Braemore Honey of the Trust

Newsletter No. 17
December, 2015
www.donkey-mule-trust.org.nz
Editorial

The Trust continues with its important work supporting the Rehoming Centres to rescue and rehabilitate donkeys; and also, just as importantly, the Trust directly liaises and negotiates with other agencies such as the SPCA, in cases where they need an alert or input about donkeys in need. This is a valuable role that the Trust is increasingly playing in the welfare arena. In addition, the Trust has its own donkeys, most of whom are aged and fragile and in need of special care.

It is with the support of the Friends of the Trust, who provide financial contributions, that the Trust is enabled to do this wonderful work and help donkeys in need. As you will read in this newsletter, the rehoming and rescuing of donkeys goes on. The knowledgeable and caring people who run the centres and who give so freely of their time and energy (and often also of their own personal resources) appreciate greatly, the financial back-up from the Trust; as rescuing and rehoming donkeys is not a cheap thing to do. The reward of seeing the donkeys in a much better place, happy and well, makes the effort and cost well worth it all, but at times the help of the Trust is essential to keep on. The Friends of the Trust play a very important part in this.

Andrea Thomson

Andrea with some of her donkeys
From the Chair

The importance of our associated Rescue and Rehoming Centres (RRCs) has been re-emphasised by the appointment of Diana Humphries of the Canterbury RRC / Cotswold Stud and Barbara Jones of Motukawa RRC as Donkey and Mule Protection Trust Trustees. We now have representatives of all of the RRCs on our Trust board, strengthening the links between the Trust and all of our rescue centres. While each of the RRCs retains its independence this formal link goes a long way to ensuring that the Trust continues its focus on supporting the day to day activities of these groups towards the wellbeing of donkeys and mules.

As a Trust Board we have been working through our Trust Deed over the past few months. This deed is the basis of our existence in that it specifies our reason for being and the rules we must follow. We have found that we need to make some changes to validate our current use of email for meetings, circulation of scanned rather than faxed documents and to provide for recent and potential changes in the Charities Commission regulations. Sounds trivial but it is an essential part of retaining our charitable status and I have been talking to a much larger organisation very recently who are in some strife because this and a couple of other basic documents were not up to date and formally agreed. I suppose it is a bit like a will in that it doesn’t matter until it is needed, and then it may be too late to fix it!

While on the subject of changes brought about by technology, if you wish to receive your copy of the Trust newsletter by email rather than in the post please let Donna, our secretary, know. There is a copy on our website but you may wish to have this newsletter emailed to you so that you have it as soon as it is released.

As usual my role is not just ensuring that the administrative structure is reasonably sound. On a lighter note it has recently included hunting for a donkey for a Christmas nativity play. Since the audience is going to be preschoolers we ended up, rather fortuitously, with a miniature donkey. Fortunately it will not need to carry Mary!

One of the reasons most of us take on jobs involving animals is that there are a number of great people involved and every so often a really pleasant and rewarding call comes from one of them. Today, after a recent phone
call, I collected a whole pile of donkey gear from my predecessor as the local Trust rep. She has just ended her active association with donkeys, sadly but logically. A number of covers etc. have kindly been donated to one of our RRCs and will be welcomed when the quality and quantity of the gear (currently in my garage but not for long) becomes obvious.

I’m also in the process of finding detailed information on some donkeys that have been reported as in poor condition so that we can work with the SPCA to get their situation sorted out. So life is interesting, even if it sometimes takes far longer than we would like to gain improved conditions for our long eared friends!

Although the Trust has changed our approach from taking ownership of rescued donkeys and finding homes for them as Trust donkeys to supporting their rescue and rehoming through the Rescue and Rehoming Centres, we still have nine Trust donkeys. Until October Andrea had cared for Braemore Honey, a Trust donkey whose death brought to an end a lot of hard yet rewarding work on Andrea’s part, and we thank Andrea for that while sympathising with her in her loss of a friend and companion.

All the best.  

Neil Cook

Braemore Honey of the Trust

I am very sad to report that Braemore Honey of the Trust was put down recently. I had her in my care for the past 9 years and also for another year previous to that, when she first came into Trust care. When she came back from being fostered out the Trust agreed I could become her carer and I determined she would stay here for the rest of her life. She was very special, and the sweetest little donkey I have known. Anyone who met her immediately fell in love with her. She had a quiet stillness about her that told you she was very wise, very brave and very loving.

When she first came to me she had a really bad abscess on her hind quarters that was so infected and deep it took 9 months of twice daily treatment to clear it up. She never complained and was stoic and brave.
Although at times I have had nearly 30 donkeys about me, she has always been special and I loved her, I have to admit, above others. She was that kind of donkey.

Honey had been getting frail for the last three years, but despite being fragile and having special feed needs, she had such a strong will that the vet agreed, she still had some living to do. Her friend Fricka, died about a year ago and she became grumpier after that. Her “new” friend was bossed around in a way she never bossed Fricka. They were two old ladies together. However, in the past few months she wasn’t 100% and she suddenly developed a badly infected foot that she was unable to stand on and would take months of being locked up in a box to heal. Her general health declined and her quality of life had gone. She is buried out in the paddock alongside old friends and I will plant a particularly special group of daffodils on her grave that will mark the resting place of a very special donkey with tons of personality, determination and charm.

Andrea—Ikaroa Rehoming Centre
Storm of Mamaku

Storm was an young entire jack, who was bought and put in with a young jenny, who produced a foal. All was well, but Storm had to be kept separate from the jenny and foal. Then his owner had a career change and decided that she could no longer look after her three donkeys.

So the Mamaku Rescue & Rehoming Centre picked up the three donkeys and rehomed the young jenny and foal to a lovely young couple with two daughters, who just love the donkeys.

Storm was gelded and remains at the Mamaku Donkey Rescue and Rehoming Centre and is grazing with two other young gelded donkeys. They all get on all really well, play all day long and therefore Storm’s social habits have improved.

Storm is a lovely donkey. He is well behaved and is very good when he has to have his hooves trimmed. He and a mate will be rehomed when a suitable home is found.

Storm of Mamaku
Sunny of Mamuku

Sunny the donkey and his best friend Comic, a mini horse, were living on a lifestyle block in the Waikato.

Mamaku Rescue & Rehoming Centre got the call that their owners had sold their lifestyle block and wanted to find their donkey and mini horse a loving home. Working with their owners and Mamaku RRC, a lovely home was found for both of them at Katikati. Kerryn had a lonely pony and Carol had donkeys, all on the same property, so we picked up both Sunny and Comic, plus a lovely big goat, who was also rehomed in Katikati.

Both Sunny and Comic adjusted quickly to their new home, but Sunny kept looking over the fence at the other donkeys and Comic also looked over the fence at the pony.

After a week or two, Sunny was put in with the other donkeys and Comic put in with the other pony - all was well, both got on with their new friends, no problems.

Both donkey and mini horse can see each other but are too busy hanging out with their new friends. At the end of the day, these two, even though separated, are with their own sort but still remain friends over the fence.

*Pauline Sainsbury—Mamuku Donkey Rescue & Rehoming Centre*
Tequila and Irish Mist Jinxie

I was rung by the daughter of an elderly gentleman who had suffered a stroke and was no longer able to take care of his two donkeys in the Mackenzie District. Nick and I met with him and his daughter at the paddock where the donkeys lived. The donkeys were very friendly and came up for the hay I had brought. It was clear that the donkeys were much loved but now needed to be removed from the property as soon as possible. We do not have the acreage for more equines, so I gave Diana Humphries a call and John and Diana came down within a few days to take them to the Canterbury Rehoming Centre at Motukarara. The donkeys practically loaded themselves on the float.

The younger jenny, Tequila, was bred by the elderly gentleman and after her mother died, a few months ago, he found the older jenny, he called Chi Chi, to keep her company. As soon as Diana set eyes on her she was sure she had seen this donkey before and after some research she was later found to be Irish Mist Jinxie, an imported donkey from Australia. She has had a number of homes over the years.

*Lea Hullett—South Canterbury Representative*
Since arriving at the Re homing centre both jennies have had their teeth done. Tequila has found a new home at Little River along with El Burro Misty Dawn and they have become good friends. They are of a similar age being in their teens.

Irish Mist Jinxie is another story; she was born in 1991 so getting on in years, is gummy but still seems to eat well. We would need a very special home for this donkey owing to the care she will need in the winter, but I am happy for Jinxie to stay at the Canterbury Rehoming Centre if that home does not come along.

_Diana Humphries—Canterbury Rehoming Centre_
Ned and Cracker

It always seems very appropriate to tell you all about both these boys at the same time. I suppose mainly because they have never ever been separated for the whole of their nineteen years. When we talk about them it is always “Ned and Cracker”, or else, “The big boys.”

So, Ned and Cracker are still very close friends. However, since residing in the Big Boy and Girl herd, they do enjoy other company and don't seem to get as stressed or concerned if one or the other does decide to spend some time with one of the others in their group.

Hoof care is great with no sign of seedy toe at all. Their behaviour is a lot different from when they initially came to live with us. Both boys stand very quietly and obliging, lift each hoof for the farrier, whom they of course, know full well that a carrot reward and farrier cuddle is waiting for them when the job is done. It is great to enjoy the services of a farrier who understands and loves donkeys. Sometimes a bonus for them is when
Dick's sister visits from Wellington and comes along with him while he trims. She also loves the donkeys, and so, Ned and Cracker enjoy extra cuddles and a groom from her when she is here.

 Teeth are also well cared for on a two-yearly basis and last time no ulceration in either mouth, as was the case when they initially came to live with us.

 At nineteen years and now starting to age, the winter months have been kind to them both and they have enjoyed their sheds and hay, as well as nice warm covers. Of late though, Ned especially, seems to need extra beta beet in his daily chaff and nutrient mix. He does tend to drop weight fast, so we are keeping a good eye on him in this regard.

 Lots of love and cuddles all round each day and especially so when we have visitors. We love them dearly and look on them as part of our happy family.

 Wendy Macpherson

Cordelia of the Trust

Cordelia is well and always on the look out for food. If she were a person you would find her in a café sipping good quality coffee and rich calorific cakes. She has been deserted by her friend Billy Bob, the miniature donkey, who has now fallen in love with one of my biggest jennies, a 12 hh teamster. Luckily, Cordelia has made friends with Briar, a really sweet and gentle jenny. Briar used to be one of my show donkeys and adores being brushed and lines up along with Cordelia, who also loves being brushed. If they see me with a brush in my hand they rush over and make it clear that they are desperate for attention!

 Cordelia and two other donkeys, who put on weight too easily, along with Billy Bob, live in the tractor yard and have a shed they can retreat to when it rains. At the moment they are getting a strip of fresh grass each day and working their way down the long, farm drive. They have a feeder full of barley straw and they get meadow hay and a bucket with chaff, vitamins and minerals each day. Carrots have run out and I hope they get cheaper soon!

 Cordelia is much happier than when she first came. She engages with me now and talks. She gets excited when her evening bucket is due and makes
“I’m getting excited about my tea” noises. A couple of years ago she just walked round like a dummy and did not speak to anyone. Cordeila has come a long way. She now comes over to greet me when she sees me coming and interacts, often to tell me she could eat something nice if I cared to give it to her, but also just to say, “Hello, here I am, how are you?”

She has recently had her teeth done and the vet found she had a chip off a back tooth which has left a gap. But as donkeys’ teeth grow, the gap should grow out over time and the problem resolve itself. Luckily, food does not seem to be catching in there. We do the donkeys feet ourselves, and Cordelia’s feet have vastly improved. She came with very bad seedy toe and every foot was rotten around the edge, so she was walking on her soles, but she now has almost normal feet and there is only a little rot. She gets Biotin most days along with the other vitamins and this has helped a lot.

I have to restrict Cordelia’s grass intake as she has been foundered and at certain times of the year she would be prone to laminitis if she had too much. However, if she could, Cordelia would eat grass all day!

It’s lovely to see Cordelia so happy now.

*Andrea Thomson*
Wendy of the Trust

Very little has changed for Wendy of the Trust since the last report in January 2014.

Wendy seems to be very much at home here on the Kaipara with her friend Murphy. Apart from her well known bit of arthritis in her back legs she appears healthy and as happy as an old girl can be although she still doesn’t like her rear left being picked up. (Sometimes we have to do things which we don’t like!)

She gets a dose of Palamountains Bone and Joint in her daily Betabeet; goodness knows whether it works, but she seems to love it.

There’s not much grass on their field at this time of year, so they get a daily slab of fresh hay which they both enjoy. Arrangements are in hand for the horse dentist to visit.

Jean and Mike
New Booklet
Differences; Anatomy & Care, Donkeys & Mules v Horses

Written and published by the Donkey and Mule Protection Trust NZ. This eleven page booklet provides valuable information on the particular needs; characteristics; and care of donkeys and mules.

It also contains widely researched, and in some cases new data, on why donkeys and mules behave the way they do.

*It is a must for donkey and mule owners.*

The booklet costs only $2.00 and p&p is $1.60 for one or more copies.

Please send orders to:

Neil Cook, 551 Owahiwa Road, RD 1, Onerahi, Whangarei 0192.
Email: cookn@xtra.co.nz.
Are you a Friend of the Trust?

Supporting the work that the Trust does in working with the Rehoming Centres to rescue, rehabilitate, retrain and rehome donkeys and mules in New Zealand is giving animals a second chance to live a happy and often useful life.

Our biggest welfare issue is (stallion) jacks that need to be gelded before they can be rehomed and become a safe family pet.

Become a Friend of the Donkey and Mule Protection Trust NZ today and help us in our work.

I/We wish to give my/our support by becoming a Friend of the Trust:

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Family annual support fee $20 [ ]
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I enclose a cheque.
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and please send to:
Neil Cook, Treasurer,
Donkey & Mule Protection Trust
551 Owhiwa Road,
RD 1, Onerahi.
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To find out more about the work of the Donkey & Mule Protection Trust visit the web site where newsletters are freely available for download in pdf format.

www.donkey-mule-trust.org.nz
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The views expressed in this magazine are those of the individuals concerned and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or the Trust.