



## Chair's report

With Spring definitely on the way, it feels as though there is much to be optimistic about in our alpaca world. As we await the arrival of lots of lush green grass, a reduction in mud (fingers crossed) and new cria in the fields, it's show season and almost shearing time – so plenty to keep us all busy!!

It's very much my privilege to take on the mantle of Chair for the CCA from Sandra, who has made sure that we are such a thriving group. It's great to read her reflections on the last few years in this newsletter and I know you'll all join me in thanking her again for all the time and energy she has given, and continues to give, to the CCA.

We have a great programme of events this year, which was kicked off in style by a zoom seminar from Barbara Hetherington of Beck Brow Alpacas in January. Our thanks to her for sharing the Beck Brow journey so far and helping us to think about our own breeding programmes and aims for our herds. What stood out for me was being really clear about the kind of alpacas we want and then being super selective in who mates with whom. Speaking of mating, Sandra has a piece later in the newsletter about the CheckMate functionality on the BAS Pedigree Registry in case you haven't discovered it yet. Our AGM and annual members lunch were both well attended, and the lunch was a lovely opportunity to relax and chat together – we will be sure to fix a date with plenty of advance notice for next year and hopefully have an even bigger and noisier gathering!!

Thanks to Sam at Lakemoor Alpacas for organising the trips to the Natural Fibre Mill later this month and to the British Alpaca Fashion Company in April. Using the wonderful fleece from our alpacas has been one of the most rewarding things we have done and, judging by the number of members who will have trade stands at the CCA Halter Show, that goes for many of you. If anyone is not sure what to do with their fleece this year, hopefully, the visits will provide some inspiration and other members will be able to share what they have done with theirs.

By popular demand at the AGM, the Birthing Refresher Vet Day is running again in April and fully booked up – a big thank you in advance to Sarah Caldwell for running that for us and to Sandra for providing the venue. With the welfare of alpacas being the single most important mission for the CCA, The Autumn Vet Day has always been a big feature of the year and the addition of the Spring Birthing Refresher is fantastic for both experienced breeders and novices – there is always more to learn.

And then we will be on to our shows. With the new venue and expanded scope of the halter show at Royal Cornwall Showground on May 7th, the committee are hard at work to make this a really great event for CCA members and for the public too. There's more about the show later in the newsletter and I hope it inspires you to come along and get involved in any way you can. If anyone feels able to volunteer some time on the day to help, you will be welcomed with open arms! Please also tell all your friends and family and encourage them to come along – there's a poster attached so please print and distribute freely :-)

The fleece show is then hot on the heels on July 15th – so don't forget to suss out your best fleeces at shearing time and get them entered into the show :-)

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Our full calendar of events is on the CCA website – here's the link  
<https://www.cornwallcamelidassociation.co.uk/events-calendar>

In addition to the formal events, there are lots of informal ways that members are helping each other out and expanding their knowledge. The Facebook group is a good place to go if you ever have a question you need help with. I'd also encourage you to make the most of the connections and friends you make in the group by going to visit their farms - Marta and Carol have shared their experience of doing just this later in the newsletter.

To sign off, it was great to be part of the BAS National Show again this year and to have so many other members there too – if you've never been, check out their write-ups and maybe consider making the trip next year. Tom and I were very proud of our Dark Sky team who managed to bring home the Champion Brown Suri Female and Champion White Suri Female trophies and it was a wonderful, and fitting, finale for

Felicia and Gary Sanders of Popham as Popham Suri Armstrong, now owned by Southern Sands Alpacas, was awarded the Supreme Champion Suri.

We have an interview with them in the newsletter reflecting on their alpaca career and I'm delighted to say that they have accepted our offer to be Honorary Members of the CCA. I hope you all enjoy the read, relish your time with your alpacas and look forward to seeing you soon. Please do let us know if you have any ideas for the CCA or need any help with your alpacas.

**Wendy Scott, Dart Sky Alpacas**



## Retiring Chair's report

My two years tenure as Chair has flown by, I like to think because everything went smoothly and successfully for the CCA. I looked back through my files and I joined the Committee early 2015 not long after the arrival of my first alpacas and assumed the role of Secretary plus the newsletter editor. There was not much of a hand over, I received a fairly blank canvas to work with and build on. My daughter in law designed a logo, the Facebook page was refreshed and a website built which enabled the committee to connect better with members and vice versa.

When Nigel Retallack became chair for years, I remained as secretary and joined forces with Nigel to help him run the annual halter show, promoting it to encourage more members to dip their toe into the water of showing. The halter show grew year on year and in the interim my own showing experience grew. I suggested a BAS fleece show and we held our first fleece show in 2020 which was a total success, it raised our profile as a regional group and has attracted many members to try showing their fleeces...the fleece show is now an annual event on the BAS show calendar.

As a regional group we are now recognised as one of the thirteen across the country, we join the BAS meetings and share our experiences and listen to others. Personally this gives me the greatest sense of achievement, that the CCA is on a par with other regional groups, whilst still a small group in terms of membership, we are at the top for enthusiasm and supporting our members.

I have handed the baton of chair to Wendy Scott at Dark Sky who I am certain will bring energy and enthusiasm to the CCA and steer us forward for the future. I thoroughly enjoyed the dinner at the Plume and Feathers recently with other members new and old, we almost outstayed our welcome with ongoing chatter and camaraderie. I have to thank everyone for my lovely flowers and gift presented by Wendy for my 'retirement', a complete surprise.

So now I join the back benches of committee, I shall still be around to organise the shows, edit the newsletters and if asked, to give advice if I can. I wish the CCA and all its members and their alpacas, the very best and look forward to meeting more of you at future events.

**Sandra Muriel, Alpacas of Cornwall, the Crewenna herd**

## CCA HALTER SHOW

SUNDAY MAY 7TH ROYAL CORNWALL SHOWGROUND

The show committee are hard at work setting up this year's show. We have called it the 2023 Cornwall Alpaca Show for all our public advertising and will be holding our usual Halter Show plus additional activities to make it a great family day out. David Lester has been doing sterling work getting sponsorship and Wendy is on the 'socials'!

A big thank you to everyone who is already signed up to be involved in the show!



We are on target for alpaca entries to the Halter Show, with just a few places still available – so if you'd like to show your alpacas and get valuable assessment and feedback from our judge, Julia Corrigan-Stuart, please send in your entries asap and by April 12th latest.

Entry forms should be in your email inbox and are also on the CCA website: <https://www.cornwallcamelidassociation.co.uk/2023haltershow>

Sandra is recruiting Stewards to manage alpacas coming into the ring and assist the Judge and Abha will be responsible for recording all the results and everything IT!

Trade stands are free to CCA members and we already have 9 booked in – anyone else? Please let us know asap – we just need an email with your name, what you'll be selling & how much space you think you need – finally, if you have alpacas coming to the show, let us know if you'd like your stand next to your pen. Nigel is in charge of layout and will be working on this as soon as we finalise numbers



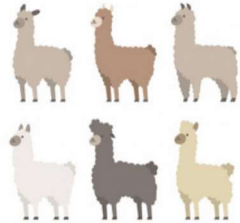
Kate Brookes has volunteered to hold alpaca demonstrations in our 2nd ring, covering simple husbandry and handling demos with a bit of training (alpacagilty) thrown in which should be a great crowd pleaser 😊

We are lucky enough to have a spinning and weaving demonstration group and Marta will also be spinning on her trade stand – as it's all about the fleece in the end, it's great to have such a focus on this at the show.

## Other activities:

SUNDAY MAY 7TH ROYAL CORNWALL SHOWGROUND

Alpaca photo studio – visitors can pay for a photograph of them with an alpaca set against a South American backdrop using a green screen (either an actual green screen or using an iPhone app). They will have their photo instantly available either by email or air dropped to their phone.



PROUD PRACTICE 😊

Alpaca Art for kids – a lovely FREE activity for the little ones using real alpaca fleece – they will be able to choose their fleece from different colours and types (Huacaya and suri) seconds and stick them to their alpaca outline, taking home their very own alpaca. Mullacott Alpacas have kindly agreed to sponsor and organise this and just need some helpers on the day.

Food and Drink:

Georgina has found a wonderful coffee van, Brew Cornwall who will be selling coffee, tea and hot drinks and would like to add a savoury food van – if anyone can recommend one, please let us know

Entry to the show will be £2 per person or £5 for a family – so a brilliant, inexpensive day out.

How can you help?

1. Promote the show and encourage people to come along – tell your family and friends and put up the show poster wherever you can!
2. Volunteer some of your time on the day – even if you can only do an hour or two, we will need help with these jobs:
  - a. Car parking marshals
  - b. Taking entry fees on the door
  - c. Announcer to let everyone know what's going on
  - d. Supervising the Alpaca Art for kids table
  - e. Running and helping with the Alpaca Photo Studio
  - f. General help / security
  - g. Setting up the pens before the show (from 7:30am to 10:00am)
  - h. Clearing up at the end of the show (from 5:30pm)
3. Find a food van to come along – if you know anyone or can recommend a food van, please let us know asap

If you can help, please email on the usual address:  
[cornwallcamelidassociation@hotmail.com](mailto:cornwallcamelidassociation@hotmail.com) Thank you!!



## Interview with Gary & Felicia Sanders from Popham Alpacas

After 23 years in the alpaca business, Gary and Felicia have retired and are moving 'up country' to be nearer family. They have been a huge part of alpacas in Cornwall and contributed so much to the CCA and to many of us individually and will be very much missed. It was rather fitting that a Suri they had bred, Popham Suri Armstrong, won Supreme at the National Show this month – a very emotional moment for them, pictured here with new owners, Southern Sands Alpacas – and grandson Owen, who fancied taking the trophy home with him!



We grabbed them for a quick interview to look back on their alpaca journey.

Looking back on your alpaca adventure, are you glad you did it?  
Definitely – it has given us years of pleasure and of course heartache at times.

What have been the best bits?

Achieving the goals on our breeding programme. Meeting so many alpaca breeders in so many countries, watching the cria grow up and, of course, alpacas we have bred winning supreme at the National Show – now 4 times with 2 huacaya and 2 suri!

And the worst bits?

You always lose the best ones 😞

What's your funniest story?

Too many to mention! This came to mind... Whilst I was trying to help our stud male Matador during a mating, rather than mounting the female, he mounted me. Fortunately, Gary was there to pull him off. Apparently I was still spitting 2 weeks later 😂

What side of alpaca ownership did each of you enjoy most?

Gary: Realising what individual creatures they are with different personalities and seeing those traits follow down the generations

Felicia: Breeding Suri and Appaloosa's - the excitement of birthing season, especially with the Appy's when a spotty nose appears

You were incredibly successful as breeders - what do you think was behind your success?

Years of practice in knowing your female attributes and what males would improve each female, offspring improving and a bit of luck!

You worked as a partnership - what did each of you bring to the party?

Gary: Breeding decisions, stud work, advertising and driving the boys to meet the girls

Felicia: Mainly husbandry, care and birthing

You helped so many of us along the way - who helped you when you were starting out?

Ian Waldron who we bought our first females from. The numerous courses he held at his farm. One that stands out is a course that Amanda Van Den Bosh held at Ian's farm.

You were very involved with the CCA - for how many years and in what roles?

Too many years to remember. We were committee members, show organisers, welfare officer and chairman for a few years.

What difference do you think the CCA has made over the years?

Helps local breeders by bringing them together and giving guidance when necessary



What do you think the CCA can / should do for members going forward?  
Continue the good work!

Back to you, how do you feel now as you look forward to your move?  
With sadness that it has come sooner than anticipated but looking forward to seeing the grandchildren more and having the chance to travel

What will you miss? And what won't you miss? :)  
The alpacas and what each day brings.  
Won't miss feeding up etc in torrential rain!

For more details of Popham alpacas over the years, take a look at the pdf on the [CCA website](#) under the members section

## CCA Members – Farm Visit

NEW MEMBER CAROL KIRBY

I have had a dream to own alpacas for a number of years. We took early retirement from our Corporate jobs and moved from West Sussex to a rented house in Devon before finding our new home in Cornwall. We moved in during November 2022 and Malcolm's first job has been to sort out the fencing and to shore up the existing mobile stable ready for the arrival of my alpacas.



I went on a husbandry course at Mullacott Alpacas last year and when Kate Brookes posted on Facebook that she had young alpacas who would be available after weaning, I jumped at the chance to choose my first alpacas.

My four boys (Everest, Fred, Lucan & Noah) will be joining us in early February. Whilst they are all pets, Everest is a stud quality male and I may very well look at going down that route with him but I haven't yet decided - regardless, they are all lovely boys.

I have been to Mullacott Alpacas a couple of times to see my boys and get some experience with husbandry and haltering. Kate has been wonderful and very supportive. She has answered all my novice questions and provided advice.

I have also been lucky enough to find Marta and Thomas at Kestle Alpacas, who are 15 minutes away from me. They have been kind enough to have me over to their farm to get some hands on experience with their alpacas. Being a new alpaca owner with no experience with livestock, it is all about developing confidence and experience with alpacas. I really appreciate Marta's help, it is lovely to have someone close by. I am also sure I will call on the CCA community for advice and help and I look forward to meeting members in the coming months.

### MARTA AT KESTLE ALPACAS

"Someone emailed me today, her name is Carol" - "Carol in the village?" - "No, no. Another Carol."

So another Carol has contacted me. Carol bought some alpacas. She doesn't know how to keep alpacas. She has some notions and lots of ideas. Social media helps a lot these days, I guess. However, nothing is better than hands-on experience.

Carol is new to the area. She has emailed to volunteer with the animals. We do not have a big farm. I guess I can do with her company. Let's give Carol a call.

When I first had my alpacas seven years ago, I did not know much about farming them. All I knew was the herds that roam free in the Andes, and I didn't even realise they were exported to other countries like here. I wish I had someone to help me discover at least the more essential things I needed. It is only fair that I ask Carol to come to "give us a hand".

My partner felt a bit unsure. How could I bring someone home, with all the mess of our busy life, the estate of the farm? I can't invite a stranger to clean the barn, to be spat even! What kind of host?? But I still invited Carol over.

Carol is nice. She told me her story, briefly, how they moved to Cornwall not long ago, how she hasn't got her alpacas yet. She wants to learn first. She arrives early and wants to get involved, she takes the brush, watches how we trim the nails, gives it a go, and we administer the vitamins... She wants to do her best when her animals arrive. I bet she will. It is a good morning when you can share it. Even more, if the enthusiasm comes from your companion. We did a couple of sessions before Carol's alpacas arrived at her place. I think we covered all the essential detail.

We learned some basics and some complex. We talked about health, behaviour, and fibre, we compared traits of the different animals in Kestle, and we shared our love for these incredible creatures. I was surprised by the amount of information I could give her about alpacas. I discovered my extensive knowledge when sharing it out loud. My confidence grew dramatically. I do thank you for that, Carol. I tend to think that, because we haven't got a big farm, we do not have vast knowledge. I am very wrong.

We still have some pending talk about processing fleece. Maybe Carol wants to join me in my passion for spinning, weaving and dying. That is my favourite part of breeding alpacas. I am looking forward to meeting her boys and talking through what can be done with their lovely fleeces.

## 'SHED AND BURIED' comes to Alpacas of Cornwall....

SANDRA MURIEL FROM ALPACAS OF CORNWAL

For fans of the series Shed and Buried, you will instantly recognise one of the stars, Sam Lovegrove, who has been visiting Alpacas of Cornwall recently while learning more about alpacas and getting hands on with them. Fair to say, the girls group love Sam and just follow him around.



## CCA Welfare

### SHEARING

Yet again shearing will be upon us soon, starting May and hopefully most will be sheared by mid July latest. This is important/vital for your alpaca (annually for the huacayas, some suri's can be left in two year fleece) so that:

- Pregnant females are clean and checked before birthing season,
- All alpacas have the chance to gain some growth on their next fleece before Autumn,
- They are sheared from their current fleece before the temperatures get higher and they can be too hot and sweat.

If you are a new owner and not booked a shearer yet, then please do get in touch with one who covers your area.

Allen Muriel specifically covers Cornwall and up to Mid Devon. Mob: 07498 001169 or 07870 612559 or email [alpacasofcornwallsm@gmail.com](mailto:alpacasofcornwallsm@gmail.com) and put SHEARING as subject.

Colin Ottery at Alpaca2 Shear, Mob: 07773 440354  
Colin covers all GB.

Ring before the season starts as

## COCCIDIOSIS in Alpacas

Coccidiosis is a parasite that can be mild to severe in alpacas. It is one of the alpaca diseases that you should be aware of as it can affect your herd. Alpaca health is important for a happy herd. Below are questions and answers to help you understand what this parasite is and how it affects your alpacas.

What are coccidia? Coccidia are microscopic one celled organisms that live and reproduce within the cells that line the intestinal tract of your alpaca. They are parasites not worms.

How are coccidia transmitted? Coccidia are transmitted to other alpacas by infected faeces.

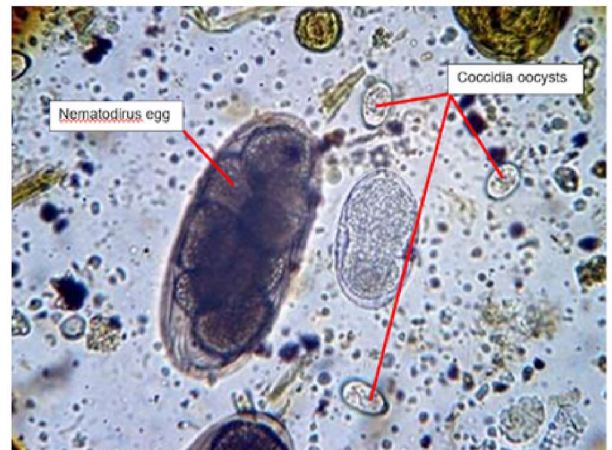
What are the symptoms? When an alpaca's immune system is weakened, it is unable to keep coccidian in check and the organism increases its reproduction. The increased amount of coccidia cause the cells lining the intestine to rupture. When large numbers of the cells are destroyed, you will see diarrhoea and dehydration. Appetite loss is possible. If the infection is severe, you may see bloody diarrhoea.

Are all my alpacas at risk? While a coccidia infection may be seen in adult alpacas, younger alpacas are more at risk. A healthy alpaca keeps coccidia in check with it's own immune system. Young alpacas whose immune system is not fully developed, alpacas with poor nutrition, stressed alpacas, or alpacas that have other diseases can all be susceptible to coccidiosis.

How is it treated? Check with your local Vet. Corrid is commonly used as a treatment and to prevent this parasite. This medication does not kill this organism. It inhibits the reproduction of coccidia. By stopping reproduction, the alpacas own immune system is allowed to develop and take care of the infection.

Can my alpaca die from this parasite? Unfortunately, the answer is yes. In young alpacas it can take as little as 24 hours if the infection is severe. Do not hesitate to contact your Vet at the first signs of diarrhoea and keep corrid on hand. How is a coccidia infection detected? The faeces must be examined under a microscope to detect the cysts.

Can I get rid of Coccidia? Once your herd is infected, coccidia is almost impossible to get rid of. You must manage the problem. You can treat your herd twice a year or you can treat only when there is a problem. Vecoxan or Baycox can be obtained from your vet or from animal suppliers. Consult with your Vet to decide which is best for your farm. Coccidiosis can cause death but it is treatable and can be managed if your herd becomes infected





## My time at the show

HEATHER LESTER, POLGRAIN ALPACAS & CCA SECRETARY



I had a chat with a few familiar faces and settled down to watch the judging. The set-up is good because you can see the animals in the ring in front of you, but also the close-up of the fleece on the big screen above. The judges also give a brief reasoning for their choices after each class.

I was lucky enough to see our own Tom and Wendy Scott of Dark Sky Alpacas receive the Champion sash and trophy in the classes of Suri White Female and Suri Brown Female. Congratulations to them on all their hard work to achieve this, and a shout out to Tom for taking up the microphone during the day, keeping everyone informed of what was going on.

Will I go next year? Absolutely and maybe for the whole weekend.

My first time visiting the BAS Nationals. What can I say, I had a great time. I had intended to leave during the afternoon on Saturday and drive back to Cornwall, but I ended up staying to the end of the judging and left early next morning instead. I checked out all the stalls and thought I was very restrained, in a large ball of yarn and a few extra harnesses.

I enjoyed the Fibre Zone, seeing what everyone does with their fleeces, with a lovely checked blanket particularly catching my eye.

I had a wander around all the pens, saying hello to some beautiful animals. I have never seen so many alpacas all in one place, it was brilliant.



## My time at the show

KATE BROOKES, MULLACOTT ALPACAS

For years I didn't go to the National Show, I don't show, I wouldn't know anyone and even those I do know I won't be able to remember the right name or how I knew them! Why would I want to go to the show?

Last year I went for the first time in 26 years of alpaca ownership and this year I was back again. I still don't show, but now I realise how many people I actually do know, and even those I don't know are really friendly and welcoming. I find myself wandering around the pens, looking at so many wonderful alpacas, and (inevitably) imagine what they would look like in my herd. I meet people I haven't been in touch with for years (luckily they are usually good at reminding me how I know them!) and I shop!



I enjoy the trade stands, meeting people I have only seen on webinars or the end of a phone line or email, discussing their products with them, and always learning more. It reminds me of the things I have intended to stock up on and not got around to ordering (colostrum and vitamin pastes this year). I managed not to spend too much at the other trade stands and definitely didn't come home with an alpaca in the boot (just a rather nice handmade dog bed!!!) I arranged a few meet ups this year too, and all went to plan.

All in all I had a great day, I liked meeting the llamas, there to show that they were not alpacas, and no, I didn't squeeze one of them into my boot either! I met up with many friends and made some new ones too. I hope you decide to give it a try next year (when we meet, just remind me how I know you when you get the blank look!!!!) See you there!

## THE HUMAN VET

SARAH CALDWELL BSC(HONS) MRCVS



The CCA's honorary vet; Sarah Caldwell BSc (Hons) BVSc MRCVS is now providing a bespoke camelid consultancy service.

TheHumanVet offers:

- A second opinion for clinical cases; working alongside your vet for a consistent approach,
- Health planning for all herd sizes, new and established, for all experience levels.

For more information <https://www.thehumanvet.com>

Contact Sarah at [info@thehumanvet.com](mailto:info@thehumanvet.com)

## CCA - Stud males List

Look no further for your outside matings, top quality males available in Cornwall, National Supremes, National Champion and Colour Champions....

[www.cornwallcamelidassociation.co.uk](http://www.cornwallcamelidassociation.co.uk)

### ALPACAS OF CORNWALL

New elite Huacaya stud males arriving to Alpacas of Cornwall in April, to add to our portfolio of the best genetics of EPC, Inca, Fowberry...more details soon.

## 'CHECK MATE'

### GRASSROOTS ONLINE CHECK FOR GENETIC COMPATABILITY

I am unsure how many owners/breeders use Checkmate as part of their breeding planning. It is not unique to alpacas, dogs and other livestock have the same check facility to be able to view the pedigree of the female and male or choice of males together, to ascertain if there are any genetics potentially too closely related in the proposed matings.

As people know, my purchase and breeding selections are primarily based on genotype, then phenotype, fleece stats and studying any progeny for their phenotype/fleece stats and junior show results.

When you are breeding for a specific colour, you immediately narrow your gene pool. For example, I have bred some top blacks, National Black Male Champion and National Black Fleece Champion/res champ three times, having taken the time to look at the pedigrees of my early purchases.

Do not be misled, when looking for a black breeding male or females, that they actually have to be black, look at their genetics. Similarly, when consider a black male, I need to see the pedigree to what black genetics are behind that male, that he is carrying black genes which when bred to females, will most likely result in black progeny.

Of course there is now genotype testing, I am hopeful that we can offer more information on that in future newsletters as it is a deep topic....what colour the alpaca presents as, but determining what colour it actually is.

Back to genetics on the Checkmate. The result of your search will show the matches in the pedigrees as red, yellow, green. A red match is clearly when the male and female are very closely related and mating is not recommended. I think green is comfortable, but yellow has to be carefully considered.

Close mating in a herd has to be very carefully considered, why are you doing it for instance. A piece of advice I was given, is if you are considering to line breeding, then only choose a parent without genetic faults as you will be perpetuating that fault in your herd.

Here is the link to Grassroots instructions for using Checkmate.

<https://home.grassroots.co.uk/workspace/pdfs/grassroots-app-step-by-step-user-guide.pdf>

**Sandra Muriel, Alpacas of Cornwall, the Crewenna herd**

And last but not least  
HAPPY HEALTHY CRIA BIRTHING!!