

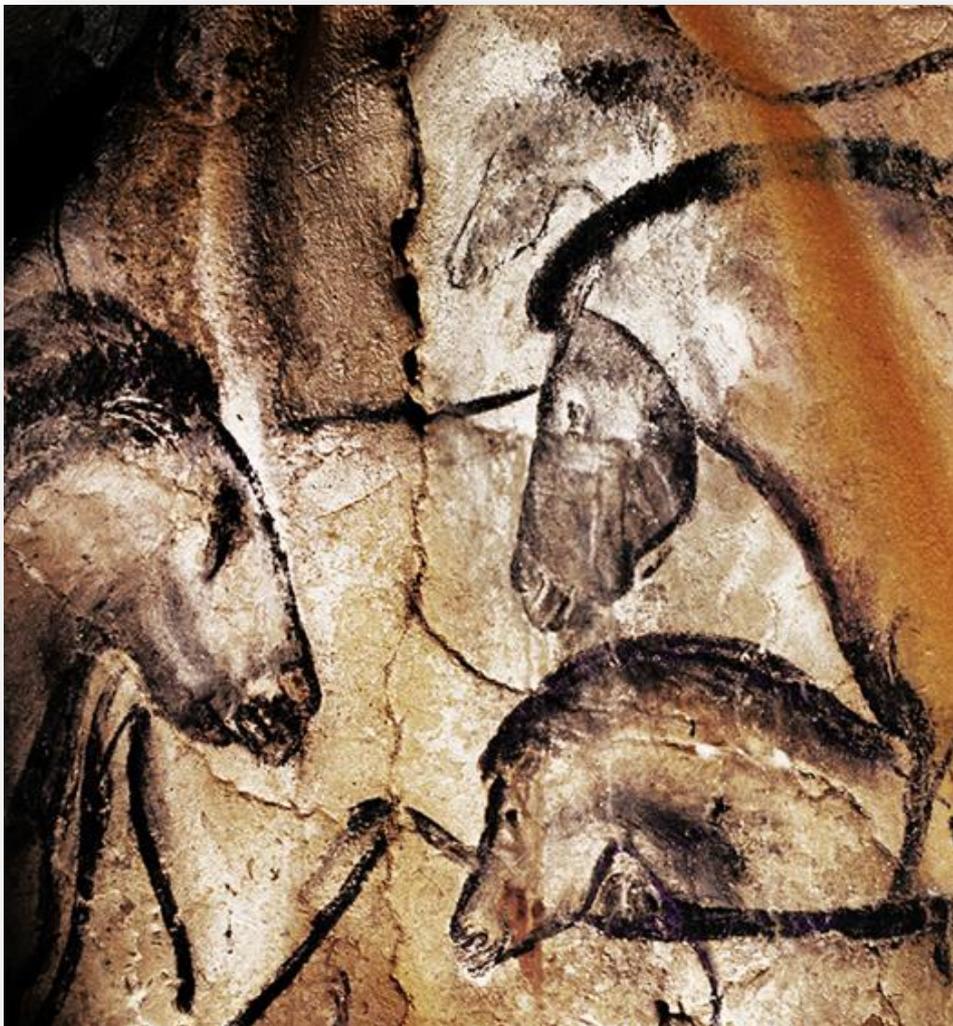


Riding for the Disabled Association NSW



"Bits 'n' Pieces"

Summer/Autumn 2017



The Chauvet Cave Horses

see the story inside, page 11



RDA (NSW) at the Sydney Royal Easter Show

Words: Nicole King

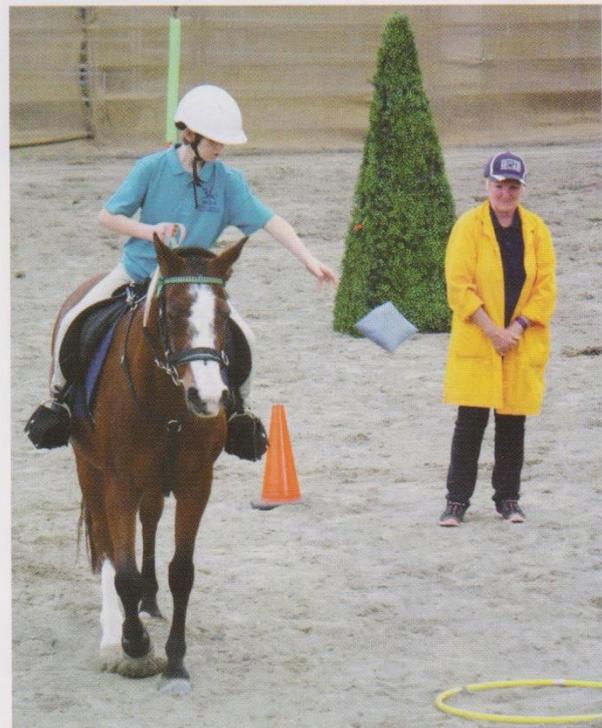
The 2017 Sydney Royal Easter Show again hosted an opportunity for RDA(NSW) riders experience this great event with the RDA(NSW) State Mounted Games Championships and Horse of the Year Event. This year there were horses and riders competing from Tall Timbers Centre (Box Hill), Richmond Centre, Wagga Wagga Centre, Kempsey-Macleay Centre and Manning Great Lakes Centre.

The event is put on with generous assistance of the RAS and the many RDA(NSW) Volunteers who are involved in the preplanning and running of the event on the day. Thank you to the organisers and congratulations to all the Riders and Centres involved in the event particularly Richmond Centre for being awarded Best Presented Team and Kempsey-Macleay Centre for taking home the Champion Rider Trophy.

The Tall Timbers Centre had three riders competing in the Mounted Games Led and Walk Events which included Flag, Bending Barrel and Keyhole Events. Jessica and Caleb were competing for the first time with Maddison riding for the second year. Riders rode really well with our horses Buddy and Hannibal doing their jobs perfectly.

In the Horse of the Year event, the horse is judged on their acceptance of the activities as they are ridden through an obstacle course. Riley rode both Hannibal and Buddy in the event and while it was Riley's first outside competition both horses have won this competition before and this year despite some close competition from Ochre from Wagga Wagga Centre who placed second, Buddy was awarded third place and Hannibal was announced as the 2017 Sydney Royal RDA(NSW) Horse of the Year Winner.

We are so grateful for the opportunity to celebrate the achievements of our riders and horses and to do so at such an event is the highlight of the year.



Riley and Hannibal in the Horse of the Year



Caleb and Hannibal in the Flag Race



Riley and Buddy in the Horse of the Year



Tall Timbers Mounted Games Team with coach Sophie

NEWS FROM THE CENTRES

COFFS HARBOUR & DISTRICTS

Another year has started and what a rollercoaster of a term, the weather giving us all grief.

Sadly before term resumed this year we lost our "LADY PENELOPE" (Penny), she was one of the founding members of our Centre and I will miss her nicker whenever you came near her stable, she was a wonderful mare and gave a lot of riders joy over her illustrious career.

This year our Centre started the year with a bang. We are fortunate to be able to host fundraising BBQs at our local Bunnings store and this always gives us a

good boost to our funds. We also, from time to time are invited to help out with our local markets, in turn they allow us to do bucket donation fundraising and this is also a welcome boost for us.

We have introduced two new horses to our stable, 'Whiskey' who is a gorgeous bay standardbred. He is a joy to work with and we are hoping he will become an asset to our stable. Our other addition is "Bundy", he is a taffy clydesdale cross. He is young but a very willing soft boy who will, I'm sure have a very long career



"Penny"

in RDA. Both horses are currently being trained and we are hoping they will be ready by third term.

We have had a few new riders join our Centre this year, and already they are enjoying their time with us each Tuesday.

This year our Centre will be entering some of our riders into the Dressage Competition and also into the Musical Ride Competition.

Over the break, a couple of the Coaches will be going to the Centre and looking for new trails to take our riders on. We already have one trail that has lots of metal sculpture animals positioned along the track.

We have a koala in a tree (who, I might say didn't like his perch for a while and insisted on dropping down under it), we have kangaroos and echidnas as well as a frog and a dragon. The riders really enjoying looking for them and at times we all have a great laugh when we find one of the animals not in the same place and we then all discuss ways of how they arrived at their new places, and what they got up to since the last trail. This makes for a lot of jokes and laughter from both riders and volunteers.

We are aiming for having different names for trails, like a fairy grotto trail, the gnome trail, the Australian animal trail and so on. This is a work in progress, but it is worth it as the riders really enjoy it.

We are still awaiting the installation of our hoist but our new ramp has been installed. We are currently training all of the horses to walk up to it as they are a bit wary of it as it is metal and new. They are all used to our wooden ramp so this is something they didn't expect. We moved our wooden ramp to our smaller arena so we now have two ramps which is brilliant.

Our Centre is quite a busy Centre having over 20 riders in the day with a few more coming along to see our Centre and join. Our volunteers are a fantastic group of people who work extremely hard each Tuesday and without them our Centre would not be as good as it is. Our riders all enjoy their time with us and the carers all express their thanks at how happy and excited their charges are to come out to the Centre each week.

This year we are committed to ongoing fundraising, having raffles for certain calendar events throughout the year. Hopefully they will all be successful.

Cheers,

Gillian Hobson

Secretary

TAMWORTH

Tamworth Centre started back at riding for 2017 on Thursday 2nd March. The horses all arrived back at the grounds the week before looking great from their various agistment paddocks. We have some great volunteers who live out of town on acreages and they are always so willing to take the horses for that long summer break as it is just too hot here in Tamworth to operate then. Our farrier then came and trimmed all their hoofs and they were drenched and all the other important things done to get them ready for the start of business. We have acquired one new riding horse “Zara” and another one “Smarty Pants” on loan for our use on riding days. We also had a lovely big ex trotter “Gonzo” donated to us and our whips are trialling him for a back - up horse to “Harry” in the carriage which is necessary owing to the extra number of clients who are coming now.

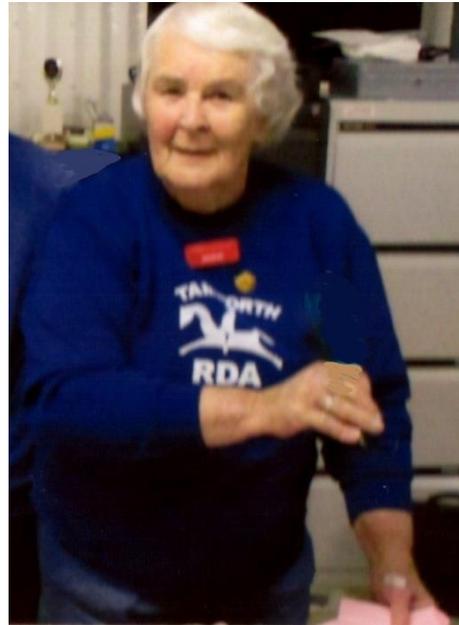
We had lots of very dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers who worked very hard in the heat at the grounds during that period doing lots of maintenance jobs tidying up etc. One of their great achievements was the setting up and building of an Adventure Trail for our clients to ride around and make it more entertaining and interesting plus giving them the chance to master a few new skills manoeuvring their horses around and through all the obstacles. They are really enjoying this a lot and think it lots of fun as do the volunteers helping them.

The week before we started riding our Coaches conducted a volunteers riding day, where all our volunteers were given a refresher run down of all the RDA rules and regulations that they must follow. We were lucky enough to get a few new volunteers joining us also to learn all the ropes. We had a full morning of extensive training by our Coaches followed by a sausage sizzle for lunch. All of our volunteers are so willing to get in and do so many different tasks asked of them. Our two faithful high schools McCarthy Catholic High and Oxley High School are back again this year to help us for a couple of hours each Thursday accompanied by their teachers.



Four of our very long serving volunteers retired at the end of last Year, Betty LeCerf, Mary Saxon, Ernie Choice and Marie Lucas. They will all be very much missed and we salute them for their many years of dedicated service and work for our Tamworth Centre.

The longest serving of these is Marie Lucas who has been a volunteer at the Centre for 35 years. She has devoted all those years to RDA Tamworth in a very big way starting back in 1982. She has seen the Centre grow from a very small affair to what it is today and all the many changes along the way including moving grounds a few times until it finally got settled to where we are now at Marius St grounds in 1995. She has also known so many of the volunteers who served at the Centre in all those years and has been loved and respected by all. She has worked so hard for RDA and has kept us all going with her wonderful cheerful nature, sense of humour and fun and for her very caring and understanding nature towards her fellow



volunteers and the clients. Marie has also seen many, many much loved horses come and go over those years and she loved them all. She was secretary for many years and also worked very hard out there on the field among the horses and clients and she was involved in a lot of the fundraising activities. As the years rolled by and some of the activities got a bit much out there for her she took over the running of the canteen with the help of Betty and Mary. Marie is one of our Patrons and a fountain of knowledge regarding the history of the Tamworth RDA Centre. She still loves to come to our monthly meetings to keep abreast of all of our activities and offer some very helpful advice when needed. We so hope she can do this for some time to come.

Colin Rosewarne (Assistant Coach) and Peta Martin (Trainee Coach) together with Jill Laidlaw, their Supervising Coach travelled to Raymond Terrace to attend the Coaches Workshop earlier in the year. They found it very helpful and informative towards their training. They reported back what a great weekend it was and how well they were looked after. They were so impressed with the Raymond Terrace Centre and loved seeing the set up there.

At various times the Tamworth Carriage Driving Club has asked us to cater for some of their functions and at the end of April they hosted the NSW Carriage Driving



Championships at Manilla Showground about 45kms from Tamworth. They asked would we do breakfasts, lunches and morning and afternoon teas for the two day weekend. It was indeed a big undertaking and all our volunteers were so generous with their time as we did BBQ breakfasts and lunches and had to make lots of slices etc for quite a number of people on both days. It was a good fundraising venture for our Centre.



Our Coaches are now preparing some of our more advanced riders to enter the Dressage Video Competition and they have been practising hard to get in on time. The riders are delighted to be working towards this. We have some very busy riding days ahead of us for the next two terms, with Bullimbal Special Needs School bringing 20 students as well as three other schools with quite a



number of students also. Some of them ride and some of them go down for rides in the cart. We also have a number of older clients who come with various groups as well as individual ones to fit in.

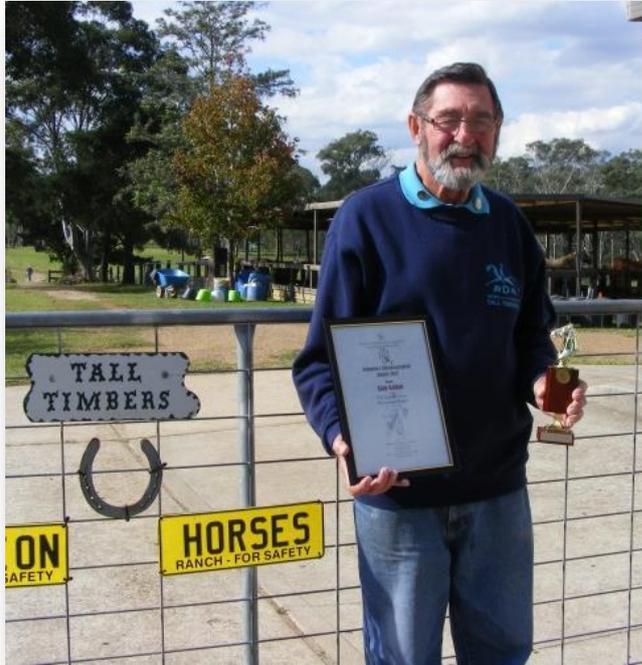
I hope you all enjoy reading about our Centre and some of our activities. We do like reading about all the other Centres covered in “Bits ‘n’ Pieces”

Gillian (Gill) Rosewarne
Publicity Officer, Tamworth RDA Centre

“Tall Timbers”

MY VOLUNTEER JOURNEY AT “TALL TIMBERS”

By Alan Gollan



I first heard of RDA when I joined the Parklea Garden Village Tai Chi class. Joan Guppy told me about “Tall Timbers” and how their donations assist with the care of a horse (now “Kitty”). The following week my wife and I went to the Royal Easter Show and saw Renee Smith and other riders in the RDA(NSW) competition for people with disabilities. That was it! The following Monday I went with Joan Guppy to have a look and have been going every Monday since. It was the riders, staff, horses and

volunteers who got me in. I help as gatekeeper, side walker, leader and most importantly as a poo-picker-upper. As a joke I ask the new volunteers if they have done the Poo Picker Up course?

One of my most wonderful experiences was, with my co-sidewalker Lindsay, with Matthew. When his grandparents first started him he would scream and not go near a horse. When we finally got him on a horse he would look at his grandparents on the verandah and scream and cry. We saw this and decided to ask them to stay inside when he was on the horse. The next week he was fine and even laughed. From then on he used to run down from the top gate to get his helmet and boots on to ride.

Early in my volunteering I saw the huge cost of running “Tall Timbers” and decided to try to help. Since then I have obtained regular donations for three horses and obtained \$25000 from Blacktown Workers Club.

Another thing I do, and enjoy, is the sausage sizzle. Every few months we cook and sell 600-700 sausages and 18-20 kilos of onions, plus drinks and raise quite a bit of money for the Centre.

I go to “Tall Timbers” on Monday mornings 5 foot 9 inches tall and come home Monday afternoons 10 foot tall!

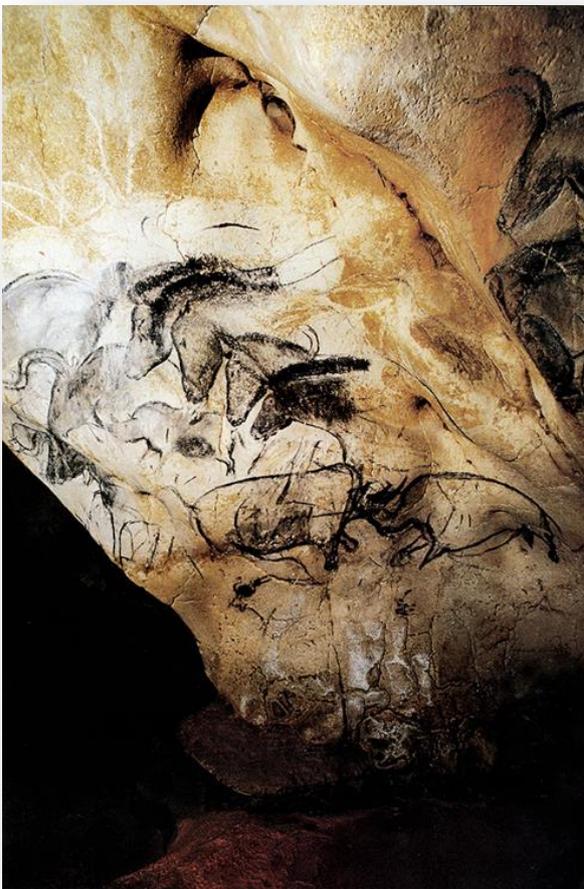


Chauvet Cave

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **Chauvet-Pont-d'Arc Cave** in the Ardèche department of southern France is a cave that contains some of the best preserved figurative cave paintings in the world, as well as other evidence of Upper Paleolithic life. It is located near the commune of Vallon-Pont-d'Arc on a limestone cliff above the former bed of the Ardèche River, in the Gorges de l'Ardèche.

Discovered on December 18, 1994, it is considered one of the most significant prehistoric art sites and the UN's cultural agency UNESCO granted it World Heritage status on June 22, 2014. Its paintings, along with those of Lascaux and the Cave of Altamira, have been dubbed a "prehistoric Sistine Chapel."





The cave was first explored by a group of three speleologists: Eliette Brunel-Deschamps, Christian Hillaire, and Jean-Marie Chauvet for whom it was named. Chauvet (1996) has a detailed account of the discovery. In addition to the paintings and other human evidence, they also discovered fossilized remains, prints, and markings from a variety of animals, some of which are now extinct.

Further study by French archaeologist Jean Clottes has revealed much about the site. The dates have been a matter of dispute but a study published in 2012 supports placing the art in the Aurignacian period, approximately 32,000–30,000 years BP. A study published in 2016 using additional 88 radiocarbon dates showed two periods of habitation, one 37,000 to 33,500 years ago and the second from 31,000 to 28,000 years ago with most of the black drawings dating to the earlier period.



the Digger whisperer is no dark horse



EXCLUSIVE

JORDAN BAKER

EVER since he returned from his army tour of Afghanistan, Ben Tyne has lived with the mental torture that is post-traumatic stress disorder.

The rage, depression and loneliness are relentless, so any escape is precious.

To that end, Mr Tyne spends as much time as he can with horses.

"It's very honest," he said. "There is no judgment and no ridicule."

Equine-assisted therapy is rapidly growing in popularity as a way to calm and treat people with addiction and post-traumatic stress disorder.

The theory is that horses are socially sophisticated animals, and deeply responsive to emotional cues.

To successfully interact with the horses, patients must work on regulating their own emotions, and keep their anger in check.

Mr Tyne said he felt serene around them.

"They are just a calming presence," he said. "They are very much peaceful animals. If you compare it to a dog, a dog will get a pat off everyone there."

"The horse really sticks with you, it's building that relationship."

"It makes you realise that you can feel calm, you don't always have to feel wound up."

"Even in times of high stress, afterwards you can think back and know there is another side, that

you don't always have to be hyper-vigilant or stressed or angry."

His PTSD kicked in slowly, over the first six months after he returned from Afghanistan.

"I started to seclude myself, bunker myself down," the army veteran said.

"I would be in bed before the sun went down, and if I wasn't I would be drinking somewhere."

It took him a while to realise he had post-traumatic stress disorder, and even longer to come to terms with it.

"The hardest part is you don't want the label of post-traumatic stress or depression, no one wants to admit something is wrong," the 36-year-old said.

"It's the adult equivalent of being afraid of the dark."

Many men and women are

returning from Afghanistan with PTSD, and there are still too few services to help them deal with it, according to John Jarratt from Young Diggers.

Mr Jarratt was diagnosed with PTSD in the 1960s, after 400 days in Vietnam.

PTSD involves rage that can be triggered by a sound or smell, followed by a deep depression that can often lead to suicidal thoughts, Mr Jarrett said.

Animals, whether they are dogs or horses, can help by giving the patient something to talk to, to focus on and to look forward to.

"A weekly visit with the horse is really, really good," he said.

"A lot of people can't accept the responsibility of a dog, or don't like them or are afraid of them, so the dog therapy is not good for them."

"A horse is gentler. It's like having a mate that's not judgmental."

"When an animal reacts to them, they react very well; the person will respond to the horse."

"It's like an acceptance, and that's something that they need so badly, acceptance."

Sydney Polo Club owner Rebecca Higgins is an equine therapist, and runs the courses for veterans in her own time.

She also runs courses for recovering addicts, and people with different kinds of PTSD.

The patients don't ride the horses. Rather they lead them through exercises, such as walking through an obstacle course.

"The patient has to be calm, controlled and focused in order to coax the horse to do what they want them to. It's almost like the

horses know what's going on, they can read body language," Ms Higgins said.

"When someone learns to ride, the horse knows what you are feeling, instinctively."

"If you get on and are really scared, they will know that."

Chris Knoble, 48, has been doing equine-assisted therapy for two years, to treat the PTSD caused by sexual abuse at the hands of a female teacher when he was a child.

The horses are part of a suite of therapies he uses.

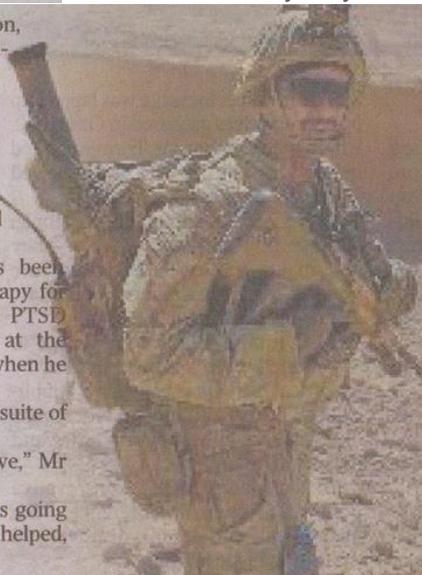
"Horses are very intuitive," Mr Knoble said.

"They pick up on what's going on with you. It's certainly helped, 100 per cent."

Rebecca Higgins, Ben Tyne and Robin Scott with "Poppy"



War veteran, Ben Tyne connects with "Teak" at the Sydney Polo Club, Richmond



Ben in Afghanistan

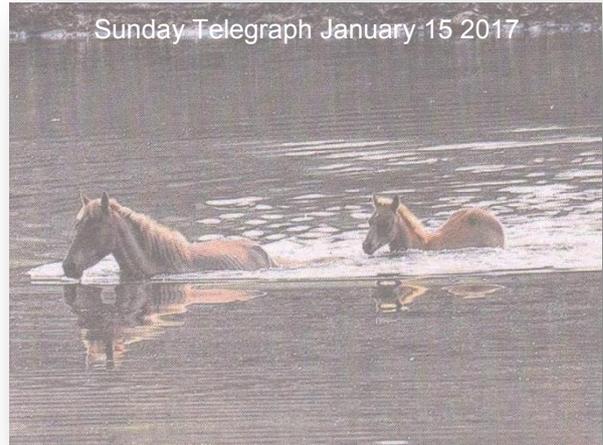


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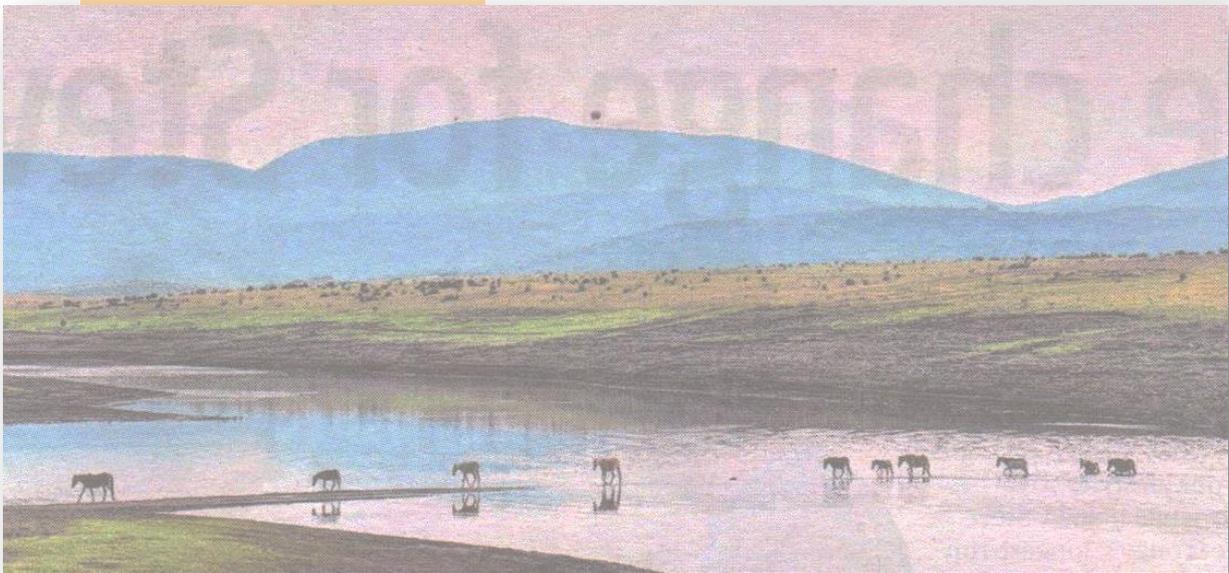
Pictures: Sam Ruttyn

Since life is so short, we should hurry to do good
Latvian proverb

GIVING BRUMBIES A HOLLYWOOD ENDING



Sunday Telegraph January 15 2017



LINDA SILMALIS
CHIEF REPORTER

IT IS the California wild horse sanctuary riding to the rescue of our Snowy Mountain brumbies.

With the deadline for the state government to adopt its final plan for dealing with the brumbies having expired, The Sunday Telegraph asked Return To Freedom how it is dealing with US government roundups of wild horses.

Backed by Hollywood heavyweights

Robert Redford and Pamela Anderson, Return to Freedom Wild Horse Sanctuary and Preservation, created a safe haven for horses in 1998, with almost 400 living out their days roaming a 600ha property.

Together with education programs, the sanctuary runs a conservation program to protect bloodlines of herds that can be traced back to early Spanish colonial horses.

It also takes part in scientific trials such as a recent pilot project for the fertility control vaccine PZP, which it is pushing the local land management authorities to adopt as an alter-

native to “traumatic” and costly roundups. Such is its reputation, donors such as Redford have joined the board, while Anderson actively promotes its initiatives.

Return To Freedom president Neda DeMayo said there was no reason why a similar sanctuary could not be established in Australia to allow tourists and locals to view the Snowy River brumbies.

This could include adopting a landholder-based conservation program where farmers are supported in creating sanctuaries on their properties.

“There is no question that similar non-profit sanctuaries could work in Australia, as part of a larger solution, if supporters of the brumbies can raise the money for their ongoing care and can work with those who know wild horses best to start sanctuaries,” Ms DeMayo said.

Under the Kosciuszko National Park Draft Wild Horse management Plan brumby numbers would be reduced from 6000 to around 600 within 20 years, with an initial cull of 3000 animals. The horses are blamed for damaging pristine park environments.

The shooting of horses in the US is banned, with authorities instead rounding them up and putting them up for adoption.

However, adoption numbers have fallen, with many horses ending up in Mexico where they are slaughtered.

Nationals leader John Barilaro, who has called for the brumbies’ protection, and Environment Minister Mark Speakman declined to comment.