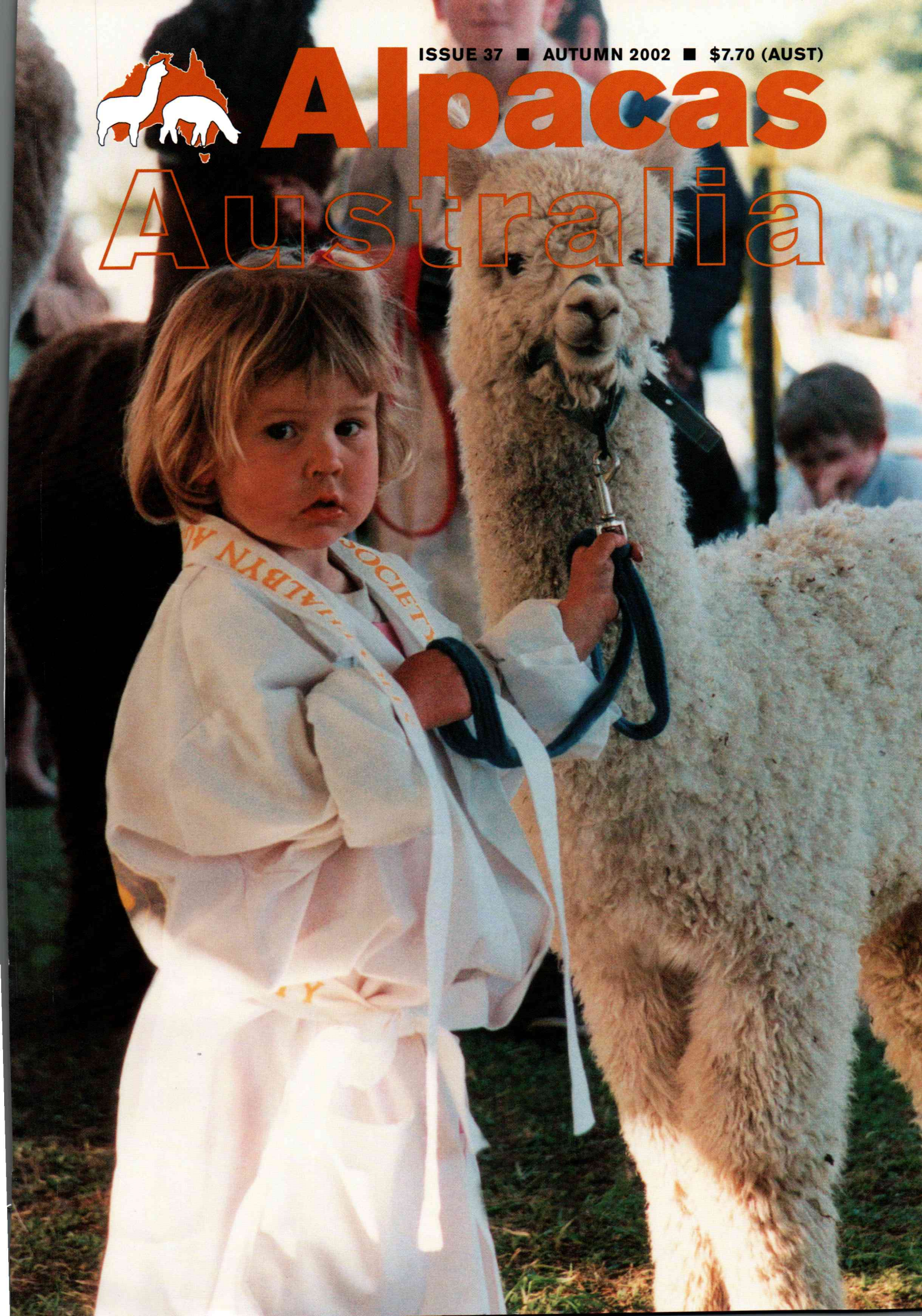
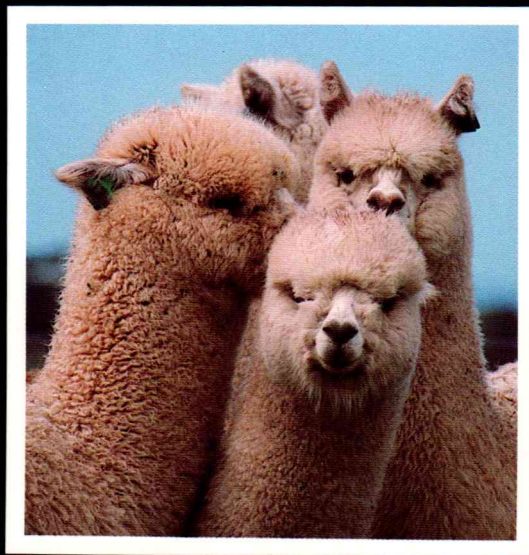


ISSUE 37 ■ AUTUMN 2002 ■ \$7.70 (AUST)

# Alpacas Australia



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Junior handler  
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see Junior Handling  
- Leading our future  
page 20

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*Willi Willi Park Alpacas, NSW*

Over 1,900 individuals and 45,000 animals make up Australia's pioneer alpaca industry. Some of these stakeholders actively support the flagship publication of the Association through advertising and written contributions. But the vast majority is the silent achievers, the rock on which we have built the foundations of a sustainable animal and fibre industry. These are the people who support each other at the regional level, who support the very strong show circuit, become actively involved in regional and national education and training initiatives and who carry the alpaca banner wherever they travel.

These are the people who make this Association what it is today – a strong, viable and respected industry body, united in its commitment to the industry and focussed in its goals.

The industry stakeholders have made some momentous decisions over the past year including huge financial support to the Australian Alpaca Co-operative Ltd, the relaxing of the registration opportunities for imported animals and lately, the reworking of the import protocols. These are all issues put to members of the Australian Alpaca Association for their decision – not endorsement or ratification, but participatory involvement.

In a sign of ever evolving maturity, the members of the Association across the nation debated and considered the future of their industry and their involvement and then cast their votes. They have made their decision and with that decision they have accepted responsibility for their actions. Such is the strength of the organisation, the industry and the stakeholders.

Alpacas represent a wonderful opportunity for everyone to participate in the birth of what I believe will be a long lasting, beneficial and financially sustainable primary industry for Australia. World leadership in the production of animal fibre will translate into world leadership in alpaca fibre and genetics. We will assume the mantle of world leadership in artificial insemination and embryo transplant technology and development just as we are leading the way with value adding to the fibre.

If ever a sunrise industry represented an excellent opportunity for investment, lifestyle, friendship and enormous satisfaction, the Australian alpaca industry is it!

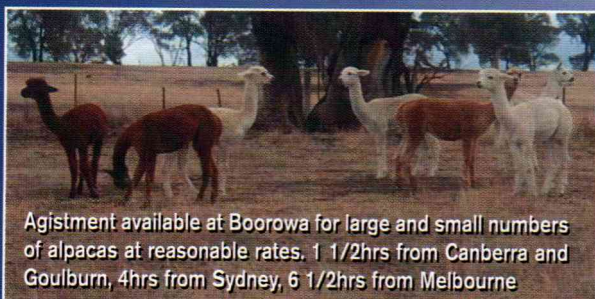
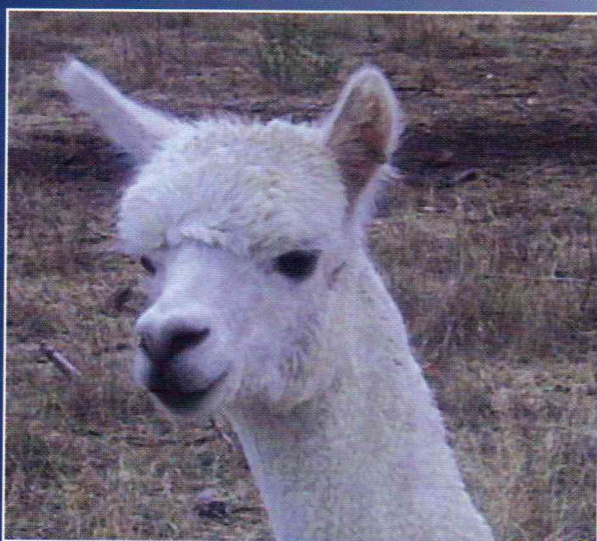
2002 will be another stellar year of progress and consolidation, which can only add to the growing recognition of alpacas in Australian agriculture.

Ian Watt, President

## a message from the president



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briefly speaking...

### Photography

*Alpacas Australia* is always on the look out for quality photographs to grace the cover of the magazine.

As the magazine name suggests we want the cover to reflect the look and feel of Australia as well as the look and feel of alpaca.

Please continue to send your photographs to the Editor for consideration.

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It is the understanding of the AAA that any photographs submitted by contributors for use in any AAA publication will be free of copyright (unless otherwise stated) and therefore will be available for use by the AAA for industry promotion without the need for further permission.

### 10th National Industry Conference

"The Finer Future" is the theme for this year's conference to be held on 23 -25 August 2002 at Australis Noosa Lakes Conference and Convention Centre, Noosa, Queensland. For preliminary details turn to page 4 and advertisement on page 41.

Further information will be mailed to AAA members shortly and will be available upon request to any other interested people.

### Digital Photography

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Alternatively, send them at least twice the image size, so that the pixels will be enhanced when reduced.

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### Next Issue

- Janie Hicks' account of Sollocotta
- Raising Respectful Alpacas - Marty McGee Bennett
- Breeders' profiles & promotional ideas

photograph courtesy of Australis Noosa Lakes Resort

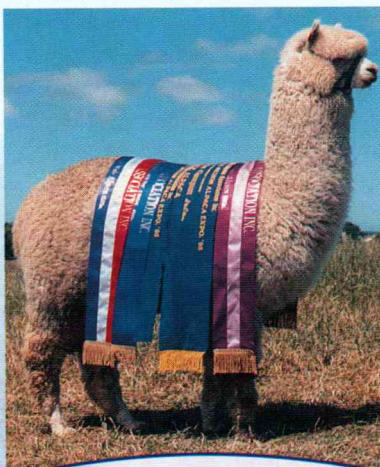
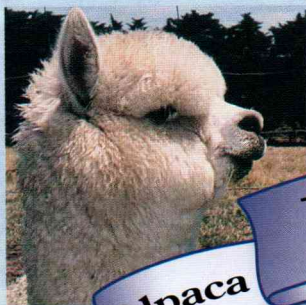


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# 10TH NATIONAL ALPACA INDUSTRY CONFERENCE

## Talking seriously about a serious industry

by 2002 NATIONAL CONFERENCE  
SUB-COMMITTEE

**The Finer Future is the theme for our industry's 10th National Conference, to be held from 23-25th August 2002 at Noosa, Queensland.**

*Every national conference raises challenging questions of the direction of alpaca breeding, policies, and the future. Economics and husbandry come under scrutiny as our industry moves beyond its establishment years and plans for the decades to come. The forthcoming National Conference is an opportunity for breeders from around the country to come together for discussion, for education, and for an exchange of ideas.*

**a**ttending the national conference of any livestock society is one of the most economical ways for breeders to find out about the people who are their associates, competitors and potential customers. It's also an opportunity to hear the many sides of controversial topics and issues. No one individual has the monopoly on wisdom.

Such a meeting of good minds, experienced breeders, pragmatic business people and those with the latest technical knowledge provides the forum for all facets to be assessed and argued. In the final analysis a national conference gives each delegate the chance to make the most informed assessment on the direction they wish to take.

In the December issue of AAA Newsletter, President Ian Watt put forward the fundamental question – "Why are we breeding alpacas if it is not to create a longer-term sustainable animal and fibre industry?"

To this end our Association is considering industry wide initiatives such as the proposed Genetic Improvement Program, but within that overall framework each individual breeder has to consider his or her own planning regime.

What is the breeding direction an individual stud hopes to follow, and what is the best way to reach that objective? Does the breeder hope to eventually have a large herd run on commercial lines concentrating on fleece production, or is the aim to produce stud quality animals that can help widen the industry's genetic base and lay the foundation for future commercial herds?

Learning about new techniques in reproductive technologies, hearing up-to-date information presented by fibre quality experts and those involved in the fields of genetics and health matters, are all valuable tools in the planning process.

At the August conference, these and other pertinent subjects will be addressed.

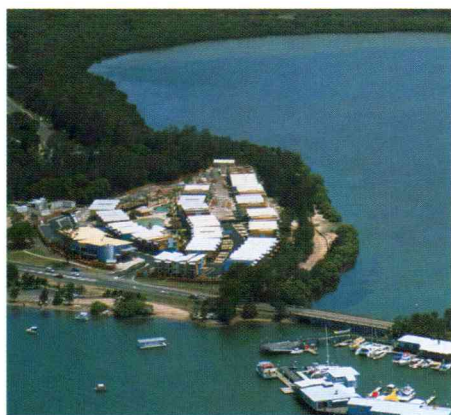
With production of an acceptable standard of marketable fibre as the industry's goal, be it from small stud herd or large commercial operation, speakers with specific fibre experience will be just one highlight of the proceedings.

A long history in merino stud management is the background to Charlie Massy's extensive involvement in Australian and international wool processing and marketing. As a member and ex-chairman of the Centre for Application of Molecular Genetics to International Agricultural, he will have a store of practical and scientific knowledge contributing to his conference presentation.

Another speaker with a strong fibre association is David Williams, now in a joint venture with the Australian Alpaca Co-Operative Ltd. David has developed his knowledge of fibre over a focused career, ranging hands-on



photography courtesy of Australia's Noosa Lakes Resort



experience in sorting wool and assessing fleece, through to establishing his own wool and mohair buying business specialising in buying for the Italian and local markets.

Soft Rolling Skin® (SRS®), a system for selection and breeding, has been developed by speaker Dr. Jim Watts. Dr. Watts states that rapid improvements in fleece quality and quantity have been achieved using this breeding system, and that many textile processors worldwide prefer the fibre it produces. His discussion of this breeding system is sure to produce much interest and debate among delegates.

Another area to be covered at the conference, and which holds promise for future industry development, is that of reproductive technology. Now accepted practice in other livestock breeds, embryo transfer and IVF techniques are still to be satisfactorily developed for widespread alpaca use.

Speaker Dr. Jane Vaughan has worked in this speciality for some years, and is presently studying ovarian follicular dynamics in alpacas. She is well qualified to present the latest information in this field, and to demonstrate to alpaca

breeders the new directions they may wish to embark on when these reproductive techniques become readily available.

Underpinning future planning matters are practical considerations relating to animal health. Breeders face these on a daily basis, so the opportunity to listen to alpaca specialist vet Dr. Ewen McMillan, and breeder Carolyn Jinks with her expertise in neonatal care, adds to this segment of the conference.

Also planned for discussion are genetics, marketing skills, and the experiences of other fibre producing associations that have much to impart to the alpaca industry.

To start the weekend, the AAA's Annual General Meeting will take place on the afternoon of Friday 23rd August. A meeting not to be missed by AAA members who wish to hear and comment on their national committee's discussion of industry matters.

While the 10th National Conference will present serious issues for the dedicated current and potential breeder, the venue has been chosen to provide the right balance for relaxation times in a beautiful setting.

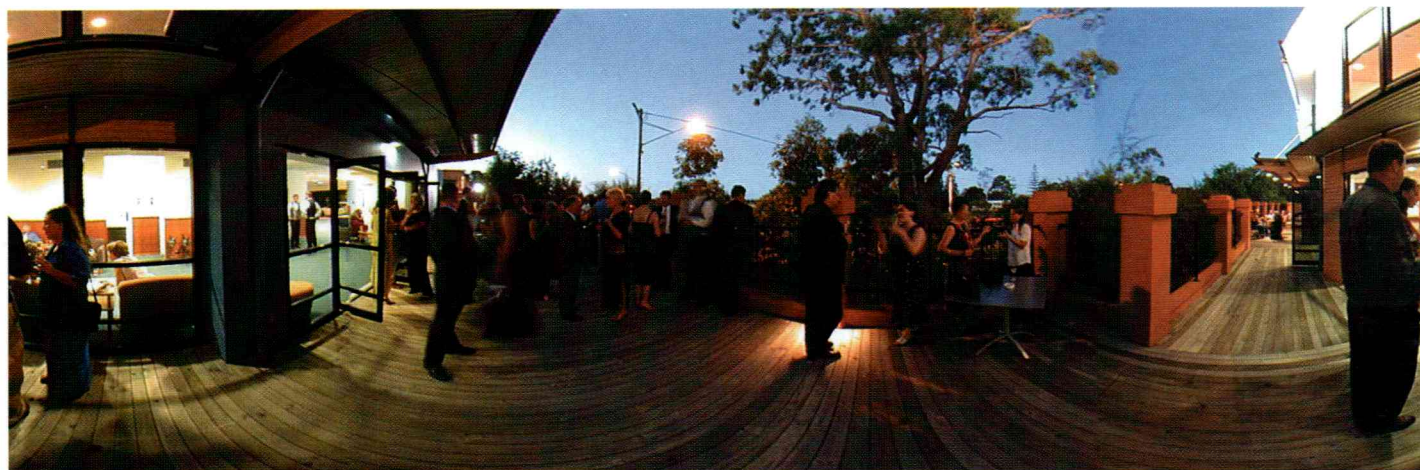
Australis Noosa Lakes Conference and Convention Centre, with its incorporated resort facilities, is situated on the Noosa River in Queensland, not far from Noosa's famous beaches. This purpose built centre has been commended for its excellent facilities and attention to the details that help make attending a conference a successful and pleasurable time.

On Friday night delegates may wish to catch up with fellow breeders during relaxing drinks on the terrace and casual meal, while on Saturday night the resort's award winning chef will cater for the traditional Conference Dinner. During the evening the latest alpaca fibre fashion will be on parade.

For those with extra time available, the Noosa region offers a perfect location for a few days holiday enjoying Queensland's balmy August weather.

**Make plans now to join us for the AAA's 10th National Conference.**

**For further information please ring the AAA National Office on 03 9873 7700**



# Alpacas as guards

**Editor's Note:** *The value of using alpacas as guard animals continues to be a vital new aspect to the alpaca industry. Breeders are receiving increasing numbers of enquiries for suitable animals and the alpaca's skill in this regard can only further advance the public awareness of the animal, the fibre and the Australian alpaca industry in general. While sheep and goat breeders and the like will admire the guard alpaca at work from afar, they will also surely notice at close quarters the appeal of the alpaca fibre. Let's ensure that their perception of both of these alpaca attributes is not clouded by bad experiences.*

AAA Breed Standards Sub-committee Chairperson, Bill Robbins, provided the following article for a recent AAA member newsletter. For the benefit of all alpaca owners it is reproduced here to reinforce the message.

by BILL ROBBINS  
AAA BREED STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE

**i** am writing this to answer questions that have arisen regarding the use of alpacas as guard animals.

We first started using alpacas for flock protection about 12 years ago when we found our males had killed two foxes. Where we live in the North East of Victoria, bordering state forest, is perhaps the wild dog capital of Australia and over a period of 18 months we lost 300 sheep and six calves.

A seven wire electric fence was erected to exclude the dogs. This helped but the dogs found a way around it. After the experiences with the foxes and the way our alpacas attacked our working dogs, we decided to use them against the wild dogs, with instant success. In the 12 years we have been in alpacas we have not lost one alpaca to wild dogs (we run approximately 250 alpacas). We now train our younger males to develop their protective instincts by running them with the older wethers that are protecting sheep and goats. From this, we have gained the

knowledge that not all alpacas are suitable as protection animals as they do not have the aggression or personality. They can however be companions for flock protectors.

It is rare that the protective instinct will develop in alpacas less than 18 months old. Thus alpacas younger than this should not be sold as protectors as they will not do their job and the industry will suffer, as it already has, because farmers will quickly spread the word that it is not a success. This market for our wethers and barren females has taken some time to build up. The last thing we need is for alpaca breeders, through ignorance, damaging this part of our industry.

We have found that alpacas work best in pairs. However single animals could work just as successfully once they bond with the sheep and goats provided there are no other alpacas about. If single alpacas are run with sheep in adjoining paddocks they may seek one another's company rather than protect the flock. The number of alpacas required to protect stock depends more on the size and terrain of the paddock than the number of animals needing protection (one alpaca could protect 100 sheep in a flat 20 hectare paddock, but four or six alpacas may be needed in a hilly paddock of the same size).

Same sex alpacas working together make the best protectors. Do not run a male and female together for obvious reasons. Males need to be castrated by the time they are a maximum of three years old, otherwise they may spend most of their time fighting or as has happened, trying to mate with the ewes or does. Some older uncastrated males can become quite aggressive. We find castrated males or pregnant females are best as these have less distractions. Alpacas are easily castrated and I have castrated many in the last eight years ranging in age from six months to eight years old.

Some alpacas will start protecting the moment they are put with sheep or goats but in general it is better to give them a little time to bond with the flock particularly in large paddocks. They need time to settle into their surroundings.

We have a large demand for well trained wethers and find it difficult to keep up with the supply, as well as have enough for our own use.

To reiterate, for a commercial farmer, alpacas are invaluable for flock protection, provided a few guidelines are followed:

- Select alpacas over 18 months old
- Use alpacas of the same sex in each group
- Males need to be castrated
- Not all alpacas are suitable

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# 2002 Royal Canberra Show

by JOHN VAN DER STRAATEN  
CONVENOR

The 2002 Royal Canberra Show, 22-24 February 2002 was planned to be a show to beat the heat! This Show was to be a trial short fleece event for huacayas, a first to accommodate the high temperatures often experienced in high summer on the Southern Tablelands. A covered show ring was also a new feature to reduce stress on the animals, judges, officials and exhibitors.

**t**he Royal National Capital Agricultural Society (RNCAS) budget for the 2002 Royal Canberra Show was much reduced from last year but the organisers tried to present the Show to the standards expected of a Royal. Many members who normally exhibit had not quite fine-tuned their shearing to be able to present their huacayas with the required amount of fleece (30mm-60mm), and so were unable to enter. As the number of alpaca entries was down on last year, we were able to accommodate them all in one marquee. The absence of the bigger studs was noticeable but this provided the smaller breeders with opportunities for recognition. Interestingly, the assessed and unassessed sections were in equal proportions.

Fleece entries, disappointingly, were down on the extraordinary number of the previous year despite the encouragement of a full range of colour classes.

Friday provided local breeders with the opportunity to display their attractive young animals to the crowd and to promote the merits of our industry. In the afternoon, the judge, Kevin Rubie, assisted by Apprentice Judge, Ron Reid from Western Australia, worked through the fleeces and awarded the Supreme Champion Huacaya Fleece to Paddington Alpaca Stud's *Evenstar Sovereign* (fawn) and the Champion Suri Fleece to Elysion Alpacas' *Elysion Puccini* (light).



Saturday, alpaca judging day, was very busy and went quickly. The judges noted that the dustier huacayas made for some difficulty in assessing the feel, but otherwise the shorter fleece presented no more of a challenge than normal.

Major trophies were awarded as follows:

**CHAMPION JUNIOR FEMALE HUACAYA:**  
*Blue Grass Winter Princess*  
**CHAMPION JUNIOR MALE HUACAYA:**  
*Blue Grass El Nino Dorado*  
**CHAMPION INTERMEDIATE FEMALE HUACAYA:**  
*Illawarra Winca*  
**CHAMPION INTERMEDIATE MALE HUACAYA:**  
*Illawarra Verdi*  
**CHAMPION SENIOR MALE HUACAYA:**  
*Blue Grass Bollinger*  
**CHAMPION MATURE MALE HUACAYA:**  
*Mirrabook Inca Prince*  
**CHAMPION JUNIOR SURI:**  
*Pacofino Classic Ice*  
**CHAMPION INTERMEDIATE SURI:**  
*Tahara O'Malley*  
**CHAMPION SENIOR SURI:**  
*Bella Vista Casanova*

Illawarra Alpacas capped off a highly successful day for most of their entries with the award of Supreme Champion Huacaya to *Illawarra Winca*. Pacofino Alpaca Stud took off the Supreme Champion Suri with *Pacofino Classic Ice*. Full details of the show results are available on the AAA Website. Please visit [www.alpaca.asn.au](http://www.alpaca.asn.au)

Sunday was planned to be a relaxed day, and as there were no junior judging entries and, at the appointed hour, there were no junior handlers out of bed, the irrepressible Chief Steward staged an impromptu open handlers event and rounded up an impressive selection of senior handlers. They were put through an obstacle course to the accompaniment of much encouragement and hilarity, such that the RNCAS considered it to be more fun than the pig racing and recommended it as an RNCAS feature for next year! The covered show ring area then featured demonstrations of shearing, alpaca fibre testing, felting and spinning as well as a display of alpaca products.

A Silent Auction of sire services was strongly supported by members who valued the generous donation of services by nine local owners of top quality sires. Space does not permit acknowledgement of those Southern NSW Region members who can be depended upon to be around when there is work to be done, nor can there be adequate recognition of all sponsors and donors of sire services in this report. However, I would like to thank them for their support in ensuring the success of the 2002 Royal Canberra Show. ■

# The Champions of the 2002 Royal Canberra Show



**Champion Junior Suri**  
**SUPREME CHAMPION SURI**  
*Pacofino Classic Ice*



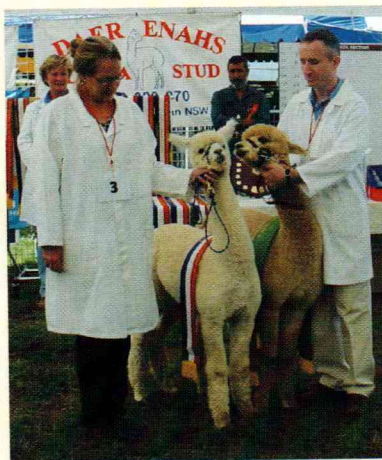
**Champion l'med. Suri** *Tahara O'Malley (right)*  
**Res. Champion l'med. Suri** *Stanmore Park Ivory Lad*



**Champion Senior Suri**  
*Bella Vista Casanova*

**Junior Champion**  
**Female Huacaya**  
*Blue Grass Winter Princess (left)*

**Res. Junior Champion**  
**Female Huacaya**  
*Talamasca Gypsy Rose*



**Junior Champion**  
**Male Huacaya**  
*Blue Grass El Nino Dorado (right)*

**Res. Junior Champion**  
**Male Huacaya**  
*Illawarra Warrior*

**l'med. Champion**  
**Female Huacaya**  
**SUPREME CHAMPION HUACAYA**  
*Illawarra Winca*



**l'med. Champion**  
**Male Huacaya**  
*Illawarra Verdi (right)*

**Res. l'med. Champion**  
**Male Huacaya**  
*Blue Grass Golden Sun*

**Senior Champion**  
**Male Huacaya**  
*Blue Grass Bollinger (left)*

**Res. Senior**  
**Champion Male Huacaya**  
*Illawarra Vincent*



**Mature Senior**  
**Champion Male Huacaya**  
*Mirrabook Inca Prince*

# Victorian Rural Woman of the Year

by CAROL MATHEW  
JINGANA ALPACAS, VIC

*On 31st January 2002, I was amazed and delighted to be named the "Victorian Rural Woman of the Year". Amazed because I had met the other regional finalists and was overwhelmed by what they were doing. Delighted because it allows me to fulfil something I thought was only a daydream.*

**b**efore going into the Award details I will give a background sketch of my affair with alpacas. In 1995-96 I purchased my first Alpacas, 3 Huacaya and 4 Suri females. I bought at the height of the market with meagre knowledge and an infatuation with the animals. Sounds familiar? The detail of this story remains for my memoirs, title still pending.

Having dived in dramatically, I kept on swimming. I purchased a 100 acre farm in Lancefield, Victoria, and became a foundation member of the Australian Alpaca Co-operative Ltd. Then in 1997 with about 30 or so other Aussies I went to the International Festival of Camelids in Arequipa, Peru. There I learnt about all the things you should look for before you purchase alpacas. However, judicious breeding decisions can give dramatic gains and are available to all! Now all of this has not dampened my enthusiasm for alpacas, just caused sleepless nights.

Part of my "kept on swimming" had included participation in the organisation of the industry. Early in Ian Watt's term as President of the AAA, he asked me to chair a Working Party on the Restructuring of the AAA. This afforded a great opportunity to look at the future directions of the



Carol Mathew receives her award from Candy Broad, Minister for Energy & Resources and Keith Hamilton, Minister for Agriculture.

Association. And I am pleased to see the continuation of a strong National focus and the slow evolution from a breed society to peak industry body.

I am the Industry Representative on the RIRDC (Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation) sub-committee for Rare Natural Animal Fibres. This body has been responsible for funding over \$600,000 worth of research on alpacas and continues to give us great support. As part of my involvement I facilitated the first AAA workshop on R&D in September 2001. This was a very successful exercise from my perspective. It was great to see the breeders take ownership of the exercise and work constructively with the broad range of researchers and processors also present. For the newbies to the industry the RIRDC website is [www.rirdc.gov.au](http://www.rirdc.gov.au) click on Programs and then Rare Natural

Animal Fibres, and you can check on past and present research.

My other major industry involvement has been as a Director of the Australian Alpaca Co-operative Ltd since 1998. At present I am Chair of the Suri Working Party which is exploring the profile of the Australian clip and ways in which we can successfully market our Suri fibre. We draw on the existing members of the Suri Club and new entrants to Suri breeding for guidance, inspiration and work. There are now over 300 breeders with registered Suris so we should be able to gain some commercial sized clips. I consider it is my strong belief in the need for a Co-operative to give long-term industry sustainability that gave me the Award.

## So, what is the Award and how do you win it?

Every State participates in the RIRDC Rural Women's Awards (by the way there is no connection with the Rare Natural Fibres Committee). In Victoria we are fortunate to receive generous State Government support for the Award. This year they funded 9 regional winners, who receive \$2,000 awards as well as the Winner who receives \$20,000. Most other States have one winner and 2 runners-up.

To participate in the Award you need to put forward a proposal which addresses 3 areas:

- personal commitment to sustainable agriculture and the role of rural women;
- potential to achieve and deliver benefits to agriculture;
- provide leadership and impart skills and knowledge.

Further details can be found on the following website [www.nre.vic.gov.au](http://www.nre.vic.gov.au) click on community.

The first area on the role of rural women was pretty straightforward for me, as I have been involved in supporting rural women who have run for municipal elections throughout the State. And for the Centenary of Federation, I co-ordinated the "Women's Petition 2001". This included the co-ordination of 260 workshops across Victoria (mainly rural) to identify issues to be included in the petition. We then gained over 45,000 signatures on the petition which was presented to the Parliament in May 2001. The petition was partly to celebrate the 1891 'monster' petition from the women of the Colony of Victoria, containing 30,000 signatures and calling for the right to vote.

My activities within the industry have always been focused on sustainability for growers.

For the second area in the award, you need to outline in some detail the aspects of your project including a budget breakdown. My project involves a focus on trying to manage markets thus smoothing the boom and bust of primary industries. This entails some measure of product vertical integration, involving market research

and promotion, and strategic alliances with processors and retailers. This keeps growers actively involved in, and with some control over, the final product from their clip.

The third area combined some of the first issue as well as a communication strategy.

The getting of information back to the industry is remarkably straightforward for alpaca growers. I consider our communication to growers is good and constantly improving. To present my findings, I propose a series of workshops for growers to discuss and explore ways ahead. I will also write a report. I also knew that winning even a regional award would present a great opportunity to promote alpacas, but the reality has surpassed my expectations.

Of course the great thing about my project is the proposal that I travel to Italy and the UK to investigate top-of-the-range processing and product opportunities. The big question is whether I can fit in Paris in June and Florence in July – and is a stopover in Japan a good idea? Oh, the joy of it all! ■

# COOLAROO

ESTABLISHED 1987



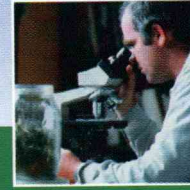
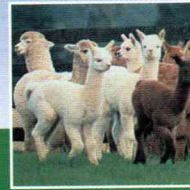
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# NECESSITY

## *the master of invention*

by JANE SZIGETHY-GYULA  
MOUNTAIN ALPACAS, VIC

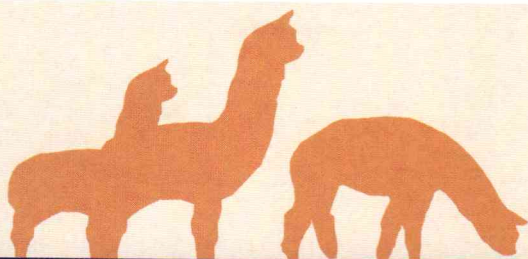
In the early days of alpacas in Australia we were all learning how best to handle these animals and how to adapt other animal husbandry practices to them. We were in contact with a lot of other breeders and so there was a great deal of interested input into our care of them.

Now most of us have worked out what is best for us and what is best for the animals in our care.

Field days are no longer our greatest priority and instead we tend to chat to our friends if we have hit a snag or come up against something new and puzzling. Many of us have had to devise better ways of doing things and, as alpaca breeders have been drawn from such diverse fields, they bring hundreds of different perspectives to the husbandry of their animals and consequently a lot of lateral thinking.

When faced with a problem that has to be overcome many of us have become "Masters of Invention" without really realizing it. The real beneficiaries are the shearers and the mobile maters who routinely visit other properties and see at first hand the adaptations these clever people have made.

So this article is an attempt to pass on some of these ideas so that others do not have to 'reinvent the wheel'. Some of these I have seen at work, others I have simply heard about, so don't take this as my personal endorsement but rather contact the inventors direct for further information.



[www.alpaca.asn.au](http://www.alpaca.asn.au)

## A Key Source of Information

The alpaca website caters to both Association members and those who have not been involved with alpacas but who may be considering joining the industry.

With over 6000 visitors per month, the website offers a valuable source of information for newcomers, investors and breeders alike.

## Shelters

Living in a windy, wet and cloudy area it soon became apparent that I needed easily accessible shedding. Rather than taking the animals to the shed I thought I would reverse the process and take the shed to the animals and so I designed a mobile shed 15'x8'. It has a welded frame and is covered with corrugated iron. With a ski at either end and an A shaped tow chain that is attached to corner rings by shackles it can be towed from either end. This is important if you get stuck on a stump or gate post and need to go into reverse mode.

Inside it has a folding internal yard which can be swung out to cut off a corner sixth of the shed or straightened to cut off a third. This enables cria, mum and cria, males and females to be separated under cover but still close to the rest of the herd. Inside hay and muesli feeders and a shelf and hooks make the shed adaptable as a work, feed or shelter centre.

Internal fittings are round-cornered or flush with existing surfaces to minimize injury and the base of the shed has two flat straps to hold the ends together so that the shed is not pulled out of alignment when towed.

The gates and yards are made from vertical rod rather than mesh allowing legs to slip through and minimizing the potential for injury.

The whole thing can be pulled by a ute or tractor and can be pegged down by angling a star steel through a welded loop on each corner. This is a necessity in windy areas or on a slope and works very well indeed.

JANE SZIGETHY-GYULA



The sled shed, ideal for feed storage, dry feeding area, on-site shearing/husbandry/mating. The alpaca need not be removed from the rest of the herd. It also reduces the need for laneways to central shedding, the proliferation of sheds or the movement of whole herd to treat just one animal. It is a cheap solution.

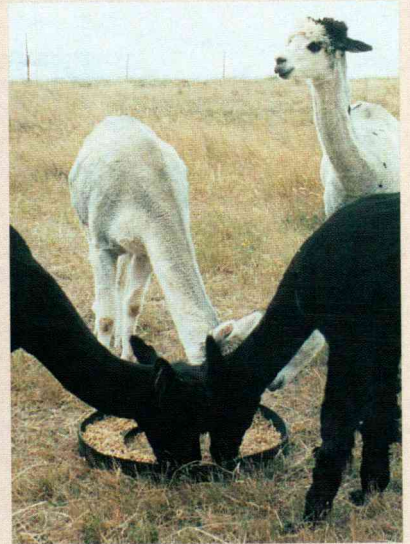
## Tyre - Tube Haltering

Once the alpaca is halter trained many people want to be able to tie it up quietly for show preparation, etc. They report that by tying it to an inner tube the alpaca seems less stressed as the elasticity seems to give it a degree of freedom of movement. They in turn are not jerked about and the alpaca seems happier to be restrained in this way than tied to an unyielding post.

## Feeders

When feeding muesli many breeders are using lengths of spouting with sealed ends. These are easily moved around, overturned if wet after rain and, as the feed is spread out over a considerable length, the less dominant animals are able to get their share. These are often attached to fence lines as are wooden feed boxes of similar length and configuration.

An alternative is to cut older style tyres (not radials) horizontally, forming rings. There is less danger of animals being cut by these. Once again they are easily moved around, rainwater can easily be tipped out and feed doesn't get in the corners. Half a dozen animals at a time tend to feed happily radiating out from them like the spokes of a wheel.



Car tyres cut horizontally make safe, easily moved paddock feeders.

Many of us are aware of the huge increase in numbers of cockatoos and galahs at feeding time. To minimize the chance of bird-born disease I like to feed at dusk when most of the birds have gone or feed in the mobile shed whose darker interior and less open escape route tends to put limits on their numbers.

Similarly I like to locate troughs in the shade of trees, allowing for cooler water, less algae growth and to minimize faecal contamination from birds who prefer a more open escape route. The downside is, of course, the need to clean leaves from the troughs frequently.

JANE SZIGETHY-GYULA

## Crush

A number of people have devised crushes based on the principle of cattle crushes. Generally they are made of two parallel posts spaced about 60 cm apart at head and foot with gates hinged at the head end on either side. The animal is led in on one side and the side gate closed moving the alpaca sideways. Naturally there is a rail or two top and tail.

If the gates are hung 30-40cm above the ground feet can be trimmed. It is better still if the gate has been specially made preferably of vertical rods and of 60-80cm in depth as this enables the animal to be quite secure and the backline easily accessible over the top as well as allowing for treatment to the sides through the vertical bars. I have seen numerous variants of these but none that has all the design features for a photo.

## Hay Feeder

A brilliant idea for keeping hay dry in the paddock without having to replenish it each day was the one devised by Geoff Brennan. An engineer by training he looked for a cheap and simple solution and came up with an adaptation to a plastic pickle drum.

These grey drums are close to the size of a 44 gallon drum and have reinforcing ribs as part of their moulded structure.

Geoff stood the drum on end and cut along one horizontal rib forming a lid that dropped back over the remaining lip of the drum. He then secured 3 wooden legs on to the base and cut out 3 or 4 panels about 15-20 cm high on the low sides. The drums take about 3/4 of a bale and because the drum is raised off the ground the alpacas can feed from below, the weight of the hay above pushing down to where it is available through the cut-outs.



Dry hay feeder made from moulded pickle drum. Very little hay is wasted and the animals remain clean by not dragging hay over one another.

I have adapted this idea by having two parallel metal rings joined by vertical rods welded up, forming a collar into which the drum nestles comfortably.

The whole thing is easily moved to another feeding place should the ground become worn. Frequently my herd is to be seen seated radiating out like the spokes from a hub peacefully feeding even in the worst of weathers.

**GEOFF BRENNAN, AUSTRALIAN ALPACAS, VIC  
& JANE SZIGETHY-GYULA**

## Drinkers

Juice bottles with handles are very useful if half the broadside is scooped out and the whole attached to a pen or fence line.

These can be used for drinkers at shows or for stockgain, licks or vitagrain which you don't want to get wet, and which your alpacas can access on a daily basis.

**JANE SZIGETHY-GYULA**

## Pen Escapees

Tiki Morgan has had years of experience working with horses and is always ready to adapt her livestock experience to her alpacas' needs. When trying to teach young horses not to rush or jump yard fences she came up with the idea of hanging something weighty across the chest and down to above the knees. She experimented with car tyres and found that that solved the problem, the rationale being that the animal felt less confident about taking flight with something swinging around its front knees. When she had alpacas who had a tendency to jump from yards she applied the same principle and found it worked very well, abolishing the need to tether the alpaca in the yard all day if at a show or sale. This little gem of experience was passed on to Karen Caldwell and I saw one of her animals standing in a pen with a collar around the neck from which was suspended a pair of hobbles, two collars joined by a short chain and swivel. These worked effectively and were compact to carry to different venues. May I stress that these hobbles were not used on the feet but were simply used to dangle across the chest to inhibit jumping.

**TIKI MORGAN, ROSKHILL ALPACAS, NSW  
KAREN CALDWELL, WYONA ALPACAS, NSW**

## Hood

One very clever and kindly device is that of the See-no-evil Hood. It was designed by Jillian Holmes in response to the violent behaviour of an older male who had had very little handling when he came to her. She tried blindfolding with a towel, which brought instant peace, but found that keeping a towel attached during treatment was a bit iffy. Immediately she set to designing a small hood that would not cover the nose and so reduce the chance of inducing panic. It had to be simple to fit on, fit over a halter and be soft so that the alpaca's eye would not be ground in to the floor if it was wearing it when being shorn.



Snugly fitting  
"see-no-evil hood"

The solution was a padded cotton hood with a velcro nose adjustment and three velcro tabs that fit together behind the ears. When shearing, the quick release side velcro enables face shearing without complete removal. Shearers and vets have used it with great success and it may be a useful piece to have on hand should you have an alpaca that panics at the unfamiliar. It is also easily washed.

**JILLIAN HOLMES,  
JIGARU ALPACAS, VIC**

## Restraints

Alpacas have always been an attractive livestock option for women and older couples who perhaps do not have the degree of brawn required for the care of other types of livestock. However, an alpaca's courteous nature may sometimes be tried by our need to toe or tooth trim and it is useful then to have a restraint that minimizes the fuss to all concerned.

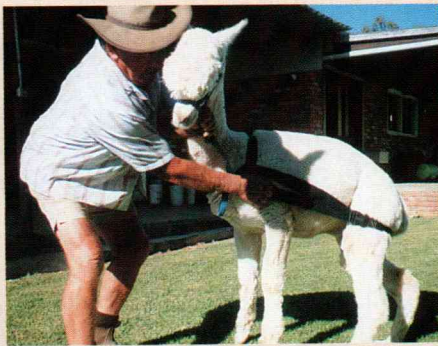
Vic Dohnt, a practical man with a lifetime of using common sense approaches to solving problems, came up with a simple chukkering device made from car seat belt material. It consists of an adjustable loop that encircles the body from shoulder to tail. This can be tightened just like a car seat belt.

A sewn loop goes over the wither preventing the harness dropping too low. By pulling gently on the adjustable strap the animal will drop into a sitting position where it can be easily handled, toes and teeth trimmed and injections administered. This device has undergone a number of modifications and Vic is happy with its performance now. He has used it widely and on difficult animals and feels it provides a simple and kindly solution to necessary restraint for husbandry purposes. It is a much simpler approach to chukkering than the roping up of alpacas which was widely used in the early '90s.

**VIC DOHNT, AILAHTAN ALPACAS, VIC**



The very simple harness



Tightening



Chukkered, a one-man operation

## Tagasaste Hedges

Rather than buying lucerne or clover hay, a good self-feeder is provided with the establishment of tagasaste or (lucerne tree) hedges or paddock lines. I have used short hedges for wind breaks by putting two parallel lines of tree mesh 60 cm apart (the sort that has smaller holes at the bottom to prevent rabbits eating the young trees, but rabbit or chicken wire will do too) and planting the trees every 45 cm.

As the trees grow, they hedge up and foliage that grows through the mesh can be nibbled off. The tips are juicy and make welcome additional feed in winter or summer.

For those who have not used them, tagasaste are not hard to establish or maintain and the alpacas do a very good hedging job across the top.

**JANE SZIGETHY-GYULA**

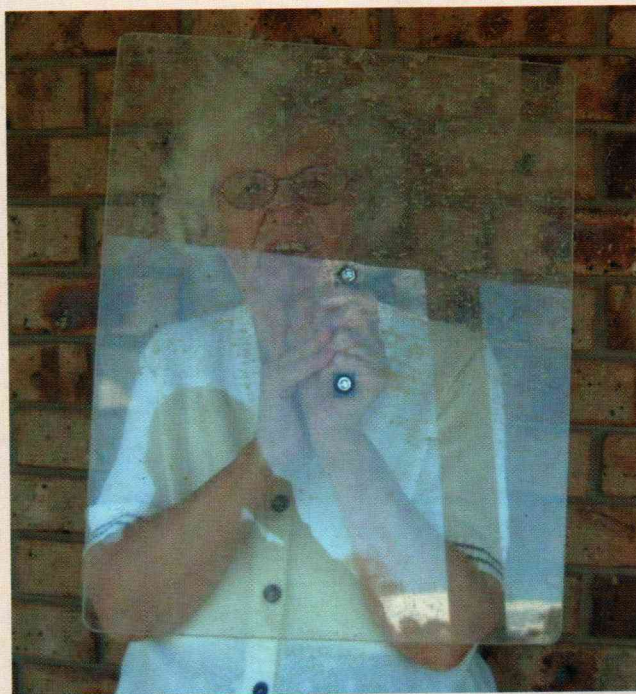


Tagasaste hedges are great windbreaks and provide good green feed winter or summer minimizing your outlay for green fodder

## Visor

Judy Richardson had one particularly obstreperous female who would not let them get up to her new born cria to determine the sex. She was covered in the unpleasant slag. A friend, horrified by what she had to put up with, went home and knocked up two perspex visors to be hand-held in extremis. They worked a treat.

**JUDY RICHARDSON, CLEARVIEW ALPACAS, NSW**



Judy Richardson's mum – safe behind the mini-riot shield

## Shearing Table (1)

There have been a number of shearing tables produced, principally to reduce the wear and tear on backs and knees and the endless scrabbling around on the floor as our herd numbers grow. Over time these have been refined and simplified. I know of two in Australia that are being used with great success. Terry Bormann made the first and he uses it widely when he shears in South Australia. It folds up to a manageable size for transporting and is quickly set up in situ. It has a flat deck that drops to the verticle position when the alpaca is led in and secured by two straps. The deck is then turned into the horizontal position and the legs secured to fixed arm attachments. The deck locks into position with the use of a spring loaded pin and the animal can be loaded from either side, which is useful as Terry visits a number of yard/shed set-ups. Once the alpaca is secured Terry is able to drop part of the deck down as it is hinged for that purpose and that enables him to get in close for shearing and limits the amount of stretching he has to do. Both sides can drop down in this way enabling him to shear from both sides. The surface is big enough, if he needs to roll the saddle over with the animal, to keep the saddle fleece intact for showing. He uses the table routinely and would never go back to shearing on the floor. He believes that the animals are less stressed because they are close to their normal head height and he finds that he can shear pregnant females quite late into their gestation. It is also felt that a raised table facilitates the skirting of fleece as there is much less chance of it becoming mixed as it sometimes does on the floor. Terry keeps baskets at hand for the fleece to be fed straight into off shears.

## Holster

Terry also had another little gem, a holster for his shearing head. It is holster-shaped but made of stainless steel and hangs from his belt. Inside it is filled with lard. He finds the lard excellent for cooling and lubricating the shearing head. Although he has used a number of oils, detergents and fats he swears that lard surpasses all of them. As the holster hangs on his belt it helps him keep minor interruptions to a minimum.

**TERRY BORMANN, TERROSERY HILL ALPACAS, SA**

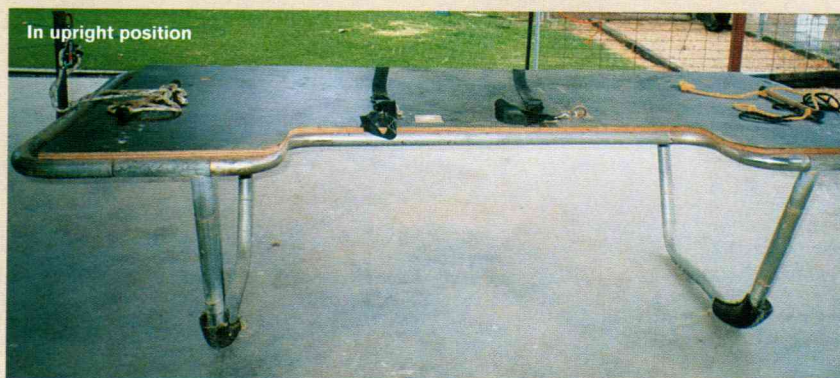


Drop-sided table allows Terry to get in close for shearing. Assistants collect fleece simultaneously.

## Shearing Table (2)

The second shearing table is another invention of Vic Dohnt's. Initially he and his wife, Joan, had employed a shearer and roped in a few friends to help. As the alpaca numbers grew and the novelty of shearing time wore off for their friends, Vic thought he had better come up with something so he and Joan could do the shearing themselves. Both he and Joan are in their mid '60s and had never shorn before but with the help of the table the two of them were able to shear all 40 animals at their place this season without the need for any assistance. Vic made use of an old trampoline he found lying about, cut it down in size, changed its surface shape a bit and added a piece of 8x4' ply. As you can see it is simplicity itself and, like the one of Terry's, enables the shearer to work in close to the alpaca minimizing unnecessary stretching. It is stable, simple, low cost and again represents the innovative approach breeders are making towards solving their husbandry needs.

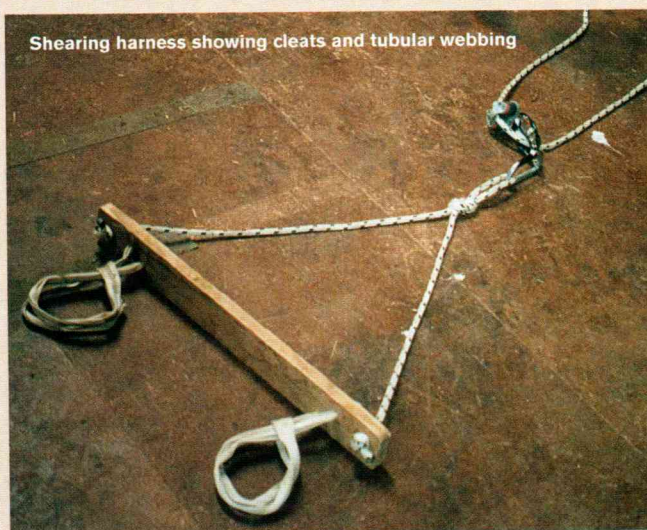
**VIC DOHNT, AILAHTAN ALPACAS, VIC**



## Shearing Harness

It is fairly commonplace in Victoria to use cleats for tightening and securing leg attachments in readiness for shearing, so I was surprised to hear a large NSW breeder speak of her recent discovery of them. The photo here is included for those of you who have not seen them. They are available from nautical shops and work very effectively in keeping the tension on the rope until one needs the quick release. You will also note that Julie Nicolas has very soft tubular webbing ties which are very easy to work with and, I am sure, very comfortable for the animal being secured. Some shearers use a piece of poly pipe rather than a piece of wood to spread the feet as they find that it is softer and makes less noise than rap of wood on a wooden floor.

J NICOLAS, CAMELOT ALPACAS, VIC



## Gag

Most dental work that I have seen carried out on alpacas has been done with the use of an angle grinder and a metal plate with a semi circle cut out for the teeth to protrude through. Recently I heard this could not be used with crossed teeth, as they could not fit through the teeth slots. Jane Nevile had seen a llama gag and thought that it would facilitate all teeth trimming and so had some made up in a smaller size for her alpacas. Over time it was refined by those who had used it and Robbie Cuthill modified it further extending its arms so that he could hold the gag on the floor with his foot whilst using the angle grinder, this way it could be used in a one-man operation. The gags are made of U-shaped metal with a rubber block in the centre providing an alternative to the more usual tongue covering plate.

J NEVILE, DARRIWILL ALPACAS, VIC

R CUTHILL, BLACKGATE LODGE ALPACAS, VIC

J NICOLAS, CAMELOT ALPACAS, VIC



Please note that the gag is fitted incorrectly and the tongue should be held behind the rubber gag and not under it as is seen here. Photographer's error.

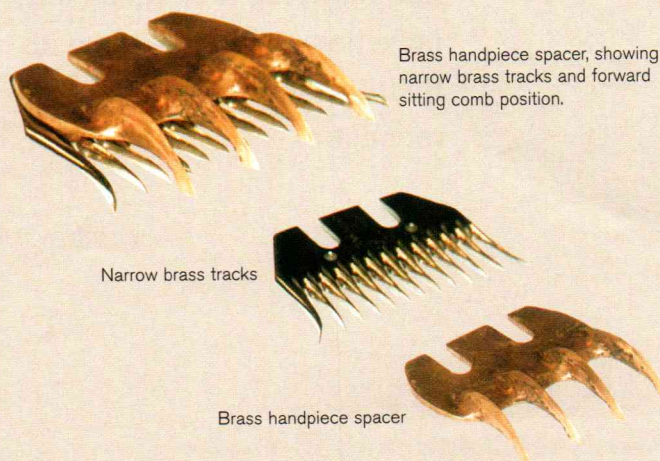
## Handpiece modifications: Leaving some length

Many of us in cooler areas or those of us anticipating shows do not want to shear our animals to the skin. In New Zealand, Russell Gent has found that alpacas grow more wool if some is left on at shearing. This is attributed to the extra energy that is required to keep a clean-shorn alpaca warm during wet and cold conditions. Sheep research confirms less wool growth and extra protein requirements under these conditions. But the dilemma is how to shear and leave some length. Double combs have been used to raise the shearing head off the skin and skilful shearers sometimes simply hold the handpiece up an inch or so which is tiring and it is hard to retain consistent length. Robbie Cuthill has a heel fitted to his head, which leaves greater fleece length, and the handpiece can dip closer to the skin around corners or where a shorter length is required.

Russell Gent's solution has been to make a brass ribbed spacer which houses four of the teeth of a normal 13 tooth comb. His son, who is a silversmith, made the mould for the brass spacer with tiny slots to house the teeth. The advantage of this is that the points are right at the front of the comb, which can rest on the skin and follow the contours of the animal.

Most spacers are fitted at the back so the teeth are raised off the skin making for a rougher job. Russell's allows for the retention of about 1" of fleece. It gives a wide corduroy finish a bit like the snow comb but has the advantage of leaving considerable length. In about a month or two this corduroy effect disappears and it is not hard to trim up the animals if you wish to show them in a shorter time after shearing than would normally be the case.

RUSSELL GENT, TOTARA GROVE ALPACAS, NZ



## Grooming

All of us want our animals to look at their best whether for potential purchasers, users of our sires or for the show ring. Here are a few grooming tips that may be useful if you have not seen them before.

**Floats:** Most of us have had experience of preparing our animals perfectly for show or sale and on arrival there have been horrified to find wet and green livestock. A simple solution to the battle of the sexes was one I saw on John Simpson's float where shade cloth had been stretched tight across the float partitions. I have tried this myself on my light mesh partitions. Magic! Of course it depends on the height of the partitions.

JOHN SIMPSON, KANTARA ALPACAS, VIC  
JANE SZIGETHY-GYULA

**Flickers:** Easily made with a wire coat hanger squashed into an elongated hoop and with a taped handle, these work very well in flicking out litter with the double action of the passing wire.

**Dowelling:** A short length of rod or a piece of broom handle works very well to clean out litter and, when brushed back against the natural fall of a longer fleece, can put some body back into it if it has the droops. It can help highlight the lustre and velvety texture of dark coloured fleeces.

**Tennis Racquets:** These work brilliantly when patted onto a heavily carpeted fleece to compact irregular ends and to enhance the fleece's natural density.

**Chux:** With their anti-static characteristics these are particularly good for flicking off surface dust prior to showing.



Rubber upholstery broom  
whose fingers do not tag

**Rubber Upholstery Brooms:** The broom in the photo is terrific for flicking out the dry litter from the fleece. It does not tag the fleece and the rubber fingers seem to flick the litter away some distance from the animal. I have seen conventional rubber curry combs used effectively for cleaning out the bird's nest area of the wither but they tend to spread it back on the fleece.

JANE SZIGETHY-GYULA

**Coats:** Animals who sweat a lot may benefit from a double towelling rug. Those that lift over the head and are strapped in two places across the abdomen with velcro tabs seem to be the most satisfactory. I don't know who made the first of these but they seem to be widely used. The double thickness absorbs moisture being given off from the animal in the underside and the condensation from above on the upper side. I have also seen single thickness towelling lined, terylene coats that seem to work as well. A loop for the tail seems to help stability and one needs to have a number of sizes on hand.

**Innovations, design adaptations. These alpaca breeders have all had a 'go' at making their workload easier and in so doing eased the impact of their handling on their animals. Most have not marketed their ideas but have been happy to make up their inventions for others on request.**

**Many thanks go to so many of you who have been willing to share your designs with us. Much of this article may be familiar to many but I am sure there are others of you who will utilise some of these devices and ideas with great alacrity. I would welcome feedback and would be interested to hear of any other "easier ways" of doing things that you may be happy to share with other readers at a future date. Not being a shearer I do not get onto so many farms and I suspect the alpaca fraternity is alive with brilliant innovations, of which many of us haven't dreamed.**

# Only PRISTINE ALPACAS...



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



Cedar House **Woolmaker**.

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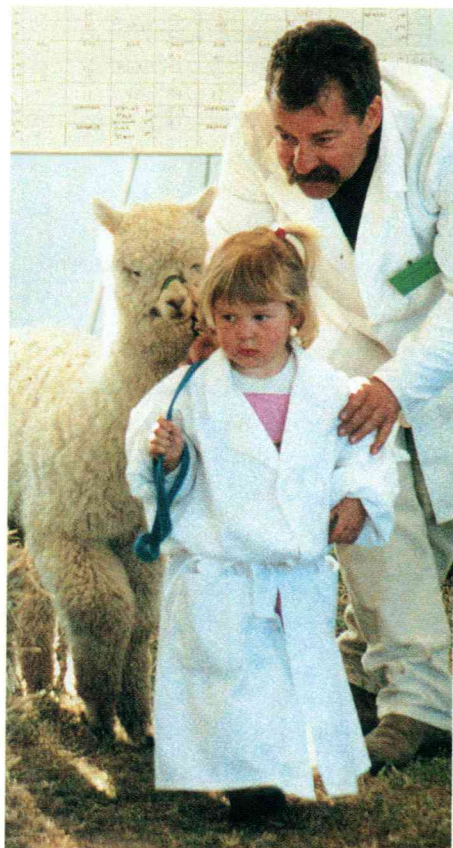
# Junior Handling

## *leading our future*

by ADRIENNE CLARKE  
AMBERSUN ALPACAS, SA

*An opportunity for the excitement felt from winning a ribbon in the show ring is offered to our children through the Junior Handler class. In the show ring the junior handlers are required to lead their alpacas through a variety of tasks to demonstrate in public and to a judge, their level of confidence in guiding and controlling their alpacas.*

*The Junior Handler class is normally a feature of country shows. It caters for children between 6-14 years, divided into two groups (6-10 years and 11-14 years).*



Three-year-old  
Kelsey Williams



Five-year-old  
Mitchell Williams

**O**ver the years we have seen the Junior Handler class emerge from a simple halter-led class to a more skilful demonstration of leading alpacas through an obstacle course, often created by arranging bales of hay or any other resources available at or brought to the show ring. Haltering, leading through a maze, holding their alpacas still and quietly and approaching the unfamiliar are a few of the challenges of the Junior Handler class. One could debate that the children are offered more of a challenge in the Junior Handler class than the other classes of the show, in that their demonstration of skill goes beyond leading and controlling the alpacas for inspection by a judge.

The apprehension of a public performance and being in a situation of judgment is experienced by junior handlers as for all other exhibitors at the show. All junior handlers are usually supported by being sashed with a ribbon, the coveted blue being awarded to the most able and confident. When asked what colour they would like to win, many of the younger exhibitors would just prefer their favourite colour.

The Junior Handler class is meant to reflect the level of interaction between the children and their alpacas prior to reaching the show ring – teaching their animals to lead by halter and be calm in unusual circumstances, while the children develop confidence and trust and an understanding of their animal. Previous experience in working with alpacas is distinctive from the novices.

In offering the Junior Handler class at shows we can only hope that we are motivating our children to develop and share their parents' appreciation of the alpaca. ■



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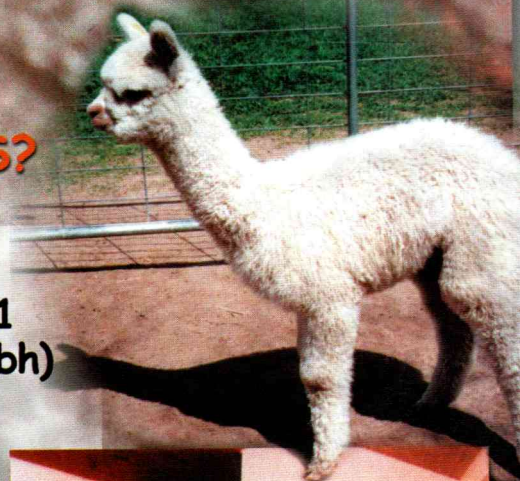
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# Australian Alpaca Co-operative Ltd

## *"where we are now"*



David Williams (left) explains the correct skirting method to workshop participants at Maffra, Victoria

by MAREE BUCK  
SECRETARY, AACo-op

*To say that the growth of the Australian Alpaca Co-operative Ltd (AACo-op) over the last six months has been amazing is definitely an understatement.*

**t**hroughout 2001 it became abundantly clear that the AACo-op had grown the business to a point where it could not operate efficiently with just a part-time office assistant and a part-time marketing consultant. It was vital for the business to move forward and sweeping changes have put this progress in motion.

It has already been well documented that the AACo-op is now established in their new Fibre Handling Centre in Geelong, together

with our new classer, David Williams. David works closely with our new office manager, Ann Seach and our new General Manager, Michael Talbot, which allows for important information on fleece preparation and sorting to be directed through the office and onto you, the growers, and our customers, the processors.

Confidence in the new direction that the AACo-op has taken is being shown with the membership growing by almost 300 new members since the Co-operative joining fee was reduced in September 2001. The AACo-op now has a total of approximately 800 members, which is more than 50% of the Australian Alpaca Association (AAA) membership.

Our strategic alliances have also been very successful, allowing a larger range of product to be introduced, together with a much

broader customer base, including overseas interest. This will also assist us in building a strong brand identity for "Australian Alpaca".

The hand knitting side of the AACo-op range is growing in leaps and bounds with one of our strategic partners, Tasman Designer Yarns, now covering the full range of colours. The wonderful range of exciting new yarns and blends coupled with large earthy checked throw rugs, boucle and brushed scarves and long, wide cosy shawls will make our alpaca customers warm this Winter.

Sales of our own 8 ply hand knitting yarn have jumped enormously with the introduction of our own alpaca knitting patterns in both men's and women's garments. We are hopeful of launching in the near future, a new range of 4 ply



David Williams (left) explains what the manufacturers want, to workshop participants at Maffra, Victoria

knitting yarn for our machine knitters spread around Australia, giving us an extra thread to our knitting range. These yarns will come in five basic colours and from the research we have conducted will be well received.

Also, at long last after promising for a year, we have overcome the spinning problems in relation to our sock range and will have in stock, by March, a complete range of men's and women's alpaca dress socks with plans to continue running these for twelve months of the year.

The product range is being continually developed and refined. It currently extends across fashion clothing such as cable sweaters, scarves and socks, to homeware items in the form of throw rugs, floor rugs and carpet and also bedding including doonas, underblankets and pillows.

Another important AACo-op initiative was the introduction of Working Parties. One working party that has been very busy all over Australia is the Fibre Collection and Shearing Working Party, chaired by Mike Nichols. A major objective of the Working Party is to collect enough fleece to enable Michael Talbot and his team to meet the sales budget agreed to prior to the AAA investing funds last year. This means we need to collect a minimum of twenty-five tonnes (but hopefully thirty) from this season's shearing. At the time of writing only four tonnes have been delivered to the Fibre Handling Centre so we have a long way to go! It is also very important that the AACo-op members maximise their return on the efforts they put into genetic improvement, husbandry and work practices by ensuring their fleece clip

is presented in the best possible condition. This requires close attention to initial shearing and then proper pre classing of all fleeces prior to delivery.

To facilitate fleece collection, Fibre Liaison Officers (FLOs) have been appointed in all mainland regions. These volunteers have been requested to set up collection points at convenient locations throughout their regions, which will save the smaller grower the cost and inconvenience of forwarding individual parcels to the Fibre Handling Centre and should also considerably reduce freight costs when negotiations with freight forwarders are completed successfully.

Pre classing workshops have been held in all regions where David Williams and other AACo-op representatives have demonstrated the best methods of skirting, sorting and packing fleece. All workshops have been well attended and David's demonstrations have been enthusiastically received and should ensure future fleece deliveries will arrive in far better condition with higher prices received by growers. An interesting spin off from the workshops is the high number of attendees who joined the AACo-op either on the day or very soon after, a clear indication that the message is being accepted.

Variation in shearing quality has also contributed to devaluation of fleece received at the AACo-op as any 'second cuts' evident in the clip often means fleece is downgraded by the classer, which of course reduces the price paid to growers. This problem is about to be addressed jointly by the AAA and the AACo-op.



Sponsored by the AAA Education & Training Sub-committee headed by AAA National Committee member, Geoff Fysh, a number of professional alpaca shearers from around Australia will be meeting in Victoria during March. They will discuss the mechanics of hand pieces, sharpening methods etc. and will demonstrate their shearing techniques using both tables of various designs as well as on the floor shearing. A video will be made of each shearing and the various methods fully analysed with the aim of developing a shearing protocol which can be passed on at workshops to all who shear either commercially or as growers. The ultimate aim is to establish a uniform and accredited method of shearing alpacas.

Whilst it is recognised that these initiatives are a little late to be fully effective for the 2001/2 clip, we should all be far better placed to fully benefit in years to come. So please take the time and effort to send in your fleece, both from this year's clip and from previous years, as fleece quantity is a critical and limiting factor in market development.

Part of the AACo-op long-term business plan is to see the business being run by paid professionals, being a financially strong organisation, running at a profit and paying a dividend to shareholders. However with the continued support of all alpaca owners, that long-term plan will soon become a reality.

With the thought and effort the volunteers from both the AAA and AACo-op are currently putting in, all alpaca owners will benefit. ■



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# Colour variation in alpacas

## (or – why breed a multi?)

by ELIZABETH PAUL  
EREHWON ALPACAS, VIC

*The process of pigment production in animals is not a random event but a highly organized sequence, which begins in the embryonic stage of development.*

**m**elanin pigment granules are produced by specialized cells called melanocytes, which themselves derive from the neural crest. The neural crest goes on to form part of the brain and nervous system. The melanocytes, once formed, then migrate considerable distances over the surface of the body, beginning with the dorsal surface. Once their destination is reached, either under the epidermis or at the base of hair follicles, they begin an ordered process of maturation before producing pigment granules. The various biochemical steps involved in the synthesis process are gene-controlled. The granules are secreted into the epidermis or the hair shaft as it grows out of the follicle. Other genes control the numbers of granules; their size and shape; their arrangement within the hair shaft, and their type, whether brown/black or yellow/red pigment. (Searle.)

Any changes, either genetic or environmental, which affect the development of the neural crest, the migration process, or the synthesis of the pigment, may result in a colour variation in the animal's skin or hair. For example, there is a time limit after which the melanocytes no longer migrate. Any delay in this migration means that the extremities of the body, particularly the face, legs and mid-ventral region may never be reached, and the animal may have white legs, or a white nose, or white underbelly. No melanocytes are found in these areas, and this effect is called whitespotting.



Photo 1. White faced black



Photo 2. "Tuxedo" black



Photo 3. Typical "multi"

Albino animals actually have melanocytes in their skin, but the change occurring at the albino allele means that the first enzyme required to start the biochemical process cannot be produced, and so the animal will never have any pigment at all.

Series of genes have been identified for a number of animals, particularly mice, and also dogs. However, similar colour patterns may be produced by different genes, in different species.

In alpacas, as in other animals, whitespotting can range from very minor to major effects.

This is illustrated in **photos 1 and 2**, showing minor effects, and in **photo 3** where the white is now extending up the legs and belly and right up the neck. Whitespotting extending up over the flanks and back would ultimately produce a mega whitespotted alpaca, which would appear to be white. Despite their appearance, these are not white alpacas with coloured patches, but coloured alpacas with extreme whitespotting effects.

South America had a policy of mating 'multi' females like these to white sires. This practice increases the amount of white in the progeny, and also increases the number of 'multi' progeny, which is why South America has over 40% 'multis' in its national herd. Full white females from these matings were taken into the white herds and then mated to other white sires. Any coloured progeny were removed from the white herd. (Escobar).

However, these 'white' females were just as likely to be mega whitespotted, coloured alpacas, and so they constantly re-introduced colour into the white herds. Also, the parents that produced coloured cria were not identified or removed, and they may well have produced a 'white' cria, carrying colour genes, the following year, which was simply retained in the herd. This is the likely source of the 30-35% coloured progeny that still appears from white x white matings. Mating

such 'multi' females to solid dark coloured or grey sires will reduce the amount of white in the progeny. The white-faced brown suri sire in **photo 4** produced a solid brown suri cria from a solid black huacaya dam.

Grey alpacas appear to be the result of a combination of dilute colour, either brown or black, with the whitespotting gene giving them their typical white face/throat/feet. In effect, they are dilute 'multis'. **Photo 5** is of a rosegrey cria at seven days old. Mating grey x grey produces 60-65% grey progeny and the rest are either solid browns or solid blacks; very few fawns, whites, or full coloured 'multis' are produced from these matings.

Appaloosa alpacas seem to be very rare in the Australian herd. **Photo 6** shows a white female, which is covered in small black spots over her entire body. The effect is similar to that created when a paintbrush loaded with paint is flicked across a blank wall. This female also has black eye rings and black ankles. Her sire and dam were solid white, with the dam's mother being grey. The sire's parentage is unknown. The mating was not repeated so she has no full siblings, but her mother has not produced any other spotted progeny. She is pictured with her second cria, a white female suri, which has the same eye rings and foot markings in dark fawn. The sire was a solid white suri. Her first cria, by a solid dark fawn sire, was also white with dark brown spots and one larger patch. This cria has just produced a solid white suri cria, by a solid white suri sire.

The dark grey female in **photo 7** has larger, pale grey spots in a leopard pattern on both sides of her body. This female has been mated three times to the same solid black sire. She has produced one solid black male and two white-faced, spotted greys, a male and a female, both almost identical in markings to herself. It will be an interesting experiment to mate the spotted male with the white appaloosa female in a few years' time.

These alpacas, and their progeny, are no doubt seen by the mainstream industry as being undesirable. However, their unusual colouring gives them aesthetic appeal to many; and their mating results make them much more valuable, genetically speaking, in the quest to unlock the colour secrets of alpacas. ■



Photo 4. White faced brown suri



Photo 5. Rose grey cria at 7 days



Photo 6. White appaloosa and suri cria



Photo 7. "Leopard" spotted dam and cria

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# Mallkini

## Alpaca development against the odds

by MARK & IRENE GARNER  
ALPACAPEÑA, NSW

*Like many alpaca breeders who have visited Peru, the birthplace of our industry, we were fortunate to visit several alpaca farms and fibre processors, not to mention of course the many other remarkable attractions that that country offers.*

*Whilst all were fascinating, one such encounter captured our interest and imagination, that of one of the world's leading alpaca fibre processors, Michell & Company.*

*Even more fortunate was our introduction to several of that company's principals and employees. Two in particular were Derek Michell (a Director of the firm and grandson of the founder) and Ignacio Garaycochea, the General Manager of Michell's other main interest, Mallkini, an alpaca ranch set high in the Andes.*

*During several meetings both men and in particular Ignacio, enlarged upon the history and progress of Mallkini as well as offering us the opportunity to visit the magnificent establishment that demonstrates Michell's commitment to the Alpaca industry.*



One of the pastor's wives with herd

### A Background of Land Reform and Terrorism

Ever since the Spanish conquest, alpacas have erroneously been considered a livestock that does not need special care, so they have been left "on their own" in the belief that nature could look after them. Largely this has not changed to the present.

In the early 1970s the Peruvian Government introduced Land Reform that took over the established ranches that exceeded (say) 300 acres and organized different forms of collective units (among them co-operatives) formed by peasants who once worked for these haciendas. Thus, alpacas were being exploited basically under the same approach as the old system, however, two major changes were introduced: Technology and Distribution of Dividends among the members of the co-operatives.

Some ten years later Sendero Luminoso, a Maoist terrorist group, argued that all forms of organisations created by the Land Reform were perpetuating the old structures of oppression, therefore, they (the organisations) should be destroyed. Many were attacked and as a consequence, all technological projects ceased.

As a way to release social pressure in a highly volatile environment, the then government of Alan Garcia passed a law by which co-operatives could return the land (and inventories) to their members. This was a death sentence for the quality of alpaca fibre.

By dividing up the land, peasants in the altiplano, not just alpaca shepherds (aka pastors), lost the power to (1) deal with the market, (2) access credit and (3) control their herds. In no time, mixed herds of llamas and alpacas, all of different colours, were seen grazing together, breeding without control and exerting an enormous pressure over an already depleted altiplano.



photograph by Mylene d'Auriol for *BienVenida* magazine

The Mallkini hacienda

## Michell's Involvement

In 1978 Michell & Company, already one of Peru's major alpaca fleece processors and garment manufacturers, recognised the advantages of investing in alpaca farming to improve the Peruvian alpaca fleece by introducing technology. To this end Michell & Co. set up a new company known as CIACASA (Centre de Investigation y Apoyo a la Crianza de la Alpaca SA) to manage a newly purchased property at Nuñoa and to commence operations.

In subsequent years Nuñoa became internationally famous for their alpaca genetics. The basis of this success was not only the clever and highly technological breeding techniques of their property manager Orlando Bareda (coincidentally a relative of Don Julio Bareda), but also and equally as importantly, their extensive record keeping.

This impressive investment was all but abandoned in 1991 when terrorists attacked the property and murdered Bareda and a visiting University Professor, Pumayala. In addition the terrorists completely destroyed all of the carefully documented records, thus significantly regressing the development of their alpaca breeding enterprise in Peru. This regression occurred throughout the agricultural sierra, with many farmers simply abandoning their farms and animals.

Though no paperwork was ever recovered from Nuñoa much of the laboratory equipment was rescued and transferred to Juliaca for safety.

On the murders... a touching story – one that reads like a film script – is told by one of Michell's long standing employees, Mauricio Chirinos.

*"Orlando was first shot in the legs in Nuñoa and forced to keep walking. When he finally collapsed they shot him in the head. His shepherds recovered his body and for 3 days, travelling only at night, walked it down to Juliaca for a proper burial service".* Quite a feat in those dangerous days.

*"At Juliaca they laid his body out on the wool scales in the center collection area in a street called Calle Nueva Zealand (New Zealand Street), because making coffins was impossible during those times. He died along with his great friend and alpaca expert, Engineer Pumayala, a specialist from the University La Mollina, in Lima".*

*"Orlando was given a formal burial in Juliaca and the Company (Michells) took care of his family until all of the children were through University."*

From 1991 through to 1996 what was left of the Nuñoa herd was maintained by a shepherd/foreman.

Once terrorism had subsided, Michells, showing an amazing commitment to alpacas, decided to recommence their breeding programme. Nuñoa, however, held too many sad memories so a property called 'Fundo de los Sauces' was purchased and renamed Mallkini.

Dedicated and Focused

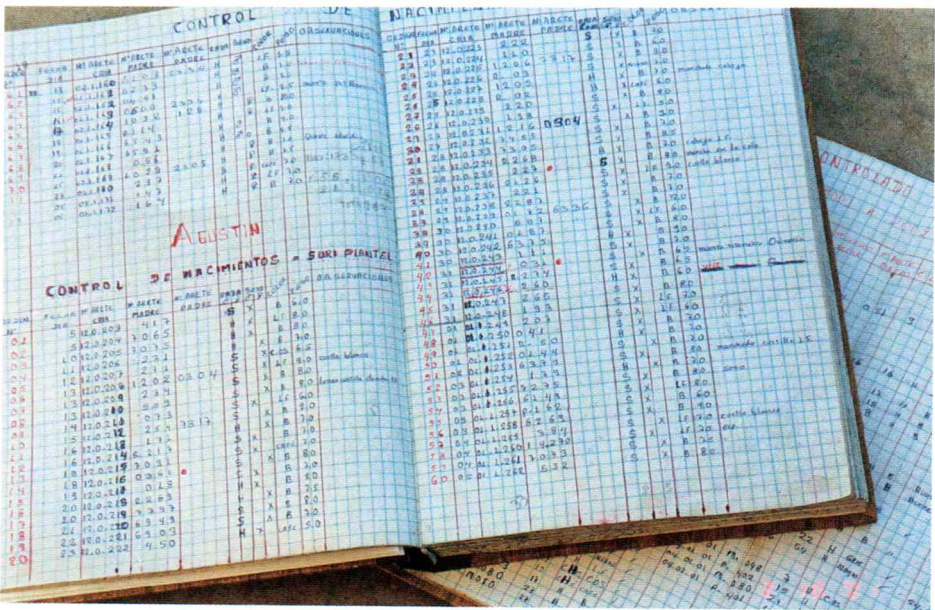
Fundo Mallkini was founded by the Michell Group in 1995 as a centre for genetic development by improving the bloodlines and breeding of the alpaca and to introduce new technology to improve the quality of the fibre throughout the Peruvian highlands.

Alpaca breeding and husbandry involves customs and practices that are as ancient as the Andean people themselves. It is a culture all of its own which you can get to know at the Mallkini hacienda through the property manager Moises Asparin (aka Moses). He is as enthusiastic about alpacas and their ancestry, as he is about the culture and history of the altiplano. Spanish does help (as does a cheeky glass of red to soften the tongue).

Mallkini hacienda is situated at over 4,000 metres above sea level in the department of Puno, Peru. The site was chosen close to Azangaro owing to that area's reduced terrorism activities and for its attractive countryside that has since attracted alpaca loving visitors to stay at the hacienda. It covers an area of some 3,000 hectares. Michell & Company subsequently purchased the neighboring property 'Sorani', they have however returned a significant percentage of this land back to the original Community to alleviate the pressures of land borders.

Specialist breeders on Mallkini currently maintain a herd of 2,300 alpaca. This herd comprises 300 Plantel (elite) Suri, 250 Plantel Huacayas, 1,300 Majada (2nd to plantel) female Huacayas and 455 male Huacayas (Majada and Plantel). From these animals the annual clip yields 120 quintales (12,000 pounds). In addition Michell's have 1,000 'general' alpacas running at Sorani.

The herd is broken up into many smaller groups of about 200, each group being cared for, on a day to day basis, by a Pastor and his family.



Daily record keeping

Record Keeping a Must

Great improvements have been achieved in the past 2 years and a great outcome is anticipated owing to the thorough record keeping introduced a year ago.

A main spread sheet records the herd as:

- Plantel Suri (elite)
- Plantel Huacaya (elite)
- Majada Huacaya (2nd to plantel)
- General (balance of herd)

This is then divided into more thorough individual "Control de Nacimiento" ("Birth Control" as a translation doesn't sound right, does it!) spread sheets of each category by:

- Date of birth of Cria
- Tag identity month/year/identity number
- Dam
- Sire
- Huacaya/Suri
- Male/female
- Colour
- Weight
- Observations

Weights are recorded at birth, then monthly.

The next spreadsheet covers "Empadre" (Breeding) divided into:

- Year tag of female
- Huacaya/Suri
- Colour
- Date of service
- Year tag of macho
- Tag for mating
- Huacaya/Suri
- Colour
- Performance

Sub spreadsheet details:

- Remating (if necessary) currently at 18 out of 40
- Then subcategories re-identified as above

Joinings are evaluated 15 days after cria birth. Sitting females are identified with a tag around the neck. The corresponding macho is selected with an identical tag. Five males are then selected to the corresponding five females and they are put into the same paddock for 'horizontal line dancing'. The animals naturally select their own partners without 'human' interruption, however the matings are supervised and the 'pairings' are recorded.

Mortality records are also entered daily with observations and explanations.

Each pastor has to keep these records which are collected by a record keeper who tabulates the daily data and inputs the information into a master spreadsheet. This data is then cross tabulated for a comprehensive indication of the progress of the herd.

## Nutrition

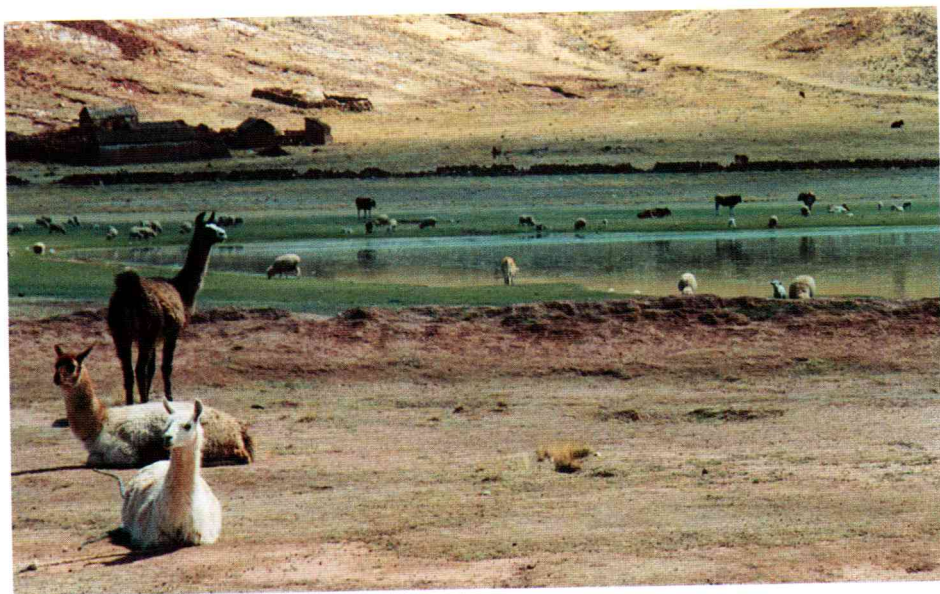
Mallkini's approach to animal nutrition receives no less attention than that of its breeding programme.

Traditionally alpacas in Peru were simply put out to browse upon the native grasses growing in and around a 'bofidal', which is an area of natural spring water on the range-land containing various marsh grasses and a very much prized moss growing just below the water surface. Rotational grazing was simply governed by which bofidal contained the most grasses. Whilst hand feeding of alpacas was virtually unknown any cultivated forage was reserved for other livestock vis. cattle and sheep.

At Mallkini they are reversing this tendency by offering cultivated grass (oaten hay silage) to their alpacas for those periods when nutrition is in high demand ie: last quarter of pregnancy, birthing and weaning, with positive results.

Unlike the more traditional alpaca farms, Mallkini has also embarked upon a strategy of sowing particular areas with more nutritious soft grasses such as clover and/or rye grass. The primary intention being that by rotation grazing to these pastures, they can increase the alpaca's weight gain in preparation for the Altiplano's harsh winter and so that the females will be ready for the first mating.

When given a choice, alpacas will always pick the fresher, softer grasses in preference to the harder, drier native grasses in the bofidals. This of course means that the animals' teeth would have to be attended to more frequently, so in order to keep a balance, a rotation between the two types of pasture has been put into effect.



Inside the Michell factory

## The Mother Company: Michell & Company

The story of Mallkini would be incomplete if one did not say something of Mallkini's parent Company, Michell & Company.

Founded by Mr Frank W Michell, Michell and Company is a fully integrated company that has pioneered the alpaca industry in Peru for over 65 years. Mr Michell, an Englishman and a veteran RAF pilot of WWI, commenced exporting unwashed alpaca fibre, sorted in its various natural colours, in the early 1930s. His idea was to eventually add value to his exports, so the business was carried successively

through the industrial processes of scouring, carding, combing, spinning, knitting into garments and ultimately to weaving into cloth. The business has been carried on by his sons and grandsons, who have striven at all times to modernise their facilities, improve their manufacturing processes and update their organization as and when local conditions and world markets so required.

As mentioned earlier in this article Michell's is a classic example of an organisation which has embarked upon vertical integration. Their interests, from the ground up, include:

- Fundo Mallkini:  
*Alpaca Breeding and Genetic Centre*
- Michell & Company:  
*Processing Alpaca tops & yarns*
- Consorcio Textil Del Pacifico:  
*Alpaca fabrics*
- Top Knit:  
*Alpaca sweaters & accessories*
- CLISA:  
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- MFH:  
*Alpaca store & tourist service*

Alpacas on the bofidals near Mallkini

# a judge's perspective



Judges bring knowledge and experience to the show ring with a commitment to the industry and its breeding ideals.

by BILL ROBBINS  
AAA JUDGING SUB-COMMITTEE

*An alpaca show is quite different when viewed from a judge's perspective.*

*Exhibitors have only one thing to worry about; parading their alpacas with the hope of winning a ribbon.*

*The judge must concentrate for the duration of the show, which at times is for hours on end, and sometimes under very difficult conditions (heat and bad lighting), and remain consistent in all decisions made during the day.*

**i** am sure some exhibitors think that judging is glamorous. However as a judge you can feel quite lonely and isolated. Judges start preparing themselves for a show from the moment they are appointed. From the time they arrive at the motel where they will be staying they are not permitted to talk to exhibitors until after the judging is completed. Upon arrival at the show just before it is to begin, they must avoid contact with anyone except the chief steward.

In Australia judges are not paid for their services as happens in other countries, but do receive reimbursement for most of their travel and accommodation costs. In spite of this sometimes judges do not recoup all the expenses incurred. For example, most Royal Show Societies pay only travel expenses from the capital city of the state in which the judge lives. In my case, travelling to that capital city means I incur the cost of a four-hour drive or the alternative cost of an airfare from Albury to Melbourne. Other judges who do not live in the capital cities would also have similar personal expenses. So you can see that a judge not only gives up their time but also incurs expense for the privilege of judging. Often the time given up can be three to four days and even further expense can be incurred if you have to employ someone to look after your alpacas or as in my case, the farm, while you are away. However, I consider it a privilege to be asked to judge and provided I am not otherwise engaged I accept appointments wherever possible.

Much criticism is heaped on judges, particularly in reference to what may have happened at previous shows. A judge can only put up the alpacas that are paraded before him or her on the day. If an alpaca has won at a previous show it may not necessarily win at the next one, as there could be different alpacas entered, or the animal may have gone past its best. (An alpaca that is

champion at a small country show of 30 exhibits may not be placed the following week at a Royal Show with 150 alpacas). The judge may also be looking for something different. All judges cannot be expected to judge in exactly the same way. They should have a similar approach but may not necessarily select the alpacas in the same order. A judge's decision is based on the official Australian Breed Standard and their interpretation of that standard.

If all judges judged exactly the same way exhibitors would quickly lose interest. The industry would stagnate. We need differences of opinion provided they are consistent. This is how an industry progresses and how the merino industry evolved and is still evolving today. All exhibitors can expect of a judge is consistency and the ability to satisfactorily explain decisions in an honest and concise way. The AAA has a program for training and assessing judges to ensure that they continue to learn, improve and adjust as the industry moves forward ensuring that they bring knowledge and experience to the show ring with a commitment to the industry and its breeding ideals.

Unfortunately a lot of breeding decisions made in the alpaca industry are based on what happens in the show ring with little regard or thought given to how the animal may perform when crossed with the existing alpacas in the herd (eg. fineness, density, crimp and staple definition). All breeders must remember that it is the decision of one breeder (the judge) on one particular day only. Alpacas are also purchased based on show results. It is the responsibility of all members of the Association to educate themselves as much as possible about alpacas (their fleece and conformation) and not rely on what a judge may have done at a show.

There are many quality alpacas that are never shown as not all members see the show ring as the ultimate goal. They see performance

testing as more important (fleece testing and weights and establishing their own breeding values). Ultimately this is a fleece industry and decisions must be made based on the fleece on an alpaca's back. We cannot sustain an industry long term by just trading animals. Please do not make purchases or breeding decisions based on show results alone.

Judges must act honestly and with integrity at all times, and are responsible for their decisions and what they say. Exhibitors, however, also have a responsibility to be courteous and show some respect for the judge by discussing any differences of opinion on the day rather than letting it fester into the future and in some way impact on this exciting industry of which we are all a part. Thus the next time you go to a show, particularly a large one, remember the judge is human, just like you, and if you have a difference of opinion over a decision they have made, I am sure they will be only too happy to discuss it with you. The other thing to remember is the alpaca that wins at any show is only the best exhibit paraded on the day. ■

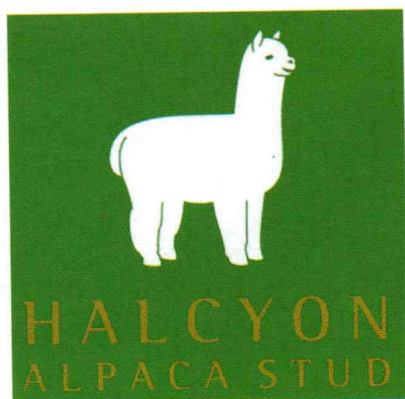


Ultimately this is a fleece industry and decisions must be made based on the fleece on an alpaca's back.

© Cath Norman

# HALCYON ALPACA STUD

## 2<sup>ND</sup> BI-ANNUAL AUCTION SUNDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2002



- 3 Selected 2000 drop Females.
- 4 Certified 1999 drop Stud Males.
- 4 1999 drop Potential Stud Males.
- 3 Specially Selected 2000 drop Males.
- 9 Mature Females.

**White and Light Fawn.**

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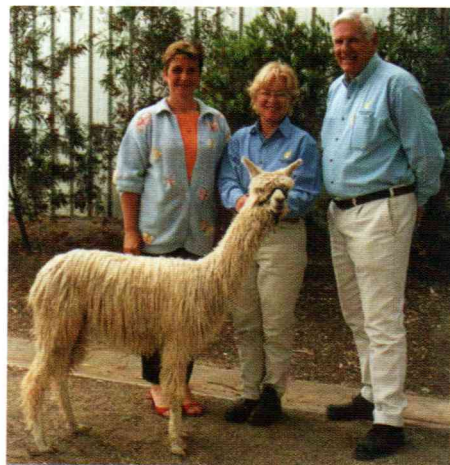
Facsimile : (03) 5962 1046

Email : halcyonalpacas@bigpond.com

# New superfine genetics for NSW

by MARGARET DWYER  
DUWIRRI DOWNS ALPACAS, NSW

A 17.45 micron suri male recently purchased by Margaret and Kerry Dwyer of Duwirri Downs Alpacas, at Ballalaba, near Braidwood, NSW, is sure to boost the gene pool of NSW, which has the largest concentration of alpacas in Australia.



Pictured with the 10-month-old white suri male are Karen Caldwell (left) representing the vendor and the successful bidders, Margaret and Kerry Dwyer.

**t**he purchase of the 10-month-old white male, *Stanmore Park Ivory Ladd*, from Esther Sanders of Stanmore Park Alpacas at Yatala in southern Queensland, was negotiated at the conclusion of the recent Wesfarmers Landmark auction, held at Albury/Wodonga.

"The extremely even and consistently fine lock architecture throughout his entire fleece, together with genes from outside the region made this weanling highly attractive. Sired by *Somerset Peru Ivory Adsail*, this young male has all the attributes of a great sire and is just what we've been looking for" said Kerry.

This valuable addition to Duwirri Downs Alpacas' breeding program was offered at the inaugural "Wild on Weanlings" Alpaca Dinner Auction presented by Terrie and Dianne Oliver of Cherry Hill Alpaca Stud at Launching Place, Victoria, and Andrew and Karen Caldwell of Wyona Alpaca Stud at Thuddungra via Young, NSW. The "WOW 2001" auction was held on 1st December as a curtain raiser and in conjunction

with the Spring 2001 Wesfarmers Landmark Albury/Wodonga Alpaca Auction. Karen Caldwell explained, "We decided to offer high quality, fleece tested weanlings, employing a totally new concept in selling. This concept took a holistic approach to the entire experience, which was an evening totally devoted to a comfortable, pressure free, buying platform".

Buyer ambiguity combined with a delightful outdoor venue set the scene for the successful buffet style dinner, which was supplied by the vendors. The dinner consisted of barbequed Suffolk Prime Lamb with freshly prepared salads and fine wines. A chilled bottle of sparkling white wine was presented to each successful bidder, upon the fall of the hammer.

Delighted with the success of the event, Karen commented, "The incredibly high standard of weanlings on offer proved beyond any doubt that initiative and fresh ideas, when combined with positive thinking, always pay off. We are all excited about the prospects of holding this unique selling experience as an annual event." ■



**DUWIRRI DOWNS**  
♦ ALPACAS ♦

is proud to announce

**Cedar House Aristotle is now standing at  
"Weema", Ballalaba NSW 2622**

Sire: Cedar House Peruvian Ayaviri (Imp. Peru) ..... (solid white)  
Dam: Peruvian Snowdrop Lace (Imp. USA) ..... (solid white)  
Grandsire: Peruvian Hemingway G171 ILR117888... (solid white)  
Grandam: Peruvian Lace W892 (Imp. USA) ..... (solid white)

and welcomes superfine new suri genetics to New South  
Wales, Reserve Champion Intermediate Suri Male,  
Canberra Royal Show 2002

**Stanmore Park Ivory Ladd**  
(solid white suri)

**17.45µ SD 3.95 CV 22.29 Spin Fineness 17.23 Comfort Factor 98.55**  
(Riverina Wool Testers Pty Ltd Nov '01)

Sire: Somerset Peru Ivory Adsail (Imp. Peru) . (SW Suri) Grandsire: Adsail Suri Cuzco Silver .. (SW Suri)  
Dam: Adsail P4011 ..... (SW Suri) Grandam: Adsail Suri K356 ..... (SW Suri)

Margaret & Kerry Dwyer ..... Ph: 02 4847 5020 ..... Fax: 02 4847 5001 ..... E-mail: duwirri@bigpond.com ..... 1 hr from Canberra





# retraining the problem import

by MARTY McGEE BENNETT  
TTEAM

*Alpacas are all individuals. They don't all act the same way and it is not useful to treat them all the same as we work with them. One technique might offer the perfect solution for one animal and be totally ineffective on another. The best of all possible worlds is to have lots of tools and techniques available to you. On the other hand, as a person who teaches people how to handle and train alpacas, I do find it helpful to categorize animals so that I can help their owners cope with them. There are distinct classes of difficulties and one of the most common is the problem import. These animals develop myriad behavioral patterns as they deal with the challenges inherent in making their way around the world.*

**i**mported animals must cope with confinement for up to months at a time. They are taken away from a familiar environment and faced with total change of everything from pasture mates to the food they eat. They must live in close quarters with very little to do. They are poked and prodded and tested by people that may very well be short on experience with camelids, and that have a schedule to maintain. Since most, if not all, of these animals don't know how to lead and have been in a herd their whole lives, they are often dragged from around the head when it is necessary to move them.

Having said that, not every import comes out the end of the tunnel a "Screaming Mimi." In my experience, difficult animals are usually born

difficult. Difficult animals are usually very bright or very "not so bright." They may have trouble figuring out what is wanted, or they may use their extra intelligence to subvert what they know is expected. Camelids are proud, dramatic, and stubborn – and like their kindred spirit – cats – they hate to be restrained. They don't like to be controlled and don't feel safe unless they can get away. The process of importation is for many their worst nightmare. They develop coping mechanisms to help with their situation. These coping strategies may include screaming, spitting, cushioning, or all of the above. These behaviors may also be accompanied by involuntary loosening of the bowels and/or bladder. Often, these difficult imports appear so distressed by any handling that owners will decide that the best course of action is to leave them alone.

But can we leave an animal in our care alone? Alpacas must be wormed and vaccinated. Toenails must be trimmed, and we must help them if they are wounded or in the case of pregnant females if they have a difficult birth. We simply cannot leave them alone. Alpacas do not distinguish between halter training sessions and a rectal exam or shots. Every time we are with our animals our behavior forms their attitude about us. Well intentioned owners feel they are giving their difficult imported animals a big break by leaving them alone as much as possible, only handling them when it is necessary for herd management chores. From our point of view these imported alpacas are getting a 360 day vacation – they should be grateful and like us for that big break! The alpaca doesn't see it that way. From your alpaca's point of view "The only time a human has anything to do with me it is unpleasant and stressful." This is just what they experienced from humans during the importation

process, the only difference is frequency. In their experience, humans never just take you for a walk or rub your neck or scratch your back, they always do annoying unpleasant things.

In my opinion it is even more important to spend time with imports doing things that ease the fear and create a different kind of expectation. It is also very important to do your very best to accomplish herd management tasks in the easiest, least invasive way possible and to minimize restraint whenever you can. My whole training and handling program is designed to meet these needs. It is not possible in this column to go over all the methods and techniques I use to accomplish herd management tasks with a minimum of hassle for you and your alpacas, imports included. I have covered other aspects of handling and management in other columns and will continue to do so. In addition, this information is available in many formats- books, videos, my website and best of all, clinics. My techniques benefit all alpacas but are especially useful when rehabilitating difficult imports. What I will address in this column are problem-solving techniques for the most common behavioral problems associated with imports as they do have some unique issues.

Imagine as you look at your alpaca that he or she has a control panel just like the dashboard of your car. There are certain buttons you can choose to push or NOT. When you push these buttons you will get very predictable results, just as you do when you turn your windshield wipers on or toot your horn. Difficult imports come equipped with a scream button, a cushion button and a spit button. Most people want to avoid these behaviors but do not understand what they are doing to push the buttons. If you push the buttons, the behaviors happen just as surely as if you had tooted the horn.

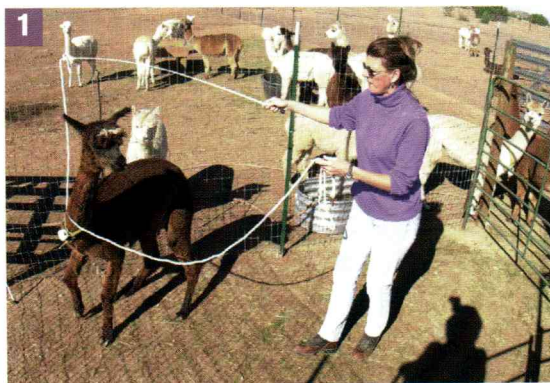
## Catching the Import

Changing the way you catch your import is the first best way to avoid all the unpleasant buttons. Your import is expecting to be cornered, grabbed, held and perhaps dragged and responds by screaming, spitting or cushing. By catching your alpaca differently you avoid pushing these buttons as well as the unwanted behaviors. Herd your import and another calm alpaca friend into a catch pen (10 x10 or 9 X 9 feet square is ideal). Get yourself a wand, or pole or lightweight herding tool (about 4 feet long) and tie a lightweight rope (about 10 feet long) to it. You are going fishing for alpacas.

Maintain your body position behind the eye of the animal and in the center of the pen. Raise your rope up and over the alpaca you intend to catch and simply guide the rope over the head (*photo #1*). Once you have both ends of the rope you untie the wand and you have caught your alpaca. I know this might seem cumbersome, but so is taking a shower every time you catch your alpaca. It has been my experience that if you use this technique for catching difficult alpacas, they will very quickly begin to stand quietly and allow you to simply walk up and slip a rope around their neck. With this method you need not corner them (very scary) and you can simply help them stand still with the rope as you walk up to them.

How you respond with the rope once you have it around the neck is your next opportunity to avoid the dreaded buttons. Use your rope to help keep the alpaca in balance over all four legs, particularly the front legs (*photos #2 and 3*). An animal standing in balance feels more in control and safer, particularly the difficult imported animal. Use the rope to give a series of signals, each with a distinct release, until your alpaca is standing next to you with slack in the rope.

It is now appropriate to proceed to haltering. As you halter, give the alpaca more room than you normally do. Most people are in the habit of pulling their alpacas up close as they put the halter on. Try giving your alpaca almost the full length of your arms instead. In this way you will be able to see your alpacas feet and can tell if the animal is standing in balance.



Catch rope is tied to a wand. Notice the handler can stay well away from the alpaca and behind the alpaca's eye and still catch the alpaca.



The alpaca is standing in balance. Notice that there is slack in the rope and the alpaca's head and neck and body are in alignment.



Alpaca is not in balance. Notice that the alpaca's head is down and to the side and the weight is borne mostly on the legs away from the handler.

## Spitting

To be sure, it is unpleasant to be spat on. On the other hand the imported alpaca has developed the spitting habit probably for good reason. Yelling, hitting, spraying with water, or spitting back may temporarily suppress the behavior but is probably not the best way to change your alpaca's mind about people over the long haul. The catching method outlined above eliminates most of the problem, as spitting is usually a response to being cornered. This method will also allow you to control the head early on in the catching and haltering process and turn the head away from you if the spitting persists. I think turning the head is all that is appropriate in terms of a direct response to the behavior. If you engage in very intermittent eye

contact and remember to breathe, it will help greatly. Let go of thoughts like "Don't you dare!" Thoughts like this will be reflected in your body language and your alpaca will react negatively.

## Screaming

It is my theory that alpacas learn to scream as a way of coping with extreme unpleasantness. When an alpaca is screaming it is the most immediate and only thing that is going on. The screaming literally drowns out everything else. As with any behavior it begins for a reason but once it becomes habit the behavior may no longer have relevancy to a new situation. We must find a way to change the habit. Using the catching techniques outlined

above you should see a lot of the screaming disappear. However if your alpaca still screams as you proceed to the halter, you may find it helpful to gently but firmly close the mouth. Be sure if you do try closing the mouth that you use your thumb up very high on the bridge of the nose – close to the eye. In this way you will not compromise the animal's airway. Once the alpaca has settled down a bit, gradually loosen the pressure and see what happens. Speak soothingly as you work. Closing the mouth will stop the screaming enough to allow the alpaca to realize that you aren't hurting her. Don't expect this technique to work if you are doing something unpleasant – however, it still may help during a rectal exam or other unpleasant procedure to close the mouth periodically.

## Cushing

Perhaps the most frustrating and difficult problem import to deal with is the one who refuses to remain standing. These animals will cush at the proverbial drop of a hat. The catching advice above may help with this problem as well... but how in the world do you get them to lead when they drop like a pole axed mule every time you ask them to take a step?

The key to solving this problem is to change the picture that your alpaca sees. In this case the cush button is a human within six feet and a little constant pressure on the head. Boom, down we go. In order to change this picture for your alpaca use a much longer lead. I like a lead about 17-20 feet long and make sure to use the whole thing. Practice initial leading sessions in a small paddock, ideally an aisle way that is longer than it is

Leading with the long lead. Notice that the handler is well forward and to the side. Notice there is considerable slack in the lead.



wide (photo 4). This helps you avoid the 'human-within-six-feet, down-I-go' button. As your import realizes that it is possible to remain standing with a lead rope on, you can gradually move closer and lead at a more convenient distance. Make absolutely sure that the halter you are using fits. Most alpaca halters are prone to slip down the nose bone. Tighten the crown piece of the halter more than you would normally even at the risk of feeling it might be a bit too snug. The halter should fit right up by the eye (photos 5 & 6). This is the safest place and your alpaca knows it. If your alpaca feels like the halter is going to slip, this will also push the cush



Halter that fits. This halter fits well up toward the eye, and is snug enough that it won't slip down the nose endangering the airway.



Halter that doesn't fit. This halter is teetering just at the edge of the nose bone. With just a little bit of pressure on the lead the halter would slip down the nose bone and constrict the airway.

button. If you have one, use a halter with rings on the nose band and attach the lead to the side instead of under the chin. Pressure under the chin raises the nose, drops the back, and encourages resistance – you got it – pushes the cush button. Leading from the side ring feels different and different is good.

The second half of the answer is to use very, very light, non-constant signals on the lead. Pretend you have balloons under your arms and eggs in your hands. If your alpaca does cush, resist the urge to pull on his or her head. Make sure you are using the full length of the lead and put total slack in the lead rope. Don't stare. Stand at an angle to the alpaca, not directly in front, and count to thirty potatoes! That's right, one potato... two potatoes... three potatoes... It will take all of a whole minute, and I bet that your alpaca will be up before you get to fifteen. Your import has been rushed and dragged and pushed and pulled – you are not going to fix this problem with more of the same. Have some patience. A minute is not really very long. As you work with your imports, remember that true insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting to get different results. If you keep pushing those buttons, you will keep getting the behaviors that go with them. Time spent with these animals is not a waste of time and will benefit both you and your alpaca. Working this way with your difficult animal will make you a better handler and trainer, and your effort will change the mind of a troubled animal. ■

## 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.camelidynamics.com](http://www.camelidynamics.com)

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# 10th National Alpaca Conference

**23-25 August 2002**

This is an opportunity for all interested in breeding alpacas and the future of our industry, to hear specialist speakers in fields important to ongoing development of the Australian alpaca herd.

Presentations on advances in breeding techniques, fibre assessment and processing industry requirements, health matters and marketing are just some of the topics on the schedule.

Presenters at the conference include:

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- ▲ Dr. Jim Watts, *developer of the Soft Rolling Skin® selection system*
- ▲ Charlie Massy, *extensively involved with fibre improvement*
- ▲ Dr. Jane Vaughan, *reproductive technology specialist*

Plus presentations on neonatal care, herd health, genetics and marketing.

**Non Alpaca Association members are most welcome at the conference.**

**For more information, contact the Australian Alpaca Association on (03) 9873 7700.**

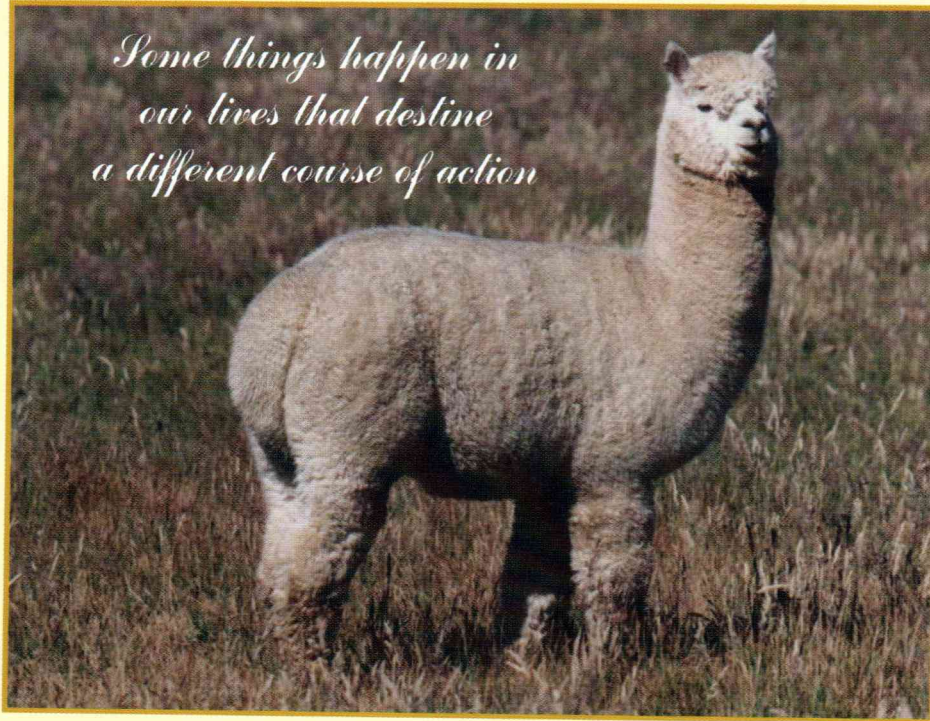
## **Venue**

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**on the shores of the Noosa River, Queensland**

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*is staying home*



*Some things happen in  
our lives that destine  
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An impressive male with outstanding presence. His fleece exhibits unique, merino-like characteristics.

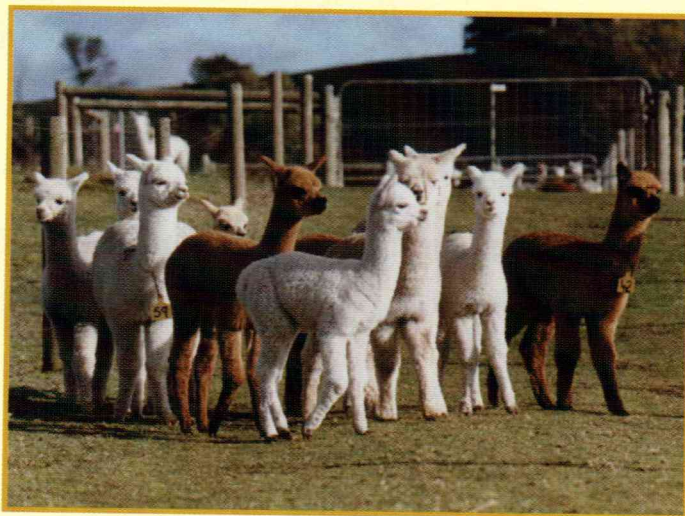
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His progeny have won over 100 broad ribbons across Australia, because of their fine, dense fleece which holds defined crimp and lock structure.

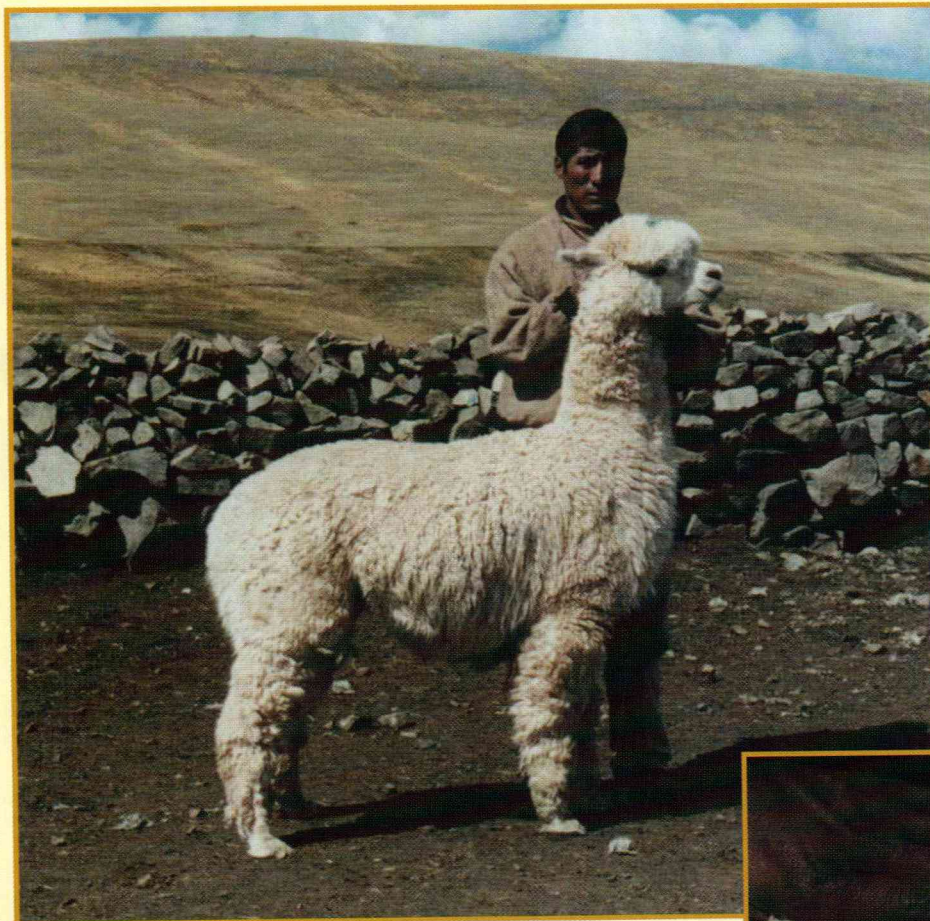


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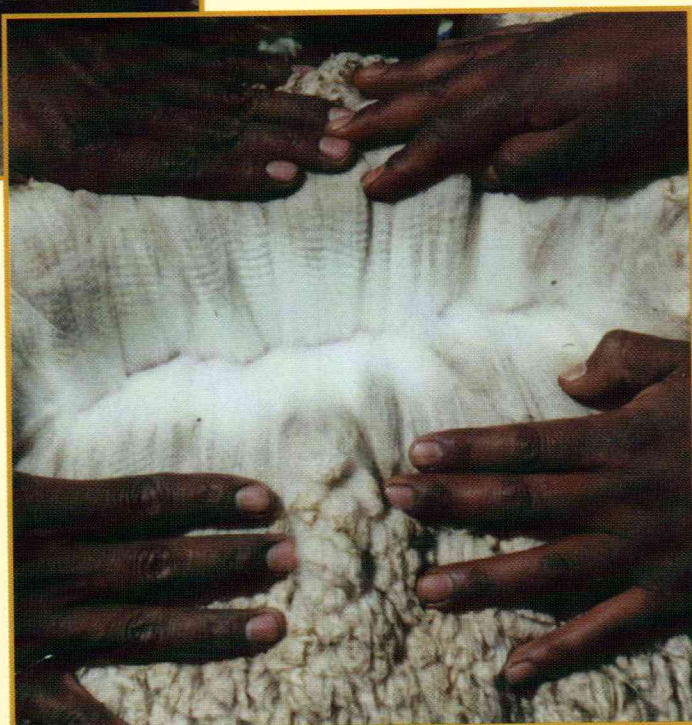
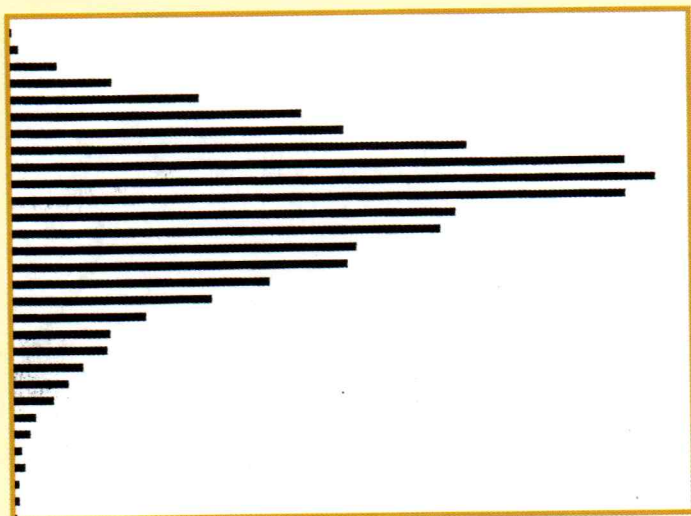
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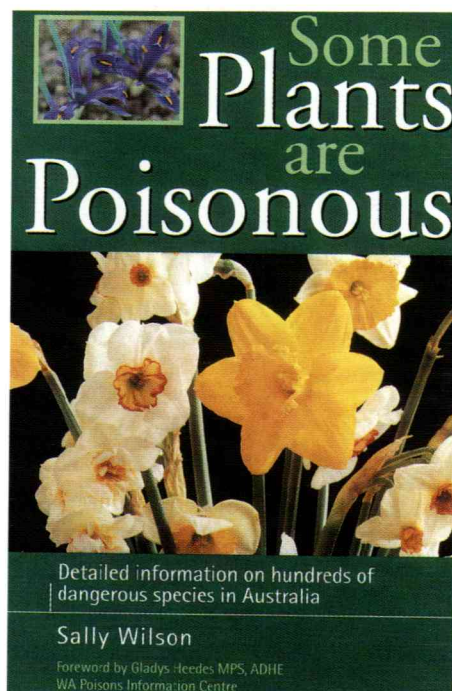
# BOOK REVIEW

## Some Plants are Poisonous

**SOME PLANTS ARE POISONOUS**  
**BY SALLY WILSON**  
**ISBN 0 7301 0505 9**  
**PUBLISHED BY REED BOOKS AUSTRALIA - 1997**  
**264 pages**  
**8 pages illustrated**  
**(some colour plates)**

by JENNY MACKAY  
 JALMINCA ALPACAS, QLD

*I picked this book up at a University of Queensland bookshop book sale some time ago. It is well set out and it is easy to find something specific or just browse.*



There are illustrations on each page plus some colour plates in the centre of the book.

Many of us will be familiar with the toxicity of plants such as Oleander, but perhaps less so that of Brunfelsia (Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow), which has both leaves and seeds poisonous to stock. I found many surprises – apparently the roots and immature fruits of most passionfruit vines are suspected to be poisonous to stock!

This is a good reference book to have around, both from the point of view of children's safety as well as livestock. It seems to have been well researched and there is quite an extensive bibliography. If nothing else, it will develop a healthy respect for ornamental plants and perhaps a more considered approach to planting. ■

**Editor's Note:** *A copy of this book has recently been added to the AAA Library facility and is available for borrowing by members. This soft cover book was purchased at Angus & Robertson book store at a very reasonable price and is a recommended title for your own home reference library.*

**Extra information can be obtained online from the following list supplied by Ken Madl**

Australian Plants Online: Australian Native Poisonous Plants  
[farrer.riv.csu.edu.au/ASGAP/APOL7/sep97-4.html](http://farrer.riv.csu.edu.au/ASGAP/APOL7/sep97-4.html)

Peter Lister: Poisonous Plants at home  
[www.uws.edu.au/vip/listerp/poisonp.htm](http://www.uws.edu.au/vip/listerp/poisonp.htm)

WA Poisons Information Centre: Poisonous Plants  
[www.safetyline.wa.gov.au/pagebin/edcngenl0051.htm](http://www.safetyline.wa.gov.au/pagebin/edcngenl0051.htm)

Mount Lehman Llamas: Poisonous Plants which may be dangerous to llamas or other livestock  
[www.smartt.com/~brianp/planpage.html](http://www.smartt.com/~brianp/planpage.html)

The Humane Society News: How to Identify the Poisonous Plants that can Hurt Your Pets  
<http://www.nashelter.org/poisplan.html>

Botanical.com: Index of Poisonous Plants  
[www.botanical.com/botanical/mgmh/poison.htm](http://www.botanical.com/botanical/mgmh/poison.htm)

University of Illinois: Plants Toxic to Animals  
<http://www.library.uiuc.edu/vex/vetdocs/toxic.htm>

Purdue University: Indiana Plants Poisonous to Livestock and Pets  
[vet.purdue.edu/depts/addl/toxic/cover1.htm](http://vet.purdue.edu/depts/addl/toxic/cover1.htm)

Cornell University: Poisonous Plants Informational Database  
<http://www.ansci.cornell.edu/plants/index.html>

U.S. Food & Drug Administration, Center for Food Safety & Applied Nutrition, Office of Plant and Dairy Foods and Beverages: Poisonous Plant Database  
[vm.cfsan.fda.gov/~djw/plantnam.html](http://vm.cfsan.fda.gov/~djw/plantnam.html)

University of Pennsylvania: Poisonous Plants Home Page  
[cal.nbc.upenn.edu/poison/](http://cal.nbc.upenn.edu/poison/)

Virginia Cooperative Extension: Learning from Poisonous Plants  
[www.ext.vt.edu/departments/envirohort/articles/misc/poisonpln.html](http://www.ext.vt.edu/departments/envirohort/articles/misc/poisonpln.html)

Rutgers University: New Jersey Agricultural Weed Gallery  
[www.rce.rutgers.edu/weeds/index.html](http://www.rce.rutgers.edu/weeds/index.html)

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada: Canadian Poisonous Plants Information System  
[sis.agr.gc.ca/pls/pp/poison?p\\_x=px](http://sis.agr.gc.ca/pls/pp/poison?p_x=px)

HORSEWEB UK: British Poisonous Plants  
[www.horseweb.co.uk/plants.htm](http://www.horseweb.co.uk/plants.htm)

At the front of the book there is a list of plants responsible for serious poisonings, also a discussion of the types of poisoning possible from plants and how to contact the Poisons Information Centre (national number 13 11 26).

The information is arranged alphabetically by genus name, but there is an index at the back of the book of common names with the associated botanical names.

Each plant is described on a separate page and the heading contains information about the degree of danger that the plant poses.

Plants covered are those commonly chosen from supermarkets and nurseries for their attractiveness and/or perfume. They are the sorts of things we might choose to grow around a house paddock or in the garden – some might be appealing to browsing alpacas!

The plants have ratings ranging from "these plants are dangerously poisonous and can prove fatal" to "these plants are suspected to be poisonous" and there is information about which specific parts of the plants are identified as dangerous.

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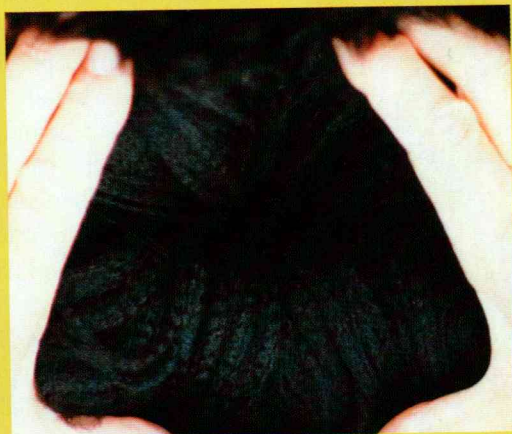
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# From clipped wings to clipped fleeces

by CANDY LAWRENCE  
WILLA WILLA PARK ALPACAS, NSW

*They say there's a silver lining to every cloud; in the case of new breeders Jenni Wilson and Candy Lawrence, of Willa Willa Park Alpacas at Mangrove Mountain, NSW, the lining is definitely of the fleecy variety.*

Burnt fingers (read "wallets") aside, this experience taught us much about our respective strengths and weaknesses as farmers, about animal husbandry, marketing and judicious

wings within a wide radius) was destroyed as a "precautionary measure" (! read "expletive deleted"), we discovered that we had indeed inherited that bloody-mindedness so necessary in farming, and picked ourselves up and started again.

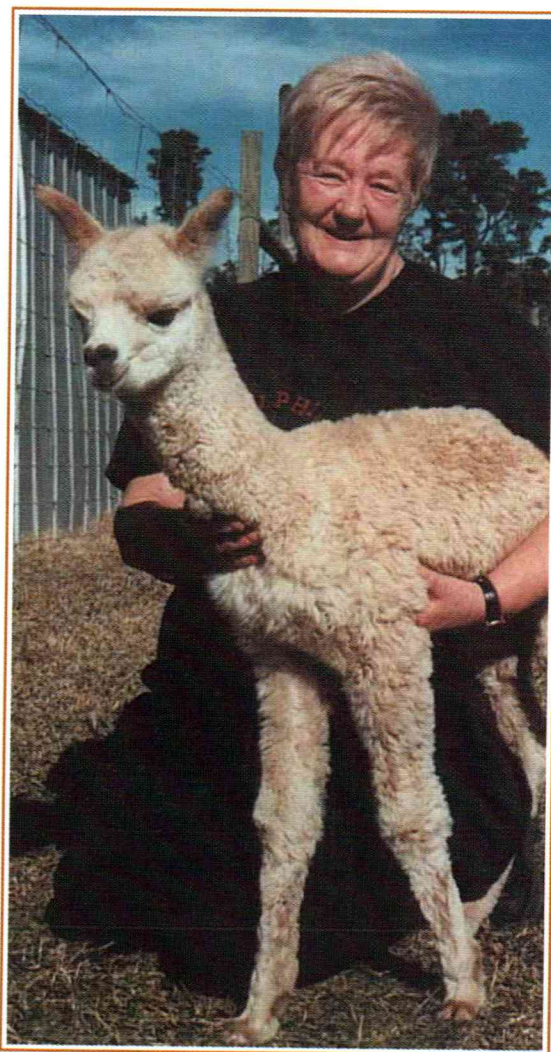
The first step was to buy the local pizza shop, where (for a change) the 30+ people in the room with us actually wanted to be there and expected to have a good time. *Memo #2: thou shalt use thy past experience to maintain steady income from another source whilst establishing thy farming venture.* This move had the unexpected side-effect of providing a brilliant opportunity for networking and brain-picking. *Memo #3: thou shalt get thine advice from people who aren't actually trying to sell to thee.* Enter Julianne and Frank Gelber, local pizza gourmards and alpaca gurus.

Over lemon gelato and short blacks, we heard about the beauty, intelligence and market potential of alpacas, and met a steady stream of other alpaca owners from the local area who came to eat pizza with the Gelbers and stayed to talk alpacas late into the night. *Memo #4: thou shalt keep thine ears open and check out the types of people who are already in this industry.* We had considered alpacas when we first decided to

go into farming, but it didn't seem achievable – an "instant herd" was simply beyond our financial reach. We had learnt about herd mentality, pecking orders and the need for a stable peer group from ostriches (not to mention schoolchildren), and were

The changes of career direction that Jenni and I have managed in the last decade would make a chameleon jealous. Ten years ago we were city slickers; Head of Music and Senior Music teacher respectively, at a high-profile private school in Sydney's north. Increasing frustration with petty bureaucratic restrictions on our freedom to teach professionally (read "maze of paperwork and dogma"), culminating in a severe case of burn-out (read "impending insanity"), led us to seek out other options. We both had strong "earthy" connections, Jen from her childhood travels all over country NSW as a bank manager's daughter, I from childhood holidays spent messing around on acres with my grandparents. We both yearned to return to the land (read "far away from pointless 3-hour staff meetings") where we could indulge our mutual love of animals (that would be the four-legged variety).

Moving to our own slice of heaven, we transformed 33 acres of neglected paradise (read "junk heap") into a working ostrich farm. An exponential learning curve ensued, with respect to both raising ostriches and the hidden dangers of new agricultural industries peopled by dodgy entrepreneurs. *Memo #1: thou shalt not commit thy money to stock which does not yet exist.*



Jenni with our latest cria, Willa Willa Mr Sandman

use of financial and agricultural resources (read "ignore the hype, read up and use your brains"). And when Newcastle Disease hit the Mangrove Mountain chicken farms and our entire stock (and everything else with

not about to purchase just one or two lonely animals. *Memo #5: thou shalt keep thine eggs in multiple baskets.* Tempted once more now that prices had receded a little from that first-importation high, and impressed by the credibility of the people who were already involved, we took advantage of the Gelbers' and Clymos' hospitality and advice. Some months and many conversations later, we finally went looking for stock.

Soon we were the proud owners of seven alpacas – some of whose fleeces prompted a quiet “oh, dear!” from Julianne, but at least we had our “instant herd”. Of our less-than-ideal bargain-basement purchases, one rather aggressive male turned out to be an excellent guard once wethered, and the remainder were good company for our few more valuable alpacas and great “practice stock” for us. Our experiences with the ostriches had also made us very aware of animal body language (read “misread the mood and you’re dead” – excellent motivational tool). Working with these starter animals was an important introduction to the alpaca “dialect”, so very necessary if one is to work them effectively without distressing them unduly (read “without being showered with rancid green slime”).

We read – textbooks, AAA magazines, *Town and Country Farmer*, anything about alpacas we could get our hands on. When we didn't understand something, there was always someone we could call (read “the Bumble Hill number was entered in our phone's memory bank”). We talked. We sat and watched the alpacas. We joined the AAA. We went to regional meetings and education days. We went to a National Conference. We visited Berrima and looked at alpaca products. We logged into the web site. We sent fleece samples off for analysis. (Yes, and ran the pizza shop too.) In short, the teachers became the students.

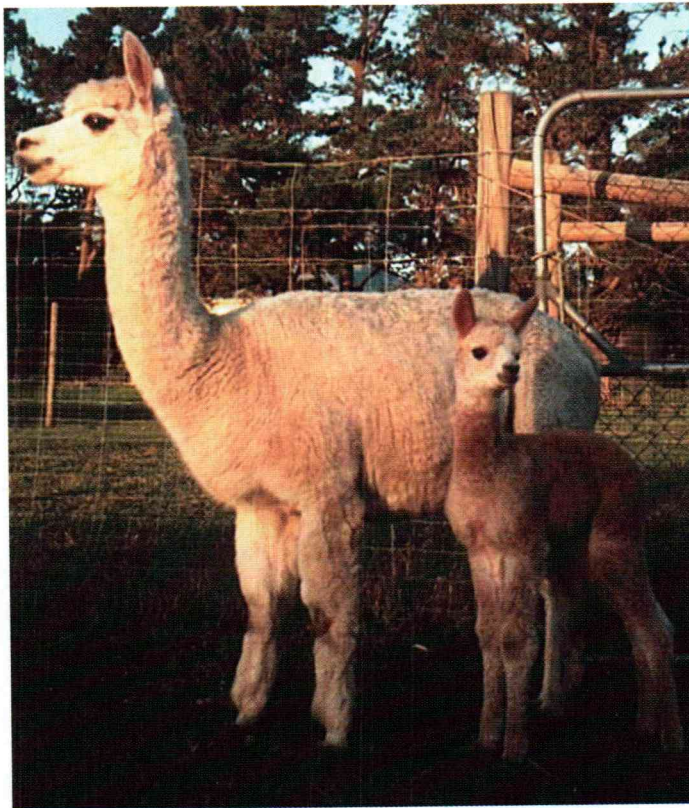
I cannot overstate the importance of the support we received from other breeders in the area throughout this period. If you want this industry to grow and flourish, get out there and offer a new breeder a hand. Just selling people our animals will make us money in the short term; but it

can't compare with the value of sharing our knowledge (yes, that means without putting a price tag on it) and exchanging views amicably over coffee while we get the whole industry set up for profit in the long term. The more we know and the more consistent our view and aims, the more chance we have of success (and the more friends we have for support when things are tough).

It is now three years since the Newcastle Disease disaster. We have been through three births (which elicited two “beautiful’s and one “oh dear”), two wetherings (one male wouldn't stay asleep, the other wouldn't wake up), two shearings (one in 40°, the other in gale force wind), one death, one infertility

debt of gratitude by offering our facilities to even newer owners at shearing time. We have some fleeces in the shed which are actually worth sending to the Co-op. The learning curve continues.

We now look forward to a time when our herd will be sufficiently large and our fleeces sufficiently saleable to pay for the feed, vet bills and matings. A week may be a long time in politics, but three years is a nanosecond in farming. Running a small business and a farm simultaneously has its moments, and keeping the paperwork up to date is a constant challenge; but we have no doubts about the quality of alpaca fibre, nor about the quality of the industry leaders we have met.



Wyona Summertime  
with our first cria,  
Willa Willa Sylvia

investigation (unsuccessful), four halter-trainings (read “kite-flying with slimefest”), and many matings, ultrasounds, nail-trimmings and other assorted health procedures. We have prepared and shown our first fleece, and are looking forward with unprecedented excitement (read “crossed fingers”) to the birth of two crias from matings with champion males. We have met many more wonderful and helpful alpaca people from our local area, and have been able to “pay forward” some of our

We are here for the long haul, and have little time for those who are only interested in fast returns – has anyone?? Meanwhile back at the pizza shop, we sing the praises of alpacas to anyone and everyone who'll listen. Usually in perfect two-part harmony... ■

# MARKET PLACE



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- ▲ **'Peru' (left)** Unisex crew neck 4 colour fairisle jumper [s to xl] \$275.00
- 'Iquitos' (centre left)** Unisex rolled V neck textured jumper [brown, dark brown, black, grey, fawn] [s to xl] \$260.00
- 'Callao' (centre right)** Lace cardigan [brown, black, grey, fawn] [s to xl] \$230.00
- 'Arequipa' (right)** Unisex crew neck fairisle yoke and bordered jumper [black/grey, brown/fawn] [s to xl] \$265.00

- ▲ **'Castilla' (left)** Ladies crew neck cabled yoke and sleeve jumper [brown, dark brown, black, grey, fawn, cream] [s to xl] \$270.00
- 'Machu Picchu' (centre)** Ladies crew neck lace yoke short sleeve jumper [brown, dark brown, black, grey, fawn] [s to xl] \$160.00
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Photography Annette Ringrose



Photography Annette Ringrose

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- ▲ **'Tunic'** [20 balls double knit] \$8.00 per ball  
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 E-mail: [sandra@alpaca.asn.au](mailto:sandra@alpaca.asn.au)

- ▼ **'Ragtime'** [10 balls boucle] \$12.00 per ball  
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# twins 2niwt

by JOY ALLENBY-ACUNA  
LA GRANJA ALPACAS, NSW

*My dream since buying alpacas in 1995 was to have twins. Heroides and I have always joked and said, "perhaps this birth will be twins!" Well, in December 2001 my dream came true, but very sadly they were stillborn.*

**L**a Granja Panchita, a pure white female, had been fine throughout her pregnancy, not unduly fat or in discomfort. I was hoping she would have a trouble-free birth as the previous year she had a dystocia in which I had to assist and only just managed to save a gorgeous fawn female, *La Granja Dama*, a daughter of *Shanbrooke High Society*. She was large and stuck by the shoulders. However, even with all our expertise, Panchita had not bonded with her or fed her so I was hoping against hope to get her a lovely cria this time around. Panchita is a lovely alpaca, so mild, shy and friendly.

I asked every breeder I know, and also shearers, about the dangers of shearing too close to a birth. Everyone assured me, "Never a problem". Now, with hindsight and knowing it was twins, I would never have had her shorn.

Panchita was shorn on 29 November by a very good shearer and did not appear to be at all

stressed. However on the 3 December she produced dead twins! (I must say that another girl due on the 28 November produced a perfect solid black girl on 5 December).

Of course, perhaps it wasn't the shearing that brought this tragedy about. The vet assures me that alpacas are really not suitable to have twins and he guessed that the twins' blood supply had been cut off too early, as they were too much for her body to cope with. Sired by *World Class Sioux*, a foundation Suri, the twins, both boys (one multi-brown and the other white) weighed 3.5kgs and 4.5kgs respectively (a good size for twins). Although delivered a fortnight early, according to the vet, they had been dead a while as both had blue 'glass' eyes, seemingly a build-up of fluid in their bodies.

All I know is I could do nothing to save them (although of course I tried, as I had done with Dama). I was there at 8:30am when she dropped the first one after a quick labour and he was obviously already dead and I just knew by instinct that there was another one in there! Fibrous tissue was hanging from her (definitely not afterbirth). I finally persuaded the vet to come out, as they said it was probably not another cria, as twins are so rare (however, I believe they are occurring more often). The vet examined her whilst I held her and sure enough, another cria (always go with your first ping!) He was upside

down and twisted back and entangled in fibres – also dead.

I was so sad for Panchita, not having a cria yet again to feed, and for myself, not having my longed-for twins. I still blame myself for having her shorn and would not do one so close to birthing again.

I have looked up a lot of my reference books since and confirmed that stress can cause abortion and stillbirth.

I left the babies with her all day in the paddock so that she could grieve and at one stage she even laid with her head on one of them. Heroides said we should call them Yin and Yang and we buried them in that position ☹️ curled around each other, next to *World Class Sioux* who had died earlier in the year of aspirant pneumonia.

Added to the trauma, Panchita also inverted her uterus and had to have an epidural to put it back, but we got her better with Vitamin C, Cod Liver Oil and Vitamins. As recommended by the vet we didn't re-breed her in a fortnight and in fact have only just done so and we believe she is newly pregnant. Third time lucky!! She is in total good health now and next year I am hopeful that she will have a gorgeous fawn girl, as she has been mated to *Weeroona Tarquin*, our super stud.

We would love to hear from anyone else about their experiences with twins. ■



Yin and Yang  
– stillborn

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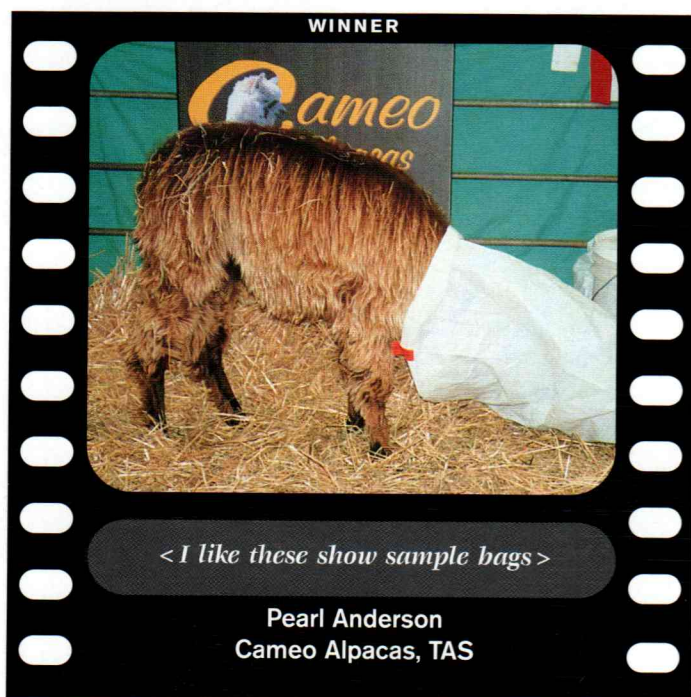
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'Alpacas Australia' Magazine front cover is, most importantly, the place where we would like to illustrate the adage, 'Every picture tells a story'. The new look magazine has a truly Australian flavour that we hope will continue to be proudly displayed 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.



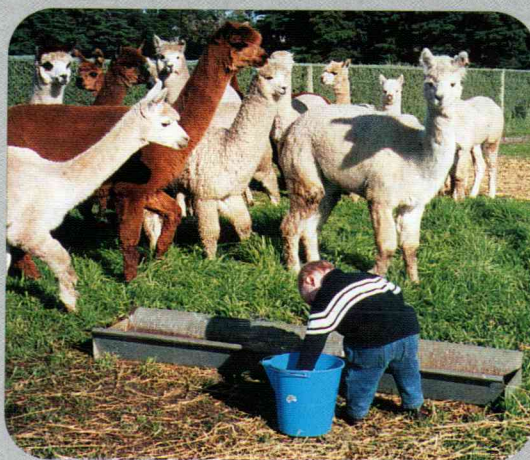
< Did she? >  
< Gee it smells like it >

Greg & Margaret Omond  
San Andreas Alpaca Stud, VIC



< I'll look out for you, little buddy >

Gerry & Anita Maas  
Gerita Alpacas, VIC



< How many handfuls are you allowed? >

Carolyn Jinks  
Benleigh Alpaca Stud, VIC



*< Swimming pool built for one >*

Grant & Marie McKay  
Church Hill Park Alpacas, VIC



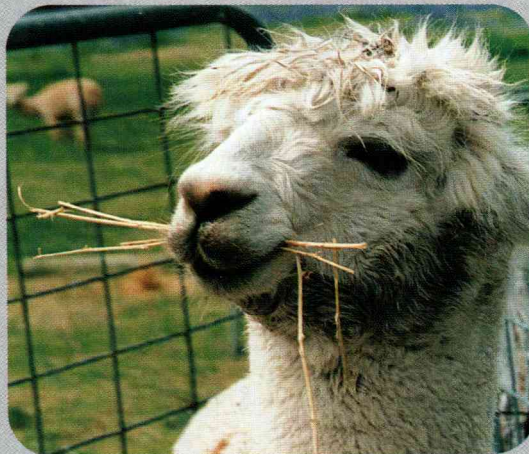
*< Hello world! >*

Bill & Odette Mayne  
Currumbong Alpacas, ACT



*< I'm seeing R E D >*

Gerry & Anita Maas  
Gerita Alpacas, VIC



*< I've always wanted whiskers >*

Janice & Garry Ward  
Monteagle Alpacas, NSW



*< I love you too >*

Joy Allenby-Acuna  
La Granja Alpacas, NSW



*< You drink, I'll stir >*

Amanda Senior  
Cobaki Creek Alpacas, NSW

## UPCOMING EVENTS

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

**2002**

### April

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

27 - 28 ALPACA FEST, VIC  
*Venue:* Geelong Showgrounds  
*Highlights:* Alpaca Show (27 April)  
 Alpaca Auction (28 April)  
*Contact:* Chris Day (03) 5368 7094

27 - 28 AUTUMN CLASSIC SHOW, WA  
*Venue:* Whiteman Park  
*Highlights:* Alpaca Show  
*Contact:* Ron Raynor (08) 9296 0442

### May

1 - 2 BUNDABERG AGROTREND, QLD  
*Highlights:* Promotional event  
*Contact:* Colin & Sharon Taylor (07) 4129 7304

3 - 5 Tocal FIELD DAYS, NSW  
*Venue:* Tocal Agricultural College, Paterson  
*Highlights:* Tocal Fleece Show  
*Contact:* Patricia Mashman (02) 4930 7049  
 Evelyn Thrift (02) 4938 1513

4 - 5 ALPACA FIESTA, NSW  
*Venue:* Hawkesbury Racecourse  
*Highlights:* Alpaca auction, raffle, fashion parade  
*Contact:* Anita Neeser (02) 4575 5360

9 - 11 IPSWICH SHOW, QLD  
*Venue:* Ipswich Showgrounds  
*Highlights:* Alpaca judging (11 May)  
*Contact:* Julie MacGregor (07) 3202 3113

10 - 12 NEW BREEDERS' SEMINAR, NSW  
*Venue:* Ranelagh House, Robertson  
*Highlights:* Lectures, demonstrations, hands-on sessions  
*Contact:* Heather Vickery (02) 4885 2852

16 - 18 GYMPIE SHOW, QLD  
*Highlights:* Promotional event  
*Contact:* Dawn Perryman (07) 5485 0890

19 MUDGEE AUCTION, NSW  
*Highlights:* Alpaca auction  
*Contact:* Kate Bailey (02) 6887 1233

25 WALLOON FIELD DAY, QLD  
*Venue:* Walloon State School  
*Highlights:* Alpaca display  
*Contact:* Julie MacGregor (07) 3202 3113

25 - 26 INTRODUCTION TO ALPACAS SEMINAR & WORKSHOP, NSW  
*Venue:* Masonic Club, South Windsor  
*Highlights:* Lectures on animal selection, husbandry, property requirements & more  
*Contact:* Anita Neeser (02) 4575 5360

29 - 31 BUNDABERG SHOW, QLD  
*Highlights:* Promotional event  
*Contact:* Fiona Laughton (07) 4156 3364

### June

7 - 8 SEMINAR, VIC  
*Venue:* International Fibre Centre, Deakin University, Geelong  
*Highlights:* Lectures for new & established breeders, Show/Steward Course  
*Contact:* Chris Day (03) 5368 7094

13 - 15 SUNSHINE COAST SHOW, QLD  
*Venue:* Nambour Showground  
*Highlights:* Alpaca judging  
*Contact:* Graeme Smith (07) 5445 9492

### July

6 - 7 MUDGEERABA AGRICULTURAL SHOW, QLD  
*Highlights:* Alpaca display  
*Contact:* Wendy Summerell (07) 5543 0207

13 - 14 LAIDLEY AGRICULTURAL SHOW, QLD  
*Highlights:* Alpaca display  
*Contact:* Julie MacGregor (07) 3202 3113

19 - 20 MUDGEE SMALL FARM FIELD DAYS, NSW  
*Highlights:* Alpaca display  
*Contact:* Kate Bailey (02) 6887 1233

19 - 21 AUSTRALIAN SHEEP & WOOL SHOW, VIC  
*Venue:* Bendigo  
*Contact:* Glenn Sutherland (03) 5826 2455

28 BALLARAT SHEEP & WOOL SHOW, VIC  
*Contact:* Pam Baxter (03) 5360 8210

### August

8 - 17 ROYAL QUEENSLAND SHOW, QLD  
*Venue:* Brisbane Showground  
*Highlights:* Alpaca & Fleece judging  
*Contact:* Camilla Smith (07) 3266 9822

23 - 25 AAA NATIONAL CONFERENCE, QLD  
*Venue:* Australis Noosa Lakes Resort, Noosa, Qld  
*Highlights:* Lectures on latest industry developments  
*Contact:* AAA National Office (03) 9873 7700

29 - 31 GOLD COAST SHOW, QLD  
*Highlights:* Alpaca judging (31 August); alpaca display  
*Contact:* Bob Chessor (07) 5527 3948

30 - SEPT 7 ROYAL ADELAIDE SHOW, SA  
*Venue:* Adelaide Showgrounds  
*Highlights:* Alpaca judging; Fleece judging  
*Contact:* Dan Males (08) 8556 9097

31- SEPT 1 GOULBURN FIELD DAY & SOUTHERN NSW REGION SHOW, NSW  
*Highlights:* Alpaca judging  
*Contact:* John van der Straaten (02) 6238 3590

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<i>Alpaca Breeders Reproduction Handbook</i> by McMillan & Jinks	29.70	25.00	\$
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<i>Medicine &amp; Surgery of Sth American Camelids</i> by Fowler (2nd edition)	price on application		\$
<i>Yacca the Alpaca</i> by Jakaitis (children's picture story book)	18.70	15.00	\$
<i>Alpacas Australia Magazine</i> - 3 back issues	18.90	9.00	\$
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Credit Card No                 Expiry Date  /  /

Name on Credit Card

Signature

Please photocopy or cut out this form and send to Australian Alpaca Association Inc

ARBN 067 146 481 ABN 33 710 945 160

**PO Box 1076, Mitcham North, Victoria 3132 PHONE +61 (0)3 9873 7700 FAX +61 (0)3 9873 7711**

## Rates

*If not paid within 14 days of invoice, a 5% surcharge will apply*

	Casual Rate		x 2 issues		x 3 issues		Production*	
	\$AUD Incl. GST AUSTRALIA	\$AUD OVERSEAS	\$AUD Incl. GST AUSTRALIA	\$AUD OVERSEAS	\$AUD Incl. GST AUSTRALIA	\$AUD OVERSEAS	\$AUD Incl. GST AUSTRALIA	\$AUD OVERSEAS
<b>4 colour</b>								
Full Page	1,045.00	950.00	973.50	885.00	825.00	750.00	308.00	280.00
1/2 Page	737.00	670.00	682.00	620.00	583.00	530.00	231.00	210.00
1/4 Page	638.00	580.00	583.00	530.00	495.00	450.00	154.00	140.00
<b>Mono</b>								
Full Page	737.00	670.00	682.00	620.00	583.00	530.00	220.00	200.00
1/2 Page	517.00	470.00	484.00	440.00	418.00	380.00	154.00	140.00
1/4 Page	297.00	270.00	275.00	250.00	242.00	220.00	88.00	80.00
Bus. cards	110.00	100.00	99.00	90.00	88.00	80.00	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

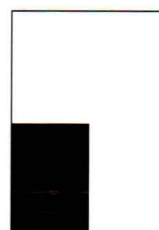
### Space and Sizes (mm)



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 38

Due: August 2002  
Deadline: Friday 7 June

### Issue 39

Due: December 2002  
Deadline: Friday 11 October

### Issue 40

Due: April 2003  
Deadline: Friday 14 February

*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)*

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stud male  
on mobile  
service

Superfine  
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yearlings  
for  
sale

Top Male  
genetics  
available  
to suit  
your herd

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

# WINDSONG VALLEY ICEMAN

*Back to Back National Champion*



*2000 & 2001 ~ AAA National Supreme Champion Huacaya*

*2000 & 2001 ~ AAA National Supreme Champion Fleece*

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**1st Fleece 1999**

*2000 National Supreme  
Champion Fleece*



**2nd Fleece 2000**

*2001 National Supreme  
Champion Fleece*



**3rd Fleece 2001**

*Not yet shown*



**WINDSONG  
VALLEY  
ALPACAS**

**WINDSONG VALLEY ALPACAS**

**Office Ph/Fax: 08 9399 8762 • Home Ph: 08 9399 2737**

**Email: [windsongvalley@bigpond.com](mailto:windsongvalley@bigpond.com)**

**Sole Agent: Coricancha Alpaca Stud P/L**

**Ph: 03 5342 0111 • Fax: 03 5342 0999**

**Email: [alpacaco@netconnect.com.au](mailto:alpacaco@netconnect.com.au)**