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DANDER

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President's Report

We had a very successful scientific meeting of AVPA in Sydney on 13 and 14 February at the Sydney University Veterinary School with many interesting papers being presented indicating that there is ongoing interest in poultry diseases and their prevention. The support of all AVPA members who attended is gratefully acknowledged and in so contributing to making the occasion such a success. Tom Grimes as Organiser did an excellent job in arranging the speakers, venue and dinner and we thank Tom for his thoroughness in arranging another successful conference. The Annual General Meeting that was held at the time provided the opportunity for members having input to the Association.

Planning for the 5th Asia Pacific Conference is now underway with PIX Conference organisers agreeing to our conference being run back to back with their conference. A Scientific Committee has been put together to arrange a program for the Conference and it is planned to have an early outline of the program so the Conference can be promoted overseas and particularly in the Asia and Pacific region. The Scientific Committee comprises Dr Pat Blackall, Convenor, Peter Scott, Rod Jenner, Kevin Whithear, Tom Grimes and Amir Hadjinoormohammadi. I look forward to members enthusiastically supporting this venture. In providing such opportunities, Australia's credentials as a leader in poultry husbandry and disease control will be enhanced in the region.

In this issue is the program for AVPA presentations at the AVA Conference in May in Cairns. We were invited by AVERT, Australian Veterinarians in Education, Research

and Teaching the SIG of AVA that has a central role in animal debate within the profession, to present on the industry's and veterinarian's views on animal welfare in the poultry industry. In being present at the Conference in partnership with AVERT, the opportunity was provided to have sessions on important poultry industry topics that would be of interest to AVA members that would not normally come to AVPA meetings. Consequently, there are sessions on biosecurity and Newcastle disease control in Australia. Cairns is a very pleasant place to be at the end of May so I would encourage members to come and hear some science and to take advantage of a holiday. Ton Schat from Cornell University on sabbatical leave at AAHL will be speaking on the epidemiology of chicken anaemia virus and he has made some very interesting observations on pathogenesis and transmission of this circovirus that will help explain why it is able to produce disease and influence concurrent disease conditions in chickens. This research also has implications for circovirus infections in other species.

Since the last issue of Dander a national Newcastle Disease Implementation Plan has been agreed between the various governments and the poultry industries. Hopefully, the Plan will be enthusiastically embraced by all parties and control will be established over the progenitor ND viruses and they will be eliminated from the poultry population. George Arzey reported at the Conference that good cooperation was being received from the poultry industry in declared restricted areas in New South Wales for applying vaccination which is a very good start.

Andrew Turner

Editorial

Dander is your Newsletter and needs your inputs for it to be interesting and relevant. The Paul Gilchrist Memoires have certainly been interesting and relevant, not only as a record of Paul's professional life, but also as a historical account of the identification and control of several major poultry diseases in Australia. The names of Len Hart and Rob Cumming are prominent in that historical record. As promised in the previous edition, tributes to the lives and professional careers of Len and Rob are provided in the obituaries published in this edition of Dander.

The scientific wisdom or lack of it of the "Precautionary Principle" which led to the banning of growth-promoting antibiotics in Europe are analysed in an article reproduced in this edition of Dander.

Also on antibiotics, it was requested at the AGM that the AVPA "Code of practice on the use of antibiotics in poultry" be supplied to the membership as a file which can be printed separately to Dander. This is a very valuable document which should be referred to routinely by poultry veterinarians.

Kevin Whithear

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The Australian Veterinary Poultry Association is a Special Interest Group of the Australian Veterinary Association. Membership of the AVPA is available to individuals and groups working in, or interested in, any veterinary aspect of poultry.

Dander will be published quarterly (March, June, September and December). Contributions are welcome. Electronic copy is preferred. Deadline for copy is by the end of the second week of the month of publication. Please send information on abstracts of interesting papers, summaries of reports, case histories, social news etc. to Jill Disint, School of Veterinary Science, The University of Melbourne, 250 Princes Highway, Werribee 3030, Victoria, <j.disint@unimelb.edu.au>, fax 03 9731 2366.

Scientific Meetings

- May 2003 AVA Annual Conference, Cairns Convention Centre, Cairns Queensland, 24-30 May 2003. See this issue of Dander for details of AVPA/AVERT session on Welfare and the Poultry Industry.
- July 2003 XIII Congress WVPA, Denver, Colorado, USA, 19-23 July 2003.
Second announcement and call for abstracts has gone out. All information is available on the website <http://www.avian.uga.edu/~wvpa> or contact the AVPA's WVPA representative Dr Trevor Bagust on 03 8344 9675 or trevorjb@unimelb.edu.au
- April 2004 Fifth Asia Pacific Poultry Health Conference, Surfer's Paradise, Queensland, 22-23 April 2004.
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Obituary

Leonard Hart

29 September 1908 – 11 December 2002

"A humble veterinarian and a truly great Australian". This is how Len's family described him at the funeral and his colleagues can only agree.

Len was born in England and came to Australia as a toddler. He had an early interest in Rural Australia and even at school chose a rural career path. He attended secondary school at Hurlstone Agricultural College (where became Dux) on a bursary. He subsequently won a scholarship to Hawkesbury Agricultural College. He then won a scholarship to study Veterinary Science at the University of Sydney.

Len was the pioneer of poultry health in Australia. In 1932 he became the first to occupy the "poultry job" at the Veterinary Research Station, Glenfield. He was followed in that position by Ian Pearson, Beri Sinkovic, Paul Gilchrist and Clive Jackson, all of whom were able, with Rod Ryan, to attend his funeral. He was the first to make the initial Australian diagnosis of many poultry diseases including infectious laryngotracheitis, pullorum disease, avitaminosis A. He also described a condition he called mucoid tracheitis that subsequently turned out to be infectious bronchitis.

He developed a vaccine against infectious laryngotracheitis and a rapid whole blood test for pullorum disease. Some of his early hand-written research notes on pullorum testing are still extant. In 1948 he developed an inactivated vaccine against Fowl Tick Fever caused by the spirochaete, *Borrelia anserina*.

He left the laboratory to become a farmer on a dairy property in the NSW Southern Highlands. He also conducted a veterinary practice from the farm. He returned to the laboratory by taking up a position at the McGarvie Smith Institute where he was involved in R&D of livestock vaccines. This position was followed by his employment by Abbot Laboratories, followed by some years with Dow Chemical where he once again became a "chook vet".

He was the professional adviser behind the, then modern, coccidiostats Zoalene and Coyden. He prepared a thorough handbook on poultry diseases for farmers.

He eventually moved to Yowie Bay in Sydney's southern suburbs. A letter from that address always stirred his colleagues. It may have been a gentle nudge to remind you of a reference you had forgotten or to praise you about something he had admired.

Len was present at the first meeting that established the organisation that was to become the Australian Veterinary Poultry Association and was elected President.

He regularly attended AVPA meetings and corresponded with and phoned colleagues until 6 months before his death. At meetings, or privately later, he would often gently draw attention to publications or field experiences that may have been forgotten by younger workers. His humility prevented him from appearing superior to a colleague, or anybody else.

When Len died at 94 he was in preparation for surgery. He was survived by his wife Edna, three children and various grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Edna, his beloved wife of 65 years, died 12 days after Len.

At his funeral a number of memorabilia were displayed, including the first copy of his autobiography and a collection of photographs of Len showing him enjoying life. Those of us who were near to him professionally did not know of his interest in music, acting, tennis, billiards, sailing and gardening.

The quotation attached to the photographs could only be endorsed by his professional colleagues.

"My father didn't tell me how to live; he lived, and let me watch him do it..." *Carence Buddington Kelland*.

Len's wish was for his professional colleagues to have his autobiography and to "think of me as one at rest".

Paul Gilchrist & Clive Jackson

Obituary

Robin Badenoch Cumming

16 October 1928 – 8 January 2003

Rob Cumming passed away on Wednesday, 8th January, after 10 years of cancer treatment. A man who loved life, he was still active with his family and finishing his chores with his game fowl to the end. His love of and life with chickens began when he was a child almost as soon as he could walk. It began with the fancy breeds and these were with him throughout his life, especially Old English Game Fowl.

Rob came to the University of New England (UNE), Australia, in 1960, ostensibly as a nutritionist. With the seeing eye of the stranger, untrammelled by local conventional wisdom, he quickly became involved with the poultry farmers of Tamworth, began CRD eradication programmes and saw the effects of the so called "Uraemia Disease" supposedly of nutritional origin. He investigated, and, like others, looked for other causes beside nutrition. He eventually isolated a virus, a variant of the infectious bronchitis virus, which he showed to be the major cause of uraemia/nephritis. His success resulted from the rigid use of 9-day-old embryos for passage and final identification. He also demonstrated the other factors of meatmeal diets, temperature, breed and sex that contributed to the syndrome. This was a "tour de force" that didn't go down well with the establishment who, as always, were sensitive to the showing of a new transmissible agent which could possibly affect agricultural trade. At that time, research funds for poultry were practically non-existent, but the farmers of Tamworth, enthused by and taking to this charismatic veterinarian from South Africa, put on an egg levy to fund him. Apart from the scientific results of this gesture, and the long lasting friendships established with many of these supporters, a lasting memorial to this time is still in use - the small, wooden, isolation sheds scattered (60ft apart) in a UNE paddock.

Rob went on to produce seed material for bronchitis vaccines. Not a "bench man" he left the intricacies of viral research to co-workers and research students and developed his talent for poultry management and production. This resulted in innovative schemes of restricted feeding for layers, the use of polypeepers, broiler nutrition, and vaccination strategies, principally for infectious bronchitis. He had interests in mycotoxins, ethology and breeding. He was involved in consultation with most areas of the poultry industry, and was used as an expert witness in several litigation cases.

A veterinary degree naturally followed, then practice in South Africa, especially with an integrated poultry company. A two year stint at Bristol University, England, studying nutrition, was completed before returning to take up an academic position at Onderstepoort Veterinary School under the mentorship of Professor Douglas Cole, a person who frequently came up in Rob's conversations - especially in the post-mortem room where Rob's prowess in gross poultry pathology was exhibited to all who liked to watch. Always a field veterinarian with an academic background, he possessed an observational talent that detected any deficiency in poultry management, whether in small flocks, broiler operations or large cage sheds. The birds, the very noise and scent, made his eyes glow with pleasure or pain, depending on the circumstance.

Rob had an open, forthright, manner. Sometimes it was a little black and white and simplistic, but his nature was always encouraging and helpful. This engendered strong loyalty from his research staff and students. He listened to them and gave them freedom of action which they reciprocated with imagination and redoubled hard work. Not a "paper man" he sometimes, by omission, did not do justice to his staff or to himself. To his research students he was almost the big brother, recounting stories of rugby and college rags, whilst jumping on any peculiar results for subsequent follow up. Many of these students are in high positions in the poultry industry world-wide. His Rural Science students were charmed by his passion for poultry and his ability to simplify, yet synthesise complex details, and put them into the big picture of poultry management, production and nutrition. His practicals, using flocks of birds, and the ideas generated by them remain, still, with those students.

His passion and forthrightness, however, also meant turbulence. Life was never quiet around Rob. He was always pursuing with vigour, in speech and print, the perceived ineptness of authorities or of the way something was done. Life was uncomfortable for the recipients, some were alienated, and yet, if these same people had a problem, Rob was still willing to co-operate fully to help resolve them, proving that he was able to work as a team player. Although his irascibility increased with age and disability, commonsense generally prevailed and he usually arrived at a rational decision or agreement. To his intimates he was always a good hearted companion, able to take their criticisms, or jokes against himself, and give them back without rancour. A founder member of the Australian Veterinary Poultry Association and active in other areas of public life, he will be sorely missed by his poultry colleagues in Australia and world wide as well as by his close friends and family. The Rob Cummings of this world are "as rare as hen's teeth".

R. C. Chubb

Memoirs of a Reluctant Chook Vet — Dr Paul Gilchrist

Part 3 of a 4 part series follows the years from 1962-70 when Paul was employed at the Veterinary Research Station, Glenfield, then with Elanco, followed by a stint in private poultry practice.

GLENFIELD 1962

In the poultry practice I had done many autopsies and learned much about the industry and its problems. Sending specimens to the laboratory was almost unheard of. I had read some of the published literature and had a bit of an idea that I might have to go back to the textbooks for guidance.

I was fortunate in having Milan Lintner as my colleague in the Glenfield job. He was an eccentric guy who seemed to spend more time courting the woman who later became his wife and managing the Yugal soccer team than attending to poultry disease. He was however an excellent teacher and I benefited from his bacteriological and pathological skills and his patience. He later died in a train accident on a trip to Europe.

My main job was to diagnose poultry diseases. Specimens were brought to the laboratory by farmers without any referral by a veterinarian. Autopsies were done and the farmer advised of the cause and control measures. Advisory leaflets were prepared to hand to the farmer and for distribution to various Department of Agriculture offices for issue to enquirers. I still wish medical people would use a leaflet system to advise patients of the basic elements of their diagnoses and therapy. Remembering things of a technical and personal nature is difficult and some take home piece of paper would be a good idea.

Respiratory diseases were the most difficult diagnostic challenge at the time. Before my time most of this type of disease was known collectively as "roup". The known diseases when I started at Glenfield had been sorted out a bit and were laryngotracheitis, coryza of rapid onset, coryza of slow onset and a mild disease described by Len Hart a few years earlier as a transmissible condition he called "mucoid tracheitis".

Laryngotracheitis was a clearly recognisable condition and Australia was famous for this as a problem. Other states considered themselves free from it. A form of it associated with a severe panophthalmitis was seen in young chickens at that time and subsequently was seen in other states and I even recognised it in Indonesia many years later when the government did not recognise it as being present. Laboratory diagnosis was confirmed by infecting susceptible 6 week old White Leghorn cockerels by intra-tracheal instillation of tracheal mucus from suspect specimens. If haemorrhagic tracheitis did not develop by the sixth day (usually seen on the third day) it was negative.

Somewhere in this time it was considered that coryza of slow onset, also called "snotty nose", was probably the same as Chronic Respiratory Disease (CRD) that was described overseas. There was some work on things known as pleuro-pneumonia like organisms (PPLO) that were suspected to be the cause of coryza of slow onset. The literature and that newcomer Rob Cumming soon told us about *Mycoplasma* and mycoplasmosis.

Mucoid tracheitis became a focus of my investigations, as it seemed to fit many of the field conditions I saw. I was especially interested in a mild "snick" that occurred in 10 day old chicks on multi-age farms with birds reared in battery brooders. I attempted isolation of all the usual bacteria and also tried inoculation into chicken embryos. I was attempting to describe small embryos when Rob Cumming isolated infectious bronchitis virus from cases of kidney disease that had been called "uraemia" in the local industry. My small embryos later were recognised as typical dwarf embryos and mucoid tracheitis became infectious bronchitis.

Diagnosis of *Mycoplasma gallisepticum* was later possible with antigen imported from overseas and the organism was isolated on special media. It was some years later, when I was working for Hyline Chicks, before *M. synoviae* was recognised as the cause of a similar respiratory disease.

I was approached by Elanco Products Company to do a comparison trial, with their new product tylosin, and erythromycin, as well as untreated controls. I obtained some young chickens infected with *Mycoplasma gallisepticum* and did a simple body weight comparison trial. The results so impressed the company that they offered me the job of technical support to their marketing effort.

ELANCO 1963-68

I was the first veterinarian to be employed by Elanco in Australia. The job of technical support of the tylosin marketing program led me into fascinating contact with the poultry industry and allowed me to travel widely. Elanco introduced the coccidiostat monensin while I was there so this extended my poultry involvement.

I had a poultry diagnostic laboratory, firstly at the factory at West Ryde and later in the basement of the office at St. Leonards. The idea was to offer a free service to farmers and thus encourage their interest in the products. Again I was free of any attempts to over-use the company product.

The first three years of this job were almost exclusively poultry oriented but in the later years there was more emphasis on hormonal control of oestrus in sheep and cattle. I reaffirmed my commitment to poultry at this stage and set up my own practice.

PRIVATE PRACTICE 1968-70

I started first at rented premises at Merrylands, not too far away from a major client's hatchery. Later I was offered a new laboratory and office on the premises of T.C. Newman Pty Ltd with a deal that I did diagnostic and advisory work for their clients and they marketed any medications I recommended. It may sound like a pressurised situation but I must say that I was never pushed by them to make any particular recommendations. I felt professionally free.

My biggest clients were two major breeding companies, Scientific Poultry Breeders (SPB) (and their affiliated companies) and Hyline Chicks (and their affiliated companies).

One of the things I did while in practice was to set up a series of coccidiostat tests. I tested buquinolate and two other coccidiostats that have disappeared without a trace. Buquinolate also disappeared but I remember it because of the spectacular speed with which resistance developed. The trials were carried out in colony cages with wire floors so that reinfestation was prevented. The results showed that it worked well against a variety of local isolates and it was introduced to the market.

In a few cases it worked for the first batch but there was one case of a broiler farm in the Blue Mountains that it did not work in the first batch and 12% of the birds died with *E. tenella* infestation. It was soon withdrawn from the market and I tested an isolate from the disaster farm for resistance. It was strongly resistant.

It was while in this job that I saw a condition recently described by colleagues in meat breeders. It was a sudden death condition in mature breeders, lasting for only a few days. Autopsy signs were miliary spots in an enlarged liver. It was not possible to isolate bacteria from the livers and though antibiotics seemed to work, so did the old remedy of "masterly inaction".

The final part of *Memoirs of a Reluctant Chook Vet* will be published in the June edition of Dander. It follows Paul's career with Hyline Chicks, then back to the Department and to his present occupation as a consultant veterinarian.

Draft Minutes OGM/AGM

Ordinary/Annual General Meeting, 12th of February, 2003. Held from 5.15 pm to 6.30 pm, in the Webster Theatre, University of Sydney, Sydney, NSW

Attendees Andrew Turner, Peter Scott, Jillian Disint, Kevin Whithear, Pat Blackall, Glenn Browning, Bruce Remington, Clive Jackson, George Arzey, Tim Wilson, Phil Lehrbach, Gordon Firth, Barry Philips, John Reeves, Steve Walkden-Brown, Ray Layton, Tom Grimes, Edla Arzey, Jim Aspinall, Peter Gray, Rod Reece, John Dingle, Peter Groves.

Apologies John Barnett, Paul Gilchrist, Dinah Fry-Smith, Peter Cowling and Trevor Bagust.

Minutes OGM

Andrew Turner opened the meeting.

Peter Scott moved that the minutes of the previous OGM and AGM be accepted. These had been published in Dander. Andrew Turner seconded the motion, motion carried.

Matters arising from the Minutes

(a) Undergraduate scholarship program.

Andrew Turner advised that this program would start operating at the University of Melbourne in 2003 and in Queensland next year; with other Universities to follow although Murdoch had reported that it was not in a position to support the proposal with the necessary technical support..

(b) AP5 (in combination with PIX 2004).

PIX is generally held on the Sunday, Monday, Tuesday. Therefore AP5 would be the Wednesday, Thursday.

The scientific program needs to be determined.

Advertising of AP5 at WVPA should be considered.

Minutes AGM

President's Report Andrew Turner gave a report which was published in Dander, January 2003

Treasurer's report Peter Scott read a letter prepared by Peter Cowling in Peter Cowling's absence and noted that detailed statements would be published in a future edition of Dander, given there were small differences in balancing the financial statements. The statements would be published in Dander as soon as available.

Peter Scott then thanked all the sponsors of the conference and gave a précis of the services

and products each supplied.

Andrew Turner then outlined the details about AVPA and the difficulties for a small organisation like AVPA in using credit cards for conference payments and subscriptions, which had been prepared by Peter Cowling in response from the comment at a previous meeting. No comment was received.

Exotic diseases and
Importation Sub-
committee

George Arzey gave a verbal report. The main document for attention was the importation of SPF eggs.

Therapeutics Sub-
committee

Tom Grimes submitted the annual report of this subcommittee, which had been published in the January 2003 edition of Dander.

The NRA mandatory restraint claim was discussed and it was concluded that any impetus for action must come from the industry.

Tom Grimes requested that the code of practice on the use of antibiotics be printed as an insert in the next edition of Dander.

Welfare Sub-
committee

No further report issued. Report for November OGM published in January 2003 edition of Dander.

WVPA

No further report issued. Report for November OGM published in January 2003 edition of Dander.

Dander

Kevin Whithear reiterated that there would be 4 editions of Dander published each year and asked all members to send in material to ensure the publication maintained value and relevance for members.

Website

No report had been issued and Dr Burgess was not in attendance. Andrew Turner asked if there were any issues requiring attention with the website and none were noted.

Steve Walkden-Brown asked if presentations could be loaded onto the website. Conference presentations had been loaded onto the website where presenters had agreed from the last three AVPA Conferences.

Jim Aspinall suggested a link with the APSA website be established from the AVPA website.

Election of Office
Bearers

All positions on the AVPA Executive were reconfirmed as follows.

President – Andrew Turner. Nominated by Kevin Whithear, seconded by Steve Walkden-Brown

President-elect – Peter Scott. Nominated by Pat Blackall, seconded by Tom Grimes.

Secretary – Jill Disint. Nominated by Glenn Browning, seconded by Tom Grimes.

Treasurer – Peter Cowling. Nominated by Pat Blackall, seconded by Kevin Whithear.

Convenor, Importation and Exotic Diseases Subcommittee – George Arzey. Nominated by Clive Jackson, seconded by Peter Groves.

Convenor, Therapeutics Subcommittee – Tom Grimes. Nominated by Pat Blackall and seconded by Steve Walkden-Brown.

Convenor, Welfare Subcommittee – John Barnett. Nominated by Peter Scott and seconded by Peter Groves.

WVPA Bureau Member – Trevor Bagust. Nominated by Clive Jackson and seconded by Kevin Whithear.

Website Co-ordinator – Graham Burgess. Nominated by Pat Blackall, seconded by Bruce Remington.

Editor, Dander – Kevin Whithear. Nominated by Andrew Turner, seconded by Peter Scott

Other Business

Holding a meeting in November, 2003 in Melbourne. Tom Grimes felt that the holding of 2 meetings of AVPA a year should be maintained. The President advised that the Executive will assess this request.

Andrew Turner outlined the AVPA program at the AVA conference being held in May. New inclusions were Ton Schat and Jim Aspinall to complement the sections on Welfare and the Poultry Industry, Biosecurity and the Deed of Agreement to Control EAD and Newcastle Disease Symposium.

Membership of SIG's of the AVA. Andrew Turner outlined the requirements for membership of the AVA and the AVPA. It was reported that for legal reasons that there would need to be a contribution of part of our AVPA membership fee to go to the AVA to cover the requirement for indemnity and liability and other insurances. Clive Jackson asked if a legal opinion of the AVPA position is required?

Andrew Turner noted that the AVPA has the option of having a number of membership options, including associate membership for non-veterinarians, student membership or veterinary membership outside of Australian resident veterinarians.

Steve Walkden-Brown suggested that we would need to amend the AVA constitution if this occurred.

Andrew Turner advised that he was not sure that this was so and would discuss the issue with other SIG's and see if they concur then discuss with the AVA Executive.

Peter Scott raised the issue of the impact of NDV on the industry, stating he felt the AVPA should have a position on this.

Clive Jackson suggested that George Arzey prepare a comment.

Peter Groves noted that the technical working group on NDV has AVPA members on it and that the AVPA has input in this way and that these members included George Arzey.

Kevin Whithear noted that the AVPA has a role to act as an authoritative voice; Bruce Remington agreed and also felt the AVPA should have a clear opinion on this issue.

It was suggested that a Subcommittee be formed and a proposal for comment be prepared and sent to all members by email for their input.

Meeting closed 6.30pm.

Appointment of Animal Welfare Chair

The Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Warren Truss, has welcomed the appointment of Professor Clive Phillips to the Chair in Animal Welfare at the University of Queensland.

"The Commonwealth has committed to making a grant of \$500,000 over three years to assist in establishing the Chair in Animal Welfare at the University of Queensland," Mr Truss said.

"Professor Phillips has a strong animal husbandry background and extensive experience in both animal behaviour and animal welfare."

Professor Phillips is currently Senior Lecturer in Farm Animal Production Medicine, Department of Clinical Veterinary Medicine, University of Cambridge.

He will be present at the University of Queensland during April and will take up full time duties in August.

"Cambridge is seen to be the premier science university in the United Kingdom," Mr Truss said.

"Given his background and experience, Professor Phillips is expected to significantly strengthen the research and education activities at the University of Queensland.

"The Commonwealth Government's commitment to establishing the Animal Welfare Chair highlights the high priority that the Commonwealth places on animal welfare issues."

Treasurer's Report

At our recent AGM I indicated through our President that our 2002 detailed financial statements would be published in this edition of Dander. Unfortunately this won't be the case, as the AVA like myself have not been able to reconcile our profit & loss/ balance sheet. All of our financial details have now been passed onto their official auditors who I trust will have it sorted out before the next edition.

The following reconciliation of our Sydney conference shows that it was very much a financial success, and a vote of thanks must go to our valued sponsors and the efforts of Tom Grimes and Peter Scott.

There are still some funds outstanding (as shown), but would I expect that most if not all will be honoured in the not too distant future.

Peter Cowling
Honourary Treasurer

Balance Sheet: Scientific Meeting Sydney February 2003

Income	\$	Expenditure	\$	Summary	\$
Delegates	6009.00	University of Sydney		Income Received	
Sponsors		Conference venue hire	654.54	Delegates	4800.00
Alpharma	250.00	Equipment hire	207.27	Sponsors	2300.00
All Farm	250.00	Catering	696.91	Income Outstanding	
Baiada	300.00	Labour	445.45	Delegates	1209.09
Bioproperties	250.00	Conference Dinner	2790.91	Sponsors	1300.00
CCD Animal Health	500.00	Printing Proceedings	316.55		
Elanco	300.00			Expected Income	9609.00
Fort Dodge	250.00			Less Expenditure	5111.63
Intervet	500.00				
Janos Hoey	250.00				
Roche	250.00				
Virukill	500.00				
TOTAL	9609.00	TOTAL	5111.63	EXPECTED SURPLUS	4497.37

Note: Figures shown are exclusive of GST

Australian Poultry Award 2002 for Dr Tom Grimes

Dr Tom Grimes was a worthy winner of 2002 Australian Poultry Award. The award was presented at the opening ceremony at the Combined 12th Australian Poultry and Feed Convention and the 7th World Poultry Science Association Asian Pacific Federation Conference at the Gold Coast in October 2002.

The citation for the award concluded : "Tom Grimes has spent 35 years working in and for the Australian Poultry Industry. At the commencement of his career he set himself high professional standards that he has diligently maintained. In view of his outstanding contribution to the industry for more than 30 years, Dr Tom Grimes is indeed a worthy recipient of the Australian Poultry Award".

The citation also recognised Tom's contributions to AVPA:

"Tom has been a regular participant and frequent speaker at Australian and international poultry conferences. As a member of WPSA, AVPA and AVA since 1968, he has held committee positions in each association and has served on government and industry committees representing the poultry industry. Tom was honoured by the AVPA and AVA receiving an AVA Meritorious Award in 2001."

"In recent years Tom has been active on behalf of the AVPA and the poultry industry in antibiotic resistance issues. In 2000 he chaired a sub-committee that updated the AVPA Code of Practice for the Use of Antibiotics for the Poultry Industry. He is a member of a number of professional, agriculture and health committees addressing antibiotic use and antibiotic resistance issues, having served on the Joint Expert Technical Advisory Committee on Antibiotic Resistance (JETACAR) and as a member of the Expert Advisory Group on Antimicrobial Resistance (EAGAR)".

The European ban on growth-promoting antibiotics and its consequences for animal and human health

Mark Casewell, Emeritus Professor of Medical Microbiology (UK); Christian Friis, Professor of Veterinary Medicine (Denmark); Enrico Marco Granell, Swine Practitioner (Spain); Paul McMullin, Poultry Practitioner (UK) and Ian Phillips, Emeritus Professor of Medical Microbiology (UK).
November 2002

This paper was released by FEDESA <http://www.fedesa.be> in November 2002. FEDESA is the European Federation of Animal Health, representing manufacturers of animal health products. Founded in 1987, its membership comprises 16 national associations, 16 corporate members and 1 affiliated corporate member. Together, these members represent more than 90% of the market for veterinary medicines in Europe.

Following the ban on all growth-promoting antibiotics in Sweden in 1986, and the ban on avoparcin and virginiamycin in Denmark in 1995 and 1998, the EU banned the use of five antibiotics for growth promotion in 1999, on the basis of the "Precautionary Principle". These antibiotics were avoparcin (a glycopeptide), bacitracin, spiramycin and tylosin (macrolides), and virginiamycin (a streptogramin combination). The driving forces behind these bans were consumer and political opinion, and a scientific concern that resistance selected in animals might be transmitted to humans to the detriment of their health.

Experience in Sweden had already shown that the bans might have adverse consequences for animal health and welfare, and adverse economic consequences for farmers [1]. There were also suggestions that human health is unlikely to benefit and that it might even be adversely affected [2, 3]. Events in Europe since the ban have shown that these concerns were well founded.

The ban has resulted, as intended, in the complete removal of the banned compounds as growth promoters. In Denmark, for example, where over 105 metric tonnes of antibiotics were used for growth promotion in 1996, the usage fell to nil by 2000 [4]. This was accompanied by a diminution of resistance to avoparcin, macrolides and virginiamycin among enterococci, studied as an "indicator" species, in food-animal faeces, in Denmark and elsewhere [4, 5, 6]. Thus the pool of antibiotic resistance genes appears to have diminished, at least in enterococci.

The diminution has, however, been at the cost of a deterioration in animal welfare. There have been reports of increased morbidity and mortality, for example among young pigs [7], mostly associated with enteric infections, in Denmark [8], and in poultry, again associated with enteritis, in France [9]. This has driven, at least in part, a substantial increase in the use of therapeutic antibiotics in Europe [10-14] – in Denmark from an overall 48 tonnes in 1986 to 94 tonnes in 2001 [5]. The main antibiotics involved in this increase have been tetracycline, mostly used in pigs, whose usage increased from 12.9 to 27.9 tonnes (a 106% increase), macrolides and lincosamides (7.6 to 14.3 tonnes, 88%), and aminoglycosides (7.1 to 11.9 tonnes, 68%) [4, 5]. This has occurred despite attempts to improve other critical aspects of animal husbandry [15] to make up for the loss of the growth promoters. Experience in Sweden suggest that this may eventually be partially effective but with an increased financial burden [1], but it is far from clear that this will apply to the whole of Europe where conditions are different from those of Scandinavia.

The only clearly attributable effect on humans has been a diminution in acquired resistance in enterococci isolated from human faecal **carriers** [16]. However, there has been no diminution in the prevalence of resistant enterococcal **infection** in humans: little could be expected in Scandinavia where VRE infections have rarely been reported [17,18]. Rather vancomycin resistance appears to be increasing in enterococcal infections in some parts of Europe over the period of the ban, probably in relation to the increased prevalence of methicillin-resistant staphylococcal (MRSA) infection [17] necessitating the increased use of glycopeptides and streptogramins – mimicking the conditions found in the USA [19] where a high incidence of VRE infection has emerged in humans in the absence of the use of avoparcin as a growth promoter.

The antibiotic susceptibility of salmonellae and campylobacters, responsible for the major zoonoses in Europe, could not have been expected to be affected by the ban to the benefit of human health (except possibly in relation to macrolides in the case of campylobacters) since they are Gram-negative organisms while the growth promoters banned had a Gram-positive spectrum of activity. However, human salmonellosis stubbornly refuses to disappear in response to control measures in Europe, and microbiologically confirmed infection actually increased in prevalence in Denmark in 2001 [5] after it had declined for three years [20]. Increased antibiotic resistance might be driven by increases in the use of therapeutic antibiotics in animals, consequent to the ban, but this remains a theoretical hazard not subjected to risk analysis. The case of campylobacter appears to be even worse: in Denmark it has steadily increased in prevalence over the past decade [20] and there is more tetracycline and fluoroquinolone resistance in human than in animal isolates [5]. One possibility is that the persistence or even increase in prevalence of these two zoonoses might in part be driven by the removal of growth-promoting antibiotics but so far as we are aware this hazard has not been explored

in Europe.

The published evidence suggests that the growth-promoter bans have reduced overall antibiotic use in animals, and that this may have resulted in a diminution of part of the resistance gene pool, in animal and human faecal enterococci. Animal welfare has suffered, and despite efforts to improve other aspects of husbandry the veterinary use of therapeutic antibiotics has increased. This increase constitutes a theoretical hazard to human health in relation to resistance in salmonellae, campylobacters (and *Escherichia coli* if it is zoonotic). Salmonella and campylobacter infections are increasingly prevalent in Europe and the removal of growth promoters might be involved - a possible hazard that has not been explored. Resistant enterococcal infections in humans are increasingly prevalent in some parts of Europe despite the growth promoter ban and the reduction of carriage of resistant enterococci in animal and human faeces: this may be driven by increased glycopeptide and streptogramin use for infections with MRSA.

In our opinion, the efforts and expenditure involved in the imposition of the ban would much better have been spent on achieving rational antibiotic use in animals and humans, and on much greater efforts to understand the complex epidemiology of resistant pathogens and resistance genes, as well as on adequate risk assessments. We also believe that the remaining growth promoting antibiotics still in use in Europe should not be banned until the adverse consequences can be dealt with in Europe as a whole.

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MEMBERSHIP

Below is a list of financial members as of 16 March 2003. If your name is **not** on the list then please make use of the Application Form on the back page of this newsletter to forward a subscription renewal cheque to Peter Cowling, Honorary Treasurer by 31 March 2003.

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AVPA Sustaining Members

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Please see the AVPA website for more information on our sustaining members and links to their websites where available.

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We thank the following sustaining members for already (as of 16 March) renewing their memberships for 2003.



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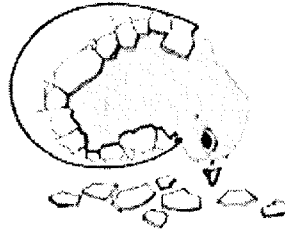


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Name: Phone:
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Qualifications:

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Are you a member of the Australian Veterinary Association? YES/NO
(Note: Membership of AVPA does not provide membership of AVA).

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Membership fees are due by the 31st of March, 2003.
Annual membership fees are \$50.00 (inc GST) for individuals and
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Please find enclosed cheque made out to the Australian Veterinary Poultry
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