

# DONKEY DO!

An occasional Newsletter of Highfield Donkeys Incorporated  
February 2013 Issue No 3

## Where are we now?

As reported in the October Newsletter the Committee made no progress with Council at our meeting in September. No clear simple, sensible proposal that matched our hopes was presented from the Council back room; and no template or example of just what a lease or licence might entail was offered.

However, the last working days before Christmas saw a breakthrough with Council about the way we would get to a longer term agreement that recognised the special nature of the donkey's presence at Highfield.

A meeting on 25 January confirmed the pre-Christmas exchanges with Council negotiators (with Rodney Councillor and Local Board members supporting us) and we are agreed in principle to first negotiate in good faith a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which will outline the principals and working practices to guide and develop the relationship between the Society and the Local Board (which will act as Manager on behalf of Auckland Council).

We already put forward our main proposals for the MOU and the key areas we feel we will want to settle on once we are operating under the MOU. We are now back on track.

## Charity Status

As this newsletter is being distributed our application to the Charities Commission is due to be discussed in Wellington with no clues as to just what the decision may be.

## Watch this space



Work has begun to erect a hay shed alongside the existing donkey shed/yards. The site is at the corner of the orchard adjacent to the home donkey yards and the access to the Glade track. The shed is to replace the old hay shed that was used by Alison and is still on the old Roberts property but soon not to be available to us. The proposal for a practical, secure shed has been around longer than the formation of the Society but was temporarily parked until we had a firm agreement with Council, and the facility to raise the funds we required. The sudden *great leap forward* was triggered by the gift of a metal kitset shed. (unprompted) from one of our *Champions*. We also used money from donations and the sale of the Greetings cards to purchase the timber and other materials needed to complete the work. Council also came to the party with a fast track consent to go ahead for the erection at that site. The work is being undertaken by Committee and volunteers.

## Death of Tui

Tui died unexpectedly on 20 November. A post mortem was carried out by vet Ross Lynch. Tui died of sudden heart failure caused by *atrial fibrillation*. The condition which she might have had for some time, "...leads to lung changes and pericardial fluid build up eventually stopping the heart causing sudden death., hence no struggling. Tui is buried not far from where she lived and died, in the hill paddock on the cliffs

## The Highfield Donkeys Committee

Peter Couling - Chairman  
Alan Norton - Secretary  
Peter Caccia - Birch- Donkey Manager  
Jenny van der Mespel Shona Duncan  
Allan Ford Sheila Ford

## Champions

We have been going for just over 6 months and have almost a hundred memberships – mostly family and a few other groups, as well as a growing network of other supporters. From the outset we always anticipated that we would also need some members who would have an interest and the ability to add a bit more. We called them *Champions*. – we copied the title from another community group we know. The early papers we circulated explained what we were looking for and the membership forms had a spot for anyone to ask for more information.

It is pleasing to record *that we are attracting Champions* and that each in his or her way is helping us build the structure of the Society as well as deal with the day to day and the exciting future .

In the last months our group of *Champions* has provided the tool shed and the materials for the floor, the new donkey *Teddy*, a donkey trailer to get him here safely, two loads of hay as supplement feedstock, and free use of several items of equipment and skilled operators we needed for a couple of jobs – including the sad one of burying Tui. The immediate examination and post mortem were carried out by our longest serving *Champion* - our Honorary Vet.. There will be challenges for more.

## Highfield Donkeys Incorporated

71 Fidelis Avenue, Snells Beach, Warkworth 0920 For more information call Alan Norton or Email [alan.norton@xtra.co.nz](mailto:alan.norton@xtra.co.nz)

### Greeting Cards

The Christmas/New Year offer for sale of sets of greetings cards found quite a few buyers among members and casual contacts passing through Highfield. The sets (which have no text in them) have continued to sell on the basis of word of mouth.

**Sets are still available** in packs of ten mixed images. at \$30 per pack. For more information call Sheila Ford on 09 425 5061. or Alan on 09 425 6592. We can also provide to order, sets of 10 copies of any of the images also at \$30 per pack.. Ask what images are available.

**Donkey Care—find out more about the donkeys as a volunteer—call Peter Caccia-Birch for an introduction on 09 425 6640**

### New Donkey Teddy meets Tommy!



The death of *Tui* came at the time we were already thinking about adding a new donkey to the herd to maintain the numbers and also to provide an opportunity to look at adding at some stage, a new generation.

*Teddy*, came to us as a gift from the Wellsford area. He

has excellent breeding and as those who have already met him will agree, a nice nature. He was a bit shy at first but now seems to have well and truly settled in. He also brings a bit of colour to the place.

**The issue of Public Liability of the donkeys at Highfield has been raised during the discussions with Council just how it is acknowledged in the eventual agreement is not yet sorted out. Privately owned donkeys in a public reserve is not an everyday event. For us it has to start with what we can do to make sure that our own security and management of the donkeys works. And everyone can help.**

- Please take care to close and latch all the gates into the paddocks and donkey work areas as you pass through.
- Generally you should leave gates between paddocks as you found them.
- The donkeys should not be outside the home yards and main donkey paddocks. They should never be in the Orchard and Garden areas unless they are with a handler.
- Whilst the Donkeys at Highfield are used to people, and always accessible and friendly they are also curious and parents and guardians should always take responsibility for their children when they approach or feed the donkeys.
- The donkeys mostly eat the grass but if you think they need a treat, apples, carrots and silver beet are fine but please, do not give them bread or cake or plastic bags. Remember also that dogs must be on a lead in the donkey areas
- If at any time you see anything that you feel is not as it should be with the donkeys or in the Reserve generally, please seek help from any of the following telephone numbers: Peter 425 6640 or Alan 425 6592 or Jenny on 425 6000
- Outside daytime/daylight hours you can also call the Auckland Council. Use the old Orewa service centre number 0800 426 5189 and stay on the line to speak to someone.
- If life or property is at risk—call the Emergency Services

### Highfield Donkeys Incorporated

Have you signed up yet?  
Do you want to know more about it?  
Would you like to be a volunteer?  
Would you like to know more about other ways of being involved?

Membership \$10 per household (per annum).  
Complete the details in these panels and Post to  
*Highfield Donkeys Incorporated*  
71 Fidelis Avenue, Snells Beach, 0920,

Enclosing cheque payable to

Highfield Donkeys Incorporated or

Direct credit to ASB account 12 3095 0254516 00

I would like to participate as a volunteer. My preference would be:

Helping *hands on* with the care and management of the donkeys

Helping with administration

Working on specific fund raising or other projects or activities

from time to time

No preference

If you want to know more about partnership membership either as an Associate or as a Champion, or working with Highfield Donkeys Incorporated in any special way, please call the Secretary Alan Norton in the first instance, on 09 425 6592 or tick here

Names .....

Address .....

Post Code ..... Main Telephone .....

Email .....

If this is not your permanent home how best can we contact you if you are not in Mahurangi?

Please indicate your preference for receiving notices, minutes of meetings and other information including copies of newsletters

I would like to receive copies of official and *information material*

By email

By Hand delivery

By Mail

Signature