



# TRAIL

Autumn  
2009

North Shore Horse and Pony Association

The North Shore Horse and Pony Association was formed in 1975 to ensure that horses and horseriding activities continue to form a vital part of the community and lifestyle in Terrey Hills/Duffys Forest and in Ku-ring-gai and Garigal National Parks.

Please become a member and join us in our efforts.

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NORTH SHORE HORSE AND PONY ASSOCIATION

**WEDNESDAY 8th JULY 2009 7.30PM**

All members and interested parties are invited to the AGM on Wednesday night 8th July, 7.30pm at Sally White's home, 207 Tooronga Road, Terrey Hills.

**RSVP 94502237 by 6th July would be appreciated.**

Light refreshments will be served.

THE COMMITTEE WOULD LOVE YOU TO COME AND MEET THE PEOPLE WHO SPEND SO MUCH OF THEIR TIME KEEPING THE TRAILS OPEN AND SAFE FOR YOU TO RIDE. YOU WILL BE ABLE TO TALK TO THEM ABOUT ANY QUERIES YOU MAY HAVE REGARDING THE TRAILS.

## TRACKS AND TRAILS

NSH&PA received a Questionnaire from Warringah Council asking for our input regarding tracks and trails used by horseriders in Terrey Hills/Duffys Forest.

In response we have sent maps indicating the unmade roads we would like opened including Yarrara, Boonah and Kulgoa. Also the fire trail from skippy trail through to Waratah Park and Anembo Reserve through to Bibbenluka. We also stressed other issues including: the fact that Thuddungra Road is still dangerous and needs immediate attention; the verges need to be cleared either side of Weemala and Tooronga and the question of residents planting bushes/trees on their verges that restrict access for horses and riders when needing to get off road for safety reasons. NB Some verges in Tooronga Rd were mowed in early May.

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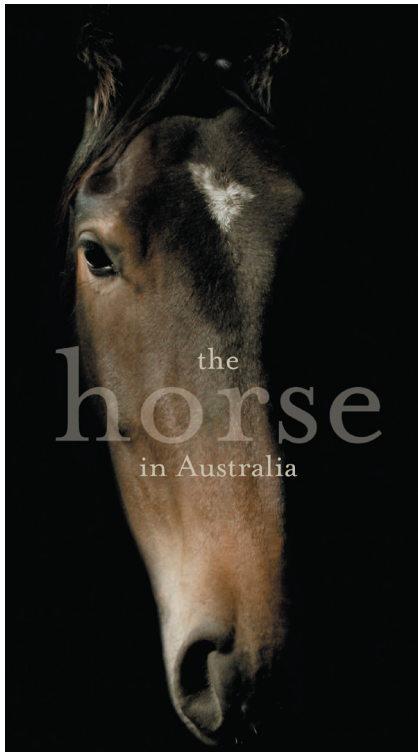
To find out more about the North Shore Horse and Pony Association, contact us:

P O Box 333 Terrey Hills 2084 E-mail: willpower33@bigpond.com  
President: Leonie Cains 9879 6709 Secretary: Mal Wilson 9450 0546

## GALLOPING TO IMMORTALITY

Fiona Carruthers

First published in SAM – the Sydney University Alumni Magazine



From the First Fleet's nags to Phar Lap and Makybe Diva, Australia has loved and relied on its horse heroes.

It's unlikely authorities will ever commission an official study on the topic, but I'd wager there were a lot more horses stabled in Sydney 20 years ago than there are today. Back in the late 1980s, when I was studying Arts at Sydney University, it seemed horses were everywhere.

Thousands of horses - including mine - were stabled around Ryde, Epping and Castle Hill. Clydesdales still pounded the pavements of the CBD for the Carlton United Brewery and stationers WC Penfold. There was the huge annual horse and pony influx for the Sydney Royal Easter Show at Moore Park and the Harold Park trots could pull in 20,000 punters on a Friday night.

Closer to uni, mounted police stood duty each morning on the crossing outside Redfern Railway Station. Best of all, there were horses right on campus: stabled down by the vet school along Parramatta Road, near the historic Roundhouse where sick horses used to be observed by students.

After graduating I led a normal life, gainfully employed as a journalist, content with the odd racing yarn. And yet, over the years, something nagged.

McMansions had gobbled up the paddocks where I once kept a horse on the city fringe. Draft horses no longer worked the CBD. The Easter Show was pushed out to Homebush in 1998. Harold Park now struggles to attract punters and the pressroom is empty. A set of traffic lights replaced the police horses at Redfern Station, and the last horses were moved from the University's city campus to Camden in the 1990s. The city had become a horse black hole. Then, browsing in Gleebooks one day, I came across NSW farmer Mike Keenan's teary bestseller, *The Horses Too Are Gone*. It was the last straw.

I called Random House to suggest a history of the horse in Australia must be written before they vanished entirely. I couldn't believe my luck when I had a book contract within 48 hours.

In researching and writing *The Horse in Australia*, I set out to explore our enduring relationship with horses since they arrived with the First Fleet, the first hoofed creatures to tread Australian soil. Transporting horses Down Under might have been an ecological faux pas, but there is no doubt about the critical importance of the horse's role on this continent, both physical and cultural.

Even with increasing rates of urbanisation, we still boast the world's second highest rate of horse ownership per head of population (behind the Irish). And we breed the second highest crop of Thoroughbred foals each year (behind the United States). Equine Influenza (EI) was not just a frightening breach of bio-security, but a socio-economic disaster reminding us that Thoroughbred racing (including betting) is Australia's fourth largest industry. Over the past three years of researching and writing, I was reminded again of the key role Sydney University has played in the story of the horse in Australia.

A fascinating and early connection is through Marjory Hirst, the daughter of the founding professor of the University's Veterinary School, J.D. Stewart.

After a visit to the United Kingdom in 1937, she returned to Australia with news of the Pony Club movement (which began in the UK in 1929) and the concept for a new horse sport, polocrosse. She and her husband Edward helped establish the nation's first pony club – Ingleburn Horse and Pony Club – on the southern outskirts of Sydney. It was here that they also gave the first demonstration of polocrosse in 1939.

Today, Australia has the world's largest Pony Club membership (almost 55,000). The Ingleburn Pony Club is still going (albeit with dwindling membership) and polocrosse is hugely popular. In 1920, the vet school established under J.D. Stewart was upgraded to a Faculty. By 1957, the University had also acquired land at Camden, where a facility was built for horses and large animals.

The Camden centre quickly developed a reputation for innovation after it pioneered the

## SEEKING YOUR SURPLUS CHAFF BAGS

Peggy Brown of The NSW Animal Welfare League is in need of your chaff bags. If you have empty ones lying around the shed she would be grateful for them, they can be dropped off to her at the Manly/Warringah Animal Welfare, 160 Mona Vale Road, Ingleside, or alternatively give her a call on 9913 8731

flotation tank in the 1980s to help horses recover post-surgery by reducing weight on fractured limbs. The flotation tank is no longer used, but it led to a funding windfall for more equipment.

A more enduring key development at Camden was the introduction of a tilt table in the operating theatre. This hydraulic-powered table moves, so horses can be walked into the surgery beside the table, anaesthetised into support bands and the table then tilted into the horizontal position so the horse is lying on its side. Traditionally, horses were sedated then lifted on to the table with a crane, often suspended by the legs.

Research into exercise physiology using the equine treadmill is yet another high point in the University's contribution to horse science. Much like a human treadmill, horses can be hooked up and monitored while exercising for a range of clinical problems such as lameness, heart irregularities and respiratory issues. Today, the University's Associate Professor Paul McGreevy – known for his pioneering work on human/ animal interaction – is embarking on a three-year research project that aims to produce better riders by applying science to riding technique.

"Horses kill more Australians than any other animal," says McGreevy. "If we can pinpoint the science of good and bad riding technique, we can maximise rider safety and horse welfare."

Thank goodness for horse-friendly universities. Horses might be long gone from our city centres, but the magical connection between us lives on, as does our great national love affair with all things equine.

*The Horse in Australia* by Fiona Carruthers, Random House. RRP \$49.95.

## RHOKER RESERVE

In March 3 NSH&PA members met with Nicola McVicar from Warringah Council on site at Rhoker Reserve to view and discuss the new route she has chosen for horses to traverse through Rhoker Reserve.

This will effectively bypass the dangerous blind corner we have had to endure in the past. Hopefully this bypass will be up and running by 2010! Nicola McVicar appeared positive and it is back to the drawing board to discuss maintenance, endangered species issues and budget with Council.

## MOSMAN PREP SCHOOL

A Land and Environment Court Proceeding re Mosman Prep School Site at Terrey Hills was held at 10am at the Land and Environment Court at 225 Macquarie Street on 7 April 2009 and members of this Committee attended.

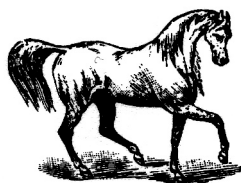
This was rolled on to another meeting attended by some Committee Members: the outcome from this meeting was again unresolved. A third meeting was arranged. However, none of our committee could attend. We have not been advised of the results. A Land and Environment Court Hearing is pending. Hopefully some sort of resolution will be decided shortly and we will include results in our next TRAIL.

## SAFETY FIRST: THE NEED TO BE SEEN

Now that daylight hours are getting shorter and late afternoon riding is coinciding with peak hour car travel it is important not to forget that motorists have difficulty seeing horse and rider by the roadside as the light begins to dim. Even during the day motorists can be unaware of riders until the last minute.

This is a reminder to please be careful riding anywhere near cars and roads during the day, but especially in the early morning, twilight and in darkness.

We encourage you to wear bright clothing or reflective vests or strips on some part of your, or your horses body, so that you can be seen in plenty of time by motorists and truck drivers.



### RIDING INSTRUCTION BEGINNERS TO ADVANCED

- Private • Groups • Trails
- Horse Training • Floating

**JILL SEVERN** B.H.S.I.I.  
E.F.A./N.C.A.S L2 & COACH EDUCATOR

Phone: 041 272 9999

The phone number for the National Parks & Wildlife Service if you encounter trail bikes, or fallen trees on the trails is 9472 8949 which is a multi answer phone service.



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*Please send this form plus your subscription fee  
when renewing or applying for membership.*

**2009**

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL/APPLICATION**

**Annual subscriptions to the NSHPA can be sent to:**

The Treasurer,  
P.O. Box 333, Terrey Hills, 2084  
1 x year subscription to the NSHPA  
\$15 Single; \$25 Family; \$50 Club

Name .....

Address .....

.....P/Code.....

Telephone Home .....

Bus..... Fax.....

Mobile.....

E-mail .....

I would be interested to know about and perhaps participate in working  
bees!

Yes..... No .....

As most people are aware, we are constantly forced to protect our right to  
ride in the National Parks. NSHPA needs your support with membership if  
we are to have a louder voice when negotiating to keep trails open in the  
National Parks and local  
horse facilities maintained.

**Save our trails, help to keep the roadways safe for us and our children  
when on horseback.**

**Meetings are held 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of each month  
all members are encouraged to attend.**