

Secretary Report 2023

Dear Members,

Well, that's been an interesting road this year, the Society has experienced quite a few changes some small and some not so small. One of the most telling changes was the retirement of our longstanding Secretary/ Registrar and Office Manager but as is the nature of things it was eventually inevitable; however, I personally will be forever grateful for the service and dedication Helen Dohan afforded the Society and its members during her tenure. Along with Helens departure the Society had to contend with another long-term loss with the retirement of Lindy Steward ultimately another hard act to follow.

I must thank both Teresa Edwards and Juliet Burnett for their continuing service and dedication to Society. As many of you will be aware Teresa stepped up and accepted the role of AHSA Registrar and Office Manager and Juliet Juliet is now officially our Assistant Registrar. It goes without saying that without these two the business of the Society would have hit a massive roadblock and its fair to say we all need to acknowledge and thank them for their continuing service and dedication. I also want to mention our newest addition Kelly Anscombe for taking up her position with society and helping fill some of the roles (and holes) that needed to be filled to take some of the pressure off Teresa and Lindy.

I never expected, when I stood for a director's position that I would be stepping into the Secretary role and, I must admit it's been a particular struggle juggling work, home and the Society role and I have tried my best to manage the Secretary role as best I could, but I never expected this role to be indefinite but essential interim. The Society was embarking on a rebuilding and restructuring phase (fair to say it still is) but the next stage is to engage the services of a new Secretary to provide a fixed service to the board and our members, the who, what and when is (at the time of writing this) still being resolved, hopefully there will be more clarity at the AGM itself.

Historically these reports incorporate the registry and membership data but this year those report and information will be provided by our office team who carry out those dedicated tasks on behalf of the society. But I will add it's been very encouraging for the Board to notice a marked increase in long term and short-term EX members re-joining this financial year, hopefully we can maintain that trend. I won't bore you with detail, but I think the board this year has continued to improve and restructure the Society, most of these things will be covered off in other Director and Subcommittee reports but briefly touching on them.

- **The changes to the Arabian horse news**, a change was necessary here, with a continuing drop in our membership base, that we attribute in general to how the world is changing we needed to try new ways and means of attracting those outside of our general 'pool of influence'. Social Media and the internet in general have made many of the reporting and notification articles once attributed to our magazine redundant so we are trying to extend our 'pool' and attract those that normally wouldn't pick up 'Society specific' magazine. Ultimately time will tell if we made the right move.
- **Combining and Reformatting the AHSA Horse Show Rule Book**, thanks to a massive amount of work undertaken by Narelle Kinnear our newly (re)appointed Chief Examiner and the rest of the JOC the rule book has gone through an extensive change to return it to its original format of one all-encompassing book. This will soon be available on our website and will be forwarded in a physical copy to all current judges.
- **Restructuring of the AANC Group**, this year the Board agreed to try something different, rather than continue the usual format of a subcommittee structure that needed to report back to the board each and every time they needed to make a decision the board decided to create a 'Project Management Team' to run they show. Their requirement was to provide a date, venue, judges and most importantly, budget to the board and once approved by the board the team was then empowered to facilitate and manage the show, I believe this worked very well and, due in part to the short timelines we were faced with, this worked extremely well. The board have decided to continue this format for the 2024 AANC and has already initiated the creation of a Project Management team incorporating Board Members and external members who have volunteered their time to assist with this event.

- **Other Subcommittee Reports**, there won't be a report from the Archive, Registry and Youth Subcommittees this year. Effectively due to the way we have changed our meeting structure and had only one meeting in Sydney this year there hasn't been an opportunity to carry out any archival work so no subcommittee meeting took place, much the same occurred with the registry subcommittee more because of our restructuring but I believe the Registry Subcommittee will be reactivated and effectively utilized this coming year. At the beginning of the year the board decided to incorporate the Youth Promotion subcommittee into the Publicity and Promotions subcommittee so effectively this report is covered off in Glenys Lilley's Promotion and Publicity report.

I think it's important to clarify that it's been a challenging year for many reasons. Change always throws things into chaos until a new equilibrium is found, I believe that as we move into 2023-24 year, we are reaching that balance. I'm hoping you will all continue on with us in our journey and also hope that you encourage others to join us. But it's important to remember the world is constantly changing and the Society needs to look to the future accept and adopt change and not continue to 'do things cause that's what we've always done'.