

# Donkey Serenade

ISSUE NO 31 | November 2020 |



New Committee (Peter, Helen, Peter, and Marion) practicing for the egg and spoon race for Donkey day to be held on the SATURDAY 12<sup>th</sup> December 2020

The annual DONKEY DAY at the Highfield Reserve will be held on **Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> December**, commencing **11am**. There will be an opening ceremony for the Lily Pond board walk which has 40 different species of native trees.

This Board Walk has been constructed under the guidance and planning of Alan Ford (builder) with help from volunteer labour and generous help from The Trading Post, The Community Shop, Bob Waata (Digger), Warkworth ITM (Materials), and Light Speed Signs (Steve Cleverly).

At 11.30 am there will be a Health and Safety briefing especially regarding feeding the Donkeys and then the following programme-

As well as seeing the donkeys there will be

Running races

Sack races

Relay races

3 legged races

Egg and spoon races

Roberts Trophy Race

Pin the tail on the Donkey

Lolly scramble

Tug of war

Santa Claus will be making an appearance about 12pm

Drinks and barbeque provided

And, of course, rides on the donkeys

Cancellation will happen if it is raining at 9am. No alternative date has been set.

### **Subscriptions and new members**

This years subscriptions are due. \$10 per member. Please deposit at the following bank account

ASB 12 3095 0254516 00 including name and telephone number.

You can set up a repeating payment on internet banking or by visiting your bank, saving you having to remember each year.

Please advise Liz Duhs of changes in address, emails, telephone numbers.

New members welcome if you know anyone in the district who would like to become a supporter in keeping this unique attraction thriving.

See attached membership form

People can buy Donkey Cards at the Information Centre Warkworth, Snells Beach library, and the Matakana Craft shop of which \$3.00 goes to the Donkey Inc.

### **AGM Report**

The AGM of the Highfield Donkeys Inc was held at Peter Coulings house in Algies Bay after being delayed due to Covid-19 regulations.

The Chairman reported that it had been a succesful year despite the impact of Covid 19 – a time capsule had been buried to be opened in 50 years from November 2019. He thanked all the committee for their work during the year, the Auckland Council for their barbeque support,

Financially we collected \$570 membership fees from 165 members, with total revenue of \$3,870.61 and total costs of \$2,325.4. \$8,487.51 was invested as at the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Elected for the 2020/2021 year were Peter Couling (Chairman). Helen Whiteley(Secretary), Marion Jones(Treasurer) Peter Caccia-Birch and John Montgomery(Donkey Managers), Elizabeth Duhs (Membership Secretary), Jenny Van de Veeple(Roberts Family Representative), Chris Mellor(Donkey Serenade) and Jaine Kelsey(Committee member).



Leo van de Wijdeven who looks after our jac donkey, Teddy, for mating with our female donkeys gave an interesting account of his life at the Annual General Meeting of the Highfield Donkey Inc. He was brought up on a rural property in the Netherlands where his father, a truck driver, became a chicken farmer and trader and built a house that was more like a barn where Leos family lived for some time. It was cold, often  $-7^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

At 7 years old after a 5 km ride from primary school he would work in the chicken, turkey, and rabbit abattoir and could pack a chicken in 1 minute and skin a rabbit in 5 minutes. He left school at 12 years worked in a stocking factory, and then had a apprenticeship in a printing company where he grew to love graphic design. His father died when he was 20 and he had a year to go to finish his apprenticeship. He took over managing the farm but then had to serve his conscription in the army. This forced him to close down the farm and he donated the donkeys and dogs to an animal park. In the army he became a top driver which meant he was not posted overseas. While in the army he took photos of recruits. This became so succesful that became a professional photographer and photographed 1000 weddings over 6 years.

His brother had emigrated to New Zealand in the early 1970's and in 1977 he decided to visit New Zealand on holiday. Restrictions on residence in rural areas in the Netherlands led to him emigrating to New Zealand in 1984. He arrived with \$350 in his pocket and a pregnant wife of 6 months. He managed to obtain a job at McConnell through a chance meeting with the CEO. He rented out his house in the Netherlands and he and his wife left for New Zealand. After 6 months he soon found work as a printer. He then went onto to purchase a panel beating business and obtained a contract for repairing police cars. His wife became homesick and they returned to the Netherlands where he became a production manager for a newspaper. His wife after 2 years decided that New Zealand was a better place to live and they sold up everything in the Netherlands and returned to NZ.

He worked in several printing companies and in 1993 bought land in Cowns Bay, and built a house. He subsequently suffered illness through working in the printing industry and had to take permanent sick leave.

He planted 50,000 pine trees after work on this property and they have just been milled. He has suffered the loss of a finger when his previous donkey bit him while feeding. He now paints pictures and helps us breed donkeys

**Visit the Donkeys at Highfield Garden Reserve**



We, the community, headed by a committee, are responsible for the care of the donkeys.

If you would like to make a donation towards their support or become a member of Highfield Donkeys Inc. to join the support group please fill in the following form & send to the Membership Secretary.

Your help would be most appreciated.

---

**Highfield Donkeys Incorporated Society**

**Providing for the care and wellbeing of Teddy, Truffle, Toby, Tara, Tina, Topsy, Turvy, & Tilly 2,  
at Highfield Garden Reserve**

**Membership or Renewal: 2020/2021 - \$10 per household**

(Financial Year is from 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> June)

Name/s .....

Contact Address..... Post Code.....

Telephone..... Mobile .....

Email .....

Signature .....

Post/deliver/email to: Liz Duhs, Membership Secretary, Highfield Donkeys Inc.,  
483 Mahurangi East Road, Rodney 0920, NZ  
Email: liz.duhs@gmail.com

>Direct credit ASB 12 3095 0254516 00

(Please ensure you reference the credit with your name and telephone no.)