Why not register to access the International Caspian Society’s on-line stud book database. The charge of £15 a year is used solely for maintenance and improvement of the facility, which is invaluable for breeders and all interested parties.

Stud Book Registration allows you access to:
- Pedigrees
- Progeny
- Level of in-breeding
- Calculate a potential pedigree and in-breeding level from a proposed breeding
- Search the database in numerical, alphabetical or chronological order
- Search by:
  - country
  - colour
  - age
  - stallions/male/female
  - Multiple search e.g. grey stallions bred in a specific country between an age range.

It would be sad to lose this unique facility through lack of funding. Donations can also be made via Paypal to ICSB@btinternet.com
The ICS would like to congratulate Her Majesty the Queen on her 95th birthday. For the first time since her Coronation the official gun salute was cancelled at her own request in view of the UK lockdown due to the Coronavirus pandemic. She is currently isolated with H.R.H. Prince Philip at Windsor Castle where she will no doubt be able to enjoy a virtual visit to the Royal Windsor Horse Show.

AND ALSO TO H.R.H. PRINCE PHILIP

HRH Prince Philip will reach his 99th birthday on the 10th June. The Caspian horse has a great deal to thank him for.

UK REGULATIONS – MICROCHIPS

UK owners need to remember that all horses in the EU must be microchipped by October 2020.

DATA PROTECTION

As well as personal information i.e. names and addresses of owners and breeders, the ICSB no longer shows DNA numbers, although this is not part of the data protection legislation.

NEW ZEALAND

Sadly, in 2020 we have to accept the end of Caspian breeding in New Zealand. Over the last year it had been hoped that breeding stock could be reinstated so that the herculean task started by Helen Rattray could continue but, as we all know, the cost of importing stock is astronomical and in the end it didn’t happen. Helen’s great success with her cross bred performance horses is well documented and we hope to bring you a full account of the stud’s activities in a future issue.

One of Helen Rattray’s beautiful part bred Caspians
Lord and Master

Helen’s stud stallion was Hopstone Atesh, imported from the Caspian Stud UK. Impeccably bred by the
Caspian Stud UK from Prince Philip’s mare Korshid Kola and Muriel Harris’s stallion, Karoun. He was regularly ridden throughout his stud career.

News from CHS May 2020

Sadly all the news worldwide seems of necessity to revolve around the coronavirus pandemic. Live shows have been cancelled or postponed, indeed our AGM has been postponed till the autumn, date of course to be confirmed when the situation has (hopefully) settled down. However, many virtual shows are being organised, and CHS is no exception. This is an opportunity for Caspian owners worldwide, and even those who are not owners but have photos or videos, to show off the Caspian breed. Perhaps your Caspian does something unusual? – they are known for their versatility. Schedules and entry forms have been sent to all members, but they may be found on CHS website www.caspianhorsesociety.org.uk

Caspian owners are finding other ways to keep their horses interested, for example Kineton Khoja is enjoying jumping loose and on the lunge instead of his usual Driving Trials.

In news from Europe, Petra has had a lucky escape with her filly Moiras Ziva. Found in the field with a dislocated neck, she took the difficult decision to let nature take its course. The Caspian intelligence and stubbornness shone through and with a specially adapted harness she can be led to areas where she can gallop, eat and explore!

Nina in Germany is upset by the news that the Caspian does not have large enough numbers there to warrant breed recognition. Although successfully exhibiting at big shows, she may have to stop breeding, as she finds the Caspians impossible to sell at sensible prices. But, in Lithuania, Laima and Andrey are working with

Stallion Hopstone Atesh (foreground)
Caspian ‘for coaching, training and therapy’. They find they are ‘very responsive’ and their ‘intellect’ ‘very high’.

I hope that the stories of these owners will be expanded in the annual CHS magazine, which is emailed to all members.

Meanwhile back in UK, after filling out many forms and sending many documents, DEFRA confirms that CHS has provided all the ‘information and documents that could be requested by the European Commission to show that the Caspian Horse Society is compliant with Regulation (EU) 2016/1012’. ie it can trade with EU and issue EU compliant passports.

Henden Aljaba

Stallion Omid

Mare Shaghaigh

Stallion Alamout

CASPIANS FROM THE MERCKE HERD DISCOVERED BY LOUISE FIROUZ –

KURDAN – 2001
Following the death of her husband, Narcy, Louise was asked by a German friend, John Schneider-Mercke, to collect a new herd of Caspians on his behalf. These are some of the herd photographed by Brenda Dalton during a visit to Louise in 2001.
Grass sickness occurs almost exclusively in horses with access to grass and is almost always fatal. The disease was first recognised about 1907 following an outbreak in army remount horses near Dundee and it has gradually moved south but, so many years on, there is still no cure for grass sickness. Theories that it is caused by a fungal toxin are unchanged in over fifty years. Young horses out at pasture in the spring are most likely to contract the illness and in its acute form it is fatal. All equines, Thoroughbreds, pet ponies, donkeys are all at risk. Around 70% of chronic sufferers survive but only with intensive nursing around the clock.

- acute grass sickness horses display signs of colic and require euthanasia or die within 48 hours
- subacute grass sickness horses display clinical signs similar to the acute type but with less severity and may survive up to 7 days
- chronic grass sickness horses have rapid weight loss and some of these cases may survive.

Signs of the disease are a clear liquid coming from the nose and stomach pain.

Once grass sickness is detected on a paddock it tends to reoccur, even with a gap of several years before the paddock is used again for horses. When looking for pasture to rent it is probably worth doing some research among horse owning populations in the area, to determine the history of the grazing you are considering.

Without national legislation, local councils in the UK are now considering taking their own measures to ban the use of these dangerous lanterns. Not only are they a fire risk but they can cause damage to domestic and farm animals and wildlife. Around 80 councils have now banned their use in the UK. Despite strong campaigning in the UK, unfortunately the banning of fireworks does not yet have the backing of legislation.

Please send news of what is happening where you are under the heading ‘News’
editor: daltonb@talk21.com
LAND OF THE TURQUOISE MOUNTAINS: Journeys across Iran

by Cyrus Massoudi

Cyrus Massoudi was born in England to parents who had moved from Iran at the time of the Revolution. As a young man he visited Iran in an effort to discover his roots. As he journeys through Iran, and through the book, he discovers and relates its history, its politics, the best and worst points of Iran and, inevitably, it leads him to Louise.

HORSE OR PONY

And still the battle rages on … Is the Caspian a horse or a pony? Its characteristics show it is a horse, whilst its height says that it is a pony.

Take note of Louise’ own formula for judging a Caspian:
“1. Not to exceed 120 centimetres in height
2. Short ears not over 11 centimetres measuring from the occiput
3. Smooth action from the shoulder
4. Fine head with large eyes and pronounced jaw bone
5. Colours may be bay, brown, black, chestnut, grey in all shades, dun. The fewer white marking the better
6. Horse in proportion to itself and legs i.e. not a pony.”

Editor’s note: (120 cm, a little less than 12 hands though the breed standard suggests up to 12.2 hands which Louise considered acceptable)

On height, B S Kirkaldy-Mather, Louth, wrote in 1992

“…In fact it’s really evolution of the HUNTER and HUNTED that establishes either growth or regression. The CASPIAN has the potential to reach 17 hh. ARABS from the 16 to 1800’s have already pushed over 16.1 from a base of 13 hh. The TB which is a mixture of various breeds but has had selective breeding imposed by man has now started to regress in height and the VERY best are down to 14.2 hh. It should also be noted that the diminutive FALABELLA is a TB x Shetland so for CASPIANS that can be anything and everything: it all depends on the WHIMS OF MAN ….”

(Note: in the USA the Mexican Dancing Horse is very similar to the Caspian and has been bred from small TB and ARAB horses. Editor)
Fire and Drought

Having narrowly avoided fire early in the year, when they had to evacuate for a short time, Shauna Mills-Swart and her husband Gerard told us how they are coping with drought, bush fires and the Coronavirus lockdown.

“We live so remotely on 101 acres. Our nearest neighbour is just over a kilometre away, so we can at least walk out into the paddocks with the Caspians. They are appreciating the extra attention and brushing.

In South Australia we are still in severe drought, and where we live, we are in a Rain shadow so get even less than the nearest town which is 6 miles away. My Caspians are still fat and are eating short, dry brown spikey grass – I will have to start feeding out hay. Fortunately, our feed store is only selling to local residents and will deliver a phone order to the front gate. If you park your farm utility vehicle there, they will load your feed order onto your vehicle so that they don’t have to come onto the property and have no contact with anyone.”

Caspian Conservation Society 1st Breed Show

By Ateshé Firouz

It was a cold crisp November morning when we arrived at the Norouzabad Equestrian Center southwest of Tehran to attend the 1st Breed Show organised by the Caspian Conservation Society with the sponsorship of Part Stud and the support of the Jehad. We had to negotiate the ubiquitous Tehran traffic to get there and arrived late. The sounds of horses whinnying and loudspeaker announcements greeted us as we walked into the show ground, the green grass of the arena in stark contrast to its surroundings. Moments after our arrival the first class was called and a handful of fillies entered the arena. There were over 70 horses entered in the Breed Show from provinces as far as the Caspian (Mazandaran and Gilan), Golestan, Yazd, Tehran and its surroundings. The show drew a large crowd to the historic home of Louise and Narcy Firouz where people gathered to honour Louise’s work in rediscovering the Caspian horse and bringing it to the attention of Iranians as well as the entire world. Out of the dozen or so classes of the breed show few had less than half a dozen entries and what struck me most of all was the incredible quality of the horses entered. There is
no doubt that this little horse is well known and appreciated in its native country and that great efforts are being made to preserve the breed. I have been returning to Iran on a regular basis these past 10 years and I am caught off guard every time by the quality of the horses, the dedication of the breeders and the tireless work of the equestrian community to recognise, honour and preserve the work started by Louise Firouz in 1965. The breed show was organised by the Caspian Conservation Society with the sponsorship of the Part Stud and under the auspices of the Jehad. The society has worked very hard to translate rules and regulations pertaining to the registry of Caspians. They have designed the forms and the procedures needed to record these horses and have worked with the Jehad to ensure that the horses are microchipped as well as identified according to the rules and regulations put together by Louise Firouz at the time of the first national stud book and later the International Caspian Stud Book. They have embarked on the mammoth task of completing the registry of all Caspians horses in Iran. To put this task into context, not a single horse has been registered since Louise’s passing in 2008. All the horses at the show were assessed by one international assessor and 2 national ones. These documents will serve to complete the requirements of registry into the different sections of the studbook, ie; pre-foundation, foundation, pure, etc.

She was rescued by a teacher in the village of Yamout in Golestan province. He is an elementary school teacher and uses her in his school to teach his pupils the history of Iran and the Caspian horse as well as the basics of animal husbandry. Despite his difficult financial situation, he made the trip from his home in Yamout with 2 of his pupils all the way down to Tehran, a trip of over 600 kms. Attendees of the show were asked to write a letter to Louise Firouz which would be delivered to her resting place in Ghara Tappeh Sheikh, in the heart of the Turkoman Steppes. The letters were assembled in an oversized envelope carried into the arena by two riders on their Caspians. One letter was to be drawn out of the envelope and the author of the letter would be presented with a Caspian from the Part Stud.

A few days after the breed show the team of assessors continued their work at the Part Stud as well. It is well worth noting the exceptional quality of the horses assessed with only a handful showing a predominance of Taleshi characteristics. The Taleshi breed exists side by side with the Caspian and the 2 breeds will readily mix in the mountains where the horses are often turned loose in ‘Ghoroghs’, traditional pasture grounds. The oldest participant of the show was an 18 yr. old mare by the name of Sarne vesht (Destiny).
Other highlights included a demonstration of riding by pupils of Homa Khatami of the Alvand Riding Club, the Norouzabad Riding Club and the Guissoum Riding Club.

CHS Virtual Horse Show

Ashby and Windsor Horse Shows, usually attended by UK Caspian owners, along with all other horse shows in the UK and no doubt around the world, have been postponed until 2021. This has been disastrous for many associations but if ever a brave face exists it is in the equestrian world. The Caspian Horse Society are holding a virtual show and a large number of entries are expected. Please check the Caspian Horse Society website for the Show Schedule and entry form. Have some fun and the best of luck.

Just a reminder of some past entries in the Ashby Show.

- Kineton Khoja
- Angela Leadbetter’s Lanhill Antimay
- Penny Walster with part bred Bytham Lindsay
- Annie Mason’s part bred Bytham Abigail (Mini Lace)
Khoja, Abigail and Inshallah all took part in the Horse of the Year Show

**NOTE:** Darkhorse Inshallah sadly passed away suddenly in 2018. She has been such an amazing little mare and we send our commiserations to Lizzie and the Sales family.