



# Donkey and Mule Protection Trust NZ

*NON-PROFIT CHARITABLE ORGANISATION INCORPORATED #1638328*

**[www.donkey-mule-trust.org.nz](http://www.donkey-mule-trust.org.nz)**

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# **Newsletter No. 14**

**July, 2014**

# From your Editor

The wind is howling outside as I sit here typing this editorial. I am comforted that my donkeys are all snug in their covers and sheds and have plenty of straw and hay to munch on to keep them warm and healthy in this cold, violent patch of winter weather. Sadly I know that there are some donkeys who are not so fortunate; sometimes through ignorance, sometimes through deliberate carelessness. The Rehoming Centres and the many good donkey people right throughout the country do much good work looking out for such donkeys, and try to improve their lot in life where they can. The Trust Representatives provide advice and support to people who only have to ask for assistance. It is always readily given and this help is going on all the time, all over the country.

Most of the Trust's donkeys are old and fragile, and it is with great sadness that I report two of our Trust donkeys have died recently. Lulu of the Trust who was in a touch and go state when she was taken into the Trust several



**Pemberton Fafner  
with Andrea July 2014**



years ago, but whose spirit and lively eyes clearly said that she still had some living to do, and Reggie of the Trust whose lifelong friend Rosie died about a year ago. I like to imagine them cheerfully peeping down from their cloud. Both of them were happy and well cared for and cherished in the Trust. It is good to know that they were contented and safe in their final years.

Most of the Trust's efforts go into supporting the Rehoming Centres to rehome, rescue and rehabilitate many donkeys. Currently the central North Island northwards has more donkeys needing our help than the rest of the country. Everywhere the need for education is ongoing.

This newsletter brings you more updates about some of the Trust donkeys and some stories from the Rehoming centres highlighting their good work.

*Andrea*

## From the Chairman

The May AGM in Christchurch is a distant memory. That either says something about my age or the rate at which things are happening or both. The AGM for the Trust is always a great chance for the Trustees to meet face to face, because although we are in almost constant communication it is by email, covering the events that need resolution each week.

Our audited accounts for the year ended 31 December were presented and approved. They showed a \$300 loss for the year, which prompted considerations as to how we could gain more Trust friends, but with over 70% of our income going directly to donkeys we were not upset by the loss!

We have been saddened however by the recent loss of 2 Trust donkeys. Reggie died in June and Lulu at the beginning of July. Reggie had been cared for by Phillipa Hackett and her family, while Lulu had been with Erin Mills at Fat Tui Farm and both are really missed. They had been fortunate to spend the last years of their lives in caring environments where they were loved and looked after in a way that all animals deserve but not all receive.

I digressed. The results of our AGM discussions have led to a great article by Andrea, publicizing the Trust, more active marketing of the Donkey calendar from which the Trust will receive 50% of the profits, the finalising of a pamphlet on the differences between horses and donkeys and a wider distribution of the Trust newsletter. >

The pamphlet is aimed at educating equine owners in the often less than subtle differences one should be aware of when caring for donkeys, especially in terms of the need for shelter, care with feeding and problems with hooves. The wider distribution of the newsletter (to SPCAs and Vets etc) has been undertaken in an effort to increase public knowledge of the Trust activities.

An easy decision, but one of real significance, was made to refer to all jacks as jack(stallion) from now on. This was also agreed by the Society at their AGM the next day and was decided because there is a lack of appreciation by the general public of the dangerous potential of jacks. Most people appreciate the fact that stallions are powerful, sometimes temperamental and volatile animals that one would not use as a children's pet, but it is not uncommon to have a jack foal advertised that way! Hopefully the jack(stallion) message will get through to at least a few people and avoid some of the problems we encounter as a Trust, endeavouring to rescue and rehome donkeys which, had they been gelded earlier in life, would have made great companions AND had a happier life.

As usual it is one thing to be involved in the running of the Trust and working on its funding and future direction and quite a different matter to be involved in the basics of donkey "rescue" In June we had a rapid hunt for a temporary home for an old jenny while her owner spent large amounts of time out of the district for medical reasons. Among our "local" donkey owners we received kind offers of homes complete with a companion donkey and great shelter, so the only problem was to minimise the distance we needed to move what turned out to be an over 40 year old jenny. The nearest new home was over 50 Km away, but after lifting one front hoof after another gently up the loading ramp we had her in the float with minimum effort in a very short time. She was really frightened and was shaking badly but soon discovered the bale of hay tucked in the front of the float and spent part of the hopefully gentle drive nibbling. A much calmer old girl backed quietly out at the end of her journey and began her introduction to her new paddock mate. So far, so good.

The response from our local donkey community was really great, especially from her new caregiver. This also reinforced in my mind the huge amount of time and money our rescue and rehoming centres put in to this type of work.

Thank you all!

*Neil*

## Lulu of the Trust

We received the sad news a few weeks ago that Lulu of the Trust had died. She was at Fat Tui Farm where she has been so well loved and wonderfully cared for by Erin and her family.

Lulu was one of a large family of donkeys rescued by Horse Welfare and given to the Trust to rehabilitate and rehome. Lulu was by far the oldest and probably the mother of many of the donkeys. Her future was in question as she was in poor state, but it was decided to give her a few months to see how she rallied as she had a bright eye and was very alert and clearly was enjoying life. Lulu was a clear candidate to be taken into the Trust as she needed to be assured of top quality care and protection for the rest of her life. She went to live with Erin about six months later, and her age was assessed at 35 years. She was still very fragile but had a toughness.



Lulu of the Trust



Through her great love of life, and the great care she received, she lived a further three years. During that time she gave lots of children much pleasure and taught them that donkeys are gentle and loving and that they can be great friends. She was the animal that the city children who were afraid of equines went to, because she was calm and serene. Lulu loved her forelock being scratched, but she would not allow her face to be touched.

Lulu bonded with another donkey Delaney and was never far from his side. Although her eyesight began to fail she followed him around and went on walks with him along the road while Erin's daughter rode Delaney. Lulu liked to walk fast and would nudge Delaney to keep up the pace. In recent months she was happy to stay behind in the stable and wait for Delaney to return.

Lulu was a favourite with the goat kids, lambs and calves. She never chased them and they liked being near her. The kids would run under her to shelter from the rain!

Lulu will be greatly missed by her carer and family as although she was a small white donkey she had a huge personality and love of life, and she was tremendously loved.

## **Fernhill Rehoming Centre**

Fernhill still has a jenny looking for a home. Queen Charlotte of Fernhill was returned last September when her owners had to relocate to Christchurch for work. Prince Harry of Fernhill has also come back to the centre as Joan had an enquiry for a jack(stallion) but when they took him home they put him in a paddock on his own without company so he did not settle. The owner was apprehensive of him as he was a strong young jack so he was delivered back to Fernhill. He is a lovely boy; he just needs some leading and handling again. He has now been gelded and he will make a lovely pet for someone or a companion for another donkey or horse.

Joan does a grand job hoof trimming fourteen other donkeys around Invercargill and surrounding districts. She is very delighted with some of the unhandled donkeys that vets and farriers had given up on, which she is trimming, and with her training they are improving greatly, and she is thrilled to see the improvement.

*Joan Rabbitte*

## Flossie (Floris) of the Trust

Flossie is now 28 years old, and although she is getting more fragile every year, and has always been on the slim side right from when she came into the Trust she has not lost any of her enormous personality and determination to run things to her rules! Flossie lives with a small skewbald donkey called Dora (Hokio Dorabella) and they go their own way during the day, Flossie goes into a paddock with lots of long grass and Dora goes into a paddock with not so much feed. At night Flossie comes in and has a hard feed and goes into her stable and has hay if she wants it. She sleeps with Dora. Her bucket contains chaff, mitavite, betabeet, cider vinegar and she loves it.

Flossie loves to have her ears massaged at the joint and she loves lots of attention, especially brushing and cuddles.



Flossie of the Trust with her carer Sarah



In the morning when Flossie goes out she decides which paddock she is going into, though she has her favourite paddock which has the yummiest grass! Flossie has a lovely thick cover. Her caregiver Sarah gets her covers especially made at Wairau saddlery. Flossie has good teeth and she has had them filed recently; she is happy and loves Dora and mothers her.

There is now a third donkey Toby, who arrived in the last few days via the Ikaroa Rehoming Centre. He is the sweetest little donkey, not much bigger than Dora and both the girls love him. Flossie has started not wanting to go out onto the grass in the morning and wants to stay with Dora and Toby in case she misses something! So she has to have an extra special feed to make up for what she might be missing in nutrients. And Dora who is usually very jealous of her feed is sharing her hay with Toby. This is a photo of Flossie with her carer Sarah, and a photo of Toby on the day he arrived at Flossie's place. You can see he looked right at home from the minute he stepped off the float.



Dora left and Toby of Ikaroa on right

## Poe

Ikaroa Rehoming Centre has rehomed a number of donkeys during the past few months. This has included encouraging an excellent owner, who has had donkeys from the Ikaroa Rehoming Centre in the past, to buy a donkey to rescue him. He was being used to run with a boisterous jack to keep him company and had been offered to another stud to run with their jack(stallion). This is a cruel thing to do in most circumstances as a jack(stallion) will usually bite and dominate a gelding which is not as strong nor as aggressive as a jack stallion. This was the case in this instance. The gelding had, had a pretty rough life while at the stud. Fortunately he had periods when he was run with the jennies during the breeding season but he spent long periods being bitten and pushed around by the jack. Poe who is mainly of Ponui Island blood was bought to rescue him from this punishing situation.

Poe was tentative at first but quickly realised that he was in a new and loving home and there were no jack stallions! He started to interact and respond to his new owner Diane.

His back is tender to touch and this is probably because he has been bitten along it, and the soreness should disappear over time.

A jack's bite is pretty severe and it may take quite a while for the bruising to go.



Poe and Storm



As you can see in the photo Poe is a very sweet little donkey. He now has a new friend who is an Ikaroa Rehoming donkey called Storm who went to live with Poe to keep him company. He was also rescued some years ago by his previous owner from a neglected home. Poe and Storm now have a peaceful and loving environment, as well as brushes and lots of attention making their new life enjoyable. They are already giving their new owner lots of pleasure in return.

## **Reggie of the Trust**

The Trustees received this email on the 23 June from Reggie's carer.

It is with much sadness and regret that I have to advise that we had to have Reggie put down this morning.

He became unwell at the beginning of the month with what I thought was grass staggers. As there was no improvement after taking him off the grass the vet was called and after blood tests it revealed that he had hyperlipidaemia, this was treated and he seemed to be responding, although still unsteady in his hind legs. Unfortunately, he went downhill again this weekend and there was no choice but to put him out of his misery.

He had the most beautiful nature and not a mean bone in his body and will be sorely missed by us and his paddock mate, my pony Rose.

Regards,  
Pip



Reggie of the Trust

## Esther of Mamaku

Esther was rescued in 1996 when she was only about two years old. She was very neglected and had only days before, given birth to a stillborn foal. Esther's rescuer needed her as a companion for Toby, her ten year old gelding who was grieving for his paddock mate, who had recently died.

Esther and Toby had the best of care and lived happily together for the next 18 years.



Esther of Mamaku and Minitie of Ikaroa

Sadly, Toby died in May. He was 27 years old and had been with his owner since he was a foal. His owner was heartbroken. Esther was so very lonely, constantly braying and walking the fence line looking for him.

His owner is now 65 with back problems, so after much soul searching she made the decision to rehome Esther, rather than have another donkey to take care of.

This is where Mamaku Rehoming Centre came to the rescue. The worry of finding Esther a good home was over when Pauline Sainsbury who runs the centre so kindly offered to take Esther as one of her personal donkeys. >

"I live close enough to visit and help out from time to time. Knowing that Esther has many donkey friends and is in such good hands makes my heart sing."

Esther was paired up with Mintie of Ikaroa whom Pauline had worked with Ikaroa to rescue. Ikaroa had bought him from Trade Me in 2011 as an unhandled Ponui Island jack(stallion) with unkempt feet; and Pauline had done all the hard work rehabilitating and training him. Now he is a quiet friendly pet. Mintie had recently been returned from the home he had been placed in due to the ill health of his carer. It was love at first sight when Esther met Mintie. They have made a close bond already and have become inseparable in just a few days. It is a happy outcome for them both. They will stay at Mamaku permanently.

## **Reuben of Ikaroa**

Reuben was bought as a completely unhandled two year old jack stallion. Understandably he was rather a handful. His owner was afraid of Reuben and unable to manage him because she was inexperienced and he was a typical strong and exuberant jack(stallion). His owner was not in a position to pay for his gelding so the Trust agreed to have Reuben gelded but also arranged for his owner to receive help and basic training to teach Reuben to be caught, tie up and lead. Not long after being gelded Reuben was rehomed, but due to his next owner's ill health Ikaroa Rehoming Centre got an urgent call to rehome him only a few months later. The next home lasted only a week as Reuben determinedly chewed their fancy wooden rail fences and Ikaroa got another call as Reuben had got his marching orders!

At three and a half Reuben is now in his sixth and final home as he was lucky enough to be given a home by Virginia who is an experienced handler who can cope with his various tricks and insecurities. She also has two other donkeys from Ikaroa Rehoming Centre, Linden Delilah and her son Coffee of Ikaroa and two other donkeys.

*Virginia continues the story:*

My husband said when he heard about him "Not another donkey." He and my other donkeys were unanimous. When I first saw Reuben attempting to climb up the fence where he was tied while waiting for us to turn up with float, I began to think the same thing.

It also came to light on the way to collect him that he had caused a





Reuben of Ikaroa with Virginia.

previous owner issues with some aggressiveness towards her other donkey.

Perhaps some alarm bells should have been going off in my head, but it was too late.

Fortunately, his last owner had started some work with him and Rueben lead beautifully onto the float, as she gaily waved goodbye to the troublesome young chap.

My other donkeys and horse hated him on sight. They had a nice little clique going, and now it was going to be a case of all shuffling sideways and reestablishing themselves into a new sort of order.

He wasn't too keen on

them either, and spent the first few days looking quite miserable, and overwhelmed by the fact that here he was in yet another home, and how long this time before he would be sent packing?

He vented his frustration the first night by – yes – chewing along the rails in my yards. I rushed off to the local mechanics and asked for the dirtiest, smelliest old sump oil they had and mixed it with some Stockholm tar. It was a heady brew, and smelt divine. I smothered all the wooden rails with it and he hasn't touched them since.

After a week he was starting to feel a bit more at home, but we would have a long way to go. He is very complex for a donkey with obvious highs and lows. One day, all sappy and cuddly and the next, stand-offish. He is beginning to place his trust in me, but it will probably take a year before he feels really secure. He lets me handle all his feet, but still needs to be haltered for this.

>

I prefer all my donkeys to be happy to have their feet examined without having to be haltered, but that is just a matter of routine.

Some days he is keen to be brushed and pushes himself forward to speed up his turn, other days he couldn't care less. There is absolutely no sign of any aggression. He is not dominant among the other donkeys, (fat chance with Delilah as boss,) and has definitely shown no sign of any bad temper towards me. He tries so hard to please, that I just wonder how anyone could have parted with him. My husband even quite likes him, and echoes me with the question with "what was wrong with him? He's actually quite cute." High praise indeed!

Possibly I am enchanted with him because he is a challenge, whether that is his personality or as a result of happenings in his life, I don't know. All I know is, I won't be moving him on. He has slotted in comfortably with the other donkeys/horse and adapted to a daily routine which gives him plenty of attention, lots of hay and a snuggly warm shed to wander into whenever a dark cloud goes past. What more could a fellow want?

*Virginia*

## **Cora and Frankie of Mamaku**

The Rehoming Centres do important work rehoming donkeys into good and loving homes. They check the new homes to ensure they are right for the donkeys and that the donkeys will be well cared for.

Cora and Frankie are two elderly donkeys who were left on a lifestyle block in the Waikato when the property was sold. Both donkeys were in reasonable condition, really quiet, friendly and most importantly their hooves were in good shape. Pauline and Elton from the Mamaku Donkey Rescue & Rehoming Centre in Rotorua, travelled the one and a half hours to collect Cora and Frankie.

It was a slow process gently persuading the donkeys to go into the horse float, but once in they were relaxed and both travelled extremely well. The donkeys stayed at the Mamaku Donkey Rescue & Rehoming Centre for a week in terrible wet weather and spent most of their time in the big shelter munching on hard feed and hay when they wanted it.

During that time it was noticeable that both donkeys would need an equine dentist as they were dropping their hard feed as they ate. It was a lovely fine day when they were loaded back into the horse float; the second time round certainly was a lot easier than the first. >



Cora and Frankie in the big shelter munching on hard feed and hay.

Then, it was an hour to float them to their new home north of Taupo to Di and Simon's lifestyle block. Once out of the float both donkeys did think they were in "donkey heaven", a lovely new shelter, paddocks with lots of grass and some sheep for company.

Mamaku is very grateful to Di and Simon who have adopted Cora and Frankie as it has been a full on job taking care of these two donkeys. During the first week Cora became lame with a suspected abscess so Di and Simon called the vet who administered medication, Cora has since recovered. Abscesses sometimes occur from stress from travelling, or when a donkey who has been at one property for years is then shifted to a different environment. It turns out that Cora has some arthritis as well, but she is responding well to Di and Simon's continuing care.

Di and Simon are a dedicated, caring couple who love their donkeys and given Cora and Frankie a new lease of life.

*Pauline Sainsbury, Mamaku.*

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