

# CLERMONT VETERINARY SURGERY

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Proudly members of the Australian Veterinary Association, Australian Cattle Veterinarians, Equine Veterinarians Australia and Australian Small Animals Veterinarians

## GUILFOYLE'S GRUMBLINGS

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**What! No teabag!**



The electronic age has finally hit the Clermont Veterinary Surgery forcing necessary changes. Since the first *edition* was produced in 1990 on an old DOS *Printmaster* programme, the production costs for *Grumblings* has increased and the not all clients were being reached.

So here we go with our first *eGrumblings* (and in the near future, all past editions will be on our *Website* or *Facebook* page).

Back in 1976 when the practice first started, if circulars needed to be printed, I would take a stencil into *Mrs Del Goodwin* at *Primac* and she would run off copies on the *Roneo or Gestetner machine*. With the advent of computers and Word Processors, it was still a matter of printing out the newsletter/circular, mass printing it on the photocopier, then back to the office and into the folding, putting into addressed envelopes (*plus the teabag*), bundling up into local/other addresses and then finally to the Post Office—a marathon task lasting at least two—three days

Today, one push of a button on the computer, and the completed publication sails off into the *Ethernet* reaching its destination within minutes. Communications made easy, even more efficient if the receiver is always checking their mobile phone!!!!!!!!!! *That is another story that will take up many pages*

This *paperless, person-less approach* may be okay for people who are *computer literate*. For instance: Take getting through to a *Government service*. Now, instead of hanging on the phone for hours, one now spends twice as long bashing the computer keyboard trying to successfully *logon* to the supposedly *user friendly Self Service Portal*. It does tend to exhaust one's repertoire of inappropriate language!!

*Back to reality.* The wet season failed and conditions went backwards from there with welcome relief to some parts of the district in February. Nationwide drought conditions meant supplementary feed supplies also began to dry up. The Government was not going to be left out and organized *Drought Summits and Help The Farmers Appeals*. Unfortunately, more than a day late for primary producers so affected.

Australia is a *“land of drought”* and drought may be the normal weather pattern we can expect. Drought summits would be better held during times of plenty when producers can be offered real financial incentives for forward planning mitigation measures, and just not *palliative care grants* or *low interest repayable loans*.

*Let's forget the impossible and look at the inevitable.*

I turned 70 in May. Oh dear! The march of time and the *“three score & ten” milestone* went past in a blur but not without great memories. Not least was a blessing from *Fr Ronaldo* with a stubby of *San Miguel* beer during a celebratory Mass at Table Downs.



In May, *Clermont* celebrated 150 years of its annual show. Clermont Rodeo & Show Committee President *Jan Burnett* read a history of the *first show in 1868*. How things have changed from the male dominated society of those times. The local shows have been run by volunteers since their inception, even today when under pressure from outside commercial pressures. Due and worthy thanks to all involved who *“keep the show on the road”*

And on June 5th, *Peter Gordon John Salmond* arrived. May God bless him in his future — hopefully a vet like Mum and Granddad !



At the end of August, Carlie and I headed off to the **World Buiatrics (Cattle Medicine) Congress, Sapporo, Hokkaido, Japan**. I presented a paper on “*The Possible Role of High Oxalate pasture in producing Subclinical Hypocalcaemia in a beef breeding herd in Central Queensland*”. The paper created interest from delegates from around the globe. (Incidentally, with the flush of Buffel grass in some areas at present, the problem is more than suspect with cases in both sheep and cattle).



Carlie and I have visited this area of Japan before in winter to enjoy the ski fields which in summer are walking trails and golf courses.

In early September, I spoke at a **Producer Forum at Spyglass Research Station, Charters Towers**. The topic was on **Welfare** but discussion centered quickly onto providing analgesia to calves at branding time. It was heartening to see the acceptance of these principles that already have been put into practice on the larger properties.

The issue of animal welfare immediately brings into focus the emerging entity of **Social Licence to Operate (SLO)**. As the gap between food producers and food consumers widens, the public is more demanding for “**clean green**” food produced under appropriate welfare standards. If these standards are not met, buyer resistance occurs.

However this is not a new concept, it has been around for years. Too often we hear community comments like “*they shouldn’t be allowed to own a property*” or “*they should be in jail for the way they treat their cattle*”. This is **SLO**, judgment by peers.

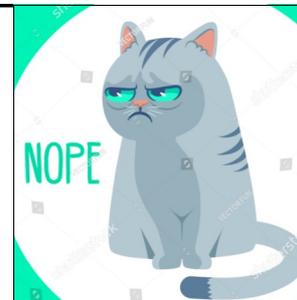
One **high profile cattle industry leader** told me “*if industry cannot sell our good welfare standards to the public, then we are lost*”

**Social Licence to Operate** also equally applies to how we look after our domestic pets. Under another name SLO is called **Duty of Care**.

For those who attended the Beef Expo in October were fortunate to hear an excellent **Forum on Zoonotic Diseases** presented by **Dr Guy Weerasingh, Dr Sarah McLay** and myself. The handling of both livestock and domestic pets can leave us open to some surprises. Sensible hygiene at all times can prevent unpleasant “**nasties**” spreading to people. **Stay aware!**

**Never too old to learn!**

Recently a client and myself were treating the family pet cat which was in severe distress. Without warning, the poor cat lashed out with teeth and claws inflicting deep wounds on both us which required urgent medical attention (plus two days in hospital for the owner). **Cat bites and deep scratches** are a medical emergency and must be treated swiftly.



**An animal’s instinctive reaction to pain is to bite or kick as well as panic.** It is distressing to see any animal in pain but utmost caution must be used when rendering help. A dog that has been run over by a vehicle or a horse tangled in a wire fence must be handled with due care to **personal safety**. All they can feel is pain or fear, animals don’t understand you are trying to help.

**Pig Hunters Beware:** Recently, a dog tested positive for **Pig Brucellosis (Brucella suis infection)**. The dog was presented with a grossly swollen testicle which is one the most common signs of this disease (**yes! In all species!**). This **zoonotic** disease can be contracted either directly from handling wild pigs or from infected hunting dogs. **Sensible hygiene and immediate first aid** to cuts and scratches can help prevent the misery of this disease.

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**Heartworm (Dirofilaria immitis)** infection of dogs is making a resurgence. This disease was very common during the 1970/80’s but due to effective preventative medications coming onto the market at the time, the problem largely disappeared. More cases are now being increasingly recorded. One sad incident occurred when the dog died while undergoing surgery; it was found to have a very heavy **Heartworm** burden which caused its heart to fail under anaesthesia.

Heartworm disease in dogs is a **silent killer** that is often overlooked until it’s too late. This **preventable** condition starts with a mosquito bite and ends with either a long, expensive treatment or death. Symptoms may not appear for about 6 months after the infecting mosquito bite: **a soft, dry cough, lethargy, weight loss, difficult breathing, fluid build-up in the abdomen and chest, and finally collapse.** If in doubt, check it out!



## WATCH WHAT YOUR PET EATS

Ensure your pets also enjoy a healthy Christmas and give your poor vet a trouble free break without troublesome emergencies

*The Twelve Poisons of Christmas for your pet* are:

**Chocolate,**  
**Grapes/Dried Fruits,**  
**Onions,**  
**Alcohol,**  
**Macadamia Nuts,**  
**Medicines,**  
**Christmas Pudding,**  
**Poinsetta,**  
**Blue Cheese,**  
**Sweets,**  
**Garlic,**  
**Xylitol/Gum.**

It sounds very boring from a human perspective but as the saying goes *“It’s a dog’s life”*

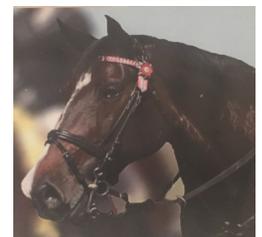


won't get left at an airport somewhere). Or the hour by hour waiting for a mare to ovulate when **frozen semen** is being used. Very occasionally, the mare gets to dance in the **old fashioned way** when a local stallion is available for natural service.

Breeding season also means the arrival of the new foals. While most hit the world literally running, some experience a range of problems which, if not treated immediately, would have a tragic end.

Our new **Intensive Care Unit (ICU)** has seen some fortunate foals saved whereas they would not have survived under natural conditions. Foals have to be fed every two hours so it means that the staff have to be rostered to meet this demand. Dedication!

The ICU unit was dedicated to the memory of **Copabella Vienna**, a top performing show mare owned by Jenny & Nicole Murphy of Dysart.



## Staff

The practice would not be what it is without the staff we have.

**Dr Caroline Spelta** achieved her **Dip ECEIM**, which means she is a certified **Specialist in Equine Medicine**—a very big deal! We are very blessed to have a vet of this caliber in Clermont. **Dr Tess Salmond** and **Dr Dee-Ann Sheehy** both retired to the breeder paddock through the year, both producing colt foals (**Peter and Oberon**). We are looking forward to having them back next year! On the nurse front, we have been joined by capable and experienced nurses in **Lexie Titmarsh, Emily Parry and Michaela Seaden**. Local schoolgirl **Lucy Appleton** has also started with us on a Saturday morning replacing **Bailey Richardson** who will be off to University next year.

We definitely have grown from a **one vet, one nurse band !**

**Merry Christmas 2018 and good fortunes for 2019 from everyone at the Clermont Veterinary Surgery**

**Cheers Guillie & Tess**

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## MAKING BABIES!

The large animal yards down the back have been a flurry of activity since the start of September with the **Equine Repro season** in full swing. No doubt this was helped by Dr Tess's **promotional video** which is available on our **FaceBook** page. Well worth watching!!

As if there are not enough daylight hours at this time of year, quite often the lights would be on at **4 AM** as the team of **Dr Caroline/Dr Max** helped by the eager **nurse support team** would flush a donor mare, collecting her seven day old embryo and then shipping it off to Brisbane by **Qantas** to be placed in the surrogate mother mare by **11 AM!** Life in the fast lane at such an early age!

This is on top of the angst of awaiting the timely arrival **the vital chilled semen packages** from around Australia (*express urgent doesn't mean it*