

## EGYPT EQUINE AID

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NEW



## Egypt Equine Aid

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Photo: Jeff Robson

### **Egypt Equine Aid founder Jill Barton awarded Order of Australia Medal**

Jill Barton, founder of Egypt Equine Aid, was awarded the Order of Australia Medal for service to the welfare of equine animals by the Governor-General in the Queen's Birthday 2020 Honours List.

Egypt Equine Aid is a Cairo-based charity that offers free treatment to sick and injured horses, donkeys and mules.

The Governor-General His Excellency General the Honourable David John Hurley AC DSC (Retd) said the list recognises a group of outstanding Australians who have made a contribution to their community, to Australia globally or domestically.

"In this list we see all the positives that are in our community – we see the great ideas, we see the hard-work, we see the love and compassion for fellow human beings – it's a microcosm of Australia," the Governor-General said.

There were 933 Australians recognised in total, with 710 in the General Division, 41 per cent of which were women.

Perth born and raised, Ms Barton said she was humbled to receive the award.

“I’m honoured and very grateful to be acknowledged for the work we’re doing in Egypt, which has, at times, been incredibly challenging,” the former pathology nurse said.

“Many Australians don’t realise that about 10,000 ‘war horses’ were abandoned by our troops and left in Egypt after World War I, let alone the poor working conditions these beautiful creatures are forced to face.

“Locals were never taught animal husbandry - when the horses were left in Egypt, they weren’t left with an instruction manual. We’ve stepped in to fill that gap as well as providing the medical treatment that most owners can’t afford,” Ms Barton said.

After a trip to Egypt in 2013, Jill with her then husband Warren Barton couldn’t turn a blind eye. They were so shocked by the conditions of the horses, donkeys and mules that they put their retirement plans on hold, sold their Gosnells house and moved to Cairo to help care for the animals.

They established the charity Egypt Equine Aid in 2014, which also educates owners about equine care.

Ms Barton said that Egypt Equine Aid admitted it’s 400th patient already this year, adding that during an average month, there are about 20 untreatable horses deemed ‘hopeless cases’ and humanely euthanized.

“We can comfortably accommodate 60 inpatients but at the moment there are almost 100 horses and donkeys on the farm and we treat dozens of outpatients every day,” she said.

“The clinic is very busy and coronavirus has had a huge impact – we’re seeing an unprecedented amount of starving and abandoned horses, equal to or worse than post revolution days.

“The lack of tourism around the pyramid area, which is where most of patients work, means that the owners have little income for feed and no use for some of their horses. Truly, we’re hoping that many locals will go out of this hideous business of exploiting animals and turn to a different form of income permanently during this time.

“The founder of a neighbouring horse rescue has resigned due to coronavirus and left Egypt for her home country, so we are also doing what we can to help the horses left there.

“Many of our supporters are also doing it tough and have had to stop their regular donations.”

Ms Barton said that her goal is to build an equine hospital in Cairo that not only helps care for sick horses and donkeys, but also trains vets in equine care.

Egypt Equine Aid relies on donations and has received a small grant for equipment from the Australian Embassy in Cairo. To support the work of Egypt Equine Aid, visit <https://www.egyptequineaid.org/how-to-help/>

Website: <http://www.egyptequineaid.org/>

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