



## **INTRODUCTION TO THE GYPSY VANNER HORSE SOCIETY**

*~ The history, goals and beliefs of the GVHS ~*

Founded Nov. 24, 1996 the GVHS is the world's first registry to recognize a breed of horse developed by the Gypsies of Great Britain/Ireland and the only such registry founded on an in depth study of British/Irish Gypsies and their horses.

Soon after World War II, a vision was born by the Gypsies of Great Britain/Ireland to create the perfect caravan horse. A small Shire with more feather, more color and a sweeter head was the goal. Selective breeding by British/Irish Gypsies continued virtually unknown to the outside world for nearly sixty years until two Americans, Dennis and Cindy Thompson, while traveling through the English countryside noticed a magical looking horse standing in a field. That very horse became #GV00001F, in the Gypsy Vanner Horse Society. His name is Cushti Bok, a name that means Good Luck in Romany, a language of Gypsies. The logo of your Gypsy Vanner Horse Society is an image of Cushti Bok, the letters GVHS with an emphasized "V" for Vanner.

The Gypsy Vanner Horse Society's mission begins with "...a commitment to bring honor, recognition and a better understanding to one of the world's most colorful, least understood societies and the horses they so dearly "love" and ends with "...a commitment to remain quality based, culturally sensitive and socially responsible".

This registry was established to protect a vision that was born over half a century ago to create the perfect caravan horse to pull the Gypsies' colorful caravans. Specific goals will enable us to achieve our mission, those goals are:

### **THE LOOK**

\* Establish the breed with the look Gypsies envisioned.

### **THE GENETICS**

\*Establish the breed with the genetics that created it identified through DNA verification whenever possible.

### **THE FEELINGS**

\*Establish the breed with the feelings of status and pride that Gypsies feel for their selectively bred horses, preserved. *"I'd give a thousand pounds just to walk him in front of the boys,"* said Tom Price (the Gypsy who raised Cushti Bok) as he described the famous stallion, The Kent Horse. We honor Tom and Gypsy breeders like him by breeding Vanner horses a Gypsy would want to *"walk in front of the boys"*.

### **THE VALUE**

\*Establish the breed in direct parallel to the value Gypsies place on their selectively bred horses. Remaining culturally sensitive requires that we understand and strive to preserve (or elevate) the British/Irish Gypsy culture's *established means of making a living raising horses*.

## **THE NAME GYPSY VANNER HORSE**

The name Gypsy Vanner Horse is the first name in the world to identify a selectively bred horse raised by the Gypsies of Great Britain/Ireland as a breed. The name was painstakingly chosen and has three components – the people, their vision, and the species. To shorten the breed's name one would use the breed's vision word, "Vanner" or "Vanner Horse". Compare this to the American Quarter Horse or Quarter Horse – a people, their vision, and the species. Vanner, in the English Chambers Dictionary, means "a horse suitable to pull a caravan". A Gypsy's caravan horse is a "vanner".

## **WHAT THE GVHS BELIEVES**

All breeds result from a crossing of breeds by someone or some culture focused on creating a specific looking horse from their dreamed image; their vision. Once the vision horse is achieved and recognized, the basic function of a breed society is to protect, educate about, perpetuate and promote that breed. Therefore, the cross breeding of Gypsy Vanner Horses is prohibited by the GVHS.

The GVHS has the distinction of being the first breed society established in the age of the Internet. Due to this communication phenomenon, people seeking information may quickly become confused by multiple names and mixed messages on the Internet. Confusion is counterproductive to a breed, our society's goals and to a breeder's ability to achieve success. Registering qualified horses solely with the Gypsy Vanner Horse Society is an important step toward eliminating that confusion.

The GVHS offers useful website guidelines designed to help our membership send the message of the Gypsy Vanner Horse Society. Members' websites, which showcase their farm's individuality, accompanied by a sense of unity, breed clarity and the pursuit of like minded goals, will insure the success of the breed, the society and its members in this unique age in which we live.

## **IN CONCLUSION**

Every ingredient described in this introduction – the look, the genetics, the feelings, and the value – existed the day Cushti Bok was discovered. The heartbeat of our society and inspiration for its mission is founded on a desire to preserve and share those special ingredients with others. Through achieving our goals, Gypsies – one of the most colorful, least understood societies on earth – will take an extraordinary place in the annals of equine history.

## CODE OF ETHICS

“A Code of Ethics is a common way for an association to convey to its breeders/members their responsibilities to the breed as well as to the association.....Codes of ethics are sadly necessary, if for no other reason than that when many people are involved in associations (which is good), disagreements are sure to arise (which is bad). Expectations of breeders and members must be clearly specified.” ~ from *Managing Breeds for a Secure Future* by Phillip Sponenberg and Donald E. Bixby (The American Livestock Breeds Conservancy).

The preceding “history, goals and beliefs” are the very foundation of our society. It therefore becomes the necessary responsibility for all individuals who accept the leadership roles of the Gypsy Vanner Horse Society to embrace the history, goals and beliefs as their own.

While it is not required for “all” members to sign a Code of Ethics document, it is important for all members to realize and know the history, goals and beliefs of the organization of which they have requested to be a member. They must understand that the leadership of the organization will function completely within the guidelines of those principals and decisions regarding the organization and its membership will be based on that foundation.

All Directors and Officers of the Gypsy Vanner Horse Society must sign the following:

I have read the history, goals and beliefs inherent in the bylaws of the Gypsy Vanner Horse Society and embrace them as my own. I will support my society and fellow GVHS members in achieving our common goals and hereby accept the position of \_\_\_\_\_ and will fulfill the responsibilities of that role to the best of my ability.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature