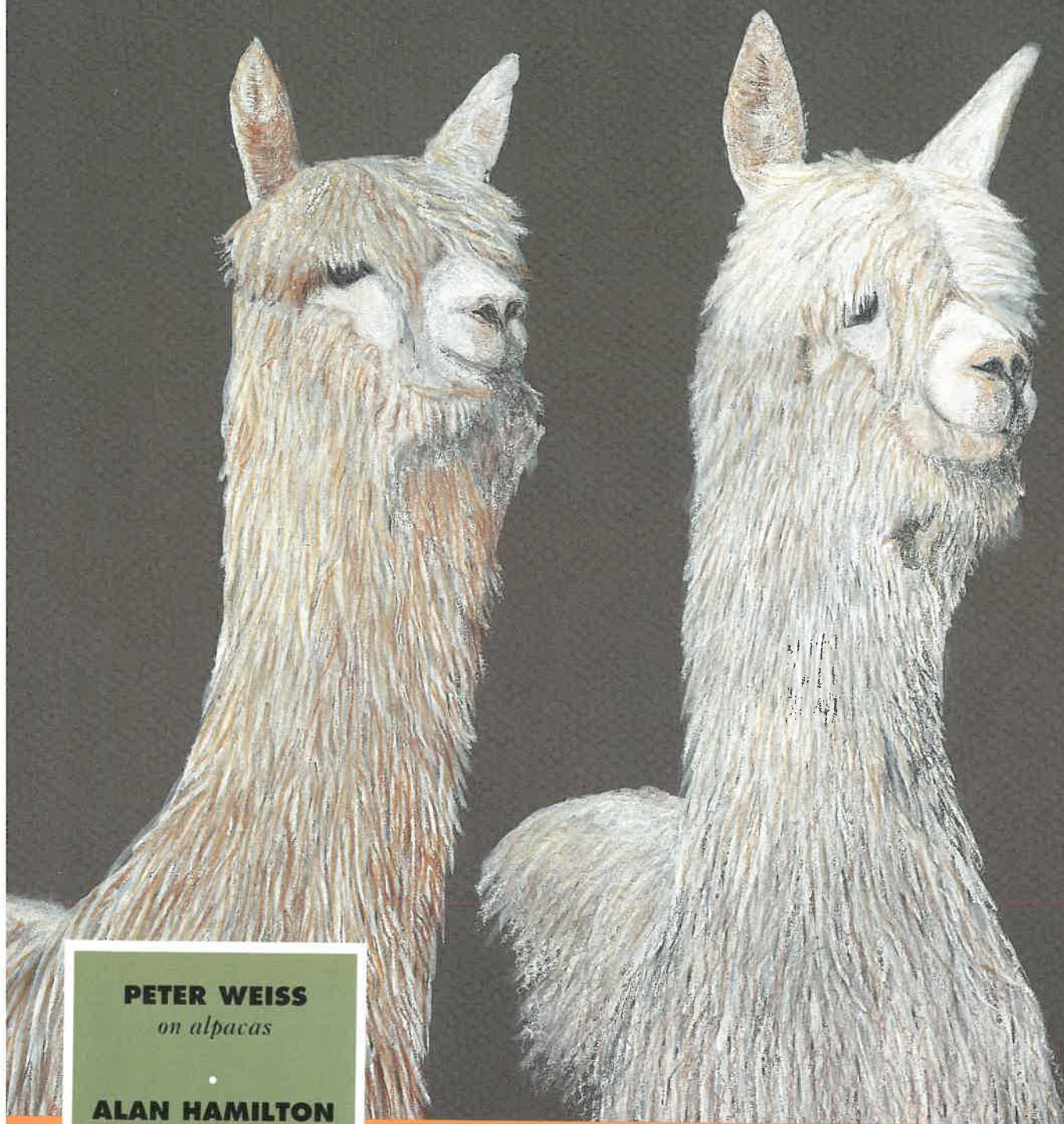


Alpacas

A U S T R A L I A

ISSUE No. 8 1994

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on alpacas

ALAN HAMILTON
views on Peru

CLIFF RODDA
alpaca artist

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*Illustration of Alpacas by artist
Cliff Rodda*

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ACROSS THE EDITOR'S DESK

Original alpaca art for our front cover

I hope you like the alpaca painting on the cover as a change from photos. I also hope that some of the classic Australian landscape paintings 100 years from now will feature alpacas peacefully grazing. Their graceful poses really lend themselves to being painted.

In this issue we look at a US and an Australian alpaca auction, both of which were very successful. The Association will hold a 2-day show and sale (auction) this November at Dalgety's Oaklands Junction complex in Melbourne. Members will be sent information, but it is important to select animals now for preparation and training as they have to be photographed for the catalogue months in advance. A high profile auction needs excellent quality stock to be a success. It is an opportunity to promote your stud which will be judged by the stock you offer (or purchase).

I thought our alpaca related stories were diverse in the last issue. The trend continues here with alpaca paintings, alpaca felt hats, an alpaca colouring book and alpaca in fashion. The industry broadens. Our feature story, however, brings us back to basics, with a view of the fibre industry in Peru and how it is relevant to the development of our own fibre marketing company.

Have you booked for the seminar yet? Because the dinner will be held at the High Court of Australia, we are required to submit a list of attendees, as part of the Court's security requirement by June 24, so no bookings can be accepted after that date.



Are your alpacas negatively geared? If not, do buy a copy of *Personal Investment Monthly*, June edition. Sandi Keane (our Association secretary) convinced them that alpacas were an excellent deduction for PAYE earners by virtue of a little known tax clause (221D) and this is the subject of the magazine's cover story.

With the onset of winter it's important to have our animals in peak condition as their health is more vulnerable through the long weeks of cold and wet. We have compiled some tips that breeders have found useful. If you have any, please send them in.

Lastly, please keep those Paca Pics coming in. They are a source of delight to our readers. Before winter really sets in, why not wander around your animals with a camera? You may make it to the front cover!

Cherie Bridges

Cherie Bridges

Alpacas
AUSTRALIA

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Cherie Bridges: Coliban Valley Alpaca Stud, Lyonbank RMB 4820, Back Glenlyon Road, Glenlyon, 3461 Victoria

ADVERTISING

Joy Vellios: Pass the Word Pty Ltd, 14/118 Church St., Hawthorn, 3122 Victoria.
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A LOOK AT THE PERUVIAN FIBRE INDUSTRY

By Alan Hamilton

Some observations and comparisons.

My trip to Peru last November with Chris Tuckwell was to investigate alpaca breeding and the harvesting, classing and processing of the Peruvian alpaca clip. The aim was to get an overview of the Peruvian industry, how it worked and how this might relate to the Australian industry. We were looking for things that could be improved in the way we will operate here.

The Peruvian industry up until the manufacturing stage is generally primitive in comparison to what we

would expect in Australia. With the exception of some of the large co-ops and a number of dedicated breeders who have improved their stock over the last 30-40 years, the majority of the Peruvian animals remain in the hands of the *Campesinos* (*Quechua* and *Aymaran* Indian peasant farmers). There has been little or no selective breeding done on the *Campesinos* stock and they are of similar or lesser quality to the Chilean imports to Australia with many *huanizos* (llama x alpaca). The

BENLEIGH ALPACA STUD

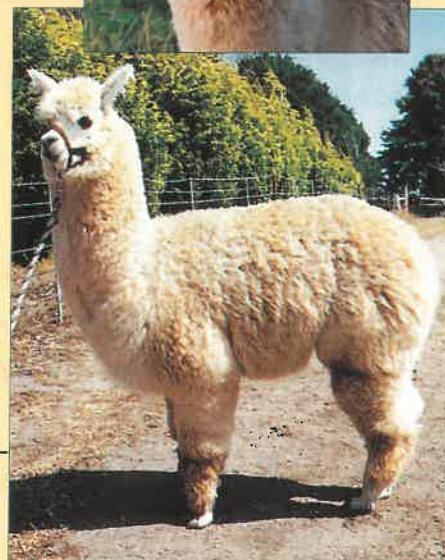
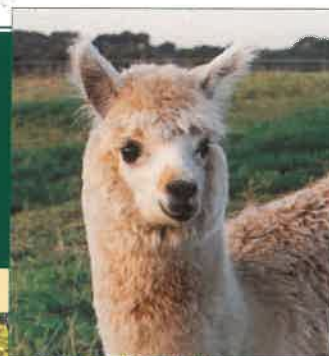
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quality alpaca that Peru is renowned for are principally farmed by a small number of dedicated breeders and are white and fawn in colour. Recently however these breeders are starting to breed coloured animals again as demand for the natural coloured fibre is increasing. A 30% premium is currently being paid for black fibre. Coloured alpacas in Peru however are generally of inferior quality to our young Australian born stock — the results of better nutrition and one or two generations of selective breeding.

Terrorism in Peru has had a dramatic effect on the alpaca industry over the last 15 years. A large number of co-ops have been abandoned or neglected with animal breeding and improvement being interrupted. Maintenance of buildings and other improvements appear to have ceased at least 20 years ago.

FIBRE MARKETS

Until recently most alpaca fleece in Peru was purchased at a flat price per kilo regardless of quality, giving no incentive for production of top quality fibre. This system led to the inclusion of a lot of huarizo fibre in the clip and the practice of some Campesinos of adding dirt to the clip to increase the weight. Legs and bellies are not separated from the saddle. They are all thrown in together, again lowering the overall quality.

Small growers sell to dealers. In towns such as Macusani there are many buyers operating out of houses or shops which can be identified by a rolled fleece hanging by the door. These fleeces may pass through several hands before being sold to the mill, with each person making a margin.

The larger growers do class their fleece in a more professional way and sell direct to the mills. Unfortunately, we did not see a shearing in progress at a larger property. To do so would



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have involved eight hours of driving over dusty pot-holed roads in the back of a truck.

THE SORTING WAREHOUSE IN AREQUIPA

On arrival at the classing area one is confronted with the sight of women in bowler hats, plaited hair and voluminous, brightly coloured skirts sitting on the floor surrounded by piles of alpaca fibre. The air is filled with dust and fibre particles and there are children playing on the floor near their mothers. It is a classic scene, but not one conducive to efficient fibre classing. This form of classing should be cost effective as wages are low, but with children playing in the fibre, a lot of unclassing seems to occur. The management of the mills have attempted to introduce classing tables in the past but this has been resisted by the sorters and they have gone back to the traditional ways.



Sorting at Mitchell, one of Peru's largest alpaca fibre processors.

Most fibre comes to the classing area in large bags similar to our chaff bags. The overall quality going through the classing area during our visit was very disappointing. We saw

very little superior fibre and there were large amounts of llama and huarizo. It seems that most of this fibre ends up being classed as alpaca regardless of its origin.

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The whole classing process can be done much more efficiently in Australia. We need to introduce an alpacamark to prevent inferior fibre being marketed as alpaca.

After classing, the fibre is scoured and moves through the processing system into tops, yarn and fabric. In this area, the two largest manufacturers in Peru, Inca Tops and Michells, would be hard to beat on pricing and manufacturing expertise. They have modern European plant and low labour costs. Australia will need to find a niche area to compete as the Italians are doing with their production of ultra high quality fabric.

While we were in Peru, a number of orders were being received from Italy for alpaca fibre and baby alpaca in particular. They are paying a premium (30-40%) which will continue to increase as Peruvian manufacturers become more aware of the demand for quality. I believe that the price for baby alpaca (generally a 21 micron blend) will double to treble over the next few years as demand is increasing at a faster rate than supply.

Some Peruvian mills are now employing Italians to design their fabric ranges and this will increase their competitiveness. I believe that we can compete with them in some areas despite their price advantage but we will need to concentrate on high margin, non-garment products and high quality fashion items. We could not, for example, expect to compete with Peru on medium quality knitwear. Their *finished* unit cost would be below our cost of *producing* the yarn for the garment. For this reason I believe we need to shape our own destiny and make our own marketing arrangements. If we rely on selling raw fibre to existing manufac-

continued on p. 15



The sorting and grading area at Mitchells.

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SCHOOL'S IN!

by Chris Wren

*The world's finest livestock
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fun to take to school.
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Some years ago I purchased a number of female alpacas, one for each member of the family. My four-year-old daughter, Danielle, was allocated *The Babysitter*. She was a white girl and the first to produce a cria. The birth, on Mother's Day, was witnessed by all the children. As it was raining at the time, Danielle named the cria *Rainy Rory*. He is a piebald male who, from the moment of birth, was subjected to intense social contact of the human kind.

Being a proud new father, and conscious of the need to keep *The Babysitter* in the condition to which she had become accustomed, I made arrangements to have her mated within fourteen days of parturition. To get her to service required me to drive from our farm in Flinders on Westernport Bay, through the city, to Lancefield.

As this route took me past the children's school and kindergarten near our home in Kew, I thought it only appropriate to maintain the social contact that *Rainy Rory* had already made. Consequently, arrangements were made with Danielle's kindergarten teacher and my son, Stephen's Grade 2 teacher for *Rainy Rory* to spend a day at school.

Rainy Rory was a very well-behaved student who sat patiently with his classmates and listened to the teacher describe the 6000 year history of his ancestors.



He was just as comfortable in the team photo with Stephen's class, particularly as Mum was looking on from her position in the back of my ute.



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The Babysitter was subsequently introduced to another handsome beau and, again on Mother's Day, gave birth to a daughter *Snowflake*. Under very strict instructions from Danielle and Stephen, I again delivered *The Babysitter* to her next mate, this time via the school only — 'Our Lady of Good Counsel' in Deepdene — as Danielle was now a pupil there along with her brother. It was *Snowflake's* turn to be introduced — to Prep and Grade Three.

The Prep children made a corral for *Snowflake* by forming a circle around her. Each child then stepped into the middle of the corral, introduced him/herself to *Snowflake* and gave her a cuddle.

One young Prep boy, José, from South America, was terrified of having any contact with animals. I held his hand and encouraged him to gently stroke *Snowflake* during his turn in the circle. As two sets of large brown eyes met, it was as if a message passed from the alpaca to the boy. His fear (or perhaps, more accurately, terror) evaporated and his tentative strokes became the hug of a favourite teddy bear. It was hard to ask José to let the next child take her turn.

In the picture opposite, Stephen is behind, Danielle is third from the left and José is third from the right.

Cool as a cucumber despite the crush, *Snowflake* received more cuddles and strokes from the Grade Three children.

Although she did not feature in the photographs, *The Babysitter* was never far away.

With *Snowflake*, as with *Rainy Rory*, she was keeping a proud eye on her offspring from the back of the utility.

On each occasion, she saw her children confidently mix with their classmates, unfazed by new surroundings or noise.



PERUVIAN ELITE SALE

SEPTEMBER 2-3-4-5, 1994

Individuals are rarely afforded the opportunity to purchase the world's rarest objects of art or the most lucrative financial investments. Masterpiece paintings are often owned by museums and are rarely available to the public. The best real estate seldom changes hands, is expensive, and is owned primarily by huge corporations. Alpaca industry participants in the United States now have a unique opportunity to become owners of the **World's Elite Alpaca**. On September 2, 3, 4 and 5, 1994 Peru's finest Alpaca bloodstock will be available for purchase.

A partnership headed by Camelids of Delaware's Tom Hunt and The Pet Center's Phil Mizrahie has assembled for sale in its entirety, a herd of Prize Alpaca direct from Peru. The import's highlight are Alpacas from the world famous herds of Don Julio Barreda and the Rural Alianza Alpaca Cooperative. Don Julio has long been acknowledged as Peru's number one producer of high quality Alpaca herd-

sires. The Rural Alianza Alpaca were selected by Clyde Haldane and Jim Vickers from Alianza's prize herd of over 40,000 choice animals.

Mike Safley, Anthony Stachowski, and Jim Vickers will conduct "The Peruvian Elite Alpaca Sale" which will be held at the picturesque Maplewood Farm, located near Lake Michigan in northwest lower Michigan.

**For complete information regarding the sale,
please contact**

Mike Safley at (503) 628-3089, (503) 228-1098
or FAX (503) 224-7068;

Anthony Stachowski at (216) 274-8370
or FAX (216) 274-0221;

Jim Vickers at (616) 582-6740
or FAX (616) 582-2799.

You must RSVP to one of the above agents for the sale, seminars and the Saturday and Sunday dinners.



SOME SORT OF A LOVE OR PASSION...

*Peter Weiss talks to
Dougal Macdonald
about his involvement
with alpacas.*

How did you first become involved with alpaca?

As you know, I've had a very close association with Pringle of Scotland for the last ten or more years and I felt there was a fibre missing amongst the lambswools, the Shetlands. So some three years ago, I found the source from an agent in Australia for alpaca sweaters out of Peru and I just quietly put them on the shelf in the Weiss Pringle shops and I had reasonable success. But in the last 12 months or so I've been marketing it a bit stronger in the columns that have been running in *Good Weekend* and we've had a very positive reaction.

I'm terribly enthusiastic with this fibre, not only because it started as being lacking but because of all the wondrous things this fibre has.

You've spent a lot of money advertising alpaca products generally. Obviously, one reason is that you market them. Are there other reasons for giving them such favourable exposure under your label?

Well, to be perfectly honest, when I started marketing alpaca, I was quite ignorant of the fact that there was actually the beginning of an industry in Australia. I marketed mainly because I felt I was putting a focus on

continued on p. 14

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BREEDERS RECOGNISED

Victorian breeders, Allan and Carolyn Jinks, of Benleigh Alpaca Stud, have been awarded the Commonwealth Bank South Western Region Entrepreneurial Farming Award.

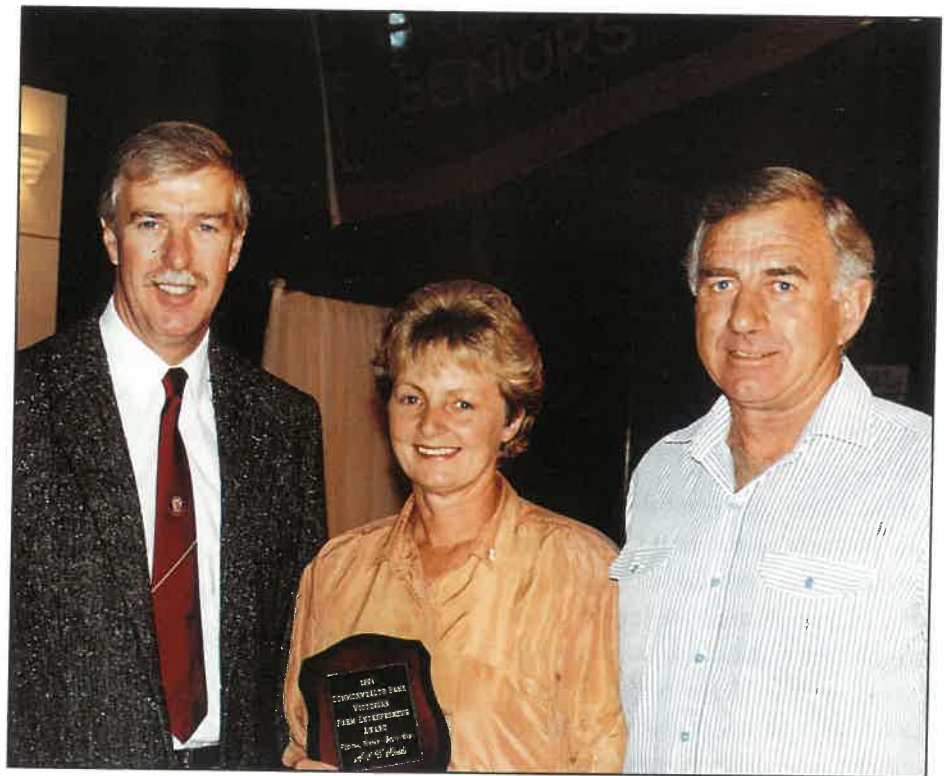
As well as Benleigh, twenty other 'new' diverse industries including herb growing, emu farming and production of sheep leather garments, were contestants for the award.

There were two judging panels. One, consisting of Department of Agriculture officials conducted interviews and inspected the agricultural side of alpaca breeding. The other, made up of Commonwealth Bank representatives, concentrated on the feasibility of the enterprise including

financial planning, goals, achievements and future projections.

The Jinks received their award from Victorian Deputy Premier Pat McNamara, at the Seymour Alternative Farming Expo.

Congratulations are due to Allan and Carolyn, not only on their personal achievement, but also on bringing to the industry as a whole increased recognition by both financial and agricultural institutions. 🐼



*Allan and Carolyn Jinks with Pat McNamara, after the presentation of their Commonwealth Bank South Western Region Entrepreneurial Farming Award.
(Photo courtesy Southern Farmer.)*

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a fibre that not too many other people were attacking. I had some sort of a love or passion for it because of the wonderful way it performs. For Australia, it is a fibre that works so well both in summer and winter — and, really, that was my first motivation of marketing alpaca.

What is there about alpaca that makes you want to incorporate it into your designs?

Weiss and Pringle are known for design and excellence and I think that's been the one thing I've stood by all along. Luxury and excellence, I suppose, sometimes are linked together and I think alpaca yarn has those. It's a luxury fibre and we can get garments towards excellence with this fibre.

For high fashion, what applications does alpaca handle best?

I think there are a number. I think that sweaters in the loose weaves are something very special for high fashion. If you handle a jacket or a trouser, the fabric can be made known, as was Harris tweed. I think alpaca as a fabric notion of itself could be something very special.

Have you a preference for alpaca fabrics in the natural colours or do you experiment with dyed alpaca fabrics?

My soul tells me that I'd like to keep to natural colours because the natural colours of the animal are so splendid of themselves. But, as a fashion person, where colour is so important, it is important to me to know that alpaca has a wonderful ability for dyeing into a wide spectrum of tones and colours. We, in fact, market some 16 or 18 colours.

Does alpaca have any shortcomings from your professional point of view?

I haven't found any yet, I must say. For the mass market, maybe price at this time. But as the industry grows and becomes more competitive, who knows where the price level will end up. But it is price that would be its only shortcoming: that [alpaca] isn't yet available for everyone.

What qualities does alpaca have that most please you as a person rather than as a designer?

Natural fibre; natural tones; soft to handle; hard-wearing; a sense of luxury.

Have you had any experience of alpaca garments pilling?

I wanted to actually add that. I'm

glad you brought it up because alpaca knitwear does not pill — and that's something, because the most expensive cashmere pills and alpaca does not.

Do you see a future for blends of alpaca with other fibres? If so, natural fibres only or some of the higher quality synthetics as well?

I hope that it will remain as a natural fibre because the colours are wonderful and you can do wonderful things with the fibre in dyeing. One of the things that Weiss are known for is the use of natural fibre, be it in cotton, in linen or in silk. That's one of the things that I love so much about the alpaca and I'd like to keep it as close to the natural fibre as possible.

For reasons that we can readily understand, to date you have used Peruvian alpaca. When Australian alpaca becomes more readily available, what will determine whether or not you use it?

Of course, particularly after my last ten days' experience with the alpaca and the families and the spirits and the passions that I've shared with everybody, I would love to use the Australian fibre. But I think we'll

continued on p. 20



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continued from p. 7

turers it will bring an unacceptably low price and be subject to wild price fluctuations as fashion trends change.

ALPACA MARKETING COMPANY

In establishing a grower-based fibre marketing company the Australian Alpaca Association must be careful not to alienate existing manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers of alpaca products as part of our aim is to promote the product overall. Competition in alpaca products will be to the benefit of the overall industry.

The grower owned company must be a completely separate entity from the Association but, to be successful, it will need to acquire at least 90% of the Australian clip. I believe Association members should support and encourage this.


The marketing company may sell the raw fleece once classed or it may value-add, depending on what will achieve the best price for growers at the time. Development of an alpaca-mark combined with handling the bulk of the clip will enable quality control not currently possible and should make the entire clip more valuable.

The need for better quality control is demonstrated by some problems in the current Australian sales of raw fleece to the hand-spinner market. While most growers might be doing the right thing, a number are allowing leggings, bellies, too much vegetable matter, etc. to be included with the saddle fleece and this practice is giving a bad name to alpaca fleece in some areas. With correct classing this can be avoided. All craft outlets could receive a properly labelled product that is consistent in quality. The poorer quality fleece would be utilised and allow only the best quality to be used for garments,

raw fleece for craft market, etc. The aim is to establish Australian alpaca as a top quality, consistent product.

This will require growers to breed for quality fibre and not be led down the wrong path with fads that may occur in the breeding of alpacas. It will also require attention to detail in clip preparation and keeping pastures seed free.

The most important factor in the development of this new Australian industry is the support for a grower controlled fibre marketing company. Current support within the industry is about 98%. If this holds when people are invited to participate in the company by purchasing shares later this year, I believe we can look forward to a profitable Australian alpaca industry. ▲



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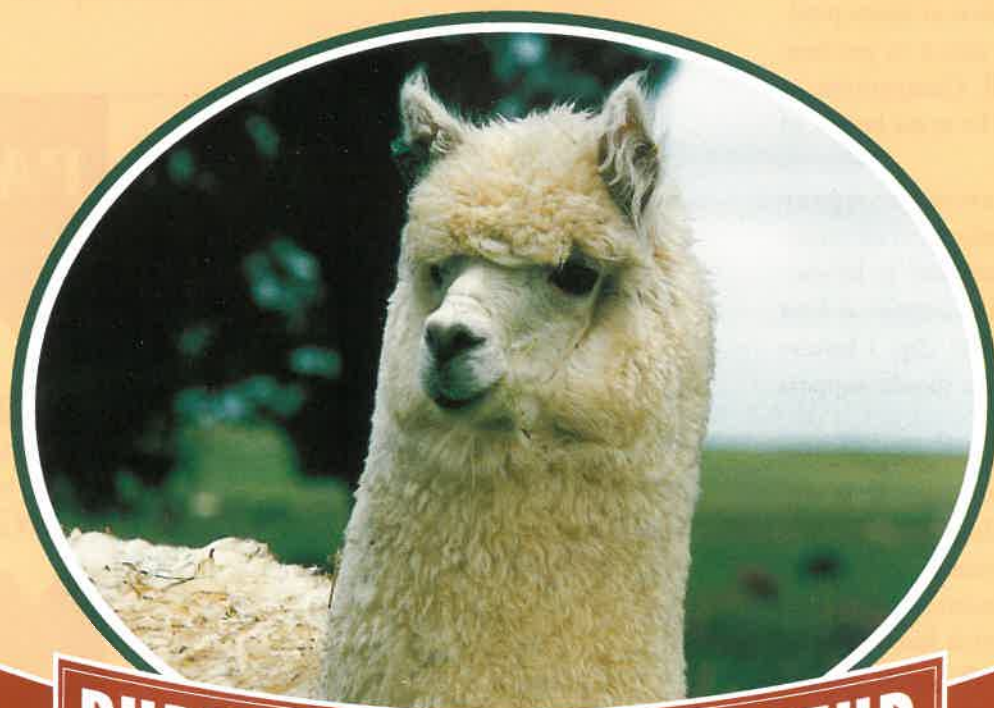
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USING MATHS MODELS FOR PREDICTION

By Ron Cole and Bill Wall

A new approach to prediction which opens up many possibilities in the fields of breeding and genetics.

An interest in alpaca farming demands answers to many questions related to both the worth of entering the industry and management within the industry. Many of these questions will be answered by personal choice, while others demand significant consideration from a business viewpoint.

One such question is 'How many animals will be produced from a given number of adults over a stated period of time?' Having posed this question to ourselves, we set about deriving a simple formula to predict the range of outcomes.

Any model is based on a set of assumptions. These assumptions may be varied to answer a variety of 'what if?' questions and the assumptions bear directly upon the model produced.

Assumptions for this exercise have been chosen conservatively. For example, we have assumed that females are mated for the first time at 15 months of age, whereas common practice might allow these females to be pregnant by that age. We argue that a conservative approach is the best course to pursue, given that a more favourable set of assumptions would be a bonus. Our assumptions

were, that:

- we begin with one pregnant female, to drop in the year of purchase;
- females are mated at 15 months of age;
- all females bear live cria and produce four young in a five year period;
- animals are counted at the end of each period; and
- the breeding program runs for 5 generations following the year of purchase.

This simple program may be displayed as shown below.

The diagram can be built up to include all possibilities and, over the period under consideration, an answer to the original question can be read off.

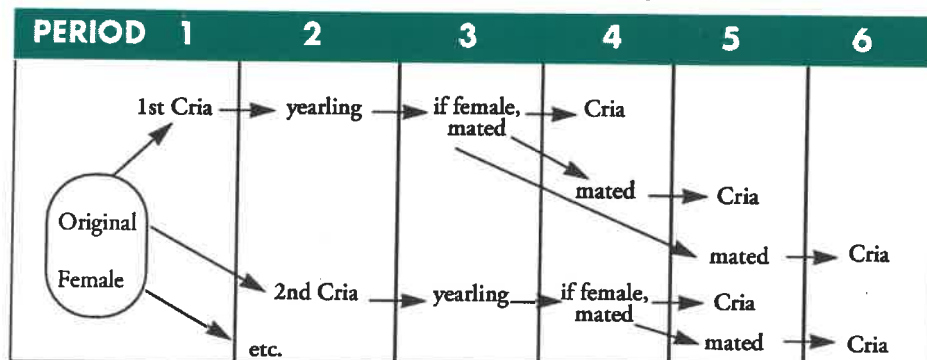
Diagrams and tables become more difficult to read as the complexity of outcome increases. It is for this reason that a mathematical model has been developed

Our model holds for periods 2 to 6, given the assumptions stated above, and is expressed as:

$$n = (x + 1) \rightarrow \frac{(x^2 - 3x + 8)}{2}$$

where:

n = the range of total number of ani-



imals possible at the end of each time period, and

x = the period (range 2 – 6)

For example, for year 3:

$$n = (3 + 1) \rightarrow \frac{(9 - 9 + 8)}{2} = 4 \rightarrow 4 = 4$$

That is, the number of animals possible at the end of the third period of the breeding program is 4.

The range for period 5 is similarly calculated at $6 \rightarrow 9$.

A FURTHER MODEL

Having derived a formula (with stated assumptions) to solve a relatively simple question, further questions inevitably arose. Some of these questions were:

- what are the possible outcomes expressed as male and female offspring?
- what is each possible outcome of the breeding program in total animals during, and at the end of the program?

- what are the gross and nett financial values of each possible outcome during and at the end of the program?
- can the model developed to answer the above questions also be used to address risk and the expression of genetic traits (when genetic characteristics of the species are better identified)?

The development of such a model is complex, especially when an outcome is mathematically possible but biologically impossible, and the computer appears to be the best tool for the purpose.

We have generated a prototype model using the computer, and initial results are encouraging. This model runs over five generations and each biologically possible outcome (more than 4000 of them) has been identified and documented. In later developments, we built a six generation model which addresses more

than 524,000 possibilities.

Our current perspective is that, due to the magnitude of the number of possibilities in six generation (and greater than six generation) models, coupled with the most commonly expressed desire of breeders to consider the five generation future in their farm management plans, we have chosen to limit our work to the consideration of five generations.

Of interest in a brief analysis of the results of model development are:

- the maximum possible financial return is identified;
- the best biological outcome is not necessarily the best financial return (e.g. producing all female offspring does not necessarily generate the most income);
- the financial effect of female or male births at each generation is identified (that is, the financial difference in outcome at the end of five generations can be read off

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the model);

- a user defined percentage chance of outcome can be looked up (e.g. what financial return will be possible at 50% male/female offspring).

These are but a few examples of the use of the model and our current interest is directed towards use of models for genetic prediction.

FINANCIAL AND GENETIC MODELLING

To date, the questions which have driven our model development have been mostly financial. We have discussed our work with several AAA members and they have consistently afforded us encouragement to continue.

To this end, we are now embarking on development of a model to address the prediction of genetic outcomes. The models successfully produced so far include prediction of each possible male and female out-

come of breeding programs which are basic (at the simplest possible level) genetic models, as the male and female outcome is determined by a single chromosome. However, the scientific explanation of reasons for male or female offspring are known, whereas the nature of, for example the production of animals with a pre-determined coat colour or micron diameter, are not documented for alpacas. It is therefore necessary to develop a model which addresses questions of prediction of traits such as coat colour from a different viewpoint.

We argue that genetic model development may well be possible through addressing two current sources of data. They are:

- the registration data provided by individual breeders and collated through registration certificates held by the International Alpaca Register, and

- anecdotal data which is the collective experience of breeder members.

Both of these sources of information are imperative to development and testing of a genetic model: the IAR data to test the model and the breeder experience to validate or contradict the results.

IN SUMMARY

Models developed to date allow:

- probability prediction and risk management;
- current and predicted worth calculation at any time during the breeding program;
- variation of several parameters to test for outcome;
- a clear management guide for maximising the number of animals at the end of the period of interest; and

continued on p. 21

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continued from p. 14

have to get some technology and some better understanding of how to produce these garments at this early stage of the industry. I'll put my weight behind it but I can't afford to pioneer too much on a commercial level. What we saw today at the parades was fabulous for the cottage industry. It will grow and I said a few words about that earlier *[in an address opening the formal phases of the day — the fashion parade and the auction]*. For us to use it commercially in the way we do, I think we've got a little way to go yet. I have a very close association with Dawson International who are the main fibre people around the world, as you know and when this market is ready to sell its fleece, I'll certainly be right behind it. Hopefully, at that time, we can produce the product here rather than go around the world to do so.

What difficulties have you had obtaining alpaca fabrics?

I have never really used alpaca as a fabric, I've only used it in knitwear.

How do you see Australian enterprises resolving those difficulties?

This is difficult. I think it's a case of sourcing overseas. It is a luxury fabric, so there wouldn't be a high volume anywhere but there certainly must be enough around for those who wish to produce it.

Should alpaca approach the market in the same way as fine merino wool has done — selling raw product to the world to process and sell back to us?

I'd be very upset if that happened because I get terribly distraught when I go to Scotland and our biggest-selling Pringle sweater is Australian. The product, a knitted garment, is called Geelong. Why is it called Geelong? Because the original wool came out of Geelong. It dis-

tresses me terribly to think that we have the wool here. It's shipped over, gets washed and processed in a 175-year-old factory in Scotland and then we bring it back here and have to pay 50% or 43% duty on it. It's a total, bloody nonsense.

Do you expect that Australian value-adding enterprises will take to alpaca?

It may not be me, because I'm not 28 any longer, but I think the young enthusiasts ought very much to start getting some vertical operations and value adding. But we need help. The industry will need help, once again, from the government and from other bodies. We can't do it single handedly.

What future do you see for alpaca in Australia?

What future do I see or what future do I hope for, are probably two different questions. I certainly hope for this to be the beginning of what could be, what should be and what,

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hopefully, will be a big industry in Australia. It's been a long time since I've seen this pioneering spirit and this enthusiasm for getting something off the ground and I think it's all here for us to see today.

What problems do you foresee in achieving a prosperous future for alpaca in Australia?

Lack of money; lack of funding.

Have you any suggestions to guide Australian alpaca producers in satisfying the market?

You've got two ingredients: number one, the animal and what it represents and that it's a lovable animal so that people are passionate about the animal itself. Number two: that there is a pioneering spirit here that I haven't seen for decades. Mix these

two together and get a marketing arm with the breeders, with the passionate people; get a marketing arm and I think that's the road to go.

This interview took place when Peter Weiss attended the first private auction of alpacas in Australia on 10 April. Dougal Macdonald has also written an article about the auction and it appears on page 32.

continued from p. 19

- many 'what if?' questions to be answered, thus allowing years of experimental breeding to be addressed at a significantly greater than theoretical level.

Models currently under development are hoped to allow:

- prediction of outcome of (for example) various coloured parents;
- a pattern in inheritance to be identified; and
- a simple-to-use tool for breeders.

Implications of this work further include budget presentation to financial institutions by individuals to allow capital to be raised for beginning, expansion and/or development of an alpaca enterprise. At the more global level, we argue that development of genetic models has a place, alongside the endeavours of other members, to impact positively on the quality of the Australian national herd.

We are currently refining our models and would appreciate feedback on the worth of pursuing this line of research. Further development is both complex and time consuming and we are reluctant to commit ourselves to the next phase of the work without significant interest of other breeder members of the Association.


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BREEDER PROFILE

ALPACA-ING IN THE WEST

By Jenny Jackson

*Banksia Park Alpacas –
a Western Australian
success story.*

If someone had predicted 12 months ago that in a very short time we would be managing a stud of over 50 animals, we would have said that such an outcome would exceed our wildest dreams.

But here we are, my husband George, our four-year-old daughter, Sophie and I, growing a herd of alpacas. Our life is full to the brim with alpaca people, alpaca thoughts and alpacas.

JUST A THOUGHT

I had grown up on a farm and had always thought I would spend my life on one. I had trained and worked as a nurse and midwife and was working as a medical representative for a drug company when I met George. He owned and ran his own veterinary practice in a suburb of Perth. He was a 'townie' through and through.

In 1988 we purchased 145 acres in Serpentine, just south of Perth, with the sole intention of being absentee farmers. It was around this time we acquired our first copy of *Town and Country Farmer* and there they were — alpacas.

I was caught, hook line and sinker. I think George was too, but he was unwilling to admit it. He reasoned with me that we couldn't run such valuable animals on a farm that we didn't live on.

He was right, of course. We put alpacas on the back shelf. There were long periods during which we didn't see an alpaca and we would almost talk ourselves out of them. Then fate would have it that we would see

them in a magazine or at a show and POW! we would be enchanted again. If we were not to have alpacas it was necessary that I never see them again.

THE BIG MOVE

During 1992 our circumstances slowly but surely changed and, before George realised what was happening, the house in Perth was sold. Our new home was being built on the farm and George's time at the surgery had been reduced to three days a week.

We were also 'just looking' at alpacas. We attended the 1992 alpaca seminar in Perth and were impressed by the enthusiasm and friendliness of all owners.

The question then became: how many alpacas would we have? Would we stay low-key with a couple of females and send them out for stud service? Or could we afford to go to a larger scale?

The fact that our farm was situated close to Perth would allow us to offer convenient agistment for alpaca owners who did not want to own land.

We could also offer the reassurance of George's veterinary experience.

Having decided to become an alpaca owner, I could think of nothing else and knew that a couple of females would never be enough.

OUR FIRST ALPACAS ARRIVE

In August 1993, our first alpacas arrived from the east, barely recognisable in their newly-shorn state. They delicately stepped off the truck, had a roll in some sand nearby, and started



Sophie feeds the alpacas in the house yard, an area generally reserved for the pregnant females.

up our driveway to their new home. They found their own way through the gate to their paddocks and commenced grazing as if they had always been there.

Since then, the number of alpacas under our care has grown dramatically. About half the people who have purchased alpacas from us have kept them agisted with us. Of the buyers who have taken their animals home, the majority have either brought, or intend to bring, their girls back for at least one service by our stud males.

The increasing number of return services enables us to purchase quality males which we would not have been able to justify for our own small herd.

AGISTING ALPACAS

Our ability to agist alpacas has provided a wonderful opportunity for us to care for and handle larger numbers of animals much sooner than if we had waited for for our own herd numbers to grow.

Looking after other people's animals is a big responsibility. Often I have tip-toed through the herd in the middle of the night to check that all is well.

We insist that all animals agisted are insured and we treat and care for them as if they were our own. Sophie knows each one by name.

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Jenny Jackson, daughter Sophie and their alpacas.

We run the agisted animals with our own, but all animals that return for service are paddocked separately to reduce the risk of disease transfer.

That part of our farm presently

allocated to alpacas surrounds our house and we have our heavily pregnant females in our house yard. However, it allows me to keep a close eye on them throughout the day.

They rarely require my services, so I try to stop myself interfering in the birth process by getting video coverage of the birth and the cria's first steps. This really delights the owners and agisters.

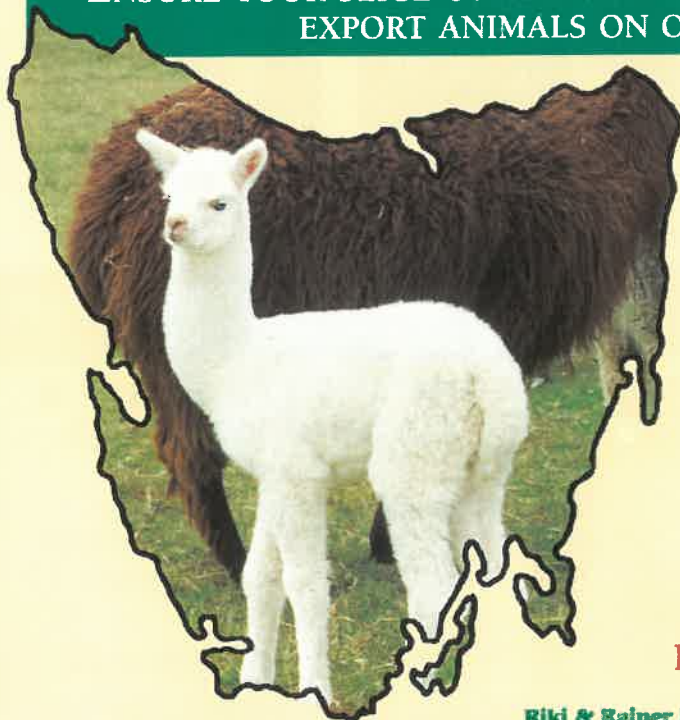
Agisting alpacas also means that our movements are somewhat restricted. We never leave the alpacas unattended during the later stages of pregnancy. Hopefully, further down the line, we can have a farm manager for a few days a week so that George and I can travel to seminars and promote alpacas together.

Our weekends are full of alpaca people: those who agist and those who have an interest in alpacas. These are memorable times. We all seem to have things in common that create a bond of friendship: a love for the alpaca and enthusiasm for the success of the industry.

continued on p. 38

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ALPACA 'A-HEAD'?

Karen Pirie's interest in millinery began about five years ago. She subsequently developed a successful cottage industry at her home in Tolmie, in the mountains of north eastern Victoria, blocking and trimming straw hats.

In an effort to develop and diversify her range of hats Karen began experimenting with felting techniques. Her early attempts involved the use of fleece from Lincoln sheep and she has since developed a number of styles using natural and dyed merino.

Karen was interested in experimenting with other fibres, and was given some alpaca fibre by a grower from Jamieson, a small township near Mansfield.

'I had heard of and seen alpacas but had no idea how quickly the

industry was developing in Australia. I am very excited about working with alpaca fibre. It's lovely and soft to work with and the results have been excellent. The textile is durable but light. The hats are incredibly comfortable to wear.'

At this stage she has produced alpaca hats in the 'stockman' style but is also keen to fashion hats of varying colours and designs.

Karen currently has felt hats featured at a wool expo in England and is looking in the near future to export. She hopes an Australian alpaca hat will become part of her range.

Karen emphasises that fibre must be very clean; a seed in the fleece means a seed in the hat and this would have a detrimental effect on the finished product.

For further details see 'Business Directory' for Pirie Fine Felt Hats. ▲



Looking snug and rustic in their alpaca felt hats are Karen Pirie and her daughter.



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AN ARTIST WHO PAINTS ALPACAS

*Cliff Rodda is an artist
who loves alpacas and
paints their pictures.*



Cliff Rodda is an alpaca owner and a self-taught artist. Although a city dweller for many years, his slow and gentle speech belies a country influence. The son of a farmer, Cliff spent his first twenty-one years on the land; first on the York Peninsula and then moving to Coonalpyn in the south-east of South Australia in 1948. A number of members of the Rodda family still farm in the area.

At the age of seven, Cliff began painting pictures. Many of his works have featured the flora and fauna of Australia, for which he has a great love. His ambition is one day to paint a complete series.

Cliff and his wife, Maureen, live in the Melbourne suburb of Altona where, for the last thirty years, Cliff has worked for a petro-chemical company.

In 1991, a family tragedy resulted in Cliff and Maureen seeking a



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new direction and a new interest. Maureen had read about alpacas when the first imported animals were arriving in Australia. The Roddas decided to investigate further.

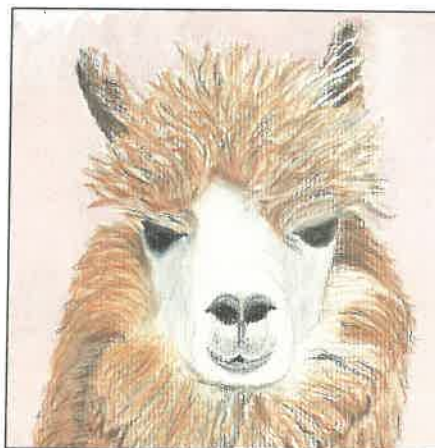
The outcome was the purchase of three alpacas in 1991, two females and a male, which they decided to agist. Still agisted, their herd has grown to four females and five males. In the foreseeable future, Cliff and Maureen plan to buy a property and run their alpacas on their own land. In the meantime, Cliff is doing an alpaca husbandry course at the Melbourne College of Textiles and keeping in regular contact with his herd.

As both a lover of animals and as an artist, Cliff has found alpacas to be beautiful and interesting animals. He has recently produced a number of paintings of alpacas and has begun experimenting with a new technique which combines acrylic (a favourite medium) with coloured pencil. He is pleased with the results — a textured and three-dimensional effect with the skilful use of pencil to accentuate detail. 'They glow', he comments.

Cliff has produced paintings of his own alpacas from sketches and has also worked from photographs. Presently laid up with a broken leg, he is able to hobble to his studio and spend a little more time than usual painting alpacas.

Cliff has supplied us with a striking and unusual front cover for this issue of *Alpacas Australia*. Further glimpses of his talents are provided with the reproductions of his work which accompany this article.

Anyone who would like to see his paintings 'in the flesh' is welcome to contact him on (03) 398 4497. Those alpaca owners who may be interested in having a painting of their favourite animal will be pleased to know that Cliff is happy to take commissions.



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THE SPRING CELEBRITY SALES 1994 ALPACA AUCTION

by Mike Safley

*On-the-spot report
from USA.*

America's alpaca breeders met in the 'Heartland' state of Oklahoma for the first ever Celebrity Alpaca Auction. The sale was, without a doubt, a smashing success. Prices were very strong and bidders were plentiful.

The Alpaca community had been anticipating the 'Spring Celebration' for many months. Tim and Teresa Vincent of Bend, Oregon and Tom and Nancy Simmons of

Sacramento, California have operated Celebrity Sales since 1989. They began planning the Celebrity Alpaca Auction in 1991. Their past auctions have sold only llamas. The Celebrity Sale has, year in and year out, been the highest averaging consignment llama sale in the United States.

The Celebrity Sale also has the distinction of selling the highest priced individual llamas in the world. Their 1989 llama average was

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\$US32,000, and they have sold a male llama for a record \$175,000 and a female llama for a record \$US170,000. The alpaca consigners, while not yet reaching these breath-taking prices, were very pleased with the alpaca auction results.

THE TOP SELLERS

The highest selling female alpaca, purchased by Karen and Scott Neff of Des Moines, in Iowa, went for \$US46,000. The animal was a gorgeous medium-fawn female bred, raised and consigned by Eric Hoffman and Cecile Champagne. Both buyer and seller wore big smiles when the gavel finally went down.

Peruvian *Bueno*, a consignment of CODI/PCI, was the top-dollar stud. The bids started at \$US10,000 and immediately leapt to \$US40,000. There were three bidders until \$US50,000 and two bidders from \$US50,000 to \$US60,000, when the auctioneer chanted his trademark phrase, 'Going to the bank with it — I sold it.' Sold American, as they say. Mike and Robin Tierney, *Bueno's* new owners from West Field, Massachusetts were the happiest folks at the sale.

I asked Mike why he was such an enthusiastic bidder for *Bueno*. His response was interesting: 'I had previously purchased seven Peruvian females in Michigan last year and I wanted to ensure my investment by purchasing the best male in the country. *Bueno* was probably worth more to me than anyone.' Mike went on to say that he didn't care to be the biggest alpaca breeder around but he would like to try and be the best.

After the auction, in less than one week, *Bueno* has attracted seven females for stud services at \$US2,000 each. The Tierneys selected Bill and Nola Graham of Castle Hill Farms to stand *Bueno* at stud for a limited

engagement on the West Coast. It looks as if *Bueno* will not only make Mike and Robin happy — but rich as well.

Karen and Scott Neff were not only purchasers of the highest selling female, *Golden Memento*, but they were also the sales volume buyer. Karen is a new alpaca enthusiast who first encountered alpacas at the Taos Wool Festival, where she met Phil

Switzer, a long-time Colorado breeder. In a very short time, the Neffs have accumulated over 30 alpacas.

When Karen was asked why she was attracted to *Golden Memento*, she said, 'I relied on my alpaca instinct; she's beautiful and has flawless conformation and fleece.' The Neffs intend to be active participants in the Alpaca Owners and Breeders Association (AOBA) and will eventu-

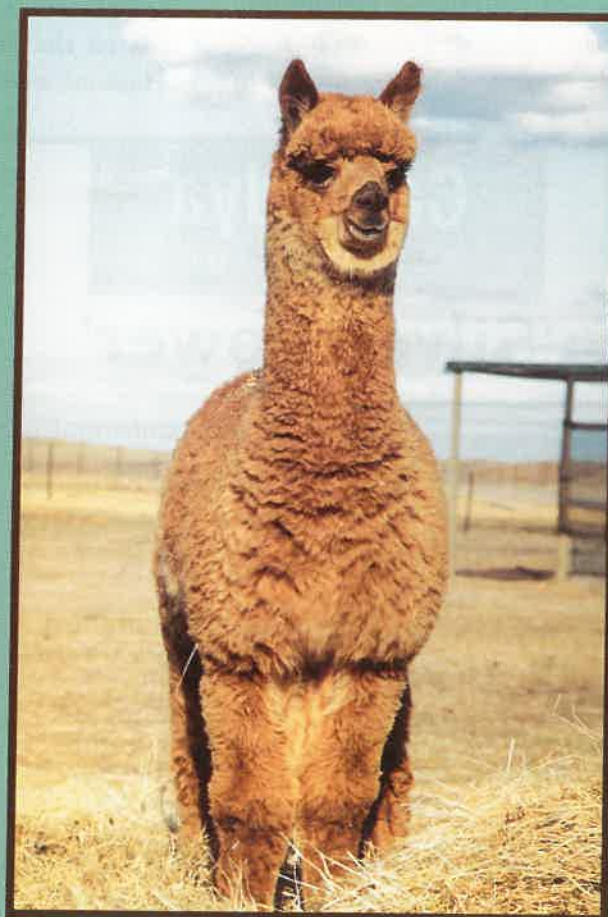


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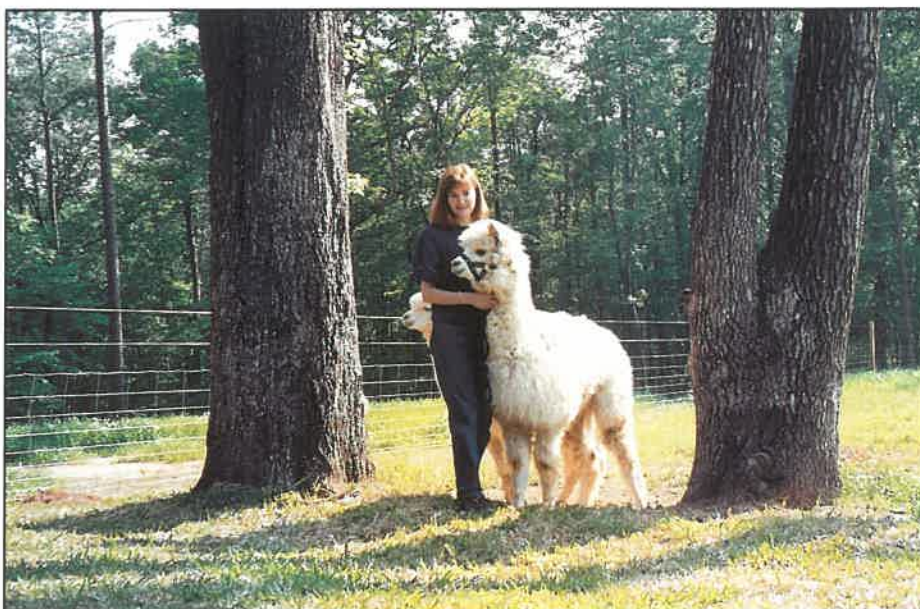
ally move the herd to their 80-acre ranch in Taos, New Mexico, where they will become full-time breeders. The couple's herd-building strategy was to buy as many alpacas as possible before the Celebrity Sale because they felt prices were going up. I think they had the right idea.

SURI SETS NEW PRICE RECORD

Suris set a new North American price record with one female offered by Bill Barnett, bringing a high of \$US35,000. There were only four suris offered at the sale. From the spirited bidding, one could easily detect a large appetite for more of the silky suri.

MORE GREAT RESULTS

Laura and Jim Hudson of Louisiana purchased the only Peruvian huacaya female — *Shez-A-Star* — offered in



Shez-A-Star, the only Peruvian huacaya female offered in the Spring Celebrity Sale, shown here with proud new owner, Laura Hudson.

the sale for \$US36,000. Anthony Stachowski, who consigned her, commented that her selling price validated the Peruvian's value. The Hudsons were also the underbidder

on Peruvian *Bueno*.

A total of six alpaca females sold for more than \$US30,000 and thirteen sold for more than \$US20,000. There were only nine males sold, but

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everyone agreed the prices were good.

Tim Vincent offered this view of the sale: 'I was both curious and a little nervous about combining alpacas and llamas in one auction but the result was tremendous. I am also pleased by the fact the auction allowed buyers to set the prices and those prices were either equal to, or better than, sale prices at the ranch.'

The Vincent family voted for alpacas with their pocket book in the months before the sale. Tim and his partner, Steve Rolfing, now have a herd of more than 30 alpacas. Steve has owned llamas for years and it was his male llama that sold for \$US175,000 in 1989. He is a prime example of the increasing number of llama owners who are diversifying into alpacas.

I am personally pleased with the results of the sale. The alpaca market has been well served by allowing purchasers to set prices.

This process validates what all 'dyed-in-the-fleece' alpaca breeders have been saying for over ten years, 'Alpacas are the world's finest livestock investment.'

SALE STATISTICS

Top selling female	\$US46,000
Female average price	\$US21,706
Female volume	\$US738,000
Number of lots	34
Top selling male	\$US60,000
Male average price	\$US17,889
Male volume	\$US161,000
Number of lots	9
Overall selling average	\$20,907
Total volume	\$US899,000
Total lots sold	43

There were only three buy-backs.



Phil Mizrahi, Nel Voclers, Tom and Jan Hunt, Robin and Mike Tierney, Eric Hoffman and Cecile Champagne, Karen and Scott Neff, with Peruvian Bueno and Golden Momento.

ECLIPSE



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AUCTION CONFIRMS MARKET REMAINS GOOD

By Dougal Macdonald

Dougal Macdonald is president of Southern NSW Region and has been a member of the Association since 1991.

By any measure, Australia's first private alpaca auction at Coolaroo Alpacas near Mittagong in the Southern Highlands of New South Wales, was a resounding success.

Sunday 10 April 1994 was a perfect day for the occasion and 450 cars packed into the paddock set aside for parking. Visitors enjoyed a day of alpaca displays, local wine and a sale that has set an encouraging benchmark for the industry.

Highlights of the day included an address by internationally-known designer, Peter Weiss who has been marketing imported alpaca products for some time. He has only recently discovered the existence of the Australian alpaca industry and in his speech, praised its enthusiasm and pioneering spirit. We interviewed him later in the day for *Alpacas Australia* and you can read his interesting comments on p. 12.

Next came an impressive parade of locally designed and made alpaca garments staged by the Alpaca

Centre of nearby Berrima and modelled by young family members of Coolaroo proprietors Philip and Judy Street.

Finally, Armidale auctioneer, Greg Teale set about selling the 29 alpacas on offer. Buyers seemed cautious — not rushing to spend their money — making opening bids generally far below selling price. The bidding was nevertheless spirited once initial bids came forward. Sales were made to Queensland, New South Wales, United States (via New Zealand) and Victoria.

Top price of \$40,000 was paid for the Grand Champion at the 1994 Sydney Easter Show, *Viracocha*. (See full sale results below overleaf).

Philip and Judy Street expressed great satisfaction with the outcome and relief that their pre-sale anxieties had proved unfounded. They praised the work of Janie Hicks in promoting and organising the sale and that of Nicola Forrest in arranging the fashion parade.

Grand Champion of the Royal Easter Show, 1994, Viracocha, fashion designer, Peter Weiss and a young visitor get acquainted at the Coolaroo Sale.



FIRST PRIVATE AUCTION RESULTS

Birth Date	Sex	Pregnancy	Colour	Price A\$
7.11.92	Female	U/S Scan+	Light Brown	\$24,000
8.3.93	Female	Empty	Mid Fawn	\$19,000
25.9.93	Female	Serv'd 28.1.94	Light Grey	\$22,000
14.9.92	Female	Serv'd 20.2.94	Mid Fawn	\$26,000
1.10.92	Female	U/S Scan +	Light Brown	\$21,000
14.10.92	Female	U/S Scan +	Light Fawn	\$36,000
23.9.92	Female	Serv'd 23.2.94	Black	\$20,000
1988 (Imp.)	Female w/cria	Serv'd 23.2.94	Mid Brown	\$36,000
3.4.92	Female	U/S Scan +	Dark Brown	\$23,000
6.10.92	Female	Serv'd 20.1.94	Mid Brown	\$25,000
30.9.92	Female	U/S Scan +	Dark Brown	\$20,000
15.9.92	Female	Serv'd 23.2.94	Mid Grey	\$21,000
15.5.93	Female	Empty	Light Brown	\$16,000
4.2.91	Female	U/S Scan +	White	\$34,000
13.9.92	Female	U/S Scan +	White/Dk Br	\$22,000

Birth Date	Sex	Pregnancy	Colour	Price A\$
5.10.92	Female	U/S Scan +	Dark Brown	\$27,000
19.9.92	Female	U/S Scan +	Mid Brown	\$23,000
10.12.92	Female	Empty	Light Grey	\$21,000
27.7.92	Female	U/S Scan +	Light Brown	\$20,000
21.4.92	Female w/cria	Serv'd 2.3.94	Light Br	\$36,000
12.5.93	Female	Empty	White	\$17,000
18.10.92	Female	U/S Scan +	Dark Grey	\$19,000
9.12.92	Female	Serv'd 23.2.94	Dk Gr/Blk	\$18,000
26.9.92	Male		Dark Grey	\$13,000
29.6.92	Male		Dark Fawn	\$12,000
15.1.93	Male		White	\$40,000
11.9.92	Male		White	\$15,000
25.2.92	Male		Rose Grey	\$12,000
3.7.93	Male		Mid Fawn	\$10,000

TOTAL SALE VALUE:

\$648,000

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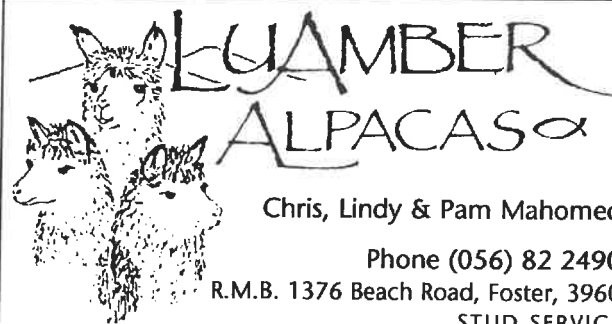
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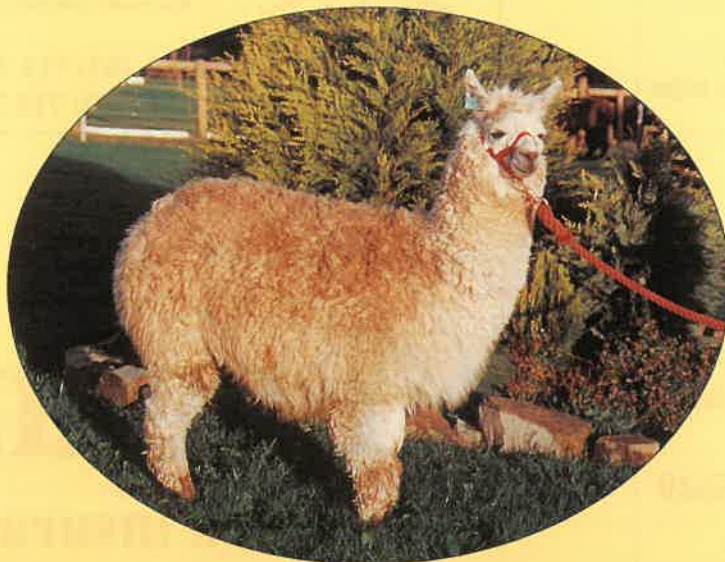
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ALPACAS AUSTRALIA WINTER 1994 EDITION

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of *Alpacas Australia*
is **Friday 29 July 1994.**

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during business hours,
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ALPACAS FEATURE AT DAIMARU PARADE

*A night on the town
brings success (and
inspiration!)*



Daimaru department store opened its doors on 27 April for a special card-holders only evening from 6 to 9 pm.

A fashion parade included alpaca garments from Suave International. As part of the display of alpaca garments, *Andalana Cassius* and *Dreamtime Dancer* kindly donated their services, along with owners Jennifer Cochrane and Ken and Pam

Hull. The trio was inundated with questions on the animals and the industry and gave away Association brochures to a number of people who showed strong interest in becoming involved.

Not only was the evening a great success for both Daimaru and the alpaca industry but also, apparently, a source of inspiration for Pam Hull who 'write a poem' about it.

A little ditty about the city

We must admit
We were quite excited.
To Daimaru
We'd been invited!

Two alpacas
Were required,
To be patted
And admired.

We fluffed them up,
And made them pretty,
For their journey
To the city.

Through the traffic
And the lights,
Those alpacas
Saw some sights!

People stopped
And people stared.

Neither alpaca
Really cared.

From the basement
Of Daimaru,
In we marched,
Two by two.

Passing staff
And startled folk,
They looked at us.
Was this a joke?

The lift had stopped
At every floor
In that huge
Department store.

Shopper's mouths
Were open wide

At two alpacas
On their ride!

Crowds then gathered
To see the creatures
Who'd been the stars
Of recent features.

'Do they spit?
'Will they bite?'
We answered questions
Through the night.

They won the hearts
Of all they met
(No-one has
Disliked them, yet)

With animals
So sweet and charming
We are delighted
To be alpaca farming!

continued from page 24

PROMOTING ALPACAS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Growth of alpaca numbers and alpaca owners in Western Australia is a little slower than in other states. Our state is vast and distances between towns greater than elsewhere. Nevertheless, alpacas are steadily finding their way into every corner.

Western Australian alpaca owners are in an enviable position — the interest in alpacas is intense and there are many areas of the state that have not had any exposure at all. Although, there has been an increase of more than 80% in the number of alpaca owners in WA in the last twelve months.

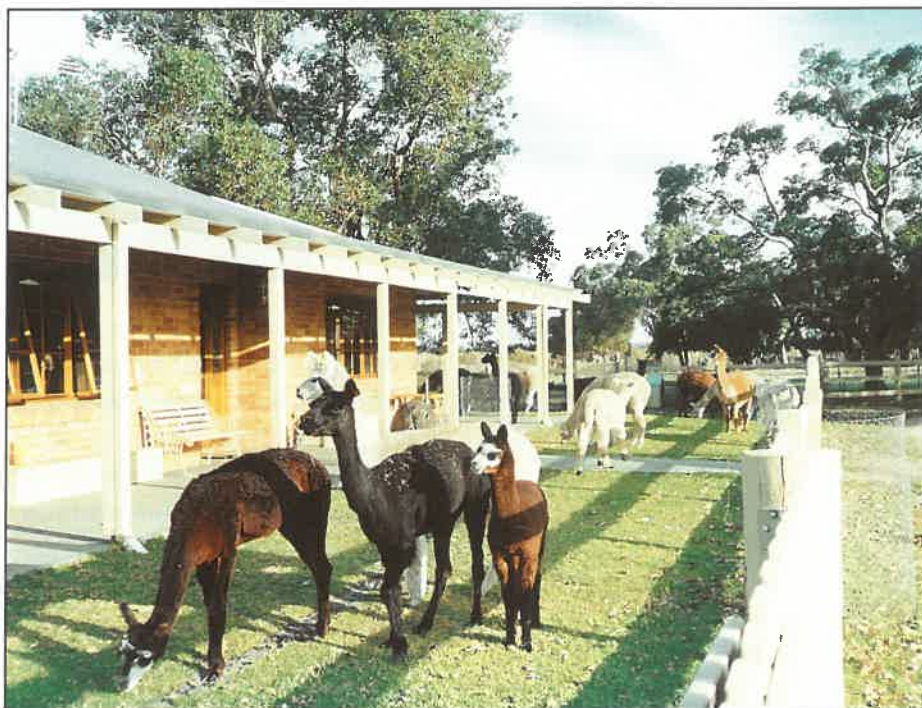
The West Australian branch of the Alpaca Association mounted its first display at the Perth Royal Agricultural Show in October 1993. The response was overwhelming. The garments and products were wonderfully received and the alpacas on display charmed everybody.

At our Royal Agricultural Show this year members will have the opportunity to show their animals and have them judged. We are aiming for this to become our premier annual promotional event.

Getting established in a new rural industry is a challenging and some-

times frightening venture. We have learnt so much over the past year through experience, seminars and other alpaca owners.

I believe that sharing of information amongst breeders is vital to the success of a fledgling industry such as ours.



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ALPACA COLOURING BOOK LAUNCHED

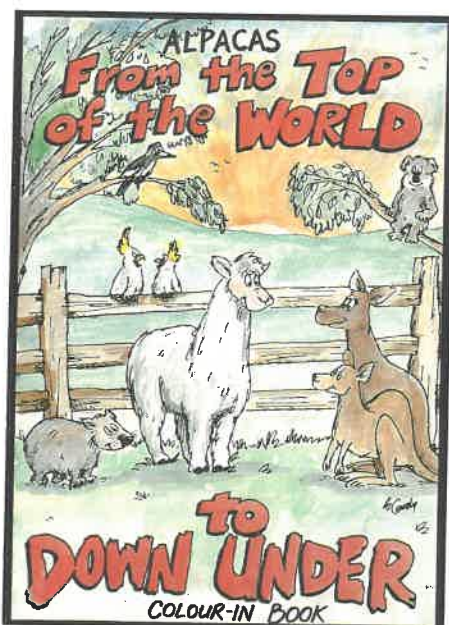
Nancy Halpin of Capalba Park Alpacas recently produced a children's book about alpacas.

Designed for both reading and colouring in, the book presents a story, told by a child, about an alpaca that travels from Alaska to Australia.

Nancy is planning to produce a series of such books and wants to show Australian children that farming is evolving and alternative farming is now a way of life in this country.

Pat McNamara (Deputy Premier of Victoria) launched the book at the Seymour Alternative Farm Expo in February.

Nancy's son Douglas also presented a copy of the book and a tee-shirt to the Minister's son, Michael McNamara.



Front cover of the colouring book –
From the Top of the World

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6 Back Issues – \$25.00 + \$8.00 postage and packing

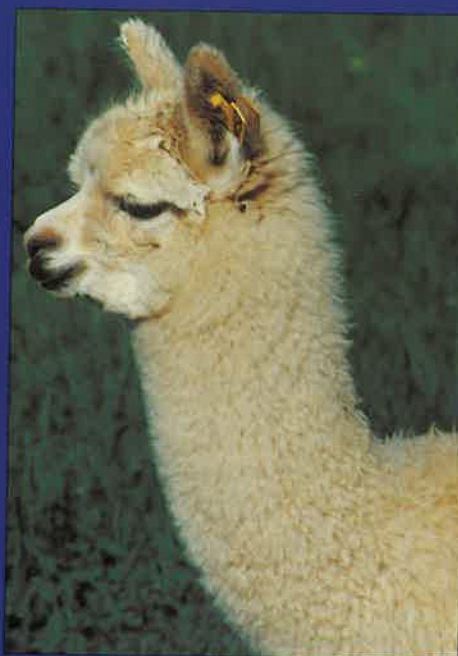
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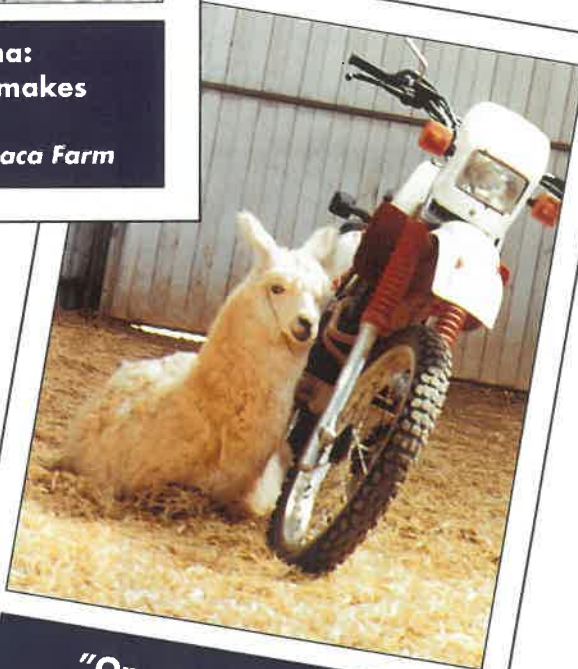
Pic of the Pack



**The Alpacanomics Dilema:
Can I withdraw before she makes
a deposit?**
- Berry Carter, Cooma Ilima, Alpaca Farm



**"Hey, who pulled out
the plug?"**
- Julie Greywall, Greywall Park ,
Alpaca Stud



"On your bike son!"
- Mark Jeffries, 4 Mile Alpaca Stud -
Benalla

PACA PICS...

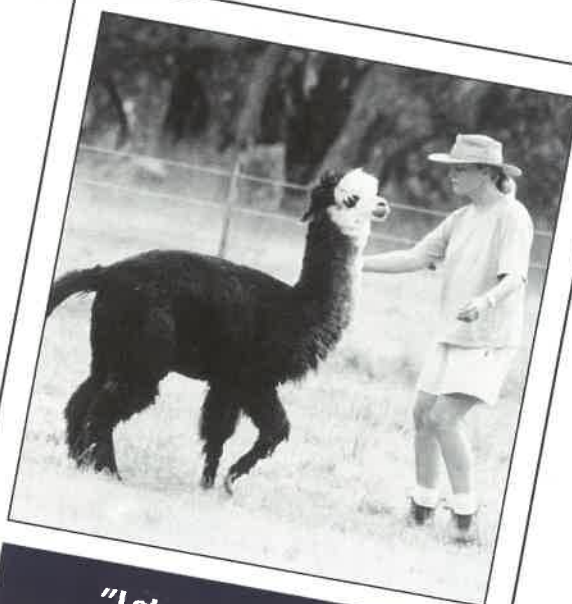
Send us your pic with a fun caption. We'll feature the best pics received, with a stud name credit.
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If your photo makes the front cover of an issue of *Alpacas Australia* you'll receive \$150.00.



"Hey guys! Steve Waugh is bowling!"
- Jenny Jackson, Banksia Park Alpaca Stud



"Ssh! maybe they won't notice us"
- Jude Anderson, Pucara Alpaca Stud
Pic. by Mike Dingdale - Geelong Adv.

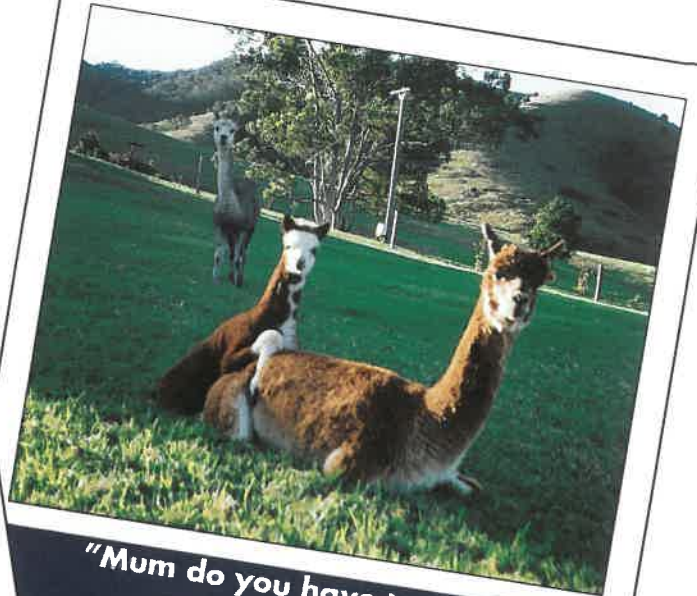


"Lets twist again"
- Jude Anderson, Pucara Alpaca Stud
Pic. by Mike Dingdale - Geelong Adv.

PACAPICS...



"Who said Alpacas have gone to our heads!"
- "Squirrel Creek" Alpaca Stud



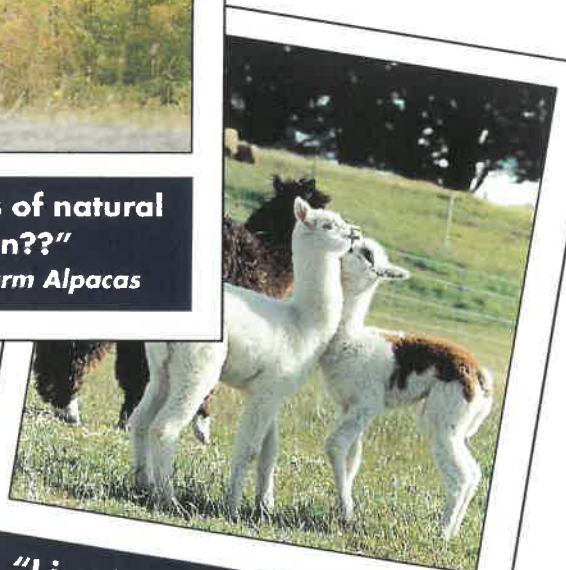
"Mum do you have to watch everything I do?"
- A&R Keene - Kiah Alpacas



"They come in all shades of natural colour....but....green??"
Claire Allston - Waterford Farm Alpacas



"Whaa - where is my mummy?"
- G & J Rigg, Jalangra Alpacas



"I just love that perfume you have on."
Riki Marten - Samarkand Alpaca Stud



Wyona Solo – 1st over 2 y.o. Male

Wyona Chipper – Reserve Champion Male 1st



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Wyona Acaramachi – 2nd 12-24 mths Male

Wyona Antonio – 2nd over 2 y.o. Male



HEALTHY WINTERING SOME BREEDERS' TIPS

*With winter coming
animals may need
some special attention.
Here are some suggestions
you may like to take
on board.*

VITAMINS

Alpacas need to maintain certain levels of Vitamin A, D & E to enable them to absorb various minerals from their feed and to keep them in top condition. When the weather becomes regularly overcast many breeders give their animals an oral drench or injection of vitamins.

Commonly used are Duphasol (an oral drench) or injections of ADE or D3.

If using an oral drench of Duphasol, suggested dosages are 5ml for cria and 10ml for adults, administered twice two monthly intervals.

If using an oral drench you can use either a drench gun or a syringe. Make sure drench is administered down the left hand side of the throat. Tip head slightly back and tickle neck to encourage swallow. Don't worry if there is some spillage as, unlike drenches, any dose is better than none!

VAM is another pick-me-up tonic used by some breeders as winter approaches. VAM contains trace elements/amino acids and is administered intra-muscularly with recommended doses being 2ml per adult and 1ml per cria.

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DRENCHES

Winter is a problem time for many types of worm. If you haven't drenched in the autumn you should look at doing it now.

However it is never advisable to drench just for the sake of it. If you don't suspect worms are present in your herd, test rather than just routinely drenching. Worm test kits are available from the Department of Agriculture.

It is advisable if testing to tick the option on the test to check for liver fluke. It is also worth enquiring as to whether or not liver fluke is known in your area in other stock. Both the Department and your vet will be able to advise.

The most common wormer used for alpacas is Ivomec which is injected sub-cutaneously.

For liver fluke an oral drench such as Fasinex is required.

FOOT CARE

Check feet and trim back close to neat V-shape. In winter feet will grow more quickly.

When checking feet check for fibromas (wartish lumps). These are quite common and need to be removed early to avoid problems. They should be surgically removed by a vet.

Necrobacillosis should also be checked for in areas where there are wet, anaerobic conditions, especially where it is warm and humid. Clinical signs of necrobacillosis are lameness and a foul, very distinct odour.

FEED

In winter you must supplementary feed if you are in an area where it rains. Although pasture may look green there is a high water content which results in the animals getting less roughage.

HAY AND PELLETS

The hay you use will depend on availability. Breeders recommend you go for quality ahead of type of hay. Most hays are fine with the common choices being Lucerne grass/clover mix (least sprayed you can find, and always second or third cut, not first cut). The more variety you can provide the better.

Many breeders recommend pellets all year round but they are particularly important in winter. Specially formulated alpaca pellets are available from a number of suppliers. A commonly used pellet is the Barastoc pellet. This requires a prescription from your vet due to the high levels of sele-

nium contained therein. These should be fed several times a week with each adult being provided with 500gms per feed.

CRIA CARE

Special care must be taken in cold weather when cria are being born. It is advisable to move pregnant animals into paddocks which offer shedding a couple of weeks before cria are due. Feed them in the sheds to encourage use. After a couple of nights you will find they will often just wander into the shed themselves.

Once born it is important to ensure a cria is dried off quickly. A towel or hairdryer can be used. A

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coats is excellent to ensure a cria maintains its body warmth over the first few days.

Observe to ensure the cria is feeding. If, after six hours, a cria has not attempted to drink, it is advisable to milk the mother to ensure the cria receives the vitally important colostrum.

HYPOTHERMIA

Combined cold, wet and windy conditions can lead to hypothermia, particularly in a cria.

It is important to tackle this immediately.

First dry the cria off and get the animal out of the weather.

If problem continues treatments can include total immersion in warm water (much as you would bath a baby) and use of hair dryer to help warm up the body core.

It is inadvisable to rub ears and legs in an attempt to warm a cria as this takes heat away from the core. Hot water bottles are another option. If a cria is really cold (temperature less than 32.3°C) there is not enough metabolic heat to maintain warmth and blankets may be required.

Normal temperature range for an adult alpaca is 37.5°C - 38.6°C to 38.9°C. Temperature is taken rectally.

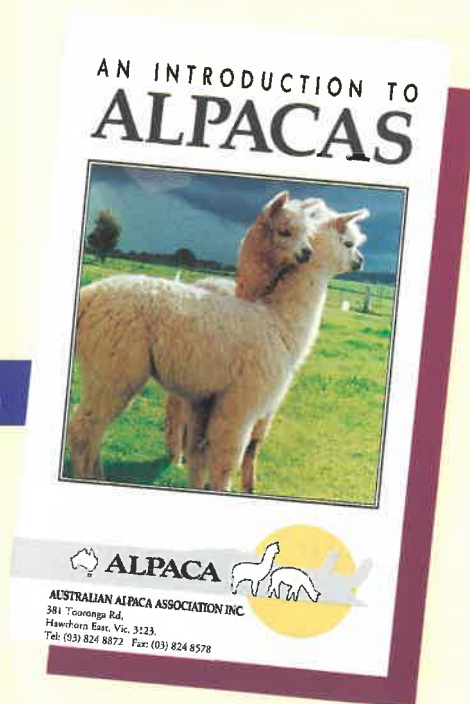
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381 Tooronga Rd, Hawthorn East, Vic. 3123.
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AAA NOTES

From Sandi Keane

INTERNATIONAL INDUSTRY AND VETERINARY SEMINAR, CANBERRA — JULY 9, 10, 11

Our national seminars have gone from strength to strength and this year's exciting line-up of guest speakers and topics is already set to take the honours from the highly successful seminar at Roseworthy last year — so much so, we have now decided that our annual seminars should be 'international' events with a strong focus on international research and expertise. Apart from learning more about this fascinating industry, alpaca enthusiasts will have a chance to catch up with old friends as well as make new ones, especially at the gala Dinner at the High Court on the Saturday night. Bookings close 24 June but at the current rate of applications, you will need to book soon as numbers are limited. Please call Jenny Jones at the National Office on (03) 824 8872 for further details.

PUBLICITY

Alpacas sure are flavour of the month at the moment! *Burke's Backyard*, *Landline*, *The Weekly Times* and *Personal Investment Monthly* are but a few of our successes. One thing many of us forget when talking to the media is the 'environmental friendliness' of alpacas. (OK, Dougal Macdonald will point out the bare patches where his alpacas have improvised their own sand pit — well, I'm guilty too. I'm told that a sand pit of river sand also helps get rid of vegetable matter which would be useful before shearing. Well, I shall give it a try to keep the alpacas

and my friends from the Landcare Movement happy.)

ENQUIRIES/NEW MEMBERS

Enquiries from prospective buyers are keeping us very busy. Fifteen new members were signed up in one week alone! Thanks to all those people who have shown some initiative in getting good, positive publicity! It is certainly paying off.

MERCHANDISE

Unfortunately, the range of merchandise supplied by the National office to Regions will have to be rationalised if we are to make economic headway. It has become an administrative nightmare now that we have ten Regions to service. The Administration and Finance Subcommittee will be reporting back soon with a resolution to this problem. It may mean reducing the number of lines currently carried to just videos, brochures and magazines and referring people to other stockists.

MEMBERSHIP DATABASE

As of May 9, the National office will take over the database. You will now be able to order labels from the National Office. But please, we need at least a week turnaround!

CHOOSING YOUR REGION

There has been some confusion amongst members about which Region they belong to. There is provision on the application form to choose your own Region. If a member lives in one Region but has animals agisted in another, they may

wish to belong to the latter. If members do not avail themselves of this option, they will automatically be assigned to the Region in which they reside.

AAA ANNUAL SHOW AND AUCTION

This popular event is, once again, back on the calendar. The date will be early November. The venue, as previously, will be Oaklands Junction, near Tullamarine Airport, Victoria. This year, we will be staging the Association's first Annual Show on the Saturday, followed by the International Auction on the Sunday.

1 9 9 4

International Alpaca Seminar

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL
UNIVERSITY CANBERRA A.C.T.

Industry Seminar

Saturday & Sunday July 9 & 10

Veterinary Seminar

Monday July, 11

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Bradford Smith, DVM, PhD Specialist
United States Alpaca Veterinarian from
Oregon State University.

Pat Bentley, Skye House Alpacas UK's
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Full details will be forwarded upon final
confirmation of speakers.

BOOKINGS CLOSE June 24, 1994

For further information contact:

Australian Alpaca Association

381 Tooronga Road, East Hawthorn 3123

Telephone: (03) 824 8872

Facsimile: (03) 824 8578

COMING EVENTS

JUNE 5

Western Region — Victoria

A meeting will be held at 1 pm with lunch from 12 noon at Benleigh Alpaca Stud, 1055 Portarlington Road, Moolap. For details, contact Allan Jinks (052) 502 737, or Phil McConachy (052) 645 182.

JULY 9 – 11

Canberra Seminar

An exciting two-day industry seminar to be followed by a veterinary seminar on 11 July. Venue is Australian National University Canberra, with a dinner dance on the Saturday evening in the Great Hall at the high Court of Australia. For further information contact: Jenny Jones (03) 824 8872.

JULY 16 – 19

Melbourne Sheep Show

Alpaca classes and promotional stand. Judging in the Federation Ring on the Saturday at 9 am. Contact: John Holt (03) 376 3733 or Dianne Condon (03) 730 1399.

AUGUST 28

Annual General Meeting — AAA

The Annual General Meeting of the Association will be held on Sunday 28 August 1994 at the Commercial Club, Dean Street, Albury commencing at 10.00 am. Notice of Meeting to be circulated to all members at the appropriate time.

SEPTEMBER 2 – 10

Royal Adelaide Show

SEPTEMBER 15 – 24

Royal Melbourne Show

Alpacas will be on display from Saturday 17 to Monday 19. Judging will take place in the Federation Ring on the Sunday commencing at approximately 4.30 pm. For further information contact Dianne Condon on (03) 730 1399.

OCTOBER 2 – 9

Royal Perth Show

OCTOBER 23

All Alpaca Expo — Victoria

Central Region planning is underway for this year's expo. Please pencil the date into your calendar now. More details as they come to hand.

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