



213 Lexton Rd, Beaufort Vic 3373
03 5309 2310 0408 201 107

info@victorianbrumbyassociation.org
www.victorianbrumbyassociation.org

ABN: 11010805927 Inc #: A0050188J

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NEWSLETTER 31 – APRIL/ MAY 2010

Hello and welcome to our April/ May newsletter! So much happened in April that the newsletter almost didn't make it, but here it is!

We have been very busy developing our handling yards are to prepare for winter, raising the level by eighteen inches and putting granitic sand down to help with drainage. This leaves us with a safe all weather surface that we can work with our Brumbies on all year round as well as more hygienic living conditions for them whilst they are yarded.

Nine **new Brumbies** have also arrived from the Alpine National Park, so we get the chance to put our new yards to the test! These Brumbies are just stunning – we are thrilled with them! Read more and see them below and on the next page.

The most exciting news that we have is that we have organized **Brumby classes at several shows** later this year! These classes need the support of Brumby owners – yes, YOU – to be successful and to get bigger and better each year. Dates and shows are listed in the Whats On Section.

We are running a small **chocolate drive** at the moment – if you would like some yummy Cadbury choccies to help you stay warm, contact Colleen!



THANKYOU!

We have lots of people to thank this month. To all who wrote to NPWS re the recent media about Brumby culling, thanks! Thanks also to the many, many supporters who signed and returned our petitions to stop Brumby running in the Alpine National Park. Your outspoken vocal and written support goes on record when you speak out. It shows that you are informed about issues relating to Brumbies and that you have expectations of humane treatment of Brumbies. This helps to keep our Brumbies safe. Thanks to Eve for donating feed for our Brumbies. Krystal also kindly donated gear from halters to feedbins and rugs – thank you! Donations of feed, gear etc are always welcomed and help us to continue to save, feed and care for our Brumbies.

WHATS ON?

June - Photo Competition. Get your horse out and about without leaving the comfort of your home! Winners will be reviewed for inclusion in the 2011 VBA Calendar!

1st August – Planet Ark Treeday. Join us at Brumbys Run Sanctuary to celebrate our Brumbies birthday by planting lots of trees and commemorate our lost Brumbies with a special memorial garden.

14th October – Brumby classes at Geelong Royal Show. Get along and support these classes if you want them again next year!

October - Camping weekend at Barmah. A whole weekend of horses, riding in Barmah forest spotting wild Brumbies, camping, great food and great company!

12th November – Brumby Classes at Ballarat Ag Show. Be there!

18th – 21st November – Equitana. Brumbies will be there again – come along and see our Brumbies wow the audiences!

5th December – Brumby Classes at National Buckskin Society All Breed Show in Bendigo.

11th December – Wild Horse Gentling Clinic

12th December - VBA Show and Open Day. Show classes, Gymkhana classes and all things Brumby. A great day out with your family – human and equine!

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST SOUGHT.

We are thinking of running some different clinics and would like to know if they would be well received. If you you might be interested in the following clinics, either as a rider/ handler or a fencesitter, please let us know:

- Barrel Racing. Training/ competition day
- Starting your horse on stockwork. Training day.
- Cross Country riding/ jumping. Training day.
- Teaching your horse to 'pony' (have another horse lead from them). Training day and ride.

THE INS AND OUTS OF IT ALL....

We have had several comings and goings recently and thought we would keep everyone in the loop, so here goes! VBA Scout went home with Belinda, VBA Firefly went home with Chantelle, VBA Spirit has left us to live with Chrissie, VBA Jemima made the trip to NSW to live with Geoff and VBA Honey and VBA Coffee headed to their new home with Jim and Cathy. We wish all these Brumbies and their new owners all the very best in their lives ahead!

We have been delighted to receive a new group of 9 Brumbies from the Bogong High Plains in Victoria. These chunky, calm, passive trapped horses are undertaking their initial training now. Welcome to stallions (soon to be geldings!) VBA Mighty Mouse, VBA Cheeky Devil and VBA Duke, mares VBA Holly and VBA Matilda, colts (soon to be geldings) VBA Picasso and VBA Echo and foals VBA Effie and VBA Padge.

Stop Press: More Bogong Brumbies arrive this week!

UPDATE ON BRUMBY CATCHING IN ALPINE NATIONAL PARK, VIC.

Parks Victoria is currently running an in house passive trapping trial in the Bogong High Plains region of the Alpine NP. This region contains around 150 Brumbies in a quite isolated population. These Brumbies are really lovely types – quite tall and really solid. They look like the old 'cob type' horses that you don't see around anymore.

The VBA has agreed that so long as the trapping is conducted humanely and high management protocols are in place, keeping the welfare of the Brumbies paramount, that we will take all Brumbies caught in the program into our rehoming program.

The Parks Vic trapping program trialed briefly in April/ May, catching 18 Brumbies to date. We picked up our first group of Alpine Brumbies in early May and we're really delighted with them.



The trapping program is run and monitored by a Parks Ranger who has a great depth of experience trapping Brumbies and cares for the welfare of the Brumbies he traps. This shows in the condition, health and manner of the Brumbies on their arrival with us, making their transition to domestic life as smooth as possible.



BUT. These horses, the ones you see above are the lucky ones. Parks Victoria still actively condones and supports Brumby Running. Although RSPCA has advised them that it is inhumane and Parks Vic themselves have admitted it is inefficient, it is still their first choice and main method for Brumby population control. Where do the 100 – 150 Brumbies who are run each year end up? Mostly at the knackery. **A tragic result when Parks Vic are so capable of running such a great, in house, passive trapping program.**

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF.... A BRUMBY SANCTUARY.

Life at Brumbys Run generally starts early when we rise at 6am to clean yards and feed horses before the school run at 9am. I ride Anzac early too - we thoroughly enjoy doing the morning 'head count' of paddock horses at such a peaceful time of day as well as checking and/ or cleaning paddock water troughs!

Right now, we have 32 horses living here with us, of which 7 are owned by the O'Brien family. The remainder are Victorian Brumby Association owned and in various stages from a few who are fully trained and ready to go to their new homes, right through to some of the newer ones who are yet to commence their basic training. During the day, the less trained Brumbies who are in yards are worked with. Training sessions vary hugely, according to the individual in training, from just spending time in the yard with them, or taking them out for a green pick, through to training them to float load, tie up and pick up their feet. I try to allow around half an hour for each horse that is 'in work' as some will take longer and others may need less time.

At 4pm, afternoon feedout starts. Any light weight and some growing Brumbies are hard fed a mixture of pellets and chaff, with the remainder receiving good quality hay. Feed rations are much like training sessions and vary greatly, according to the individual Brumbies needs. In addition to the day to day work at our sanctuary, we also have to find the time to make the trip up to the High Country when new Brumbies are caught, to pick them up and bring them to their new home. We maintain our website, answer emails, write letters to support the welfare of Brumbies and lobby and meet with both government and Parks associations to work towards more sustainable and humane forms of Brumby population management.

Promoting Brumbies is one of our most important roles. We make visits to Pony Clubs, events such as Equitana, Agricultural and Royal shows and other organisations, taking Brumbies along to demonstrate what is possible when you train wild horses with love and patience. As with any charity, fundraising is never far from our thoughts either! The sale of our Brumbies comes close to covering their costs, from their pick up to gelding, worming, feed etc. To cover the shortfall, we run regular training days and clinics as well as competitions and are constantly looking for new fundraising ideas and help. As you can imagine, there are never enough hours in the day to do everything that we would like to and of course, the welfare of the horses always comes first, which is why we limit the number of Brumbies we can take in. We are very lucky that on the weekends, we have some enthusiastic volunteers and our committee members who try to chip in where ever they can. This allows us to get a lot more horse work done as well as tackling that never ending job of fencing and continuing to set up our new sanctuary!

Our volunteers have diverse backgrounds and a range of skills. The only similarity is that they're all passionate about saving wild horses. If you would like to find out how you could be more involved with the VBA, please don't hesitate to contact Colleen to talk some more.

As you can see in our Whats On section, we have a special volunteer day coming up on the 1st of August – the ideal way to see what we do and get starting saving Brumbies!

Together we can save our Heritage Brumbies!

NOW FOR SOME “HORSEY HUMOUR”!

To keep all things equal, this probably applies to both Husbands and Wives and may help you weight up whether to spend more time with your horse or your significant other!

Good Things About Husbands:

- Husbands are less expensive to shoe.
- Feeding a husband doesn't require anything that even mildly compares with the hassle of mixing a hard feed.
- A lame husband can still work.
- A husband with a belly-ache doesn't have to be walked.
- Husbands don't try to scratch their heads on your back.
- They're better able to understand puns.
- If they're playing hard to catch you *may* be able to run them down on foot.
- They know their name.
- They pay their own bills.
- They apologize when they step on your toes.
- They seldom refuse to get in the vehicle.
- They don't panic, yelling and running all through the house when you leave them alone. (unless you left the kids too)
- For a nominal fee you can hire someone else to clip them.
- Men rarely pee in the middle of the bed day in and day out.
- Men don't usually trample their dinner into their beds, or eat the bedding.
- You don't have to bolt the door every time you leave them for a few minutes to stop them running back to their friends.

Good Things About Horses:

- If they don't work out you can sell them.
- They don't come with in-laws.
- You don't have to worry about your children looking like them.
- You never have to iron their saddle pads.
- If you get too fat for one you can shop for a bigger one.
- They smell good when they sweat.
- You can repair their "clothes" with duct tape.
- It's possible to keep them from "jumping the fence".
- You can force them to stay in good physical condition...with a whip if necessary.
- They don't want their turn at the computer.
- They turn white with age, but not bald.
- They learn to accept restraint.
- They don't care what you look like, as long as you have a carrot.
- Your horse will not think a new pair of shoes every month is excessive
- Your horse will be glad of the company if you go shopping for another one, and your friends will approve of you keeping more than one, as this is more natural.

CONGRATULATIONS CHRIS AND KRISTIN BITMEAD!

Committee members Chris Bitmead and Kristin Morris were married in an olive grove near Geelong on the 27th of March.

Kristin arrived at the ceremony riding our Brumby mascot Anzac in a sidesaddle. Anzac was introduced to the sidesaddle the week beforehand and we



were so proud of him! The Bitmeads honeymooned in Bali and are already back, working hard each weekend to help out at the Brumby Sanctuary. We would be lost without the help of tireless committee members and volunteers like Chris and Kristin and wish them a married life filled with happiness (and Brumbies!).

**BRUMBY LOOKING FOR LOVE...**

VBA Hunter is a stunning light chestnut 2 year old gelding. Hunter is soft and intelligent and very keen to please. Passively trapped in Kosciuszko NP, Hunter has been with us for four months and is great with other horses, fences and the activity level here which is considerable. Hunter leads calmly and is close to ready to saddle start.

Hunter will mature around 14.1hh and would be perfect for someone who is interested in natural horsemanship or trail riding. Please note we have



significantly dropped Hunters price to \$550 to try to help him find his forever home.

VBA Snippets (chestnut 12 month old filly, mature 14.1hh) and VBA Sam (chestnut twelve month old colt, mature 14.1hh) are also both now available for \$500.

We always have other Brumbies available, so if you're looking for a specific age, sex etc, just ask or check out the For Sale tab at our Website!

Together we can save our Heritage Brumbies!