

**ISSUE 7  
WINTER  
2011**

# **Victorian Tradesman's & Delivery Horse Group Inc Newsletter**



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## **PRESIDENTS NOTE**

As the cold and wet has started to set in for the winter, our thoughts start to turn towards the 2011 show season. I'm pleased to see the addition of a Pony Delivery Turnout class into the program for the 2011 Royal Melbourne Show. The committee felt that there was a need for such a class with the increasing number of ponies being shown, and are very pleased that the horse council committee of the RAS, has taken our suggestions on board. The judge at Melbourne Show this year is Mr Peter Strafford, who has judged at various harness events, been a qualified farrier for many years, and competed in the tradesman's & delivery section on many occasions. I wish all those competing good luck and encourage spectators to come along a see again a good line up of vehicles and horses. Hopefully the show season this year will be blessed with better weather, and I again encourage competitors to support our shows. Just a quick reminder that in addition to our hub shows, we will now accept horses and/or vehicles which have been champion or reserve at 2 or more non hub show qualifiers. Just a reminder of our hub shows (Bendigo, Geelong, Cobram, Whittlesea & Dandenong).

Another change to the end of year Victorian Tradesman's & Delivery Championships, will be a rebate for every horse, which is in attendance. I'm proud to announce that our group has purchased an ablution block, which has been placed at the Heathcote Showgrounds. The committee had a working bee on the block, where it was painted, plumbed and has since had the electricity put on, so all that is needed now is to complete the fit out inside. A caravan has also been purchased, which will act as a mobile office and storage space. The VT&DHG will be having a training/fun day in early August, please see inside for further details. I wish everyone luck for this upcoming show season.

**John Mullenger**

If anyone has anything that they would like to see in the newsletter, or any advertisements or stories which they would like to contribute to the newsletter please feel free to let me know

[www.vtdhg.org.au](http://www.vtdhg.org.au)



**Harness Day**  
**Heathcote Showgrounds**  
**Saturday 13th August**  
**10am Start**

**From Beginners To Advanced**  
**Hands On Education, Novelties/Games**  
**Prizes On The Day**

**Camping Available**  
**BBQ and Videos Sat Night**

Feel free to stay the night and compete on Sunday in the CCHS  
Driving Day (for program see next page)  
Small number of horse yards available, please contact us if you  
require a yard

**Enquiries: 0412 700068**  
**secretary@vtdhg.org.au**

# Heathcote Clydesdale & Information Day

Sunday August 14th 10am Start

## Heathcote Showgrounds

### Ring 1

- Class 1– Novice Horse driven in Reins
- Class 2– Single Horse in a Tyre
- Class 3– Pair of Horses in a Sled
- Class 4– Single Horse in a Sled, Two Person Novelty
- Class 5– Single Horse in a Tyre, Flag & Barrel Race

### Ring 2

- Class 1– Novice Junior Driver, 5-17 Years
- Class 2– Junior Driver 5-17 Years
- Class 3– Junior Novelty Class
- Class 4– Novice Driver over 18 Years
- Class 5– Lady Driver
- Class 6– Gentleman Driver
- Class 7– Ridden Heavy Horse
- Class 8– Ridden Handy Mount

- Only CCHS members are eligible to compete in rings 1 & 2
- Non-members wishing to compete may obtain a day insurance at \$11.00 per person, from the organisers
- Information talks on the day covering a range of topics
- A competitor briefing will take place at 9.30am
- Horses must be presented in a good clean condition and harness must be in a safe working condition

Catering available on the day  
For more information please contact  
Bruce Hamblin - 03 5433 6243  
Cathy Chandler - 03 5859 2313

# *Upcoming Events....*

## AUGUST

13th - Harness Information Day, Heathcote Showgrounds, 10am Start

14th - CCHS Clydesdale Driving & Information Day, Heathcote Showgrounds, 10am Start

## SEPTEMBER

11th - VT&DHG Inc AGM, Kalkallo Hotel, Kalkallo 1.30pm Start

25th - Tradesman's & Delivery Classes @ Royal Melbourne Show

## OCTOBER

1st - Nathalia Agricultural Show

8th - Sunbury Agricultural Show

16th - Royal Geelong Agricultural Show

- Maldon Agricultural Show

22nd - Bendigo Agricultural Show

- Cobram Agricultural Show

## NOVEMBER

6th - Whittlesea Agricultural Show

7th - Colac Agricultural Show

12th - Dandenong Agricultural Show

- Koroit Agricultural Show

13th - Ballarat Agricultural Show

20th - Kyneton Agricultural Show

- Clunes Agricultural Show

- Noorat Agricultural Show

26th & 27th - Victorian Tradesman's & Delivery Championships,  
Heathcote Showgrounds

## DECEMBER

3rd & 4th - Possible Dates for School with Vince Corvi

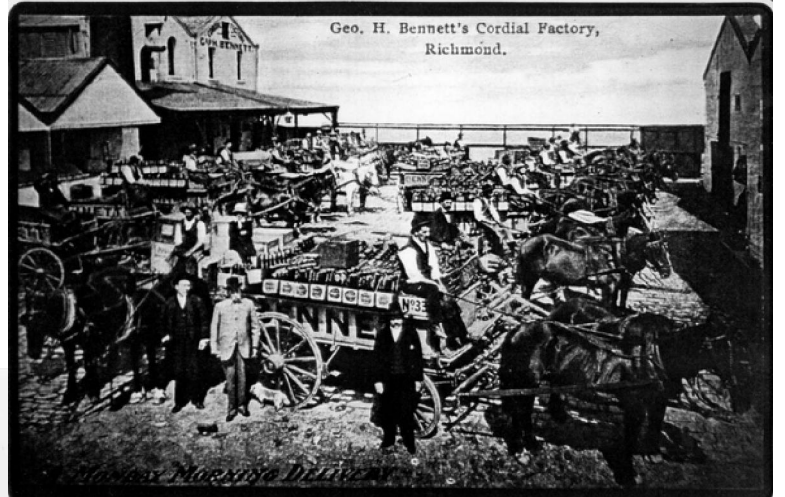
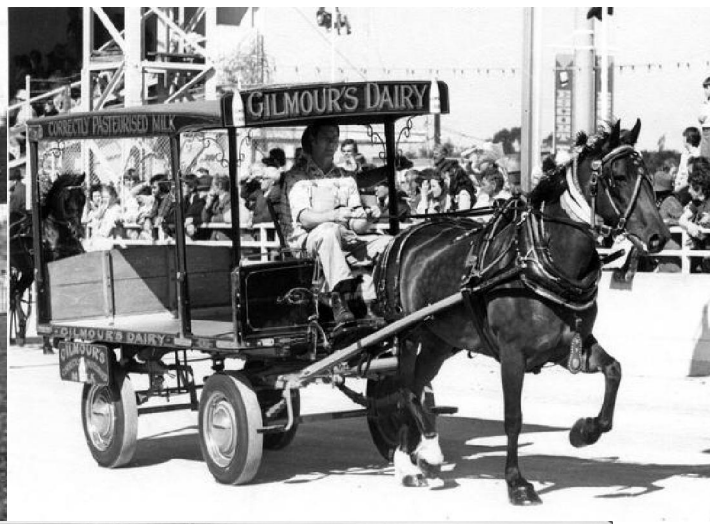
Christmas BBQ/Family Fun Day

# 2011 Selected Harness & Vehicle Sale

March this year saw the 3rd running of the Selected Harness and Vehicle Sale by the VT&DHG Inc. With over 600 Lots, of all manner of horse related items, there was something there for everyone and there were some well fought bargains. Amongst the sale items, where high quality delivery show vehicles and turnout quality show harness, both light and delivery styles, along with a large quantity of work gear and vehicles. The committee would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication to the cause by John & Courtney Mullenger and all those who helped along the way in making this years sale a great success, without this there would be no sale. With approximately 500 people in attendance, we were able to have a clearance rate and a buying rate above 70% . On behalf of the committee we would like to thank all those involved and those who were in attendance, and hope to bring you another sale next year



Stay tuned later on in the year for information regarding if there will be a selected horse, harness and vehicle sale next. If you have anything you would like to sell please let us know



# Vince Corvi Harness School



The committee would like to inform our members that we are trying to secure the services of Mr Vince Corvi for a 2 day school, which will most likely run on the weekend of the 3rd & 4th of December. We are currently working on the details such as location and prices, and as soon as this is worked out we will let you know. There would be probably 10 places available each day for one on one tuition, at a higher cost, but we will also be accepting fence sitters at a lower cost. We are currently seeking expressions of interest, if this is for you please contact us on 54221256 or via [secretary@vtdhg.org.au](mailto:secretary@vtdhg.org.au). Keep a regular eye on the website ([www.vtdhg.org.au](http://www.vtdhg.org.au)) for updates

*For those who don't know Vince Corvi is....*

Truly one of Australia's greatest horsemen. From a very early beginning, Vince Corvi has been involved in many facets of the horse industry. Firstly winning all major riding awards from an early age and then becoming a master trainer of Show hacks across Australia. His main interest and aim, was and is speared on by his love of the Hackney horse and pony. Vince took to training and showing harness horses and ponies with great zest, he was excelled into the world of harness, with great success in training and showing for the late Mrs Pauline Faulkner and has since done the same for many owners. Spending time in the UK with the queen of the harness world Cynthia Hayden, inspired Vince to become the best in the business. Upon his return to Australia he began a very strong association with the Dunolly Hackney Show Team as head trainer and driver of countless fine harness horses and ponies, winning every major harness award throughout Australia. Vince Corvi is highly regarded amongst his peers and admirers as the guru of the Australian harness world, with his vast knowledge in conformation, movement, trainability and show craft. Don't miss the chance to see this truly great horseman in action.

## Light Trade

Over the last few years Light Trade classes at many shows across the country have become both popular and spectacular. Looking back in our records at the 1985 BDS Journal it is interesting to read below two articles entitled Commercial Classes written by the founder of the BDS the late Sanders Watney and Light Trade Class Judging by the late Norman Robarts a very prominent and highly respected judge of the time.

### COMMERCIAL CLASSES

by the late Sanders Watney  
(from BDS Journal 1985)

Now that commercial classes are becoming increasingly popular and are included in the BDS Show, a few words on correct fittings and equipment for these turnouts may be of interest.

Basically, all harness is similar, but the bridles and saddles, or pads, of trade harness are both stronger and heavier than those used for private driving. Trade harness frequently also has fittings made of white metal – as this was found easier than brass to keep looking polished, and had the owner's initials, or firm's trade mark as embellishments on the winkers etc. The winkers themselves were frequently square, or hatchet shape in design, with Wilson snaffle bits, while the traces ended in chains. Brightly coloured leather, decorating items such as pads and kidney beaters are only acceptable in Coster turnouts, and were never used for ordinary Trade harness.

The drivers of ponies and cobs used for delivery work were always immensely proud of their animals, and took great pride in their presentation as well as their vehicles, which, for Show purposes, should be empty except for articles used as receptacles with the products sold – such as baskets for bread and meat, and milk churns.

In addition to the suitability of the horses to their vehicles, and these varied from sturdy cobs, to the smart Hackneys beloved by butchers and fishmongers, it was important for them to be taught to stand quietly when unattended, and in the case of milkmen's horses, to move forward on command, and some Judges may expect them to do this in the Show ring today, although this might be considered unwise.

In the old days, both butchers and fishmongers wore aprons with blue and white stripes, so, in order to differentiate between them, the positioning of the stripes varied with the two trades – butchers' aprons being striped horizontally, while those for fishmongers were vertical. During the summer months they wore straw boaters on their heads, while in the winter these were exchanged for bowler hats.

Tradition dies hard these days, and the sight of light trade turnouts is still extremely popular in the ring.

### LIGHT TRADE CLASS JUDGING

by the late Norman Robarts  
(from BDS Journal 1985)

**1. VEHICLE** – As there are very few real working Light Trade Turnouts operating today, the first thing to consider is the general condition of the vehicle; bodywork (interior and exterior); paint; wheels; tyres; shafts; equipment if carried, (not always necessary but an added



plus if all other things are equal). Lamps should be either candle or oil, not electric battery.

**2. HORSE** – Is the horse suitable for the vehicle? And for the job? And able to pull the load adequately? Is it sound, and in good condition? Will it stand unattended if required? And goes straight? In all instances, Trade horses should walk quietly and sensibly, as well as trot. Light Trade Horses should also be able to back at least five yards, preferably ten. Particular attention should be paid to the condition of the horse's feet. "No foot no horse" was a motto taught many years ago. It must be remembered that in true working conditions, most trade horses would need shoeing every two to three weeks. Age is not particularly important, but no Trade horse should be under 4 years old. If all other things are equal a young horse – say 5 to 8 years would be better than one 16 to 20 or over.

**3. HARNESS** – Should fit the horse, and be suitable for the vehicle as well as strong, clean, supple and well maintained? Except under

special circumstances, Trade Harness should be black, and not too flashy. Special attention should be given to the fit of the collar. If it is either too small or too large, the animal will not be able to work satisfactorily; also it is most important that the traces are of the right length, and that the breeching will do its job satisfactorily. It is not of great importance whether the fittings are brass or white metal chrome, but they should match those on the vehicle. Whips should always be carried.

**4. DRIVER** – The driver should be neat, tidy and correctly dressed; a hat should be worn, depending on the particular trade. It can be a straw boater, uniform cap, or bowler. If aprons are worn, the stripes should be correct, i.e. whilst a fishmonger's stripes are vertical (up and down); those of a butcher and milkman are horizontal. Cash bags should be carried if the particular job necessitates the collection of cash, as should Round books or Cash books, baskets etc.

**5. COMPLETE TURNOUT** – It is difficult to be too specific but the whole turnout should "Click" in the Judge's mind, and it is important to consider the ability of the animal for the job i.e. I would expect a sharp good goer in a Baker's Cart, Butcher's Cart or Milk Float, because in the days when they were in use, the average daily journey could have been anything from 12 to 20 miles. A heavier milk van or Coster's turnout would probably not be expected to travel more than 10 miles daily but the load would be much greater and therefore the horse would have to be stronger and heavier and possibly not quite so active.

Comparing these articles from 1985 against judging criteria today it is good to see that the high judging standards are still adhered to. It should however be mentioned the Commercial Classes described by Sanders Watney are now incorporated within our Light Trade classes today.

These days the driver does not dismount from the vehicle in the ring. However the judge would expect the turnout to be able to stand quietly.

Unless the schedule allows, no goods should be carried.

If the class includes an Osborne Qualifier for either 2 of 4 wheeled Light Trade, no goods should be carried, a coster turnout may carry a small sample load; for example: a bushel box with a selection of fruit and vegetables or a small sack of rag and bones.



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# Seasonal Laminitis Risk - Autumn/Winter

Dr John Kohnke BVSc RDA

There were reports in late autumn 2010 of outbreaks of laminitis and founder in horses and ponies in Victoria's Gippsland, Tasmania, South Australia, Western Australia and many other areas where good rainfalls through autumn and winter resulted in pasture growth.

The majority of cases occurred after early winter rains helped pasture to continue to grow before the cold weather set in. Cases of laminitis were reported within a few days to a fortnight after a number of mornings of heavy frosts in June and early July. In warmer areas, late autumn rains have kept a supply of green grass for grazing, with many horses being turned out for a 'strip out' and 24/7 paddock grazing on warmer winter days. **Both these scenarios are a recipe for laminitis and founder.**

## Why is frosted grass so dangerous?

Grass and clovers naturally contain high levels of soluble sugars and non-structural carbohydrates (NSCs) during their active growth phase under suitable conditions. A heavy frost can abruptly stop plant growth and plants enter a stress recovery phase. They accumulate sugars in the stem base in an attempt to fuel their regrowth under more suitable conditions.

This results in the plant stems and leaves being more easily digested in the small intestine to release sugars, combined with the plant base becoming sweet to taste because it is more highly concentrated in sugars and more attractive to a grazing horse. Hungry horses, especially 'cresty' ponies or horses with Equine Metabolic Syndrome (EMS) and insulin resistance (IR), such as conditioned show hacks and other horses over 10-12 years of age which are turned out during the day, and particularly those at pasture 24/7, are tempted to consume large amounts of the 'sweet' sugary plants.

This can result in an increase in blood sugar concentration causing a rapid elevation in insulin hormone levels in an attempt to maintain normal blood sugar concentration. If the circulating insulin level is already high due to underlying IR in a 'cresty' pony or over-weight horse, the surge of insulin is likely to trigger metabolic changes in the glucose supply to the lamellae of the hooves and devitalisation of the basement membrane and the onset of insulin-induced laminitis.

## Handy Hint

### Remove High Risk Horses from Frosted Pastures

Within 4-5 days of a severe frost, or a series of frosts, dying plants can accumulate high concentrations of soluble sugars. If you notice severely wilted plants within 2-3 days following a heavy frost, remove high risk ponies and horses out of the paddock into a yard or onto a small grazing area under trees on higher ground which is less affected by frosts. If a pony has a hard 'crest' and lumpy tail-butt fat deposits, confine the animal to a yard and feed soaked hay at 1 kg dry weight per 100kg body weight per day. Provide a small feed of lucerne chaff (250g per 100kg body weight twice daily) in the yard to reduce calorie intake and supplement with Kohnke's Own **TRIM** to help maintain blood sugar control. Lucerne has a lower natural content of soluble and non-structural carbohydrates (NSCs) as compared to grass, cereal or clover hay (Refer to the Handy Hint below on how to soak hay).

## Handy Hint

### How to Soak Hay to Remove Soluble Sugars

Soaking high risk grass hay in **double its volume of luke-warm water** for 60 minutes can reduce the soluble sugar content by 30-35%. Drain and air dry before feeding. Soaking lucerne hay in the same way can reduce its soluble sugar content by 25%. Good quality lucerne hay is lower in sugars and NSCs to start with, and it is much safer when soaked, as compared with good quality grass hay. First cut lucerne hay with a high C3 grass content must be soaked for high risk horses. If all the hay is soaked, then some of the soluble trace-mineral, vitamin and salt content can be leached out into the soaking water. Daily supplementation with Kohnke's Own **Cell-Provide**®, **Cell-Vital**® or **Aussie Sport**™, as well as **Cell-Salts**™, will help to replace these essential nutrients for health and vitality.

## Handy Hint

### Making Lucerne Safer to Feed

Besides soaking lucerne hay, simply bashing it on the floor or over the edge of a drum to remove the leaves and save the more fibrous stems, significantly reduces NSC content for horses with EMS or IR. The stems can be fed to high risk horses, with the leaves being mixed into the feed as lucerne chaff for other horses.



# Seasonal Laminitis Risk - Autumn/Winter

## Handy Hint

### First Aid for Laminitic Horses

If you observe a shortened, stiffer gait and painful movement with the front toes extended forward, immediately check for warmth in the hooves and a digital pulse. Prompt first aid for laminitis is essential. Confine the horse to a stable or small yard and ice the hooves with foot baths of iced water for as long as possible, or for at least 20-30 minutes, 3-4 times per day (most horses and ponies will stand in a large bowl or shallow tub filled with ice blocks). Alternatively, wrap a 2-3 kg bag of ice around each hoof and secure with an elastic wrap to hold the bag in place while the ice melts. Replace when the ice melts away. **Contact your vet for advice.** Medication with anti-inflammatory medications, such as 'bute', are beneficial to reduce pain and swelling within the hoof. Standing the horse on wet sand also helps provide support to the soles and helps reduce the risk of internal hoof collapse.

## Why do Late Autumn Rains Increase the Risk of Laminitis and Founder?

If the season is uncharacteristically warmer than usual and late rains promote plant growth while still under the warm, sunny conditions, growing plants can accumulate high levels of soluble sugars and NSCs in their stems and leaves. This alone can increase the risk of laminitis in horses and ponies turned out 24/7 on growing pasture due to the overload of the soluble carbohydrates into the hindgut and the development of hindgut acidosis as a result of an increased fermentation and D-lactic acid production by *Lactobacillus spp.* bacteria in the hindgut. This in turn can trigger a cascade of hindgut acidosis, death of other bacteria, release of toxins and absorption into the blood. These toxins can circulate to the hooves and shut down normal blood and glucose supply to the lamellae, weakening their attachments to each other and the pedal bone.

**If a 'cresty' pony or EMS affected horse, is allowed to graze on this pasture 24/7 or if a sudden frost checks plant growth and concentrates the sugars, this type of pasture has a very high risk of triggering both an insulin surge and a hindgut acidosis form of laminitis. Note: A horse does not always have to be 'cresty' or over-weight to have underlying EMS condition and therefore a high risk of laminitis when grazing large areas of frost damaged pasture, as excess intake can cause an insulin surge as well as an overload of sugars into the hindgut.**

## Handy Hint

### When to use Founderguard®, EquiShure® or Trim™

Theoretically, the hindgut acidosis resulting from an overload of fructan sugars, soluble sugars and carbohydrates by excessive grazing of grass and clover pastures can be suppressed by dosing with Vetsearch Founderguard® or neutralised by feeding KER EquiShure® in a hard feed. However, in the case of 'cresty' ponies and over-weight, EMS horses consuming frosted grass and high sugar grass hay, the uptake of soluble sugars from the small intestine can trigger an insulin surge and lead to insulin-induced laminitis in an already insulin resistant animal. In this case, **Kohnke's Own Trim™**, which contains specific nutrients which have roles in sugar metabolism, slowing insulin reactivity and assisting fat metabolism, would be the product of choice to help maintain blood sugar levels. Many owners opt for a complete approach by supplementing with Trim™, as well as Founderguard® or EquiShure®, when faced with a laminitic horse or pony, irrespective of the underlying cause.

## Consider Using a Grazing Muzzle on Pastured Horses

It is not always possible to restrict grazing to the early morning or on frosted high risk pastures if, as an owner, you have to go to work, take children to school or do not have a suitable day yard to confine a horse during the high risk period from mid morning to late afternoon. In this case, consider fitting a grazing muzzle on an EMS sensitive horse or 'cresty' pony after around 10am to limit the animal's 'hoovering' or continuous grazing habit on high risk pasture during the day. On return home after 5pm, the mask can be removed for 30 minutes grazing until twilight. The animal should then be confined to a yard or stable overnight and fed soaked hay to limit soluble sugar intake. It is not wise to fit the grazing muzzle overnight as restricting feed intake for as little as a 12 hour period, could trigger a potentially fatal metabolic syndrome, such as hyperlipaemia, in an over-weight or 'cresty' pony within a few days.

## Why confine high risk horses to a yard during the night?

There has recently been a lot of mis-information circulated which suggests that high risk horses should be turned out at night and restricted during the day to reduce their intake of soluble sugars and NSCs from 24/7 grazing. Although studies have shown that growing plants contain the lowest fructan sugar content in early spring and carbohydrates in autumn between the hours of 10pm to 10am, which suggests night time grazing is safer for high risk horses, these studies have not taken into account the instinctive grazing habits of horses where they can consume up to 40% of their total daily intake of forage before midnight. Therefore, it is generally safer to confine them at night and feed them a hard feed of lucerne chaff or soaked hay as well as restrict grazing access from 8.30am to 10am in the morning and from 4pm - 5pm in the afternoon in two short turn-out periods, or by fitting a grazing muzzle during the high risk periods during the day.

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## Handy Hint

### Avoid Frosted Pastures

Stress from frosts causes wilting and triggers storage of sugars and NSCs in the bases of plants so that they can survive. Grass which was growing actively after a rain and then rapidly dries off during a hot, dry period is also dangerous as the stressed grass stops growing and stores sugars in its base to allow it to survive. Horses find these grasses more palatable and even on a sparse, over-grazed dry pasture, they will fossick enough to overload sugars and NSCs in insulin resistant (IR) horses if left out to graze 24/7.

## Cycle of Summer/Autumn Founder

