

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

50
YEARS



ANNUAL REPORT

PROJECT HOPE HORSE WELFARE
VICTORIA INC.

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

2026

PROJECT HOPE

HORSE

WELFARE VICTORIA

PROJECT HOPE HORSE WELFARE VICTORIA INC.

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

We provide education to both the equine community and the general public. Our aim is to improve the well-being of horses and safeguard against neglect by educating people about horse welfare issues.

Our educational work takes many forms: we respond to queries received through email, phone and Facebook. We produce and provide publications, conduct training days, webinars, demonstrations and have information available on our website. Essential aspects of horse health that we address include feed and nutrition, hoof care, worming, teeth maintenance and end of life options.

Upon receipt of a report about a horse potentially in trouble, we ask one of our trained Horse Representatives to attend and see what assistance PHHWV can provide. In some cases, advice or support to the owner can resolve the issue. In other cases, the owner will surrender the horse to PHHWV, whereupon we address welfare and rehabilitation needs with the help of our Short Term Carers. We then seek to place the horse into Long Term Care through a lease agreement with our members. Beyond basic care, we aim to work in accordance with the five domains of animal welfare.

PURPOSES OF PROJECT HOPE HORSE WELFARE VICTORIA INC.

1. Assist horse owners through education, advice and support to rehabilitate their own horses;
2. Rescue and rehabilitate any horse found abandoned, sick, injured, mistreated or neglected or likely to become so in the imminent future;
3. Provide emergency care, treatment and assistance to horses;
4. Educate the community on the plight of neglected horses; and
5. Contribute to the development of improved government legislation and policy relating to the welfare of horses.

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50th Anniversary Book

Sub-committee

When October 2026 arrives, Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria (PHHWV) will reach its 50 year milestone. The PHHWV 50th Anniversary Book Sub-committee was formed to produce a publication documenting the history of what is most likely Australia's oldest, largest and best-known horse welfare organisation.

To capture and record the history and provide our members, as well as the general public, with an insight into the evolution of PHHWV is a daunting task. Not to be deterred by the prospect of tackling a publication of such significant scope, our small band of volunteers bound together, determined to produce something worthy to celebrate 50 years of PHHWV.

The 50th Anniversary Book Sub-committee consists of co-ordinator, Kathryn Wren with Patricia Hartshorn, Mary Hughes, Karen Davies and Jane Duckworth. Anne Crawford and Jane Holth have made substantial

contributions to the book content. Sue Kirkegard and Kerryn Solomon have provided documents and recollections of events. Others who have contributed are Nicola Fanning, Judy Tricker and Rhonda Petschel. There have been other long-term members who have shared their stories and photographs, helping to establish the chronology of events over the 50-year period. We thank everyone who assisted with this somewhat ambitious project.

Much research has been completed and historical documents reviewed. The structure and content of the publication have been extensively mulled over, evolving with time. We have struggled with technology and the intricacies involved in producing a book, learning a lot on the way. Although the writing expertise of the team varies, our keen commitment to creating a valued 50th anniversary publication does not. We hope to finalise this special creation in the coming month or so and look forward to launching the PHHWV 50th Anniversary book later this year.



Our Team



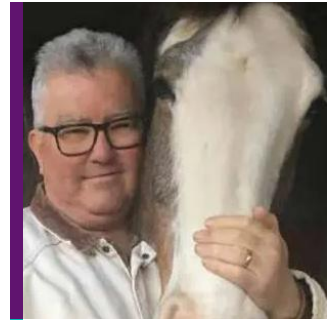
President
 Leigh Wren



Vice-President
 Angela Smith



Secretary
 Karen Davies



Treasurer
 Mark Dean



Membership Secretary
 Silvija Footner

Sub Committee Members



Tricia Hartshorn



Laina De Winne



Sandra Strongman



Kathryn Wren



Toni Harris



Tessa Reimers



Jenni Cooper

Former Committee Members
 Elle Cooper, Renee Neubauer,
 Shirley McPherson, Adele
 Cerasoli, Cassandra Male,
 Vaso Elefsiniotis, Gina Harris,
 Vikki Male, Sarah Corzelius
 and Carolyn Cooper.



Elizabeth Tulloh



Jane Duckworth



Mary Hughes



President's Report

The past year for Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria Inc has been unusual. There has been more membership engagement than has been experienced for quite a while and although at times the emotions ran high, it shows that there is passion within our organisation.

Last year's Annual General Meeting saw the election of a President who had only recently joined as a member of PHHWV. Having someone new to the organisation in a



leadership role was considered fraught by some, whilst others welcomed "new blood". There is a Chinese saying that "a new broom sweeps well" but conversely, "an old broom knows the corners". While new leadership can bring energy and change, experience and long-term familiarity offer deep knowledge, nuance and the ability to handle challenges or complex matters due to past exposure.

PHHWV is constantly evolving. As a volunteer run organisation, we are limited in resources and trying to keep an updated comprehensive training handbook or induction manual has been challenging. In the past, we

have – rightly or wrongly – relied upon previous and existing committee members to pass on their knowledge and experience to new committee members. Position descriptions and roles tend not to be static as they are dependent on the skill set held by the members at the time. Perhaps it might be advantageous for PHHWV to liaise with other similar incorporated associations to compare operational models.

Shortly after the AGM, the Executive Committee voted in favour of signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Racing Victoria. The lack of consultation with the Committee led to a request for a Special General Meeting (SGM) to declare the MOU invalid and remit it back to Committee for review, together with a resolution to amend the Rule limiting the power of the Executive Committee. This is the first time I can recall a SGM being held in my 17 or so years as a member. Members started to get involved and there was a surge in communication about matters that in the past received little or no attention. Previously we have struggled to reach a quorum at AGMs, however a record number of members attended the SGM. On one view, this was a good thing as it showed that the membership wanted to have a voice and be heard. The Special Resolutions proposed at the SGM did not achieve the requisite 75% needed. The MOU remains in place with Racing Victoria until July 2026.

Legal proceedings were issued against PHHWV in the latter part of last year. The case has been resolved, but the terms of settlement are subject to a confidentiality clause which prevents the Committee from disclosing details. Shortly thereafter, a number of Committee members resigned, as reported in the Summer Newsletter.

Many of you might be rolling your eyes at this point and wondering what has all of this got to do with helping horses. As an incorporated association, PHHWV must comply with the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012, as well as the governing rules and ACNC standards. Without compliance, we cannot operate and do the important equine welfare work that we have been doing for 50 years. That said, it is my sincere hope that we can get on with promoting our five core purposes and make a difference to the lives of horses and ponies.

Putting the politics aside, PHHWV has continued the important works throughout the year, despite all of the additional challenges that were presented, and those additional challenges that are present to this day. Horse report investigations have continued unimpeded and there have been a number of successful outcomes, be it by way of surrender, assisting owners or simply

President's Report

providing education and knowledge provided from our very experienced Horse Representatives.

As the number of reports and calls for assistance increased during the latter months of 2025 and have continued into the current year, we have endeavoured to start a series of Horse Rep Training sessions, the first of which was conducted recently in the Melbourne CBD. More training workshops are planned for the future and these sessions will be held across the state to enable as many of you who are interested to be able to attend.

I will take this opportunity to thank and to congratulate all of our Horse Reps and educators for all of their hard work and commitment to the organisation and to the cause. These are the unsung heroes of our organisation and they all deserve our thanks and admiration. Well-done to you all and keep up the great work!

Unfortunately, the Summer of 2026 was again a period of heightened activity due to the fires that raged across the country side in parts of Victoria. PHHWV was again sharing information across social media platforms and some members were on the ground providing direct assistance where needed. Some, on the back of trucks with hoses in hand. Donations of feed and an assortment of rugs, tack, veterinary medical items, etc were accepted and distributed where needed. The donated goods received were shipped from as far as Tasmania from a small group of concerned equine enthusiasts, interstate communities trucking down load after load of feed, locals who feel bad as they were fortunate enough to get through the fire unscathed, and of course, our members. This work is ongoing and will be for the next couple of months.

Much thought and reflection is brought about post-fire season and has prompted the idea of a pre-fire season Fire Property Preparation and Prevention Seminar. More about this in the coming months.

In addition to the politics, hard work tending to horse reports and providing assistance to those in need, there has been time for a bit of fun. A very successful Trivia night was held in Woodend and more are


being planned for other areas throughout Victoria. Members have set up stalls at local community markets and have spoken to many about PHHWV and who we are and what we do.

As this is a very special year for PHHWV, being the 50th anniversary, many special events and fund raisers are being planned. Be sure to keep an eye out for events being held in your area.

So much more could be said in regards to the year that has passed, however I think we all need to think about the year ahead. Although the politics are at times necessary in order to evolve, it's not what defines this wonderful organisation. Our work needs to continue as it has done so for the last 50 years. Change, and acceptance of change is needed to adapt to the future, however, not at the expense of the foundation on which PHHWV was built.

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” – Helen Keller

Sincere Regards,



Leigh Wren
 President
 PHHWV



Life Membership Awards

Jane Duckworth

Jane Joined PHHWV in 1998 and has been an active member ever since. In 2002, Jane joined the Committee and in 2005, became elected Vice-President. In 2003, Jane wrote regular articles for PHHWV in our quarterly newsletter under the heading of NET RIDER. She has attended countless events promoting PHHWV, attended many horse reports and even did several stints as newsletter coordinator. She has been on a Long-Term Lease Committee and in 2015, Jane was integral in updating the PHHWV website. Then in 2018, she created a promotional clip together with Sue Smith and Nicky Fanning featuring the one and only PHHWV Creature. In 2021 Jane, wrote the Re-homing Responsibly document, which is designed to assist horse owners with decision making.

In 2023, Jane undertook a review of the PHHWV website and made recommendations for changes. She also assisted with the preparation of submission for legislative changes for equine welfare as proposed in the anticipated Animal Welfare Act.

Through her writing and advocacy, Jane has raised awareness and strives for improved treatment and living conditions for equines in Australia. Jane has authored several books including:

- **"They Shoot Horses, Don't They: The Treatment of Horses in Australia"** (2002)
- **"Not Every Dog Has His Day: The Treatment of Dogs in Australia"** (2009)
- Written a Children's book **"Snow Rescue"**
- Co-authored **"The Story of Agroforestry"** with Lisa Robins (short-listed for Australian Award for Excellence in Educational Publishing in 2004)

Jane's skills are highly valued as a member of the 50th Anniversary Book Subcommittee and her meaningful contributions to this project have been appreciated.

This Life Membership Award honours

Kathryn Wren and Jane Duckworth's legacy and expresses gratitude for their invaluable work. Their dedication serves as an inspiration to others, and their impact will continue to positively shape the future of equine welfare an PHHWV for years to come.



Kathryn Wren

In 2016, Project Hope introduced Life Membership Awards. This award recognises the significant contribution that a particular member has made to the organisation over a period of time. Last year, a Life Membership was presented to Kathryn Wren and Jane Duckworth in recognition of their ongoing dedication and commitment to Project Hope.

Kathryn joined Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria some 18 years ago. On Committee, she has held the positions of Secretary, Vice-President and President. She is a trained Horse Representative and has attended numerous Horse Reports. Kathryn has been a Short Term and Long-Term Carer for PHHWV horses.

Kathryn was instrumental in assisting with the 2016 Warrack Seizure by negotiating a MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with the RSPCA, liaising with other equine welfare organisations and taking 47 horses into Short Term Care. Kathryn has been involved in drafting internal documentation such as the current brochure, maintaining the horse database and hard copy surrender forms/lease agreements, updating the website and assisting with the production of the Newsletter. Kathryn drafted the current governing Rules of the organisation. She has prepared various submissions in support of changes to equine welfare legislation and represented PHHWV in stakeholder meetings and at the Victorian Horse Council.

Kathryn has assisted in organising and attending external events such as Seymour Expo and Equitana, as well as AGMs, horse representative training, social functions including a Trivia night, Gala Fundraising Dinner and Strategic Planning Days.

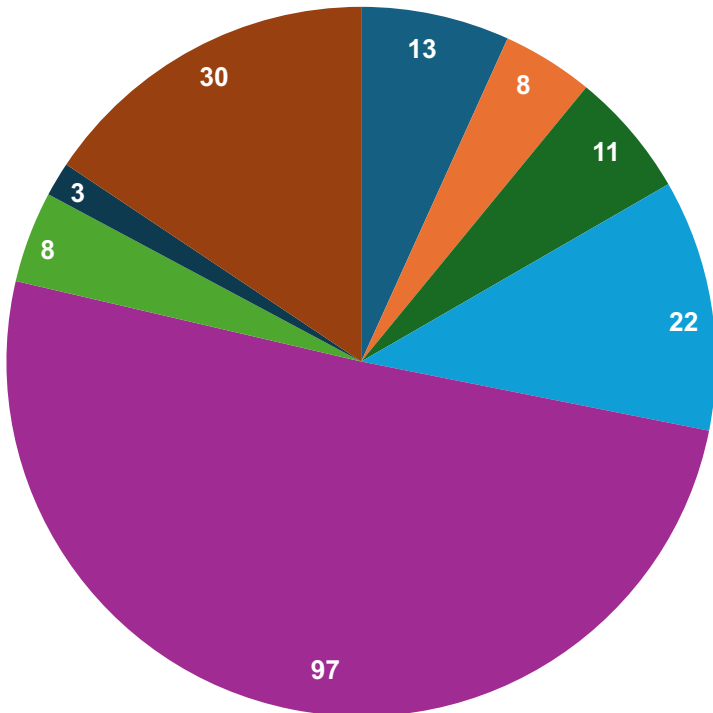
Kathryn is currently co-ordinating Operation Reconnect and is also the Chair of the Governance Subcommittee and 50th Anniversary Book Subcommittee. She has provided pro bono legal advice to PHHWV on a variety of topics.



Horse Reports

The PHHWV year runs from 1 March 2025 until 28 February 2026.

Key Stats: Reports Received: 122 Horses Involved: 371



Unfortunately, we are often unable to assist some horses due to owners declining any assistance or advice. In some situations, we can offer short term help, when the owners are aware that people have noticed and reported their concerns. We need to be their voices.

PHHWV has produced a very useful booklet titled 'Rehoming your horse responsibly' which helps guide owners into making better choices to ensure that the welfare of their horse is not compromised when trying to rehome it. We are often asked to rehome horses because of unsoundness issues, age, financial stress and many other reasons. Unfortunately, we cannot take on such huge numbers.

Conclusion

This summary underscores the importance of education, community engagement, and collaboration in addressing horse welfare concerns. We continue to strive for improvement in all these areas.

We would like to give a huge thank you to our short-term and long-term carers who provide loving and caring homes for our equines. Our reps often deal with stressful situations or aggressive owners which can be challenging. Thank you to our members who provide help in other ways such as sourcing hay, farriers, admin, volunteering at events or even catching wayward horses. We look forward to your continued support.

Observations and Challenges

Late Intervention – We are often faced with situations where horse owners have been reluctant to seek help or make difficult decisions such as euthanasia. Many cases are due to ongoing or severe neglect from a lack of appropriate feed and water, not providing appropriate veterinary care, or hoof and dental maintenance. The main contributing factors leading to these situations are financial stress, declining mental health and not knowing where to get help.

Owner Awareness – Many owners that we come across in our investigations are unaware of the costs and obligations of horse care and welfare. They have also overestimated their capacity to provide physical care which then leaves some horses vulnerable in a back paddock unseen and unattended.

Resource Constraints – PHHWV faces limitations with rehoming some horses due to their age, unsoundness, behavioural issues and availability of suitable homes.



Education,
 Rehabilitation & Advocacy

Education

Horse Rep Training Day 1 March 2026

On Sunday 1 March 2026 we conducted a Horse Representative Training Day.

It was very well attended with 9 members completing the training. A big thank you to Lucy Clyde who presented the very comprehensive and interactive session.

Thanks also to Leigh and Kathryn for organising the day. And of course, congratulations to Janina, Mandi, Toni, Elly, Jen, Kate, Peter, Karen and Linda!

Without trained Horse Reps to attend horse reports received by PHHWV, we could not do the work we do at the front end.

The Horse Rep training provides PHHWV members with the knowledge and skills to attend reports of horse neglect. The presentation also covers an overview of the PHHWV history, purposes and processes, the role of horse representatives, assessment of cases and properties, body scoring and managing case outcomes. Once a member has completed the training, they have the option to become an active horse rep for PHHWV if they wish.



Did you know?

History of Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria Inc.

It all started with a letter to Rider magazine in October 1976 from Val Collingwood, a keen horsewoman from Wallan in Victoria.

She had come across a severely neglected horse that was supposedly aged, however she soon discovered that he was in fact only three years old. Val named the horse "Hope". Despite her best efforts, he died three weeks later due to complications arising from a massive worm infestation.

Hope's plight prompted Val to write to Rider magazine to share Hope's story and express her concern about the severity of the situation faced by other neglected equines. Val put forward a proposal whereby horses in need could be rescued and rehabilitated.

Readers of the magazine responded with offers of encouragement and support and Val proceeded to coordinate the scheme under the name of Project Hope Horse Rescue Australia, in memory of the young horse. Over the years, the need for assistance grew and so did Project Hope. In 1993 the organisation became a registered incorporated association and changed its name to Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria. In 2005 it became a registered charity, in addition to obtaining Gift Deduction Status from the ATO.



Education,
 Rehabilitation & Advocacy

Rehabilitation

PHHWV Polly and Alby

Miniature Shetland ponies PHHWV Polly and Alby were surrendered in October 2025. They are approximately three years old.

Despite being well-loved by their owners, they were inexperienced and the ponies had little manual handling and were grazing on lush grass. The owners were aware that the ponies were being neglected and thought euthanasia might be the best solution, although their sons were not happy with this and begged Dad to reconsider. Fortunately, a PHHWV member became aware of the family's plight and suggested the ponies be surrendered, which they readily agreed to.

Upon arrival at their new STC home, Polly and Alby were annexed to the round yard. Alby was a stallion which caused a ripple of interest amongst the five mares on the property, however, the matriarch, was having none of that and shooed the girls away telling Alby in no uncertain terms what he could do with his 'boys bits'! Interestingly, he had shared a paddock with Polly for years but presumably the relationship had only been platonic!

Both ponies had slipper feet, but Polly's were by far the worst. The STC sought advice from Dr Melanie Quick who performed a radical trim on Polly as her pedal bones had rotated. So severe was the problem, both the carer and Dr Quick were unsure if Polly would survive. Fortunately, owing to Polly's determination and good hoof management post procedure, she did survive. Alby also underwent a procedure - to remove his 'crown jewels'. He walked gingerly for about a week afterwards, then he was back to his cheeky self.

Fortunately, a LTC home was found for the ponies in Lockwood and they are living their best life.



Polly



Alby



Education,
 Rehabilitation & Advocacy

Rehabilitation

PHHWV Rudy

Rudy is a 15.1hh, Chestnut Thoroughbred gelding, approximately 21 years old.

He was born and bred in New Zealand but exported to Australia in 2006 as a yearling and had three starts, all unplaced. His home after his racing career ended was a happy one – he would regularly get into the veggie patch and devour the lot. He was also allowed the run of the place on occasions and would make his way up to the house and press his face against the window to say hello. He followed the family everywhere and loved being part of whatever was going on.

His previous owner is very candid and admits that as Rudy got older his needs changed and she had never cared for a senior horse before and with a heavy heart she knew she had to make a very hard decision. She contacted PHHWV for a self-surrender. The Horse Representatives who went to the property to assess Rudy were kind and understanding and made no judgment but knew he had to be found a STC home as a matter of urgency. He was malnourished and had an ulcerated eye.

Rudy is a perfect gentleman and is very easy to handle. When he arrived at his STC home he would stand in one spot and when he did move it was very slowly. The poor boy was very weak as a result of malnourishment. But love and a good diet worked wonders and within eight weeks he was trotting up for his tea. He was found a LTC home quite quickly and nowadays, feeling like a

million dollars, he is first at the gate in the morning waiting for his breakfast. According to his LTC 'he has the intellect of a fence post' and he suspects that's why absolutely nothing bothers him. He has his mates in adjoining paddocks but likes his own space. He does like to pick fights but generally comes off worst and as his carer says 'the ultimate loser is my bank balance'. That aside, he is a pleasure to have around and you can do anything with him.

One of the PHHWV representatives who attended the surrender envisaged Rudy visiting aged care homes or similar facilities as a companion horse. That didn't come to pass but he obviously brings great joy to his carer and is enjoying the good life which he so richly deserves.



Education,
 Rehabilitation & Advocacy

Advocacy

Chloe's Poultry in Narre Warren North

These champions from Chloe's Poultry in Narre Warren North have been collecting donations for Project Hope for many months now.

Their mum Amanda sent me a message saying we could come and collect the current donations and that they wish to continue collecting. When I arrived there was \$90.50 in the tin.

Everyday heroes helping us.
 These are the kids to thank; Sam, Jess, Isla & Bec

Mandi H



Woodend Community Market

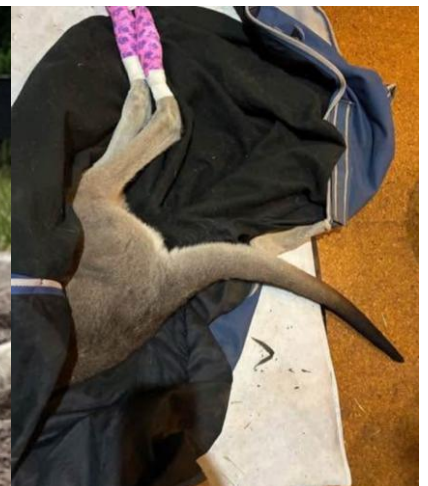
I volunteer every month with the Woodend Community Market as 'Crowd Controller'- well that's what I call it. It's more 'meet and greet'.

The market management kindly allow PHHWV to have a stall there once a year, so I'm quite well known to market goers which is helpful for engaging with them about the wonderful work PHHWV does. Toni Harris always puts her hand up to volunteer too and whilst we don't see it as a major fundraising event, we think it is important to take PHHWV to the people in the ranges to see exactly what we do in the local community and across Victoria. We have quite a few members in the Macedon Ranges and some call by to say hello.

I had been acquiring quite a supply of old horse rugs in my garage from people who know about my connection to PHHWV and always think of us when they are de-cluttering. I wasn't terribly hopeful of off-loading any as they really were past their use by date. However, Jane, a lovely lady from the local Wildlife Rescue Centre came by and gave us a \$100 donation for all the rugs with a promise of a few more that were still in my garage. The rescuers use them as trauma blankets for injured kangaroos.

Jane and I have become friends since that day and we have a quid pro quo happening! She will give to PHHWV and I give to the Rescue Centre. Maybe we could organize a joint fundraising event one day.

Tricia Hartshorn



Education,
 Rehabilitation & Advocacy

Advocacy

Boneo Park Off The Track Carnival (13-14 Sep 2025)

Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria (PHHWV) was selected as the official charity for the Boneo Park Inaugural Off the Track Carnival (OTT) held on the Mornington Peninsula in September 2025.

The weather was kind and several PHHWV members volunteered over the two days of the event.

The carnival highlighted the athleticism, adaptability and potential of OTT thoroughbreds. The program aims to turn racehorses into well-rounded, capable horses, often training them for second careers as riding horses, show jumpers or simply for pleasure.

As the PHHWV marquee was adjacent to Riding for the Disabled (RDA), we discussed how we could tailor our

training with Short Term Care horses to particularly suit RDA. They were a delightful group and we added to each other's coffers by purchasing fundraising items. We also met with members of the Restart Program (Hong Kong Jockey Club) which has been operating since 1964.

We sold merchandise and conducted a raffle and silent auction with all prizes donated by Boneo Park. The display of 50th Anniversary 'teaser' merchandise was well received, particularly the purple logo shirts and logo beanies with USB light. Overall, the event was very successful and provided PHHWV the opportunity to meet with OTT personnel and horses, other horse owners and also showcase our work in the community.



"A Little Bit Mongolian" Movie Fundraiser (8 Feb 2026)

"A pack of children on horseback gallop at full tilt across the northern Mongolian steppe. In the tick of the action a lone foreigner. His name is Angus Paradise, he's 12 years old and he's from Australia."

A year earlier, Angus had been to Mongolia on a family vacation and watched the local riders gallop across the wild empty grasslands with envy. Back home in Australia, he started training, riding 25 kilometres home from school each day. And now, he is back in Mongolia to find a trainer willing to take him on. He must learn new skills. But more importantly, he must find the courage within himself to become the first foreign boy to ever compete in the big Nadaam Festival horse races".

Michael Dillon is the maker of this inspirational film. He has won more awards in adventure and expedition

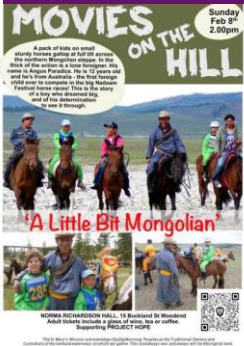
documentaries than any other individual worldwide. His most recent accolade being the prestigious Lifetime of Adventure Award presented by the Australian Geographic Society. He is a pioneer of Australian adventure cinematography and was Sir Edmund Hillary's (of Mt Everest fame) long-term filmmaker. Michael and his wife Robyn hold regular movie sessions featuring his films in the local church hall. Takings for the movies are split between their charity and a local charity of their choice. In February 2026, Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria was the lucky recipient, thanks to Tricia Hartshorn. Proceeds of \$667.50 were donated to Project Hope from people coming to see "A little Bit Mongolian" and President Leigh Wren was afforded the opportunity to talk and educate the community about Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria. We are so grateful to Michael and Robyn for their generosity.



Education,
Rehabilitation & Advocacy

Advocacy

“A Little Bit Mongolian” Movie Fundraiser



Trivia Night Fundraiser (27 Feb 2026)

In February 2026, we held our second ever Trivia Night at the Victoria Hotel in Woodend.

The purposes of this event were to raise funds for PHHWV, provide an opportunity for members to socialise, educate the community on the plight of neglected horses and promote the work that PHHWV does.

The event was again a sell-out and the addition of a raffle coupled with generous donations helped to bring in much appreciated income for PHHWV. Quiz master Pete was brilliant, making a special effort to throw in some horse related trivia questions.

What are horse hiccups called?
What is the horse equivalent to a human year?
How soon after birth can a foal gallop?

There was heated debate about the name of the Lone Ranger's horse, whereupon Pete conceded that it was Silver, and Scout was actually the name of Tonto's mount. He had everyone entertained and we thank him profusely for making the night such a success.

All those who attended reported having a thoroughly enjoyable time and we even managed to sign up a new member!



Emergency Relief

Harcourt Bushfire Relief

One of the purposes of Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria is to provide emergency care, treatment and assistance to horses.

Over the past 50 years, we have helped the equine community with relief after natural disasters such as bushfires and floods. This has taken many different forms depending on the situation and what is needed. Sometimes it is provision of feed and other supplies such as halters and lead ropes or first aid treatment kits. Sometimes it is fencing materials and even the labour to assist with rebuilding. Sometimes it is emergency agistment or transport. Our members have always been quick to offer support or assistance to horse owners needing emergency care, treatment or assistance for their horses.

In early January 2026, Victoria experienced some of the most dangerous fire weather conditions seen since the 2019-20 Black Summer fires, driven by a combination of prolonged heat, dry landscapes and extreme winds. Fires first broke out on 5 January 2026, including a major fire at Mt Lawson State Park and Longwood in central Victoria. The fires intensified and spread rapidly over the following days. Strengthening winds ahead of a gusty cool change from the west caused fires to become strongly wind-driven, fast-moving and impossible to control. Fires burned rapidly through rural landscapes.

These were largely grassland fires, fuelled by abundant fine fuels following several wet years. While grass fires tend to be less intense, they can spread extremely quickly – up to 25 kilometres per hour in open areas – making fires highly unpredictable and uncontrollable under extreme heat and wind conditions.

Collectively, the fires burned over 400,000ha and damaged or destroyed almost 900 structures across Victoria. Of those, more than 300 homes were destroyed or significantly damaged, and more than 500 outbuildings have been damaged or destroyed. The fire also caused one known human fatality and killed over 23,000 head of stock.

The PHHWV Committee made enquiries and were advised that many of the fire affected areas had received adequate supplies and assistance. There was a need, however, in the Harcourt area for horse feed. Harcourt lies about 110km north-west of Melbourne and combined with nearby Ravenswood, lost 54 homes and several businesses. Thanks to PHHWV member Susie and her husband Steve, who kindly donated over 100 square bales of hay, Leigh and Kathryn made a delivery on behalf of PHHWV. When they arrived at the Harcourt relief centre, Leigh and Kathryn were greeted by a group of volunteers who jumped up to help unload the hay, which was gratefully received. A big thank you to Buzz, Mango, Shirty, Brian, Reg and Aaron for the massive effort you all put in to help the community recover.



Horses in Care

Operation Reconnect

Operation Reconnect is a project to reconnect with PHHWV horses and their Long Term Carers. The purpose is to engage with members, obtain up to date photos and information about the horses, assist with any welfare queries and seek feedback. Without the assistance of members caring for horses, PHHWV could not operate as it does and we thank all members with horses for making this possible.

Following on from our successful start in 2024, we have now visited members in the Shires of Bass Coast, Baw Baw, Golden Plains, Latrobe, Wellington, South Gippsland and Macedon Ranges. Massive thanks to Jennifer Grant who travelled far and wide to get through her five Shires! Thank you also to Alan Salter who is still working through Golden Plains.

Gina Harris and I split up the Macedon Ranges between us as it is a Shire with the highest number of PHHWV horses and members. Overall, 30 horses and 21 long term carers were visited. I was in both camps - being visited by Gina and introducing her to our herd of five PHHWV horses - as well as conducting the visits to members and their PHHWV horses. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting members and reacquainting with others. Everyone was very welcoming and it was clear that all of the horses are very much loved and cared for. I especially enjoyed reuniting with some of the ponies that Leigh and I had in short time care from the Warrak seizure in 2016. Again, so wonderful to see them happy and healthy.

PHHWV does not sell, adopt or give away horses or

ponies that have been surrendered. The reason for this is that PHHWV wants to ensure that the ongoing wellbeing of the horses and ponies is protected and members who care for them are supported. Unfortunately, this has not been the case in practice and many members with LTC horses have queried why they have not heard from PHHWV for such a long time.

The logistics of organising visits to members with LTC horses is not as straightforward as it may sound. The first step is to cross reference the membership database with



the horse database, then the map reference, then the lease agreement, to ensure integrity of our records. Any discrepancies need to be addressed. Once a shire has been selected, we then need to appoint a team leader and send them an information pack, including the microchip scanner and other paperwork to complete when visiting members and horses. Once the visits have been done and the paperwork completed, it is sent back to the Operation Reconnect Team to enter and save.

The Operation Reconnect Team at present consists of only two members, both of whom work full time and have a number of other roles and commitments within PHHWV. We really need help! If you are able to assist at all,

even if only for a short period or with a specific task, please get in touch with Kathryn Wren via kathryn@phhwv.org.au.

Kathryn Wren
 Operation Reconnect Project Coordinator



Horses in Care

Long Term Care

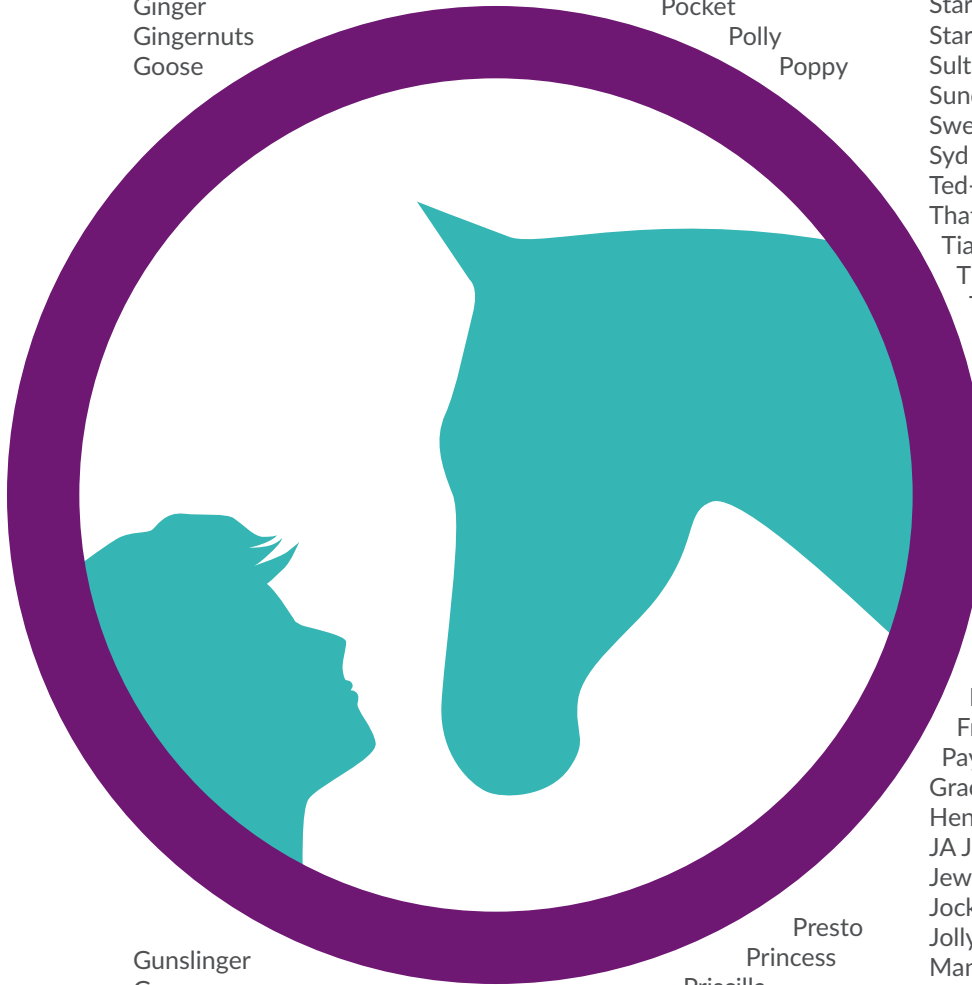
Abbi
 Abella
 Alby
 Alex
 Ally
 Amiira
 Applejack
 April
 Arazi
 Aster
 Athenrai
 Aurelia
 Aurora
 Ava
 Axel
 Axl
 Aztec
 Banjo
 Bellebutton
 Benson
 Bentley
 Bert
 Betty
 Bianka
 Black Swan
 Blackie
 Blinky Bill
 Boss
 Bruce
 Bunny
 Button
 Campaspe
 Captain Hook
 Caramel
 Caviar
 Cedric
 Celeste
 Charcoal
 Charlie Brown
 Cisco
 Cleopatra
 Connie
 Cressey
 Crumpet
 Curtis
 Dakota
 Delight
 Destiny
 Dexter
 Dick
 Digger
 Doc
 Dock
 Domino
 Dora
 Dylan
 Echo
 Fanta

Feisty
 Felix
 Flicka
 Frankie II
 Freddie
 Free Spirit
 Friday
 Fudge
 Gambian
 Gandalf
 Gina Hanover
 Ginger
 Gingernuts
 Goose

Lady
 Laine
 Larissa
 Licorice
 Lillith
 Lou Lou
 Louis
 Lucky
 Lux
 Maggie May
 Magnum

Olivia
 Ollie
 Opal
 Paris
 Patches
 Patty
 Penny
 Perri
 Phillippe
 Pirate
 Pocahontas
 Pocket

Sasha
 Scamp
 Scarlett
 Scooby
 Scout
 Sebastian
 Silver
 Sizzle
 Skittles
 Snip
 Sonny
 Star 2
 Star Jazmyn
 Sultan
 Sunday
 Sweet Honesty Czar
 Syd
 Ted-E Bear
 Thatcher
 Tia
 Tiny
 Torah
 Torry
 Trevor
 Turbo
 William
 Xena
 Yani
 Yarra
 Zack



Polly
 Poppy

Presto
 Princess

Gunslinger
 Gypsy
 Hank
 Harmony
 Honey
 Honey II
 Hooby
 Hunter
 Jack IV
 Jane
 Jasper
 Jazz
 Jet
 Jill
 Joey
 Junior
 Kippa

Maysu
 Meg
 Mia
 Mickey
 Midnight
 Miffy
 Miles
 Milo
 Mimi
 Mischief
 Molly Mule
 Neddy
 Netty
 Norman
 Nugget

Priscilla
 Rain
 Rascal
 Raven
 Red
 Renni
 Ripple
 Roux
 Rozie
 Ruben
 Rudy
 Rutherglen
 Sabrina
 Sadie
 Sammy
 Sapphire

Short Term Care

Annie
 Dusty
 Fridays
 Pay
 Grace
 Henry
 JA Just Gold
 Jewell
 Jock
 Jolly
 Mango
 Mocca
 Moonlight
 Petal
 Pugsley
 Sandy
 Spook
 Sugar & Spice
 Tapiki
 Thorfinn
 Thornville Santoy
 Tiki
 Tilt
 Tucson
 Wayward Spirit
 Winney

Horses Farewelled



Belgrave



Chad



DJ



Dynamite



Frodo



Katie



Luna



Pete



Snag



Tilly



V8



Zara

Transfer of Ownership

Angel
 Beamer
 Casper
 Peanut
 Rosie
 Spike

R.I.P.

- Belgrave
- Chad
- DJ
- Dynamite
- Frodo
- Katie
- Luna
- Pete
- Snag
- Tilly
- V8
- Zara



Treasurer's Report

Financial Year 1 March 2025 – 28 February 2026

As a brief summary and comparison to the 2024/2025 financial year:

	2025/2026	2024/2025
Total Income	\$242,221.10	\$ 99,001.64
Admin Expenses	\$ 63,472.82	\$ 59,841.28
Horse Expenses	\$ 96,949.30	\$ 48,987.25
Profit	\$ 81,798.98	\$ 10,854.03
Cash on Hand	\$386,672.09	\$311,858.11

This simple summary displays that Project Hope is in a very favourable financial position. I should note with some caution that the turnover figures for the 2025/2026 year were, like, in many years previous, bolstered by bequests bestowed upon the organisation.

“What isn’t shown in these figures is the generosity and expenditure our long- term and short-term carers provide for the PHHWV horses surrendered into our care. Every long-term carer makes the personal commitment to care for their PHHWV long term horse. They also make a significant financial commitment to what in many cases is an older companion horse who only survives because of the members’ generosity.

In relation to providing short term care for newly surrendered horses we, as an association, offer full financial support but in many cases, and in probably the majority of cases, our members provide short term care at their own expense. This is in addition to the time and personal strength required to support a horse that can be in distressing condition.

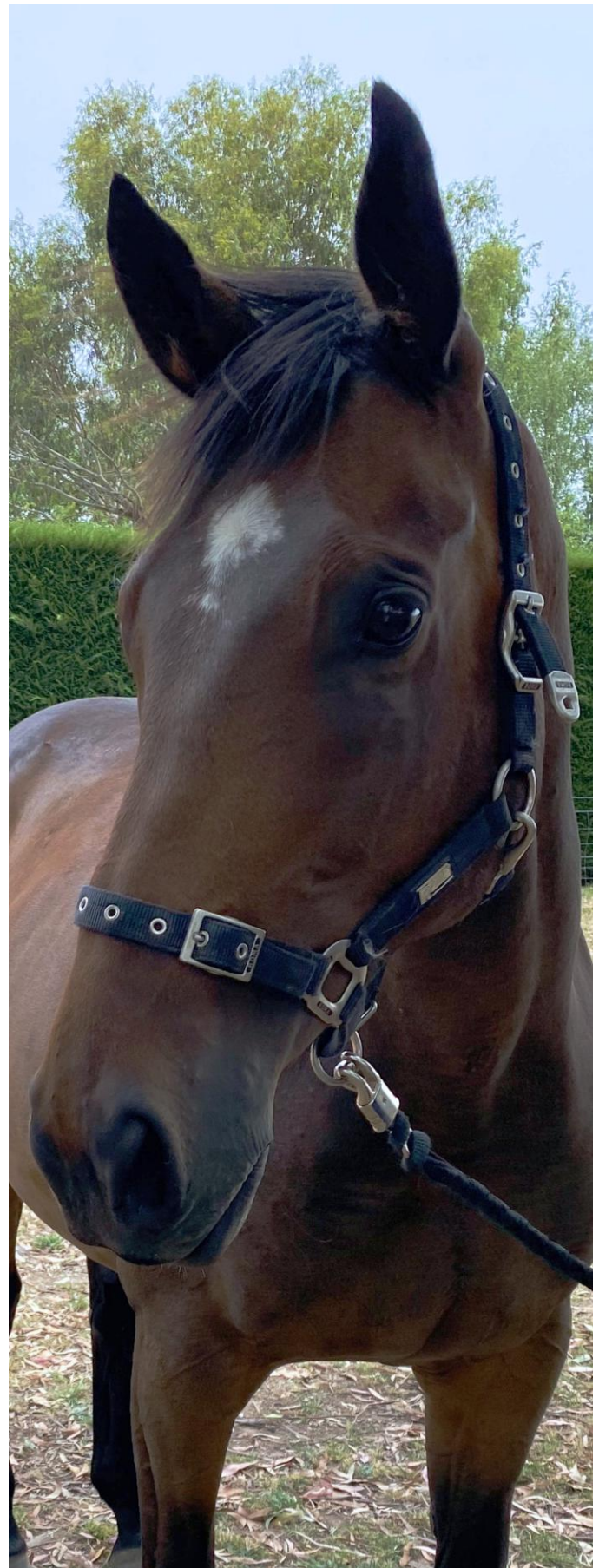
PHHWV owes its financial and operational success to the generosity of the members, carers, donors, supporters, and sponsors”.

The above is a direct quote from my Treasurer’s Report in 2012. It’s comforting that in an ever-changing world that Project Hope still holds true to the values that make it great.

I would like to acknowledge Shirley McPherson who held the role of Treasurer for the past 10 years and has been very helpful in providing me with a comprehensive handover of duties.

The formal audit report for the 2025/2026 financial year is available as a supplement to this Annual Report.

Mark Dean
 Treasurer



Financial Report

Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria Inc Profit & Loss March 2025 through February 2026

	<u>Mar 25 - Feb 26</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
Donations & Bequests	
Appeal Donation	20,289.09
Bequests	70,505.54
Donation Boxes	213.60
General Donation	42,757.39
Member Donation	38,920.01
Periodic Donation	7,939.78
Donations & Bequests - Other	22.00
Total Donations & Bequests	<u>180,647.41</u>
Fundraising	
Raffle	7,380.04
Fundraising - Other	3,350.00
Total Fundraising	<u>10,730.04</u>
Interest Received	2,209.84
Memberships	25,490.45
Merchandise Sales	895.24
Recovered HorseCare Expenses RV	22,198.12
Sale of Assets	50.00
Total Income	<u>242,221.10</u>
Admin Expense	
Accountancy Fees	445.45
Admin Travel Reimbursement	242.15
Annual Report	2,625.00
Bank Charges & misc fees	
Merchant Fee	245.01
Online Transaction Fees	958.68
PayPal Transaction fees	326.61
Bank Charges & misc fees - Other	12.53
Total Bank Charges & misc fees	<u>1,542.83</u>
Consultant	121.68
Education	3,981.82
Fees - Misc - inc gst	286.90
Fees - Misc - No gst	617.15
Fundraising Costs	
Raffle Costs	204.00
Fundraising Costs - Other	850.00
Total Fundraising Costs	<u>1,054.00</u>
Insurance	
Cyber Event Protection	1,227.27
Personal Accident Insurance	818.18
Public Liability Insurance	6,233.87
Total Insurance	<u>8,279.32</u>
Legal Fees	22,545.45
Merchandise Costs	2,785.14
Miscellaneous Admin Expense	3,596.88
Phone / Communications	
Phone - Mobile	809.88



Financial Report

Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria Inc Profit & Loss March 2025 through February 2026

	Mar 25 - Feb 26
Phone - Priority 1300 Service	1,021.97
Web	
Web Design	2,932.50
Web Maintenance / Updating	785.00
Total Web	<u>3,717.50</u>
Zoom / Subscriptions	223.90
Total Phone / Communications	<u>5,773.25</u>
Post Box Rental	402.37
Postage	1,193.13
Printing	1,152.98
Rep / Admin Training	271.82
Software Costs	
Accounting Package	1,934.55
Software Purchase	234.00
Software Costs - Other	144.55
Total Software Costs	<u>2,313.10</u>
Stationery	448.34
Storage Unit	2,127.24
Subscriptions	
Animal Emergency Incident AEIMN	50.00
Reckon	77.27
Total Subscriptions	<u>127.27</u>
Venue Hire & Catering	1,539.54
66900 · Reconciliation / Discrepancies	0.01
Total Admin Expense	<u>63,472.82</u>
Other Income/Expense	
Horse Expenses	
Agistment	2,108.18
Central Animal Records	50.00
Chiropractor-other Alternative	1,019.36
Compassionate Fund	2,998.87
Dentist	4,115.03
Euthanasia	1,554.51
Farrier	5,818.34
Feed	29,133.72
General Horse Expenses	2,993.30
Horse Assessment	145.46
Horse Training	75.00
Horse Transport Costs	10,522.64
Long Term Care Financial Assist	4,674.73
Microchip Implant	1,358.72
Travel-Horse Rep Reimbursement	1,253.46
Vet Fees	24,220.20
Wormer and Medication	4,907.78
Total Horse Expense	<u>96,949.30</u>
Net Income	<u><u>81,798.98</u></u>



Balance Sheet

Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria Inc Balance Sheet As of February 28, 2026

	<u>Feb 28, 26</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Chequing/Savings	
Bank - Bunderra Foundation	69.75
Bank - Gift Account	150.00
Bank - KABE Equity Trustees	14,875.14
Bank - Main Account	325,441.91
Bank BB Term Deposit	20,000.00
Bendigo Bank - 50th Anniversary	26,135.29
Total Chequing/Savings	<u>386,672.09</u>
Accounts Receivable	
Accounts Receivable	4,755.55
Total Accounts Receivable	<u>4,755.55</u>
Other Current Assets	
12000 - Undeposited Funds	(50.00)
Total Other Current Assets	<u>(50.00)</u>
Total Current Assets	391,377.64
Fixed Assets	
13000 - Equipment at cost	15,905.08
13100 - Less accumulated depreciation	(15,905.08)
Total Fixed Assets	<u>0.00</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>391,377.64</u>
LIABILITIES	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
Tax Payable	(4,422.70)
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>(4,422.70)</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>(4,422.70)</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>(4,422.70)</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>395,800.34</u>
EQUITY	
Opening Bal Equity	111,351.54
Retained Earnings	202,649.82
Net Income	81,798.98
TOTAL EQUITY	<u>395,800.34</u>



Acknowledgements



NATURAL HORSE SUPPLEMENTS



We thank Mary-Anne Thomas MP for her support in printing our quarterly newsletter from her electoral office in Gisborne

Hon. Mary-Anne Thomas

Member for Macedon
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
Leader of House



Simon Perrin
VERSION
Design + Brand + Digital

Thank you to all the individuals and organisations who have supported us and the vital work we do.



DJ and Virginia

PROJECT HOPE
HORSE
WELFARE VICTORIA