



EQUINE STUDBOOKS ASSOCIATION

Representing Horse and Pony Studbooks of the UK

Chair: Celia Clarke (WBSUK), Vice-Chair: Natalie Meredith (AHS), Secretary: Jane Murray (New Forest), Treasurer: Sue McGeever (Exmoors)

CHAIR'S REPORT April 2024

First let us remember three people of great influence in the British equine breeding industry who passed on recently. They are:

- Tiki Adorian of the Miniature Horse Society – a strong supporter of the 826 Equine Studbooks Association since its inception and of the BHS Horse and Pony Breeds Committee in the years before that. Even having moved to Romania in recent years, and in increasing ill health, she would almost always log on to our Zoom meetings and express her views on many subjects. She will be much missed.
- Graham Suggett – founder of the Warcolag Stud at Warwickshire Agricultural College and its related innovatory BSC in Equine Science, the first BEF Director of Breeding and one of the original organisers of the National Equine Forum, his influence on sports horse breeding and young horse performance assessment is still embedded in the Futurity and will continue to be felt for many years ahead
- Renata Shenfield – a true enthusiast for the Hannoverian horse, wife of 826 ESA committee member John Shenfield, and well known internationally as a regular attendee at the WBFSH General Assembly, her input into sports horse breeding extended far outside the warmblood sector of the industry.

To return to the present, we gained two new studbook members in the past 12 months, namely the Shetland Pony Studbook Society and the Standard and Trotting Horse Association GBI – two long-established and highly respected organisations that between them exemplify just how widespread the support for the 826 ESA is now within the industry as a whole

In the six months since our last meeting, the committee of the 826 Equine Studbooks Association has again been quite busy, although for reasons of confidentiality, much of the work done has been 'under the radar' dealing as it did with consultations with DEFRA and other bodies. These mainly concerned conveying our needs as a specific sector of the equine industry as regards potential changes in regulations for Equine ID and Zootechnics and the timing of these. However, they have also expanded to expressing concerns that DEFRA has not yet been able to resolve the increasing problems at border control posts, which directly affect not only those importing and exporting live equines but also those involved in the import of fresh, chilled and even frozen semen into the UK. This issue, in particular, will become even more acute from 1 May onwards when new, much more severe, regulations relating to animal and plant products will come into force.

Hopefully, the DEFRA teams attending this meeting will be able to give us a more up-to-date, formal and time-linked report on these on-going issues. Also, as in the past, and on your behalf, a number of committee members have also tried repeatedly to get various technical points relating to Equine IDs clarified with the Equine Register but frustratingly this has proved impossible due to date clashes, travel commitments etc. This situation should be resolved soon. In a side line to this – and in view of the Post Office IT disaster -- the 826 ESA raised a Freedom of Information Inquiry to check whether DEFRA (or its contractors) had used any Fujitsu or Horizon programs in its dealing with any equine and related data. It was a great relief to us when, only a few days later, we were informed that neither Fujitsu nor Horizon were involved in any DEFRA work on any of its contracts.

As a formally identified collaborating organisation by the British Equestrian Foundation, a number of members of the 826 ESA again provided significant input into the new and innovatory BHF project Better Beginnings 'Inception to 2 years old', which we do hope you have all also promoted to your member, colleagues and clients.

Continuing commitment and attendance at the British Horse Council and the National Equine Forum has also ensured that 826 ESA embers had a presence at key high-level meetings, even if not able to attend in person themselves.

Finally as the 826 ESA AGM falls in the spring, it does sometimes clash with the AGMs of member bodies – as is the case with a couple of organisations this year. To stop this happening again, please would studbook main representatives let me know via celia.clarke@outlook.com the dates of their 2025 AGMs as soon as they are confirmed so that all possible clashes can be avoided next year.

Celia Clarke

(Chair, 826 Equine Studbooks Association)