



# Ponies Association (UK)

*Patron : Mrs J Lee-Smith FABRS*

*President : Susan, Countess of Swinton*

*Chairman : Mrs D Whiteman BHSI*

*Chesham House, 56 Green End Road, Sawtry,  
Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. PE28 5UY*

**MINUTES OF THE 21<sup>st</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF PONIES ASSOCIATION (UK)**  
**HELD ON SUNDAY 24<sup>th</sup> January 2010**  
**AT THE FORGE STONELEIGH PARK WARWICKSHIRE CV8 2LG**

Chairman: Mrs Davina Whiteman BHSI

## **PRESENT**

Mrs Davina Whiteman (Chairman)  
Mrs Pat Campbell (Director)  
Mrs C Dew (Director)  
Mr J Foster  
Miss P Derrick  
Miss A Grummitt  
Mr J Conifey  
Mr D Curtis  
Mrs G Sells

Mrs Joan Lee-Smith (Patron)  
Mr Edwin Schofield (Director)  
Mrs F Sheffield (Director)  
Mrs K Doyle  
Mrs L Wright  
Miss J Grummitt  
Mrs T Brookes  
Mr N Webster

## **1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The Chairman welcomed all present to the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting of Ponies Association (UK).

Apologies were received from:

Helen Turner  
Stephanie Turner  
Mrs S R O White  
Tina Carswell  
Mark Carswell  
Mrs C A Madeley  
Nicola Madeley  
Mr & Mrs T Smyth

## **2. To adopt the minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2008 at The Forge, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire. Already circulated.**

The Chairman signed the records as a true and correct record.

## **3. To receive the Financial Report on Ponies Association (UK) and adoption – Mrs Jane Scriven, Treasurer. Presented by Edwin Schofield, Director**

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to present the report and accounts for the financial year to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009. These accounts have been audited by Whiting and Partners who confirm that “in our opinion the information given in the directors’ report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.”

At the beginning of the year your board decided that, due to the economic conditions, membership and other fees should not be increased. This, together with the increase in costs over the year has resulted in a reduced margin. The turnover of £611,195, after the cost of sales and administrative expenses has resulted in a loss for the year of £39,102 as against a profit in 2008 of £5,817. The Association has had a number of financially successful years which allows it to take decisions for the long term benefit of its members and therefore, despite the loss in the year, it retains a strong balance sheet position of £169,728 of members funds. This is the background against which your Chairman will be talking about the initiatives that have been put in place for the year to come and which seek to take the association back into profit as the broader economy comes out of recession.

Proposed.....Miss P Derrick.....Seconded.....Miss A Grummitt.....

Edwin Schofield proposed a vote of thanks to Davina Whiteman and the staff on managing to keep down costs. Davina said that Jackie will convey the thanks to the team.

#### **4. Adoption of the Annual Report - Mrs Davina Whiteman**

Madam Patron and Fellow Members

In 2003 when Joan Lee-Smith retired as a Director, I knew that it was imperative a strong team was put in place to safeguard the future of the association was essential. I follow two ladies who had enormous tenacity – Glenda Spooner and Joan Lee-Smith but I do not expect either of them had to face the diversification of the many showing societies or the credit crunch.

Your Board took a very brave decision in 2008 to invest in the membership by not increasing fees for the third year in succession in any sphere. The challenge of course was to hold the expenditure and maintain the standards members have come to expect. An Impossible Task.

Members must come to terms with the fact that, for the Showing Industry to survive and for standards of judging to be maintained and administered with a correct infrastructure of rules and regulations they have a responsibility to support societies who are members of the Showing Council, showings central body.

To maintain these standards administration teams must be active 52 weeks of the year, an enormous cost to any organisation to safe-guard the standards of your sport, historically sport was organised and administered by volunteers.

Unfortunately human resources do not come cheap and competitors have not the time or energy to spend organising national organisations and more important the retired sector finds it too demanding with spiralling fuel costs and the rules and regulations of health and safety and administrative organisations.

Those of us with our bus passes will remember that the BPS began as an arm of the NPS to administer the British Ridden Show Pony – a Council for which my father was a founder member. Ponies of Britain began as a club due to a disagreement with the NPS. Glenda in her wisdom – with Miss Gladys Yule - persuaded a number of enthusiasts to support them with a clear mandate to protect the welfare of the British Horse and Pony.

The continual fragmentation of the industry has naturally divided the customer base, allowing those precious standards to be diluted in some cases. Enthusiastic and financial support of the official Breed and Showing Societies by showing enthusiasts is essential to safeguard these standards, the unaffiliated world's contribution to the training and administration of judges and shows is unfortunately minimal. The Pony Club and the Riding Club all work within defined

standards and are particularly strict with all their procedures of Health and Safety and Customer Care, proving excellent partners for societies.

We are all being hit hard by competitors saving money by attending the commercial unaffiliated events without the support of the recognised codes of practise of the Showing Council, the voice of the show-world to the British Equestrian Federation. We recognise this sector of the competition world and our challenge must be to find a way to unite the two.

The success of the Summer Championships continues to be the flag ship of the Association with new and innovative ideas from the very enthusiastic team. The Chairman's role is to ensure that all of the preparation and details are in place for that team to swing into action.

Traditionally new competitions and innovations are trialled at the championships, this year the judging of the Super League was taken to another level in preparation for the exciting move for the Finals in 2010 at the British Open at the NEC Birmingham.

Historically this association has been the innovator of the Showing Industry. In 1956 Glenda Spooner introduced the Working Hunter Pony, and in 1992 the P (UK) Championships initiated the first evening performance outside London on the East of England Showground. It has now become the norm for the local riding club.

It is essential that a formula is sought to present our marvellous sport to attract sponsors and remain true to the sport.

The Super League is a step to take the showing format to encourage the public to appreciate our beautiful animals in an exciting way. We know that a short format is absolutely essential with music, but the Breed Standards must be maintained. The Boards view is that National Champions will have been judged for those criteria as they progressed from the qualification stage, ensuring that the best of the best will have the opportunity to individually impress the crowd at Birmingham. The very first time for P (UK) and any showing jockey to appear under the lights at the British Open.

The two winter championships and the regional shows were really appreciated with the enormous cost of fuel restricting the miles travelled to events by many... This may revitalise the local events that have not already been lost as competitors become more selective.

Burghley continues to be a major investment by the Board to allow our members and Pony Club members the opportunity to compete at that amazing event in front of International Riders who come and support their pupils.

We have campaigned long and hard for the Junior Riders of M&M ponies to be recognised with their own high profile goal to encourage each and every one of them to make the step from first ridden along the road to the open category. The board are thrilled that the RIHS accepted the associations' proposal which will be featured on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> July on the River Lawn and the possibility of a championship in the International Arena. Another first for Ponies (UK).

The dedication of the P (UK) staff administration must be congratulated and I am sure you will all join with me in wishing Kelly Horne every success now she has moved back to her roots.

The Judge remains the key to the industry and the future of the Showing and Breeding World. The interactive training of potential Judges and the Conferences have been voted a success. I am delighted that the Star status of Judges is becoming established. Attendance at the Conferences remains a priority to continue to broaden all of our views and maintain that standard of integrity that is so important in this modern world's perception.

The Elite Riders Academy continues to offer high class opportunities from very experienced Trainers to those who wish to develop their skills. This has resulted in a further Gold Star Status Riders – who have been accepted as official Ride Judges, Elite riders who are invited to ride judge at the Championships are dedicated to broadening their CV. We are very proud to offer the opportunity of a great experience, beginning the long road of becoming an International Judge.

The un-written rule within the association has always been ‘the opportunity must be offered to everyone’. This criteria applies to Judges, Officials, Members and Staff – to expect preferential attention must not be on the agenda. I am confident this will continue as a priority, but the real challenge is to sustain low entry fees and to underwrite the spiralling service and hire fees of showgrounds and event centres.

I would like to thank the team for their support and Susan Countess of Swinton for her enthusiasm and experience. She concludes her term as the National President, but will continue to exhibit her homebred Highlands I am sure.

She will be succeeded by the very enthusiastic, Jenny Pitman OBE who needs no introduction and is looking forward to meeting you all in the coming year.

My pledge to the association remains as strong as ever and I welcome new members of the Board Veronica White and Roger Stack to Council,who recognise and thank management committees who work tirelessly to safeguard the future of the association.

Finally,

I would like to thank your Patron for her wisdom and all of your sponsors and fund raisers who allow us to continue to invest and secure the future of this sport we all love with passion.

Thank you.

Proposed Mrs K Doyle Seconded Mrs G Sells

9.20 am – Mrs Veronica White arrived

## 5. Election of Directors

### **Mrs Pat Campbell – Re-election on rotation in accordance to the Memorandum & Articles of the Association**

Proposed: Mr J Foster Seconded: Mrs G Sells

### **Mr Edwin Schofield - Re-election on rotation in accordance to the Memorandum & Articles of the Association**

Proposed: Mr J Foster Seconded: Mrs G Sells

### **Mrs Veronica White - Recommended by the Board for election**

Proposed: Mr J Foster Seconded: Mrs G Sells

## 6. Election of Auditor for Ponies Association (UK) – Whittings & Partners

Proposed Mr J Foster Seconded Miss P Derrick

## 7. Election of Solicitor for Ponies Association (UK) - Greenwoods

Proposed Miss J Grummitt Seconded Mr E Schofield

## **8. Any Other Business**

John Conifey asked "How the Association could help competitors with the spiralling costs? The Chairman reported that this was the question that had faced Administrative Societies for the past 10 years. The hire of facilities will continue to increase; the hire of a stable in August plus cleaning costs is £85 + vat. Judges panels and the administration of affiliated shows is a cost of £25,000 to every Showing Society and so it goes on. The only sources of income are entry fees, sponsors and membership. Davina invited Mr Conifey for a proposal to solve 'this old chestnut' and emphasised that these problems had all been highlighted in her report. P (UK) had invested in the Royal International, The British Open and Burghley to offer P (UK) members 'special moments'.

Mr Conifey asked if something could be done to get competitors/members to attend the AGM. Clare Dew replied that it is very difficult to get people to attend, the AGM and conference details were sent to all members by post and email. P (UK) would welcome all members at the AGM. Davina did state that the "Flagship Show" (Summer Championships) could go to an ordinary showground in order to save money. Mr Conifey wished that members would become more proactive and understand the cost of organising shows.

Mrs Sells wanted to know if there was any point in sending a report to members about the new horse tax – will it hit people? Davina said it will hit the owner. Mrs Sells said that a lot of horses will be sold. Mrs Campbell said that there is a campaign to stop the tax for horses. Davina said that P (UK) is supporting the Federation and that Mrs Campbell was on the committee to support the voice of P (UK).

Mrs Campbell proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman for her tireless work for P (UK). All were agreed.

**Close of meeting 9.35 am**