

# Mount Gambier Harness Racing Club Inc

## President's Report 2013/14

I have pleasure in presenting the 67<sup>th</sup> Annual President's Report of the Mount Gambier Harness Racing Club for the 2013/14 season.

The Club has enjoyed a very successful season with nine race meetings held during the year, including the very successful Baxter Hire & Sales Mount Gambier Pacing Gold Cup on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2014.

The Cup meeting provided a wonderful evening of racing for the exceptional crowd in attendance, with very favourable weather. Congratulations are extended to the 2014 Baxter Hire / Carlton Draught Gold Cup winner, Paris To Berlin, owned by Peter and Lesley Medhurst, trained by Barry Finnis and driven by Brent Howard. The night featured a high standard of racing with the Emma Stewart trained Celebrity Lass taking out the City of Mount Gambier Fillies and Mares Pace and Galleons Warrior was successful in winning the Allan Scott Memorial Final .

The Club is very fortunate to have the generous support of its major sponsors – Baxter Hire, Carlton Draught and Scotts Agencies for a number of years now, and I wish to thank them for their continued support of Harness Racing.

I would also like to thank our sponsors, the Glencoe Community and Sporting Clubs, the Heywood community and the Naracoorte Trotting Club for their support of their cup meetings, all trophy and rug donors – your support throughout the season is very much appreciated.

The Club has had a very busy year, both financially and socially, conducting a very successful 'beer' raffle which enabled the Club to provide entertainment for the children during the year – (Thank you Anthony Rice for your organisation), successful Stallion Services Auction and Dinner, and our Club Sponsors Dinner and raffle draws with generous support from our sponsors and donors. The Calcutta Night proved a success with John Dunne in attendance as guest speaker.

The Club was able to undertake several projects during the year, including the completion of the installation of the new BBQ and server in the canteen to provide a safer and more efficient service to our Patrons and reverse cycle air conditioning has been installed in the bar area. A new public walkway has been installed adjacent to the stalls area, providing a safe area for public patrons. The Horse Roll area was finally removed and planted with grass to give a designated area for float loading and unloading. The televisions in that area were relocated to the drivers' rooms. A new raised presentation deck was built adjacent to the finish line, which has enabled presentations to continue without interruption to the track maintenance. Grounds maintenance work has been undertaken by an employment scheme in conjunction with Show Society, and has provided a timely 'spruce up' to the area.

The Club's appreciation goes out to the volunteers and sponsors who assisted with these projects.

The Cattle Rearing Scheme has again provided a large financial return to the Club – the club's appreciation is extended to these members who have assisted with the cattle which provide additional finances for future years. Special thanks to Graham Brook and the Naracoorte Trotting Club and also to Barb McPhee from Kongorong for the calf rearing.

A 'Hay Drive' was also conducted, with the support of local producers. Thanks to Peter Richardson for coordinating and to the farmers who donated hay.

Our "100" Club was once again successfully run by Percy Dunn and Fritz Glynn, with \$4,900 being returned to the Club. Thanks Percy and Fritz for another great effort.

The track has been in excellent condition all year and this has only happened with the support of the track committee and support staff and I offer my thanks to you all for your assistance. With the track improvements completed last year, in my opinion has brought a better standard of racing.

The support of patrons, owners and trainers has been great - the support by harness enthusiasts is crucial to ensure the continuation of racing in the South East of South Australia.

I would also like to thank all the volunteers who have assisted in any way throughout the season – it is very much appreciated. The support of the Gambier City Lions Club – thanks Trevor Bowden and staff, and the St John's Volunteers – Julieanne Feast and volunteers, the service you provide is very much appreciated. The Harness Club and the Mount Gambier A & H Society continue to work together for the betterment of both clubs and I thank Peter Woodruff and Frank Tilley for their assistance and support.

Neil Shepherd, Barry Carraill and members of the Pony Harness Club continue to provide an enthusiastic and exciting element to our race meetings – thanks to everyone involved. The support of the media has been very good, with special thanks to The Border Watch and David Gilbert.

The final two race meetings were unfortunately cancelled due to a lack of nominations,

The Club concluded the season with a very successful end of season Trophy Presentation and Windup on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> May, with nearly 80 enthusiasts attending.

All in all, the season has provided keenly contested racing between the stables with many visiting owners and trainers also attending. The Clubs main feature races presented a great tussle between the David Drury and Barry Finnis stables, with David taking out the Leading Driver and Leading Trainer Awards, and Jason Finnis receiving the Leading Junior Driver Award. The Horse of the Year Award was won by Galleons Warrior (David Drury), Leading 3YO Horse was Top Share (Barry Finnis) and Most Improved Horse was Galleons Warrior (David Drury).

To our Committee, I thank them very much for their support and assistance throughout the year to ensure that the Mount Gambier Harness Racing Club can continue to remain healthy and successful.

The Mount Gambier Harness Club looks forward to an exciting season of racing in 2014/15 with an allocation of 13 race meetings and an early indication of increased stake money.

Phil Wood  
 President  
 28 July 2014

#### Committee Members Attendances at Meetings

	<b>Possible</b>	<b>Attended</b>	<b>Apologies</b>
Phil Wood	13	12	1
David Earl	13	13	0
Brendan Baker	13	10	3
Dennis Gray	13	13	0
Malcolm Jones	13	12	1
Ray Lattin	13	12	1
Peter Medhurst	13	12	1
Anthony Rice	13	13	0
Neil Shepherd	13	12	1
David Spier	13	12	1
Gary Scanlon	Resigned 18.11.13	1	3