

# Dressage NSW Inc Annual General Meeting – Minutes

Held at Windsor Bowling Club

Tuesday, 5 December 2017

Meeting opened at 7.00pm

## 1. Welcome and Apologies

### Present

Toni Venhaus	Tracey Lesslie	Earle Olaisen	Lauren James
Jan Geary	Judy Wilson	Helen Lawson	Michelle Becchio
Vicki Newham	Kathy Shelley	Petra Keranen	Lizzie Wilson-Fellows
Helen Zimic	Sue Cunningham	Julie Jones	Jocelyn West
Marjolyn Thomas			

## 2. Apologies (\*Proxies received)

Franz Venhaus*	Sara Price	John Geary*	Andree Wheeler*	Gail Benson*
Suzanne Doyle*	Sue Baker*	Jacqui Winspear	Pamela Bice	Cathie Drury-Klein
Kristen Lyons				

## 3. Confirmation of the Annual General Meeting Minutes, 8 December 2016

**Motion:** That the minutes be accepted as correct.

**Moved:** Toni Venhaus

**Seconded:** Petra Keranen

**Motion Carried**

## 4. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

## 5. President's Report

2017 has been another busy and productive year for our committee and one of major achievements for DNSW and NSW riders.

2017 saw the continuation of our successful High Performance and Development Squad program with 26 combinations being named over the year. Riders enjoyed regular squad clinics, and protocol days with 4\* judge Ricky McMillan and German 5\* judge Peter Holler. NSW riders scooped the pool at the National Dressage Championships at Boneo Park – taking out all the team's events as well as every Championship across all grades except medium pony and novice open. This exceptional result showcases both the quality of and the depth of talent across NSW at all levels and is in part a testament to our successful squad.

We also launched the new Young Rider Development Program and Squad which was hugely successful with 55 combinations registering and 14 combinations being placed on the YR Squad. Riders attended three clinics over the year, receiving two lessons per clinic and a wide range of off-horse educational activities, thanks to Mandy Jones and her young rider sub-committee. The Young Riders also represented DNSW with demonstrations of freestyles, pas de deux and a quadrille at the World Polo Championships, to wide acclaim. For the first time, a statewide young rider leaderboard was also established in NSW. We will continue to build on the success of these programs in 2018.

DNSW again led the way in running 2 very successful CDI events – the iconic Sydney CDI and the NSW Championships including a CDI-W. With 460 tests across Open, AOR, Pony and Para-Equestrian divisions, the State Championships is a huge and inclusive event. As always, the Sydney CDI3\* is a highlight of the Australian Dressage calendar and in 2017 was the first event in the southern hemisphere to offer the spectator judging app. Not to mention the very popular quadrille competition this included a very polished DNSW committee team! The Young Riders sub-committee also ran a very successful State Youth Championships. It would not be

possible to run these major events without the dedication and hard work of the army of volunteers that turn up year after year and for that we express our deepest gratitude. Of course, the longstanding support of our loyal sponsors is also a major contributor to the success of these major events - your ongoing support is never taken for granted and is greatly appreciated. Last but not least, a huge debt of gratitude is owed to our amazing Event Director, Toni Venhaus who handles every challenge, problem or situation with superb efficiency.

Clarendon has had another busy and successful year providing well run, friendly competitions across all levels on well-maintained surfaces as well as valuable opportunities for judge education and training. Clarendon has an essential role in generating funds for other DNSW projects across all areas of responsibility. Unfortunately, profits were somewhat affected by both the hot weather early in the year and two washed out competitions, including the Winter Festival which had to be rescheduled to November, after much discussion. The enthusiasm and dedication shown by Kathy, Karen and their tireless Clarendon sub-committee is unflagging and we congratulate them on their continued success.

NSW metropolitan and regional clubs were invited to attend a two day Forum in February with over 60 attendees from all across the state. Topics such as adverse weather policies, encouraging more judges, how to use the scoring system and risk management were discussed and debated and an outcome of the Forum was the instigation of a regular information bulletin for clubs and committees, produced by Pamela Bice. Regional Dressage Festival events were again supported to the value of \$6000. I would like to thank the regional delegates for all their hard work over the past year – your contribution and enthusiasm in advocating for our vitally important regional clubs and grass roots competitors as well as keeping clubs informed and regularly travelling long distances to attend our committee meetings is very much appreciated.

The renewed focus on judges and officials training continued and in 2017 the hardworking judge's sub-committee headed up by Sue Cunningham has provided:

- 6 free seminars at Clarendon for judges, riders and coaches at all levels, attended by over 180 people
- 3 regional club-run free seminars (with over 90 attendees)
- 2 stewards training courses
- A freestyle workshop with German FEI 5\* judge Katrina Wurst
- A risk management course
- 45 shadow judging and exam opportunities and more than 85 sit-in's at Clarendon competitions

This year saw the trial of a new system of two-day seminars where attendees are able to fulfil their theory, seminar and shadow judging requirements over one weekend. 29 x G level judges registered their interest and 17 achieved accreditation – a fantastic result. In addition, 17 candidates upgraded across all levels, with one x A level judge undertaking pre-requisites to upgrade to FEI level. 4 x FEI riders registered to fast-track to D level and 8 new judge mentors were appointed. This has resulted in another very successful year in terms of both attracting new judges to sport and upgrading our existing pool of judges to meet the high demands of the NSW dressage calendar. Congratulations to Sue and her judges committee.

This year also sees the retirement from the committee of several members. I would like to thank Vicky Newham and Suzanne Doyle for their faithful service to dressage through their DNSW committee involvement and also welcome new committee member Julie Jones who was elected to the committee this year. Of course, Toni is also stepping down from the committee and the role of Hon Secretary this year. Many of you heard the speech I made at the Pirouettes Party and also read the Centreline article, however I would like to reiterate here my sincere gratitude to Toni for her selfless dedication in working for the good of the sport of dressage in NSW and Australia. I have personally enjoyed working with Toni for the 9 years I have been on the committee with her and to say she will be sorely missed by both myself and our committee is really the understatement of the century. Toni has been the backbone of Dressage NSW for a very long time and thank-you hardly seems enough.

I know I speak on behalf of not only the Dressage NSW committee, but also our members, Clubs, NSW riders and owners, and riders across Australia when I express our gratitude. One more retirement to note is that of our co-opted treasury support member, Judy Wilson. Judy was the highly respected and dedicated Treasurer of DNSW for many years before stepping back from the role 5 years ago. However, she has remained in the background providing invaluable support to myself, Suzanne and Petra since her retirement. Judy has decided it is now time to step back and enjoy her retirement and I would like to personally thank Judy for the wise advice and many hours of dedicated service she has contributed to our sport over many years.

Lastly, I can't let 2017 end without expressing my gratitude to the extremely hardworking DNSW committee and the many co-opted members who provide invaluable support and guidance. Your encouragement, enthusiasm and willingness to contribute to our sport is amazing and I'm honoured to work with you all. To Tracey Lesslie, our dedicated and knowledgeable Admin Secretary, for another year of support at meetings, major events and patience in answering many and varied enquiries, your work is appreciated. To Karen Lever, our incredibly passionate and dedicated Clarendon event secretary, thank-you for your hard work and enthusiasm. Thank-you also to Lizzie Wilson-Fellows – our NSW riders representative who does a sterling job representing the interests of all riders.

The Pirouettes Party, our annual awards night and general 'let you hair down' year-end party was a fitting end to a highly successful and positive 2017. I wish you all a happy and safe Christmas and New Year and look forward to seeing you all in 2018.

Helen Lawson  
President  
DNSW

## **6. Honorary Secretary's Report**

It is with mixed feelings that I present my last report as Honorary Secretary for Dressage NSW. I indicated to the Committee last year that I did not intend to re-stand for the Committee for the next term, and as a result, I am stepping down from the position. It has been a privilege to have held this position for the last 14 years, and I have enjoyed the work and the challenges that have come our way over the years.

Helen has covered some of the highlights achieved over the past year, and Petra will cover the financial side, so my report will be a little smaller than usual to avoid doubling up.

The last twelve months have been "*business as usual*" for the Committee as we continue to manage the sport on behalf of Equestrian NSW. The nature of our role and responsibilities is varied, wide and at times demanding. As the SDA (State Dressage Authority or State Dressage Committee), we manage the day-to-day administration of the sport. In addition, through our sub-committees, DNSW conducts regular events and training days at Clarendon, conducts the NSW Dressage Championships, oversees the conduct of the NSW Young Rider Championships and of the Sydney CDI. On top of this, the Judges Sub-Committee is very active with the education of judges, and we also have the High-Performance dressage programme to be managed.

The workload can be pretty demanding for a volunteer organisation, and it is not always easy keeping all the balls in the air. I doubt there is any other sporting body that manages to achieve what this committee does.

Eleven committee meetings were held since the last AGM. A summary of attendance is attached to the agenda hand-out. A Club Forum was held in June and was well attended by Club representatives from across the state.

Our Committee has remained constant this year with the exception of the recent resignation of Suzanne Doyle after being elected to the Equestrian Australia Board. We are sorry to see Suzanne go but she will be a great asset to EA.

We have had a few changes in Area Delegates this year with the resignation of Samantha Farrar (Hunter Valley/Central Coast) and Kim Slocum (South Western region). Sue Bryce (many will know Sue as Sue Baker,

former Metro Delegate) has taken on the Hunter/Central Coast area and Kaye Spence has temporarily added the South West region to Central West area.

Managing the **dressage calendar** is a challenge with the demand for events increasing each year. Some Clubs are struggling to get judges as there are currently not enough judges to service competitions. In addition to the dressage events, our judges are called on to judge at Interschool, Eventing and Pony Club competitions. Our judge numbers are growing but it takes time for judges to work their way up the ladder. All Clubs need to share in the responsibility in encouraging more people to take up judging and provide support and opportunities for local judges in their area.

193 official competition days were scheduled in 2017 (10 cancelled due to weather or for other reasons) and 34 Closed events were held.

DNSW has recently started to limit the number of Official Events a Club can run to four per year. There are some exceptions, and consideration is given to Clubs to run more if it fits in with the calendar.

**Clarendon** events continue to be well supported by the riders but two washed-out events, including the postponed Clarendon Winter Festival, did impact on the income this year.

Six regional club events were part of the **DNSW Regional Dressage Festival** series in 2017. These events were in Canberra, Young, Tamworth, Manning Valley (Taree), Wagga and Alexander Park. Support from Equestrian NSW allowed us to contribute financially to each event along with providing other types of promotional support.

**DNSW Membership** numbers have increased slightly this year. We can note a rise in the number of Junior members as a result of the introduction of the Young Rider Development programme and the Young Rider Annual Awards. A handout of the member statistics is attached for your reference.

Our website continues to be popular but it is difficult to compare history due to the new platform. DNSW presence on social media is significant. DNSW Facebook page continues to grow, and we have close to 8,000 followers. Clarendon now has its own Facebook page with 955 followers. The Sydney CDI has 6,025 followers, and we also have a Facebook page for young riders. DNSW as well as the Sydney CDI are represented on Instagram. Managing and feeding information into all of these hungry platforms can be a challenge.

Our **Annual Awards and Performance Medals** represent a significant achievement for our members.

126 Performance Medals were presented this year, compared to 117 in 2016. 13 Gold (10 in 2016), 42 Silver (41 in 2016) and 71 Bronze (66 in 2016).

NSW riders continue to perform well at a State and National level. At the recent 2017 Australian Championships at Boneo Park, NSW riders were dominant, winning most of the Champion titles. The camaraderie between the riders was evident.

In line with our Constitution, four committee positions are declared vacant to be filled at the AGM.

Vicky Newham decided not to re-stand for the next term. Thank you, Vicky, for your valued and positive contribution during your time on the Committee.

Three Nominations were received for the 2018-2020 term (Sue Cunningham, Kathy Shelley and Julie Jones). There being no other nominations a vote was not required, and Sue, Kathy and Julie are elected to the Committee for the coming term.

We have two remaining positions open on the DNSW, and nominations will be called from the floor this evening.

Later we will be voting on changes to our Constitution. One of the proposed changes is limiting the number of terms a Committee member can remain on the Committee. This may be difficult, especially in the beginning, but hopefully it will encourage others to step up and be involved.

A special thank you to Tracey Lesslie, our Admin Secretary, and Karen Lever, our Clarendon Events Secretary, for the fantastic work and support over the years.

In closing, thank you to all Committee members and Delegates for your assistance and support during the past year and during the time I have been the Hon Sec. I have enjoyed working with you and admire your dedication and commitment.

I would like to say a special thank you to Judy Wilson, with whom I worked closely for many years. Judy is one of the unsung heroes on the DNSW Committee, quietly working away in the background looking after our financial affairs and never asking for thanks or recognition. Thank you, Judy, for your wise counsel and advice over the years.

Under Helen's leadership I am sure this Committee will continue to do great things and I wish you all the very best.

Toni Venhaus,  
Honorary Secretary, Dressage NSW

### **7. Honorary Treasurer's Reports**

Petra Keranen spoke to financial accounts (see page that had been prepared by Ross Fowler & Co and highlighted the following

- A profit of \$3,743 was made in the 2017 financial year which was significantly down on the previous year which is accountable to the postponement of CWF and the cancellation of a number of events.
- The challenge going forward is to expand income streams to be less reliant on competition.
- Thanks to Helen Lawson, Judy Wilson and Toni Venhaus for all their support.

**Motion: a) (page 10) that the committee resolves that financial report presents fairly the financial position of Dressage NSW Incorporated as at June 30 2017 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, mandatory professional reporting requirements and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board**

**b) at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Dressage NSW Incorporated will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.**

**Moved: Petra Keranen                      Seconded: Toni Venhaus**  
**Motion Carried.**

### **8. Proposed changes to the Constitution**

#### **Proposed change to the Dressage NSW Constitution, December 2017**

Lauren James noted that not all members had been advised in writing as not all members receive Centreline magazine and that the procedure may have to be improved to ensure any future changes reach members that no longer subscribe to Centreline magazine

Helen Lawson noted that the changes had been advised both through Centreline magazine (as per the constitution) and on the website following the meeting in August

Toni Venhaus spoke to the changes as highlighted.

**Motion: That the constitution be amended to reflect the inclusion**  
**Moved: Toni Venhaus      Seconded: Sue Cunningham**  
**All in favour: Motion Carried.**

### **9. Appointment of Auditor**

**Motion: that DNSW follow a tender process to appoint an auditor for the 2018/2019 financial year.**  
**Moved: Petra Keranen                      Seconded: Michelle Becchio**  
**Motion Carried.**

## **10. Committee Elections**

Four positions on the Committee were declared vacant and a resignation has been received so five positions have become available

Three nominations were received by the due date (Kathy Shelley, Sue Cunningham & Julie Jones) for the term 2018 - 2020

Two positions remained vacant.

Marjolyn Thomas had sent a nomination and was endorsed by Toni Venhaus,

**Motion: to accept the nomination of Marjolyn Thomas to the Dressage NSW committee.**

**Moved: Toni Venhaus      Seconded: Sue Cunningham.**

**Marjolyn Thomas was elected unanimously to the committee .**

No further nominations were received from the floor however a late nomination has been received from Andree Wheeler. As Andree was not available to attend the meeting, it was recommended that Andree fill a casual vacancy on the committee and stand for re-election in 12 months time.

Confirmation of the 2018 Committee: Gail Benson, Kathy Shelley, Jan Geary, Helen Lawson, Petra Keranen, , Sue Cunningham, Earle Olaisen, Michelle Becchio, Jocelyn West, Marjolyn Thomas and Andree Wheeler

## **11. General Business**

In most cases the Hon. Secretary is the Public Officer unless otherwise advised. The organisation currently does not have a Public Officer and Toni Venhaus has offered to fill that role until a new Hon Secretary is established.

**Motion: That Toni Venhaus fill the position of Public Officer for 12 months until a new Hon Secretary is established.**

**Moved: Michelle Becchio      Seconded: Jocelyn West**

**Motion Carried**

**Close of Meeting**

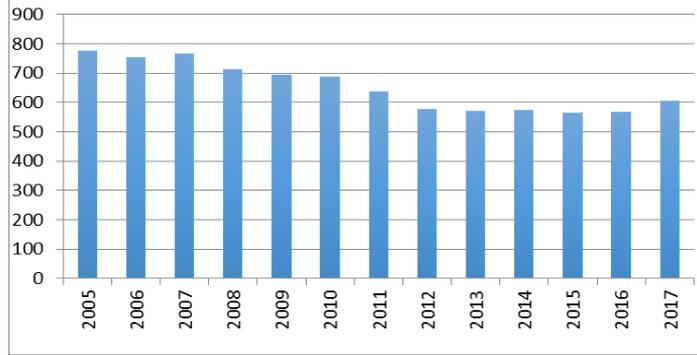
**The meeting was declared closed at 7.52pm**

## DNSW Membership Comparison

As at end June 2017

<b>Members</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
Ordinary members	639	635	650	596	585	565	512	457	449	452	445	440	455
Life & Hon Members	92	92	90	91	93	93	94	91	91	90	90	90	83
Junior	44	27	28	27	17	31	32	29	32	33	31	38	69
<b>All Members</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>754</b>	<b>768</b>	<b>714</b>	<b>695</b>	<b>689</b>	<b>638</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>572</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>568</b>	<b>607</b>
<b>Other</b>													
Affiliated Clubs/Organisations	52	52	53	53	53	55	54	55	53	57	56	52	53
CL subscribers	154	176	152	157	133	120	77	71	55	44	33	30	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>981</b>	<b>982</b>	<b>973</b>	<b>924</b>	<b>881</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>769</b>	<b>703</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>655</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>680</b>

### All Membership Types



### CL subscribers

