

**SOUTH AUSTRALIAN "BUDGIE DIGEST"**

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**BUDGERIGAR SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED**

Meeting Place: Adelaide South West Community Centre,  
171 Sturt St, Adelaide SA

First Tuesday of each Month at 8.00 pm

Club website - [www.bssainc.org.au](http://www.bssainc.org.au)

**PRESIDENT:**

Chris Murphy—Coromandel East H 8370 6306  
W 8300 5900

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**AUDITOR:**

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**DELEGATES TO B.C.S.A.:**

Chris Murphy (see above)

Positions Vacant (2)

**DIGEST EDITOR:**

Kerry Murphy Email: [kerrymurphy@ozemail.com.au](mailto:kerrymurphy@ozemail.com.au)

The opinions expressed by the Authors are their own and not necessarily those of this Society

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

### **FEBRUARY MEETING-TUESDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2015**

Start time is 8pm and we will be holding our Annual General Meeting in conjunction with our normal monthly meeting.

Entertainment: Open breeders panel to discuss the current breeding season.

Hot weather policy applies so please check the forecast temperature on the Monday evening for the Tuesday.

Classes will be avail for all varieties and will be allocated for Junior, Novice, Intermediate and open.

### **NOVICE SHOW AND PETER SIMIC'S AUCTION**

On Saturday 28 March the BSSA will host both events. The Novice show is open to all BCSCA members regardless of which club is their principal club.

The schedule will be based upon the ANBC class schedule and providing sufficient birds are benched on the day, the winner will qualify for Status movement as per BCSCA regulations.

This is the third Novice show and both previous shows have qualified.

Show schedules are avail from any committee member or can be downloaded from the BSSA website [www.bssainc.org.au](http://www.bssainc.org.au)

Detail re Peter's auction will follow.

### **BSSA SHOW DATES 2015**

The following dates apply for this coming year.

Novice Show:	Saturday 28 March
Deane Trevellion Interclub:	Tuesday 7 April
Stan Watson Breeders Show:	Saturday 16 May
Logan Shield:	Sunday 14 June

National Show in Mandurah, WA	20/21 June
Ron Norman Annual and Brasea Show:	Saturday 4 July
Interclub Nest Feather Show:	Saturday 31 October

#### **DEANE TREVELLION INTERCLUB, TUESDAY 7 APRIL 2015**

This interclub replaces our April monthly meeting and will be held at the Sturt Street Hall.

Held in conjunction with the Southern Cage Bird Society.

Each club will exhibit birds in 10 classes as we join together to remember the help and service provided to both our societies during the 1970s and 1980s.

All members are invited to support the BSSA and Southern cage by attending in support.

#### **JANUARY 1 RING ISSUE DATE**

The ring steward has distributed all ordered rings in accord with the new issue date. As at the 19 January committee meeting the Society held 1850 rings on hand.

#### **QUALITY OF IMPORTED RINGS**

The BCSA secretary has requested feedback both positive and negative re the rings that are now in many fanciers hands. You may contact any of our committee members or indeed contact Nigel direct.

#### **KELWYN KAKOSCHKE AUCTION FOR 2015**

For many years has been held in Sydney which was always a 'Bridge too Far' for us South Australians but this year will be hosted by the Dandenong Club in Victoria. Further detail will be found on the BCV website.

## Giardia

**Description:** *Giardia* - This zoonotic, single-celled, protozoan parasite can cause disease in birds, dogs, cats, humans, and intestinal other animals. This parasite exists in two forms, trophozoite and cysts. Trophozoite is the active form which moves by means of hair like structures known as flagella. These trophozoites use a small sucking disk to attach themselves to the surface of the villi, (finger-like projections in the small intestines). The second dormant form is called a cyst. Cysts as well as trophozoites are intermittently shed in the faeces from an infected bird. The environmentally stable cysts can survive become a source of infection to other hosts. Trophozoites are unstable outside the host presenting them with less of an opportunity to infect another host.

Although all birds are susceptible to *Giardia* infections most at risk are cockatiels, budgerigars, lovebirds, and Grey-cheeked parakeets.

**Transmission:** Transmission occurs when cysts and or trophozoites are released in the faeces of an infected bird. Asymptomatic birds may intermittently shed the cysts in their faeces serving as a continuous source of infection for other birds. Transmission occurs when these cysts and or trophozoites are ingested from food or water contaminate other possible hosts. Certain insects such as flies and cockroaches may serve as carriers of the cysts, and transmit from one location to another.

\**Giardia* from mammals may infect humans, but the zoonotic potential for avian giardiasis is thought to be relatively low.

**Symptoms:** A *Giardia* infection in psittacine birds may be asymptomatic or the birds may exhibit signs of weight loss, bulky or loose foul-smelling stools, vomiting, diarrhoea, anorexia, depression, and recurring yeast infections.

Dry skin and feather picking is typical in budgerigars and cockatiels suffering from Giardiosis.

**Prevention:** Keep aviary clean and dry. Prevent exposure to contaminated water (standard chlorine levels in drinking water will not destroy *Giardia* cysts, but boiling the water will).

Prevent overcrowding in the aviary. Isolate and quarantine all new birds as well as any infected birds.

**Treatment:** Iprnidazole; Metronidazole - re-treatment may be necessary because re-infection is fairly common. Turbosole, Ronivet.

## **Recognising Signs of Illness in Your Birds**

by

Dr. Tony Gestier BVSc. (Hons.), MACVSc.

Vetafarm Australia

Early signs of illness in birds are frequently not recognised. As a survival tactic in the wild, a sick bird will attempt to maintain a normal appearance for as long as possible, so that by the time any signs of illness are apparent, the bird may have been ill for some time. The bird that dies "suddenly" may be the result of the owner's failure to make distinctions in the appearance or behaviour of the bird prior to that time. Observation of Droppings is one simple method of monitoring your bird's health. Paper towels, news-paper or other smooth surfaces can be used to line the cage bottom so that the number, volume, colour and consistence of the droppings can be noted daily.

### **Guidelines for evaluation of droppings**

Normal captive bird droppings consist of 3 parts:

1 FAECES are food waste materials from the digestive tract. Normal faeces can vary somewhat in colour and consistency, depending on the diet. Diets with a high seed content usually produce homogeneous black or dark green faeces. Birds on formulated diets (pellets) normally exhibit softer, brownish faeces.

2 URINE, the liquid portion, is normally clear. A diet high in vegetable and fruit matter may increase the urine component.

3 URATES, or creamy white waste from the kidney, are often suspended in the liquid urine or appear to wrap around the faeces.

Some normal variation from the previous descriptions may be found in impending egg laying females, youngsters on hand feeding formulas, the first void in the morning, conditions of nervousness or following a large meal of a specific coloured food. Thus the owner should evaluate several droppings under normal circumstances before becoming alarmed.

### **Emergency first aid**

The two most important considerations for temporary care until your veterinarian can see the bird are HEAT and FOOD.

**HEAT** - A temperature of 30°C - 32°C should be maintained for sick birds. Placing a heating pad along the side or floor of the cage and draping can make a temporary incubator. The entire cage should be covered with a blanket or cage cover. An infrared or 100 watt light can be used as an alternate heat source. If the bird starts breathing rapidly and holds its wings out away from its body, the temperature is too hot. Flame heaters, which produce carbon monoxide, must not be used near the bird.

**FOOD** - A bird that stops eating dies. Therefore, every effort must be made to encourage the sick bird to eat. Cups of food should be placed adjacent to where the bird is perched, or scattered on the bottom of the cage. Offer the bird's favourite foods. Poly-Aid should be given to revive weak birds until they can get to a veterinary clinic. Supply an electrolyte (Spark) in the bird's drinking water while in the hospital cage. The smaller the bird, the more critical the need for prompt attention.

DO NOT give antibiotics, "miracle cures", alcohol or oil.

DO NOT wait to see how the bird is tomorrow. - TELEPHONE YOUR BIRDS VETERINARIAN!

The following symptoms may not require emergency treatment, but because they are abnormal, any bird showing these signs should be checked by your veterinarian:

- Prolonged moult or continual presence of pin feathers
- Feather picking
- Shifting of feet
- Lameness
- Brown stain in feathers over the nostrils
- Crusty material in the nostrils
- Loss of feathers or swelling around the eye
- Overgrowth of beak or nails
- Baldness
- Sores on feet

### **Signs of illness**

The following symptoms may indicate a serious health problem and veterinary assistance should be sought at once!

1. Change in character of the droppings. The sick bird may exhibit:
  - decrease in the total number or volume of droppings
  - change in the colour of the URATES or URINE

- an increase in the water content of the FAECES (diarrhea)
- decrease in the FAECES volume with increased URATES
- increase in the URINE portion (polyuria)

2. Decreased or excessive food or water consumption.

3. Change in attitude, personality or behaviour - decreased activity, decreased vocalisations, increased sleeping, and no response to stimuli.

4. Change in appearance or posture - ruffled feathers, weakness, inability to stand, staying on the bottom of the cage, sitting low on the perch, drooping wings, convulsions.

5. Change in character of respiration - any noticeable breathing movement (e.g. tail bobbing) while resting, heavy breathing after exertion, change in quality of voice, respiratory sounds such as sneezing, wheezing or clicking.

6. Change in weight or general body condition as determined by a gram scale, or by handling; a prominent breastbone due to loss of breast muscle tissue is serious!

7. Enlargement or swelling of the body.

8. Injury or bleeding.

9. Vomiting or regurgitation.

10 Discharge from nostrils, eyes or mouth.



Folio 0932

Expressions of Interest for the following:

Bird Carers x 3 for Western Australia in June

Auction Coordinator - Annual Auction

Show Manager - State Selection Show

The Budgerigar Council of South Australia seek applications from fanciers that are interested in any of the positions mentioned above.

For further details on each position, please refer the website [www.bcsa.com.au](http://www.bcsa.com.au) or contact either Dennis Lomman, [dennisem@chariot.net.au](mailto:dennisem@chariot.net.au) or myself for copies of each [position.bcsa.secretary@aapt.net.au](mailto:position.bcsa.secretary@aapt.net.au)

Looking forward to hearing from interested fanciers

Applications close 31st January 2015

Much regard

Nigel Tonkin  
BCSA Secretary 18 Garnet Avenue Blackwood,  
South Australia, 5051

15<sup>th</sup> November 2014



## **A New Approach To Disease Control in Budgies. (Part 1 in a series)**

\*Budgies are FRAGILE creatures that do not recover well from diseases. In captivity, simple diarrhoea often kills budgies. Their nomadic lifestyle in the wild is excellent for avoiding contact with these sorts of diseases.

\*Budgies are like American Passenger Pigeons - they breed in their millions in the wild, but they also can die in their millions when they encounter serious challenges of any sort. In extreme heat or during severe droughts, budgies die in their millions.

\*In their natural environment, the individual budgie is expendable. The evolutionary strategy of this species is to simply breed in vast numbers when times are good and thus to be able to cope with bad times even if numbers are drastically reduced.

\*For this reason, they also have very short lives - perhaps as little as about 2-3 years average in the wild. Even in captivity, most exhibition budgies average only about 4 or 5 years. (The record for a pet budgie in a cage according to the Guinness Book of Records is 29 years - note that a pet cage is the PERFECT quarantine isolation unit with a perfect climate and excellent food supply)

\*Human beings as well as many parrot species and cockatoos have a very different evolutionary strategy to the budgie. With humans, the individual DOES MATTER. It takes about 20 years to grow and educate a human, and we usually only have one baby at a time. Humans recover well quite from injuries and diseases and live for a long time. (Stone Age people averaged lifespans of about 30 years, but in biblical times some lived much longer, to around 60 years. Pharaoh Ramesses II lived to around 90!)

So, what does all this mean?

Well it may just mean that our approach to budgie disease control needs to be changed. For many reasons, you could argue that we have gone down the wrong path in trying to treat sick budgies. Maybe even our methods of disease prevention are wide of the mark. It is a simple fact that budgie disease prevention and control is based on human medicine. That is, there is a presumption that how we treat humans is appropriate for budgies: it is my view that this is sometimes dangerously wrong. So let's look at some new science on everything from antibiotics to microbiomes.

Budgies are FRAGILE creatures that do not recover well from diseases.

Currently almost all exhibition budgie breeders use human antibiotics purchased from

a vet for budgie disease control or prevention. Recent research on the gut microbiome in humans is showing that antibiotics do much harm as well as good. They basically upset the ecosystem inside the gut. In the guts of all animals, there is a gigantic and complex ecosystem thriving, involving billions of organisms of hundreds of thousands of species. Each of these gut species is likely to be exclusive to that particular individual animal species. So we humans have this vastly complex soup of special organisms inside us that co-evolved with humans and can only live inside us.... AND NOWHERE ELSE! There are 10 times as many cells in our gut as there are in the rest of our entire body. The human gut microbiome is by far our biggest organ.

Inside the guts of all animals are hundreds of thousands of genes belonging to the gut bacteria and other organisms that affect the development and wellbeing of the host animal. This is true for humans and budgies alike. SO bung some antibiotics down your budgies' throats and you may just do all sorts of damage that may indirectly over time lead to the illness or death of your birds.

You might be unbalancing your budgies' gut microbiomes (a microbiome is sort of like an internal ecosystem) such that all hell breaks loose. Yes, the antibiotic may well kill the one diagnosed disease but it will almost certainly kill all sorts of other good or useful organisms as well. New research clearly indicates that it is the BALANCE of species of organisms in animals' guts that is essential for ongoing health. Even 'bad' organisms are essential (in small numbers) for good health.

Antibiotics kill a wide number of organisms and thus destabilise your gut. Perhaps you could compare this to spraying another ecosystem, the Serengeti National Park in Tanzania in Africa, with Roundup to control a pasture weed. Doing this would kill the native grasses as well which would starve the Wildebeest, Zebras etc to death; which would then cause the Lions, Hyenas, Leopards, Vultures and many other carnivores to starve and on it goes.

We humans are equipped to cope with this sort of gut disruption fairly well\*\* - but it is my contention THAT BUDGIES AREN'T. This sort of disruption merely opens your poor budgies up to more and more other problems over time. It also seriously damages the budgies' immune systems, since the gut has a powerful effect on all animals' immune systems. A well balanced gut ecosystem is essential for a healthy animal. A budgie's own immune system is the key to better health, not antibiotics and similar medicines.

It is the contention here that Budgerigar Health is best maintained with substances that promote balanced, natural gut functions. At this stage, these substances are almost exclusively natural substances such as foods and herbs.

Budgies are FRAGILE creatures that do not recover well from diseases.

The main contenders for use in developing a stronger immune system with budgies are: Vitamin D3 from exposing your budgies to natural sunlight, Manuka Honey, Apple Cider Vinegar, Garlic, native tree & shrub branches and Ginger roots like Turmeric. Many other foods like beetroot, amaranth, carrots, etc probably help too.

\*Vitamin D3 is essential for a healthy immune system in budgies and Humans. Vitamin D3 acts as the hormone that drives the immune system. Budgies make their own Vitamin D3 from exposure to direct sunlight that has not passed through glass, Perspex, clear fibreglass, or any other clear material. Second best is the use of Sylvania Reptistar Fluorescent tube lighting - especially in bird rooms. As a possible backup, use a really good vitamin D3 supplement such as Soluvite D Breeder from Vetafarm.

\*Manuka Honey is a gentle product that you can add to the budgies' water (1/2 teaspoon of manuka honey to 1 litre of water). It appears to nourish the gut lining etc. My budgies' fertility has soared since I started using it. According to current research being done with wound healing in horses by Professor Andrew Dart from the University of Sydney, Manuka Honey is very good, but Scottish Heather Honey is even better. Recently Budgie breeder Mick Arnold sent me the following feedback on using Manuka Honey as I had recommended: "My first round with 10 breeding cabinets I hatched 47 chicks I can't think of anything .I have done different this year against previous years apart from the honey These are the best results I have had in over 20 years with budgies."

\*Apple Cider Vinegar with added Garlic has a very strong effect on my budgies ( I use Stockhealth Double Strength Apple Cider Vinegar with Garlic at a rate of 2 ml per litre of water. I get this product from Elenbee Bird Supplies). The following day after administering it, my birds are much noisier and more active. Apple Cider Vinegar has been shown to improve gut health.

\*I guess that many other herbs, shrubs and tree parts will be of considerable help for gut health. The ones that budgies use in the wild such as Eucalyptus buds & branches plus lemon scented teatree branches are likely to be very good too.

Budgies are FRAGILE creatures that do not recover well from diseases.

I have not used any antibiotics or other veterinary medicines for over 3 years now and my birds have never been healthier. They have never had so many babies either. I have had many nests of over 8 babies and some with 11 successfully raised babies, which I have never even heard of before. I still have kept my antibiotics that I got

from the vet, but I am determined not to use them unless something goes terribly wrong .... So far so good.

I have had a number of senior budgie breeders look at my breeding birds too and they can bear witness to the huge numbers in each nest - over 700 babies from 52 breeding cages in the first 8 months of this year (2014).

***\*\*This gut disruption in humans is quite costly in terms of ongoing wellness, but humans will eventually cope with it. They won't die. from it because they are not as expendable and as fragile as budgies.***

#### Fat Budgies.

I have had fat budgies at the beginning of the breeding season every year for over 8 years. I have tried feeding different seed mixes, feeding higher protein foods, making the birds exercise more and many other tricks - all failed. It has been revealed by recent research with humans that an unbalanced gut microbiome can make people fat, so I tried the products mentioned herein - so far it seems to be working. My birds are no longer commonly obese. See article from Scientific American: 'How Gut Bacteria Help Make Us Fat and Thin' by Claudia Williams.

#### Megabacteria.

I have had some to many birds with Megabacteria (Avian Gastric Yeast - AGY) for many years. While administering the above 4 asterisked treatments has not cured any old birds with AGY, no new ones have appeared over the last 3 years. I suspect that AGY is a classic symptom of a compromised gut microbiome. I have tried the recommended veterinary treatments for Megabacteria and I can assure you that they don't work.

#### Antibiotics.

There is clear evidence of the decline of effectiveness of antibiotics around the world. This was always inevitable. Perhaps it is time to try other things. See paper by Susan Brink, National Geographic, 'Fatal Superbugs: Antibiotics Losing Effectiveness, WHO says'.

#### Wild parrots eating herbs.

Research has shown that in Australia, parrots eat hundreds of wild herbs, plant leaves etc every week in addition to the seed that they eat. Perhaps this is in part self-medication for the gut microbiome. So a wide selection of plants that are known to be safe with budgies should be offered every week to your birds.

### **Poo Transplants**

The University of Sydney is researching transferring faeces from healthy people to other people to see what health improvements are noticed. This is a vastly superior concept to trying Probiotics that contain only 1 or 2 probiotic species as sold in shops. Maybe soon we will be able to buy special pills of safe gut organisms that survive through the stomach to release their goodies in vast numbers of different species into the gut.

### **Quarantine**

We hear a lot about quarantine: in theory it is a good idea, but in reality it may not be so good - in the way that it is normally done. Bombarding your newly acquired budgies with nasty antibiotics etc may be disastrous for the poor birds' immune systems. Certainly it has not worked well for me. What I have found useful is to create a breeding quarantine/isolation system. I put new purchases straight into a breeding cage with one of my birds or with another new bird. I find that the new birds breed really well in this isolation with my treatments of Manuka Honey, Apple cider vinegar with Garlic, and UV light supplementation (from a Sylvania Reptistar tube). Along the way, they get slow contact with the diseases in my flock, which they seem to deal with really well. The new microbiome research shows that your microbiome spreads relentlessly around you all the time. So much so that criminals will soon be identified by the traces of their microbiomes left at crime scenes. Your budgies are also relentlessly spreading their gut organisms from their microbiomes such that new birds in isolated breeding cages will be inoculated sooner or later. At the end of this quarantine/isolation breeding process, I put the now healthier "new" birds into my aviaries for the first time.

© Don Burke 3/11/2014

**BSSA Hall of Fame - ANBC Class Winners**

<b>K &amp; J Kakoschke - 22 Wins</b>	<b>Nigel Tonkin - 2 Wins</b>	<b>D Lomman - 1 Win</b>
Normal Green - 1980,1984	Spangle - 1993	Violet - 2014*
Normal Blue - 1980,1984	Hens - 1988	
Red Eye Self - 1977,1979,1983,1984,1986		
Clearwing - 1980	<b>R Arnold - 1 Win</b>	
Cinnamonwing - 1981,1993	Normal Blue - 1977	
Opaline - 1986		
Fallow - 1982,1986	<b>B Coventry - 1 Win</b>	
Lacewing - 1986	Dominant Pied - 1977	
Dominant Pied - 1980,1982,1986		
Yellow Face - 1984	<b>R &amp; E Deslandes - 1 Win</b>	
Hens - 1977,1982	Greywing - 1980	
<b>Kakoschke &amp; Rice - 7 Wins</b>	<b>Graham Evans - 1 Win</b>	
Normal Green - 2005	Normal Green - 1981	
Clearwing - 2005,2010		
Opaline - 2011	<b>Alan Kett - 1 Win</b>	
Opaline AOSV - 2010	Normal Blue - 1981	
Crested - 2005		
Dark Factor Green/Blue - 2003	<b>Stan Watson - 1 Win</b>	
	Hens - 1981	
<b>Geoff Smith - 5 Wins</b>		
Opaline - 1984	<b>Malcolm Aspen - 1 Win</b>	
Dominant Pied - 1981,1983,1984,1985	Opaline - 1985	
<b>Wayne Weidenhofer - 4 Wins</b>	<b>Marie &amp; Kerry Murphy - 1 Win</b>	
Yellow Face - 1977,1978,1979,1980	Spangle - 1989	
<b>Deane Trevellion - 3 Wins</b>	<b>Lynn Ray - 1 Win</b>	
Clearwing - 1981	Dominant Pied - 1990	
Greywing - 1983		
Fallow - 1985	<b>Ron Norman - 1 Win</b>	
	Hens - 1996	
<b>Peter Glassenbury - 3 Wins</b>		
Blackeye - 1980,1992,2009*	<b>Mike Crossley - 1 Win</b>	
	Yellow Face - 2002 *	
<b>Ethel Dobie - 2 Wins</b>		
Lutino - 1975	<b>Peter Simic - 1 Win</b>	
Dominant Pied - 1975	Recessive Pied - 2010	
<b>Gordon Lowe - 2 Wins</b>	<b>Note:</b> Both Geoff Smith and	*Indicates a past or current BSSA
Opaline - 1979	W Weidenhofer would be ANBC	member who did not enter with
Yellow face - 1983	members, however ANBC by	the BSSA team for Logan Shield
	laws only count wins since	pre selection event.
	1983 when all seven states	
<b>G &amp; E Duffield - 2 Wins</b>	became full members and	
Black eye - 1975	participants	
Clearwing - 1994		

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**February to November (Monthly Meetings)**

**(20 cents entry per bird)**

1<sup>st</sup> = 3 points, 2<sup>nd</sup> = 2 points, 3<sup>rd</sup> = 1 point

Bird of the Night = 3 points

**Annual, Breeders, Novice, Deane Trevellion and Unbroken Cap Shows**

Each Class

1<sup>st</sup> = 3 points, 2<sup>nd</sup> = 2 points, 3<sup>rd</sup> = 1 point

**\* Denotes non member but Show results acknowledged**

OPEN		INTERMEDIATE	
M & K MURPHY	158	R & I FIELD	93
J & W WEIDENHOFER	125	ANDREW & LUCY	66
STEPHEN ELLIOTT	66	TRACY HASKELL	49
SUE ADAMS	30	VICKI SANFORD *	38
GLENN STEARNES	27		
K & A SMITH	25		
MICHAEL CROSSLEY	23	<b>NOVICE</b>	
DENNIS LOMMAN	22	WAYNE BANDT	200
BUTTERWORTH/STONE	19	GEORGE ENGLAND	63
C & T MURPHY	17	IAN JENKE	60
PETER SIMIC	17	KALEAS/WRIGHT	55
GRAHAM EVANS	16	LIBBY THOMAS	11
ROBERT WORRALL	14	T & K CAMPBELL	6
PETER GLASSENBURY *	10	BEN HALE	6
ALGI LAPINSKAS	10		
IAN MCEWAN	7		
ALAN KETT	5		
BARBARA FISHER	2		

LIFE MEMBERS CONT 2001: Mr. C Murphy; 2004: Mr. K Murphy, Mrs. M Murphy  
2008: Mr J Fisher; 2012 Mr K Wing.