

DONKEY DO!

An occasional Newsletter of Highfield Donkeys Incorporated
March 2013 Issue No 4



To all members of *the Society*
as well as
Donors, Supporters, Friends and Neighbours

You are invited to a celebration of
Our new hay shed
On Saturday 16 March 2013 from 2 pm (rain or shine)
Unlocking of the doors
at 2.30pm following the
**Grand Parade of the
Highfield Donkeys**

You are encouraged to bring your partners, children, grand children, and any one else you think would like to join in what is our first real event.

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

Afternoon tea /light refreshment will be served
in the orchard and garden area adjacent to the main donkey yards
RSVP (to help with working out catering)
by email alan.norton@xtra.co.nz or telephone 09 4256592

Highfield Donkeys Incorporated

71 Fidelis Avenue, Snells Beach, Warkworth 0920 For more information call Alan Norton or Email alan.norton@xtra.co.nz

Where are we now?

Our next meeting with Council is scheduled for the first week of April. It will be our first directly with the Local Board Reserves Committee members who will be the effective managers of the Reserve.. The *Memorandum of Understanding* we are seeking will be with the Board if we can agree on how it will work. The Council staff with whom we have so far worked have the responsibility to advise the Board on just what we are seeking.

It suits us in fact, to be closer to the local planning process and we see it as an important part of any agreement in the longer term that we all continue to work on a day to day basis through the Highfield Garden Reserve Advisory Committee which is established under the Reserve Management Plan. The Advisory Committee already brings together representatives of all parties and also reports to the Board, which represents all parts of the Council.



What's a sel-lib'ation?

I think you mean **celebration** silly! - It's to unlock the new hay shed.

Conversations at Highfield

I heard they've invited all the members and their kids as well as their friends and everybody else in the neighbourhood and some VIP's.

Why we think it is important to meet and celebrate

It is now more than two years since we started to talk about what would happen to the donkeys at Highfield under an amalgamated Auckland. The need for the community to confirm a way of supporting the donkeys was recognised before that. The death of Alison Roberts provoked curiosity and questions most of which were satisfied or pushed away by the fact that a transition to family ownership and volunteer support coordinated through the existing Advisory Committee and with help from Rodney District Council meant that the small herd of donkeys stayed, were (and still are) managed; and remain healthy — even if it is slightly different in its composition.

The process of sorting out a long term arrangement with the new Auckland Council in spite of ups and downs, has resulted only in us all getting to know more about what is really involved; and what can be done under a *centralised system of creating policies*. Recognising a practical way of administering donkeys in a public reserve appears to be an ongoing learning curve for those involved. Perhaps harder for the Parks and Reserves managers and staff than for any one else. Harder for everybody has been the evolution of the political process that now looks like being adopted and made to work, of giving the Board the powers and resources to actually pick up being the conduit for just how we progress from here.

When members and supporters come together on the odd occasion it strengthens what the original donkey support group set out to do. It allows them to meet and share ideas and even a bit of fun. Facilitating the meeting is the only way we can say thank you for staying with us and confirms that the core group might be doing something right—even though we still have a lot to learn. It is also in itself a reason to celebrate.

See you next Saturday at Highfield!

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).

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

Donkey Care - To find out more about working with the donkeys as a volunteer call Peter Caccia-Birch for an introduction, on 09 425 6640