

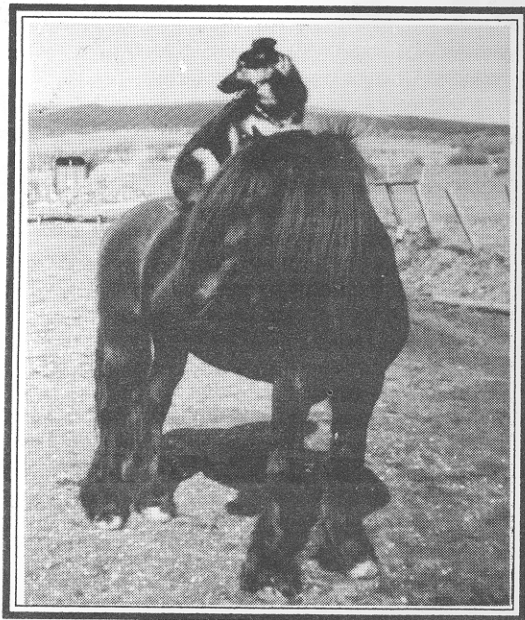
# THE FELL PONY SOCIETY

*Spring 1997*

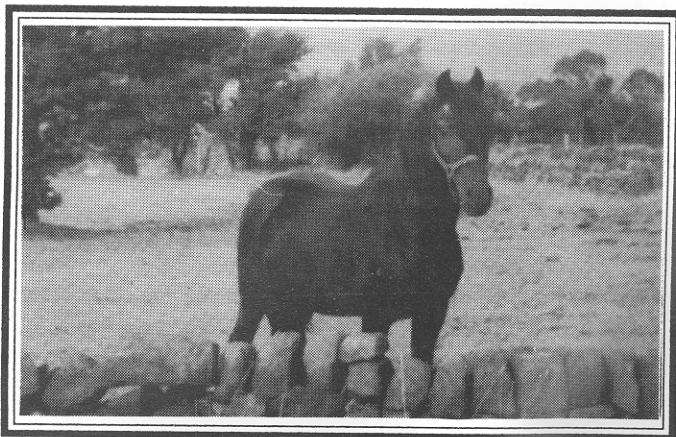


**This issue is dedicated to the late Mr Joseph Shepherd Dargue,  
Council Member & Breeder of the Peepings bloodline.**

## PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION RESULTS



Thank you to all those of you who submitted entries for the most unusual photograph of a Fell pony competition, announced in the Autumn Newsletter. The above entry was submitted by Rachel Crayston. It shows Wincey, a German Shepherd x Border Collie & Townend Henry FP44C whom she used to lunge on a 20m circle like this! The duo were self-taught - they needed no encouragement to put on this show. The £10 first prize, kindly donated by Mr Ian McKinlay of Anglesey is on its way. Additionally, a special award of £5 goes to Mrs D McGarry for this photo of Dene Don, aged 20, still running free and covering his mares. All entries will be returned.



# **The Fell Pony Society**

## **Patron - H.M. The Queen**

**President: Mrs M C M Laing**

**Chairman: Mrs E A Ball**

**Vice-Chairman: Mr B M Allen**

**Secretary & Treasurer:**

**Ms Sally M Wood, Keeper's Cottage, Guyzance, Acklington,  
Northumberland, NE65 9AA. Tel & Fax: 01670 761117**

**Sales Officer:**

**Mrs M C M Laing, Twislehope, Hermitage, Hawick,  
Roxburghshire, TD9 OLS, Scotland. Tel: 013873 76272**

**Publicity & Exhibition Officers: Mrs M Laing,  
Mrs P Forsman, Miss B W Walker.**

**Trainee Judge Chairman & Show Affiliation Secretary:**

**Mrs A A D Newall, Todridge, Great Whittington,  
Northumberland, NE19 2HP**

**Trainee Judge Secretary: Mrs C Allen**

**Representative to the N.P.S.: Miss M G Longsdon**

**Representative to the B.H.S.: Mr R B Sutcliffe**

**Editor Fell Pony Newsletter: Ms S M Wood**

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### **Council**

- To Retire 1997: Mrs E A Ball, Miss M G Longsdon,  
Mr J S Dargue, Mr R B Sutcliffe.**
- To Retire 1998: Mrs M C Murray, Miss B W Walker,  
Mr T H Harrison, Mr M Allen.**
- To Retire 1999: Mr J P Gibson, Mr H F Wales,  
Mr A W Morland, Mr W S Potter.**
- To Retire 2000: Mr B M Allen, Mr R B Charlton,  
Mrs M Laing, Mrs A A D Newall.**
- To Retire 2001: Mr E M Wilson, Mrs C H Robinson,  
Mr P Forsman, Mr P Boustead.**

## A Message from the President

I will not say anything this time except to wish you all a Happy New Year and a good breeding season and lots of luck at the shows.

*Molly La*

## Chairman's Notes

As your Chairman, I feel a great responsibility for the future of the Fell Pony Society. We face many changes today. Some of them, forced upon us by circumstances beyond our control, others brought about by the spread of the Fell Pony all over the world, living in conditions quite unlike their native haunts. To ensure the continuation of the Fell Pony as we know it today, it is essential that we take the following steps:

1. We must keep a nucleus of Fell Ponies breeding on the fells in their native haunts to maintain a reservoir of true to type ponies.
2. We must exert control over our Daughter Fell Pony Breed Societies in other countries, in order to keep the Fell Pony breed true to type under a great variety of diverse influences.
3. In order to exert control over such a wide area it is essential that we have ponies permanently identified as foals, and thus ensure that a buyer in any country he may be, can be sure that the pony he buys matches up to the paper he comes with it.

We cannot have conditions imposed on our Daughter Societies which our own Society do not insist on.

There is a particular problem with our breed as many ponies are of various colours and therefore identification other than white markings is essential.

The Society now faces a particular dilemma. Conflicting advice from the Government and Ministers means we have as yet no final ruling on Equine Passports. If the Fell Pony Society is ultimately responsible for the issuing and accuracy of the passports, we must be certain of the identification of our ponies.

Passports will probably ask for colour markings and whorls as identification markings, the latter need to be very carefully interpreted and are, at best, an especially if done by unskilled people (i.e.. not vets). Also, not an easy task to do out on unhandled foals.

At present time, the only sure way of identification is DNA testing. This is open to argument and only requires a small tuft of hair pulled out of the pony's tail. It does cost money, but perhaps a subsidy on testing for colt foals could be arranged in order not to risk restricting the gene pool.

The time has come for the Fell Pony Society members to decide what policy for positive identification is to be, before Equine Passports come into effect in January 1998.

*Liz B*

## Secretary's Letter

I would like to start by welcoming all new members who have recently joined (39 at time of writing), and for whom this Newsletter will be their first. I hope to have the pleasure of meeting you over the coming season at the Society's shows and events. The Fell pony breed's augmenting popularity is something of which the Society can be justifiably proud.

Thank you to everyone who has renewed their subscription on time especially those thoughtful people who sent an sae. If you haven't yet paid your 1997 sub, this will be your last Newsletter and you will not be entitled to attend meetings or enter events without an up-to-date membership card.

For Full Members included with this Newsletter you will find a copy of the Memorandum & Articles of Association, a copy of the final accounts of the unincorporated Fell Pony Society and a membership application form, which you will find explained under General Information & News Items. Please be sure to read this section.

Junior Members will also find something to their advantage there.

The winter, although not too bad as winters go, has left its own mark with the death of Mr Dargue and, more recently, that of Mr Ronnie Ball, husband of our Chairman. I knew neither well but nevertheless can appreciate the empty space they leave behind. Liz Ball works tirelessly on Society business and has provided much support for me during my first few months in post. To Liz, and our President, Molly Laing, I extend my thanks for helping to steer me through the many and various responsibilities the job brings.

*Sally Wood*

### Obituary- Joseph Shepherd Dargue

It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Joseph "Joss" Dargue on 14 December 1996, aged 77.

Joss farmed with his son Frank, at Dufton, Appleby-in-Westmorland and bred free roaming Fell Ponies with the Peepings prefix. Ponies from the Peepings line were well renowned in earlier times for their prowess in trotting races.

Joss was a lifelong member of the Fell Pony Society, a hard-working Council member, and a very popular Chairman for many years. He was a greatly respected judge who was never afraid to please himself.

Together with his wife Elsie and daughter Pauline, he dedicated a great deal of work and time to the Fell Pony Society. Joss was very proud of his family, and his first grandchild, Joseph, became the youngest ever member of the Society.

Joss was a kind and modest man, a gentleman, whose knowledge and friendship will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

Our sympathies go out to his family.

*Eddie & Margaret Wilson*

## COUNCIL INFORMATION

### Council Members' Telephone Numbers

Mr B M Allen	-	01229 774528	Miss M G Longsdon	-	01629 640709
Mr M Allen	-	01539 726273	Mr A W Morland	-	015396 24615
Mrs E A Ball	-	01556 680216	Mrs M Murray	-	01833 650474
Mr P Boustead	-	01524 383665	Mrs A A D Newall	-	01434 672218
Mr R B Charlton	-	01434 673262	Mr W S Potter	-	01931 716267
Mr P L Forsman	-	01768 890372	Mrs C H Robinson	-	01946 862439
Mr J P Gibson	-	01207 270230	Mr R B Sutcliffe	-	01254 776389
Mr T H Harrison	-	01931 716653	Mr H F Wales	-	01768 361388
Mrs M Laing	-	013873 76272	Miss B W Walker	-	017687 77202
			Mr E M Wilson	-	016974 78638

### **FOAL MORTALITY RESEARCH**

It was reported at the Autumn General Meeting that Dr Derek Knottenbelt at Liverpool University of Veterinary Science, Leahurst, had received few referrals from members with foals suffering from syndrome-type symptoms over 1996. The incidence rate does seem to be reducing but there are still some cases around, and each one could provide vital information to Dr Knottenbelt's research and the future of the breed. Prior to the new year's foaling, it is therefore worthwhile repeating the symptoms which should be treated with great caution should they present: staring coat, diarrhoea, anaemia (white gums), secondary infections (eg runny nose, cold, cough) typically at age 3 weeks upwards. The contact is:

Dr Derek Knottenbelt, Leahurst - telephone 0151 794 6041, or Barry Allen.

### **BETTING LEVY BOARD (HBLB) GRANT 1996/97**

(Re-distributed by The National Pony Society)

The grant awarded from the HBLB for the past year was £3,500, down 12% due to the breed's non-Rare Breed status as forecast, on the previous year's grant of £3,974. The Society is required to add a minimum of 20% to the grant; in fact the contribution amounted to 38%, ie £1,506. It is largely due to this important source of funding that the Society is able to offer cash Premiums, subsidise licensing and offer blood-typing, all of which are of benefit to the improvement of the breed.

The NPS has warned that there is likely to be an 8% decrease in grant awards to every society it supports when the HBLB announces its Levy income figure. The provisional grant for 1997/98 is thus expected to be £3,220, subject to confirmation.

The Society is indebted to the HBLB and the NPS for its grant support. The diminution if it continues will mean that the Society's other sources of income will have to be worked hard to replace the lost grant-aid if the benefits are to be retained.

### **BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF EQUINE SOCIETIES (BAES)**

In response to the concern felt by many UK breed societies and associated organisations such as the British Central Prefix Register to such issues as the status accorded the British Horse Database, impending towing regulations, and VAT on horses, a new umbrella organisation designed to represent joint concerns is being formed. In October 1996 the Secretary attended a meeting in Gloucestershire at which 17 breed societies had representation, and expressions of interest from others

were received. Subsequent discussion in Council approved the Secretary's offer to be part of the working party for the new organisation, however, the first meeting was held prior to this, and therefore without the Secretary's participation.

With constant developments regarding legislation, particularly coming from the EU, and matters which pose threats to the members the Society represents, and indeed what the Society has stood for since its inception, the need to muster forces to fight inappropriate legislation is greater than ever, being an expensive and time-consuming activity. By the autumn it is expected a further report will detail the BAES's work.

### **PONY BREEDS GENETIC PROJECT**

Are our Native Ponies unique? How are they related to each other? How are they related to other horses? Did they come to Britain with the Celts, or were they here already?

So far no systematic genetic work has been done with our Native Pony Breeds, and the aim of this project is to answer these questions by comparing their DNA. Hopefully the Project will prove the importance of our ponies as a genetic resource, so helping us to preserve our breeds, their moorland habitat and our traditions of management. The project could also help us to understand and deal with the present foal mortality problem and to avoid other such problems in the future.

The Project Research Team is from the Institute of Zoology at Leicester University. They will want to take samples (hair and/or blood) from a number of ponies of each breed. These samples should come from as many bloodlines within each breed as possible. The Project has the approval of the Council and it is hoped you will be willing to help the team with information and by allowing your ponies to be sampled. Dr Katharine Byrne hopes to attend the AGM in March when she will tell us more about the project and answer questions.

### **FREE BLOOD-TYPING KITS ON OFFER**

Owners of foals which have been suspected of or diagnosed as suffering from the foal "syndrome" are invited to apply for a free blood-typing kit to be used on the foal's dam. As not all the free blood-kits were allocated during 1996, requests from owners of senior brood-mares are invited, on a first come, first served basis. A further 20 kits will be offered this year, initially to senior licensed stallions, thereafter to the dams of senior licensed stallions, as per usual. Please contact the Secretary with requests.

### **AUDITING OF SOCIETY ACCOUNTS**

The Society has hitherto required that its Accountants produce an Accountant's Report annually, rather than undertake a full audit which is not compulsory as the Society's turnover is well below the threshold at which full audit becomes mandatory. In November 1996 Council appointed a new company, Messrs Stephenson Armstrong & Co., based in Newcastle upon Tyne, to replace N B Lancaster & Co of Carlisle. This appointment was deemed necessary in view of the change of Secretary & registered office. The Council has therefore taken the decision to continue to have an Accountant's Report prepared annually, on behalf of the membership. The difference in professional fees would result in an estimated

doubling if full audit was required. Any Full (voting) members who disagree with this are asked to write to the Secretary in the first instance.

## **BRITISH CENTRAL PREFIX REGISTER**

The BCPR has asked that the following to be brought to the attention of all Members.

1. One word prefixes only are accepted, with no apostrophes or hyphens.
2. Each name within a family or partnership must be specified individually as being registered to use a particular prefix.
3. The British Horse Database has withdrawn from affiliation to the Register as it is no longer offering breeding facilities. Full details available from the Database.

## **ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS 1997**

One of the main purposes of the Spring Annual General Meeting is to elect candidates to the Council to serve for a period of 5 years. There are four vacancies and eight candidates who are all hopeful of a place. Here each one has the opportunity to put forward their own reasons for considering themselves suitable to serve the Society. The number of Council meetings **not** attended over the previous 5 years by Council Members seeking re-election is shown in brackets at the end of each paragraph.

### **Current Council Members eligible for re-election:**

**MRS ELIZABETH BALL** I have spent a lifetime with Native Ponies and in particular Fells, which I first acquired in 1964, breeding from up to 12 mares for more than 20 years. Having served on the Council also for over 20 years, and as Chairman since 1993, I would value further opportunity and time on the Council to use my experience in helping keep the true type of Fell Pony breeding on the fells, whilst at the same time, trying to keep our Society moving forward, to stay abreast of the ever changing demands that the increasing popularity of the breed in the world today brings. (2) *Liz Ball*

**MISS MARY LONGSDON** My first introduction to Fells was in the 1940's at Patterdale. I started the Bewcastle Stud in 1966, taking the prefix from where my family had bred Fells in the late 19th century.

I have served on the Council for many years and am its representative to the NPS. I was invited onto the Judges' List, and also to start the Southern Show. This has proved a considerable success both as an advert and to meet the demand of a widening membership. I believe in a Society we can all be proud of, in the interest of the Fell Pony. (4) *Mary Longsdon*

**MR RUSSEL SUTCLIFFE** (4)

### **New Candidates seeking election:**

**MR JIM BELL**. Dear Members, As I have been proposed to stand for election to the Council again, I hope I need no introduction. I am sure everyone knows who I am, being a member for 58 years and a Council Member for over 40 years. I have had a lifetime interest in Fell ponies, my Waverhead stud started in 1947 with three mares from my father. Since then I have tried to breed the best which I feel successful. My breeding mares, 8 in number, and 2 stallions are all blood-typed, which I am mostly in favour of as I feel this is the best proof of being pure bred. I have always tried to give my service for the Society and all its members, which have grown in number



over the years. I thank you giving me the pleasures which I enjoy and also thank you for your support and votes. Your personal friend,

*Jim Bell*

MR THOMAS CAPSTICK I have been a member of the Fell Pony Society and breeder of the Murthwaite ponies for approximately 34 years. For ten of those years I served as a Council Member. My ponies which run as a semi-wild herd on the open Howgill Fells have also enjoyed considerable success in the showing over the last few years, winning many major championships. I am committed to the breed, having never owned or bred anything other than a Fell Pony, and I am keen to safeguard the true characteristics of the breed in its traditional native environment. *T B Capstick*

MRS BEVERLEY HODGSON Since purchasing my first Fell pony in 1988 Fells have been an important part of my life. I have never missed a meeting. I successfully breed, compete and work with Inglegarth ponies. I am very concerned about the future of the Fell pony and feel we must try to preserve the valuable bloodlines, and with the aid of technology place them on a sound genetic footing. As a Council Member I would welcome ideas and suggestions from members which I would express at Council meetings. I would be willing to attend meetings, shows and events at home and abroad in support of the Fell Pony Society. *Beverley Hodgson*

MRS MARGARET RAINES I have been involved with horses and ponies (breeding, hunting, showing, dressage, etc) for over 40 years. A member of the FPS for 17 years and have represented the breed at Olympia 3 times. I believe that the traditional qualities of the breed - native hardiness, action, bone and type - must be maintained whilst promoting the versatility and competitiveness of the Fells, thereby ensuring the continued interest in the breed and thus its long-term survival. *Margaret Raines*

MRS GWEN WILLIAMSON I have bred Tarnbeck ponies for 26 years and was a Council Member for 15 years. My interest has always been to breed and produce a good type of pony and felt it a great honour to represent the Fell Pony Society at Olympia in 1995 with a home bred mare. I was involved with helping to organise the early performance trials at Packway which have proved very successful, resulting in the more advanced performance trials held first at Rydal and now at Hexham. I have a keen interest in the affairs of the Society and my main concern is if the directives coming from Europe are going to benefit the breed or cause hardship to our breeders. Hopefully these regulations can be implemented with as little cost as possible, assuring the continued registration of all foals. *Gwen Williamson*

## General Information & News Items

### 1997 SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscription rates remain unchanged as follows:

FULL MEMBER	£15.00
JUNIOR MEMBER (under age 18)*	£ 7.50
FAMILY MEMBER	£ 7.50

Subscriptions are renewable annually on 1 January. There is a period of grace of 3 months, until 1 April, at which time membership is deemed to have lapsed. A reminder letter will be issued, after which no further mailings will be sent and privileges of membership of the Society are withdrawn.

**PLEASE NOTE:** You must have paid your 1997 subscription and received your membership card before the AGM to be eligible to vote (Full Members only). Please produce your membership card to Mrs Laing on arrival at the meeting on 22 March, whereupon you will be given a voting card and papers. This procedure saves much time at the meeting. Please return your voting card to Mrs Laing at the end of the meeting.

**\* JUNIOR MEMBERSHIP - IMPORTANT NEWS - Change of age limit.**

In order to comply with Company Law, the Society has raised the age limit for Junior Members since the Society became a Company Limited by Guarantee. In law, as no individual under 18 years can be a Full Member with voting rights, it has been necessary to revise the age limit upward to 18 years from 16 years.

This fact came to light after standard letters had been sent to Juniors reaching the age of 16 years in 1996 telling them they were no longer eligible for Junior membership, and would therefore have to pay full membership from 1997. Members who turned 16 in 1995 are therefore eligible for a year's FREE membership, as they paid double fees effectively in 1996. **Please contact the Secretary if this is you as the computer programme does not retain birthdate information once the age of 16 has been reached.**

**\* FULL MEMBERS - IMPORTANT**

You may well be wondering why you have received a membership form with your Newsletter when you are already a member. It is not a recruitment drive but a legal requirement!

The membership application has been revised to include a declaration which states: *"I agree to be bound by the rules of the Society as set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association and I understand that my liability as a Member of the Company is limited to a maximum of £1.00"*. The Secretary is required to keep at the Registered Office a register of signed membership application forms completed by Full Members. It is therefore **VERY IMPORTANT** that you complete the form and return it to the Secretary (at the Spring General Meeting, if possible, or by post).

A copy of the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Society should also accompany this newsletter. If further copies are required, please request them through the Secretary. They will be issued automatically with any new full memberships being taken up in future.

**REGISTRATIONS, PREFIXES, TRANSFERS & STALLION LICENSING**

**PLEASE DON'T FORGET: ALL FEES INCREASED ON 1 JANUARY.**

Sending the wrong amount with your papers will result in delays, so please be sure to send the correct fee.

**To Register a Foal:** This must be done in the year of its birth and by 31 December (the only exceptions being colt foals out of grading up Section (A) and (B) mares, which must be gelded before registration, and foals bred by Native Heath Breeders which must be registered by 1 April in the year following the foal's birth). A yellow registration application form should be completed and sent to the Secretary together

with the dam's record of service slip (provided by stallion owner at time of covering) together with the fee: Colts £5.00, Fillies £12.00 (non-members pay double fees).

**Prefixes:** A prefix is likened to a breeder's signature. It is by no means compulsory but for people intending to breed several foals, it is preferable to have one as all stock will be placed together in the Stud Book and it is of much service in tracing the pedigree of an animal. Prefixes tend to be chosen from names of places, farms, areas and without registering such a name, this cannot be used in conjunction with the foal's name. This continues to be the most confusing part for people naming foals so here are some examples of names to try and help explain if you are unsure:

**Simple name/no prefix:** Black Jack, Polly, Dusky Lad, Heather Bell, etc.

**Name with prefix:** Nidderdale Nancy, Creekfarm Lightning Boy, Valleyview Victor. Registering a prefix is a simple procedure but as the British Central Prefix Register is a national organisation to which the Society affiliates, it is quite possible your first choice of name has already be registered to a breeder elsewhere in Britain. This is why three choices are required at time of application, in order of preference. The choices must be all single words (no hyphens or spaces allowed) and the completed form should be returned to the Secretary together with the fee of £25 (overseas £40). The procedure takes usually a few weeks to be completed, after which registration of foals can resume as normal. Application forms are available from the Secretary.

**Stallion Licensing:** Colts are eligible from 2 years old, after 1 January of their second year. Owners must supply the Secretary with the contact details of a veterinary surgeon *from a practice other than their usual one*. An examination & report form is sent together with a letter which is copied to the colt's owner, who also receives the blood-typing kit for the vet's use. The owner makes arrangements with the vet for the inspection, after which, if the colt has passed the blood is taken. The cost of the vet's inspection is borne by the colt's owner. The appointment should be at the beginning of the week to allow the sample to arrive at the Animal Health Trust in Newmarket for testing prior to the weekend. The vet returns the examination and report forms to the Secretary, whereupon the licence is issued, records up-dated and a stallion service book is issued in the spring. It is important to register transfers of ownership of stallions so the service book is sent to the correct owner, avoiding delays. The cost of a stallion licence, which includes a subsidised blood-kit, is £50 (non-members double fee). Stallion service books must be returned by 1 September annually.

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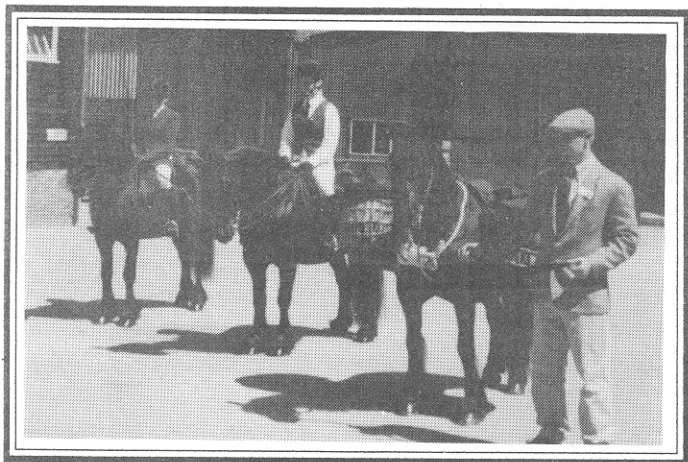
**SOUTHERN SHOW 1997** This will be held on Sunday, 14 September at Shotover by kind permission of Sir John Miller. Mrs Pam Harvey-Richards and Mr Mike Allen have kindly accepted our invitation to judge, so let's give them a record entry. The classes will remain the same, but there are still a few which would like sponsors! Schedules will be sent to 1996 exhibitors, otherwise please apply to me at the new address: Miss M G Longsdon, Eaglets, Little Longstone, Bakewell, Derbyshire, DE45 1NN.

**RARE BREEDS AT WINDSOR** On a beautiful sunny afternoon last June, we were kindly invited to take part in the Chiltern Group Rare Breeds Exhibition, There were six horses and six ponies, which included 2 Exmoor, one Dales and three Fells. These were Lunesdale Black Grouse, ridden by Lizzie Briant, Guards Robert, ridden

by Lynn Peel, representing the WHP abilities of a Fell; also my own and Michael Goddard's Bewcastle Boy Blue carrying panniers. The panniers had been borrowed from the Royal Mews and had only arrived one day previously, not allowing much time for practice!

However, all went well, and naturally the ponies behaved impeccably. The parade was watched by H.M. The Queen, who then walked down the line and spoke to each of us, the ponies receiving a pat and a polo! The afternoon was a delight and we were honoured to represent our Society.

*Mary Longdon*



**Lizzie, Lynn and Michael all ready for the Rare Breeds Exhibition**

### **BREED SHOW 1997**

The Breed Show will be held this year on 3 August, a Sunday, at Brougham Hall Farm. I am sure you will be glad to know that we will be back on our usual field. Schedules for the show are not posted to competitors, but will be available at the AGM, the Stallion Show and other FPS venues. Alternatively, you can obtain a schedule by sending an s.a.e. to either Mrs M Murray or Mrs M Laing.

The closing date for entries will be 12 July. Please try to get your entries in to Dawn well before that date if at all possible - it makes her job so much easier if she is not trying to process 150 entries in the few days between close of entries and printing of the catalogue. It should also mean the catalogue will contain less errors.

Please remember that one of the requirements is that competitors must be fully paid up members of the FPS at the time of entering. So make sure your subscription for 1997 is paid well before you write your entry form. Remember, also, that as Entries Secretary, Dawn can only accept cheques or P.O.s for your entry fees, so do not include money for subs etc.

As you will see in the schedule, there are no major changes, but please read it carefully as there are one or two differences. One thing I can assure you of - the timetable in the schedule is the one we will be using - there will be no last minute alterations.

**WHPClass.** After last year's show the Committee received quite a few criticisms about the height of the fences in the Open Class. The Show Committee, having discussed the problem, agree that the maximum height and spread of 3'3" is indeed a bit tough for ponies newly coming into the Open Classes from Novice, and have decided to build the course to a max. of 2' 9". As you know, the Open WHP Class is a qualifying class for the Ponies Association (UK) and the height/spread of 3'3" is what they stipulate. We are obliged to abide by their requirements when writing the schedule, BUT we are not obliged to build the course to their max. height. So don't be put off when reading the schedule. However, the winner of the class will have to be prepared to jump a course with every fence at 3' 3" height at the Ponies (UK) Championship!

*Margaret Murray*

## S.O.S. or A DAY IN THE COUNTRY

Those of you who have been to the Spring Performance Trials before will probably remember me as the panic-stricken person running round trying to press-gang volunteers to provide a judge at each of the cross country jumps. This is not always an easy task - Sarah Charlton will never forget the year one jump went unmanned, and no one noticed until the end, when the score sheets failed to arrive!

Last year was more difficult than ever, as although we had a record number of competitors we had few offers of help other than the handful of stalwart regulars, without whom the event would not be possible. It is understandable that parents and friends disappear when they see me heading their way - they want to watch their offspring/friend competing, but so do those who volunteer - one pair of parents ended up manning 5 jumps between them, and all I saw of my own daughter competing was at the jump I was judging. (She was probably glad I didn't see her dressage!). This is one reason for the delay in starting the show jumping, so that everyone can watch.

We aim to make the day as relaxed as possible for everyone, and if we could get enough volunteers to share jumps this would enable everyone to see at least part of the event and not be tied to one spot for up to 3½ hours (this in itself is a deterrent to volunteers).

The scoring system is very simple, the weather is usually glorious, the scenery beautiful, the course excellent, and the ponies vary from absolute beginners to olympic standard! All it needs for perfection is more jump judges, so **why not come along** you Fell Pony enthusiasts and support this unique event; breeders come and watch your produce in action; panel judges come and see the ponies you may never see in the showing; former competitors come back and see what you began; armchair riders come and sit out in the fresh air, and Fell Pony lovers in general just come and be among them. All of you are guaranteed a great day out in the country, and your help couldn't be more appreciated. The event this year is to be held on 25th May - Bank Holiday Sunday - what better way to spend the holiday weekend!

I can't grovel any more as my knees are worn out, but please contact me on 01229 774528 and I can give you more information and detailed directions to get to Linnel Wood.

*Cath Allen*

## THE BRITISH NATIVE PONY PILGRIMAGE OF 1997

This event is being organised by Mrs Pam Harvey-Richards to celebrate the Golden Wedding of H.M. The Queen and H.R.H. Prince Philip. It will start with each Native Breed leaving their own local habitat and trekking, in stages, along the bridleways, so that we end up for a final display at the Royal Show, where where we have been allocated half an hour in the main ring on Thursday afternoon.

Although this is all at a very early stage of planning, we hope to leave from Kendal during May, ride across to the Sedbergh area and on down the Pennines. To make this event a real success for our Society, we are going to need lots of help and support, and especially ponies and riders for all the various stages.

Hopefully considerably more information will be available by the Spring meeting, but meanwhile please think about it and if you have any brilliant ideas or would like to join in, please contact either Mary Longsdon (tel: 01629 640709) or Betty Walker (01768 486615).

*Mary Longsdon*

## RAFFLE RESULTS & NOVEMBER SUPPER/DANCE

It may have been pouring with rain outside, but inside the Crooklands Hotel were some 70 people who were warm, cosy, well fed and having a good time! There was much talk, dancing and some drinking too, and the feeling at the end of the night was that those who hadn't been able to make it had missed out. Never mind, there's always next time...

After a delicious meal, Mrs Laing presented a bouquet of flowers and a cheque to Rachel Bell in appreciation of her work for the Society during her tenure as Honorary Secretary and Treasurer. It was felt that as so many people had generously donated towards a gift she should have the opportunity to spend the money on her own choice of memento. Rumour has it she is saving for a new set of harness...

Following the presentation, Mrs Laing drew the raffle the results of which are as follows:

£100:	W Teasdale	Horse Rug:	Mrs M Draper
Animal Portrait:	Darcy Laing	Whiskey:	Sweeting
£15 cash:	C A Biggs	Whikey & Glasses:	J Mawson
Galloway Glass Bowl:	Mr J Ventrass	Ham Joint:	Mrs E Ball
Set of Coasters:	J Barnett	Tin Biscuits:	Swindle
Tin Biscuits:	P A Lindley	Shaving Set:	J Macdonald
Sparkling Wine:	V Llewellyn	Red Wine:	A Child
Sparkling Wine:	Mrs R Fiddes	Ale Gift Pack:	Eve Hall
Purse:	L Mather		

The raffle raised £1509.82. A big thank you goes to all those who helped to sell tickets, and those who purchased, of course. Also many thanks to Mrs Molly Laing and Mrs Christine Robinson who 'masterminded' the raffle and the dance.

P.S. There will be another Grand Raffle in 1997 - tickets will be available at FPS shows and events throughout the season.