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# WellBred

Wellington Branch of the  
New Zealand Thoroughbred Breeders' Assn.

## President's Report :

I am very pleased to say that you have a very enthusiastic Committee working on your behalf. Since the AGM many things have been discussed and are now in place or are about to be.

Firstly, a Quiz / Social Night has been organized for Thursday 23 July 2009 at Monteiths Bar and Restaurant in Paremata. Please make a special effort to attend. Details of the start time and cost are further on in the Newsletter.

We are currently in the process of organizing a raffle to raise funds for the Branch. The winning prize is a "free service" to the very exciting new sire Sir Percy, Gp.1 winning unbeaten Champion 2 year old and Derby winning Champion 3 year old. In the last 40 years only 6 horses have won the ultimate 2 and 3 year old prizes of the Dewhurst Stakes and the English Derby. Besides Sir Percy they also include the breed shaping sires Mill Reef and Nijinsky. Watch this space! - we are just awaiting Internal Affairs approval.

Late August we are organizing a Stud Tour to coincide with the Annual Waikato Stud Tour. This tour takes place over 2 days. Please see further on for more details.

Darryl Burrow

## Annual General Meeting :

The AGM was held on 20 November 2008 at the Trentham Racecourse - Champagne Lounge.

There was a very good attendance of 50 members who were well entertained by Jayne Ivil who presented a most informative and interesting address on her travels with the wonderful mare Seachange. To learn of her time in charge in the lead up to Dubai and Royal Ascot was something very special.

For those of you who have not attended the last two AGM's I recommend that you try and get to this year's one.

## Annual Awards :

The annual Wellington Branch Breeders' Awards were presented following on from the AGM. After detailed consideration had been given to all horses nominated the winners in each category were:

**Horse of the year:** EFFICIENT

**Broodmare of the year:** REFUSED THE DANCE

**The John A Higgs Award:** Mr RON DIXON.

We congratulate the winners and all other owners whose horses were considered and wish them well for 2009.

## Waikato Stud Tour :

As previously advised we will be coordinating a stud tour to coincide with the Annual Waikato Stud Tour which this year is scheduled for the weekend of Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 August. The tour starts around midday on Saturday and that day covers all of the Stallions based in and around Matamata. On the Saturday night the Waikato Branch have their monthly awards dinner which is also scheduled to be held in Matamata. On Sunday the tour moves to the Cambridge area and finishes up late on the Sunday afternoon.

Your committee has decided on the following format to give the most flexibility and control of costs so as to suit all members.

**Transport to and from the Waikato:** Members are to arrange their own way there. However if you decide to fly we will be able to meet any incoming flights from Wellington on the Saturday morning and transfer you to Matamata. If you book your flight now you should be able to get a very good deal. Likewise we will be able to drop you back at the Airport on Sunday afternoon.

**Transport around the Studs:** Many members will be driving up and will not require transport as they will be using their own car. However a mini van will be available to anyone requiring transport over the weekend.

**Saturday night Dinner:** This will be a great opportunity to all get together for some fun and relaxation. We encourage you all to attend.

**Accommodation:** A block booking for accommodation has been made at O'Reilly's Motel in Matamata for the Saturday night. The cost of a single/double is \$100.00.

**Coordination:** John Fokerd has kindly offered to coordinate everything. Please advise of your individual requirements as soon as you know them. Do you need to be picked up from the Airport? What time? Do you need transport around the Studs? Do you require a motel unit? Do you require a ticket to the Awards Dinner? How many people in your party, etc? John's email address is [jef.meb@xtra.co.nz](mailto:jef.meb@xtra.co.nz) His phone number is (04) 477 9953.

## Wgtn NZTBA QUIZ NIGHT

Monteiths Bar, Paremata Thurs 23 July.  
6.30pm start - quiz from 7.30pm

Very affordable set menu priced at \$29.50 per head.

Private bar for NZTBA members. Fun night out for family and friends! Fun mixture of breeding, racing and general knowledge questions. Plus big screen and breeding video info. Numbers are limited so get in quick!!! Please let us know if you can come .. phone Darryl Burrow (04) 233-9307

## Breeder Profile : Graeme Hunt

*In the first of a series of interviews with Wellington TBA members, Charlotte Gendall spoke to Graeme Hunt, co-breeder of 2007 Melbourne Cup winner Efficient, about his interest in the sport of racing ...*

Graeme's first involvement with horses came during his secondary school years in Wanganui, when he joined his father in visiting local stud farms such as J G Alexander's Cranleigh property.

Although not from a traditionally 'horsey' background, Graeme developed a fascination for going to the races – and not just from a punting perspective. He liked the horse as an animal and as he met more breeders and owners, his interest in pedigrees and physiology grew.

After completing a BA / BCA at university, Graeme rewarded himself with a share in his first horse and realises now just how lucky he was.

The youngster turned out to be the well performed Balmerino colt Globetrotter who went on to win 10 races including the Queen Elizabeth States at Flemington.

When the horse retired, Graeme bought a couple of mares to send to him but sadly, Globetrotter's career at stud was cut short when he died during a visit to an Australian vet clinic.

The subsequent insurance claim did allow the purchase of some better bred mares, including Velita, a half sister to Golden King, and marked the point when Graeme decided to take breeding more seriously.

Velita went on to produce the winners of more than 60 races and although she ended up producing more colts than fillies, the sale of the colts enabled the purchase of other females.

Talking to Graeme, it's clear that he took a planned approach to the process and spent carefully.

"About every two years, I would go to the sales and pick out the best fillies that I could afford for my limited sums. I would be looking at a range between 50 and 100 thousand for yearling fillies that were nice types and could race.

"This was when I really realised that physique was so important. I wasn't prepared to compromise on that – instead I had to discount some other factor so usually I would be looking at fillies that

were by an 'off' stallion. Refused The Dance (Defensive Play) was one of those.



"My business colleague Simon Niblet was also getting very interested and so we would go to Karaka and Jim Marks would vet the prospects and we might end up with five for final consideration. The year that I bought Refused The Dance, we ended up with two that we were looking at but she was wonderfully athletic and I had also had the advantage of seeing other foals from the mare (Florida Jig)."

Refused The Dance was raced in partnership with Mike Sellars and after her racing finished (two wins and a second from six starts), Graeme bought Mike out and sent the mare to Volksraad, Stravinsky and Zabeel in succession.

Efficient was the result of that third mating and Graeme – who bred him in partnership with Cambridge accountant Scott Williams – says he was special right from the start.

"He was a really lovely foal – he had lots of quality and what I would call refined muscle. He was medium sized but a real athlete. The next one, Guillotine, (Montjeu) was even nicer."

Guillotine went on finish fifth in the AJC Derby of 2008 before winning the Feehan Stakes and running third in the Caulfield Stakes.

When Graeme Rogerson expressed an interest in buying Efficient at the sales, Graeme Hunt was pleased – he'd previously had horses with Rogie and so agreed to keep a quarter share, a decision he will never regret as the grey claimed the ultimate honour on the first Tuesday in November. From a breeding perspective, however, it hasn't been straightforward since then. Refused The Dance has suffered some bad luck, missing twice and slipping once to Zabeel before being sent across the Tasman.

Initially, she fared little better in Australia, slipping to Redoute's Choice after falling victim to E.I. On a happier note, the 13 year old is now safely in foal to Encosta De Lago, is likely to return to him in the

spring and has many happy breeding years ahead of her.

In all, Graeme currently has an interest in about 20 horses, most agisted at either Curraghmore or Wellfield, and he has also taken shares in a number of stallions as this helps provide income to support the others.

A couple of shares in Zabeel have come in handy, while other interests include Shinko King, Alamosa and Handsome Ransom.

"The stallions have been very helpful to me, they have helped me pay the way and that's not easy with horses!"

Graeme readily admits that he sits under the radar of publicity and that's the way he likes it.

"I have some theories about breeding and other people might laugh at them but it works for me and this way I can do my own thing."

So what are his key requirements?

**Physique** – "This is critical. You have to have the right type of mare. You can't breed for fantastic form if the mare is 'ponified,' short backed, too long or whatever."

**Speed orientation** – "I would try and balance a staying mare with a sprinting stallion or vice versa. This is so clear with Zabeel. His mares must have speed, Zonda (Light Wind), Maldivian (Danzig) ... they have that speed. Montjeu is a bit different, you seem to be able to cross him with staying mares."

**Pedigree** – "You can make some luck with this part of it but basically I like to combine crosses with genetic affinities. At the end of the day the one rule I've got is never to cross a mare to a stallion carrying the same sire line on top."

It was a pleasure talking to Graeme who clearly takes a real enjoyment in his horses as he works through his business commitments.

His attention to detail has obviously moved him beyond the level of hobby breeder – but not so far that he regards racing as a clinical operation.

From his base in downtown Wellington, he talks fondly about the horses in his life and – hopefully – about those still to come.

## Angus :

Wellington TBA committee member **Julia Bryce** was thrilled by recent news from California, where the exported gelding Angus (My Halo – Shuzohra) has been in top form.

Julia takes up the story of Angus (and his Mum!) ...

"Angus was Shuzohra's second foal by My Halo – sadly, the first colt was kicked by another mare when he was two weeks old and broke his leg.

Shuzohra was originally sent to the South Island to visit Felix the Cat in the hope of getting a filly as his dam line has a good potential for broodmares needless to say we got two colts (both winners).

Angus was foaled at Riverlea Lodge by Barbara and he was so big she reckoned his legs would never straighten. Mum is only 14.3 and now Angus is 17.1.

As a yearling we discovered he was a roarer (laryngeal hemiplegia) so as we had time on our side and Massey wanted to try a new operation for them (done a lot overseas). He had a neuromuscular graft where they transplant the C1 nerve to the muscle attached to the laryngeal cartilage and when the horse breathes in, this triggers the nerve to make the muscle open the larynx.

We were all thrilled that it looked as if it had been successful. It takes nine months of special treatment to train the nerve to work so it took a lot of patience. Angus eventually had his first start in a maiden at Foxton and struck Fritz Boy there. He then had a break and raced in May 2008 at Woodville and just got run down by Il Giacotore but bled that day, much to the disappointment of everyone including the team from Massey who had gone there to see him.

After a break we brought him back and started training him using Laisix for his gallops - no problems but obviously it has a four day withholding which we had to stick to.

He then started at Wanganui in November 2008 with Chris Johnson on board with instructions that if he bled look after him which he did. That was it – banned! Well I always said he would make a lovely dressage horse ...

The Americans rarely look at a maiden horse however we were lucky (from his point of view) that Phil Cataldo had someone interested and he left for USA in early December to join the stable of John Sadler at Hollywood Park . Angus had his first start (on Laisix) on April 26th 2009 at Hollywood Park over 1200m - winning in 1.09.55 coming from the back of the field at the top of the straight. Thrilling but sad in that we had to lose him to NZ Racing - maybe one day we can use Laisix.

As for Shuzohra - she has had 12 foals, 10 alive for 7 winners. Her first foal is her only filly (hence we only gave it two starts) the second one Holicom was placed in Australia and died as a 3 yr old and the other non winner is her rising 3 yr old by Ekraar who has only just been broken in. Reg won the most races including the Churchill Stakes & Feilding Gold Cup.

Shuzohra is 25 this year and lives with her trainer Errol Skelton - they are both enjoying their retirement! Amongst her achievements were running second in three Group 1 races – the Caulfield Cup, the BMW and the Wellington Cup, third in the Sandown Cup (G2) and second in both the Turnbull and Trentham Stakes (G3)."

Post script... by the time this goes to print, Angus should have had his next start in the US . We'll follow his progress with interest!

## Central Districts Stallion & Weanling tour Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> July

**11.00am** Fairdale Stud - Howbadoyouwantit, Fully Fledged, plus weanlings

**12.15pm** Goodwood Stud - Chinese Dragon, plus weanlings

**1.00pm** Newmarket Lodge Stud - Gold Centre, Skagen, plus weanlings

**2.00pm** Wellfield Lodge - Alamosa, Handsome Ransom, Towkay, Zed, plus weanlings

*For more details please contact  
Hugh Taylor, Wellfield Lodge  
Phone (027) 455-4999*

## New Ideas :

If there are any suggestions members would like the committee to consider, please advise the President or Secretary.

## Wellington Branch Contact Information.

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