

**Western Australian Committee  
Riding Pony Stud Book Society  
Annual Chairperson's Report  
May 28th 2020**

The WA Branch of the Riding Pony Stud book society has experienced a rather turbulent year.... along with the rest of the country! Late 2019 saw the departure of some long- standing members from the committee, and I would particularly like to thank Eileen Morris, Helen Moore, Judy Sabine, Julie van der Sande, and Marlene Kinder. These dedicated members have contributed many years and many, many hours of volunteer time and hard work to ensure the well being of the WA branch of the society. As a result, a Special General Meeting was held in February and a new committee elected, consisting of myself, (Helen Ransom), Peter Thomas, Robyn Vale, Amanda Gilberd, Kathryn Thomas, Jade O'Brien. More recently Catherine O'Connell has also joined the committee. We look forward to working together in planning for the future of the WA branch of the society, and to learning new skills, including the use of digital platforms for our meetings!

The country has experienced some very challenging times over the last 12 months, and the resilience of our membership continues to astound me. We in the West have been fortunate to have been spared the prolonged drought and the devastating bush fires experienced in the Eastern states, and for that we can only be grateful. We extend our sympathy to the Salway family in particular, following their tragic loss of life, defending their farm and beloved ponies in the summer fires. Most recently the onset of the viral pandemic has affected us all and has seen the abrupt halt to any semblance of a show season and put plans for future shows on hold. Once again, we have fared better in some ways, and the many hours of travel that some of our WA members have endured to cross the unrelenting miles that constitute the Nullabor plain to show our ponies, has strangely turned out to be an advantage for us at this time. This recent health crisis was unimagined and has contributed to tough economic times for many pony breeders. It is important that we work together to support each other where we can. It is also important to manage our budget in advance of a reduction of new registrations and show participation. We will therefore undoubtedly need to make some compromises with the running of our shows, to meet our budgetary requirements and mitigate the effects of extraneous events. However, out of adversity comes change, and that change may be for the good. We are all looking toward a flexible approach to planning for a return of showing as soon as that is possible, and some tentative enquiries about ground hire have recently been made. We are hopeful that with continued proactive management of the threat from the pandemic, and the community's acceptance of the "new normal," that a return to showing on a small scale may not be too far away. It is up to us to come up with some novel and ingenious ways to get our ponies out there again! Therefore, it is with quiet anticipation that we look forward to another successful year of enjoying all that our Riding Ponies bring to our lives.

Best wishes,  
Helen Ransom,  
Chairperson. WA branch of The Riding Pony Stud Book Society.