



# Brumby Bridges

*The quarterly newsletter of the ABA*

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***ABA Honors Clive Edwards***  
***Snow Mountain Bush Users Group***

### **The ABA**

The *Australian Brumby Alliance Inc. (ABA)* was established in 2008 to help facilitate the efforts of like-minded wild horse interest groups throughout Australia. We do this by sharing information and expertise as well as providing a collective voice in regard to the humane management, welfare, preservation and promotion of what we consider to be a National Treasure - *The Australian Brumby*.

# ABA News

## President's Chat

### *Australian Brumby Alliance (ABA) Website*

The new ABA website that Sandy Radke has created for us looks great and has already generated a noticeable increase in inquires. We have received 17 inquiries since 1-Jan-2016 which have been responded to within a week. The overall breakdown is five school inquiries (3 student requests for project information by telephone) and 12 general inquiries, covering topics such as; where to purchase a Brumby, how to remove Wild Brumbies on a property, registering Brumbies and where to see Brumbies living wild in Victoria and NSW.

As evidence of the ABA website profile, I find myself increasingly bringing up ABA information via google – why not try googling Brumby queries for yourselves? The more we can contribute to the ABA website content, the more the general public can read about positive Brumby information, as well as seeing links to each ABA member website.

### *Brumby Information Papers*

The ABA will have completed half of the ambitious 28 information papers we are producing to explain the history, contributions and values that Brumbies provide – *in managed, viable and sustainable numbers*. Quite an achievement, well done troops. ([page 3](#))

### *ABA Committee Changes*

Our ABA committee representatives have had some changes. Clive Edwards (SMBUG) representative has stepped down after a few health problems, check out Clive's trophy presentation ([page 5](#)).

Dave Berman is now President of the SEQ Brumby Association, and has introduced himself and the new SEQBA committee ([page 6](#)). Fortunately Anne Wilson who, with her husband Terry, started Queensland's first rehoming charity late 2009, is now ABA's Vice President. We also retain contact with Sandy Hall, past president of the now closed OHHA of WA. Sandy Hall assists the ABA as a contact person for WA queries. Thanks also to Sharon Peterson for her work last year as ABA secretary – and for now I am acting as interim ABA secretary.

We continue to wait for the *draft* Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse management plan and the following two critical months to provide feedback on how to keep viable, sustainable Brumby populations in our National Parks.

Hoping members and readers had a pleasant time over the Easter break and that you all enjoy this edition of the ABA Brumby Bridges.

*Jill Pickering*

### **Hot off the Press!!!**

The NSW Natural Resource Commission has just released a draft report, **Shared Problem, Shared Solutions** on pest animal issues in NSW. The report was produced at the request of the Premier of NSW to undertake an independent, state-wide review of pest animal management in NSW.

The public is now invited to provide feedback on the draft report before finalization of the recommendations by the end of June 2016.

What implications this wider review will have on wild horse management in the Kosciuszko National Park is unclear at present but it is likely that any reforms emerging from the state-wide review will have some bearing on the long awaited Kosi Wild Horse Management Review outcomes.

To access the full report and provide feedback, visit: [www.nrd.nsw.gov.au/pest-animal-management](http://www.nrd.nsw.gov.au/pest-animal-management)

Details will also be available on the ABA website [www.australianbrumbyalliance.org.au](http://www.australianbrumbyalliance.org.au).

## Australian Brumby Alliance Information papers

The Australian Brumby Alliance (ABA) will have completed half of the ambitious number of 28 information papers we have set ourselves the challenge to produce, to explain the history, contributions and values that Brumbies provide. The Brumby, or Wild Horses, has enriched our lives and the environment by living wild in our parks – when they are *managed in sustainable, viable numbers*.

Information papers overseas studies show how wild horse populations increase biodiversity through the new concept of “Conservation grazing”, and raises interesting ways to help increase Australian biodiversity and reduce fire loads.

This information will include Australia’s earlier Megafauna, weighing up to 2,000 kgs that grazed across its continent for thousands of years, but disappeared soon after the Aboriginal people migrated to Australia. Another paper explains how *ancestors* of today’s Brumby populations “migrated” to Australia in 1788 as domestic horses.

So once again Australian soil can benefit from the larger herbivores to fertilise soil, increase its moisture content, rotationally crop tough dry grasses to stimulate new growth, whilst at the same time reducing fire fuel loads - so that more native species can find their niche habitat.

Check our website

<http://australianbrumbyalliance.org.au/more-info/aba-brumby-resource-information-paper-1-1/> )

for an interesting reading. 15 more papers are a work in progress.

### ***Information Papers completed to date***

- 1.1 Introduction to ABA Information Papers [regularly revised]
- 1.2 How the ABA Supports Heritage Brumbies
- 1.3 Wild Horse Ancestors
- 2.1 Origin of Australian Brumbies
- 2.3 The Sentient Brumby and Family Bonds
- 2.1 The Brumby, the Environment and the Management Debate
- 3.5 Brumby Manure Concerns
- 3.6 Brumby Bio-Diversity Values **[Coming very soon]**
- 4.3 Dartmoor National Park England
- 5.1 Humaneness of Current Brumby Management Options
- 5.2 Fertility Control Expanded
- 5.3 Why Aerial Shooting Brumbies is *not* Humane
- 6.1 Principles of Rehoming Brumbies

*Jill Pickering*

## Member News

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### Hunter Valley Brumby Association (HVBA)

The HVBA had a stand at the **Hunter Valley Field Days** at Maitland Showground on the 18<sup>th</sup> until 20<sup>th</sup> of March. We will be near the food section and with our new look stand, so we will not be missed! After 12 months of negotiations with the publishing company, the royalties for the book *Brumby*, have finally been paid to the HVBA. We have used some of this money to purchase a banner to go across the top of our gazebo to make our stand much more visible.



Matari and Sienna will be part of our demonstration each day.

**The Draft Kosciuszko Wild Horse Management Plan** has still be put on hold. The plan was supposed to be made public before the end of 2015, it is possibly now set for release late March/early April. The HVBA is monitoring this very closely as we feel that the NPWS may be trying to push for a ground shoot, rather than passive trapping for the Kosi Brumbies.

We recently spoke with the Gloucester NPWS, as many rumours have been floating around as to the possible trapping, ground shooting etc of the **Barrington Brumbies**. The HVBA has been assured that any plan to manage the Barrington Brumbies will not be a mirror image of the Kosi program, but instead be tailored specifically for the Barrington Tops, and of course the HVBA will be at the forefront of any management plan.

**The Draft Plan of Management for the Curracabundi NP** has also just been released. The park is located north west of Barrington Tops and is home to a Brumby population.

The area where the Brumbies are located is not accessible to the public. It has been two years since the HVBA conducted a study in to the populations of the area and we are currently planning another trip to study the Brumbies before submitting our response to the plan.

Currently the Brumbies in this draft are listed as a medium priority. If we can prove, yet again, that the population is stable, then we are hoping to ensure the safety of these beautiful Brumbies.

Despite our repeated attempts to have a meeting with the Department of Defence regarding the **Singleton Brumbies**, we were contacted last week from a contractor, who had been employed to manage the Singleton Brumbies – we were not even notified that a new tender had gone out.

In two weeks we will be having a meeting with the contractor and other staff here at the HVBA to discuss the options for the Singleton Brumbies, we will be sure to keep our Members updated as to the outcomes of this meeting.



Very big congratulations to our VP Madison for being accepted in to her Masters of Environmental Science! Madison works incredibly hard, in her own time, to study research into Australia's Brumbies and she is hoping to one day be formally recognised for all of her hard work. We wish all the very best in her studies.



## Save the Brumbies (STB)

It's been a relatively quiet summer for us at STB due to the fact that our Sanctuaries are completely full up at present as we have a large number of horses being maintained in the fertility control trial.

We placed on three horses to excellent 'forever' homes and new owners are delighted with them; we received compliments on the way the horses had been trained and handled, thanks to Megan and Jan. It's always good to receive positive feedback.

As we go into the second year of the fertility trial we can report an 85% success rate so far. A few mares did foal down but as they were running with treated stallions and not treated themselves this was expected. All part of the trial process.

Foals are all healthy and normal, they will be offered for Adoption on weaning at the end of the year. No adverse results or birth defects were presented.



*Meet STB Miracle. 'Hey neigh to you all, I should not be here 'cos my Mum 'n Dad are in the fertility control trial but the Team are very happy with me 'cos they say I'm just a stunning, perfect colt, how 'bout that then' ????*

Our social day in January at Bellingen Sanctuary, home to our Sponsored horses in high level care was a most enjoyable day, well attended and well behaved horses delighted visitors.

New England Brumby Sanctuary is experiencing an extremely dry period which has us very concerned for the coming winter; the prospect of buying in water for some forty horses is something we have to budget for; rain dances are being conducted with vigour at present.

A new hay shed has finally been constructed, a long overdue project for NEBS and will allow for many more hay bales to be stored in preparation for a possible drought this winter.

Our new website should be posted by the end of April, do check it out if you have the time. That's about all for this issue. Jan Carter. STB Inc.

*Jan Carter for STB Inc.*

## Snowy Mountains Bush Users Group (SMBUG)

*Clive Edwards, Snowy Mountain Bush Users Group (SMBUG), Australian Brumby Alliance Management Committee Representative 2009 to 2015*

I first met Clive at a feedback session on the first National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) 10 year Wild Horse Management Plan, around 2008. Then in 2009, Clive, representing the SMBUG, came to the first gathering in Armidale of Brumby interest groups hoping to develop an umbrella organisation to provide a united national Brumby voice.

Clive, as the local Tumut ABA representative joined the quarterly meetings with NPWS that Colleen O'Brien, Victorian Brumby Association had begun, and I had joined also, for around three years meeting with NPWS to work together on ways to improve the humaneness of NPWS Brumby trapping, rehoming and transporting programs. This was a very productive time and provided the opportunity to better understand where both sides were

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coming from and how to work with NPWS in a less confrontational environment.



Clive has always put the concerns of KNP Brumbies first, and brought a positive, somewhat challenging perspective to the ABA Committee. Clive and I have had many long and, at times, robust conversations. However our different approaches always

added value and depth to the ABA's role.

After 8 years as the SMBUG representative, Clive's contribution will be greatly missed, however due to some health issues, Clive has decided to step back - our loss is



Clive's wife and family's gain as he now has more time to focus on them. In appreciation of Clive's long and sustained role on the ABA committee, I presented Clive with a small trophy which read:

*Presented to Clive Edwards, Snowy Mountains Bush Users Group Australian Brumby Alliance (ABA) founding member representative, 2009 - 2015.*

*With thanks for your long sustained and outstanding work to protect, and fight for heritage recognition of, Kosciuszko Brumby Wild Horses.*

## South East Queensland Brumby Association (SEQBA)

SEQBA recently held its AGM and now has a new committee:

- President Dave Berman
- Vice President Angela Warren
- Secretary Sandy Robertson
- Treasurer Keryn Masters

Terry (former president) and Anne (former secretary) have moved to Victoria hence their resignation from the committee on which they have done a stellar job, training and rehoming brumbies.

The new president Dave Berman has a long association with managing brumby numbers throughout Australia and is keen to see as many brumbies as possible rehomed in SEQ. To date he has personally rehomed more than 40 of the 100+ that have been trapped and removed from the Toolara State Forest.

Angela has one of the Brumbies from Toolara Forest (namely Solo), and is keen to see more brumbies enter into the local shows. Angela has been on the committee for the past couple of years.

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Sandy has no less than three Brumbies (Cobbie, Zorro and Bonnie....plus Bonnie's baby Molto Baci).

Keryn has two brumbies, one from Victoria and one from Toolara State Forest (namely Bridget) and has been on the committee since its inception in 2009.

The SEQ Brumby Association was established to help reduce the risk of collision between Brumbies and vehicles on busy roads in a pine forest north east of Gympie. Around 100 brumbies have been captured and rehomed. This is not a simple job but we have managed to reduce the number of collisions between horses and vehicles. There is however a large population of Brumbies in the forest increasing at around 10% per year. That means there are perhaps 160 new foals born each year. We know

this because a PhD student, Magda Zabek, just finished her studies there. So if capture and rehoming is to continue to keep the risk of collision low, then we need more homes and people willing to domesticate horses that are captured. We also require financial support to feed and care for the horses that are currently being prepared for rehoming.

For more details on our current horses in care, visit our Facebook page Anne Wilson (Seq Brumby) : <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=anne%20wilson%20%28seq%20brumby> ) or contact us on:

[seqbrumby@gmail.com](mailto:seqbrumby@gmail.com)

[seqbrumby@hotmail.com](mailto:seqbrumby@hotmail.com)

## Victorian Brumby Associations (VBA)

The VBA crew has been super busy (I always seem to start with that?!) the past few months! We are in the lead up to the Australian Brumby Challenge now, with all the Brumbies for the Challenge here in residence at our sanctuary – that is some thirty individuals on top of our regular Brumbies that we take in for rehoming purposes! They have all settled into large mobs well and are looking great!



We have started weaning the youngsters for the Challenge last week as they're getting huge. Four have now been weaned, the younger ones will need their Mums for a little longer and are out enjoying the larger grassier paddocks.

The Brumby Challenge commences in June. Trainers have now been announced and the website is up to date with all the information on the selected trainers – we will be posting more updates there over the coming weeks ([www.australianbrumbychallenge.com.au](http://www.australianbrumbychallenge.com.au)).

On Saturday the 2<sup>nd</sup>, the team are taking two Brumbies along to the Rural Living Expo in Ballarat to fly the flag for Brumbies. We are looking forward to a day of great demos and introducing our Brumbies to lots of new people.

We have our Wild to Domestic fundraiser night on the 16<sup>th</sup> of April. Tickets have sold really well and it looks like being a sell out! The night will be held at the Talbot pub with Colleen O'Brien (President) and Carly Reid (Horse Trainer) speaking about our programs and what the VBA is all about over a lovely meal.

In between all of this, we have still been training and rehoming Brumbies and saw four Brumbies off to their new homes over the past couple of weeks. It is always such a thrill to start hearing how well they're settling in and how loved they are. We have even had a neighbour



call us already, asking how she can get herself a Brumby after meeting next doors new arrival! They really are their own best advertisement, our Brumbies!

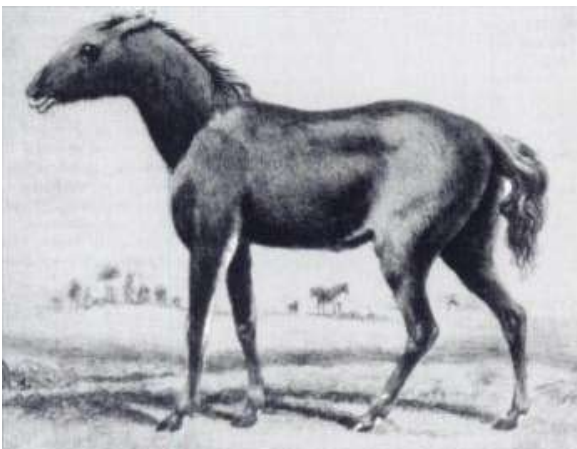
As always, we are still looking for more volunteers and have some new volunteer day dates just up on our website!



## Hoof Prints – Other items of note....

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### About Tarpans

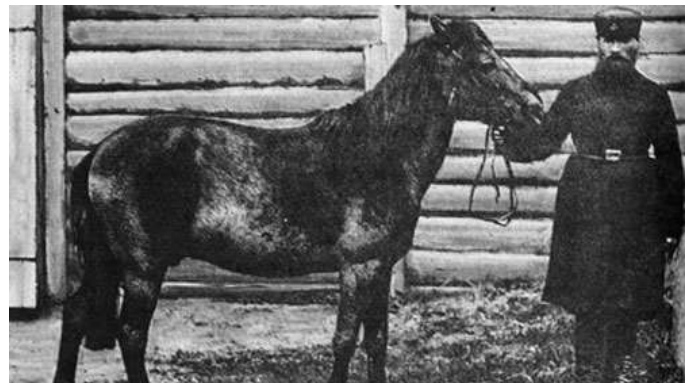


The only known illustration of a Tarpan made from life, depicting a five-month-old foal.[ By Borisov, 1841 (from Wikipedia)]

The only horse surviving today that has never been fully domesticated and interbred is the Przewalski Horse of Mongolia. Still in danger of extinction, these horses have been saved in semi-captive breeding programs and recently released back to the wild.

But another ancestral breed, the Tarpan, was still living just over 135 years ago.

Apart from Arabs, most light horse stock is largely attributed to the Tarpan of the southern Russian steppes which unfortunately became extinct in the late 1800's. The last wild Tarpan mare died in 1880 in the Ukraine but a semi-wild herd bred back from the Konic Horse, a Tarpan-related stock, exists in forest reserves in Poland. While not exactly a Tarpan, these horses have some of Tarpan characteristics such as the grullo colour. These back-bred stock are sometimes known as Heck Horses after the German Nazi director of the Berlin Zoo, Lutz Heck, who was involved in some of the re-breeding.



Only known photo of an alleged live Tarpan, which may have been a hybrid or feral animal, 1884 (from Wikipedia)

**For more info on Tarpans and other wild horses visit:** <http://australianbrumbyalliance.org.au/about-wild-horses/>



# The Editor's Tail

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## What is a wild horse?

Generally the literature considers wild horses to be populations that have never been domesticated. According to this definition, the only wild horses in existence today are the Przewaslki, or Asiatic Wild Horse *Equus Przewalskii*, of Mongolia. The Tarpan or European Wild Horse *Equus Ferus*, became extinct in 1880. Debate over the status of other equine populations, for example the Riwoche horse of northeastern Tibet, is often dismissed based on DNA evidence.

Certainly, in terms of genetic evolution, one can argue that populations that were never domesticated and were isolated enough to not breed with domesticated stock, are truer genetically and characteristically to the ancestors of the modern horse. But what of populations that have been left in the wild for generations and have adapted to their environment?

In Australia, Brumbies of similar type and breed will, over generations, become smaller and stockier in a mountainous environment than if they lived in a plains/desert environment. Although food supply may be a factor, the ability to survive in these different

environments is more to the point. In desert areas, horses may need to travel long distances for food and water and the ease of the terrain may encourage the development of longer legs. In forested mountain terrain, food may be more abundant but a smaller size will facilitate mobility and hence survival.

The ABA considers a Brumby horse to be:

***....a wild horse that survives in an unrestrained, untamed state in a natural herd structure whereby natural selection decrees the type that survives in that environment.***

With this in mind, there are many populations of wild horses around the world.

***Above is an excerpt from About Wild Horses:***

<http://australianbrumbyalliance.org.au/about-wild-horses/>

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## Australian Brumby Alliance Inc.

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### **Newsletter Contributions**

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0458 105 221

### **ABA Member Groups**

- 🐾 Australian Brumby Horse Register
- 🐾 Coffin Bay Brumby Preservation Society Inc. (SA)
- 🐾 Hunter Valley Brumby Association (NSW)
- 🐾 Kaimanawa Heritage Horses (NZ)
- 🐾 Save the Brumbies Inc. (NSW)
- 🐾 Snowy Mountains Bush Users Group (NSW)
- 🐾 South East Queensland Brumby Association
- 🐾 Victorian Brumby Association