

Pioneer Profiles

This section is literally a comprehensive amalgamation of anecdotal and factual information on the principal pioneer protagonists accumulated from wherever I could find resources. 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 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 sourced from friends, relatives, compatriots 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 20th 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 – Balloch, 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 1979 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 is 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 own 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.

"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 which 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



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 what was then the 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 24th 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, FRCVSC, HDA
Veterinarian

"Farleigh"
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 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. See below.

Tel. (02) 9487 2732



Dr J. G. Hungerford, OBE, BVSC, FRCVSC, HDA
Veterinarian

"Fairleigh"
38 Burns Road,
Wahvonga, 2076

Hi Bill Howe
Doctor.

21.11.01

Dear Bill, Murray Beir daughter has sent me a magnificent letter, enclosing a write up on Murray which I sent 27 years ago. I enclose both.

Murray, I feel, has never been sufficiently acknowledged. Maybe (and 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.

Best wishes

Tom

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

TEH

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
22nd 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 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.

Tel 48.3151
Bus 26.1675
26.2122



"Fitzgerald"
38 Burns Road,
Wahroonga, 2076

J. G. Hungerford, B.V.Sc., F.A.C.V.Sc., M.D.A.

21st. 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 form 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 and 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 say, “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 20th 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, Murray 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 unravelled the arcane trammels of the migration of Large Redworm (*Strongylus vulgaris*) 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!



Mace and Morag Bain in the garden at Chivers
March 1972.

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 wildlife. 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.



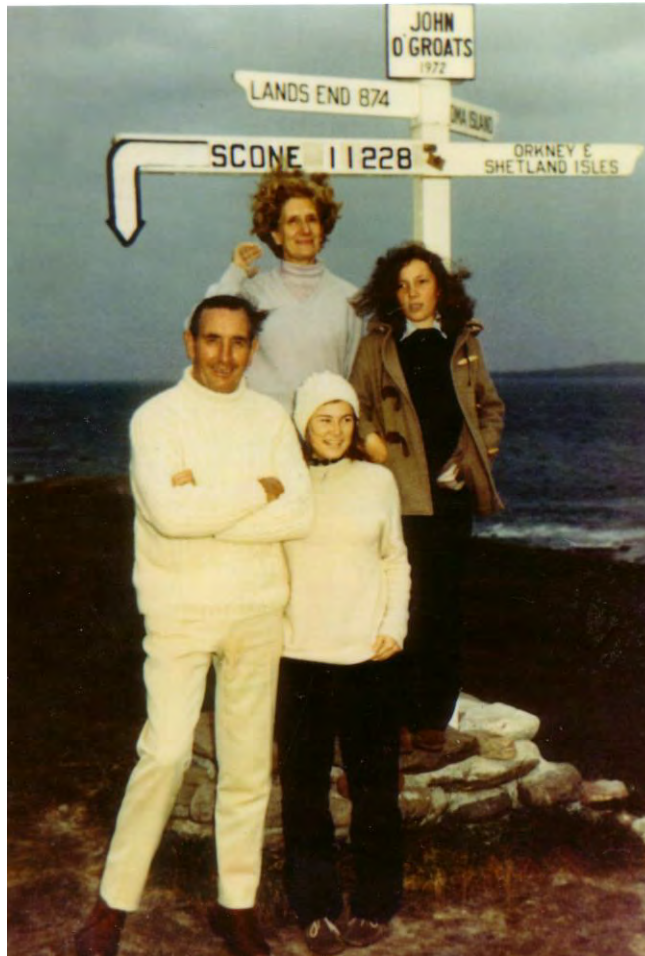
Bain Family at Surfers Paradise 1961 - Murray in his element with his beloved family and 'feathered friends'!

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 judgment 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*. 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.

John Wildgoose Appreciation

Mr. John Wildgoose (Percy Sykes' half brother and Sydney veterinarian) was to write the following appreciation of Murray Bain in the *Veterinary Record*, March 30, 1974.

Following his army service, Murray Bain settled in New Zealand where he concentrated on thoroughbred stud work. During his time there he met and married his wife Mace. He then moved to Scone, a small country town about 200 miles north of Sydney in the beautiful Hunter Valley which can be considered the headquarters of the thoroughbred breeding industry in Australasia. Within a few years he was head of the largest and one of the most technically advanced up-to-date practices in the country. We regard Murray as being the "father" of thoroughbred stud practice, since he conceived and introduced the techniques that are now in standard use by practitioners in Australia.

Being a shrewd judge of a horse, Murray has successfully raced and bred thoroughbreds and owned his own stud farm on the outskirts of Scone.

Murray was a complete man with diverse interests and could converse with equal authority and humour on any subject from politics to women's lib. He had an amazing knowledge of local flora and fauna and an intense love of nature. His efforts and persistence led to a massive tree planting operation which transformed Scone into one of the most delightful and scenic towns in New South Wales.

Murray's death is a sad loss to the profession he served so well, to the thoroughbred stud farms who relied on his immense knowledge and experience and to the people of Scone for whom he did so much.

Our sympathies go to his wife, Mace, who cared for him with such devotion throughout his long illness borne with immense courage, and to his daughters, Morag and Fiona.

It is interesting to note Murray was appointed as an 'Honorary Ranger for the State of New South Wales' by the Chief Secretary in pursuance of the Fauna Protection Act, 1948. The letter advising Murray of this information was sent on 9th April 1964 from the office of the Fauna Protection Panel and signed by Allen A. Strom, the Chief Guardian of Fauna.

The following is an excerpt from a letter written by Murray to Stanley Wootton in England on October 25 1973, only about 6 months before he passed away. The letter was sent in response to a request for information from S. T. Wootton about his mares in the Hunter Valley. I think it provides a unique insight into Murray's innermost thoughts. The letter is typed by Mace and almost certainly dictated by Murray.

Dear Stanley,

Thank you for your gifts and cards while I was *hors de combat*. I have to answer rather belatedly your enquiries regarding your mares.

You had a very bad year in 1971 due to abortions and I think this was primarily due to all the mares running together, i.e. Dry mares and infected mares were all running with the in-foal ones and I feel sure that the source of infection was probably one of those mares with a recalcitrant uterine infection. As ingestion is the commonest route by which bacterial infections become established it is not difficult to visualize how dangerous can be the presence of an individual with a chronic uterine discharge. I understand that you intend leaving some of your mares at "Bhima". This is excellent as they are running a very good stud there.

I am sorry you did not see my small farm when you were over. I am sure you would have approved. It comprises 200 acres of which more than half can be irrigated. We have established improved pastures of Cocksfoot, Rye, Lucerne and Clover which gives an excellent balance for horses.

We have probably spent too much money on fences etc. but then if injuries occur I can never reproach myself on inadequate fencing. The water troughs are on wide concrete aprons so there is not the usual bog hole with horses sinking in mud over their fetlocks. We have also put in a drive way and windbreak and Mace and I have planted some hundreds of trees which are doing very well and already looking attractive. We of course laid on water and have an excellent man [Eric McNamara] who is as interested in the project as we are.

Most of your mares are behaving well and we have not had any serious problems with foals. "Magic Symbol" [Dam of 'Biscay'] unfortunately slipped twins which in itself is disappointing but it often affects the fertility in the year of occurrence.

We see Jean and Bryant [Gavin] quite often. The latter is very busy with the properties, the horses and the Australian Stock Horse Association which had got off to a wonderful start.

The price of horseflesh continues to rise and an ordinary stock horse cannot be bought for under \$500. We are trying to promote Scone as a selling area and I have included a copy of a draft letter that we are sending to all studs and owners'. [This was to do with the construction of horse boxes at White Park and reached fruition with the first donation of \$1000 coming from Murray Bain and Partners].

Another insightful 'pearl' into Murray's personal philosophy is provided by a quotation from an article written by Mike Davis on Dr. Murray Bain and his horses in the *Turf Monthly Magazine*, September 1973.

In my years as a veterinary doctor I have seen most of the leading studs in the United States, New Zealand, Great Britain and Australia. There are four main factors in the make-up of top properties. The first, of course, is a successful stallion; good pastoral lands, a knowledgeable and competent stud groom and finally, good veterinary service.

In retrospect after almost 40 years it is amazing how rapidly the wheels have turned. I arrived in Sydney via the USA and Pacific on 3rd 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 two 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. Murray could also be imperious and intolerant. 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 myself to one of their special soirees at their always hospitable home at Garthgowan in Main Street very early in the peace. Although I was from the 'opposition' 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 First 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 First 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 Frank's 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 to 5 square metres.

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 Morrie 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 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.



The author, Paul and Ross Williams and Dr. David Warden at Sydney University
Dr. David Warden had 'intimate connectivity' with generations of veterinarians in Scone.

‘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 10pm 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 rumen and/or 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 egregious ordure 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 'jalopy' model following an incandescent winning day. Jack had his leg out the window "just for show". Maybe he had chilblains? It might be reasonable 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 novercal 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 driving?



Elegance, grace, poise and svelte 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.

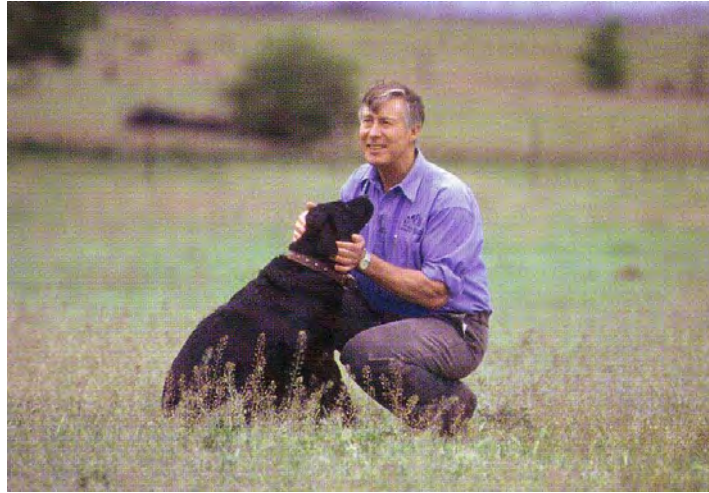
The Sykes Bain veterinary partnership was to endure for a few short years in the early 1960's. Percy was not too keen on the 'bush circuit' and much preferred the urbane suave, sophisticated, refined, cultured and debonair ambience of the Champagne Bar at Royal Randwick!

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 courtesy 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 courtesy of Australian Country Style.



Nigel Scott and Hugh White. Hugh and Nigel have survived as ‘elite’ graduates of Scone
and indeed prospered!
Photo courtesy of Australian Country Style.

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.



‘The Top Block’ - Moobi Hill.

This was the home of Lorna and Norman Judge in the mid 1960s
The stables at the back were set up as the first ‘horse hospital’ in Scone.

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. Jenny organized the 'star' program.



Malcolm Turnbull was guest speaker at the AVA meeting in Scone
Mr. Turnbull of 'East Rossgole' had just returned from his 'Spy catcher' victory over
Margaret Thatcher in England.

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 where he stood Carioca and Swift and Sure as well as breeding stud Charolais Cattle. However diabetes mellitus had begun to wreck his body and he died in the Scott Memorial Hospital in Scone on 29th 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.
Jackie excelled as an executive with Qantas.