

# Obituary: Ann Leighton

1919 – 2011

Entry number 118 in the Register of Veterinary Surgeons was made on 17 June 1943. It was for Ann Francis Mildred Rogers (later Johnston) and appears routine. Yet it is a history-making entry: Ann was the first female veterinary graduate to be registered in New Zealand.

While the book describing the history of the veterinary profession in New Zealand, *And while you're here...* (1998)<sup>1</sup> attributes Pearl Dawson as the first female veterinary practitioner in this country, she learned her skills as an apprentice with an Auckland veterinary surgeon and obtained a diploma in veterinary science through an American correspondence course in about 1920. Ann Rogers was the first veterinary graduate of a professional university-based veterinary course, as is current practice.

Ann's death in June 2011 in Taupo, aged 92, is a reminder to us how the large increase of women in our profession is relatively recent. Thus the courage and perseverance of Ann in achieving this distinction in the 1940s is to be admired.

Ann was born Ann Rogers in Wellington in 1919, an only child with a strong love of animals. She boarded at Iona College in Havelock North and travelled overseas with her family. Her ambition was to become a veterinary surgeon and she persevered with this, entering Sydney University in March 1937 and graduating in 1942. Initially, she worked for the Kaipara Veterinary Club. Like many veterinary graduates she married a fellow veterinary graduate from Sydney University, Jack Johnston and they practised



Caption: Ann Leighton.

in South Auckland. Ann preferred large animal work and also worked in Taranaki and Waikato.

Later, after the death of Jack Johnston, she again worked for the Kaipara Veterinary Club, now Helensville Veterinary Services, for many years, again preferring large animal work. This included involvement in tuberculosis testing in the 1970s. She married a local farmer Eric Leighton and they had a common interest in Thoroughbred horses as

well as farm livestock. Ann is also mentioned as always having a dog of some type – a dachshund, papillon or Irish water spaniel – and as driving the ubiquitous Volkswagen like many rural veterinarians of those times.

The few current NZVA members who knew Ann or had met her in the course of their professional associations with colleagues spoke of her private nature. They also spoke of her quiet determination and her preference for large animal work. Her story reminds us of the bravery and perseverance necessary for a woman of that era to blaze the trail to graduating in veterinary science, a path now well and relatively easily trodden by the women of today.

I am grateful to Ros Rothschild for drawing my attention to Ann's death and to Karne Burke, her surrogate daughter, Wynne HaySmith of the Helensville and District Historical Society and to Mark Anderson and Catherine Phillips, colleagues of Ann's, for information on her life and work. ■

Bob Gumbrell

## Reference

1. Shortridge, E, C Smith and E Gardner (1998) *And while you're here ...: A Brief History of the New Zealand Veterinary Profession*. Wellington: New Zealand Veterinary Association.

*Moxidectin: continued from page 41*

- ingredient if compounded, and the concentration;
- > The dose rate and frequency of treatment;
- > The route and method of administration;
- > The duration of treatment;
- > The withholding time;
- > The date of treatment;
- > The name of the prescribing veterinarian and the name, address and contact phone numbers of that veterinarian's practice.

MAF requires records to be kept for inspection for two years.

The crucial aspects for the records are that, as per the trial, Cydectin Injection was by subcutaneous injection at 0.2mg/kg more than 49 days before slaughter.

All stock going to slaughter are accompanied by an Animal Status Declaration (ASD) form. Based on a veterinary consultation, your farmer client **does not** need to declare using Cydectin Injection 49 days from slaughter on the ASD.

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## Acknowledgements

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**i** Off-label use: Managing the risks. *Vetscript*, September 2011, page 43.