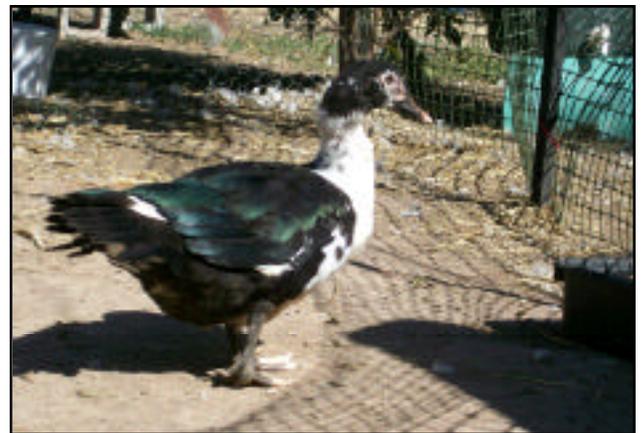


Thankfully summer has come to an end and not before time. It has seriously been the worse summer I have ever experienced since coming down here from Sydney back in 1999. Three heatwaves in January and February took a toll and I unfortunately lost some friends. In recent weeks some well welcomed rain and cooler temperatures has seen the sheep paddocks and other grazing areas begin to green up a little. Hopefully with some more rain during the next few weeks there will be enough regrowth to see us through the winter and thus avoid having to buy another load of hay, as I had to do just after Christmas, for the first time in six years as there was so little feed in the paddocks for the sheep. Tonight while I was doing the rounds I found another sign that the seasons are changing — Peabody and Peter peacocks are loosing their flashy tail feathers, and it won't be till spring time when they get all flamboyant again.

Apart from the weather it has been a busy few weeks here, particularly because I've been busy with the paid working gig, the nature of which has meant working at least one day almost every weekend. It has also meant a lot of day trips to country towns, which brings with it personal challenges like passing treelees paddocks with cows and sheep in them; seeing signs advertising the rodeo is coming to town; passing the hide and leather shop or the saleyards, or the trucks transport the 'livestock' to the sales; the roadkills, the burnt-out land.

While a few friends left there have been new arrivals — not replacements, just newcomers and each has quite a lucky tale to tell. First up was Lucky Duck, (pictured right) who arrived at A Poultry Place on January 25 with some people from Sydney who were coming down to celebrate the sanctuary's 13th birthday. On their way they took a wrong turn and found Lucky Duck in the middle of the road and with no farm nearby it is assumed he literally fell off a truck. Still quite young he was slow in meeting some of the other resident drakes but has now settled in and is part of an 18-strong flock of drakes.



Next to arrive were two roosters, (pictured left) rescued by a fantastic passionate young woman called Gracie. "I was driving to work two days ago past some broiler chicken 'jails' and came across two escapees...I wasn't entirely sure where they came from but as both sides of the road where 'jails' I had to assume that they where not someone's loving companion animal and I could not bring myself to return them to the sheds (which are pretty far from the road anyway). To cut it short I bought them home and to my surprise at 5am was woken by these two little fellows (as so was the rest of the neighbourhood (I'm not very popular at the moment) So my good intention to keep them and talk the husband into it will not be a possibility."

As luck had it I had a spare temporary rooster run available and Gracie brought the two boys down here. As it turned out they were not escapees from a broiler farm but most likely had been dumped as they are roosters and of 'no economic value' to anyone. One of whom has a deformed foot but doesn't let that interfere with his life.

I was also happy to help out a woman whom had rescued a quartet of bantam chickens (pictured right) only to received a letter from her local council, which gave her two weeks "to get rid of them". Two of the four are roosters and a neighbour had complained to the council. Eventually these four will join the bantam chicken flock.



Last month I ran through a list of sanctuaries which had started since A Poultry Place began back in 2001. This month I'm excited to say another two new sanctuaries are soon to open their gates in NSW. Manning River Farm Animal Sanctuary near Taree is the baby of four very dear friends — Sharron, Fiona, Tara and Denise. A little closer to home Disposable Heroes Rooster Sanctuary on the south coast will open in May. This is fabulous news for the many, many animals who need homes. No one sanctuary can cope with all requests. The fact that these new sanctuaries are opening in places where there hasn't been a presence before is also great.

Across the border in the ACT, the local politicians have passed legislation which bans the use of battery cages, sow stalls, farrowing crates. While this legislation sets an important national precedent it does not mean the ACT is factory farm free as the ACT Government is giving producer Pace millions of dollars to convert it's battery operation to a barn-laid egg set up. What annoyed me the most though about this development was how it was spun to people. The Greens, who sponsored the bill ran online promos which read: "Her mother was a battery hen, Her grandmother was a battery hen Her daughters will be free". What about her sons?, was the first thing that came to my mind when I saw it. I have to say it really pissed me off, a feeling which was made worse when many, many people, even some who call themselves animal rights campaigners liked it without even questioning the obvious — what about the male chicks? I posted that question to the politician who sponsored the bill and am yet to get a response. I know these things take time but yet again it reminded me how little people think about roosters. These on-line promos came a few weeks after the RSPCA launched a new campaign 'Set My Sisters Free', which again made no mention of what happens to the millions of male chicks born as part of the egg industry. there is so little respect for roosters out there.

Talking of roosters a new school year has begun and it's timely to ask everyone to make a determined stance in 2014 against any school hatching projects they hear of as sanctuaries like A Poultry Place us cannot possibly cope with all the 'by-products' from these silly in-class experiments. The companies behind hatching projects promote them as fun programs that enable children to see chicks actually hatching from their eggs and therefore teach valuable lessons about 'the life cycle'. However all they do is teach kids that fragile chicks are nothing more than teaching aides, not sentient beings. And that they are disposable. At the end of the projects the chicks are usually collected by the company and become someone's dinner. If you have kids, grandkids, nieces or nephews at schools where they are proposing to have hatching projects please find your voice and speak out

against them — there are many resources available to help you in your quest email me at freehook@bigpond.com if you want to know more.

Finally, I'm honoured that I'll again be a part of the **Activist Emotional Wellbeing Workshop**, which is being run by Animal Liberation NSW, on **April 5 in Sydney**. Topics this year will include Anger Management; Cognitive and dialectical behaviour therapy techniques to help deal with social estrangement and/or feelings of disillusionment; Depression; How To Avoid Activist Burnout and Hope. Passing on what I have learnt through my own experiences as an activist and my professional experiences, working with volunteer activists since 2003, has seen me develop a special interest in the emotional wellbeing of people working for social change and how best to try and avoid burnout. The workshop is free and open to all activists, regardless of your level of activism. **To RSVP email sydneyhq@animal-lib.org.au or phone the office on (02) 9262 3221. ●**

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**

