



## NEWS UPDATE AUGUST 2017

To say it's been an interesting few weeks is an understatement ..... where to begin.....

This week marked eighteen years since I left Sydney and began living hands-on with the rescued and unwanted by agreeing to live at Atchin Tan Sanctuary for a year or two as one of the guys who ran it took the opportunity to pursue an overseas job opportunity. The experience inspired me to begin thinking about creating my own sanctuary and at the start of 2001 A Poultry Place began taking shape.

This week also saw snow fall – perhaps winter's last hurrah the days have been lovely of late. Even if it is frosty in the morning it quickly burns-off and we've been having some lovely days of winter sun. Well, all except one day a fortnight ago when it rained. I remember that day clearly because once the rain stopped the sun came out and I went outside to check on everything and managed to slip over in some mud. It's not as if I haven't ever done that before but this time I did it well and managed to fracture my ankle..... so my leg now lives in a moon boot and will do so for the next six weeks or so. To say it makes life challenging is a little bit of an understatement but we are managing things so far thanks to some fab help from friends and supporters. The guys at the local stockfeeds have been great as well delivering and unloading feed for me and also offering any other support. If you have some spare time in the next month or so let me know and want to lend a hand please let me know

In an addition to all this life goes on. Before my incident eight hens “that are no longer laying” joined the main flock after they were inherited by a family who moved into a new home and the previous humans left them behind.

A duck called Derik also joined us from the Southern Highlands after a backyard tragedy: *“Last night my husband and I returned home from work to find our beloved female call duck Diane had somehow managed to escape her pen and had been killed by our dogs. We are devastated as we have raised her from a duckling and she was to turn five in January. What's worse is now we are left with her beloved mate Derik who is obviously missing her as he won't leave his pond to eat and just keeps calling for her. We discussed rescuing another middle-aged female duck to keep Derik company but to be honest I'm now much too nervous to add*



*another duck to our family until we can move and build a new enclosure. Sadly, we just don't have the funding or time to do this at the moment. I've followed your work for some time and am ashamed that I am contacting you for possible help but being a middle-aged drake, I know he will be difficult to home and quite honestly it makes me nervous to think where he could end up! I don't know if you are able to accommodate private rehoming as I'm sure you already have a high demand for spots at your beautiful sanctuary but after watching him call out for her all morning, I had to at least try. Thanks for taking the time to read this and I do understand if you're not in a position to help."*



And again I was reminded of the efforts some humans are willing to go to in order to help their fellow beings. When Miriam came across these four chickens who had been dumped in a suburban park near where she lived she knew she had to do something. *"I don't know how long they've been there as I only saw them yesterday and I don't go to the park every day I have asked the lady from Hen Rescue if she can help find a home for them, so this prompted me to round them up today. She told me that it's common for roosters to be dumped once they get too old after being looked after as chicks by a school hatching program."* The four boys are now safe and settling in here.

On a sadder note, Quacker, a duck from the intensive duck industry who joined us in February 2015 has departed. Quacker was a unique individual who was born with a deformed beak, yet somehow learnt to survive. While deaths are unfortunately par for the course when you run a sanctuary it always upsets you. One of the first things I learnt when I began living full-time at Atchin Tan was that deaths are inevitable and can happen despite all the care and attention you give a being. Death sometimes comes suddenly and inexplicably, like in Quacker's case, and in such instances I console myself by knowing in the time he or she was with me they were in a better place than from where they came. They were valued for who they were, not what they could do for me; they got to experience love from a human; and hopefully they had a chance to experience life as it was intended for them not how we humans determined it for them. I can't do any more than that.



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