

Commonwealth Clydesdale Horse Society Australia Inc.



Dear Member,

Your Membership renewal notice for the 2026/2027 year is on the way to you in the mail. The Society appreciates your support as a member and welcomes you to continue your involvement to maintain the Clydesdale breed. It is important that you are financial when competing at events for insurance purposes or attending CCHSA meetings to have the right to vote as well as for the registration or transfer of any horses. The Society has a good number of complimentary members that are given initial membership when purchasing their first Clydesdale in the hope that they will maintain an association with the breed into the future.

Unfortunately, due to overall rising costs the Society has had to increase the Membership fee for the year. Your **Membership fee is \$100.00** and is due and **payable by 1st July 2026**. If payment is not received prior to the 30th September 2026 or if you have been a member previously and have let your Membership lapse there is a rejoining fee of \$20.00 applicable.

Payment of your membership can be processed by Direct Deposit

BSB: 633 000

Account Number: 130 462 211

Account Name: CCHSA **Bank:** Bendigo Bank

Reference: Your Membership No & Surname

or you can post a Cheque/Money Order along with your membership form to the PO Box address.

Please note the CCHSA cannot process credit card payments.

**PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU DEPOSIT YOUR PAYMENT INTO THE FEDERAL ACCOUNT
NOT A STATE BRANCH ACCOUNT**

You must provide a reference when direct depositing. If you do not provide the reference requirements your Membership will not be processed as there is no other way of identifying your payment.

Please Note: CCHSA Membership of \$100.00 covers the nominated person only under a single or joint membership for insurance and entitles one vote per membership only at CCHSA meetings.

Next Gen Membership: The Federal Council has introduced a Next Gen Membership category which is for Clydesdale enthusiasts between the ages of 18 – 35 years. Conditions apply as a Next Gen Member is not eligible to have a stud name or register a horse unless they are a full Member.

Would you like a membership card? It is optional to receive a Membership card, and if you require a Membership card to be posted, make sure you provide your current address and you must tick the relevant box on your membership renewal slip requesting a card to be sent. This can be done by either emailing fedsec@clydesdalehorse.com.au requesting a card or posting back your renewal with a yes ticked in the box. Some members last year put a note in their direct payment reference send a card please which is also accepted. If you have not received your requested membership card in the mail within 2 – 3 weeks of making payment, please contact the Federal Office to have one sent.

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Commonwealth Clydesdale Horse Society Australia Inc.



Has your Personal Contact Information Changed? It is important that you check all your personal details to keep your Membership information up to date as this information is passed on to State Secretaries. Please contact the Federal Office to update your details at any time when they change or adjust them on your renewal and email to fedsec@clydesdalehorse.com.au or send in via the post.

Federal Newsletter June 2026 - Please note Members that have an email address will receive the Federal Newsletter by email. This decision is to reduce costs of printing and postage.

CCHSA Fees & Charges as of July 2026

Membership Fees

- Membership (1st July – 30th June) - **\$100.00**
- Re-joining Fee (Additional Fee if a Previous Membership has lapsed) - **\$20.00**
- Next Gen Membership (18 – 35 years) (1st July – 30th June) Conditions Apply - **\$35.00**
- Junior Entitlement Levy (Under 18 years) (1st July – 30th June) - **\$11.00**

Registration Fees

- Registrations (Male & Female) - **\$70.00**
- Registrations (Geldings) - **\$40.00**
- Cross Bred Recording (Male, Female & Gelding) - **\$60.00**

Transfers

- Transfers (Current Members only) - **\$30.00**
- Transfers (Non-member within 60 days) - **\$70.00**
- Transfers (Non-member after 60 days) - **\$90.00**

Stallion Service Certificate Book

- Service Certificate (book of 10) - **\$30.00**

Duplicate Certificates

- Issue of Duplicate Registration Certificate - **\$30.00**

DNA Testing

- DNA Kits - (Inc DNA testing kit, Lab Results & updating registration details) - **\$100.00**

Late Registrations

- Male or Female Late Registrations - (Inc Registration & Penalty Fee - if registered during the following two seasons) - **\$190.00**
- Gelding Late Registrations - (Inc Registration & Penalty Fee - if registered during the following two seasons) - **\$110.00**

Please note that registrations of foals born in the last breeding year (2025) are to be submitted prior to the end of the breeding year 31st July 2026 otherwise penalty fees will apply.

I look forward to you making your payment of Membership asap and continuing your association with the Commonwealth Clydesdale Horse Society of Australia Inc.

Rod Bowles
Federal Secretary

CCHSA Federal President Update - Russell March



Dear Member,

We are nearing the time of year when memberships are being renewed, plans about our breeding programs and training of our youngsters all seem to coincide at the same time. Entries for the Royal Adelaide Show and Royal Melbourne Show are due. I believe the Perth Show is at a similar time also.

Rod has been extra busy processing registrations and transfers, which is a good healthy sign.

The next edition of the stud book will be distributed very soon, a 3 season volume. A historical record that is more special because it is a tangible hard copy. I would like to thank the Federal Secretary Rod Bowles, Bill Mahnke (content edits) & Ian Stewart-Koster (photo edits) for their contribution and work yet again.

This past year, we completed our National Constitution and registered our name with ASIC. We've also adapted our by-laws to better serve members across all states, though there's still work to do.

The greatest highlight, however, has been the incredible efforts of our newly formed Next Generation Committee. They are taking on the challenges head on and have organised and held events in different states successfully. They have also formally created a structure of roles within their committee. I congratulate the appointment of Claire Marriott - Chair, Kristian March - Vice Chair and Montanna Rheinberger - Secretary and Marketing. All other members of the Next Gen committee should also be applauded for their participation and contributions.

I would like to congratulate our newest Federal Judges, Dean Rheinberger, Heather Oxenham and Shaun Maloney. Hopefully more aspiring judges will take on the challenge to become a CCHSA endorsed Federal Judge.

After some consideration the Heavy Horse Festival of SA has been postponed due to current fuel and economic conditions. But it is pleasing to see many shows able to continue across Australia, even under this financial burden. The results of the shows I will leave the specifics to the presidents of each state. Competitor numbers have been fair to good considering the difficulties we all face. Facebook has been full of photos from proud exhibitors.

SA hosted Matt Trewin (Lavereen Clydesdales) from Victoria to present at a 'Clydesdale Workshop' for interested people in absence of the SA Heavy Horse Festival on the 16th May. It was a very successful day and created an encouraging and informative environment for both old and new members without the pressures of competition.

Events like these provide a social environment for our members to enjoy and is a non-threatening place to welcome new members or even people of interest. I would love to see more social events for members where we get together as friends because we have one good thing in common, The Clydesdale Horse.

Russell March
Federal President

CCHSA Next Gen Committee



"To encourage & foster an enjoyable environment for the Next Generation of Clydesdale enthusiasts with activities that may include but not limited to training days, feature classes, social events, & scholarships".

The CCHSA is committed to fostering the youth and has established a National Next Gen Committee with representation of two nominated delegates from each state. Those State representatives are listed below:

New South Wales: Danika Patane & Montana Rheinberger

Queensland: Alisha Perry

South Australia: Caitlin Armstrong & Kristian March

Victoria: Andrew Lakin & Claire Marriott

The group recently elected their executive so congratulations to those elected and their contact numbers have been provided below if you would like to make contact on how to get involved with the Next Gen activities.

Chairperson: Claire Marriott (0428 503 947)

Deputy Chairperson: Kristian March (0449 998 681)

Secretary / Social Media: Montana Rheinberger (0492 943 951)

Next Generation Membership

The Federal Council has introduced a Next Gen Membership category which is for Clydesdale enthusiasts between the ages of 18 – 35 years. Conditions apply as a Next Gen Member you are not eligible to have a stud name or register a horse unless you become a full Member. Next Gen Membership is \$35 for the year and the application form is available on the CCHSA Website.

Recent Next Generation Competition Results

National Clydesdale Heavy Horse Festival

1st Place - Montana Rheinberger & Eva Scott

2nd Place - Nicole Mahncke & Rhyks Kastrasti

Gatton Heavy Horse Festival

1st Place - Chelsea Smidt

2nd Place - Azaylia Carr

3rd Place - Bridgette Buckley

Queensland Junior Championships

1st Place - Madeline Pitstock

2nd Place - Maddison Giess

3rd Place - Natasha McColl



***If you want to be involved,
make contact with the
Next Gen Representatives!***



Interim Presidents Report

It has been a rather busy show season with the Sydney Royal Easter Show, the Braidwood Heavy Horse Show taking place and the NSW Branch providing support for the Royal Easter Show Jamison Farm Display.

Firstly, I would like to congratulate all exhibitors in the fine showing of Clydesdales at the Sydney Royal and acknowledge the Champions below being:

Supreme Champion Clydesdale Exhibit and Champion Mare: Oscarville Skye (Ahern Shires & Clydesdales) and winner of the Annaburne Gold Cup

Champion Clydesdale Stallion or Colt: Benwerrin Park Governor – exhibited by Mrs Heather Oxenham & Mr Philip Oxenham.

The NSW Branch also displayed Clydesdales at the Jamison Farm Display again for the duration of the Royal. I found that this was a rewarding exercise as the interest and interaction with the general public was invaluable for the promotion and education of our Clydesdale horse. So many members of the general public had little understanding of the history and purpose of the Clydesdale horse and it reinforced the old adage of “The Breed that Built Australia”. A particular highlight was the shoeing demonstration provided by the NSW Farriers association that involved making shoes then fitting them to our beloved breed.

I would like to thank Susan and Samantha Weir for their tireless work in setting up, providing horses for the Jamison Farm and manning the display. I would also like to thank Steve Wesselink for providing his Clydesdale for the display and Danika Patane for all of hard work looking after the horses and being on hand for the display.

Congratulations is also in order for our 3 new Federal Panel Judges that were recently assessed competent at the Werribee Clydesdale Show so well done to Heather, Dean and Shaun. Having three additional Federal Judges fills a void in our judging stocks.

The Braidwood Heavy Horse Show was conducted in May with over 50 Clydesdales and other heavy horses competing and there being 170 entries in the various classes, It was wonderful to see so many versatile horses being showcased. The NSW Branch sponsored the foal classes and I would like to congratulate the organising Committee for their efforts.

Currently, the Committee is working to have the Sydney Royal Male and Female Honour boards updated as they have not been updated for nearly a decade. They are now back, finally on display in the old Carlton Horse Pavilion, now known as the stables. I have been in contact with the Horse Committee and awaiting advice as to the way forward.

The Committee is continuing to work with the Royal Canberra Show Society in relation to resumption of Clydesdale classes, both led and harness. They have proposed a comprehensive program of events over two days and are currently finalizing a suitable program of events in conjunction with your committee.

I would ask that the membership think about the make-up of the next Committee and people, put yourself forward in these roles so that we can further the purity and integrity of the Clydesdale Horse. It is important that we continue to have representation from NSW on the Federal Council so that we can protect the virtues of the purebred Clydesdale and maintain the Breed Register.

I look forward to everyone's input via email, as it is your Branch and we are all here for one thing only, the promotion and support is the Purebred Clydesdale horse.

Max Britton
Interim NSW Branch President
Email: alexburnestuf@gmail.com

SA Branch Report - State President Ross Blewit



Our first show for this year was Mundulla held on 7th March. The judge was Mr Kristian March, and the show was well attended with 11 heavy horses competing. The Mare class was won by Box Valley Lady Belle shown by Box Valley Clydesdales, second was Wheelabarraback Isobel shown by Natalie Blewit and third was Bluestone Ridge Misty shown by Katrina Klemm.

The Stallion/Colt class was won by Box Valley Levi shown by Box Valley Clydesdales and Supreme champion was Box Valley Lady Belle with Reserve being Box Valley Levi.

Harness classes were single horse won by Wheelabarraback Flash Lizzy shown by Katrina Klemm. The pairs were won by Wheelabarraback Flash Catherine & Kooroongarra Princess Sahrina driven by Rob Fairchild, second was Benwerrin Louis & McMurchie Tiffany driven by Scott Marr. Champion Harness was Rob Fairchild's Catherine & Sahrina. Long rein obstacle was won by Bluestone Ridge Misty driven by Katrina Klemm, second was Wheelabarraback Flash Lizzy driven by Katrina Klemm, third was Wheelabarraback Isobel driven by Natalie Blewit.

This year saw the passing of our very longtime convener Dee Provis. Wheelabarraback Clydesdales sponsored a perpetual trophy in Dee's honour and it was for the heavy horse that accumulated the most points over the day.

The winner of the inaugural Dee Provis trophy was Wheelabarraback Flash Catherine owned by Rob Fairchild.

Our Next Show was Mt Pleasant held on 21st of March. The judge was Mrs Emma Killpatrick from Victoria. No entries were received for Colts and Stallions. Mares 3 years and over was 1st Caversham Nellie owned by Caversham Clydesdales, exhibited by Caitlin Armstrong. 2nd Caversham Flossie shown by Katrina Klemm and 3rd Wheelabarraback Isobel shown by Natalie Blewit. Champion Mare was Caversham Nellie & Reserve Caversham Flossie, with Supreme being sashed to Caversham Nellie.

Sire/Dam & 1 progeny winner was Wheelabarraback Flash Bonnie/Glenquarry King Hinkley exhibited by Glenquarry Clydesdales. The obstacle course driven in reins open driver awarded equal first to Katie l'Anson driving Lowan Vale Master Angus and Ruth Vogelsang driving Caversham William. 2nd place was Caitlin Armstrong driving Bluestoneridge Torin Jasper and 3rd place Katrina Klemm driving Caversham Flossie. Junior Obstacle Course driven in reins was 1st place Maria l'Anson driving Lowan Vale Master Angus. Ridden heavy horse was awarded to Ruth Vogelsang riding Caversham William and 2nd place to Katrina Klemm riding Caversham Flossie.

The Tim Potter junior encouragement award went to Maria l'Anson.

Unfortunately, our premier event, the South Australian Heavy Horse Festival was postponed until 2027 because of the rising fuel costs.

Ross Blewit
CCHSA SA Branch President

VIC Branch Report - State President Eileen Jorgensen



National Clydesdale & Heavy Horse Festival

The 2026 NC&HHF was a very successful event, despite numbers being down due to multiple ongoing bushfires in Victoria & less than ideal weather conditions. International judges, Ray & Amber McLaughlin from Ontario, Canada, officiated the led & harness classes.

Thanks go to all of those involved with its planning and success over that weekend. The committee was ably led by Bill Jackson, with Jess Norrstrom filling the role of Secretary.

The volunteer assistant secretary on the day was Deb Packham. She is to be commended for giving her time to assist in the office. It was pleasing to see the number of horses entered over the weekend. The planning of next year's festival is well in hand with a small but enthusiastic committee. Werribee Park Equestrian Centre has been booked for the 2027 NC&HHF - to be held 16 & 17 January 2027.



Benalla Driving Day

BDD was held on 2 May 2026 & was again a very successful & well-supported event. It was great to see a number of new faces joining in the competition, & also a steady flow of people taking up the opportunity to drive a Clydesdale under expert tuition.

Special thanks to our Judges for the day - Harrison Collins, Will Lewin, Annie Davidson, & learner tutor Bernie Rice. The event was very well supported & enjoyed by the general public. Congratulations to the Sub-Committee on such a well organised & successful day!



Upcoming Events

The Victorian Branch has a number of events planned for the coming months. Please see our website for more details. <https://www.clydesdalesvic.org.au/events>

- Clydesdale Showcase & Workshop Weekend - Echuca - 6th & 7th June 2026
- Melbourne Royal Show
 - Junior Presentation & Next Gen - 26th September 2026
 - Led Judging - 27th September 2026
 - Harness Judging - 28th & 29th September 2026
- Annual General Meeting - 23rd August 2026

QLD Branch Report



The 24th Junior Championships & Gelding Show was held on the 16th May 2026 at the Boonah Showgrounds. It was a great success with out of 20 entries in the Junior Classes 17 exhibited with a majority of the entries being in the foal classes. The geldings were well supported this year with 8 of 10 ten entries exhibited in the three different age groups. This year we also had two entries in the cross-bred class .

Our Junior Handler and Next Gen competition was highly contested with great numbers, Two age groups 8-12 and 13—17 with 7 entries. Our Junior Handler was Judged by Rhonda Harnell who has shown many beautifully presented Clydesdales. Next Gen was also hotly contested with 6 entries, which was judged by Cai Thomas Thank you to Photos by Lizzie (Lizzie Woodward) for taking wonderful photos creating wonderful memories for everyone



Champion Colt or Filly Foal

BROOKLEIGH LODGE BENTLY - MELANIE CLAUSEN
BENTLY ALSO TOOK OUT SUPREME CHAMPION UNDER 2 YO



Reserve Champion Colt or Filly Foal

DUNESKE REGAL PRESENCE - STEWART-KOSTER FAMILY



Champion Yearling

BROOKLEIGH LODGE CONSTANCE - MELANIE CLAUSEN



Reserve Champion Yearling

DUNESKE PROMIS OF REIGN - STEWART - KOSTER FAMILY



Champion Two Year Old Colt or Filly

BROOKLEIGH LODGE PIPER - MELANIE CLAUSEN
PIPER ALSO TOOK OUT SUPREME CHAMPION TWO TO THREE YEARS OLD



Reserve Champion Two Year Old Colt or Filly

SAMARAH PARK REFINER - GRAHAM & NICKY EHRICH

QLD Branch Report



Champion Three Year Old Colt or Filly
MCMURCHIE TILLY - GRAHAM & NICKY EHRLICH



Reserve Champion Three Year Old Colt or Filly
GLENGOWRIE CATRIONA - GRAHAM & NICKY EHRLICH



Champion Gelding
DUNESKE DISCOVERY - STEWART-KOSTER FAMILY



Reserve Champion Gelding
MADEEGAN CARSON - MADELINE PITSTOCK



WINNER OF THE JUNIOR HANDLER AWARD AZAYLIA CARR WITH JUDGE RHONDA HARNELL



WINNER OF THE NEXT GEN MADELINE PITSTOCK

Junior Handler & Next Gen Competition



WINNER OF THE JUNIOR HANDLER 8-12 YEARS
PHOEBE CLAUSEN



CCHSA Life Membership - Marjorie Hinkley



For over 20 years, this remarkable lady has been serving us as the branch secretary of South Australia. We as a committee would like to take the time to honour such a spectacular woman and all she has achieved by sharing a brief snapshot of her history breeding clydesdales.

Marj's love of clydesdales began at a young age where watching her father and grandfather work the land with his team of eight clydesdales and crosses. When her father passed on in the mid 1980's, Marj and her husband Roy moved back onto the farm and in 1986 brought their first clydesdale, Tinrra Yarraman Shera-Lee. From here they registered the Glenquarry Clydesdale Stud name in 1987. Unfortunately mishaps do happen and Shera-Lee suffered a major aneurism during her first at stud and passed away. Heartbroken, Marj and Roy didn't manage to replace her until 2 years later.

Next came Canaan Park Jerusha, who later became a statewide champion breed mare and Canaan Park Dibri. Now with a firm foundation for the stud, the Hinkleys were able to start their breeding program in 1992. Glenquarry Scottish Piper "Bill" born 2000 from Jerusha went on to receive Glem Loffler Trophy for Champion Gelding in 2013-2015.

This has continued all the way to the current generation of humans and horses with the stud having bred close to 20 foals and many of them state champions.

In serving our state, Marj has been our ever reliable secretary since the early 1990's and served as a committee member for a few years before the nomination to position. She often boasts of the attitude of heartfelt support the South Australian committee members give to each other and how she has had many years of building long term friendships with all those involved in the clydesdale breed.

Congratulations to Marj on her Life Membership award and thank you for your dedication and service to the Clydesdale world.

Principles of Ploughing written by Mark Porter

Principles of Ploughing in NSW, Australia, with a Pair of Draught Horses & a Single-Furrow Mouldboard Plough

Ploughing with a pair of draught horses and a single-furrow, mouldboard plough varied between the UK and Australia, and even between states within Australia. The method described here was/is that used in NSW.

Due to the unevenness of the ground and the need to have more flexibility in manoeuvring the plough around obstacles in Colonial Australia than in the UK, most ploughmen in the past dispensed with the UK's furrow-wheel and only retained one wheel on their ploughs: the land-wheel or 'Depth-wheel'.

The Procedure for Ploughing a Paddock in NSW is as follows:

1. Measure Up Your Lands:

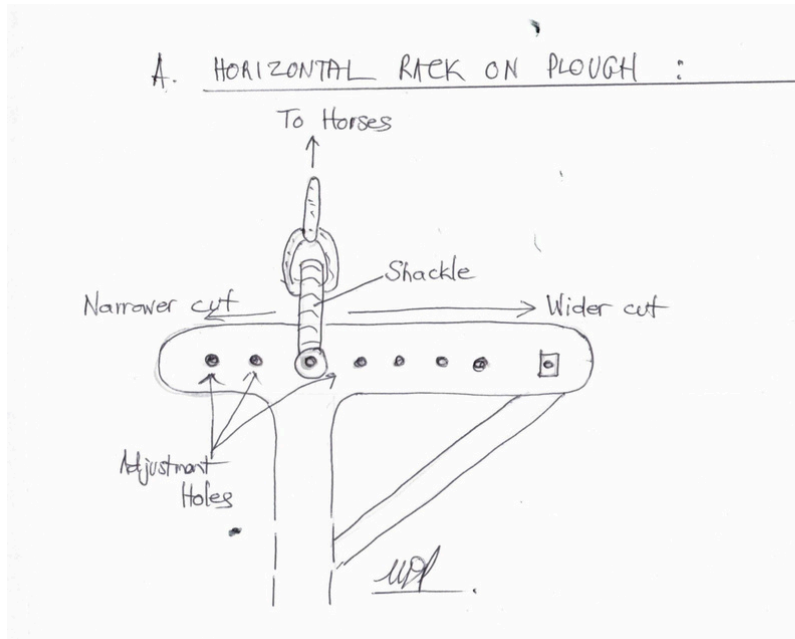
A good width for ploughing with a pair is one chain wide [22 yards]. From the edge of your paddock, step out half the width and peg [with a bit of white rag at the top] at the start, middle and opposite end. It helps to have an assistant when doing this.

2. Strike-out ['Scratch-Furrow']:

Adjust the depth-wheel on your plough to about half your desired ploughing depth [we like to plough about 4" deep for a cereal crop], so that a shallow trench will be cut. Adjust the shackle [connected to the swingle-bars of the horses' chains] so that it is in the middle-hole on the horizontal rack of the plough [see diagram A on next page]. 'Strike-out' down the paddock with the horses, 'ploughing in your pegs' as straight as you can. At the end of this first furrow, turn LEFT [this is the only time that you will turn this way], drop the depth-wheel slightly and – with the shackle on the middle-hole on the horizontal rack once again – run the depth-wheel down the land-side of the first 'scratch-furrow' all the way to the end of the paddock [this is called 'opening the book']. Walk a horse either side of the scratch-furrow if you can. Turn RIGHT at the end of this furrow.

Principles of Ploughing written by Mark Porter

Diagram A



You now have two shallow furrows, with the sod of each thrown on top of unploughed ground, which you now need to plough. This is called 'Backing-Up'.

3.Backing-Up:

Raise the depth-wheel a little, and move the shackle along the horizontal rack 1-2 holes to the right of centre, and plough a furrow into the unploughed ground beneath one side of your 'open book' [you're beginning to 'close the book']. Turn RIGHT again to 'Back-Up' the other side of unploughed ground under the second of the strike-out's sods [completing the 'closing of the book']. To do this, you have to raise the depth-wheel again, nearly to the final desired ploughing depth [for us 4"]. You also need to move your shackle to the 4th hole to the right of centre on the horizontal rack, and walk the offside horse in the last clear furrow.

With the Strike-out and Backing-Up furrows, one must lean/weigh-down on the plough-handles at the end of each furrow [to stop the share digging in] while turning the horses. Once you have completed these initial furrows, then you can start 'throwing the plough over' [onto the mouldboard side] to let the horses drag it to the other side of the land. Now raise the depth-wheel to the full ploughing depth and adjust the shackle [and therefore the horses] along the horizontal rack as required.

4.Normal Ploughing:

Make sure that your furrows start and finish in line across the paddock [your 'Ins and Outs']. 'Steering the plough' involves guiding it along behind the horses, tilting it slightly left and right to grab more or less furrow-width, all the while trying to keep a straight and even furrow. It certainly helps if you have good soil moisture and steady walking horses! And a share that has been 'set and sharpened' by a blacksmith. Ploughing wears a bevel beneath the point and wing of the share, which makes the plough want to ride out of the ground. The point has to be 'dumped up', given a slight 'kick down' and 'lead in' to the land-side of the furrow; the bevel beneath the wing of the share has to be drawn down. These measures allow the plough-share to 'bite' into the soil sufficiently so that the sod flows up along the mouldboard and is turned over by it's shape so that the grass and weed cover is buried. You need to select a share to suit the size of your horses' feet [we use them about 9" wide], so that the furrow-horse can walk along the furrows easily.

5.Clean Out:

As you approach the adjacent land, you gradually DROP the depth-wheel again to minimise the gully you tend to get at the junction of two lands, called the 'Clean-Out'. This is about 9" or two furrows wide. You aim to split the last piece of unploughed ground between the lands neatly in two, so that when you turn right at the end, you have just one furrow to plough. For this final cut, you actually RAISE the depth-wheel to avoid any 'ducking and diving' and to get a good 'bite' into the ground. If you want to do a really special job, you can then 'close the book' [ie. level out the gully] by ploughing two more furrows.

An interesting bit of trivia from the past: A man walking behind a pair of horses would plough one acre per day. The man would have walked 11 miles. No wonder ride-on ploughs were invented! [Part 2 of this article will deal with setting & sharpening a share in more detail].



Stud Book 43



Stud Book Volume 43 is on its way to you in the mail if you have already pre-ordered one. There are still copies available for sale so if you would like a copy then make your payment and we can get it posted to you. This Stud Book will include 3 years of reporting.

Stud Book 43 is available for purchase at \$75.00 including postage. If you would like to order a stud book you can make payment as per below:

Payment can be made by direct deposit as per the account details below:

BSB: 633 000 **Account Number:** 130 462 211 **Account Name:** CCHSA **Bank:** Bendigo Bank

Reference: Studbook 43, Your Membership No & Surname



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9am – 1pm Monday – Friday

Answering machine service is available outside of these hours and we will endeavour to get back to you as soon as possible

Find us on 

Commonwealth Clydesdale Horse Society Australia

Check out the website for all the information you require including forms, state contact details, judges list and more....

The database is updated regularly and the search for details of horses, owners, breeding etc can be accessed via the website.

Commonwealth Clydesdale Horse Society Australia Inc.

Reg No. A0019631A ABN 24 748 123 650

Rod Bowles – CCHSA Federal Secretary

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Barellan's New World Record- a 62-horse team!

"To us it was important to do it right, to have the horses drive and work as a team. It was really important that we weren't just trying to chase a number," Aleks Berzins explained.

"I knew Don Ross who had driven the Australian record 50 horse team with Blue Bunyan in Queensland (in 1985), so the seed was planted to match it for NSW and Barellan. "We had put the number at 54 at the end of the last year (2024) as an idea, but I was talking to Don Ross' wife in Queensland this year and she planted the seed about the 60 as Don had always aimed to drive 60 horses."

"We have lost Don now so I put together a few more horses and revamped the energy to make sure we got the 62.

Aleks contributes his horsemanship skills and knowledge to his greatest mentor, his grandfather, Sid Samuel, a passionate breeder of Belgian and Suffolk Punch draught horses.

"To have Steve Johnson and Bruce Bandy, who have been doing this forever, and the whole horse community, have been a mentor, I'm learning things all the time. This just shows what you can do when you love something so much. It's nice to be able to do things with a bunch of blokes who are passionate about it at the same time."

In 2024, 'they' (Aleks, plus Steve Johnson and Bruce Bandy) collectively put together a team of 35 draught horses, and they worked very well together, so the idea to expand on that just grew from there. Over half of the team were registered Australian Draught Horses, five registered Shires, three registered Suffolk Punch, some registered and unregistered Clydesdales and Percherons.

"We put a lot of confidence in the leaders – Hank, Lady, Digger and Margaret - it takes a long time to build. For Steve and Bruce, it has been years upon years and for me too – it can be 10 years in the making to get to this point where we have the right horses. This was the year to do it. Jason Gavenlock, Cowra, NSW, Allison Prentice, Kamarah, NSW, and Heather McFarlane, Barnawartha, Vic, also contrib-





Bruce Bandy, Aleks Berzins, Shane Carroll and Steve Johnson- a quick celebratory photo as the team is being unharnessed after their first breaking piece of history!

uted horses, and Shane Carroll was the brakeman.”
“It’s hard to get that many horses to do it – you can risk it and hope that it all works but we know it will work.”

Aleks admitted the build-up of excitement to the record attempt had been enormous.

Guinness, the authority on records, has accepted this as the largest team of draught horses pulling a fully laden wool waggon.

Owned by Ian Dahlenburg, Murramai, NSW, the historic Australian-built Bennett waggon weighed 3.8 tonnes and was loaded with 32 bales of wool from

the Flagg family, Moobooldool, NSW, to give a total weight of 10.2 tonnes of load.

The huge team was driven entirely under voice command with no outriders nor handlers/walkers, four times around the 800m track over each of the two days of the festival.

In past times in Australia, teamsters would hook up double and treble teams to help get each other through wet, boggy or hilly areas of difficulty – 16 to 18 was a more usual number for bigger teams to take the wool clip from farms and stations to the rail head. Barellan itself once held a record in the 1930s for the largest number of horse drawn wagons of grain delivered to the town’s rail siding.

This 62 horse team at Barellan comprised of 15 spans of four abreast, plus two in the shafts at the back. It took half a dozen people about two and a half hours to harness the team up, and bring each span of four out at a time to put them in their place.



The horses were tied up, harness and unharnessed together in their spans of four, and their collective collars, hames, backbands & chains were also kept together, so that harnessing would be as efficient as possible - a 2-1/2 hour task for the 62!

Collecting and repairing the mountain of harness was a feat in itself. Many of the chains were provided by Noel Wiltshire. ALL horses wore Australian-made long-straw collars. Some of the team used standard Australian leader harness with backbands and hip straps, while some used ‘spider harness’. (Breeching, which is common in North America, is a foreign idea and not used here in this type of instance)

“I only have one set of reins – the majority of the team other than the leaders are tied in, making





First the shafters are put in, then the 'pin' horses - the first span in front of the shafts. These ones are often as big as possible



Each horse's trace chains were 11 feet long, so with 15 spans, that stretched to 165 feet per side, plus the two shafters and the 22 foot waggon – made it nearly a 200 foot long item. The team chains at the back are heavier, considering they take a greater load than the front ones do.

Congratulatory messages from around the world included one from Sue Meggers, the daughter of the late Dick Sparrow, of Iowa, USA, and who single handedly drove a 48-horse hitch in the Cotton Bowl Parade in Texas, earning a spot in the Guinness Book of World Records in the 1976.

More than ten thousand tourists descended on sleepy Barellan to witness not just this, but also a new modern record of a team of 40 bullocks (oxen) as well. Bullock driver Phil Thomson OAM, of Nunminbah Valley, Queensland, teamed up with fellow Queensland bullocky, Matt Stanford, Darcy Quinn, of Adelong, NSW, and Joey Reedy, of Forbes, NSW, to create the composite team.

The 40 head eclipsed the previous record at Barellan of 28 set on October 3, 2025, and set a new Australian record for the 21st century on October 4, 2025,



Steve Johnson 's span of four follow him out to their place in the team. Steve has done some liberty work with them.

all horses in the hands of the leaders. There are a couple of sets of reins, one into the body of the team and one into the shafts and to the pins. (the 'pin' horses are the span in front of the shafters or wheelers- it's a term from the bullock driving days for the ones in front of the pole.) Everything else is at the peril of the leaders up the front wanting to get the chains tight and hold them in there."

As the record team moved off, there was a brief hiccup when the offside lead rein a became hooked under a spreader bar, but that was quickly remedied, and they moved off like old hands after that.



Some team horses wore standard Australian leader harness with hip straps and spreader bars, (left), while others wore spider harness (above)



'The Hawk' and her load of wool - nearly 10.5 tonnes in total

at the Good Old Days Festival, Barellan, NSW. The national record stands at 102 bullocks set at Cessnock in the 1980s when the timber industry was at its height in the 20th century.

The team comprised dairy breed and beef cross bullocks pulling a Bennett tabletop wagon also loaded with wool bales.

Phillip said it was unlikely that number would ever be broken as the timber cutting and milling industry had declined.



Barellan- 2 January 1932 the town pulled off an incredible feat of 116 teams, over 600 horses and 13000 bags of wheat delivered in just ONE day

As well as the big teams, led classes, ploughing, turnout classes, ridden and obstacle courses occupied many competitors all weekend, while other heavy horse exhibitors attend to just participate in the parades or demonstrations. Russell Bradford and family coordinated a big group who drove 30 horses in 13 wagons, travelling a couple of hundred kilometres to get there from Stockinbingal NSW over the previous 10 days.

Barellan's other unique claim is the largest working display of mixed species draught animals, considering they also have camels in harness, donkeys, mules, and goats, as well as all the horses and bullocks.

The dates for 2026 are 2nd to 4th October, at Barellan, NSW, Australia – about halfway between Sydney and Adelaide!

Compiled by Ian Stewart-Koster, from discussions, and from interviews by Kim Woods.

Photos courtesy Kim Woods & Ian Stewart-Koster



Hank, Lady, Digger and Margaret became the face of the weekend for ten thousand spectators - a very memorable occasion!



Dick Sparrow's record team from the mid 1970s in USA. His daughter, Sue Meggers, was quick to send congratulatory messages, and later generously posted some souvenirs and memorabilia from Dick's team's efforts, to the Barellan committee.



Every one of the 62 collars used, were long-straw Australian-made collars



A new initiative for 2025 was the Tim Peel Cup. This is first in Australia, an encouragement award for young teamsters under the age of 30 which recognises their skills and knowledge, and in doing so promotes the art of the teamster driving any species of draught animal. It was well-contested, and Joey Reedy (above left, aged 18) was the winner. Judges Andrew Duyvestin and Dave Pitstock are behind Tim Peel.



Matt & Kim Fitzgerald gave cultivating demonstrations all weekend - there had not been sufficient rain for a harvesting



Phillip Thomson OAM with a scale model log waggon made from flooded gum- built by Allan Langfield from Wagga



Elemer Showman was 2nd in the ridden Clydesdale class, and shown by Eddie Davis, was 2nd and reserve champion gelding. Eddie also won Junior Handler under 16 years. The led classes were judged by Sarah Kent from New Zealand, who attended with her mother Sue, and sister Emma. Sue Kent, a tremendous historian of the breed, has been breeding and exhibiting Clydesdales since the 1960s under stud name 'Glen' near Christchurch.



Undoubtedly a TEAM effort - many hands make light work, and it sure was heavy work over many months to reach this pinnacle



Sam Weir with Misty Park Duelling Banjos- 2nd in the led stallion 4 years and over, 1st 4-wheeled turnout and and champion turnout. Stephanie O'Toole won the 2-wheeled turnout.



Jason Gavenlock was 'Champion Ploughman' this year, winning the Norma Zingel Memorial Trophy, driving something a bit different from his usual Australian Draught horses



Henry Lawson's great poem, 'The Teams' is most apt here, especially the aspects of dust!

A cloud of dust on the long white road,
And the teams go creeping on
Inch by inch with the weary load;
And by the power of the green-hide goad
The distant goal is won.

With eyes half-shut to the blinding dust,
And necks to the yokes bent low,
The beasts are pulling as bullocks must;
And the shining tires might almost rust
While the spokes are turning slow.

With face half-hid 'neath a broad-brimmed hat
That shades from the heat's white waves,
And shouldered whip with its green-hide plait,
The driver plods with a gait like that
Of his weary, patient slaves.

He wipes his brow, for the day is hot,
And spits to the left with spite;
He shouts at 'Bally', and flicks at 'Scot',
And raises dust from the back of 'Spot',
And spits to the dusty right.

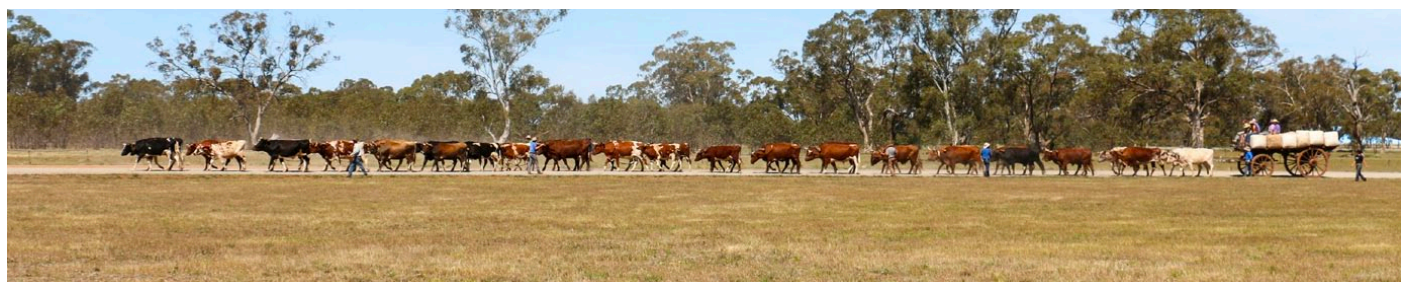
He'll sometimes pause as a thing of form
In front of a settler's door,
And ask for a drink, and remark 'It's warm,
Or say 'There's signs of a thunder-storm';
But he seldom utters more.

But the rains are heavy on roads like these;
And, fronting his lonely home,
For weeks together the settler sees
The teams bogged down to the axletrees,
Or ploughing the sodden loam.

And then when the roads are at their worst,
The bushman's children hear
The cruel blows of the whips reversed
While bullocks pull as their hearts would burst,
And bellow with pain and fear.

And thus with little of joy or rest
Are the long, long journeys done;
And thus — 'tis a cruel war at the best —
Is distance fought in the mighty West,
And the lonely battles won.

H. Lawson.



The record team of 40 bullocks - 20 spans of two abreast - a wonderful composite effort from Phillip Thomson OAM, Matt Stanford, Darcy Quinn and Joey Reedy.



Maintaining the variety of draught animals, Rodney Sansom's family, aided by Peter Towle, brought working camels, donkeys and goats in harness, while Noel Wiltshire had a team of mules



Rodney Sansom at left. Above, Jan and Steve Johnson and family found time to give chaff cutting demonstrations as well as being a significant part of the big team, while Bruce Bandy managed to also give some mowing demonstrations.



For the 1958 Brisbane Royal Show or Ekka as it is fondly known, in discussion with Frank Robertson (councillor) and Billy Kinghorn (chief redcoat) it was decided that some form of new entertainment was needed- an exciting horse-based act for the night show. So chariots were built in a nearby workshop by Jim Stafford, and with Don's brother Jim, Don organised the chariot races for what was then called the Bushmen's Carnival. (Bear in mind this was a year before Charlton Heston's 'Ben Hur' was released to the public!) That began a lifelong movement of show entertainment up and down the eastern coast of Australia.



A 1958 press photo of Don in his first chariot at the Ekka that year for the Bushman's Carnival

Don Ross – Horseman

4th August 1934 – 21st December 2024

Obituary

"I once heard someone say, there are horsemen, and there are horsemen, and then there is Don Ross, so I think that just about sums him up," says Judy Ross, Don's wife of 61 years.

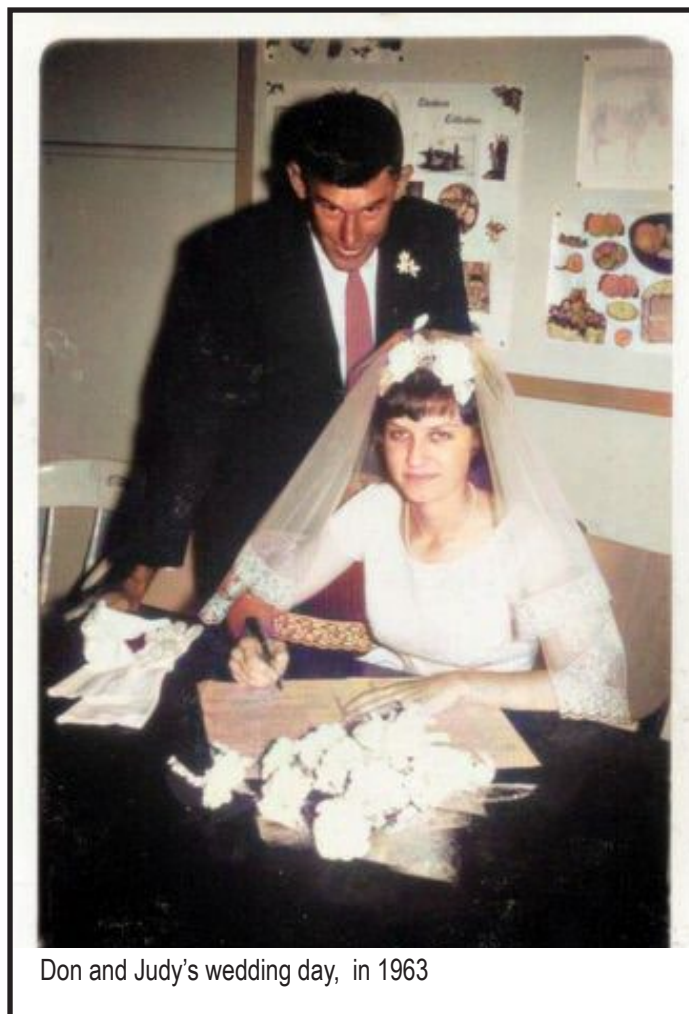
"Don had a truly remarkable life, but what he did with horses was as natural as breathing to him, it was his oxygen. His life was horses and family and everything he did and achieved was for us. He loved his children and grandchildren, and he was so proud of them all and of the amazing people they are. He was not a man to talk about himself or what he had done in his life, but I often heard him having a quiet little boast about what Jenny, Donny and his grandchildren were doing with their lives, when he talked to his mates."

A book or a set of encyclopedia could be written about Don and his achievements in the horse world, so this will be a tiny summary.

Don married Judy in 1963, and a few months later Don headed off with Bill Bolton, driving his horse teams along what was the world's longest horse-drawn coach trip- 3000 miles from Port Douglas in north Qld, to Melbourne, to raise funds for the Royal Flying Doctor Service. That took three months and one week.

John Osborne recounts "The teams and of 5 coach drivers were totally controlled and managed by Don Ross who Mr Bolton considered as "the best of the best ever Cobb & Co Coach Driver." They raised £66,000, which the Queensland State Government

subsidised pound for pound, the New South Wales Government – 10/- per pound, and the Victorian Government gave 5/- per pound. “That was a fair whack of money in those days” Don recalls.



Don and Judy's wedding day, in 1963

Daughter Jenny was born in 1964, and son Donny in 1967. In 1968 the family moved to Belmont (a suburb of Brisbane) and thereafter every weekend was either at a show, at the trots or a rodeo.

Don became well known for movie work, and one day, (as all good stories go...) Don saw an advertisement in the Brisbane Sunday paper – WANTED – 20 Clydesdales for a movie. Actually, one of Don's mates saw the ad and told Don who had had up to 70 heavy horses by them.

Don phoned the producers, and the three directors flew up to discuss “things” with him. They asked for a price, and agreed then that Don would “do” it since they also had had no luck sourcing a team elsewhere. The only hiccup was that they did not communicate with Don about dates and he was left in peace for twelve months. In the meantime, Don had bought a few more horses, and sold a good few, then the 1977 phone call came out of the blue “Are

you ready to go?”. They'd been short of funds earlier hence the “go-slow”, but now things were ready to roll from the directors' point of view.

Don “scraped together” a team - not entirely the originally intended horses - and made preparations to go up to Charters Towers for the filming which was to take three months.

The film adaptation of the book ‘The Irishman’ required a 20 horse team pulling a large box wagon. (six spans of three abreast, plus two back in the shafts) It was filmed around Charters Towers, and while Paddy was seemingly driving the team by voice command, Don was sometimes lying in a false bottom built into the wagon and steering the leaders with very long reins! Other times he stood just out of the scene, and called them by voice command as they were well-used to. Don organised the whole team, and helpers, and the movie was very popular. For the premiere of the movie, the team was trucked to Sydney, and they drove the team of 20 over the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

In some of movie scenes, two big boxes can be seen on the back of the waggon – they housed water tanks which were filled up to give added weight and therefore traction when braking, otherwise an unladen waggon mightn't be much of a load for a twenty-horse team, and when going down steep banks, would throw an unnecessary load upon the shafters.

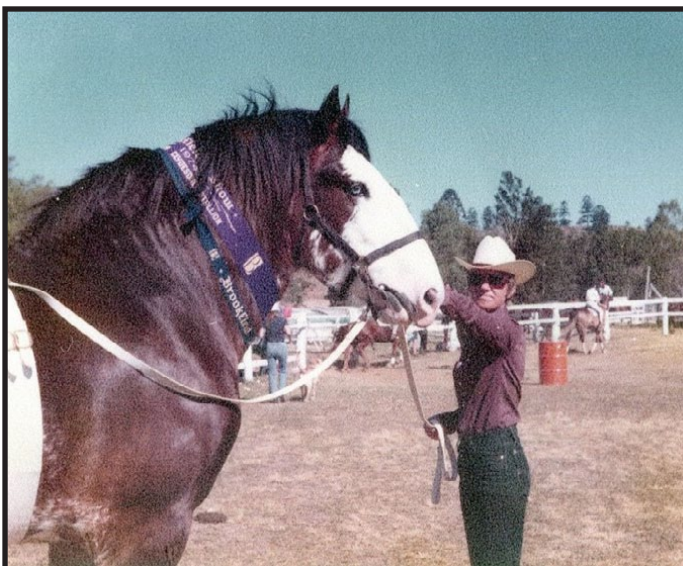
On one occasion, while crossing the Leichhardt River, they became hopelessly bogged – the movie crew had dozed a cutting down into the creek and onto a sticky silty backwash. The team pulled the waggon down through the cutting and onto this mound where the waggon promptly sank down to the naves [wheel hubs].

They jettisoned the water from the tanks, then tried using a bulldozer to move the waggon. The dozer became bogged. In time, Don worked the team and with a few whacks from some biggish branches, the dropped down and hauled it out by themselves. In the movie, Paddy walked the team down to the water – a one-take-scene – and he coaxed the leaders into the river saying “Come on, my beauties, come on” whilst he was riding Sally, one of the team mares. In the background, (unseen in the film), two kids with a handful of pebbles were employed to toss them at subsequent horses to get them into the

water and through the river.

Other movies Don was involved in were the Man from Snowy River, Wild Ride of Cobb and Co and the opera Aiada, plus the big Ben Hur re-enactment in Sydney.

Don's wife Judy bought the Clydesdale stallion, Valmont Hiawatha, and they started breeding many of their own draught horses. Hiawatha was three times Champion Clydesdale Stallion at Brisbane Royal Show (1974, 76 & 77) and the Ross family was in constant demand with requests for carriages for weddings and funerals, as well as general rides. At one stage they had 300 of their own horses!



Valmont Hiawatha with Judy Ross at Brokfield Show
He was champion in 1974

Jenny says, "Every year our family "holiday," a working one of course, was spent at the show supplying horses for all manner of main ring entertainment including Blessing of the Plough, Chariots, Robbery of Cobb and Co, Roman Riding, Waggon Races, the Cavalcade of Transport, transporting the Governor, Governors General and Queensland Premiers for the Official Opening of the RNA on People's Day. Dad became Horse Superintendent at the Ekka from 1982 until 1996.

Dad supplied horses for the Queensland Mounted Police and for many events, the phone would ring, an event would be suggested and no matter how many horses and men were needed it was always a "Yes". Even if he didn't have the horses available, with his uncanny ability to get the right horse for the job and have the reliable men behind him the job

would get done and done well."

Graham Daly recounts, "In 1976 the Ekka celebrated its 100th show and the centre ring night program was an extra special event, the feature nightly act being The Robbery of Cobb & Co coach.



Don with the team and coach built by Ernie Yates, in a 1988 Ekka grand parade- the Bicentenary year.

As the announcer narrated the story of Cobb & Co and its role in carrying the mail and passengers, Don drove the five-in-hand sedately around the ring, with his trusty guard Bob Henderson carrying a real 12 gauge shotgun beside him. When narration got to the part where "bushrangers were a constant threat", six wild riding felons would burst onto the track firing real .45 colt revolvers and Don let 'em go flat out.

The chase was on and Bob returned fire, shooting two of them off their galloping horses, Don Bourke and Graeme O'Keefe alternated, but Alan Storie got shot and took a fall every night.

The other four bushrangers overtook the coach and grabbed the leaders and pulled them up and proceeded to rob the coach and the passengers of their valuables, all to no avail, the announcer would declare "but the troopers were never far away".

Three in period uniform galloped out to save the day, Doug Conway, Warren Bruntflet (Brumy) and yours truly, (Graham Daly) firing our revolvers and killing two more felons and arresting the other two and then escorting the coach to safety.

As we did, Merv Ross would drive in with a bay clumper (draught) mare pulling a tipdray to pick up the dead. We played to a packed house every night and the crowd went wild. I can't remember when there was a larger audience.

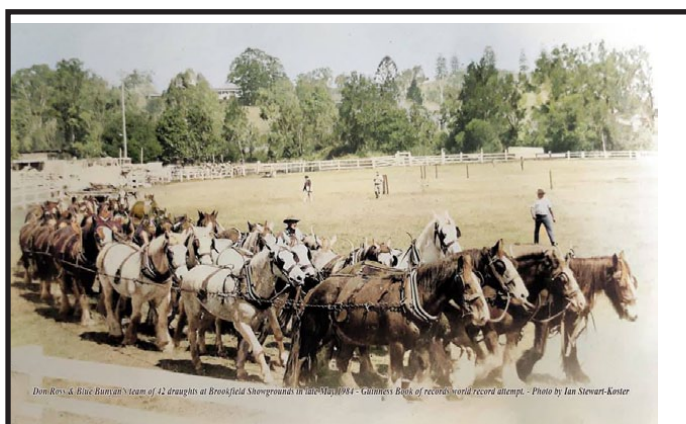
The Queensland Police supplied the weapons and

loaded them with blanks. The authentic noise of the gunfire was terrific and added to the spectacle.”

In May 1984, with Bill Kay's suggestion for the Gentle Giants field day at Brookfield, Don and Bluey Bunyan started assembling a team of 42 horses to pull an old tabletop waggon of Blue's. This was an attempt at a world record, but apparently Dick Sparrow had beaten them to it and nobody told them! Not to be outdone, for an Australia Day festival at Carrara near the Gold Coast in 1986, they assembled and drove a team of 50 draught horses – 12 spans of 4-abreast, plus two back in the shafts. But this was apparently somehow not a record either... still it was a tremendous feat for the era, and gave many Aussies a very appreciative and unique glimpse into the old ways this was done.



The 42-horse team at Brookfield's Gentle Giants field day in May 1984. Helpers were Bob Bone on brakes, Doug Heiner, Brad Ryan, Don (beside the offside leader) and Blue Bunyan (beside the nearside leader)



The team at Brookfield. Here, Don was almost 50, while Blue Bunyan was 56 years old.

Don Ross was invited to be Clerk of the Course at Albion Park race track, an honour he held for 38 years.

In 2009, he received the Brisbane Royal Show's highest award being named the 14th Ekka Legend- a fitting tribute to his almost half a century involvement, none deserved it more.



Don, with David Bolton, son of the late Bill Bolton, and John Osborne OAM, presenting him with the first Cobb & Co Meritorious Award in May 2024. They are standing in front of coach #100 which he drove the 3000 miles from Port Douglas to Melbourne in 1963.

Don was Patron of the Qld Branch of the Commonwealth Clydesdale Horse Society from 2007 to 2023, and was in 2024, awarded the Cobb & Co Museum's first Meritorious Award for services to the harness horse and coach industry and history. He had numerous citations and Life Memberships of harness racing clubs.

Some health issues intervened when Don was in his mid 80s, necessitating a hospital stay with a perforated bowel, kidney dialysis three times a week for 4-1/2 years, and a heart attack in 2023, but Don was looking forward to turning 90 in August 2024, as well as being involved in the Cobb & Co Centenary trek from Surat to Yuleba. Fortunately he achieved both!

On the morning of his 90th birthday, Judy could not find him. He'd saddled his old favourite redcoat horse 'Blue' early, and had gone down the road for a ride!



On the road with the coach between Surat and Frogmoor Changing station, with Donny as offside.



At Bainbilla changing station north of Surat, August 2024, aged 90.

Don Ross had been a tremendous and positive influence throughout his life, to SO many, for SO long. "Legend" doesn't even come close to describing him!

Ian Stewart-Koster

When Don Ross Drives the Coach

A poem written by Geoff Elliott

He sits with his foot on the wheel brake
With the reins loosely held in his hand
The collars are loose on the shoulders
And the leader bars rest in the sand
The hocks on slack traces are brushing
There's a stamp from the big bally bay
As heads toss and jangle the snaffles
All restless to be underway.

Then he gathers the ribbons with purpose
And calls up the centre lead's name
With a whistle to tighten the traces
And as one, the five rise to the game.
The thoroughbrace creaks with the movement
As swindle bars lift to the fray
Twenty toe clips dig deep in the gravel
And the Cobb and Co coach is away!

They swing through the gates to the roadway
Each horse willing and eager to run
But his voice holds their pace 'til they're steady
And they're trotting and pulling as one.
He feels every mouth with his fingers
And he watches how every horse moves
As the the hills at a canter are conquered
And the miles are flung back from the hooves.

Ears forward with manes and tails flowing
What a sight as they sweep round a bend
There's no whip just his voice or a whistle
When to slow up and when to extend
Through the great coaching days are now history
And the back country roads are now passed
What he knows is a treasure of lifetimes
So the romance of driving will last

There are many who'd covet his knowledge
They'd give gold for his touch on the reins
For his instinct to understand horses
And the magic that pumps in his veins.
His exploits have rewritten history
With a record beyond all reproach
The past comes alive for our pleasure
When Don Ross is driving the coach.