

I don't need a calendar to tell me the year is drawing to a close as the days are getting warmer (this week each day is forecast to be in the mid-to-high 30s!). In addition they are longer with day light coming just after 5am and the last of the bubs not going to bed till almost 9pm. It makes for long days but it is always nice to get home from work and have a few hours to potter around and enjoy the scenes here. Unfortunately the dam has dried up, which is hardly surprising given the far below average rainfall we've received during 2013. We are currently 228mm below the average and a lot less than what we had received this time last year, guess that's how they get averages, the fact that we have had a few good years makes the current situation that much harder to cope with.

It's also that time of the year when I reflect on what has passed and as I sit typing this looking out over the house paddock, where some new roosters are getting to know one another, I recall the 260 other beings I've been able to assist during the year; and the building projects which have resulted in three new safe and secure areas being constructed, including the section of the sanctuary known as Roosterville. During the year I was invited to speak to animal rights groups at the University of Wollongong and Macquarie University during International Respect for Chickens Month (May) and also hosted an open day that month which was attended by almost 50 people. In winter I was visited by members of the University of Sydney Animal Welfare Society and hosted an open day for the attendees at the inaugural Institute for Critical Animal Studies Oceania Conference, which was held in Canberra. I have to admit it was an honour to be invited to speak at the forementioned conference about the concept of being a sustainable activist and avoiding burnout, which is a topic of immense personal interest. I had done a similar talk at the Animal Liberation Activist Emotional Well Being Workshop in Sydney in March and was overwhelmed by the response to my presentation. It is personally satisfying that people are becoming increasingly prepared to talk about the toll activism can take on them and investigate ways of managing it — it is a sign of the growing strength within our movement. I was also pleased once again to have A Poultry Place be part of the Living Green Festival in October and recently had a few of the members of the Animal Lib group from Macquarie Uni come down for a working weekend and it was nice to be surrounded by so many keen young people willing to get their hands dirty. I am delighted that through the presence of A Poultry Place on Facebook I have contributed to the growing awareness amongst the general public of how poultry, the most exploited group of land animals on earth treated. Two recent projects undertaken on the site — *Twelve Days of Christmas 2013* and *The Truth About Ducks* have increased awareness of turkey and duck farming in Australia, with many of the stories being 'shared' and even attracting some abusive comments, which means that even the haters are reading it!

By the way if you haven't already I recommend you grab yourself a copy of Animal Liberation NSW's *Like a Duck Out of Water* report, which was recently released, to find out more about the dirty secrets of the duck farming industry — it can be downloaded at www.aussieducks.com While I'm at it don't forget the wonderful *Big Birds Big Cruelty* report on turkey farming in Australia, which is available at www.bigbirdsbigcruelty.org Both resources will give you more than enough ammunition to counter any of the discussion you might face during the fast approach festive season when some may be sitting down to a roasted turkey or duck.

Again, throughout the year I have been struck by the kindness of people who have contributed to the ongoing functioning of the sanctuary. People who have given their time by assisting me in undertaking some of the building projects and chores, or donated materials that have been utilised here, as well as those who have contributed financially to the running of the sanctuary. In recent weeks I have heard from a couple who had a vegan wedding with a charity box in place of gift

registry. They shared the contributions between their favourite animal sanctuaries, one of which was A Poultry Place! And then there is the woman who has requested donations be made to A Poultry Place in lieu of presents this Christmas. Running an animal sanctuary single-handed and funding it from your own pocket such gestures are particularly appreciated.

So I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing interest in A Poultry Place.



During the past month the family had grown a little. Parker (above left) was a rooster who turned up in a Sydney car park and was befriended by a caring woman who fed him and earned his trust before my friends at NSW Hen Rescue could collect him. He had a brief stay at one house but it didn't work out so I was asked if he could come here. Russell (above right) was adopted as a youngster believed to be a hen but when he started crowing and once the neighbours began complaining a new home had to be found. It was touching to see his human, who brought him down from Sydney say goodbye to him.



Vanilla (left) was a five month old sheepie found wandering alone on a country road looking lost and lonely, with no other sheep around. Thankful two friends came across her and managed to catch her and bring her to safety here where she will live out the rest of her life without fear and in the company of her new family. Within a fortnight of her arrival, Vanilla, and the other 13 members of the woolly family were shorn.

Leo and Lawrence (below left) two hatching project by-products. These two gorgeous guys were destined to be killed before some caring people stepped in and brought them to sanctuary here. And then there is Penelope (pictured left), a three-and-a-half year old hen who lost both of her sisters in a

fox attack. She was living on her own and pretty down and listless. Her human didn't want to introduce a bunch of new, younger hens and wondered if I could take her at a Poultry Place. She now lives with Rufus rooster and 10 new sisters and during the festive break I hope to introduce and integrate them to the main flock.



Finally you may be interested to know that an animated movie called *Free Birds* is scheduled for release here in Australia at the start of 2014. It promises to be for turkeys what *Babe* was for pigs and *Chicken Run* was for chickens. From what I see on paper I think it will get some people at least thinking about the way we humans treat turkeys. It focuses on a turkey called Jake who runs the Turkey Liberation Front and he teams up with another turkey, Reggie, to travel back in time to the first Thanksgiving to prevent turkeys from becoming the traditional holiday meal. Woody Harrelson, the actor who is the voice of Jake, is well known for being an ethical vegan so I think that's a good sign. The fact that one US critic made a big deal of not taking his kids to see it during the Thanksgiving holiday over there underlines this — his article, which has been widely shared by people on social media, alleged that taking kids to see the film would wreck the holiday. The question begs but why? Too revealing to the real story about turkey exploitation I guess.

Have a good and restful festive season. I will be in touch again in the new year ●

TO VISIT A POULTRY PLACE EMAIL freehook@bigpond.com

**DONATIONS ARE WELCOMED AND CAN BE SENT TO BEDE CARMODY
PO BOX 976 CIVIC SQUARE ACT 2608**

**OR DIRECTLY DEPOSITED INTO THE
FOLLOWING BANK ACCOUNT
BSB 012925 ACCOUNT 484228991**

**KEEP UP TO DATE WITH ALL THE HAPPENINGS HERE VIA FACEBOOK
www.facebook.com/apoultryplace**