Ireland in the mid 1960’s. In Donegal there was a large herd of cows and represented the core family assets as well as comprising the total means of income provision. All siblings were ‘over the water’ earning pounds or dollars to further supplement the coffers. If one of the highly treasured animals even looked slightly ‘off colour’ veterinary advice was sought and expected immediately! They watched them twenty four hours a day with the cows housed at night next to the family home! I remember one very urgent call at 2am because a recently calved cow was ‘shivering’ and this in a Donegal December! All family members assembled with an eclectic selection of neighbours. Buckets of warm water with a profusion of soap and towels were always on hand! A drop of ‘poteen’ lubricated the process when you had firmly established trust.

Imagine my surprise and ‘disorientation’ on receiving my very first call to a calving at a Kars Springs property only three quarters of an hour’s drive from Scone towards Towarri mountain. This was like halfway across Ireland! I imagined it to be an ‘emergency’ and made appropriate preparation and haste! It was a time of drought (just another!) and cattle prices were in the nadir ‘trough’ of the boom/bust cycle! Ernie Power was a soldier settler truly battling on his too small selection at Brawboy. I eventually found the farm only to be disappointed no-one was about! I managed to find a friendly neighbour able to reassure me after overcoming initial language barriers I had found the ‘right place’! After what seemed an inordinately long time a lone figure on horse-back eventually emerged from a brown cloud of dust in the ‘long paddock’. Ernie and steed were accompanied by a rather mottley mob of ‘superfine’ Kelpies and Blue Heelers.

I will never forget the impact of the beautiful laconic gravelly drawl with a droll cultural cadence I cannot imitate:

“Ah, you must be the vet! Wasn’t expecting you today. She only started calving last Thursday.....!!!”

That Saturday night I received a call at 10pm while attending a case at Ameroo Santa Gertrudis Stud (I’d never heard of them before!) near Willowtree. There was a sick foal at Woodlands Stud, Denman. The boss was out to dinner! I went! In my resilient Holden 186 Station Wagon ‘tank’ with three forward column gears I traversed the 100 miles in 90 minutes! All the way across Ireland in my Mini Minor!

## Culture Shock 2

My most enduring rose coloured memories of my early life in Scone are centred round the very real privilege of providing a veterinary service to the unique and special stud farms in the Widden Valley. Only 1.5 hours' drive away this is the fabled 'Terrible Hollow' of Rolf Boldrewood and 'Robbery Under Arms' fame.

As with all privilege comes responsibility. In those halcyon days of winding telephones, small rural exchanges with omni-informed telephone receptionists and shared party lines it was established practice to call at the Baerami Creek Store owned by Cliff Kemp. Cliff's father had reputedly regularly served Harry Readford *aka* 'Captain Starlight' who resided in a nearby gully at Terrible Hollow. This is only a short cockatoo flight away from the Baerami Valley settled by Tom Hungerford's ancestors and still bearing a small side road with the appellat 'Hungerford's Lane'. At Cliff's store you chatted, collected messages, delivered newspapers and could assuage the petroleum thirst of the very dry 186 Holden Chargers! If you missed Baerami Creek there was always Rodney Butcher at Baerami post office or indeed Kerrabee PO or Bylong Store. 'Bush telegraph' still works better than mobiles out here!

Part of the unwritten creed also included a veterinary service to the animals owned by the inhabitants of Baerami Creek 'while you're passing through' (i.e. *Gratis!*) on your way to and from the Bylong and Widden Valleys. Cliff asked me to call and clean a heifer who still hadn't passed her afterbirth since disappearing into the scrub to calve 'about two weeks ago'! Late on a very hot Saturday after a big day at Baramul and Oakleigh I agreed to make the call. Cliff had mustered the lean 'yellow' Hereford heifer into a very old post-and-rail iron bark round yard. There was no race or forcing crush. I decided to do 'a full clinical examination! (Like bloody hell!) The heifer, totally unkempt and wild, would kill you if she could, racing around, snorting, bellowing and charging! Cliff was very old man. No help there! The solution was to neck-lasso from atop the safety of the high rail fence, choke down and secure with other ropes across the round yard attached to both hind and fore legs! The 'anaesthetic' (neck rope) could now be released. Now William you can perform a thorough clinical examination! I didn't! I went straight to the source of trouble, the RFM! You guessed it! She still hadn't calved! After 2 very hot hours and my remaining lubricant gel (no hot water on tap here - actually no water at all - Baerami Creek was dry!) I managed to extricate the desiccated remains of what might have been a very pretty white faced calf!

Cliff and I celebrated with a drop of rum and no water! Cliff kept a safe distance! I stank! Old Ben Barber of Baerami reckoned you went mad if you drank the water from Widden Creek. He stuck to rum. Who am I to doubt an expert? The heifer did not thank me at all! After release she would still have killed me if only I'd stayed in the yard! I left!

The happy post-script is the heifer survived and fattened. Cliff obtained a fair price for her at Denman cattle sales. Cliff was a very astute businessman. Forgetting whom he supplied with a 56lb bag of sugar once he put it on everyone's account! Sixteen paid



without question! They breed them resilient, resourceful and tough out Baerami way, don't they Tom?

### Culture Shock 3

One of the very real privileges on coming to work at Scone was 'Belltrees'. Belltrees was and is the ancestral home of the White family. The original pioneer James White came originally to Australia from Somerset in 1826 as custodian of 79 valuable French merino sheep destined for the Australian Agricultural (AA) Company. The AA Company was soon to begin its vast expansion throughout the colony of NSW from its base on the north shore of Port Stephens. In 1967 Michael and Judy were respectively patriarch and matriarch at Belltrees and parents of an immaculate family. Equally impressive was the home herd of magnificent Aberdeen Angus Cattle carefully selected for the very best breed traits over successive generations. Their acclimatisation in Australia astounded me having been accustomed to the softer 'Border' variety of the farms in the Tweed Valley between Roxburghshire and my ancestral home in Northumberland.

I remember in Donegal a farmer bursting into tears when a cow I was rushing to treat was dead on arrival from the peracute ravages of indigenous 'grass tetany'! My first job at Belltrees was pregnancy testing 'only' 285 heifers in the lower yards. A little later there were over 700 cows and calves mustered into the homestead yards for S19 vaccination of the junior female component. This was and is a magnificent sight with the exquisite expertise and precision of the Belltrees team of stockmen ensuring smooth flow and minimum fuss through the superb facilities. The very young Anto and Peter White were delegated to assist and learn the trade! A 'crook' looking cow was brought to my attention. She was febrile and my initial diagnosis was 'PUO' (pyrexia of unknown origin) possibly associated with chronic metritis. I suggested treatment. Michael was unimpressed! Far from 'breaking into tears' his decision was to 'take her up the gully and shoot her' as being biologically unfit to maintain her status in the Belltrees herd and possibly pass on an undesirable genetic weakness! I was momentarily stunned before acknowledging to myself the sound scientific wisdom of this peremptory decision. One glance at overseer Alec's mutual contiguous approval sealed her fate! I had some philosophical readjustment to make and repositioning to assuage before moving on! Michael and Charles Darwin obviously saw 'eye-to-eye' on this one arguably explaining the eclectic quality and high fecundity of the Belltrees herd? Back in the Borders the cow would at least have fed the local pack of hounds!

A little more pragmatic was one scion member of an illustrious grazing family on the Liverpool Plains. The family surname suggested an ethnic origin closer to Zionism than Christianity and with proclivity for placing higher value on 'individual' assets. The scenario at 'Western Willowtree' was almost identical to that described above. This time the decision was made to administer antibiotics to the cow with 'PUO'. A repeat dose was prescribed. Imagine my initial surprise some months later when our receptionist in Scone relayed a call from Fred at Willowtree for more 'of the stuff that fattens cattle'! I had never considered Terramycin in that light but the results of therapy had been spectacular at least in Fred's eyes!

## Culture Shock 4

I was riding with Murray at his behest determined to learn all I could and quick! I had never met Murray Bain but had seen him deliver paper at the BVA Congress in Edinburgh. It was with a mixture of trepidation, awe and reverence I ventured forth in my very new and pristine environment. I don't know what I expected but Scone looked to me like a Hollywood Western film set. The spectacular steep sandstone hills in the Widden Valley appeared to me to possibly harbour Geronimo and his braves! I had not yet discovered 'Captain Starlight'! Inured to a class ridden culture which at least displayed a thin veneer of superficial respect for highly qualified professionals imagine my surprise on arrival at Baramul to find no obsequious welcoming party at the mare yards! I remained silent, made no remark and passed no judgement. Eventually there emerged on horseback two caricature 'baddies' straight out of 'Warner Brothers'. With at least three days' stubble and worn but clean 'uniform' the only missing apparel were the twin Colt 45's. They both dismounted and hitched their steeds to the rail. John A. went to the water tank for a drink. Legendary Star Kingdom Stud Groom Noel H. proceeded to the Doc's car, (a 'Merc') opened the door, helped himself to the daily paper and read the racing results. "You're late you (expletive deleted) old bastard" were the first dialectic words I heard spoken in the Valley! So much for 'professional reverence' down under!

Noel and John were guilty of a little humorous deception at Murray's expense sometime earlier. Murray was meticulous in everything he did. His veterinary gear in his car was immaculate as were his sparkling white overalls, towels and most importantly record books in which he immediately wrote the results of every examination he ever made. (I counted >1 million examinations in the practice at one stage). Unpacking the car on arrival was an elaborate procedure and followed a very regular military pattern. The whole process took over 10 - 15 minutes. Murray was vain and proud and had attained very high army rank serving with HM forces in the Middle East and North Africa. On one occasion he was not surprised to find anyone at the Baramul yards and unpacked as usual. Still no one appeared. He read the paper. He checked his watch. He walked around. He checked his watch. He looked about. He checked his watch. At last he decided there must be some mistake so packed everything up again with the same exact precision as the unloading process. He was just about to drive away when two cheeky faces appeared above the old empty water tank by the cattle race! 'G'day Doc, nice day?' may or may not have sounded sweet to his ears. I have no record of his response!

Noel was also the original author of the famous quotation of the relationship between veterinary income, 'bugs' and big time investment. With remarkable prescient percipience Murray had established the very first private diagnostic veterinary laboratory in the country. In 1965 Shona Murphy arrived to take up duties as resident bacteriologist and clinical pathologist in Scone. Very soon popular and scientific names of common equine pathogens became very familiar 'around the studs'. Beta Haemolytic Streptococcus was conveniently and with very sound reason shortened to BHS. This prevented the embarrassment of 'literacy' exposure not least with the veterinarians. Jim Capel from Barraba nearly choked on the telephone on receiving a report from us his mare had the long form version of the disease! I only just managed to calm him down and

explain! The bull market corporate giant of Australia at the time was the ‘Big Australian’ Broken Hill Pty. Ltd. or BHP. It did not take the very droll Noel to cotton on that “Murray should rename BHS to BHP he’s made so much money out of it!” As Murray said about someone else: “Cheeky bastard!”

## Culture Shock 5

The unique Australian accent and enunciation must have had their origins from the type of people with whom I had been used to dealing. The soft Donegal intonation, the harsher strident Tyrone argot and the rolling vowels of my native Northumbria all contributed to the unique antipodean pronunciation. Similarly the lowland Scots diction left its mark as did my favourite ‘Geordie’. It’s always intrigued me how Burke and Wills may have communicated? I considered I had acquired a generally well-rounded exposure to varying degrees of elocution in English. I had listened to wireless broadcasts of Test Cricket and compared the starkly contrasting tones of Alan McGilvray with the very ‘beeb’ renditions by Brian Johnston (‘Jonners’) and earthy doyen John Arlott. My father rather unsuccessfully tried to imitate the call of ‘No’ in ‘strine’! It sounded like a not too convincing nasal ‘now’! Ken Howard and “Fag” completed my ‘downunder’ etymological education not long after arrival.

In the halcyon swinging sixties it was still *de rigueur* to listen to the races on a Saturday afternoon. Indeed there was little else to choose! Commercial radio was new to me with its tinny tunes and jingling advertisements. Ken Howard was the ‘legend’! I was transfixed by his accuracy and bemused by his speed at calling a race! It was a different story when I tried to follow the progress of my selection! With a degree of unfounded prudish intellectual snobbery I considered I had a smattering of French. I backed a horse called *Arc En Ciel* by *Faux Tirage* (NZ). The race was well and truly over before I realised ‘Arkenseel’ had indeed run a place and his sire was ‘Forkstirrage’! Ken Howard deferred to no one with his Darlington inspired brand of French pronunciation! I thought *Arc En Ciel* must have been scratched or left at the barrier!

‘Fag’ was another story altogether! A great bloke and one of my trusted and valued friends, he also ‘talked the talk’ as he ‘read the chalk’! Literate written interpretation sometimes presented a problem especially with Trans-Tasman names. Murray was always a ‘stickler’ for exactitude in record keeping especially correct spelling. “Can You Eat A Pie” sounded a funny name for a horse in ‘Fag-speak’ – so much so I thought I should inquire further. I asked for the identification papers. ‘Fag’ was right! ‘Kanhui Tae Pai’ must have been Maori for the same thing! ‘Tall Haemorrhoid’ also stretched the limits of credibility and imagination! ‘*Taille Emeraude*’ was a French bred mare at Holbrook!

Richard Nairn Fraser BVSC



Ready for anything – and everything!  
Practice Party in the naughty 90's with Blues Brothers 'Moll' JJ

HVTBA President's Award 2005

I had the honour of delivering the address when Nairn Fraser was presented with the Hunter Valley Thoroughbred Breeders President's Award in 2005. The following is a synopsis of my speech.

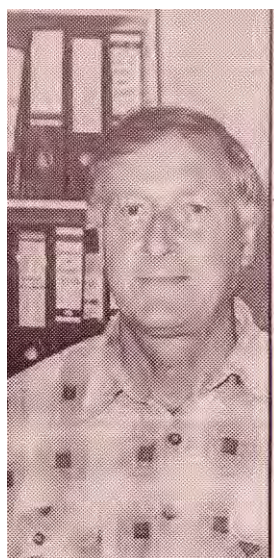
'Nairn Fraser is a quiet but most effective achiever' straddling a period of almost four decades.

Succinct. Germane. Apposite. Relevant. Remote. Impassive. Inconspicuous.  
Circumspect. Taciturn. Unassuming. Unobtrusive. Understated. Modest. Discreet.  
Diplomatic. Dexterous. Dedicated. Devoted. Tactful. Prudent. Pertinent. Practiced.  
Professional. Proficient.

Matching my proclivity for etymology and completing the third leg of a unique 'trifecta' of sorts and after 35 devoted years' service to the thoroughbred industry in the Hunter Valley the most worthy recipient of the HVTBA Presidents' Award for 2005 is **Richard Nairn Fraser**.



‘This is Nairn Fraser’ Jackie Druery in foreground



Nairn Fraser



## Shona Murphy



### Pen Picture

Shona Murphy is a New Zealand born microbiologist who came to work for Murray Bain in Scone in 1965 and has remained there ever since. To that extent she represents the 'original' with a long link to the practice. Shona's expertise was largely instrumental in 'saving' the Hunter Valley Thoroughbred Industry from the ravages of 'Jubilee Clap' in 1977. She is yet another practice recipient of the Murray Bain Service to Industry Award made annually by the Hunter Valley Thoroughbred Breeders Association.

### Reflections

I am a microbiologist. I graduated in 1954 and did it as a part-time class. The opportunity arose and I was always interested in science and chemistry at school. I was working in New Zealand at a research station and I had some friends who'd come to Australia and I came over to visit. They were working at the Vet school at Camden and I stayed with them and secured a job at Camden. About 2 years after I started there I heard about this job in Scone with Murray Bain. Another girl who was a Vet had been approached to take it on but couldn't do so.

Murray wanted to set up a laboratory for the practice and I came up and looked at the position. It was one of the very first laboratories in a private practice but Percy Sykes had one too. I thought it was something that really suited me and a bit of a challenge. At this stage the practice was small, with 2 or 3 vets. Then Bill [Howey] came and then Richard Greenwood. It was a close knit little group. We got on very well and stayed really good friends. I got the laboratory going with mainly bacteriological work. They used to swab mares for infections during the breeding season to make sure they'd go into foal and also take samples from foals.

I probably was the only woman and I enjoyed it! They were all very good to me. There was no discrimination or anything. Sometimes when I went out onto the studs they were surprised I was present when they examined mares and took samples of semen from stallions. Once they were used to the situation I accepted it and they accepted me.

I liked Murray Bain. He was a very impressive man and a Scot. My mother was a Scot. I related to him well. He had a great personality and made people feel very welcome. He was a very popular man but did have his detractors. He was very good to his staff and made you feel as though you were a very important person. He liked to have convivial chats. When we finished work at night we'd go for a drink and have a talk about things that were happening in the practice. One day Murray was talking about one stud owner and said; 'The trouble is he thinks he's God'! I replied: 'He doesn't realise we've already got God here'! He had lots of funny stories to tell. He'd stop for morning tea and relate some story about people he knew. He could charm his way out of anything! He always stuck to the truth - more or less.

We went to parties in 'the hole in the wall'. There were about three flats on top of shops in the main street [Kelly Street]. They were quite nice and owned by Harry Hayes. I was one of the organisers. We'd have a combined party. It was called the 'hole in the wall' because between two of the shops on the main street there was a narrow gap you could go down to get to the back of the flats. Mine opened directly into Kelly Street.

I was 31 when I came to work in Scone. Bill came after I did but not very long after me. John Bryden and Treve Williams were here when I arrived together with Murray. Frank wasn't working with them then as there had been a 'partition' in the practice. Peter Beiers came briefly. Murray started bringing vets in from overseas and Richard Greenwood was another who just happened to arrive that way. Many vets were emigrating at the time. They probably came for the experience of working with Murray. He had a very good connection with Newmarket in England and there was always a good interchange between those two practices. John Morgan came next I about 1968.

It was great fun. I worked long hours because I was the only one working in the laboratory. Often it would mean working late at night because the samples might not come in until the end of the day. I enjoyed it because it was such a good atmosphere to work in and meeting new people all of the time. I got to know a lot about the horse industry and the people!

Contagious Equine Metritis [CEM] is transmitted venereally by stallions and causes infertility in mares until it is treated and/or cured. The mares don't go into foal. It was a mutant of some other bacterium which became established in mares over in Ireland and the UK. It was brought out by visiting Stallions in about 1977 and perhaps before. It was a big deal. The stallions had to come in through quarantine and were meant to have been checked to be free of any infection (CEM). This particular stallion came up to Oakleigh Stud in Widden Valley. (Mount Hagen was his name). He'd come from Ireland and was meant to be checked before left and when he arrived in quarantine. We 'test mated' him with three mares, swabbed the mares and brought the swabs back to Scone. I cultured them. I'd been in touch with a microbiologist in Newmarket who'd been looking at this and he told me what to look for. I read the cultures and said; 'I think we've got this dread disease'. They couldn't believe it. I sent it away to be confirmed with Keith Hughes at Camden. It was confirmed. They didn't use the stallion again as they were not sure how good the treatment would be. CEM had spread quite a bit through different studs. It was isolated from quite a few visiting mares. They wouldn't use them again that season.

There was a quite a bit of financial loss to the studs, mainly because we weren't sure how much it had spread. People were all very hush-hush about it; "It mustn't be known that we have that on our stud". There was a lot of work to be done because all of the mares had to be swabbed. The incubator was overflowing every night as it took 48 hours to actually grow the organism. It had to be grown in a micro-aerophilic inoculation and special media. After 48 hours checking all of these cultures it gets quite exciting when you actually find one that's positive! It can be quite boring just going through lots of negative cultures. Vets went to the studs and educated people about hygiene.

I went to work in 'Ballykisteen Stud' in Tipperary, Ireland as part of 'tax minimization scheme' orchestrated by some smart accountants and lawyers in Australia. I set up a laboratory there. CEM was rife in Ireland but I didn't pick any up while I swabbed there.

Viral abortion had also occurred at about the same time as CEM and they were losing quite a lot of foals. Abortion happens at about three months premature. We had no facilities to actually diagnose the virus in Scone. We sent samples to Margaret Sabine at Sydney University and also to a vet called Mike Studdert at Melbourne University. We had to freeze the samples so that they wouldn't arrive too contaminated. He [Mike Studdert] was the first one to actually isolate the virus. During the Herpes Virus outbreak; 'The safest place to be was the Hunter Valley because everyone knew what was going on'.

On one stud they had an abortion storm. It was possibly Bellerive Stud in Scone. In the same year, I think we had all our problems at once. We were very alarmed about it. I think that's when they got people to have meetings, invite the stud people and get some informed lectures. Margaret Sabine came up at some time to lecture on virus infections. People suspected it before but we never saw the samples. They probably destroyed the aborted foetuses. Viral abortion occurred in July 1977 and we had a meeting here at Scone in the Bowling Club with 400 people attending.

Then we diagnosed CEM from a dry mare called 'Opera' at Bhima who had been to an imported stallion in Victoria in 1976. There were 3 'trial' mares to go to Mount Hagen at Oakleigh. Heart's Choice was one and Ballyhoo another. Bill brought the cultures back on a Saturday night. He was leaving early on Monday morning and I came out and told him there was a problem.

When Bill came he was new to equine practice. He'd worked as a vet in Ireland and I think that Murray could see the potential in Bill. He was very good about the way that he passed on his knowledge to him and made sure he got all the right experience. He probably developed Bill quite a lot in his personality.

The jokes they played on Murray! They used to like their practical jokes, especially when Murray had broken ribs when he got into a fight. Apparently Murray went to his doctor and said; 'A horse kicked me'! The doctor replied; 'That's not right - you know you've been brawling again'. Murray said the doctor 'was a lying bastard' with tongue in cheek! They played jokes on me! One day I was down at Woodlands (enjoyed getting out of the lab) and we'd been drenching the mares and foals. I helped out and I idly remarked 'I've never seen a large snake'. I went to get into my side of the car and there was snake curled up on my seat in the car! I leapt about ten feet although it proved to be dead. The studs were smaller and privately owned then but now they're more impersonal.

In the 'red light district' (hole-in-the-wall) I was in one flat and Bill Howey, Bill Stewart, Nairn Fraser and Warren McLaren were the 'hole in the wall gang'. Jean McPherson shared with me and later married Warwick Judge, Norman's son. He used to stay at my house but it was all very proper in those days. I still see Jean. I used to go home to NZ once a year at Christmas. My mother would come over from time to time. I remained single and stayed on working in the Scone practice until I retired.

Bill: "A famous 'red-light district' of Scone, veterinary orchestrated and promulgated."

Shona: 'It makes me sound like the madam'.

Bill: 'That would've been some people's interpretation'!



'Madam' Murphy under the 'red light' after dark

A night watchman (Geoff Hayne) tried to arrest 'the gang' when they were sitting on the roof. Ross Croaker was playing a guitar strip naked and they were throwing raw eggs at him. He slipped down and almost killed himself. He was 'starkers'.

Bill and I hosted the infamous champagne and chicken party at Kingdon Castle. We decimated the 'squatocracy' of the upper Hunter. There were 120 bottles of champagne bought through Jane Mackay. ('Shona, you should've bought 120 chickens'!). I thought it was going to be a glass of champers and a chicken nibble. We had a tent pole and John Kelso just collapsed to the ground. Lionel Israel crashed into a fence while trying to get into his car. John Morgan got into his car and passed out. When Sally went to pick up the kids from the swimming pool they'd gone! Norman Smith had picked them up! Nick Locke just kept repeating 'sorry darling' to wife Sue and couldn't move. It was all very close personal contact.



Shona with Virginia Osborne and Norman Judge at a Veterinary Meeting in Scone

We have had 'shuttle vets' for over 35 years. The first was James Crouch in 1967. We pre-empted the shuttle service long before it happened on the studs. Bill Stewart came from New Zealand. His Dad Jack Stewart had been a famous Rugby Union player for the University of Sydney. Another vet Jamie Barnes hung a notice: 'In memoriam - Bill Howey once drank here' at his Bucks Party in the Belmore Hotel. Jamie's father is the longest serving Councilor of the RAS of NSW. His mother is a Russian Ballerina. They always said Jamie played football like a ballerina! His father is a grazier.

Vets were involved in Scone Rugby club and in the community. Murray was a Shire Councilor and very involved. Bill was involved with Murray and his tree planting.



Sarah (Howey) used to drive them home from the races when they couldn't drive themselves. I remember one day having a party at Di Fleming's place. The 'gang' were expected but they didn't make it. They were stuck at my flat and had 'ordered' room service from the Belmore Hotel delivered by Robert Cotton! We used to have great Christmas parties. Jenny Jenkins was a good organiser. She, Mark Wylie and Karen Hoffman were the 'Blues Brothers' one year.



'Blue Brothers' and 'Molls'

Jenny Jenkins, Paul Ferguson, Karon Hoffman, Mark Wylie

Sue McCubbery was one of the first female vets in 1973. She came from New Guinea and went to the University of Queensland. I spent a lot of time with her later in Ireland when I was at 'Ballykisteen'. She married an Irishman and had four children. Sadly she had committed suicide at age 40. Sheila Lavery came from Ireland. Michele Cotton might've been the first female undergraduate vet to see practice. Murray forbade her to meet Percy Sykes. When she did, Percy said; 'I can see why'!



### ‘Petticoat Conspiracy’

Amanda Campbell, Sarah Howey, Shona Murphy

It was 6am on a Sunday morning at ‘Kingdom Castle’. Murray picked up Bill and said ‘come with me I’ve got something to tell you’. Then Dave Warden rang and confirmed it. He had a suspected tumour and asked Bill to look after things for a while. There was ‘a spot in the groin and a spot on the liver’ which if you’re a scientist you know is not good news. Murray was on Pethidine injections for pain relief and sometimes Bill Howey was giving them. [‘The only human I’ve ever injected’]. Denise, the nurse, would not allow more when Murray asked for it because it had not been officially prescribed. Bill called Dr. Dave Warden who said ‘Bill, do what you ‘effing’ well like’! It was near the end. The course of the disease was 18 months and Murray died in March 1974.

## Testimonial Tributes

There are a few non-veterinarians absolutely pivotal to the egress of veterinary practice in Scone who I feel are worthy of special praise. This section is dedicated to them.

## Administration Apogee

It didn't come any better than this!



Lorraine Skinner is on the right with Jackie Druery to her right

The very first 'practice secretary' was Mrs. Everingham whom Paul Williams remembers with glasses and very straight hair. Enid Garland was a lady in every respect but tended to sacrifice efficiency on the altar of verbal but not written communication. Marj Gillett inclined to be the reverse but could be unwittingly brusque. Kay McGregor shared her duties between the practice and 'Grazcos' and did not subscribe to the 'customer is always right' philosophy. She gave one 'whingeing grazier' very short shrift one day which evoked a complaint to head office! Kay later earned fame as the Australian Power Boat Champion when domiciled with butcher husband Mick Marshall on the Gold Coast.

The demise of Kay heralded the entry of Lorraine Bateman/Skinner. Lorraine was to emerge as indubitably the 'icon' of administration and the benchmark for excellence in this field. She was extremely intelligent and possessed a computerized 'steel trap' mind well before their 'invention'. Hilton Cope swore blind that when he telephoned she

picked up the 'phone and said 'Yes Hilton' before he had even uttered a word! 'How did she know it was me' he said! Was it mental telepathy? Australian business tycoon and leviathan entrepreneur Robert Holmes A'Court was perplexed when Lorraine fielded his inquiries from Heytesbury Stud WA by say 'Yes Mr Holmes A'Court' even before he had time to introduce himself! She recognised his argot! Lorraine was at the helm as 'de facto' practice manager and she (and we) enjoyed great support from Jackie, Jan and Robyn. This was possibly the apogee of administration excellence.



Robyn, Jackie, Lorraine, Jan  
Enjoying sunshine and ice cream! These were indeed 'days in the sun'!

Lorraine possessed a very strong mind – and will - and she was able to guide us all through the egregious miasma of early computerization! When Lorraine resigned (for very good family reasons) after 18 years of devoted service she left an enormous gap which it was impossible to fill immediately. No one person could cope with the work load she had carried and endured. I am eternally in debt to Lorraine because in addition to all her other duties she was 'lumbered' one year as acting 'Honorary' Secretary of Scone Race Club. I was President and the incumbent had resigned her position a mere three weeks before the Annual Cup Meeting in May. This was a very busy time but 'when the going gets tough the tough get going'! Thanks to Lorraine's incredible memory and innate ability the Cup Meeting went off without a hitch that year! She was able to handle the entirely new administrative work load with consummate skill. The practice office handled all the nominations and acceptances as well as all the myriad arcane enquiries, 'demands' and requests from the not too discerning or polite racing fraternity. Thank you Lorraine from the bottom of my heart! Likewise I am equally in debt to Jackie! Jackie was/is and exquisite typist. I am a shocking writer! Guess who came to my rescue! Much of the content appearing in this tome would not have done so were it not for Jackie who was never fully compensated or recognised for her efforts!

Our eventual solution was to 'reinvent' administration and drag it kicking and screaming into the 21<sup>st</sup>. century. I think the practice was the very first professional organization in the town to appoint a full time business/administration manager. John Spillane joined the team from the then recently defunct State Bank. Today [2005] the administration machine has evolved into a 'chimera' of sorts! The paper work associated with modern veterinary practice and compliance with various legislative requirements has exploded exponentially! Consequently in a team the size of that assembled at Scone Veterinary Hospital there is a huge demand for a very smooth machine. Kim Budden now heads a very professional assortment of specialist positions within the administration structure.



'Siegfried' with Lorraine  
JRGM and Lorraine enjoyed internecine 'mind battles'

If Lorraine Skinner was the 'shining star' at Morgan/Howey/Fraser she was matched at Frank Williams and Partners by Beverley Pittman. When the two practices merged again in 1978 'Bev' elected to take a well deserved exit from the exigencies of private practice. She would have been welcome across the road at 106 Liverpool Street!

Almost all the people in administration possessed an acute sense of humour! We had our lighter moments! Sometimes it was based on delightful *naiveté*! Please see 'Jenny Taylor'!



‘Man Friday’  
(Salvation John)



‘Man Friday’

He was our salvation! The practice now known as Morgan Howey Fraser & Partners moved to 106 Liverpool Street from ‘Grazcos’ Kelly Street in 1977. There was a lot of work to do! JRGM came up with a big winner! Not all his ideas came to fully ripe fruition but this was the ‘Ace of Spades’.

John Flaherty was well known to and by the practice. For two decades he had toiled laboriously at Brooklyn Lodge for Carl Powell. With ‘Cribby’ he formed a formidable duo and survived to tell the tale. As Carl elected to move his whole operation ‘lock stock and carriage’ to Victoria ‘Flaht’ was at a loose end and amenable to offers. I confess the decision was not mutually unanimous but a strong majority swung behind ‘Flaht’ who commenced as general hand at about this time. How fortuitous! The time and timing were brilliant!

Initially a prospective jockey from the Far North Coast John Flaherty had acquired a prodigious range of skills in the horse, building trade and related industries. He was a consummate farrier, expert horseman and esoteric horse educator (‘breaker’) as well as competent builder, electrician, plumber and welder. In his spare time he constructed all the metal goals posts used by Junior Soccer to this day. I provided the resources and he delivered the expertise and labour. It was no more than his due to be made a Life Member of the Junior Soccer Association for his voluntary effort(s).

Thanks to John the construction of the Equine Surgery at the rear of 106 Liverpool Street was able to proceed and be completed on time and within budget. Similarly, the Intensive Foal Care Unit at Clovelly was constructed under the aegis of his expertise. The great thing about 'Flaht' was that no task was ever too big or too difficult. He could always stand back, take an objective look and make a value judgement on how to proceed. 'No' or 'impossible' were not in his lexicon. I never ever remember talking about 'hours' or 'days off'. It was immensely satisfying when John Flaherty was selected for the prestigious 'Murray Bain Service to Industry Award' by the Hunter Valley Thoroughbred Breeder's Association in 1996. There was no more deserving cause! Murray would have been very proud. The award was instituted in his name specifically to acknowledge such achievement.



John Flaherty and Jeannie Crawford [Harris] plan Clovelly Stables

'Man Friday'? Make that every day of the week and nights as well!

W. P. Howey

## “Angels of Mercy”

### Veterinary Nurses



Jeannie Crawford – Pioneer

Veterinary nurses? Never heard of them! Well, that’s exactly how it was in 1967! We used to rely on struggling administration ‘volunteers’ to restrain whatever was necessary often at ungodly hours and with strictly limited resources. Marge,

Lorraine, Jan and Jackie were highly competent and always willing but it was not what they were trained to do! Occasionally an unwitting itinerant student or ubiquitous spouse was cajoled and/or coerced into the ‘unfamiliar’ role! How things have changed and so very much for the better!

Vicki Clifton was first ‘cab off the rank’ but it was really Jeannie Crawford who first firmly established what was to become the benchmark for a long line of excellence in the field sustained to this day. Each and every year the team is encouraged, enlarged, enriched, enhanced and embellished. In the inchoate 21<sup>st</sup>. Century it is inconceivable to imagine a situation in practice without the expert assistance of highly trained and exquisitely skilled veterinary nurses. Motivation always accompanies the package and is never a problem! At the time of writing the Veterinary Nurse category of employment has emerged and evolved into an honoured para-professional group indispensable to modern day veterinary practice. Scone Veterinary Hospital has been in the vanguard of this development since inception and today is an industry leader especially in the area of intensive foal care and nursing. The unit at Clovelly Stables is the largest in the Southern Hemisphere and a benchmark for excellence in its field. It is undiminished by comparison to its ‘competitors’ in Northern climes.

Jeannie Crawford was the willing ‘pioneer ingenue’ in the field – literally as well as metaphorically! I think Jeannie’s career development as our inaugural initiate is worthy of recording in some personal detail. Jeannie was the very first of our ‘shuttle veterinary nurses’ who chose to expand and enhance their careers with experience gained in the Northern Hemisphere. To a very large extent this reflects the history and evolution of the category we now know as ‘veterinary nurses’. It also details the development of ‘foal care and nursing’ and the implementation of intensive foal care at ‘Clovelly Stables’. Jeannie has written the following as a voluntary contribution to this tome.

“In 1974 I commenced my employment at the Scone Veterinary Hospital (then known as Morgan, Howey & Fraser). I was 12 years old and was principally employed to assist Shona (Murphy) in the laboratory after school from 4 – 5 pm. This led to work on Saturday mornings from 9 – 12 pm when I would make up worming drenches for mares and foals and numerous concoctions of cough medicines, wart ointments, wound dressings, tonics for racehorses, ringworm lotions etc. all from a recipe book that various vets contributed to (mostly from Newmarket I think). It’s something that is not used today with all the commercial ‘drugs’ that are on the market. There doesn’t seem the interest in using the ‘old’ remedies of mixtures. In 1978 I left school and worked for Major and Mrs. Mitchell at Yarraman Park.

It wasn’t until I returned from working in New Zealand in 1981 that John Morgan asked me if I was interested in working full time at the practice as a veterinary nurse. Vicki Clifton had been working this position when she left school assisting Patricia Carney (nee Wilkinson) in small animals. I jumped at the chance to do this as I just loved the time I’d spent there before. I enjoyed working with Trish and she taught me a lot – there was no large animal surgery (except for the odd surgery performed out the back shed or in the grass yard). I think in those days horse requiring elective surgery traveled to Camden University and it was only emergency situations or minor procedures that were carried out at the clinic. Nowadays the nurses do a lot to assist the vets on their outcalls like taking bloods off weanlings for blood typing while the vet draws the description, or assisting with the taking of radiographs carried out on the stud farms.

In the early days at the practice Lorraine Skinner would order the drugs for the pharmacy but eventually she handed that duty over to me as I knew what we needed from working with Trish and the other vets. Jenny Jenkins replaced Trish as small animal vet around 1983/84. It was around this time my father had completed building ‘Portastalls’ at their property ‘Clovelly’ at 10 Liverpool Street after moving from ‘Tooloogan Vale’ where he was the farm manager for the Dr. Barnardo’s Organisation. The idea Dad had then was to provide a hospital for horses as he could envisage that with the population of horses in the Hunter Valley it would be more economical for horses needing daily veterinary attention to come to town and be near the veterinary practice rather than the vet travel for miles just to see one horse and then drive the same distance in the opposite direction to treat another. With all the horses under the one roof bandage changes could be attended to frequently and wounds assessed or medical conditions could be treated more intensively.

Eventually 'Clovelly' got started and the benefits of having horses in a hospital situation caught on to the stud owners and managers and Dad and I became very busy. It helped that I worked at the veterinary practice as I would assist the vets with any treatments and be able to let them know if I thought the horse was deteriorating or improving just by observing them every day. At that time Dad was also busy with his clinical hypnotherapy practice and therefore it was often left to me to feed the horses and muck out their boxes before I went to work up at the Liverpool Street surgery and after work also.

After 12 months of this plus the duties I had at the practice I decided to take 12 months leave and travel overseas. I was 23 years old and it was something I always wanted to do. When I told John Morgan of my plans he backed me 100% and said my job would still be there on my return. I arranged for Prue Holcombe to fill in for me and when I arrived home in 1985 she took up the Vet. Nurse and receptionist position at the Denman Branch Clinic working for Jim Rodger. On my arrival back in Scone I was keen to start back at Morgan, Howey & Fraser. The break away had done me the world of good and I realized how much I missed the work and of course all the people I worked with. Dad was pleased to see me as Clovelly was getting a bit much for him and he discussed with me if I wanted to take over the running of the stables full-time. At that stage I didn't want that kind of responsibility so he discussed with Bill Howey and John Morgan the possibility of the practice buying Clovelly (house, land and stables).

Mum and Dad had their eye on a house at Satur they wanted to buy and with Dad's hypnotherapy practice taking off he was too busy to run the stables as well. Dad arranged installments for the partners to purchase Clovelly so they didn't need to pay for it all at once. It worked out well for me as I rented the house from the vets which meant I didn't have to move and I had a little income for myself of providing transport for horses to the surgery and Clovelly with my 'ute' and float. John Flaherty was employed at the practice after leaving Brooklyn Lodge so he took over my duties at the stables which allowed me more time at the clinic. John Flaherty was also putting the finishing touches to the large animal surgery and X-ray department he was building at 106 Liverpool Street.

Jenny Jenkins had built up the small animal practice and it was extremely busy. On my return from overseas she asked me if I would be interested in doing a veterinary nursing course being offered at Tamworth TAFE. It was a 2 year course being conducted from Peter Best's South Tamworth Animal Hospital and the first time a course of this nature had been offered. Our class of 1986 were 'guinea pigs' to see if the course would be popular. I completed my Vet. Nursing Certificate in 1987. I thoroughly enjoyed it as for years I'd worked the practical side of veterinary science but had never learnt the theory. Now everything made sense. I felt I was equipped to run the Large Animal Operating Theatre that was now completed. Alan Simson (one of the vets) had returned from America after viewing all the latest equipment etc. used in surgeries over there so now Morgan Howey & Fraser had a functional operating theatre. Alan Simson and fellow employee Paul Adams were the main surgeons with Jenny Jenkins the anaesthetist.



I found being the only veterinary nurse for both small and large animals very taxing so other nurses were employed to help with the workload. Libby Henderson, Cathy Finlayson and Molly Woodford were all nurses that worked with me for a period of time. Carolind Pike (now Strong) was employed as a junior nurse when she left school and is still a valued member of the practice to this day now working in administration. In 1989 I got itchy feet again and was eager to learn more about foal nursing as it was an area I felt was lacking in the equine industry. America seemed to be so far ahead in foal medicine that I asked Bill Howey if he could arrange for me to work at Hagyard, Davidson and McGee in Lexington, Kentucky. He did so with the help of Dr. Walter Zent (one of the partners in the Kentucky practice) and I spent the season there in 1989 working in their neo-natal intensive care unit for foals. From this experience I decided to make my career in equine veterinary nursing. This led to an opportunity for me to take up a permanent position as head veterinary nurse/lab technician in a prestigious equine hospital in Kildare, Ireland which I accepted.

I commenced my employment at Troytown Hospital (formerly known as Cosgrove & Partners) in January 1990. In 1991 Peter Flynn and Jim Rodger (a former employer at SVH) visited me in Kildare and offered me the position of veterinary nurse at Woodlands Stud. Again, being a first as vet nurses weren't really apparent on horse studs but they felt the need for one at Woodlands, having so many foals born in a season and being a far distance from Scone. They felt they could treat the not so ill foals on the stud and wanted a nurse to assist the vet treatments. I was reluctant to leave my job in Ireland so they discussed with the partners at Troytown the possibility of me working seasons back to back thus paying my airfare to and from Australia. This was agreed upon and I did this until 1993 where upon I decided to stay put in Australia.

In 1994 I renewed my association with the Scone Practice and worked as a nurse at Clovelly Stables which had built up a reputation as an intensive foal care hospital after Karon Hoffmann started in the 1989 season with a team of American nurses running the unit. This led to a position as head veterinary nurse up at the surgery in Liverpool Street where I worked with a team of two other nurses Carolind Pike and Sascha McWilliam. Lisa Fidock who previously worked there in my absence of being overseas left and in 1995/1996 returned to the area with her husband and became another valued member of the nursing team. Carolind would work the "season" at Clovelly every year as that became her vocation since working with Karon Hoffmann and spending time in America also.

In 1998 when the receptionist of the Scone Practice left I approached the partners as to whether they would consider me for the job. I had married in 1997 and my husband Mike and I lived at Emirates Park Stud in Murrumbidgee, and the driving to Scone in the wee hours of the morning for a colic surgery plus the long working hours etc. soon took its toll. I was 36 years old and wanting a job with set hours. Luckily they agreed and I became more involved in administration duties plus running the reception area. It was such a change from wearing overalls – now I could "dress up" for work! I fully enjoyed my time at the front desk and I felt I understood fully the running of the place having worked for many years "on the other side".

Unfortunately I had to leave in 1999 as my husband accepted the job of yearling manager at Collingrove Stud, Sandy Hollow and it was obvious that the traveling everyday to Scone would be too far. I decided to go back to looking after sick foals after a break of 2 years and the day to day stud work. On the odd occasion I would fill in on a Saturday morning at the Denman Vet Clinic or in the off season when things at Collingrove were a bit quiet I would fill in for weeks at a time the reception position at Scone Vets while my replacement Catherine Gorman took her holidays. All in all I felt that I could slip back into any role at Scone Vets and be accepted. It was like I never left. Apart from my work as a nurse, my experiences led me to being offered a teaching role at Scone TAFE. Veterinary Nursing was being there as a certificate course (similar to what I had done in Tamworth) and I became part-time teacher. I still am involved in this to this very day.

Having been associated with the Scone Veterinary Hospital for many years I can say with all honesty that when I woke up every morning I looked forward to going to work, it was such fun, the practice was like an extended family to me. Not only did I work with these people I socialized and at time shared accommodation with them as well which never posed a problem. Even to this day I feel a close connection to the place and hope that it continues. The practice had such an influence on my life and as I did a lot of my growing up years there I feel very lucky that I had the opportunity to work in such a unique place”.

Carolind Pike (Strong) is another pioneer nurse who made a huge impact and has steered and guided the evolution of veterinary nursing care in Scone. Carolind says that Intensive Care Nursing in particular demands a very keen sense of observation and recognition of vital signs very quickly as critically ill neonates can deteriorate very rapidly. In this field the nurse plays a very vital role in the team. Without them and their skills the ‘Clovelly’ ICU facility could not function. Nursing skills and administration of medications are just as pivotal as the veterinary diagnosis and antibiotics of choice. An ICU veterinary nurse’s job is very demanding being on 8 – 9 hour duty roster ‘shifts’ throughout every 24 hour period. It requires intense concentration and organization and the ability to make clear quick decisions in an emergency.

Carolind has maintained a detailed record of the personnel at ‘Clovelly’ since inception in 1990. In that first year Dr. Karon Hoffmann imported 3 trained ICU nurses from her one time alma mater the University of Florida and also the University of North Carolina USA. In subsequent years other northern hemisphere nurses came from New Bolton Centre of the University of Pennsylvania and University College, Davis, California as well as from Florida and Carolina. There was also infiltration from Ireland and the UK. By about 1993/1994 more locals were trained and reciprocal exchanges organized between Scone and the USA in particular. There was a huge amount of interest generated in foal nursing and trainees began to emerge in droves. With the rapid exchange of knowledge and skills extant in the modern era only 15 years down the track we have a large number of highly trained and exquisitely skilled ICU veterinary nurses absolutely integral to the industry.

There is no doubt Jeannie established the benchmark for excellence in Veterinary Nursing. However all the names mentioned in Jeannie's detailed expansive treatise also achieved similar exalted standards. Lisa Fidock was in fact 'No. 1 Graduate' in NSW TAFE in the year of completion of her certificate course. All have articulated to higher levels of expertise and management. I am immensely proud of my own association with NSW TAFE Commission and the evolution of suitable courses for Veterinary Nurses including the pioneer 'Equine Nursing Course'. The truth is I was able to successfully plunder, purloin and plagiarise the Curriculum Carolind Pike was 'cajoled' into retrieving from New Bolton Centre, University of Pennsylvania during one of her early 'sabbatical' sojourns in North America! This later emerged in 'customized and contextualized' format as the aforementioned Competency Based Course in Equine Nursing now with National and International currency.

In 1988 Dr. Karon Hoffmann approached me and stated 'the practice needed a foal intensive care unit and me to run it'. This made very good sense following a visit by Dr. Anne Koterba from Florida USA who was major guest speaker at the annual AEVA Bain Fallon Lectures. The decision was made! The special expertise and ingenuity of 'Man Friday' John Flaherty was again conscripted and the fruitful results of his labours are evident in all the construction work at Clovelly Stables. It has been an unqualified success although not without some initial 'dystocia and spasmodic colic' not the least cause of which was financial elasticity!



Jane Axon at work







Catherine Chicken and 'child'



## Denman Veterinary Clinic

Denman was always the 'Achilles Heel' of veterinary hegemony within the 'Kingdom' - or should that be 'Sheikhdome' - of the Upper Hunter Valley? The original legal agreements supposedly binding on extant signatory incumbents stipulated they could not aspire to set up opposition practices within 50 miles of the PO Scone or within 50 miles of the PO Kerrabee. This effectively precluded the whole of the Upper Valley! While posterity has demonstrated these 'concessions' were never legally enforceable they were nevertheless an impediment to construction of a dominant edifice of 'free trade'. We at Scone appreciated we were vulnerable to strategic predatory 'attack' in the South West from Denman including the 'lucrative clientele' in the Bylong, Widden and Martindale Valleys. We acknowledged we were vulnerable on this ruthlessly exposed front or flank! It was surprising to us that Muswellbrook or anyone else failed to exploit this weakness!

'General' Jim Rodger came up with the answer! While the rest of us were guilty of internecine decades of dithering dalliance Jim acted! He 'volunteered' to set up a branch practice in Denman! Oh Boy! Was I - and were we - relieved! Together with Jim and Mark Buckerfield they/we purchased, staffed and equipped very suitable premises in Ogilvie Street, Denman. This pioneering venture has flourished beyond expectations! While Jim has pursued a stellar career in equine practice and research leading to a 'Fellowship' and specialty ranking within the profession his 'totem' still endures!

Denman is 'pristine' while still retaining the very best of innate cultural heritage. Indigenous might protest! I strongly suspect the 'duality' of cultures is richly preserved in Denman!



Jim Rodger and Clare Williams at work December 2005

## Anecdotal Reflections

### History of Veterinary Practice in Scone

The following article appeared in the 'Scone Advocate' on Thursday 14 February 2002.  
It's amazing how time seems to fly!



Bill Howey and veterinary student Anne Quain are seen here perusing the 'Scone Advocate' archives in their research of a project initiated by Bill Howey, former Scone veterinarian and TAFE teacher. Bill has enlisted the help of Anne, an honours graduate in philosophy and currently a veterinary journalist as well as veterinary student, to assist in writing this long anticipated history of veterinary practice in Scone.

Over the next few months Bill and Anne will be collecting photographs, documents, anecdotes and interviews to produce a book that will 'bring to life' the characters around which veterinary practice in Scone revolved, including the larger-than-life Murray Bain, Frank Williams and other colleagues.

Bill attributes the concept to author Judy White: 'Judy White first promulgated the concept with an approach to write the history for the bicentennial jubilee in 1988. I hope that Judy will agree to write the forward for the new book,' Bill told *The Advocate* this week.

Bill spent almost thirty years of his practicing veterinary career in Scone, and is currently the Director of the Post Graduate Foundation in Veterinary Science of the University of Sydney. The Foundation, initiated by a team including Murray Bain provides continuing education for veterinarians on the global market. Bill is hopeful of attracting 'equine streamed' undergraduate and graduate veterinarians to undertake formal education 'industry directed' training programs through the aegis of local studs, HVTBA, practising veterinarians and TAFE.

'Our goal is to produce an historical narrative that gives readers a real insight into the figures they're reading about,' said Anne. 'We would greatly welcome any information – not simply facts and figures but any information, such as anecdotes, that might allow us to "flesh out" the people and location'. Mr. Howey and Ms Quain are conducting research in Scone throughout this week. They assure everyone who contribute articles, photographs or simple yarns will be treated with the utmost sensitivity.

### Fast Forward 2005

The information provided will go into a section to be called 'Anecdotal Reflections'. It is hoped to capture the essential authentic argot of the time without vitiating the quality of the discourse. Much of it may be repetitive but editing will be limited in order to maintain the smooth 'flow' of each contribution and not interfere with the 'tremulous cadence slow' of the dialogue.

It is interesting to contemplate on the 'reflections' received and reviewed. There is quite a degree of repetition as predicted possibly reflecting the extent to which the 'high jinks' of the veterinarians were public knowledge and both the source and impetus of much 'valley gossip'. The 'bush telegraph' travels faster than even the most rampant raging bush fire. There was a time I well remember when 'vet knocking' was *de rigueur* at all the 'right' dinner parties in the Upper Hunter! A local 'respectable' identity widely regarded as the 'Hunter Valley News' was foremost in disseminating the pejorative rhetoric whilst all the time maintaining a face-to-face superficial veneer of 'affability'. He had plenty duplicitous mates! On one occasion no less than three close friends approached me to warn me of the undercurrent of ill will following such a vet knocking dinner party. This was reinforced in spades when a respected professional colleague from Victoria approached me at a national veterinary conference and said he enjoyed his rendezvous in Scone hosted by a cabal of local stud master 'clients' with a view to his placement and contract! [He later committed suicide]. All this was news of course but devastating to morale, ego and pride as well as security, continuity and service. However no one is immune from scrutiny! So much for polemics!



Ron Jeffries  
Manager of Woodlands & Bellerive Studs



Ron Jeffries relaxing and ‘reflecting’ in the garden at ‘Geraldton’

Pen Picture

If Cliff Ellis is the ‘Victor Trumper’ of stud grooms/managers then Ron Jeffries is a combination of Stan McCabe and Doug Walters! Ron was Manager at ‘Woodlands’ during the halcyon days of the late 1950’s, through the 1960’s and into the early 1970’s. This was a time when Woodlands was one of the world’s most prolific thoroughbred nurseries in one year producing 180+ winners of c. 360 races. They also presented one quarter [109 yearlings] of the total draft at the one of the annual Inglis Easter Yearling Sales in the 1960’s. Ron is a great raconteur with a natural dry wit and laconic dispenser of percipient ‘one liners’! ‘Dry as a lime burners boot’ is one such example. ‘If you tap their hooves with a hammer they ring like a bell’ was his graphic description of the hard quality of the yearling colt’s hooves at Woodlands. Ron and Murray were great friends and I think there was mutual trust and respect emanating from their subliminal recognition of each others superlative qualities. There is probably no better person than Ron Jeffries to critically and objectively evaluate the veterinary ‘fraternity’ passing through the Upper Hunter and Scone in particular from 1950 – 2000+! Ron has also spent a few pleasant years of his twilight era working with John Flaherty at ‘Clovelly Stables’. One year in the 1960’s Ron had the champion yearling filly by ‘Newtown Wonder’ in the Thoroughbred section at the Royal Easter Show. She was a full sister to ‘Apple Jack’ [Newtown Wonder ex Silver Words] and competed against him for the championship. Sir Alan Potter was Chairman of the AJC and presented the championship ribbon. The ‘Newtown Wonders’ were superlative strikers and Sir Alan placed the sash around Ron instead! The crowd was greatly amused!

## Reflections

There were no vets about in the early days. In 1947 we had our first foaling case and John Goodsir from Singleton came out. Of course by the time he'd done the caesarean we'd lost the lot. Norman Larkin used to travel from Sydney. Fancy having a panel van locked up at the railway station with all your gear in it! Frank Williams [FW] arrived in 1949 and we nicknamed him 'Joe Stalin' because of the big mo he had. Murray came in 1950. Frank didn't make it through the Gully in the Widden Valley a few times!

In November 1946 I went to Woodlands from a pre-training establishment in Cessnock. [Ron had acted as 'ball boy' when Woodlands boss George Ryder was playing tennis!]. The yearling barns were on the Hunter River flats. A man named Lincoln went down to inspect the water and the river came up and cut him off. He ended up on the roof then felt the shed moving so jumped into the river. The thing that saved him was not panicking. They sat waiting for him for half an hour at what is now 'Coolmore'. He got on an old log and floated down. They eventually saw him walking around the corner! There were 20 yearlings in that shed there and we lost all but one. We found the one surviving colt on a flat at 'Arrowfield'. When the river broke the bank Jim Gibson and I were out riding and were cut off by the 'water bank' on other side. There were 20 mares and foals there. There was nowhere to ride. A mare called 'Cabinet' came to the water, went in to get her foal and they all followed her. The mares were in the water chest high with the foals swimming at their side. We didn't lose any of them all for the one mare, 'Cabinet'.

We once took 100 mares from 'Widden' to 'Piercefield' near Denman. We drove them by road and walked them all the way over. We wintered them there. They didn't do much good there as it wasn't horse country. Across the road where Bowman owned the paddock we had 50 mares and foals there one year. Saddlers Creek was that brackish they wouldn't drink the water.

There was a lot of convivial activity in Denman those days and we had trouble with motorcars coming back over Ogilvie's Hill! Georgie Bowman was the stallion man, general farrier and factotum. He could do most things and had a unique way with words as well as many special sayings. We were repairing a trailer with hexagonal bolts. "Don't forget them bolts with the hoxxygen heads" said George! We knew what he meant!





George Bowman  
Stallion Man at Woodlands and Kia Ora

‘Cheeky Charlie’ Feehan used to get Murray all wound up. He put the gelding trick on Murray one day when he was follicle testing. The boys were all standing around. I went off and pulled saddle off my old horse. Murray didn’t notice. He was always talking and blathering away, so he lathered up the anus, looked down and noticed another part of the anatomy was missing. He pulled his arm out of the horse’s arse that quick and it ‘sounded like a cork coming out of a champagne bottle’ said Charlie who could embellish a story.

He [Murray] was always wrapped in our birds and animals. He’d say, “I can’t understand you fellas, you’re frightened of snakes but you’ve been born and reared with them!” So Jim [Gibson] found a dead snake, coiled it around and left it on the front seat. When Murray came in he saw this bloody snake. We found out he was a bit afraid of them! ‘There’s no doubt in this world’, said Murray, ‘that you bastards would be descended from convicts’!

Sue Rhodes of ‘Now you’ll think I’m awful’ fame had written about Aussie men friends she’d had who weren’t up to scratch in her opinion. She was apparently in a very good position to have an opinion! She eventually married an American actor called Rory Calhoun. Murray gets the Sunday paper out with the headline ‘Aussie man make lousy lovers’. They’re bloody awful. ‘She hadn’t met me’ said Murray! He couldn’t wait to show the article to me and Jim! I read it and said; ‘Yeah Doc, doesn’t say what sort of servers we are though’! [Murray was always called ‘Doc’].

We always trouble with the housekeepers at Woodlands. They were usually kind and used to feed the vets sometimes with good grace and sometimes not with good grace. Gardeners and cooks were the worst two people ever employed on studs and caused more trouble than anybody else. Freddie Walden of Kia Ora said there were 13 families living on Kia Ora then [1950] not counting single blokes. We had ten families living on Woodlands plus the single blokes. There were no married blokes on the place then and no women working there. All were rabbit catchers and cleaned up the rabbits at ‘Arrowfield’

for Lawson. He was a politician or something and wouldn't pay them. They had to walk away because they had no money to take him to court or nothing.

Murray always maintained the best job he ever did at Woodlands was to fight with Bill Fletcher and beat him! He was 'undefeated heavy weight champion of Hunter Valley' and Mace was mortified at her professional husband 'brawling'. I [Ron Jeffries] took over from Bill Fletcher when he was dismissed. Murray went shopping in Scone later the same day and George Moore said; 'Don't hit me, don't hit me. I'm only a little bloke'! The same thing happened at 'Oakleigh' in the Widden Valley next day. Murray went into a barn to see a yearling and they'd set up a boxing ring with buckets and towels and everything! There is nothing faster or more reliable than the 'bush telegraph'!

We worked very hard and played as hard. We were up at 3.30am, got going by 4am and were still going till 9pm at night. We took it in turns to relieve the night watchman. We had nine mares foal one night when George Asimus was there. His wife died so he sent his son Brian to school with my kids. He never remarried. He was a long time at Widden. George Ryder and Tom Street together with Dave Crystal owned Woodlands then.

In early 1970's Lord Derby [England] and Bob Kleburg, King Ranch, Texas USA purchased Woodlands. I had to put up with a bit of flack! I was also known as 'Lord Ron' by 'Cheekie Charlie' Feehan. Lord Derby used to come out with his valet and bought out a book he had signed himself. Before dinner one night the boss of King Ranch Texas [Santa Gertrudis] was into the Scotch and Murray was late. They couldn't keep him sober long enough to actually get to dinner!

They must have had a low opinion of the Australian industry because of the mares they sent out here. One good horse produced was 'Marscay'. Lord Derby's mares were rubbish. 'Heart of Market' sent out by King Ranch wasn't a bad mare. John Derby was a hell of a nice fella and 'dry as a lime-burner's boot'.



'Marscay' [Biscay x Heart of market]



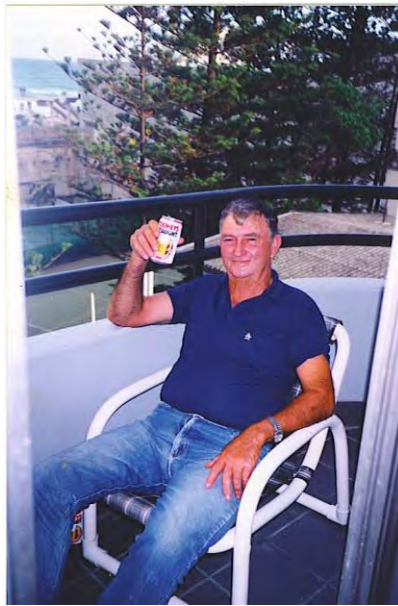
‘Marscay’ triumphant in the ‘Golden Slipper’ 1982

‘Cheeky Charlie’ described an overweight lady friend of someone’s in graphic terms and what might transpire – but it cannot be repeated here! Barry Blessington [‘Blesso’] brought his old man to spend a week once. Charlie said; ‘I bet when you saw that bastard [Blesso] at birth I you turned up sex from then on in’! ‘We’re the best of mates’ said Blesso! Blesso’s wife Ida was Scottish and he worked for a Council in Sydney. He’d come to the yearling sales at 4am. How are you going with your retirement Blesso? He said; ‘I’ve worked in the Council for 20 years, I’ve had plenty of practice’! We were all part of the ‘mad mile’ in Stable No. 3 at Inglis’ Easter Sales. We started at 3am and had all the boxes done and yearlings exercised, fed and watered by 6am with the rugs over the doors. We then opened 2 dozen cans and Archie produced his rum and milk! John Inglis used to join us some mornings and Archie asked him to get a milking cow – the ‘milko’ arrived too late in the morning with fresh milk! John would have rum or beer with us sometimes and said ‘he would look into it’. John [Inglis] was a champion bloke but he liked to see the lane clean and all the boxes done early. He didn’t mind if ‘we had a few then’! ‘Blesso’ would be telling so many jokes no-one wanted to go for breakfast!



John Inglis and Stan Keene at White Park Sales Scone

Cattle used to come across the river onto Woodlands but they never used to go back though. There was a bloke there then who used to 'borrow' a few cattle. He used to do some horrible things and poor old George [Ryder] didn't know what was going on. Old George had an association with Jack Kramer the tennis player. 'Newtown Wonder' was the 'gun' stallion. I was to take this group of yearlings to LA to go on first boat that took the live sheep across. My wife got in trouble with this pregnancy so Jim Gibson went instead. They raced well in America. They all had tennis names.



Jim 'Hollywood' Gibson

Jim took the mares to America for Jack Kramer – and caroused with the 'Stars' in Hollywood!



Jack Kramer



The 'Old Fellow' [George Ryder] also tried Lew Hoad and Ken Rosewall. He would try anyone he thought had any money! George Ryder had Winifred Atwell playing the piano at Woodlands. Lew Hoad had a gutful! He went to sleep on the marble slab in the kitchen but next morning he ran 4 miles around the river flats with 3 thick woolen jumpers on! He was a legendary tennis player. [*Note: Lew Hoad and Ken Rosewall played an exhibition match at Denman RSL – arranged by George Ryder!*]. Bob Askin, Jack Green and Bobby Limb were there. I had to drive them down to airstrip opposite 'Coolmore'. We all talked about how black Winifred was and especially Bob Askin! No political correctness then!



Winifred Atwell



Lew Hoad





Ken Rosewall

George Ryder once asked Bill Howey to an STC Lunch when he was chairman. Bob Askin and Bill were sitting up there at the top table. John Kelso could tell a story. He and Norman Larkin of the NSW TBA were worried about impact of SP bookmaking on the TAB. They arranged an interview with PM Sir Robert Askin. He was standing at fireplace and said; 'Okay, what the hell do you two bastards want'? 'Come off it', he said, 'my best mates are SP bookmakers' when they tried to explain!



Bob Hawke, Neville Voigt, T. J. Smith and G. E. Ryder

'TJ' always said 'George Ryder was the best man for racing in NSW in my time'  
Hundreds of winners were raced in their interests in the halcyon days of the 40's – 70's

The sergeant in Denman said; “No way you’ll have grog there [at Woodlands] on Sunday”. Someone got onto Askin who got onto the cop and said to get out of the way. They invited him as a guest. He didn’t like being pushed out of the way.

Bill Dovey, the Chief Justice, came from Newcastle once a month on Friday to do the divorce court. He’d finish then it was “Righto boy where’s the first pub”? He’d be drunk the whole weekend. He took two bottles up to Woodlands after I picked him up at Muswellbrook station.

All the things that Cheeky Charlie used to say to Murray Bain are unprintable. Murray was a proud bloke, so they would try and bring him down. It got worse and worse and worse. Shona Murphy said females were monogamous where males weren’t. Murray was one of those ones who wasn’t! Cheeky Charlie once sold a shed full of hay but ‘forgot’ to pass on the proceeds to where it came from.

Murray was passionate about record keeping and immaculate in the way he kept professional standards. I don’t remember anyone who’s matched him. He had immaculate white overalls. Going out to Baramul when Noel Hennessy was there they tricked him. They waited for Murray coming, and there was an old dry water tank. He got everything out, everything beautifully done. These blokes were sitting watching him through a hole in the tank. He gets out of the car, reads the paper; packed everything back up again, everything back neatly again. They popped up just as he was leaving and said; ‘G’day Doc’. He had a stainless steel silver tray with an Italian fella’s name on it. They used to have a go at Murray. They reckon he shot that fella in the war.

Richard Greenwood was a very English Englishman. Sue, his wife, was a very pretty woman. At the sales; she came and sat on my knee. Poor old Richard – always late and always forgot something. But a top bloke – he swore so nicely. Instead of saying ‘Farrckkk’ he’d say ‘O Fuck’. Murray didn’t swear much but when he did it was a horrible sound [Scottish man]. What you see with Bill is what you get. He never changes. He was a bit nervous to start with but soon fitted in with the fellas. He did really look up to Murray. He was his hero more or less.

We would sometimes get into trouble! I remember ‘Dossor’s Keg’ at Denman. They had a keg up there in the icebox at the old Lucerne factory. We went up there and help them drink it, didn’t we? Ruby often brings that up. ‘I was waiting for you to finish, I had all the kids down the street’. I say; ‘Listen dear, don’t live in the past’

During the foaling season there were cases in the night; fortunately they used to save more than we used to lose. They used to be on call from Scone to Woodlands; when it was discovered that semi-anaesthetised mares during foaling was the answer. Murray had two rules – two people go to a foaling, and you anaesthetise the mare. I was telling Jeremy Francis the other day about an English Mare with tetanus and pregnant. Old Jack [Francis] pumped her full of antibiotics; anaesthetised her to finish her off and did a caesarean at the same time. A black colt jumped out of her straight to his feet. Two weeks later he had tetanus contracted from her and we lost the lot.

One year we had a Salmonella outbreak. Shona Murphy had just come to work in 1965. A foal had an abscess and Murray lanced it in the yards and took a culture. The next morning we had half a dozen foals scouring and by the time the Doc arrived there were 20 or more. The culture turned out to be Salmonella and we treated all the foals and lost none. That was the time Murray showed adding liquid paraffin to the scour drench enabled the foals to recover quicker.

Pipe of Peace was a great stallion. We served 95 mares one year with him then backed him up to serve those mares belonging to Jack Kramer. That burnt him out. He was a top sire. Old George buggered that horse up with his attitude at the sale. He used to put exorbitant prices on them. Pipe of Peace, King of Babylon and Sostenuto were the same. Owners were a problem a lot of the time. One owner was 'over the moon' when her mare had twins. 'Oh good, two for the price of one'! Little did she know! Then there was the owner who wanted us 'to serve her mare again just to make sure' when told her mare was in foal! Another asked if we had served his mare yet? I told him we usually waited until a mare foaled before we served them again! Old George [Ryder] could be 'creative' when he syndicated stallions. He was the first in Australia to do this after the Americans started it with 'Nashua'. When Lord Derby and King Ranch bought Woodlands there was a meeting of the Sostenuto and King of Babylon syndicates. If there were 40 share holders about 57 actually turned up! Old George just 'invented' and sold another share so as 'not to disappoint his mates'! Bill Ritchie got him off the hook on that one! Old George was the most successful syndicator of stallions and everyone wanted to be in on it. He did a great job with Gunsynd and Baguette at Kia Ora.

Old George said they [stallions] used to shrink on the ship out! The BBA would say they were 16.2 HH when they left France or England and when they got here that were 15 nothing. He reckoned that 'Charleval' and 'Damnos' were little better than two geldings and had definitely shrunk by the time they got here! He once bought some sheep in Dubbo at the yards. George didn't know they all had no teeth and lost a heap of money on them. He did some things well but he made a mess of a lot of things. At one stage he lived in the old Governor General's house at Rose Bay. Mick Dunn and I went there once. We had two horses spelling there. We drove out there to take some sheep and the 'Ute' breaks down in the middle of the tram line. We had a stream of trams backed up there a mile back with 'Trammies' helping us push it off onto the road. Hughie Ryder had all the pubs up there. George used to call his wife Dot 'Grief and Strife' – but didn't call her that to her face!



Anecdotal Reflections  
'The good old days'?



John Flaherty and Ron Jeffries when at 'Clovelly'

There is no doubt 'old George [Ryder]' was one of the most colourful of colourful racing identities. He had a great life. He went to the races two days a week, played golf two days a week, played tennis two days a week – and served on Thursdays! [He had a regular 'courtesan' at Kings X]. He was a 'hustler' and better than Bobby Riggs! He once had a 500 pound side bet with Norman Von Nida. He would give 'the Von' 15-love start in each game of three sets of tennis at White City. Von Nida would give George a one shot-per-hole start over 18 holes at 'The Australian'. George cleaned up at tennis. He played

regularly at White City with Davis Cup 'greats' Adrian Quist, John Bromwich and Ken McGregor. They had to call off the golf after 'old George' was beating Von Nida 'off the stick'! 'Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus playing better ball couldn't give me a stroke a hole at 'The Australian' said George. He played off a handicap of +4 anyway! He even won the power boat race on Sydney Harbour when they opened the Harbour Bridge.

George Ryder had a private pilot's license very early in the peace. He and Dave Chrystal took off from Bankstown one day. When they were over the ocean and out of site of land Dave became a bit anxious! 'Where are we now George?' he asked with some trepidation. 'No worries' said George there's a big block of land on the horizon. 'It's not New Zealand so it has to be Australia'. After perusing the coast George found a 'city'. It wasn't Sydney so it had to be Newcastle or Wollongong! There was consternation at Bankstown later on when George was trying to land with the wind instead of into it! The airport security and ambulance services had a good work out that day! George once spat out of the open window when flying 'and the spittle came back and dam near chopped my ear off'!



## Cliff Ellis

### Pen Picture

He may not be the 'Bradman' of Stud Managers and Stud Grooms but the 'Victor Trumper' has an authentic ring to it! I do like cricketing analogies and Cliff was a cricketer and I believe a more than competent wicket keeper/batsman. Cliff Ellis lived up the Widden Valley for much of his working life since starting in thoroughbred industry. He attended his first yearling sale in 1951. He has also managed Yarraman Park and Wakefield Studs in the Scone area and been the owner/operator of his breeding operation at 'Kingdon Farm', Parkville, Scone. In addition Cliff has taught a generation of young and raw recruits to pass through the Scone TAFE College.



Cliff Ellis at No. 2 Stable Block, Wm. Inglis & Sons, Newmarket January 1999

## Reflections

The first job I had on a thoroughbred stud was on Holbrook in the Widden Valley. Holbrook was run at that time by the late William Harris (father of John and Alan), who could probably be best described as the last of the old time Stud Masters. It might be interesting here to reflect briefly on the methods employed in running a thoroughbred stud pre the advent of Murray Bain.

Providing the mare had been served, stallion fees were payable at the end of the breeding season. If she failed to produce a live foal, she was entitled to be served the following season at no charge. No mare agistment was charged during the breeding season, but would incur a cost from January on, if the mare remained as a permanent boarder.

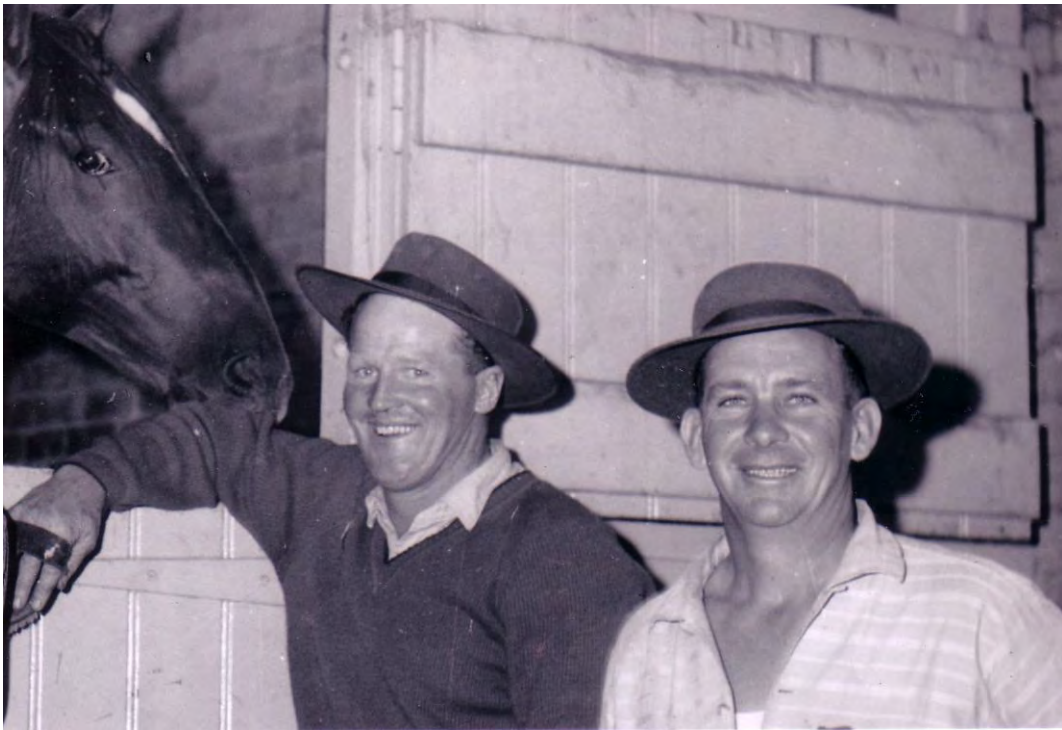
In those days mares were not pregnancy tested on Holbrook. After the Sydney Easter Yearling Sale, William Harris would go through his mares and sort out the pregnant mares from the non-pregnant. During the four years I spent at Holbrook I never knew him to make a mistake. Once drafted out, all the foals on the pregnant mares were weaned, and the foals on the non-pregnant mares were left on their mothers until August. It is significant that these foals always wintered better than those that had been weaned. In late August he weaned this second batch of foals. They took a bit of handling, too! I have never forgotten his advice at this time, which was: "Now, these foals will be a bit fiery, but remember, they only strike and kick out of fear, and if we go about things quietly and get their confidence, we are half way there." I wasn't convinced at the time, but I've often thought since how wise these words were.

To my amazement the mothers of these late-weaned foals were all in season within a week or ten days. I learned afterwards that the sudden cessation of lactation, coupled with the sheer physical relief of not having to feed these big foals, resulted in early oestrus. As a direct result of this practice Holbrook produced more early foals than any stud I have worked on until the modern practice of putting mares under lights evolved.

In those times we had to recognise all horses on the stud by sight. On some studs the visiting mares were hoof branded, but in wet and muddy conditions these were difficult to read, so the only real solution was to know each horse by sight. On present day studs, with huge numbers of horses, and staff that is partly seasonal, this is impossible, so neck straps and name tags are necessary.

In the 1950s the only yearling sale in NSW was held by Wm. Inglis & Sons at their Newmarket stables each Easter. The sale was conducted over four days, the first three being reserved for the main studs, and the fourth day consisting of yearlings produced by small vendors, usually with four horses, or less. The first yearling sale I attended was in 1951, when on the first three days there were 42 vendors of 542 yearlings. On the fourth day there were 118 vendors of 206 yearlings. Over time, these small breeders have all but disappeared.

In the 1950s, some of the major studs conducted their yearling preparation at Wm. Inglis & Sons Newmarket stables in Sydney because the economics of building and maintaining a yearling complex of 30 to 50 boxes for just one yearling sale per year had to be weighed against using the Newmarket complex which was empty. In these cases the colts were usually in Sydney before Christmas and the fillies by the end of January. In those days, yearlings were sold in guineas (21 shillings). The vendor received a pound, and the auctioneer's commission was the shilling (approx 5%).



Cliff Ellis and Ross Flynn [Oakleigh Stud], Old No. 1 Stable Block, Newmarket, Easter  
1962

Yearling Colt by 'Pirate King' ex 'Canvas Back'



Cliff Ellis, Old Sale Ring Newmarket 1962  
 Yearling Colt by 'Pirate King' ex 'Debonaire' owned and bred by Cliff  
 Sold to Bart Cummings for 3,000 guineas

Regular veterinary services in the Scone – Widden area were started by the Sydney veterinarian, Norman Larkin. He made several trips to Scone, Widden and Bylong during the breeding season, staying a few days in each place. He did any urgent veterinary work that was required, and advised generally on stud veterinary practices. In Scone around 1949 he installed a young veterinary surgeon named Frank Williams, who was then able to provide a permanent service to studs in the area. Frank was a very capable veterinarian who introduced some modern practices, such as the treatment of infertile mares with antibiotics, and was the first veterinarian I saw perform a Caslick's operation. This procedure involves suturing the vulval lips in order to prevent the intake of air, particularly during oestrus. Healthy mares have an innate ability to rid themselves of the usual infections introduced during foaling, or when being served. They cannot cope, however, with the regular intake of bacteria-laden air which occurs when the mare is in season and the vulva relaxed. This is usually a condition found in older mares, but sometimes in young mares as well. This Caslick's operation was the most important thing we did at that time to combat infection in mares, and it probably still is. Fame is a fickle thing. Dr. Caslick was an eminent veterinarian and all he is remembered for is sewing up horses' 'fannies'!

In about 1950 – 1951, Murray Bain arrived in Scone and formed a partnership with Frank Williams. However, the partnership was short-lived, as their clients soon recognised Murray's superior experience and competence, and so he found himself doing 80% of the work for just 50% of the profit. Needless to say, this circumstance did not sit well with

the canny Scot, and after a short time he set up his own practice in opposition to Frank Williams. Frank generally got less and less work and Murray's practice eventually bought him out, but as Frank was a well-liked and capable veterinarian, he was retained by the practice as a consultant.

The first time I met Murray Bain was while I was working at Holbrook. One of the stallions, Melhero, developed colic, so the Scone Vet Practice was called. Murray duly arrived, but as the Blackwater Creek was in flood, it had to be crossed on horseback. I saddled our biggest and quietest horse and led him across the creek to meet Murray. Murray could ride quite well, but he had feet as big as paddles, and they wouldn't fit in the stirrups, and so he had to ride over with his knees up under his chin as the water was up to the saddle flaps. Between us we carried his gear across and he duly treated the horse, who recovered. Murray took it all in his stride, but he must have thought it a fairly rough country that he'd got himself into! The mountains in the Widden Valley are sandstone, and the creeks have sandy bottoms which can be boggy when in flood.

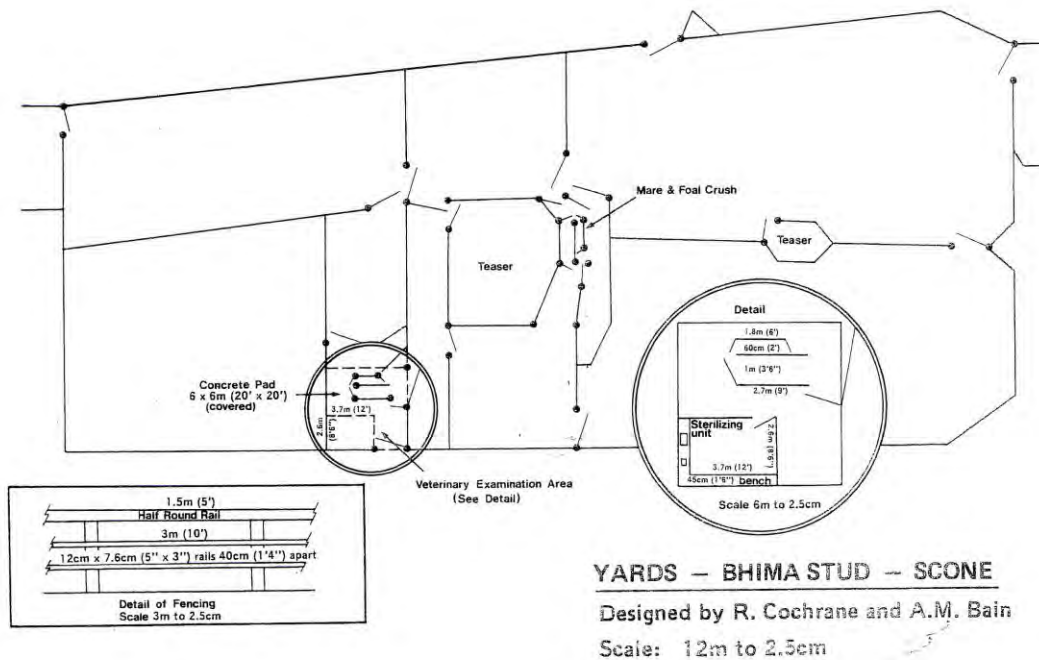
Murray Bain had the best veterinary brain of anyone I've ever worked with. He was not only a brilliant academic, he was a practical man as well. He had worked as a veterinarian at Claiborne Farm in Kentucky, and later was appointed manager of Alton Lodge Stud in New Zealand. He studied the layout of these studs together with other studs he visited, and was a rich source of information and ideas for Stud Masters in the vast area in which he practised – an area embracing Scone, Jerrys Plains, Denman, Widden and Bylong Valleys. Many local studs were re-modelled, and some rebuilt along the lines he suggested. On Oakleigh Stud, where I worked for 17 years, all the horse facilities were built or rebuilt using his ideas. They were not elaborate or unduly expensive facilities, but they worked.



## WORKING YARDS

- (1) for stud work
- (2) for handling and sorting groups

(1) See plans of Bhima Stud, Scone working yards attached. These are ideal vet yards designed by the late Murray Bain - simple, safe and effective.



The yards designed by Murray (and Reub Cochrane) for 'Bhima Stud' were the prototype for most of the studs in the Hunter Valley and indeed throughout Australia. The dimensions of the mare and foal crush are especially pertinent.

He organised the studs AND the people who worked on them. His nature was truly egalitarian, as he was comfortable in the society of kings and commoners alike. He always thought that the ordinary stud workers received little recognition for what they did. He would organise a party at the end of the season, put on a few drinks and a nice meal and invite all the stud workers along.

Various things grew from that. He didn't start the Hunter Valley Blood Horse Breeders' Association, but he laid the foundation for this important society. The germ of the Service to Industry Awards undoubtedly started with Murray Bain.

Murray set up his own laboratory at his Scone surgery, installing a brilliant young New Zealand technician, named Shona Murphy, to run it. This enabled him to have his swabs processed quickly and his treatment of infected mares speeded up enormously. As these

mares can only be treated effectively while in season (a period of about five days) this was a tremendous advantage – just another example of his forward thinking.

To give an example of Shona Murphy's capability, when an outbreak of C.E.M. (Contagious Equine Metritis) occurred in Australia for the first time, she was the first person to grow the bacterium. This had to be cultured on specially prepared agar plates, which she had to produce herself. She has probably never been adequately recognised for this work.

Murray was also involved in a veterinary exchange program between Newmarket, in England, and Scone, in which young vets from each area exchanged practices for a season.

Parasite control in horse has improved dramatically. Murray Bain was the first to stress the need for this, I think. The methods he used were rather old fashioned by modern standards, but they worked. The green powder, stick in the tin and stirred for two hours – very time consuming but very effective. He actually made people realise that parasite control was so important. The incidence of Rattles diminished. We haven't solved the problem yet but we have been able to control it a bit. After I started using his control measures, such as regular drenching and dust control, I hardly ever had a foal with Rattles.

He also stressed the need for the early pregnancy testing of mares, which he did at about 28 days. This was of course done by manual palpation (in the days before scans were available). The reason, he insisted, was not to find the pregnant mares, but to find the ones that weren't, so something could be done about it.

In the early 1950s there was a concern among some Stud Masters that the palpation of mares in early pregnancy would increase the incidence of early foetal loss. It was sometimes difficult for the veterinarian to allay these fears and to convince them to adopt more modern practices.

He was also the first person to realise that much of the Widden Valley was deficient in limestone. He formulated a lime, salt and bone flour lick to combat the problem.

As a person he was a fun-loving man. He enjoyed a party and he loved to socialise. He also had very definite ideas about things, and didn't suffer fools lightly, but if you knew what you were on about, or what you wanted to know, he was easy to get on with, and always helpful. If he didn't like you, you didn't have to ask around to find out. At the RSL Club a couple of fellows he didn't much like said: "G'day Murray" and he responded: "Humph", then turned to me and said: "Well, why should I pretend to like the bastards when I don't?".

A big, tall, angular Scot, he was surprisingly light on his feet, and could jitterbug with the best of them.

He had an altercation local a Stud Master, finishing up “decking” the bloke. On being invited to “try that again”, Murray did, with the same result.

When Bill Howey was new in the practice he went up with the great Murray Bain to “Baramul Stud”. All he could see were horses in yards and not a soul in sight. Murray pulled up, took the paper out and started to read it. An uncouth stud groom, with a three day growth, wandered up to the car, pulled out a paper, started to read it, and said: “You’re late, you bloody Scotch bastard!” This was the great Murray Bain on the first occasion Bill Howey went to Baramul. The groom in question was Noel Hennessy. When Richard Greenwood went out to “Woodlands” with Murray Bain, Ron Jeffries, the stud manager, said to Murray at the end of the day: “We’re finished now, so you can piss off, you old Scotch bastard.” Poor Richard didn’t know which way to turn! Neither Ron nor Noel would have said it to a person they liked less.

Bim Thompson grew up on the family stud, “Widden”, the oldest Australian horse stud. When Bill Howey stayed with Bim, Bill was impressed that although Bim might have been up half the night with a sick foal, by 7 am the next morning he’d checked on all 700 horses on the place. Bim looked up the valley and saw eagle hawks, and he said: “By Christ, a mare must have slipped a foal.”

Twice foals got stuck in wombat holes, so Bill Stewart was going to write it up in the New Zealand vet. Journal: “Wombat strike in the foal”. Wombat strike in the foal! It happened twice, not once. One foal damaged an “Olecranon process” and was no good afterwards. It was owned by Alan Harris. It is always important to count your mares and foals. George Asimus decided he was one foal short. He thought: “There’s only one place it could be – down the well. And it pretty well was!

When I was manager of “Yarraman Park” (for 8-9 years), Bill’s father-in-law sent a mare to one of the stallions. She wouldn’t cycle. I presented her to Bill: “She won’t come into season.” Bill said: “Well, before we do anything technical we’d better pregnancy test her.” She was three months in foal! She’d been turned out with an old sire of Polo ponies (Panzer) who was 26, so they’d (mistakenly) considered that he was too old. Murray Bain always said that the most common cause of anoestrous was pregnancy, which many teenage girls have found to their cost! (This statement was a mite prescient and a little bit polemic.) ‘Immaculate conception’ has occurred once in history, but never in horses!

Yes things have changed, with technology and increased provision of veterinary services. Ian Gunn, working at Monash on IVF, was talking about the “electric spark factor” and why it is that some (stallions) are better than others. F.K. “Darby” Mackay also said the same thing. Also old Stanley Wooten and Murray Bain said: “Don’t go too often to the well.” They had studied genetics and also talked about the “electric spark factor/vital spark factor.” Then there were “dilution factors” and “vitality”. “Some just have it and some don’t”. I personally believe that the single most important characteristic in a stallion is vitality.

There's not the wastage in brood mares that there used to be due to an improvement in drugs and technology. We've got more and better drugs than ever before, and the use of scans has been a tremendous leap forward. In the days before this technology, if the mares missed for 2-3 years, they were sold. You probably finished up with a better strain of horse – survival of the fittest. Through persevering with those problem mares we've probably decreased their fecundity and potentiated weakness.

Everything is subjugated to speed. It doesn't matter what temperament they have, if they can go fast you forgive them everything else. You can finish up with a slightly weaker horse. George Ryder was the best bloke for racing in NSW in his lifetime. He might have milked a cow dry, too! If you breed "speed to speed" you'll get fast horses, but a lot of them aren't going to go very far. You have to get a little bit of strength into their pedigree. George Ryder not only did a tremendous amount for racing, he probably bought more good stallions in my time than any other Stud Master.

The first time I met Bill Howey was when he arrived at "Emu Vale" with Murray, to look at a horse with a punctured hoof. Bill appeared a bit in awe of Murray, which seemed somewhat strange to me. I didn't then realise the esteem with which Murray was held world-wide. To me, Murray was just a pleasant natured big bloke who was good at his job. I learned to appreciate his worth over the years. (Footnote: the horse didn't survive!).

Bill Howey struck me as a quiet young fellow who thought before he spoke, and didn't project himself very much. He was highly intelligent which only became apparent when you sought his opinion. He was only feeling his way, because when he became 'Australianised' he came right out of his shell. He has a very orderly mind – his work vehicle was always tidy with everything in its rightful place. He could have gone to it in the dark and put his hand on anything he needed. He had a tremendous work ethic and a great sense of humour. Vet days with Bill were always good fun.

In later years I taught for 8 years at TAFE. I had a limited formal education, but read all the available textbooks (and picked up some mistakes in them). Of course, I learned a lot from them as well.

We had some very talented students studying the Stud Groom course at TAFE, many of whom are still in the industry in positions of responsibility. I still hear from quite a few of them. The students who gave me the most satisfaction, however, were the less talented who tried hard. I helped them as much as I could. If they got 48% working their tail off, I marked them 53%. Some of the latter group has never been out of a job since. Maybe I gave them a bit of a chance – I like to think so.

Before Norman Larkin, the stud grooms did most of the veterinary work, and didn't know a lot about what they were doing. Most of them had old wives' remedies for the majority of problems, which seemed to work as the horses got better. The stud grooms were very good at caring for them. Norman Larkin said to me once: "When I was a young fella' I went to work for Roy Stewart straight out of University. He said: "Listen, son, most of

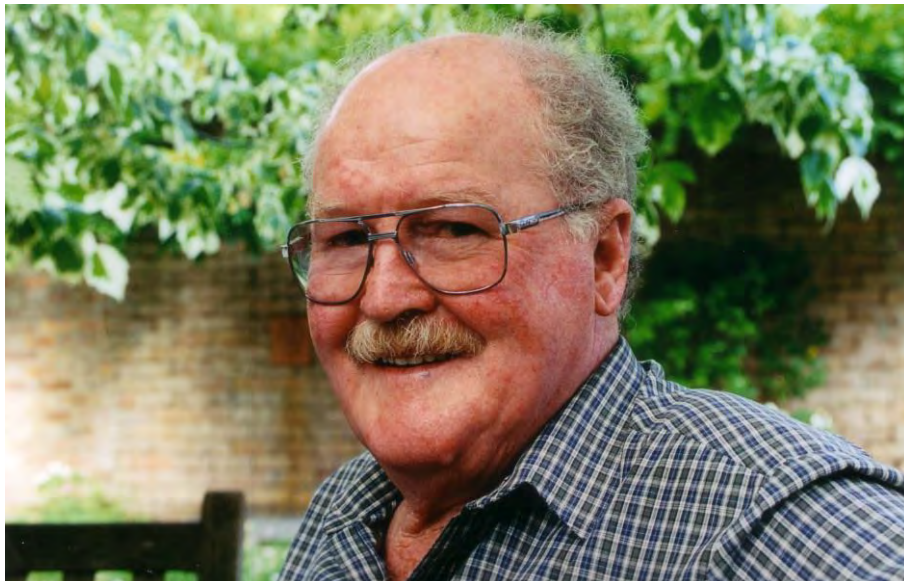
these horses that come to us with problems are going to get better anyway if we don't kill them with our treatment!" Many of their treatments were ineffectual but the nursing was first class.

Norman Larkin was the first person to organise short courses of 2 to 3 days' duration for stud grooms who were keen to advance their knowledge. These courses usually involved a couple of university lectures and visits to veterinary hospitals. This practice was followed up by Murray Bain.

"Common things commonly occur and once you remove the common disease there's not very much left" was a quote from Murray Bain. Murray was a champion of recognising great skill: "Given the choice between a very good stud groom and a good stud vet, you'd take the good stud groom every time."

I have been asked by Bill Howey to reminisce about the period when the Veterinary Practice was evolving in Scone. I have mainly talked about Murray Bain because he laid the foundation of, and the guidelines for, what is now the Scone Veterinary Practice. I have also mentioned Bill Howey as he has undertaken the Herculean task of recording these times. I haven't mentioned the many capable and dedicated veterinarians who have served in this and other local practices over the years, as I have been concerned mainly with the beginnings.

In conclusion, I would like to say that I have lived through a most interesting and stimulating period in the thoroughbred industry, meeting people from all walks of life. As a wise man once said, we are all equal on the turf and under it.



Cliff quietly reflective in the garden at 'Geraldton'

Cliff Ellis



Harley Walden  
Raconteur, Horseman and Journalist

Pen Picture

Harley Walden was born in Scone in 1937 and more or less grew up with horses. His legendary father Darcy went to work at Sledmere Stud and lived there from 1939 until joining the army in 1941. He served on the Kokoda Trail in PNG and was repatriated in 1944 and returned home to Sledmere. Darcy was an iconic figure at the annual Easter Yearling Sales in Sydney and was an accomplished although unqualified early 'veterinary practitioner'. Harley attended school in Scone. Sledmere Stud was at that time owned by Sir Hugh Denison who won the Melbourne Cup with 'Poseidon'. Harley's Uncle Jake managed Kia Ora for very many years. Roy Collison was a good horseman.



Darcy Walden in 1988

Darcy was the inaugural recipient of the Murray Bain Service to Industry Award. The award was presented by HVTBA President Brian Agnew to an emotional standing ovation by members in the Scone Bowling Club in 1985.

## Reflections

Sir Hugh's son Cecil Denison took over the Sledmere until 1948 when it was purchased by Maurice ['Morrie'] V. Point who was the managing director of the Ford Motor Company in Australia. Morrie Point had a big office in William Street and liked to travel overseas from where he purchased and imported many overseas mares. He 'built the place up' and was a visionary. Today his equivalent might be John Messara at Arrowfield.

Morrie Point thought Australia breeding should go ahead in leaps and bounds while the others 'liked to sit back'. He was a great man behind the Scone Race Club which kicked off at White Park in 1947. He put a lot of money into the Scone Race Club and was the instigator of the 'Scone Guineas' for three year olds.

Kia Ora was then the leading thoroughbred stud in Southern Hemisphere and sold over 100 yearlings every year. In the mid 1930's there were no resident vets in Scone. The only vet to visit was Viv Davis from Sydney. He spent 3-4 days here every month and did the veterinary work for any stud with a priority. Stud grooms had to be vets too. What they couldn't do Viv would do such as pregnancy testing. He visited the bulk of the studs that were around this area including Kia Ora, Alabama, Sledmere, Segenhoe and Redbank. Viv Davis covered the territory into the 40s. Roy Stewart and Norman Larkin also traveled to the district. Alf Thompson at Widden Stud first employed Norman Larkin after graduation in 1934. Norman Larkin was an odd character. He had a stud at Wilberforce known as one of the roughest studs in NSW. He dabbled in yearlings and did a bit of vet work. He was the AJC vet for many years. Old Roy Stewart worked out of vet practice at Randwick. He used to wear Bombay shorts that they wore in India. The AJC ended up barring him because they wouldn't let him in with the gear he was wearing. Roy would pick up empty coke bottles, put them in his kit and take them home with him if he thought he'd get a penny. One day when casting a horse someone asked if he would help with the rope and he sent a bill for a guinea!

It was an era when you had to do what you could do yourself. You gave all your own tetanus shots and strangles needles. Stomach tubing was not heard of so you 'physicked' horses with a plastic capsule, 2 inches long, filled with Carbon Bisulphide for 'bots'. Then you'd fill another capsule with 'Thibenzole' for worms. You had to be able to physic or 'bot' the horse. You'd use a gag. Dad could do it without a gag. He'd get their tongue, pull it out of the side of their mouth and 'fire' the physic ball from between two fingers. A lot of 'feisty' mares would hide it in their mouth and it would burst producing a putrid smell and horrid sensation for a horse!

We had five stallions on Sledmere serving 40-70 mares each. We had to have a teaser and your stud groom had to be 'spot on'. You used your own judgment to work out who would ovulate first. You'd serve her first and 'hope to God you got it right in your own mind'!

You had to be able to stitch your wounds up with needle and thread. In those days there were some great old remedies. If you found a horse with a gash in its leg, you brought it home, washed the wound in cold water, then salt and water, and then whip stock oil and tar on it. 'Goodwood Park' was a mare owned by Vivian Bath who had lot of 'proud flesh'. You'd rasp it back with a hoof rasp. That was only way you'd get it to grow back over. 'Conde's Crystals' was used a lot as a disinfectant. Salt and water was the greatest thing in the world. Now we take the horses down to the beach and swim them. Epsom salts was also good.

We only had the odd vet up here until Frank Williams arrived in 1949. He lived up here from 1950 and was one of the first vets in the area. Frank was very quiet – they called him 'Whisper Williams'. He was a tradesman, knew his business and was a horseman. He'd gain an animal's confidence straight away. I saw him in 1950s when we had a yearling colt at Sledmere, a full brother to filly called 'On Wave' He was worth a lot of money. He was a terrible horse to rear if led into a box. He hit his head on the beam and split his head straight across the forehead just before the yearling sales. FW put 27 stitches across the wound. You wouldn't have seen the scar on the horse's head – it was a beautiful job! He was a good vet, Frank. I also saw FLW and Geoff Adams (another vet) apply splints and removing them with a hammer and chisel after knocking 'em out!

Morrie Point employed one of the first resident vets on any stud in Australia. He was a Hungarian Dr Frank Zeibert. His wife was named Joan *aka* 'Missy'. He never spoke much English and had his own lab. He used to experiment with lots of things in bottles. We also had cattle on the property to graze the pastures and so reduce worms. There were a lot of calves you castrated in yards with a sharpened pocket-knife. One afternoon Dad happened to mention we'd get up early the next day to mark the calves before it gets too hot. FZ said Missy and I will help you too. It was a hot and dusty day and we had 30 or 40 calves to do. Frank Zeibert's 'ute' pulls up and out they stepped resplendent in white coats, stainless steel trays, scalpels, disinfectant and all these instruments! We'd have been there for a week if we'd done it his way!

One day FZ went riding on an old chestnut and no one told him about stinging nettles. He rode through a patch and the first thing the chestnut did was make for the river and lie down with him still on. We had a rubber-tied spring cart and an old horse pulled the cart. Kevin Smith loosened one of the wheels on the cart. An hour later FZ comes walking back. He had been trotting down the hill and the wheel went flying past him!

The next chap out there was Reg Killick; a quiet sort of man, very astute vet and a very 'in depth' sort of bloke. He did everything in triplicate. He came from Newcastle and then had a practice in Sydney. Then we had a chap named Jack Francis. He was a raw recruit and just out of University. He later moved into the practice with Frank Williams and Murray Bain.

Murray Bain was the man who revolutionised veterinary practice in the Hunter Valley. When Bain arrived in Scone veterinary work just 'took off'. He introduced new techniques and was such a great man. He was a man that people really looked up to.

Anyone that thought they knew more than MB did was a fool to himself. If anyone wanted to know anything it was MB they asked. In the community, things he'd done for the race club. MB got St Andrew's race day going. He never only went to studs, he went to racing stables in Sydney.

John Morgan was a very quiet sort of bloke – he could get a bit unsettled if everything didn't go his way. Nairn Fraser is a top chap. Geoff Adams was a big man. He'd buy himself a new set of overalls but they were always about 2ft. too long for Geoff, so he'd just get the scissors and cut off the bottom. He could preg test a mare and tell you right to the centimetre the size that it was. Bev still lives around here and is President of Horse Week. She has medals from everywhere for running. Bill Howey is unbelievable. He is the ultimate man for the district, for anything that goes on about the district. You just don't get blokes like him. He will stand behind a man who is examining and will tell you what he's doing, how he found it. If they had knighthoods he'd be Sir BH. With the closing of Scone Race Course in 1994 when they shifted to Satur, we got a committee – the Scone Race Club White Park Wake Committee. We all went out and got into it. It come twelve o'clock and no one came and by two o'clock the roll up was astronomical, it was part of Scone's history.

When I was night watching at Kiora I foaled over 100 mares in one season and called the vet once. Reg Sperrink was Stud Groom when I was at Major Mitchell's Stud 'Yarraman Park'. Old Norman Larkin would come up once a week to look at the mares; he would not spend one penny. I went out to look after three stallions – I didn't do anything else. You'd walk them, groom them and feed them. One morning we spotted an old mare with a growth on her neck; Norman was in a hurry. He shouted; "Just grab her by the ear and hold her". Then he just cut it straight off her neck – everyone passed out!

Emperor [Imp.] was a great sire. We had him out there, two days before he died at about 22. He was a terrible horse and he'd run the fence. He'd been re-shod two days before. Norman took the shoes off. NL arrived out there to drench his mares and foals. He had a foal tube – 'as a matter of fact I had it in the war years, I used to drench the soldiers at the Barracks at Randwick with it'.

Murray Bain and Norman Larkin had fallen out. Frank Williams without Norman Larkin did everything for himself but not for anyone else. Murray Bain did not suffer fools.

Murray Bain and Virginia Osborne [Sydney University] disagreed on testing mares: Virginia Osmond said that preg testing mares caused abortion. That got around the industry and cut MB in the pocket. 'The bloody crusading virgin,' he said. 'There should be no such bloody thing'! She was a lecturer in anatomy, and during a paper she gave, MB got stuck into her. NL stood up and said called for an apology, but MB jumped straight to his feet and said 'I repeat exactly what I said, she is not a scientist. There is no apology'. Someone said 'MB why are you going around criticising her when you should be doing the other thing'.

BH once caught MB out on knowledge. Somebody brought in a worm, BH; 'That looks like an immature ascarid'. MB; 'If that's an immature ascarid, I'm the Archbishop of Canterbury'. BH got the lab results back and said; 'Have a look at this, your grace'. He yelled 'cheeky bastard' and stormed out. Carly Simon could've written the song about Murray. MB had a lot in common with Warren Beatty.



Betty Shepherd  
Horse Trainer



Betty Shepherd and friends

Pen Picture

Betty was the first female horse trainer in Australia obtaining her license in 1952 at 21 years of age. She always maintained 'I don't want to be a stable hand - I want a trainer's license' and successfully lodged her application. Betty was born in Tamworth but was brought up and lived in Scone. She used to ride to school and had been riding as long as she could remember. Betty became interested in racehorses when going out with future husband Archie whose father trained thoroughbreds. Each horse was 'worked on differently as they don't all do the same things'. The emphasis was on TLC – 'tender loving care' - including individual attention and a lot of roadwork.

## Reflections

I met Murray Bain when he first came to Scone [1950]. He and Frank Williams came to do something with a horse and we established very good rapport straight away. If something was said and I didn't agree with it I'd tell him straight out! He loved bringing students because if an explanation was given both our opinions were expressed so introducing two different perspectives. Occasionally Murray used to be quite dictatorial, obdurate and patrician. Not many people told Murray Bain what to do!

One day Murray came to give the horses an oil drench but he didn't have a bucket of his own. I had 14 buckets each with a different colour so 14 individual feeds were mixed for each horse. Asking if he could borrow one I very politely but firmly told him: 'No – they are special'. He went in and counted them and when he got to 100 he said: 'You have one hundred buckets and I can't even borrow one'! Murray loved practical jokes – almost as much as he loved his rum and milk very early each morning. He'd come home at night and Morag went out to meet him on the step – he got into trouble for being late home from the RSL Club: "Daddy I think you'd better tell Mummy you were up the Widden Valley"!

It was always great when Murray came out to a call. When 'Trevors' was extremely ill Murray arrived just before he died. He absolutely grilled the young vet [Peter Beiers] who was there: 'What have you done? Have you done this? Have you done that?' He said: 'We can't do anymore'. It was dreadful – we went up the house and had quite a few drinks. Murray wasn't here when he died. I came down and it looked as if he was going to go any minute. I put a head collar on and held him so he wouldn't bash himself to pieces when he died. Murray talked me into having an autopsy in case it was zoonotic to ourselves, our daughter or our friends. He received a bigger obituary in the local paper than did any person ('Trevors' died Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April 1967). We buried him behind the vine in the garden with 'Raz' the dog that accompanied him to Melbourne.

Murray never behaved as if he knew more than anybody else but he knew much more. He went everywhere. He was a wonderful person; very open, not petty, he loved horses and he loved his racing. Dogs and horses where far and away his favourites. He always said Greyhounds were probably the nicest house-dogs you can have.

Vets parties? We went to those. They weren't put on. They just happened! It would just sort of work into a party. We had enough parties without officially organising them.

I remember Bill Howey very well! 'Shah Mauree' became sick one week after he arrived. Bill came and treated her and she kicked him after we'd had a few drinks. He blamed that for getting kicked! He was here quite a long time with her. He had a plaque on the wall at the Belmore Hotel: 'Memorial – Bill Howey once drank here'. It was put there to commemorate his 'Buck's Party'. When Bill's car pulled up from a long trip you could almost see it sigh with relief! It creaked! He used to drive and drive and drive and drive.

We used vets for any sickness – colic; stomach tube-worm drenching (no tube pastes then, so everything was drenched regularly). We didn't have a lot of troubles with out foals. We had strangles occasionally and lost one with strangles but I don't think there were vets here at the time.

We looked after 'Obelia' when Murray Bain brought her out of work from Sydney with an 'incorrect blood reading'. Murray said 'I want you to get her all the green she'll eat'. We gave her a mass of green for a couple of days and then he said: 'Yes, there it is - its right'. The blood's right 'up top' again. We encouraged the ambition to win the golden slipper. Mace won it with one of the one's they'd bred ['Dark Eclipse' – 1975]. We also looked after the Biscay/Obelia filly after Murray died. [See 'She Bears the Mark of Fate']



Jack Francis is dead now. We used to do terrible things to Jack! One night he'd gelded a horse in the top stable. We had a few drinks after and Jack backed his car into the fence and no one would push it off for him. We made him stay there! Someone took one of his shoes. He had to get up first thing in the morning and drive to Merriwa with one shoe! Everybody picked on him. Jack was a person who had been on the stage in New Zealand. He was used to acting and 'knocking all the scenery all over the stage'. He was rather like that when he was doing the horses always trying to do something extremely quickly!

My daughter [Georgie] was fascinated by Murray's feet! He had HUGE feet and also wore 'moleskins' which hugged his thin legs so exacerbating the big feet. I used to lecture Georgie and say: 'Don't look at Mr. Bain's feet!' She'd look down and say: 'Hello Mr. Bain' to his feet! When Murray became sick he seemed to suffer a long time. We went to see him in hospital in Sydney. He went on a diet because he thought he was getting too fat. His stomach was swelling and he was becoming thin everywhere else. That's what 'woke him up' that he had cancer".



Paul and Ross Williams; Dr. Dave Warden

Pen Picture(s)

Ross and Paul are the sons of Frank and Beth Williams. Both were raised in Scone although neither was born there. Dr. Dave Warden was an iconic medical practitioner in Scone for almost 30 years and a partner in the surgery during its heyday. He was personal physician and close friend of almost all the early veterinary fraternity when Scone was a much closer community than it is today.

Anecdotal Reflections – Interview Thursday Feb 21, 2001 at Sydney University



The author, Paul Williams, Ross Williams and Dr. Dave Warden  
The 'Roundhouse', Faculty of Veterinary Science, University of Sydney

In the very early days it was Larkin, Bain and Williams. Norman Larkin used to commute from Bondi Junction. He had a farrier working up there with a van as well and it also became the veterinary service. That was the first green van that Dad had. The practice was at 240 Liverpool Street and that was our place. Dad was the first resident vet at Scone.

I have a picture of Norman visiting, but the stock inspectors provided a service certainly at the flock and herd level to the area before that. 'Warby' Warberton was still around in those days. His base was at Merriwa but the district vet was from Scone. There was an honorary veterinary position with the Quirindi Polo Club.

Lots of old timers used to use bailing twine and all that type of stuff. There were blistering agents such as 'Butter of Antimony'. It burnt the bloody skin...I mean Christ! Reggie Watts was a legendary colt 'gelder' but Andy Pendavgos lost a \$10,000 insurance claim when a colt bled to death. Suddenly we got a lot more colts to geld.

At our house in Liverpool Street we had a dispensary out the back in the laundry. Murray Bain used to use that as well. MB was delayed in NZ for the season and he ended up doing the horse breeding season there in 1949. Norman Larkin had already booked up Murray to come to Scone. Dad had served with NL during the war in the vet unit where Dad was a Captain. He was offered a partnership in Scone.

It must've taken MB some time to find, acquire and restore 'Chivers'. Scone 118 was the original phone number and 322 was the office number when it moved down to Chivers. The girls would find you wherever you were. It was the manual exchange. They could tell you where anyone else was. Dave Warden said; we'd give them a list of names of blood donors and they'd ring around and find someone. They listened in to conversations especially overseas ones. 'Bung' Cone could recite verbatim in the RSL Club a conversation that had taken place the night before. His wife was on the exchange!

Norman Judge was Dad's driver during the war. That was largely why he went and did vet when 'demobbed'. They were up around Broome WA and all that area. There are pictures of Prince Regent River. He said you just can't believe these canyons and cliffs with the river going straight down the middle.

Murray Bain demobilised from British Army 1946. He had been acting Lieutenant Colonel. He had a reputation for removing the 'Neigh' from donkeys in Palestine. He ovariectomised them to shut them up and did it with an old sharpener. Subordinates used to bet on how many would survive! He paid his own way went to Claiborne Farm in Kentucky with famous Colonel Sager and was there 9 months. He'd established a job with Sir James Fletcher where he was Stud Manager, not Stud Vet. He was there for 3 years and then he came to visit the Hunter Valley. There were lots of horses and he thought there was an opportunity. He came back in 1950 and stayed at Eaton's Hotel in Muswellbrook. Sir James Fletcher had said 'Bain, I've got just the girl for you'. It was his private secretary Mace.

Dad [FW] went to PNG after the war finished. They were cleaning up diseases after that. He nearly got himself killed a few times. Once he was kicked by a donkey and another time falling into a river. He worked as veterinary officer for the Department of Agriculture and then went to Scone. He lived in the Golden Fleece before Mum and I went up there.

Dad drove around in a Baker's van in those days. Transport was not easy to come by then. He had an Austin then a Wolseley. It wasn't until Holdens came along that we ended up with reliable transport. Dad used to get a Holden if not every twelve months then every 18 months because of the mileage he used to do. He went as far as Goondiwindi for TB testing. 70,000 miles per year was about it on average.



John Bentley was at Singleton. Mum always credits him with establishing veterinary science in the Hunter Valley in almost a social sense. She always attributes the fact that vets were accepted into Hunter Valley society to John Bentley. He was at Singleton and Dad was at Scone.

There were 36 gates between Scone and 'Widden'. Paul and I used to be hauled into this. If you needed a gate opener you'd haul your kids with you. 'Tinagroo' had 19 gates when it operated as a stud in those days. 'St Aubins' was also a major stud.

[Ross did five years of vet and failed third year twice. 'They said I should go away and think about it and I never went back'. Paul has a PhD and works in an endocrinology lab at Sydney University]

Murray Bain used hyperbole and was the best storyteller. He knew the whole of the 'Jungle Book' by heart. Paul was a substitute son for MB in the early days. 'I spent days with him'. MB loved kids, going out with him with the car, he was essentially my Godfather and the split didn't happen until I was 15. I'd be in that end bedroom above the cellar. That was one of my major contentious issues when Dad and MB split. I said to Murray that the worst thing about this is that it's very difficult for me to see you and I miss you a lot. Thank god they started to talk to each other after that. It took a while.

They picked one person to support each. Dad was more annoying because of his disorganization and *laissez faire* approach. Unlike MB he rarely documented his treatment procedures; he was extremely lax about getting his paperwork and accounts done. Let's just say that there were quite a few animals around Scone that were fixed *gratis*. He just loved his work. It wasn't just veterinary science, it was being out and about with people.

The other side of vet practice and medical practice was the part the wives played, just as receptionists and backstops. The phone never stopped ringing – day, night, weekend and all the rest of it. Murray lauded and praised Mum [Beth Williams] for tearing strips off Ray Israel. Ray and Mum were good friends. For the first years at Scone we celebrated Christmas at Segenhoe. David used to put teethmarks in his drumstick so no one else would get it. It was a Jewish household.

Dad's first contact with Tom Payne was when I think he gelded a colt. Tom slipped him some money. Dad's professional response was; "no, I'll send you a bill". Tom was used to slipping money to the local horse doctors.

A scheme operated with dairy farmers where the milk factory subsidized the vet service. Dad had a lot to do to that. I'm not sure when Penicillin became generally available in vet practice? I have memories of Sulphur powder being cast about everywhere in the early days. Chloroform as anaesthetic and procedures with nose bags on horses were used a lot. You put the hobbles on, then the nosebag with Chloroform and drop the horse on the spot. [DW; 'I used to use Chloroform'].

Dad only went away once with Frank Thompson from Widden. They bought Santa Gertrudis cattle back. Paul got a postcard in the Davey Crockett days (I got a Davey Crockett hat). Dad wanted to look at stallions in the UK, Ireland and King Ranch. Mum has programs from things like 'My Fair Lady' in London. It was the year that Little Richard brought out Long Tall Sally and Tutti Frutti. Dad brought them back and they were played continually.

Eddie Kennedy used to polish the tops of his army boots with no soles. He'd put them on especially to welcome the vet. Dad went up to horse that staked itself. We tramped for miles up the side of one of those hills and I don't know how far up the Rouchel it was. He had to put the horse out to get the stake out of its foot. The 'yep' boys were all single and used to hide the rum bottles from one another.

Jim McFadden was the first vet ever appointed to a race club and went to the AJC in 1947. He and Laurie came up a lot in those days.

Dave Warden: 'Vicky always liked his [FW's] sense of humour and sparkling eyes with twitching moustache. His moustache was probably his main identifier. He was advised to grow it when he left veterinary science. He said 'no one will take you seriously, you look too young'. He was bald when he was 21. He went from here virtually straight in the army and graduated in his Captain's uniform'.

The first (army) camp they went to was up at Hawks Nest because they were training the horses on the sand on the beaches to get them used to desert conditions. They had to swim the horses across from Tea Gardens. There is a bridge there now opened in 1974 but there was not even a ferry then. Mum maintains that he learned to drink as a 20 year old officer in an officer's mess.

Treve Williams married Trish Basche from 'Aluinn'. Frank Packer used to run a horse stud there operated by a resident manager. Dad would have to unpack the car to get us in the back. As soon as station wagons were available we got one. You always knew you were in a vet's car. Once some Carbon Bisulphide exploded in the car and it really stinks!

The first time I came across parasitology was why Dad had all these snails that he was sending down to laboratories. We used to forever have thousands of bottles of blood, waiting for serum to come off; shaking off the clots – that was testing for brucellosis. We had stacks and stacks of bottles of blood all over the house.

Brucellosis of course was a problem for Dad. He came back from PNG with malaria. Mum had to seek sustenance because he was hospitalised after he came back. It wasn't recognised that it was the brucellosis or malaria that knocked him around. A lot of the work they did was brucellosis testing and tuberculosis testing. Strangles vaccine was also common as was Castor Oil. Castor Oil was another one of those miracle cures – it used to go onto those warts. I went out to 'Bickham and they had all these bulls in pens. One had

almost a necklace of warts. Castor Oil was placed upon these things and 2-3 weeks later the change was most dramatic.

Murray had all sorts of concoctions: – calf scour powder, foal scour powder...wart stuff. One of Ross's holiday tasks was to mix these miraculous cures out the back of 'Chivers'. Murray blew up half his house with Carbon Bisulphide. He had a snake under his house and found the hole. He put in Carbon Bisulphide and blew a hole in his wall. I remember Murray proudly telling Lionel Israel about a bushranger being shot outside there. Lionel said; 'that's nothing, one lives in it now!' Murray was an avid bird watcher. I don't think he kept any records of the other variety!

John Paradise and Dave Warden did a call for Jack Francis when he was out at Christmas Eve one year. They went to see a milk fever cow. They gave her calcium and she didn't get up, so Dave said; 'You know what they do now? They jump on the tail'. Dave said it was the most miraculous cure he'd ever had. It certainly sold vet science to dairy farmers in the area.

Murray's good works are well documented. His extra-professional activities were many; all his tree planting, watering down the main street, the concerts we used to have, the Scone Scots – all of those things he did too. Ray Farrell had a wound break down and it created a little sinus. Dave Warden said 'You've got a bit of a hole in it Ray' and he replied; 'Don't tell Murray he'll put a bloody tree in it'.

Dad was a strong footy (Rugby) supporter but didn't coach at Scone. Dad played first grade before the war and coached reserve grade after the war. Before grand final in 1968 they were having a party at Di Fleming's. They phoned Dave Warden at 3am to seek the President's advice to ask if he recommended sex before a football game and whether or not once a night was enough! Isobel answered the phone and said; 'I think the whole thing sounds utterly disgusting'! BH was involved in the phone call.

Peter Beiers had been Murray's assistant just before Bill Howey arrived and he'd just been sacked. He became a medico then ended up treating Dad in Newcastle. Murray told the story about Jack Francis driving down Main Street while steering with his knee and pouring blood. You rarely finished by 7 o'clock at night. The RSL Club was a meeting of all the guys in those days. It lasted until the early 70's. The camaraderie isn't there anymore. Now you get into trouble if you drink drive. Dad held an office at RSL. He was involved in the welfare process, visits at Christmas time, taking around food parcels and presents and things. Mrs. Everingham was the first secretary. I remember the glasses the and straight hair.



Memories! Memories!



Michele Cotton was the first female undergraduate in Scone.  
Rumour has it she was 'hand picked' by Murray

## Don Scott Anecdotal Reflections

### Pen Picture

Don Scott was/is a Chartered Accountant in Scone for over 48 years and was the effective business manager of the 'practice'. He is an iconic figure in the town and district. If you had any questions Murray would simply say; 'Go and see Don Scott'. Don was a close confidante and friend of almost all the early veterinarians and possesses a unique insight into the 'trammels of quotidian veterinary life'.

### Reflections

My father was as dour a Scotsman as you could ever find. He and Murray met one day at the post office corner with Norman [Smith], where they both carried on and got more Scottish. Apparently Dad said to Murray; 'You've gotta' admit son, we're the salt of the earth'. Norman said to me; 'You know, the two silly bastards believed it'! Dad also said; "A bad Scotsman's better than a good anything else".

Mace was the boss when we came here and we won't say anything about Morag. There were a lot of problems in the latter years of Bain, Williams and Francis. Frank would never do his day sheets so we couldn't do any financial accounts because, quite rightly Mrs. Everingham [Secretary] said once you do that without getting Frank's time sheets we'll never get them from him! When they split up Frank and Jack moved from behind 'Chivers' up into 88 Main Street. Angus Cunningham would be sitting doing worm egg counts at midnight – because he was Angus. Norman Judge went to the Olympic Games in Mexico and was also Olympic vet in Tokyo. He brought Quarter Horses back here from America. Frank would carry a bottle of Scotch with him and some might have said: 'What do you mean a bottle? A case'! On one occasion it took three days for him to get back from the Widden Valley. His health problems were compounded by the farmer's disease 'Brucellosis' and possibly also his exposure to malaria and other tropical diseases in New Guinea after WWII.

Murray was a lady killer. The women would melt! He was a big 'fella', not fat, just very big. He was a dark Scot. He had the great attribute of having such long arms to pregnancy test a mare. He was an egotistic bastard with a lot of testosterone. He was a very pleasant presentable guy. He never struck you as a vet. He had all this gear in the boot and when you opened the boot it all used to fall out on top of you.

Mace had everything to do with the practice. Mace used to come and see me. She'd get to the door of my office and stand there without coming in because she obviously thought that the moment she sat down the 'taxi meter' started to tick. I was at the RSL having a drink with Murray and he said you'd better come and have a drink at home. I smelled a rat. He gave some land to the Race Club. Mace burst into tears. She was a Kiwi. Murray used to say *ad infinitum*; 'I've solved the problem – I know where they landed. The eleven lost tribes of Israel landed in New Zealand'. He started off in NZ, with Sir James Fletcher, and Mace was the private secretary of Sir James.



Murray didn't have much financial sense. He needed Mace to pull it together. She was extremely tough. Mrs. Everingham used to answer the telephone in the early days.

Jack [Francis] would've been the wildest driver I've ever seen. It wasn't so much he was fast on the road. He'd do same speed on the driveway as he would up the highway. Jack had Jeremy in the back one day and it was always flat strap. He said; 'Anything behind Jeremy'? Jeremy said; 'No Dad' - WHOOMP – 'only that tree'. Murray was not always right but he always thought he was. Julie Rose used to drive him around. Vic Cole bought Bevan Reed up here when Murray was dying. Murray was a brilliant vet and Bevan a brilliant doctor. He (Bevan Reed) was surgical registrar at Gosford Hospital and Slim Dusty's son.

## John Bryden



I wish to acknowledge the following ‘Anecdotal Reflection’ is purloined from an article in ‘The Veterinarian’ July 2002 written by colleague Dr. Rowan Blogg. The title was ‘Get by with a little help from friends’ and is an eloquent synopsis of the professional life of John Bryden. Much of John’s early and formative veterinary career was spent in Scone. John himself provides a fascinating objective insight into the evolution of the veterinary community in Scone.

A graduate of Sydney University John was guided in his career by distinguished veterinarians Murray Bain and Percy Sykes. He met Murray through his future wife Lesley Blackeby.

“Lesley had an uncle in the thoroughbred business in the Hunter Valley [Bill Harris, Holbrook Stud], one of the original nurseries of the Australian thoroughbred and the base for some great stallions including Star Kingdom,” John says. “Murray invited me as a student to come and do a practical stint with the Scone practice.”

Murray was on his way to becoming a legend and was one of the veterinarians who, like Jack Francis and Frank Williams, would drive 70,000 miles each year on his calls. He would innovate and was known for passing a stomach tube in the ‘impossible’ horse before amazed locals outside the pub in Dungog. Murray introduced stomach tubing to the Hunter Valley. In the 1950’s and 1960’s veterinarians in Scone were earning more than doctors and were the pioneers of modern rural veterinary practice. Their willingness to teach helped create the Sydney University Post Graduate Foundation of which John’s brother John became Director.

John's first job after graduation was as District Veterinary Officer for the Sydney suburb of Homebush now home to Sydney Olympic Park. There followed his inaugural stint in Scone before Murray encouraged him to 'spread his wings' and work at one of the premier universities in the UK. John was appointed house surgeon at the University of Glasgow in 1959.

"I met an old friend of Murray's who had worked with him in the Veterinary Corps during World War II," John says. "The Veterinary Corps was at its zenith. Bob Crowhurst and Murray had each been running veterinary hospitals as a vital part of the Italian Campaign. At the time of the historic Salerno Bay landing, mules pulled artillery through mud in the mountains. Dodging bullets, Bob gelded 75 donkeys one day in Egypt." Murray met many men during his military tour of duty who were to inspire his collective passion for a future career in equine practice. They included Bob Crowhurst as well as Fred Day, trainer Frank Cundell and others. They were to remain enduring lifelong friends.

After a couple of years in Britain, a letter came from Murray Bain inviting him to come back to Australia and work with him in Scone. In 1961 John and his family hurried home.

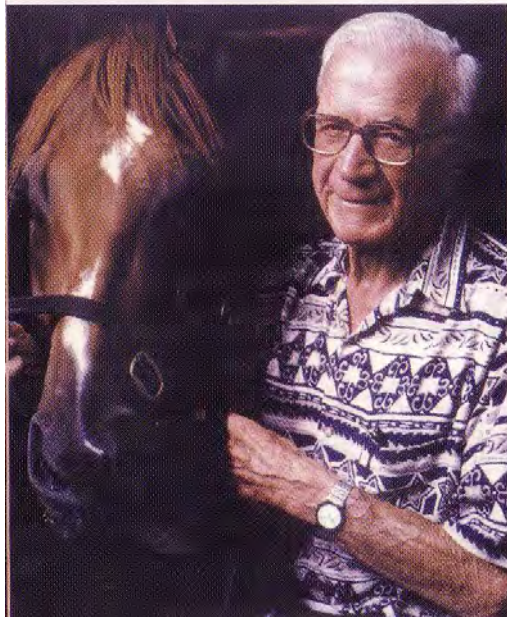
"It mattered little that Murray had not told his veterinary partners. However he was a great veterinarian, a patient teacher and an outstanding citizen in the Upper Hunter region," John says. "Scone still stands as a proud example of his love of nature, with many of the trees around the town being planted by him and volunteers he recruited."

Murray's practice was mixed and served a very large area. Some of the beef cattle work was extraordinary.

"Going east into the hills early one morning, I vaccinated 600 heifers for brucellosis by lunchtime," John says. "We would go tot Quirindi every week to a number of cattle and horse studs such as Sinclair Hill's polo ponies. "Sinclair rang me one Sunday morning and asked if I was coming up on Tuesday. He said he had 16 colts to geld. I asked the vital question: 'Are they handled'? He promised they would be by Tuesday!" They were however completely unhandled when they arrived. "We gelded them by putting them in the cattle race, giving IV anaesthetic, opening the gate and gelding them where they dropped – up to 70 metres form the crush," John says.

It was while he was working for Murray Bain that John met another of the colleagues who would prove an excellent mentor and teacher. Percy Sykes, a race track veterinarian from Sydney had come to look at an old problem – two-year-olds were not doing well under the stress of track training. Percy and John collected hundreds of blood samples which enabled them to diagnose adult rickets. They found many mares were chronically short of calcium and the discovery was a watershed in rearing horses in the Hunter Valley. In 1967 John moved from Scone to Melbourne on the dissolution of the Sykes Bain partnership where he was to become increasingly focused on racetrack practice. His memories of his career are mainly positive.

“I have had a time in the profession that I would not swap. From the beginning with Star Kingdom and Murray Bain in the Hunter, to looking after 16 Melbourne Cup winners, dinner with horse lovers like Prince Charles, Ron and Nancy Reagan, the King of Nepal and the Aga Khan,” John says.



Percy Sykes



Treve Williams AJC Chairman was in Scone in the mid 1960's as part of the Sykes Bain partnership

John's comments regarding the learning, teaching and mentoring aspects of life with Murray Bain et al are further handsomely augmented by his brother Doug who succeeded Tom Hungerford as Director of the Post Graduate Foundation in Veterinary Science.



Dr. Doug Bryden had retired as Director of the PGFVS when he wrote the following letter in response to an enquiry from my assistant philosopher, journalist and veterinary student Anne Quain. Anne was responding to a request from me to write a posthumous 'legend' piece about Murray Bain for the PGFVS Director's Circular. Anne noted that her early research and reading indicated Murray had been 'a formidable equine veterinarian'. This was extraordinary percipience by Anne and the first reference to the epithet '*formidable*' in relation to Murray's *persona*!

Dr. Douglas Bryden  
"Canisby"  
RMB 296F Browns Lane  
Tamworth NSW 2340

Thursday 18 October 2001

Dear Anne

It is lovely to hear from you again and with such a fascinating request. Yes my brother John knew Murray well. He will be the best to tell you his story [see above] which I think begins when he was still an undergraduate.

When I began my clinical veterinary studies in Sydney, John was then working with Murray and I spent quite a bit of time on a property close to Scone [St. Aubins Without] and then saw practice with Murray and John in my last couple of years.



Murray was a very colourful figure within the profession and was a legend in his own time in the Hunter Valley. I learnt an enormous amount from him, not only in veterinary medicine and surgery, but also how one should operate as a veterinarian and the importance of going about things in the right way to provide high quality service to your clients.

Murray was very dedicated to continued learning and he was one of the group of veterinarians who came together with the idea of providing a resource for continued learning especially those working in the country areas away from the Universities. It was this group who eventually began the Post Graduate Committee and Post Graduate Foundation which was set up under the Senate of the University of Sydney and which have provided such a remarkable resource for veterinarians in Australia and New Zealand and in many other countries of the world.

Murray was a man of vision and a man of action and with his charm and his broad Scottish brogue was usually the centre of attention in any company.

I wish you good hunting in your search for information.

Warmest regards

Doug

Almost without exception all Murray's 'acolytes' at any time mention his mentorship, teaching, learning and dedication to what we now refer to 'Continual Professional Development' [CPD] and 'Continuing Veterinary Education' [CVE]. It cannot be just coincidence that so many followed this pathway.

## AEVA Anecdotal Reflections

My association with the Australian Equine Veterinary Association [AEVA] began in 1973. I succeeded Virginia Osborne as NSW delegate. Virginia had been appointed to the inaugural Executive Committee in 1971. John Bourke and Tony Stewart were most surprised when I attended my first Executive Meeting at Parkville [Melbourne]. I had great difficulty in locating them and would not have been able to do so without the timely assistance of undergraduate student Bill Harbison who was also looking for Tony. They were enjoying an impromptu and very well lubricated 'dinner' clearly not expecting 'outsiders'! Subsequent meetings were held in the private home of Honorary Secretary Andy [and Sarah] Black in Adelaide. These were usually over and after munificent dinners and lasted well into the 'wee small hours'. There was great difficulty with accurate recall of any decisions reached in the cold hard light of dawn! Attendance at all these early meetings was entirely self-funded.

My first foray into expansion of the AEVA's profile was a letter under my signature distributed from my practice in Scone to all AEVA members located in NSW. This 'unearthed' a feisty Peter Roach who was quickly appointed as Honorary Secretary in succession to Andy Black. Peter was a very proactive and proficient secretary although his term of office was not without its controversial moments! An article appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald by leading racing journalist Bert Lillye criticizing 'official' veterinarians at Sydney Metropolitan Race Tracks [AJC and STC] citing the office of the AEVA as its information source. Percy Sykes, Bill Monk, Norman Larkin and Jim McFadyen were indubitably 'not amused' to put it mildly! The latter resigned in protest from the AEVA never to return again. Peter resigned his position after this episode also.

It was the policy of the AEVA to invite an eminent overseas equine veterinarian to address members at its annual conference held during the AVA AGM each year. In common with others SIGs we were allocated 4 x 1 hour lecture sessions only. Professor John Hughes [UC Davis] gave these lectures in Melbourne in 1975. Professor O. R. Adams was invited to 'remote' Perth for a similar program in 1976. With admirable foresight Peter Roach distributed a generic letter asking if any other organization would like to access the expertise of Professor Adams in the eastern States and also share a proportionate portion of the costs. What is now a famous part of history is that the dynamic leader of the PGFVS Tom Hungerford seized the moment with great verve and admirable alacrity. With very few members able to travel to Perth because of a national air transport strike a record number of veterinarians attended Tom's promotion of 'Lameness in Horses' at Sydney University. To this day this is still the record course for the PGFVS in terms of attendance [>500] and profit margin [c. \$60,000]! Recognizing a potential 'bonanza' to Tom's eternal credit and with remarkable prescience he wrote to O. R. Adams urging him to 'get here even if it meant chartering an aeroplane'! Professor Adams advised he would not have bothered to come if he had not received this letter when temporarily stranded in Singapore and unable to fly to Australia because of the still extant national air strike. He managed to procure a seat to Perth for the AVA/AEVA AGM on a private charter flight at the end of which time the national strike was over.

The massive scientific and financial success of Tom's venture gave us an idea! We could do this for ourselves! First we needed to secure some core funding and 'seed' venture capital to launch any new initiative. We did this in the first instance by promoting a program at the old Camperdown Travelodge [now Rydges] in Sydney utilizing free local 'talent'. Speakers on this occasion include Professor David Hutchins, Reuben Rose, Phil Knight and Bill Howey. The net return to the AEVA was c. \$3000:00. We were 'in the balck' and 'with funds'! Previously the 'Equine Group f the AVA' had run successful scientific programs in Canberra [1971], Brisbane [1972], Werribee [1973], Darwin [1974] and Hobart [1975]. The establishment of the AEVA was first 'mooted' in Canberra by John Bourke and others and cemented in Brisbane. The problem was – we did not make any money! The first proceedings of the Equine Group of the AVA [1971 – 1974] were produced by Honorary Editor Dick Dixon.

About this time and during the terms of office of Norman Larkin and Professor David Hutchins the AEVA was 'incorporated' into the AVA together with other SIGs. This was a difficult, arduous and painful process and involved a long series of 'delicate' deliberations and negotiations! Geoff Hazard succeeded Professor Hutchins as President of the AEVA [1977] and I took over the reigns from Geoff in 1978. We made the collective decision to arrange our own 'stand alone' AEVA program in June 1978. Further funds were needed and so a two-day program was held at Scone in March 1977 featuring Percy Sykes, Professor Bill Pickett [CSU, USA], Professor Cliff Irvine [NZ], Margaret Evans [NZ], Bill Stewart and Bill Howey. Bill Stewart presented on the only recorded case of 'Grass Sickness' or 'Grass Ill' ever diagnosed in Australia. Audrey Best had emerged by this time as an outstanding administration officer for the AEVA. This was indubitably one of the very best decisions ever reached by the Executive! All scientific content was provided 'gratis' at Scone and a substantial profit ensued. The second set of AEVA proceedings was printed in conjunction with the Scone meeting.

Later that same year [1977] John Morgan was visiting Newmarket [UK] and was asked to unearth a potential keynote speaker for June 1978. He returned with a list of 24 topics provided by Leo Jeffcott who was then at the Animal Health Equine Research Station in Newmarket. So began a virtual litany of aerogramme correspondence between the author and Leo in England. This was the genesis of what was to become internationally known as 'Bain Fallon'. The concept was 'set in stone' at a seminal meeting of the AEVA Executive at the Windsor Hotel, Melbourne on VRC Derby Day 1977. I traveled by small aeroplane charter to be there and 'Galena Boy' won the Derby! The 'brand name' decided for the AEVA 'special' was Bain/Fallon Memorial Lectures in honour of eminent equine veterinarians the late Murray Bain [d. Scone 1974] and Peter Fallon [d. Melbourne 1974]. I was employed by Murray Bain in 1967 and Geoff Hazard was a former associate and employee of Peter Fallon.



### Sydney University First XV Premiers 1945

Peter Fallon is second from the right in the middle row

‘Another Rugger Bugger’ veterinarian Peter Fallon was a great friend of Murray Bain. Peter was one of a large number of ‘Kiwi’ [NZ] veterinary students to excel at Rugby in Sydney. This tradition continued for almost 40 years.

‘Wallaby’ Brian Piper is first on the left in the front row. His son ‘Mick’ later worked at ‘Widden’

1977 was the year of emergence of ‘Jubilee Clap’ [CEM] in England and also the first ostensible recorded case of Equine Herpes Virus Abortion in mares in Australia. This occurred on a stud near Scone in July 1977. A massive meeting of industry personnel was held at the Scone Bowling Club to discuss these vital issues at this time. Over 400 owners, breeders, and veterinarians attended the debate including AEVA President Geoff Hazard.

The inaugural Bain/Fallon Memorial Lectures were held at the Wentworth Hotel, Sydney on 15<sup>th</sup>. – 18<sup>th</sup>. June 1978 [4 days: Thursday – Sunday]. Leo Jeffcott was magnificent and with incredible zeal and admirable stamina filled the whole program. Note [3 ‘booklets’] were printed and handed out the day of delivery. Thanks to Tom Hungerford’s inadvertent expert tuition the ‘grand ship’ Bain/Fallon was launched to brilliant acclaim and the AEVA really attained its majority seven years after its birth! Dave Hutchins had presciently predicted that the ‘AEVA would not progress until it had its own full time fully paid administration officer’. We now claimed Audrey Best as our very own!



Professor Leo Jeffcott  
Professor Jeffcott has visited Scone on many occasions



Professor Jeffcott in 'Scone' mode!

The next 'big thing' the AEVA did was to host the Third International Symposium on Equine Reproduction in Sydney in 1982. To date this is still the 'biggest and best' single achievement of the AEVA [in my opinion!]. Following the Second Symposium at UC Davis [USA] in 1978 a 'core' group of devotees managed to persuade a somewhat reluctant Executive to allocate \$10,000:00 of AEVA member's funds as initiating venture capital for the idea. A local arrangements committee was formed comprising Peter Irwin [Chair], Phil Knight [Treasurer], Rex Butterfield, Reg Pascoe and Bill Howey. There were 3 former AEVA Presidents [CPI, RRP, WPH] and 2 former AEVA Treasurers [RMB, PRK]. Audrey Best was the expert and highly efficient Group Secretary. The Symposium was a huge success and many Australian equine veterinarians were able to benefit from the accumulated wisdom of the eclectic international gathering. The



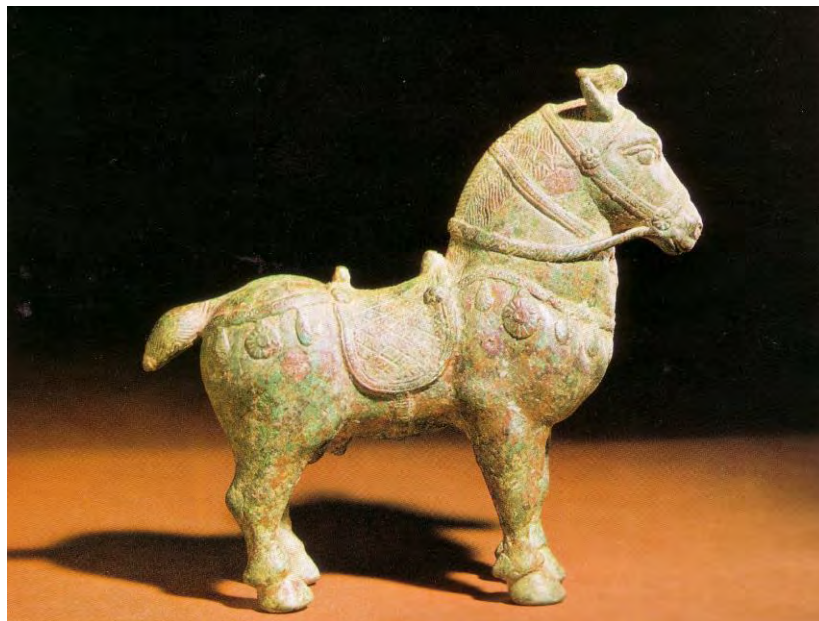
proceedings were published as 'Equine Reproduction III' by the Journals of Reproduction and Fertility Ltd.



Delegates for 14 countries at the 3<sup>rd</sup>. International Symposium on Equine Reproduction  
Seymour Centre University of Sydney 1982

Rex Butterfield far left front row. Audrey Best far right front row next to the author.

Professor John Hughes [USA], Professor Cliff Irvine [NZ], Professor 'Twink' Allen [UK], Dr. Peter Rosedale [UK] and Professor Bill Pickett [USA] all spent time in Scone



Sassanian Bronze Statue. c. 3<sup>rd</sup>. – 6<sup>th</sup>. Century A.D.  
Symbol of the 3<sup>rd</sup>. International Symposium on Equine Reproduction

## The Post Graduate Foundation in Veterinary Science in the University of Sydney

### First and Foremost in Continuing Veterinary Education

During the 1950's many veterinarians recognised a growing need for continuing education. Through a group of forward thinking veterinarians from within the ranks of practitioners, university lecturers, the professional association, and associated industries this recognition culminated in the formation of the Post Graduate Committee in Veterinary Science in 1961. The activities of this body led to the formation of the Post Graduate Foundation in Veterinary Science of the University of Sydney in 1965. The Foundation was formed under the authority of the Senate of the University of Sydney and is governed by a Council elected by the Members of the Foundation. It was established to fund continuing education for the profession and over time the activities have been expanded to cover a range of different services.

The initiatives of 40 years ago established the world's first and leading organisation dedicated to postgraduate veterinary education. Its earliest activity was the organisation of regular refresher courses of 2 to 5 days duration. In the first year 2 such courses were held. In 1996, 68 courses were held, in 1997, 94 courses were held and in 1998, it was 102. There has been comparable growth in our other activities covering publishing, technical information search and dissemination, and distance education.

From its inception the Post Graduate Foundation has enjoyed the support and participation in its activities of our colleagues in New Zealand. Veterinarians from many countries around the world now use the Foundation as a resource and many overseas veterinarians attend our courses. With the expansion of veterinary practice and the new technology in communications we are looking forward to increasing involvement in fulfilling the continuing education requirements of veterinarians everywhere.



The first veterinary director of the Post Graduate Foundation was Dr T G Hungerford OBE BVSc FACVSc HAD Fellow of the University of Sydney. As Director of the Post Graduate Committee and Post Graduate Foundation he led the profession with great distinction for many years. During this time he was responsible for expanding the practical application of veterinary science within the community through his encouragement to veterinarians to embrace all aspects of animal health and production in keeping with their training.

Throughout his professional life Tom Hungerford has received many honours. The Queen made him an Officer of the Order of the British Empire, the University of Sydney conferred on him an Honorary Fellowship of the University and the profession continues to honour him even in his retirement. In 1998, The Australian College of Veterinary Scientists honoured Dr Hungerford with an [oration](#) which was delivered by Dr Douglas Bryden. All who know Tom Hungerford, and especially those who have been fortunate enough to work with him, hold a warm affection for him and the Post Graduate Foundation honours him each year with the T G Hungerford Award for Excellence in Post Graduate Education and with the naming of one course every year for him.



In 1987 this talented and dynamic visionary was succeeded by [Dr Douglas Bryden BVSc MACVSc](#). Dr Bryden conducted a mixed practice in Tamworth, NSW for many years. He was as founding member and the first Chairman of the Cattle Chapter and was President of the Australian College of Veterinary Scientists in 1987/88 and has published on the subject of cattle medicine. In 1994 he was awarded the Gilruth Prize, the highest honour of the AVA. Dr Douglas Bryden left the Foundation at the end of March 2000 to enjoy a well earned retirement.

Dr Bryden was appointed a [Member \(AM\) of the Order of Australia](#) in recognition of his work in veterinary science, particularly in the fields of continuing education and clinical practice.



In April 2000 Dr Bill Howey took up his appointment as Director. His strong background in veterinary practice and education proved invaluable for the needs of the PGF. Bill, at the time of his appointment was no stranger to the Foundation. He had served as Veterinary Consultant to the Foundation since 1996 and as Associate Director for the best part of 1999. As Consultant he was involved in producing over 80 'TimeOut' Seminars throughout Australia attended by over 1,000 veterinary delegates. He was also closely

involved with the planning and delivery of some major courses, specifically in the equine domain. Bill earned the respect and admiration of the Post Graduate Foundation Team working with him and brought veterinarians the very best programs for their continuing education needs during his term of office.

Bill's fine sense of equity, his openness and kindness have contributed a lasting legacy to the Foundation, continuing the tradition of its core purpose which is to support the members of the veterinary community through the provision of the best quality continuing education.



Dr Michele Cotton

In May 2002 Dr Michele Cotton, formerly in the role of Associate Director for the Post Graduate Foundation, was asked to step into Bill's position whilst he was away on leave and continued to act as Director of the Post Graduate Foundation after Bill's resignation in August 2002. In December 2003 Michele was offered the position of Director of the Post Graduate Foundation.

Michele comes with an extensive career in veterinary practice which has encompassed both large and small animal veterinary medicine and surgery, as well as zoo animals, wildlife, teaching and research. Having been a solitary practitioner for most of her professional career and a grateful recipient of the support that the Post Graduate Foundation has provided over that time she is well aware of its importance to veterinarians in all corners of the world. It is with great pleasure she strives to act as guardian of the directorship and to continue the work of the Post Graduate Foundation, so thoughtfully established over 40 years ago.

Michele Cotton was the first female undergraduate veterinary student to 'see practice' in Scone. It was widely rumoured she was personally 'hand picked' by Murray! Michele succeeded the author as the fourth Director of the PGFVS of the University of Sydney continuing the remarkable intimate association with the Scone practice





Michele Cotton and Dr. Dave Warden at Sydney University  
Dr. Dave Warden was the unsuspecting – but highly successful – ‘substitute’ veterinarian  
who achieved phenomenal success with a dairy cow on Christmas Eve!  
Dr. Warden has a 100% record with ‘Milk Fever’. Not many veterinarians can claim that!



‘Hogmanay’

‘Ode to a Haggis’

Robert Burns



R. T. Mackay and A. M. Bain at ‘Tinagroo’ 31 /12/69  
Both were returned men from WWII in North Africa and Palestine  
Murray is addressing the ‘Haggis’

Fair fa’ your honest, sonsie face,  
Great chieftain o’ the puddin’ race!  
Aboon them a’ ye tak your place,  
Painch, tripe, or thairm:  
Weel are ye wordy of a grace  
As lang’s my arm.

‘Hogmanay’ celebrations at the Mackay’s of ‘Tinagroo’ were legendary and arguably the absolute apogee of the annual social calendar certainly as far as Calvin and John Knox adherents were concerned! It was worthwhile ‘saving the best ‘till last’ and in true Scots tradition you don’t have to pay until the very end! The Bob Mackay and the Murray Bain families were ‘on the best of terms’! They shared a common consuming inherited and/or inculcated passion for all things remotely heritage Scots!

The billiard room at 'Tinagroo' was widely and justly regarded as the Number One private entertainment venue in the Upper Hunter. This was especially so when salubriously suffused with the warmest Ponty and Bob Mackay hospitality and richly embellished by Murray Bain's special brand of 'Atholl Brose'! Formal Scots dress 'uniform' was mandatory with the ladies in beautiful full flowing long white dresses suitably enhanced with tartan sash and men enriched in clan kilts. We do not know if the gentlemen were 'unencumbered' beneath their kilts! Perhaps the ladies did? All this was *très soignée*, extremely erudite and the epitome of eclectic bilateral cultural expression. The spacious dance floor in the billiard room provided ample theatre for Murray's proclivity to perform his best Nijinsky impersonation. I don't believe either the eponymous *ballet supreme* or Derby Winning Champion Sire possessed Size 13 shoes however!

Murray was indubitably the consummate party animal! He would snort derisively if pressured to leave early: 'As soon as the men start to enjoy themselves the women want to go home'! It wasn't always easy to extricate him from Tinagroo. Mace would telephone seeking his presence and he would retort: 'Tell her I'm in the Widden Valley'! On other occasions if he had been at the RSL Club Morag would meet him and very sweetly say: 'Mummy is not very pleased! I think you should say you've been in the Widden Valley'! On another occasion Murray arrived back at 'Chivers' to discover tiny daughter Fiona was being admonished by banishment to the back steps. Undaunted she was reciting repeatedly the three worst words she could summon: 'Dam! Bugger! Shit!' Murray did not have it in him to be angry! Fiona wins again!

There was also a very fine swimming pool at 'Tinagroo'. Yes, the inevitable did happen! The author was 'in the drink' as well as 'drink taken' although this was not the 'norm'! Ponty was distinctly 'not amused' in her very best Queen Victoria ersatz! This made it a notable double entendre for the author having made a comparable debut at St. Aubins in company with mine hostess Katherine McMullin!

## Anzac Day

Anzac Day was marked by similar celebrations.



Three generations on the front lawn at 'Tinagroo'  
Cardiff RSL Pipe Band on parade before the Patron  
Tam O'Shanter

Whiles glow'rin round wi' prudent cares,  
Lest bogles catch him unawares;  
Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,  
Where ghaists and houlets nightly cry.

Now, do thy speedy-utmost, Meg,  
And win the key-stone o' the brig;  
There, at them thou thy tail may toss,  
A running stream they dare na cross.

Sadly one Anzac Day 'Black Douglas' of the Cardiff RSL Pipe Band failed to negotiate the harrowing twists, turns and gullies of Thompson's Creek Track when beating a retreat from 'Tinagroo' to Newcastle. The 'ghaists, houlets, warlocks and witches' secreted in Murray's lethal 'Atholl Brose' mix may have got to him and his 'Holden' version of sturdy Meg before the creek! Happily the whole contingent was inured to pain and no one was seriously hurt!

How do I know all this? As a 'Sassenach' I married Sarah Mackay of 'Tinagroo' the day after Anzac Day in 1975. Fiona Bain was our bridesmaid with Ian Robertson of Cardiff RSL Pipe Band the obligatory lone piper!



What's a bloody Sassenach doing in a skirt!  
The author 'in drag' addressing 'Scone Scots' at the Scone Bowling Club  
Bit of a worry?

#### Boating at Lake Glenbawn

With the filling of Lake Glenbawn as a dam on the Hunter River week end boating and sports such as water skiing were very 'vogue' with the Scone and Upper Hunter communities in the 1950's and 1960's. Families would often combine resources and water sport in summer activities succeeded the winter passion for Polo. Some individuals became very adept at some disciplines and even attained representative status.

The Bain and 'Rossgole' Bragg families were no exception and the joint venture 'team boat' was moored in dry dock at 'Chivers'. They would be joined by the Belltrees Whites, Dunwell Archibalds and Tinagroo Mackays for a week end of hilarious 'cavorting on water'. The addition of the juvenile offspring from the fecund families added another dimension of fun! The Darrell McInnes and Col McRea families were also similarly addicted and would provide an element of competition on most summer Sundays.



Arthur Bragg

Murray Bain and Arthur Bragg were firm friends. Although Murray enjoyed great success in breeding and/or racing notable thoroughbreds such as 'Tod Maid', 'Obelia', 'Little Gum Nut' and notably 'Dark Eclipse' the Bain/Bragg/Howey syndicate were conspicuously less successful with 'Blossom Lady' and 'Camomile'!



St. Andrews Race Meeting

*The Joint Committee of the Scone Race Club and the Scone Scots  
would welcome the pleasure of the company of*

*at a*

LUNCHEON

*to celebrate the occasion of the*

INAUGURAL ST. ANDREWS RACE DAY

*which will be held on Saturday, 1st December  
at the new White Park Racecourse, Scone*

*Luncheon at the Scone Golf Club, 12 p.m. sharp  
preceded by "Athol Brose" at 11.30 a.m.*

*R. L. V. P.  
16-11-73*

*Please Return  
Card Enclosed*

Social Cachet! The Invitation to the St Andrews Race Day Lunch  
You can fill it in - in favour of yourself!

I am indebted to Bert Lillye for the following dissertation on the inaugural St. Andrews Day Race Meeting in 1973 only three months before Murray passed away.

The Sydney Morning Herald, November 1973  
Written by Australia's leading Racing Journalist Bert Lillye

**"The racing world owes Murray Bain a favour ....."**

The bright eyed Scot was the driving force behind the Summer Cup Meeting. Jimminy Cricket, in a quaint outburst of Disney doggerel, figured that the universe was in hock to him for a living which is a trite piece of logic and strictly from the realms of Fantasyland. But to my mind, there is no doubt that the racing world owes Murray Bain a favour which is why everyone with an interest in NSW's thoroughbred breeding industry should do his best to be at Scone on Saturday. The attraction is the inaugural St. Andrew's race meeting which is being staged by joint committees of the Scone Race Club and the Scone Scots. The driving force behind the novel race meeting is Murray Bain, a bright-eyed Scot whose veterinary genius has won renown for the Hunter Valley as a nursery of the thoroughbred.

## Dream of a Scot's Day

For years Murray has dreamed of a Scot's Day on White Park racecourse which he loves so much. On Saturday his dream will be realized when every Scot in the district will go racing clad in the kilts of his homeland. There will be a pipe and drum band from Newcastle\*; the winning owner of each race will receive a half-gallon flagon of Dewar's whisky, and the horse will be decorated with a tartan sash. Similar awards will be made to the successful trainer and jockey of the day. The feature race, the John Dewar Whisky Cup (1400m) is worth \$1,750 in stakes but its real attraction is a magnificent trophy .... a silver statuette of a kilted highlander. Other races on the program include the Armstrong Flying (\$1,000 – 1000m); Charles David Country Stakes (\$1,000 – 1800m); Caledonian Improvers' Handicap (\$750 – 1000m); Scottish Improvers' Handicap (\$750 – 1000m); and the Moncrieff Maiden Handicap (\$750 – 1200m). The meeting next Saturday will be run on the new course proper which is sorely needed in Scone. Thanks to a gift of land from Sir Alister McMullin\*\*, there is now a 1400 metre chute which has eliminated the former hazardous "saucer" track. Other improvements include an aluminium running rail and banked turns into and out of the straight.

Murray Bain, a committeeman of the Scone Race Club, played a leading role in the improvements of the track, but that is not the reason why everyone is working hard to ensure St. Andrew's Day is Scone's most memorable race meeting. Their purpose is to say "thank you" to Murray Bain, who has worked tirelessly for the past twenty odd years to assist Hunter Valley breeders and cattlemen in their times of trouble.

Mr. Bain, now in his late fifties, is a graduate of Scotland's Royal (Dick) Veterinary College. In World War II he served in the British Cavalry first as a trooper, then in the Veterinary Corps. "We were Hitler's secret weapon," recalled Murray with a laugh. After his discharge Murray went to work on the famous Claiborne Farm in Kentucky. From there he went to New Zealand where he managed Sir James Fletcher's Alton Lodge Stud for three years. He was still in charge of Alton Lodge when he made his visit to Australia, traveling to Scone to inspect the thoroughbred breeding set-up compared to the New Zealand way. He was amazed to find that there was no resident veterinary surgeon resident in Scone, which is the hub of the Hunter Valley breeding industry. Mr. Bain went back to New Zealand, resigned from Alton Lodge, and set up practice in Scone in September, 1950. He has been there ever since, extending the practice to its present status of being one of the most efficient in the world. Which means that for 23 years Murray Bain has been at the beck and call, night and day, of every horse breeder and cattleman in and around the Hunter Valley.

The stories of his wonderful veterinary deeds are legion, but Jim Gibson, the manager of Kia-Ora Stud, instanced a typical testimonial to Murray Bain's veterinary skill. Back in 1965 (at Woodlands Stud), Murray Bain saved Regal Peace when Jim Gibson thought the mare was dead. Jim Gibson recalled the story:

“Regal Peace stopped breathing while she was under anaesthetic and, to all intents and purposes, she was dead. Murray worked feverishly to give Regal Peace artificial respiration, how he revived her I’ll never know....it was long after midnight and Murray worked non-stop for at least two hours before he got her to her feet, confident the mare would live.”

There is not a studmaster in the Hunter Valley who has not got a similar story to tell about Murray Bain’s devotion and dedication to the thoroughbred. Naturally there have been some wonderful rewards for his expert horsemanship. Such as the mare Ragged Blossom, who was given to Mr. Bain by Jim White when he despaired of breeding from her. Ragged Blossom won only one small race at Tamworth and earned a total of fifty eight pounds and fifteen shillings [= \$117:50] in her 13 starts. She missed in her first three matings, but then Murray Bain developed his “gift” mare into one of the Stud Book’s great bonanzas. But there is an air of sadness over Scone at the present time because Murray Bain is suffering from a serious illness. Which is why everyone plans to make St. Andrews Race Meeting a memorable race meeting. All that remains to make the day complete was for Murray Bain to be well enough to “go on parade” in his blue and green kilt of the Mackay clan. And his fortune toasted in a magical Scotch potion known as Athol Brose. Good on you Murray.

I felt it justified to add this article written by Bert Lillye, a man whose passion for racing in Scone was probably only rivaled by the man it was written about, Murray Bain. Murray Bain passed away on March 18, 1974, farewelled by these words spoken by the then Scone Race Club President, Mr. John Kelso, “Murray’s passing has robbed the Club of its greatest champion and to everyone a great friend.”

\* Murray was patron of the City of Newcastle Pipe Band

\*\* Murray and Mace Bain also ‘donated’ a portion of a ‘Chivers’ back paddock adjacent to White Park

Footnote:

Unfortunately Murray was not well enough to attend ‘his’ race meeting but club stalwart Arthur Banks recorded a special audio tape for his special consumption at home. The inaugural meeting was an unqualified triumph. The St. Andrew’s Race Meeting endured successfully for several years as a special day on the local racing calendar imbued with its own unique flavour. Ultimately a rather extravagant display by the then Drum Major of the City of Newcastle Pipe Band led to its demise! On a very hot late November day the ‘leader of the pack’ imbibed an excess of Athol Brose. Mixed with copious quantities of ‘Toohey’s Special’ this constituted a potentially lethal bolus and the inevitable brawl ensued. While scrabbling on the dusty ground in undignified fashion for a potentate ‘Black Watch kilted highlander’ it became abundantly apparent to all and sundry this manly warrior-bold left his ‘gruesome’ but impressive capacity for reproduction ‘unencumbered’ by worthless underwear! Mace Bain as an immediately adjacent witness was absolutely mortified! No more St. Andrews Day Races after that!



The author and Mrs. Bill Rose at the inaugural St. Andrews Day Race Meeting 1973





St. Andrews Day Race Meeting December 1974  
'Murray Bain Memorial Trophy' presented by the author  
Arthur Banks and David Macintyre in attendance  
Members of the Cardiff RSL Pipe Band - Drum Major Mort Holme on left



Scone Race Club President John Kelso and Vice-President Bill Howey congratulate Betty Shepherd, owner and trainer of 'Titaria' who won the Murray Bain Memorial Cup



## Unreliable Anecdotes

This is just as it sounds but there is more than a grain of truth in every one! In some cases actual identities are mildly disguised! Many are 'dated' and composed when I was Director of the Post Graduate Foundation In Veterinary Science at the University of Sydney.

'A Fortunate Life'

Or

'The Decline and Fall'

Here he goes again: 'Bipolar Bill' pontificating and waxing lyrical about life, limb and libido! It's amazing from where motivation can spring! I so annoyed my two children with my trade-mark aphorism:

"Just as necessity is the mother of invention  
So is motivation the precursor of achievement"

It's been consigned to the 'scrap heap' until now! They have both now safely 'flown the nest' and are embarking on nascent careers in Corporate Law (Filly) and Corporate Accounting (Colt) following admirable primary, secondary and tertiary achievement in each case. They will be greatly relieved not to be reading this! I contemplate reflectively their emergence into the professional sphere(s) had more to do with 'motive' than with 'need' compared to my own? No polemic hard feelings there it's just times, places and opportunities (or lack of) were very different between generations. I confidently anticipate neither will persevere for ever on their initial paths. My son is ideological and inclined to teaching and the church. My daughter is more pragmatic and currently leans towards anarchy, mayhem and nihilism! I believe she may mellow and mollify in time! I told her in order to bring about effective change in society one has to gain access to the corridors of power! She just might do it if determination counts for anything!

I've just secured a second *déjà vu* diagnosis of bipolar mood disorder as opposed to 'unipolar'. I rather suspect the consulting psychiatrist gave 'Bipolar Bill' a bipolar bill for the consult! Perhaps it might be cheaper to be one thing at a time in future? This revelation may come as no surprise to any of you? It certainly didn't shock me as it's the second time around in approximately twenty years of fluctuating vicissitudes on the roller coaster of life. I seem to share the experience with an inordinately large number of fellow travelers many of whom are aligned in one of my professions?

In recent times I have entertained ongoing dialogue with a colleague from the Riverina who has struggled of late with life and society's exigencies. He wrote me two highly intuitive and percipient accounts of his deliberations on the health status of our profession and where we fit in the communities we serve. It is soul searching stuff! I include one of them entitled 'Mental Health & Mental Illness' for your consideration with this message.

I feel I can speak objectively and with some authority as one with experience on both counts. I used to treat such claims with disdain! 'This could never happen to me'! 'It's just weakness and an excuse anyway'! Sound familiar? Many years our great advocate and mentor TGH told me: "If you can't stand the heat get out of the kitchen"! I'm proud to say I'm still in the kitchen stoking the fires Tom! Another of my formative instructors (AMB) using a reproductive context background also told me: "There's only so much in the well". Do we go to the well too often? Will the well run dry? For those of you with drought management experience I think I can accurately anticipate your answer! Reflecting after almost forty years of my own efforts I think the 'drought well' analogy is fair. Have we allowed enough time for replenishment after each successive 'dipping'?

Solipsism? What does this mean to you if anything? Are we too, too selfish, narcissistic, egoistic and self centred in our own deliberations and considerations? Is self aggrandizement the holy grail of a modern democratic society? Is a sensitive new age society the apogee pinnacle of a highly developed culture and consumer driven humanity?

As usual I find inspiration from those I consider quite the reverse of 'solipsistic self'. Two such people are A. B. Facey ("A Fortunate Life") and Billy Connolly ('Billy') as depicted in their autobiography and biography respectively. Both emerged triumphantly from 'jungles', one rural and one urban, embracing all aspects of desertion, neglect, abuse, horror and excessive trauma. I vividly remember with some residual chagrin visits to parts of Billy's Glasgow domain as a young man! Remarkably neither considered himself 'unfortunate'. Each ultimately discovered solace, consolation and fulfillment in the love of a beautiful woman.

This reminds me of a portion of a letter written by my friend in the Riverina to the Editor of his local paper following a macabre murder in the town:

*"The question arises have we progressed in 2000 years? It would appear not. In his epic historical study of the collapse of the Roman Empire, Edward Gibbons identifies five reasons. These are:*

- 1. The breakdown of the family structure*
- 2. The weakening of a sense of individual responsibility*
- 3. Excessive taxes and government control and intervention*
- 4. Seeking pleasures that become increasingly hedonistic, violent and immoral*
- 5. The decline of religion*

*Not even considering the last four factors but the first demonstrates the depth of the problem within society with a relationship breakdown rate approaching 50%. It is well known that stress not only affects thought processes but emotions. It is also a fact that a "problem shared is a problem halved" and this requires an effective knowledge of self and effective communication skills. Communication skills are acquired by the age of five from within the family of origin and not at school. The World Health Organization identifies family breakdown as a major causal factor in mental health problems.*

*The problems of our society will only deepen and become more prevalent whilst ever simplistic thinking predominates and real issues are avoided. Many changes are required in the awareness of all individuals if our society is to survive and people to live fulfilling and satisfying lives”.*

Contemplation drags me back to consider one of the most profound and poignant declarations of love ever penned in the English language (in my opinion!):

*“The following year my wife became very ill and she was sent to hospital several times, for weeks at a time. I engaged several different doctors but she never got much better. She seemed to get worse as the years went by and she had several blackouts. Then, on the eighth of July 1976, she became unconscious and stayed in that state until the third of August 1976. She died at seven o’clock at night in my arms. We had been married for fifty-nine years, eleven months and twelve days. So on this day the loveliest and most beautiful woman left me.*

*Evelyn changed my life. I have had two lives, miles apart. Before we married I was on my own. It was a lonely, solitary life – Evelyn changed that. After our marriage my life became something which was much more than just me”.* A. B. Facey.

Thank you Albert! *‘Much more than just me!’* Every time I read (and think) of this tears well in my eyes just as they did in Debbi’s as I read it out just now! You are the most unselfish of men and richly deserved your ‘fortunate life’ after starting in the work force at eight! You make me feel very humble and exceedingly privileged!

After two years at the helm of the PGFVS I have discovered many responses I elicit appear to be couched in terms of ‘I don’t agree/that doesn’t agree with that point of view/culture/religion so how can you promulgate it’. I confess this disturbs me! As I have written before I do not profess to be the ‘censor’ or ‘editor’ of collegiate veterinary opinion but rather promulgate free press expression of the full range of views as espoused and defended by Voltaire et al! Sir Gustav Nossal, Director of the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research recently cited ignorance, poverty and cultural isolation as sowing the seeds of hatred, instability and zealotry. At the same SU Vice-Chancellors’ Distinguished Lecture forum Lord May suggested greater openness between science and society, more consultation and exploration of the questions raised by ordinary people to elucidate the problems of a ‘more complicated tomorrow’. Giving the Templeton Lecture Lord May, President of the Royal Society openly advocated deliberately seeking out ‘dissenting voices’. By listening to dissent can we arrest the ‘decline and fall’ and live fulfilling ‘fortunate lives’?

W. P. Howey  
Director

## “Breakfast at Harry’s”

Harry was legendary! He enjoyed the good life but only because he invested in it what he hoped to receive with interest in return. He made adequate preparation by working 25 hours per day then take some time to celebrate the effort. Racing and breeding were his enduring passion(s) after his primary interests of cattle raising, grazing and the meat industry. He was rightfully honoured by the State for his highly significant contribution to community and sporting affairs.

Gelding a few colts was arranged for the cool of an early summer morning for 6am at Lufton Park. Murray had pre-arranged with great mate Jim from Woodlands to assist with handling the fine young thoroughbreds. First Harry had to ‘shout’ breakfast. Two large bottles of Resch’s DA plus rum chasers accompanied the 1kg best-marbled HV beef steak! Suitably fortified the castrations were a breeze! Not many years later I survived a not-so-well orchestrated gelding operation at Harry’s. Wal was diligent but not the world’s best horseman. The unbroken colt was at the top yards with a stiff breeze blowing. Wal and I made preparation for a standing castration. Remarkably everything was proceeding according to plan despite the less-than-perfect situation. Shortly after I made the incision and crunched off the right spermatic cord I became vaguely aware of a subdued ‘clunk’ behind me. To quote cricket commentator Jim Maxwell Wal was ‘base over apex’ and out like a light! The semi-colt just stood there with twitch still applied and I furtively and hurriedly completed the process. Not a method of restraint I recommend! Both Wal and the ex-colt recovered uneventfully with Wal perhaps the worst for wear!

On another occasion I was gelding a colt ‘standing’ and doing my level best to show off to the beautiful young ingenue veterinary student assistant later to achieve scientific and social prominence. My performance was not helped by the fact it was Scone Thoroughbred Week and celebrations were excessive. I had just completed half the operation when a green head ant attempted the same procedure on myself! Modesty was not an issue! It was immediate strides down and a search and destroy mission! Luckily I swiftly identified the culprit. Ultimately I was more successful than my insect competitor because I completed the operation. I don’t think my companion was too impressed with what she saw however!

It was a privilege to travel with Harry to Newcastle to the meetings of the Hunter and Central Coast Racing Association. Harry had cultivated many mates through his long patronage and as Committeeman of the Newcastle Jockey Club. It was an education to observe racing politics in process through the aegis of Roy, Stiffy, Harry et al. Harry, John and Lionel set off one day for Broadmeadow with the former two full of expectation for their respective charges. There was much discussion about certainty of victory and the dimension of the bets to be placed rather than the ‘improbability’ of success! Lionel stayed mute. The return journey was a long subdued one with Harry and John commiserating on misfortune and missed opportunity. Lionel had won the last race! “Why didn’t you tell us about your horse Lionel?” chimed H and J. “You didn’t ask me” said Lionel! On another occasion Harry and I emerged at 6pm following lunch at Danilo’s in Hamilton. “I’ll toss you for the keys” said Harry! I lost! We made it back to

Scone in Harry's 6.8 litre Mercedes with time to spare! Thank goodness for the deterrent of RBT today! Harry's other preferred mode of travel was a 'Roller' but I never enjoyed the exhilaration!

W. P. Howey



## “Free Services” & Entrepreneurial Spirit

When you live and work intimately with the fraternity that is the thoroughbred breeding industry in the Upper Hunter Valley you very soon begin to realise the entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well! This is never more apparent than in the clandestine acquisition of a ‘free service’ to desirable but expensive and closely guarded male TB genetic material! There were at least three such instances I was made aware but did not witness in my early days at Scone. All involved daring and carefully executed plans for success skillfully and intuitively hatched by their protagonists, the extremely resourceful ‘bush’ equivalent of the euphemistic urban ‘colourful racing identities’.

My great friend from Denman, the ‘Ayatollah Kerrabee’ alerted me to the first and perhaps most imaginative ingenious scheme. ‘Digger’ Edmonds was temporary night watchman at a property at the ‘never never’ end of the famed Widden Valley. Digger had a long, varied and illustrious career as a stockman, horseman, trainer and indomitable rodeo rider. His many mates included RMW, Lance Skuthorpe and Basil Gollan. He possessed a finely honed acumen and perspicacious acuity for accumulation of grazing cattle with a cavalier attitude towards their true ownership. ‘Cattle borrowing’ was an extension sport designed to test the acquisition and distribution skills of its proponents extant in the Valley since ‘Starlight’ days. Similarly Digger was quite nonchalant about the precise identity of his racing thoroughbreds on any particular day although one suspects he knew exactly himself and merely enjoyed testing the steward’s resolve and teasing bookmaker’s resources? He once told me the best maiden he ever had won no less than eight races! It was rumoured he enjoyed involuntary holidays at ‘her majesty’s pleasure’ consequent to exposure of serial recidivism by authority and disagreement in principle over some of these escapades.

Digger had a mare in season but did not fancy any of the resident stallions on his home stud. Like many others he was a great admirer of the iconic ‘Star Kingdom’ just down the valley. He had a problem. Nominations to Star Kingdom were like proverbial ‘hen’s teeth’ and far too expensive to boot! Also the ruling Stud Master was a sworn and bitter enemy of Digger’s and the sentiment was mutual and reciprocal! The solution was a simple one as far as Digger was concerned. He mounted up and rode his mare on the ‘other side’ of Widden Creek along a path possibly negotiated earlier by erstwhile ‘Terrible Hollow’ resident Harry Readford (‘Captain Starlight’). Star Kingdom must have been as surprised as he was bemused and excited to ‘accommodate’ a matron at the unusual hour of 2am! All this took place well within a bull’s roar of the homestead and resident stud groom. The ruse was not detected! Patrons of the Sandy Hollow and Denman hostelrys reveled in the tale for many a long day and night!

Everyone in the thoroughbred breeding industry was surprised when Ronald Frederick Marshall decided to import a stallion. His boutique private stud near Muswellbrook had enjoyed enormous commercial success in retaining a highly selective band of brood mares with the eclectic blood of the very best stallions coursing through their veins. Ron was a master of selection with exquisite attention to every detail. A horseman from the old school he was born and bred on the land into a family steeped in the rich traditions of

the country. This made him a superb judge of stock and stockmen. He brought with him the loyal and trusted 'old Jack' from the North West of the State. His newly acquired much younger stallion groom Brian was most enthusiastic and quite thrilled at the prestige of leading some of the most highly priced yearlings through the Inglis's sale ring at Newmarket. As a relative newcomer he was also trying ultra hard to establish his credentials in Muswellbrook society and the local race club in particular. He made friends with Bob Miller who in addition to many other pursuits ran a delivery service to rural properties allowing scope for reconnoitering possible lucrative ventures, tainted or otherwise. Bob was a highly resourceful local identity with a passion for racing and a reputation for 'inventiveness' with personal fund raising activities including dismantling and selling the spare parts of an aeroplane! Brian and Bob were 'buddies' on the race club and formed a partnership to expand the 'book' of the new stallion perhaps without owner Ron's consent or 'old Jack's' knowledge? Bob also harboured aspirations of ascent in the surreal world of thoroughbred racing and breeding. He 'acquired' a few mares. Brian managed a stallion's activities. In the Muswellbrook Bowling Club 'old Jack' recounted arcane stories of intrepid 'moonlight' visits by a certain horse float from Muswellbrook at ungodly hours throughout the season! Interesting concept?

Henry Cullen was another peripatetic horseman of the preceding generation whose perambulations had taken him throughout every state and territory. His defensive inclination was to keep moving to avoid confrontation on fiscal and romantic matters whenever the 'heat was turned up'! Henry was employed by a local Scone stud master with a surname suggesting other than alignment with the Christian faith. Henry also had a mare but very few other resources. A very fine imported coal black Irish thoroughbred stallion occupied a yard and box not 20 metres from Henry's abode! Henry was leading his mare about at midnight on one occasion when accosted by the ever vigilant stud master who tried to claim the \$3000:00 service fee! Henry's instant response was he would have chosen the cheaper grey horse with the French name in any event! Henry moved on of course! Purely by chance several years later my taxi driver in Sydney turned out to be Henry Cullen! Much to my disappointment and probably more so to his he informed me his mare failed to produce the next year! Ah well, nice try Henry! Better luck next time!

With equal chagrin well down the track I was disillusioned to discover Digger's mare had not produced either! I rather suspect however Bob and Brian were more successful relying less on chance and more on increased opportunity to succeed. It must have been disenchanting for them nonetheless when Ron's new stallion turned out to be a 'dud'! By time of discovery Brian had left literally 'with the neighbour's wife' only to be hospitalised as a result of a serious car crash in beating a hasty retreat on the dirt Wolombi track! The best laid plans of mice and men are come to naught! Interesting times though?

W. P. Howey

## ‘Hazardous Journeys’

Life could be arduous at times in Scone and even short journeys could be hazardous depending on the time of day – or night – and the load aboard in the ‘bad old days’!

There used to be a well established Iron Bark tree on the centre strip at the corner of Guernsey and Kingdon Streets. This was a short walk from White Park and not far from the RSL Club. Unfortunately – for the tree – it was also in the path of (name deleted) attempting to negotiate a route from the Polo Club Party at the Golf Club to the ‘Hole in the Wall’. It was 3:30 am on a very cold July night and an aeroplane could not have flown there was so much ice on the windscreen. Alas and perhaps inevitably the car and tree collided! Much to the consternation of the neighbourhood that was only the beginning! The car was ‘parked’ half way up the tree with the horn blaring at full pitch! Lights started to come on around town rather like in the old advertisement for the ‘Flintstones’ series. This required quick thinking and quicker action! Climbing up a slippery bonnet and dismantling an errant and faulty car horn is not easy especially just as a police car is turning into Guernsey Street from Liverpool Street! It’s not far along the railway track to the sanctity of the ‘Hole in the Wall’ however. A quick telephone call to Geoff Cooper of Superior Panel Beaters at 7:00 am cleaned up the mess. It’s a very unconventional and extremely expensive method of ringbarking a tree and definately not recommended!

The railway crossing on Liverpool Street could also pose some problems especially for the unsuspecting late at night! Mrs. Crump used to live in the stone cottage by the crossing and it was her job to open and close the gates manually whenever a train was expected. After a very hard days’ night in Merriwa following a Rugby match one was almost home only to find the gates shut at 3 am ending the arrival of the NW Mail. Luckily Lester Rose used to go to work at his Supermarket very early in those days. It’s a very strange feeling to awaken in a car with engine running at 4:30 am in the middle of Liverpool Street with the railway gates open and no train in sight! After all it wasn’t Mrs. Crumps’ job to move the cars! Again this is not a recommended method or place of abode even for a short stay!

Tragically there was another tale of a ‘second coming’ when a ‘car borrower’ was not so lucky! Bill and Stan were putting away a few late ones following the weekly Tuesday boozers celebration at the ‘Belmore’. Stan was not on police duty that night which was fortuitous. Bill decided to leave ‘early’ at about 10 pm. There was mild consternation initially as he was unable to locate his car behind the pub. This was not unusual as confusion and hazy memories often reigned supreme at this time. Not being in the habit of locking one’s car it was not unknown for ‘friends’ to borrow a vehicle and park it somewhere else! After a little bit of lateral thinking it was concluded Bill’s car really had been purloined! Bill made his way quickly to the police station where Sergeant Graham Noble was in charge. He looked mildly shocked when Bill walked in. ‘I’ve just had a report you’ve been killed in a road accident’ intoned the indefatigable Sgt. Noble. It was at this very moment ashen faced solicitor Graham Hooke raced into the station. He

looked like he'd seen a ghost and thought he had! He'd also heard the grim 'news'! Luckily Bill was mildly 'tranquillized' at this stage and the reality had yet to bite!

The 'mystery' then began to unfold. Sadly there was a fatal road accident near Willowtree and Bill's distinctive two-tone Holden was involved. A wiseacre truck driver from Muswellbrook had witnessed the tragedy and assuredly identified the deceased as definitely 'the young pommy vet from Scone'. He delivered his (uncontested) opinion to a meeting in Murrurundi attended by Bill Perkins among others. With startling rapidity and within one hour the 'news' had spread throughout the valley. Graham Noble had evidence to the contrary and Graham Hooke was able to confirm the truth. It is to the credit of the police they never accept *ad hoc* evidence and pursue a well defined course of investigation. Even more remarkable was the fact the late recidivist was a young man of indigenous extraction from the Breeza Plains – hardly to be confused with a florid faced 'anglo-celt'?

My car was retrieved from the debacle and repaired by the insurance company. I never did feel at ease in it after that and always locked it up whenever left unattended. Some lessons come the hard way!

One other hazardous journey was made by Warren [*aka* 'Vulgorilla'] and Bill following the TB testing of a large herd of cattle on the Barrington Tops. It was necessary to stop first at the Victoria Arms in Moonan Flat and then to Jack Kellett's famed 'Linga Longa Inn' at Gundy. Warren was well primed by this time and was asked to pass an opinion on the 'bar cat'. The only consulting space available was the bar itself and the diagnosis made was 'definitely male'! The following sequence was almost inevitable in the prevailing circumstances! An operation was performed on the unsuspecting cat with the enthralled bar audience in close proximity. Jack Kellett used to contribute a unique Gundy column each week to the 'Scone Advocate'. Guess what his leader was on this occasion? It really was dangerous to travel with Warren in such a mood!

W. P. Howey

## Horse Away!

It had been a hard day's night for Tom from Merriwa and his trusty steed 'Ginger'! The annual Scone Rodeo traditionally on the 'hot' last week end in October was a challenging event not to be missed. It had to be celebrated in true bucolic style by as much competitive and social interactivity as was humanly possible and then some! Tom and 'Ginger' were tenacious combatants of the old school and had successfully completed another furious round of camp drafting and 'pick up'. It was very thirsty work of course and it was essential to immediately replenish depleted fluid reserves with gusto! 'Ginger' liked pure water and had his fill. Tom preferred a less pure brew but being a Sunday in the 'bad old days' his poison was much harder to procure. There is always a solution for the assiduously perspicacious bon vivant!

Norm and Becky kept a very congenial household at 13 Oxford Road. Having no immediate family of their own they were generous to a fault in 'adopting' and caring for a few surrogate 'bachelor' sons. Today was another of their special social Sunday soirees and the party was in full swing. No stranger to the odd scotch on his own account Norm had just completed a long innings at the Rodeo himself! Being in the agency game and holding the distribution rights for 'Scottish Cream' demand was never seriously challenged and supply rarely threatened! Bill R., Bill H. and Tom with 'Ginger' in tow made up the party just as the sun was setting over a long, hot and dusty early summer week end. It may have been the cold water but Ginger started showing warning signs of early 'gripes'. No problem! Bill H. was there and being a veterinarian must have had the solution to the problem. Initial consultation and treatment appeared to effect some relief and the early success of therapy was celebrated with another cold 'KB' or three. When 'Ginger' began to relapse and take a turn for the worse it was decided to instigate more drastic therapy. It may have been the gathering twilight or accelerating perspiration but at this stage 'Ginger' appeared to be changing colour from strong chestnut to 'KB' bay? One could have been mistaken of course!

Bill H. required further supplies from the veterinary pharmacy at the Grazcos establishment in Kelly Street and elected to drive the approximate 500 metres. It was not a wise decision! There was a small access lane way beside the building further impeded by the addition of an outside toilet added as an additional afterthought to the main construction. It was difficult to negotiate the alley at the best of times. This was not the 'best of times'! Bill H. managed to clip the near corner of the 'dunny' on his landing approach in the trusty 186 Holden. Max Brogan had been working back late that night anticipating a busy week for Grazcos. Attending to ablutions in the 'loo' just at this moment it was a tremulous and deathly ashen faced Max who emerged visibly shaken from the most cathartic experience of his life and the most definitive cure for constipation ever conceived!

Deciding Max would survive, fuelled and fortified by now with auxiliary supplies of the 'right' medicine, Bill hurried back to Oxford Road to resume his miracles. On opening the gate into the garden 'Ginger' saw the opportunity and made his break. As they say in the song 'never let a chance go by'! Ginger didn't! Deciding he'd endured enough



torment for one day he took off out the gate 'lickety split, helter skelter' up Oxford Road! 'Horse away' was the frantic and frenetic call!

Luckily he turned right! With Bill and Tom in very laboured, distant and hot pursuit 'Ginger' assumed he'd secured safe sanctuary within the close confines of the Catholic Convent at the end of Oxford Road! He could not have found a better place! It was a much relieved Tom who somewhat surreptitiously retrieved his faithful steed from the sacred precinct of the 'sanitarium'. We'll never know if it was the medicine, the threat, the flight or divine intervention but 'Ginger' fully recovered, rejoined the party at Norm and Becky's and a good time was had by all! It was very long time before Max Brogan deigned to enter the 'old loo' at Grazcos especially if he suspected Bill was imminently returning slightly hazy from a long stint in the Widden Valley!

W. P. Howey

## Jenny Taylor and the Semen Extender

Administration staff were wonderful but we sometimes failed to apprise them of the real meaning or scientific pronunciation of 'delicate' subjects. This was compounded by the fact all receptionists were female and many of them country style and delightfully *ingenue*. One senior gentleman grazier of the old school would only use the word 'alter' to request castration of a colt and certainly nothing so banal as geldor castrate!

It was not improbable therefore when occasional errors were made in 'interpretation' of instructions or implementation of directions! Jamie had been in a hurry as usual and there was an urgent request for an insurance examination and certificate for a very valuable stallion in the Widden Valley. The specific instruction was for the examination to pay particular attention to the reproductive anatomy ('genitalia') and this fact must be accurately stated on the certificate. Although always extremely thorough Jamie shared a common fault with many others in failing to complete paper work with due diligence and appropriate exactitude. He was therefore very happy to pass the draft certificate to Jackie who would fill the detail and facsimile the final document to Logan Livestock Insurance with 'specific attention to genitalia'. Jackie was sure she understood.

It was a very bemused Bob Logan who telephoned back some time later gratefully accepting the certificate but seeking to point out that no one with the name 'Jenny Taylor' actually worked there.....!

Sandie had just joined the eclectic team at 106 Liverpool Street and came to us from the beautiful but somewhat secluded Stewarts Brook. A stud hand from Segenhoe called in to collect some 'semen extender' for use on the stud. Sandie also thought she understood and was certainly unwilling to divulge any residual naivete having recently earned emancipation from the sequestered confines of the very Upper Hunter! Sandie had quietly and unobtrusively witnessed the massively impressive Cambridge Model Equine AV stored in the back shed. With admirable logic and commendable lateral thinking she deduced this must be the object of 'desire'. Fortunately Sandie was rescued from acute embarrassment just in time by Jeannie who was able to explain 'semen extender' was an adjunct to natural service of mares and prepared in the laboratory by Shona in discrete 200ml amounts! I would love to have been present if Sandie had managed to wrestle the AV to the front bench to present to the unsuspecting stud hand! Imagine the look on his face!

Tony Parker left an indelible mark on the practice many years earlier when he (correctly) labeled the semen extender container bottle: "Not to be taken"!

Ted Murphy

## Lay Diagnosis Therapy and Ultimate Carcass Disposal

Never ever underestimate the ingenuity and perspicacity of the layman! One of my closest friends in life has turned out to be a trainer of 'bog Irish' extraction a native born resident of the Upper Hunter. 'Cocky' inherited the sobriquet from his late father. His sire was patriarch of a large family in the best catholic tradition and reputedly ingenious in providing for his large brood through difficult times. He was a 'confidant' man capable of reinventing ruses in order to make a profit and also dabbled in as many trades and schemes. Clearly his youngest son inherited the finely tuned entrepreneurial acumen as well as bush logic, eye for a deal and subtle dry wit.

With characteristic irreverence redolent of his genotype it was Cocky who introduced me to 'Hub Capping' as well as many other extramural pursuits. 'Hub Capping' or 'SUM' (Social Upward Mobility) is defined colloquially as a person or 'hub cap' with a proclivity for 'hanging around the big wheels'! A stud master in the vicinity of Muswellbrook had earned Cocky's disdain for such activity. 'Hub Cap Jack' harboured AJC Committee aspirations and joined the ranks of the local professionals' residents on 'Snob Knob' and 'Pill Hill' in Cocky-speak vernacular. 'Tow Bar Harry' and 'Mud Flap Mick' were epithets to flow on naturally from the concept. There were lots of big barbecues around Muswellbrook but very few 'Hyacinth' candle-light suppers! Amazingly I have just heard of another 'Hubcap' who was a major big time polo player and unwittingly 'overheard' by a journalist at a swish Paddington restaurant expatiating at length on his social proximity to a major media magnate with a similar passion for polo!

Cocky tutored me early in the most sure fire 'bush cure' for abortion in mares I have heard of before or since. "Confection" was a mare by the icon 'Star Kingdom' acquired by his father and subsequently inherited by Cocky and elder siblings from their demised father's sundry estate. She resided on a property down Muscle Creek close to Fairways Stud. Her problem was not achieving pregnancy but maintaining it! Habitual abortion was her stock in trade. Cocky asked my advice and I delivered my ill prepared prolix on progesterone et al. I do not think he was swayed! A few weeks after my diatribe he informed me with great eclat he had discovered and implemented the 'perfect cure' for such serial misadventure. Intrigued I inquired into the circumstances and evidence of so proud a boast. He said she'd never do it again! How and why was my all too naïve ingenuous retort? On discovering yet another lost foal at age 18 years he decided enough was enough and to hurl injury after insult on the unsuspecting 'Confection'. He simply walked her up the gully and shot her! Problem solved! He was right! She'd never do it again! It was a very similar situation a few years later at Skellatar Park when the stable was not enjoying one of its better days! Cocky was just returning from his stables past the home turn only see one of his starters had pulled up in Race V 'with one leg 'swinging in the breeze'. There was a .22 in the back seat. Quick fire diagnosis and instant 'therapy'! Chief Steward Michael was not amused at the precipitous disposal especially as he had not yet had time to issue instructions to course veterinarian Gavin!

I never discovered a 'legitimate' 100% solution to the affliction myself possibly earning for me a place in posterity and lucrative returns. It may sound as if Cocky was dispassionate and uncaring or callous? He was not. He was pragmatic, sensitive and caring. He simply deplored unnecessary waist. Likewise the local stud master who peremptorily instructed me to perform euthanasia on two aged thoroughbred mares who had fulfilled their destiny. Despite the offer of \$500:00 cash in hand for each by 'Old Jacks' mate from Mungindi their fate was sealed. Better they meet with a dignified demise rather than languish in a so called euphemistic retirement 'drought' paddock with untended feet, teeth and feed or suffer the insult of salvage value termination at the 'doggers' behest! Perhaps that is why the stud master was able to maintain the most eclectic band of young commercial thoroughbred mares in the country? Well selected Sir!

Other HV horse industry notaries were equally adept at formulating 'quick fire' proactive response and reactive solutions to sticky situations! 'Curly' and 'Bluey' were legendary around the traps and racetracks of the locality! Aberdeen Jockey Club operated at Jefferson Park adjacent to the Hunter River. It was finally washed out in 1971 and relegated to the realms of history. A meeting in 1968 was in full swing until tarnished by a major track accident resulting in a very severely injured horse. Most country racehorses then were by 'Box 5 (Station Sire) ex Box 6 (Station Mare)', uninsured and worth 'dogger' price. Compound comminuted fracture of a forelimb was distinctly not pretty, terminal and not for salvage. Easy decision!

The major problem lay in carcass disposal. With Jefferson Park also host to golf, cricket, tennis and football as well as youth sport dead horses were not welcome! Race Clubs with very limited resources were also singularly unimpressed with worthless animals and possible incidental extra expenses. Local Council liked them less! No one backs a dead horse! Curly and Bluey were both residents of Aberdeen and well apprised of the local morale demography and topography. The back straight at Jefferson Park ran into a dip along the bank of the Hunter River then heavily in spate. This was just out of range and sight of the viewing public. I'm not admitting it happened but it is tempting isn't? I mean the pragmatic option as proposed by the inimitable Curly so that the carcass might very soon become Newcastle's problem!

Which reminds me of Stan's cure for twins! 'Lady C.' had produced two foals at a stud in the Denman district. For the uninitiated twins are highly undesirable in thoroughbred breeding and often an unmitigated disaster! I empathised with my mate over the 'double' misfortune. By time of yearling sales a designated twin is virtually valueless whereas a singleton will always retain residual worth and bring something. Stan was a dry dour droll Scot of very few words but much accrued wisdom. Like most of his ethnicity he thought of the future and kept a careful eye out for fiscal opportunity. Only he and I knew of the debacle. Imagine my surprise on routinely visiting the stud a day later in the presence of the owner of Lady C. There she was proudly disporting a very fine *single* colt by her side. On very careful surreptitious inquiry of Stan I naively asked him where was the other foal? 'Expletive deleted at Newcastle by now' was his explicit succinct and curt retort! It transpired as often happens one twin does not make it! One didn't! Destruction of available incriminating evidence became urgent and paramount with the 'boss' about.

The local creek was a tributary of the Hunter River and heavily in flood due to recent big rain in the catchment area. You guessed right! The dead foal ostensibly had a watery burial - or so I was told? Perhaps my ever reliable memory is fading?

W. P. Howey



## “Now You’ll Think I’m Awful”

The other HV legend at this time was ‘Trevors’. Betty was the first licensed female thoroughbred trainer in the country. She and hubby Archie enjoyed enormous success with the finely tuned Scone galloper. The ‘Chelmsford Stakes’ at Randwick was the first Group Race to be secured by an out-of-town trained performer. ‘Trevors’ and entourage set off for Melbourne with great expectations in the spring of 1966. ‘Trevors’ did not disappoint and finished a most credible fourth in an outstanding field for the Caulfield Cup headed by the great Galilee. As usual preparations had been minute and immaculate. There was a lot of publicity and media interest! Sue Rhodes of ‘Now You’ll Think I’m Awful’ fame was a high profile TV journalist and early feminist. Her depredation of Australian males as lovers in her seminal publication caused a national furore and Sue soon moved to Hollywood to marry iconic western actor Rory Colhoun.

Sue had been assigned by nascent Channel Nine to cover the story of Betty and ‘Trevors’. It can be uncomfortable when the media and TV cameras move too close. ‘Trevors’ had duly completed his final ‘hit out’ at Aberdeen with Betty as pilot resplendent in a tightly fitting figure hugging polo necked sweater. Trevors coughed softly! Archie froze! He recognised the early warning signs of ‘cranial epistaxis’. It had happened before but mum’s the word! With frantic haste Trevors was loaded on the float with Betty on the head to return directly to Scone. Just as the tail of the float was hoisted ‘Trevors’ blew his nostril to spray Betty’s immaculate yellow jumper polka dot scarlet! Sue Rhodes wanted one more ‘parting shot’! Not on your life! Minder ‘Wiffo’, Archie, Betty and ‘Trevors’ were off like bullet! No more questions asked!

‘Stipe’ Bob had taken a particular interest in Trevors’ preparation. He marveled at how he ‘delivered’ every time the price was right! It’s very simple of course as ‘you pick the best company for yourself and the worst for your horses’ and present a ‘super fit’ horse on the day. Just to make sure on any single occasion preparation included a minute snippet of ‘Jimmy’s tonic brew’ as a reminder. Conditioned reflex really just like ‘Vicks’ up the nose and electrode jelly on the neck. No need to carry unwarranted gear! Frank Sinatra had just popularised “There’s An Awful Lot Of Coffee in Brazil”. There was an unfounded rumour pharmacist Jimmy had also very successfully refined the active ingredient of coffee! Suffice it to say Trevors’ performance at Cessnock attracted Bob’s attention and he commanded a ‘swab’ be taken. Where the hell was the swabbing steward? He could not be found! Many years later a ‘cockatoo’ told me he was very happily locked in the ‘dunny’ with \$100:00 (50 pounds) in his kick and a bottle of Archie’s favourite overproof rum at his behest!

Sue Rhodes’ book made national headlines! “Aussie Men Make Lousy Lovers” screamed the front page of the Sunday Mirror as Murray and I headed out to Woodlands in November 1967. “She must have met some crummy men” intoned Murray as he sped with undue haste and mounting excitement to accost Ron and Jim with the earth shattering news! Ron was quite diffident as he scanned the pages. “Doesn’t say what sort of servers we are though Doc” was his sage rejoinder while successfully deflating Murray’s inflated balloon!

Rum and milk was standard fare at Trevors Stud. Early winter mornings were social occasions *par excellence*. I used to do the racing preview on a Saturday for Radio Station 2NM in Muswellbrook. Great racing 'journos' Bert Lillye always attended the Scone Cup in May each year. He and I were scheduled to be at 2NM at 8:30am. I was to pick up Bert at Trevors. I arrived in good time but was persuaded against my better judgement to enjoy a 'heart starter' with the assembled menage. We tuned to 2NM hosted by Mike. Bert drank five and I drank four with Mike announcing Bert Lillye and Bill Howey will be here soon to talk about the Scone Cup. The 20 minutes journey to Muswellbrook took quarter of an hour. Mike was distraught. He was out of sporting content and out of advertisements! No worries! At 8:50 Bert and I let rip! The 9:30am news was postponed to 9:45 with no interruptions before we could be gagged! It's a great tongue 'loosener' Archie's special brew at Trevors! Must be the milk content?

W. P. Howey

## “Racing Is Fun”

“I freely admit that the best of my fun I owe it to country racing”  
(*Not quite* Whyte Melville – ‘Horse and Hound’)

I had a ball as much as I can remember!

Since 1947 the Scone Race Club has had direct or indirect veterinary involvement. It was a feeling of immense pride when I was asked and agreed to replace Lionel Israel on the SRC Committee. I joined my ‘boss’ Murray as well as ten other Upper Hunter notaries. It began an association lasting until today. Some of the happiest and busiest years of my life were the six of my Presidency 1978 – 1984. I am proud to be the only non-grazier and/or stud master to hold the position.

Murray had grand ideas none more so than when he was able to marry his Scottish heritage to the Australian culture he so loved. Scone was an ideal pace to be! ‘Scone Scots’ was formed to commemorate St. Andrews Day in early November. ‘Hogmanay’ was always celebrated in grand style at Tinagroo with Murray addressing the haggis Burns style resplendent in tartan kilt! Bob Mackay and Murray were respective patrons of two Newcastle based pipe bands who rotated the honour of coming to Scone at Anzac Day. With Murray’s energy, inspiration and drive the St. Andrews Day Race Meeting was born! For at least a decade it became an institution but sadly Murray did not survive in good enough health to actually witness the first one held in 1973. The death knell of the concept was heralded some ten years later. Murray’s old pipe band had been invited at Mace’s behest to provide the highland flavour. It was very hot! The band was thirsty. Traditional ‘Athol Brose’ did nothing to satiate the appetite. The Pipe Major demanded and was supplied with abundant Dr. Toohey’s. Alas the potent brew stirred the demons in the Drum Major. He took an instant dislike to anyone not dressed as he was who comprised most of the crowd at the bar! Being a massive ‘don’t argue’ steel-worker type he elected to attack! Inevitably by sheer weight of numbers he was upended. Much to the shame and chagrin (or should that be bemusement?) of the female contingent he was ruthlessly exposed as an adherent to the true Scot’s tradition of rendering underwear redundant when wearing the kilt! Mace was mortified! End of the St. Andrews Day concept! The band has not been back!

Murray was also known for his ‘negotiation by confrontation style’ and vituperative was in his armory if ever he felt the need! When a Scone Shire Councilor he was famously quoted in large headlines in ‘The Advocate’; ‘Councilor Bain calls Councilor Armitage a Rat’! He had in fact invited the benign dear old Bertie Armitage to ‘crawl back into the rat hole out of which he came’ when they disagreed in debate on some matter of principal!

He was incensed at what he considered some very poor marketing by the Scone Race Club. He wrote to the Sporting Editor in the Scone Advocate on April 30 1963:

Sir,

The Scone Cup Meeting could almost be described as the *raison d'être* of the Scone Race Club. In recent years from being the best country cup meeting it has gradually deteriorated.

1. In lack of quality where such races as the Scone Guineas are no longer in existence and there has been a reduction in prize money in the other semi-classic events. This of course is due to the influence of local racing interests who would like to see the meeting run for bush horses only.
2. It has also been characterized by some of the worst exercises in public relations. They have run out of race books on several occasions and there has been the debacle of restricted fields in the Cup and the general lack of adequate facilities to deal with inclement weather.

However with their latest effort they have surpassed themselves. I refer of course to the Scone Cup poster which invites people to visit the various studs but have omitted to mention Mr. V. C. Bath's Bhima Stud, Mr. S. G. White's Carrington Stud, Mr. M. V. Point's Sledmere Stud and Mr. George Moore's Yarraman Park Stud. Some of the owners have been considerable benefactors to the race club and Mr. G. Moore, one of the world's great jockeys, is gracing the meeting with his presence, which would be a draw card in any part of the world. It is not only bad public relations but it is also bad manners.

I mentioned this matter to two committeemen and neither of them had seen the poster. One would have imagined that something as important as this would have been the subject of careful scrutiny before publication. It would have been in any other organization. For all I know the dates might also be wrong! It wouldn't surprise me.

A. Murray Bain  
30/4/1963

No 'shrinking violet' there! I suppose Murray was not on the Committee at this time? He clearly had one or two individuals in his sites and did not miss the mark! He was certainly never afraid to 'ruffle feathers' if he thought there had been evidence of apathy, incompetence or negligence! He did not suffer fools gladly as Bert Lilly testified!



Marching at St. Andrews Day Race Meeting 1973  
David Macintyre and the author



Averil Sykes [daughter of Percy] with Murray and Mace Bain  
Scone Cup Races 1964

I learned a harsh lesson soon after marriage! Don't we all? I was a punter. As a single man I considered \$200:00 on the nose a fair risk! In 1975 I was betrothed. Sarah and I



managed on \$20:00 per week with my spouse's careful and frugal management! 'Blossom Lady' was a sure thing in the maiden at Denman! The half sister to 'Tod Maid', 'Obelia' and 'Little Gum Nut' by 'Kaoru Star' had been with 'TJ' and now Betty was working her miracles as she had with her own 'Titaria'. Money for jam! Backed to favouritism you guessed right she finished an inglorious sixth! Sarah was palpably 'not amused'! (Something Queen Victoria started?). She reminded me forcibly as if I needed it that \$200:00 amounted to two months house keeping! Fortunately ever-generous George Bowman had supplied me with two pumpkins from his prolific garden. Sarah made magnificent pumpkin soup!

The lesson I learned? Well, a diet of pure pumpkin soup every meal for several days' cures punting! I haven't had a bet since! A slight exaggeration of the truth perhaps but I think you get the drift? 'Blossom Lady' won her next start at Muswellbrook by six lengths with her ears pricked unencumbered by my investment! Ah well, the glorious uncertainty as they say!



'Gunsynd' made his final race track farewell at Scone Cup Meeting  
Kevin Langby is the 'hoop' with 'Gentleman Jim' Gibson in attendance!  
This was all part of George Ryder's incredible publicity machine!

The meeting at the old Denman race track was memorably the last! There was a near riot after the final event! The judge was an eminent Sydney QC who enjoyed relaxing at his country stud out near Baerami. His favoured tippie was of pure malt extraction. The problem was when not on legal duty he always started early and finished late! Dusk was beginning to settle when four horses flashed across the line but the margins seemed clear at least to most patrons. Alas at this late hour the judge was 'emotional and tired', mildly 'pixilated', slightly 'blutterbanged' and the merest trifle 'puggled'! In the gathering murk the camera had not worked. Feeling expediency to be a virtue he made a hasty decision

not in keeping with the views of the majority of avid punters! He had eyes only for the two horses near the inside running rail and failed to see the three others at least two clear lengths in advance 'just under his nose' on the outside of the track! Weight's right! There were serious threats of incineration of the old wooden judge's tower complete with incumbent contents! In the end sanity prevailed! A team from Muswellbrook headed by a 'D' had collected and wanted to retreat with no redress! They were able to calm the heated throng and escort his eminence to safety. How do I know this? Another 'cockatoo' whispered in my ear twenty years later he was in the 'know'. Bookmakers had plenty after 'Blossom Lady's failure. I have often wondered about her form that day! They wouldn't have missed the judge's tower. It's where a drought-ravaged cow crawled to die before being discovered on reopening the next year!

Back at Scone the May Cup meeting was going a 'blinder'. 'Curley' and 'Meggsy' were assiduous barrier attendants as usual. They reckoned 'Skeldon' was a 'sure thing' in the Improvers Cup. Not only that but they also bet he would break the track record. I remained very smug! 'Shyly' was going around for me with my friends and was 'hot to trot' with 'Jerky' up. The race was interesting. I was stationed near the home turn. 'Skeldon' was bolting in front and 'Shyly' entered the short home straight with no hope towards the rear. 'Jerky' was sitting up quite like the leisurely gentleman squire! 'Skeldon' walked in and broke the record! I had to provide my losing betting ticket to soothe the 'Stipes' angst. I understood 'Skeldon's win OK. He went on to open company. The mystery was in a restricted class galloper breaking a course record so easily? Many years later when long gone from the chair I cajoled 'Meggsy' at a habitual and customary weak moment late at the Aberdeen Bowling Club. The scheduled 1000m race had in fact been 960m. The cagey guys had placed the barriers 40m up the back straight! Nice work if you can get it! 'Shyly' eventually won eleven races too!



Scone Cup Presentation 1980

Winner 'Hoedown' Trained by Pat Farrell (Second from left) Ridden by Wayne Harris  
Committeemen Bill Rose (Far left) David Bath (Far right) and the author (4 from right)  
were to have a major impact on the evolution of the club over the next 15/20 years  
'Master of Ceremonies' Peter Meehan (Radio 2NM) is third from right



Wayne Harris

Wayne earned national celebrity status as the rider of 'Century Miss' [Golden Slipper] as an apprentice and 'Jeune' [Melbourne Cup] as a senior

'Pluvial Insurance' was easy to buy but difficult to collect in association with the Cup Meeting. Two eminent Race Club Committee men found a solution. It had 'rained on the parade' overnight but strict guidelines applied before the Club could collect. The President whose surname predicated Christmas was not a cultural celebration was up and about early as always. He was preceded only by a loyal colleague whose name suggested his original ancestors may have cared for ovine flocks. The rain guage at the Post Office was a few points light and would be 'officially' read at 6am by the Post Master. Quick collaboration and the dilemma solved. They do say there are some very large male dogs around Kelly Street early in the morning in May!

'Clerk of the Course' is a very important appointment on any race track and ever more so in the country. There was no shortage of skilled horsemen to fill the position(s) at Scone. The job was regarded as a 'big day out to be enjoyed' by most participants. Occasionally conflict arose when social aspects spilled over and interfered with professional duties of the situation. Larry was feeling no pain returning the reverse (anti-clockwise) way of going after successfully starting the third! Just as he entered the home straight the field was thundering down to meet him head on at about the winning post! Luckily warning shouts were heeded and massive mayhem avoided. Unfortunately Larry's steering gear was not working well as he veered to the outside rail. 'Scots Syd' was leaning over the top rail in vociferous support of his selection. Larry's right stirrup struck him a heavy blow on the head! Syd was a great mate of mine but as a 'Sassenach' I suddenly felt very vulnerable if I didn't do something about it as he threatened to 'put my lights out'! Larry was happy to dismount and resume at the bar. It wasn't difficult to locate his replacement. Steve was right there and in great form! The lesser of two evils it had to be

Steve if only to mollify Syd! Decisions! Decisions! The trials and tribulations of high office!

I discovered early how to breed a Stakes Winner! Alf and I were at the commiseration stage at the RSL Club one night. Alf was a horseman of the old school and rightly boasted rodeo experience with Tex Morton, Gill Brothers and Lance Skuthorpe. By time of his arrival in Scone Alf had seen better days. A large angular thin bony caricature of the gentle quintessential Aussie horseman he had absorbed lots of hard knocks. His habitual long term joust with the 'bottle' had also taken its toll but had neither diminished his spirit nor dimmed his humour. Once after a five days spree with Jack Gill he imagined he saw weasels, rats and weird disappearing men! Worried I consulted medico mate Dave. His telephone diagnosis was immediate and spot on. A second veterinary oral dose of 'Largactil' in the Golden Fleece at 2am cured the 'DT's'. No more rats or weasels! Alf was very suspicious of his local 'hoop' Merv. 'Seven fox power cunning' was his guarded assessment of Merv's intuitive instinct. 'We both suffer insomniac' he told me. 'We can't sleep at night'. 'He lies awake all night thinking how he'll outsmart me' he protested. 'I lie awake all night thinking how he thinks he'll outsmart me!' 'We can't sleep at all.' Bad situation for an alcoholic insomniac!

Alf had a decent mare 'Breadline'. By 'Honeyline (Imp)' out of 'Bertha' she carried the famous brand of Ban Buffier from Wingarra in the Bylong Valley. Dan bred two Golden Slipper winners. Alf occasionally neglected to feed 'Breadline' if on a bad stretch but she still won one race, dead heated in another and ran 'Ochre' to within a whisker in a Flying at Scone. Well past the commiseration stage Alf talked me into his accepting my offer (yet to be made) of \$1000:00 for the fine foundation mare (his words) 'Breadline'. The deal was struck, hands shaken and cheque written! No turning back now! I needed a stallion share to complete the package. I had corresponded with the great Stanley Wootton at Treadwell House, Surrey, England. He wrote me he had a very fine young horse in training in Melbourne with AA he thought would make a very good sire one day. A son of the flying Biscay he won four out of five and his only start in Sydney. He was coming to Widden. The price was right! The only impediment was I was recently married and very short of 'chips'! I had to borrow \$3000:00. The next hurdle was the bank manager. Somehow I succeeded in persuading the non-smoking, non-gambling, non-drinking, Methodist lay preacher with a name like a trotter to lend me money to invest in a TB stallion! The result of the subsequent union was 'Bakerman' who won a Group III at Doomben and fifteen other races! Beginners luck! It never happened again!





The 'Bletchingly' ex 'Breadline' weanling colt at 'Trevors'  
Chestnut with silver mane and tail he raced as 'Nioka Prince'  
He was a Sydney winner and full brother to 'Bakerman'



'Nioka Prince' in action at 'Trevors' just prior to sale  
He later stood as a stallion at Tyrone Stud [Jack Johnston]





‘Bletchingly’ at Widden with Henry Plumptre

Then of course you can do it like Murray with impeccable long term planning and assiduous attention to detail. ‘Ragged Blossom’ produced ‘Tod Maid’, ‘Obelia’ and ‘Little Gum Nut’. The *coup de grace* came with ‘Dark Eclipse’s success in the ‘Golden Slipper’ of 1976. Murray had purchased ‘Marjoram’ as a yearling and later put her to ‘Baguette’. The rest as they say is history!



The author’s first individual winner at Scone!  
3 year old Filly ‘Leith Walk’ [Lower Road (Imp) ex. Dusky Lady]  
Trainer Pat Farrell  
Jockey Arthur Lister



Clerk of the Course Stan Bowd (*aka 'Steve'*)



White Park Wake Committee October 1994

Warwick Norman, Harley Walden, Bill Howey, Atholl Rose, Jack Johnston, Stan Wicks



The 'grand trifecta'

The author with close friends Hilton Cope and Tom Payne at 'White Park'  
The occasion was the 'White Park Wake' – the final race meeting conducted at the picturesque and popular race course in October 1994



White Park Wake 1994  
The symbolic *finale* 'lowering of the flag'

#### Scone Race Club Veterinarians

1947 – 1948	R. D. Hartwell
1949	J. A. Berriman [Later QTC veterinarian in Brisbane]
1950	F. L. Williams
1951 – 1956	F. L. Williams, A. M. Bain
1957 – 1963	F. L. Williams, A. M. Bain & J. Francis
1964 – 1967	F. L. Williams, A. M. Bain, J. A. Francis & J. Bryden
1968 – 1972	A. M. Bain, F. L. Williams
1973 – 1975	F. Williams & Partners, Morgan Howey & Fraser
1976 – 1977	F. Williams, G. Adams, J. Morgan, W. Howey & N. Fraser
1979 – 1981	G. Adams, J. Morgan, W. Howey & N. Fraser
1982 – 1993	Morgan, Howey & Fraser
1994 – 2000+	Scone Veterinary Hospital

This list was kindly compiled and supplied by Harley Waldron – the author of 'The Spirit Within' – a history of the Scone Race Club

## ‘Seven Fox Power Cunning’ & ‘Insomnia’

Alf was a legend but with many flaws! His early education included fragile ‘terms of endearment’ with nationally iconic showmen and horsemen such as Tex Morton, Lance Skuthorpe and the Gill Brothers. Reputedly one of Alf’s “Big Top” acts was to bite the back fetlocks of unbroken bucking Brumbies! He told me the survival strategy was to very very quickly ‘pull your head in’ extremely low to the ground while the aggrieved horse fiercely lashed out millimetres above! Well, I believed him anyway! Alf was the quintessential Aussie horseman and like many of his ilk had endured hard times with much of the drudgery serendipitous and self inflicted! By the time he reached Scone to take up thoroughbred training Alf was beginning to loose his long internecine battle with ‘Dr.Grog’.

Although a patient and gifted trainer his nemesis was his trackwork rider and race jockey Herbert! Mistrust bordering on paranoia cemented their relationship although each depended on one another to some degree with a measure of unacknowledged grudging respect thrown in. Herbert was also at the nether end of a distinguished career in the saddle and determined to ‘make every last one count’! His abstinence provided him with a cutting edge advantage over his trainer patron. He was also a very sharp riser ever ready to ‘catch the early worm’. His sobriquet was in fact ‘Mr. Eveready’ although the more cynically inclined attributed this epithet to a well-known make of electric battery with possible sinister applications in horse training and race preparation!

Alf was suspicious of Herbert’s extreme shrewdness and accused him of causing mutual insomnia! “He’s seven fox power cunning and we can’t sleep at night”, proclaimed Alf in his unique gravelly voiced ‘cultural’ cadence. “He lies awake all night thinking how he’s ‘gonna outsmart me and I lie awake all night thinking how he thinks he’s ‘gonna outsmart me”! “We can’t sleep at night”, groaned Alf laconically! “I’ve got the insomniac”!

It wasn’t Herbert’s fault when I received a telephone call late one night from a very distraught Alf in the Golden Fleece Hotel where he was then unwisely staying. “Herbert the’re after me” he intoned with great anxiety! “Weasels with faces thirty feet long and a weird bloke in the corner! I think I’ve got hepatitis”! I tried to explain to no avail I was not Herbert but Alf would have none of it! He repeated his bleak assertions to me over and over again! Eventually I managed to placate him enough to obtain his telephone number and promised to return his call. Unsure of myself I immediately ‘phoned my doctor friend Dave. “The horrors” was his immediate diagnosis! “Do you have any “Largactil”? I wasn’t sure so Dave arranged for me to pick up a dose at the Hospital. By this time it was midnight. I took the medicine to a very agitated and distressed Alf soaked in sweat and he still called me Herbert. He took the pills without fuss and I managed to persuade him to get to bed!

About two hours later I received another panic call! It was Alf again! “The weasels are still after me Herbert”! That was enough! I called at our surgery across the road and armed with some knowledge of the ‘human dose’ I added a bit to the loading bolus of ‘Largactil’ and watched to make sure while a hysterical Alf swallowed it all with plenty

of water! I was able to repay Dave for a much earlier 'medical' intervention in a case of 'Milk Fever' at a Parkville dairy farm!

Two days later Alf stopped me in the street, called me by my proper name, and thanked me profusely for the best night's sleep he ever had! "Slept like a baby for 24 hours" he said! It turned out Gill Brothers' Circus had been in town and Alf had ben on a five-day 'bender' with his old mate Jack Gill! Talk about 'weird weasels' and a sure fire cure for insomnia!

Not long before his ultimate demise and still suffering from 'insidious insomnia' Alf managed to procure a job as night watchman on a local Stud. At about three o'clock on a very cold freezing August morning Cliff and I had just settled back pleased but exhausted and a little smug after a most arduous foaling. Termagant virago 'Dainty Clare (Imp)' had declared war on any human intervention ever since arriving from the UK! She might have been bred by Maggie Thatcher! Even when almost comatose with the exertions of a massive dystocia she fought us all the way before a very large foal was extricated! While silently congratulating ourselves a loudly croaking frog suddenly materialised out of nowhere! "You wouldn't believe that", said Alf with very droll and serious mien. "Fancy a frog inside her causing all that trouble for so long"! I rest my case!

W. P. Howey



‘The Voyage’  
“Shipping Fever”  
Treatment and ‘Ultimate’ Carcase Disposal

In July 1970 I was extremely fortunate to accompany as attendant veterinarian the last major shipment of horses to traverse the wild Pacific to west coast USA. The MV ‘Parrakoola’ was a modern Swedish-registered container vessel circumnavigating the vast ocean in pursuit of trade. This was my first and only exposure to ‘life on the ocean waves’ and the vicissitudes of a merchant seaman! What an experience in life skills and people/animal management training! My co-strappers were Malcolm Ayoub who has recently achieved national notoriety/fame as the ‘guru’ for Jim Cassidy. Malcolm was a colourful racing identity encompassing in spades all the skills and attributes the sobriquet implies! Jack Flood my ‘boss’ was a magnificent horseman of the old school and a firm and loyal friend of his equally impeccable employer and gentleman John Inglis. Like John he became my much respected mentor, advocate and confidant until his ultimate demise some years ago. With three of us to care for 84 horses for a month the job was ahead! Malcolm with some psychological baggage was occasionally AWOL.

The crew was a most intriguing conglomerate of Scandinavian and West Europeans with a few global itinerants completing the cast! The captain was a very fine Swede and many were equally impressive Finns. The Chief Engineer was ex-Baron August von Reinfelds of old Prussia who had commanded a U-boat during the war! Then resident of Mosman he told me stories of his 4-horse drawn carriages on the expansive family estates in Bavaria. He certainly knew his horses. All his subordinates were Austro-German and ‘Sieg Heil’ ruled OK! Only one courageous Englishman, Ted from Manchester and resident of California challenged the domain with his Churchillian rhetoric, ‘fight them on the beaches’, cigar and correctly applied ‘V’ sign! Willy Richter from Adelaide had previously accompanied bloodstock agent Reg Angel shipping the champion racehorse and stallion ‘Tobin Bronze’ to America.



Air Ellison, Star Kingdom's managing part-owner in Australia, photographed at the races at Flemington.

AOE Owner of 'Baramul' and great friend of AMB

The 84 horses on board were comprised mostly of thoroughbreds from the dispersal of the famous Baramul Stud in the Widden Valley. My personal favourite aesthetic HV Stud property this was the home of the immortal 'Star Kingdom'. Many of the mares and weanlings on board carried his genes directly or through the aegis of his sons 'Todman' and 'Biscay'. The latter's first crop were 7 – 9 month foetuses carried in some of the in-foal mares. The exquisitely beautiful chestnut Todman mare 'Eternal Youth' was the then extant 'love of my life'! She later featured as a star on the front page of the 'Fijian Times'. 'Pio Pio' by Summertime and dam of 'King Apollo' was a close second! All had been purchased by a disparate triumvirate of successful USA business men following the brilliant success in North America of Todman's brother 'Noholme II' and his son 'Eskimo Prince'. Rex C. Ellsworth was a big time Mormon cattle rancher from Utah who had enjoyed enormous success with Hyperion's grandson 'Swaps' by 'Khaled'. His son Kumen was veterinarian at Chino CA. Dr. Franklin achieved global prominence firstly by pneumatically enlarging and enhancing the mammary tissue of the post-ingenue female residents of Hollywood and secondly by purchasing overnight TB stallion success 'Vaguely Noble' from the UK. My colleague John Morgan 'vetted' the latter in Newmarket prior to his sale to the US.



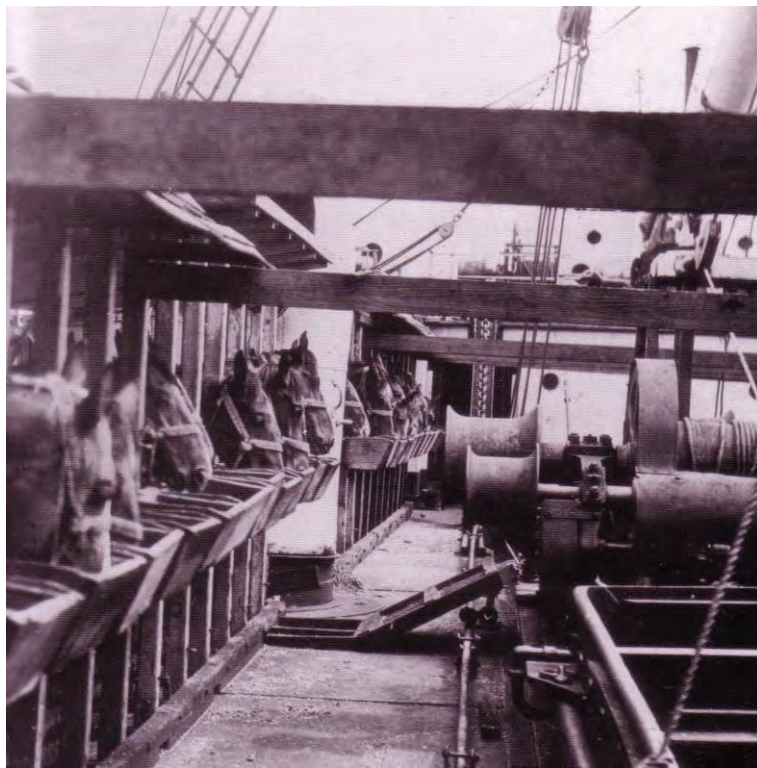
*Todman proved to be a most successful sire in all departments. His outstanding racehorses included Eskimo Prince, Crewman and Ricochet; his sons sired the top performers Ngawyni, Scamanda and Burwana; and his daughters produced the champions Dulcify, Maybe Mahal and Good Lord.*

Dr. Arnie Pesson was a larger than life Texan-born and Lexington/Kentucky based veterinarian who was my gracious and generous host later that year. I still retain clear memory of his supervision of the construction of a new Fasig-Tipton sales complex in Lexington with 'mate' John Finney. He directed the bulldozers on site from horse back complete with spurs, whip, cigar



and topped off by an immaculate white ten-gallon Stetson! Arnie Pesson was particularly ungracious about the original owner of the mare shipment, barrister Mr. A. O. Ellison of Baramul. However, his descriptive American vernacular then fresh to my ingenu ears in alleging various banal proclivities does not bear repetition here!

The mares were held in individual inwardly facing stalls on deck and stood for the entire 28 days journey on wooden slats. The stalls were constructed of Australian hardwood ('Iron Bark'). We removed partitions between the weanlings so they could move about their 'corral'. This was ultimately highly significant! Feed bins and fresh water buckets were placed in front of each mare. Ordure was washed overboard daily by power seawater hosing. Feeding comprised Lucerne hay and chaff, oaten and wheaten chaff, Victorian meadow hay, molasses as an 'appetiser' and some salt. My veterinary pharmacy included Penicillin ('Crystapen' and 'Triplopen'), syringes and needles, stomach tube, alkaline salts, Epsom salts, stethoscope and thermometer. The journey took us via Fiji (Suva [6] and Lautoka [2] days) to Hawaii [2 days] and finally San Diego. The mares and other horses rested beautifully at night gliding peacefully over the smooth ocean. It was serenely sanguine to observe the tranquil scene with flying fishes glinting and sparkling in the crystal clear moonlight before retiring at nightfall!



'Horses at Sea'

This was almost exactly the arrangement on the 'Parrakoola'

*Photo courtesy of John Gilder and Judy White*

The first 'hiccup' was that Widden Valley domiciled mares did not find Victorian meadow hay palatable and to their liking at all! The alarm bells sounded with loud clear clarion fortissimo very early on day 3! An old brown mare was clearly severely distressed from before daylight! She had

consumed her usual feed and water overnight. I will never forget her anguished expression, terrified mien, flared dilated nostrils, dark purple plum coloured mucous membranes, dyspnoea, high febrile temperature (41.2 Celsius), sanguineous blood tinged watery nasal discharge, distress, terminal struggling and death all within 2 hours! Treatment proved useless! I had witnessed first hand the onset, egress, progress and inevitable ultimate demise of a case of peracute 'Shipping Fever'. Old Jack was shocked and I was in trepidation! Jack, a veteran of many long sea voyages with horses, had never seen anything like it!

The next series of events have also stayed with me over the years! At sea in the merchant navy, the captain of the ship is supreme omnipotent commander as judge, jury, advocate and executioner! No arguments! Not surprisingly I was not allowed to perform a PM. Within moments of her death the mare was winched up by a gantry crane with a rope around a hind leg and swung overboard. A seaman with a knife cut the rope and 'Duchess Delville' + foetus plummeted to the depths of the wide blue pacific mid way between Sydney and Suva! Not two weeks before she had languished in the lush Lucerne paddocks at Baramul! I stood transfixed and stunned at the speed and efficiency of the whole operation which seemed to take only a few seconds although it must have been longer? To this day I have never seen a more impressive or proficient means of disposal of a large cadaver. I am forced to confess the circumstances were unique, however!

Alarmed and fore-warned Jack and I took exquisite care and paid minute attention to detail from here on! At the slightest sign of abnormality we checked them out. With any rise in temperature I gave them **5 mega units of 'Crystapen' (Glaxo) = 3g crystalline penicillin intra-venously and 10 – 15 mega units 'Triplopen' (Glaxo) = 6g – 9g procaine/benethamine penicillin intra muscularly**. This was repeated one or two times. I/we became adept at picking the early cases by astute observation. At first light each morning one could look along the line of horse's heads over the front rails. The clearly defined glazed eyes and alarmed anxious expression with flared nostrils became pathognomic for the condition. Temperature rise confirmed the diagnosis. Treatment instituted immediately proved to be effective. The affected mare(s) were removed from their stall(s) and placed on straw on deck with restraining ropes attached to the containers. Here they could lie down and rest, quite critical for recovery. We lost no more. 'Torrina' was the biggest 'guts' and best conditioned mare on board but she succumbed on the Lautoka/Hawaii leg. She lost an estimated 200kg and 'slipped' her hairless colt foal on deck. Disposal presented no problem!

Even though the weather was generally warm and balmy, 17 or 18 mares showed 'acute' signs of travel or shipping fever necessitating treatment. I was not prepared to take the risk! A few others exhibited milder chronic clinical signs and were treated prophylactically. The weanlings having more space to move and mix travelled well. The six night stay in Suva was extremely damaging to the horse's well being and psyche. Container vessels are intense hives of activity around the clock while in port. On the leeward side of Viti Livu it seemed to rain every afternoon at 4 o'clock and frequently at other times! This meant extremely noisy opening and shutting of hatches at the slightest sign of inclemency. The 'hubbub' of lights, metal, clanking and incessant human activity was constant for 24 hours non stop. Consequently there was no tranquil rest for the horses as at sea. They were constantly 'jittery' and 'on edge' all the time in port with no opportunity for relaxation. The process was repeated to a lesser extent in Lautoka (2 nights) and Hawaii (2 nights). We successfully employed local labour to assist with feeding, watering and hosing down in port. The Fijian media were intensely interested in our unique cargo. We featured on the front page of

the 'Fijian Times' as well as radio and TV. The female journalist with the 'Times' was particularly charming. Sydney trained local veterinarian Dr. Goldsmith was also most hospitable.

Life experience with merchant seamen ashore and exposure to local culture is not something one forgets easily! Minutes after docking in Suva and laying down the gang plank the deck was swarming with local female talent. This seemed to be *de rigueur* behaviour and mostly re-acquaintance with further (literal!) bonding from previous visits. There were some truly memorable parties! The morning after a 'special' at the idyllic Hotel Isa Lei the ship's captain made an amusing breakfast time announcement. He read a message in broken English from the manager of the hotel: "Would gentleman from your ship kindly return to retrieve his glasses and his underpants from the swimming pool!" I made an appointment with an optometrist in Suva for a new pair for myself being half blind, very reliant and as I had no spare(s)!

Waikiki was also exceptional! Hans Selgren, ship's bursar, entrepreneur, urbane avid punter, motel owner and resident of Brisbane put on the greatest show on earth in a bar on the strip. His sobbing rendition of the pain of loneliness at sea so impressed the gullible but sympathetic barmaid we had our own private party within an hour of arrival! 'Hassa' is one of the most socially adroit, experienced and genuinely gregarious people I have ever met! I don't think he's ever been lonely! His thespian talents exceeded his consummate social skill and punting proclivity! He later wrote to tell me he'd successfully backed 'Divide and Rule' for the proverbial 'squillion' in the Stradbroke Handicap and Doomben Cup of that year. I rather doubt he still retains the proceeds!

While I was administering prophylactic penicillin to the horses the whole crew seemed to be lining up in sympathy for the same treatment by ship's medical officers after leaving port! On strong medical advice they had all been compulsorily vaccinated against tetanus before embarkation because of 'exposure to horses' and the perceived increased danger of contracting the disease!

The Hawaiian visit was rudely interrupted by the need to blood sample all horse on board for quarantine purposes beginning at 2am! Some party pooper! Dave Mackay was the courteous and hospitable local state veterinarian. His expertise with horses wasn't initially great but he adjusted very quickly and we finished the task long before breakfast. Before arrival in LA we were met by boarding party including a senior CA state veterinarian. He came to check the 'strange virus'. After detailed and thorough interrogation and the results of the blood tests were known we were cleared to land on mainland USA.





Chief Joseph  
I didn't meet him!

Disembarkation in LA was classic! The horses were lifted individually in crates by large gantry cranes from deck to port. The crates were 'geriatric' wooden devices probably not used for decades. Chief Engineer von Reinfelds had not disguised his disdain or disgust for Americans and their culture all voyage. His vituperative about the caricature 'Yankee' with the 'loud shirt, big hat and bigger cigar' was strongly impressed on anyone who cared to listen. In fully gold braided Chief Engineer's uniform complete with cap, gloves and white cane he paraded conspicuously in upright splendour back and forward along the sidewalk poking the LA wharfies with his cane loudly proclaiming time and again: "So Fred Flintstone have built zese crates, ugh?, So Fred Flintstone have built zese crates, ugh?" I thought World War III was about to erupt! August Von R. was even more delighted when the challenge of dismantling the Iron Bark wooden stall infrastructure proved too much for the 'soft' chainsaws operated by the indigenous 'wharfies'. All were firmly seized up within 20 minutes and the job only just begun! Interestingly 'Hassa' Selgrun and 'Baron August' visited me in Scone the following year. After a very good night out in the 'Wounded Buffalo' and the 'Golden Fleece' August became somewhat disoriented and was discovered wandering in the grounds of the house in which I now reside! Then incumbent Janet Barton, mother of Cessnock veterinarian David was singularly not amused on discovering the strange man late at night in the bushes muttering in deep guttural German/English: "So Bill Howey have done zees! So Bill Howey have done zees!" Strike 1 Winston C. and Ted from Manchester!

Pessin, Ellsworth and Franklin were present to greet their precious but somewhat dishevelled cargo in LA. The journey was complete. Dr Pessin kindly invited me to spend time with him in Kentucky. I was delighted to accept! I was unable to extract any response at all from either Franklin or Ellsworth!



Destination 'Bluegrass' – 'Kentucky Lace'

In Lexington I was accommodated in the 'Polo Club' at Winchester Farm on Winchester Pike. I had never seen such luxury! I met a few mates I had seen in Oz (Brian Palmer) and was also lavishly entertained by Patrick Madden of Meadowcrest Farm. The gate posts at the entrance drive had flames leaping from their apex throughout the night! Easier to find your way home? It was facile to be side tracked by Patrick and his colourful entourage! This was southern exposure at its very finest. Modesty and coyness prevent full disclosure of the extent of hospitality provided! Suffice to say anything goes! I also made time to visit old friend John Hughes of Dublin then completing his research at the University of Kentucky. Jim Smith and Walter Zent of Hagyard/Davidson/McGee were great and we began a lifelong communication. Among many other highlights were visits to Darby Dan Farm ['Ribot'], Gainesway, Claiborne, Spendthrift, Castleton and the like. I also ran into 'Aussies' 'Sky High' and 'Tobin Bronze' *en passant*. Remarkably on the last leg of my return journey to Sydney I sat next to Dr. Goldsmith's parents from Suva! Small world! Some life!



*Sky High was a relative failure at the stud in Australia but sired the top horse Autobiography when exported to the U.S.A. (where he was re-classified as Sky High II).*

W. P. Howey  
Director



## St. Patrick's Curse

Shelagh was fine sprightly colleen from Ballybay, County Monaghan. Her upbringing in my mother's birthplace had been idyllic unencumbered by poisonous animals or plants other than the banshees, leprechauns and assorted 'little people' frequenting Irish lane ways, bogs, lakes and thickets. Large Pike encountered swimming in the greater Ballybay Lough did not deter her intrepid adventurous spirit.

After graduating in Veterinary Science at UCD and a year of practice in dank Dundalk she decided to seek warmer climes. Kieran Bredin had spent two seasons 'down under' at Scone and Randwick. His tales of Murray, Percy, Treve, Bill and John M. had whetted Shelagh's appetite for Aussie exposure during her work experience at his Curragh establishment. Kieran effected an introduction to Shona then on her biennial 'sabbatical' in Tipperary. A deal was struck and Shelagh headed for Scone NSW. The cultural shock and language inter phase was very successfully negotiated and not surprisingly she became a popular figure around the town, farms and studs. Hilton Cope in particular had greatly enjoyed his Irish days riding with John Oxx and welcomed the opportunity for a bit of nostalgic 'blarney'.

Shelagh had been warned to change her name before venturing to Australia but decided to tough it out anyway. She must have been aware of the indigenous population of slippery slithery slimy snakes but did not appear intimidated. St. Patrick had taken great care to rid her native land of ophidian threat to the extent its inhabitants are neither inured nor immune to the effects of anguine contact. Hominid 'black snakes' in the Widden Valley had challenged Shelagh's virtue and sense of security but were most successfully and vehemently repelled.

It was a different story when a rather indiscrete and somewhat pusillanimous stud hand placed a 'King Brown' in the boot of Shelagh's car! The fact that it was dead was not immediately apparent and no one was in a hurry to take its pulse! Suffice it to say Shelagh survived the ordeal but eventually migrated to greater safety in Canada. In deep midwinter in Montreal or Quebec City there are very few real cold-blooded 'viperines' on the loose! Her children love the story of how 'Mum' wrestled the massive monster in Oz and saved the day! Perhaps we need a St Patrick's Curse down under or would that really upset the ecological apple cart and enrage the bio-diversity adherents?



**Dr. Sheila Laverty**

***Professeure***

*Faculty of Veterinary Medicine  
Université de Montréal*

Do you really believe any of this sententious diatribe anyway?

W. P. Howey



## Stud Managers & Stud Manager Management!

It had to happen!

Murray ('The Doc') was a great champion of the Stud Managers and Stud Grooms. He made it very clear to me from Day 1 that given the choice between a good Stud Groom and a good Stud Veterinarian you take the former every time! Back in your place boy! Also when 'we' were going to do something you did it and no questions asked! My very first week end in Scone (7 days after leaving Tyrone/Donnegal) 'we' were planting trees at Segenhoe cross roads. Murray was passionate about many things including all things natural such as trees, bees, birds and yes that as well! He told me very early he could give me 10 years 'short cut' to equine veterinary knowledge if I listened carefully to what he said and practiced with even greater care the things he showed me. I am forever in his debt and eternally grateful for my great mentor and tutor in professional life!

It was such an 'innovation in education' trip to Woodlands I first learned of the great 'stoush'! Ron, Jim and George were great personal friends of Murray and featured prominently in his epoch-making film "The Veterinary Surgeon on the Stud Farm". Ron had been long time understudy to a heavy ex-miner and 'pug' from Cessnock we'll call 'Big Bill'. Big Bill was not a popular man and used stand over tactics to elicit obedience. Surreptitious rumour suggested cattle grazing serenely on the river flats were a joint venture between Bill and a local agent rather than 'straying from the neighbours paddock across the river' as regularly reported to George the boss!

One day Murray was late for his appointment at Woodlands. Every day Murray was late for his appointment at Woodlands! This particular day Murray was later than usual. Bill was distinctly not amused and vented his spleen. After a long hot day of trial and tribulation Murray's spleen was in great state for venting also! The challenge was issued and the bout proclaimed! No contest! 'The Doc' won by a TKO in the first round with a solid right to the forehead opening up a gaping wound! Like all bullies 'Big Bill' wilted at the sight of blood especially his own. Move over Bill! Take over Ron! The best job I ever did for Woodlands said Murray! Mace (spouse) as mortified! Murray gained a lot of grudging respect! George wanted to know why Ron and Jim had not stepped in to stop the contest? "Not while the 'Doc' was winning, Boss!"

Later that evening in Scone Murray was walking down Kelly Street. George Moore (Jockey) of Yarraman Park shielded himself from Murray in mock submission pleading 'don't hit me, don't hit me, I'm only a little bloke. I'll get Sonny Liston'! That sort of news travels very fast around the Upper Hunter Valley. The very next morning Murray arrived early at Oakleigh Stud, the magnificent home of the Flynn family in the Widden Valley. Ross asked him to first look at a yearling in the big barn. In a meticulously planned arena there stood the perfectly erected and appointed boxing ring complete with posts, chairs, ropes, buckets, towels, soap and boxing gloves! In the red corner we have the undefeated heavyweight champion of the Hunter Valley! When I had gained a little more confidence I used to call Murray by that name. 'Cheeky young bastard' was his standard response usually accompanied by a wry smirk!

The other episode when I used to stir the boss was linked to the Oakleigh visit. Parasite control at Oakleigh was first class. It was therefore disquieting for them when they produced a small 'translucent' white worm for identification. I volunteered my opinion as an immature ascarid. "If that's an immature ascarid, then I'm the Archbishop of Canterbury" boomed Murray stretched to his full height and pronounced with the very firm characteristic surety he would not be contradicted! Naturally the insubordinate in me prevailed and I submitted the specimen for identification at Glenfield. 'Immature ascarid' came back the unequivocal report. 'Here is the answer your Grace' was my mode of address when I had the temerity to hand it to the boss! His retort is not printable here! At other times I was simply not game to mount a challenge!

The present Associate Director Michele Cotton was the very first female undergraduate veterinary student to 'see practice' at Scone. Murray loved the company of presentable young women and Michele's eminently blonde presence caused quite a stir in the Valley and a sensation around the almost totally male dominated stud farms. Michele asked me recently why Murray had very distinctly instructed her she was never allowed to meet Percy Sykes! Could it have been professional jealousy as Murray and Percy had once been in partnership practice? It was with wry delight I was able to make arrangements for the introduction 30+ years later. Percy was thrilled to meet Michele (at last!) and bemused at Murray's guardian concept of 'forbidden fruit' where he was concerned!

W. P. Howey

## “Why Suffer Diminutives When Superlatives Suffice?”

‘Supervet!’

Every practice has one and we had ours – in spades! ‘Olly’ had been an undergraduate student with us and I definitely had my eye on him as a ‘replacement’. Eventually he arrived via Mildura much to the chagrin of my co-senior partner John who was expecting someone else! Jim was much more enthusiastic! ‘This will work very well. He’ll want to do everything and you’ll let him!’ I’m reputed to have said.

Suffice it to say Olly turned out to be even better than expected successfully rotating John and delighting Jim and I with his dynamism and commitment! Always wildly enthusiastic Olly was assigned duty at Kia Ora. Jimmy had seen hundreds of us come and go! Olly was different! Always wildly enthusiastic he arrived before time jumped out of the car ripped off his shirt and put on his overalls all in just about one single movement. This was in stark contrast to Keith (Imp) who wrecked more than one gate with the iconic brown Torana in his late haste to make up time! The very droll Jimmy remarked one day in the ‘Comical’ Hotel in Aberdeen that Olly would soon arrive ‘fly out of the car with a big ‘S’ on his chest and a flowing cape behind!’ Supervet! It stuck! As expected Olly has proceeded on track to the pinnacle of his profession! Recently in conversation with Mark and I he glibly told us he castrated 54 colts in two and a half hours! Was this a record? I took another sip without replying!



“Olly”



‘Can you believe that’?  
Mark Wylie in ‘dubious’ mood?

Life? It’s all about being in the right place at the right time and with the ‘in crowd’! In the ‘bad old days’ we had the ‘Tuesday Boozers Club’ in the Belmore Hotel in Scone. With the weekly fat stock sales over and done with there was a great gathering of Upper Hunter graziers, farmers, cattle men, agents, veterinarians and other sundry ‘hangers on’ at Jim and Audrey Cotton’s famous watering hole! We had great Christmas parties and what a place for networking! (Good excuse anyway!). I had the honour of ‘chairing’ a big celebration party one year! Fortuitously I was present late one July Tuesday evening in 1971 with Wattsy, ‘Little White Bull’, Mac, Bert, Tiger, Brookie, Peter, Bill, Norm et al. There was much elaborate discussion about Wattsy’s famous mare ‘Norma’ the champion all time camp drafter! (I was worried at one stage this was a means of separating the ‘homo’ from the ‘hetero’). As the night progressed the number of open drafts won by Norma in 1935 increased exponentially! American Quarter Horses had arrived in Australia with pomp, ceremony and hype to make a significant impact! Something had to be done to preserve and promote the ‘indigenous’ breed! That’s how the Australian Stock Horse Society was founded and how I have been its Honorary Veterinarian since conception! All about placement!

Then there were the ‘Vietnam Vets’ – literally! The lady who was to become my mother-in-law was then outstanding imperious matriarch at the magnificent Mackay homestead ‘Tinagroo’ near Scone. With three young daughters rapidly approaching ‘matrimonial stage’ like any caring ‘mother hen’ Ponty always planned meticulously! The American R & R servicemen on leave from Vietnam seemed a great opportunity to display the virtue

of her young ingenue Australian brood! To their enduring and everlasting credit 'home stay' was offered by country families for those servicemen who passed over the frivolous delights of the 'Cross'. There was no better place than 'Tinagroo' to entertain war ravaged soldiers. It just so happened a number of them were veterinarians. It was a great honour to have ride with you senior military US personnel and share their experience(s) with yours. I have kept brief in contact with Tommy Thomas ever since. Ponty's subtle ruse did not work and Mackays' eventually landed a 'Ten-Pound-Pom' as second best son-in-law!

'Anthelmintic Cake'? Sound appetising? It can kill you! Murray was well known for his voracious appetite at 'smoko'. He worked very hard and needed to maintain energy levels! 'Thiabendazole' was the wonder anthelmintic drug of the era. 'Lu' at Segenhoe decided independently a number of the horsemen looked 'wormy'. She baked her traditionally luscious Anzac biscuits incorporating the white TBZ powder in place of flour! No one remarked at morning tea on any subtle taste discrepancy but by night-fall three guys were decidedly 'crook'! The joke (if there was one) was that if Murray had been there he would have died! All was well in the end but no more 'worming' of staff at Segenhoe!

There were never any 'grey areas' where Murray was concerned! He was famously quoted as saying:

'Let's not hide our light under a bushel' (He didn't!)

'Let's not be stupidly immodest' (He wasn't!)

'Erectile tissue has no conscience' (No comment!)

[His actual expression was more argot vernacular like 'a standing c..k has no conscience'!]

A very pushy, new and pristine smart travelling sales man arrived. He insisted on seeing a reluctant Murray to expound the virtues of the incipient MIP test for mares. 'It is 98.5% accurate at 42 days' he proudly proclaimed. Murray pulled himself to his full height above the diminutive delegate and loudly pronounced, 'I am 100%'. The poor young fellow reddened, packed up and sheepishly left utterly defeated! Later Murray was routinely pregnancy testing a large herd at Willowtree. Mike tentatively suggested a cow tested not pregnant the year before had actually produced a calf? 'Impossible' was the unequivocal response!

W. P. Howey



“Terrible Hollow”  
*aka*  
Widden Valley



There was never a dull moment in the Widden Valley! Seemingly very far removed from any madding crowd, isolated with no through road and a total population always maintained <100 despite no TV in the early days amazing things happened on a regular basis. My old boss referred to it as ‘Peyton Valley’ such was the level and extent of human drama redolent of the popular American TV ‘sitcom’ of the day! Successful negotiation of the wickedly narrow twists and turns on the winding one lane road returning late from bacchanalian celebrations at the ‘watering hole’ hostelrys of Sandy Hollow and Denman proved far too much for unsuspecting neophytes never mind lonely veterinarians on late after hours calls! Many were the victims claimed! Robbie Burns might well have penned the antipodean equivalent of ‘Tam O’Shanter’ such were the vicissitudes of so perilous a journey! One elderly veterinarian experienced great difficulty actually leaving the valley following adequate lubrication (no water please!) with a very hospitable friendly stud master who was not driving! The cattle grids and metal guardian rails although painted iridescent white seemed to hold ‘magnetic attraction’ for the elderly gentleman’s geriatric Holden! One gully is still named in his favour!

I will never forget my introduction to the Widden Valley! I was riding with Murray at his behest determined to learn all I could and quick! I had never met Murray Bain but had seen him deliver paper at the BVA Congress in Edinburgh. It was with a mixture of trepidation, awe and reverence I ventured forth in my very new and pristine environment. I don’t know what I expected but Scone looked to me like a Hollywood Western film set. The spectacular steep sandstone hills in the Widden Valley appeared to me to possibly harbour Geronimo and his braves! I had not yet discovered ‘Captain Starlight’! Inured to a class ridden culture which at least displayed a thin veneer of superficial respect for

highly qualified professionals imagine my surprise on arrival at Baramul to find no obsequious welcoming party at the mare yards! I remained silent, made no remark and passed no judgement. Eventually there emerged on horseback two caricature ‘baddies’ straight out of ‘Warner Brothers’. With at least three days’ stubble and worn but clean ‘uniform’ the only missing apparel were the twin Colt 45’s. They both dismounted and hitched their steeds to the rail. John A. went to the water tank for a drink. Legendary Star Kingdom Stud Groom Noel H. proceeded to the Doc’s car, (a ‘Merc’) opened the door, helped himself to the daily paper and read the racing results. “You’re late you (expletive deleted) old bastard” were the first dialectic words I heard spoken in the Valley! So much for ‘professional reverence’ down under!



Noel and John were guilty of a little humorous deception at Murray’s expense sometime earlier. Murray was meticulous in everything he did. His veterinary gear in his car was immaculate as were his sparkling white overalls, towels and most importantly record books in which he immediately wrote the results of every examination he ever made. I counted >1 million examinations stored in the practice at one stage. Unpacking the car on arrival was an elaborate procedure and followed a very regular military pattern. The whole process took over 10 minutes. Murray was vain and proud and had attained very high army rank serving with HM forces in the Middle East and North Africa. On one occasion he was not surprised to find no-one at the Baramul yards and unpacked as usual. Still no one appeared. He read the paper. He checked his watch. He walked around. He checked his watch. He looked about. At last he decided there must be some mistake so packed everything up again with the same exact precision as the unloading process. He was just about to drive away when two cheeky heads appeared above the old empty water tank by the cattle race! ‘G’day Doc, nice day?’ may or may not have sounded sweet to his ears. I have no record of his response!



Noel was also the original author of the famous quotation of the relationship between veterinary income, 'bugs' and big time investment. With remarkable prescient percipience Murray had established the very first private diagnostic veterinary laboratory in the country. In 1965 Shona Murphy arrived to take up duties as resident bacteriologist and clinical pathologist in Scone. Very soon popular and scientific names of common equine pathogens became very familiar 'around the studs'. Beta Haemolytic Streptococcus was conveniently and with very sound reason shortened to BHS. This prevented the embarrassment of 'literacy' exposure not least with the veterinarians. Jim Capel from Barraba nearly choked on the telephone on receiving a report from us his mare had the long form version of the disease! I only just managed to calm him down and explain! The bull market corporate giant of Australia at the time was the 'Big Australian' Broken Hill Pty. Ltd. or BHP. It did not take the very droll Noel to cotton on that "Murray should rename BHS to BHP he's made so much money out of it!" As Murray said about someone else; "Cheeky bastard!"

The most remarkable features of the Widden Valley were/are its glorious geography, magnificent spectacular scenery, superb fertile black soil flats, arcane history and most importantly its people! John Lee first established there the largest stud herd of Durham Shorthorns (5000) in the world in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup>. Century. He had been directed to the valley from the Bathurst area by indigenous knowledge of a place known to them as 'stay here go no further'. Prescient wisdom indeed! Those who followed him were no less extraordinary. Of the latter generation(s) to populate the ponderosa 'Bim' was perhaps the most memorable and outstanding. He was groomsman at my wedding in 1975.



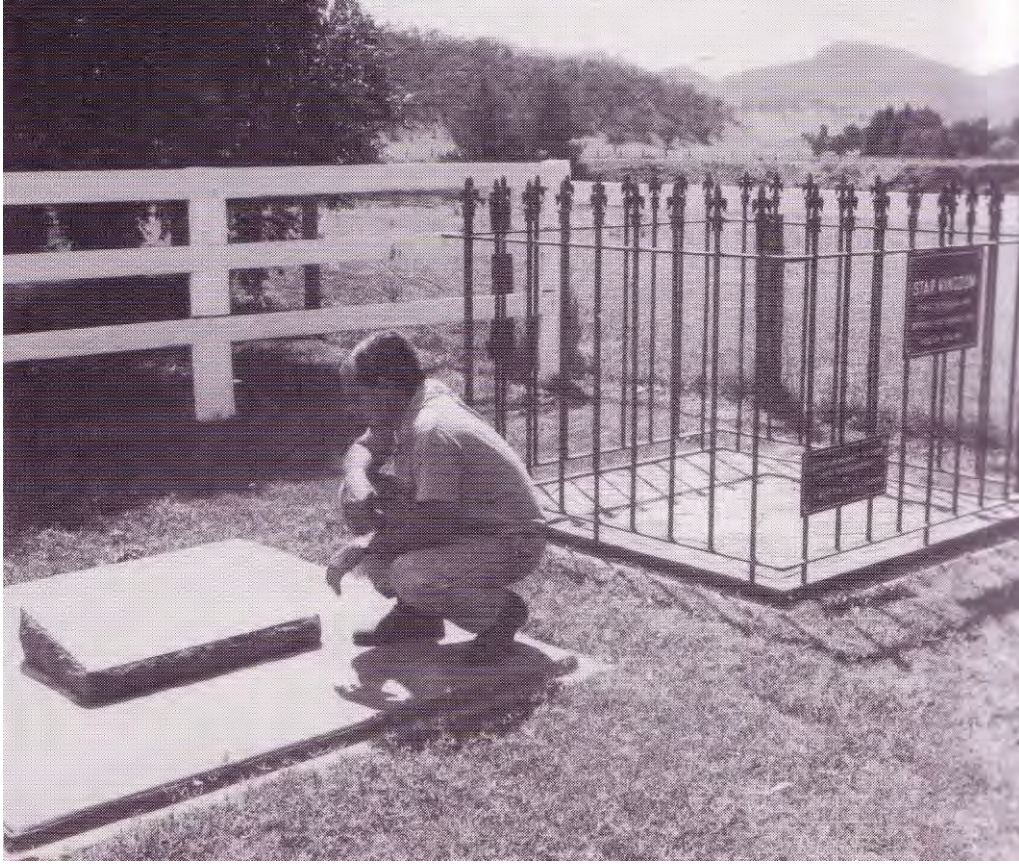
Bim represented the 5<sup>th</sup>. Generation of his family to succeed and inherit the thoroughbred stud bearing the title name. Although not a spectacular scholar his finely tuned brain absorbed, stored and filed computer style the most detailed facts concerning the hundreds of thoroughbred horses in his care. Like all good stockmen he could recall and relate every facet of a mare and her foal, relations, performance, early progeny and individual habits. Once short-listed for the Olympic Games (Equestrian 1968) by 7:00am every morning on his motor cycle he had checked all 700+ horses on the stud by himself. Any idiosyncrasies were noted and acted upon immediately. This was an education in observation! Sadly he suffered an all too early demise as a tragic terminal victim of the 'Widden Valley Syndrome' seeming to insidiously afflict so many of its temporary (veterinarians!) and permanent residents.



The Real 'Terrible Hollow' at the head of Emu Creek  
This was the legendary home of 'bushrangers' – real or fictional  
Photograph courtesy of Cliff Ellis and Syd Cope

I mentioned earlier observation and lay diagnosis? I witnessed one of the more spectacular examples of this working with Bim one very hot day at Widden. His sharp eyes had spotted two 'Eagle Hawks' (Wedge Tail Eagles) circling high and landing at a spot far away at the top of Myrtle Grove paddock. So, I thought, 'Wedgies' are a common sight in the Widden Valley? Bim surmised on available evidence a mare had slipped her foal and the magnificent large birds of prey were feeding on carrion! He investigated and returned with an aborted foetus in a plastic bag he had the foresight to take with him. On at least two other occasions he noted when mares had swapped foals. This can prove very embarrassing when a foal with no ostensible grey parent actually changes colour on moulting! Jim McFadyen then Keeper of the Australian Stud Book and the very first veterinarian employed full time by a major Race Club (AJC) was most impressed! It can explain a lot Jim!





‘Bim’Thompson surveys Todman’s headstone at ‘Baramul’.  
Todman spent the last four years of his life at ‘Widden’ and died in 1976

It is always paramount and a ‘sackable offence’ when disobeyed to carefully count and check against known figures total numbers of all stock in any paddock. This is especially poignant when mares and foals are concerned. There were three almost contiguous occasions in the Widden Valley when ‘one-foal-missing’ heralded unusual possibly unique circumstances! Wombats and evidence of their presence are endemic in the sandy locality. A foal had earlier been discovered stuck fast head-first with one leg forward down a Wombat hole! Imagine one’s immense surprise to discover a repeat episode a few days later! ‘Wombat Strike’ in the foal was added to the list of differential diagnoses by attendant veterinarian Bill from NZ. He threatened to write this up with ‘Eagle Hawk’ indicated abortion in the New Zealand Veterinary Journal! I don’t know if he did? The other case of ‘foal lost’? Suffice it to say it pays to check down old wells in addition!





Colleague Mark reminded me recently of the ‘longest ever single call’ completed in our practice! Resident veterinarian Jamie had called for assistance to deal with an outbreak of foal scours. Mark was assigned duty and drove through the gathering storm to reach the final concrete creek crossing closely adjacent to Widden homestead at dusk. He noticed the ominous heavy black clouds further up the valley and the water in Widden Creek beginning to turn murky brown, angrily swirling and rising fast. Eight days later the creek had subsided just enough to permit safe negotiation in a conventional vehicle! “I had a ball,” said Mark!

It was always expedient and wise to cover your tracks in the Widden Valley! The price of liberty is eternal vigilance! Small seemingly unimportant signs swell to extravagant proportions when taken out of context. On one occasion a new housekeeper had arrived to take care of domestic arrangements at a particular homestead. It was generally considered gentlemanly practice to jealously guard the virtue of any vulnerable female ingenue in any such ‘remote’ location. It raised the hackles and aroused suspicions of the resident stud master when a foot-print was discovered in the garden surrounding the private accommodation of the newcomer. Being an especially meticulous man he carefully measured the dimensions of the imprinted evidence. It was his considered opinion the size of foot-print could only have come from the boot of a large scale veterinarian of his intimate acquaintance! Also having a legal background this was circumstantial proof enough for him! The ‘opposition’ was somewhat surprised to find out early the next day his veterinary services were required immediately to replace the prime suspect who had been the incumbent! The pendulum swings as they say and occasionally for the most arcane reason?

Perhaps this episode was poetic justice? 'Party lines' provided 'party games' in those halcyon days of very close interpersonal communication. Everyone became familiar with the number of 'rings' for a particular number along the line. This was rather like 'morse code' in a telephone format. A particular stud had apparently suffered the embarrassment of an acute outbreak of strangles or possibly ill advised injection abscesses? An adjacent stud master was anxious to establish the truth or otherwise of this assumption. He considered it well within his rights and also very sound practice to seek advice from the veterinarian in Scone. Naturally he called up one night to make his inquiry. Having put the salient question and before the veterinarian could frame an answer there was a loud interjection across the line! Precise, concise and explicit threats of legal action were proclaimed if one word were uttered to comment on or substantiate any part of the whispered rumours! Like I said it pays to tread warily, drink cautiously, speak softly, eat sparingly, sleep soundly, drive casually and look carefully behind you to check the evidence. Anecdote relates the veterinary service on the 'accused' stud also changed at this time!

Alan was a rather louche raffish rue, *enfant terrible* and the 'black sheep' of an established family. Like most of his kith and kin he was fabulous company, a great entertainer, gregarious, urbane, charming, eloquent, witty and funny to a fault. He had a serial problem with 'work allergy', celibacy, bacchanalia, adultery and fidelity. This made life difficult for a married man consigned to the country by his despairing kin to mend his ways or at least hide from them! His colourful 'party line' telephone conversations with his long-suffering but resilient wife provided the sort of unexpurgated and uncensored entertainment in the 'bush' modern media moguls barely dare present. The doughty ladies at the local social Tennis Club were quite affronted to relate one morning how rude Alan had been on the telephone the night before! "Did you hear that Mrs S. and Mrs. C.!" They considered his decorum to them in seeking their opinion in his support had been more confronting and insulting than his lurid dialogue with his spouse! Bush telegraph means a lot of different things to different people! Excellent uncensored communication!

Tom as a young veterinarian spent quite some time in the Valley and loved the bucolic ambience and sparse but special rural companionship. He was very proud of his impressive physique, careful in his habits, trained hard, excelled at outdoor sports, entertained young ladies and justifiably earned the sobriquet 'The Sheik'. It came as a great shock to him to perform his first autopsy on a stallion. This was an old thoroughbred having completed many seasons and servicing a pantheon of mares in his lifetime! It was the very beginning of the new season. The 'old gentleman' as he was affectionately known was led to his first mare exactly as he had done hundreds of times before. However it had been eight long months since the last 'excitement'. The geriatric equine patriarch was feeling his advancing age and the 'weight' of his pendulous expanded abdomen. Being an accomplished expert he nonetheless completed the allotted task in good time. Twenty minutes later he was dead! Tom was able to make an exact diagnosis of the cause of death – rupture of the great aorta as a consequence of sexual exertion while unfit! I'm reliably informed on very good authority Tom's training regime was stepped up immeasurably and his life Spartan and celibate for at least six months!



It's always dangerous to 'anthropomorphize' but Tom was taking no chances! If ever you've seen one of these 'horrendous' cases you'll understand why!



Does the 'Utopian' Terrible Hollow *aka* Widden Valley have a down side? Sadly I have to agree with old 'Ben Butler' of Baerami! Drinking the water has deleterious effects! There is an insidious 'black dog' in the valley. He can infiltrate even the most stoic and settled of minds. We used to joke about the level and extent of human drama afflicting the transient and permanent members of the small tightly knit community. When life's theatre transcends from 'comic' to 'tragic' then it is no longer humorous! I have to say from certain knowledge Churchill's 'black dog' affliction altered the lives of too many of my colleagues, friends and acquaintances to be ignored! Mr. A. O. Ellison gave me two pieces of unsolicited cherished advice as well as a signed picture of 'Bletchingly' before he died. The first 'pearl' was 'you have to be a very wealthy man to go chasing thoroughbred horses!' The second was when I was 'assisting' him back to his car after entertaining him at a party in his honour at my home on welcoming him to Scone: 'The Widden Valley is a Wombat hole and I'm glad to have crawled out of it!' I took action on both counts! This was the same Mr. Ellison whom Murray and I had gently chided 25 years before. AOE and AMB forever sustained a philosophical and psychological contest based on mutual professional respect! AOE ('Allwyn' to Murray) was describing his rehabilitation after a very serious car accident breaking his pelvis and both front legs. Hydrotherapy involved treading water at ever decreasing levels. Almost synonymously we chimed in with 'but we thought you could walk on the water AO!' 'Murray and Bill will keep' was his reputed retort! We did! I'm the only one left so you can't dispute it!

W. P. Howey

### Test Mating 'Jubilee Clap' and Shuttle Vet Diplomacy

Veterinarians started it all! It's even arguable Murray Bain was Scone's very first shuttle veterinarian in 1950! It escalated to become something akin to an avalanche of human resources in the mid-sixties and thereafter. This is very good for science of course! Exchange of ideas and genotypic heterozygosity with prolific DNA interchange are the cornerstones of a vigorous society. Modern day Australia bears testimony to this premise! Quite a number of individuals in the immigrant human veterinary tide took this one stage further and availed themselves of esoteric local Hunter Valley bred 'fillies' to become their life's partner!

The thoroughbred industry observed the phenomenon of interchange and followed suit with its own equine and human dual hemisphere seasonal peripatetic breeding perambulations during the mid-seventies. From this time thoroughbred horses became international currency to be traded 'as gold' on a grand scale. The smartest major players recognised this facet early and reasoned very expensive DNA commodities resident and redundant for over half the year in the NH could very well earn 'extra keep' downunder accommodating the extra local harem and maintaining cash flow on a daily basis while doing so! Sound delightfully lucrative and superficially simple? It is! There

is always a catch of course. Nothing is that easy! The anachronistic scions of the NH Stud Books in there infinite wisdom refused to even contemplate it could be much cheaper, simpler, rational and logical to transfer refined male DNA alone rather than the whole 'living' reproduction factories themselves thus committing to far greater risk while doing so! Venereal disease is a case in point. See later!

There was massive escalation at this time of TB racing and breeding in Australia underpinned by the introduction of State Government-run TAB agencies. With the gradual official demise of traditional and popular illegal 'SP' this fuelled the extraordinary exponential (even logarithmic) increase in 'legally' taxed betting turnover especially in the major states of NSW and Victoria. With 'kick backs' to racing and consequent far higher prize money Australia became the preferred SH destination for the best portable TB DNA with an industry capable of supporting the higher valued overseas stallions. The number of TB mares in the ASB had been more or less static at about 10,000 for over 40 years. This number jumped up by over x 4 to >40,000 in the short time to the mid eighties.

With the inflationary spiral of thoroughbred numbers and their individual values came a concomitant commitment and absolute obligation to provide duty of care for the animals wherever, whenever and however domiciled. This means people or 'human resources'. Probably since inception TB breeding in Australia had relied on a few hard core and old school horseman with an exquisite range of all round 'hand-me-down' practical skills. (Literacy was not highly prized as a desirable asset!) All great observers much of this was based on good solid old fashioned horse husbandry common sense. Other tenets were of very dubious merit and little better than satanic witchcraft. With advances in science, communication, technology and pressure of numbers the elder generation were gradually phased out. They were replaced by a sensitive 'new age' breed drawn largely from the ranks of the 'Yuppies Puppies' brigade attracted to the increasingly 'fashionable' recently upmarket TB breeding industry. Many had attended one of the various tertiary institutions beginning in WA and mushrooming throughout the Continent to provide much needed formal education in the horse industry.

Veterinarians were part of the flow and indeed pre-empted the escalation in the need for a greater degree of expert care for the increasingly lucrative and numerically strong thoroughbred band across the country. James Crouch joined Murray Bain in September 1967 on Horse Race Betting Levy Board Scholarship from the UK. The author (WPH) followed at the beginning of October and Richard Greenwood came a short while later. This formed the nexus of what was to become a regular two way UK/USA - Australia veterinary interchange over the ensuing 35 years

'Real' stallions began to 'shuttle' from about the mid-seventies. 'Mt. Hebron' was a case in point. He travelled from Ireland in 1975 and stood for one season in southern NSW before returning to leprechaun land.. He was 'hot stuff' and arrangements were made to bring him back to the Widden Valley as 'gay lothario' for the 1977 eclectic harem. As luck would have it this was also the 25<sup>th</sup>. year of Queen Elizabeth II's ascension to the Commonwealth throne. Coincidentally an outbreak of a 'new' equine venereal disease was first identified at the National Stud, Newmarket, UK. Putting the two elements together a polemic wit with a fine sense of irony dubbed this 'Jubilee Clap' or more correctly and officially Contagious Equine Metritis (CEM). The proverbial hit the



fan in massive dollops in the incestuous world of thoroughbred breeding. Ireland claimed to be unafflicted by the 'English' disease.

To be forewarned is to be forearmed however! JRGM had just returned from the UK and was intimately familiar with the 'goings on' at Newmarket and the National Stud. Jimmy Rodger still had his erstwhile cohorts keeping a close watch on developments! Confusing the issue still further was the very first ever occurrence in July 1977 of an equine viral abortion 'storm' in Australia and the Hunter Valley! We had some serious discussions and seminal public meetings. The Scone Bowling Club hosted over 400 anxious veterinarians, breeders and other interested parties at one of the Australian horse breeding industry's most important ever historic scientific gatherings.

Our 'inner sanctum' at Scone decided the first few mares covered that season by any imported stallion should be swabbed 3 – 4 days post service to establish freedom from venereally transmitted disease(s) including CEM. This was despite a series of stringent pre-importation quarantine swabbings of the genitalia of the bemused would be *equine galantes*. This is very good science of course. The biological test is always paramount and underpins the important principles of Koch's Postulates. Alas 'Mt. Hebron' failed the test! The 'little people' must have been at work! They are responsible for many otherwise unexplained misdemeanours in Ireland! Talk about wild fire and bush telegraph! The fans whirring the proverbial were in overdrive – a flock of 10 thousand pelicans with cathartic gastritis and profuse watery diarrhoea could not have produced a greater impact! The speedy exodus of mares from the afflicted stud was bigger than biblical proportions.

'Mt Hebron' poor old fellow – he was consigned in disgrace to quarantine himself surrounded by ubiquitous but unattainable equine 'talent' in the idyllic Widden Valley with nothing to do and all day every day to do it in! This was not the end of the matter however! He had to be transported home for the 'term of his natural life'! He suffered the indignity of a massive barrage of antibiotic treatment and locally applied genital douches. Further swabbing and washing ultimately gave him a 'clean bill of health'. There was still one more step to be taken – he needed to be mated with 'pristine' equine maidens and cleared by an imported Irish veterinarian of eminent stature dispatched by first class air especially for the purpose by the Irish Government and commercial interests. Fine by me and us!

The host stud purchased four 'maiden' pony mares at the regular Scone horse sales. Naturally one of them turned out to be in foal already – a not altogether surprising occurrence in the post-sixties liberated Hunter Valley as one caustic sage sardonically commented! The other three clean 'virgins' were prepared and proved to be accommodating, willing and eager. In the meantime the 'tall timber' veterinarian had arrived from Ireland. An old acquaintance he soon made himself at home proving to be as adept at diplomacy as he was fluent in blarney. His brand of special gaelic charm particularly impressed a recently extant young lady veterinarian 'Sally' eager to test the veracity of Lonnie Donnegan's abstruse claim in his popular song 'Nobody Loves Like an Irishman'!

In life as in love as in work vital timing is everything! The young 'clean' mares were covered and the special day for swabbing for clearance for Mt. Hebron to be allowed to return to Ireland had arrived. It was a hot Saturday in November. We had a great party the night before and I was to

meet 'Lean Tall Sean' but not 'Long Tall Sally' promptly at 6:00am at the practice for the long drive to the Widden Valley. At 6:30am he had not arrived so I determined to pick him up at Airle House. I recognised one of our cars outside Room 22. I thought it a little strange but knocked on the door anyway. Poor old Sean! Wan, dishevelled and bedraggled he was in no fit state to travel! He had already traversed half the globe for the test mating clearance of the imported stallion. It might have been delayed jet lag or even residual travel sickness but he couldn't take the last few steps! Perhaps the importunate demands made on his person by his newly discovered nubile companion had irretrievably sapped and exhausted his available energy supply? Did he advance the concept of 'Koch's Postulates' too far too soon? I made the journey to the Widden Valley alone! Anyway it's results that count and Shona gave the 'all clear' 3 – 4 days later. Mt. Hebron was able to make it back to Ireland. He was possibly in better shape than Sean for whom I cannot speak?

Test mating? It's very sound practice providing you survive! In defence of Sean it could be he was unfamiliar with handling copious quantities of 'Reschs' or Rocky Waters really had disoriented him after 3 hours 'unintelligible crack' in the Bowling Club on Friday night. Maybe Lonnie Donnegan should compose another song about the capacity of 'test mating' Aussie ingenues to dispel mythology about legendary Irish lothario capability?

WPH

### 'The Castle', 'The Hole in the Wall' Gang & 'The Wounded Buffalo'

If only rooms had ears and walls could talk!

Kelly Street Scone had a red light district if only you knew where to find it! A veritable warren of 'bachelor and spinster pads' was situated directly above Will & Jan Serhan's store and Harry Hayes' butchers shop. For the decade from c. 1965 – 1975 these provided a 'home' for the many unattached and single veterinarians and technicians/scientists aligned with A. M. Bain and Associates operating from the 'Grazcos' building over the road. Shona was there first and then John M., Des F., Bill H., Warren McL., Nairn F., Tony P., David P-O, Ray G., Bill S., Jamie B. et al all followed. Rumour has it the beautiful blond English wife of a 'Ten Pound Pom' veterinarian was seen shinning down the white cedar tree at c. 3am in Kelly Street accompanied by another (unidentified?) party goer one night! Shona hosted some great soirees! Geoff Hayne tried to make an 'arrest' one night of a would-be carouser serenading on a guitar from the balcony overlooking Kelly Street to anyone who would listen. There were few onlookers or takers at 4 am on Sunday morning however!

Further rumour identified handsome Warwick as making a very suspicious looking and highly dangerous wall scaling entrée between the balconies of the flats late one night. The fact two beautiful young local hostesses currently occupied one of the 'warrens' fuelled the gossip machine. The truth was much more mundane! He had simply forgotten his key and did not want to wake anyone at such an ungodly hour!

Ross nearly 'met his maker' one night when he slipped while making a hasty descent from the roof of Lester Rose's Supermarket. The fact he was stark 'bollocky' naked and still carrying his entertainment guitar did not help the situation. This was compounded by the extremely 'slippery' state of the ripple iron roof due to the 'whites' of the freshly broken eggs with which he had just been pounded! Fortuitously he was able to grab the guttering which held! Bill almost blew up the whole complex on more than one occasion when his culinary skills were sorely tested after Rugby! If you do not open a can of Baked Beans before heating it will explode Bill! It makes a nice mess of the kitchen too not to mention the electric range!

The red light 'warren' was oft regarded as home away from home for the many jackeroos and station hands from Glenrock and elsewhere who played Rugby on Saturdays in Winter. It was seriously unwise and frequently impossible for the young vagabonds to even attempt the return journey especially after a Merriwa match! It became common place to awaken and find 6 – 8 jackeroos spreadeagled on the floor or anywhere there was space! Jack came home to Bill's one night and crashed through the balcony door. What he did not know – or had possibly forgotten - was Bill was overseas (1970 - Baramul Mares to USA) at the time and Ray and Lorraine had taken up residence and together in the double bed! Further compounding the shock was Lorraine was 8.99 months 'in foal'! Such was the surprise all round Melissa was born a few days later and all was well! Jack was ever the gentleman. Although slightly blutterbunded and mildly pixilated he was able to extricate himself with honour and profuse apologies from the delicate situation. He never did fully recover from the shock!

Very often redress to the 'hole in the wall' followed a very convivial - and late - meal at Leighton's 'Coffee Club Inn' (*aka* 'Wounded Buffalo') next door to the vets and 'Grazcos' just across and up the road. Leighton's greatest difficulty was very often how to get rid of his Bacchanalian mob and close his restaurant. There was a dispute one night ending up with Leighton in the 'Whiz Bin' and an impromptu game of golf down Kelly Street at 2:30 am. by the would be Greg Norman protagonists. The Golden Fleece Hotel never ever did account for the broken windows and golf balls in bedrooms raining on them that night! The participants all later became stalwart figures in Upper Hunter Society! (No names! No pack drill!) I always greatly enjoyed Leighton's company and he often cooked me a great rump steak at 11:00 pm if I had returned late from a long, long day in the Bylong Valley. The standard fare (to me) was \$2:00 and we always opened a few 'tinnies'! It didn't help my golf swing much however! I always believed the sobriquet 'Wounded Buffalo' although humorous to be a mite unjust. Alf Marks really started something there!

62 Kingdon Street in Scone is legendary as the erstwhile 'home' of successive waves and generations of veterinarians. It became known universally as 'Kingdon Castle' or just simply 'The Castle'. Richard and Sue Greenwood were first to live there in 1968 and make it into a 'home'. Warren and Robyn McLaren followed soon after until there was a 'parting of the ways'. Bill Howey and Tony Parker moved in when Warren left. At about this time there happened: 'The Party'. Bill and Shona owed some hospitality so it was decided to hold a 'champagne and chicken' lunch just before Christmas 1972. Bill ordered champagne and was well known for his heavy hand. He surmised however there would be plenty left over to celebrate Christmas two weeks later from the 10 dozen bottles on offer. Shona supplied the chicken. It was hot and there was limited shade! By 2:30 pm all 120 bottles of champagne had been consumed by the 70 or so Upper Hunter 'glitterati' in attendance. Prominent stud masters, eminent professionals and powerful graziers were littered everywhere! One elderly statesman was stuck in the fence across the road having 'missed' reaching his car by about 10 metres. Another gregarious and equally loquacious individual fell where he stood still clinging on bravely to the flag pole as he slid slowly to the ground talking to the end. A local physician had 'collapsed' over his steering wheel having locked himself in and could not be wakened. (No RBT!) Yet another had to be 'rescued' from his own swimming pool later that day! The spouse of one veterinarian had gone to the public swimming pool to retrieve her children only to be told a 'strange man had taken them'! Her partner was in horizontally recumbent and in deep, deep sleep. It all ended well however and was a great talking point for a very long time! (A very kindly neighbor had picked up the children correctly surmising sobriety to be in short supply that day!)

Murray Bain greatly enjoyed the camaraderie the young residents of the 'Castle' provided. He used to arrive early on Sunday mornings (6 am!) for a cup of coffee and conversation ('gossip') prior to going out to the farm at Yarrandi. He rolled in very bright and breezy one day during the Bill and Tony era. 'Alright you blokes – dismount now' was his characteristic initial prurient laced retort. Smiling very sweetly back at him as he crossed the hearth was a very lovely young lady, a recent acquaintance of Tony. I rarely if ever saw Murray Bain stuck for words but there was a lot of stuttering and stammering on that occasion! Sadly about 6 months later Murray arrived as usual about 6 am one Sunday.

No respecter of hangovers he 'ordered' me into the car to drive to the farm with him. He had just returned from Victoria. 'I have something I want to tell you' were his exact words as I piled into the front seat of the white 'Merc'. Suspecting a large bowel obstruction himself Murray had performed a very basic examination. His findings and suspicions were confirmed by personal physician and close friend Dave. Within 48 hours a major bowel operation had been completed. 'Just before surgery I never ever felt better in my life' said Murray. 'It must all be just a very bad dream'. On visiting a few days later he told me: 'They got most of it but there is a spot on the liver and a small bit in the groin'. It was impossible to say anything in reply! He never relinquished hope and vowed 'to fight it all the way and win'! Only at the very end did he tell me to 'make plans without him for the coming season'. They were the last words I ever heard him speak.

The 'Castle' subsequently housed a continual succession of permanent, temporary and itinerant veterinarians. After nearly burning the place down when a steak caught fire on the grill Bill moved to a safer and less combustible abode. Tony moved on. 'Falstaff' Stewart and 'Three Legs' Barnes moved in. Both stayed and left. Even today (2005\*) the 'Castle' is permanent home to Mark and Camilla and their four delightful children. The veterinary dynasty endures!

WPH

### The Foaling

It had not been a particularly auspicious beginning for me! My migrant plane was late – very late! After 10 hours touring London while 'technical problems' were sorted by Qantas we took off via New York, San Francisco, Hawaii, Fiji, Auckland and ostensibly Sydney. Alas on the Monday of the October long week end in 1967 the Gods were angry. A mighty dust storm blew over Randwick Racetrack dispersing the 'Metropolitan' crowd. It also closed nearby Mascot just as we were about to land. So Brisbane it was! Immigration formalities were completed and I boarded an Ansett ANA flight to Sydney. At midnight I arrived at the Australia Hotel in Castlereagh Street very thoughtfully arranged by Mace who had arranged to meet me in the morning. Murray had returned to Scone to join James Crouch in the practice. Mace needed to do some shopping and would greet me later. I described myself as accurately as I could. Mace arrived in the foyer marginally before me and approached a gentleman matching my description. He was not amused at being 'approached' and reported the incident to the Manager! Mace was mortified! I appeared and the explanation became clear! To this day I'm not sure either the manager or the 'affronted' gentleman was totally convinced by Mace's impassioned pleas! It was good to bump into 'Tiggy' down from the country for the spring meeting at



Randwick. This was my first exposure to NSW rural culture and its protagonists. Reinforcement came later in the day during the journey to Scone via the 'Wollombi Track' and the 'Convict Drinking Trough' on the old Great North Road!

Murray and Mace were extraordinarily hospitable and entertained a large circle of friends. Gourmet dinner parties were a regular feature of the social scene in then Upper Hunter. During my very first week I was graciously invited to tag along and join the throng at Victor and Roseanne's magnificent 'Braemar' homestead. I will never ever forget being greeted by Roseanne at the front door. Cupping my face in her hands she proclaimed with exquisite delectation: "Oh what a darling boy! (I was young and fresh!) Do you mind if we become awfully familiar?" I didn't know whether to run, laugh or cry. Being totally transfixed I did nothing! It was fabulous evening and Roseanne later became a much loved surrogate mother to me, her family my life long friends!

I learned very early Murray was a party animal! Still an itinerant resident *chez* 'Chivers' my second week was interrupted one evening by a call from Parraweena. 'View' had colic. 'View' was Johnny's highly prized Todman gelding. Murray and I traversed the Liverpool Range and headed west. The late Saturday call just happened to coincide with Bryans's birthday party celebrations! Bryan won an Olympic bronze medal in equestrian team sport at Tokyo. 'View' was not well and we commenced treatment. The tall imposing figure of the neighbouring 10 goal international polo player filled the door of the box. "Another (expletive deleted) pommy bastard" was Sinclair's one retort on introduction! The lines of cultural divide were very firmly drawn in the sand! Even 'Tiggy' had been polite on meeting me in the foyer of the iconic 'Australia Hotel' on my first morning in Australia! 'View' improved but there was no way Murray was leaving when Jill, Denise, Karen and Vallee were available on the dance floor!

I sat in a corner like a recalcitrant child bewildered and bemused! After tripping the light fantastic until 5am on Sunday we commenced the return journey and Murray was tired! I drove! My very first experience with a Mercedes Benz was like floating on air. We survived! I was not invited to steer again!

It was unfortunate to say the least whenever a 'Chivers' special was in full swing and rudely interrupted by an emergency. A difficult foaling was generally considered the most dire of crises demanding immediate reaction. Victor and Roseanne were special friends of the Bain's and were enjoying the lavish fare at 'Chivers' in suitable style and comfort on a pristine spring evening. They were justifiably proud owners of a boutique local stud on the outskirts of Scone. Just as everything seemed perfect the telephone rings on cue and Murray answers. It's a foaling all right and Murray decides he must go. It had always been practice policy that two veterinarians should attend whenever possible. Victor, used to giving orders in dictatorial colonial manner, was singularly unimpressed with Murray's perceived lack of delegated authority. "Send the boys" thundered Victor in inimitable and unmistakable style! "Well that's fine", responded Murray, "but the emergency is at a little tin pot stud down the road called Braemar!"

Victor was out there first in double quick time! Spouse Roseanne arrived moments later with Murray. Victor, a military survivor of Changi and fully fuelled by Dr. Dewar for any crisis was in imperious form! Strident orders and elaborate directives followed one another with alarming alacrity and sharp rapidity! Even Roseanne fell into line in full flowing evening dress and was delegated to fetch buckets of hot water. On returning heavy laden she suddenly recognised the futility of her immediate and current situation. A highly educated English born lady with impeccable manners, sublime diction, erudite knowledge and classy etiquette she decided immediately to make her unscheduled exit. “Victor, get (expletive deleted)!” was her parting shot while depositing the buckets! No one had ever heard vernacular expressed in such transcendent terms with cultured cadence so befitting!

The story had a happy ending and a very fine Star Kingdom colt hit the ground later to attain success in the sale ring, even greater achievement on the race track as ‘Finders Keepers’ and glory to the Stud as a sire. The party resumed to conclude with port and cigars. Professional honour was preserved with a very happy clientele. It only goes to show you must take careful stock of priorities before making too hasty decisions!

I had operated on a mare of VC’s who had a Granulosa Thecal Cell Tumour. Incredibly she survived! VC was also just recuperating following a surgical procedure performed by the immaculate Dr. Walter Pye. VC was expatiating at great length (and could be heard in Aberdeen) about the discrepancy in the two bills. ‘Ah, but the mare is worth more than you Mr.B’! There were some very pronounced expostulations, stutterings and mutterings!

W. P. Howey

### The Opposition – in life, work and play!

Like government every veterinary practice needs an effective opposition to ‘keep the bastards honest’! We had our fair share and maintained scrupulous integrity at all times! You never grow to like them but you can learn to respect them! Opposition comes from within and without of course.

Muswellbrook had traditionally provided stiff competition for anything extant in Scone. This historic antipathy was firmly entrenched in the rival genre of both cadre populations for generations past. Peter Dawkins, like Murray an expatriate from the ‘old dart’, set up in Muswellbrook shortly after Bain and Williams began trading professionally in Scone. It was an uneasy truce eased somewhat by Peter’s election to concentrate on dairy cattle rather than horses which he disdained. Having simmered along contentedly for over a decade it was in the late sixties when inter-practice rivalry hotted up and reached its zenith to that time.

Bill and Richard had joined Murray in Scone in 1967 in a presciently pre-emptive exercise foreshadowing what was later to develop into a regular seasonal two-way trans-global migration. Their Rugby talents could best be described a ‘modest’ or even

‘moderate’. Nonetheless they added to the playing numbers if not the strength of the recently nascent Scone Rugby Club. Scone enjoyed great initial success with victories in 1967 and 1968 the first two years of competition. Peter Dawkins employed Gavin and Frank directly from the UQ Veterinary Faculty in 1968. Both were eminent First Graders in Brisbane and Frank represented Queensland to boot - literally! Gavin had formed part of a redoubtable scrum for UQ many of whom were contemporary Wallabies including Ross Teitzel and Keith Bell. This shifted the balance of power considerably and raised the stakes in the ‘opposition’ contest! Within two years Muswellbrook won the competition with Frank at the helm as Captain/Coach. Never ever underestimate the impact this sort of extra-mural activity can generate. This was further compounded by the success on the race track of ‘Dark Diamond’ owned in partnership by Muswellbrook veterinarians Dave Scharp and John Law. They had picked out the ‘Dark Defiance’ gelding from a paddock owned by Les Swords in Denman and he had developed into an open company Cup horse!

The worst part about it was Frank and Gavin were both great blokes. Fortunately (for us) Frank did not stay around too long because of ‘not seeing eye-to-eye’ with some of his contemporaries. Gavin paid me the most back handed compliment ever on the Rugby paddock. Slugging it out one day against Scone the Muswellbrook pack was under duress and underperforming according to pack leader Gavin. His motivational diatribe was short and succinct: “Come on you Muswellbrook pigs! Howey’s their best forward and we all know how (expletive deleted) piss weak and useless he is”! I take the point Gavin! On my one day as captain of Scone we were beaten by a record margin at Murrurrundi, two were sent off and two walked off! The recruitment campaign of a few League players from the front bar of the Golden Fleece Hotel that morning had ‘back-fired’ badly! Eleven schooners is not the ideal pre-match preparation! Two received ‘life’. Tragically the referee later committed suicide! I like to believe it was unconnected to this event?

The contribution made by the veterinary profession to Scone Rugby in the early days is possibly unmatched by any other single organisation. Bill Howey and Richard Greenwood set the ball rolling (only just!). From there the quality and quantity markedly improved with the following also representing on the field and/or administration: Tony Parker, Warren McLaren, Angus Campbell, Bill Stewart, Jamie Barnes, Alan Simson, Nigel Scott, Gary Parker, Mark Wylie, Paul Ferguson and Euan Haith. Don Crosby also starred for Scone although based in Muswellbrook. Quite a few ‘itinerant students’ were also required to turn out as part of the seeing practice experience! Mark Wylie had answered in good faith the advertisement placed in the Australian Veterinary Journal for ‘a Rugby Playing Assistant’! Politically inexpedient if not incorrect in these enlightened days!

### Satur Veterinary Clinic

Just when we thought we had ‘buried the veterinary partition gremlins for good’ Satur Veterinary Clinic rose like a phoenix! Sandy Racklyeft was an experienced veterinary surgeon who was employed at Morgan Howey Fraser and Partners to bolster the clinical pathology and companion animal sectors at the behest of Jenny Jenkins. Jenny was

incumbent in the small animal domain and had worked with Sandy in the after hours emergency animal hospital in London UK. Sandy became disillusioned with the work environment and when he sealed a lifetime partnership by marrying equine specialist Debbie Edwards he and they set up at Satur. This has been a very successful personal and professional arrangement and provides effective opposition and 'choice' for clients. Many outstanding and competent veterinarians have passed through Satur Veterinary Clinic and no doubt this will continue. Many such as Peter Gorman have served very well at both Scone and Satur. Peripatetic Irish Veterinarian Kevin Doyle has also 'done time' at Satur.



Kevin Doyle with Debbie and Sandy Racklyeft at work

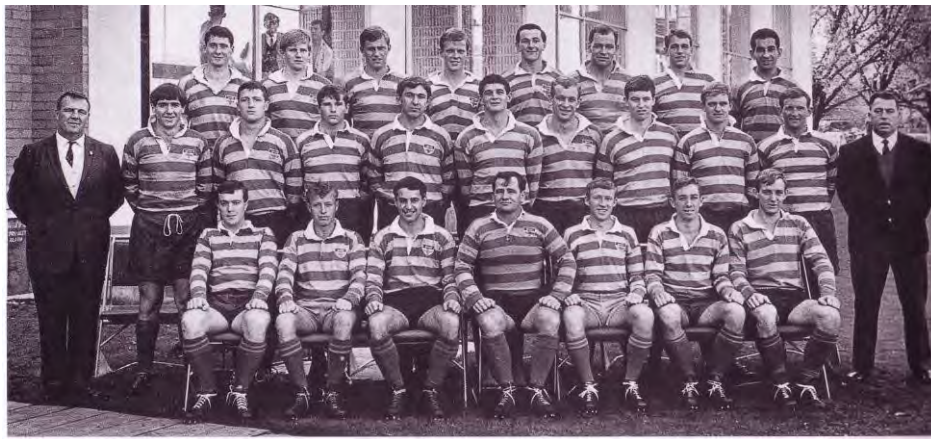
Phil Redman

Phil Redman controlled the destinies of 'Turangga Stud at Scone for many years and was a great humorist. Bert Lillye also wrote effusively about Phil's exploits as a horseman and veterinarian.

Bert wrote that 'at times his eyes carry the sparkle of the Devil'! No argument there! He would surprise visitors to Turangga by 'bleeding' mares from the jugular vein. For the unwary and uninitiated this can be a daunting experience! It seems like a lot of blood! Phil informed his inquisitive audience 'you wait until you see their eyes spinning' before you close the incision! Feinting was not uncommon! Phil spent four years in Indonesia on an ill fated attempt to set up a racing and breeding operation there. He escorted 550 racehorses and local conditions and feeding regimes with rice bran 'gubba' were 'unusual'. Colic and other complications were the 'norm' and many horses died *in extremis*. It was not without its lighter moments however! On one occasion in desperation Phil resorted to a trochar and cannula to relieve 'bloat' in a distressed horse 'Rio Shah'. Miraculously he survived and even thrived to win three subsequent races in quick fire succession. The natives were enormously impressed and soon turned up in droves

‘demanding treatment with this marvelous new form of acupuncture which turned slow racehorses into consummate winners’!

Phil also had great fun at the expense of the local equivalent of the ‘little people’. He was performing a caesarean section on a cow and the children were goggle-eyed at this ‘whitefella magic’! On successfully removing a live calf Phil was just beginning to suture the uterus and flank when he noticed his totally enthralled wide eyed audience for the first time! The temptation was too much! He couldn’t resist! On passing his arm through the wound he was able to wave to the little urchins pressing around him with his free hand through the cow’s back vulva! That was enough! With howls of terror in unison the assembled throng bolted *poste haste* into the surrounding bush! They had almost as much trouble coming to terms with Tom Campbell’s false teeth which he removed and placed ‘grinning’ at them as he went about his tasks!



Sydney University Rugby Club versus Melbourne University 1964  
‘Rugger Bugger’ Phil Redman is 3<sup>rd</sup>. from the left in the middle row

Ray Biffin

Ray was also the veterinary equivalent of a colorful racing identity albeit a very gifted proponent of the ‘art and science’! He was very innovative when he set up his facility at Murrurundi and was the first to establish a ‘flotation tank’ to aid in the healing of limb fractures of horses. The fact that it did not work very satisfactorily was no impediment to Ray! He was similarly prescient in being among the first to successfully attach an artificial limb to a horse with an amputation. This was ground breaking stuff and certainly ‘pioneering territory’. Ray could have used the flotation tank himself when he suffered the indignity of a fractured pelvis while attempting to assist a horse recover from anaesthesia! He was made of stern stuff and the injury did not impact his workload! Carbon fibre implants were once the ‘new age rage’ for the treatment of tendon injuries in performance horses. Guess who was ‘first cab off the rank’?

Rural Lands Pastures Protection Board Veterinarians



Although strictly not ‘opposition’ or ‘competition’ the late Murray Bain was somewhat scathing in his assessment of the ‘free veterinary service for graziers’! There have been a number of prominent veterinarians to hold the position in Scone. Joe Berryman was an early ‘veterinary stock inspector’ and was followed in the 1960’s by Colin Cargill who later forged an eminent career in the pig and pork industry. Graham Brown was the young incumbent in the late 1960’s and his veterinarian son Chris has begun to attract a lot of comment as a TV vet. Trevor Doust followed Graham and in turn was succeeded by John Entwistle who filled the post with long distinction until his tragically early demise in the late 1990’s.

“The Weirdest Call”  
&  
“A Boy Named Sue”

Sue was the very first full time female veterinary assistant employed in the Scone veterinary practice. A true ‘Queenslander’ with strong PNG associations Sue had been an outstanding undergraduate and endeared herself to the ‘boss’ to the extent she was the very last person offered career prospects by AMB. It was not easy for a ‘new’ graduate to assimilate into the by now very well established team. Sue made it with honours!

Just as we have all experienced Sue had her perplexing moments in her early days! Much of this centered around the unique social culture of the Moonan/Woolooma/Stewarts Brook district in the hills to the east of Scone. One day there was an important call to Max and Lex – or was it Lex and Max? The call description was ‘unclear’ to the receptionist and the directions almost as vague. Sue agreed to investigate. Eventually she managed to decipher the convoluted map to Stewarts Brook where unfortunately she encountered a big rock and a puncture! Luckily old ‘Dodge’ was riding past and being

natures' gentleman offered assistance. Sue was in unflattering overalls and wore her hair very short long before it became fashionable. To his dying day 'Dodge' maintained he helped a young vet Sam to change his tyre! 'A boy named Sue' became a standard joke in the Victoria Arms at Moonan Flat! Johnny Cash would have approved!

Never having left 'Dodge' knew the locality very well and was able to direct Sue to identical bachelor twins Max and Lex's abode at a weather worn cottage near the Moonan Brook turn off. It had been a hard day's night and an argument had developed! There were a few empty Brown Muscat flagons strewn about! Sue was eventually able to establish the reason for the call! The twins had a major disagreement whether or not all twin calves were infertile? Not trusting subjective local knowledge they elected the vet as being able to mediate objectively in the dispute. This was the only agreement they had reached in 48 hours of heated debate! Sue delivered her diatribe on 'Freemartinism' unsure if her message was clearly received. The conflict was resolved and honour satisfied. Sue was greatly bemused by the circumstances of her first exposure to local culture!

At about this time we invested in 'new communication technology'! We purchased a 'Divertacall' system. This revolutionary device played a recorded voice message on the main line as to what number to dial to contact the duty vet after hours. I received a 'desperation' call from Harold of Moonan Brook at my home late one night. He told me he dialed the practice number several times 'but that other bloke wouldn't talk to me!' It can be confusing the first time for the residents of the very Upper Hunter!

We have all dealt with 'horror calls'! I think mine must have been at Warland's Creek at 2 am one winter's night when it had rained for two days solid! The appellant simply replied 'Yuh, Yuh' to any request for accurate directions. Warland's Creek nestles among the hills above Murrurundi in the high rain catchment area. A small heifer had 'hip lock'. On arrival at 3:30 am the heifer was prostrate in 12 cms of water in a back shed with no permanent lighting. My car had slid down a greasy embankment. After the most difficult elective 'caesar' of my life I was dragged out by tractor at 7 am still in cold 'Donegal style' driving rain just in time to go back to work!

It was a Sunday on duty when I drove 780 kms attending fifteen calls with five in the high country above Timor that I began to consider my longevity in large animal rural practice! The last call was at 10 pm to Upper Rouchel to a cow with mangled twins the owner had just discovered on returning from a long week-end away. It had been a horrendous day with the greatest disappointment coming from eventually reckoning what I had achieved? Regrettably the late spring season was a good one and the unborn calves had generally grown too big for the 'immature' winter drought heifers. Tractors and 4WD's attached to hip lock heifers doesn't do much for their obturator nerves or vet's sanity! Tragically Sue later made an 'ultimate' decision on her own behalf at age 40 in a far away country.

W. P. Howey

### Tuesday Boozers Club

The 'Tuesday Boozers Club' [TBC] at the Belmore Hotel was an iconic totem of a bygone era celebrated by a unique cadre of bucolic individuals!

For eons of time the weekly Fat Stock Cattle Sale has been held at the various Scone Sale Yard locations every Tuesday of the year barring major public holiday clashes. This became the pilgrimage destination for many outlying farmers and graziers seeking business transactions allied to social interaction with their agents and associates. For some this included well lubricated sessions of discourse in the 'select bar' of the Belmore Hotel with mine hosts Jim and Audrey Cotton at the helm. There were variable sessions of condolence, congratulation, consideration and commiseration. Wives, girl friends and *de facto*'s were expected to visit and meet with relatives and friends or engage in other social, civic and sporting pursuits for the duration of the sale and aftermath. They could collect their 'bread winner' at the appointed hour for the return journey.

Every Christmas a special dinner was held to ‘cement’ the year’s activities and seal friendships not excluding the long suffering spouses! This was funded in part by contributions to a ‘swear box’ at 20 cents per expletive! The swear box was Audrey’s valiant although not too serious attempt to improve the standard of conversation at the TBC. One day Johnny Del was so exasperated at his inability to adequately express his disgust over a matter of epic proportion he placed \$1 on the bar. “Mrs. Cotton [always a gentleman!]! Here is one dollar in advance: ‘F—k, F—k, F—k, F—k, F—k,’”! At 5 x 20 cents Johnny’s gremlins were suddenly exorcised in rapid quick fire succession! Coming from a background of Mediterranean ethnicity Johnny occasionally had trouble with the local vernacular – but not on this occasion!



TBC ‘Grandmaster’ Reg Watts in action on ‘Norm’ at Rouchel 1947  
Reg Watts was a renowned ‘lay gelder’ of colts in the pre-veterinary days of Scone

Reg Watt’s niece Rita used to do a wonderful job looking after her precious Uncle. She told me the post-TBC dinners she prepared for him were always special and every one unique! The actual time and timing was ‘negotiable’ and the guest list uncertain! It could include fellow TBC members and great mates Fred R. from ‘Ardglen’ or Ray B. from Aberdeen at very short – make that no notice! All were equally welcome and lavishly entertained! True gentleman Fred was always effusive in his apologies to his favourite sobriquet ‘Sis’ for turning up – yet again – unannounced! Those were indeed the days!

The TBC cabal was an eclectic selection of high mountain men from east of Moonan, the Timor cabal, the Rouchel contingent, the Kars Springs cadre and the Bunnan brigade. ‘Inside men’ including local farmers, business men and most of the agents made up the total cache. Following a suitable ‘quarantine’ incubation period a few ‘outsiders’ were occasionally permitted to join the TBC ranks! The author was one in this category! There was Norm, Roy Mac and the ‘Little White Bull’. Tiger, Tom, Tim, Regis, Paul and Bill were there most days and old George from the sale yards. Tom and Paul et al from

Dalgaty's contributed a regular contingent being closely adjacent to the choice 'watering hole'. Don's garage was a convenient excuse for some to drop by and pretend to be otherwise engaged at 'Don's Party'. The 'Gallop Major' [Imp.] added an exotic dimension in the TBC's declining years. Discerning contemplation of the very self evident exquisite lactation potential of fellow countrywoman 'hostess' bar maid Sheila might have formed part of the attraction there! There was a subliminal aura of general convivial appreciation of the female pectoral area pervading the TBC! There were a few dairy farmers. They had a very good eye and knew their section criteria! 'Gentleman Jim' was definitely not on his 'Pat Malone'!



'The Little White Bull' on 'Norma' Sydney Royal 1938  
Photos courtesy of Chris Winter

No conversation subject was taboo for the group and erudite philosophical discussion expanded in exponential proportion to the 'lubricant' consumed! Ken from Timor was perhaps the TBC's most articulate and eloquent exponent. One day after much tub thumping, breast beating and derisory diatribe about the then egregious state of the pork industry in Australia Ken from Timor made his perennially famous consummation pronouncement! "Gentlemen, there you have it, a carefully considered opinion from a genuine team of experts: 'Pigs is f---d'! 'PIF' became a catch cry for some TBC members for many years to come! Ken always played a straight bat and portrayed an even straighter face closely allied to a very dry droll laconic humour!

It would not be stretching the truth too far – although veracity had an elastic quality at the TBC – to claim the Australian Stock Horse Society had its genesis if not its nexus at the TBC. Many of the 'good ol' boys' like Wattsy, Tiger, Bert and even 'honorary' blow in Joe Burr from Nundle were very mindful if the impact of the introduction of the American Quarter Horse. They were especially enamored if not threatened by the



slickness of the publicity and marketing machine of the well oiled importation proponents. They knew they had an equal if not superior product and there was much erudite debate. The outcome was the 'acorn' of an idea to form a local horse society dedicated to the 'Waler'. The Australian Stock Horse Society became the 'great oak tree' and history dictates it emanated from meetings at the RAS Royal Easter Show and in Tamworth. I say it started at the TBC in the Belmore! You don't believe me? Just ask me – and also Tiger, Wattsy, Bert and Joe - if you can find them! 'I was there'. How come I've been the honorary veterinarian since inception?

TBC members expatiated at length on much esoteric and some unique philosophy. The timing of departure was a matter of profound debate and each individual reached his own conclusion usually allied to perceived meteorology and 'geography' gremlins pertaining to the return journey. Pete from Bunnan adduced it was dangerous to drive into the setting western sun. It was therefore necessary to delay leaving until 'safe to do so'! Naturally the time vacuum could not be adequately filled without further consumption of 'seven ounces' and rum chasers. Time was a precious commodity at the TBC and not to be trifled with or wasted! Brock from Rouchel had a different problem but equal, opposite and apposite solution. He had to be home before the sun rose over the Barrington Tops to the east on Wednesday morning! It was all a matter of good timing and very sound logic at the TBC!

The timing was bad for one poor unfortunate recidivist late one night in 1970! The author was just completing another convivial TBC meeting with First Class Constable Stan. At final call for 'last drinks' the unique blue and white 'Kingswood' was found to be missing from the car park! A quick visit to the police station enabled the duty Sergeant Graham Noble to establish the just received report of the demise of the author at 'Willowtree' was grossly exaggerated. 'You've just been reported as dead' was the laconic retort! Solicitor Graham Hooke arrived at this stage 'white as a sheet' thinking he had seen a ghost! He confirmed the Sergeant's opinion that the author was indeed extant!

The 'bush telegraph' had excelled. In the time it takes to down six schooners a part-indigenous person from Breeza had stolen the iconic Holden and tragically crashed into a new road bridge just south of 'Willowtree'. A Muswellbrook truck driver had 'identified' the poor unfortunate as 'definitely the young 'Pommy' vet from Scone'! [He doesn't look too aboriginal!] This message was quickly relayed to Bill Perkins among his 'good old boy' acolytes and cronies at the TBC equivalent in the 'White Hart' in Murrurundi. Talk about a 'bush fire'! Bad news travels very fast. The author was able to rapidly dispel the wildly extravagant rumours as described!

There were some trophies on the wall at the TBC! One young professional elected to have his 'buck's night' at the Belmore. A brass plaque was appended by his associates to commemorate the occasion presuming the demise of the proponent as a TBC regular. The caption read: "In memoriam – Bill Howey once drank here"! Alas all good things come to an end! Jim Cotton passed on at too early an age. Some TBC members accelerated their own early departure but the introduction of RBT heralded the ultimate rapid demise of the 'great debate'! Memories! Memories! Memories!

## Vale Champions

It's always very sad when the time has come to say good bye! I've had my share of them!

For any normal natural 'hetero' male 'Pipe of Peace (Imp)' was a sorry and distressing sight! The magnificent brown son of Supreme Court had given his all and then some! From being one of the best 'mare stoppers' in the country he suddenly 'went off' – right off as far as fertility was concerned! He still loved his job! Subsequent investigation resulted in 'paraphimosis' where it all hangs out and won't go back until it shrinks! It was heart rending to watch this superb animal with undiminished libido but with his masculinity dangling limply totally unresponsive to testosterone priming!

King of Babylon (Imp) was a different case. He had always suffered from 'soft feet' and 'flat soles'. The very best farrier care had managed to progress him to late middle age but now the pain was constant and acute with chronic under running and abscessation. All sorts of palliative therapy had been tried and now found wanting. His time had come!

‘Todman’ did not suffer the indignity of the ‘green dream’ needle. ‘Bim’ and I were at the bottom yards when ‘Bim’ noticed him stagger in the superb old sandstone stallion box the home of many a champion! My instinct was to rush over. ‘Leave him’ said pragmatic Bim. By the time we walked over he was gone.



*Todman proved to be a most successful sire in all departments. His outstanding racehorses included Eskimo Prince, Crewman and Ricochet; his sons sired the top performers Ngawyni, Scamanda and Burwana; and his daughters produced the champions Dulcify, Maybe Mahal and Good Lord.*

‘Gunsynd’ had been the people’s champion and despite ‘commercial’ failure as a sire many still nurtured great affection for the ‘Goondoowindi Grey’. Unfortunately he had suffered from ‘nasal bleeding’ – was Bill Wehlow right? This developed to ‘Progressive Ethmoid Haematoma’ which only the superb expertise of Dave Hutchins could reverse. The ‘tumour’ had now returned at a time when insurance was ‘difficult’ and real value diminished. He could not be left as he was! The hardest part was keeping the Channel Nine news team at bay!



*Gunsynd, possibly Australia's most popular racehorse in post-war years, has been in the headlines again in recent times as the sire of the dam of the top filly Emancipation.*

Anaphylactic shock can be terminal for horses - and people! 'Baguette' was a son by Rego [Imp.] of the great Star Kingdom brood mare 'Dark Jewel' owned by the Tait family. Full sister 'Heirloom' had died suddenly of 'anaphylaxis' in 1968. Anecdotal evidence suggested the 'old lady' had also succumbed. 'Baguette' had developed a severe almost asphyxiating upper respiratory condition. The case passed on to me. Antibiotics had been administered. I saw the warning signs just in time!

It was different with 'Kaoru Star' I was the cause and I nearly died! 'Old Kaoru' had mild colic one evening and I had some S8 'Pethidine' with me. I gave him some intravenously. Lionel Israel (owner) was standing just outside the box. Kaoru Star went on a 'trip' – literally! He walked and paced and walked and paced and paced and walked! 'How are things going Bill?' 'Fine Lionel!' Bullshit! I was terrified and would have died if I could! After a few minutes he settled down and was OK. Two hours later I stopped sweating. I don't think my heart rate has ever returned to normal? I never ever used 'Pethidine' again!





*Kaoru Star. His progeny, which includes Luskin Star, have won more than \$4 million.*

‘Biscay’ was always my favourite! A gentle giant with a superb disposition he overcame the stigma of not being ‘Imp’ and also moving between three different studs for his first three seasons. Some of his unborn progeny I accompanied to the USA in 1970. Although only starting eight times in his life he very early developed severe navicular disease. At 22 after a prolonged battle Biscay was in severe and chronic pain and spent a lot of time lying down in his special sand roll. (His great sire son ‘Bletchingly’ was to follow a similar path many years later). Mr A. O. Ellison was quite philosophical about all of this! Star Kingdom and Todman both died at 22 he noted. David was in charge at Bhima. He called me from my son’s junior cricket game one Saturday in late October and said I must come! To his everlasting credit David had decided ‘enough was enough’ and instructed me to go into action! I knew it was right and did as instructed. I think there was a tear in both our eyes but of course we will never admit it? It’s never easy!





*Biscay — brilliant racehorse, successful sire and outstanding sire of sires.*

‘Vain’ was my other icon in Biscay’s realm but fortunately I ‘escaped’ before it was his – and my – turn again.

W. P. Howey

## Philosophical Peregrinations

This section could almost be part of 'Unreliable Anecdotes' and/or 'Philosophical Perspectives' but I thought there was enough difference and distance to separate them! Quite a few of these are 'dated' also and relate to times when I was Director of the PGFVS.

### 'Defend to the Death'

"I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it".

The citation above was attributed to Voltaire in *'The Friends of Voltaire'* (1906) S. G. Tallentyre (E. Beatrice Hall) but is not found in his works.

Mr. Asquith, then Prime Minister of Great Britain (1910) also invoked the same quotation in dealing with a youthful, determined and vituperative Winston Churchill who was allegedly most aggressive and assertive in debate. "You will learn, when you begin to understand that conversation is not a monologue" the PM is reputed to have rebuked the garrulous WC while still defending his right to free speech!

Not surprisingly I have been taken to task for printing 'Ruffled Feathers' with my Christmas Director's Circular. I had contemplated and anticipated such admonishment and offer no apology! I have little further to add other than to reiterate the views expressed by Kevin McManus do not purport to represent those of the Foundation or its management. The PGFVS has (almost) always been 'politically neutral' and allows all sides the right to their say. This position will be nurtured and maintained. As far as I am concerned I have respect for the opinions of all my collegiate veterinarians although there are many I do not see eye-to-eye! My numerous associates in practice will attest to this pronouncement! Like Voltaire (?) I will ultimately defend the right of any individual to express his or her considered views without fear or favour and unencumbered by so called political correctness however conventionally unpopular. Anything less in my view amounts to an onerous form of editorial censorship. Who am I to judge my peers in this way?

Similarly my knowledge of the Muslim religion and contents of the Koran were brutally exposed by a well-intentioned and extremely well informed Christian member who has read the Koran! My major premise was to promote harmony, peace, good will and most importantly tolerance in these trying times! I must do my 'home-work' better in future although I still fervently believe in the essential unbiased content of the message promoting forbearance in general!

W. P. Howey  
Director

## The Exodus, the Genesis

And

“A Dream That Could Be Realised”

## The Evolution of a New Racecourse

On one of his frequent visits to the Upper Hunter Valley, Emeritus Professor Rex Butterfield, President of the Australian Equine Research Foundation and Keeneland (USA) representative in Australia, remarked on the similarity of events at that time to the genesis of the “Keeneland Concept” in Kentucky in 1936. The date was sometime in the early 1980’s and the Upper Hunter was witness to a flurry of activity in the development of thoroughbred racing and breeding in the district, possibly unprecedented, even in the bench mark/cornerstone industries so important historically to the locality.



Emeritus Professor Rex Butterfield [Centre]  
Inaugural Vetsearch-RIRDC Equine Research Award 1995  
Mr. Keith Hyde [RIRDC left] and Mr. Ian Champion [Vetsearch right]

In his concluding remarks addressed to a mass meeting of breeders and others interested in racing at the Lafayette Hotel on Wednesday afternoon March 20, 1935 Major Louie A. Beard said: “This may seem like a dream, but I believe it is a dream that can be realised.”  
(*The Thoroughbred Record (USA) October 10 1936*)

The meeting witnessed by Professor Butterfield was held at the Scone Bowling Club. It was a gathering of like-minded people representing the fledgling Hunter Valley Bloodhorse Breeders Association (HVBHBA) and inevitably the local racing industry. The significance of the astute Professor's observations as we approach the closing of White Park Racecourse (22:10:94/24:10:94) and the opening date (18:11:94) of the new course at Satur can now be placed in true perspective. Actually the rebirth of the new track is in fact a return after a lapse of c.100 years, to racing in the Satur locality. As detailed in Daniel Morgan's excellent thesis "The Reality of the Turf" (Scone's Colonial Horse Racing, 1842 - 1900) first class racing was held at Mr. Frederick Augustus Parbury's property from 1892 - 1915 under the auspices of the Scone Jockey Club.

During the late 1970's to the early 1980's some vitally important decisions were reached in a remarkable chronological sequence which were to have enormous impact on the future development of racing in Scone, and indeed to rescue and secure its (precarious) position. Pivotal in this process were a few individuals, most of whom represented either or both the Scone Race Club and the HVBHBA. The committees of both these organisations had enjoyed a recent period of growth and strength at a fortuitous time.

The early seed for the concept of a better race track for Scone had evolved from the fertile mind of local agent F.W. (Bill) Rose (FWR). The committee of the Scone Race Club had long deliberated on the restrictions and deficiencies imposed by the less than adequate White Park and the sharing of the facilities with the Golf Club in particular. The Club was being thwarted in its efforts to attract funding for development from the Racecourse Development Fund established by the NSW TAB.

The hidden agenda behind consistent refusals or pittance donations by the TAB was that the discerning decision-makers did not support the further development of White Park Racecourse!

To its great credit, the Scone Race Club Committee at the time accepted the stark and harsh reality of this observation. The major problem was what to do about it and achieve a realistic feasible solution acceptable to the Race Club and the broad community in general. The initial response was for the Scone Shire Council at FWR's instigation and insistence to purchase Dal Adams farm adjacent to White Park and to develop this 'ideal' location as a Sports Complex in perpetuity for the citizens of Scone. To the great credit of all concerned, this conceptual plan was rescued from potential and established as reality from this time. The Sporting Development Committee under the chairmanship of Brian McGrath was constituted by Scone Shire Council to expedite and oversee this project.

The secondary agenda underpinning this idea was to separate the interests of the sometime feuding Golf Club and Race Club and to permit the expansion of the Racecourse to a 2000 metre track within the confines of White Park. No golf fairway was to straddle the course proper. At an 'on site' sub-committee meeting comprising Brian McGrath, Terry Barnes (Scone Shire Clerk), Bill Rose and the author the overall practicality and financial feasibility of the total concept was addressed. The quotation for

the erection of 3 new creek crossings to support the enlarged track was detailed at \$180,000. The two Race Club delegates conferred and volunteered the opinion that considering this scale of finance the concept was not viable and an alternative solution should be found. To say that this revelation surprised Brian and Terry would be a gross understatement! It was, however, agreed that the harsh truth of this decision was realistic and that the proponents of change should consider other avenues. The importance of this deliberation cannot be overemphasised as absolutely basic and underpinning all future decision and debate!

The outcome for the district was the establishing of a magnificent Sports Complex accommodating a wide range of sporting pursuits but did nothing to alleviate the existing and ongoing problems of the Golf Club and Race Club!

The Chairman of the Sydney Turf Club at this time was Mr. George Ryder, a long time Hunter Valley Thoroughbred Breeder first at 'Woodlands Stud' and latterly at 'Kia Ora'. George was an enthusiastic, energetic and innovative administrator, but who on occasion "ran his own race". He was an active proponent of the total concept to restructure country racing in NSW. In some cases this involved amalgamation and pooling of resources of race clubs in close geographic proximity to improve the overall standard in general and not to in his opinion fractionate the TAB distribution 'cake' into too many small nonviable fragments. It was the perception by many close to the action that this represented the strong majority view of AJC, STC and TAB committees as well as NSW Government Policy. The 'carrot' as dangled by George Ryder was a sum in excess of \$600,000 provided by the STC to facilitate the relocation of a major racing facility in the Upper Hunter. It was later revealed that this concept did not have the unqualified support of the STC directors!

The Scone Race Club Committee deliberated on this proposition and submitted as one possible solution the pooling of resources of the Scone Race Club and the Upper Hunter Race Club to establish a single large modern racing facility financed in part by the STC as well as other funds. (TAB, sale of Skellatar Park etc). This was interpreted by the racing fraternity in the district as meaning one thing only – amalgamation!

A furious and heated debate ensued culminating in a very public and well attended meeting at the Scone Bowling Club chaired by the author when the Scone Race Club Membership totally rejected by a very large majority any consideration of relocation or 'amalgamation' of the Club's racing facility. The committee (other than a few 'populist defections') nonetheless maintained the position that to remain on White Park without major structural change would ultimately and inevitably lead to the demise of the Scone Race Club as a separate identifiable entity in the medium to long term. This was truly 'grasping the nettle' a very vital and compelling decision that was to significantly influence subsequent events as they unfolded. Sir Humphrey of 'Yes, Minister' fame would have labeled this as politically inexpedient and naive but 'courageous'! It would come as no surprise that total membership of the Scone Race Club attained its historic zenith at this time! Chronologically it was imperative to hold this debate and to address the very real issue of the progress and future of racing in Scone. To have hesitated or

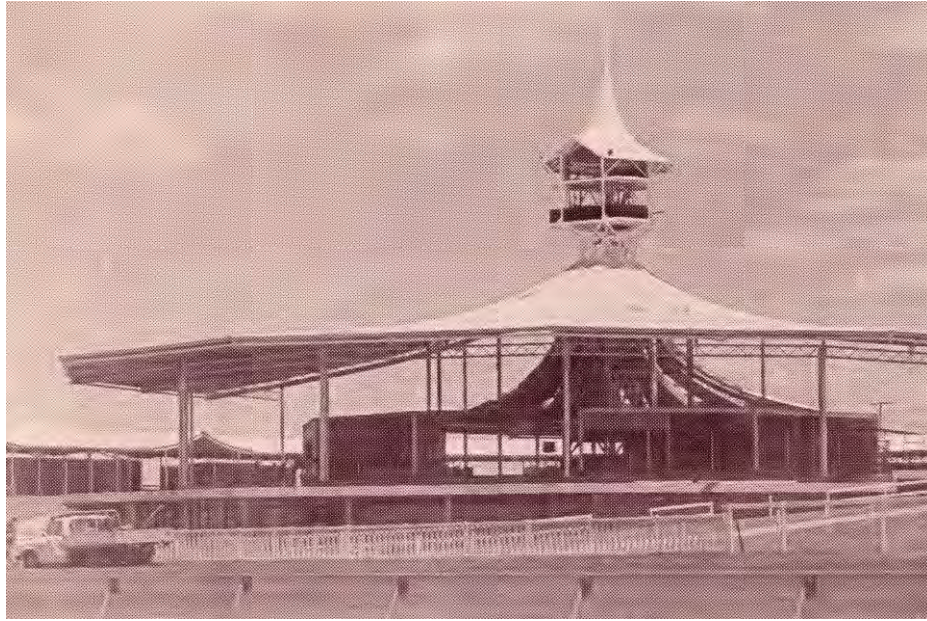


procrastinated on this issue could justifiably have loaded ammunition for future generations to aim at the administration of the time. The author with others was determined that accusations of ineptitude or apathy could never be leveled at the committee of the day!

It was from this standpoint that FWR, with single-minded purpose vigorously pursued his vision and goal of the purchasing and development of a site selected by him at 'Tarrangower', Satur. That he was able to achieve this is testimony to his bullish determination part of the motivation coming from the challenge of not the principle but the feasibility of the objective. The procedure and process was largely withheld from the committee in general other than a select few. This was regrettable although in hindsight probably necessary in order to achieve fruition. It inevitably led to some dented pride, bruised egos and a somewhat divided committee but if the ends justify the means then totally sustainable.



Julie and Bill Rose at the new track under construction. November 1994  
The author lived at 'Tarrangower' when first married in April 1975. 'Best man' at the wedding Bill Rose first conceived the idea:  
"What a great amphitheatre for a racetrack"!



‘Public Viewing Facility’

November 1994

The subsequent purchase and ability to raise the significant funds for the total project brought into play a remarkable and providential series of people and organisations, co-incidentally and fortuitously ‘in the right place at the right time’!

The vehicle for fund raising was to be the Hunter Valley Equine Research Foundation the brainchild of the author and Brian Agnew of Wakefield Stud from his perspective as energetic and popularly elected President of the HVBHBA. This is a registered charitable trust set up by the HVBHBA to raise funds for local equine research projects and to which donations were exempt from taxation. The HVERF was to become the ‘landlord’ of the Satur facility and to purchase the property from FWR and grant the Scone Race Club a portion for the new racetrack on a long-term ‘peppercorn rent’.

Purchase of ‘Tarrangower’ was for an amount in excess of \$1 million which had to be locally raised. That this was readily achieved is testimony to the ability of all concerned and again attributable in part to some extraordinary circumstances.

This period of time (mid to late 1980’s) was arguably the most inflationary and ‘bullish’ market in the history of thoroughbred racing and breeding in Australia. The donation of very high stallion service fees was a major activity in fund raising. Also the entrepreneurial flair and genius of Tony Bott recently established as Studmaster at Segenhoe could be harnessed to organise some very high profile and vastly successful activities at Segenhoe and the Sebel Town House, Sydney (at Easter). The auction of donated goods and chattels at these events realised significant sums of money towards the project as well as donations to charity (>\$100,000 NBN Telethon appeal).

That the funds were raised and the purchase completed is testimony to the singular purpose and dedication of a number of protagonists and a few in particular. Having

secured the title to a suitable property, the Scone Race Club was then in a strong position to approach the TAB - RDF (as previously advised) to provide funding to complete the total concept. The procedure of development and fruition has been very successfully guided and negotiated, not without considerable personal sacrifice, by the incumbent Race Club President, David Bath of Bhima Stud. The reality of the complex as it approaches its genesis is a tribute to David's persistence, patience and zeal.



Opening of the new Scone Race Track  
November 1994

The challenge facing the administration of the Race Club will be to transport and/or re-create the special ambience that was such a very special feature of racing at White Park, universally acknowledged by successive generations of patrons.

The committee might very well consider the aspirations of Hal Price Headley, on the day before Keeneland opened its 1937 spring meeting, who stated:

‘We want a place where those who love horses can come and picnic with us and thrill to the sport of the (Bluegrass). We are not running a race plant to hear the click of the mutuel machines. We don't care whether the people who come here bet or not. If they want to bet there is a place for them to do it. But we want them to come out here to enjoy God's sunshine, the fresh air, and to watch horses race’.

Clearly, in today's climate, some of that logic is questionable. However, the ideals and principles are highly commendable.

The primary purposes of Keeneland also bear repetition and contemplation in this context:

1. Preservation of the finest tradition of the sport of racing



2. Conduct of the world's most important Thoroughbred sales, and
3. Participation as an active "citizen" in the community and state.

The concept that 'dreams can be realised' with sufficient motivation and purpose is to some extent fuelled by the emotions as expressed and quoted in Daniel Morgan's treatise on 'The Reality of the Turf' viz:

'The passion for horses may be ridiculed by persons of narrow mindedness and sedentary lives; but the feeling has ever been characteristic of the most intellectual and powerful races of mankind, and the highest order of literature and art has been inspired by the contemplation of this admirable gift of the creator.'

(Sydney Morning Herald. October 3, 1857)

W.P.Howey. Scone. October 1994

Footnote:

Some years down the track the dream is slightly jaded. The energy and synergy was not maintained by the early 'glory runners' many of whom were seduced by the apparent 'win-win' situation. Most are no longer extant. The new course has been a glorious success but country racing has changed a great deal. The public viewing facility has attracted much justifiable criticism. It is seen as a very costly mistake more meretricious than meritorious.

The Hunter Valley Equine Research facility was constructed but has never functioned fully for its intended purpose although this situation may be changing.



The Hunter Valley Equine Research Centre



## Education

Further enlightened education has always been a fundamental premise for successive generations of veterinarians in Scone. Commitment to life long learning as a continuum has formed the basis of a prevailing philosophy for the incumbents at any one time. The birth of this process can arguably be traced back over 50 years. Murray Bain was resident veterinarian and manager of Alton Lodge Stud in New Zealand. He gave a talk entitled “Problems Associated with Infertility in the Brood Mare” to the NSW Division of the Australian Veterinary Association at The Veterinary School, University of Sydney on Tuesday April 6<sup>th</sup>. 1948. It was an extraordinarily intuitive treatise challenging many of the inculcated but outdated tenets of the day. Murray brought this heuristic mind to the Hunter Valley with him in 1950.

It is a legacy which endures to this day on a local, national and international stage. Murray and his cohorts arranged a series of seminars for interested stud people as early as 1968 with the inaugural one taking place in the Scone Bowling Club with John Kelso in the chair. Following Murray’s tragic early demise in 1974 the ‘F-squared Club’ was formed by Peter Morris and Bill Howey. From this the Hunter Valley Blood Horse Breeders Association emerged and subsequently also the Hunter Valley Equine Research Foundation. Scone TAFE College was established in the mid-eighties at Muffett Street and dedicated to equine and rural courses. The new Hunter Valley Equine Centre became part of a larger complex embracing the TAFE College and Race Track as well as the Research Centre.

Veterinary education also flourished. Together with fellow icons Vic Cole and Tom Hungerford Murray had been one of the early visionary founders of the Post Graduate Foundation in Veterinary Science of the University of Sydney in the sixties. Only Julie Rose’s mother (Bill’s mother-in-law) momentarily deflected his driving passionate commitment to this organisation. Bill Howey was to become the third full time Director of the PGFVS in 2000 following Tom Hungerford and Doug Bryden. The PGFVS enjoys a global reputation as the leader in continuing veterinary education having been the very first of its kind.

A major course featuring international speakers was held in Scone under the aegis of the Australian Equine Veterinary Association (AEVA) in 1977. Bill Pickett (USA), Cliff Irvine (NZ), Margaret Evans (NZ) and Percy Sykes augmented local speakers in the Arts and Crafts Centre. The following year (1978) the initial AEVA Bain/Fallon course with Leo Jeffcott was held in the Wentworth Hotel in Sydney. The course was named in honour of Murray Bain and Peter Fallon who both died tragically early in 1974. It is an enduring monument to this day and the principal flagship of the AEVA.

Veterinary commitment to general education endures through the various courses available through Scone TAFE. Most significant among these are Veterinary Nursing and specifically Equine Nursing – again the first of its kind internationally. The now *de rigueur* ritual migration of veterinarians and stud hands between the hemispheres is also an education extension process.

W. P. Howey



Cambridge Education!

The author and Mr. Pat Nicholas 'on tour' with the Post Graduate Foundation in Veterinary Science of the University of Sydney. This photograph was taken at Kings College Cambridge University UK in 1973.

Pat was a former 'Wallaby' and on the Council of the PGFVS when the author was its third Director

## Equality? Myth or Reality?

Have you ever contemplated the real meaning of equality in our society? The Macquarie Dictionary – like the Macquarie Thesaurus never far from my grasp these days! – defines ‘**Equality**’ as: “*the state of being equal; correspondence in quality, degree, value, rank, ability etc.*” ‘**Equal**’ is further delineated: “*as great as another; like or alike in quantity, degree, value etc.; of the same rank, ability, merit etc.; evenly proportioned or balanced; uniform in operation or effect; adequate or sufficient in quantity or degree; having adequate powers, ability, or means; level as a plain; tranquil or undisturbed; impartial or equitable; one who or that which is equal; to be or become equal to; match; to make or do something equal to; to recompense fully.*” Quite a lot in that little scenario! Just underneath is EEO! Is it realistically attainable and/or sustainable?

I was stimulated to think and prompted to write about this topic by another most welcome little present from Santa Claus! I was fortunate to receive an autobiography of Eric Blair by Jeffrey Meyers. Eric was an intriguing fellow who lived his short peripatetic life in the first cataclysmic half of the previous century ultimately falling victim to ubiquitous ‘consumption’. He left an enduring legacy as the writer, critic and social philosopher George Orwell. Described by his peers as ‘*the wintry conscience of a generation*’ he contributed greatly to the English language as the author of several seminal tomes including ‘*Animal Farm*’ and ‘*Nineteen Eighty-Four*’.

“All animals are **equal** but some animals are more **equal** than others” (*Animal Farm*) has become as much a part of our etymological heritage as “Big brother is watching you.” (*Nineteen Eighty-Four*). Reference to another of my close companion edition(s) (*Oxford Dictionary of Modern Quotations*) reveals many scintillating citations from other sources. E. M. Forster in *Howard’s End* (1910 Ch. 6) attests humorously: “*All men are **equal** – all men that is to say, who possess an umbrella!*” In *Proper Studies* (1927) ‘*The Idea of Equality*’, Aldous Huxley affirms somewhat stridently, “*That all men are **equal** is a proposition to which, at ordinary times, no sane being has ever given his assent.*” Sir J. M. Barrie echoed the prevalent social conditions of the day in his play *The Admirable Crichton* performed in 1902, “*His lordship may compel us to be **equal** upstairs, but there will never be **equality** in the servants’ hall*”. This was presciently redolent of the proletarian philosophy so richly espoused in the very successful serial UK tele-drama ‘Upstairs, Downstairs’. “*We have talked long enough in this country about **equal** rights. We have talked for a hundred years or more. It is time now to write the next chapter, and to write it in the books of law*” was LBJ’s lofty ‘though doubtless sincere rhetoric in his speech to Congress, 27 November 1963 following his unpropitious succession to JFK. Sir Isaiah Berlin in *Two Concepts of Liberty* (1958) separated conceptual definitions thus: “*Liberty is liberty, not **equality** or fairness or justice or human happiness or a quiet conscience*”.

Have you noticed a common thread in these quotations? They are all male oriented and refer almost exclusively to the masculine gender! How sexist! “*All human beings are born free and **equal** in dignity and rights*” (“*Tous les etres humains naissant libres et*

*egaux en dignite et en droits*’ – sorry no French inflections in my program!) is in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* 1948. It represents the ideological high-moral-ground pronouncement and being gender neutral somewhat redresses the balance. Following the massive immutable ‘juggernaut’ (not before time!) of the feminist revolution lead by Germaine Greer and others Polly Toynbee has stated with *metier* in the *Guardian* 19 January 1987: “*Feminism is the most revolutionary idea there has ever been. **Equality** for women demands a change in the human psyche more profound than anything Marx dreamed of. It means valuing parenthood as much as we value banking*”. Very interesting!

The most famous phrase in *Animal Farm* (enunciated by the self-serving pigs) combined Jeffersons’s fundamental concept in the Declaration of Independence, “*all men are created equal,*” with Eve’s self-destructive command to the Serpent in Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (9.823-25): “*render me more **equal**, and perhaps, / A thing not undesirable, sometime / Superior.*”

Robert Zimmerman (*aka* Bob Dylan) obviously had reflective thought in composing his 1964 song *My Back Page*:

***‘Equality’**, I spoke the word  
As if a wedding vow  
Ah, but I was much older then,  
I’m younger than that now.*

Where the hell is all this leading I almost hear you ask! Well, as I’m much younger now I’ve also found time for reflective thought except, unlike Bob, I compose abominably and sing abysmally! I recall my entry into veterinary practice in Australia with Murray Bain at Scone NSW in the mid-sixties! There were 2.5 ‘all male’ veterinarians! Guess who was 0.5! Women veterinarians were almost unheard of, especially in rural practice! Ideologically, I’d made up my mind for various reasons I wanted time and space to myself in veterinary practice having been exposed to quite the reverse in Ireland and Scotland. Based on the premise ‘provide the service and get the work’ we expanded to 20 veterinarians (48 on the payroll) within 20 years in 1988. This was only made possible because the thoroughbred population of Australia and specifically the Hunter Valley quadrupled during these 2 decades.

The present Associate Director was the debutante female neophyte to ‘see practice’ in Scone. What a memorable revelation! The Stud Managers and ‘strappers’ were most impressed! Gentlemanly conduct (and fear!) prevents me from divulging when! Wendy Paul, now a PGFVS Councillor followed soon after, had a similar impact and was the first non-male employee veterinarian in Scone as a locum tenens. Again, modesty forbids time disclosure! Murray was not only an ardent ornithologist but also *rue gallante* with a highly cultivated eye for the aesthetically pleasing female form! The late Sue McCubbery was the first full time employee just prior to Murray’s tragically early demise in 1974. Scone Veterinary Hospital, the evolutionary outcome of our earlier efforts, employed in excess of 20 veterinarians in the season just completed in 2001. More than 50% were

female. Does this mean, using the Scone analogy we have achieved professional 'equality'? I rather suspect not! However, I believe it has little or nothing to do with gender but everything to do with generation, attitude and aptitude!

On entering practice, my naive altruistic ideal was for a socially democratic veterinary cooperative capable of delivering eclectic service, excellent facilities, adequate financial recompense, cutting edge CVE and CPD and appropriate unencumbered family oriented and focused lifestyle. My personal goal(s) included intense involvement and commitment to local clubs, societies and cultural and communal activities not excluding social events! After preparing duty rosters for so many veterinarians in practice over 20 years I reached the irrevocable and immutable conclusion, like Orwell's 'pigs' that **'some are more equal than others!'** Is this mildly cynical and slightly pejorative redolent of inculcated sanctimonious 'old flatulent' attitude? I do not think this situation has altered dramatically with the passage of time. What has/have changed exponentially is/are the expectations of the veterinarians themselves, clients, employers and employees. This reflects profound societal development and is certainly no bad thing!

I regard the PGFVS with patrician care rather like my practice but with broader boundaries and widely divergent philosophies! I trust this is not too, too 'Orwellian'? In *Animal Farm* every detail had political significance in this allegory of corruption, betrayal and tyranny in Communist Russia. The human beings are capitalists and the animals Communists led by the principal pigs with the margins of their 'acquired' behaviour becoming increasingly blurred as the plot unfolds! Interestingly in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Blair did not foretell the ultimate demise of the great human social experiment of the twentieth century within a decade of the passing of 1984! In *Animal Farm* the pigs, like the bureaucrats at the BBC, "had to expend enormous labours every day upon mysterious things called 'files', 'reports', 'minutes' and 'memoranda'. Does this mean my role resembles that of 'Napoleon' (Stalin), 'Snowball' (Trotsky) or more likely the self-sacrificial horse 'Boxer'? I'm acutely aware of the dangers of creeping, crawling, cancerous bureaucracy so I'll opt for the latter and promise to do my best! It is a sobering thought that Boxer, like Orwell, collapsing from overwork suffered a tubercular haemorrhage: "A thin stream of blood had trickled out of his mouth..... 'It's my lung', said Boxer in a weak voice." Isn't it fortunate we occupy such healthy space these days?

**'Equality'**? Are there such things as two equal halves of anything? Are 'identical twins' ever exactly the same? It depends on the criteria applied and the circumstances prevailing. I think of **equality** as a finely balanced see saw with two 'equal objects' arraigned at identical distances from the fulcrum. Applied to the veterinary context, such are the forces of nature and vicissitudes of human (animal) behaviour they will never be in 'perfect balance' apart from the infinitesimally short time the 'bar' is perfectly horizontal in fluctuating between ends. Goodness, I'm waxing lyrical! It's about time I stopped! I've just received a telephone call from my wife Sarah with news a very great friend of mine has died not unexpectedly at Warwick, QLD! Fortunately I called him on



Christmas Day and also wrote to him the same morning! Thank God some are more equal than others! I'll leave it at that!

We have a lovely young lady undergraduate who is assisting us the PGFVS. I almost earned a slap in the face the other day when I said: "Of course we're not equal – I have more testosterone than you!" I really meant it as a compliment but Anne was not quite so sure! Dangerous territory spiked by our new age nemesis 'political correctness'!

W. P. Howey  
Director

## The Hunter Valley Bloodhorse Breeders Association

The major sponsor for the Scone Race Club Cup Carnival is for the first time (1996) the Hunter Valley Bloodhorse Breeders Association (HVBHBA) with the \$40,000 HVBHBA Scone Cup (1300m) and the \$50,000 HVBHBA Dark Jewel Quality Handicap (1400m) for fillies and mares on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> May 1996.

The incumbent committee is to be warmly and sincerely congratulated on this magnificent initiative to promote their local industry. It begs the question of the origin, incentives and objectives of the organisation.

Research has revealed that a meeting convened in Scone on 31<sup>st</sup> November 1951 led to the formation of the Upper Hunter Thoroughbred Breeders Society. Present at that meeting were G.A. Christmas (Oak Range), L.R. Morgan (Redbank), A.H. Young, Scott Johnston (Tyrone), R.M. and J. Bowcock (Alabama), A.W. ('Bert') Riddle (Kia Ora), Cliff Duncombe (Kingsfield), W.M. Bate, R.A. Basche, and Noel Hall (Cressfield). Apologies were received from F.W. Thompson (Widden), L.B. Israel (Segenhoe) and J.W. Johnston (Tyrone). The stated objectives of this embryonic society were to promote the thoroughbred racing industry in the Upper Hunter. Presumably, this association did not have a long lifespan as it appears to have fallen into liquidation within the decade. This may well have been attributable to the (also) recent formation of the Bloodhorse Breeders Association of Australia (NSW Division) some of whose major protagonists were common to both committees.

The next significant and energetic drive to galvanise the industry and achieve consensus was achieved by Murray Bain and John Kelso who combined to convene a series of meetings designed to discuss mutual problems based on scientific (veterinary and management) presentations. The first of these seminars was held at the Scone Bowling Club in July 1968. Out of this, sprang the Murray Bain led crusade which culminated in the construction of the first set of yearling boxes on White Park. This was financially backed by William Inglis and Sons and Pitt Son and Keene as well as local Stud Masters and Veterinarians. Gough Whitlam's 'RED' Scheme was to further augment this construction between 1972 and 1975. Later, Peter Morris (Derby-King Ranch) and Bill Howey formed the 'F2 Club' with a similar legacy to promote regular meetings of thoroughbred breeders at the beginning and end of each breeding season and to meet socially. (The 'First and Final' Service Club!?!).

By the mid-1970's a ground swell of opinion began to emerge, partially orchestrated from what was to become a familiar source, that the philosophy of this type of seminar should be expanded to include a far wider range of topics for discussion and decision by regular like minded gatherings. It was left to Peter Hodgson (Chamorel Park Stud, Upper Rouchel) and Jack Sheppard (Gyarran Stud) to systematically drive the genesis of what was to become The Bloodhorse Breeders Association of Australia, New South Wales Division, Hunter Valley Branch (HVBHBA). Peter and Jack constituted a formidable duo combining 'new age' acumen and vision with traditional knowledge and values

A series of well-attended and enthusiastic meetings were subsequently convened in Scone and in mid-1978 the Rules of The Bloodhorse Breeders' Association of Australia, New South Wales Division, Hunter Valley Branch were formally adopted.

Rule 3 states:

The objects (sic) for which the Branch is formed are:

- (a). To promote and advance the interest of the Breeders of the Bloodhorse in the Hunter Valley district.
- (b). To regulate or assist in regulating the days of sale, order of sale and procedure in connection with the Hunter Valley Branch Yearling Sale or Hunter Valley Branch Sales.
- (c). To co-operate with and assist all other divisions and Branches of the Bloodhorse Breeders' Association of Australia.

The inaugural committee elected in Scone to implement these objectives included the following: Peter Hodgson (Chamorel Park), Jack Sheppard (Gyarran), John Harris (Holbrook), 'Bim' Thompson (Widden), John Kelso (Timor Creek), James Mitchell (Yarraman Park), David Bath (Bhima), David Casben (Yarramalong), Peter Morris (Woodlands D-KR), Hilton Cope (Kelvinside), Betty Shepherd (Trevors), John Clift (Kia Ora), Ray Gooley and Bill Howey (Veterinarians). Their success or failure may be judged against today's values.

Amongst many of the early deliberations were the promotion of racing at Muswellbrook(!?!), sales at Scone, co-operative buying groups for goods and services and a 'black list' of bad debtors !?! The legal profession under current legislation might have discovered fertile territory had some of these come to fruition?!?

Perhaps the major early significant achievement was the promotion of the First Annual Yearling Sale, White Park Racecourse, on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> March 1979 at which 204 lots were catalogued. There was a barbeque and parade of yearlings at 6.30 p.m. on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1979. This followed the Denman Race Club Meeting at Skellatar Park, which was sponsored by the HVBHBA with the Upper Hunter Breeders Improvers Handicap (fillies and Mares), 1200m., \$1000 prize money with a Winners Trophy of \$200 and Breeders Trophy of \$100!! Woodlands Stud, Balfour Stud and Yarraman Park Stud were also major sponsors on the day.

The sale was officially opened by media personality Mike Willesee who purchased his first yearling, Lot 115, the Chestnut Colt by Coolness ex. Liquid Fire consigned by the Holbrook Partnership, Widden Valley. The liquor licensing laws of the period demanded that on Sunday, alcoholic beverages and refreshment could only be provided by 'committee' from the minute bar at the Scone Race Club. There were some very

interesting accounts and 'shouts' from that arrangement which the combined tyrannies of time and distance fortuitously prevent accurate recall and/or redress!?!



Mike Willesee

Mike Willesee opened the inaugural sale in 1979 and purchased Lot 115

It was measure of the calibre of the man that 'Bim' Thompson voluntarily elected to vacate some of his 'choice' boxes on course to accommodate well presented yearlings consigned by Sledmere Stud who had been allocated the less favourable tie-up stalls. Would this be likely to happen today!?!



‘Bim’ Thompson

The social highlight of the year for the HVBHBA had undoubtedly been the Annual Dinner and Presentation of Awards during the Scone Horse Festival in May. Unique accolades are the ‘Murray Bain Service to Industry Award’ and the President’s Award for Industry Achievement. In the spirit of the ‘F2 Club, very successful Christmas Parties have also been held!! Occasionally, as needs arise, very important industry collaboration has taken place whenever new disease or other threats appear. Paramount among these was the gathering of 400+ at Scone Bowling Club in July 1977 when the ‘twin disasters’ of ‘Jubilee Clap’ (CEM) and Viral Abortion were anticipated and repelled.





Mutual congratulations!

The author [President's Award] and Jack Johnston [Murray Bain Service to Industry Award] shake hands at the HVBHBA Dinner in 1995

The author had just delivered the eulogy in favour of Jack who was 81 years old at the time. Jack announced he was retiring from the Scone Race Club Committee having attended 48 consecutive Scone Cups at the 'old' White Park Track

Perhaps the most significant of all 'new beginnings' to emerge from the original HVBHBA conceptus has been the nascence of the Hunter Valley Equine Research Foundation (HVERF) in the mid 1980's. This was the brain child of the author and the inspiration for front runner Brian Agnew of Wakefield Stud. As history has dictated it has been the underpinning organisation in the startling, impressive and holistic development of the Hunter Valley Equine Centre at Satur.

The HVBHBA has followed a circuitous path to arrive at today's crossroads and is a rather different organisation than that originally envisaged and constituted. However, it has been constant in promoting races even since its inception, and surely the scale and magnitude of the promotion of the Scone Cup Meeting 1996 and the quality of the catalogue for the HVBHBA Yearling Sale, Sunday May 1996 represent the culmination of effort and pinnacle of achievement to date??

## Irrelevant?

I very vaguely evoke my earliest recollections of considering veterinary science as a career. I was in the equivalent of Year X (4<sup>th</sup>. Form) and had some decisions to make. Neale Holmes-Smith was in my year at school and a close friend. His father was an eminent Ophthalmic Surgeon but Neale was passionate about animals and veterinary surgery although Botany was his best subject. I was very keen on making the 1<sup>st</sup>. XI, summoning up enough courage to ask out Maggie K. and bashing one John Michael Horrocks-Taylor for ducking me at swimming pool. He was the same person who bore the brunt of my imitation Stradivarius in Year 1 before they took it off me!

I put down 'Veterinary Science' when I was called to see the Careers Advisor. Guess what my first lesson was? Neale gave me the idea in the first place and I couldn't think of much else! My science master said everyone wanted to be a doctor and they were 'commonplace'. Eventually I made it into the Royal (Dick) Veterinary College in Edinburgh via all the sporting teams, school hierarchy and some timely diligence in Chemistry, Physics, Botany and Zoology. I never did manage to impress the eternally beautiful (in my memory) Maggie K.! I still wonder what became of her? However I digress! Neale struggled with basic sciences and eventually found his niche at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh. He was a devout Quaker and I think disapproved of my 'freshman' discovery of bacchanalia! We lost touch!

Coming from a farming community in the 'Borders' where my family had practiced the mixed variety without significant change for over 400 years I was full of idealistic altruism! My father was a very good farmer but excelled at hedonism. Punting on the races was an absorbing and consuming passion. I could see the family heirloom gradually and systematically working its way to Margaret Laidlaw the SP in the Turks Head Hotel in Rothbury. I determined to win some of it back! I also thought I could improve the lot of the national flocks and herds to the great benefit of the food chain, the nation and all of mankind! Pompous pious puerile little prick!

Some of the established routines on East Hepple Farm were not best or current practice. It was a revelation in 1950 when my neighbour Aunt Peggy started intensive deep litter pullets in the old blacksmith's forge and battery laying hens as well. Much to our consternation they all made happy noises! They weren't so happy when George Foggon's rabbit ferrets escaped one night and slaughtered more than fifty unsuspecting chickens in the old forge! In a village our size that is news, news, news!

Dad knew lots of short cuts especially if it meant saving veterinary fees for the 3:15 at Epsom! We spent quite a bit of time pumping up the udders of the lambing South Country Cheviot ewes succumbing to 'Grass Tetany'. It works although slowly! The wonders of the parathyroid gland! I thought there had to be better ways so set off to find out on my journey of discovery. My mission was the health of the nations' food producing animals. Companion animals didn't count. This was probably the prevailing philosophy of the day. 'Smallies were pussy and sissy'! I still thought I was 'relevant'!

Imagine my dismay more than forty years adrift when I distinctly heard a senior eminent 'production animal scientist' - a veterinarian - state at a public forum veterinarians are largely 'irrelevant' in today's animal management systems on farm. How did we manage collectively to achieve this remarkable feat in so short a time? Is it just? With OJD peregrinations we know from bitter first hand experience we are very much 'on the nose' in the sheep industry. Do we deserve this or have we brought it on ourselves? We won the TB war and the S19 battle but lost the routine work involved in subsequent CAB follow up investigations.

There are fewer Government funded 'get on farm' animal health programs involving private veterinary surveillance these days. Are we outnumbered in Cattle PD's, Horse's Teeth floating and Equine 'Chiropractic'? Do we have the numbers and the will and/or desire to compete for territory? Are there enough graduates with the essential 'attributes' to take on this type of work? Is it worth they're while even if they do? Do the Universities really have the resources to assist in their preparation faced with ever diminishing Government financial support?

I'm worried! I don't like feeling 'irrelevant'!

W. P. Howey

“It Ain’t Over ‘Til the Fat Man Spins”!

*Or*

‘The Acquisition of Life Skills’

I have just spent a few wonderful days attending the Third Cricket Test versus the South African Proteas! For me this is the apogee of relaxed convivial entertainment! The New Year game at the SCG also brings to town my ‘dry’ mates from outback and way back migrating and congregating annually to assuage thirst and reinforce mutual bonds! It is a tricky manoeuvre to avoid meeting too early for fear of missing most – or all – of the match! Peter Roebuck has great admiration for the ‘bushies’ and their intimate intricate knowledge. Great to see Gary from Trangie, Tim from Merriwa, Brian from Narromine and the strong Upper Hunter contingent as usual! Yes, I am a resigned ‘flannelled fool’ and addicted extant cricket tragic! I share this ultimate fatal flaw with the PM who I met at a school cricket match! I was delighted to entertain as my guest the thirteen year old Pyotr Judzewitsch for the first two days of the match. ‘Petie’ is the youngest sibling of the Associate Director’s brood. With a Russian father and Oberon mother and raised in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia his early cricket education was found wanting but is being rapidly enlarged and enhanced! It is heart warming to observe the thrill, exhaustive energy and bubbling enthusiasm of the pre-pubescent ‘teens’ all in standard ‘uniform’ chasing down and accumulating autographs from their heroes! Meanwhile, the elder generation sits back, imbibes and absorbs the feral pheromones wafting so generously around the SCG!

As a very small boy in a very distant and tiny village in the Cheviot Hills in Northumberland, England where my family had lived for well over 400 years and very far from any madding crowd I remember my farmer father giving me instructions! He told me of a legendary fellow called Bradman from a distant ‘Empire Outpost’ who acquired exquisite cricketing skills! The story of stump and ripple iron water tank is universally known! Walking slowly to the wicket to accustom one’s eyes to the light was another anecdote I distinctly remember. Funnily I noticed Matthew Hayden did exactly that when opening the batting! Fine tuning one’s eyes to light in England was often an inverse exercise with the candle power in the dressing room arguably stronger than outside! I also learned of a mythical far away place called ‘The Hill’ widely regarded as the ultimate testing ground of English mettle in the blazing heat of combat in the southern cauldron! My father had sown the seed germinating to become my life’s journey!

However it was the acquisition of life skills I contemplated during the intermediary breaks in play! Learning to open the batting in my view teaches you to handle the inevitable vicissitudes you will encounter later in life. You have been selected as part of a team. You walk out at the start of play as an individual to face the first ball at the direction of your captain. You are welcomed with infinite discourtesy by the opposition! With ‘tremulous cadence slow’ you take guard from the umpire pretending to be brave and resilient when you are ostensibly trembling and terrified! Time for decisions! You cannot run to Mummy or hide behind Daddy! Curtly Ambrose is a ghostly blurred figure in the far distance. He charges in from 300 metres or so and hurls the tiny shiny red grenade at 450kph from a trajectory of 5.8 metres! According to the coaching manual and eons of net practice you step onto the front foot, head down, bat straight, eyes on the ball and play a classical forward defensive stroke! Curtly arrives and something vaguely red flashes past before you’ve moved! You hear the inevitable chilling ‘death rattle’ just behind immediately followed by the raucous cheers of the opposition, all 250 of them, gathered closely around the bat! You have scored another ‘golden primary’! You disconsolately tuck your bat under your arm and trudge back head bowed 5kms to the pavilion in full view of your team and assembled throng!



In my very first representative match for my Yorkshire boarding school under 14 team I was the third wicket of a hat trick bowled by a fellow called Jones from Pontefract King's School. How well do I remember the details almost 50 years later! I distinctly recall my elder sister Diana and her friend Mary Shrouder laughing loudly at my humiliating demise! I can still recall their resounding cackles to this day! The experience - I hope! – 'steemed' me for the future! Eventually I captained a few teams and 'carried my bat' on more than one occasion. Both my children Kirsty and Hugh opened the batting for their respective schools. At a safe distance of 20,000km Diana and I correspond very well these days!

The point I wish to make is if you can cope with the scenario described above, 'go the hard yards' and recover to fight again you are well placed to deal with later exigencies and perceived – real or imaginary – discrimination, discrepancy and downright irregularity. Rudyard Kipling had a bit to say about the *metier* in his poem with the shortest title ever!

How well trained is the average veterinary undergraduate in 'life skills'?

Learning and acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes is arbitrarily divide into 3 'Domains':

1. Cognitive Domain – Knowledge, understanding, comprehension, analysis, synthesis, evaluation
2. Psychomotor Domain – Hands on skills and 'doing things'
3. Affective Domain – Feelings, attitudes, values, interpersonal communication

I believe the cognitive genre is well covered in the undergraduate course. Surgical and other manipulative skills are also very well taught in principal and in theory but only more practice will 'make perfect'. Ultimately much of this will be work place based learning, training and instruction. What about the 'affective' components of the education process? How will this be accumulated and assimilated? Will the reclusive 'loner' be isolated on a limb? A very good friend who has run a very successful veterinary practice for over 30 years asks each aspiring new associate, 'what team events did you take part in'? A 'team' could mean any communal activity whether sporting, social or cultural. Henry Collins has loudly espoused the importance of the human/human and veterinarian/client relationship as well as veterinarian/animal and client/animal in modern day veterinary practice. How important is the development of 'team spirit' and 'team play' in our veterinary society? How do we *effectively* communicate with one another? Is this a team activity or very much individual idiosyncrasy?

Back to the cricket! For me the level of skill attained and displayed by the combatants at Test class is esoteric! It is not just the skill with bat, ball or in the field. It is the steely mental resolve finely honed and tuned over many years' competition at the highest level with all its concomitant 'highs', 'lows' and sustained recovery! It is the infinite patience and consummate concentration required for many hours or even days combat. It is the ability to raise the threshold, ignore the pain and strive for glory just the same! Well done Matt Hayden, Justin Langer, Damien Martin, Stuart McGill and Gary Kirsten! All have 'reinvented' after earlier demise! Welcome the new brigade including Brett Lee and Botha Diepenaar! As ABC commentator Tim Lane correctly announced the thumbs were down in the Coliseum when the 'Fat Man' came on to spin on the 4<sup>th</sup> day! Not even Kerry O'Keeffe's 'asinine' laugh could delay the inevitable!

W. P. Howey  
Director

Postscript: I played against one G. Boycott at secondary school! I could leave it at that but truth prevails! It was Geoff's red haired cousin Gordon from a different school!

## Marco Polo Peripatetic Peregrinations 2004 Style



An intrepid 'cavalry cluster' delegation representing the Australian Stock Horse Society Ltd. set off on a 12 day 'whirlwind' tour of modern China on 25<sup>th</sup>. September 2004. Marco Polo would not have been so perfunctory or peremptory!



Terry Blake and Brian Atfield at 'prayer'

First stop was Beijing via Guangzhou. Immediately we were apprised of cultural and language differences! Some of the Mandarin translation into English is exquisite! I 'deciphered' the following subtle warning on arrival in my hotel suite:

## Notice to Electric Kettle

*'When you use the electric kettle, please pour water to the 2/3 of it, order to avoid the boiling water out to be dangerous'!*

Our soigné, erudite and urbane host for the first part of the visit was Mr. James Sun who as Executive Director of the Project Planning Department of the Ministry of Agriculture was responsible for local arrangements in Beijing. James also 'doubles' as editor of the official mouthpiece of the Chinese Equestrian Association: 'The Chinese Horse Industry Journal'. There are about 8000 horses and nearly 100 riding [equestrian] clubs in the vicinity of Beijing. Many elite riders have made Beijing their training base obviously with a close eye on incipient events in 2008.



Helen Xie and James Sun

The Beijing Junxing Breeding Farm is located in the vast urban periphery of this massive metropolis of some 20 million people. It included a domestic breeding farm and ancillary training centre both appearing to be 'residual' military facilities 'inherited' by the present incumbent Mr. Lu who is a four star major in the Chinese army. The horses were of mixed domestic breed and quality with some recent thoroughbred importations aimed at improving the overall genotype. There were some 'thoroughbreds' from Japan and Russia. We were royally entertained by the 'Major' and his dutifully obedient acolytes to the first of many traditional bountiful banquets! A military bus was generously provided for our cross city transport with Major Lu in the vanguard in his late model 4-wheel drive with his hand constantly on the warning klaxon! In China it is still advisable for the inscrutable locals to make way for the military! There were many near misses but no collisions!

The Beijing Longtou Farm is a converted chicken raising facility of some 120 acres and owned by Japanese interests. The paddocks were enclosed by the ubiquitous brick walls/fences so prevalent in this part of northern China. The walls are far cheaper than

post-and-rail fencing with the ready availability of abundant cheap labour and raw materials. Mr. Isamuishida informed us over 4 million bricks were used in construction of the fences which provide excellent wind shelter in winter. The farm stands three USA bred thoroughbred stallions in Thrill Show [USA], Golden Pheasant [USA] and Tight Spot [USA]. Mares located at Longtou Farm include the progeny of Roberto, Tony Bin, Conquistador Cielo, Soviet Star, Helissio, Jade Robbery, Ogygian, Arctic Tern and Groom Dancer. The project represents a confident investment by the Japanese Company in the future horse racing industry in China. The aim is to produce quality thoroughbreds for the local market at 1/10<sup>th</sup> the cost of production in Japan.



Longtou Horse farm

The Beijing Tongshun Jockey Club and Beijing Huanjan Breeding Farm are located on the periphery of Beijing and constitute the most significant and advanced thoroughbred racing and breeding complex yet constructed in modern China and still expanding. Anecdotal evidence suggests in excess of A\$700 million has been allocated thus far. The facility is owned by the Domeland Consortium so prominent in Hong Kong and Australia. Over 3000 Australian thoroughbreds have been imported to date with new arrivals expected constantly. 'Tierce [AUS]' and 'Bigstone [IRE]' are two resident sires familiar to Australian interests. The very prominent advertising billboard adjacent to the main track proudly proclaims the local presence of Randwick Equine Centre. We were very fortunate to be entertained by expatriate equine veterinarian Dr. Michael Robinson as well as Director of Racing Kevin Connolly as the last race was run on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2004. Only modest crowds of some 2000 patrons are attracted to the races at this stage. Betting is officially 'illegal' but unofficially and pragmatically condoned with a system akin to 'voting for a horse'. Racing also includes provision for 'small children pony events' based on the Jesuit principle of 'catch them while they are young'! The facility also caters for the Chinese National Event Training Centre where the team for the 2008 Beijing Olympics is in preparation. The Beijing Tongshun Jockey Club is the only



one of eight Jockey Clubs in China open for daily operations with eight events contested each Saturday and Sunday. As soon as lights are installed the Sunday meeting will be transferred to Wednesday evening similar to the successful format in Hong Kong. The first Forensic Racing Laboratory ['Dope Testing'] was founded in Beijing in 2002. The first evening in Beijing included a most memorable perambulation through Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City dominated by the massive tribute to Chairman Mao.



Beijing Tongshun Jockey Club

The Beijing Sunshine Valley Equestrian Club hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Asian Equestrian Games in September 2003. It is located about 2 hours 'army escorted drive' in the high country to the north of the city and well above the 'smog layer'! It is a most impressive facility in an exquisite location in the Days Inn Rose Valley at the foot of the Badaling Great Wall. The indoor riding arena is the largest in China and is a superb construction. On Monday 27<sup>th</sup>. September 2004 the very first Polocrosse match ever played in China took place here with a demonstration by a scratch team of visitors and then an 'International' involving the bewitched and bemused locals! Days Inn Rose Valley is an International ski resort during winter months and the group availed itself of the opportunity to visit the Great Wall which is every bit as impressive as its proud publicity proclaims. The facility is also the home of the 'Museum of Horse Culture in China'. Constructed by a consortium consisting of the Chinese Equestrian Association, Chinese Horse Industry Association, Chinese Cultural Relics Association and the Government of Yanqing the museum covers some 2700 square metres and houses more than 1300 exhibits. The exhibits are in six sections and embrace the rich historical horse culture of China stretching back c. 4000 years with modern updates including many Australian and NZ images located in the 'England and America' display! The museum is absolutely first class in every respect and is aimed at the flood of visitors confidently anticipated in 2008.



Indoor Arena Sunshine Valley Badaling



Polocrosse at Sunshine Valley Badaling  
‘Chairman’ Terry Blake and young descendants of Genghis and Kublai

Wherever we went we were constantly apprised of the fact that the ‘turbulent’ [‘tyrannical’] events of the 20<sup>th</sup>. Century had all but obliterated the ancient horse culture in China which numbered as many as 700,000 horses involved in polo, racing and in circuses. They are acutely aware of the need to start again from ‘scratch’ and re-establish a viable equine industry in China. Since the early founding of the People’s Republic in

China in 1952 over 1,100 stud horses were imported from the former Soviet Union to improve local 'China breeds'. Arabians have also been introduced in significant numbers in Military establishments. Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang appear to be the best areas for horse breeding.



The 'Gang of Five' at the Great Wall

Two days in Nanjing followed our initial foray into Beijing. We were first met and entertained by Mr. Wu and his cohorts of the Nanjing Horse Racing Enterprise Co. Inc. This comprises a massive very busy construction project now underway closely emulating the facilities already provided in Beijing and Wuhan and probably approaching the total amount in expenditure. Mr. Wu was careful to point out that whereas the Beijing concept is essentially a private and local government arrangement the Nanjing project is a 60% private [Mr Wu] and 40% State [National] Government scheme with an option to 'purchase' the latter. The Nanjing facility will host the National Equestrian Festival in 2005. It is clear the visionary concept in China is for an all embracing equine/equestrian carnival including all disciplines of competition such as racing, show jumping, eventing, horse sports, trick riding and entertainment in general. Once more we were 'subjected' to yet another eclectic luncheon banquet arranged by our ever attentive and courteous hosts! For many including the author this began to produce spectacularly cathartic gastro-intestinal results! The evening concluded with a celebration of the 'Moon Festival' in downtown Nanjing and ample opportunity to indulge in ever more shopping! Even so it was hard to drag oneself away from the luxury of one's accommodation at the Jinling Resort on the Baijia Lake.





Nanjing Riding Club



Nanjing Riding Club Bar

On Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup>. September 2004 the ‘cluster’ was very warmly welcomed at the Department of Clinical Medicine in the College of Veterinary Medicine at the Nanjing Agricultural University. This is the second most prestigious such campus in modern China after its Beijing equivalent. We were greeted by seven Professors and five Academic Associates including Dr. Rong Rui DVM PhD and Dr. Kehe Huang DVM PhD. One elderly faculty member had spent two happy years in Sydney with Professor Cliff Gallagher. The physiology department was especially impressive with its leader an extremely erudite lady boasting esoteric credentials including time spent in Melbourne in human health research and many years in Germany. We enjoyed a fully escorted tour of the whole campus and shared morning tea with the faculty elite which included a power point presentation in English by a young and extremely enthusiastic academic with a passion for horses called Dr. Sun Junling. Both he and Professor Kehe Huang went to great pains to explain the ‘marriage’ and incorporation of both traditional ‘Eastern’ and modern ‘Western’ veterinary medicine and surgery into the Nanjing clinical training curriculum. The author proposed a vote of thanks to the host faculty – fortuitously translated into Mandarin! – and presented an AEVA tie to the young academic. At this stage the facilities for clinical teaching in Western methods for both companion and

production-animal streams is limited but improving. Mr. James Sun points out that due to exceptional historical circumstances there are as few as 10 'dedicated' expert equine veterinarians in China. Most of them are 'ageing' and come from the State or Provincial-level agricultural colleges and combine both eastern and western disciplines. 'Foreign' veterinary expertise is being imported by the emerging race clubs [Beijing JC] and in 2002 the first international equine veterinary workshop was held in Beijing.



Nanjing Agricultural University  
Experimental Buffalo

The afternoon of Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup>. September 2004 was spent at the Jiangsu Boama Ltd. International Equestrian Club owned by Dr. Gao Huan who has spent a lot of time in Perth, WA. The club is set in idyllic surroundings near the 'Purple Mountain' on the outskirts of Nanjing. It is typical of 'new age' riding clubs centred on established stables catering for the emerging middle class demand for such active recreational activity. The stables were 'old world' in comparison to the newly constructed edifices at Beijing and elsewhere. We were treated to a demonstration of 'traditional' method of slinging a horse in a crush with cotton ropes in order to effect routine farriery procedures. The horse in question had long-standing hoof problems possibly due to chronic laminitis. The local Farrier at the club was able to achieve remarkable results with vintage tools resembling chisels! There is clearly a deficit in the area of suitable training and 'new age' farriery equipment. The evening concluded with beers in the exquisite garden at the riding club and thence to an 'Austrade' hosted wine appreciation dinner at the 5-star Jinling Hotel in the city. It was very good to eat 'western', quaff some Hunter Valley brew and repulse the 'Chinese Way' challenge to 'skol' a few beers in the vibrant hotel night club!





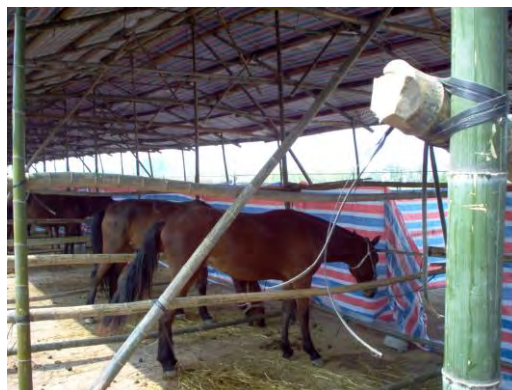
Horse 'Crush'

A late night was less than ideal preparation for an 'early mark' and departure for Wuhan. The China Wuhan Equestrian Festival at the Orient Lucky City was a sight to behold. The Orient Lucky City Horse Group is the brainchild of Hong Kong based Mr. Jacky Wu. It is a multi-national corporation with comprehensive and diversified business in China and overseas including international horse racing, environmental protection technologies, telecommunications and real estate. The Wuhan complex incorporates the four elements of horse racing, tourism, commerce and property. Mr. Jacky Wu is a Hong Kong citizen and leader of the Company. He was one of the first entrepreneurs to invest in mainland China following the recent 'glasnost'. Mr. Wu is a forward thinker, a strategic advocate and charismatic leader. The concept of bringing equestrian and horse racing activities, commerce, tourism and property business all under one roof is his unique idea. It appears to provide the role model for future development in China into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.



Australian Stock Horse Society on parade at Wuhan

The Orient Lucky City complex hosted the 'China Wuhan Equestrian Festival' from 1<sup>st</sup>. – 7<sup>th</sup>. October 2004 so coinciding with 'National Week' otherwise known as 'Golden Week' with obvious implications for commerce and trade. The ASHS mounted a trade stand at the exhibition with the 'Ranvet' Company also present. Three members of the delegation [including the author] were interviewed for local consumption on CCTV. The Australian and ASHS Flags were proudly displayed at the opening ceremony with two mounted visitors resplendent in Akubras, Drizabones, 'RM's' and Moleskins performing the honours. We were royally entertained by local Orient Lucky City employee 'Jenny' and enjoyed the 'run of the place'. Orient Lucky City is located at the Gold-Silver Lake of Wuhan. It covers an area of 1 million square metres and includes an International Racecourse, the Jockey Club, the Equitation School, the Equestrian Exhibition, the Amusement Park, a 5-star International Convention Centre Hotel, Luxurious Houses and Apartments, the Intelligent Office Complex and the Mega Store. The total investment to date is US\$200 million.



## Bamboo Stables Wuhan



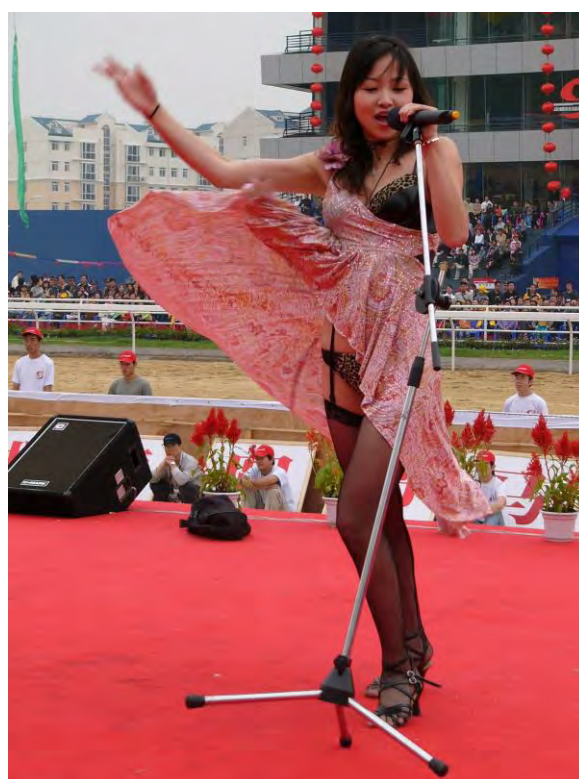
## Polo at Wuhan

The Orient Lucky City premises are dominated by the six-storey grand stand and deep sand all weather running track. Horse related activities included trick riding, show jumping, racing, a local variety of polo and various other horse sports. The same 'eclectic' mix of horses appeared to be used for most activities with the exception of show jumping. Teams from 12 Chinese Provinces including Hong Kong were present to compete for national supremacy in this discipline. Competitors [and horses] rated from sublime to less so! The Aussie contingent mounted challenges in Polo Cross and 'Polo' much to the delight of the local patrons. The former was a demonstration match and the latter 'International' ended in an honourable 1 – 1 draw with ability to 'dig' the large polo ball from the deep sand on the race track a paramount skill! The finale for our delegation was to be present on stage with Mr. Jacky Wu and the full Orient Lucky City contingent for a wide range of entertainment and spectacular demonstrations including scantily clad fish-net stocking dancing girls, party games and singing as well as an 'incidental' horse race incorporating local ownership. One of our entourage was 'selected' by pass-the-parcel to deliver a rendition of 'Waltzing Matilda' much to bemusement of the local fraternity! Racing in China certainly is different! The Aussie delegation mounted an impressive display of 'whip cracking' following which a tall imperious female delegate dazzling in Akubra and boots presented a home made trophy to Mr. Wu. We trust he did not misinterpret the signal as indicative of a subtle invitation to some bizarre sado-masochistic ritual?





Whip Cracking in Wuhan



‘Pulse Racing’ in Wuhan

Two days in perennially mystical Shanghai provided the perfect back stop for our delegation. While ‘Seventh Heaven’ Hotel on Nanjing Road Mall was somewhat ‘dubious’ in reputation and did not match its elaborate title the location was perfect for exploring the myriad delights of both old and new Shanghai. The Yuyuan Gardens of Happiness were spectacular as were the old ‘Bund’, Pudong New Zone and hustling, bustling Nanjing Road itself.

The overall impression of the horse industry in China is one of ‘re-invention’ following the internecine turbulence of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. There is an urgent need for re-skilling in some of the basic tenets of accepted best practice in general horse husbandry in the West. This includes all aspects of housing, drainage, bedding, ventilation, farriery, hoof and teeth care as well as fundamental nutrition. Nonetheless there is extraordinary will, drive and vision among the many people we met who were universally courteous, gracious, attentive and generous to a fault! A few of the major players including powerful ‘new age’ entrepreneurs will avidly pursue their goals and drive their grand plans to ultimate fruition. One of our entourage stated: “I may not be the beneficiary of this detente but my successor’s successor will”. It is a long term project but things will indubitably happen very quickly in the rapidly developing ‘new age’ China. Marco Polo? At least we had the ‘polo’ part right – or should that be ‘polocrosse’!

Acknowledgements:

ASHS Steve Guihot and Ray Hines  
HEC Don Champagne and Helen Xie  
OLC ‘Jenny’

W. P. Howey Honorary Veterinarian ASHS                      AEVA EO



## Murray Bain Service to Industry Award

The Hunter Valley Blood Horse Breeders Association [HVBBA] as it was then known instituted the 'Murray Bain Service to Industry Award' in 1985 at my suggestion and request. This was the beginning of the Brian Agnew era. Darcy Walden was the first recipient in 1985. This was a most memorable occasion at the Scone Bowling Club. Babe Singleton was next in 1986. The major premise was that Murray was a great exponent of the 'working stud groom' and championed their cause. He always impressed on me that: "given the choice of a good stud groom and a good stud vet you take the good stud groom every time"! That put me firmly in my place! Many of his close friends subsequently received the award including Ron Jeffries, Cliff Ellis, George Bowman and Jim Gibson. I think Murray would have approved!

The back ground of the **Perpetual Trophy** relates to the letter from Mace to me and my subsequent response. Channel 10 had used Murray's old original 16mm film 'The Veterinarian on the Stud Farm' [c. 1964/1965] for footage to make the Star Kingdom Video. They offered the munificent sum of \$500:00 as payment of royalties to Mace! We had just formed the Hunter Valley Equine Research Foundation [HVERF] and Mace suggested the money be invested there. I made a 'unilateral executive decision' to put it into something more tangible and telephoned Mace [13/10/88] to request a 'perpetual trophy in honour of Murray'. She agreed. A copy of the original letter from Mace to me is included below with my 'annotations' relating to debate on the 'fate' or ultimate destiny of the \$500:00.

I purchased the trophy for c. \$760:00 and 'made up the differenced myself'. This is the trophy presented each year at the Annual Dinner. The underlying and deeply entrenched principle is the award should be made to a "richly deserving person actively working with 'hands on' in the industry" and not at a safe distance. The Presidents Award was instituted for other purposes in 1990.

120 St. James Road  
Bondi Junction  
Sydney N.S.W. 2022  
Tel: 389 0102

St. Aubins Arms  
245 Kelly Street  
Scone, N.S.W. 2337  
Tel: 45 1040

22 September 1988

The Hunter Valley Equine Research Foundation,  
c/o Mr. Bill Howey,  
P. O. Box 280 Scone.

Dear Bill,

Further to our telephone conversation, I  
enclose a cheque from the producers of the  
Star Kingdom Dynasty film which is in  
payment for Royalty fees for the use of  
footage from the film "The Veterinary  
Surgeon on the Stud Farm" which as you know,  
was produced by Murray.

I requested that these royalties be paid to  
the H.V. Equine Research Foundation as a  
donation from the family of the Estate of  
the late Murray Bain.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

Mace

M.J. Bain

PS The film I think is being shown on  
Channel 10 around 1pm on the 16 Oct.

TELEPHONED

13-10-88

REQUEST

TROPHY

"MURRAY BAIN  
SERVICE TO INDUSTRY AWARD"

ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO: P.O. BOX 822 BONDI JUNCTION N.S.W. 2022

### Winners of the Murray Bain Service to Industry Award

1985	Darcy Walden	1994	Reub Cochrane
1986	Babe Singleton	1995	Jack Johnston
1987	Cliff Ellis	1996	John Flaherty
1988	Ron Jeffries	1997	Shona Murphy
1989	Jim Gibson	1998	Billy Neville
1990	Alec Herbert	1999	John Vincent
1991	John Morgan	2000	Angus Campbell
1992	George Bowman	2001	Senga Bissett
1993	Syd Anderson	2002	

### ‘Punctuality’!

I called to see Tom the other day (14/05/02) on my way from my city *pied a terre* at Bondi Junction to my *real* home at Scone in the Hunter Valley. This involves traversing Sydney from the Eastern Suburbs through the CBD to the Upper North Shore. Foolishly I agreed to be at ‘Farleigh’, Burns Road, Wahroonga at 9:00am sharp! It is palpably unwise even bordering on extreme stupidity to rely on smooth passage through the *milieu* of Sydney traffic at this hour! Almost inevitably I was late! Tom was not amused! The first task I performed was to change a light bulb for him. At 90+ he was not confident of climbing and balancing on a high ladder. (‘Farleigh’ is a magnificent old residence redolent of the area with very high 12’ ceilings rarely encountered nowadays). This small ‘charitable’ act seemed to humour him a little. The truth was I was not game to refuse!

Our discussions centred on the origins of the PGFVS and also the 10<sup>th</sup>. Edition of T.G. Hungerford’s ‘Diseases of Livestock’ (McGraw-Hill). It was a fascinating two hours and included a delightful morning tea with Mrs. Hungerford as gracious hostess. (‘The worst wife I ever had’! – TGH). Tom actually prepared the tasty sandwiches I enjoyed so much.

The concept of continuing veterinary education had its genesis through the aegis of the largely NSW based AVA in 1964. Hugh Gordon, Victor Cole, Murray Bain and Ron Churchward were the front runners. Ron was Registrar of the AVA and had a ‘political’ agenda to pursue. Together they formed the Post Graduate Committee and the Post Graduate Foundation in Veterinary Science of the University of Sydney with Vic Cole as Chairman. The original philosophy engendered ‘refresher courses’ rather than ‘new knowledge’ promulgation. The first course offered was on ‘Sterility of Cattle’. No notes were provided prior to the course and none were delivered for the course. A total of six ‘consultants’ were appointed to advise on different areas of veterinary activity. Tom was invited to counsel on poultry. Keith Sanders and Graham Edgar were others briefly involved at this early stage.

Eric Butt, a non-veterinarian, was appointed Executive Director of the PGFVS in 1967. It was not long before Tom began to make his very strong views apparent as an ‘adviser’ to the Foundation! The eventual outcome after much sabre rattling was for Tom to be offered the position of Veterinary Director. ‘When can you start’? He was asked. ‘Tomorrow’ was his succinct and curt reply! As good as his word Tom assumed office at 7:30 am on 6<sup>th</sup>. August 1968 after leaving his Penrith (NSW) practice the day before. Eric did not stay long thereafter and Tom soon became the sole full time Director. Others such as Don Gates had brief sojourns and Tom ‘went on the attack’ to achieve his goals!

Tom’s goals were admirable and certainly worth revisiting today! It was envisaged to hold a maximum of four major courses per year. These were to be of great intensity and the highest standard of ‘worlds’ best practice’. Notes were to be produced one month in advance and authors paid per page of *new* material produced. The courses were to be so much ‘must attend’ so that veterinarians would feel ‘blackmailed’ into being there!

Great emphasis was placed on *punctuality* at the courses by both the participants and the tutors. (At this juncture Tom fixed me with his best ***bold italic underlined*** steely expression as he emphasised the point! The message hit home!). Tom had great delight in relating to me how he switched the microphone from the rostrum to his hand held 'mike' just as soon as a tutor's time was up! He had no compunction in interrupting in mid-sentence and always maintained strict control!

Tom described how it was necessary to impose strict discipline very early to instil absolute confidence in the participants so they would now exactly what to expect and when! Similarly Tom fought and won other basic and not so basic philosophical arguments at this time. 'Control and Therapy' articles were a case in point. Tom defied Committee direction and printed them unedited just as received. Filibustered by a wildly enthusiastic protagonist Vic Cole was 'big enough' to admit Tom was right! A similar situation evolved with control and editorial content of the 'Director's Circular'. Score: Hungerford 2 – Committee 0.

*'Punctuality is the virtue of the bored'*. (Michael Davies (ed.) *Diaries of Evelyn Waugh* (1976) 'Irregular Notes 1960 – 65', 26 March 1962.

Somehow I don't think Tom would have liked Evelyn Waugh very much?

Further discussion centred on the proposed 10<sup>th</sup>. Edition of 'Hungerford's Diseases of Livestock'. Tom gave a wonderful rendition of his original 'negotiations' with the senior principal(s) of publisher McGraw-Hill in head office New York City. Tom opened with the gambit about the 'worst wife he ever had' but the (female) president countered by opening Tom's book and citing the following dedicated quotation:

*"As of the bow the cord is  
So unto man is woman  
Though she bends him  
Yet she obeys him  
Though she draws him  
Yet she follows  
Useless one without the other"*

The allotted maximum 10 minutes interview duration extended to over two hours! Ardent feminists would not have approved but the McGraw-Hill President was impressed! At the end of this time Tom was allocated 'all the resources he required' to produce the 9<sup>th</sup>. Edition of his seminal tome. I don't think it will be that simple for the 10<sup>th</sup>. one Tom!

W. P. Howey

## Relevance Deprivation Syndrome (RDS)

Andy Warhol put into perspective! We are each entitled to our own fifteen minutes of fame! Some of us are allocated more time and some less. Old Bill Shakespeare also intimated how we can artificially influence our fair share by being selectively proactive in making life's most important decisions:

“There is a tide in the affairs of men  
Which, taken at the full leads on to fortune;  
Omitted, all the voyages of their life  
Is bound in shallows and in miseries”

(IV, iii ‘Titles from Julius Caesar)

We all have to deal with it sooner or later and it can be a bitter pill to swallow! I confess the intellectual property of the title is not my own – although I would claim it! I heard it mentioned on talk back radio as part of the acrimonious debate over the internecine NRMA Board debacle in NSW. A particular formerly high profile media delegate was described as suffering a bad case of ‘relevance deprivation syndrome’ (RDS). I liked it and it stuck!

Whenever we volunteer for duties or are elected to Association, Council or Board positions we must remember we have a finite term of duty! Knowing when to quit is the big question. Senior iconic sporting figures seem to have the most difficulty? Is it dollars or is it hubris, vanity and ego? I must confess to my fair share of wounded soul searching and retribution in the past. Now in the twilight quadrant of my life's journey I am completely inured to its effects. Does it matter? Could it be related to successful extirpation of my own expansive ego a decade ago? One of Australia's great national treasures put it beautifully many moons back. ‘Remember, we are merely temporary custodians of the (greater) game’. Thank you Sir Donald! I will never lose sight of that!

W. P. Howey



## “Revelations” at Christmas

Because I believe it is appropriate, I like to think optimistically at Christmas time!  
“Revelations” helps!

“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations”. (Revelations 22:1 – 2)

Similarly, eminent authors and modern composers have poignant cogent advice barely concealed in exculpatory rhetoric:

“The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult; and left untried”. (*G. K. Chesterton* 1874 – 1936, *What’s Wrong with the World* (1910) pt. 4, ch. 14).

“And here’s to you, Mrs Robinson  
Jesus loves you more than you will know.  
God bless you please, Mrs Robinson  
Heaven holds a place for those who pray”.  
(*Paul Simon* 1942 - , *Mrs Robinson* 1998 song; used in the film *The Graduate*)

(The Mrs Robinson character so excellently portrayed by Anne Bancroft in *The Graduate* might have more in common with Madame Bovary than the Madonna!)

## A Happy Ending after All *The last word is the best news of all*

A New World at Last

“There will be no more tears then, nor pain. Wild animals will frolic, not kill. Once again creation will work the way God intended. Peace will reign not only between God and individuals, but between him and all creation. The kingdom comes out into the open. The City of God flings wide its gates”.

Revelations ends on a note of great triumph. Somehow, out of all the bad news augured here, good news emerges – spectacular Good News. To those who believe, Revelations becomes a book not of fear, but of hope. God will prevail. All will be made new. *There is a happy ending after all.* (Revelations 22)

Everyone at *PGF Team 2000* wish for you all at the time of an inchoate Millennium the merriest Christmas and the happiest and most prosperous New Year!

W. P. Howey  
Director (On behalf of PGF Team 2000)

## The Centurians

I have just returned from my annual vicarious nostalgic and highly emotional ‘cricket fix’ at the SCG Test in the early new year. It never ceases to thrill to ‘re-live’ my earliest misty recollections of the SCG and its traditional much fabled ‘Yabba’s Hill’. As a tiny boy over 50 years ago in far distant rural Northumbria my father regaled me while checking the sheep about the legendary Bradman and the infamous bodyline series with its threat to destroy the Empire and Dominion! Little did I think then it would be my ‘ultimate privilege’ to share the experience of an Ashes Test at this iconic halcyon Antipodean ‘whitefella sacred site’! I know this epithet is politically inexpedient but it is part of our white Anglo-Celtic culture: a status also shared (in my lexicon) by Randwick Race Course and the Royal Easter Showgrounds!

I wistfully wander along the remarkable ‘walk of fame’ suffused by ‘whimsical ephemera’ to eventually wind my way into the legendary ‘long bar’ deep in the bosom of the Members Stand between the two team ‘dream time’ dressing rooms. Here I peruse the massive smoke sullied score boards recording for posterity in minute detail the outcome(s) of the earliest encounters of the ‘Inter Colonial’ matches between NSW and Victoria. I note with reverence the contribution(s) of one H.J.H (‘Tup’) Scott for Victoria in the 1870’s and 1880’s. Dr. Scott was destined to captain the second Ashes touring team to England where he earned the sobriquet for his penchant of riding on London’s ‘double deckers’ for the princely sum of ‘tuppence’. A more prurient interpretation is that ‘Tup’ has long been the local bucolic vernacular for ‘Ram’ portentous of a rather more ‘zesty’ proclivity!

Dr. Scott was a native of Toorak but later made his home in Scone NSW. He became a much loved and revered ‘GP’ unfortunately passing away at the early age of 52 in 1912 due to the ravages of typhus. His memory is honourably enshrined in history with the local hospital bearing his name in perpetuity. His majestic home now functioning as a premier motel is a further totem to his stature. My own ‘stately’ abode was the home of the other famous resident ‘medico’ of the time – Dr. Oswald ‘Toby’ Barton the son of Sir Edmund ‘Tossy’ Barton our first Prime Minister.

Of course I was there – when Steve Waugh scored 87 of his 102 runs on the second day! I will be forced to lie forever to my still non-extant grandchildren! I surmised erroneously that with only 6 overs remaining of the days’ play he would not score his century tonight! ‘I’ll be there in the morning’ I said! If you leave the SCG slightly earlier than ‘stumps drawn’ you have a slim chance of exiting the Member’s Car Park at Moore Park within 1 hour! I opted for the latter and only just in time to witness the ultimate magic moment on my TV in my sanctuary at the Australian Club in Macquarie Street where ‘Invincible’ Arthur Morris holds court every evening during the Test! I was in good company! Even twin brother Mark had arrived at the same decision and made his way to Harold Park trots to keep an important punting engagement in company with his Essex (UK) team mate Ronnie Irani!

Undeterred and un-phased by such a 'Nasser-like' equally reckless and disastrous decision I faithfully returned the next day – to witness the dismissal without addition to his overnight score! You can't be right all the time! Although I missed the piquant pinnacle it was still magic to be part of the full-on non-stop electric action at the SCG! Dream-like I sit and blissfully absorb the extra special ambience.

Vicariously I muse as fellow veterinarian Matthew Hoggard trundles in rather raggedly from the Paddington Hill end with a fully fuelled 'barmy army' vociferously cajoling his most sterling efforts. Michael Vaughan also performs exceptionally well.

How come secondary education in Yorkshire County did not produce a similar response in yours truly? Why is it so that one G. Boycott made all the runs of that era? Could it have anything to do with innate ability or am I just another 'cricket tragic' statistic perennially confined to the scrap heap? (You don't have to answer that!) The Prime Minister and I are on equal terms there! I actually met him at a Sydney GPS cricket match when my son was valiantly doing his level best to rescue and restore the dented cricket reputation of the faded and jaded Howey clan!

What has all this to do with the AEVA I hear you ask? What is the sanctimonious 'old flatulent' on about now? Well, there is a somewhat tenuous link! The eclectic Audrey Best was the very first full time paid Executive (Administrative) Officer of the AEVA. Early President Professor Dave Hutchins presciently predicted the AEVA would not progress without our establishing such a position. We picked a big winner in Audrey! I confidently prophesy the present inchoate incumbent Nicola Rose will not only equal but swiftly surpass Audrey in overall excellence! However I digress!

Audrey Best was a native of Nottingham in England. This is the same County which produced the opening bowling pair of the 'bodyline' series in Harold Larwood and Bill Voce. History has recorded how Harold Larwood was later 'ostracised' by the MCC and he subsequently emigrated with his family to live in Australia where he was warmly welcomed by Jack Fingleton and Prime Minister Ben Chifley. John Major saw fit to redress and partly remedy the shameful situation by awarding him the OBE. "Well bowled Harold – at last" screamed the headline in the SMH when Australian Governor General Peter Sinclair presented him with the richly deserved award! As a mark of respect Audrey and I composed a letter to congratulate him. "The people of Nottingham are very pleased you have been acknowledged" wrote Audrey. When Audrey Best retired I was thrilled to be invited to deliver the address at her valedictory dinner in Sydney. This was the celebrated occasion when many past and present AEVA Presidents seemed to somehow slowly disintegrate and gently disappear by slipping under the table of the excellent Surry Hills host restaurant! The same crew were later to assemble on the balcony of the eatery for a loud raucous rendition of 'For She's A Jolly Good Fellow' as Audrey left by taxi! Surprise? Surprise!

I was reminded of all of this when I came across the magnificent 'Larwood' memorabilia tastefully assembled in the striking cricket museum at the SCG. There was the mounted ball presented to Harold by his much maligned 'grateful skipper' Douglas Jardine. With it

were his pristine Nottingham County Cricket Blazer and Cap as well as copper plate hand written letters sent by him from Australia to family and friends in England in 1932. Also present were a collage of poignant old daguerreotype photographs redolent of the era including Harold returning to the SCG pavilion having scored a most courageous and ultimately match winning 98 batting at Number 9 in the Sydney Test.



Harold Larwood in action

Bankrupt for inspiration of what to say about Audrey I decided to telephone Harold Larwood at his home in Kingsford easily identified as the only 'Larwood' surname in the Sydney Telephone Directory! After slight initial guarded reluctance from a rightly protective female family member I was able to have a long conversation with the legendary fast bowler! It has been one of the most defining and gratifying moments in my life's experience. I explained my purpose with the hair on the back of my neck standing on end.



Harold Larwood  
Nottinghamshire & England

Harold was immensely proud of his success in the application of ‘leg side theory’ (his words) under direction during the Ashes Tour. With 32 wickets at a fraction over 17 runs per wicket was he just far too good? He was equally thrilled with the award made to him by his grateful haughty patrician captain. Everything he remembered had positive reflections! In his rich Nottingham burr undiminished after 50 years expatriation he told me with great dignity (as tears welled in my eyes) of receiving a standing ovation at the SCG! Initially he thought the crowd were gloatingly celebrating his dismissal by Australia. Then it dawned on him the deafening appreciative applause was all for him and his heroic efforts! His message for Audrey was to form the nexus of my speech: ***“Tell tha’ lass a’ll get a ‘undred for her next time lad”!*** It was as if that other great almost co-contemporary product of Nottingham D. E. Lawrence had written the script and Paul Morel was uttering the words! He couldn’t see it, but the tears really did begin to flow and filter down onto my telephone hand set!



Harold Larwood  
Kingsford Sydney

W. P. Howey



## Vicarious Thrill – Graduation 2001!

I had a fabulous time at the awards presentation ceremony for new Sydney BVSc graduates on Wednesday 19 December 2001! For the information of Sydney alumni it was held in the W. P. Young Room of the Veterinary Science Conference Centre and on the lawn outside. This was an exceptional occasion and huge success with the ambience 'perfect'. Congratulations to the Faculty (Dean Reuben Rose), Veterinary Science Foundation (Jennie Churchill) and everyone else involved! It was a great thrill and honour to present the PGFVS Prize for Clinical Competence to Dr. Elizabeth Duys BVSc, a most worthy recipient. The PGFVS makes similar awards each year at Melbourne, Queensland, Murdoch and Massey.

I had a ball! My only regret is that I had to drive away so greatly inhibiting my style! Graham Brown (Chris's father) reminded me of when I didn't make their wedding in Newcastle 33 years ago because I'd rolled my car and obliterated a few fence posts leaving Denman Races! So perhaps it was as well I was 'restrained'! Graham was PP Board Vet in Scone when I arrived in 1967! I found a lot of other soul mates and 'blasts from the past'! Perry Manus I'd rarely seen since he knocked over my magnum bottle of Scotch somewhere in mid-West USA on the PGFVS Beef Cattle trip in 1973! This was the first and last time the PGFVS went 'on tour'! Victor Cole was an outstanding tour leader! Dave Mossman and Brian McCrae excelled in the 'hospitality' stakes!

It was great to run into John Hayes (Angus's father). Angus and Sam Walker were staunch mates of my son Hugh at St. Paul's College. Chris Brown was also in the coterie although 'in denial' at St. Andrews! George Russ has done well to secure Chris for Neutral Bay! He expects all the 18 - 25 nubile young females from the lower North Shore to turn up regularly for feline consultations! (Actually, I think he said they'd be bringing their cats!)! Angus, Chris and Sam all stayed at our place in Scone when doing 'practical work'. Sarah, not surprisingly, thought they were all 'divine' even heavenly - especially Chris! Nicky Jagger also stayed with us - at my invitation! I met her parents for the first time that night! Genetics rules OK!

Andrew and Janie Stevenson (Edwina's parents) were in their element. Andrew is chairman of the Widden Stud Board as well as St. Vincents Hospital and Westgarth Chambers! Good to see former VETSOC leader Kym Hagon who is bound for the North Coast. There were lots of others but time and 0.05 are limiting! I felt quite 'patriarchal' with some of my proteges now BVSc. Well done! It was an enormous thrill to be there – vicarious like most of my pleasures these days!

My son Hugh leads our family's Christmas prayers each year! Hugh has a very strong faith - finely balanced by the opposing 'anarchist' views of his elder sister 'Cyclone' Kirsty! As I began to write this she was recuperating in Buenos Aires following a hectic global peripatetic perambulation of 10 months duration. Not surprisingly civil unrest had just exploded! Kirsty managed to sneak across a remote border in escaping from Nepal at the time of the Royal slaughter! She was in Turkey for S11! She pushes the boundaries!

Since she arrived home NSW has been on fire! Ah well she is her father's daughter! Like I said genotype predominates! ***I will close in wishing you all a fabulous Year in 2002!***

W. P. Howey  
Director

# What Makes a Good Horse Vet? What Makes a Horse Vet Good?

Many years ago the late Alf McGeoch delivered me a crumpled piece of paper with a hand written note on it. Alf is the sire of Olympic bid hero Rod as well as my mate Andy and was then the major stud stock consultant with the AML & F Company. I enjoyed the distinction of playing Rugby with Andy who had earlier partnered the legendary 'Pine Tree Meads' in the King Country XV in NZ. (Talk about 'decline and fall' and 'sublime to ridiculous'!) His son James and my son Hugh later played second row for Sydney University Colts. However I digress – I thought you really needed to know that! The writing on the note was in the shaky scrawl of the very elderly F. K. ('Darby') Mackay. 'FK' was my wife's great uncle, a prominent thoroughbred breeder and former vice chairman of the AJC. Like the 'Wizard of Dormello' Federico Tesio he made an intimate study of horses around the world, their behaviour and genotype ('breeding'). Nebo Road and Royal Sovereign were two of his champion breed. His note posed two superficially simple questions:

“What makes a horse good?”

*and*

“What makes a good horse?”

“Good luck” said Alf as he bid *adieu*. I needed it! I have struggled for correct answers ever since. It’s rather like the extant situation with veterinary training. What are the answers? See if you can tackle the following table!

## Graduate Attributes ('Competencies') of Veterinarians

[illegible]

## Taxonomy of Educational Objectives

### Summary of the Three Domains

(From Module B-2, Develop Student Performance Objectives, The Centre for Vocational Education, Ohio State University, AAVIM, Georgia, 1977)

<b>Major Categories in the Cognitive Domain ('Knowledge' Based)</b>	
<b>Evaluation</b>	Involves acts of decision-making, judging or selecting based on criteria and rationale. Requires <b>synthesis</b> in order to <b>evaluate</b> .
<b>Synthesis</b>	Combines elements to form new entity from original one. Requires <b>analysis</b> in order to <b>synthesise</b> .
<b>Analysis</b>	Separates whole into its parts until relationship among elements is clear. Requires ability to <b>apply information</b> in order to <b>analyse</b> .
<b>Application</b>	Uses information in a situation different from original learning context. Requires <b>comprehension</b> of information in order to <b>apply</b> in new situation.
<b>Comprehension</b>	Interprets, translates, summarises or paraphrases given information. Requires <b>knowledge</b> in order to demonstrate <b>comprehension</b> .
<b>Knowledge</b>	Recognition and recall of facts and specifics.
<b>Major Categories in the Psychomotor Domain ('Skills' Based)</b>	
<b>Naturalisation</b>	Completes one or more skills with ease and becomes automatic with limited physical and mental exertion.
<b>Articulation</b>	Combines more than one skill in sequence with harmony and consistency.
<b>Precision</b>	Reproduces a skill with accuracy, proportion and exactness; usually performed independent of original source.
<b>Manipulation</b>	Performs skill according to instruction rather than observation.
<b>Imitation</b>	Observes skill and attempts to repeat it.
<b>Major Categories in the Affective Domain ("Attitudes' Based + Attributes?")</b>	
<b>Characterising</b>	Total <b>behaviour</b> is consistent with values <b>internalised</b> .
<b>Organizing</b>	Committed to set of <b>values</b> as displayed by <b>behaviour</b>
<b>Valuing</b>	Displays <b>behaviour</b> consistent with single <b>belief</b> or <b>attitude</b> in situation where one is not forced to <b>comply</b> or <b>obey</b> .
<b>Responding</b>	<b>Complies</b> with given expectations by <b>attending</b> or <b>reacting</b> to stimuli or phenomena; i.e., <b>interests</b> .
<b>Receiving</b>	<b>Aware of</b> ; passively <b>attending</b> to certain phenomena and stimuli; i.e., <b>listening</b> .

### Graduate Attributes - What Are They?

How exoteric and how esoteric should we be in defining the desirable traits of veterinary graduates? With the exponential increase of 'knowledge' is the 'omni-competent' veterinarian a myth or a reality? Is the 'omni-attributed' veterinarian more feasible? Should we attempt to distill 'emotional intelligence'? Have you ever heard of 'spiritual intelligence' or 'SQ'? "Mummy, why do I have a life?" is an interrogative cited by journalist Maxine McKew as evidence of a child with high SQ in a recent article in 'The Bulletin' (February 12, 2002). How esoteric is that and how problematical to answer

honestly! How do we teach, measure and assess these ‘attributes’? It’s time the various VSB’s acknowledged the fact it is now ‘impossible’ to register truly omni-competent veterinarians at graduation if indeed it ever was!

*‘What the hell is the geriatric old flatulent on about now’* I can almost hear you interject and not without good reason I must confess! The point is I am (arguably) intellectually incarcerated as a trained scientist with inculcated intelligence (ignorance?) of things you can measure and therefore readily ‘assessable’. In my other VET (Vocational Education and Training) life I learned to think write and read in terms of assessable learning outcomes based on clearly defined ‘competencies’. We had to think **‘SMART’** in developing objectives for curriculum:

Specific  
Measurable  
Achievable  
Recordable  
Trackable/Traceable

It is intriguing to contemplate that the first draft of the National Competency Standards for the Thoroughbred Racing Industry (1992) included as many Units of Competency for ‘Attributes’ as for ‘Skills’:

Unit of Competence	Stable Hand AQTF Level 2	Jockey AQTF Level 3
Handle a Horse	4	4
Perform General Stable Duties	4	4
Maintain Horse Health and Welfare	4	4
Ride a Horse in Work	Optional	4
Rise a Horse in Races		4
Communicate Effectively in Regard to Stable Duties	4	4
Communicate Effectively in the Racing Industry		4
Maintain Personal Health and Fitness		4
Manage Career and Relationships Within Stable	4	4
Manage Personal & Business Affairs		4

The point of the illustration above is young people with minimal entry level requirements are being instructed in life survival skills of communication, health, fitness, relationships and fiscal management from induction. These people are at the lower end of the Australian Qualifications Training Framework (AQTF) scale. Graduate veterinarians are equivalent to AQTF 8 – 10.

Where is the deficiency in education? How dilatory have we been to implement the effective change(s) the VET sector has instituted for the last decade? Is it a case of



misguided intellectual snobbery or academic arrogance? How ironic the acronym matches our own abbreviated descriptor!

Further, key competencies in the workforce (Meyer) are incorporated into delivery of all VET CBT curricula:

Key Competency
Language, Literacy and Numeracy ('Desirable')
Collecting, Analysing and Organising Information
Communicating Ideas and Information
Using Mathematical Ideas and Techniques
Using Technology
Working with Others and in Teams
Solving Problems

Professor Donal Walsh from UC Davis was the keynote speaker at the 'Veterinary Graduate Attributes and Learning Outcomes' Joint Australasian Veterinary Schools Workshop at the VCSS on 28 & 29 January 2002. Donal was co-author of a paper '*Defining the attributes expected of graduating veterinary medical students*' in Perspectives in Professional Education, JAVMA, Vol 219, No. 10, November 15, 2001. The chair (Dr. Lonnie King) of the **National Commission on Veterinary Economic Issues** (NCVEI) was cited as stating:

"Increasingly the critical success factors for veterinarians in our rapidly changing world are seemingly less about our technical and scientific skills and more about life skills including:

- Interpersonal competence
- 'Entrepreneurism'
- Ability to:
- Adapt
- Leverage technology
- Create and take advantage of new opportunities
- Work in TEAMS
- Maintain high level of self-confidence
- Desire to improve
- Continuously learn

The acquisition of these skills will produce new graduates who are better equipped to raise incomes, meet societal needs and truly reach our profession's potential."

Three (3) steps are essential to ensure attributes attained by veterinary graduates will meet expectations as members of the veterinary profession and the needs of society:

1. Define attributes students must acquire by time of graduation

2. Establish internal assessment process to ensure students meet expectations
3. Establish external ‘outcomes’ assessment to ensure appropriate goals are met

Some of the expected attributes of veterinary graduates are and should be the basis for admission. From the UC Davis study expectations of veterinary students were classified into 3 categories:

- Professional characteristics
- Knowledge and understanding
- Skills

The VSCC meeting failed to define **attributes** as far as I recall. I discovered the following in the glossary of the Professional Competencies of Canadian Veterinarians:

**Attributes:** The personal characteristics such as skills, knowledge and attitudes that underlie competent performance

**Competency:** The ability to perform the required activities within an occupation or function to the standard expected in employment

After much circular thinking and spiral discussion I had a real sense of *déjà vu*! Haven’t I been down this path before? It is a standard maxim in teaching – and tired cliché – that ‘***in the end we go back to the beginning***’! Henry Collins produced a most commendable raft of evidence and documentation to support and stimulate debate at the ‘Attributes’ meeting. Each school had furiously ‘re-invented its own wheel’ in terms of curriculum development and evolution of standards. All produced essentially similar lists of skills, competencies and attributes perhaps thinly disguised by bureaucratic nomenclature. One did not have to be Einstein (see below) to soon realise much of the original thought had already taken place! I commend the following websites to you to access this information:

Ontario Veterinary College, University of Guelph:

<http://www.ovc.uoguelph.ca/Services/College/DVM/DVM2000/compet.html>

Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons:

<http://www.rcvs.org.uk>

National Commission on Veterinary Economic Issues:

<http://www.NCVEI.org>

If we follow our own lead to adapt and adopt we will arrive back at the beginning as I said! Like the Irishman seeking Tipperary I wouldn’t be starting from here either but you have to begin somewhere! As with VET there should be a Competency Standards Body (CSB) established to oversee the accreditation of national standards compliant with international recognition and agreement. This paves the way for National Registration with accommodation for mutual recognition of overseas qualifications where graduates are ‘equivalent’. Isn’t NOOSR our *de facto* CSB in any case as the guardian of ‘principles’ for entry of professionals? Are we guilty of duplicity in supporting double

standards where potential immigrants are implicated? Should we empower the nascent but impotent Australasian Veterinary Boards Council (AVBC) to steward to process?

So what have I/we done about it? For along time I've firmly believed the mature age veterinary profession should accept a greater responsibility for those who will replace us! It must do this by becoming more reactive and proactive in the education process. We must assist our academic colleagues by all means at our disposal to expedite the process of education especially the 'skills' components. This has become even more of an exigency with the progressive downward diminution of University funding with the 'expensive' Veterinary Faculties becoming the campus pariahs for the V-C's! We used to be heralded as 'boutique specialties' when funds were overflowing in the halcyon days of yore!

To this end I have taken some intrepid early steps to "put my action where my mouth is!" The Equine Chapter of the ACVSc has formulated a program on 'Graduate Attributes of Equine Veterinarians' for its meeting at College Science Week in July. Debbie Racklyeft will lead this debate. With Bob Ratcliffe we have held a series of meetings with equine veterinarians and horse industry leaders in the Hunter Valley. The end users of veterinary services will have their say to determine their 'wish list'. It is vital the employers and consumers become part of the evolutionary process and develop a 'sense of ownership'. These parties have been largely excluded to date breeding fear and distrust.

**"Imagination** is more important than **knowledge**. I never came upon my discoveries by a process of rational thinking". Albert Einstein.

### **Graduate Attributes - *"To attribute or not to attribute – that is the question?"***

'Old Bill' from Stratford-U-A (UK) started some profound philosophical debate enshrined in his pivotal prose of the previous millennium. Not quite so 'Old Bill' of another era/generation and from somewhere else possesses miniscule literate power but poses the plagiarised question(s) nonetheless. Is there a theoretical difference between 'being' and having 'attributes'? What are 'attributes' in the context of the practice of veterinary science and how do these relate to knowledge, skill, attitude and 'competency'?

There has been much recent furious discussion on what constitutes 'competency' in the work place and the acquisition of the 'attributes' necessary to adequately perform to an accepted professional standard. In another life I worked for a period of time in the vocational education & training (VET) sector with TAFE NSW. This coincided with the imposition of the reforms of the National Training Reform Agenda (NTRA) and the National Framework for the Recognition of Training (NFROT) as proposed by the then extant federal government. This was the era of a ***'skilled Australian workforce'*** and ***'get skilled Australia'***. As a consequence the National Training Board (NTB) produced Policy and Guidelines Documents on National Competency Standards. Much of my time in curriculum development with TAFE NSW was spent in writing and accrediting syllabus in 'Competency Based Training (CBT)' format. I cemented two friendships with my

TAFE colleagues Barry Porter and Paul Mascord I'm sure will endure for a lifetime! I will not bore you with the minutiae of the process save to emphasise the complex nature! Coming from the private sector in veterinary practice I was initially dismayed at the (perceived) slow progress of events. Before fully appreciating the absolute need for quality assurance and control at all levels of national curriculum extension I regarded TAFE rather cynically as a '***gargantuan antediluvian dinosaur educational bureaucracy***'! Much to the chagrin of the TAFE hierarchy and the NSW Minister for Education I was (in)famously quoted in the Financial Review as deploring the '***bureaucratic impediment to progress***'!

Imagine my dismay to find the academic (University) sector and our profession is approximately a decade behind its VET sibling! We pre-date my sardonic judgment of the longevity of the TAFE bureaucracy! According to the NTB directive and under the aegis of the NOOSR/AVA Competency Project Professor Lindsey Heywood produced a document 'The Australian Veterinary Profession – *Competency Standards*'. The revised edition is dated 31 July 1996. The 'ground-work' had been done! While largely ignored at home This formed the basis for the elocution of the 'Professional Competencies of Canadian Veterinarians – A Basis for Curriculum Development' produced by the Ontario Veterinary College of the University of Guelph. I commend it to you! It is available and you can download the whole text from the OVC URL at:

<http://www.ovc.uoguelph.ca/Services/College/DVM/DVM2000/compet.html>

The national educational focus now seems to target a '***knowledge based***' Australian work force albeit unsupported by commitment to increased funding to achieve this goal. Indeed, quite the reverse applies! 'User pays' in all things apparently not excluding access to higher education! How the pendulum swings!

A seminal meeting was convened by the Faculty of Veterinary Science at the Veterinary Science Conference Centre of the University of Sydney on 28 & 29 January 2002. Henry Collins was the facilitator. Delegates from all five Universities providing undergraduate training attended the 'Joint Australasian Veterinary Schools Workshop' and also James Cook University (JCU) of North Queensland with its graduate courses. A recent veterinary graduate of Sydney represented Charles Sturt University (CSU) from the Wagga Wagga Campus. The keynote guest speaker was Dr. Donal Walsh from the School of Veterinary Medicine, UC Davis, CA USA. It was a revelation to discover both JCU and CSU are seriously contemplating the introduction of undergraduate veterinary degrees! Are we to witness the 'decentralisation' of veterinary training into more realistically affordable and sustainable regional models? JCU certainly thinks so! Even more startling was the proclamation by a very senior academic that the three schools on the eastern seaboard coalesce resources to form a combined school perhaps based in Canberra!

The *AIMS* of the combined workshop were to:

- ◆ Share the experiences of ‘Australasian’ (and US) schools in identifying the basic attributes/competencies of veterinary graduates
- ◆ Achieve a consensus on an appropriate model and terminology for the defining of veterinary graduate attributes
- ◆ Achieve a consensus on a set of attributes appropriate for ‘Australasian’ veterinary graduates
- ◆ Identify ways in which graduate attributes could be assessed
- ◆ ***Create a process for validation and further development of graduate attributes in collaboration with the profession (‘Employers’)***
- ◆ Explore the possible use of graduate attributes in registration of veterinarians, accreditation of schools, graduate evaluation of courses, recognition of overseas degrees, and universal international recognition
- ◆ Explore the role of graduate attributes in the provisional registration of final year students and in extramural education

These are most worthy prescient noble goals Henry and you are to be heartily congratulated! I do strongly suggest, however, there is one glaring omission!

- ◆ ***Create a process for validation and further development of graduate attributes in collaboration with the end users of professional veterinary services (‘Clients’)***

As a result of this meeting Henry has formulated a draft of its findings. These are presented elsewhere with this Circular. Implementing the changes will take a combination of brute force and subtle subliminal diplomacy! I’m more adept at the former! As the incumbent Director of the PGFVS responsible for thousands of collegiate veterinarians I am profoundly conscious of my duty. Equally, after 30 years of private practice where we employed over 100 veterinarians (as many as 23 at one time) I feel I have a reasonable grasp of criteria required for success in the practice situation. I think I can qualify but not quantify the desirable qualities. Let us nonetheless proceed forthwith!

*“The fault dear Brutus lies not in our stars but in ourselves that we are underlings”  
(Caius Cassius to Caius Brutus in Julius Caesar by ‘Old Bill’ of Stratford-U-A).*

*“Whatever is well done however humble is noble” (Anon.)*

### **Attributes of Australasian Veterinary Graduates (Draft)**

Summary of Meeting – VSCC Sydney University - 28/29 January 2002.

On completion of the course the student will demonstrate:



<p>A. PROFESSIONAL LIFE</p> <p>1. Professional Duty of Care Professional integrity</p> <p>Responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Animals</li> <li>• Clients</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Understanding of legal obligations</li> <li>• Relevance to community health</li> <li>• Conservation of species and the environment</li> <li>• Agricultural sustainability</li> </ul>
<p>2. Effective and Empathic Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clients</li> <li>• Staff</li> <li>• Peers</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Oral and Written English</li> <li>• Values:</li> <li>• Compassion</li> <li>• Courtesy</li> <li>• Respect</li> <li>• Honesty</li> <li>• Absence of Discrimination</li> </ul>
<p>3. Understanding of the Business of Veterinary Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business fundamentals</li> <li>• Organisational systems</li> <li>• Human resource management</li> <li>• KPIs</li> <li>• Ongoing quality control</li> <li>• Health and safety</li> <li>• Knowledge management</li> <li>• Design of hospitals</li> <li>• Complaint management</li> </ul>

4.	Capacity for Self-management and Self-knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goal-setting and planning</li> <li>• Emotional intelligence</li> <li>• Community leadership and change skills</li> <li>• Team work</li> <li>• Managing a career</li> <li>• Work/leisure balance</li> <li>• Increasing professional knowledge</li> </ul>
5.	Recognition of and Compliance with Ethical and Professional Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All areas of veterinary activity</li> <li>• Code of Professional Conduct</li> </ul>
6.	Adaptability and ability to collaborate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional colleagues</li> <li>• Support staff</li> <li>• Clients</li> <li>• Other professionals</li> <li>• Participation in veterinary organisations</li> </ul>

## B. SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING

### Ability to Investigate and Solve Problems in Veterinary Science

Apply knowledge, skills and understanding of:

- ◆ Normal animals and their interactions with the environment
- ◆ Principles of disease
- ◆ Animal production systems and economics
- ◆ Public health and food safety

Incorporates:

- ~ Observational skills
- ~ Collection of evidence
- ~ Testing of hypotheses
- ~ Information literacy and management
- ~ Statistical analysis
- ~ Critical analysis of evidence
- ~ Ethical behaviour
- ~ Clear communication at all levels

## C. CLINICAL ACUMEN

Identify and Manage Disease and Dysfunction in Animals:

- ~ Recognise normal and abnormal behaviour
- ~ Take a history or interpret records
- ~ Perform a clinical examination
- ~ Select appropriate diagnostic aids and interpret the results
- ~ Make a diagnosis
- ~ Formulate, implement and monitor treatment
- ~ Advise on control and prevention of disease
- ~ Keep accurate records
- ~ Advise on economic and welfare implications of clinical decision-making

**Draft 4**

**H Collins 01/02/02**

**W. Howey 08/02/02**

## **Education in Veterinary Science at the University of Sydney**

### **The Goal of Veterinary Education**

The Faculty of Veterinary Science aims to produce graduates who can be registered and:

- Communicate fluently in English in various media
- Information literate
- Possess a broad understanding in the biological and veterinary sciences and in animal husbandry
- Skilled in animal management, medicine and surgery
- Capable of investigating and resolving animal-related problems
- Familiar with the functions and routine management of practices
- Support and promote animal welfare
- Support the aims and image of the profession
- Support protection of the natural environment
- Practice scientifically, legally, professionally, safely, with compassion and without discrimination
- Aware of the need for regular self-evaluation and continuing professional development

### **Preamble to the Graduate Attributes**

Veterinarians are professionals who carry out a wide variety of activities on behalf of both animals and the people responsible for them. The practice of veterinary science not only involves the application of scientific knowledge and skills, but also the ability to communicate with clients and the public, manage a small business and work in a team.

Most veterinarians in practice deal with species from several animal groups. The species that are frequently and routinely involved in practice, here called the standard animals, are the cat, dog, horse, cow, sheep, pig and 'bird' (encompassing domestic hens and the common cagebirds). Less frequently, through the application of basic veterinary knowledge and principles, veterinarians deal with a wide variety of other species, such as goats, guinea pigs, rodents, rabbits, donkeys, emus and ostriches, and 'fish' (aquarium and farmed) – termed the associated animals. Australian native animals, although frequently met with in practice, are too dissimilar to the standard and associated animals to allow the transfer of more than a few procedures. Some zoo animals are similar to the standard animals; many are not. The needs of the graduate with respect to the different groups of animals have been acknowledged in forming the Attributes.

Veterinary graduates need to be able to function satisfactorily in mixed practices. To fill the role of a 'mixed practitioner' they need certain basic attributes. Attributes describe what veterinary graduates should know, be able to do and how they should do it. All graduates should have these basic attributes.

However, some practices would like to employ veterinarians who can function at a higher level in particular aspects of veterinary science – *equine*, dairy, etc. It would be advantageous for our graduates if they had additional abilities in at least one particular type of practice. These are advanced attributes that are described separately, and which will be acquired through study in electives.

### **The Basic Attributes of Veterinary Graduates**

Graduates in Veterinary Science will have the generic attributes of graduates from the University of Sydney and, in addition, will be able to:

#### **ANIMAL MANAGEMENT**

1. Handle and restrain the standard animals safely and effectively. Using basic principles, handle and restrain associated animals and Australian native animals
2. Advise on routine management, nutrition, housing and handling in the standard animals, and, working from basic principles, in associated animals
3. Perform routine procedures for investigation, control and enhancement of fertility and reproduction in the standard animals
4. Advise individuals and organisations with responsibility for animals on the principles of Animal Welfare and the humane management and disposal of animals

#### **FOOD SAFETY**

5. With due attention to Animal Welfare, advise on the safe and humane preparation, and the safe storage, use and disposal, of human foods of animal origin
  - Advise on the appropriate preparation, management and humane slaughter of the meat animals used in the production of safe food for human consumption
  - Perform routine meat inspection procedures in the meat animals
  - Advise on the safe handling and storage of animal-derived foods
  - Advise on the risks to human health of contamination of animal feeds and human food products with chemicals, animal wastes, pathogens and parasites
  - Advise on the safe and environmentally-sustainable disposal of the wastes from the preparation of animals for human consumption

#### **CLINICAL MANAGEMENT**

6. Through recognition of clinical signs, exploration of the clinical history and interpretation of appropriate diagnostic tests, diagnose the common diseases and



dysfunctions of the standard animals, and by working from basic principles, of associated and Australian native animals

- Perform a thorough physical examination
  - Investigate and record the clinical history
  - Collect suitable samples and perform routine diagnostic tests appropriate to a practice laboratory
  - Interpret the results of routine diagnostic tests carried out by a practice, government or commercial pathology laboratory
  - Review diagnosis based on clinical progress
  - Perform a routine *post mortem* examination of a standard, associated, Australian native, zoo or feral animal and collect appropriate samples for further investigation
7. Using the currently available diagnostic imaging equipment safely and accurately identify, as appropriate, the common diseases and dysfunctions of the standard species. Working from basic principles, apply routine imaging where appropriate to associated, Australian native and zoo animals
- Use standard radiographic equipment safely and efficiently, prepare radiographs and interpret the results
  - Use advanced imaging techniques whenever appropriate in the diagnostic process
8. Using the information derived from the physical examination, and from laboratory and instrumental aids to diagnosis, determine logical diagnostic possibilities, identify and institute appropriate medical and/or surgical therapy based on scientific evidence, and monitor for effectiveness and untoward sequelae
9. Carry out current routine analgesic and anaesthetic procedures in the standard animals Using basic principles, apply these procedures to associated animals and Australian native animals
10. Carry out current routine surgical procedures, as appropriate, in the standard animals and, working from basic principles, in the associated animals
11. Perform routine obstetrical procedures in the standard animals, and, working from basic principles, in the associated animals
12. Carry out first aid in emergency situations in the standard animals and, by applying basic principles, in the associated animals
13. Advise clients on the prevention of disease and dysfunction in the standard animals and, by working from basic principles, in the associated animals

14. Recognise the possible presence of an introduced exotic disease and know the correct procedure for notification and initial control
15. Carry out euthanasia efficiently and humanely in the standard animals and using basic principles, in the associated, meat, Australian native, zoo and feral animals
16. Apply principles of diagnosis, treatment and control to health problems in the associated animals, and to uncommon health problems in the standard animals

## PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

17. Practice veterinary science professionally:
  - with primary consideration to the welfare of the animals in care
  - in accordance with the agreed ethical and professional standards of the profession
  - with due regard to the legal requirements of veterinarians
  - with due regard to the current legislation relating to animals, animal welfare, animal management, practice management, health and safety, food safety, quarantine, etc
  - with due attention to the health and safety needs of oneself, colleagues, ancillary staff, clients and the community
  - with colleagues, ancillary staff, clients and the public with respect and without discrimination, and
  - record the results of veterinary interventions and procedures promptly, accurately and concisely
18. Work effectively as individuals, partners and as members of a team
  - Communicate with colleagues, ancillary staff, clients and the public with patience, empathy and compassion
  - Participate as a member of, or lead the activities of, a group in discussion of issues, generation of ideas or problem-solving
19. Respond to the need for change
  - Identify the need for change in plans, procedures, skills, knowledge or attitudes
  - Describe the aims of the changes
  - Identify methods to achieve the planned changes
  - Manage the change process
  - Reflect on the outcomes
20. Identify the need for information, and acquire, store, retrieve, critically evaluate and use scientific, clinical and other relevant information in print and electronic resources

21.
  - Access, evaluate, sort and interpret information from both print and electronic sources
  - Use networked services and information technology efficiently in research, professional development and practice management
  - Investigate emerging technologies and determine their relevance to the profession
22. Communicate effectively in English, both orally and in writing, with a variety of recipients and audiences and using a variety of media
23. Describe the standard approach for reporting scientific investigations, including the basic structure and function of a scientific report, the common methods for citing references in the text, the rules for constructing a bibliography and usage of correct scientific language
24. Advise clients, ancillary staff and the public on the control of the common zoonoses transmitted by the standard, associated and Australian native animals
25. Explain the need for the routine procedures that occur in the management of a small veterinary practice
  - Management of records, disposal of wastes, safety procedures, hygiene etc
  - Explain in general terms how the financial status of a practice depends on satisfying the veterinary needs of the public, promoting services, maintaining good communication, controlling costs and maximising returns
25. Prepare a *curriculum vitae*, identify appropriate work opportunities, construct an effective application, perform satisfactorily at an interview and negotiate a favourable employment contract
26. Reflect on and evaluate own abilities and achievements, identify deficiencies in skills and knowledge and develop strategies for further improvement.
  - Identify clinical and other situations where additional expertise and experience is necessary
  - Identify suitable specialist services and refer patients promptly and professionally
  - Regularly attend appropriate courses and conferences in order to update and improve knowledge and skills
  - Recognise and describe personal learning needs and goals, identify suitable resources and communicate effectively with the appropriate provider

## CONSERVATION BIOLOGY AND ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY

27. Practice veterinary science with due regard to the need to protect the natural environment and conserve endangered species

28. Apply basic principles of Veterinary Conservation Biology to the management and conservation of wildlife and protection of the natural environment

- Advise on the sustainability of agricultural activities, taking a whole-farm approach
- Apply basic principles of veterinary science in the control of feral and pest animals
- Apply basic diagnostic, surgical and therapeutic principles and procedures in the treatment, rehabilitation and release of injured and diseased Australian native animals
- Advise on the ecological and animal welfare implications of rehabilitation programs

### **The Australian Veterinary Profession**

### **Equine Competency Standards**

PGFVS/NOOSR/AVA Competency Project

Animal Range Indicator: *Horses*

*Methods of Restraint:*

Range of Common Contexts to which Performance Criteria Apply	Witnessed/Achieved
Nose Twitch	
Neck Grip	
Blindfold	
Blinkers	
Chemical	
Crush	
Elevation of tail	
Halter	
Bridle and bit	
Rearing bit	
Lifting one leg	
Loin rope	
Neck rope	
Single and double side lines	
<i>Other:</i>	


Animal Range Indicator: *Horses*

*Abnormalities of individual animals:*

Range of Common Contexts to which Performance Criteria Apply	Witnessed/Achieved
Abdominal distension	
Abnormal respiration	
Anaemia	
Anorexia	
Ankylosis	
Ataxia	
Blepharospasm	
Bone fractures	
Coat conditions	
Colic	
Constipation	
Coughing	
Dehydration	
Dementia	
Dental disorders	
Depression	
Dermatitis	
Diarrhoea	
Discharges from orifices and wounds	
Disorders of the hoof	
Dysphagia	
Dysmetrias	
Dysuria	
Entropion	
Fever	
Flatulence	
Haematomas	
Icterus	



Lacerations	
Lameness	
Malocclusion of jaws	
Masturbation	
Myalgia	
Nasal discharge	
Oedema and swellings	
Pallor	
Pawing	
Pica	
Polydipsia	
Poor body condition	
Rubbing	
Sport injuries	
Stall walking	
Sweating	
Flexor tendonitis	
Tenesmus	
Tetany	
Umbilical hernias	
Valgus and varus in foals	
Weaving and windsucking	
<i>Other:</i>	

Animal Range Indicator:     *Horses*

*Problems in groups of animals:*

Range of Common Contexts to which Performance Criteria Apply	Witnessed/Achieved
Abortion	
Conjunctivitis	
Foal septicaemia	
Ill thrift	

Infertility	
Laminitis	
Nutritional disorders	
Ecto- and endoparasitism	
Plant poisoning	
Skin diseases	
Strangles and upper respiratory tract infections	
<i>Other:</i>	

Animal Range Indicator:     *Horses*

*First aid procedures:*

Range of Common Contexts to which Performance Criteria Apply	Witnessed/Achieved
Alleviation of colic	
Control of heamorrhage	
Fractures of lower limbs	
Obstetrics	
Sedation and euthanasia	
<i>Other:</i>	

Animal Range Indicator:     *Horses*

*Diagnostic procedures:*

Range of Common Contexts to which Performance Criteria Apply	Witnessed/Achieved
<b><i>A. Instruments and equipment with which diagnostic skills are required for horses:</i></b>	

Stethoscope	
Thermometer	
Hoof knife	
Hoof testers	
Artificial vagina	
Uterine biopsy forceps	
Electrocardiography	
Endoscope	
Microscope	
Nasogastric tube	
Ophthalmoscope	
Otoscope	
Skin biopsy punch	
Ultrasound	
X-ray	
<b><i>B. Diagnostic procedures and tests:</i></b>	
<b><i>(i) Commonly carried out by veterinarians</i></b>	
Endoscopy	
Serum enzyme analysis (kits)	
Culture and sensitivity	
Haematocrit (PCV)	
Testing patency of naso-lachrymal duct	
Total plasma protein	
Urinalysis by dipstick	
Worm egg flotations	
<b><i>(ii) Commonly employed but not necessarily carried out by veterinarians</i></b>	
Faecal egg counts	
Haemogram	
Histopathology	
Hormone assay	
Immunoglobulin IgG assay	
Joint fluid analysis	
Multiple biochemical analysis	
Urine analysis	
Peritoneal fluid analysis	
<i>Other:</i>	

Animal Range Indicator:     *Horses*

*Common diseases:*

Range of Common Contexts to which Performance Criteria Apply	Witnessed/Achieved
Arthritis and degenerative joint disease	
Colic	
Corneal ulcer	
Equid herpes virus infections	
Equine infectious anaemia	
Equine viral arteritis	
Grain engorgement	
Greasy heel	
Hoof abscess	
Hypersensitivity to <i>Culicoides</i>	
Laminitis	
Metritis	
Myoglobinuria and rhabdomyolysis	
Navicular disease	
Nutritional diseases	
Plant toxicities	
Pneumonia and pleurisy	
Rain scald/dermatophilus	
Ringworm (dermatomycosis)	
Sarcoids and other granulomas	
Septicaemia in foals	
Sinusitis	
Strangles	
Tetanus	
Traumatic injury including sport injuries (bowed tendons, sore shins)	
Underrun sole	
<i>Other:</i>	

Animal Range Indicator:     *Horses*

*Major exotic diseases:*

Range of Common Contexts to which Performance Criteria Apply	Witnessed/Achieved
African horse sickness	
Equine influenza	
Equine encephalitides	
Contagious equine metritis	
<i>Ehrlichia risticii</i>	
Hendra virus	
<i>Other:</i>	

Animal Range Indicator: *Horses*

*Anaesthetic/analgesic techniques:*

Range of Common Contexts to which Performance Criteria Apply	Witnessed/Achieved
Local anaesthesia including intra-articular blocks	
Peripheral nerve blocks	
Ring blocks	
Intravenous sedation and analgesia	
Intravenous and inhalation anaesthesia	
<i>Other:</i>	

Animal Range Indicator: *Horses*

*Surgical procedures:*



Range of Common Contexts to which Performance Criteria Apply	Witnessed/Achieved
Abdominal anastomosis	
Arthroscopy	
Caslick's operation	
Use of resin and plaster casts for lower limb fractures and lacerations	
Castration	
Desmotomy carpal check ligaments and patella ligaments	
Drainage of abscesses	
Excision of skin and third eyelid tumours	
Herniorrhaphy (umbilical, scrotal, rectal, diaphragmatic)	
Internal fixation of lower limb fractures	
Trephining facial sinuses	
Nasogastric intubation	
Neurectomy of digital nerves	
Ovariectomy	
Removal of foreign bodies	
Removal of tumours	
Scirrhus cord	
Splint removal	
Surgical treatment of corneal ulcers	
Tarsorrhaphy	
Tenotomy	
Wound repair	
<i>Other:</i>	

Animal Range Indicator: *Horses*

*Diseases and conditions controlled by veterinarians or on veterinary advice:*

Range of Common Contexts to which Performance Criteria Apply	Witnessed/Achieved
Endo- and ecto-parasitism	
Strangles	
Tetanus	
Botulism	

Nutritional diseases	
Foal septicaemia	
Venereal diseases	
Infertility	
Morbillivirus infection (Hendra virus)	
<i>Other:</i>	

Animal Range Indicator:     *Horses*

*Behavioural disorders:*

Range of Common Contexts to which Performance Criteria Apply	Witnessed/Achieved
Agression	
Anorexia	
Crib biting	
Kicking at abdomen	
Lying down	
Mismothering	
Dysuria	
Polydypsia and polyuria	
Pawing	
Rolling	
Stall kicking	
Stall walking	
Tenesmus	
Weaving	
Windsucking	
Yawning	
<i>Other:</i>	

Animal Range Indicator:     *Horses*

*Reproductive Problems Manipulative Approaches                      Obstetrical Procedures:*

Range of Common Contexts to which Performance Criteria Apply	Witnessed/Achieved
Abnormal Sexual Behaviour	
Artificial Insemination	
Assistance with Foaling	
Altered Photoperiod	
Caesarean Section	
Caslick's Operation	
Cervical and Clitoral Sinus Swabbing	
Cryptorchidism (Rig) and Hormone Assay	
Dystocia	
Embryotomy	
Follicle Testing	
Induction of Ovulation and Parturition	
Infertility	
Manipulation with Prostaglandins	
Ovariectomy	
Pregnancy Testing	
Rectal Examination	
Retained Foetal Membranes	
Semen Collection	
Silent Oestrus	
Teasing	
Ultrasound Examinations	
Uterine Biopsy	
Vaginal Examinations	
<i>Other:</i>	

### Equine Reproduction - Learning Outcomes

1. Describe the oestrous and ovarian cycles, reproductive behaviour and natural breeding patterns of mares (and stallions)

2. Describe normal reproductive behaviour of mares and stallions and recognise abnormal behaviour patterns
3. Describe the factors controlling ovulation and fertilisation in horses
4. Prescribe methods of controlling oestrous and ovulation in mares and evaluate the relative merits of the various methods
5. Prescribe methods of breeding mares outside their normal breeding season
6. Prescribe methods of enhancing reproductive performance of mares including 'super-ovulation' and embryo transfer
7. Prescribe methods of insemination consistent with obtaining a high level of fertility
8. Describe embryo development and parturition in mares
9. Recognise and describe abnormal foetal development
10. Recognise and describe abnormal congenital abnormalities in foals
11. List causes of embryo, foetal and neonatal mortality
12. Prescribe methods of prophylaxis and treatment of 'abnormal' foetal development
13. Describe and evaluate the various methods of pregnancy diagnosis in mares
14. Prescribe treatments for misalliance, termination of pregnancy and induction of parturition in mares
15. Prescribe remedies for dystocia in mares
16. Describe management of the neonatal foal

Animal Range Indicator: *Horses*

*Diseases and conditions commonly identified at post mortem examination:*

Range of Common Contexts to which Performance Criteria Apply	Witnessed/Achieved
<b><i>A. At gross examination:</i></b>	
Abcesses	
Bladder rupture	

Icterus and liver abnormalities	
Colic	
Fractures	
Peritonitis	
Pleurisy and pneumonia	
Tumours	
<b><i>B. With follow up investigations</i></b>	
Causes of abortions	
Gastro-enteritis	
Septicaemia	
Parasitism	
Identification of food intoxications and pasture species where appropriate	
<i>Other:</i>	

### **National Competency Standards Body for the Australian Veterinary Profession**

As with the Vocational Education and Training sector (VET) there should be a National Competency Standards Body (NCSB) established to oversee the accreditation of national standards compliant with international recognition and agreement. This paves the way for National Registration with accommodation for mutual recognition of overseas qualifications where graduates are 'equivalent'. The National Office for Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) is the *de facto* NCSB as the guardian of 'principles' for entry of professionals. The nascent but presently impotent Australasian Veterinary Boards Council (AVBC) should be given the imprimatur of stewardship as custodian of appropriate standards. (*Raison d'être*).

Much of the groundwork has already been done. Lindsay Heywood developed the initial NOOSR/AVA Competency Standards Document. (Revised July 1996). This attracted scant recognition at home but formed the basis for the 'best practice' North American model produced at Guelph. This is now freely available on the World Wide Web (see below) as are seminal documents put forward by the RCVS and NCVEI herewith:

- ◆ Ontario Veterinary College, University of Guelph:

<http://www.ovc.uoguelph.ca/Services/College/DVM/DVM2000/compet.html>

- ◆ Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS):

<http://www.rcvs.org.uk>

[http://www.rcvs.org.uk/vet\\_surgeons/pdf/esg\\_consultation.PDF](http://www.rcvs.org.uk/vet_surgeons/pdf/esg_consultation.PDF)

- ◆ National Commission on Veterinary Economic Issues (NCVEI):  
<http://www.NCVEI.org>

I firmly believed the mature age veterinary profession should accept a greater responsibility for those who will take our place. It must do this by becoming more reactive and proactive in the education process. This should be driven from the 'top down' not 'bottom up' as has been historic and standard practice. We are obliged to assist our academic colleagues by all means at our disposal to expedite the process of education especially the 'skills' components. This has become even more exigent with the progressive diminution of University funding. 'Expensive' Veterinary Faculties once heralded as 'boutique specialties' when funds were plentiful have become campus pariahs for cash strapped Vice Chancellors! There has been much recent debate and baroque rhetoric about 'Graduate Attributes'. It appears academically inspired pedantic semantics have obfuscated the process.

The Equine Chapter of the ACVSc has formulated a program on 'Graduate Attributes of Equine Veterinarians' for its meeting at College Science Week in July. A series of meetings with equine veterinarians and horse industry leaders in the Hunter Valley have been instituted. The end users of veterinary services will have their say to determine their 'wish list' of desirable 'entry level' graduate attributes. Other groups should be encouraged to do the same. It is vital employers and consumers become part of the evolutionary process and develop a 'sense of ownership'. These parties have been largely excluded to date eliciting fear and distrust.

*"Imagination is more important than knowledge. I never came upon my discoveries by a process of rational thinking".* Albert Einstein.

*"Struggles in academia are always mediaeval and vicious because the spoils are so small".*

J. K. Galbraith.

W. P. Howey  
Director PGFVS



Word Puzzles!  
And/Or  
A Little Light Learning!

Many veterinarians have commented on my barely comprehensible use of words and the English language in general! My secondary school teacher vehemently expressed the same critical opinion 45 years prior with profound deleterious effect on my grades! I had great difficulty in making it 'over the line' for the absolutely necessary pre-requisite pass in the subject to attain University entrance! This will surprise no one! Perhaps I spent too much time on the playing fields and too little in the library?

One of my colleagues at the PGFVS (who shall remain nameless!) presented me with a small copy of a book by Guy Noble 'Word of the Day'. This is an etymological compilation of the wonderful words and what they mean as heard on ABC Classic FM radio in Sydney. Guy Noble has been the host of 'Breakfast' on ABC Classic FM since 1999. He is also a conductor, pianist, incurable word buff and father of two small children.

Purely to be obtuse I composed the following from words (with definitions) appearing in 'Word of the Day'. I believe it makes a sentence although my 'Windows 98 Spell Check' refutes the spelling and has great difficulty with most of the words! This is the literary equivalent of Eric Blair's [aka George Orwell] 'doubleplusgoodduckspeaking' in his epic '1984'!

***"The pixilated slubberdegullion uxorious poodlefaker was a blutterbanged flibbertigibbet last night, cachinating to a lickspittle before haughmagandy, susurrations and persiflage with a prurient soubrette slooming it off before dysania and becoming caliginous gutfoundered with tintinnabulation on a muckle turdiform fuscous goatsucker followed by borborygmus and afflatus!"***

Perhaps I should explain! Some of them are not what you might think! I have occasionally been slightly 'blutterbanged' and mildly 'pixilated' myself! I'm feeling a trite tittup today as I spuddle about my umbonate! It's all crapulous logorrhoea to me!

Pixilated = Bewildered, crazy, drunk: as amusingly eccentric as a titillated pixie!

Slubberdegullion = A worthless, slovenly fellow

Uxorious = Excessively fond of one's wife

Poodlefaker = A youth too much given to tea parties and ladies' society generally

Blutterbanged = Confounded; overcome by surprise (from Lincolnshire)

Flibbertigibbet = Flighty, gossiping person

Cachinating = To laugh loudly or immoderately

Lickspittle = A toady

Haughmagandy = Adulterous sexual intercourse

Susurrations = Whispering or rustling

Persiflage = Light raillery, banter

Prurient = Given to or arising from indulgence in lewd ideas

Soubrette = In 18<sup>th</sup> century French theatre, a clever but impertinent servant girl  
Slooming = Sleeping heavily and soundly  
Dysania = Having a hard time waking in the morning  
Caliginous = Misty, dim, dark  
Gutfoundered = Exceedingly hungry  
Tintinnabulation = Ringing, tinkling  
Muckle = A large amount  
Turdiform = Having the form of a thrush  
Fuscous = Sombre; dark coloured  
Goatsucker = Common name for nocturnal birds such as frogmouth and nightjar  
Borborygmus = A rumbling of the guts  
Afflatus = A sudden rush of divine inspiration  
Tittup = To move or behave in a restless manner; caper, prance, frisk (impatient horse)  
Spuddle = To go about a trifling business as though it were a matter of great importance  
Umbonate = Having a rounded boss or protuberance in the centre  
Logorrhoea = Excessive flow of words  
Crapulous = Suffering the effects of intemperance

My Associate Director was distinctly not amused when I described her as a trite “tittup”!  
It has just come to my attention that Windows XP spell check cannot handle this  
etymological miasma! Eat your heart out Bill Gates! You’re defeated at last!

W. P. Howey  
Director

# ‘The Infinitive History of Veterinary Practice in Scone’

*Aka ‘Hippomedon Hyperbole’ and/or ‘Nomius Nexus’*



Frank Leslie Williams

‘Nomius Nexus’