

PENGELLY ALPACA STUD

AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

SUPERB PERUVIAN ALPACAS

ARRIVE IN VICTORIA
JANUARY 1997

AND

COLOURED PENGELLY
CHILEAN AND
AUSTRALIAN FEMALES
MATED TO SELECTED
PERUVIAN MALES
AND OUR OWN
CHAMPION MALES

INVESTMENT

ATTRACTIVE TAXATION
ADVANTAGES

PERSONAL SERVICE
WITH REAL SUPPORT
TO NEW OWNERS

BOOKINGS BEING TAKEN
FOR A LIMITED NUMBER
OF MATINGS
TO OUR OUTSTANDING
PERUVIAN DARK FAWN
STUD MALE

AND

OUR DENSE & FINE WHITE PERUVIAN STUD MALES READY JANUARY 1997

NOW STANDING AT STUD OUR CHAMPION FAWN AND BLACK MALES

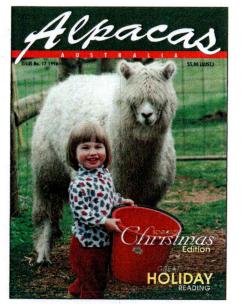
MOBILE MATING

AGISTMENT

ENQUIRE ABOUT OUR EDUCATION DAYS

B&B
ALPACA WEEKENDS
AT OLD DAIRY COTTAGE

Christine & Peter Nicolas Tel: (03) 5422 6540 Fax: (03) 5422 6544 Kyneton Macedon Ranges



Cover photo courtesy Windsong Valley Alpacas.

ADVERTISERS index

Acheron valley Alpacas	24
Adelaide Alpacas	28
AIS Brokers	
Akhira Pty Ltd	40
Alpaca Giftware	27
Alpacandes Alpacas	35
Amberdale Alpacas	
Australian Alpacas	
Banksia Park	
Benleigh Alpaca Stud	
Bethongabel Alpaca Stud	
Bonnie Vale Alpacas	
Calico Alpaca Brokers	
Coolaroo Alpaca Stud	
Coonawarra Alpacas	51
David Rowntree Insurance	<mark>27</mark>
Eclipse Alpacasback	cover
Eykamp Kikuyu Company	53
High Country Alpacas	50
Inca Alpacas	
Merungle Alpacas	
Mountain Alpacas	
Octagon Star	
Pengelly Alpaca Studinside front	
Pinjarra Alpacas	
Pucara Alpaca Stud	
Royal Farm Expo	
Samarkand Alpacas	
Sharpe Laboratories (Di-Vetelact)	
Shanbrooke Alpacas	7
Starwood Alpaca Farm	
Surilana Alpacas	46
Shelbory Park Alpacas/Gunnamatta Stud	
Talca Alpacas	47
Wesuri Heritage Alpacas	23
Windsong Valley Alpacas	
Wilburtins	
World Class Alpacasinside back of	
Wyona Chipper (Sarah Harris)	45

CONTENTS

2	A	YEAR	OF	SUCCESS,	PROGRESS	AND	GROWTH
	From the Editor						

- 3 ALAN HAMILTON: A COMMITTED REALIST Profile of newly-elected AAA president
- **6 FIBRE NOUVEAU** Textile artists on Central Coast of New South Wales
- 8 PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF ALPACA REPRODUCTION Dr Peter Bartram's lucid and comprehensive paper
- 13 SA ROYAL FARM EXPO LAUNCH News of the 1997 launch
- 14 THE BLACK OUTCOME OF A GUT FEELING Helen Danks describes the 'Blue Crane' dynasty
- 18 THE WHEELERS OF WINDSONG VALLEY The story of breeders Terry and Tena Wheeler
- 22 ALPACA DESIGN PROJECT 1996 Fashion and Design School students get to know alpaca fibre
- 25 SCHOOL'S IN Final year vet students get hands on experience with alpacas
- 29 MAGAZINE DEADLINES: EDITORIAL & ADVERTISING Deadlines for 1997 and general information
- 30 ALPACA CLASSIC The 1996 National Alpaca Show & Sale
- 34 THE SURI ALPACA All you need to know about the breed
- **37 FELTING ALPACA** Elbow grease produces results
- 39 REMEMBERING ARRAMURRAGUNDJI Reflections on the use of herbs for alpacas; first of a two-part series
- **43 SNAPSHOT** 'Whatever had we done with our lives before alpacas?' asks Annemarie O'Connor
- 45 ON THE E.D.G.E. Evaluation and Development of Genetic Excellence — Coonawarra's program
- 49 THE 1996 AOBA CONFERENCE A retrospective — Lyn Dickson
- **52 INDUSTRY UPDATE** Latest industry news
- 53 TO THE EDITOR
- **54 BUSINESS DIRECTORY**
- **57 SPECIAL EVENTS** Industry happenings
- **59 VETERINARY CORNER** Camelid Ophthalmology (part 2): Eye diseases in camelids
- **62 TTEAM TOPICS** TTEAM Trailer Training — the second of two articles
- 64 ORDER FORM ASSOCIATION PUBLICATIONS

A year of success, progress and growth

or alpaca breeders, 1996 must go down as a very successful year — one that has seen good progress made in all areas of the industry. Alpacas are becoming the rule, rather than the novelty exception, at shows, expos and other events large and small. There is growing awareness of the alpaca industry among both the public and among business people — many of the latter having sponsored alpaca activities all over Australia this year. Thank you, the industry is very grateful for your generosity.

The Association continues to grow; alpacas continue to thrive; and our knowledge and understanding of these superb camelids continue to broaden.

That this is a vital, imaginative and progressive industry has been reflected particularly this year in both the amount and range of articles contributed to *Alpacas Australia*. For the past few issues, we have been overloaded with material — not that we're complaining, mind you! There's a very good feeling about having material in hand well in advance of publication.

We thank every one of you who has taken the time to send in material. For those who were 'first-timers' this year, we look forward to more in '97. To those whose contributions continue to sustain us year after year — whatever would we do without you! For those who haven't got around to it yet, how about a New Year's resolution to take the plunge and get that story written.

We hope you enjoy this larger Christmas edition of *Alpacas Australia*. Learn the views of new AAA president, Alan Hamilton; discover how some vet students learned about alpacas; find out about felting and catch up on industry news, includ-

ing the very successful National Classic Show and Sale. We also have one of the best articles on alpaca reproduction ever to appear in the magazine.

There is some bad news, though. We couldn't fit in PacaPics! On the other hand, we couldn't allow Sue Maynard's (Gunnamatta Stud) Christmas alpaca to remain unpublished. It is definitely the 'pick of the pack'. We promise a big double page spread of PacaPics first issue next year!

To all our readers and their families, a very merry Christmas and a very happy New Year. May 1997 (and selective breeding!) bring lots of happy, healthy cria!

Carol Hosking Editor





PUBLISHER

Alpacas Australia is published quarterly by the Australian Alpaca Association Inc., Suite 2, 476 Canterbury Road Forest Hill 3131 Victoria (PO Box 464, Brentford Square, 3131) Telephone: (03) 9877 0778 Fax: (03) 9877 0770

EDITORIAL

Carol Hosking: PTW Desktop & Design Unit 9, 663 Victoria Street Abbotsford 3067, Victoria Telephone: (03) 9428 9663 Fax: (03) 9428 2728

ADVERTISING

Suzanne Hines: PTW Desktop & Design Unit 9, 663 Victoria Street Abbotsford 3067, Victoria Telephone: (03) 9428 9663 Fax: (03) 9428 2728

SUBSCRIPTION RATE

A\$28 a year : Australia A\$35 a year : New Zealand A\$45 a year : International

CIRCULATION

2,500 for current issue

PRODUCTION & ARTWORK

PTW Desktop & Design Film Separations: Reprocolor Pty Ltd Printing: Southbank Pacific Pty Ltd

COPYRIGHT

All material appearing in Alpacas
Australia is copyright. Reproduction in
whole or part is not permitted without written permission of the publisher.

LIABILITY

Views expressed by the contributors to this publication, and the advertisements appearing in this publication, are not necessarily endorsed by the Association. Every care is taken in compiling the contents of this publication, but the Association assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of information contained in the text or advertisements.

ALAN HAMILTON a committed realist



By Carol Hosking

lan Hamilton is again president of the Association. He previously occupied this position from 1992 to 1994 Why is he back in the driver's seat?

Even a short discussion (ours was just over half an hour) elicits a great deal of Alan's thinking about the alpaca industry, its current state and his future projections. He speaks quickly and economically and with an assurance borne of long association with the alpaca industry.

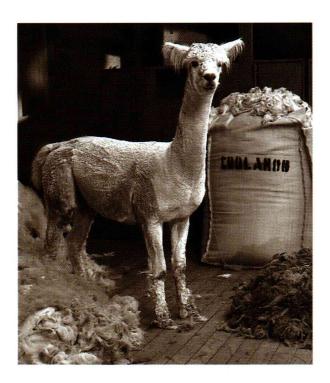
Those who have supported his presidency for 1996/97 believe that he has the kind of dynamism and vision the industry needs. There is no doubt that he has firm views both on where the industry should be going and on the role of the AAA in helping it to get there.

The platform upon which Alan stood in the lead-up to the elections was very much concerned with the organisation of the Australian Alpaca Association into an efficient and business-like entity that has firm plans and defined goals. He is now well into the process of implementation.

'If there is something that needs to be done that can be handled by one person with AAA authority to act, all the better,' he comments. I recall that the appointment of a Chief Executive Officer for the Association was a prominent part of his election commitment. Nevertheless he has plans for a small, efficient group of AAA subcommittees (portfolios), each with a



INTERESTED IN ALPACA POTENTIAL?



Take a short cut to success.

There's a lot to know when it comes to buying alpacas, and there's no shortage of advice around. Some people will tell you to buy Peruvians, others to go exclusively for Suris, and someone else will advise you that whatever you buy make sure it's white.

So, how do you know who to believe?

At Coolaroo we decided to avoid hearsay and invest in our own scientific research programme. Two years ago we employed the services of Dr. Jim Watts, an internationally renowned fibre scientist formerly with the SCIRO. His aim was to identify the characteristics required to breed high performance alpacas with the finest fleece.

Jim's task has been aided by the fact that we have selectively bred alpacas since 1988 with superior bloodlines from around the world. The results of our breeding approach have been proven by consistent Championship prizes at many shows including the Sydney Royal Easter Show.

In other words, we've done all the hard work when it comes to choosing the right stock, which means we can offer you a short cut to success in Alpacas.

For more information fill out and mail or fax the coupon below. We'll send you a free information brochure in alpacas. Otherwise you can call us on 048 785 266 or 0419 995 553.

Yes, I would like more information on Coolaroo alpacas.							
Name:							
Address:							
Phone No:							
Please fax to 048 785 233, or mail to the address below.							
	PTW						



defined brief and each consisting of members based geographically close to each other.

'It is cost-ineffective when members have to fly in from all parts of Australia.'

As a business person, he is very aware of the need for careful financial management and planning. Nevertheless, like all entrepreneurs, his priority is the setting of industry goals and developing the necessary strategies to achieve them.

He is already working with a subcommittee to prepare a business plan and financial projections that will guide the Association over the next three years. His aim is to have these prepared and ready to run by the next general meeting in March 97.

In Alan's view, the outcome of the plan should be an efficiently run Association with the capacity to embark on an intense marketing campaign. Fees from imports have already been earmarked for industry promotion. Alan believes that as this initial promotion begins to 'bite', the stimulus provided in terms of income generation through animal trading, transfers, etc. will help to generate ongoing funds to keep the industry well in the public eye.

'We need to reposition the industry, take initiatives with promotion and marketing. Concentration on fibre is the key and this can be done very effectively in the fashion area.'

He sees the next two years as crucial for the industry.

'We need to make really effective progress in moving from concentrating on breeding to increasing our concentration on the end product. Certainly, that transition will take time to complete, but if we are not seen to be achieving in quality fibre production, we're risking our credibility — and that could do the industry a lot of damage.'

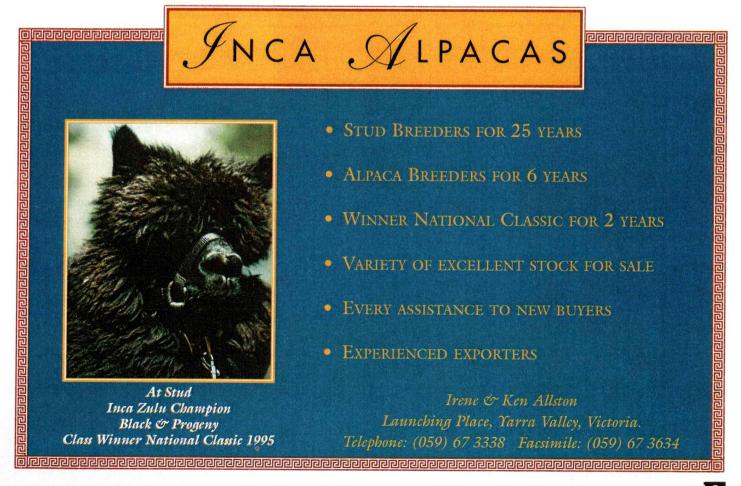
Notwithstanding that warning, Alan projects a very optimistic view of the industry's future in which breeders will have a number of breeding options.

'We have some Peruvians coming into Australia. Will these animals flood the market? The answer is "No!". The reality is that export restrictions imposed by Peru will ensure that this will not happen.

'These restrictions, in many ways, are helping Australia. There is no doubt that the Peruvian influence will improve the genetics in white and light fawn animals. In Peru, the predominance of white and light fawn is a fact of life. It will be in Australia also.

'However the Peruvian breeders have found themselves in a situation where they are short of coloured animals — and discovered that there is a good market for them. So, they've also banned the export of coloured alpacas.

'Australia, I believe, now has the best coloured alpacas in the world. We bought coloured Chileans and we are improving the quality of these animals with each generation.



'I can tell you that coloured fibre is going to be in high demand. I believe that black fibre will be at a premium and that there will be strong demand for browns, fawns and greys.

'Similarly with micron types, there are options for breeders. We need producers of super fine, fine, medium and strong micron types — that's a range from around 15 to 32 micron. Each of these types has a definite end product use and a strong market. There is a use for every quality animal Australia can produce.

'Another area that is potentially profitable for the Australian industry is the export of some of our quality animals. I would particularly like to see us export some of our coloured Chileans and Chilean/Peruvians — especially now that Peru has those export restrictions on coloured animals.

'I can see that this may be difficult for smaller breeders, but I believe that we should assist smaller breeders to join in larger exports. Because it is expensive and timetaking to engage export agents, it is generally only the larger breeders who have the contacts and finance to do it. But, I would like to see room made for smaller breeders' animals in some of these exports and it's a project that I intend to work on.'

In his first address to AAA members at the Annual General Meeting, Alan touched on the need for industry unity. He returned to this theme at the conclusion of our interview.

'The reality is that breeders are in the industry to make money. They must, if they are to justify the large investment they make in alpacas. Alpacas are a business.

'Let's remember, though, that each of our alpaca businesses will only be commercially successful as long as there are lots of other businesses just like it being successful too. Put simply, being committed to the success of the industry, including one's strongest competitors, is the most important business strategy of all.'

I think 'committed realist' sums up Alan Hamilton pretty accurately.

Above: Middle Aussie Below: Tuscan Night



Fibre Nouveau is a group of textile artists working in a variety of media on the Central Coast of NSW. Its aim is to promote excellence in design and execution in diverse fibre arts. The group's first annual fibre exhibition was held near Gosford on 31 August and 1 September this year.

All the members of the group had felt isolated in their chosen crafts — fibre artists are few and far between on the Central Coast. Initial contacts were made at a weaving day held at Acacia Alpacas last year and, as friendships developed, Fibre Nouveau became a reality.

The exhibition included works by Robyn Gan, Merrilyn Rawson, Cynthia Birrer and Beverley Page.

Fibre Nouveau

Merrilyn Rawson's works included two pieces, 'Tuscan Night' and 'Middle Aussie', which contained alpaca fleece provided by our stud, Acacia Alpacas.

'Tuscan Night' (1996) consists of medieval-style panels featuring scenes inspired by a recent trip to Europe by the artist. The design was worked from a number of photos taken in Tuscany. It was executed in Victorian Tapestry Workshop wools, silks and both huacaya and suri alpaca fibre, and used cotton warp, Rya tapestry and Soumak techniques.

'Middle Aussie' (1995) was taken from a photograph which was used to form a working drawing. It was executed in worsted wools, Victorian Tapestry Workshop wools, mohair and huacaya and suri alpaca fibre. Cotton warp, Rya and Soumak techniques were used.

The exhibition has resulted in several commissions for Merrilyn with specific requests for alpaca fibre to be included in the works.

Amanda Clymo

SHANBROOKE ALPACA STUD

'Breeding for the Future'

ELITE STUD SERVICING

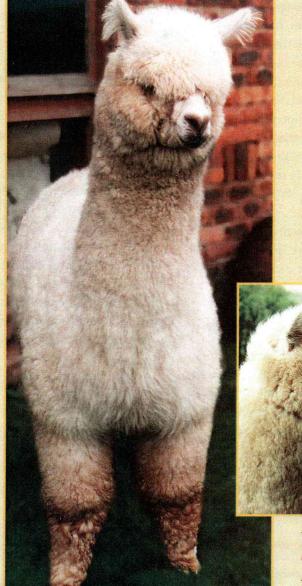
to the most outstanding males to be brought into Australia... These males can only enhance your herd.

- Peruvian Sonoma
 Extreme, dense lustrous fleece
 19.8 micron 20 C.V. at 41/2 years.
- Royal Russet Rare chocolate brown Suri.
- Peruvian Pride of Alianza Silky white Suri.

THE FUTURE IS BREEDING WITH THE BEST GENETICS IN THE WORLD.

- Limited number of top quality pregnant Peruvian females for sale.
- Quality females mated to top stud sires.
- Agistment for breeders & investors.

Ron & Dianne Condon Tel: (03) 9730 1399 Fax: (03) 9730 1031 Mobile: 015 547 630



Purrumbete Portia

PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF **ALPACA REPRODUCTION**

by Dr Peter Bartram

Dr Bartram presented this paper during an Education Day held at Pijarra Alpacas in May. We thank him for the opportunity to reprint it here for the Association.

THE MALE ALPACA

Normal development and behaviour

To ensure the long-term success of the Australian alpaca industry, it is essential that machos are carefully selected for their absence of adverse genetic traits. It is only common sense that the features examined for in male certifications such as an overshot jaw or syndactyly be eliminated from the breed at the earliest opportunity.

In most Australian situations machos are rarely expected to perform to capacity. Our tendency is to expect a macho to start working earlier than would be the case in his natural environment and then serve only one or two females a day.

A better comprehension of the macho reproductive physiology will allow us to use our available males to best effect.

Puberty at 18-36 months

The onset of puberty in a macho is highly variable. It may occur between 18 and 36 months of age. The determining factor is a significant rise in the secretion of testosterone by the testes. The increase in plasma testosterone produces a breakdown in the penile frenulum and an enhancement of libido.

Mating capacity

2-5 females per day

One of the interesting developments in the alpaca industry is male mating policies. In the last five years, the mating capacity of males has largely been a

mirror image of the equine Thoroughbred industry, viz. two females a day with a maximum of three under duress. The record for a Merino ram is successful service of 148 rams in a 24hour period. The truth for machos lies somewhere in the middle. An adult male alpaca can successfully mate at least four females a day without compromising his fertility.

Semen longevity

Obviously, the most critical component of conception is to have viable sperm present at the time of ovulation of the oocyte from the ovum. It has been shown that ovulation occurs approximately 24-30 hours after mating. To maximise the likelihood of a pregnancy resulting, the maximum possible number of spermatozoa should be present at this time. The viability of spermatozoa begins to decrease measurably after 24 hours. It may thus be appropriate to re-mate a female 24 hours after the initial joining unless she is spitting off at this time.

Treatment of reproductive problems

The vast majority of male reproductive problems in Australian alpacas have been 'relative'. That is, most have been the result of premature expectations on the part of their owners. In most cases, time comes to the rescue and allows the machos to attain maximum capacity.

For the macho with a genuine fertility problem, a specific diagnosis is the only way to get to the bottom of the problem. A thorough evaluation of his reproductive performance, his semen

and any other available information will be essential. However, for those males experiencing some growing pains, there are some useful aids.

LH injections increase libido

In a situation where a relatively mature macho is showing a reluctance to mate females on a daily basis, the judicious use of luteinising hormone (LH) may save the day. The LH-like activity of Chorulon makes it particularly useful for this purpose. Injection of the compound increases the circulating testosterone and, consequently, the libido of the treated macho. This increase is transient but may be useful in modifying the psychological approach of the macho to sex.

Cohabiting with females

Curiously, we have chosen predominantly hand-mating and segregation of males in Australia. The machos are generally pastured alone or with other

males. This flies in the face of the knowledge that plasma testosterone levels are five times higher in males being run with females.

Testosterone has been shown as being essential to the sexual development and libido of a macho. It stands to reason that if young males are allowed to grow and develop in the physical company of females, they will reach maturity much earlier and exhibit much stronger male characteristics.

THE FEMALE ALPACA

Normal development and behaviour

Sexual maturity is an entirely different deal in female alpacas. Many females become receptive to male activity at around six to nine months of age. However, at this stage, they are not sexually mature. Puberty is generally attained at around two-thirds adult body weight (approx. 40-42 kg).

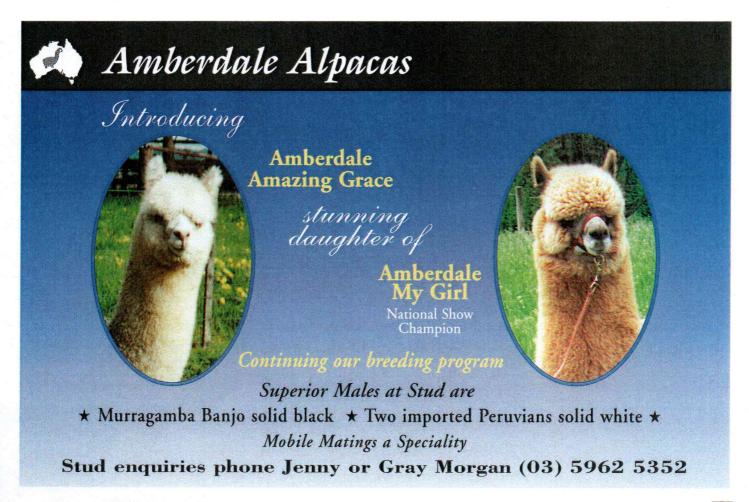
Puberty

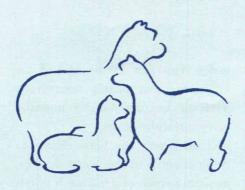
Puberty generally occurs between 11 and 14 months of age. These alpacas are sexually receptive and entirely capable of conception. If they become pregnant at this age they should continue to develop normally and deliver a healthy cria.

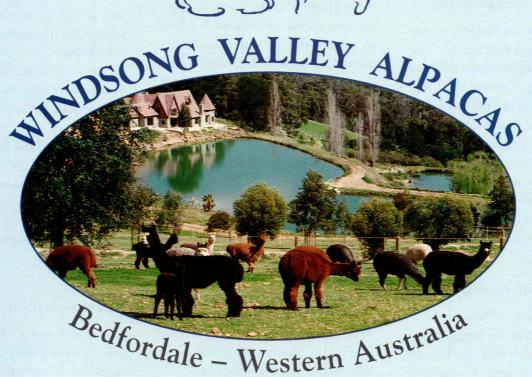
There is a frustrating retinue of females who have no interest in sex until at least 20 months of age. The only way to detect this group is to repeatedly introduce them to a male. It is difficult to differentiate between those females who have not yet reached puberty and those who have ovarian hypoplasia. If a female remains sexually unreceptive at 24 months of age, it is time to pursue alternative diagnostic avenues.

Peruvians mate at >45 kg

It is all well and good to suggest that females should have attained puberty at about 14 months at the latest.







The Picture Tells The Story

Windsong Valley All Blacks



Talisman's Progeny – Like Peas in a Pod Perth Royal Show – 1996 1st, 2nd, 3rd – Black Jnr Male Class 1st, 2nd, 3rd – Black Jnr Female Class Jnr Reserve Champion Male & Female

- Talisman's Yearlings available early 1997
 - Quality Females mated to Talisman
- Enquiries to Tena and Terry Wheeler 09 399 2737

However, this assumes optimum nutrition is available. Where fodder resources are scarce and growth rates have been sub-optimal, it is best to adopt a policy of not mating females until they have reached a weight of 45 kg.

At this point, the female has the physical maturity to carry the cria to term and should have a frame large enough to ensure there is a minimum likelihood of difficulties at birth.

Gestation period 10.5 to 12.25 months

The gestation period (pregnancy length) for alpacas has classically been stated to be 350 days. However, it would seem no-one bothered to tell the alpacas this. Normal crias can be born in the range of 330 to 380 days.

Prematurity

Premature birth is not uncommon among alpacas. Any cria born before 330 days of gestation is likely to be premature. The premature cria will have floppy ears and an epithelial membrane that still covers the unerupted incisor teeth. If the cria is slow to kush or stand then treat it as premature until proven otherwise.

If you have the misfortune to have a premature cria born, don't despair completely. Premature crias do require intensive care and vigorous treatment. However, a fastidious owner and a diligent vet can combine to save the day. Two hourly feeding with milk-replacer, oral plasma transfer, antibiotics and intravenous glucose can rescue even the most dire situation.

Post-maturity

An overly long gestation period is a source of great stress, mainly for the owner. If the alpaca appears healthy there are no grounds for intervening in the pregnancy or induction. There is no evidence that crias suffer significantly from post-maturity or excessive gestation length.

If the pregnancy has continued past 380 days, I think it is important to ultrasound the female. This allows the pregnancy to be confirmed, the thickness of the foetal membranes and the foetal heart rate to be measured. The foetal fluids can be scanned to ensure a lack of proteinaceous debris indicative of some pathology.

If the scan is normal, do not be tempted to intervene. A normal delivery should ensue in due course.

Oestrous cycle

Follicles develop every 14 days

The alpaca will become sexually receptive within 10 to 14 days after giving birth. Follicles grow on the ovaries in waves which last about 14 days. The follicle grows rapidly on the ovary until it exceeds 5 mm in size, usually taking about three days. The follicle then remains on the ovary for about ten days. The oestrogen secreted by the follicle makes the female sexually receptive.

This cycle of follicular development continues every 14 days until conception occurs. In the absence of mating, the follicle simply degenerates and a new one develops to take its place. Thus, the female is constantly receptive.

Induced ovulation

If the female is mated, the stimulation of the cervix by the penis produces a surge of hormone release which provokes ovulation. The ovulated follicle now fills with blood, is invaded by luteal cells to become a corpus luteum (CL) and starts to produce progesterone. Within 36 hours of mating the plasma progesterone levels are such that the female will spit off, whether she is pregnant or not.

Ovulation typically occurs 27 hours after mating. The viability of sperm

typically exceeds 36 hours. Thus, there is little justification for mating a female more than once at each cycle unless the male has questionable fertility.

Damage to endometrium by mating

One of the unusual features of alpaca mating is the fact that the penis penetrates the cervix during intercourse. The thrusting of the fibro-elastic penis during the 30 minutes of mating produces a significant amount of damage to the uterine lining (endometrium). There is a lot of bleeding in the uterus and loss of the surface cells.

To minimise this damage to the uterus, I would recommend that females be joined only once unless male fertility is a concern. With ovulation at 27 hours and sperm lasting >36 hours there is no justification for repeated matings. This schedule will minimise the amount of uterine damage present at the time the embryo is trying to implant in the uterine lining.

Teasing

After joining, it is a waste of time teasing females for sexual receptiveness until 14 days post-service. All mated females will be unreceptive between days 2 and 12 after joining. At this time the progesterone secretions in the non-pregnant females will plummet and the new follicle will promote sexual receptiveness.

Those females who spit off at 14 days are either pregnant or have a retained CL.

Reproductive management

There is a limited group of reproductive which affect alpacas. problems Obviously, failure to conceive is a very serious threat to the economic success of a female. The approach to the problem depends on the circumstances in which it arises and the specific diagnosis.

Anoestrus/suboestrous

This condition occurs in a specific group of females who are generally less than three years of age and have never had a cria. The female repeatedly spits off despite treatment with prostaglandins.

Ultrasound of the female fails to reveal any ovarian structures. Laparoscopic examination shows either an absence of ovaries or minute ovaries with no effective structures. This ovarian hypoplasia is a hereditary condition in alpacas. There is no treatment in affected animals.

Retained CL

After ovulation the follicle is filled by a blood clot. A group of specialised luteal cells that surround the follicle immediately start to multiply and invade the clot. These luteal cells form a pea-sized yellow mass called the corpus luteum (CL) in the ovary. This structure is responsible for secretion of the progesterone which causes the female to spit off and is so essential for the maintenance of pregnancy.

In some females the CL fails to regress as the follicle develops at around day 12 of the cycle. The continued progesterone secretion prevents the female from becoming sexually receptive. The retained CL may last for years. Treatment is by an injection of synthetic prostaglandin to cause lysis (rupture) of the CL. It is essential to ensure the female is not pregnant before the prostaglandin is administered.

Endometritis

A few females will develop endometritis, an infection of the uterus, after giving birth. The infection is usually detected by the presence of a whitish purulent discharge present at the vulva. The presence of the bacterial infection will prevent the female becoming pregnant.

Diagnosis is initially by culture of the uterine discharge. Once the specific cause of the infection is known, the female can be treated. This is usually by a combination of uterine irrigation with an appropriate antibiotic and systemic treatment with a similar compound.

Failure to ovulate

Between five and ten per cent of females fail to ovulate in response to the cervical stimulation of mating. In these animals the follicle persists and the female remains sexually receptive.

Ovulation occurs in response to a surge in the amount of circulating LH (luteinising hormone) prompted by the cervical stimulation. To those females who fail to provide a normal response we can administer Chorulon (human chorionic gonadotrophin), a distilled product of human female urine. This protein has a high component of LH-like activity and provokes ovulation approximately 27 hours after administration. This timing is almost identical to that seen with natural ovulation.

Abortion/premature delivery

It is impossible to foresee the likelihood of a female alpaca aborting or delivering a premature cria. Little is known of the mechanisms involved. However, it can be assumed that the two most likely causes are placental insufficiency and chronic uterine infection. The dilemma of how to treat a female after her first abortion has yet to be completely resolved.

Progestagens

A small group of animals are suspected of aborting as a result of insufficient nutrition of the foetus by an undersized placenta. This may arise as a result of insufficient levels of progesterone secretion by the CL. Supplementation of the natural progesterone levels by oral progestagen sup-

plement (Regulate) has been proposed as a means to combat this.

There is no evidence that Regulate will bind to progesterone receptors in camelids. However, the technique cannot be discarded and deserves further investigation.

Antibiotic therapy

Another group of animals will deliver a premature cria with a thickened placental membrane with or without a light pearly-grey fluid discharge. These animals have had a chronic placentitis and should be treated with appropriate antibiotics following laboratory culture. The antibiotics should be continued for five days in every month during the next pregnancy.

Pregnancy testing

Pregnancy testing was traditionally performed by manual examination. That was fine if you had a hand the size of a Peruvian shepherd's, but the average Aussie would only dream about being able to perform a manual rectal exam on an alpaca.

Plasma progesterone

Plasma progesterone was used as an estimate of pregnancy prior to the availability of ultrasound. A progesterone level greater than 2ng/ml more than 14 days after mating is highly indicative of pregnancy. However, those animals with a CL will have a high plasma progesterone while not pregnant.

Ultrasound

Visualisation of the pregnancy with the advent of the ultrasound machine has revolutionised alpaca pregnancy testing. The technology involves graphically presenting reflected sound waves on a video screen. For optimal performance it is necessary to have both a 5 MHZ and a 3.5 MHZ probe.

Minimum — 23 days

The earliest pregnancy can be reliably detected in the alpaca is around 23 days. Trans-rectal examination with a 5MHZ probe can demonstrate the fluid in the uterus typical of the conceptus. The foetus cannot be imaged at this stage.

Usually 30-35 days

Most early pregnancy testing is conducted at around 30 days of pregnancy. At this time the conceptus is readily detected with the trans-rectal probe and the foetus can be identified. Ninety-five per cent of pregnancies will be detected in the left uterine horn.

Certify at 60 days

The early-embryonic loss-rate makes it prudent to wait until 60 days before certifying an alpaca as pregnant. A significant proportion of pregnant females will lose their pregnancies between 30 and 60 days. A 3.5 MHZ trans-abdominal probe will readily detect pregnancies at this stage. The foetus can be visualised and the presence of a heart-beat documented.

Confirm at 120-150 days

It has become our habit to confirm pregnancies by trans-abdominal scanning at around 150 days. This will detect those animals who have aborted between two and five months (usually

around five per cent of the pregnant females). Many of those who abort will retain their CL and continue to spit off. Thus, sporadically walking a male through the herd of pregnant females is not a reliable way to detect those who abort.

Pregnancy attrition rate

A large amount of data is now becoming available regarding the embryonic loss rate in alpacas. This is important, as it allows us to determine the most appropriate time to finally pronounce an animal as pregnant. Ten per cent of pregnant alpacas will lose their pregnancies between 30 and 50 days of pregnancy. Of those still pregnant at 60 days, five per cent will abort between two and eleven months of gestation.

Parturition

What can I say! Most alpacas give birth without any grief. They typically go off by themselves for a short period during Stage I. After a period of discomfort, the mother gives birth to the cria standing up. The outline opposite gives you the normal parameters.

After the cria's birth the placenta should be delivered, intact, within two hours. Use the following guidelines to determine whether you should pull the cork on the champagne or call the vet.

ALPACAS

STAGES OF LABOUR

(Normal parameters)

FIRST STAGE

12 hours

Relaxation of the vulva

+/- mammary development

SECOND STAGE

60-90 minutes

Delivery should be completed within 15 minutes of any part of foetus being visible

THIRD STAGE

Placental expulsion check to ensure complete

Retained membranes should be treated as emergency if retained > 6 hours

Watch out for uterine prolapse

SA ROYAL FARM EXPO LAUNC

With the launch of Royal Farm Expo early next year, the Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Society of South Australia aims to develop one of the most comprehensive and distinctive exhibitions on diversification in modern farming.

Royal Farm Expo is designed to become a meeting place and showcase for the new and emerging farming

industries. According to Jock Duncan, president of the SA Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Society, it will reinforce and broaden our farming base into the twenty-first century.

Royal Farm Expo intends to provide the traditional farming community, investors and the general public with a comprehensive and impartial insight into the many options and potential that new farming industries offer.

'Individual or collective requirements will be incorporated into the overall exhibition in a manner which will cater for all needs', Mr Duncan said, in announcing the launch.

The Expo will take place at the Royal Showground, Wayville in South Australia, 7-9 March, 1997.

The black outcome of a gut feeling

by Helen Danks

Who could have guessed that such an 'unlikely looking' alpaca would have founded a black dynasty...

When we purchased our first alpacas in mid-January 1993, it was a very exciting time, as it is for all new alpaca purchasers. Deciding which females to purchase was difficult, but Brent finally chose a rose grey for her colour and density and I liked a light brown because of the potential to breed for fawn. We signed the contracts on both animals and were about to head home, when Brent said, 'Why don't we get another one'. So out we went to choose another female. Brent did the choosing (I was still too stunned by the purchase of the first two to be in any condition

to make another decision). Besides, Brent is one of those 'gut feeling' people, so I thought it better to leave it up to him. Even so, I was a little taken aback when he chose an unlikely looking silver grey with black blotches here and there. However, this afterthought did have a pretty face and Brent, a former wool valuer, seemed to think her fleece looked OK.

Of course, we wanted to get them home as soon as possible. We chose a place for our first alpaca paddock just near our bedroom window to allow for easy viewing. Our scheduled and



much-needed family holiday was both shortened and deferred to allow us to just about complete the fence. Then we went off for a bit of family togetherness.

Shortly after our return we collected our alpacas in our horse float — the inside of which was green from top to bottom by the time we got them home. Over the next couple of weeks, we spent many hours (and drank a lot of coffee) observing the behaviour of these intriguing animals.

We had been given expected birth dates of our pregnant trio, so we knew we had plenty of time to get to know them before they dropped their cria. The light brown was expected to drop in June; the rose grey in September; and our afterthought (Blue Crane) was due in August.

However, just two weeks after we took delivery of our little group, I noticed one morning that Blue Crane was rather preoccupied with her rear,

visiting the dung heap and looking rather uncomfortable. It occurred to me that she was miscarrying at around four months. I called the vet.

After examining her, he decided that a stomach ache was the problem and started her on a course of antibiotics. However, as we let her go off to join the others, I noticed something protruding from Blue Crane's rear end. A miscarriage after all, I thought. But, to our amazement, it became clear that this was no abortion but the final stages of a full term birth. The two front feet had appeared but that was all.

A quick check by the vet showed that the head and neck were back by the side of the cria's body. He decided to do a caesarian section.

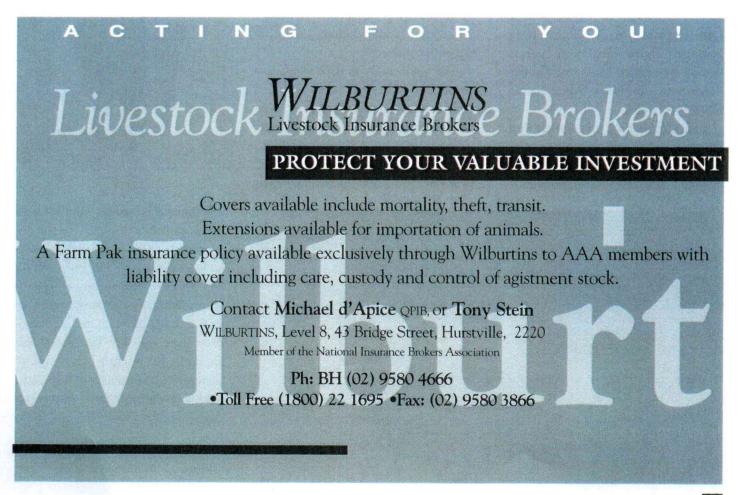
We chose a clean, shady spot on the lawn and got down to business. Out came a black female with her head around to the side as the vet had said. I spent time drying her off while the vet stitched up Blue Crane. It all went

like clockwork. As the cria got to her feet. Blue Crane came out of the anaesthetic and, standing up, greeted her newborn.

Blue Crane took a little longer than usual to fall pregnant again due to a slight infection. However, within four or five months she had been successfully mated to a gray (not a lot of colour choice in SA at that stage). We were a little concerned that she would not carry her pregnancies full term or that she would need caesarians, which would severely limit her cria bearing life. When the time came, apart from reorganising the position of a leg, all went smoothly and out came another black female. We were ecstatic.

By this time we realised that Blue Crane has a strong black influence in her background. Liking the idea of developing a black line, we next mated her to a black male. The result — yet another black female.

The added bonus is that all Blue





THE BLUE CRANE DYNASTY

Grandson, 'Fox; second daughter, 'Piaf'; third daughter, 'Sprite'; granddaughter, 'Belle-bird'; granddaughter, 'Swanee'; first daughter, 'Black Bird' and the matriarch, 'Blue Crane'.

Crane's cria have good fleece qualities. The mother seems to pass on both fleece density and character.

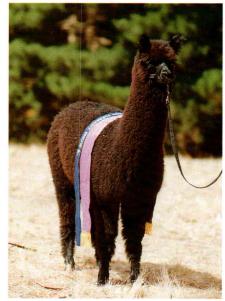
We were delighted when her second born, Piaf, placed second in a large class for black fleece at the 1995 National Show, only four points behind the winner. More recently, her fleece won champion fleece at the Clare Show in SA.

Blue Crane's third cria, Sprite, won her class and reserve champion junior female at Mt Pleasant Show this year.

Blue Crane is now a grandmother.

Her first born, Black Bird has just produced her second black female; while Piaf has produced a very nice black son. Although it's early days, he is already showing excellent fleece qualities and good conformation — a sire of the future, perhaps?

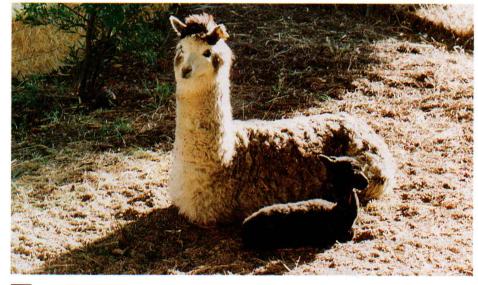
Our opportunity to develop a consistent line of quality blacks is really due to Brent's gut feeling about this unlikely alpaca with the pretty face and black blotches. Now six years old, Blue Crane is due to have her next cria in February. She is still quite young and



'Sprite

will hopefully produce another black female or two.

Sadly, her little family will be broken up soon when Sprit and Piaf, with son Fox, will go to new homes not far away. We are confident their new owners will receive much pleasure and satisfaction from their animals. The Blue Crane line so far has produced very attractive alpacas with tractable natures, rich black colour, good fleece quality and sound conformation.



'Blue Crane' with her first cria, 'Black Bird' shortly after the Caesarian birth.

WILL PUT YOU A GENERATION AHEAD! PINJARRA'S SUIPER STUID STARS AVAILABLE MOBILE

Geelong Alpacafest '96 "the best black male I've Reserve Champion seen anywhere"...

eading A Grade judge





Sired by the US star same miraculous fibre. "Hemingway" with the





right choice to maintain

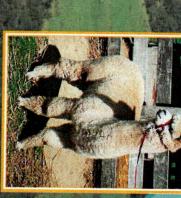
solid colour

heavy coverage. The

Beautiful soft handle &

Remarkable corkscrew ringlets and pearl-like lustre

Outstanding attributes are being borne out by his prize winning progeny.



Senior Champion,

Melbourne Sheep Show '96

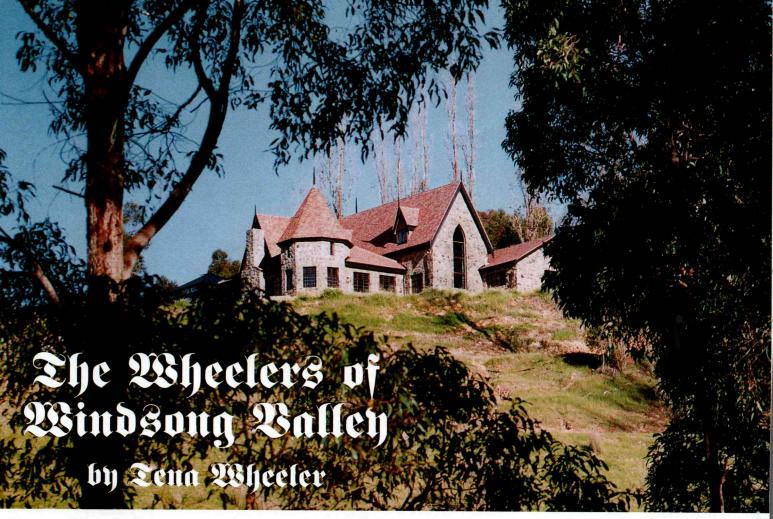
Eastern Region Show '96 Baby fine fleece (21 micron)

and super low prickle factor

Reserve Champion,



RMB 16244 Mansfield Road, Lima South, 3673... in magnificent North-East Victoria Call Sandi Keane or Wendy Beer on 03 5768 2549 or Fax 03 5768 2231



\$2,000 and a lot of faith

On a cold wet day in 1963 travelling home from our jobs in the City of London we were dreaming how lovely it would be to live in a warm land. From something as simple as that was to come enormous changes in our lives. In 1967 with one and a half children, we left England behind us to start our adventure in the country we loved from the day we arrived. We had just \$2,000 and a lot of faith.

Terry was an analytical chemist, so we chose Western Australia, with its boundless mineral wealth, as our destination. Within a fairly short space of time we found ourselves in the Eastern Goldfields living near Kalgoorlie.

The laboratory

By 1972 we were back in Perth again founding our own analytical business, Genalysis Laboratory Services. Over the years the company has grown to employ 150 staff servicing the Australian mining industry and more than 50 countries around the world. The family grew too - four daughters and now four son-in-laws and six grandchildren with another due soon.

Taking up the Christmas slack

Our first diversification was into growing plants. This came about because, in the early seventies, our laboratory business was seasonal. There was always a quiet period after Christmas each year, which coincided with the main growing season for potted plants.

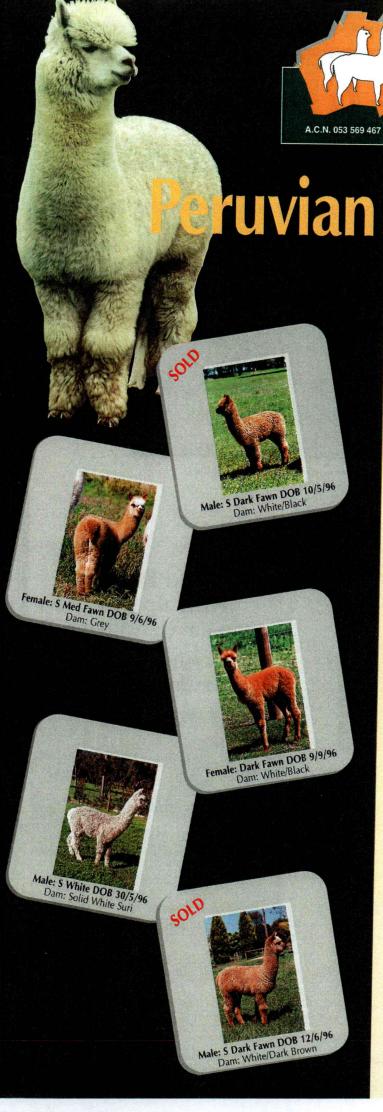
By 1975, our enjoyment of gardening had developed into our owning a retail nursery and then a wholesale nursery, growing a variety of plants on a 30 acre property. In the quiet period, our laboratory staff would come out to the wholesale nursery and enjoy a break from the routine, working in the shade houses where we grew palms, ferns and indoor plants. We would tour Australia buying unusual stock and the trucks would carry it across the Nullarbor Plain loaded to the roof.

By the early 80s, the laboratory was too busy to spare the staff but, as the nursery was very successful, we kept it until the late 80s. Eventually, we sold it to our manager.

Windsong Valley

In 1988, we purchased a beautiful property of 75 acres set in a valley in the Darling Ranges. Just 30 km south of Perth, it looks out over the flats to the coast 30 km away. Its name, 'Windsong Valley', came from listening to our cooling summer sea breeze, the 'Fremantle Doctor', whistle through the trees.

Windsong came complete with deer which we ran for three years, increasing the herd to 1200 head and even purchasing a further 900 acre farm. We bred for improved bloodlines, combing Australia for the genetics we needed. We did a lot of embryo transfers from New Zealand to breed us the best in both velvet growth and body weight. However, after my encounter with two female reds (which, needless to say, they won) when they reared on their hind legs and attempted to stamp me into the ground, we felt that per-



ruvian Centeno

His progeny are on the ground and the results are stunning

AUSTRALIAN ALPACAS

TRIUMPH ENTERPRISES PTY. LTD. Paroo' 1040 Northern Highway, Bylands, Victoria 3762

Phone/Fax (03) 5782 1800

WE PURCHASED PERUVIAN CENTENO from the USA in 1993 and he arrived in Australia on 20 March 1995. During his quarantine in Australia we joined him with 3 multi-coloured huacayas and one white suri. He also mated a grey female huacaya belonging to a client.

We believe his progeny are stunning. They are all solid coloured (mainly medium and dark fawn) and they all resemble Centeno in both conformation and fleece quality.

Centeno is a very compact animal with superb conformation and presence and extremely dense fine crimp fleece.

We purchased him specifically to improve the quality of our own herd and, on results to date, we are more than pleased with our choice of herdsire.

If you wish to improve the quality of your herd, we believe Centeno is the obvious choice. We offer both agistment and mobile mating service. Our mating agreement contains a host of benefits including a 'live cria' guarantee. The service price is negotiable, depending on the number of matings you require. Agistment is free for the first 90 days. Your alpaca sent to our stud for mating will be well cared for under the full time supervision of Michael Brennan.

Michael will be pleased to show you Centeno, his progeny and our alpacas. You are invited to visit our stud in Bylands, Victoria (between Wallan and Kilmore). Call Michael now on (03) 5782 1800.

FOR SALE NOW

A number of alpacas that are pregnant to Centeno. Some have cria at foot. Our prices are, as always, very reasonable and negotiable.

The AUSTRALIAN ALPACAS team Michael Brennan, farm manager Geoff and Beverley Brennan Ph/Fax: (03) 5782 1800

Graeme and Sandra Pope

Ph: (03) 5428 7071 Fax: (03) 5428 7090

Alan Batchelor

Ph: (03) 5826 5364 Mobile 015 845 839

Di-Vetelact "Really Gets Them Thriving"



The twins just after birth - Snugglepot and Cuddlepie. The alpaca with the bandaged leg, Cuddlepie on the left, had difficulty feeding and weighed only 4.3 kilograms.



The twins at 3 1 /₂ months - Cuddlepie weighs 16 kgs and Snugglepot 24 kgs- with Di-Vetelact being a major factor in their thriving good health



Di- Vetelact Emergency

Telephone: (047) 775 051 Mobile: 014 036 687 A World First ... twin alpacas who have survived!

Ebony Park Alpaca Stud Seville, Victoria



Ultimate Milk Substitute

For further information please phone or write to:

Sharpe Laboratories Pty. Ltd. 12 Hope St, Ermington NSW 2115 Ph: (02) 858 5622 Fax: (02) 858 5957 haps deer farming was not the ideal venture.

For a while our son-in-law, Lance and our eldest daughter, Samantha ran the deer farm, but during 1991 we saw our first alpacas and our love affair with these interesting animals began. There was no comparison in the enjoyment or the safety factor, which was definitely important to me as I carried out most of the earlier day to day husbandry. Nor, for that matter, in the remuneration obtained from the two types of animals, so the deer farm was sold. Samantha and Lance have now joined us in alpacas and run their own stud. Samantha and our third daughter, Paulette, also run a mobile mating service with Windsong Valley sires.

Our first alpacas

Our first purchase of four females and two males confirmed that the alpaca were not only the most beautiful animals to look at but also extremely interesting to breed. Therefore, further trips looking at alpaca farms and attending auctions usually resulted in the purchase of more animals. But it was three years, when our herd had increased to around 85, before Terry could persuade me to actually sell any. Each time it was suggested that we should sell one, I could always find a reason why that particular animal just had to stay at Windsong.

It was obvious to us that there was a great range of quality of animals and their fleeces. Once we had increased our knowledge of the animal through hands-on experience and avidly read anything we could get our hands on to do with alpacas (which was not much at that time), we set about purchasing a particular type of alpaca.

Talisman

The purchase of 'Talisman' in 1993 was our first investment in a true 'top' stud sire. Talisman has already lived up to our high expectations. He proved himself by duplicating his excellent

attributes in his progeny and also by stamping his strong black genetics, producing over 80 per cent solid black cria from a variety of coloured females.

Talisman's progeny made their debut at the 1996 Perth Royal Show taking off 1st, 2nd and 3rd in large Junior Female and Junior Male classes, as well as Junior Reserve Champion Female and Junior Reserve Champion Male.

After our investment in Talisman we purchased Purrumbete Fairground, Cedar House Manhattan and Purrumbete Ledger's Dream.

Fairground and Manhattan's first off-spring are eagerly awaited and, of course, Ledger's Dream should not need an introduction to anybody involved with alpacas in Australia.

Over the last two years, our interest also grew in (and we became captivated by) the suri. We now have two suri sires: a fawn, Suricaya Paladin and a white, Peruvian Conquistador. We also own eight suri females of various colours. At the recent National Classic



Purrumbete "Warrior" -Supreme Champion Eastern Region Show K.C.C. 1995

ALPACA EXCELLENCE

- Breeding for Australian excellence in fibre and conformation
- Imported Peruvian sires (solid white) standing from March 1996
- Mobile mating available
- Quality animals for sale
- Information and advice for new breeders
- · Inspections welcome by appointment

BETHONGABEL ALPACA STUD

Jenny and Lindsay Gadsden 24-26 Medhurst Road Coldstream Victoria 3770 Phone:(059) 649 268 Fax:(059) 649 484 Auction, we purchased black huacaya females to increase our gene pool. We also added a further two suri females to our herd.

To alpacas...

Our lives and that of our families have certainly changed due to our involvement with alpacas. It has given us an interest that we can all share and enjoy together.

The pleasure gained form this year's Royal Show, winning 15 ribbons; watching my eight year old grandaughter, Bethany lead out her own alpaca in the junior handlers class (although she was too busy cuddling him); and the comraderie of all the breeders this year is a memory to be cherished.

Alpacas have forged new acquaintances and close friends throughout Australia and have made our lives



much fuller. I would repeat a frequent toast that is made in our home:

'To alpacas and all the friends they bring.'

Starting young and getting it right. Bethany shows how it's done in her show debut as a junior handler.

Alpaca Design Project 1996

MELBOURNE INSTITUTE OF TEXTILES FASHION AND DESIGN SCHOOL

In late 1995 the [then] President of the Australian Alpaca Association, Gray Morgan, approached our Head of School, Louise McCarthy, to discuss the possibility of liaising with us to produce a range of garments in order to promote alpaca to the local market.

Our school was very keen to explore such an interesting project: one which would allow the opportunity for our students to design with this rare product for a specific market.

In conjunction with Design staff and a group of alpaca breeders, a brief was set to specific guidelines. Our students were asked to research and design an appropriate range.

A combined effort from Industry Sector Studies and Communications

Skills classes resulted in a presentation to selected members of the alpaca and fashion industries. The students enjoyed positive and encouraging feedback for their designs and ranges.

In accordance with the set curriculum guidelines, students were then required to make the patterns and finished garments in order to complete the project within the specified 100 hours.

The finished results were both elegant and wearable — a strong reflection of the versatility of the fabric. The students were very pleased with their efforts and enjoyed the challenges of working with alpaca.

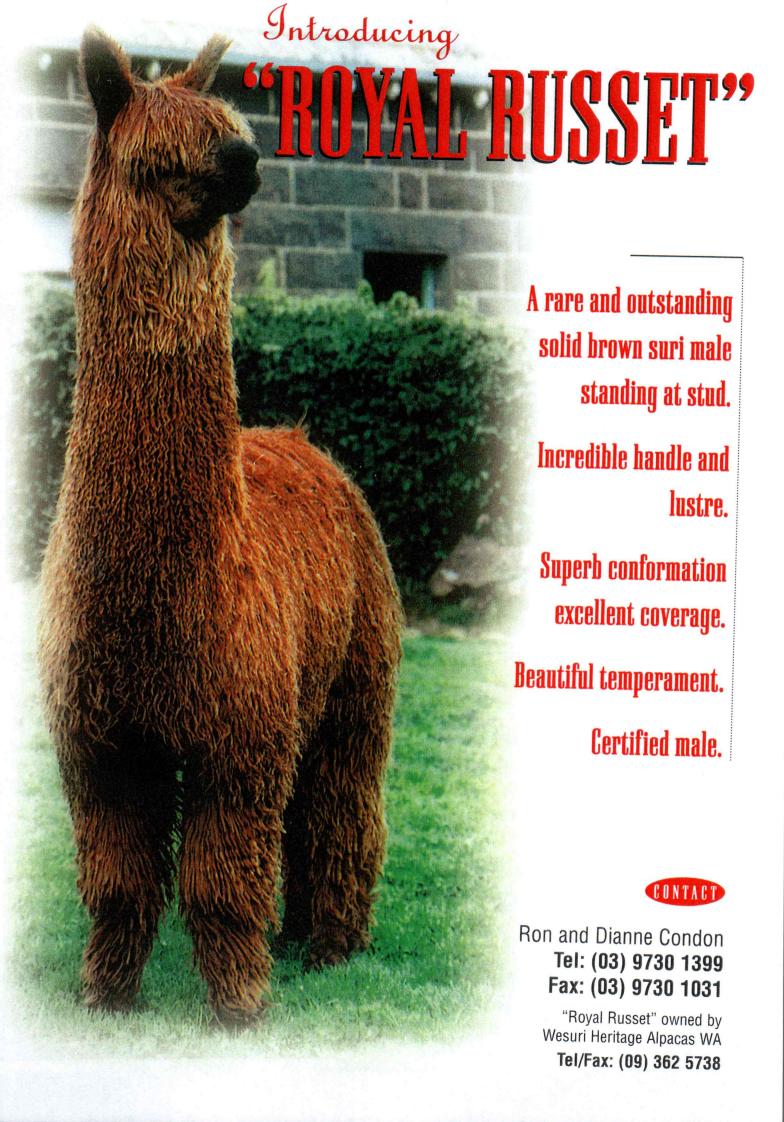
This has been as wonderful learning experience for all parties, particularly

the students, who have gained a unique insight into a new and exciting product.

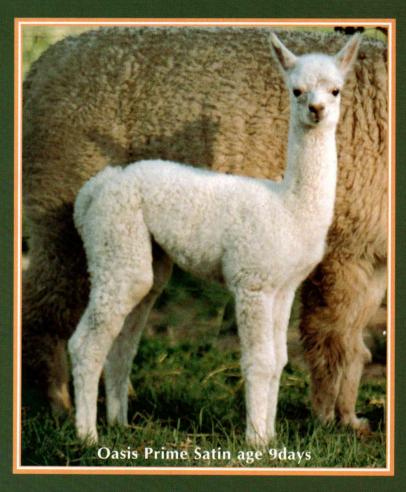
The students are planning to enter the Wagga Wagga Golden Gown Awards which, in 1997, will include the introduction of a special award, donated by the Australian Alpaca Association for garments made in alpaca.

The students will also be competing for other awards which offer cash prizes and work experience with leading Sydney based labels and companies.

Anne Ryan Subject Co-ordinator Melbourne Institute of Textiles



The Proof is in the Progeny



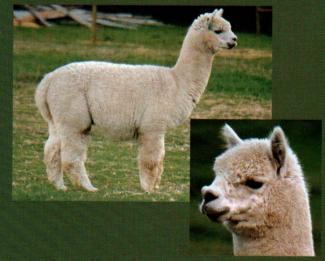
Acheron Valley Alpaca Stud

invites inspection of the FIRST PROGENY from our light fawn SUPERIOR STUD MALE

Peruvian Primero

Mobile matings available to select females

Progeny for sale



J & B Worcester R & B Holland

(03) 5963 7154 (057) 747 365

SCHOOL'S IN!

by Carolyn Tinks

Instigated by the Melbourne University Veterinary Faculty's Professor, Russell Mitten, co-ordinated by Dr Ewen McMillan in conjunction with Allan and Carolyn Jinks and held at Benleigh Alpaca Stud in Victoria, our industry can only gain from this new innovation in the education of veterinary students.

A pilot scheme for final year veterinary students from Melbourne University to study camelids as an 'on farm', practical component to their course was an interesting idea.

But, on our farm!? Every week!? Can we justify the necessary time?

We knew the answer, of course: new vets need to learn; we had a unique opportunity to help. More importantly, think of the benefits for the industry with new vets already having had some real 'hands on' experience.

'Yes', we said, 'We'll be in it.'

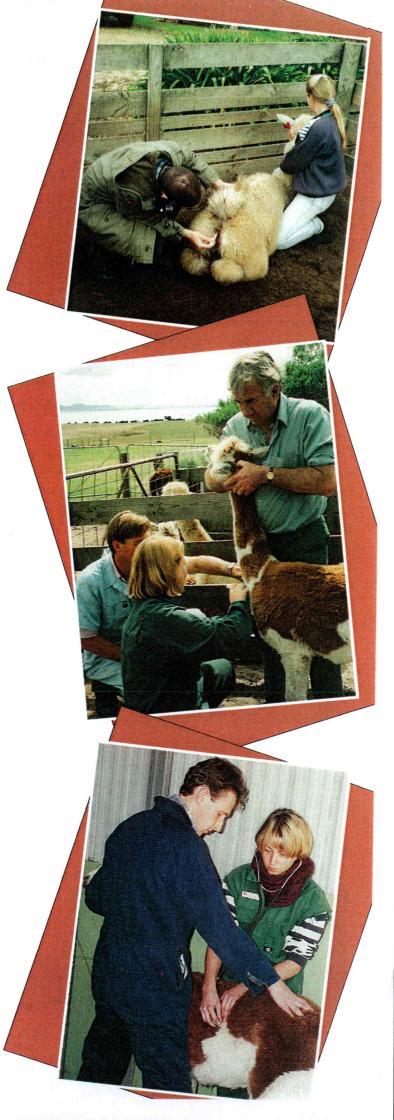
How it all came about

Russell Mitten, Senior Lecturer in Small Animal Medicine at Melbourne University's Veterinary Faculty, initiated the project.

'The role of the veterinarian has always been to provide expert medical and surgical care to animals of any type and to prevent and avoid animal pain and suffering. When a new species has become popular, there has usually been a lag time before the vet has acquired knowledge and skills with the new animal type. Much of our learning has often come initially from the animal owners themselves.

'However, the basic principles of anatomy, physiology, medicine and surgery learnt in "traditional" species can usually be applied well to the "new" animals. The veterinarian is in the business of providing humane and skilled care to any animal that he/she is asked to attend, whether it is a household pet, an indigenous animal or a novel exotic species. The affinity that most veterinary students have for animals is usually obvious as soon as they enter the course and, in many cases, long before that time. The satisfaction gained from successfully dealing with "all creatures great and small" makes the profession a very rewarding one. Most vets regard themselves as being fortunate in their career choice.

'In our teaching at the Vet School, we have come to realise over the past few years that a number of vets in practice have developed specialised skills, either in particular disciplines, such as dentistry and ophthalmology, or with particular animal

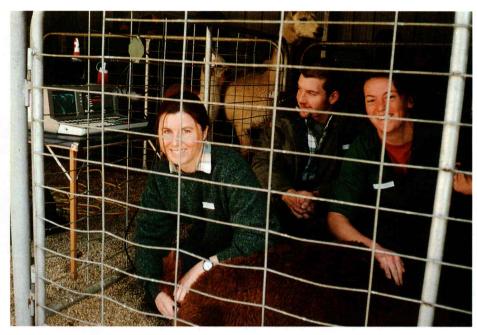


species, such as alpacas and ostriches. This year, with some time becoming available, we have taken the opportunity to introduce practical sessions in several of these special areas, including a day with camelids. We have called this the "Special Topics Week".

'Over the past 20 years, knowledge has expanded exponentially and we are having to learn to cope with this by using computer technology to help us keep abreast of developments. The level of service demanded by clients has also increased dramatically and it has been essential for vets to respond to this demand.

'Any vet in practice who fails to anticipate and adapt to the change in client expectations will find that his/her clients are going elsewhere. One of the objectives in developing this Special Topics Week has been to show students how vets who graduated earlier have adapted their knowledge and skills to changing situations. Some vets have gained their specialist skills by further university training, but many, like Ewen McMillan, have done it by recognising the need and seeking out the knowledge and expertise for themselves. This is really what tertiary education is all about: to teach people how to learn for themselves.

'The Special Topics Week has been an outstanding success so far. Students



All penned up with alpacas — students at Benleigh learn about ultrasonography.

spend a day in each of the areas of reproduction, ophthalmology, dentistry, camelids and dermatology. The alpaca session has been a real hit. The students relish the opportunity to get out in the open for the day. Ewen's enthusiastic teaching and his easy style has made the learning a pleasure and the hospitality and husbandry skills of Alan and Carolyn Jinks have been outstanding.

'The real highlight, however, has been the animals themselves and more than one student has wanted to take a cria or two home. Later in the year, students will have a bird day, where they will experience specialist avian practice, including domestic birds and commercial flocks of ostriches and emus. These sessions have been so well received that we will certainly continue with them. There is no way that the students will allow us to leave them out!'

The practicalities

It was in late 1995, that Dr Mitten asked our vet, Ewen McMillan to participate in this new program and he soon had us caught up in the project.

'I suggested we include two of our local farm owners, Alan and Carolyn Jinks, who have long experience with alpacas and have a farming background; and Max and Nancy Moore, who are pioneers in llama farming in Australia.'

'Students came in groups of three or four. The format of the day was a one-hour discussion about camelid physiology and reproduction at my clinic and then more 'on farm', where the respective farmers gave a short presentation on alpaca and llama management. This was followed by handling the animals and participating in animal health procedures due on each farm for that week.



'Look into my eyes, you adorable creature... for veterinary purposes only, of course!'

'There was always some variation — a birthing, if we were lucky — but mating and reproductive management were always demonstrated.'

Doing 'our bit'

As the weeks rolled by and each new group of students arrived at Benleigh, we were rewarded by the enthusiasm of the participants. Many had never seen an alpaca before — a pretty scary thought when you consider they will be out in clinics next year!

Our role was to share basic, practical, everyday animal husbandry and demonstrate matings, ultrasounding, 'spit offs', etc.

Each session was begun with Allan discussing handling techniques, feeding, pasture, drenching and vaccination.

It was good to see students showing such a genuine interest in the care of



'We found a foetus!" Vet students practise ultrasonography with Ewen McMillan.

healthy animals and our methods of management.

It was amazing how often a cria was born while students were at Benleigh one even needed assistance practical lessons no lectures could equal. But the natural, normal births

were most beneficial - so often, vets only see the problems.

'Spit offs' created much laughter (One wonders what the students told their friends!). With each group, we ran through around 20 females, included several non-pregnant, so that

ALPACA INSURANCE SO RING ROWNTREE

Toll free: (1800) 251 900 Business: (02) 9363 5814 Home: (02) 9363 4762

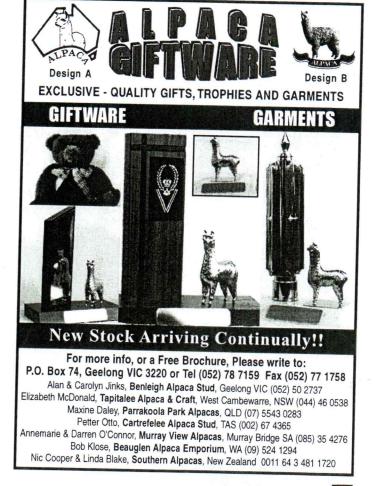
Fax:

(02) 9362 4039



David Rowntree Livestock Insurance Brokers Pty Ltd

Member: NIBA



students could begin to understand and recognise the body language of those who were pregnant and those who were not.

After the merriment caused with the 'spit offs', the serious side of diagnosing and confirming pregnancy began.

The mornings were spent with us and the afternoons with the Moores and their llamas, so that the students were able to understand both the differences and similarities between the two species.

Using two ultrasound machines, one from Ewen's animal hospital and our own, students were divided into two groups and were able to use the machines to perfect their techniques. A proficient practitioner should only take a moment to locate the foetus and see a heart beat in a female who is 60 to 80 days pregnant.

also learned Students about venepuncture. Taking alpaca blood for the first time can be a challenging



Allan Jinks talking alpacas to final year students during their 'hands-on' day with alpacas.

experience. Students practised on cooperative wethers and Ewen taught them about the benefits of plasma transfers in premature or frail crias.

Predictably, our stud males were always delighted to 'perform' for their audience. I might say that there were some unprintable comments when students were informed how long 'Inti' can work at one session!

Our morning agenda was also able to include neonatal care and demon-

ALPACA INSURANCE

Best Rates

- Widest Insurance Cover
- Prompt Claim Settlement

Contact

GRANTLEY **FEARN**

Ph: (03) 9696 4788

Fax: (03) 9696 2982



ADELAIDE SUNDANCE

Dam: Purrumbete Lullaby Sire: Purrumbete Inti

KNOWN PARENTAGE WHO ARE BOTH SOLID MEDIUM FAWN

FINE

FIBRE TESTICLES

LARGE VERY GOOD COVERAGE

BONE HEAVY **EXCELLENT** BITE

CURRENT HISTOGRAM 4TH APRIL 1996

A VERY DENSE UNIFORM FLEECE

Royal Adelaide Show 1995 Reserve Champion Male Standing at stud in the Adelaide Hills Enquiries and inspection by appointment welcome Mobile service and on farm matings available

ADELAIDE ALPACAS

CONTACT JULIE LAWRENCE (08)8388 9098 OR PAGER (08) 8414 0233

strations on 'chuckering' - the gentle method of restraining alpacas and a useful skill for vets and owners alike.

Discussion work also included the role of a the vet in education for new owners/breeders who may have little or no previous experience with livestock and who are eager to learn about their alpacas.

In the afternoon, the students moved on to Max and Nancy Moore's llama property. According to Ewen, it was a lot of fun.

'Max and Nancy demonstrated loading a llama to pack and how to take a llama into the bathroom. Their little dog, "Killer" did some llama leading - a real highlight.'

Allan and I believe that hosting the 'On Farm Vet School' will foster further interest and research. Certainly, we can be sure that the young students who visited Benleigh will enter the workforce with an appreciation of alpacas — the animals that we breeders treasure so much. As it turned out, we found that there is always time for something as worthwhile as this!

Ewen tells us that he really enjoyed the project. Melbourne vet school also schedules two camelid lectures so that, as Ewen said, 'The class of '96 for Melbourne university should be the best equipped new grads in Australia when it comes to treating camelids.'

A student view

Apparently, the students really enjoyed the experience too.

Russell Mitten wrote, 'Without exception, the comments have been enthusiastic and favourable... While no doubt the animals themselves were a highlight, the thing that has made this venture so successful has been the positive and welcoming atmosphere that the students found at your place.'

We were given some of the evaluations of the project done by the students, most of who were young women. One of them, Kirsten Neil, said, in part,

'...groups of final year veterinary science students...were given the opportunity to expand our previously limited knowledge of alpacas and llamas. Each group ventured from Werribee to the Bellarine Veterinary Clinic, full of enthusiasm yet unsure of what the day was to bring. Many of us had never seen an alpaca before.

'Armed with "Mr alpaca vet", Ewen McMillan, we visited the Benleigh Alpaca Stud, home of Allan and Carolyn Jinks and their very cute alpacas. ... The lucky ones amongst us were privileged to see a cria born. I wish other species were that obliging to give birth during the day!

'We also visited Nancy and Max

Moore and their llamas. "Bernie" was a hit, especially when he went for a walk inside their home to look at himself in the bathroom mirror. We also watched a "spitting off", and some students who didn't have their wits about them soon discovered that they were in the wrong place at the wrong time!

'Overall, students were grateful to have gained such a valuable insight into the alpaca industry. Everyone raved about the hands on experience obtained and came back to Werribee brimming with alpaca news.'

Same time next year!

Well, it looks as though we are going to be part of the education scene in 1997. Russell Mitten seems to think this is very much an ongoing part of Melbourne University's veterinary training...

'Having such a success in 1996, we will be keen to repeat the exercise next year! I hope that you will again be able to have our students come; they will certainly want to do so!'

In fact, we are now holding regular day and weekend alpaca education programs at Benleigh for new breeders who got to know about our 'vet school'. If you are interested in participating, please call us on (052) 502 737.

ALPACAS AUSTRALIA EDITORIAL AND ADVERTISING DEADLINES AND INFORMATION

Editorial to Carol Hosking

If possible, all editorial contributions should be typed. Visual material can be colour photographs or transparencies. We will endeavour to return all photos and slides.

Advertising to Suzanne Hines

Rates and specifications are available on request. We can accept camera ready material or will produce advertising material to specification. We cannot guarantee inclusion of late advertising material.

For further information, on both editorial and advertising matters...

Phone: (03) 9428 9663

(03) 9428 2728

during business hours.

Please address all editorial and advertising to:

PTW Desktop & Design Unit 9, 663 Victoria Street Abbotsford 3067 Victoria

DEADLINES 1997

Issue 18 — Autumn Due: March 1997

Deadline: Friday 17 January

Issue 19 - Winter Due: June 1997

Deadline: Friday 18 April

Issue 20 - Spring Due: September 1997 Deadline: Friday 18 July

Issue 21 - Summer Due: December 1997 Deadline: Friday 17 October



Alpaca





Champion Suri, 'Peruvian pictured here with Benoit Ernst of Coricancha.







One hundred and fifty-one animals and twenty-nine fleeces were exhibited at the Classic Show. For the first time at a National Classic, suris were judged.

The Association is extremely appreciative of the efforts of the judges, Lavona Fercho and Cameron Holt, and Chief Steward, Bill Plunkett. Thanks are also due to major sponsors: Di-Vetelact, Hamilton-Bridges & Associates Pty Ltd and David Rowntree Livestock Insurance Brokers and to Town & Country Farmer Magazine, Wilburtins Insurance, Australia's Exotic News, and the Alpaca Fibre Co-operative.

Congratulations to all exhibitors and special congratulations to the winners: Champion Wether: Harry, Cherry Hill Alpaca Stud, T & D Oliver, Seville Vic Champion Suri: Peruvian Emperado, Jindy/Coricancha Alpaca Studs, I Pohl, B & B Ernst, Canterbury Vic

Reserve Champion Suri: A.S. Traders Empire Monarch, Alpaca Syndicated Traders, J Short, Trentham Vic.

Champion Junior Male: Kingston Park Paragon, Kingston Park Alpacas, S Rainbow & L Fisher, Cranbourne Vic

Reserve Champion Junior Male: Pinjarra Diablo, P & E Bennett, Bell Post Hil Vic.

Champion Junior Female: Pinjarra Domino, Pinjarra Alpacas, S Keane, Lima South Vic

Reserve Champion Junior Female: Acheron Shiralee, Acheron Valley Alpacas, J & B Worcester, Buxton, Vic

Champion Intermediate Male: Shanbrooke Elite, Shanbrooke Alpaca Stud, D & R Condon, Yarra Glen Vic

Reserve Champion Intermediate Male: Greenvale Don Giovanni, Greenvale Alpacas, M Tardivel & G Jenkin, Greenvale Vic

Champion Intermediate Female: Benleigh Highland Lass, Benleigh Alpaca Stud, A & C Jinks, Geelong Vic

Reserve Champion Intermediate Female: Purrumbete Legacy, Summerhill Park Alpaca Stud, A Quilty, Coldstream Vic

Champion Senior Male: Greenvale Guido, Greenvale Alpacas, M Tardivel & G Jenkin, Greenvale Vic

Reserve Champion Senior Male: Shambara Beaumont, Shambara Alpaca Stud, G & D Henry, Shepparton Vic

Champion Senior Female: Purrumbete Wedding Bells, Benleigh Alpaca Stud, A & C Jinks, Geelong Vic.

Reserve Champion Senior Female: Purrumbete Compass Rose, Shanbrooke Alpaca Stud, D & R Condon, Yarra Glen Vic

Supreme Champion: Benleigh Highland Lass, Benleigh Alpaca Stud, A & C Jinks, Geelong Vic Champion Fleece, Purrumbete Wedding Bells, Benleigh Alpaca Stud, A & C Jinks, Geelong Vic Reserve Champion Fleece: Purrumbete Warrior, Bethongabel Alpaca Stud, L & J Gadsden, Coldstream Vic



Left: Supreme Champion Benleigh Highland Lass' (Benleigh Alpaca Stud. (From left): Michael d'Apice representing sponsors Wilburtins Livestock Insurance Brokers; Classic Show judge, Lavona Fercho; and owners Allan and Carolyn Jinks.

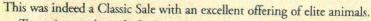
Far left: Champion Fleece, 'Purrumbete Wedding Bells' (Benleigh Alpaca Stud) Carolyn Jinks, Cameron Holt (judge) and Allan Jinks.

Classic









Top price was brought by Lot 14, *Purrumbete Hot Shot*, a light fawn huacaya stud male. He was offered by Merungle and Pucara Alpaca Studs and purchased by Peter and Margaret Bennett of Heritage Park Alpacas.

Lot 3, Purrumbete Portia, offered by Shanbrooke Alpaca Stud, was purchased by Swan Valley Alpacas (Ron and Rose Reid) for \$62,000. Major buyers were Terry and Tena Wheeler who successfully bid for three superb black females, one with cria. They also added two suri females to their herd.

Average price for the 13 animals sold was very pleasing \$32,115.

The setting for the events of Saturday and Sunday 2 and 3 November was the New Showgrounds Exhibition Centre at Melbourne Showgrounds — an excellent venue. Because the weekend fell during Melbourne's Spring Racing Carnival, the fashion parade of alpaca wear held prior to the sale reflected a racing theme.

Again, the Association is grateful to suppliers of garments for the parade. A large thank you to: Alpaca Classica; Australian Alpaca Centre; Capalba Park Alpacas; Darfield; De Sol Alpaca Collection; Llana Rural Products; Nerrida Pohl; Suave International and Tumi Knitwear.



Above right: Dianne Condon, Shanbrooke Alpaca Stud with Ron and Rose Reid of Swan Valley Alpacas, purchasers of Lot 3, Shanbrooke's Purrumbete Portia'. Right: Peter and Margaret Bennett of Heritage Park Alpacas paid top price for light fawn male, 'Purrumbete Hot Shot'.







PUCARA ALPACA STUD

Alpaca for the discerning breeder

Pucara have quietly gone about acquiring the best alpaca genetics available in the world in a quest to breed quality fibre for quality product. Witness the stunning Machos that arrive in March '97: Peruvians, Don Julio, Drambuie and Legend. We are also part-owners of Peruvian Hemingway – 17.8 mic., 3.9 s.d., 21.9 c.v. at 7 years old. His progeny are breathtaking. They have consistently won in the U.S. show rings. At the Denver National Show '96 where shown, his progeny won the junior male and female classes which had more than 20 animals per class!!!

A number of our select Peruvian females bred to Hemingway are for sale. Also available are a beautiful selection of weanlings, male and female, some of Hemingway descent. With them will be an elite group of full Peruvian suris, the quality of which has no parallel in Australia. Soft, lustrous, fine... locked fleeces that hang like curtains of silk.

We haven't neglected colour either. All the Aussie 'experts' said there was no colour in Peru, but of the 5.4 million kgs cut there 35%(*) is coloured!!! Pucara this year got 50 coloureds in Peru before the Peruvian government shut the door on colour.. ...for ever!!!!

1996 NATIONAL CLASSIC AUCTION

Congratulations Peter and Margaret Bennett for the purchase of Purrumbete Hot Shot from Pucara and Merungle Alpaca Studs, the highest ever price at auction in Australia... Hot Shot is now at stud at Pucara.

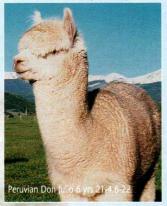
Well done Aymara Alpaca Stud on the \$42,000 sale of a weanling female, the daughter of Pucara's outstanding black herdsire, Pacific Beethoven.

Give us a call, we'd like to hear from you.

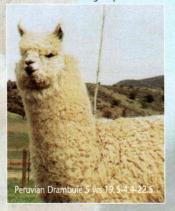
(*) R. Weatherall, 1995

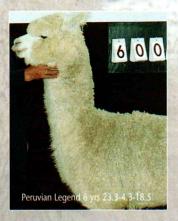
Tel: 0352 633 436 Fax: 0352 633 364 015 525 391 Jude Anderson Alan Cousill

1/2 Owners Shelbory Park Alpacas



1/2 owners Warralinga Alpacas









PUCARA MACHOS

(Now at stud)



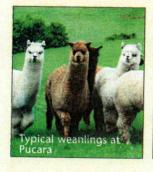


SNOW MAN PROGENY



'Snowman progeny have won the supreme championship of two largest shows of alpaca in Victoria 1995 and the Royal Sydney 1996.'

CHRIS PROGENY







BEETHOVEN PROGENY



PUCARA WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING WHO HAVE BOUGHT ANIMALS FROM US RECENTLY CONGRATULATIONS **

John and Diane Kuhl Mt Gambier
Jessie Jenkin Geelong
Trevor and Debbie Walker Mt Gambier
Paul and Lesley Tepper Mt Eliza
Laurie and Margaret Binks Albany
Riki and Rainer Marten Staverton
Judy Brear and Lyn Sullivan Martinsville
Helen Fritsch Dural
Rex and Bev Shearer Bega

Geoff and Jeanette Cumming Peterborough
Peter and Judith street Mittagong
Kay and John Cleaver
Kim and Marc Tonkin Bombala
Bert and Margaret Rijk
Peter and Erica Bennett
Ken Madl Denver
Lynn and Lutz Jacobi Little River
John Simpson and Sue Bourchier Shepparton

Wendy Hotchkie Newcastle
Ted and Meredith Cole Brisbane
Geoff Martin & Sue Curliss Mt. Edgerton
Paul and Pauline Witham Elaine
Sue Wood Albert Park
Gary and Jan Petit Clarkefield
Geoff Cole & Gary Scarlett Torquay

THE SURI ALPACA

With less than 300 suris in Australia, the industry has much to learn about these very different alpacas. The National Committee of the AAA recently adopted a Suri Alpaca Breed Standard as a guide for both breeders and judges. It is an open standard, designed to give a wide range of choices to suri breeders in defining their directions. The suri alpaca offers the breeder a set of genetic building blocks with which to mould the future. There are desirable genes which must be brought to the fore and undesirable genes which must be diminished or eradicated.

Fleece

The Breed Standard identifies four basic categories of fleece, but makes no judgement as to which is preferable.

1. The tight ringlet

The fleece forms into thin ringlets which twist almost to the skin.

2. The fanned ringlet

The fleece forms into ringlets which start at the skin in an open fan shape and roll into ringlet from the apex of the fan.

3. The curled ringlet

The fleece forms into bulky curls which hang in bold corkscrew-like ringlets.

4. The straight fleece

The fibre parts along the backline and hangs straight down. When the animal is in motion, the fibre should flow and reflect the lustre and elegance that sets the suri apart from the huacaya.

Summary

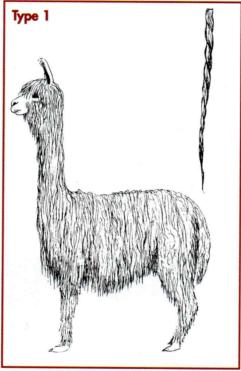
Suri fleece should be highly lustrous and show good length.

Faults

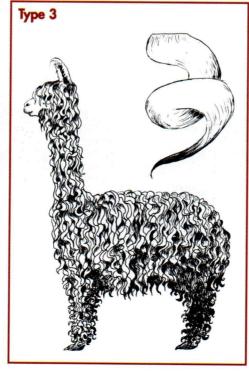
Chalky fleece Short fibre length.

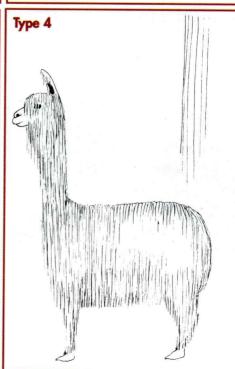
Profile

When viewed from this position, the proportions should be pleasing. It is in









the hands of the suri breeder to refine this profile so that the suri alpaca is not just a highly functional animal producing viable quantities of exotic fibre. The suri alpaca should be bred with the aim of creating an animal of exquisite beauty, which carries a fleece of equal beauty.

The topline should be graceful, being straight to slightly arched and sloping away from above the pin bones to the tail set.

Slope from the tail set to the buttocks should be more abrupt to avoid vulva contamination from faeces.

The rear legs angle slightly to the rear with a slight curve to the hock.

Both the rear and fore-feet are supported by pasterns which are firm and upright.

Faults

Sway and humped backs Sickle hocks Weak pasterns.

Ideally, the belly should have good fleece coverage of equal quality to the main body fleece.

Forequarters and forelegs

The chest is broad and deep with well sprung fore-ribs.

Fibre on the chest area should not be coarse or hairy.

When viewed from the front, the forelegs should be spaced with little or no deviation.

Fibre coverage on the legs should be dense and grow down to the top of the

The feet have two evenly sized toes.

Faults

Narrow chest Flat, narrow rib cage Over deviated legs Fused toes Bare legs.

Hindquarters: rear view

Tail should be of normal length, approx. 23 cm. Tail set should not be too high and should show a dense flag of lustrous fibre.

Pelvic width should be such that the rear legs are well spaced and stand perpendicular.

Ideally, fibre covering the thighs should be of similar quality to the saddle fleece. This is not usually the case, so this is a good area to evaluate the overall quality of the animal.

The male should have two evenly sized testicles relative to its age.

The vulva of the female should be normal and located not too close to the anus.

Faults

Narrow pelvis Hocks touching or overlapping Bandy legs Short or bent tail.

PARK VIEW RAVEN

As can be seen by his exceptional results during his first 12 months of showing, RAVEN is one of Australia's most awarded black males. He has a beautiful lustrous crimpy dense fleece which is incredibly soft, and which cut almost 4 Kg at his first shearing.

Show results include:

1st in class at:

- * National Classic Show 1995
- * Sydney Royal 1996
- * St. Ives 1996
- * Castle Hill 1996
- * NSW State Show 1996 (Fleece)
- * National Classic Show 1996 (Fleece)

Also:

- * Supreme Champion Portland 1996
- * Reserve Champion Inr. Male Hawkesbury 1996
- * Reserve Champion Fleece Central coast 1996

Also at Stud

The legendary... Purrumbete DON QUIXOTE (solid light fawn) And stunning newcomer...Cedar House LUCIFER (medium fawn)



Keith, Jeanette & Kylie Hollingworth 76 Arcadia Road. Galston NSW 2159

Ph: (02) 9653 1696 Fax: (02) 9653 1040

SPECIALISING IN **FAWN AND BLACK BLOODLINES**



Head

The face is open and covered with short, fine, lustrous fibre.

The length of the muzzle is medium and has a strong but soft appearance.

The eyes are large and doe-like, reflecting intelligence and docility.

The ears are erect, pointed and covered with soft, velvetlike fibre.

The upper and lower jaws should align so that the molars mesh evenly together and the incisors touch the top dental pad.

Faults

Muffled face with excessive fibre growth on the open facial area. This can cause problems with grass seeds in eyes, etc.

The suri naturally will have a fringe of long, lustrous fibre growing from the forehead and falling down on to the face. This will not cause the animal any problems if annual shearing is practised. Strong medullated fibres in this forelock are a fault. The forelock provides a good indicator of fibre quality on other areas of the animal.

Fused or abnormally short ears are a fault, as are curved llama type ears.

Overshot or undershot jaws are a fault and best assessed

once the animal has lost its cria milk teeth and has its permanent incisors in place.

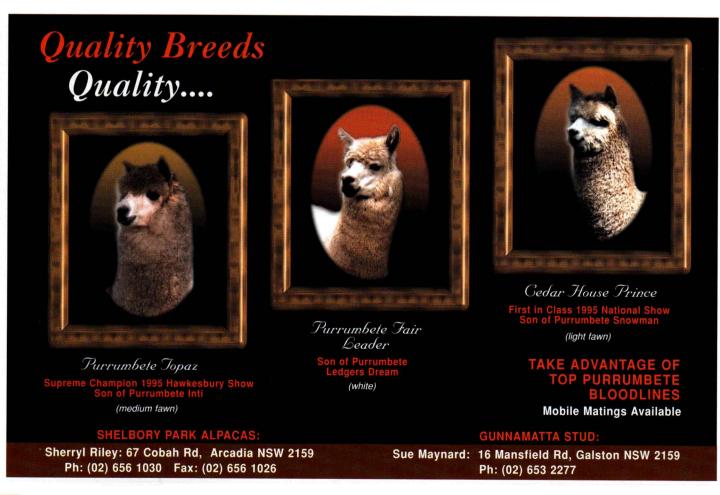
Neck

The neck should carry the head in an aristocratic manner. The attachment of the neck should be a smooth transition from the body.

Faults

Short neck U-shaped neck.





FELTING ALPACA

By Nerrida Pohl

Investing in alpacas creates obvious pleasure if you also run them on your farm. For the city based agistor, however, real involvement in the industry requires a special effort. One way of getting involved is to make finished products from the bags of fibre garaged at home.

I have worked happily on promotional stalls for the AAA and freely acknowledge that, although we are aiming to build an internationally commercial base, much of our fibre is appreciated for the pleasure it gives to the cottage industry workers. After watching breeder, Jenny Pullar demonstrating alpaca fibre spinning at the Women's Weekly Art and Craft Show in Melbourne, I decided that both spinning and felting were crafts I would like to learn.

A number of felting teachers tried to discourage me from working with alpaca, claiming it did not felt well, so I was quite excited when Jenny announced she had found a teacher, Martien Van Zuilen, who is building a network of felters around Australia.

Felted animal fibre has a long history. Excavations have uncovered felt in excellent condition after being buried for centuries. The cheap felt found today in craft shops is made from synthetics and produced on machinery using a fish-hook type system.

Nine of us agreed to have a beginner's lesson at the Pullar's farm. The day of our lesson was so cold and blustery that plans to work on the verandah had to be abandoned. Jenny's kitchen, laundry and living room became the workshop.

Felting essentials include a bamboo blind, curtain netting, old towels and alpaca fibre (preferably washed) in slivers or carded.

Many of us assumed that the suggested 'short cuts' of fibre meant inferior cuts. We soon learnt that guard hair does not make a fine quality product.

Some of us, who had never washed fibre before, found that it felted to such an extent that it was no longer possible to card. Between us, we worked with a various assortment of prepared slivers, cleanish carded fibre and completely unprepared bits of belly and leg.

Martien showed us some of her finished work. This included a black alpaca beret made from fibre Jenny had provided in advance. There were also some magnificent works of felted woollen wearable art featuring cobwebbed effects shot with coloured silks. There were boots warm enough to be worn on dry snow and even a basic tea cosy suitable for beginners to attempt. As felting is caused by shrinkage, templates are prepared 30 per cent larger than the finished object.

Although alpaca felts as quickly as wool, it is not as dense and, as it is also slippery, care is necessary in the early felting stage to ensure fibres do not shift and leave thin patches in the felt.

By lunchtime, we had all completed our first project, a flat piece of felt.

Bamboo blinds were placed on thick towels and alpaca was arranged on top. Three layers were built up, each at right angles to the one below. These were then covered with netting and soaked with hot water and dish washing detergent.

After this, it was all elbow-grease. Rubbing through netting, rolling the bamboo up and down and, when fibres eventually began to knit, removing the netting and rubbing and scrubbing much harder, until we could wring our fabric out under a hot tap without it falling to bits.

Traditionally, felting has been men's work; women prepared and embroidered the finished material. No men volunteered to do our class. 'A different culture,' we concluded.

At the beginning of the afternoon session, simple templates, made from garden plastic were selected by each of us. (Templates with angles, for mittens with thumbs, for example, are more complex to work with.) Tea cosies were the most popular, although many of these ended up more like bags!

I was the only beret candidate. The reversible beret was set out with carded white suri and black huacaya on one side and dark fawn huacaya decorated with suri 'rays' on the other.

Next to me, Trudy from Truleen Downs was preparing a bag from unwashed offcuts in black and white. We shared the laundry. We both felt that washing the fibre in advance was a waste of time. With all that detergent and water, it ended up super clean!

When you work with open-ended patterns, you can see where the template will be removed from. The beret was the only design without an open end. Alpaca was overlapped around the full perimeter of the circle, fully enclosing the tray-sized template. I became quite anxious about where it was to be cut. Martien showed us all how a small X cut into the black and white side became the exit point for the template and the entry point for a head.

All the items we made were unique, but none came out quite as planned. Beautiful black slippers had apparently swallowed up most of their silk decorations. We thought one tea cosy might make a good golf club cover.

Some of us are actually flexing our muscles and looking forward to upgrading our skills. Men's work, huh?



Jenny is placing cleaned, hand carded alpaca over her template in three layers, alternating direction at right angles each time. Table is protected with plastic and a towel is under the bamboo blind.

Step 2

Old curtain netting is placed over the fibre to hold it in place, while hot, sudsy water is poured on top. This is rubbed in gently until fibres flatten and begin to knit together.



Step 5

I have completed layering the second side and used uncarded white suri staples as decoration. A knob of fawn huacaya will hold the suri in place.

Step 6

Net is placed on second side and more hot soapy water is rubbed in.

Step 7

Item is rolled firmly in bamboo blind manytimes. Hot soapy water is added continuously.



Step 3

Trudy has completed one side of flattening black and white alpaca. She has turned the template over to commence overlaying the other side of the brown plastic template. This creates a seamless three-dimensional shape.



Step 8

Fibres have shrunk sufficiently to cause template to begin to curl. Martein shows where a hole will be cut in my beret to remove the template.



Step 4

The black and white side of my circular template has been turned over. Martein demonstrates application of three layers on the other side.



Suri staples have kept their shape due to gentle rolling in the early stage.

Step 9

When template is removed, more continuous rubbing with hot soapy water is required until felt is correct size and thickness. Next it is rinsed and wrung out until all trace of soap is gone.



Items are finished, but still wet and untrimmed. Two to three hours manual labour was required. Some tea cosies have become bags. Some items have been decorated with slivers of coloured silk tops. Slippers have shrunk to correct size.



My dried beret is soft and lustrous, very light and warm. The intermeshed natural colours provide textural interest. However, loose fibres at the cut edge are falling in my face. Either further shrinkage is necessary, or a binding trim could be attached.

[Ed.] Nerrida's beret was worn as part of an alpaca outfit in the fashion parade that accompanied the 1996 National Alpaca Sale.

REMEMBERING ARRAMURRAGUNDJI

reflections on the use of herbs for alpacas

By Riki Marten

'Equally as old as the ancient and noble race of

South American

Camelids, is the ancient and noble study of herbalism.'

The first of a fascinating two-part series.

Arramurragundji, a Creation Era ancestor came out of the sea. In her dilly bag she carried the seeds of Red Lilies, Blue Lilies, Wild Rice, Water Yams and Water Chestnuts. As she walked across the country she filled the floodplains and billabongs with food.

Once upon a time not so very long ago, and still, in some quiet corners of the earth, such as Arnhem Land and in Kakadu National Park, the indigenous peoples of this planet lived by the magic of the Earth Exchange. They were taking part in what I describe as the Gaia Covenant. It is called different names in different societies: the Law, the Dreaming, the Way, by which the earth offers to her children her way of balancing and sustaining the delicate maintenance and symmetry of her complex ecosystems.

For the Badmardi clan of Southern Kakadu, this meant a story journey of hundreds of kilometres each year. Season by season, they followed the Dreaming Tracks given in the Creation Era, to be where the Mother required them to be, to fulfill their duties to the

land and to accept the gifts offered: goose eggs in Gudjewg (monsoon), water yams in Bangerreng (knock 'em down storms), red lily seeds in Gurrung (hot sand time), or kangaroo after burning in Yegge (cool weather time). For, in the words of one of the senior traditional owners: 'That first mob (creator beings) showed us what to do, how to hunt and make fire, we didn't make it up. Us second mob have to do these things to look after the country.'

In the Guatemalan highlands, one could take in the words of a Mayan Indian prayer of today given in thanks to Pokohil, the forest guardian:

'O Pokohil, today you have shown favour,

And have given some of your beasts, some of your deer,

Thank you, Pokohil.

See, I bring you flowers for your deer. Perhaps you have counted them.

Two of them are missing;

They are the ones this Old One [the

hunter] caught,

You gave them to him.'

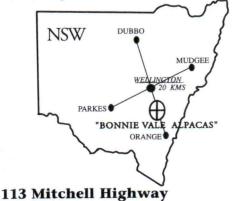


Bonnie Vale Alpacas



John & Julie Lawrie

Wellington NSW 2820



Foundation Members of AAA

The largest flock in Central Western New South Wales with a wide selection of quality animals (all colours available).

Also available, are group purchases of Peruvian stock already in Australia.

Check out our prices, after sale services and agistment rates and stud males before you buy.

Phone (068) 467 292 Fax (068) 467 282 Mobile 015 253 219

These are but two of the countless wavs in which Gaia is served and her covenant ratified. But the covenant not only relates to humans and the earth but to all earth's children: the humming bird and the bee carrying pollen in exchange for nectar; the birds transporting seeds in exchange for food; the carrion eaters who clean the land in exchange for food. Those with mobility caring for the immobile, for the forests and the the bush, pollinating, pruning, mulching, weeding, seeding, transporting, balancing. Anyone who has watched even an hour of Richard Attenborough will be aware of the infinite variety of gift for gift, and the cooperative ethic, unconciously extant within nature.

The big picture

'How does all this fit into the world of herbs?' you may ask. It's all part of the big picture, which of course is made from many many small pictures. In a naturally balanced system not only does Gaia feed her participants but cares for their health as well. Animals in the wild are not prone to disease, and if they are one can usually find human interference at the root of the cause. Most rangeland animals have a natural 'dowsing' ability which enables



York Farm Gaarden, herb section, Tammin Western Australia.

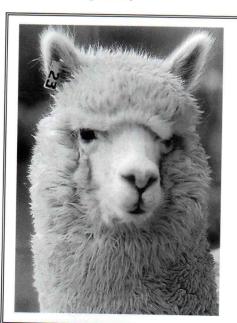
them to find curative plants which restore them to health and balance. And for many centuries farmers, crop masters, and husbandry men, knew the connection between variety, diversity, and health, and had a complex array of natural cures available.

The deadly web...

Today western agriculture is an industry. Farms have ceased to be the complex diverse and interactive systems they were even 100 years ago. The difference now in philosophies is the difference between the Australian traditional owner and those caught in the

deadly web of modern farming practice. The Aborigine would never have dreamt of cutting his mother's breast open to obtain milk. And the traditional owners of all countries have voiced dire warnings of the consequences of breaking the Gaia covenant. It is interesting to reflect that on some Australian properties today, one grazier struggles and sometimes fails to make a living on land that previously supported several hundred Aborigines.

In 200 years, Australia has removed four-fifths of its forest cover allowing 15 million tonnes of topsoil to blow away every year (it now takes 7 kg of top soil to produce one loaf of bread).



Peruvian Alpacas

The first shipment of Peruvian Alpacas direct from Peru have now completed a considerable part of their Australian quarantine.

These superb animals were selected by *Dr. Walter Bravo* from the World's top Alpaca Studs such as *Don Julio Bareda (Accoyo)*, Rural Alianza, Sollocota and Kenamari.

We can now offer these outstanding alpacas to discerning Breeders and Investors.

You are invited to see our video and photos of the animals prior to leaving Peru and from our recent trip to Cocos Island.

*We currently have an excellent range of Chilean and Australian born females for sale. Some packages with female cria at foot. **Superb males at stud.

Our on farm shop carries a large range of imported and Australian Alpaca knitwear, garments, hats, rugs, wall hangings, doonas, jewellery, spinning and knitting wool etc.

Contact: Robert & Lyn Shepherd AKHIRA PTY. LTD.

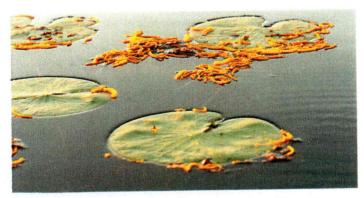
MT. PLEASANT ROAD, BIRDWOOD S.A. 5234

Phone: (085) 68 5422 Fax: (085) 68 5266 Mobile: (018) 857 346

Erosion and salinity are major problems, combined with soil degradation and species loss. Yet we continue to farm in one of the most energy wasteful methods ever evolved. The patience of the Creator Beings must surely be wearing thin. Indigenous peoples have always seen our role as caretakers of the earth. We seem to have forgotten the care, and now simply take.

We are still spiralling down through the big picture to these wonderful plants, the herbs. Today's pastures are probably the least productive use of land we could possibly have developed. They are usually planted with a limited range of grasses. According to David MacKenzie's classic Goat Husbandry, grasses are 'minerally speaking, one of the most poverty stricken families in the plant kingdom'. Lush they may look, but they are often not much more than green water. Today's pastures also often lack soil life. Super phosphate and earthworms are not friends; the soils are often compacted, allowing neither air, water nor nitrogen to penetrate; and pastures are often planted as part of a monocultural system. For a thorough coverage of the importance of biodiversity and deep ecology, I can only refer you back to last issue of Australian Alpacas and Sandie Keane's timely and significant article. If you haven't read it yet, please do.

Into this erroneous zone, this 'aggro' culture, daintily steps the ancient and noble race of South American camelids, a true rangeland animal. This is a highly selective forager used to an unpolluted diet of tall and short grasses, forbs, herbs, and shrub communities. There is, unfortunately, no room here to cover the details of diet selection and utilization of plant species in the high altitude arid rangelands of South America. But I will just mention that several of the plant species listed by Fowler have close equivalents in Australia, among them the native grasses Stipa spp., Juncas (nut grasses and sedges), and the introduced soft herbs Plantago and Alchemilla spp.



Blue water lilies and acacia blossoms, gifts from Creator Beings such as Arramurragundji.

The ancient and noble study of herbalism

Equally as old as the ancient and noble race of South American Camelids, is the ancient and noble study of herbal-



Stems, roots, flowers and seeds of the red lily can all be used as food or medicine.

ism. Treating illness with curative plants is as old as prehistory. Even as we evolved and developed we probably would have used similar dowsing abilities natural to all wildlife (and we too were once wildlife). Again there is insufficient space to cover in detail the history of herbs and herbalism but it is a closely integrated part of mankind's historical interrelationship with the plant kingdom and is part of all cultures. It is still active today among many indigenous peoples, from bush medicine amongst the Australian Aborigines, to Bolivia and Peru, where medicinal herbs form part of the trading packs the mountain dwellers will take down to the markets on the backs of their llamas.

All of the major civilizations of the past make reference in their written records of the medicinal use of plants. From China, India, Egypt, Sumeria, Greece, and Rome come histories of plant use. In 2800 years BCE, China's first herbal, the Pen-ts'ao Ching listed 366 plants. A Sumerian tablet of 2500 years BCE catalogues herbs in popular use. Tablets from King Ashurbanipal of Assyria's library (668 - 626 BCE) list 250 plants in medical use, along with 120 mineral drugs. The famed gardens of Ninevah included public herb gardens. Pliny in ancient Rome devoted seven of the 37 volumes of his monumental work Historia Naturalis to the medical use of plants. From Hippocrates to Galen, and from Avicenna to Culpepper, the long and fascinating history of herbalism carried the combined weight of knowledge across the centuries. The Physic Gardens of Europe, some planted in the Middle Ages, can still be seen today. In fact the Chelsea Physic Garden in London, founded by the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries in 1673, is still flourishing on the same site. Behind all the great names and the written histories, lies the

other, unwritten history of all the herb gatherers down the centuries. These are the green men and women of Europe: the rhizotomists; the 'yarb' women of North America; the farmers; and the natural healers whose deep knowledge of plants and their uses has provided the foundation and growth of herbal medicine.

Herbs are often as effective as modern chemical medicine

According to World Health Organiz-ation statistics, 80 per cent of the world's human population still relies on natural remedies and herb medicine. This situation is encouraged by the WHO as it is far less costly, often as effective as modern chemical medicine and is far more culturally acceptable. Since the industrial revolution, the western civilizations have sublimated much of their herb lore and knowledge. The twentieth century has seen the rise and dominance of chemical agriculture and chemical medicine. It has seen the fragmentation of work and the alienation of people within society. It has seen many 'wonder drugs' become horror stories. And it has seen inevitably, a reaction to the values of the 'quick fix', the 'fast lane', the immediate response. The medical profession, many veterinary surgeons and an informed and concerned public are now looking with increasing interest at the old knowledge.

The cultural heritage of herbal lore is probably now at its richest point in all human history. Even 20 years ago the global village had not come together in the way it has today. We now have access to a greater variety of herbal medicine than ever before. North and South American, South East Asian, Chinese, Indian, Japanese, Australian and Pacific medicines are all now available.

The benefits of using herbs

At Samarkand we have used herbal treatments for over three years now with a clientele ranging over an average of sixty alpacas as well as dogs, cats, horses, cattle, and humans. We are all alive and thriving.

Why do we use herbs? I must say at the outset, that we integrate herbal treatment with conventional medicine as well. There are always cases where accidents, wounds or acute conditions need immediate professional attention and, if in any doubt, always consult your veterinarian. We are very fortunate in having a supportive and interactive veterinarian who usually says, 'Well, it's worth a try', and is willing to investigate new therapies, remedies, and diagnostic skills.

The greatest benefits in using herbs come from their preventative and supportive action. We use these treatments because they have undergone what amounts to the longest clinical trials in history. They work, and we can repeat results.

Herbs also have a gentle and natural action combined with a synergistic effect caused by the interaction of the differing



Sunflower (Helianthus annus) Seeds are full of fibre and oils which impart lustre to alpaca fleeces. Leaves can be used as fodder.

(Photo: Penny Cearns)

compounds within the plant, which buffers the whole system against some of the highly undesirable and toxic side effects of modern drugs.

Herbs are not known to lose their effectiveness when used over long periods, although this is happening with some modern treatments. Herbal medicine is holistic, in that diagnosis considers the whole system and not just a single symptom.

Herbs play a basic maintenance role in animal and human nutrition. They can strengthen a depressed or overactive immune system, providing nutrition and nourishment in order to increase the body's natural resistance to disease. The underlying cause of a problem should always be treated, not merely the immediate symptoms.

For alpacas, a number of basic herbal remedies or treatments can be safely used, remembering these are rangeland animals who, in a more natural environment, would be able to access their own specific curative plants as part of their daily grazing. As we have denied their natural dowsing abilities and now keep them in relatively small areas, it is up to us to take responsibility for their safety and health.

[Ed.] Riki lists some of the herbs she uses as treatments in the second part of her article in the March 1997 issue. Riki Marten is the Australian Alpaca Association's Librarian.



Whatever had we done with our lives before alpacas?

By Annemarie O'Connor

Standing in the paddock at Murrayview looking down into the valley and over the river. I often speak softly to our alpacas while wondering what our family had ever done with our lives, before we had discovered these wonderful creatures. I still remember our first glimpse of those doe like eyes and intelligent faces. It was a photo in the South Australian Stock Journal. I immediately wrote away to Trudi and Keith Barnett at Murragamba stud for more information. That was in 1992.

Although I come from generations of sheep farmers, Darren and I had lived in the city for three years before shifting to a houseboat at Murray Bridge with our three children. The idea was to find some land and have a more relaxed lifestyle.

After finding out as much as we could about alpacas, the search for land resulted in our buying twenty-five acres at Mypolonga, 14 kms from Murray Bridge on the edge of the Murray River. The area is used mainly for orchards and dairies, so when we first brought our girls home we became the talk of the district, though I'm sure most people thought we were mad. Still, many of the locals found an excuse to call in for a look.

We housed our two females on the back lawn area for the first few months while we got to know them and their very individual personalities.

Our first year saw us cramming in as much learning as possible: fibre courses; show preparation workshops; and picking other breeders' brains. Trudi and Keith provided a wealth of knowledge and friendship. That was one

thing that struck us early in the piece how wonderfully friendly and helpful people in the industry were. All that we learned was passed on to our vet who was keen to learn as much as possible.

Darren and I both have experience with horses and we used the same principles with alpacas: take your time; use patience; and develop trust.

Our first shearing, I'm sure, was more traumatic for us than for the girls. After it was over, with the fleece grid sampled, weighed and packed away, I remember Darren sitting me down with a stiff drink to recover. The girls were fine; they were already munching on their tea happily.

These days, I quite happily shear our animals with Darren or one of the children holding their head and talking to them quietly, certainly different from sheep!

With our first fleeces, I tried my hand at spinning and knitting. The result was a jumper for Darren which he loves, as it came from his favourite girl. Unfortunately he could only ever

wear it in the Antarctic! Now we have experts who do it for us. The end product is lovely and warm, while being comfortable in temperatures above freezing.

Our first cria was born in less than 20 minutes, one lunchtime, without any fuss or bother. Fee-fee, the mum, was quite happy to have me catch it all on camera.

Although our original plan was to sell mum and cria, by the time I rang everyone I knew to tell them our first baby was a girl, I knew we couldn't part with her.

Then came our next dilemma: how could we not have any animals at home while the girls were away being mated? What choice did we have but to buy more. Brecon and Jingle, two little boys, came to join our happy family and they have been wonderful, being involved in all sorts of promotion.

They have been everywhere, from schools where dozens of little hands touched them to aged care hostels. They have been perfectly behaved wherever they've been. Brecon must be



Darren and Annemarie with Brecon and Tibby chat with residents of Resthaven.

one of the most photographed wethers around and I'm sure he smiles when he sees a camera now!

In 1995 I was elected on to the SA regional committee which I found was a great learning experience and I would recommend it to anyone. Through this I was involved in the first SA field days and coordinated the Murray area. The local businesses and papers were very supportive and we had a great day with visitors leaving our farm a lot wiser about alpacas.

We have found promoting alpacas very easy; the animals sell themselves so well. Whether at the Royal Show, the Farming for the Future stand, or parading up and down Rundle Mall in the heart of Adelaide, we always seem to attract a huge crowd and an assortment of questions. Showing our animals has been a great family outing and our decision to keep our mum and first cria paid off when she won first in her class at our first show. All our entries since have gained a place.

Our children are very involved, participating in feeding, training, fleece sorting and showing. They are great ambassadors for the industry and show how placid and easy alpacas are to work with.

This year we have expanded our business becoming agents for Alpaca Giftware in South Australia and producing garments made locally from our own fleeces. We are also having a go at felting. Great fun, but our daughter Melinda gets sick of me banging her head for a final fitting - we must get a hat model!. Two local shops are selling our products and are keen to be involved in promotional days in the near future.

We are also very pleased to be agents for Murragamba Alpaca Stud in the South East of South Australia., which



Joel, 8 and Melinda, 10, put Brecon and Tibby through a halter training session.

was the first privately owned non syndicate stud in SA and one of the few true broadacre farms running alpacas. Our first few bus groups have gone very well and we welcome the opportunity to chat to visitors and watch their faces when they first touch alpacas.

With our new fencing and pasture planning in place, we offer agistment and advice on stud services to owners on a TN2 clearance stud, providing all aspects of care for individual animals at any stage of testing.

By the way, we really enjoyed the 1996 Australian Alpaca Seminar in Queensland. For those who couldn't get there I recommend buying the 'Feel the Warmth' proceedings — if you haven't already done so by now. It

is jammed full with information. Everything we learned only convinced us further of the great future and potential of this industry. Although it was hard to leave behind those lovely warm days and mild nights and come back home to nights of 1 and 2 degrees, I've found if I run around faster it's not so cold. And, who knows, perhaps I'll get more done! There's one part of the day, however, during which I refuse to hurry. That is that time, every evening, when I sneak off to 'feed' our animals. The kids often find me sitting down in the paddock surrounded by alpacas bounding all over the place. I keep telling them, somebody has to make sure they're eating properly. Well, that's my story and I'm sticking to it!



Murrayview Alpacas at Mypolonga, near Murray Bridge in South Australia.



Desert Reign

AUSTRALIA'S PROMIUM SURI STUD MALES

From TWO leading suri breeders with ONE common aim.

"Our aim is to provide breeders with the best. Recent purchases of Peruvian and Bolivian stock continue our program of improvement through controlled expansion of the genetic base of Australian suris."

Proven performers* now standing:

- Suricaya Paramount (white)
- Suricaya Golden Chief (fawn)

And introducing:

- Desert Reign (white)
- Desert Dynasty (fawn)

A glimpse of tomorrow

*Male progeny of Suricaya Paramount and Suricaya Golden Chief — herdsires of the future.

Surilana

Cherie Bridges, Hamilton-Bridges & Associates Pty Ltd

Phone: 053 487 744 Fax: 053 487 754

Jill Short, Alpaca Syndicated Traders Pty Ltd

Phone: 054 248 534 Fax: 054 248 533

ON THE E.D.G.E.

Evaluation and Development of Genetic Excellence

by Adele Feakes

A look at a program of alpaca herd management where fine fibre and fine wine meet.

The Coonawarra Alpaca Stud is located a Coonawarra, in the heart of the well-known wine district in the South East of South Australia. The stud principals are Kirsty, Doug and Annette Balnaves. The family have an extremely busy winery, growing and processing their own and their clients' grapes. Annette is a well-known professional photographer and is also heavily involved with tourism.

The herd is one of those being used in the RIRDC survey which has been reported on in *Alpacas Australia*, at the 1996 industry conference and at this year's Australian Camelid Veterinary Network conference. It is also the focus of many veterinary and work experi-

ence students who come along to get 'hands on' experience when the herd's veterinarian and record keeper, Dr Adele Feakes, has some routine work planned.

THE E.D.G.E. PROGRAM

At Coonawarra, annual shearing, fibre testing, fleece weighing and skin follicle assessment have been under way since 1991. This has provided us with much knowledge about the alpacas and their fibre. It has also enabled focussing of the breeding program.

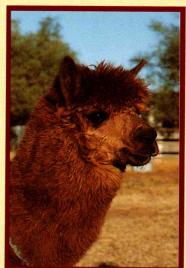
The long-term aim is: (a) to breed alpacas capable of production of fibre of such quality and quantity as to

WYONA CHIPPER

Australia's Most Successful Show Winning Male Alpaca.

Senior Male Champion, Sydney RAS, 1995.
First 2 Yrs & Over Male, Sydney RAS, 1995.
Reserve Champion Male, Gulgong, 1995.
First 2 Yrs & Over Male, AAA National Show, 1994.
First 2 Yrs & Over Male, Melbourne RAS, 1994.
Reserve Champion Male, Sydney RAS, 1993.





Never Beaten in Class at show at Junior or Senior Level. Solid Dark Fawn - Throwing Solid Fawn Offspring. Excellent Fleece, Confirmation and Size. Certified Breeding Male. Fleece Tested.

Standing at Wyona Alpaca Stud, Thuddungra, NSW, 2594. Phone Karen & Andrew Caldwell, Ph. (063) 833 531 Fax: (063) 833 578.

enable alpacas to be run commercially by Australian farmers; and (b) to produce higher gross margins per hectare of grazing land than traditional sheep and beef enterprises.

Achievement of this is dependent

- a breeding plan with specific objec-
- management of the herd to mimic, as closely as is practicable, a commercial herd; and
- the development of a viable, Australian-based fibre industry.

Prior to 1995, the breeding program for the home-based herd concentrated firstly on mating colour to colour and then on the use of a sire with excellent handle to his fibre. The group of females in quarantine were all mated to solid fawn sires.

Sires and colour lines

1995 and 1996 have seen the serious formation of the 'Coonawarra Black Line' and the 'Coonawarra White Line' with external sires chosen specifically to bring better genetics into the herd (fine/medium micron, heavy cutting sires). Mating is like colour to like colour. Coonawarra Alpaca Stud also has a sizeable Brown and Fawn Line and a small Grey and Rose Grey Line.

Sires used to bring external genetics into the breeding herd include:

Purrumbete Ledger's Dream (SW); Purrumbete Highlander (SW): Purrumbete Eldorado (SMF); Purrumbete Snowman (SW); Purrumbete Inti (SMF); Pacific Beethoven (SBLK); Purrumbete Caramel Chris (SDF); Noblacka Jackflash (SBLK); Purrumbete Don Quixote (SLF); Suricaya Lord Robert (SMF); and Suricaya Sir Sydney (SMF).

Sires are selected by their density and coverage, fibre tests, annual fleece weights, solid colouring and, of course, conformation. There is, however, a great deal of frustration involved in

sourcing sires due to sheer lack of technical information about them. Sires running on different properties cannot be compared directly with each other because of different nutrition, ages etc. However, a sire will not be considered unless he is in 'ballpark' of the breeding objectives of Coonawarra Alpaca Stud.

Performance

Over the last few years, much progress has been made in terms of improvement of performance. The 1994 drop showed a large improvement in fleece weight, but the pick of the litter is SBLK Coonawarra Julius (20.2µm second fleece and dense too!). The 1995 drop (now weaners and tuis) are looking even better with the Purrumbete sired ones majoring in performance. First fleece measurements are very good. We are looking forward to the fleece weights and fibre tests for their second shearing. They will be the reck-

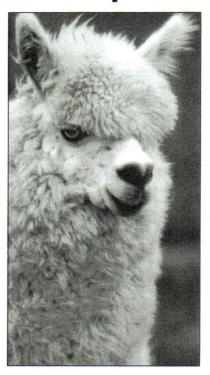
The 1996 cria crop is looking even more exciting, as early 1995 joinings were chiefly Purrumbete Highlander and Purrumbete Snowman, with later 1995 joinings to Pacific Beethoven and more to Snowman. 1997 and 1998 will be interesting as the 1995 and 1996 young females will be producing offspring to sires chosen for density, fleece weight and lower micron. In addition, the younger and older females in the 'Black Line' will have been mated to CAS Julius. We are very keen to see if his progeny inherit some of his fleece performance.

Shearing

Shearing is carried out using the well known 'ropes and tackle' at ground level. Earlier attempts to use a sheep shearing cradle have been abandoned.

The 1995 shearing created something of a record with maximum number of alpacas shorn in one day being 78. This was with the full RIRDC research team doing their extra bits and

Come, see and feel our Alpacas



stud males:

TALCA ARTURO

Solid white from solid white Purrumbete Sire

Supreme Champion

Sheep & Wool Craft Show 1994. National Classic Alpaca Show 1994. Lustrous, dense, fine fleece 23 micron, 20 CV, SD 4.6

CHERRY HILL CASPER

Solid medium grey soft handle with lustre.

- We have open days
- · You can get hands-on experience
- · Finance Seminars
- · You can hear about the incredible long term future of the alpaca industry
- We have pregnant females and weanlings for sale

Call 03 59 788666 Fax 03 59 788667



Christine and Nick Veltjens Moorooduc

Alpacas

quality animals for luxury fibre

pieces: photos, samples, weights, etc. It also included midside and grid sampling, fleece weighing (necks, saddles, legs/aprons/bellies and total) and individual labelling and packaging of necks and saddles which we would do anyway for the performance records of the stud quality animals.

Females

For the females joined at home, most of the joining is done in the paddock in single sire mating groups. Very high conception rates are obtained, with a lot less fuss and bother than hand mating. The practice of 'spitting off' is almost never undertaken.

Ultrasound scans are done on a monthly basis to verify pregnancy. We have trialed a system to pinpoint paddock mating dates which has, so far, proved very accurate. Further trialing will be undertaken in the 1996/97 joining season.

Once over 120-150 days, a pregnant female is not rescanned unless she loses weight, we are otherwise worried, or for verification for sale. Late pregnancies are monitored via body weight gain and by balloting.

The females are weighed at least every two months so changes in condition are easily picked up. If a female is not conceiving, she is checked for discharge. However, generally we find the non-conceiving females have their third or later cria at foot. This cria has a tremendous growth rate, to the detriment of the mother. These females will be put in a special feeding paddock. If this does not help, they are not remated until the cria is weaned.

Seasonal breeding

The stud is also moving quickly towards seasonal breeding, with joining in 1996 stopping at June 30. In 1997 it will stop at May 30. In both years, joining is to begin again after shearing in November. The reasons for this are twofold:

- 1. so that cria losses in deep winter due to the cold and in spring from overdue and over-large cria can be avoided; and
- 2. so that comparison of cria and tui performance (growth rates, fibre tests and fleece weights) can be done more accurately.

The system of annual shearing and delaying joining until after shearing also lends itself to our paddock mating system. Females do not have to be crutched, which avoids the possibility of the 'tangling' of the male which, of course, may ruin the male's career.

Apart from three 'late' females this year, cria will now be born only in late Spring through to mid-Autumn, to be all weaned by October and all shorn in November with the main herd. They are then run through together (males and females separate, of course) for their first fleece evaluation.

Sales

Obvious pet quality males are now sold off from weaning onwards. Older cull males have been snapped up by local farms as 'lamb guards'. In the long term, this will be very important to the industry as an outlet for older males that do not suit the pet or the fleece market.

The stud now has in place the 'tui male evaluation' system. Those young males classed at their first shearing as having potential are then run on for evaluation of their second fleece. Not all these will make sire quality grade. In fact, less than half of the male cria will be likely to enter the tui male evaluation group and, of these, only a select half or fewer may 'qualify' as sire quality by the completion of their second fleece evaluation.

Any surplus sire quality grade young males will be available for purchase every year, ranked as to performance (i.e. compared fully fibre tests and with first and second fleece weights).

Coonawarra Alpaca Stud has available its first batch of potential herd sires this year, having a few more than required for its own purposes.

All the female weaners are put through virtually the same evaluation program for their performance records. The tui females are joined as soon as they reach 50-55 kg (but, at the earliest, 11 months) provided they reach this within the November to May joining period.

With ever growing numbers of breeding females to be mated each joining season, Coonawarra Alpaca Stud has a realistic gene pool to support their long term breeding program.



THE 1996 AOBA CONFERENCE a retrospective - Lyn Dickson

A contingent of about seventeen Aussies attended the 1996 AOBA Conference in Denver, Colorado. The theme for this year's Conference, which was held for the first time away from the traditional Estes Park venue, was 'Discover the Treasure'. As one who made the trip for the first time, and as someone who is, by nature, sceptical about American razzamatazz, I have to admit that I was completely bowled over by the whole scene!

For about ten days, I 'overdosed' on all things alpaca, as indeed did my compatriots.

The structured Conference lectures and seminars ranged in scope from the ever-popular neo-natal and reproduction to marketing strategies and included the Internet, weaving and dyeing, alpaca behaviour, feeding and nutrition and anatomy. The list of topics seemed endless.

One session which I found particularly interesting was on digestive anatomy and gastro-intestinal diseases. This was delivered by Chris Cebra from the Colorado State University Veterinary Teaching Hospital, whose specialties include camelid gastroenterology. His presentation was supported by particularly graphic slides and I was heartened to learn that there is significant research being carried out in this field in the U.S., as gastrointestinal diseases are documented as being one of the major mortality causes of insured camelids.

It was the first time also that there had been an AOBA sponsored alpaca auction and the presentation was fullon American hype (we loved every minute of it!). The auction grossed \$US510,000 for 28 alpacas, male and female - an average price of \$US18,230. The top priced female sold for \$50,000.

A group of Aussies, who shall remain nameless, became caught up in the spirit of things and, to their surprise (and that of their husbands, back



CALICO ALPACA **BROKERS**

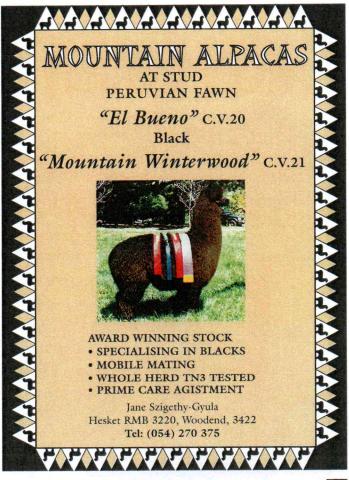
BUYING & SELLING MADE EASY

*Listing All Stock for Sale

also

*Listing of Stud Males Available for Service

ALL ENQUIRIES: Phone/Fax: (03) 5147 3006



home) had one of the alpacas knocked down to them. This was followed by many frantic telephone calls home, and requests to 'send money'.

For those more interested in the social aspects, there were breakfast meetings, dinner dances and fashion parades. There was even an organised trip to that oh-so-American institution, the baseball. Those of us who attended are still recovering from indulging in the largest ice-cream sundaes you could ever imagine.

A number of us attended the ALSA Judges Clinic run by Maggie Krieger and our own Cameron Holt. This was a hands-on clinic, attendance at which forms part of the requirement to enter the American ALSA Judge's Apprenticeship Programme.

Four Australians actually put their knowledge to the test and undertook the rather intensive examination at the end of the two-day clinic. I believe they all performed very creditably.

The AOBA Show, which was the

largest alpaca show ever held outside of Peru, attracted 245 entries (last year: 91). Julie Bird and I, as visiting Australian judges, were privileged to be invited to steward for Maggie Krieger during the Show. It was a mind-boggling experience to be involved in the ring that day with such a large alpaca turn-out. Many others from our Australian contingent were called upon to be handlers by some of the larger breeders who were having difficulty coping with lots of entries in both rings at the same time.

Then, of course, there were the colourful and up-market stud displays (more correctly, ranch displays). There was a myriad of alpaca and alpacarelated products available to buy. These very professional ranch and retail booths only served to confirm what we already knew. These Americans lead the way in knowing how to sell themselves and their products.

But it was the alpacas themselves that will remain the highlight of my



These Americans know how to sell themselves and their products!

trip. I was fortunate to be able to attend the Estes Park Show and Wool Market held on the weekend before the Conference. Although this was not as





The AOBA Show was the largest alpaca show ever held outside Peru.

large as the AOBA Show in Denver, many breeders had used this venue as a lead-up to Denver and the quality of the alpacas presented was extremely

Five of us travelled independently and met up at picturesque Estes Park. I will always remember that first day when, jet-lagged and weary, suffering from lack of sleep and altitude headaches, we individually inspected these outstanding animals. We chatted to their owners about blood-lines (more like interrogation, in my case) and got our hands on those marvellous fleeces, re-grouping to compare notes, too excited even to stop and eat.

This activity set the scene for the rest of our trip and I believe I lived on adrenalin from then on.

The Americans have had the benefit of breeding up with some of the best Peruvian lines for three to four years now and the improvements in their herds have been massive. It was a great experience to see and feel these animals. It gives me much optimism about our future here, knowing that we are poised to make those same improvements.



A couple of other impressions remain firmly imprinted in my mind and I offer them as personal observations for other to consider.

The generosity and professionalism of the American breeders towards their industry was very striking. The total support which AOBA receives from all the breeders, large and small, both in terms of monetary assistance, visionary leadership and active 'roll-up-yoursleeves' participation sets a standard which we in Australia would do well to copy.

There have been tremendous inroads made into learning about fibre in a short space of time. The breeders display absolute enthusiasm and positive attitudes towards educating themselves and progressing the industry. We tend to take for granted all the wool and fibre technology at our finger tips and assume that 'down under' we know it all and will continue to lead in the area of fibre. I think, 'not for long' unless we are prepared to continue to push the boundaries.

We returned with countless invitations to 'come visit our ranch', richer for our experience and certainly (at least in my case) lower in the bank balance. The American breeders were extremely generous and hospitable hosts and displayed a fascination for all things Australian.

I am also delighted to report that the passion for alpacas is equally as addictive on the other side of the Pacific as it is here. I am sure that everyone who attended the Conference would agree that we did, indeed, 'Discover the Treasure'.



COONAWARRA **ALPACA STUD**

Now exposing our 'E.D.G.E.' at Coonawarra: 5 YEARS of annual fibre testing, fleece weighing, and some follicle assessment. Matings are chosen for fibre quality, quantity and solid

E valuation and then Development of G enetic **E** xcellence in alpaca fleece production.

Cires used in the Coonawarra Obreeding program include the Purrumbete sires Ledger's Dream SW, Highlander SW, Snowman SW, Eldorado SMF, Inti SMF, Don Quixote SLF, Caramel Chris SDF. Also used are Suricaya Lord Robert SMF and Sir Sydney SMF, Benleigh Champagne SLF, Jolimont Manuel SMF, Pacific Beethoven SBLK and Coonawarra Nelson BLK.

- Pregnant females available.
- Young herdsires now available from the tui male evaluation mob.
- Show and pet quality males.

WE ALSO WISH TO INTRODUCE THE OUTSTANDING SUPERFINE AND EXTREMELY DENSE COONAWARRA JULIUS SBLK

is fully shorn cria fleece measured 19.8 micron (grid sample of saddle). Then 12 months later, in his second fleece, midside sampling measured 20.2 micron (4.5 sd & 22.4 cv). His 'second' fleece weight and shearing dates will be available after shearing.

FOR ENQUIRIES PLEASE CONTACT PRINCIPAL: KIRSTY BALNAVES

> Phone: 087 372 946 087 372 945 Fax:

BREEDING RECORDS & FLEECE **EVALUATION PROGRAM:** DR ADELE FEAKES BVSC

Phone: 087 620 021 087 620 055 Fax:



ELISHA VALIDATION 'URGENT' SAYS COMMITTEE

The National Johne's Disease Co-ordinating committee consists of representatives from all industries affected by Johne's disease and government agricultural officers. It is a committee of the National Farmers' Federation.

Geoff Hargreaves, chair of the AAA's Animal Health and Welfare Sub-committee, attended the JD Committee's September meeting as the Association's representative.

For the AAA, a significant result of the meeting was its agreement that there is an urgent need for validation of the absorbed ELISA test for alpacas.

ELISA (Enzyme-linked Immuno-sorbent Assay) is a blood test for Johne's Disease that is quicker and cheaper to process than the JD faecal test.

At present, results from the JD faecal test take about three months to become available. There can also be a high level of test culture contamination which means re-testing is required. The absorbed ELISA test results are available within ten days.

Validation of the absorbed ELISA tests is imperative for the implementation of the industry's Johne's Disease Market Assurance Program (MAP) for alpacas. Validation is expected to confirm that the probability of false negative results is so low that it can safely replace the faecal test as the primary test for Johne's disease in alpacas.

Subject to validation, the draft alpaca MAP proposes that only animals showing a positive reaction to the blood test should undergo faecal testing as a confirmation measure.

The AAA Animal Health Sub-committee believes that before the alpaca MAP is recommended for adoption by the Association, it must be fully specified, structured to minimise implementation costs to breeders and allow estimation of total costs. Incorporation of the blood test into the MAP will substantially reduce both costs of testing and time

taken to produce results.

The Sub-committee has also agreed that, once achieved, Test Negative 2 status will be maintained by regular tests to be carried out roughly every two years (specifically, between 22 and 26 months).

Geoff Hargreaves is finalising the seventh draft of the MAP for discussion by the AAA Animal Health and Welfare Sub-committee and the National JD Co-ordinator.

In the meantime, JD testing programs should be conducted under the guidance of state veterinary officers.



7 - 9 March

Royal Farm Expo

Diversification in Modern Farming

Royal Showground, Wayville 7-9 March 1997

This exciting new Expo aims to display and promote advances and improvements in farming technology, exhibit new industries and ideas and include the latest developments in products and diversification.

Exhibitors and displays are now invited from all:

- agricultural and service industries
- primary producer enterprises with a particular focus on diversification
- breed societies
- manufacturing and distributing organisations
- researchers and service providers

Royal Farm Expo

Yes, I am interested in receiving more information on Royal Farm Expo. Please forward it to:

Contact Name:Fax:....

Type of Enterprise / Commodity:.... Forward the Coupon to:

> Royal Farm Expo, PO Box 108, Goodwood 5034 Telephone (08) 8210 5211 - Fax (08) 8231 4173



Please address all letters to: The Editor, Alpacas Australia, C/- PTW Desktop & Design Unit 9, 663 Victoria Street, Abbotsford Vic 3067.

I very much enjoyed Chris Tuckwell's article, 'Selection of Alpacas for Breeding', in your Spring 1996 issue. I agree that each breeder should establish breeding objectives for their herd, and that herd improvement depends on the choice of male for stud. My own opinion is that given the importance of sire selection, it is a mistake for small breeders to purchase their own stud sire. Unless you are improving your crias with each generation, you are falling behind the rest of the industry.

However, I do not believe Mr Tuckwell's article went far enough. When he says 'the offspring are backcrossed to the same sires repeatedly', I interpret that to mean that he is advocating inbreeding, yet he says that 'the alpaca industry needs to retain all sound females in a breeding herd'. Unfortunately, if you are going to begin an inbreeding program, you need to ruthlessly cull all the animals with genetic defects, and there will be many. Without culling, the defective genes will remain in the population and can become much more prevalent, but no breeder that I know can afford to take an extremely valuable female out of their breeding program. Alpacas are worth significantly more than sheep.

There is also the danger that when you inbreed to selectively enhance certain traits, you can breed the soundness out of the animals. One only has to look at the dog world, where one pathetic example is breeders of German Shepherds who wanted low, sloping hind legs; the unintended result was hip dysplasia.

As far as editing the article is concerned, I believe it is a mistake to use Spanish words (e.g. hembra, tui) when the equivalent English words are more understandable and would increase the clarity of the article. Using undefined terms in an article geared to newcomers to the industry is counter-productive. You cannot attract new people to the industry if they do not comprehend what you are saying.

> Kenneth E. Madl Aviana Farms Denver, Colorado

[Ed.] There's a valid point here, but it does cause an editing dilemma, when our authors often use the Spanish words. Should we Anglicise? Any one feeling strongly either way might let us know, please.

Two great articles coming up in the New Year

The second of Riki Marten's thoughtful article on the use of herbs for alpacas.

A very interesting piece from Mike Safley in the US: 'The Role of Crimp in the Textile Process'.

ALPACAS AUSTRALIA

(next issue, March 1997)

KIKUYU GRASS SEED

The perfect pasture for Alpaca

HIGH IN PROTEIN



Rid pastures of weeds to protect fleece value.

Turn problem areas around water troughs, tank overflows, creek and dam banks into pasture areas.



For further information and a free sample contact:

EYKAMP KIKUYU COMPANY SPRING RIDGE ROAD, **QUIRINDI 2343**

TEL: 067 462 241 FAX: 067 462 107

directory Z

"TRULEEN DOWNS" ALPACA STUD FARM



- LIVESTOCK INVESTMENT
- SALES & STUD SERVICE
 - MANAGEMENT
 - AGISTMENT

Toomuc Valley Road Pakenham, Victoria 3810

Enq: Colleen or Trudy Phone: (059) 411 994 Fax: (059) 402 352

To place your business card advertisement in the Business Directory,

Contact Suzanne Hines

PTW Desktop and Design. Phone (03) 9428 9663 Fax (03) 9428 2728.

Only \$100, including production, or as little as \$80 per issue for regular advertisers.

T A MSW

Do you want to learn about Alpacas,

(including nutrition, breeding, health and fibre production) by home study?

If so, contact Pauline Smith

Armidale College of TAFE Beardy Street, Armidale 2350 Phone: (067) 73 7723 Fax: (067) 72 8792

Jonora Alpaca Barn & Tourist Farm

We have an extensive range of alpaca yarns and garments.

Mail Order for Wool Available.

Home baked refreshments and lunch available in our coffee corner.

Winner of 1996 Hawkesbury Business Award for Outstanding Tourism Services.

Hours: Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Public Holidays 10am – 5pm

> Lot 1/159 Avoca Road, Grose Wold NSW Phone/Fax (045) 72 1986

Eden Alpacas

Breeding for Fine Fibre, Good Conformation & Temperament

▲ Quality Animals for Sale

▲ Raw & Spun Fleece Available

▲ Visitors Welcome Cathy Exon – Wonga Park

Phone: (03) 9722 1779 Fax: (03) 9722 1069



McGregor Alpacas

- Alpacas for sale
- •Excellent after sale service
- •Spinning and knitting service available

Visitors welcome

Home of Magenta Alpaca Stud Sally & Ian McGregor R.M.B. 1440 Chiltern 3683 **Phone/Fax (057) 26 1524**

TRARON ALPACAS

- Lifetime in Farming
- Superior Males at Stud (all colours) (Peruvian Feb. 1997)



- Agistment for Investors on excellent pastures
- · Quality animals for sale

"We are happy to share our knowledge"

BILL & ANNETTE ROBBINS RMB 7062, WODONGA VIC. 3691 PHONE/FAX: (060) 725 224

Cartrefelee Alpaca Stud

Quality Alpacas for Sale Agistment & Stud Services Available

Peter & Heather Otto



SADDLE ROAD PHONE: KETTERING TASMANIA

MOBILE:

(002) 67 4365 (002) 67 4804 018 122 346

"The Alpaca Isle"

for Alpaca insurance

Ph: (02) 9909 1499 Fax: (02) 9909 8057

Now is the time to shear your Alpacas. Have them expertly shorn by Trevor Cuthbert

No number is too small - will travel. Ring now to find out when he's in your area.

Poplar Ave, Shepparton East 3631 Telephone: (058) 28 6210 Mobile: 015 313 098

Lana Rural Products Protect your investment

with our tried and proven quality alpaca paddock rugs, halters, feeders and associated products.

for further information contact:

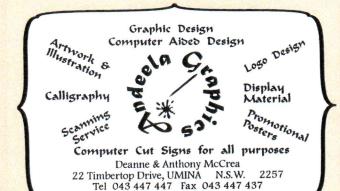
Suzanne Browne (Lockhart) on (059) 62 3927

Capalba Park Alpacas

Garments in Luxurious Alpaca Suppliers of Alpaca Yarns, Tops & All Your Alpaca needs

Call us now for Catalogue - information

Geoff or Nancy Halpin R.M.B. 4820 Seymour Ph 057 99 1688



Mobile 015 258 805

INSURE YOUR ALPACAS

Embryo from 4 Months after Covering Conditions Apply. Cria from 1 Day Old Alpacas to 12 Years. First Class Service & Security



Park Lane Insurance INSURANCE BROKERS PTY. LTD.

Tel: (03) 719 7377 Fax: (03) 719 7723



Chris Highet & Alan Hamilton Trimming an Alpaca's teeth.

THE HIGHCROFT TEETH TRIMMER

Used by leading breeders and vets here and in the U.S.A. and Peru.

Available from **Highet Engineering** 25 Chasewater Street, Lower Mitcham SA 5062

Ph/Fax: (08) 276 5671

Prossmore Alpaca Stud & Cottage

Experience the delights of Alpaca ownership from a small breeders perspective. Stay in our restored miners cottage where you can rest, revive and indulge.

Nev and Marg Giles, RMB 667, Creswick Vic 3363 Telephone: 03 5345 2759

J. M. A. STRINGER & COMPANY

LICENSED STOCK & STATION AGENTS.

Established 1961

Licensee: Michael Stringer OAM, JP, MCIT PO Box 290 NARRABEEN NSW 2101

★ Alpaca Sales Specialist★ Rural Property Sales

A service for Buyers and Sellers of alpacas Phone (02) 9970 8184 & Fax (02) 9970 8185

QUALITY ALPACA SUPPLIES

- Books
- HALTERS & LEADS
- FLOOR RUGS,
 MAGNETS, BLANKETS
- TEDDY BEARS

For a catalogue please phone or fax Christine Roffey on (02) 630 3731

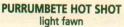


MERUNGLE ALPACA STUD

In the drier part of Gippsland Where you don't get your feet wet!

AT STUD







PURRUMBETE SILVERSMITH
grey roan

- Junior Male & Supreme Champion
 Senior Champion Male
 Melb. Sheep & Wool Show '95
- Reserve Junior Male Res. Senior Champion Male Royal Melbourne Show '95

A lifetime of farming experience The home of show champions & breeding for the best

Sires used in breeding program include:
Purrumbete Inti, Snowman, Ledger's Dream, Scarborough &
Highlander, Peruvian Sonoma, Pacific Beethoven

Jenny & Peter McDavitt Sellings Lane, PO Box 330, Maffra 3860 Phone: 03 5147 2444 Fax: 03 5147 2603 Mobile: 0418 516 606

• Information Days • Sales • Agistment • Stud Services • Garment Sales





STH NSW REPORTS **EVENTS SUCCESS**

The Bowral Alpaca Fair (pre-publicised last issue) was a great success on 28 and 29 September. Primarily an educational event, it featured mini-seminars, husbandry and craft demonstrations, a kids' corner and a breeders' marquee. There were also garments and other alpaca products in the trade hall. A Saturday night dinner was followed by a very successful auction of stud services, garments and other alpaca-type lots. This raised a very useful \$7,750 for the region.

Careflight air ambulance was able to sell their merchandise and were given a share of the entry fees to the Fair as well as the proceeds of a raffle (a wether, donated by Blue Grass Alpacas of Boorowa). All up, Careflight ended up around \$3,000 to the good.

The region also attended Agview, in Camden, on October 26 and 27. Agview, which attracts 200,000 visitors, is held annually in the grounds of the Elizabeth MacArthur Institute by the RAS.

It features traditional and alternative agriculture, inventions and products. Alpacas have been represented at this event for a number of years and the alpaca display grows larger each time.

The region staged shearing and craft demonstrations and junior handling competitions which were also open to the general public. There were also excellent merchandise displays.

For the first time the region held an alpaca sale, with twenty-two stud animals available and a number of wethers. The region expects further on farm sales as a result.

TRUDI BARNETT DIPS HER LID TO OUR JUDGES... WEEKEND GET-TOGETHER EXTREMELY USEFUL

A two-day get-together for AAA judges was organised for the weekend of August 23 and 24. They were invited to discuss such matters as the current rules and regulations, suri judging, fleece and animal judging and uniformity in judging.

Alan Jinks chaired and convened the weekend and the venue was Ron and Dianne Condon's property in Yarra Glen, Victoria.

The weather was beautiful, although a little chilly for interstate softies, noticeably submerged in their coats and hats. However the stunning views from the Condon's breathtaking property, perched high in the Yarra Valley, soon blew the chills away.

An almost complete turnout of judges listened to Alan's welcome and outline of what would be covered over the weekend.

The first subject was suri judging. Cherie Bridges gave an informative and well-presented address on the desirable aspects of the suri that judges should be looking for in their appraisals. Cherie also pointed out the undesirable traits that should be noted.

Roger Haldane added his experienced comments on suri selection and on how best to approach judging the suri alpaca (compared to the huacaya). At that stage, suris had not been judged in a national show ring. This changed with the National Alpaca Show (see pages 30-31).

Some wonderful suri fleeces were produced and discussed by Cherie and Roger. Judges had the opportunity to handle and comment on them.

There were also around twelve suris, supplied by various breeders, for a practice judging session.

This was not easy, given that the suris were not being held as they would have been in a show ring, but were penned. This meant more than one judge might be examining an animal or in the same pen with other inspecting judges. The task was undertaken extremely well, with the utmost care and consideration for all the alpacas.

Once judged, the placings were given to Alan Jinks, who announced that all judges had picked the same animal for first place. The majority picked the same animals for second to fourth placings, but had varied the order. Thereafter the range of preferences and opinions had become wider, as one would expect.

However, this was a good result and demonstrated uniformity, especially as some judges had limited knowledge of judging suris.

As a hands-on observer with no familiarity with suris, I was incredibly impressed with how well our judges performed.

A discussion followed the judging in which certain judges were asked to describe why they had placed each suri, giving explanations in the same manner as they would do in the show ring.

Philip Street presented an excellent paper entitled 'Ringcraft and Judging Procedures'. He addressed the judges with an overview of the content of the paper which contained some very helpful suggestions for all judges.



Philip Street presented a paper to AAA judges: 'Ringcraft and Judging Procedures'.



Roger Haldane was among the judges who found suri judging an absorbing business.

Following this, everyone enjoyed a BBQ lunch at the house. Thanks to Ron and Dianne and Isabel Plunkett.

After lunch, an imposing selection of huacayas were artfully hustled into the pens (the suris had miraculously disappeared!). Once again, the judges set to and methodically went over all the alpacas, once, twice and even three times. Certainly, some very difficult decisions were being made.

Once again, however, there was marked uniformity in judges major placings. Again, certain among them were chosen to exhibit their ability to address the competitors and crowd with an explanation of their placings.

Everybody made themselves comfortable on hay bales to discuss the show guidelines booklet and the rules and regulations. A number of recommendations were proposed for the consideration of the AAA National Committee.

After a long day, a number of vehicles snaked their way down the track to the main road en route to the Healesville Motel. Later, at the local Chinese restaurant, we filled two tables. Ours was the quiet one. Those occupying the noisy table I shall not name.

Next morning, bright and early we were in the car that led the way back to Yarra Glen — completely in the wrong direction. In turning around, the leadership fell to Andrew Caldwell's full car, followed closely by Jenny Jackson. It was a very pretty drive — even though it was horribly wrong. We all pulled over, except for Jenny who must have liked the views. Eventually we did all arrive at our destination. I guess all that can be said about our judges' navigational skills is thank goodness there are stewards to show them where the alpacas are!

The morning of this second day found us warm and cosy in the house,

listening to a talk by Cameron Holt on fleece judging and the use of score cards with lengthy and active debate for the better part of the morning. Following this, it was off to the shed to judge a marvellous display of fleeces.

Once again, the judges seemed to be of like mind, although one fleece did require some debate.

Cameron then demonstrated his fleece judging technique, explaining what he was looking for and taking comments from those assembled.

Back to the house for sandwiches and coffee.

The rest of the day was spent discussing further issues in the show guidelines booklet with even more recommendations for the National Committee.

In summary, it was a very well organised and beneficial two-day event for all the judges involved. That our alpaca judges are so uniform in their decisions should confirm to us all that they have reached the required standard and have been well chosen. We can rest assured that at every show and from each Australian judge, we are getting the very best there is in skilful assessments of our alpacas.

There are plans for more of these get-togethers and I am sure they will be of invaluable benefit for judges and competitors alike.

I personally take my hat off to each and every judge and consider myself very fortunate to have witnessed them all in action.



First catch your huacayas! Bringing them in for the judges' get-together



by Dr Andrew Turner Armadale Veterinary Eye Hospital, Vic

CAMELID OPHTHALMOLOGY (Part 2)

Eye diseases in camelids Diseases of the eyelids

Lacerations

Eyelid lacerations are occasionally encountered and every endeavour should be made to repair these immediately to prevent secondary corneal problems. Lid scarring or lid hairs touching the cornea cause chronic irritation.

Congenital (present at birth)

Congenital abnormalities of the eyelids have been reported including lids turned in or out, long hairs touching the eye surface, malformed lids, and eyelid cysts. Congenital blockage of the tear duct openings is seen and the animal presents with chronic tearing. The surgical correction of this condition can be performed.

Infectious and inflammatory diseases of the tear sac

Infection of the tear ducts has been reported in llamas and is often caused by grass seeds and awns entering the tear duct. Treatment consists of flushing the duct and placing temporary tubing into the duct. Flushing of the duct with antibiotics for four or five days is sometimes needed.

Diseases of the conjunctiva

Infectious

Numerous bacteria and fungi have been cultured from the conjunctiva of normal camelids and any of these organisms could be involved in eye disease including infection of the tear duct. Laboratory tests enable the correct selection of antibiotic or antifungal agent as indiscriminate use of antibiotic allows resistant bugs to appear. Bacterial infections of the conjunctiva occur quite commonly in the camelids and infection of the cornea and conjunctiva by an organism that is similar to the one that causes 'pink-eye' in cattle has been found in a llama. It caused sensitivity to light, half-closed lids and tearing.

Dry eye

Dry eye has been recognised occasionally in camelids.

Parasitic

Other causes of conjunctivitis are rare and include eyeworm and fly irritation. Eyeworms in cattle have been treated effectively with ivermectin (pour-on) but this use of ivermectin in alpacas is 'off label' so consult your veterinarian regarding the use of this compound.

Foreign bodies/pus in the eye

Foreign bodies such as grass seeds, awns and other vegetable matter are common causes of conjunctivitis and a thorough inspection of the entire conjunctival sac which surrounds the eye is necessary. We must also look behind the third eyelid.

Cysts

Cysts, or small fluid-filled sacs of the conjunctiva, have been reported and these can be surgically removed.

Diseases of the cornea (the clear 'window' of the eye)

Physical

Causes of the corneal disease in the alpaca include superficial abrasions and ulcers, abscesses, perforated ulcers, lacerations and foreign bodies.

Infectious

Secondary bacterial or fungal invasion following injury has been reported. During general anaesthesia care should be taken to protect the exposed cornea from injury or drying. Under general anaesthesia the eyelids and, possibly, tear production do not function.

Treatment

Treatment of corneal diseases in the alpaca is similar to other species. Lacerations can be repaired.

Because of the potential for secondary bacterial invasion from the normal bacterial and fungal contaminants of the conjunctival sac, it is wise to treat corneal ulcers with broad spectrum, topical antimicrobial agents until the results of pathology tests are known.

Stitching the eyelids together, third eyelid flap and conjunctival grafting techniques such as pedicle grafts are all useful.

When treating a very deep ulcer of the cornea, surgery is recommended on the cornea. A conjunctival graft in combination with the third eye sutured to the eye ball and suturing eyelids together for extra protection give excellent results.

Tumours

Melanomas of the eye have been diagnosed in the USA.

Diseases of the anterior UVEA

Persistent pupillary membranes

Persistent pupillary membranes (PPM) are small strands of iris that attach to the front of the lens or to the back of the cornea. They normally regress late in the cria's gestation. I have seen them accompanied by cataracts.

Anterior uveitis (inflammation in the iris)

Active inflammation in the eye (uveitis) is seen in the alpaca. Clinical signs include cloudy eye and blood in the eye. Adhesions commonly form between the iris and the lens following uveitis. The cause is often difficult to determine but trauma, blood poisoning or deep corneal ulceration have been incriminated.

Treatment would depend on the cause but appropriate anti-inflammatory therapy is essential in the early stages of the condition to prevent secondary problems such as adhesions between the iris and lens and iris and cornea and increased pressure in the eye (glaucoma). Topical medications may be applied using a tuberculin syringe with needle broken off at the hub.

Diseases of the lens

Cataracts (opaque lenses)

I have observed cataracts in alpacas some of which appeared secondary to severe intraocular inflammation or PPM.

Total cataracts were observed in one or both eyes and the vision in the affected eyes was severely affected.

One blind alpaca exhibited a strange gazing appearance with the nose extended upwards.

Small cataracts were observed but did not appear to affect vision much.

Many of the cataracts seen were apparently congenital.

Lens dislocation, notches

Lens notches, lens dislocations and traumatic lens rupture have also been observed in camelids.

I have observed a lens dislocation into the front chamber of the eye in association with a mature cataract in an alpaca.

Diseases of the back of the eye

Congenital

Congenital abnormalities of the back of the eye are either limited to a single structure or found to involve multiple structures within the eye. These include abnormalities of the optic nerve head and the fibrous coat of the eye and retinal detachment.

Inflammatory

Active inflammation of the back of the eye including the retina has been observed and a few of these have also resulted in post-inflammatory retinal detachments.

Equine herpesvirus 1 has been reported to cause severe posterior segment disease in camelids resulting in blindness due to severe inflammation. Bleeding within the eye and retinal detachments were also observed in some cases. Some of the alpacas also had neurological signs.

The result was permanent blindness in all affected animals.

Generalised fungal infections have also been confirmed at post mortem as a cause of inflammation of the back of the eye in an alpaca which presented with blindness and neurological signs.

Toxoplasmosis was also suspected in one case of blindness in a llama Clinical examination revealed signs of generalised inflammation of the eyeball and adhesion of the iris to surrounding structures.

Traumatic

Trauma induced retinal detachment has also been diagnosed as a cause of blindness in the llama.

Miscellaneous eye conditions

Temporary blindness

Blindness in very young crias has been reported and in all cases vision returned. No abnormalities were observed in the retina.

Glaucoma (increased pressure in the

Glaucoma is apparently rare in camelids. Several cases have been observed in Colorado State University. The eyes appeared normal. Routine measurement may reveal a higher incidence of glaucoma than has previously been reported.

An enlarged globe has been observed in a one year old alpaca with a deep corneal scar. A complete cataract was dislocated medially.

This was probably related to a previous bout of secondary glaucoma. The pressure in the eye was not taken at the time of examination.

Conclusion

Eye conditions are quite common in camelids partly due to the prominence of the eye. Do not hesitate to call your veterinarian to discuss eye problems in your stock. If your veterinarian is not sure of what he or she is dealing with, ready access to veterinary eye specialists is now possible.

You should keep a constant lookout for inherited forms of eye disease. Failure to do so might end up costing you a lot of money and heartache.



Dearest Folks!

1/1/Forever

Me at Samarkand – where the grass is always greener – both sides of the fence! Wish you were here to see the views – smell the air – taste the water! Food's fantastic – everything organic – no blowouts though – they tell me adult herd average (40) 25.3µ and 19.9% CN: howsat! Hosts great – nothing too much trouble – Tream people too! Suites (sorry, paddocks) have super extras – rocks, splashpools, rolling pads and Endless Pasture – Top barn – Rates amazingly low! Girls are gorgeous – coming or going! Look forward to wintersports with snow babies – Hope you can get to see it all – must rush – breakfast served!

Love Always Nuran XXX

Greetings from Samarband

Schol to find out more about the Sanarkand magic. ... Soo Stavenon, Pas. 1306

Marty McGee

TTEAM Trailer Training (Part 2)

TTEAM work emphasises teaching your animal self control, trust and confidence. TTEAM techniques are designed to teach an animal student how to learn rather than merely to acquire specific skills. Often, handlers will force animals to obey or tire them out by repeating the same thing the same way, until they 'get' it. Many animal trainers consider consistency and repetition to be the keys to successful training. What if repeating the same thing over and over consistently doesn't work? If our attempts are not getting through, one answer might be to keep repeating the signal or process the same way until the alpaca accidentally, or out of desperation, does what we want. Perhaps a better alternative is to try to figure out why we are not communicating effectively.

Repetition has its place in human learning, just as it does with animals. However, a child isn't taught to add or subtract simply by repetition. It is very difficult to do over and over what you don't understand how to do, or are afraid to do. Repetition is a way of acquiring skills, it is not the key to understanding new concepts. Once a child understands the concept of addition is the time to practice and become proficient.

In teaching concepts, it may be more helpful to say the same thing three or four different ways, rather than to say the same thing three times the same way. A clinic participant once shared a great quote with me. 'True insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting to get different results.

Let's assume that you are teaching your alpaca to load in a trailer. If you are interested in training your alpaca without the use of force, repetition and consistency, this may leave you without

many options. If your alpaca won't get into a trailer on his own, it is difficult to repeat the process! Consistently pulling on the lead rope very often gets a consistently opposite reaction to what is intended.

The TTEAM approach to teaching an animal to load involves chunking the process down into the smallest component parts necessary to arrive at understanding, without fear. Forcibly teaching an alpaca to load is not only demoralising to the alpaca, it may not be safe. Pulling the front legs under the edge of a step-up trailer can result in a broken cannon bone if the alpaca jumps straight up from this position.

To teach your alpaca to load in a trailer using the TTEAM approach, you will need the following: two sheets of plywood 2 ft x 4 ft (approx); three 4 inch square posts about 4 feet long; a piece of sheeting or plastic, 4 ft x 9 ft; and four screw-in hooks. You will also need one helper.

Place the two pieces of plywood on level ground forming a 4 ft plywood square. Ask your alpaca to walk on the plywood. If he will walk across without being forced, great! If not, what do you do? If you drag him across three times, he will probably walk across the fourth time. You have succeeded, but at what price? How is your alpaca going to feel about a handler that forces him to walk on something he is afraid of? Have you created a feeling of trust? How is your alpaca going to feel the next time you come come for him with the halter?

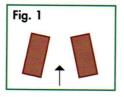


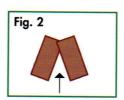
Instead of pulling and pushing your way over the plywood, lay the sheets of plywood out on level ground with a Vshaped aisle in between (see Fig.Fig. 1). Leave a 3 ft opening at the point of the V. Walk your alpaca through this aisle from the wide end of the V to the narrow end of the V. Repeat the process. Only this time, leave about 2 ft at the narrow end of the V, at the same time reducing the wide end of the V. Continue until the two pieces of plywood meet. It may be helpful to cross them (Figs. 2 & 3). In this way, each step builds logically on the last.

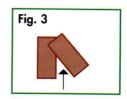
If your alpaca becomes reluctant or seems frightened, back up a bit and widen the aisle. Your alpaca may be apprehensive about the addition of the next step. However, he is learning that you are reasonable in your requests and he has confidence in himself based on the successful completion of the last task.

Once your alpaca is walking on the plywood, put the two pieces of plywood on the 4 inch posts to form a 4 ft square platform. Make sure that the platform is steady and does not tip. This step approximates the step up into a trailer, along with the scary noise and unfamiliar feel of a new surface (Fig. 4).

A trailer is also a confined space. You can simulate one side of the trailer by placing the platform next to a barn wall. To simulate the other side of the trailer wall, have your helper hold the folded sheet or plastic on the other side of the platform. Remember, you can





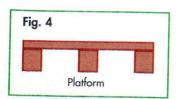


always back up to an easier step. Widen the aisle, or alter the 'trailer' in any way that will make it easier for your alpaca to succeed. This is not a win/lose situation. You can always quit for the day any time you feel it appropriate. If you decide to quit, it is a good idea next time to back up to a step that the alpaca has completed successfully. This is a much different concept to that much subscribed to training trap of having to finish, at all costs, what you start.

To simulate the roof of a trailer, put two screw eyes into your barn wall. The hooks should be 6 ft off the ground and 4 ft apart. Hang the corners of your sheet on the hooks. Using a broom stick under the sheet, one helper can support the sheet to form the roof on one side (Fig. 5). The other side is formed by the barn wall. If you want to get fancy, you can put loops or grommets in the corners of your sheeting. Put another set of hooks in the barn wall at about 4 ft high for more of a challenge (Fig. 5).

With this approach, we are not overwhelming the alpaca with too much new information. The alpaca and handler confront an obstacle and work through together. When you confront the real trailer, make sure to give your alpaca plenty of slack and allow him time to give the trailer a good once over. I am convinced that when a handler puts constant pressure on an alpaca's head (dragging him into a trailer or over an obstacle) his brain disengages.

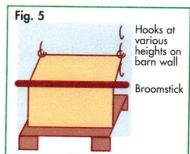
Note that this series of exercises is geared to a step up trailer. To simulate a trailer with a ramp, you must change the set up slightly. If you are teaching your alpaca to jump into a van or minivan, your alpaca must learn to jump and duck at the same time - not exactly a skill one would imagine an alpaca to be born with! To teach this new concept, raise your platform (bales of hay, in place of the four by fours) and lower the 'roof' hooks gradually

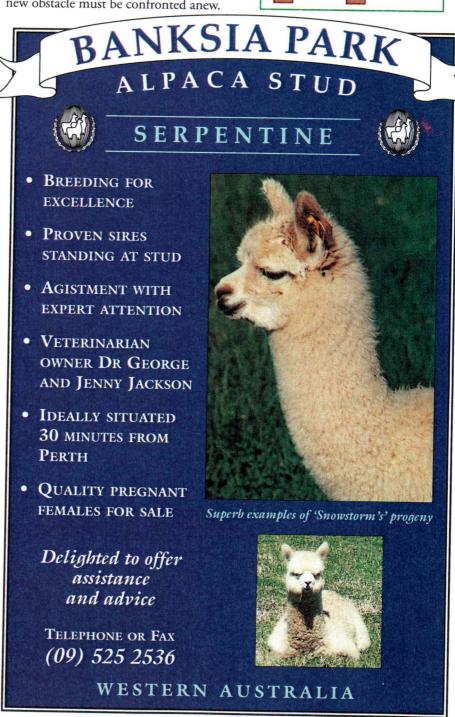


until the alpaca is jumping and duck-

Most of the tasks we wish to teach our alpacas are not those that require practice for proficiency. Wearing a halter, leading and crossing obstacles are all things alpacas can do immediately, provided they understand and are not frightened. Dragging an alpaca over obstacles works. In most cases the third or fourth time over or in and the alpaca accepts that the obstacle is not dangerous. However, this teaches the alpaca to put his faith in the obstacle and each new obstacle must be confronted anew.

Working through an exercise, such as the one just described, helps the alpaca to learn to put his faith in his handler and you end up with an alpaca that will follow you anywhere.



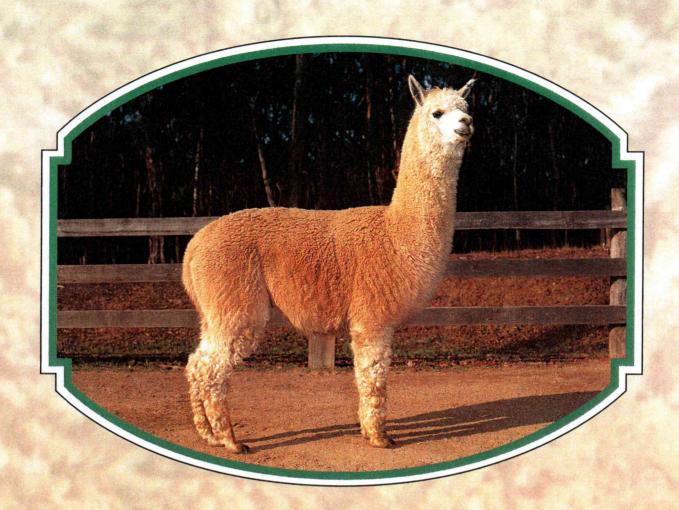


ORDER FORM

PUBLICATIONS			Please tick the appropriate box/es.
Fibre Report	\$14.00	\$	I am not a member of the AAA, but am
Seminar Proceedings			interested in learning more about alpacas.
Roseworthy 1993	\$22.00	\$	Please send me a FREE alpaca information kit
Canberra 1994	\$22.00	\$	
Geelong 1995	\$22.00	\$	I would like to subscribe to the quarterly magazine, <i>Alpacas Australia</i> .
Queensland 1996	\$27.00	\$	
Promoting Alpacas Is Easy	\$7.00	\$	Australia \$AUD28 New Zealand \$AUD35
Alpacas Australia magazine, 4 back issues	\$14.00	\$	Overseas \$AUD45
The Alpaca Book: Hoffman & Fowler	\$142.00	\$,
Animal Breeding & Production: Escobar	\$63.00	\$	I enclose my cheque/money order (made
Gold of the Andes Vol. 1 & 2 each	\$125.00	\$	payable to the Australian Alpaca Association Inc.) for \$
set	\$235.00	\$	
The Life of Charles Ledger: Gramiccia (member)	\$120.00	\$	Name (PLEASE PRINT)
(non-member)	\$140.00	\$	Address
Medicine and Surgery of South American			
Camelids: Fowler	\$162.00	\$	Postcode
'An Introduction to Alpacas' Video	\$44.95	\$	OR Please debit my credit card for the amount
'Camelids', Veterinary Proceedings 1995	\$37.00	\$	of \$
'Camelida' Veterinary Proceedings 1996	\$70.00	\$	Mastercard www.
Herd Book 1	\$27.00	\$	Bankcard 5
Herd Book 2	\$27.00	\$	Visa VISA
Coat Colour Tables	\$22.00	\$	
Llama & Alpaca Neo-natal Care Clinic	\$22.00	\$	Credit Card No.
		_	
	Total	\$	
PLEASE NOTE			Name on Credit Card
All prices are Australian dollars and are inclusive of			
postage and handling within Australia only. For overseas orders, please contact the Association			Expiry Date
for specific postage charges.			Signature

Please photocopy or cut out this order form and send to

AUSTRALIAN ALPACA ASSOCIATION INC. PO Box 464 Brentford Square Victoria 3131 Ph: +61 (0)3 9877 0778 Fax: +61 (0)3 9877 0770



Born Into a Class, Not a Herd.

The difference between an alpaca and a World Class Alpaca begins before birth. As the first true alpaca stud in Australia, World Class Alpacas are committed to producing the very finest stock.

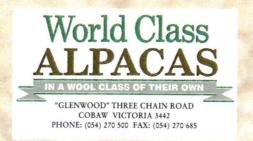
Every World Class investment is of excellent conformation, true to type, with dense fleece of even consistent colour.

Working in partnership with Veterinarian Dr Anthony Stachowski, the leading American breeder of alpacas, our World Class approach involves all aspects of animal husbandry.

Nutrition and health are covered extensively in a complete breeding program designed to produce the very finest Alpacas in Australia.

And to ensure the quality of your investment, every World Class Alpaca comes with a comprehensive Health Certificate to ensure that your ownership is both profitable and enjoyable.

Phone now for a no obligation appointment to view the World Class Alpaca stud. Sandra and Laurie Harrison will be delighted to show you the fine selection of World Class investments.

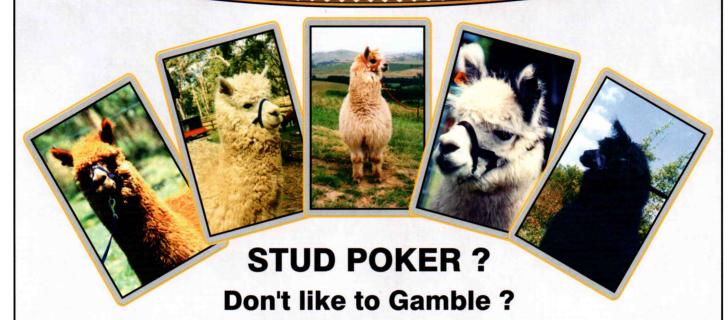


ECLIPSE



ALPACAS





Tarapaca Alexander

There's no Wild Cards in this Pack!

Inca Snow Spirit Suzendy Centuri

Cherry Hill Grey Bear Inca Black Magic

Also standing at Stud... Eclipse Antares (Solid Dark Fawn) Wyona Biggles (owned by I & K Allston, Dark Fawn Suri)



Mobile Matings available and preferred



All possible advise and support to new and existing breeders



Agents for Thunderbird[™] Scales - \$ 795 ex

Enquiries and inspection welcome...

Contact: Mandy or Craig Lawton 998 Old Northern Road, Glenorie

Phone: (02) 9652-2638

Fax: (02) 9652-2639