

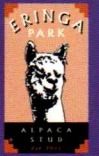
ISSUE 36 ■ SUMMER 2001 ■ \$7.70 (AUST)

# Alpacas Australia

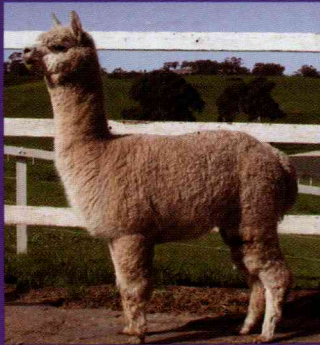




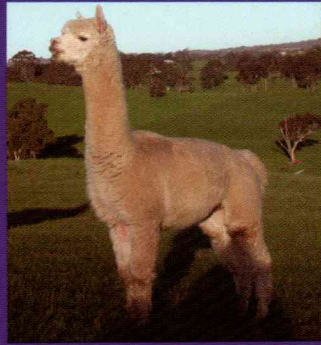
# Eringa Park Stud



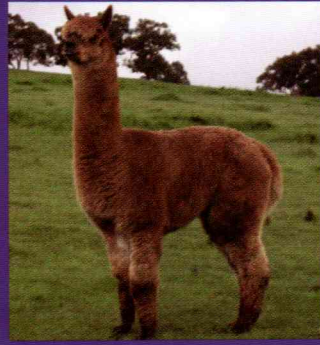
## The Sires



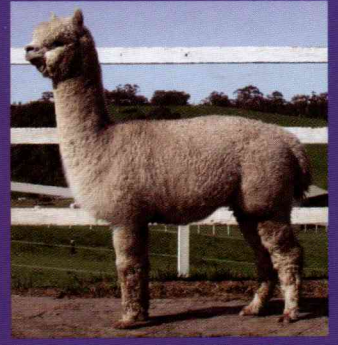
Jolimont Conquistador  
(Full Accoyo)



NWA Ltd Ruffo  
(Full Accoyo)



ILR NWA Ltd Luminosa  
(Son of Hemmingway)



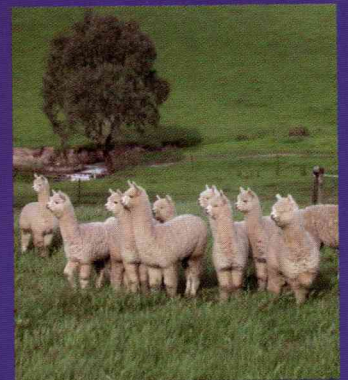
ILR PPeruvian Allin Capac  
(Full Accoyo)

ILR NWA Ltd Luminosa and ILR PPeruvian Allin Capac available in Victoria.

## The Dams



## The Winning Results



For further details contact Catherine or Matthew (08) 8389 7899

# CAMBRIDGE ALPACAS



#### COVER

2001 Royal Adelaide  
Show Judge  
Jenny Jackson

see overview of  
*The Royals 2001*  
page 12

Photograph  
Cath Norman

#### PUBLISHER

Alpacas Australia is published by the  
Australian Alpaca Association Inc.,  
Unit 2, 613 Whitehorse Road  
Mitcham, Victoria 3132 Australia  
(PO Box 1076, Mitcham North, Victoria 3132)  
Telephone +61 (0)3 9873 7700  
Fax +61 (0)3 9873 7711  
E-mail [alpaca@alpaca.asn.au](mailto:alpaca@alpaca.asn.au)  
Internet [www.alpaca.asn.au](http://www.alpaca.asn.au)

#### EDITORIAL AND ADVERTISING

Sandra Wright, Australian Alpaca Association Inc.  
Unit 2, 613 Whitehorse Road  
Mitcham, Victoria 3132 Australia  
(PO Box 1076, Mitcham North, Victoria 3132)  
Telephone +61 (0)3 9873 7700  
Fax +61 (0)3 9873 7711  
E-mail [sandra@alpaca.asn.au](mailto:sandra@alpaca.asn.au)  
Internet [www.alpaca.asn.au](http://www.alpaca.asn.au)

#### SUBSCRIPTION RATE (3 ISSUES)

AUD \$28.05 : Australia  
AUD \$40.00 : New Zealand  
AUD \$50.00 : International

#### CIRCULATION

2,400 for current issue

#### DESIGNED AND PRODUCED

by Garner Graphics  
'Riverside' Lot 4, Inverary Road  
Paddys River NSW 2577  
Telephone +61 (0)2 4884 1222  
Fax +61 (0)2 4882 1233  
E-mail [garnering@bigpond.com.au](mailto:garnering@bigpond.com.au)

#### COPYRIGHT

All material appearing in *Alpacas Australia* is copyright.  
Reproduction in whole or part is not permitted without  
the 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.

ISSN 1328-8318

#### ADVERTISERS

Almora Alpacas	41
Benleigh Alpaca Stud	3
Blue Grass Alpacas	28 + 29
Bungalook Alpaca Farm	4
Coolaroo Alpaca Stud	2
Eringa Park	inside front cover
Pristine Alpacas	37
Pucara Alpaca Stud	11
Shanbrooke Alpaca Stud	6 + 7
Starline Alpacas	inside back cover
Timbertop Alpacas	outside back cover
Windsong Valley Alpacas	21

## REGULAR FEATURES

- 2 A Message from the President
- 3 Briefly Speaking
- 48 Marketplace
- 51 Business Directory
- 52 Paca Pics
- 54 Upcoming Events Calendar
- 55 Order Form
- 56 Advertising Details

## EDUCATION

### 20 IN STEP

*Innovative Skills Training and Education Program ideally suited to alpaca breeders*

### 22 Prepare, Perform, Profit

*Property Management Planning course customised for alpaca breeders*

### 30 Come on down...

*Alpaca Breeders Seminar weekend*

### 34 Eliminating Toenail Trimming Trauma

*Marty McGee Bennett shows how to trim toenails and pick up alpaca feet*

### 50 "The Camelid Companion"

*Book Review of Marty McGee Bennett's most recent book*

## SHOWING AND JUDGING STANDARDS

### 8 2001 National Show and Sale

*Highlights of show*

### 12 The Royals 2001

*Overview of Hobart, Queensland, Adelaide, Melbourne and Perth Royal Shows*

## ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE

### 4 Stocking Rates

*Dr Richard Dixon examines over-grazing and supplementary feeding*

### 26 The Miracle of Birth

*A normal birth in pictures*

## INDUSTRY

### 16 Fibre to Finery

*Victorians value-add to their breeding operations*

### 25 Alpaca Breeders with a Vision and a Long Term Goal

*Stansbury Alpacas' breeding program*

### 32 The Estancia Accoyo Herd

*A visit to Don Julio Barreda's Farm in Macusani, Peru*

### 38 A Peruvian Adventure

*A visit to some of the best alpaca farms in Peru*

### 40 Wonderful Wethers

*Castration - a responsible management procedure*

## BREEDER PROFILES

### 42 From Oceans Blue to Paddocks Green

*Braeside Alpacas and Farmstay, NSW*

### 44 A New Island Home

*Viracocha Alpacas, Tasmania*

### 45 "Criation" of a Lifestyle

*Swan Valley Alpaca Stud, WA*

### 46 Alpacas - The Hard Way

*Bluetor Alpacas, Tasmania*

**A**s we wind down 2001 our thoughts naturally turn to Christmas and the New Year. The show season has nearly ended, much of the mating for next year's crop of young'uns has been completed and shearing has just started. Another alpaca year draws to a close and many of us wonder where it went!

I do sincerely wish everyone a wonderful and satisfying Christmas with family and friends. I also wish a wonderful and successful New Year to you all in both personal happiness and alpaca success. I do hope that everyone will enjoy their festive season free from grief and injury on our roads.

But I would also like to remind everyone that 2002 will be another very important year for both our Association and our

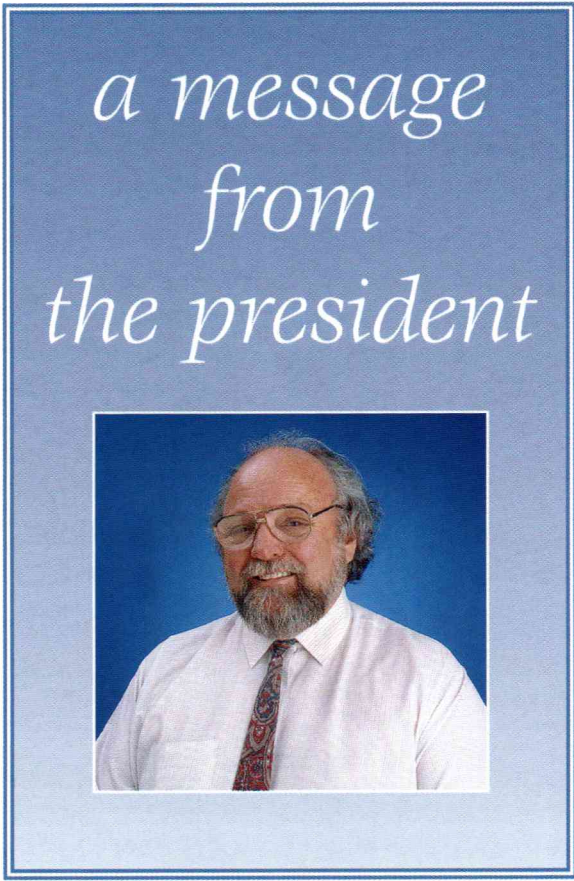
industry. We are a very strong organisation supported by a huge number of volunteer committees and supporters. We are a very well placed industry to take advantage of new

investment opportunities that will open up over the next twelve months. We have stability, strength and commitment to the future – we just need one day of your time to bring it all together for us all.

Please spare a thought for your Association and industry in the hustle and bustle of the festive season – we have the chance to add another successful year of growth and stability to Australia's newest primary industry with your help.

In the meantime, enjoy your families, your friends and yourselves!

Ian Watt, President



## Optimum Performance & Balanced Breeding

PRODUCES SYDNEY ROYAL GRAND CHAMPION ALPACAS AND A FUTURE IN FIBRE EXCELLENCE

*'Coolaroo Jaminu'*  
Grand Champion Male Exhibit  
Sydney Royal 2000

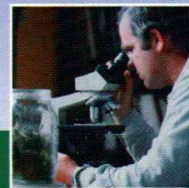
*'Coolaroo Queen of the Desert'*  
Supreme Champion Alpaca  
Sydney Royal 2001

Become involved in a highly beneficial, leading edge and well researched breeding programme following the Advanced disciplines of Dr Jim Watts.



COOLAROO

ESTABLISHED 1987



Agistment, stud servicing, comprehensive information and support for new breeders available.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT Neil Parker – Coolaroo Alpaca Stud

Woodlands Road, Mittagong NSW 2575 PHONE 02 4878 5266 FAX 02 4878 5233 EMAIL coolaroo@pbq.com.au

## briefly speaking...

### 'Paca Poncho

Congratulations to Carol Lucas of Zeus Alpacas, Wedderburn, VIC on her winning entry in *The Weekly Times*, "Dear Miranda" section. Carol's entry described her luck in finding an alpaca poncho at a school fete and how, even after 20 years of use, it continues to be warm, soft and light.

Carol admitted, "So what if my son says I'm an ageing hippy! I love wearing that poncho, especially mid winter".

Ironically Carol's prize included a supply of mohair knitting yarn.

### Christmas Greetings

A Merry Christmas and a safe, happy and prosperous New Year from the staff of the Australian Alpaca Association Inc. National Office.



Photograph courtesy Illawarra Alpacas

### Vale Jo Wilson

It is with much sadness that I report the passing of Jo Wilson in the early morning hours of Tuesday 18 September 2001. Jo, together with her devoted husband Chic, was an inspirational driving force in the Queensland alpaca industry and will be greatly missed. We are fortunate indeed to have published in the last issue of *Alpacas Australia*, Jo's personal account of their life together before, and with, alpacas at Noosa Alpaca Stud.

### Have you moved, or are you moving soon?

Please remember to notify the AAA Office of address changes.

**Phone +61 3 9873 7700  
or fax +61 3 9873 7711**

*This will also update your Alpacas Australia Subscription address.*

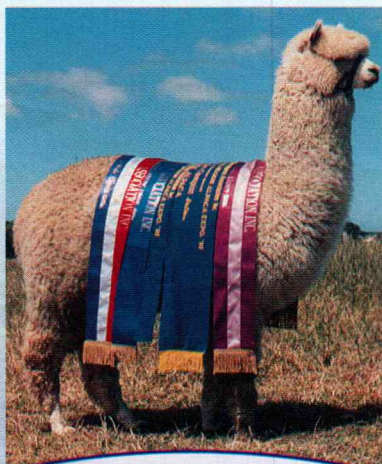
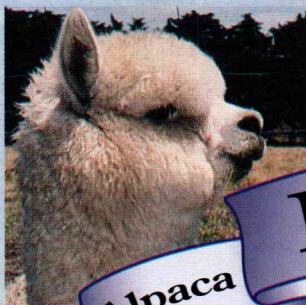
### Digital Photography

For those sending digital photos or scans for publication, please save them in the highest resolution possible for reproduction quality. Or send them at least twice the image size, so that the pixels will be enhanced when reduced.

## BREEDING IS OUR BUSINESS

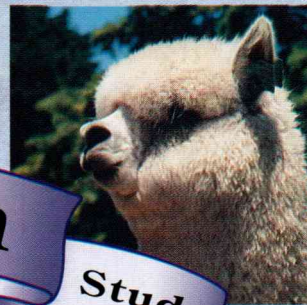
### The proof is apparent!

National Supreme Champion, **Purrumbete Brigantine** is sire to many Champions throughout Australia, including **Benleigh Olympic Dream** (top priced female at the National Auction 2000) **Gold Coast Brindabella** (top priced alpaca at the National Auction 1999) **Call to discuss Stud Service**



### Benleigh Alpaca Stud is committed to excellence in breeding and top quality fleece production.

So... If you are serious about herd improvement, call Benleigh for sales, stud service, consultation, agistment or workshops.



**Benleigh**  
Alpaca Stud  
Established 1989  
GEELONG VICTORIA  
EXPERIENCE ■ EXPERTISE ■ EXCELLENCE

**CONTACT: Allan or Carolyn Jinks PHONE: (03) 5250 2737 (03) 5253 2870 MOBILE: 0418 109 348  
FAX: (03) 5253 2850 EMAIL: benleigh@magnet.com.au WEBSITE: www.benleigh.com.au**

# Stocking Rates

*“Feed for all” or “Do your darlings dung on the dinner table?”*

by DR RICHARD DIXON, B.V.Sc.  
BERRIDALE ALPACAS, NSW

*Most alpaca owners think of stocking rates as a concern for beef cattle and sheep producers; the value of our stock allows us to give supplementary feed if the pasture gets a bit sparse, with no harm done.*

*There are two fallacies in this approach. Persistent over-grazing can lead to a build up of parasites in the pasture and the animals, and can lead to a chronic under-production of grass and fodder, which means that you have to give even more supplementary feed.*

**a**s a species, alpacas have several advantages over other forms of grazing livestock and we should try to maximise these advantages and avoid practices that reduce or negate these pluses.

- Alpacas are selective grazers, nibbling on all manner of grasses, clovers, forbs and shrubs. They do not mow the pasture to the roots like sheep and horses and, if you avoid over-grazing your paddocks, the variety of plant life normally found will be maintained.
- On unimproved pasture, the more efficient digestive system of the alpaca allows you to run four alpaca where a sheep farmer would run three sheep. However, if your paddocks have been ‘improved’ by the use of ryegrass, phalaris or other ‘high quality’ herbage, this digestive advantage no longer applies.
- Under non-stressful conditions, adult alpacas appear to develop a resistance to the common intestinal parasites that affect cattle and sheep. However cria and weaners and immunodeficient alpacas do not have this resistance and may become clinically affected or even die.



**BUNGALOOK**

## Alpaca Headstalls

..... are designed to fit alpacas. They come with leads attached and are **ideal** for training Cria.



The Bungalook Headstall holds the lead rope in the best position for controlling the alpaca. The animal is not discomforted by the irritation of a nose strap pulling across the soft tissue of the nose and is able to give its attention to your leading lesson.

Available in Large & Small sizes in  
Black, Brown, Blue, Gold & Red

Credit card orders welcome  
\$27.50 each (inc. GST)  
plus postage (\$5 for up to 6 headstalls)

**Send your order with choice of colours and sizes to  
Bungalook Alpaca Farm  
P.O. Box 204 Lakes Entrance  
Vic 3909 Australia  
Ph/Fax: 03 51552464  
E-mail: [bungalook@b150.aone.net.au](mailto:bungalook@b150.aone.net.au)  
Web site:**

<http://www.gippsnet.com.au/alpaca/001/halter.htm>

Over grazing can lead to a build up of worm levels, and the higher stock numbers can lead to increased stress levels because of the relative overcrowding, which in turn can lead to immuno-compromisation.

The highest stocking rate that I've encountered was on a 4 hectare (10 acre) property that ran 100 alpacas. The pasture was irrigated, and divided into multiple small yards that allowed for frequent rotation of the groups of 10-15 head and spelling of individual yards. There was a quarantine yard also, for visiting animals. The animals were supplementary fed and the poo piles cleaned up daily.

This system worked well until an animal was introduced that was carrying a worm burden of Barbers Pole Worm (*Haemonchus contortus*). Barbers Pole Worm eggs hatch and produce infective larvae in four days which will produce eggs themselves in another three weeks. Irrigating the grass and the intensive stocking rates provided the ideal conditions for a rapidly multiplying infestation that was soon killing animals.

Stocking rates can vary significantly within and between districts. The benchmark is the Dry Sheep Equivalent (DSE) which is the stocking rate per acre, or per hectare, for wethers or non-lactating ewes that will maintain maintenance feeding throughout the year. It is best to ask your District Agronomist or local Livestock Officer, the value for your property. Remember, also, that heavily pregnant and lactating hembars and growing cria and weaners will require a higher protein intake than a wether, so you may have to reduce the stocking rate per acre or hectare, or supplementary feed these classes of alpaca.

Remember also that other types of livestock may well be more than 1 DSE. For instance, a hack is 15 DSE – that is, *Old Neddie* will eat as much as 15 of your alpacas.

In balancing parasite control and pasture growth it may be risky to rely on drenching all animals two, three or four times a year with the current most popular drench, especially if you do not have an accurate idea of individual body weights. The best way of producing drench-resistant worms is to drench to an average body weight with an inappropriate drench at an inappropriate time of the year. Instead you should incorporate the following measures into your parasite control program:

- Have a sample test done of the poo from adult and weaner alpacas, and ask for any worm eggs found to be grown to larval stage and identified. This can be done by your Regional Veterinary Laboratory, and in some states kits for collection and submission of ten poo samples can be obtained from your Regional Veterinary Office or the Rural Lands Protection Board, or its equivalent. Do not settle merely for a faecal egg count without identification of the parasite.
- If there is no significant worm infestation, do not drench. If there is a significant infestation, seek advice from your veterinarian or the local veterinary officer as to the most effective drench for the parasite in your locality.
- Always have a post-mortem examination done on any animal with a history of anaemia, wasting or weakness and ask your veterinarian to check specifically for intestinal parasites even if the cause of death seems to be a cancer, liver abscess or some other obvious disease.

When trying to balance the pasture growth and pasture requirements, remember that the fastest growing and most nutritious phase of pasture development is when the grasses have four to six leaves. If you graze the pasture heavily the grasses will not get past the two leaf stage when pasture is relatively slower to grow; if you let the pasture run to seed the plant portion becomes fibrous and low in nutritive value and your alpaca may well not eat it. You are looking at a paddock of grass that may be knee high; they are looking at a paddock of uninteresting straw.

Managing a property where the pasture is rapidly growing requires some ingenuity and lateral thinking. Some options are:

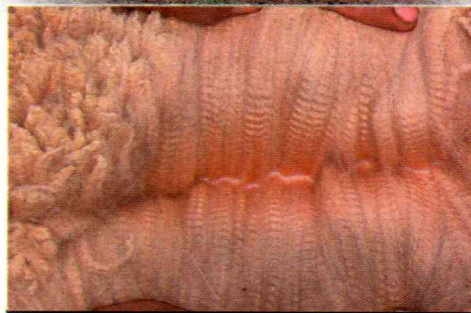
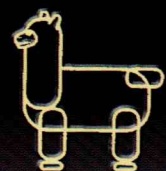
- Sub-dividing some of your paddocks with temporary fencing and rotating your groups of animals through them at a rate which will keep the pasture from going to seed.
- Concentrating your groups of animals on some of your paddocks and controlling the growth in the others by slashing or mowing. If you are in a sporodesmin prone area be careful not to leave the slashings lying on the pasture or you will produce an environment conducive to sporodesmin multiplication.
- Consider planting brassica or oats in one or two paddocks to provide an alternative source of feed should you need it in cases where sporodesmin or staggers becomes a seasonal problem.
- If you have a small property with an increasing number of alpacas, so that you cannot do other than over-graze and supplementary feed, you may have to make the decision that many of your fellow members have had to make – move to a larger property!! ■

# Shanbrooke Alpaca Stud

in conjunction with

## Somerset Alpaca Stud

Take pleasure and feel privileged to offer the alpaca industry, on a limited basis, the use of 5 Don Julio Barreda Accoyo Males



Phone: 03 9730 1399 Fax: 03 9730 1031 Mobile: 0409 547 630 : 0407 834 358  
Email: shanbrooke@bigpond.com Web site: www.shanbrooke.com.au





## The Elite Collection



These will soon prove to be  
"The Best males ever to be offered for mating duties  
anywhere in the world."

## TAKING US INTO THE FUTURE

After 5 visits and numerous meetings with Don Julio, he has allowed us to select from his Superior "Select Group", two mature Plantel males of magnificent qualities. One of these males is featured in Mike Saffley's many articles on Accoyo breeding programs. These mature males cut 8kg of fibre. Other qualities that make this group of males superior to anything else that has left Peru is their fineness, lack of medulation and of course they carry the typical "Accoyo" trade mark of an alpaca with great conformation and coverage. The young males of this group have the same superior qualities to match the mature males.

Also within the group is the only fawn Accoyo in Australia.

We are in a position to give an appraisal of your herd and suggest in which manner to use these males to get the most benefit possible from both our 11 years of breeding experience.

**Please enquire about our limited package deal ....  
Use of all or any of the five males,  
8 matings over a one year period. Mobile service available.**



The Classic Auction realised a 100% same day clearance of all 13 Lots offered

Underscoring the aspects of producing quality alpaca fibre for commercial purposes, a 'Most Valuable Fleece Class' was created and awarded to a solid white 17 month-old animal - *Blackgate Lodge Sollinca* exhibited by Kate & Robbie Cuthill of Blackgate Lodge Alpacas, Victoria. This class was judged on a commercial basis for the overall dollar value, based on current prices that can be obtained on local and/or international markets.

Dinner at the National Press Club on the Saturday night saw 250+ people wining and dining before the excitement of the fun auction that raised almost \$20,000. The generosity of the donors of the auction items as well as the successful bidders is a vital contribution towards the cost of running such a grand scale event.

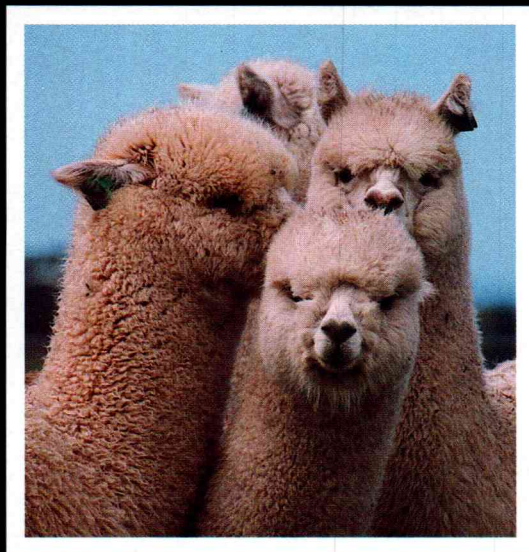
The Classic Auction held on the Sunday realised a 100% same day clearance of all 13 Lots offered. Ten lots were sold under the hammer in very competitive bidding, and the remaining three lots were sold immediately after the auction.

The total sale revenue of the 13 lots amounted to \$368,500 with the average price per lot sold of \$28,346 believed to be a record for Australia.

Keen bidding saw excellent prices for all Lots but the climax of the afternoon was when the 'wild card' entry, *Benleigh Kansas*, earlier judged as the Champion Junior Male Huacaya, went under the hammer to Harriet & Ian Davison and Celia Cook of Illawarra Alpacas, NSW. USA breeder Ken Madl acquired the show's Champion Intermediate Suri Female *Summerhill Silken Princess*.

The massive task of packing up and dismantling was left to a handful of hard workers as exhibitors prepared for their trips home. Although undoubtedly weary, everyone who attended this excellent event will also undoubtedly be inspired by its success. ■

# PUCARA ALPACA STUD



**Which ever way, we're worth getting to know.**



## PUCARA ALPACA STUD

Jude Anderson & Alan Cousill

Mail: PO Box 669  
Torquay Vic 3228

Fax: (03) 5263 3364

Phone: (03) 5263 3436

E-Mail: [pucara@bigpond.com](mailto:pucara@bigpond.com)

400 Alpacas on farm  
80 on sale list

- Honesty
- Service
- Energy
- Integrity

# The Royals 2001

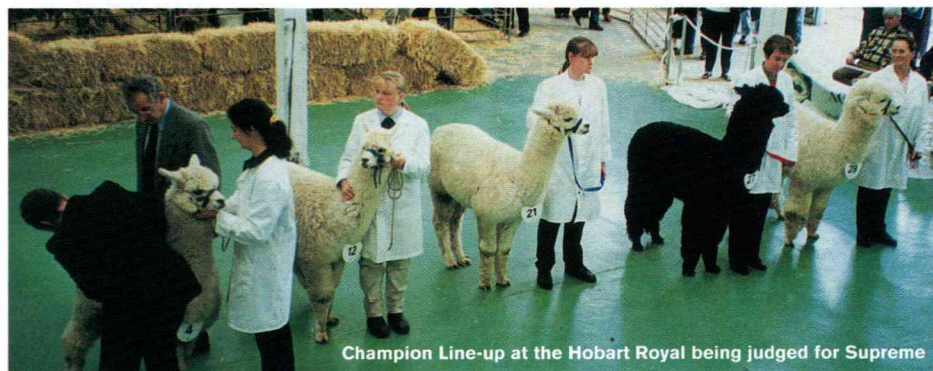
compiled by SANDRA WRIGHT  
AUSTRALIAN ALPACA ASSOCIATION

In August, September and October each year we are presented with a succession of Royals. Of course, we're not speaking of the British monarchy, but the premier shows of Tasmania, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia. It is an exciting time as the 'Country comes to the City' at the Royal Agricultural Shows in each state's capital city.

Here, in a brief overview of each event, we share news of this year's success enjoyed by ribbon winners, show organisers and participants of all sorts. Congratulations to all those exhibitors who proudly showcase alpacas to the hundreds of thousands of Show-goers each year.



Supreme Champion Huacaya Dowpaca Nando



Champion Line-up at the Hobart Royal being judged for Supreme

## Royal Hobart Show

by TERRY HANLON  
TASMANIA REGION

The Royal Hobart Show for 2001 ran like clockwork. Alpaca judge Jude Anderson was impressed with the quality of the exhibits at this year's show. Ms Anderson commented on the high standard of the Mature Males and the Junior line-up. A difficult decision for Supreme Champion resulted in the award going to the Champion Senior Male of the show, an outstanding black with an exceptionally soft handling, lustrous, crimped fleece. Ms Anderson commended the quality of the Junior Champion Female suggesting breeders take time to have a look at this girl as she had an exceptionally fine lustrous fleece and a great breeding future.

Fleece judge, Dianne Condon, praised the quality and preparation of the fleece exhibits stating they were very well prepared and would perform well in any competition, even suggesting some should have been entered in the National Show. Ms Condon was particularly impressed with the fineness and style of the fleeces presented. The Champion fleece was exceptionally fine.

An excellent display of alpaca products and information was prepared by a small, dedicated group of people. All products were Australian made from Australian fibre and of a high quality. The display received some very positive feedback from the public and the Show Society officials.

A post-mortem gathering over light refreshments was held at the end of the day giving members and judges an opportunity to discuss the show's success and progress ideas for future events. A very informal and enjoyable get together was enjoyed by all.

## Royal Queensland Show

by CAMILLA SMITH  
QUEENSLAND REGION

Was it the inner city underground tunnel that turned the Brisbane Exhibition grounds into something resembling a battle ground or the determination of some positive alpaca breeders that made the 2001 Royal Queensland Show the best yet?

Remarkably a combination of both...

Being homeless created a whole new meaning, and the executives of the Royal National Association displayed their willingness to appreciate the potential of our Industry by providing an area for our static display in the Sheep and Wool pavilion. This was very well received by the public and attracted many written requests to receive more information about our industry.

Even more attractive was the new 'home' providing accommodation for our animals and the all-weather judging ring. This is a very positive progression and we look forward to working with the new Registrar, Mr Warren Sturgess.

Congratulations to all exhibitors, you again created another successful representation of the Australian Alpaca Industry. May I extend an invitation to those of you who are eager to promote your stud to attend the Brisbane Royal next year.

As the saying goes, 'there is strength in numbers'.

## Royal Adelaide Show

by LEA RICHENS  
CONVENOR, RAS LIAISON OFFICER

Rain, rain and more rain! For the third successive year wintry conditions prevailed, but these failed to dampen the enthusiasm of exhibitors, Alpaca Association members and the general public. Judging days went smoothly, with strong, healthy competition evident.

A steady flow of interested people visited both the show alpacas and fleece display in the Alpaca Pavilion as well as the SA Region's excellent promotional site in the EXPO marquee.

Judge, Jenny Jackson, was impressed with the excellent facilities,

the high standard of alpacas presented and the efficient running of the Show itself. The relocation of the Fleece Section and the gradual introduction of colour and greenery to the Pavilion added to the atmosphere and overall presentation.

The alpacas present on display for the second part of the Show, the shearing demonstrations, the spinning and knitting activities attracted large crowds and were definite highlights.

Overall – a most successful RAS 2001, due largely to the assistance, support and enthusiasm of dozens of members. To all involved a big thank you and special applause to the strong interstate contingent comprising some 37% of exhibitors.



**Champion Huacaya Fleece**  
*Benleigh Cosmos*



**Supreme Champion Huacaya**  
*Amberson Poseidon*



**Supreme Champion Suri Arequipa Gold Cebanyon (right)**  
**Reserve Champion Suri Kenilworth Park Rouseabout (left)**



Royal Adelaide Show  
high pens

photographs this page © Cath Norman 0417 846 634



**Junior Champion Female** *Bonnie Park Destiny*



**Intermediate Champion Female** *Patagonia Mietta*



**Senior Champion Female**  
*Greenvale Pia*



**Mature Champion Female**  
*Ambersun Gold*



**Mature Champion Male**  
*Jolimont Trovattello*



**Supreme Champion Suri** *Elyson Oliver Twist*  
Judged by Carol Mathew

## Royal Melbourne Show

by GEOFF HARGREAVES  
ROYAL MELBOURNE SHOW CONVENOR

Judges and exhibitors agree that the 2001 Melbourne Royal was notable for the extremely high standard of the animals paraded in the ring over a total of 10 hours of judging.

Huacaya judge, Julie Bird, was presented with a difficult task of distinguishing between over 20 animals in some classes and ultimately between three very even animals in the final judging for the Supreme Championship.

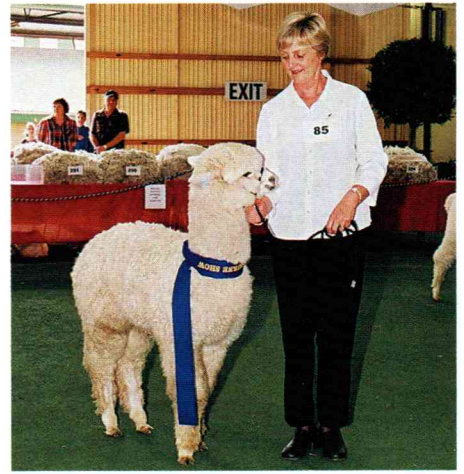
She commented that the breeding displayed in these animals was so good that she was forced to differentiate on the basis of fleece on necks and well down on the legs where, a few years ago, a judge would not need to look.

While the number of entries, particularly of Suris, was about 20 down on last year and there were some unavoidable withdrawals, over 200 animals were exhibited.

The shed display and the events of the three days that commenced with a roast dinner in the ring on the Friday night impressed visitors from every state.

Junior Judging and Junior Handler competitions continue to be of interest to exhibitors and the public during this Show which presents the best of our industry to a very wide city and rural audience.

The presence of the Australian Alpaca Co-Op. Ltd. in the 'Fibre Factory', for the second year, was a welcome feature.



**Junior Champion Male** *Benleigh Kanzas*



**Intermediate Champion Male** *Ambersun Poseidon*



**Senior Champion Male & Supreme Champion Huacaya**  
*Benleigh Bellissimo* - Judged by Julie Bird

## Royal Perth Show

by DOLLY VAN ZAANE  
W A CENTRAL REGION

The Tom Wilding Pavilion at the Perth Royal Showgrounds was the place to be on Sunday 1st October. Judge Bill Robbins had his work cut out as he commenced judging some 125 of WA's best alpacas.

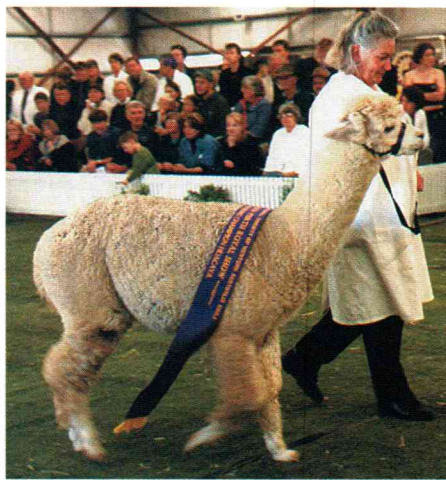
Judging was indoors in a very well set out ring with ample seating for the spectators.

Classes were well attended with the whites and fawns attracting the greatest number of entries. In a welcome change this year the so-called 'big' studs did not dominate the results and we saw the 'little' people in there with a chance.

In Bill Robbins we have one of Australia's most experienced alpaca judges. Bill knows his fleece. As a wool breeder and classer from way back he has the experience and moved to the alpaca industry with great enthusiasm.

Geoff Fysh, keeping everyone interested in proceedings as he gave out snippets of worthwhile information, provided commentary throughout the day. Geoff's vast knowledge and sense of humour made watching alpaca judging quite entertaining.

Supreme Champion Huacaya was awarded to the well-known *Windsong Valley Iceman* presented by Tena Wheeler. Iceman, being now classed as a mature male (over 30 months) still showed all the qualities that made him a champion when younger. Bill Robbins commented, "I am very happy to give the Supreme championship to a mature animal. It really shows we



Supreme Champion Huacaya *Windsong Valley Iceman*



Line-up of senior males



Bill Robbins during judging



are producing the quality animal that still hold its own over the younger ones."

Equally impressed by the Mature Senior Females, Bill said of the ladies, "A few years ago we would not have had senior females of this high quality. It is exciting to see them coming through and holding their fleece so well at their age."

At the completion of judging I asked Bill for his thoughts and views on the results:

"The overall standard is excellent. I would have liked to see more numbers. There is a lack of depth overall. The tail of each section is greater than would be in Victoria. However, having said that, the best here are on a par with the best in the Eastern States. The density and style of fleece appeal to me. I suppose you need to work on increasing the numbers. You need more animals for more variety."

When asked what he thought of WA as a region and the alpaca industry as a whole he had this to say:

"I am enthused by the WA people's enthusiasm. You are headed in the right direction. The next step is to make sure that the show animals have commercial value. My background is as a wool classer and grower and I believe the alpaca industry has a bright future, but you must have the right fleece on the backs of the animals. You must use superior males to improve your stud stock and get a greater commercial value. There are still many people who are in the industry to show animals.

Commercial farmers are not and will not be interested in showing animals; they are just not show orientated. We need to performance test our animals. We can do that. Alpacas have a hell of a future and we are headed in the right direction, but fleeces must be FINE, because sheep farmers can do it a hell of a lot cheaper than us."

Food for thought and from a person with Bill's background and expertise, comments such as those should be taken aboard and discussed at all levels, whether big or small. ■

Parade of Champions

For a comprehensive list of all Show results visit the AAA web site at: [www.alpaca.asn.au](http://www.alpaca.asn.au)

# Fibre to Finery

## *where persistence pays*

by JANE SZIGETHY-GYULA  
MOUNTAIN ALPACAS, VIC

Whether for historical or numerical reasons or through sheer enterprise, Victorian breeders have been forward in value-adding to their breeding operations. Now 10 years down the track since the first heady days of this livestock industry in Australia, the range and quality of alpaca fleece products has continued to be enhanced. The past 10 years have seen breeders tackling problems of colour, uniformity and small fleece volumes. As the national herd grows to a projected number of 200,000 by 2008 we will see greater uniformity in the national clip and a resultant growth in its commercial processors.

But there are still dozens of alpaca breeders who have and still want to value-add to their own fleeces. Some of these are gifted craftspeople and there are others who have gone beyond craft into small-scale processing. All processors and craftspeople, no matter how big or small, have a lot to tell growers about clip preparation and the way fleece types perform when processed. We all benefit from their experience.

The following article introduces you to four Victorians who have gone beyond the craftsman arena but are hardly large-scale processors. All started with the desire to be involved with the next step of fleece manufacture and to have product to sell from the farm gate which would help defray stud costs.



'Styles to fit all shapes'  
- Ballinfield Alpacas

**Kay Cleaver** of Ballinfield Alpacas is a small breeder in Central Victoria whose herd is of mixed colour and intentionally so. Her plan was to process her fleece into high quality 100% alpaca under the label "Purely Alpaca". Handle was to be paramount. Despite a background in marketing and advertising and an eye for fashion she had no formal design background and certainly none in wool processing.

Initially it seemed easy waving off her bags of fleece in the expectation that it would reappear three months later transformed into yarn ready for the able hands of the machine knitters. However the trouble was, it arrived on numerous small cones of different weights and lengths and, when threaded onto the machines, the yarn was found to have been joined by knots. These never fell at the edge of the proposed garment and invariably they unravelled. Then it was discovered that some was plied in the wrong direction so that when a square was knitted it came out diamond

shaped. Some yarn was too tight and therefore harsh and stringy to the touch and some too loose so that it pulled apart. And so it was back to square one - to have the yarn re-spun. Naturally all this was costly in terms of time and money but it did provide the basis of developing an understanding about the fleece, spinning and future quality control.

On return of the re-processed yarn knitting could begin in earnest, but then new design problems emerged. The knitters had not used alpaca before and found it more difficult. They found that the stitches they used changed the silky handle of the end product, which Kay was so adamant about keeping. For example, the lovely textured moss stitch became quite abrasive to the touch, probably because of the springy twisted loops it makes. Fisherman's ribs too could be stringy if the stitch was too small and even plain stitch, which is perhaps the best vehicle for carrying the creamy handle of alpaca fibre, could become



harsh if the tension was too great. As always it was a balance between keeping a garment soft without letting it get stretchy. Alpaca does have the characteristic of relaxing during the wearing of the garment and contracting again at night. This became a problem with some of the early jackets that required stronger tension because of the extra wool they required for the bigger designs. When knitting alternating ribs there was found to be different elasticity between the two different types of stitches with the ribs concertina-ing which affected the size and appearance of the final garments.

Sleeve type and garment sizing were also challenges which had to be overcome and it was found that square inset sleeves and a plain stitch classic jumper were the most versatile for most shapes. These could be varied in colour, band designs, cuffs etc. and Kay has sufficient experience now to be confident of meeting other design requirements for her clients should they be desired.

These are all problems that one could expect in product development with a new fibre and could have been very costly if large runs had been initiated. As it was, Kay adopted a softly, softly approach with prototypes meeting exacting standards before she took any further orders.

Scarves were a breeze by comparison and provided the opportunity for experimentation of colours and designs, which could later be incorporated in her jumpers. Additionally she wisely made a line of children's wear which is endearing, affordable and oh so soft for baby skins.

The really important lessons to be learnt from her early exploratory work with her own fleece was that micron was less important than CV. She could produce lovely yarns from quite strong fleece providing it didn't have a coarse edge. Secondly it had to be correctly spun into a consistent product so that one could knit a run of garments with confidence, though experience has shown that a sample should be knitted up first with any new yarn.

The original zeal for an all home-grown product has been modified by the financial realities of processing small quantities of different coloured fibres. Nowadays Kay buys in 100% Peruvian alpaca yarn for her woollens. Should a processor arrive on the scene that can make a good 100% product

from small consignments at the right price she would be delighted to return to her original plan. In the meantime she wants to maintain her idyllic lifestyle with alpacas and lowline cattle and to supplement her operation with the sale of her impressive knitwear.

Kay's garden – a tumble of roses and perennials – was open this year during the daffodil festival and she is at present renovating a building for a showroom and B&B. Her intention is to attract small tours of specific interest groups eg. spinners, gardeners, and other community groups for by-appointment visits.

- **Her greatest problem** – to get quality and consistency in her yarn.
- **Her greatest disappointment** – the cost ineffectiveness of using her own fleece for the time being.
- **Her best advice** – “caution”, tread slowly and develop one-offs, understand what is happening each step of the way, talk and talk to other processors, get a professional photographer, target advertising and where possible piggy-back on local event advertising.
- **Her best hope** – maintain a thoroughly delightful lifestyle and offset farm costs by value-adding to her alpaca breeding programme.
- **Her best achievement** – overcoming many of the product design problems to see her label on quality garments.

With disarming modesty Kay doesn't feel she should be involved in this article because she “knows so little”.

**Cherryl Selkirk** of Beewah Park Alpacas came into the alpaca industry with experience in breeding sheep, cashmere and mohair goats in Bendigo. Having moved down to the Bellarine Peninsula she soon came to realise both the public's fascination with alpacas as they stopped to photograph them and the potential of her location on a major tourist route. The dream of starting a shop came into effect two years later and “All Things Alpaca” has been operating now for 3 1/2 years, trading 7 days a week from 10-4. She now has a well-stocked shop with quality Australian manufactured goods and some overseas imports.

One significant achievement has been the processing of her own fleeces into black, brown and charcoal yarns. These she has made into hats and scarves. She believes that, “one of the

fundamental skills you must have is the ability to recognise exactly what type and style your yarn is and to design product to complement it, not the other way round. Alpaca is so unique with a mind all of its own and this we mustn't change as I believe this is the greatest quality of alpaca”. As a retailer she becomes very upset when she hears of or sees poor quality cheap imports which give the industry a bad name. This is why she is now concentrating on Australian made smaller items that she can source locally or make herself. At one time she had a batch of yarn made from belly and leg fleece which had been intended for export for rug making. When that sale fell through she considered tossing it away but, with an eye for the possible, she started knitting hats which she was then able to felt, and they have since become one of her best sellers. This demonstrates what she means by seeing what suits the yarn and adapting accordingly. Over the years she has been involved in the industry she has become very conscious of just what the buying public will pay, and believes there is a definite cut-off price for a scarf for example, so she has to be cost-effective in her production of these items.

Cherryl had no marketing experience until she started her shop and so she was suddenly on a steep learning curve. She applied the same analytical approach to marketing that she had to production and her experience here is of wise council for those contemplating entering into the retail business.

- Be cashed up, there is a long lead-time before profits can be achieved.
- Employing staff is expensive and the operation will probably have to be solo or family run in the early years.
- Being open daily from home means that your privacy is invaded and sometimes threatened.
- The goodwill and support of your family is invaluable, particularly if they are living on the property with you.
- Council permits can be a protracted business and insurance ‘curly’.
- Setting up the property to be user friendly, with loos etc. can be costly and it is easy to over-capitalise.



Amity Green Alpacas at Mt Buller

- Location, location, location.
- Spend your advertising dollar for maximum effectiveness and, where possible, take advantage of the publicity for local events.
- Be aware that assessing your market is very difficult.
- Sourcing the quality goods and having ready backup supply is not easy.
- Intent ordering from Peru proved to be a disaster with no reliability of delivery.
- Practical craft skills are a tremendous bonus as it enables you to understand how a garment is made, how it can be altered or redesigned should you wish to make similar.

Final words from Cheryl, "if you think all the above is under control then go for it, and good luck."

**Ken Green's** adventure into alpacas began with three animals in 1993 at Amity Green Alpaca Stud where it soon became evident that value-adding was a good option. Ken came to processing with a background in manufacturing school wear and corporate advertising garments. As well he was a textile dyer by trade which gave him a solid understanding about the behaviour of fibres. With this rag-trade background he was well placed to enter into manufacturing of alpaca and had the contacts to source help if required. To overcome the problem of small quantities of fibre so early in the peace, he and two others bought a bale of white fleece from

Jolimont Alpaca Stud. By using this and their own coloured fleeces they had 8 ply yarn produced in six colours in an 80% alpaca / 20% wool blend. They used this for hand-knitted jumpers, vests, beanies and scarves and also sold balls of yarn, and these were launched at the Royal Melbourne Show.

Next came the production of quilts in 1995. The first production run was of 10 quilts only that were sold to friends as part of the market research. Meeting with considerable success they are currently manufacturing runs of 100-150 at a time which are wholesaled to breeders who have their own small outlets and through agents to bedding stores. The alpaca fibre comes off the carder in a soft cushion that is then sewn into a prettily stitched cotton japara case. They are light, warm and do not need to be fluffed up after use.

Ken has also been producing men's and ladies 100% alpaca hats that have

been popular on their promotional stalls and at their on-farm shop. Ken has been really active in promoting his products at dozens of shows and field days and initiated a 'first ever' by taking his animals and his products and setting up a stall at Mount Buller at the height of the ski season. The animals and stall were placed right at the foot of the Bourke Street run and caused a sensation amongst skiers and Ken was pretty happy with his sales that day. With this masterful stroke Ken has found his way into hundreds of photo albums so he and his alpacas can never be forgotten. He has followed up this initiative by regularly attending the Summer Opening of Mt Buller and arrives there every year with his alpacas and their product.

Ken and his partner, Pam, have now taken up the challenge to produce their own line of knitwear and, with this in mind, over the last few years, have been stockpiling their better fleeces as well as purchasing fleeces from other small breeders, and dividing them into 4 colour lines.

The 100% alpaca yarn is being processed now but getting it fine enough has been the greatest problem to date. The machine knitters are about to commence making up the styles that they have settled on and the initial run of 200 is expected to be ready for sale at the end of summer, in time for the beginning of the cooler weather.

Ken has really worked hard in the show ring, and through every promotional opportunity, to present quality alpacas and alpaca products before the public. He is adamant that as the number of alpacas increases so will the range and quality of the products, and he believes wholeheartedly in the huge future of the industry.



And so to bed  
- Amity Green Alpaca Stud



Suri drape, huacaya felt hats and suri/huacaya woven scarves  
- Mawbanna Alpacas

### Glenda and Keith Turner of

Mawbanna Alpacas have expanded the range of alpaca goods on the Australian market by processing suri fibre. They have a small herd of coloured suris down at Korumburra and Glenda is making the most beautiful scarves that handle like thick cream – maybe it has something to do with their dairying background! She has her suri commercially spun into yarns and the drape, lustre and silkiness is very evident in the final garments that are being enthusiastically received by targeted markets here, and are now heading off-shore as well. Not a bad achievement for the short 18 months in which she has been learning how to weave from scratch, experimenting with product and having all the delays and dramas in trying to have her suri fleece processed into yarn.

As with all these small processors Glenda and Keith's product has been an evolutionary adventure. The arrival on the scene of Tasman Yarns' boucles has delighted Glenda who has now been able to add extra texture to her worsted suri yarns. She dreams of the day when boucles and textured yarns will be made of suri and believes these will be 'magic'.

Glenda buys huacaya fleece from other small breeders that she processes into yarn. She knits these into hat shapes and then felts them onto hat blocks to make beautifully sculptured hats which are quite ravishing in design, and beautifully finished. Of course, these come in a variety of colours and designs, often finished with an emu feather or some native bush curiosity. They are however, far from being rustic, I would say more whimsical and redolent of the lovely

natural world that is part of the Korumburra environment.

Being an artist Glenda's head is spinning with ideas for product; one which she would like to explore is alpaca felt sculptures. The artist's background is very evident in all she does and her familiarity with the 'how to' for her new products stems from that background. Totally committed to being pure, natural AND handmade, she is totally uncompromising in what she does and the materials she uses, even down to details like organic rabbit glue.

Like all these processors, Glenda has made her mistakes but they have been part of the learning curve. Of her journey into processing she has the following observations to make about the fibre.

"Handle – softness and prickle are determined by the way the fleece is spun. I have discovered that the mixed yarns BEHAVE when woven and felted and also the finished article holds shape without stretching or shedding. I believe added natural fibres complement alpaca".

With regard to profitability of her enterprise, her scarves are becoming so popular that she has trouble keeping up with demand despite the help given by Keith in balling the hanks of wool and setting up the looms. Wanting a satisfying lifestyle and time for experimentation, she is concerned about getting too big but is currently toying with the idea of taking on a young, unemployed artistic person to learn the art of weaving and textiles.

Like the other processors, Glenda is passionate about what she is producing. She has discovered that

there is a good profit margin available when you do it all yourself and knows from experience that a well-produced, all-natural product will sell itself. She believes the market is wide-open for the development of beautifully crafted alpaca products that really showcase our industry.

All these processors have approached their new enterprises with passion and a commitment to quality. All have personal resources that have enabled them to push through the barriers and overcome the problems when they have been working in unfamiliar territory. Mistakes have been many and costly and not always of their own making but they have also played an important part in coming to terms with fibre behaviour, the realm of the possible, and the commercial imperatives of consumer acceptance. They all feel that the future is unlimited as more expertise is gained and more product developed as more fibre becomes available. What is evident from their experience is that the fibre has a life of its own and has to be handled accordingly. Match product to fibre. This individuality is what gives the natural fibres their distinctive character and makes them living garments, so different from their synthetic counterparts.

The demand for natural fibres is huge. As a greater variety of products become available the industry will move from gateway and specialty outlets to much broader awareness and acceptance by the public at more readily available outlets.

The one plea from processors is for someone who can handle small quantities of fleece, who can make a variety of different types of yarns, who is quick and who is affordable. Anyone who can do that will have hoards of breeders lining up to have their fleece processed and then we may well see an explosion of brilliant innovative alpaca designs.

These processors are but four of the many in Victoria who are value-adding. I hope their experiences have been an inspiration to others of you who are toying with doing something 'special' with your glorious fleeces. I would like to thank all contributors for being so generous with their information and the stories of their pitfalls and their successes. May we give them all a round of applause for being flagships for our industry. ■

# INSTEP

by GEOFF FYSH  
RONNEBY PARK ALPACA STUD, WA

*Mention the words 'work experience' and employers usually start thinking of reasons why it's not feasible to take on unmotivated students for a week. On the other hand, students are often faced with menial tasks and long hours with little more than cleaning duties in a stuffy office or making cups of coffee for the boss.*

*Enter the national INSTEP (Innovative Skills Training and Education Program). Also known as 'Worklink: Structured Workplace Learning', this form of work experience is ideally suited to alpaca breeders who can provide one full day a week over two school terms to Years 11 or 12 students.*

Sidoan Bakranich

**g**eoff and Kate Fysh, who run Ronneby Park Alpaca Stud outside Gidgegannup in Western Australia, were approached by the local INSTEP co-ordinator to take on a Year 12 student who was interested in agriculture or animal work.

"Although neither of us are teachers, we both place a lot of value on helping with the education of anyone willing to learn, and so we jumped at the opportunity," said Geoff.

Sidoan Bakranich lives in the Swan Valley some twenty minutes travelling time from Ronneby Park, and attends each Wednesday to fill the role of a fully operational farm hand.

"We're very conscious not to make Sidoan too much of a slave and it's good for us to have to plan the day's activities in advance," said Kate.

Unlike general work experience, under the INSTEP system, assessment is closely tracked and each week students are given a list of skills that they need to complete. These are marked off as competencies that have either been attained with merit, are mastered to the expected level, or require more training.

The philosophy behind INSTEP is to build worthwhile links between industry and the participating schools and at the same time providing students with the opportunity to develop work skills while continuing with school education.

Sidoan already helps run her parents' winery, as well as their 200 head of Poll Hereford on 400ha north of Perth, as she completes Year 12. It was about three years ago when, helping her parents with their cattle, she realised animal care was where her future lay.

Earlier in the year Sidoan also had 15 weeks of INSTEP at Belmont Horse Hospital.

"INSTEP offers a great head start through hands-on skills, plus it will give me entry points into Vet Nursing at TAFE which is really what I want to do," said Sidoan.

At Ronneby Park, Wednesdays usually start with feed-outs and water trough checks before moving on to other activities. Sidoan has enjoyed the variety of work she is exposed to each week at Ronneby Park and in turn she has become a real asset to its operations.

"I've learned a great deal because I've had no previous experience with alpacas, and it's terrific to have something different each week with vaccinations, matings, ultrasounds, castrations, tractor work, fencing etcetera," she said.

From Geoff and Kate's point of view it has been valuable to have a motivated student, not just to do some odd jobs, but also to keep them challenged and focused on their own weekly activities when things that appear to be routine need to be explained and assessed.

Not all schools run INSTEP but a simple phone call to the local high school or college could make the world of difference to a student looking for a challenge, and at the same time it could open up a whole new avenue for younger entrants into the alpaca industry. ■





# IT'S ALL ABOUT BREEDING



*'WINDSONG VALLEY ICEMAN'*

*AAA National Supreme Champion 2000 • AAA National Supreme Champion Fleece 2000*

**Progeny from our males have won the AAA National  
Supreme Championship in 1995, 1996, 1997, 1999 and 2000.**

*OUR AIM* is to provide the best alpacas and fibre in Australia.

*OUR DREAM* is to provide the world with these genetics.

*OUR WISH* is to share our success with those that desire excellence.



*Visit us and see for yourself...*

Our males at stud • Our stock for sale • Our facilities

**WINDSONG VALLEY ALPACAS** ~ 'Windsong Valley' Springfield Road, Bedfordale, WA 6112

**Ph: 08 9399 2737 • Fax: 08 9497 2705 • Barn Fax: 08 9399 8762 • Email: [windsongvalley@bigpond.com](mailto:windsongvalley@bigpond.com)**

Or visit our agent: **Coricancha Alpaca Stud P/L**, Ballarat, Victoria.

**Ph: 03 5342 0111 • Fax: 03 5342 0999 • Email: [alpaco@netconnect.com.au](mailto:alpaco@netconnect.com.au)**



Aerial photography proved to be very useful

# Prepare Perform Profit

by STEPHANIE POPE  
THE AUSTRALIAN SURI COMPANY, SA

*The hugely successful Property Management Planning course promoted by PIRSA has been customised to meet the needs of alpaca breeders. Several South Australian breeders have recently completed the course with promising results. We were all in various stages of our businesses and each had a different level of knowledge. But we had a common purpose: To learn more about our alpacas, their breeding, management, marketing and all the other aspects that are associated with running a successful primary production enterprise. Without exception, we completed the course with changed ideas in several areas from whence we started. Here is my story.*

## Getting Started

During the course of a telephone conversation with **Dave Hubbard** of PIRSA, I discovered an enormous untapped resource of financial aid available to Primary Producers to be used for the purpose of education in management principles. I have a degree in business and an endless stream of information specific to alpacas from the Internet, magazines, industry conferences, and the like. I have also found that the "farming lifestyle" looks very picturesque from the outside, but in practicality, I lack considerable amounts of information specific to land care, grazing, primary production, etc. David's offer was most appealing, as it would benefit those new and old in the industry. PMP classes have been developed for virtually every other rural enterprise, broad-acre cropping, sheep, cattle, goats, etc, etc. And, as you have guessed, nothing existed for alpaca breeders.

Our first task was to put together a group of breeders who were willing to commit the time and effort to develop and take the course for their own benefit. Groups of 8-12 businesses work best. It was a simple step to put together a group of 11 to commit to the course. This group consisted of both small and large breeders, newcomers and veterans in the industry.

David's excellent facilitation skills were put to work at our first meeting where we discussed what facets of the enterprise we wanted to cover and how they would best fit into the categories we were required to include under the program. To David's amazement, it was a simple process to decide on regular meeting times and days. And for such a diverse group of people, relative to our places in the industry, we also had a fairly common set of goals, ideas, speakers and topics on which we were thirsty for knowledge. We discovered that we mostly preferred organic solutions to our problems as opposed to chemical ones and (while we do not shy away from hard work), wanted to obtain the maximum effect from a minimum of input.



Course participants

Utilising the information we gleaned from the meeting, Trish Egan and I (in conjunction with Dave) spent several months developing our course outline and speakers. Upon completion, we had unanimous commitment from all those involved for the 11-session course we developed. The costs for our venue, speakers, facilitator and other expenses were close to \$22,000. (This also included aerial photographs of our properties). PIRSA agreed to fund 90% of the PMP portion and 75% of the FarmBiz workshops we threw in to round out the course. The remaining costs were then divided between the 11 businesses that participated. In all, each business contributed \$225.00 for the course. (I can tell you here that it was worth every cent, and more!) We agreed to begin right after Christmas and proceed at a comfortable pace.

## The Highlights

The most important part of the course was that each workshop devoted time to evaluate our personal situation so that we were forced to be an active participant, rather than a passive observer. The course was conducted over a period of 5 months permitting time for reflection on the completed workshop, allowing for changes to be made in our current situation and planning for the upcoming workshop. These intervals were significant because they added value in a way that the intensity of our annual conference conducted over a single weekend couldn't compete with.

Several of our speakers did not have much experience with alpacas. However, their methods and ideas could be modified to suit the alpaca industry. It was useful to 'borrow' techniques from other industries to make ours more effective. We can learn lessons from them, copy their successes and avoid their mistakes. Similarities and differences can both be exploited in this way.

Our initial course was a 3-hour evening session, "Setting Directions". For those who did not have an existing business plan, it was an excellent chance to answer the questions needed to develop one. Answering questions like:

- "What are my personal values?
- Where do I want to go?
- What resources do we have to draw upon? and
- How do we get there?"

are essential in any business plan. We did a SWOT analysis of our current situation. For those of us who had previously formulated a business plan, it was a great opportunity to re-evaluate its relevance to our current business.

A two-week break afforded the time necessary to properly construct a draft business plan before we considered our next topic, "Natural Resources". **Tim Herrman** tackled many topics in this area including:

- identifying land classes,
- soil characteristics and reports,
- native vegetation, and
- planning considerations for these.

Over two sessions, we assessed our current situation, compared different methods of accomplishing the same goals and developed our own individual strategies for managing our respective land classes and gaining maximum production from them. This was also the first of several sessions in which our aerial photographs proved very useful for evaluating existing conditions and planning for future improvements.

A full weekend session over two days with **Colin Trengrove** produced a more complete understanding of the relationship between soil, plant and animal nutrition. Using analysis reports of soil, plant matter and blood tests from animals, we were able to put together ideal grazing systems for grazing and crop rotation to produce sustainable outcomes.

A separate workshop was also planned for identification and management of weeds. We utilised plenty of paddock time identifying weeds and learning to evaluate pasture overall. I have continued to evaluate my pasture on a quarterly basis to accurately assess what percentage of the grazing area is actually useful in each season and confidently determine the best stocking rates for each one.

Having enjoyed the broader understanding that Tim imparted about native vegetation, we pursued a separate Field Day committed to evaluating native grasses, their nutritional value, and whether they have a place in an alpaca enterprise. The answer was a resounding Yes! Native vegetation requires less work, is sustainable during all seasons of the year (depending on the species) and offers nutrition more suited to alpaca's lower requirements for protein.

A well-known speaker from several Industry Conferences, **Chris Tuckwell**, delivered several in-depth talks on a variety of topics surrounding breeding plans and genetics. Chris has maintained his style of asking lots of thought provoking questions. This technique was particularly appreciated as his questions had different answers from everyone in the room, and yet no answer was wrong, which helped us to formulate our own breeding goals and programs. These programs are as diverse as the people that develop them and none of them are necessarily amiss, as they will help us to assemble the necessary blocks to build a vibrant industry. Our lively discussions of genetic interaction, heritability versus environmental characteristics, line breeding vs. cross breeding, benchmarking, performance recording and the like encouraged all of us to pursue further research on these topics.

Most PMP courses have a section that relates to succession planning. For our group, we found that this was not particularly relevant. So David brought in some material that was extremely valuable in evaluating our own individuality regarding where and when we are comfortable moving from planning stages to action and reflection stages of getting a job done. As in many family businesses, working and living together can sometimes be stressful. This lively workshop also provided a better understanding of how conflicts arise between members and highlighted the best means to manage them.

**Peter Hayes** conducted our finance workshop. While most accounting sessions will put me to sleep within 20 minutes, Peter was most adept at keeping all those in the room awake and engaged in conversation for the entire 3 hour session. (To be honest, we even kept him overtime!) His amusing anecdotes and understanding of business structures proved to be both informative and entertaining. Additionally, we discussed cash-flow maintenance, production loans, and other pressing measures of finance. He helped us to identify plans that will improve business performance and maintain long-term sustainability.

Throughout the course we were encouraged to continually refer back to our business plan and property plan. We consistently evaluated the decisions we were making to determine whether we were working toward our identified goals. In other words, was our property plan consistent with our pasture management and did it help toward accomplishing our overall strategy? Are there means of reducing costs while producing the same (or better) return? In what ways did our decisions help toward the ultimate goal of producing a profit? Often, new ideas are less daunting if we are willing to 'think outside the square' and to engage the support of others.

## The Outcome

The PMP course has given me a new respect for those who maintain successful (and by success, I mean profitable) farming enterprises over the long term. As in any business, success starts with setting goals. But success is only realized when the on-going management practices are continually evaluated against those goals. This discipline is rare in any industry. A business plan is a fluid document that must change as new opportunities arise and others are discarded. Breeding plans need to have benchmarks and be evaluated with concrete evidence. Breeders must learn to shun the marketing hype and 'off the cuff' evaluations and give solid reasons for pursuing particular animals.

Our small group was invaluable for discussion purposes. We were able to interact with each other and our instructors to gain knowledge that was particularly relevant to our situation. In all cases, they were open to new interpretation, and appreciated the high level of understanding we were demanding from their various presentations.

As a group, we have developed an understanding and respect for each other. We realize that while each of us is pursuing individual goals, we have a common purpose that unites us. Each of us is a piece of the puzzle that is vital to the success of our industry and therefore we must support each other. We plan to continue our discussions and put together other workshops that will enhance our on-going learning process. ■



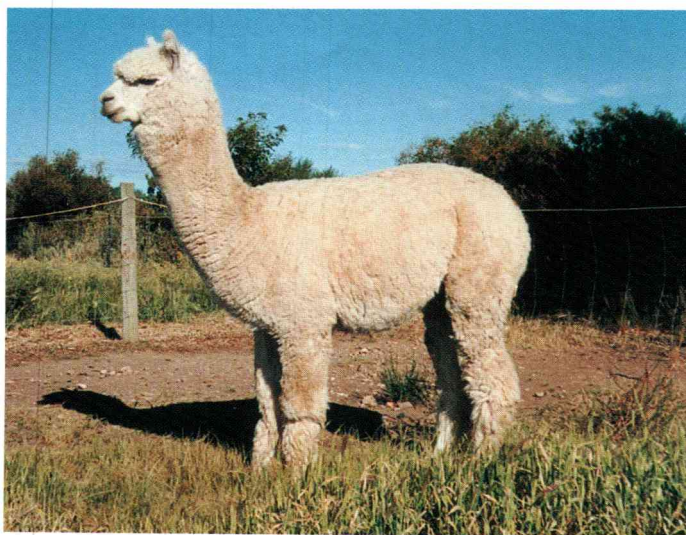
# Alpaca breeders with a vision and a long term goal

by JOANNE & STEVEN MARSHALL  
STANSBURY ALPACAS, SA

*It was March 1997 when we bought our first two female alpacas. At the time we did not know a lot about breeding programs and when we asked around, everyone was breeding for fine, dense, and preferably crimped fleeced animals.*

**t**he way breeders were trying to achieve this was by matching their females' characteristics with that of different stud males to produce the perfect animal or at least a marked improvement on the sire and dam. This practice did produce better quality animals but there were drawbacks. As the price of animals reduced and the average number of breeding females that breeders owned increased, it became a less viable option. Another problem that we perceived was that the alpaca industry would not be taken seriously by the farming community until it managed herds on a commercial level.

After looking around at some stud breeders of sheep and cattle the one thing that we noticed was consistency in the offspring. This inspired our current breeding program. We decided that, to aim for consistency in offspring, we would start by using the same sire over all our 15 breeding females. From there, as each generation became ready for mating we would follow up with another sire, which was an improvement on the first, and so on. Eventually we should



Pinaroo Farm Avalanche

have a herd that is consistent in its genetics and therefore should look similar.

With our objective in mind we wrote a list of essential attributes and desirable attributes for our sire. We required a solid white, full Peruvian male to put over all of our females. This led us to Victoria to purchase *Pinaroo Farm Avalanche*. It turned out to be a wise decision. He has passed on his Peruvian influence with progeny showing fine, dense, crimped fleece and our herd is starting to show some uniformity.

With female progeny from *Avalanche* on the ground it became time to consider the next step. Our essential attributes for a male to cover our next generation included solid white, dense, crimped fleece under 20 micron, while maintaining a Peruvian influence over our herd. Our search led us across Australia to Perth in September 2001. This time we purchased *Windsong Valley Wilde Star*, a son of *Purumbete Highlander* out of a Peruvian dam, and with 20 micron fleece at 3 years old he should continue to make the improvements we require. As for *Avalanche*, while he still has a lot to offer, he has been replaced by *Wilde Star* and will be sold in the near future.

Our journey with alpacas continues with us broadening our goals. We are currently investigating environmental factors specific to our location that influence animal health and fleece condition. We aim to manage the environmental conditions efficiently so that we minimise supplementary hand feeding and still maintain healthy animals with quality fleece. ■

# the Miracle of Birth

Captured in pictures by  
**STEVE MARSHALL**  
STANSBURY ALPACAS, SA

Narrative by  
**CAROLYN JINKS\***  
BENLEIGH ALPACA STUD, VIC

**STEVE'S COMMENTS:**

"I have been breeding alpacas since 1997 and now have a herd of twenty, but it wasn't until this year that I finally saw an alpaca being born. I found it interesting that everything seemed to stop when the head and neck are out while the lungs drain. The dam even started eating hay at one stage. If I hadn't been told this was normal, I think my nervous wait would have turned to panic as this stage lasted 18 minutes. However the shoulders were pushed clear and it was all over in another minute".

**CAROLYN'S COMMENTS:**

"Congratulations Steve, you have provided a classic sequence of photographs of a normal birthing. These pictures will enable breeders to become familiar with 'normal' and to be more alert should problems arise".

*\* Carolyn Jinks has lectured on alpaca neonatal care throughout Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom and has monitored an average of 150 births per year since 1990. She is co-author of the 'Alpaca Breeders Birthing Handbook', now in its third edition and available through the AAA National Office.*

**3** The head appears and should be quickly followed by... ➡



"Nose first, head and..."

**4** Two front feet which arrive above the head. ➡



"... toes..."

**8** From then gravity assists. ➡



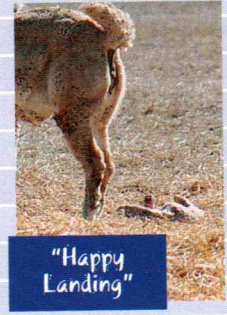
"Phew! Worst bit is over"



"Nearly there"



"Just one more push"

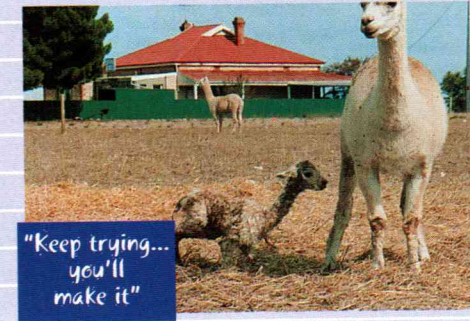


"Happy Landing"

**10** Watching a cria's first efforts to stand and suckle are frustrating, but be assured a normal active cria will be up within an hour and WILL master the art! ➡

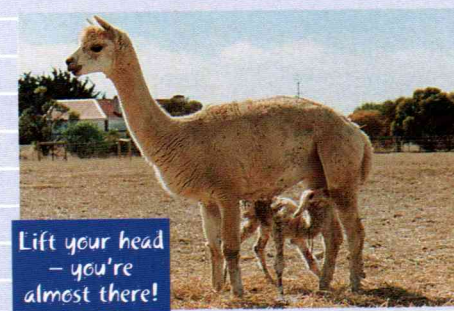


"What an obstacle course!"

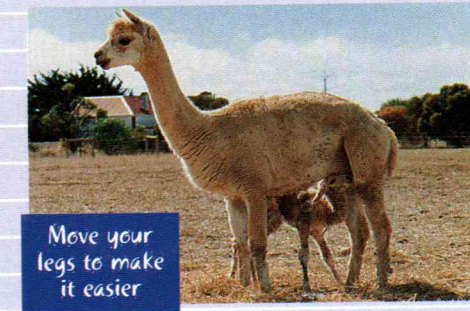


"Keep trying... you'll make it"

**12** Many cria alarm their owners by almost commencing to suckle but then popping out under the Mum. Don't interfere, no matter how tempting this may seem. ➡

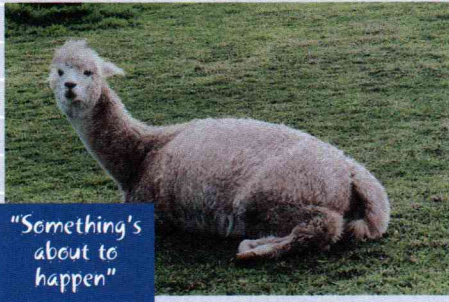


Lift your head - you're almost there!



Move your legs to make it easier

1 Body language can give signs of birthing imminence – ears back, restlessness, rolling, murmuring and sitting on one hip may be evident. ➡



"Something's about to happen"



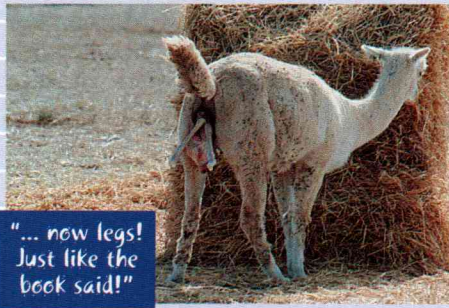
"I'm feeling funny"

2 The vulva appears at bursting point prior to the nose appearing. ➡



"Is this a hunger pain?"

5 Fluid can be seen draining from the cria's mouth and usually cria are shaking their heads at this time. ➡



"... now legs! Just like the book said!"

6 When head and legs are presented, mother may go into a rest phase, sometimes sitting or grazing. This phase averages 10 minutes. ➡



"What IS going on back there?"

7 Labour recommences with strong contractions to push shoulders of the cria through. ➡

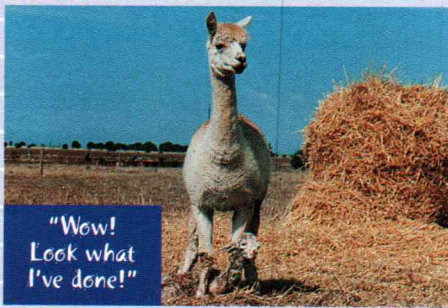


"Hard work getting the shoulders out"

**NOTE:**

At this stage it's a good idea to perform a quick check of the cria. See that there is no membrane over the nose or mouth, no umbilical haemorrhage, teeth are erupted (run thumb over lower gums) and of course, what sex, then **MOVE AWAY!** ➡

9 A proud moment ➡

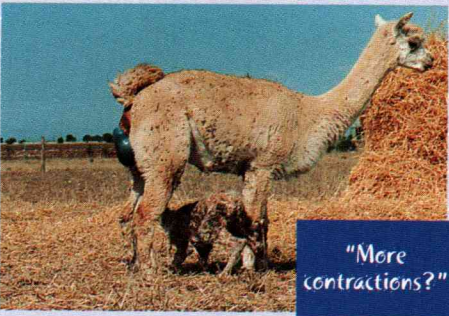


"Wow! Look what I've done!"



"Welcome to the new arrival"

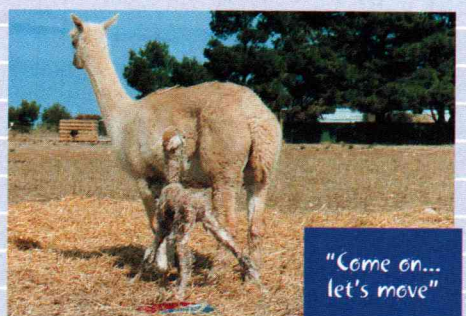
11 The third stage of labour is a vital part of the birthing process and it is important to be aware that the afterbirth has been expelled and is then disposed of (the mothers don't eat it). ➡



"More contractions?"



"Glad that part of the job is done"



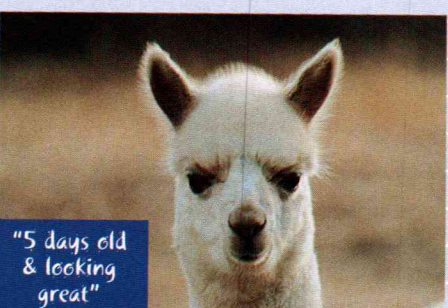
"Come on... let's move"

13 Contentment. ➡



"Contentment! A job well done"

14 A beautiful miracle!



"5 days old & looking great"

Average birth weight is 7-7.5kg and gain should average 1-1.5kg per week during the first four months. Some cria may lose weight on day 2/3, just as some human babies do, but if they are active, be happy!

*WHEN ONLY THE BEST WILL DO*  
*2nd. Fleece 16.8 3.7 22.02 99.5*

*VISIT OUR WEBSITE*  
*[www.bluegrassalpaca.com](http://www.bluegrassalpaca.com)*



*Julie & Arthur Mavros*  
*Phone (02) 4821 3403.*

*Blue Grass  
presents*



**JOLIMONT WARRIOR**

# Come on down...



Karen Caldwell keeps participants interested

by MATT RIDLEY  
SYDNEY, COAST & HIGHLANDS REGION

*There was a lot riding on the Alpaca Breeders' Seminar held over the last weekend of October. In many ways it was a test ... a test of the enthusiasm and organising ability of the people involved, a test of the advertising and promotional effort put into it, and certainly a test of the alpaca marketplace.*

**d**iving into the hills west of Sydney that Saturday morning, there were diverse, and conflicting, emotions. Would there be shoeless baseballers, would there be queues seeking Messianic intervention (it was a Christian venue), or would I find the alpacas outnumbering the participants?

With late registrations, the Saturday numbers swelled to over 100. And it was almost the perfect mix. Some had dipped their toes into the alpaca pond, some were still considering doing so, and some were there to hold hands and encourage others. By the Sunday evening, there was synergy as well as satisfaction.

Kurrajong is unable to decide if it is the last vestige of Sydney's Cumberland Plain or part of the Blue Mountains. It is this indecision that is

its charm. The divine intervention came by way of a glorious Spring weekend.

"Stunning" was AAA National President, Ian Watt's description of the venue, a collection of lecture halls, meeting rooms, accommodation units, conference facilities and rolling hills stretching as far as the eye could see.

When Phillip Vickery took over the reins of the AAA's Sydney, Coast and Highlands Region about 18 months ago, one of his visions was just such a seminar: he wanted those in the industry to show those outside it how to enjoy alpacas, do it profitably, and do it with confidence. With the other NSW Regional Presidents in agreement, AAA helping with the funds, and wife Heather to do the hard yards, he had a great team around him, a team that would be swelled by volunteers and knowledgeable and entertaining speakers.

Sunday's roll up was over 60. In all, there were at least 25 participants who did not own alpacas, and dozens more with a few recently acquired animals. The seminar was a success by any standard.

The program was a result of the hard work of SCH wunderkid Rachel O'Donoghue, and the presenters were the pick of the crop. They covered everything from choosing a property, running it efficiently once you have it, buying alpacas, adding value to them, end products and services, the Australian Alpaca Co-operative,

shearing, husbandry, the show scene, and promoting the industry.

Little wonder there was some information overload, including very professional seminar notes to take home, but a clever three-strand format gave participants the flexibility to pick and choose the topics of most interest.

They came from everywhere. There were those from all over NSW, Victorians, South Australians who spent two days driving there, and Queenslanders arriving in the early morning hours.

Ian Davison – how to start with a large fortune and ...



Tracy Earle, with co-driver Shirley Hobbs, had seen the seminar advertised in her regional newsletter and journeyed from Riverton, SA. She was pleased she did. "You just can't learn enough, can you?" she enthused. "They've covered everything, and I can't wait to get back and try some of the new ideas." Her sister, Shirley, although a driver rather than an alpaca enthusiast shared the enthusiasm: "It was really excellent. It wasn't too technical, so I could enjoy it and follow what was going on. Now I know how much help Tracy needs."

Jennifer Gould came up from Ingleburn for the Sunday and saw the seminar as a way of learning "as much as possible, as quickly as possible", while Helen Tanner of Valley Alpacas on the Central Coast admitted to "learning a few new things from a good range of topics."

Elizabeth MacDonald of Tapitalee Alpacas, and a relatively old hand in industry terms, "had a ball. The price was right, and the feedback is good. It's a very positive experience and the quality and variety of the speakers is outstanding."

Some had come only to take notes. Susan Buckman and Bill Olson were doing just that for Susan's mother Elaine, and had come up from Wollongong. They found the topics varied and interesting and the presenters easy to understand.

Diana Fairbairn (Bonny Belle Alpacas) and Susan Judge (Limestone

Ridge Alpacas), both breeders with smallish herds, spoke separately of their aims of drawing together lifestyle and business objectives and both saw the weekend as helping towards their goals.

The learning curve was steep for Phillip and Moira Goard, who spent both days there. Having recently bought a farm at Cowra, they have spent over 12 months planning their next step in alpacas, and had come to the seminar "so that we don't kill too many along the way." The mood may have been jovial, but it was a serious business for them and they found many of the practical sessions of great use - shearing, conformation analysis, husbandry.

Even those with some years' experience, like John and Pamela Bloxham of Wattle Farm, saw value in the sessions. "We've learned a lot from the animals, but there are always gaps to fill, and this weekend has certainly done that. We have a better feeling now that what we're doing at home is OK."

"No matter how many times you talk about alpacas, you pick up something new," said potential property purchasers Max and Marilyn Mosher, who already have some animals on agistment nearby. This view was shared by Tanya and Glen Sargent, who have the heavenly combination of alpacas and wine grapes at their Poet's Corner property at Mudgee. "If you don't come to events like this, you'll miss out on picking up

something new ... and you'll never catch up with that again" said the five-year alpaca veterans.

So was it all just good vibrations, or will the alpaca industry be better for it?

There is no doubt that the weekend generated both knowledge and enthusiasm. Even some of the same old tired faces seemed invigorated, albeit some of them exhausted after a hectic time that also embraced active social sessions. And there is equally no doubt that the marketplace received a boost.

Several newcomers spoke enthusiastically about buying animals, some of them already experienced farmers. A week later, I went along to the SCH alpaca auction at Menangle and wasn't surprised to see some of these new faces leaving with alpacas in their floats ... the proof is in the pudding.

The final part of the weekend was a question and answer session featuring a panel of all the speakers, and a few other experts. I sat back and admired. I couldn't help thinking about the positives. No matter how vocal the doomsayers, there is a genuine optimism and enthusiasm out there.

And there is the expertise, not just in breeding and raising alpacas but in pushing, cajoling and shaping the industry.

That so many people would put in so much was more than just heartening, it was really quite inspiring. ■

Allan Aynsley - the finer points of shearing



Graeme Dickson - fleece plus preparation equals dollars



# The Estancia Accoyo Herd of Don Julio Barreda

by DIANNE & RON CONDON  
SHANBROOKE PARK ALPACAS, VIC

*In a chance meeting approximately five years ago we met Don Julio Barreda at Juliaca airport, while waiting for a plane. Having seen this highly respected alpaca breeder in America and having read many articles about the Accoyo Herd, we regarded him as the top breeder in Peru and felt we should take advantage of the situation and strike up a conversation with him. This became rather difficult, as although Don Julio writes fluent English, he does not speak a word. We sat for some time passing notes back and forth discussing alpacas and breeding, and felt honoured to have had this opportunity. We weren't to know at the time, but this chance meeting was to become the start of an extremely good relationship with Don Julio Barreda on both a personal and a business level.*



Don Julio with Dianne

**W**e kept in contact with each other over the next 4-5 years, and learnt a lot about the world famous Estancia Accoyo Farm. During our sustained communication with Don Julio he invited us to visit his famous farm. We jumped at the opportunity and were soon on a plane to Peru. We had been to Peru several times before but never to the most famous herd of alpacas in the world.

We travelled to Arequipa to acclimatise and then set off to Juliaca for several more days before heading off to Macusani where the Estancia Accoyo Herd is situated. We travelled by four-wheel drive vehicle for seven hours on roads that could only be explained as dirt tracks. The journey was both dangerous and exciting, travelling along sides of mountains, through rivers and sometimes where there were no roads at all. Although at times we thought, "what are we doing here?", these thoughts soon disappeared as we travelled through the most breathtakingly beautiful scenery in the world passing small villages, grazing alpacas and even a few vicuña.

We finally arrived at Don Julio's farm where we were greeted with morning tea and friendly faces. Helena, his daughter, is also involved in the farm and made us most welcome. Many questions and answers were tossed around the room and we would like to share these with you.



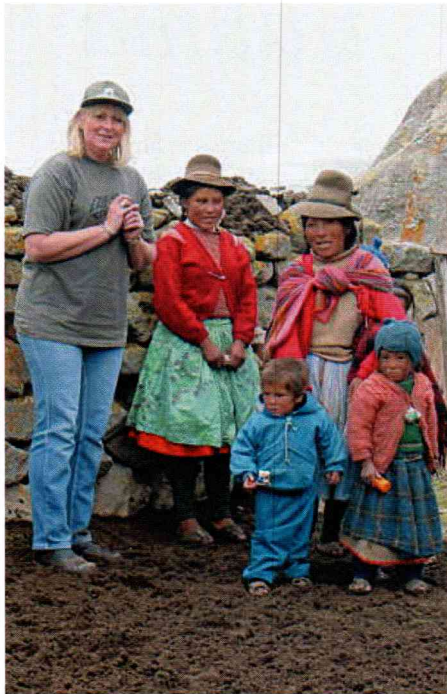
The Mountain Allin Capac



The Estancia Accoyo Herd is found in the region of Macusani at a height of 15,000 feet above sea level and is known as the alpaca capital of Peru.

Don Julio first became involved with alpacas at the age of 13 and he is now 84 years old. He is an extremely proud man and with what he has achieved it is easy to see why. He has continually improved his herd and, since 1946, his fleece weights have doubled. At the age of two these alpacas are assessed for potential herdsires and must cut 4.5 kgs to be retained. The Accoyo Herd has not had any outside influence in fifty years, and there have been no new bloodlines introduced. This is clear to see in his herd, as all alpacas are so true to type. Don Julio has full records on these animals and is able to produce his well-worn books. The Accoyo Herd consists of approximately 1700 alpacas, of which 75% are Huacaya and the remainder are Suri.

Don Julio was one of the first breeders to implement fencing, enabling better husbandry and management. He now runs two lines of Huacaya alpacas; these are known as his 'A' and 'B' lines. The



Cowboys of Accoyo families with Dianne

'A' line animals carry large frames with heavy cutting fleece however this line is not as fine, ranging in micron from 20 to 25. The 'B' line, which is known as his Select Group, have been bred for their extreme fineness and carry fleece below 20 micron. His Plantel Males are his top Stud Breeding Males that he retains in his own herd for breeding.



We have since travelled to this famous farm five times in the past 18 months and, when we selected alpacas, we were told the only stipulation was that we could take any of his animals, but we could not take 'his soul'. It is our understanding that no one has ever had the selection of animals that we were presented with, and we feel that we have seen almost his entire herd.

We'll never forget the first visit when these alpacas were presented to us for selection. They ran into the holding yards where we began our selection process. We had never seen alpacas like them anywhere else in the world. The density was incredible and the fine, bundling, lustrous fleece was more than we had ever expected. These true to type large framed alpacas had been untouched for several years, due to the closing of registers all over the world, and the selection was unbelievable.

We had very strict criteria when choosing these outstanding alpacas, and we never deviated. Each time we travelled there to top up our selection, only a few extras were chosen as we were being so selective that we weren't willing to settle for anything but the best. We believe our selection will be the best ever to leave Peru and are confident that we have chosen the absolute best from his farm, including some of his Plantel Males that are cutting 7 to 8 kgs, and some of his select line of females with incredible fineness.

We feel proud to know Don Julio Barreda and to have been given the opportunity to select from his outstanding herd some of the best alpacas to enter Australia. To own alpacas like these is like a dream come true and hopefully our industry will benefit from these genetics. ■

Accoyo famous holding yards

# eliminating toenail trimming trauma

by MARTY McGEE BENNETT  
TTEAM

*When I teach clinics, the topic that tops the list is trimming toenails and picking up feet. Next to shearing, it is perhaps the most problematic aspect of alpaca management. Understanding why it is so hard for alpacas to accept foot handling is a big part of moving through the problem, so we will talk about understanding "why," as well as techniques for "how to."*



I have my own opinion as to why it seems to be such a common difficulty. I agree with the conventional wisdom that postulates that alpacas are naturally resistant to having their legs handled because of the leg biting behavior males exhibit both between themselves and with females. **But** I think there is more to it. It only makes sense to focus on what we can change and we can't change an alpaca's natural behavior. I wouldn't change an alpaca's nature even if I could. All that leg biting and neck wrestling is part of what makes them so entertaining.

So what can we change? We can systematically and logically show an alpaca that it is safe for us to handle their legs and then make sure that it is! Unfortunately, many owners decide that toenails will be done "come Hell or high water," and tie or restrain the alpaca. We then proceed to take a painless process and create a nightmare out of it. Once toenail trimming has become a nightmare, the alpaca now has a hardened opinion that humans and toenails are a dangerous combination based in fact, rather than a sort of nebulous, unfounded fear of leg handling that is far easier to deal with.

To be sure, there are alpacas that don't seem to have a problem with having their legs handled. On the whole, however, most alpacas are not very enthusiastic about the process. Alpacas run away from things they are afraid of. An alpaca's legs are its first line of defense. It requires a great deal of trust for an alpaca to allow a person to handle his escape equipment. Difficulty with feet and nails is not unique to alpacas. It is not uncommon for llamas, dogs, cats, and horses to object to having their feet handled or nails trimmed – sometimes to the point of requiring a tranquilizer!

So it should not be a complete surprise that alpacas have some of the same difficulty.

I believe that alpacas are born with a basic temperament. I also believe that their mothers and herd mates fill them in on what they can safely allow a human to do. Difficult alpacas are usually born difficult – they may tend to be nervous or reactive or flighty, or slow to catch on or (most commonly) afraid to give over control to humans. Whatever the problem, an alpaca's inability to **get it** and learn to cooperate sets the stage for an escalating drama around their relationship with humans.

When an animal resists, human handlers most often respond with additional restraint. For an alpaca that is frightened of control in the first place, more control only causes more of a fight. We are frequently in a hurry and an animal's attempts to say "Wait a minute – I am not too sure about this!" are often dismissed. An alpaca is going to have difficulty trusting a human who is in a hurry, is unaware of the alpaca's attempts to communicate discomfort or fear, and who is quick to use restraint. Alpacas that don't **get it** are classified as having a problem. By definition, the problem is ours. We are the ones that need to trim the toenails!

## Try these techniques

Rather than organize this information linearly, I am going to offer it up as a sampling of techniques and ideas. Unlike many trainers, I find teaching is best approached creatively, as opposed to a 1-2-3 approach. In that spirit, pick and choose some of these techniques and give them a try. Having said that, remember the most important thing – **if what you are doing is not working, don't keep doing it!** Change something! **If the horse is dead, get off!** Mindless repetition and a loyal attachment to an idea that is not working will cause you to teach your alpaca all kinds of escape and evasion techniques that will haunt you.

Not all alpacas respond positively to the same technique, particularly when it comes to toenails. Try new things or new twists on old techniques. If what you are trying isn't working the way that you want it to in one or two tries, begin thinking about what you can do differently. Practice makes permanent. You don't want to practice what is not working, or... you will teach (both yourself and your alpaca) what you don't want to learn.

## Balance

Remember: BALANCE-BALANCE-BALANCE-BALANCE-BALANCE-BALANCE-BALANCE-BALANCE-BALANCE-BALANCE-BALANCE-BALANCE-BALANCE-BALANCE-BALANCE-BALANCE-BALANCE-BALANCE...I cannot say this too many times. The major reason alpacas struggle about having humans pick up their feet is that humans do not pay attention to an alpaca's balance. We pick up the foot and take it way to the side, too far back, too high up or we push the alpaca out of balance as we pick the

foot up. In doing this, we cause the alpaca to feel as if he is going to fall. He struggles to regain his balance and wants his “standing up” equipment back. We won't give it to him. What is a poor alpaca to do? This does not feel safe and will cause the alpaca to begin using techniques of his own to prevent from getting your hands on his leg in the first place. I have seen many an alpaca that could wrap one leg all the way round the other and tuck it handily up under the opposite armpit!

Of course kicking is another fair response to perceived danger. Covering up the legs altogether is another thing we teach alpacas in the process of trying to get a hold of those legs. Of course, you could just be your own spin doctor and just tell yourself you were really teaching your alpaca to kush!

Pay attention to your alpaca's balance. Begin looking at your alpaca student while you are training him. How is he standing? Are all four legs in a balanced configuration? Legs crossed, a leaning alpaca, all four legs placed out from under the body, legs that are tucked up all in a bunch under the body – these are all ways of standing out of balance. Take the time to rebalance your alpaca before you continue with whatever foot-picking- up technique you are using.

## Body Language

Alpaca body language gives you valuable information about when and how to proceed with training. Overlook balance and you are missing 50% of the picture. When you pick up your alpaca's foot or assist with the process, think of yourself as the gymnastics spotter. When a gymnast is learning a new move, it is the spotter's job to help the gymnast find his or her own balance. You are going to move the leg in such a way that you help the alpaca find and keep his balance. Above all, if the alpaca loses his balance and you miss the opportunity to help, let the alpaca have his foot back and begin again. You can still keep your hand on the leg or foot but let the alpaca put his foot back down on the ground.

## Lift above the knee

Further: the old saying “hold on until the alpaca stops struggling” is perhaps the least helpful piece of advice I have heard. It is much easier to avoid taking an alpaca out of balance if you pick up the foot above the knee joint in the front and the hock in the back. You are lifting closer to the center of gravity and creating less torque – which is the same reason you have less power with a short screwdriver.

Sometimes I use techniques designed to give me more leverage and

physical advantage. In this case, I want less. Try picking up a front foot above the knee, while standing in front of the shoulder facing the rear. Think of shaking hands with your alpaca above the knee (*see Photo A*). Slide your hand down the shoulder, down the foreleg, and stop just above the knee and apply forward pressure to pick up the foot.

You are not in the right spot to trim, but you can teach your alpaca how easy and safe it is to stand on three legs and allow you to hold his leg up. This goes a long way toward successful toenail trimming!

Use the same technique for the rear legs. Lift the rear leg by using the hand closer to the alpaca to ask him to shift his weight to the leg you are not picking up, and the remaining hand to pick up the leg from above the hock (*see Photo B*). No matter how you pick up the foot front or back, **think** Support the foot/leg; do **not** hold a death grip on the foot. Squeezing hurts and scares the alpaca and will cause or contribute to resistance. Ironically, gripping is more likely to result in the alpaca pulling his foot out of your hand. Relax, breathe, and go with the movement of the leg or foot.

Sometimes jiggling the foot or leg will help the alpaca move out of instinctive resistance and come back to a “thinking place.”



Teach your alpaca how easy and safe it is to stand on three legs by picking up the front leg above the knee. For the back legs, support the leg above the hock.

## Use a confined space

Walk your alpaca onto a piece of plywood, rubber mat, concrete slab, or clean flat ground inside a confined area (i.e., catch pen, stanchion, or mini catch pen). You can back your alpaca into a 'V' created by folding two catch pen panels together. Your helper blocks the exit and offers food while you trim (see Photo C). Make sure that you provide good footing – not too slick, and if you use plywood, make sure that it is stout enough for your alpaca to feel safe and secure.

If you don't have help, you will need to work inside a container small enough to prevent your alpaca from walking away or turning around. If you choose to tie your alpaca, it is best to use an area that is smaller than the length of the rope. In other words, the area contains the alpaca, not the rope. The rope, in this case, only prevents the alpaca from turning around.

## Trim without picking up the feet

Use pruning-type toenail nippers and trim the toenails without picking up the feet or touching the legs. Stroke the nail a couple of times with the nippers to prepare the alpaca for the trimming sensation and then begin to cut off whatever part of the nail that should come off. I am amazed at how well this works. I have used this technique on many alpacas who were known for being very difficult to trim, including "kickers," and it has worked almost every time. The

alpacas are remarkably unconcerned about the actual trimming, it is the handling of the leg that seems to be so frightening.

This technique is particularly useful on very long nails, and you can do a reasonably good job of getting the nail back in shape. I was surprised to find that I could manipulate the nail all I wanted with both the nippers and my fingers, as long as I restricted the contact to the nail alone and not the leg or the foot. I begin on the front nails and squat down forward of the leg I am working on. Even alpacas that are very skittish and dancey about leg stroking and handling don't mind this technique. I believe this technique is so effective because it skirts the issue of balance all together!

At a recent clinic, I was working with an alpaca named Jane that was really upset with all other techniques we tried. Jane threatened to spit, and then kushed so fast that we couldn't really try picking up the legs without holding her up. I began with Jane standing quietly in a very small area of the catch pen unrestrained. I stroked the nail first with a wand from about 3 feet away. Next, I stroked the nail with my finger and then wiggled it around. Jane was so calm I picked the nail up with my fingers slid the nippers under the nail and trimmed a bit. Although I had never tried it before, I said to the clinic participants, "I think I can even pick up her foot using her toenail!" Then I did it! She stood quietly while I picked up her foot

with her nail, and then supported the foot by the ankle with one hand and massaged the bottom of her foot with the other. She was totally fine and calm and I was able to trim the foot with it off the ground.

## Other helpful hints:

Trim nails after a rain, or keep "trimmees" confined in a moist area for an hour or so before you trim.

Always provide a food source for incentive and distraction during the trimming process. Can you imagine sitting under the dryer at the beauty shop or hanging out at the doctor's office without magazines?

An alpaca is not a collection of parts, but rather, is a whole being. You can't successfully create a good trusting relationship with an alpaca's legs if you do not pay attention to all the other parts of the body and the *mind*. The way that you catch, halter, and relate to your alpaca will impact his willingness to work with you on the leg thing. Using a catch pen and resisting the urge to corner and grab your alpacas when it is expedient will do more to create a sense of safety and ease your efforts to pick up legs than any other single thing you can do. ■

---

**About the Author:** *Marty McGee Bennett has been a fixture in the alpaca business almost since there was an alpaca business. After meeting Linda Tellington-Jones in 1987, Marty dedicated herself to bringing Linda's work, known as TTEAM, to the alpaca community. An accomplished author and teacher, Marty travels the world over to present hands-on training workshops to humans on how to handle their alpacas. When not on the road teaching, Marty lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico, with husband Brad. To find out more about Marty visit her website at [www.martymcgeebennett.com](http://www.martymcgeebennett.com)*

---

This article is reproduced with the kind permission of Marty McGee Bennett and *Alpacas Magazine*, the official journal of the Alpaca Owners and Breeders Association (AOBA), USA.

Back the alpaca into a "V" formed by 2 panels. Have a helper block the exit and offer food, while you trim.



**An alpaca's legs are its first line of defence. It requires a great deal of trust for an alpaca to allow a person to handle his escape equipment.**

# Only PRISTINE ALPACAS...



Left: Cedar House **Mozart**. Right: Cedar House **Woolmaker**.



Cedar House **Woolmaker**.

## *Dedicated to delivering the world's finest livestock investment.*

Pristine Alpacas are ideally positioned with a well established holding of improved pastures and a carefully selected herd of quality stock. Pristine Alpacas aims to supply markets with the highest quality and sought after progeny, the best fleece and attract record prices.

The company was established in 1995 by Sandy and Allen Mercier. Located 20 minutes from Canberra's CBD, the lush 100 acre property has been set up specifically to support the needs of Alpacas with quality infrastructure.

## *Elite Sires*

Pristine Alpacas is building its stock using the best genetics in Australia. Now standing at stud is Cedar House **Mozart**, the first 100% Peruvian born in the Southern Region from the renowned Cedar House Peruvian Ayaviri (No.14).

Cedar House **Woolmaker** is one of Australia's best huacaya alpacas. He possesses all the traits necessary for a guarantee to success. **Woolmaker** broke all Australian records when Pristine purchased its half share for \$150,000.

## *Only the highest quality.*

Sandy and Allen have developed a perfect environment for Alpacas and are dedicated to the task of creating a showpiece for the industry.

They look forward to working with you.



*Impeccable Pedigree:  
Intelligent Investment*

**Phone** (02) 6236 3551 **Mobile** 0418 665 053 **Fax** (02) 6236 3552  
**E-mail** [pristine@pristinealpacas.com.au](mailto:pristine@pristinealpacas.com.au) **Internet** [www.pristinealpacas.com.au](http://www.pristinealpacas.com.au)

# a Peruvian adventure



Peru Canyon

by RON REID  
SWAN VALLEY ALPACA STUD, WA

*Talking to alpaca breeders over the years, it is certainly a dream for many to visit Peru and experience the alpacas in their native environment, 'the altiplano'.*

*My wife, Rose, and I were fortunate enough to have the opportunity to travel to Peru in July this year accompanied by Merredin, W.A. alpaca breeders Peter and Carolyn Richards and Ron Condon from Victoria. This trip also allowed us to visit some of the best alpaca farms in Peru where we could access new bloodlines, which I believe is imperative if our industry is to fulfil its potential in Australia. The whole 12 days in Peru were an eye opener to us all.*

Vicuña crias



## The adventure begins...

**15/7/01** – Depart from Los Angeles for Lima, an 8 hour flight. We arrived at 1am and couldn't get a flight to Arequipa until 3pm. Lots of tourists and aircraft very basic. Lima is very dirty and overcast, pollution, poverty and crime were very evident. Barricades on dwellings were quite noticeable. Bottled water – a must even for cleaning teeth. Rainfall is virtually non existent (approx. 50mm per year).

**17/7/01** – Depart for Arequipa – this city was severely damaged by an earthquake approximately 3 weeks before our arrival – there were a number of people killed and some ancient buildings and a bridge sustained major damage. Arequipa (2325m) is located in the mountainous desert of the Western Andes. Beautiful snowcapped volcano – El Misti (5822m) along with two other mountains Chachani (6075m) and Pichu Pichu (5571m) overlook the city.

There is a lot of colour in this city. Music, restaurants and markets were an eye opener. Guttled frogs, dried alpaca and plenty of fruit and fresh produce! We stocked up with food and bottled water for our stay in the Altiplano.

The accommodation was excellent and the people very friendly. We caught up with Janie Hicks from Coolaroo Alpaca Stud, NSW, who drove us around some of the tourist spots. No road rules, it's just a free for all, heaps of little taxis. We visited a number of excellent alpaca clothing shops. Quite reasonably priced.

## Our two-day stay in Arequipa

allowed us to adjust to the altitude, then it was off to Juliaca by train which was 'about a 1960 Australian vintage dog box type'.

We travelled through mountainous terrain and adjacent rivers and streams that are created by melting snowcaps. Herds of alpacas were quite a common sight and at times, were just dots on the distant mountain slopes. After approximately 6 hours, our train finally approached Juliaca where numerous small rural dwellings made out of mud bricks were situated on the flat countryside.

Juliaca (3822m) was very dirty with huge amounts of rubbish in drains and along the roadside. A lasting impression was the amount of plastic bottles, bags and containers that were discarded everywhere. This was pollution plus! The chap who was responsible for the 'keep Australia beautiful' project would have had a heart attack!

Roadside market stalls were everywhere as were three-wheeled cycle taxis and lots of dogs. The hotel where we stayed overnight was quite modern, however maintenance was low on the agenda. Hot water would take approximately 10 minutes to reach the units in the morning. Apparently the system was some distance from the rooms and was affected by the freezing temperatures at night.

The next morning we hired a small mini bus and visited some ancient burial sites of the Inca people before heading to Puno and Lake Titicaca. This lake is very big, being 170 kms long and 65kms wide (max). It is South America's largest lake and the world's largest lake over 2000m. Pleasure craft are a common sight and it is very picturesque.

After returning to Juliaca, we all traveled in two 4WD vehicles to Ayaviri. Our group included Walter, a 4th year veterinary student who was our interpreter, Reto, a qualified vet and expert navigator and another driver, Edgar.

As we travelled along the mountain dirt tracks, the scenery at times was beautiful. At one point we reached an altitude of 4950m and passed through falling snow. Along the roads we could see small mud huts accommodating alpaca farmers who tended their small

herds like the shepherds in biblical times. They also had a few cows and sheep in their care. After an overnight stay in Ayaviri we travelled to the Barreda Farm which undoubtedly was the highlight of our trip to Peru.

Don Julio Barreda, who is 84 years of age, runs between 1300-1500 alpacas. His daughter, Helena, assists him and we were made very welcome with breakfast and lunch being provided. Don Julio was very helpful and proud of his alpacas. It is well known that other breeders in Peru are envious of his achievements and one did not take long to realise why! Peter Richards and myself assisted workers in handling some alpacas and believe me; the altitude soon takes its toll on you. Probably the best way to describe the feeling is like having just run 10kms – a shortage of breath and faint feeling.

Through Walter, our interpreter, we shared some very memorable time with Don Julio and the purchase of a Plantel Accoyo 7 year old stud male made it a very special day.

For the next week our party travelled continually throughout the Altiplano inspecting alpacas at a number of farms. Accommodation varied from dormitory type on farms to guesthouses and sleeping bags on floors. The weather was extremely cold with 20mm of ice covering streams at 7am daily.

We had been warned about eating and drinking local products so as a safeguard we took our own food and bottled water, which was certainly worthwhile. Apart from a little altitude sickness suffered by some, we all had a trouble free trip.

### Other highlights of our trip included:

- Holding 5 month old Vicuña cria which were bottle fed orphans at Rural Alianza farm.
- Travelling down a canyon towards the Amazon which was a couple of hours distant. The scenery in this canyon was unbelievable and Ron Condon remarked that it was by far more spectacular than the Colca Canyon, which is the deepest canyon in the world. It was approximately 50kms long and the gravel road weaved along and around sheer cliffs, some of which would have been 3 kms deep. It was certainly different when you looked down into the clouds from the road with huge waterfalls sending cascades into the river below.

- Probably the vast barren mountains and rocky terrain with very little natural greenery are a vivid memory. Not forgetting of course the snow capped peaks of the Andes that could be seen for most of our journey.

- There were many humorous moments and it is difficult to remember them all. A couple I can recall was when Peter Richards thought he would be a gentleman and let others have their showers first only to find the hot water had run out when his turn came. Not good when it's freezing cold and you haven't had a wash for a few days. Not to be outdone a couple of days later, the same thing happened only this time he had at least lathered up with soap before the town water was turned off! Peter had to make do with a towel to wipe the soap off. There were a few choice words and something about Merredin being paradise.

- I'd better mention how I got lost in Macusani, as someone else surely will! I thought I'd make a phone call home, so, as Peter had already been to the phone booth, I thought I'd get some proper direction from him. I found a phone shop okay but, apart from not being able to make the call home, I then couldn't find our place of abode. All the buildings and narrow streets looked the same. I spent an hour walking up and down the streets of Macusani. I tried to communicate with Peruvians who I can assure you don't understand English as they speak Spanish. On returning to the phone shop for the third time and asking the assistant where 'Inca Tops' was, she obviously realised I was lost and beckoned me to follow. After a short distance it was obvious she was heading me in the wrong direction and as she was definitely no 'Elle McPherson' I decided to try for myself once more. Eventually a young chap and his girlfriend who I passed by at least four times previously must have felt sorry for me so they directed me to

a rickshaw (three wheeled cycle taxi) in the main square. I hopped in. However, completely at a loss as to what he was telling the rider, I had gone about 20 metres when Walter (our interpreter) called out. I was out of that rickshaw faster than Cathy Freeman! I can assure you it's not very pleasant. As a result, Ron Condon now calls me Rickshaw Ron!

Our last city we visited before returning to Lima was Cuzco, which is the hub of the South American travel network. Thousands of visitors come annually to this unique destination but also to experience an age old culture. Cuzco is the archaeological capital of the Americas and the continent's oldest continuously inhabited city. Massive Inca built stone walls line most of Cuzco's central streets. The streets are often stepped and narrow. The City Square, which is lined with smooth cobblestones, is like an amphitheatre with steep slopes on all sides covered in dwellings. At night it was breathtaking with 'fairy type' lights appearing on the surrounding slopes and a huge illuminated cross on the mountain top. Cuzco is 3326m above sea level and has a population of over 300,000. Not far from this city is Machu Picchu, also known as the lost city of the Incas, which is considered a must-see for all visitors from Perth. Unfortunately we didn't have time to visit Machu Picchu on this trip.

Noticeable on leaving Cuzco Airport, were the police armed with automatic machine guns which at the time looked rather strange and different from what we see in Australia. However, in light of recent world events, we must all adjust to this type of action.

In closing, all of us thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to witness personally the Altiplano and the alpacas. Ron Condon was an excellent host and the trip to this rugged, remote part of Peru would not have been possible without Reto, our driver and navigator. ■



Peru Mountains

# wonderful wethers

by CAROLYN JINKS  
BENLEIGH ALPACA STUD, VIC

*With generations of farming background behind us, and running around 350 alpacas, my husband, Allan, and I never stop marvelling at the challenges, differences and opportunities that alpacas offer and for us, as breeders, castration is part of responsible management of our animals.*

As with all livestock, very few male alpacas qualify to be classed as 'Stud' males, and be actually kept for breeding. In the case of sheep, males are generally castrated at 4-8 weeks of age (and then become known as wethers), calves are castrated at 9-12 weeks (they then become steers) and according to horse trainer, Caroline Hatch, horses are gelded from 6 months onwards. Recently there has been much controversy surrounding the correct age for alpacas, but WA veterinarian and alpaca breeder, Dr George Jackson, has long been castrating alpacas from 9 months of age without any problems.

When we first included alpacas as part of our farming entity back in 1989 we discovered that our dogs, which were well accustomed to working sheep and cattle, would not get off the back of the ute or 4 wheel bike when we drove into an alpaca paddock. As our property is in a heavily populated fox area we experimented by putting some alpacas in with our lambing ewes. To our amazement, lamb loss was dramatically reduced.

We loaned three males to a friend who was having severe fox loss – the foxes were taking the lambs while they were actually being born – and after only two nights he called to say he wanted to buy the alpacas. This was documented in the *Australian Geographic* Magazine many years ago.

Since that time, there has been a range of written and verbal stories providing information about the success rate of using alpacas as guards, and many farmers have benefited from running alpacas with their ewes.

Due to the territorial nature of alpacas, we have found it is preferable to graze the alpacas in the paddock first, and later introduce the ewes a couple of weeks prior to lambing. Lamb loss can be markedly reduced where sheep are run with alpacas, and there has been a huge buyer force in

the sheep farming area of western Victoria.

We do not have any evidence that alpacas kill foxes, but we have absolute confidence in stating that foxes prefer to take a wide berth around paddocks that contain alpacas.

## However, there ARE some problems:

Regrettably some alpaca owners are selling these 'wether quality' males as 'wethers', when in fact they are not castrated. As a result, alpaca owners have come under criticism by some sheep farmers for selling entire males under the guise of 'wethers'. In my experience some older males that have not been castrated have been known to molest rather than protect so it would seem that such criticism is justified.

There is a great opportunity for marketing 'genuine' wethers – but just be sure that IS what they are! It is important that we get it right so as not to sabotage this arm of our industry!

## Summing up...

The merits and joys of alpacas never cease, but please be practical and CASTRATE so they can do their job well. ■



### Attention all foxes: Caution – Wether at work

*A wonderful example of the value of wethers in a caring capacity occurred at Benleigh this lambing season.*

Several males (wethered!) were paddocked with the sheep. One woolly ewe was found cast (rolled on her back and not able to get up) after lambing during the night, and a black alpaca was standing guard next to the lamb. The lamb was even trying to drink from him! When the ewe and lamb were moved under the cover of the hayshed next to the lambing paddock to bond, that black male walked up and down the fence line, with his charge well within sight, until the ewe and lamb were returned to the rest of the flock. He was aware that something was wrong and that his protection was needed. I'm sure that without him there that lamb would have been a definite dinner delight for any fox.



# Almora Alpacas

*Is pleased to Announce*

KINGSTON PARK

## DRYSDALE

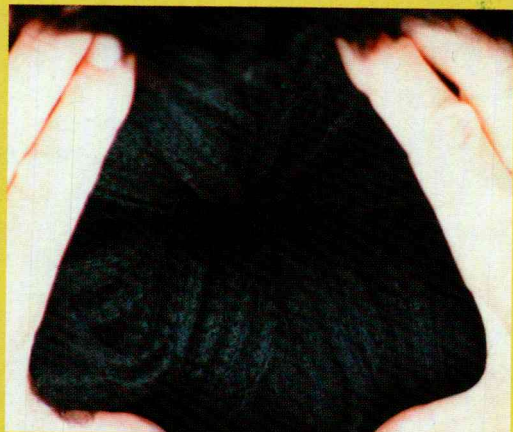


**Is now available for stud duties!  
Mobile or Drive By matings.**



### **His show record includes:**

- Victorian Eastern Region Alpaca of the Year 1999-00
- 2nd Victorian Eastern Region Alpaca of the Year 2000-01 (by one point!)
- Ist in class Vic Eastern Region Fleece Competition '01
- 3 Supreme Championships
- 2 Junior Championships
- 1 Intermediate Championship
- 6 Senior Championships including Blackout 2001



*Drysdale is a solid black huacaya  
with lustrous bundling fleece  
and even crimp all over his body.  
An outstanding male  
with stunning conformation*

**Contact:**  
Joy Skinner  
Almora Alpacas  
Cardinia



**Phone: (03) 5998 8305 Fax: (03) 5998 8409  
Mobile: 0418 346869 Email: accurate@satlink.com.au**

# From oceans blue to paddocks green

by HEATHER DUNN  
BRAESIDE ALPACAS AND FARMSTAY, NSW

Peter and Heather met on a merchant ship in 1986. He was a newly promoted First Mate (2nd in charge deckside), and Heather, the Ship's Radio Officer. Two years later they married and after a brief period of seafaring together decided to start a family. They also purchased "Kurrajong", a 40-acre, yellow box studded, small farm between Crookwell and Rugby.

Heather stayed at home embarking on a steep (and sometimes slippery) learning curve, coming to terms with motherhood, and coloured sheep. Meanwhile Peter's career progressed to Ships' Captain (Master Mariner) and he now alternates between sailing the seven seas and developing "Kurrajong" from a worn out block of land into a productive and organised farm. Add three growing boys to the equation and there are few dull moments!

## Heather takes up the story...

I had learnt the ancient and communal craft of hand spinning in High School. After Peter bought me a wheel and I bought some wool while at sea in New Zealand, it was time to pick up the threads again. I felt like I had never left the wheel.

We decided to breed soft handling, heavy cutting coloured sheep to service the hand spinning market. Our aim was to keep prices realistic and product irresistible. It took a few years to finalise our breeding objectives, source the sheep and shear at the correct time. Peter had

Peter spent a few hours leaning on the railing of a pen of alpacas talking to alpaca breeder, John Pittard. That afternoon he announced that we were going to buy two wethers as stock guards. (We have only lost one lamb to foxes since *Jet* and *Rusty* arrived on the farm). With the generous assistance of

Penny and John Pittard and another breeder, Peter Kelly, we progressed to females and now have a herd of 30 odd including a few agisted animals.

The arrival of the alpacas was another steep learning curve, but after 10 years of sheep husbandry we have found the transition fairly smooth. Like sheep, we listen, read, seek advice, experiment and use common sense. The alpacas have thrived. I participate in Landcare, Prograze and Salt Action Field



Heather surrounded by fabulous fibres. Alpaca features strongly with silk and wool providing blends that increase the versatility of alpaca.

experience with his family enterprise in merinos, but I was starting from scratch.

By 1997 we were winning shows with sheep and fleece, had established a market through Sydney and beyond, stabilised our flock to produce consistent results and were starting to cast around for a new challenge. At Crookwell Country Weekend that year,

Days and courses and I am currently doing a soil course through Acid Soil Action to maximise sustainable production on our farm.

My hand spinning took on a whole new twist. In collaboration with two other spinning fanatics, I decided to utilise our freshly painted and kitted out *Farmstay* cottage as the hub of spinning Alpaca, Silk and Mohair. Our first workshop was in autumn over the first weekend in April this year. Apart from leaving us speechless with

exhaustion it was a resounding success. The participants went away enriched with great ideas and enthused about spinning fibres other than wool. With six alpaca breeders attending, I couldn't afford to be 'off the mark' with my contribution to the tuition (alpaca of course), and I learnt more than I taught.

We had another Workshop in winter, focusing on designer yarns and dying. At time of writing this article our next one is scheduled for September when we plan to continue with designer yarns and explore colour and blending. These events are held over a weekend and include techniques, fibre handling, fibre choice and preparation, fellowship and laughter. People have travelled from Cooma, Sydney, Canberra, and Orange to join us. It's been inspirational.

We are getting more enquiries from people who want to learn hand spinning, so beginners' classes are being developed with the Southern Region Adult Education in Goulburn.

I can almost see the big and more established breeders eyes glazing over as they read this and possibly preparing to turn the page. But wait and think about this. Everyone we touch in this 'Cottage Industry' – through workshops, lessons, and demonstrations at field days and the like – are CONSUMERS. People who use fibre in their art or craft are DISCERNING CONSUMERS, and they all have family and friends. Peter and I see this as one of our aims. With fibre workshops and our *Farmstay* cottage, we aim to educate and enthuse the people we meet about alpacas and their fibre.

By using alpaca fibre each day I

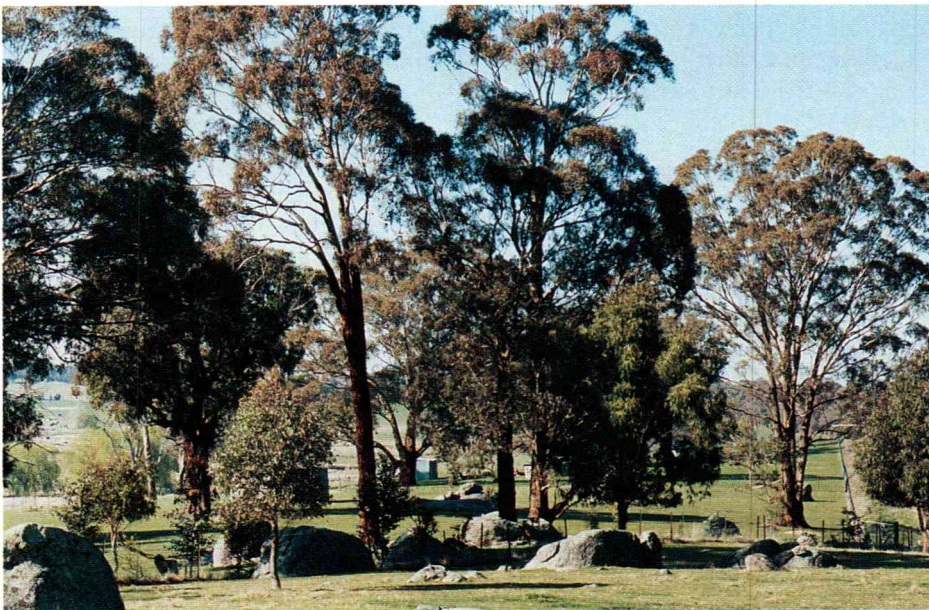
have become more meticulous about clip preparation and the commerciality of fleece. One aspect I see that needs urgent attention is clip specifications for the suri fleece type. I have had some spectacular results with suri fibre and see myself tending to work with it more and more. However on occasion I have been presented with fleece that the owner is very proud of, but, to my disappointment, is either dread locked (ie. locks so well twisted together that they have felted into rope), matted, too long (a big problem) or full of burrs or straw. People are jumping onto the suri bandwagon and I think that they need to have assistance in determining their breeding objectives for commercial fleece. Otherwise the suri is simply a shimmering, captivating show pony.

I encourage all smaller breeders to seek out their marketing niche. We have chosen to breed a commercial herd, market our fibre to that much-maligned 'Cottage Industry', (as well as fibre to the Alpaca Co-Op) and teach and inspire through tuition and *Farmstay*. Whatever you choose to do, remember we can't all be 'studs'. Someone has to use the seed stock of studs and progress the industry towards a credible commercial future.

As our three boys grow up and our herd slowly expands with the arrival of our herd sire, *Curabungla Arika*, we hope to do just that. ■

Mature shade trees and granite tors are a feature at "Kurrajong". Peter and Heather are continually adding to this base with more trees and shrubs every year.

Colour is a feature of alpacas that handspinners value. Heather and Peter are aiming for increased yield while maintaining colour in the herd. Fineness is a consideration but not the "be all and end all".



# A new island home

by DOMINIC LANE  
VIRACOCHA ALPACAS, TASMANIA

One December day just before Christmas last year the human and animal components of Viracocha Alpacas were aboard the "Spirit of Tasmania" crossing Bass Strait. I know that the human part of the equation felt less than wonderful some of the time: one wonders how the alpacas felt down in the hold. However, all things pass and with the clock showing after eleven o'clock at night we docked at Devonport, where the process of disembarkation and Customs clearance seemed to take an interminable time.

Luckily, my partner, Erin, who had flown over earlier to start work in Launceston, and my parents were waiting to act as guides to our property at Meander. Even though there were still a few days until settlement, the alpacas had been given permission to take up residence. Now, I don't know if you've ever tried to unload a group of fractious alpacas, with the sole aid of a torch, into a paddock you can't see and don't even have a mental picture of at one o'clock in the morning; but I don't recommend it as a pastime. A few days later, though, restored and refreshed we moved in – Viracocha Alpacas had arrived.

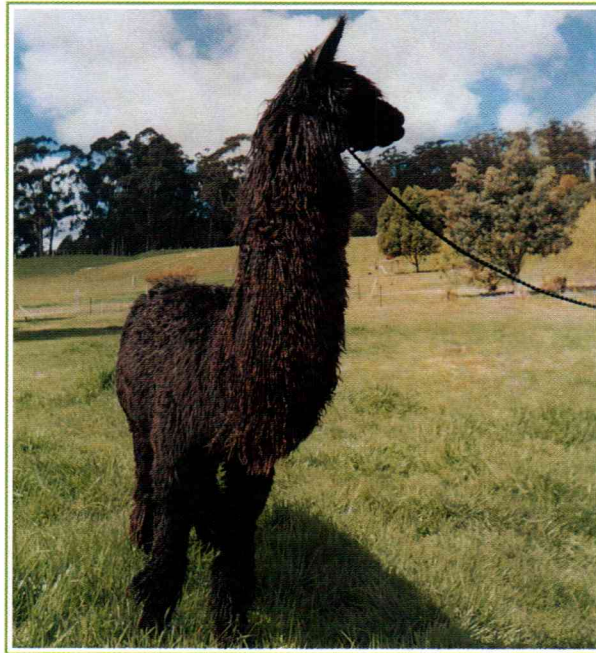
Since that time what had been a house in a lovely setting has become a farm. The land has been fenced into paddocks suitable for stud males, females, wethers and weanlings. Our motto is "Breeding Superior Quality Blacks"; to that end the herd of huacayas and suris is predominantly black with several of the females due to give birth later in the year. Presently standing at stud (and for half of each year) is the multi-award winning black huacaya male, *Wytterica Patrick*.

It is our strong belief that the only way forward for a viable and profitable alpaca industry is to make every effort to improve the quality of the fleece, especially its fineness. This can only be done by introducing excellent genetic potential into our herds through judicious breeding programmes. Naturally it will always cost more to achieve this, but breeders never do themselves a favour by skimping on mating fees. Genetic quality is the name of the game, something which continues to be

for some breeders and the cost of importing a really good stud male is high too. However, the dangers of continuing to use the same bloodlines, even good ones, and of imagining that our overall quality is higher than it is are only too real. We have to take every opportunity to introduce top class new genes whenever we can. Only then will more Tasmanian animals become the equal of (and, consequently, as valuable as) animals anywhere else.

It takes patience, it takes time and it is not cheap – but it is essential. We hope to help by introducing new stud males of high quality in the years ahead. Despite Tasmania's relative isolation and the extra cost this involves, the island has some wonderful positives to offer. The people are friendly, the countryside is magnificent and largely unspoilt, the weather reasonably predictable, the climate suited to animal husbandry and the style and pace of life less stressful than elsewhere. Nature is bountiful and the price of farm land and property is within the reach of younger people like ourselves. True, the island has a tendency to be wary of new ideas – especially any emanating from 'The Mainland'! – but that is the nature of islands the world over.

We are truly pleased to be in Tasmania and, in our own small way, to be reversing the trend of people leaving to try their luck in other parts of Australia. I hope that Viracocha Alpacas will make its mark in its new island home and that my previous experiences in New South Wales, and my progress towards becoming an AAA accredited Judge, will prove, over time, to be of benefit to everyone. ■



One of the black suris at Viracocha Alpacas

proved by our friends in the cattle and sheep industries. For alpaca breeders it is even more critical: we make no money by selling animals for meat nor do we have the huge flocks which sheep breeders have. For us it is only quality of a genuinely high standard that will pay us financially in the end.

This is without doubt a real problem for Tasmania, because the cost of sending females to the mainland for mating can be prohibitive

# “Criation” of a Lifestyle

by RON REID  
SWAN VALLEY ALPACA STUD, WA

It was back in February 1994 when Rose and I saw our first alpaca, a brown Chilean female, and almost instantly decided we had to have her. A few months later we purchased another young female plus a young brown male that was to be our future stud male!

We entered him in the Perth Royal Show, proud to be showing off our new boy.

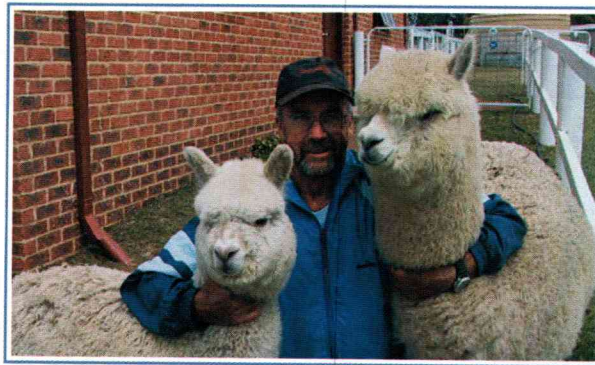
I can still clearly hear the judge giving his post assessment (in private) on our young brown male – “Quite a nice young alpaca but I’d wether him if he was mine.” I explained this was to be our future **stud** male! He replied, “you did ask for an honest assessment, didn’t you?” I think my comment was, “thanks, you’ve made my day!” However we did take his advice.

The learning curve in those early years was very steep although very enjoyable. Being very keen to succeed we listened to judges and other experienced people and also read any article or books on alpacas we could get our hands on. We decided to concentrate on quality not quantity and set ourselves a five year plan.

In June 1996 on our way to the Alpaca Conference on the Gold Coast we took time to visit some top studs in Victoria. One of those was Ron and Dianne Condon’s Shanbrooke Alpacas at Yarra Glen, where we purchased a quality young female, *Moore Park Highland Princess*. She has proved to be a great asset as she went on to win Grand Champion Female at the Perth Royal and all of her offspring have also won champion sashes. Both Rose and I

firmly believe it is extremely important to build a trust with a breeder with whom you feel comfortable and confident and one who has a sound knowledge of the industry. Ron and Dianne have been very generous in sharing their alpaca knowledge and helped us select quality stock.

Like any sound business venture you must have strong foundations on which to build. The alpaca industry is no different.



Ron Reid with *Swan Valley Achiever* and *Swan Valley Elegance*

Without doubt our biggest break came when we were fortunate enough to purchase *Shanbrooke Elite* at 10 months of age. Not only has he won numerous championships (including 3 Supremes) both in the ring and fleece sections throughout Australia, he has also stamped excellent qualities in his progeny. That same year we attended the National Classic auction and purchased *Purrrumbete Portia* who was then pregnant to *Peruvian Sonoma*. Portia gave birth to our next top stud male *Swan Valley Majestic*. With the addition of another 5 pregnant females we now felt we had an excellent base from which to build.

There are various reasons why people own or breed alpacas, however it is very rewarding to breed quality stock. The principles we adhere to and pass on to new breeders are:

- Quality females are paramount in achieving excellent results.
- A breeding plan will be far more effective by utilising the genetics of top sires.
- Quality, not quantity – a small number of quality alpacas is much

more economical i.e. less mating fees, less management costs (feed, vet fees, shearing, agistment if applicable). It can also be more rewarding financially.

The past 8 years of breeding alpacas has been extremely rewarding for both Rose and myself as well as our four children who have become more involved over

the last few years.

We had been thinking for some time that we needed to expand our genetics and realized our dream when we travelled to Peru recently and purchased an Accoyo stud male from the Barreda Plantel herd as well as two breeding females.

Apart from being a viable business and a very enjoyable lifestyle, we both believe one of the highlights has been the great friendships we’ve made Australia wide. Having alpaca breeders from such a variety of backgrounds in this young industry is very positive.

With continual monitoring and careful planning we are very confident that our Swan Valley Stud will continue to produce future show champions. ■

# Alpacas the hard way

by JILL WINTER  
BLUETOR ALPACAS, TASMANIA

We hear and read a lot about, and from, the so-called 'bigger, richer, more successful' breeders. Well, we're not; we're two of the 'little people' – those who make up the majority of AAA members. We thought we'd share some of our story with you. It may strike a chord with some; it'll probably horrify others; still more will think we've totally lost the plot, but I hope it might just inspire others to stay with it as everything can come right even from the blackest of times.

We first came across alpacas at the Perth Royal Show in 1993 or was it 1994, I forget. Anyway, they were tucked away at the back of a shed with other 'exotics'. There were, I think, only two alpacas there but with those huge soulful eyes and gorgeously long eyelashes, how could anyone resist?

Well, we did resist. We'd been in Australia for just under 12 months at that time and we had enough on our plate trying to figure out how the place 'ticked'. So what changed? Well, those fascinating creatures must have lingered at the back of our minds because two years later, we were back. Our first female was bought because I liked the colour! The other two were 'booked' from the Hamilton-Bridges Peruvian shipment.

Running them ourselves was out of the question. We were based in an Aboriginal community called Warakurna (near Giles Meteorological Station, if you know the area) – 300kms west of Uluru and 1500kms east of Kalgoorlie. Camels a plenty but not the place for our alpacas. Both of us had spent our entire working lives teaching. Between us we've taught everyone aged from 6 to 60 in several

different places around the world. The desert is as close to being 'another country' inside Australia as you'll get and we loved it! So why alpacas? Good question and one I've asked myself many times in the intervening years! What we really wanted of Australia, I think, was in Robin's case, a place with a large shed and in my case, to experience 'real life' outside



*Bluetor Socks* matches the colour of the grass during a Tasmanian summer drought

the safety of a school setting. You see we'd probably never have considered it in England but here in Australia... well, you can... can't you? I can now think of 101 things we could, or maybe should have done, but we didn't. We bought 3 female alpacas and moved to Tasmania. Why Tassie? That's easy – after 18 months of red dust and sun, green trees and rain seemed absolutely right. To cap it all we bought 28 acres in Dover. For those who don't know Tasmania, that's almost as far south as you can get. A beautiful place and for a while we were Australia's Southernmost Alpaca Stud.

That farm gave us our stud name – a 'tor' is a rocky outcrop on top of a hill. It's a term common in Devon, England, where Robin hails from and the 'blue' bit was because the rocky outcrop was, in fact, our house made of bluestone. We were still living on romantic notions of 'The Good Life' Australian style.

In May 1997, *Suricaya Honeycake 2* and our firstborn made the trip over from WA. Four weeks later she aborted her cria. Setback number one. We hadn't stopped to think about dead stock in our business plan! Setback numbers two and three were serious. Too late we realised that the restrictions on importing animals into Tasmania meant that the Peruvians would have to do another 12 months on the mainland before they would be allowed to enter Tasmania. This despite the fact that they'd just done 15 months quarantine! We pleaded but they stayed. Both had given birth to male cria in quarantine

on Nuie – one died two months after arriving in Australia and the other three months later. I shall always be grateful that we'd listened to the advice of WA breeder, Jenny Jackson, and had them insured!

Things weren't going quite according to plan. Working on another bit of sound advice, this time from Tena and Terry Wheeler in WA – always use the best males you can afford – we sent *Honeycake* and *Bluetor Tjitji* to Victoria for mating.

To digress, Tjitji is an Aboriginal word from the Ngaanyatjarra people that means little child. Several of our alpacas have aboriginal names – *Bluetor Minarli*, one of the two stud males we now have, means white boy; his

mother is *Somerset Minyma* – white woman; *Kirnara* means moon; and *Kumana* is the word used to replace a name when someone dies. *Tjirrkarli* – spearhead – was one of the two Nuie boys that died. With the ‘spearhead’ of the operation gone, our direction, vision, dream, whatever you call it, was a bit blurred!

For the next two years we had a 28 acre farm with Murray Greys, coloured sheep and wandering geese but no alpacas. We read everything we should have read before we got into the industry and Robin went to every seminar, conference, show and sale we could afford. We learnt heaps very quickly about farming, about organics, about livestock, about alpacas and about ourselves too. There were times when I could cheerfully have screamed my way through the day; there were times when I was so depressed, I just sat and cried; but there were also the days when pausing to watch Daisy (all our cows were named Daisy) with her newborn calf in a quiet, sun drenched paddock, put life itself back into perspective.

It was during these two years that I finally quit teaching and became a tax consultant instead, and Robin got his shed. He started producing alpaca woodcrafts. He designed and made fridge magnets from scrap timber. People loved them so he made more. To his great surprise, his bits and pieces sold well at shows and regional events over here. Encouraged, he disappeared into the shed more often, for hours on end, and came up with prototypes for more alpaca gifts – earrings, toast racks and wind chimes. These things today form the basis of his woodcraft business.

At present he’s working on a special piece from a rather special tree. The One Tree Project was the brainchild of those Tasmanian craftsmen who wanted to demonstrate just how much quality woodwork could be made from just One Tree. An alternative to woodchips, it shows that many more livelihoods can be maintained from our forests than is at present the case. Robin’s offering will be a small part of that project.

**Back to the alpacas** – in November 1999 we finally managed to get all our alpacas back into Tasmania together. There were now 6 females, all pregnant, and two young males. Surely we’d now turned the corner and things could only get better. Still believing we could make it work, still believing in the industry as a whole and still telling ourselves, “there are

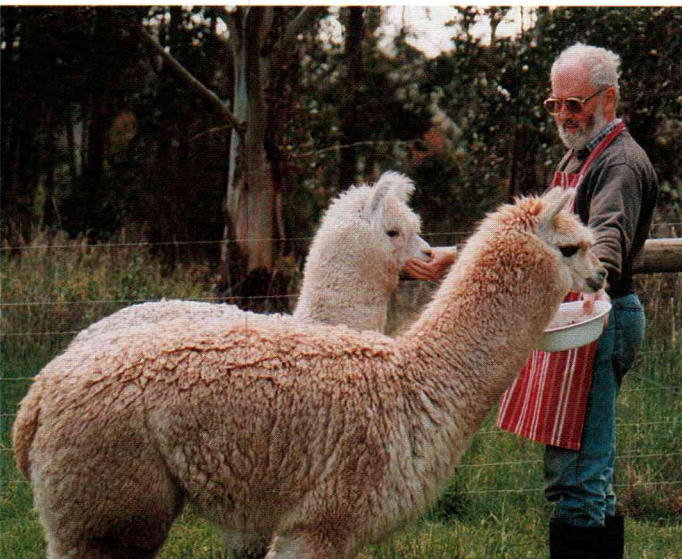
no problems, only solutions”... two of our females aborted their cria – AGAIN!!!! It was heartbreaking. It only seemed to happen after long stressful journeys but that didn’t do anything to lessen the disappointment. I must admit, that was the low point for me – for about 24 hours, I could happily have given them all away! However as one by one the other girls produced, problem free, beautiful cria, we dared to believe that, after all, we **could** make the dream happen.

I was brought up with, “you can do anything you want, if you want it enough”. So, we picked ourselves up, took a deep breath and revisited the business plan once more.

Since then, we’ve moved to a smaller place nearer the Big Smoke (Hobart?!); our two boys have grown up to be fine, dense, hard working blokes; all our Y2K babies have gone to new homes and all the girls are pregnant again. Fingers crossed please! We’re still aiming to go organic in the long term and we still manage

our land and alpacas with the emphasis on environmental sustainability. Robin’s woodcraft is a burgeoning Tasmanian micro business. He has buyers all over the Australian mainland except in the Northern Territory and ACT. Many studs and tourist outlets like to have ‘a little something’ that visitors can go away with as a souvenir. And we’ve just taken the step of going online. For those techno-pacas among you – [www.geocities.com/bluetor\\_alpacas](http://www.geocities.com/bluetor_alpacas).

It’s been a switchback few years for us – challenging, exciting, frustrating, but we wouldn’t change it. We were fortunate to have had no debt and to have a portable career skill that is in demand. There have been tough times but wouldn’t life be boring if it was all too easy! We believe in the alpaca industry and we are determined to add our ten penn’orth to its development. Our lifestyle, on the edge, may not be everybody’s idea of fun but it sure beats being “Miss” (or Sir) to 29 five year olds any day!! ■

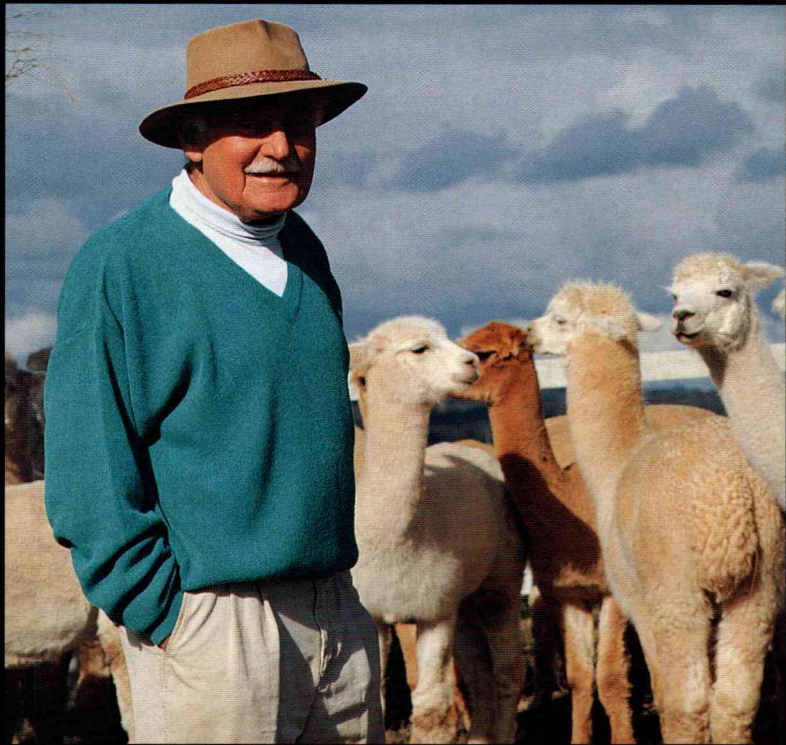


A true drought. Last summer in Tassie. No overweight alpacas here!

*Bluetor Minarli* and *Bluetor Titan* at about 12 months of age

# MARKET PLACE

Photography Tom Dimec



▲ Mens lightweight links knit jumper in a classic V  
Available in a variety of colours [s to xxl] \$270.00  
The Alpaca Centre, Australia 02 4877 1399



▲ Baby alpaca & silk mix tunic  
[navy, black] [xs to xxl] \$385.00  
The Alpaca Centre, Australia 02 4877 1399

Photography Tom Dimec



▲ 3 stripe men's alpaca/cotton blend sweater  
\$190.00  
Inca Stitches 03 9525 5768

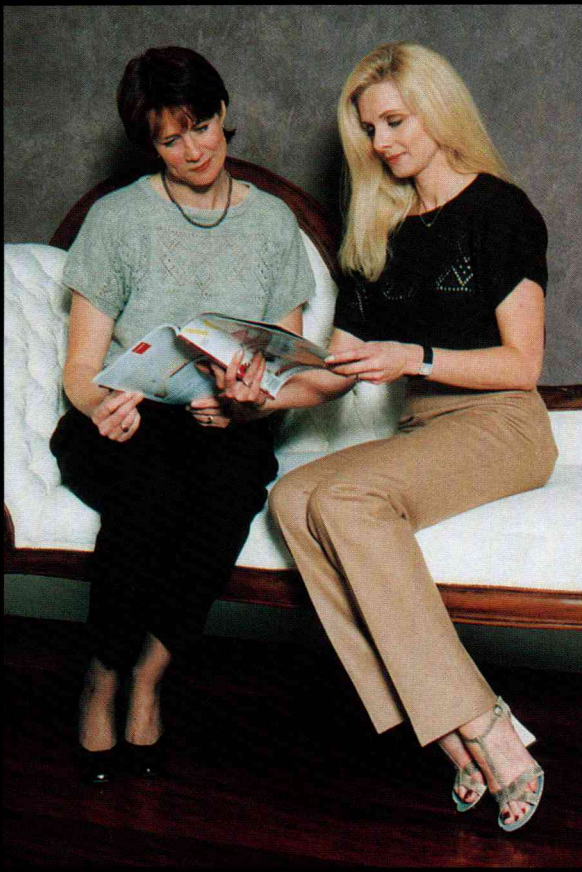


▲ Alpaca blend bouclé sweaters  
[m, l] \$195.00  
Inca Stitches 03 9525 5768

Photography Annette Ringrose



Entries in MARKETPLACE are free to alpaca retailers  
 Please contact Sandra Wright for details at the  
 Australian Alpaca Association Inc.  
 Phone: (03) 9873 7700 Fax: (03) 9873 7711  
 E-mail: sandra@alpaca.asn.au



© Creature Comforts

▲ **'Machu Picchu'** Ladies crew neck, lace yoke, short sleeve jumper [black, grey, brown, fawn] [s, m, l, xl] \$160.00  
 Creature Comforts 02 4573 6681 / 02 6355 2477

▼ **'Callao'** Ladies Lace V neck cardigan, set in sleeve [grey black, brown, dark brown, fawn] [s, m, l, xl] \$230.00  
 Creature Comforts  
 02 4573 6681 / 02 6355 2477



© Creature Comforts



© Alpaca Granja

▲ **Mens alpaca plain knit, lightweight vest**  
 Available with buttons and pockets [black, navy, dark grey, red]  
 [m, l, xl] \$132.00  
 Alpaca Granja 03 5259 3630



© Alpaca Granja

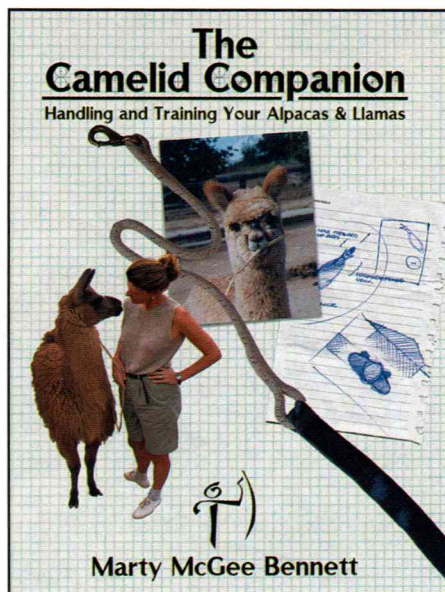
▲ **Mens and Ladies alpaca fabric vest with crochet edge**  
 [black, brown, beige, navy] [m, l, xl] \$126.50  
 Alpaca Granja 03 5259 3630

# BOOK REVIEW

## *The Camelid Companion*

reviewed by GEOFF FYSH, CONVENOR  
AAA EDUCATION & TRAINING SUB-COMMITTEE

American animal behaviourist Marty McGee Bennett has a well-deserved worldwide reputation for helping alpaca owners handle their animals.



**THE CAMELID COMPANION**  
BY MARTY MCGEE BENNETT  
ISBN 0-9709916-0-6  
PUBLISHED BY RACCOON PRESS,  
NEW YORK, USA – MAY 2001

Her most recent book *The Camelid Companion: Handling and training your alpacas and llamas* is a very weighty (nearly 400 pages) compendium of comprehensive practical lessons.

With the alpaca industry being such a magnet for people with minimal livestock skills her down-to-earth approach to handling alpacas is a welcome addition to our somewhat limited amount of reading material.

There is probably no definitive text that covers every single aspect of running alpacas (and certainly not under Australian conditions) and so it is one of the book's strengths that the author keeps relating back to the principal subject of handling, even in chapters on veterinary procedures and husbandry.

Despite the preoccupation with a love of llamas and an obvious predilection for pets, Marty manages to write in an easily understood style about a variety of topics highly relevant to alpaca owners.

As the title would suggest most of the book concentrates on handling and training. However, chapters such as "Camelidynamics Defined" provide the uninitiated with an understanding of the way alpacas think and regard their owners. From this she builds a framework of lessons and useful tips that can make the difference between pleasant, rewarding progress or frustrating disasters that end in defeat.

Throughout the chapters distinctive icons with various names such as "(Not for) Beginners Only" and "Get this!" are used as quick reference guides to help cement a vital point in the reader's mind.

As Marty says, "This book is about something much more than toleration, de-sensitisation and habituation. I am writing this book to help you create a truly respectful, safe and trusting relationship with your animals."

A copy of *The Camelid Companion* is available for Association members to borrow from the AAA Library facility. A limited number of books are currently available to purchase from the National Office – price available upon application. Alternatively the book may be ordered via Marty's website: [www.camelidynamics.com](http://www.camelidynamics.com) ■

**About the Author:** For those who might not be familiar with the life-work of Marty McGee Bennett, here's a thumbnail sketch provided by Dave Belt, Editor of "Alpacas Magazine – Official Journal of the Alpaca Owners and Breeders Association Inc."

After graduating from the University of Georgia with a degree in Animal Behavioural Science, Marty served in the U.S. Army for a few years. After leaving the service, she pursued her life-long dream of working with animals. In 1987, she met British animal behaviourist Linda Tellington-Jones, 'inventor' of a unique style of animal-human interaction training called Tellington Touch Every Animal Method (TTEAM – pronounced "Tee-Team"). Inspired by Linda's success working with humans and their horses, Marty set about the task of creating a new model for use with llamas and alpacas. Nowadays, she is truly a 'celebrity' among the alpaca community for her amazing techniques and teaching style. She and her husband, Brad, currently travel the world in a Recreational Vehicle, presenting in-person training sessions.

# BUSINESS CARD DIRECTORY

## SOUTHERN TABLELANDS FIBRE TESTING

*'For those who are serious about fibre growing'*

- ~ALL STANDARD FIBRE TESTS CONDUCTED~
- ~COMPREHENSIVE RANGE OF TEST REPORTS~
- ~AVAILABLE FOR ON-FARM OR IN-HOUSE TESTING~
- ~FULL LENGTH OF FIBRE TESTED~

Enquiries: Ph (02) 48373210  
Email: paulvalley@bigpond.com



Chris Hight & 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  
Hight Engineering  
PO Box 255  
Torrens Park SA 5062

**Ph/Fax: (08) 8538 7115**  
**Email: higheten@lm.net.au**

## QUALITY ALPACA SUPPLIES

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

*For a catalogue  
please phone or fax  
Christine Roffey on  
**(02) 4572 5812***

## Barb's Sew and Knits PHONE (08) 8294 7441

2 BYRON STREET, GLENELG SA 5045 (off Jetty Road)

### KNITTING YARNS

### KNITTING MACHINE SPECIALISTS & TUITION

### SEWING & KNITTING CENTRE

SALES & REPAIR TO ALL MAKES OF MACHINES

B. NOLL, Proprietor



## MICRON ACN 090 048 294 MAN - FIBRE ANALYSIS

*The Alpaca Breeders Preferred testing service  
Using the Latest OFDA Technology  
Specialized Alpaca Reports at Competitive Rates*

Enquiries Contact : Wayne or Jo Marshall  
Address : P.O. Box 1423, Bibra Lake W.A. 6965  
Unit 9/28 Salpietro Street, Bibra Lake W.A. 6965  
Phone : 08-9418 1733 Fax : 08-9494 2931



## BERRIDALE ALPACAS

*High Country  
High Quality*

Richard & Judith  
Dixon  
*" Crofton on the Hill "*

26 O'BRIEN AVENUE  
BERRIDALE NSW 2628  
**PH: (02) 6456 3676**

## TRULEEN DOWNS



- Mobile or on-farm mating
- Agistment: short & long term
- Group tours and workshops  
– spinning lessons
- Alpaca sales – ribbon winning stock
- Gift Shop "PACA SHACK"  
– garments, halters, leads etc

940 Toomuc Valley Rd,  
Pakenham 3810  
**Phone: 5942 7417**  
**Fax: 5942 7201**  
Email: truleen@net2000.com.au  
www.truleendownsalpaca.aussie.com.au



Place your  
business card  
advertisement  
in the  
BUSINESS  
DIRECTORY  
FOR ONLY \$110  
PER ISSUE  
or  
\$88 PER ISSUE  
FOR 3-ISSUE  
BOOKINGS

FOR BOOKINGS  
contact  
Sandra Wright  
at the  
Australian Alpaca  
Association Inc.  
Phone: (03) 9873 7700  
Fax: (03) 9873 7711  
E-mail:  
sandra@alpaca.asn.au

*paca***pics**  
*paca***pics**  
*paca***pics**  
*paca***pics**



< No-one photographs my baby without MY permission >

Angela Preuss  
 Pinjarra Alpacas, VIC



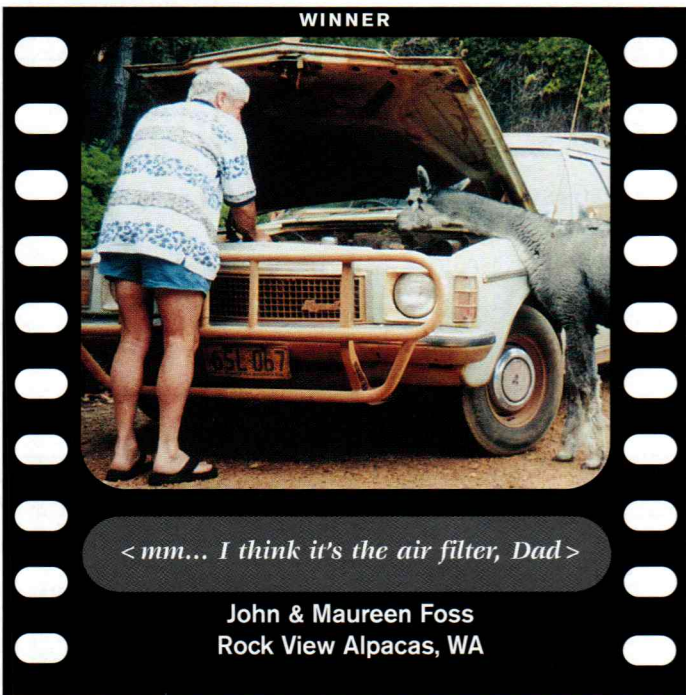
< Aren't YOU a cute little fellow! >

Janice Ward  
 Monteagle Alpaca Stud, NSW



< Oh please, can't we still be friends? >

Fiona Henderson  
 Cooredulla Alpacas, NSW



< mm... I think it's the air filter, Dad >

John & Maureen Foss  
 Rock View Alpacas, WA

**Every picture *does* tell a story!**

Alpacas at work, at play, at rest, alpacas at their very best. Send us your favourite snaps of your alpacas and let your photographs tell us about your stud.

'Paca Pics' feature offers you the opportunity to charm our readers with your delightful photos and, as a bonus, the 'Pick of the Pack' winner will receive a complimentary business card size advertisement insertion in the next magazine.

'Alpacas Australia' Magazine front cover is, most importantly, the place where we would like to illustrate the adage, 'Every picture tells a story'. The new look magazine has a truly Australian flavour that we hope will continue to be proudly displayed on the front cover of each issue. We are looking for photographs that have that special 'Australian' feel for our future front covers, so check your albums to see if you have any that fit the bill. (Humor does not go astray!)

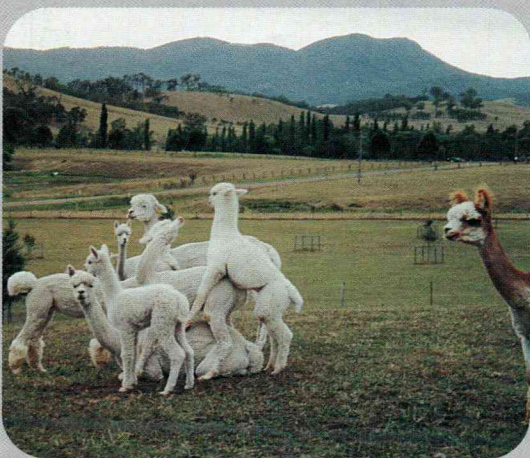
The winners of magazine front cover status will likewise receive a business card advertisement insertion in the next magazine as well as five complimentary copies of the magazine bearing their winning front cover photograph. The magazines will prove to be excellent promotional tools for your stud.

We look forward to your continued support of 'Alpacas Australia' Magazine.



*< Is there anything going on back there? >*

Jill Winter  
Blue Tor Alpacas, TAS



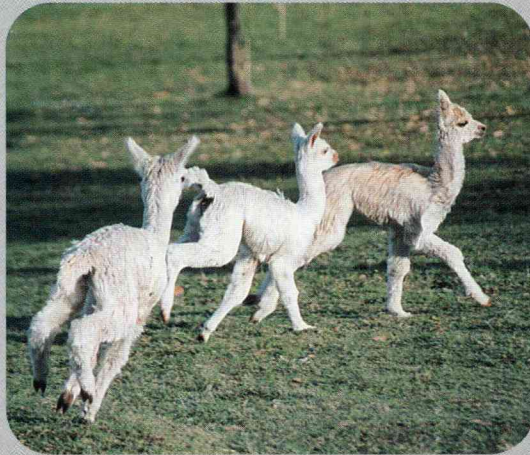
*< The refs the one in the brown coat! >*

Andrew & Pat Johns  
Forest Alpacas, NSW



*< Cheers! >*

Janie Hicks  
Coolaroo Alpaca Stud, NSW



*< Yeah! Playtime >*

Fiona Laughton  
Beavona Lodge Suri Alpacas, QLD



*< psst... Don't look behind us, they may recognise WE are last year's fleeces >*

P & C Mahomed  
Luamber Alpacas, VIC



*< Don't you just hate it when the shearer's running late! >*

Jude Anderson & Alan Cousill  
Pucara Alpaca Stud, VIC

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Alpacas on show at the following venues - All welcome -*

2002

### January

27 BUNGENDORE SHOW, NSW  
*Venue:* Bungendore Showgrounds  
*Highlights:* Promotional display  
*Contact:* John van der Straaten (02) 6238 3590

### February

1 - 2 BERRY SHOW, NSW  
*Venue:* Berry Showgrounds  
*Highlights:* Alpaca Judging (1 Feb)  
*Contact:* Des McDonald (02) 4446 0538

9 TYRENDARRA FLEECE SHOW, VIC  
*Venue:* Tyrendarra Showgrounds  
*Highlights:* Fleece Judging  
*Contact:* Rob Johnstone (03) 5529 2592

15 - 16 KANGAROO VALLEY SHOW, NSW  
*Venue:* Kangaroo Valley Showgrounds  
*Contact:* Kevin Watson (02) 4448 6267

15 - 17 SEYMOUR ALTERNATIVE FARMING EXPO, VIC  
*Venue:* Seymour Showgrounds  
*Highlights:* Promotional display  
*Contact:* Glenn Sutherland (03) 5826 2455

16 - 17 FAR SOUTH COAST SHOW, NSW  
*Venue:* Bega Showgrounds  
*Highlights:* Alpaca & Fleece Judging (16 Feb)  
 Promotional display (17 Feb)  
*Contact:* Susan Nielson (02) 6493 2602

22 - 24 ROYAL CANBERRA SHOW, ACT  
*Venue:* EPIC (Showgrounds)  
*Highlights:* Fleece Judging (22 Feb)  
 Alpaca Judging (23/24 Feb)  
*Contact:* John van der Straaten (02) 6238 3590

### March

1 - 2 ROBERTSON SHOW, NSW  
*Venue:* Robertson Showgrounds  
*Contact:* Heather Vickery (02) 4885 2852

2 - 3 STAWELL ALPACA SHOW, VIC  
*Venue:* Stawell Showgrounds  
*Highlights:* Inaugural alpaca show  
*Contact:* Tracy Krupa (03) 5359 2388

3 BRAIDWOOD SHOW, NSW  
*Venue:* Braidwood Showgrounds  
*Highlights:* Promotional display  
*Contact:* Kerry Dwyer (02) 4847 5020

16 MT PLEASANT SHOW, SA  
*Contact:* Dan Males (08) 8556 9097

17 - 18 GOULBURN SHOW, NSW  
*Venue:* Goulburn Showgrounds  
*Highlights:* Fleece Judging & Promotional display  
*Contact:* Jacki Waugh (02) 4829 8157

22 - 4 April SYDNEY ROYAL SHOW, NSW  
*Venue:* Showgrounds, Homebush  
*Highlights:* Fleece Judging (19 March)  
 Alpaca Judging (2 April)  
*Contact:* Helen Fritsch (02) 6359 5033  
 Richard Bird (02) 9655 1122

23 WODONGA SHOW, VIC  
*Venue:* Wodonga Showgrounds  
*Contact:* Sally McGregor (03) 5726 1524

24 - 25 YASS SHOW, NSW  
*Venue:* Yass Showgrounds  
*Highlights:* Promotional display  
*Contact:* Carolyn Austin (02) 6226 4169

30 - 1 April BENDIGO EASTER FAIR, VIC  
*Venue:* Rosalind Park, Bendigo  
*Highlights:* Promotional display  
*Contact:* Meddwyn Coleman (03) 5448 8032

### April

7 ALPACA FIESTA, WA  
*Venue:* Palandri Winery, Cowaramup  
*Highlights:* Promotional display  
*Contact:* Diny Monaghan (08) 9764 1061

12 - 14 BATHURST SHOW, NSW  
*Venue:* Bathurst Showgrounds  
*Highlights:* Animal & Fleece Show, Expo  
 Animal Judging (14 April)  
*Contact:* David Owen (02) 6337 5836

13 TOOWOOMBA ROYAL SHOW, QLD  
*Venue:* Toowoomba Showgrounds  
*Highlights:* Alpaca Judging  
*Contact:* Pippa Smith (07) 4630 9777

20 NANANGO SHOW, QLD  
*Venue:* Nanango Showgrounds  
*Highlights:* Promotional display  
*Contact:* John & Trish Elliott (07) 4171 0469

20 BALINGUP SMALL FARM FIELD DAY, WA  
*Venue:* Balingup  
*Highlights:* Promotional display  
*Contact:* Ron Robertson (08) 9764 1272

### May

3 - 5 TOCAL FIELD DAYS, NSW  
*Venue:* Paterson  
*Highlights:* Tocal Fleece Show  
*Contact:* Narelle Tulip (02) 4934 1799  
 Evelyn Thrift (02) 4938 1513



## Rates

All prices below are subject to 5% discount if paid within 14 days of invoice

	Casual Rate		x 2 issues		x 3 issues		Production*	
	SAUD Incl. GST AUSTRALIA	SAUD OVERSEAS	SAUD Incl. GST AUSTRALIA	SAUD OVERSEAS	SAUD Incl. GST AUSTRALIA	SAUD OVERSEAS	SAUD Incl. GST AUSTRALIA	SAUD OVERSEAS
<b>4 colour</b>								
Full Page	1,097.25	997.50	1,022.15	929.25	866.25	787.50	323.40	294.00
1/2 Page	773.85	703.50	716.10	651.00	612.15	556.50	242.55	220.50
1/4 Page	669.90	609.00	612.15	556.50	519.75	472.50	161.70	147.00
<b>Mono</b>								
Full Page	773.85	703.50	716.10	651.00	612.15	556.50	231.00	210.00
1/2 Page	542.85	493.50	508.20	462.00	438.90	399.00	161.70	147.00
1/4 Page	311.85	283.50	288.75	262.50	254.10	231.00	92.40	84.00
Bus. cards	115.50	105.00	103.95	94.50	92.40	84.00	N/A	N/A

### Loading for Specified Positions

Outside Back Cover	+ 25%
Inside Front Cover	+ 20%
Inside Back Cover	+ 15%
Right Hand Page	+ 10%
Specific Positions	+ 10%

### \*Production costs include

Layout, typesetting and electronic finished artwork and low resolution proofs (high resolution extra)

### Additional Costs

Colour scanning	\$40.00 per photograph
Mono scanning	\$30.00 per photograph

### Space and Sizes (mm)



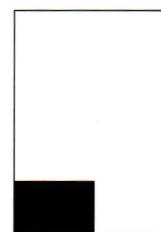
Full Page  
Image: 188 x 275  
Trim: A4 (210 x 297)  
allow 3mm bleed all sides



1/2 Page  
188 x 123



1/4 page  
91 x 123



Business Card  
90 x 55

## Material

**Editorial Material.** If possible, all editorial contributions should be typed and preferably submitted electronically or by floppy disc in Word format. Visual material preferably supplied as colour photographs or transparencies. If supplying digital photography ensure that it is in high resolution of at least 250 dpi. We will endeavour to return all photos and slides.

**Advertising Material.** Please supply electronic artwork on disc to correct size. Include all screen and printer typefaces, high resolution pictures, logos etc associated with the advertisement. Colour adverts to be supplied in CMYK (not PMS or RGB). Please supply hard copy proof in colour or mono (as applicable). We cannot guarantee inclusion of late advertisements.

Further advertising material enquiries can be directed to:

Irene Garner  
Garner Graphics  
Phone +61 (0)2 4884 1222 Fax +61 (0)2 4884 1233  
Email [garnering@bigpond.com.au](mailto:garnering@bigpond.com.au)

## Deadlines

### Issue 37

Due: April 2002  
Deadline: Friday 15 February

### Issue 38

Due: August 2002  
Deadline: Friday 7 June

### Issue 39

Due: December 2002  
Deadline: Friday 11 October

Please book and send all editorial and advertising material to Sandra Wright  
Australian Alpaca Association Inc, PO Box 1076, Mitcham North, Victoria 3132  
PHONE +61 (0)3 9873 7700 FAX +61 (0)3 9873 7711 EMAIL [sandra@alpaca.asn.au](mailto:sandra@alpaca.asn.au)





# STARLINE ALPACAS



WILL HELP YOU IMPROVE YOUR HERD WITH  
Our excellent **SOLID WHITE** stud males  
whose progeny are showing wonderful potential

**Starline STARBUCK (70)**  
Sire - Peruvian

**Starline MR. UNIVERSE (40)**  
Sire - Somerset Atahualpa

**Starline SPUTNIK (08)**  
Sire - Purumbete Highlander



**WHY NOT CHECK IT OUT YOURSELVES?**

Please contact us for further information:  
Bill Jenkinson (Farm Manager) Ph: 0438 791 081  
Ilona & Karl Freund (Owners) Ph: 02 9417 6233 (bh)  
FARM: 1100 Milbrodale Road  
BROKE NSW 2330 (Hunter Valley)  
e-mail: [starlinealpacas@hotmail.com](mailto:starlinealpacas@hotmail.com)



**Come & visit us & stay at our well appointed self-contained sandstone cabins, have a game of tennis, enjoy a swim in our pool, or just relax in the spa or sauna watching the peaceful alpacas graze in front of your cabin - & enjoy the wonderful vineyards surrounding our property.**  
Website: [www.starlinealpacas.com](http://www.starlinealpacas.com)

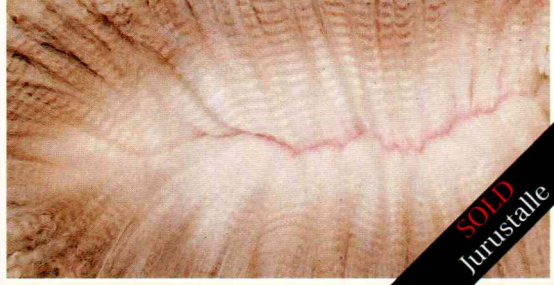


# Timbertop Alpacas

## Natural Network Australia

### Summer Collection

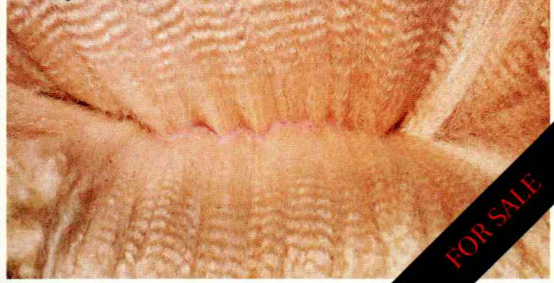
3rd junior male white @ the Nationals 2001



**SOLD**  
Jurustalle

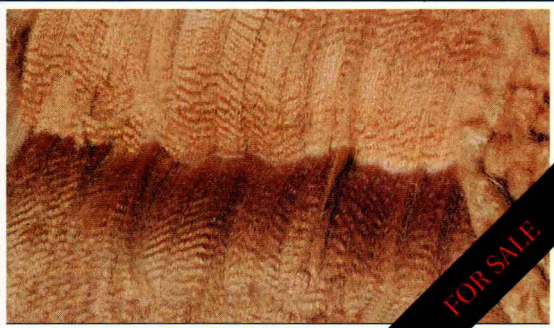
Timbertop Offshore

1st junior male fawn @ the Nationals 2001



**FOR SALE**

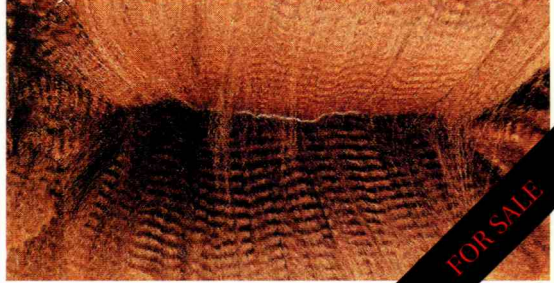
Timbertop Alibi



**FOR SALE**

Anneaton Ruffus

1st junior male brown @ the Nationals 2001



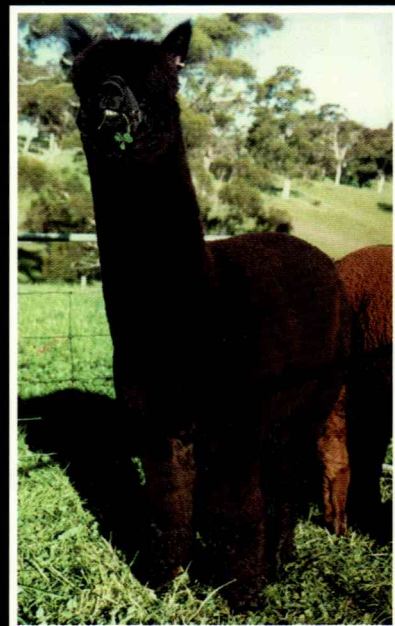
**FOR SALE**

Timbertop Pathfinder

*Access huge genetic gains – in black  
“Timbertop The Scud”*



His cria have started arriving and all 6 progeny  
– 5 females, 1 male –  
although young, are showing  
his outstanding attributes. Excellent density,  
bold staple and crimp definition and true to type  
– 5 black, 1 dark fawn –  
and all are solid in their colour.



© photography Cath Norman 0417 846 634



*Networking across Australia.*

Contact Andrew Brown for more details on  
PH: 0409 549 547 / 08 8355 1284  
email: [andrewbrown@timbertopalpacas.com.au](mailto:andrewbrown@timbertopalpacas.com.au)  
[www.timbertopalpacas.com.au](http://www.timbertopalpacas.com.au)

