

2009 END OF YEAR REPORT

Hello All,

The beginning of 2009 was marred by the tragedy of the bushfires and the terrible stories we heard about people and animals, including horses, perishing in the fires. This catastrophic event raised our awareness about the importance of a fire plan. I personally had never really thought about what we would do with our horses in the event of a bushfire but the fact that the fires affected Bendigo prompted our family to form a fire plan, as I am sure it has with all our members.

On a brighter note Bendigo Pony Club was again well represented at the Royal Melbourne Horse Show at Werribee in January. The classes were huge with up to 50 entries per class and to have our members competing successfully amongst such stiff competition is a big achievement. Good luck to those of you who are competing at Summer Royal in 2010.

In March Tori Faull, Ashlea Howard, Hannah Trahair, Samantha McIntyre, Penny Loader, Maddison Maud and Emma Lea easily passed their C certificates and then we were into April and the Donaldson Day rally. Congratulations to the 2009 'D Day' Highpoint winners, Georgia Welch, Maddison Maud, Emma Lea and Morgan-Rose Maud.

April was also the month of the Interschool competition which was again a very successful event. We received positive feedback and suggestions on ways to improve the weekend, some of which we will implement to ensure that the Interschools keeps growing and evolving. One comment that I constantly receive from members from other clubs is that they are amazed at how our club manages to successfully run such a huge weekend of competition. As a club we can all be so proud of what we have achieved with the success of the Interschools. The profits from this event have gone a long way to funding some major assets for our club over the last three years including the ménage, the Jump 4 Joy show jumps, the photo copier, the ride on mower, the portable dressage arenas and our new cross country jumps.

The clubs AGM was held at the end of April and all the executive committee members agreed to stay on for another year. Mary Donaldson as President, John Faull as Vice President, Kerrie Long as Treasurer, and Deb Degenhardt as Secretary. The club is very grateful to these people for their dedication to these various roles over the years but there will come a time (maybe in the not too distant future) when some or all of these key people decide to step down and I encourage new members with young riders to seriously think about getting more involved with your club and joining the general committee. I believe a club is as only as strong as its committee and with the date of our clubs impending move to Strathfieldsaye getting closer it is essential that we have a strong, united committee in place.

During the year the committee has had many meetings with the Bendigo City council to discuss the clubs relocation. The most recent meeting was very positive due mainly to the excellent proposal prepared and professionally presented by Michael Carty. As a new parent to the club we are all very grateful for to Michael for his involvement and initiative.

The first weekend in May was the date for the State Horse Trials hosted by the Midland Zone. Bendigo Pony club members did an amazing job catering in the VIP tent as well as helping where

needed throughout the weekend. Without the generosity of John and Karen Faull who loaned the Zone two huge water tanks, hosting the event at the Goornong venue would have been impossible.

July was the month for our dressage and show jumping championship at the show grounds and in August some of our members trooped off to Bealiba to compete in the Midland Zone Flat & Show Jumping Team Shield. Our Flat team of Morgan Maud, Shannon Stone, Hannah Mika and Shaleah Bray did a great job to place 6th. These same riders along with Samuel Nielsen, Tori Faull, Tegan Tresize and Ashlea Howard also competed in the show jumping events. During the presentations Britt Holmberg was awarded the Pony Club Award of Merit for service to Pony Club and Peggy Mills who is a good friend to our club and a very important member of the Midland Zone was awarded a Zone life membership.

On September 13th we held our inaugural EFA affiliated open horse show which included the Jack McKenna memorial event. The day went very smoothly and as is usual with a first time event we learned some things and have plans to make next year's event bigger and better.

Our new portable cross country jumps arrived in October and they look fabulous! Clinton Hedger did a great job building the jumps and John Faull was kind enough to loan the use of a shed for the jumps to be built in. The jumps can be moved to our new home and until then our riders have the chance to school over the jumps at each rally.

Congratulations to all Bendigo Pony Club riders for their individual successes at the 150th Bendigo Show during the last weekend in October. Samantha McIntyre and Chester have developed into a lovely combination and had a very successful show winning both the Kristy Grinton award for Supreme Pony Club Rider and the Alison Bogumil award for the most successful combination in the pony club events.

As DC I am very grateful to the fantastic instructors who teach our kids every month. Bendigo Pony Club has long had a reputation for quality instruction and as these instructors services become more in demand I am grateful for the commitment that our instructors have undertaken to teach our kids for 2010. These include Lynn MacIntyre, Jason Scott, Wayne Hirst, Rowan Anderson, Brian Davidge, Deb Browell, Liam Hartz, Allan Mitchell and Laura Mow. Thank you one and all!

With the move to our new home the club will have the capacity to grow its member base. The future is looking bright for Bendigo Pony Club.

Merry Christmas and a happy, horsey 2010 to all,

SUE

