

THE BRAHMA CLUB OF AUSTRALIA

President

Andrew Rathbone
"Carcolla"
Bathurst NSW. 2794

Ph 02 6337 3840

Secretary

Carol Abuid
PO Box 100
Maldon Vic. 3463

Ph/Fax 03 5476 2758

Email:

brahma@telstra.easymail.com.au

November 2001

Issue 6



Founded 2/7/2000

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hi All Brahma members,

I hope this report finds members in good health and that your brooders are brimming with Brahma's. Our Secretary, Carol has been experiencing some ill health recently and I think all the membership will join me in wishing her a speedy recovery.

The Committee has had discussions with the Belgian club concerning an alternative venue to Castle Hill, as it has become less conducive to both clubs requirements. Carol in her report, will elaborate on this subject stating the alternative venue and also a change of date.

A disturbing issue has arisen from the 'For Sale' section of our 2001 show. The club & its members are not stock agents or collection agencies for the benefit of both members and non-members participating in selling fowls at our shows. Any club can be put in a compromising position regarding birds that are not sold by absent vendors with no defined instructions on their outcome. The club cannot endorse this practice in future, and it will be discouraged. Ultimately the care and welfare of Show and sale birds is foremost, but the club cannot be held responsible or liable for lost, damaged or abandoned fowls. Members will have to consider their position and the clubs integrity before they do someone a kind favour.

On a brighter note, Carol would love to hear from members with ideas and prize support for our 2002 show. Any input would be greatly appreciated.

My chook runs and Angora goat paddocks are filling fast at the moment with youngsters. For the first time in 22 years of breeding Angora's, the buck kids outnumber the doe kids born. A bonus however is that the interval between the first and last kid born was only 5 weeks. If only my hatching season could be so short. There are some promising chickens from my Standard Lights and Buffs, but the colour variation of the Standard Darks and Gold's. Seems to be an ongoing challenge for me. How are other members doing in their programs?

Kind regards,
Andrew

PRESIDENT OF VICE

(Vice President)

Hi All Brahma Members,

Well, Spring has sprung and by now we all should have our first Brahma chickens running around the brooder or under those big clucky hens or even those small Bantam hens. Mind you when you have eleven chooks go clucky in a few days, it really upsets the breeding plans. It takes a while before they start to lay again, and it always happens to the only hens I have, that are of really good type or my Dark or White hens. I have taken Andrews advice and put them in a wire cage for a couple of days, then put them in with a very active rooster. Generally it works well, but eleven in a couple of days was a bit much.

My first hatch was only fair, with about 20% hatched, but that has improved to 80% last week. I am hoping to improve on that again as the season progresses as I hope to hatch out between 200-300 chickens mainly from Dark and Partridge Brahma's, with a few Blacks that Andrew helped me along with. I have 2 White pullets and I am using a Large White Wyandotte to help increase my numbers, but they are a long way off yet.

As spring is here, there are always a million things to do. Weed control, cows calving, fences to fix water troughs to install and all the general farming duties. But over the past couple of months, I have been rearing a baby Llama, as it's mother died of old age a couple of days after the Llama was born. As with all babies, it's those 4 hourly feeds that get to you, but it only took about two weeks before there were no more nightly feeds. I had no trouble really as many of my friends and neighbours all had turns and a week at a time was just enough for the novelty not to wear off 14 weeks later. He is nearly weaned and on the 4th November he is off to Whittlesea Show. The Victorian Llama Association are having a field/fun day, so if you are in the area call in and have a chat about Brahma's and Llama's.

I hope your breeding season has been successful and before you know it you will be celebrating Christmas.

All the Best,
Bryan Jon.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Hello again, how time fly's.

Welcome to all our new members. Here I must send my apologies to those members who have had to wait for membership forms or information to be sent to them. If any member has not received a copy of the No 5 Newsletter, could you please contact me and I will arrange a copy to be posted asap.

Unfortunately I have been unwell since our show in July, and after many tests etc I ended up in hospital for an operation in early October. I'm now trying to get back on track and get things done.

I hope everyone is having a good breeding season and getting plenty of birds on the ground. Unfortunately we are haven't had a good season so far and are both hoping things will improve soon.

We have news regarding next years Show and AGM. It has now been confirmed that we will be moving to Wyong and the Central Coast Poultry Clubs rooms, and with this comes a change in date. The date for next years show will be one week earlier which is about 29th June 2002, this will give members the opportunity to show the following week at the Rare Breeds Show at Fairfield.

All members will be informed in later Newsletters with the exact dates and accommodation locations etc for those travelling, as there is no camping at the grounds. Whilst this may be a slight hiccup, the other side to look at is the fact that The Central Coast Poultry Club are going to setup, cleanup and cater Sundays breakfast and lunch at this stage with the possibility of some for Saturday. Our Thanks must go to Don Jones and David Saunders in particular, for their help in getting this venue for us.

We are about to become registered with the EPA as a club in our own right to insure that we are covered for insurance. Up until now we have been under the umbrella of The Belgian Bantam Club of Australia and our thanks must go to The Belgian Bantam Club of Australia for holding the Brahma feature show, where we were able to organise ourselves enough to form a club to start with.

I will be starting to organise things for next years show very shortly, so if anyone has any ideas for improving the show, ideas for raffle prizes, donations, sponsorships, were you happy with the place cards or are there better ways. Please put forward your ideas, it all helps.

Helpful Hints. Where are they. Did everyone have the same hints, is that all there is surely not. We need HELP to put this Newsletter together, doing the work is not the problem, but ideas and information is. Particularly, the older members must have some ideas that are not outdated, given it is ironic that a lot of old ideas are tried and tested and new ones come and go.

On the subject of members, there are seven outstanding memberships. These may have been forgotten, so if they have there is a statement enclosed with those who are outstanding.

Until next time Happy Breeding
Carol

TREASURER'S REPORT

Opening balance: \$521.29

Deposits:

Memberships	\$20.00
Memberships	\$70.00
Memberships	\$30.00
Memberships	\$10.00

Expenditure:

Midland Junction Poultry Society	\$15.00
Castlemaine Office Supplies	\$17.95
Australia Post	\$14.85
Australia Post	\$ 4.50

Balance \$598.99

We have now entered all the clubs financial details into Quickbooks, which makes life easier. In the program there is facility for Invoices, Statements etc. As has been the practice to date, unless members request one, and supply a SSAE receipts will not be issued.

Last issue of the Newsletter was to be the last for unfinancial members, but we have decided to send out Statements with this issue to those who are still unfinancial.

This will definitely be the last issue of the Newsletter to those who are still unfinancial.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to the following new members:

Henry Charles Ng	NSW
Anne Walshaw	NSW
Joshua Percival	NSW
Jessica Bunn	NSW
Michael Lavender	NSW
Greg McCamley	QLD
Dale & Skye Baker	QLD
Mark Collins	QLD
Janice Verran	SA
Stephen Cann	SA
Stephen Kilpatrick	VIC

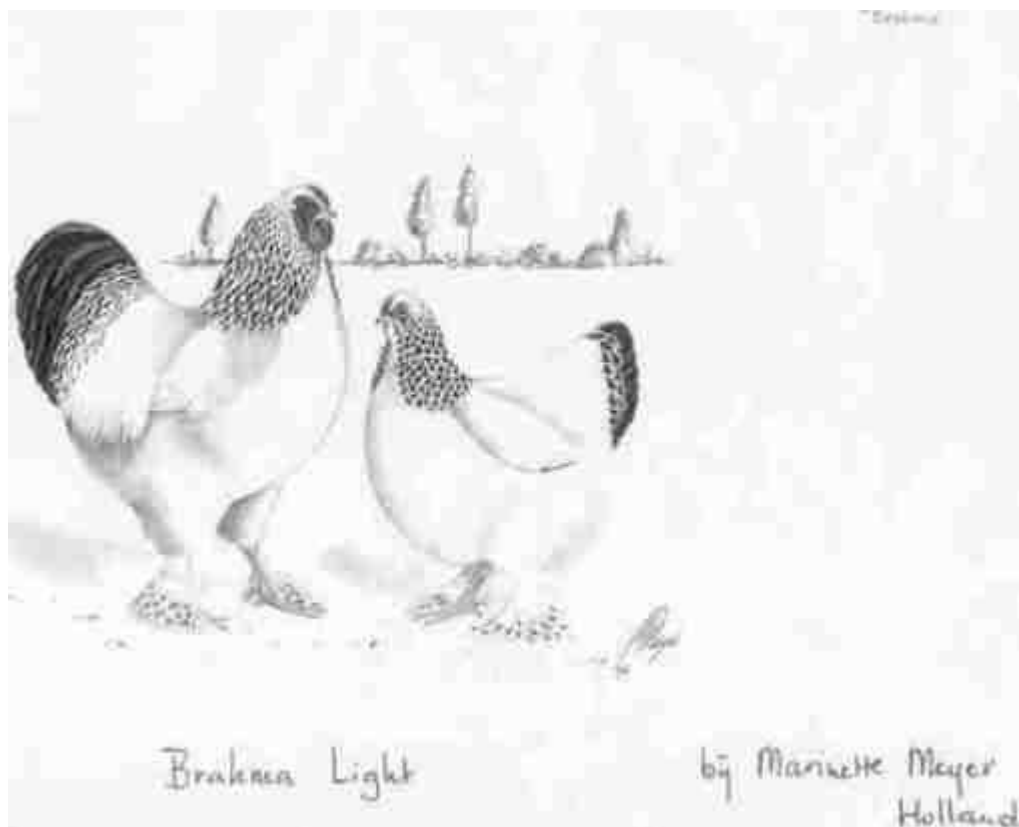
PATRON'S REPORT

Thank You. That's about all I can say at being voted as Patron. It was certainly unexpected to say the least.

After the last newsletter, there has been no response bar one on the issue of colours. It needs to be remembered that ultimately any decisions will impact on us all both now, and for members in the future. There are members who feel that there should only be Light and Dark, on the other hand there are members who feel that we should be able to have the colours we like. Who's right and who's wrong? Neither. It's up to the individual, if we have the knowledge to breed other colours, so be it, but it doesn't mean it's wrong. Our biggest problem as far as these birds go is **type** and the eradication of vulture hocks. No matter what colour the bird is, we need to ensure that there are no vulture hocks. Yes it will take time. So please try to be patient and tolerant.

On the subject of Standards the following is a good example of why we need to get our own produced and used for judging.

The Belgian Club produced their Handbook. They have since produced a judge's information kit that is sent to judges at member's request. In this information kit a copy was sent to the current president of the VPFA in Victoria. As he was reading through it, he double-checked the eye colour as listed in the Australian Standards. It didn't correspond, he then went on to check the British Standards (On which the Belgian Standards are based.) and it was found that there is an error in The Australian Poultry Standards. The APS are not readily changeable and it will be a while before they are reprinted. Having said that, there is only limited time before the drafts would be required for another print run. Let's get this together and properly, so that we can get it into the next printing of the Standards.



BRAHMA BREED DESCRIPTION

By Hans L Schippers

History

The Brahma is a very old, Asiatic large breed that originated near the mouth of the river Brahmaputra in Lakhimpur, Eastern Bengal in India. It was exported to the USA and Europe in the first half of the nineteenth century under various names, such as Shanghais, Chittagongs and Bramaputras. The Shanghai and the Brahmaputra are the actual forerunners of the Brahma, as we know it today. There is much confusion about the Chittagongs as they are actually Malay type poultry. Brahmas were very large upright fowls that were unknown in those days in other parts of the world. There are two versions of the history of the Brahma. The first is that the Brahma-type poultry were imported into the USA around 1845 where they were developed into the present day Brahma along the east coast in state such as New York, New England, Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. The other version states that the Brahmas were imported in their original shape. Whichever is true, a fact is that the well known breeder, Virgil Cornish at the first American poultry show in Boston, Massachusetts in 1850, already showed Light Brahmas. Another breeder by the name of John C Bennett had already shown a few at a local show in Fitchburg to the west of Boston at an earlier date. Around this time, Brahmas were also located in England from where they were dispersed around Europe> Initially they were kept as a rarity as people had never seen such big birds> The egg production was good for that time. The yellow-brown eggs weigh about 65 grams. Brahmas were extensively used for the creation of new breeds, especially for dual-purpose breeds that produce many eggs as well as good meat. Brahmas make good broodies and mother hens.

Description

The Brahma is an aristocratic, upright, large breed that is high as well as deep in body shape. The description below is for the Light or Columbian variety. The plumage is very profuse making the bird look bigger than it actually is. The bright red, so-called triple or peacomb is small and close fitting. The head is fairly small, short and broad in comparison with the body and has pronounced eyebrows. The eyes lie deep and are orange-red to red-brown in colour. The short powerful beak is curved and yellow with a horn-coloured overlay. The red wattles are small and between them is a small dewlap. The earlobes are also red. The medium long neck has abundant hackle feathers. The body is broad and deep with broad shoulders. The small wings are carried high and horizontally and are well tucked under the saddle feathers. The back is short, very broad, slightly flat or hollow between the shoulders and rises towards the tail. The tail is of medium length and carried fairly upright. The short sickle feathers are carried a little spread. The main tail feathers are placed, seen from behind in a sort of upside down V-shape. The breast is very broad and carried slightly forward. The yellow legs are placed well apart, the thighs are richly feathered and the hocks amply covered with soft, rounded feathers. The toes are also yellow, whilst the middle and outside toes are well feathered.

Characteristics

Brahmas are placid and aristocratic birds that can become very tame. Their adaptability is enormous. They do well either free range or housed in pens. More than 150 eggs a year are normally produced. Their production is hampered by their frequent broodiness. For the size of the bird, they lay relatively small eggs, which weigh about 60-65 grams. The egg colour varies from white to light brown according to the colour variety. They are unable to fly because of their weight and small wings and the perches should be placed low.

Weight

A cock weighs between 4500 to 5000 grams and a hen around 4000 grams.

Varieties

Brahmas are best known in the following colours: Light (Columbian), Dark (a sort of Silver pencilled), and Buff (Columbian) but other, rarer varieties exist.

BRAHMA COLOURS

“Australian Exhibition poultry can stand in it’s own image, free from the inhibitions and restrictions of the past where our destiny was determined by the actions of others over whose decisions we had no control or influence”. Thus wrote Tom Bowden, President of the Australian Poultry Exhibition Council in the foreward to the Australian poultry Standards, published by the Victorian Poultry Fanciers Association in 1998. It was in this spirit that I suggested at the AGM of the Brahma Club of Australia on July 1st 2001, that the members consider the rationalisation of the names of the colours of the Brahma. I am grateful to all those who gave their opinions, both on the day and in Issue 5 of our Newsletter.

My views are as follows:-

I am against

- Any change to the type of the Brahma
- Any change to the description of the existing colours, or from the Wyandotte description in any new colours, which have a Wyandotte equivalent.
- Different names for the male and female of the same variety. This last has not, to my knowledge, been found necessary in any soft feathered breed. Note that the description ‘In both sexes and all varieties’ of Brahma and Wyandotte calls for the beaks to be yellow or yellow and black and the eyes orange-red or reddish bay, the legs and feet orange-yellow or yellow. This would include the Black Brahma, which is already with us on the showbench.

I am in favour of

- The name of the White being left unchanged.
- The name of the Light being changed to Columbian as the standard calls for a light bluish slate undercolour, not pure white as in the light Sussex.
- The name of the Dark being changed to silver pencilled, which would bring it into line with the Wyandotte and would be an accurate genetic description. (I have much sympathy for the plight of the long-time breeders with a change to the names of these two colours; the most commonly bred colours. If for this reason and because the existing names are used in most overseas countries, the club members decide to retain them, I will of course, accept their decision.)
- The name of the Gold being changed as: (a) in the full description of the male and female plumage, the word gold as golden appears only in the head and hackle colour of the female. (b) The equivalent Wyandotte colour is Partridge. (c) Confusion with the Buff could occur as that variety calls for the body colour to be ‘rich golden buff’. (d) Overseas countries, except the UK call this colour Partridge. My suggestion at the AGM that it be called Golden pencilled was because this was the original name of the Partridge Wyandotte according to the Editor in Chief of The Australian poultry Standards, James Bishop, writing in an earlier publication – the Silver Jubilee Book of the Wyandotte Club of Victoria-***“Partridge Wyandottes ... were first called Golden pencilled Wyandottes and it is a pity in one sense, the name was changed as this describes the colour pattern of the female very fittingly.”***
- The name of the Buff be changed to Buff Columbian as it is a Columbian pattern, ie. Black fore and aft and on the wings and slate undercolour. This is the name used overseas, and it is the name of the Wyandotte equivalent. Also this would make way for the clear Buff Brahma now being produced in good type by several breeders.
- The retention of the Any Other Colour category of our show schedule so that the new colours may be seen by all and the colours name be decided on by the club when the colour can be reliably reproduced, in good Brahma type. (The insistence of the VPFA that the term Any Other recognised Colour be

used means that a colour may not be shown until it is recognised and will not be recognised until it has been shown, 'for a number of years.')

I believe that the acceptance and naming of colours should be a function of the National specialist breed club, in each breed, and that the general poultry associations, both state and federal be advised of any decisions.

Lance Hicks

RANDOM SHAFTS.

The judge's remarks in the last newsletter, re the leg colour in blacks seemed a bit strange to me. He made mention that the blacks had a problem with leg colour in that they were not yellow. I was a little taken aback!! I'm not sure how other peoples blacks were arrived at but mine were a cross between White and Dark, this cross was repeated a number of times and gives black legs. Why would we want yellow legs?. Just because it can be achieved in Wyandottes does not seem to be a sound reason for trying to change the natural black leg colour. Black Cochins have black or slate legs. I would prefer to see black/slate legs (or yellow if preferred).

The name Buff is not the correct name for a buff coloured Columbian pattern. I was the first to breed Buff Columbian in the UK in 1974 and got them admitted to the standard through the breed club. They are Buff Columbian, Buffs would be buff without black. In the UK these were the result of a cross between a German White male and a Light female.

There is a problem with Gold's. The Gold first produced in the UK and admitted to the UK. Standard were bred by the late, Mr A.J. Spencer a well-known Wyandotte breeder, he told me they were the result of a cross between Gold laced Wyandotte and Dark Brahma. The colour is a rich deep gold as in gold laced Wyandottes NOT the light lemon colour of Partridge Wyandottes. This is the colour of the Partridge Brahma in the USA. If we are going for the yellow colour call them partridge, if we are going for the gold colour call them gold's. There is room for both I think.

Interestingly Dark bantam chicks in the UK are not striped like they are here, but look like "mutton birds", being very very slow feathering. The Gold's and Buff Columbian are normally quick feathering.

Blue. I bred blues in the late 80's, they were the result of a cross between a White Brahma female and a Blue, Pekin * Wyandotte. I would like to see them have lizard/slate legs and be a uniform blue all over. Currently I have barred blues and blacks, the result of a cross between a Golden Crele Australian game and a blue Brahma, these then being sibled. I seem to have some brown reds too. I did this cross to get better heads as they had got a bit "sneaky" and to tighten and uplift them.

The Lights * Light Brahma/Golden Crele Oz game look very good, still a nice length of leg but with feathers right down the middle toe.

Are your birds quick feathering? This should be aimed for and with a little effort is easy to achieve, so to is brown eggs in bantams.

Alex King 03 93272430

ESTABLISHING THE AUSTRALIAN BRAHMA STANDARD

I was first introduced to the majestic Brahma thirty-three years ago as a teenager in Canada. The owner was an elderly man who had maintained the same bloodlines of Dark Brahma for a little over forty years, resulting in tremendous quality but poor reproduction. Over the next four years I assisted in his careful introduction of a new blood line. The lessons I learned about responsibility and attention to detail come back to me in all aspects of life.

His lessons were as follows; **if you are spending time it should be productive, if you are dedicating that time to an activity, it should be to further the ultimate goal of the activity (for everyone's benefit), and in order to achieve these goals, you must accept the authority of a standard and always work to achieve it.**

So, where does that fit in the context of the Australian Brahma Club? Well it occurs to me that we have an exceptional opportunity that most people will get once in a lifetime. We have the opportunity and responsibility to develop a recognised Australian Brahma Standard. I believe that we have many positive things in our favour.

I had the pleasure of visiting the Annual show in Sydney in July where there were a number of birds on display that I would proudly show in North America. This is first a credit to the good folks who have meticulously recreated the Breed to an exceptional type, and conversely due to the effects of the North Americans not dedicating themselves to the good of the fancy and therefore failing to adhere to the Standards in their breeding programs. The result – gangly birds that vaguely resemble Brahmas!

Keep in mind that this is in spite of having only three recognised colours in the American Standard! We can and will do better, we must if our Australian Standard is to have any integrity. Without integrity, no one will respect the authority of the Australian Standard. So, I would suggest that first of all, we recognise the responsibility we carry in establishing our own standards. We need to ensure that we take the standards that have been accepted for the past 100+ years and **improve** them, not dilute them. If we can achieve this, we will have a Standard that will enjoy international recognition. To do otherwise will be viewed as taking the easy way and respect for our standards will always be elusive, both at home and overseas.

Issues regarding Standard Colour and Type

The first step in establishing a standard is to agree and adopt the Standard type for the breed, in our case this should be easy as these already exist. Next is the hard bit, we must agree to **apply** the standard. I know I'm harsh, but if we agree on a standard, it must be adhered to, otherwise why bother?

This means that such things as the dreaded "Vulture Hock" MUST be bred out of the birds and to achieve this we must not reward or breed from birds displaying this fault. At the very least, we should have an interim rule that no bird displaying this or any other common defect should be allowed to place 1st in competition.

As much as possible I believe that we need to adhere to the accepted standards and this applies to cutting points for all recognised faults.

Now comes the exciting part. If we can achieve a recognised standard for type, I believe we will be respected enough by other clubs to allow us to develop the unique Australian colour patterns of our choice. It would be hard to argue that a bird of impeccable Brahma Type would not

qualify if it also conformed to an established Colour Standard. These Colour Standards need to be accepted through an agreed process of “proving” that a colour variety will breed true. This will allow us to legitimately recognise the fantastic array of colours and patterns that are already evident through the dedication of the Australian Brahma Club members.

The only conundrum I can foresee is the difficulty with describing the accepted Buff Brahma versus the “Columbian Buff” that already exists. That should be resolved easily by simply describing the colour/pattern. We can then get on with the enjoyment of creating a wide variety of colours in a standard type that we can be proud of and may even export. By using an agreed acceptance procedure we can be as innovative as we want to the delight of anyone who appreciates the value of sturdy birds that conform to a recognised breed.

In summary, let’s not lose precious time arguing about what colour is or is not acceptable – there’s room for them all within an accepted Standard. Let’s get the Standard right and the challenge of breeding true colours will be enjoyed by any fancier with imagination. That’s how I believe we can best serve the Brahma, in return for the enjoyment they provide us.



Figure 1 Light Brahma Ckl, Annual Show
Photo: B Pattinson



Figure 2 Light Brahma Plt, Annual Show
Photo: B Pattinson



Figure 3 Dark Brahma Ckl, Annual Show
Photo: B Pattinson



Figure 3 Head Study Std Light Cockerel Photo: A Rathbone



Figure 2 Buff Cockerel Std. Photo: A Rathbone



Figure 1 Best Std Gold, Friday after Annual Show. Photo: A Rathbone



Figure 6 Std Light Cockerel Photo: A Rathbone



Figure 5 Std. Light Ckl & Std Light Plt. Photo: A Rathbone



Figure 4 Std. Black Pullet Photo: A Rathbone