



Scan me!

IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS  
**PROJECT HOPE HAVE  
ASSISTED 188 HORSES**



Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria Inc. (PHHWV) is a non-profit organisation committed to providing hope for equines through education, rehabilitation and advocacy.

## PHHWV PURPOSES

- To provide assistance to horse owners through education, advice and support to rehabilitate their own horses.
- To rescue and rehabilitate any horse found abandoned, sick, injured, mistreated or neglected or likely to become in such condition in the imminent future.
- To provide emergency care, treatment and assistance to horses.
- To educate the community on the plight of neglected horses; and
- To contribute to the development of improved government legislation and policy relating to the welfare of horses.

A very big thank you to all our volunteers who make this possible.

## Committee

### Executive

Rhonda Petschel, President  
Renee Neubauer, Vice President  
Karen Davies, Secretary  
Shirley McPherson, Treasurer

### Ordinary

Silvija Footner  
Toni Harris  
Angela Smith  
Mandi Herauville  
Vaso Elefsiniotis  
Tessa Reimers  
Maria Auhl  
Jenni Cooper

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### Follow us



REG: A0027152D  
ABN: 96 820 500 367

# President's report



With my horse guardian hat on, I note the winter frosts have come, the bot flies are no longer pestering and it is time to turn my attention to parasite management. With my Project Hope hat on, I can report that autumn was busy with conferences, events, annual reports, the annual general meeting and the welcoming of the 2024 /25 new committee.

On 26 May we presented our Annual Report at the AGM and elected in the committee for the coming year. We have farewelled Trish Hartshorn during the year from the committee, and Noelle Vine at the AGM. Thank you for your contribution to the committee over many years and while I know you are taking a well deserved break I also know both of you continue to volunteer for the cause. The new committee is a wonderful mix of long-termers, a well-settled in-group after one to two years involvement, and two new members. It is wonderful to see the long term support of some and the bringing of new skills, knowledge and insights with the new. As the introducing of our committee deserves and will receive a special section in the newsletter, all I will say is thank you to all for volunteering.

This time of year is very busy for committee members working behind the scenes on administration, good news stories and report writing. As such I acknowledge and thank Karen Davies for her sterling effort with the annual report, Shirley McPherson for the financial reporting, Silvija Footner in her leadership as membership secretary and everyone bringing together their annual reports and wonderful stories of the good work we do.

As reported in the Autumn newsletter, we are continuing to settle in the new Horse Report coordination team. The combined expertise of Alan Salter in the Ballarat region, Jennifer Burchat in the Wangaratta region and Jenni Cooper in the Kilmore region will strengthen support for our horse representatives and the horses that come to our attention. If you would like to join this team please email [info@phhvw.org.au](mailto:info@phhvw.org.au)

At the beginning of the financial year we had 28 horses in short term care, and since then a further 22 horses have come into care. 39 of the 50 horses have been rehabilitated and/or rehomed, and at the time of writing we have 11 in short term care. Great work by our horse representatives, short term carers, long term carers and the Horse Welfare Working Group - what a team!

Our first purpose is to provide assistance to horse owners through education, advice and support to rehabilitate their own horses. We should be very proud that over the past year we have helped 188 horses through advocacy, education and support, and provided emergency care, treatment and assistance to horses in need. The Horse Representatives team deserve a big loud shout out too.

Autumn was popular for community events, and Mandi Heuraville coordinated a wonderful team of volunteers who represented PHHVV at the Berwick Show, Lardner Park Farm World and Seymour Alternative Farming Expo. Mandi's event management leadership has seen attendance costs covered, and led to new memberships – what a leader and team!

Operation Reconnect continues. This project, which aims to visit every Project Hope horse in long term care and personally thank their guardians, is soon to be rolled out, starting in the Mitchell Shire. We are looking for member volunteers to lead the program in their region. If you would like to join this team let us know by emailing [info@phhvw.org.au](mailto:info@phhvw.org.au)

I hope you all stay warm over the winter months and enjoy your equine friends.

Rhonda Petschel  
President  
Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria Inc.

WINTER  
NEWSLETTER  
2024

## Contents

President's Report

Meet our Members

Member Notices

Events

Horse Education

Horse Reports &  
Updates

Horses for Lease

Horses Farewelled

Bulletin Board





## MEET OUR MEMBERS

### Mary Palmer

Back in 2012, I read about a big court case around the rescue of a number of horses from a property in Kyneton (not far from where I live), and around the same time, there was a lady running a cake stall to raise money and awareness for this organisation called Project Hope. I promptly signed up, and soon after was contacted by a wonderful and kind person, Sue Kirkegard. That's when I started my journey with Project Hope Horse Welfare.

At the time, I was looking for a pony for my grandchildren, which usually resulted in hiring a trailer - not to bring the lively pony home, but to rescue a dear old soul of a horse standing in the corner of a paddock. That happened more than once and around then Sue came out to my place to see if it would be suitable for fostering through Project Hope.

My belief in Project Hope Horse Welfare has never wavered, even when the hard question has to be answered, that sometimes euthanasia is the kindest option. And these caring selfless souls who keep Project Hope going are my heroes.

I have had Project Hope horses at my property over the years, but my favourites were a Brumby and her foal who over time were finally able to willingly walk up into a float, and I heard some time later, they were rehomed with a loving family and they really seemed to be enjoying their life, finally! I will always be a supporter of Project Hope – thank you all so much.

The photograph below shows Maisy, one of my first rescues, with two of my 18 grandchildren. Maisy became a “house horse”, hardly ever in a paddock and always ready to join a party.



## MEET OUR MEMBERS

### Lee Skiathitis

I contacted Project Hope in mid 2023 for a companion pony for my old horse Ollie, while I take his young friend out and about.

My first conversation with PHHWV member Toni Harris was 2.5 hours long, and I was captivated by how I could help the horses, offering a long term care home for Sebastian (because he's just too cute) and use my experiences to help other horses in a short term care situation. With more than 40 years of horse-handing experience I was happy to help some of the more challenging horses such as Bessie, to give them the best chance of finding a long term care home and to enjoy life once again.

Almost all of my work and experience with horses is around mental health support, helping them to become confident in themselves, and to support and guide them through unloading their mental baggage to trust humans, enjoy life with humans, and be a willing participant in any interactions with humans. The horses give me a lot of strength to continue to improve my own self esteem and they are my escape outlet when life gets too much for me. I take great joy and satisfaction in seeing a horse blossom from frightened and stressed, totally misunderstood and not in a frame of mind to cope with life, into a calm and confident animal that clearly enjoys human company, like what Bessie showed to me.

Bessie was with me for about six months, and in the beginning, I had doubts that I could help her, but the more time we spent together the better our bond became. Her trust in me increased to a point where she would follow me anywhere and do almost anything I asked of her.

This is my way of giving back to the equine world from what past horses have taught me. They are not unlike humans in relation to mental stress, PTSD, and learning to not just cope, but to enjoy life again.



Bessie



Sebastian





# Project HOPE Winter Appeal

Dear Supporter and Horse lover,

Imagine the gentle nuzzle of a horse who has finally found safety after years of neglect. This is the reality we strive to create every day at Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria. But now, more than ever, we need your help.

## The Rising Cost of Caring for Horses

As you know, the cost of living has been steadily rising, impacting not just families and businesses but also the vulnerable animals we care for. The price of feed has soared, veterinary costs have increased, and maintaining safe shelters has become more challenging. These rising costs are straining our resources and making it harder for us to provide the essential care our rescued horses need.

## Your Support Makes a Difference

At Project Hope, we rescue horses from dire situations, providing them with veterinary care, proper nutrition, and loving homes. Horses like Jazz, who came to us malnourished and frightened, are now thriving thanks to generous supporters like you. But for every Jazz, there are many more waiting for our help.

## Donate Now

We invite you to join us in our mission to save and rehabilitate horses.

Click here to make a secure online donation

**Donate Now**

If you prefer, you can donate via an [e transfer](#) or call us at **1300 881 606** to donate over the phone.

You can also help by becoming a [MEMBER](#)

## Every Dollar Counts

Your generosity not only saves lives but also gives these magnificent animals a chance to live with dignity and love. Together, we can ensure that no horse suffers alone.

Thank you for your compassion and support.

Warm regards,

**Rhonda Petschel**  
President  
Project Hope Horse Welfare Vic Inc

1300 881 606



Project Hope Horse Welfare has DGR status.

Every donation over \$2 is tax deductible.



**Jazz Today**

## How You Can Help

Your donation today can make an immediate difference.

Here's how:

**\$25** can assist in worming a horse

**\$80** can cover a farrier trimming

**\$150** can provide a month's worth of nutritious feed for one horse

**\$500** can fund emergency veterinary treatments for horses in critical condition.



**Jazz August 2023**

Jazz August 2023

## MEMBER NOTICES

### Project Hope Horse Welfare AGM

On Sunday 26 May 2024, Project Hope held an Annual General Meeting at the Beaconsfield Club. Members were able to attend both on site, and via Zoom. The Annual Report previously sent to members was officially tabled, and financial statements submitted as required.

President Rhonda Petschel then declared all Committee positions vacant, and called for nominations for the 2024/2025 Committee. The new PHHWV committee members are:

#### Executive Committee

President - Rhonda Petschel  
Vice President – Renee Neubauer  
Treasurer – Shirley McPherson  
Secretary – Karen Davies

#### Ordinary Committee

General Committee – Angela Smith  
General Committee – Toni Harris  
General Committee – Silvija Footner  
General Committee – Mandi Herauville  
General Committee – Vaso Elefsiniotis  
General Committee – Tessa Reimers  
General Committee – Jenni Cooper  
General Committee – Maria Auhl

Official proceedings at the AGM were followed by a very engaging and informative presentation by equine dentist Peter Borgdorff from the Australian Equine Dental Practice, around best practice and prevention in dental care and horse welfare. And to close the AGM, our annual Mothers Day Raffle prize was officially awarded – *details following*.



## MEMBER NOTICES

We successfully re-launched an annual Project Hope raffle in time for Mother's Day. Together we raised \$4,450!

**PROJECT HOPE HORSE WELFARE VICTORIA**  
*"Where welfare has been our primary focus for nearly five decades."*

### Raffle of Hope



Given that many of us are so used to paper raffle tickets and shaking the tin it was a leap of faith to finally go digital this year. After looking at a few different platforms, one was a standout and we went with RaffleTix. However none of this would have been possible without one of our long-term members who is a quite sought-after very talented artist – Nicki Burgermeister, owner of Equilution Studio.

The sculpture valued at \$2200 was entirely donated, and incredibly generous. Carved from sandstone with reflecting opalescent glass, in the light this piece will make sunlight dance on walls and surrounds.

TICKET NUMBER 70 was the winning ticket held by Project Hope member Gayle Kelly. Congratulations Gayle. To all the other ticket holders we thank you for your support. We have been told that Nicki will be doing another one for next year, so stay tuned!

### THE STORY BEHIND THIS BEAUTIFUL SCULPTURE "HOPE" Without Hope what do we have left?

Hope was sculptured after my father passed away. The creative outlet helped me through a very trying time. Hope is very special and one of a kind. She is sculptured from limestone on a stainless steel post set on a hardwood base. Her beautiful opalescent glass mane was made by Samantha Abbot glass and wrapped in warm copper to accentuate the colour and secure it to the stone.

The decision to donate my beautiful limestone sculpture to Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria was made after fostering a PH pony who was in dire straights and facing untimely end through no fault of his own. This pony is a special little fellow and now living his best life, healthy and happy and filling our lives with joy.

*Nicole Burgermeister, artist*

**The winner of our Mother's Day Raffle, Gayle Kelly, received her prize from Vice President Renée Neubauer during the AGM.**



*Kindly donated by Nicki Burgermeister  
owner of Equilution Studio*







## MEMBER NOTICES

### Vale Cheryl Anne De Leonardis

Cheryl became a member of PHHWV in April 2019 when she took on the long term care of Banjo, a black miniature gelding.

Cheryl always loved animals, and had cats and dogs around her all of her life. In addition to Banjo Cheryl also had a rescue pony named Tam Tam, and since moving to Kyneton in 2007, always cared for a number of horses and ponies.

In July 2023, Cheryl was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and had a number of chemo treatments which were unsuccessful. She was in and out of hospital from January 2024 with various complications and surgeries, and finally succumbed to the disease in March 2024.

Cheryl will be greatly missed for her caring nature and laughter that was not far away when she was around. Those who knew her were truly lucky to have her in their lives.

Cheryl is survived by her husband Daniel and her four children Shannon, Andrew, Sarah, and Emma.



PHHWV Banjo

## FACEBOOK AND YOUTUBE

All PHHWV members are welcome to join our Private Members Facebook page  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/386122952118831>

On this page, you can share your stories, get advice and have first insights into PHHWV horses available for Long Term Care. Please ensure you answer the questions when joining.

We would appreciate you sharing posts, inviting friends to the page and sending us requests. Please hit the share button and spread the good work of PHHWV.

PHHWV also has a YouTube channel for members and the broader community to find out more about Project Hope and some of our horses. Check it out here, share and subscribe:  
<https://www.youtube.com/@phhwvinformation6247/featured>

# Events

## BOOLARRA DENTAL EDUCATION DAYS 1-2 JUNE



By Mandi Herauville, Events Coordinator

Over the first weekend in June, PHHWV hosted a two-day event dedicated to dental education and treatment with equine dentist Peter Borgdorff, from the Australian Equine Dental Practice. Seventeen horses were examined and treated, and feedback from attendees was extremely positive.

Most importantly participants said they learned so much at the event and were happy their horses were assessed and treated by such an expert. While many horses had received regular dental treatment over the years and horse owners had been reassured all was well, on Peter's assessment there were many acute and chronic dental issues identified which had been either ignored or not picked up previously.

Some owners whose horses had serious issues agreed to allow Peter to return with a vet to sedate & treat the horses with problems such as hugely overgrown teeth, split or infected teeth, and other issues arising from infection, injury (at times completely unknown by owners) changing jaw alignment, and incorrect feed including excess sugar in diet, feeding short feed such as short-cut chaff to horses with poor mastication ability, and feeding powders to horses with poor saliva or mastication which can cause choke. Other issues identified and/or treated were huge gum lacerations, extractions, misaligned jaws, tartar, sharp teeth (on almost every horse). Despite these issues, all horses attending were in fantastic condition, apart from a few with unattended feet & some slight equine scour, were well attended to, cared for and loved by their owners.



Yet owners were often unaware that many unfavourable behaviours displayed by their horse could be caused by pain in the mouth. Pain on riding or feed balling, loss of condition, or even colic from swallowing unchewed food due to poor ability to masticate properly with the side-to-side motion horses require to properly crush & divide the feed into the correct size to be swallowed & digested, can all be caused by dental issues. Although mastication issues are more common in older horses, these can present in younger horses with misaligned jaws and/or teeth issues. With riding in particular, pulling to one side or the other was discussed as being a major sign of pain in the jaw (accompanied by biting on the bit by the horse to try to minimize pain), along with other behaviours that owners initially didn't see as associated with equine dental status such as rearing or bucking, shaking of the head & head pulling. Also new to most, was the risk of systemic infections such as sepsis, heart valve infection or pneumonia due to bacterial infection entering the bloodstream via gums, tongue or sinus cavities.



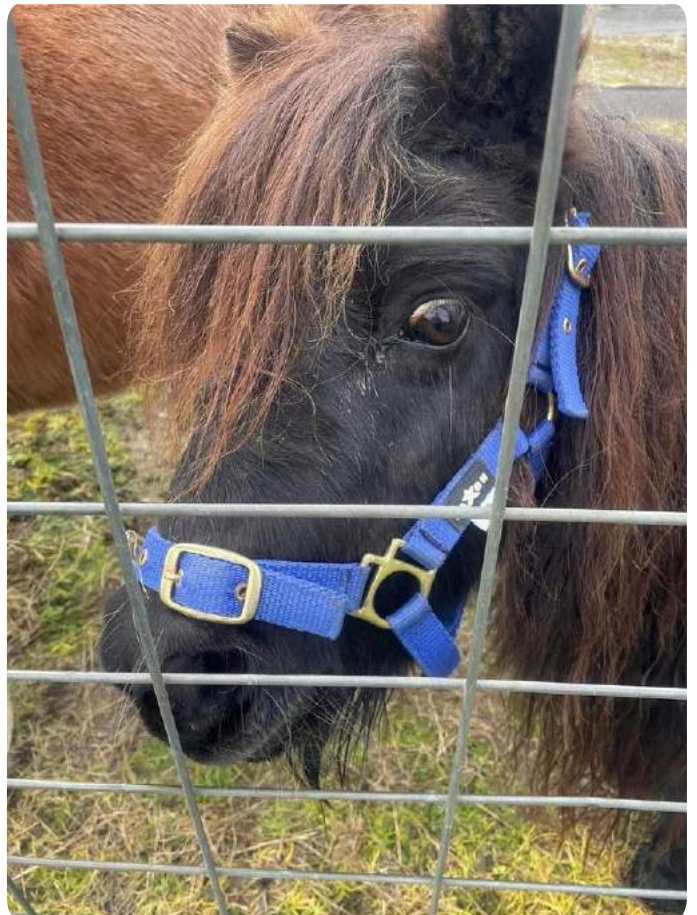


# Events

This was an important message for owners to seek:

1. Properly qualified equine dentistry with minimal invasiveness to preserve enamel and internal tooth pulp (the living part of the tooth for growth) and longevity of the teeth.
2. Regular checkups and treatment as guided by the dentist. Not too often!
3. Early assessment and management of teeth. Then more minimal treatment is required (except in special cases such as genetic malformation or injury etc.) throughout the lifetime of the horse.

Equine Dental Health Education is a huge pillar of equine health and this program highlighted this issue perfectly. Educated and experienced horse owners were genuinely surprised at the importance of this topic and were grateful to expand their knowledge in this area. Poor dental health can not only cause pain and suffering but is also a major factor in impacting behaviour. One can only imagine what condition neglected horses are in and how much pain they could be suffering. These factors drive us to further & continue our vital work in equine welfare.



PHHWV aims to provide quality education days for the equine community.

We thank Loch Nyora Pony Club OTEquine Dentistry , Peter Borgdorff of Australian Equine Dental Practice and our valued committee in making these weekend events a success. Treating 17 horses was a huge task but so worth it. Project Hope Horse Welfare provide these days free of charge. We can only continue this vital work with your support by becoming a member and by donations.

You can donate via our link here: <https://www.givenow.com.au/project-hope-winter-appeal>, and become a member via our link here: <https://www.phhwv.org.au/ways-to-give/membership/>.





## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Ian Shaw Behavioural Education Day @ Smythesdale Pony Club



A day dedicated to education and information around horses' behavioural issues with horses & their riders, 9am-3pm.

**Dates** 17 August, 2024

**Location** Unicorn Park & Stud Equestrian Centre, 33 Courts Rd, Clarendon.



### Woodend Community Farmers Market

Authentic, community based farmers' market - 1st Saturday of the month, 9am - 1pm.

**Dates** 2 September, 2024

**Location** High St., Woodend



### Ian Shaw Behavioural Education Day @ Ballarat Social Trail Horse Riders Club Inc.

A day dedicated to education and information around horses' behavioural issues with horses & their riders, 9am-3pm.

**Dates** 20 October, 2024

**Location** Unicorn Park & Stud Equestrian Centre, 33 Courts Rd, Clarendon.



### Lancefield Agricultural Show

Lancefield Show is a fun day for the whole family with so much to see and do, from Animal Exhibits, Rides and Food Stalls, 9am-4pm. \*Kids under 12 get FREE entry.

**Dates** 20 October, 2024

**Location** Lancefield Park, 62 Chauncey Street, Lancefield



# horse education



## Perspectives from Animal Welfare Conferences

By Rhonda Petschel, President

In March 2024 I travelled to Hamilton and Cambridge, New Zealand to represent Project Hope at two conferences:

- Companion animals in a Changing World hosted by Companion Animals New Zealand, and
- A Good Life for Horses: The 19th International Conference of the International Society for Equine Science.

As you can imagine the conferences were jam packed with information, so I will provide an overview of themes plus some snapshots of research that I believe will interest members. I encourage any members interested in these topics to investigate independently, as everyone listens with bias, and I am no different.

### Companion animals in a changing world

The role of companion animals has changed significantly in recent years. There is now a wider variety of companion animals including horses, recognised as an important part of society and classed as family members. With an increase in the number of companion animals, access to information, and social media there is a stronger presence of social license, and higher expectations of the quality of life for the animals. The presentations raised the complexity of companion animal regulation, current challenges of climate change, the increase of pet ownership during the Covid pandemic and the subsequent increase in both behavioural problems and the impact on rescue organisations. A theme also emerged regarding the human perception of an animal's welfare versus the experience of the animal and the importance of considering both their physical and mental state.

Dr Susan Hazel from the school of Animal & Veterinary Sciences, Adelaide University, gave an excellent presentation as to what "a good life" looks like, pointing out that the emphasis has shifted from preventing distress to enhancing positive emotions, and that it can be suggested that all animals – human and nonhuman - have a good life if they have more positive experiences than negative ones.

Although assessment of welfare in animals is not routinely performed, models such as the 5 domains (Nutrition, Health, Environment and Behavioural interactions which affect the 5th Domain, the Mental state) make this possible. She pointed out the focus needs to be on both the animals and the human caregivers to maximise welfare.

Carolyn Kemp's presentation on "Who's having fun at the dog park?" gave me opportunity to reflect and cross reference this with horses. This research project investigated the perceptions and behaviour of dog guardians at four different dog parks. My take-home message was that dog guardians' perceptions of how much time they spent with their dogs did not correlate with the time measured, and dog parks were not used in a way that ensures dogs are experiencing the potential benefits of the area. This presentation brought home to me how important these investigations are and how small changes with good knowledge will make a difference to the lives of dogs and their guardians alike.

Leonie Lee from Victoria gave an excellent presentation on "A more holistic life for our equine companions by design: A review of the evidence and practice of equine environment design and construction", that reflected a similar story. Leonie pointed out that research shows that horses' physical and mental development can thrive in environments tailored for them, and are important in how they sleep, learn, socialise, move, adapt and digest food. The challenge lies around long-standing practices on how we house our horses. Once again, I felt that looking through a different lens and making small changes will make a huge difference.

Our very own Julie Fiedler who presented to PHHWV 2023 AGM presented her research: "Horses are worthy of care: Insights into horse sector participants' attitudes towards sentience and animal welfare". Julie and her colleagues put forward the suggestion that understanding peoples' beliefs is important before updating current welfare policies to include the 5 Domains model, mental state and a good life. The exciting news is 99.9% of the participants believed horses were sentient, that sentience is a pathway to understanding mental state and that a moral obligation exists to consider sentience. This is wonderful news.



# horse education

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY  
FOR EQUITATION SCIENCE  
NEW ZEALAND  
A GOOD LIFE FOR HORSES



On the second day I participated in the workshop “Good Animal Citizens: creating a blueprint for Pet Guardianship”. In groups we chose a companion animal and created a detailed persona for a “Good animal citizen” of that species. We then presented a persona focusing on the animal’s characteristics, behaviours and needs. For example, the need of a horse to have horse companionship to ensure they sleep well, feel well physically and mentally and their human interaction is positive and well understood from their point of view. From there we built a Guardian Blueprint by developing a tool kit around the guardians’ responsibilities and what they need to know and provide for their pet to be a “good citizen”. Finally, we identified the barriers to good guardianship in the community, and worked on short and long term solutions. Our workshop presentations included parrots, cats, dogs, guinea pigs and a horse of course. This activity was invaluable, highlighting the importance of understanding the ethology and telos of the animals in our lives, our responsibility as guardians and the impact we have. It also highlighted the impact small changes can have on our companion animals’ quality of life.

(If anyone would like to be involved in a workshop of this nature with their club, please let me know).



## A Good life for horses – International Society of Equine Science

This conference was held over three days with the second day involving a field trip. Craig Johnson from Massey University in New Zealand gave an excellent lead-in presentation encouraging us to understand how we come to know things (empiricism, authoritarianism, experience and intuition) and that we all tend to favour some ways above others. He encouraged us to uphold the principle that those with different kinds of knowledge have something to offer and to respect what they have to say. This theme continued throughout the conference with the focus on bringing together the understanding of the human caregivers and the horse as a unique species to assist us in maximising welfare. The irony that the importance of non-judgemental acceptance is equally as important when interacting with horses and people was not lost on me. The conference presented a number of themes including:

- Living a good life
- Riding and training: tack and equipment
- The emotional life of the horse
- Sustainable and ethical equine practice

Depending on your interest, you will find a lot of interesting information at <https://www.equitationsscience.com/19th-ises-conference>.

Professor Paul McGreevy’s presentation highlighted the difficulties of working with people to improve practice by sharing empirical evidence. He covered the topics of whip use in racing and tight nosebands.

**The whip:** Although science shows that the whip causes pain, evident in various factors such as strike swelling and heat or worse with the strongest impact coming from the backhand strike, the whip continues to be used in most regions with the response to the research being to change the design and/or





# horse education



the name of the whip. Paul has been researching this for many years and continues to address the issue up front.

**Tight nose band:** Paul advises there is now ample data showing that tight nosebands cause microfractures on the nasal plane, boney changes under the jaw, and cheek lesions. This is further impacted by the bit, as a noseband limits mouth opening which is the horse's way of coping with the pain of the bit. If the mouth cannot open the horse will instead draw its tongue back to relieve pressure from the bit which then restricts the horse from swallowing. Paul's final comment was to suggest we take notice of the mouth opening and learn from it rather than clamping it shut.

Uta Konig von Borste's presentation is relevant to all guardians: the effect of a hay feeding regimen on the horses' emotional state. In the study presented, she fed one group of horses loose hay restricted to feed times only, and another group had adlib hay fed via hay nets to last throughout the day. Once the horses became accustomed to the hay nets the adlib hay throughout the day showed an improvement in their emotional state compared to the restricted-feed day. This research further endorses the message we have been receiving for many years regarding the importance of having forage available over 24 hours.

The concept of forced handling was also raised by Katrina Merkies who presented her findings on the effect of touch in horse-human interactions. Her study tested whether certain locations and types of touch had an effect on heart rate variability. Whilst the location and type of touch resulted in no significant findings, the treatment did. When touching horses that were tethered, stress behaviours increased, as opposed to the horse being loose and choosing to approach the human.

Julie Fiedler's presentation at this conference was also enlightening as she highlighted the disparate attitudes towards animal welfare in the horse sector, her work bringing people together to recognise what we do well now, and to collaboratively agree on future welfare improvements and areas for policy development - another topic relevant to the long-term goals of PHHWV.

In conclusion, to improve the lives of horses we must come together, share knowledge, deeply understand their telos - their nature or 'beingness' - and make decisions on housing and care through their lens. I came to understand that there is a lot of good quality knowledge available to assist us with good quality decision-making and small changes can make large improvements in providing a good life for horses.



Julie Fiedler and Rhonda Petschel



# horse reports

By Noelle Vine and Jenni Cooper, Horse Reports Coordinator

The following is a summary of welfare concerns received from members of the community about a horse or horses that PHHWV has then investigated.

## **Baw Baw**

A report of 4 horses in a paddock with minimal feed. All but one appear to be in ok condition but a T/ Bred on the property has a low body score, so possibly aged and not doing as well. In an update, we were told that 2 horses had been removed from the paddock. The reporter was asked to call back if the horses returned. Case closed.

## **Baw Baw 2**

We received a report about 4 neglected horses. The horse's owner passed away 12 years ago, and the horses have been living with the partner of the deceased. Horses have varying conditions, including bad feet, swollen eyes, skin conditions, etc. A Horse rep attended the property and left a letter. The owner responded to the letter and our Horse rep. had a long discussion with the current owner about ongoing care, and provided contact details for local farriers.

## **Central Victoria**

We received a report of a stallion that has been in the same paddock for 7 years. A neighbor who is concerned for the horse is unsure of the horse's condition up close as they want to remain anonymous. Plans are in place for a Horse rep. to visit.

## **East Gippsland**

We were contacted by an owner who was thinking about surrendering 2 horses as they could not afford to provide the care they needed. The horses' feet have been neglected. Following a discussion with PHHWV, the owner is thinking about possibly keeping horses, with some assistance from us.

## **Golden Plains**

A report of 17 Welsh ponies in poor condition and badly neglected was received. The owner was unable to care for the ponies, was facing eviction from the property, and did not want to sell or surrender the ponies. Contact was made with the Welsh Society to see if they could assist. A further report from a family member informed us that the RSPCA were attending the property.

## **Indigo**

We received a complaint about a pony having difficulties walking due to the length of its feet. Horse Reps will be attending.

## **Latrobe**

We were contacted about asking to rehome an 18yo St/bred due to the owner having to move interstate for medical reasons. Rehoming responsibly information was sent after advising that we could not help in this instance. Case closed.

## **Loddon**

A report of 6 horses with no feed or water was made. A concerned person saw an ad on Facebook about rehoming some horses. When they attended the property, they found 6 very distressed horses with no access to feed or water. Due to an apparent argument between the horse owner and landowner, the horses had been locked in a yard. The RSPCA are in attendance.

## **Macedon Ranges**

We received an email from a person who had bought a property in 2021 and on taking possession, found 3 T/Breds on the property. They contacted the agent



# horse reports

who could not reach the owner of the horses. One of our Horse Reps went to visit and found 2 of the horses were in good condition. However, the third horse was a windsucker and had a body score of around 1. The horses had received no care in that time. Photos were sent to Racing Victoria, but they informed us that these horses were too old for their programs. As the horses were all from the same breeder, they were going to try to track down the owner to see if the breeder would take responsibility for them. In the meantime, information on taking out a lien was provided.

## **Macedon Ranges 2**

A horse owner rang us after their horse had gone through a fence, getting caught up in children's bicycles and injuring itself. It had been given bute for a couple of days, but the owner could not afford a vet. A Horse Rep went to assess the horse and a vet was called. The horse had fractured its pelvis and euthanasia was recommended. The horse was euthanised the next morning.

## **Melton**

An elderly man that has an aged horse is going in to care and a family member asked for assistance. Photos were sent and the horse is in good condition. A return call went unanswered. Case closed.

## **Mitchell**

We received a report from property owner about an aged horse on their property. Two Horse Reps attended. A lack of communication between the property owner and the horse owner following a disagreement in which the horse was to be moved. The horse could not be caught but the owner was trying to catch the horse so it could be moved. Some mediation required. Case closed.

## **Mitchell 2**

We were advised of 2 ponies on a property with front legs deformed probably due to very long-suffering laminitis by a concerned member of the public. The caller was afraid of retaliation if they report the ponies. Since taking photos, the ponies were moved and then spotted again. The property owner has been in touch with their local Council. Following two letters left at the property by Project Hope, we were contacted by the solicitor of the owner. After reporting our concerns, the solicitor arranged for a vet who found that apart from needing some dental work and their feet attending to, the ponies were in good condition. The vet will attend to their teeth and a farrier has been arranged. See attached photos.

## **Mitchell 3**

We were contacted regarding an older mare in light condition, in a bare paddock with two alpacas, with concerns for her coming into winter. Her feet are in good condition, but she is unable to be wormed. She is fed gumnuts and hay twice a day. It was recommended that the mare be wormed with pellets in her feed and moving her to a better paddock on another property. Case closed.

## **Moorabool**

We were contacted by a family member about 2 ponies that the property owner was unable to care for due to their age and physical weakness. The ponies belonged to a family member that had abandoned them. The ponies were surrendered.

## **Pyrenees**

We were contacted about an elderly couple who had a horse that had been left on their property by a homeless person. The horse was a St/Bred gelding in its late teens that was walked along roads and highways by its owner.





# horse reports

The elderly couple offered the owner and their horse a place to stay for a couple of days, which turned into weeks. The owner has since entered supported care, but the horse remained on the property. The reporter was caring for the horse while the situation was being sorted and wanted some help from PHHWV. After a number of calls and advice provided, the horse was eventually picked up by a friend of the owner who remains in care.

## Wellington

Previous RSPCA case: the owner who has had animals seized by the RSPCA contacted PH regarding 2 mules and a pony, advising that they were likely to be evicted at any time as they had been told to vacate the property. If this occurs, their animals would be unattended. A Horse rep visited, and this case at the time of writing is still active.

## Wyndham

A call was received from a member of the public wanting to rehome 2 T/Breds and an unhandled mini. Both the T/Breds had back injuries. On replying to the request, we were advised that the RSPCA had arrived with a vet and were going to take the horses. Case closed.

Contact us with any concerns about the well-being of horses and ponies. Our trained members follow up the reports, visiting the property to talk to the owners, to look at the horses and check their surrounds. PHHWV representatives look for signs of a horse not thriving including: inspecting the paddock for safety, checking on a horse's condition, and ensuring there is access to water and shelter.

PHHWV has no power to help unless owners are cooperative. Some horse owners lack the knowledge or means required to have a horse. When we look at the horse with them, we share our knowledge and experience to improve a horse's health. When a horse is at serious risk we ask for permission to rescue the horse on the spot. If surrender is refused, we contact RSPCA Vic. as it has the authority to remove a horse.

If you are concerned about a horse, contact us at Project Hope or report online on the link below, or by scanning the QR code:  
<https://www.phhwv.org.au/report-a-horse/>



# horse updates

## PHHWV Sebastian

by Lee

“Sebby” is doing well and giving me plenty of pony attitude. He’s pretty chilled out and is currently paddocked with my Shetland, Tonka, so Tonka can lose some weight. He and Tonka get on really well and do play a lot together, which is good for both of them. It’s amazing how little Sebby is. Tonka is 10.2hh and is double the size of him! He doesn’t let that bother him though! They roughhouse quite a bit but never with any malice or intention to hurt.

His feet are great, his weight is good and he is VERY fluffy. I am currently teaching him some manners to stand back while I bring his feed in, as he has developed a pushing habit, but he’s doing very well with that, only forgetting occasionally. Otherwise, he’s a happy chap, always up for a good cuddle and a scratch.





## HORSES FOR LEASE

These PHHWV horses have completed their rehabilitation with their Short Term Carer and are now ready to find their Long Term home.



### Aster

Aster is a 12yo, 15hh Chestnut Arabian X gelding. His first hoof trims, teeth float, vet check and vaccinations have all been completed, and he has gained weight well. Aster is gentle but nervous and seems to have some knowledge / memory of basic groundwork. He can now be easily caught and groomed, and leads and ties up well. Aster is curious and calm with other horses, has a kind nature and is a fast learner. He is comfortable in his body and bright and alert.



### Bellebutton

Bellebutton is an 8yo, 16.1hh bay Thoroughbred mare. She is sensible and intelligent with a very sweet nature. She would make an excellent companion and also be suitable for in-hand liberty work or obstacles. Her dental work, vaccinations and hoof trims are all up to date. Although paddock sound, she may not cope with constant work under saddle due to an injury to her nearside hind leg as a foal.



### Captain & Star

Captain Carrot is a 25 yo, 9hh Strawberry Roan gelding who enjoys interacting with people (and carrots!). He is easy to catch, lead, trim and handle. He is used to dogs and not fazed by loud vehicles or machinery.

Star is a 10 yo, 11hh bay mare who is bright and inquisitive. She is easy to catch, brush and trim and shows affection. However, she can frighten easily with sudden movements around her, hence she is not safe to be around children and should be supervised with people unfamiliar with horses.





## HORSES FOR LEASE



### Curtis & Priscilla

Curtis is a miniature white 9.2hh gelding in his late teens. Due to his pink pigmentation, he will need a fly mask often to prevent sun damage. He is in good condition but not trusting of people. With daily handling he is getting better but will occasionally try to bite or kick. It is recommended that he is not around children.

Priscilla is a miniature white 9.2hh mare approx. 12yo. She is easy to handle, and the previous owner advises that she is great with kids. This has yet to be confirmed. She can be a bit bossy over Curtis at feed time and this appears to be her only vice.

Curtis and Priscilla have been together for many years and should remain together in a long term home.



### Jazz

Jazz is a 25 yo, grey Arab mare standing at approximately 14.2hh. Due to dental neglect, she will require 6-9 monthly checks. Catching and leading is now a comfortable action for her, however she remains wary with rugging. Jazz is great with the farrier and to worm. Due to her age, she is not suitable for riding.

Find out more about each of our horses and leasing arrangements via our website here:  
<https://www.phhwv.org.au/our-horses/ready-for-a-home/>

If you are interested in giving a Project Hope horse a long term care home, get in touch with us by emailing [info@phhwv.org.au](mailto:info@phhwv.org.au)





# horses farewelled

It is never easy. This season we farewell PHHWV Sharnie, Shakisma, Amie, Tommy Lee, Stella and Ivanna, and send our heartfelt wishes to their rescuers and carers. RIP.

**Amie**



**Ivanna**

**Sharnie**



**Shakisma**

**Stella**



**Tommy Lee**



# PHHWV Bulletin Board

## CEN AMBASSADORSHIP UPDATE

All Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria members are eligible for a **10% discount and free delivery** (on any two supplements or more) by simply going to CEN's shop on their website: <https://cennutrition.com.au/horses/shop/>. At checkout, enter **HOPE10** to claim your discounts. PHHWV is then given a 10% commission on all sales from those who enter the **HOPE10** coupon code. CEN has also generously matched all commissions dollar for dollar, so PHHWV gets a double donation. To date we have had \$1675 deposited. So not only do the horses win, so do we with the extra \$\$\$\$. Thank you CEN Nutrition.

CEN also support all our horses coming into Short Term Care by providing a Starter Pack which is dispatched directly from CEN head office to the Short Term Carer. The Starter Pack contains CEN Oil, CEN CF50 and Cen XtraBalance and lasts approximately two weeks.

We send a huge thank you to those who are using this all Australian-owned and made supplement and feed, and also to Bryan and Peter from CEN Nutrition for your wonderful support, and for all the prizes you have provided for our Educational Days at several events this year. Lots of happy winners from our daily raffles.

**PROJECT HOPE HORSE WELFARE VICTORIA** ADVOCACY

### The horse's advocate

19% of horses reported to PHHWV in 2022-2023 were from a deceased estate.

Have you given thought to what you wish to happen to your horse in the event of your passing?

Speak to family and friends about your wishes.

Record your wishes in writing, however, only a Will can provide legal assurance that your wishes will be followed.

A Will that considers your horse can mean the difference between your horse being cared for or being neglected.

Please note that Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria does not offer a legacy programme and therefore is unable to accept any horse gifted in a Will.

Contact us for more information:  
Email: [info@phhwv.org.au](mailto:info@phhwv.org.au)  
Tel: 1300 881 606  
[www.phhwv.org.au](http://www.phhwv.org.au)  
REG: A0027152D ABN: 96 820 500 367

The above information does not constitute legal advice and PHHWV recommends that you consult a solicitor for specific estate planning advice.



## FOOTNER WREN LEGAL

Injury Compensation, Wills & Probate, Conveyancing

Discounted services offered to PHHWV Members.

Contact Kathryn Footner  
(03) 9602 5761, 0421 337 432  
[kathryn@fwlegal.com.au](mailto:kathryn@fwlegal.com.au)  
[www.fwlegal.com.au](http://www.fwlegal.com.au)





# PROJECT HOPE WINTER APPEAL



PROJECT HOPE  
**HORSE**  
WELFARE VICTORIA

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