

New Zealand Shetland Pony Breeders' Society (Inc.)

NEWSLETTER
August 2022



New Zealand Shetland Pony Breeders' Society (Inc.)

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Mid/Lower South Island	Beth Prescott-Ballagh	South Canterbury/ North Otago	027 512 4967 or 03 689 1340
Canterbury / Upper South Island	Kirsty Whiting	Canterbury	zeberdee_equine@outlook.co.nz

- New registrations, transfers and stud book queries can be sent directly to the Registrar
- Newsletter articles, photos, items of interest, classifieds, queries or corrections can be sent to the Newsletter Editor
- Show results can be sent directly to the Show Results Collector
- Financials can be sent directly to the Treasurer
- Website and Facebook items can be sent directly to the appointed Co Ordinator

Please note: while every care is taken during the compilation of the NZSPSB newsletter, the New Zealand Shetland Pony Breeders Society Inc. does not accept any responsibility for any errors or omissions.

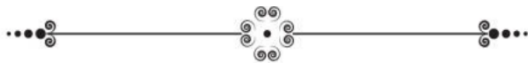
From the President

Presidents Report August 2022

The weather has definitely been very wintery across the country. Rain ,snow, some unexpected warm days before more rain. Of course, with the rain comes the mud but our wee Shetlands are very well equipped for everything that winter can dish out.

Don't forget to email me if you have any ideas or thoughts about a mission statement for our breed society. I would love to hear from you.

I am attaching some photos to go with this report. The first one is of four very happy riders on Lesley Lewis's lovely ridden Shetland ponies. What is very special about this photo is that the two younger riders are my grandnieces and the older riders are Lesley's grandniece and a friend.



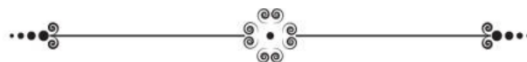
Those of you who have visited our stud when we have had considerable rain know that we get very muddy. Here is a photo of Lael Celeste with my two granddaughters with Narrandera Xzar (stallion) at a respectful distance. Celeste is the boss!

There is only four and a half weeks until spring. I am confident that it will be a more normal show season this year so please enter and support your local A and P shows this spring. All the best for those of you expecting early foals.

Stay well and stay warm.

Bernadette Woffenden, Lael Shetland Pony Stud
NZSPBS President

“A dog may be man’s best friend ... but the horse wrote history”.
- Author Unknown



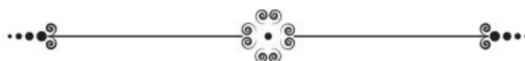
From the Newsletter Editor

Are you as pleased as I am to see the days getting longer?! I think everyone is looking forward to the show season starting (and not being interrupted by Covid!). This month's newsletter looks at Shetlands at work – we start off with the life of Pit Ponies of the past and then move on to the current role of Patrick...the ceremonial Mayor of Cockington. We also have an excerpt from the Shetland section of *Judging Horses and Ponies* book which I personally found fascinating. Anyway, with the days lengthening you have even more daylight to read the August newsletter by...Enjoy!

If anyone has any articles or items of interest and/or photos of your beautiful ponies, that you are happy to share, please send them to me at christinawil@gmail.com for our next newsletter.

The next newsletter publication is planned for mid-October 2022 so items for the next newsletter need to be sent through to me by the 1st October 2022 or even earlier if possible.

Wrap up and keep warm and dry
Christina Lewis – Newsletter Editor



PLEASE DIRECT ALL WEBSITE QUERIES OR SUBMISSIONS TO:

Email: duncree@xtra.co.nz • Tel: 03 317 8018

(emailed photographs to be high resolution & saved as a jpeg attachment)
(posted photographs to be high quality & include self-addressed envelope for return)

From the Registrar

New Registrations

Registration Number	Sex	Pony
1184NZ	Colt	Kristamoor Lodge Regal Promise (Imp Aust)
1185NZ	Gelding	Outlaw Liquorice Allsorts
1186NZ	Mare	Nevaeh Zayliyah
1188NZ FR	Colt	Burravoe Duke
1189NZ	Mare	Burravoe Opal
1190NZ	Mare	Burravoe Adelyne
1191NZ FR	Colt	Burravoe Lordy

FR = Foal Recording for Colts until they are fully registered as a Stallion or a Gelding

Stallions/Colts Gelded - none

Foal Pre-Naming - none

Transfers –

Reg. Number	Pony	Vendor	Transferred To
1182NZ	Cotswold Anthem	D&J Humphries, Motukarara	K Sanders, Kumeu
1100NZ	Nevaeh Zaidee	F&S McLachlan, Cust	J & P Hunt, Darfield
1151NZ	Tullamore Twin Turbo	D & R Holst, Tuakau	A & N Nand, Bombay, Auckland
1143NZ	Tullamore Dark Merlin	D & R Holst, Tuakau	T Baxter, Paeroa

Name Changes -

Reg. Number	Previous Name	New Name
1118NZFR	Toonmalls Celtic Flame	Toonmalls Nordic Flame
1123NZFR	Abberley Showoff	Abberley Show Case
1147NZ	Tullamore Sue's Spark	Tullamore Sue's Sparx

Stud Books Online

The long-awaited Volume 4 of the NZSPBS Stud Book is up on the website along with downloadable copies of Volumes 1, 2 & 3. Please note that Volume 1 is not the same as the printed version and the data that is in the copy on the website was taken from the records as July 2022. We hope to have Volume 5 available early 2023.

Rather than print paper copies, we've made decision to make the stud book available to everyone.

If you would like a copy printed, please get in touch with Catherine Crosado, our Registrar.

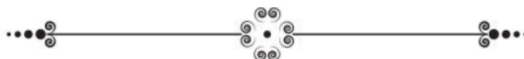


Blast from the Past

Jean Reid driving Mainland Cracker Jack 255NZ and Catherine Crosado driving Cotswold Bexley Heath 254NZ at the Temuka Geraldine A&P Show in 2005.

Newsletter Deadlines

- October 2022 Issue: 1st October 2022
- December 2022 Issue: 1st December 2022



"When your horse follows you without being asked, when he rubs his head on yours, and when you look at him and feel a tingle down your spine ... you know you are loved".

- John Lyons

Barney 'Narrandera Mite Not' getting rid of his winter woollies



Area Representative Reports:

WAIKATO/UPPER NORTH ISLAND AREA REPORT

Kathy Drake

Having come out of summer with one of the worst droughts in the 33 years we have been here in Pukekohe, we have more than made up for it by experiencing the worst July rainfall since we started keeping records all those years ago. The first four months of the year gave us a total of 154mm of rain, then 125mm in May, 214.5mm in June and a whopping 300.5mm in July. The drought well and truly is over. Fortunately, we are nowhere near capacity of stock numbers as we have in past years, so the paddocks still look reasonable, even though there is standing water in most of them. Rain seems to be the main topic New Zealand wide this winter, with areas that don't normally have high rainfall figures, having to cope with adverse events. My brother in New Plymouth is even complaining about wet sodden paddocks—and Taranaki has always had higher than normal rainfall, with the paddocks always lush and green and free draining soils well used to soaking up any excess. But even he is complaining of leaving muddy boot prints in the paddocks—which is normal for Auckland winters! And it is apparent that South Island friends are also having to cope with abnormally wet, sodden paddocks.

The winter woollies shows should be coming around soon, and then we are not far from the start of the new show season. With upcoming shows in mind, please everyone, think carefully why you show your ponies, and why others are also prepared to put in the enormous amount of work required to train, turnout and learn the ins and outs of show ring etiquette, to also bring their ponies out to a show. Surely it is because we love our wee ponies and want to showcase them as much as possible. And all the while, make friends who have the same interests as us, and have a lot of fun along the way. So, while we all love our ponies and think ours are the best it's important to remember that it is the judge who decides on the day and not let any disappointment get in the way of good sportsmanship. Anybody who wins deserves to be wholeheartedly congratulated and allowed to feel proud of their achievements.

Have fun everyone, and let's hope the 2022 show season goes ahead without the cancellations we have seen in the past couple of years.

MID/LOWER SOUTH ISLAND AREA REPORT

Beth Prescott-Ballagh

Sitting by our fireplace enjoying the embers glowing and flicking gives a person a glow of peacefulness. It seems only a couple of months ago we still had nice weather not like the rain and high winds we have now. The foals are weaned and the hunger for the new show season to start is drawing closer by the day.

Plans to make what and who we will take to the shows this season. Hopefully we will get a full show season this year as long as we stay at least in the orange setting for Covid.

We will be starting to plan what mares we are going to breed with to what stallions for colour, confirmation and height - makes the long cold nights and days go much quicker. Time is coming around fast for the next crop of foals to appear giving us all so much pleasure. A day doesn't go by without looking out across the paddocks to see Shetland ponies grazing and enjoying life. The mares are starting to show signs of expanding barrels holding little bundles of joy - can't wait.

SHOW ALERT Palmerston are holding a show on the 17th of September and have said they will have Shetland classes if we get at least 4 breeders to the show (we have to date 3 breeders going but need more if we can). So, let's make an effort to support their show and get Shetland Classes back on.

Hope everyone has a wonderful foaling season and see you all at the shows.

Harry and Beth Prescott-Ballagh

CANTERBURY AREA REPORT

Kirsty Whiting

Hey All,

Not a huge amount to report this time round, other than I'm sure I'm not the only one who's over the mud and the rain. Canterbury has been slammed over the last few weeks with cold nights, wet days and HUGE WINDS. I'm certain in saying this I think we are all ready for some warmer drier months. I haven't even bothered to look at the show season with hairy muddy ponies gracing the property, however I did drag out all of Baileys covers in some attempt of preparation. Jute rugs are my little tip on helping pull the last of the winter coats that are a little harder to shift – these covers are a natural material and breathable so perfect for use on warmer days being light in colour they also don't attract the heat like darker ones can. Not only do we swear by jute we also use full mesh rugs to help give some protection from flies during the warmer months also. Before shows we use a satin lined 310gsm white cotton summer rug – available from us if anyone's after these Zeberdee Equine is your one stop shop for ALL Shetland covers and halters – Little chance at a business plug.

Anyway, that's enough cover tips for now, a few of you would know I have been traveling the country with my business. I have been blessed over the last few months to have been in the North Island for 10 weeks doing pop up shops and market days. This usually isn't the normal for us, however due to covid cancelling all our major sales events we had to do something to generate some of the turnover we lost. It's been an interesting few months driving from North Canterbury all the way to the far north seeing the beautiful country we are so blessed to call home. However, the last trip saw me catching a flight back from Whangarei to Christchurch last minute when my toddler tested positive for covid, he's a severe asthmatic so this was a scary time for my family. I am happy to report after a LONG 9 days he is heading back to Preschool today as I type this report - side note, I'm secretly binge-watching MOM on Netflix and enjoying the peace and quiet LOL.

For those looking forward to the show season and considering doing the road trip thing to out of town shows please take care on the roads. The condition of our roads at present is incredibly rough and I can only suggest do not rush, leave a day earlier if you can and take your time. Be prepared – make sure your vehicle and floats spare tyre is in safe usable condition, that not only do you have a jack for your vehicle I highly suggest a separate trolley jack for your float along with a wheel brace. The roads around the country at the moment are full of huge potholes, so be prepared to have to change a tyre. If you are not sure or don't know how to change a tyre NOW'S a good time to learn. Here are a few items I ensure I have on board my float for my trips away, this isn't including all my show kits

Check list – FLOAT

- Check all lights and tyres before you leave
- Spare D- shackle and R- clips
- Hi Vis Jacket
- Spare tyre
- Trolley Jack
- Wheel brace
- Pop up road cone
- Full Water tank – Horse Consumption
- 20L Drinking water – Human consumption
- 2 bales of hay per 4 days of traveling
- 1 – 2 bales of bedding either straw or shavings if stabling
- Water bucket
- Electrolyte pastes
- Granulated molasses (perfect to encourage drinking on hot travel days)
- Hay bags/nets
- Hard feeds one per day plus a couple spare
- Spare halter x 2
- Spare leads x 2
- Waterproof light weight cover
- Cotton sun sheet
- Horse first aid kit
- Human First aid kit



Duncree Hickory Hakim is glad his mum is always well prepared

Pocket knife
Scissors
Cable ties – honestly you will be surprised how handy these can be
Torch – with spare power bank or batteries
Shovel and Manure bucket
Wet wipes
Toilet paper – honestly you will thank me when your caught short

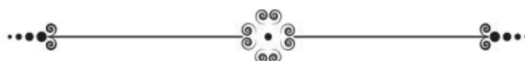
These things may vary due to the length of travel I'm doing, I do not travel my ponies with hay bags, I stop every 3 hours for a water and hay break. During summer I try and stop near the beach or the river for a refreshing dip for the ponies also.

Anyway team, that's enough rambling from me. Enjoy the remainder of Winter and here's to Spring and Summer!

I'll leave you with a cute photo of Huddson and his pony Lucky (Birchlands Lucky little miss)



(Note from the Editor –Look at the joy on that Face!)



Duncree Sir Shiloh with Duncree Harmony in the background. Enjoying the spring blossoms.



PIT PONIES

By Lorraine Martini

When Catherine and I were walking around my ponies back in January discussing what I could write for the Newsletter, apart from the article on the ANZAC horses, I said I could do an article on Pit Ponies. So, I started doing my research, I thought that being so recent, that the NZ History sites would be helpful. Well, how wrong could I be. It seems the use of horses and ponies in the NZ coal mines has, for the most part, been buried. Very few mines on the internet admit that they used Pit Ponies, and those that do gloss over it with a few sentences.

The one article I found was a short paragraph about "Snow" & "Nell". According to an undated newspaper article in the Waitaki District Archive collection, they both worked at the Ngapara coal mine. A Chloe Searle wrote an article in 2016 stating that the Ngapara coalmine, which opened in 1878, was the oldest continuously worked coalmine in New Zealand. It was also one of the last mines to use a Pit Pony, Snow and Nell.

"Snow" was a ½ draught mare about 15 ½ hands. At the time the article was written Snow was 20 years and had been working at the mine for 10 years. She would haul 2 half ton wagons at a time. Over a 10 year working life a horse would haul between 20,000 to 30,000 tons of coal. The other horse mentioned was "Nell". Nell was over 30 when she died and also worked at the Ngapara coal mine.

I did however find two photographs of ponies in New Zealand, neither photo can say for certain where they were taken. This first photo is of Danny Lawrie leading pit pony "Speedy", hauling a rake of empty trucks in 1948, the skips used underground were much smaller than standard railway trucks, holding 0.6 tons each, but it does not mention the mine these two worked at.



The second photograph I found was just titled "Pit pony underground possibly Millerton mine West Coast– Bobby". Not exactly the best research I have done and neither of them look much like Shetlands.



Now, the English Pit Pony on the other hand was much easier to research.

The first known recorded use of ponies underground in Great Britain was in the Durham coalfield in 1750, horses and ponies had been used for a variety of tasks in coal mines for centuries. In general, however, they were not used underground. By the mid-19th century, the mines had developed greatly, with long galleries extending horizontally from deep vertical shafts.

Then I really started my research, I should have realized after reading the transcript from a Mr Peter Freeman, member for Newport, in the House of Commons in October 1948 on the conditions of the Pit Ponies that this was going to be another harrowing article to write. Mr Freeman states that "these little animals are suffering from heat, dust, dirt, rough conditions, dancing lights, and noise and the objectionable intolerable conditions at the best lead to intolerable suffering." He gives examples of 40% of the ponies working more than one shift. He goes on to say "they can be worked seven days a week, 365 days a year or 366 in a leap year, without any rest or holiday or respite of any kind. There is no provision for any limit in these conditions in the arrangements at present provided for the ponies. They can be worked for any length of time from the day they go down the mines at the age of 4 until either they fall down dead or are incapable of any further labour."

Then my research led me to why the ponies were put into the mines in such huge numbers and that the most significant export from the Shetland Islands came as a result of an Act of Parliament passed in 1842. According to historians a tragic accident in 1838 led to large-scale replacement of child workers with pit ponies. A flood struck at the Huskar Colliery mine, in Silkstone Barnsley on 4th July 1838, drowning 26 children who were trapped in the depths of the mine. A violent thunderstorm and torrential rain put out the boiler used to power the pits operations. About 40 boys and girls were trapped at the bottom of the mine for 9 hours. They tried to make their way out via a ventilation shaft, but a stream burst its banks and flooded the shaft drowning all but 14 children.

This National tragedy led to Queen Victoria demanding an immediate inquiry, and the ensuing public outcry led by Politician and reformer Anthony Ashley Cooper, later Lord Shaftesbury, a Royal commission was instigated to investigate the matter, and report back to Parliament. The United Kingdom passed the Mines and Collieries Act in 1842. This act prohibited the employment of children under the age of ten, (later amended to 13) and women from working underground, leading to the widespread use of horses and ponies in mines, though the Act did not end child labour in British mines entirely. Prior to that, women and children had been employed in transporting the coal from the coal face, initially in baskets on their backs, then on sledges, and finally in wheeled tubs, which they pulled or pushed along the narrow, low roofed galleries – often on their hands and knees. The passing of this Act was to have a lasting effect on the Shetland breed.

The British Coal Mines Regulation Act 1887 presented the first National Legislation to protect horses working underground. Due to pressure from the National Equine Defense League (formally the Pit Ponies Protection Society) founded in 1908 by animal and human rights advocate Francis Albert Cox (24 June 1862-25 May 1920) and the Scottish Society to Promote Kindness to Pit Ponies: in 1911, a Royal commission report was published, detailing conditions, which resulted in proactive legislation.



In 1911, Sir Harry Lauder became an outspoken advocate '**pleading the cause of the Poor Pit Ponies**' to Sir Winston Churchill, when introduced to him at the House of Commons, reporting to the Tamworth Herald that he '*could talk for hours about my wee four-footed friends of mine*'. '*But I think I convinced him to improve the lot and working conditions of the patient, equine slaves who assist so materially in carrying on the great mining industry of this country*'. As a famous Music Hall entertainer of the time and a miner for 10 years he would give interviews to the papers about the plight of the ponies.

At the peak of this practice in 1913, there were 70,000 ponies and horses underground in the mines of Britain.

Larger horses, such as varieties of Cleveland Bay, could be used on higher underground roadways, but on many duties small ponies, no more than 12 hands (48 inches) high, were needed. Shetlands were bred commonly used because of their small size, but Welsh, Russian, Devonshire (Dartmore) and Cornish ponies also saw extensive use in England. Geldings and stallions only were used. Donkeys were also used in the late 19th century and in the US, large numbers of mules were used.

Left a horse bound and ready to be lowered into the mine (note the brand on the horse's back)

A typical mining pony was low set, heavy bodied, and heavy limbed with plenty of bone and substance, low-headed and sure footed. Under the British Coal Mines Act of 1911, ponies had to be four years old and work ready (shod and vet checked) before going underground. They could work until their twenties. Although one article I read said the average working life of a mining pony was only three and a half years compared to 20 plus years if living on the surface.

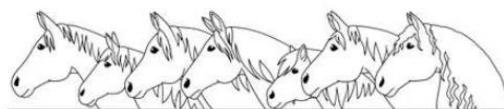
In shaft mines ponies were normally stabled underground, with the stable built at the pit's bottom and wide enough to accommodate up to 50 horses and fed on a diet with a high proportion of chopped hay and maize, coming to the surface only during the colliery's annual 2 week holiday, and when brought to the surface the shock of the open air often sent them into a galloping, whinnying frenzy. In one article it was stated that at the end of the two weeks holiday it was very difficult to catch the ponies to take them back to work. (I wonder why!) The National Coal Board say that typically, the horses and ponies would work an eight-hour shift each day, during which they might haul 30 tons of coal in tubs on the underground mine railway, although I did find an article stating that sometimes the ponies would work their 8 hour shift, they would be taken back to the stable, given food and water and 4 hours rest then sent out for another 8 hour shift.



Underground stables (no straw bedding for these ponies to sleep on)

Of the conditions in the mines, the National Coal Board claimed that the horses and ponies in the mines care were very well looked after. The miners say otherwise.

One interview of a former worker (Mr. Singleton) recorded in 1978, he states, "Conditions were terrible. Ponies used to go into areas with insufficient height causing back injuries and skin ripped from their withers and rumps. For protection they wore a skull cap and bridle made of leather. A pony had to be four years old before it was allowed down the pit. They learned to walk with their heads down and could open (air doors) in the roadway. It knew which door needed pulling and which doors it could push. The ponies lived most of their lives underground. Moorgreen colliery had as many as 120 ponies. The ponies had to haul four trucks up a one-in-twenty gradient and as many as ten trucks on a level seam. Singleton fondly recalls feeding apples to the ponies and mentions a pony named Pansy, who at the age of 31 years was as crafty as a fox and had worked underground for nearly 28 years". In the steeper mines, sometimes the tubs would get away from the horses or ponies, and either run them over or run them into an air door and break their necks.





Granger Lad driving a pit pony at an Eastwood Pit circa 1910.

Over the years stories about the Pit Ponies have grown. One such story I read is that the miners did not care about the ponies. I found this piece disputing this theory. Although the images this puts in my mind is not ideal, I feel that it shows the sympathy and compassion of the miners for what the ponies suffered. I have also reworded it as it was decided it was too descriptive and graphic to include in its original wording.

Because there were no guns allowed underground, the miners had to find different ways of putting any injured or dying ponies out of their misery. In an interview of an anonymous miner, because it could take hours to get someone down into the mine to relieve the animals suffering they usually used a firing battery, they realized that it was probably not legal, but they couldn't leave the pony to suffer like that, it was heartbreaking, he went on to say *'that there would not be one man that was not in tears.'*

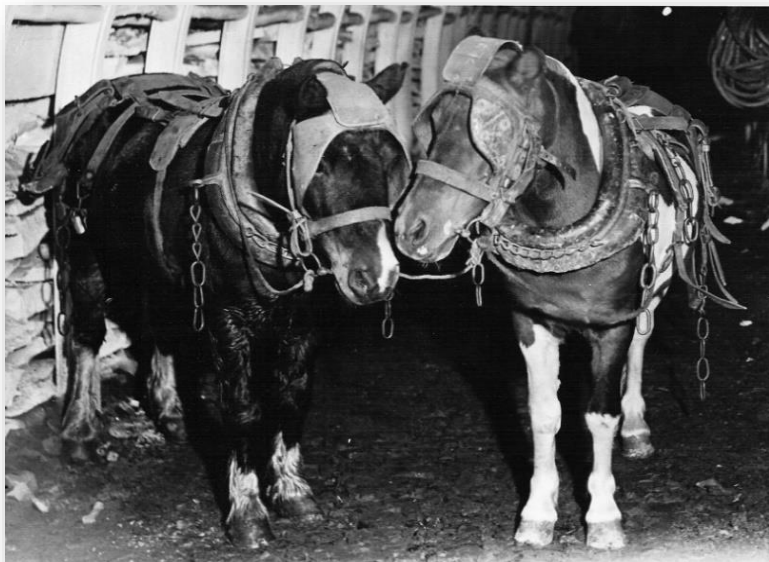
One of the reasons for the strong bond between man and pony was the belief that the ponies had a "6th sense" and could alert the men to danger and even save lives. In a book called "Pit Ponies" by John Bright Published by B.T. Batsford in 1986 he quotes anecdotes of equine courage and fore-sight, told to him by miners who worked with the ponies and horses. "Boulder would always guide me to safety"; "When I got up Fido, he rubbed his nose on me and snorted. Seconds later, there was a terrific crash"; "If it hadn't been for that pony, we would have died".

Brights also states, Make no mistake. It was a working relationship. The men may have brought the ponies apples, and given them bread from their lunches, but the miners did not always have the luxury of kindness. The miner was compelled by the system to force the animal to work extremely hard, yet aware that the pony and he suffered similar privations.

There was a steady decline in the number of ponies and horses used in the mines after the 70,000 recorded in 1913. When the National Coal Board was set up in 1947 there were 21,000 by 1984 their numbers had fallen to just 55, chiefly at the modern pit in Ellington, Northumberland. When Ellington closed for the first time in 1994 four pit ponies were brought out (no ponies were used during the RJB era) (my investigations say this was a large company wanting to start up mining again). The practice of stabling ponies deep in the mines finally came to an end at this time when a pony named "Flax" was brought to the surface at Ellington for the last time. Of the four ponies brought up, two went to the National Coal Mining Museum for England at Caphouse and two went to Newcastle Cat & Dog Shelter. The last surviving pony was Tony who died in 2011 aged 40 years at the Newcastle Cat & Dog Shelter.

Probably the last colliery horses to work underground in a British coal mine, "Robbie" & "Gremlin" were retired from Pont y Gasseg, near Pontypool, to an RSPCA rest home in May 1999.

One miner in the book "Pit Ponies", sums it up. "Thankfully, ponies were eventually removed from the pits. Of all the cruelties committed against the animal world, surely sending ponies underground to haul must be the worst, but I must admit that those marvelous little creatures gave me the happiest moments of the years I worked the pits".



This photo is from the book *Pit Ponies* by Mike Kirkup printed by Summerhill Books.

The caption reads.

Trusty Companions of the regions coal mines. The dark pony on the left has just completed a strenuous shift and his marra (Cumbrian word for friend or mate), has just started work. You can tell by the wrung-out-with sweat mane on the bedraggled pony, contrasting the pristine condition of the other.

On the larger photo, personally, I saw the sweat on the legs and chest first, the mane was too hard to see.

A bill was presented to the House of Commons in 1928, again in 1929, 1930, 1932 and 1934 signed by no less a signatory then the Previous Minister of Mines, Mr David Grenfell, but no action was taken to alter or improve the conditions of the ponies in the mines.

PIT PONIES COMMEMERATED

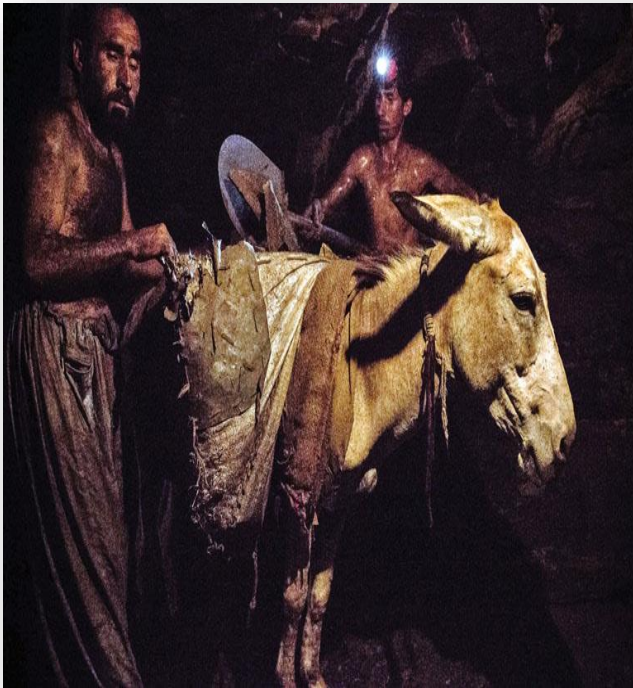
On a hillside in a country park on the site of the former Penallta Colliery, North of Caerphilly, Wales there is a 200 meter (660 foot) artwork celebrating the work of the Pit Pony.

It was created between 1996 and 1999 by artist Mike Petts using 60,000 tons of coal shale waste it was then covered with living grass.

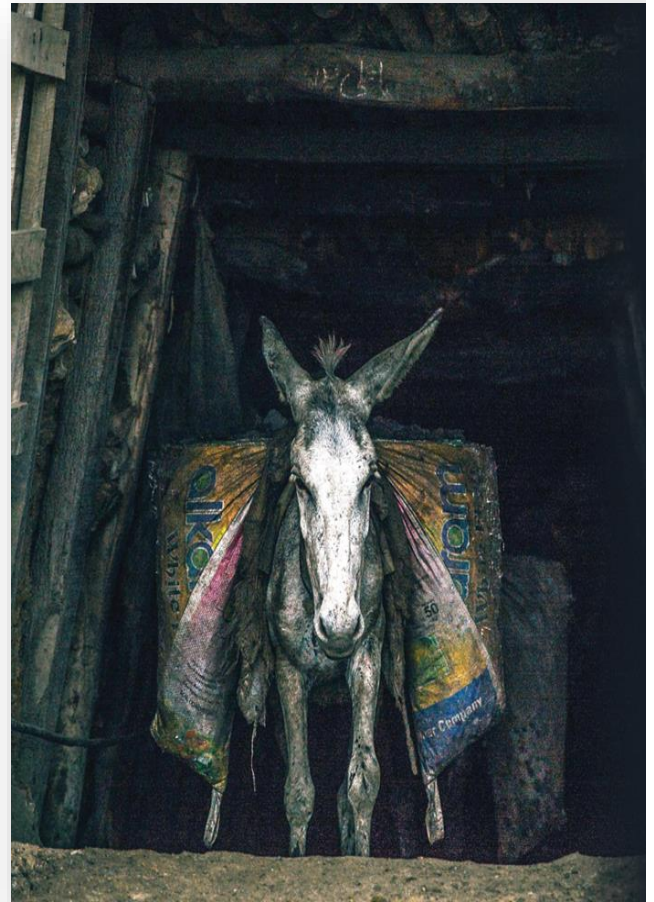
The artwork was named by the local people after one of last Pit Ponies from the area which was still living at the time - 'SULTAN'



You would think that by 2022 the mistreatment of horses and donkeys would be a thing of the past.... Unfortunately, the era of the Pit Pony is not yet over.



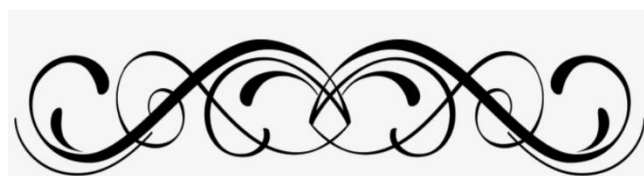
Today in the Shakwal District of Pakistan, thousands of donkeys still toil in coal mines where they work the coal seams of the Salt Range Mountains. Rather than being hitched to coal cars, the donkey's carry heavy sacks of coal out through narrow tunnels. It is hard hazardous work.



I think the final word should go to Mr Robert Smillie, born 17 March 1857 in Belfast died 16 February 1940. The family moved to Glasgow when Mr Smillie was 15 and he got a full-time job working at a brass foundry. Mr Smillie became a miner before the age of 17, he attended evening classes to improve his education and at 28 he was elected Secretary of the Lanarkshire Miners Association, and in 1894 aged 37 was elected President of the Scottish Miners Federation. He is recorded as saying.

“That the life of a pony down a mine was a life of hell itself.”

This article was written by Lorraine Martini with information and photos gathered from Google, Wikipedia, Spartacus Educational, Transcripts from the House of Commons and Pit Ponies of England.



PATRICK – MAYOR OF COCKINGTON



In these turbulent political times, the residents of the village of Cockington in Devon, England have appointed a Shetland Pony mayor of their village. Patrick is a purebred Shetland pony registered as “Tawna Patrick”. Patrick is a regular at the local pub, The Drum, where the landlord has a special corner of the bar reserved for him to enjoy his favourite beer, Guinness.

Patrick’s visits to The Drum with his owner Kirk Petrakis, began as a way to socialize him for therapy work during the pandemic. A special pen was built for Patrick and he soon became a firm with pub patrons. The locals started an online petition to make Patrick the Pony the ceremonial “mayor” of Cockington, which proved successful. Patrick has set of mayoral chains and robe. He also is the official mascot for The War Horse Memorial, and the Devon Recovery Learning Community, which supports mental health and recovery. He is also an ambassador for the Purple Poppy organization, which recognizes the sacrifice of animals in wars. Like most celebrities, he has a very busy schedule.

Since Patrick’s rise to fame, a book about him has been published, “The Adventures of Patrick the Pony: The Ten Ducklings”. He has his own website <https://communityponycic.org.uk/> as well as Face Book page and a Twitter following. Things turned a bit sour in late July when an anonymous local made a complaint about Patrick being at The Drum. The pen was demolished as it was built without planning permission. This started a world-wide media frenzy for interviews with Patrick and it was even

suggested that Patrick could be a possible Boris replacement for Prime Minister.

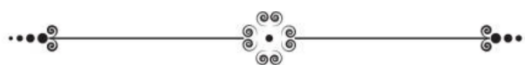
If you have a moment, check out the Face Book page <https://www.facebook.com/celebrity.pony> and Website <https://communityponycic.org.uk/>. The photos and articles will make you smile.

“A pony is a childhood dream. A horse is an adulthood treasure”.
- Rebecca Carroll

“I prefer a bike to a horse, the brakes are more easily checked.
- Lambert Jeffries

“No hour of life is wasted that is spent in the saddle”.
- Sir Winston Churchill

“I’d rather ride on a Mustang, than in one”.
- Bailey Ann Neal



MOUNTAIN AND MOORLAND PONIES

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Excerpt provided by Kathy Drake

SHETLANDS: A discussion on what judges look for in the Shetland pony

Although they are small, Shetlands can have enormous presence, and this is what most judges like to see as a class comes into the ring. Quality too, is required. A good head with a big, bold eye is another important feature because, as one judge commented, 'If they haven't got these, it takes some time for their other features to impress you when they first come in.' A nice, long, active stride at the walk, and an interested, lively but kindly outlook also catch the judge's eye.

When the class trots on, the judge likes to see a good length of stride, a moderately round action, with no suggestion of the low, daisy-cutting movement more fitted to a hack. Native-pony judges (in some breeds more so than in others) emphasise that they judge the animals not only as suitable for riding and driving, but as ponies that should have genuine native features which contribute to their survival in their natural habitat. Thus, a low, daisy-cutting action would be useless and even dangerous in a native pony travelling over the rough, uneven ground of mountain or moorland. Some knee action is necessary, but the movement should, as in any horse or pony, come from the shoulder. The hindlegs should also be raised with strong movement of the hocks. Most judges consider it a great mistake to breed and show Shetlands that move very low and close to the ground. Shoulder and hock action is invariably lost and the pony will go too heavily on the forehand. A well-made pony should move naturally in a reasonably collected manner - but one that has been bred to move very close to the ground almost certainly will not do so.

In the individual inspection, the judge looks for a Shetland to have a small, neat head, but one that is in proportion to the rest of the body. For some time, the breed has been plagued by ponies with rather large, heavy heads, and judges are doing all they can to discourage the proliferation of such animals by placing them right down the line. The typical head is very broad between the eyes and the eyes themselves should be bold, open, and very kindly - great importance is attached to the latter point, as Shetlands are primarily children's ponies. Some judges insist that the ears must be very small; others are less fussy about this, provided the ears do not impart a "horsy" look to the pony. All look for a well-rounded cheek-bone and broad, open nostrils. The ideal profile is slightly dished (concave) and judges do not like to see any hint of a Roman nose, or a profile that is slightly Roman and leads down to a rather long and protruding top lip 'a bit like a tapir', as one judge described it. The muzzle should not, however, be excessively square, nor should it be pinched and very narrow.

A well set-on head and neck, with a curve, not an angle under the jaw is required, as is a high head carriage. The latter is important in a child's riding-pony to give some confidence to the small sider, and an animal that goes along with its head near its knees does not find favour with a Shetland judge.

Some Shetlands have rather short, thick necks, but this is not acceptable in a show animal; it should be moderately long and show some elegance. The very wide chest sometimes seen is considered a fault. A well-laid shoulder and clearly defined withers are needed as in any other riding-pony, and Shetlands with thick, heavy shoulders will be penalised. The judge looks for a short, strong back, strong loins and adequate length between the hip-bone and the dock, with no suggestion of drooping quarters. The tail should be set high. The body must be deep through and well ribbed-up, but judges are highly critical of exhibitors who show grossly over-fat Shetlands. This restricts active movement, makes the true conformation difficult if not impossible to see, and adds to the width small riders have to stretch their legs around.

Some Shetlands have such short legs on heavy bodies as to appear almost grotesque, and this type of pony will not be well placed. A long forearm is essential and while it should be well muscled, the bulging, bulbous muscles which make the legs appear disproportionately short are not true to type. Good, wide, flat knees are required, with a short cannon-bone and well-defined tendons, giving the appearance of great strength. The bone itself should be adequate in circumference for the size of the pony, but any suggestion of coarse 'cart-horsy' bone is disliked. The judge likes to see well-sloped pasterns and nicely rounded feet of a size to fit the rest of the pony. Boxy feet can occur even in an otherwise very good pony. At the back, the hocks must be well let-down, and the judge will be well aware that sickle hocks are an all too common feature of Shetlands. Stifle trouble is probably no more prevalent in Shetlands than in any other native breed, but the judge certainly looks for any sign of weakness or puffiness in that area.

A profuse mane, forelock and tail are essential breed characteristics which protect the pony from the rigours of its native climate, and a deficiency of any of these is penalised as being off-type. Judges do not expect a great deal of hair down the backs of the legs in the middle of summer, but a pony that lacks this altogether is untypical. The hair itself should be straight, and the crinkly variety found in some animals is considered a fault.

Colour arouses a certain amount of controversy in the Shetland world, and while some judges have a personal preference for black as distinct from coloured ponies, they are adamant that they do not allow this to affect their choice. Piebalds and skewbalds present special problems, because, like wartime camouflage, the patchy markings tend to break up the true outline. Most judges agree that they have to look very carefully at these animals.

Shetland judges are faced with the difficulty of a relatively broad size range, as the ponies may be any height up to 40 inches at four years and 42 inches at maturity. Some breeders have specialised in the 'mini' ponies, and to judge these in the same class as the larger animals is not easy. In addition, some judges have a personal preference for animals standing at the maximum or near-maximum height, believing that the ponies were originally bred to do a job of work and that anything under about 38 inches is bound to be less suitable. But they acknowledge that the breed standards allow for smaller ponies and they try not to let their own feelings influence their placings. There is, nonetheless, a notion that really good mini ponies are comparatively rare. They are rather prone to have heads too large for their bodies, and although their bone measurement is adequate, this often inclines to coarseness. These features are, of course, also found in the larger ponies, but are more conspicuous in the small ones.

When the ponies give their individual show, the judge expects to see straight, even movement and is severe on any animal that 'screws' its feet as they are placed on the ground. Although this fault is probably seen more in Europe than in Britain, it *does* exist here and is actively discouraged. Dishing in show-standard Shetlands is not a great problem (except in over-fat ones) but going too close is. There is a feeling that some judges would rather have them going too close than too wide, but from the point of view of the rider's safety there is little doubt that the pony going too close is the greater hazard.

In Shetland stallion classes the judge looks for ponies with a good, strong neck and masculine appearance, with a faultless temperament, and a high degree of presence and quality. Age is perhaps of less significance in a Shetland stallion class than in some other breeds, and quite old ponies still do very well in show classes. A back slightly dipped with age is not considered a great barrier to success, provided the pony still moves well and has a good set of limbs. Shetland judges like brood mares to look feminine, and very kindly. They must not be too fat, and should stand over a lot of ground, with a good length of line underneath, but not too long a back. Some Shetlands are inclined to be stuffy, and a mare of this type is not favoured. A number of judges are very much influenced by the type of foal a mare has bred, even to the extent of placing the one with the best foal at the top of the line.

The usual difficulties are encountered when judging foals. In general, a foal that stands square on its feet, has an attractive head and kind eye, is well put together, and has adequate bone, is likely to head the line. Judging yearlings presents unique problems early in the season, as Shetlands are the only breed that do not lose their coats in the normal way. Instead, the coat peels off in patches. Although the patchy look can be avoided by keeping the youngster in and grooming it constantly, some judges disapprove of this in theory, but can offer no other solution in practice to owners who want to show a yearling early in the season. Among yearlings that live out, few would have coats in real show condition before about mid-July, while those that are kept in and rugged-up, will clearly have a big advantage. A number of judges feel very strongly that even show Shetlands should be kept under as natural conditions as possible, to the extent that if faced with two ponies that were equal in every other way, preference would be given to the one that had obviously lived out, provided it was clean and well presented.

In Ridden Shetland classes, the judge looks for the basic points of conformation, but pays very great attention to impeccable manners, which are perhaps even more essential in Shetlands than in any other breed. They are so often a child's introduction to ponies and riding, and any display of bad manners or vice will not be tolerated. The pony must be calm and quiet and willing to do, as far as possible, what its small rider asks of it. If the rider is old enough, judges like to see him or her get off and get on again, in order to be sure that the pony stands quietly and is accustomed to being handled by a child. Again, provided the rider is old enough, the pony should be asked to trot, but most judges feel that cantering is not required.



***'For one to fly, one needs only to take the reins.
- Melissa James***