

Newsletter

June 2011

Elisabeth Curtis Centre Riding for the Disabled

Charity No. 1137217; Company No. 7302917



Charlotte Daniels (16) on Silver came first in her class in the Countryside Challenge at the Regional Qualifier. Well done, Charlotte!



Improving lives
Registered Charity
No.244108

Editorial

I feel I must start today by saying a great big “Thank You” to our supporters. Mrs Dicker of the Stanford-Dicker Trust and Derek Woods, whom some of you might remember from his time as a volunteer, have both been very generous in recent months. Some younger members of the wider community have also been working hard fundraising for us, as well as some closer to home. More of them later.

This has meant that we now have a new kitchen area to comply with modern hygiene regulations, as well as improved storage. We are well into sorting out a sprinkler system for the indoor school and we can face the prospect that the Hay Store is no longer fit for purpose without worrying too much about the cost. Many thanks to Allan and various others who have managed to keep it watertight for so many years.

We must also say another “Thank You” to Ian Bambridge for his time and expertise in installing opening windows in all the stables. Some of you may have noticed how much fresher the air is in the stable block in recent weeks? We wouldn’t normally expect to need the windows open in April but this year we certainly did! Ian gave up a whole weekend to fit the windows and a large chunk of time at home making them. When we asked him for the bill, he was reluctant to take any money at all, but was persuaded to take £100 for the materials. At £10 per window, that is what I call a bargain! One company had quoted us £400 per window!

Finally, a large vote of thanks has to go to Kirsty, who has been our Secretary and a fundraiser for many years. Recently she has also qualified as an instructor. This meant that she was now on three committees involved with the running of the Centre - a lot of work and a lot of time! She has very wisely decided to put her energies into working with her riders, and has passed on fundraising and secretarial work to others. The Centre is very lucky in having such dedicated people.

Jan (Editor / Chairman)

The Regional Qualifiers

On Sunday 8th May a number of our riders entered a competition arranged by the RDA for entrants from RDA groups all over the Eastern region. For most of the riders this was their first time at an event like this and they were very excited!

There were two different classes; one was the dressage where riders are required to demonstrate their horsemanship at different paces and through different manœuvres. The other was the Regional Countryside Challenge Qualifier where riders had to negotiate lots of different obstacles such as the zig-zag path, the arch, the apple trees, the duck pond and the gate. Riders were in different classes according to age and ability.

All riders completed their classes successfully; some did very well and are to be congratulated on making it through to the National competition.

Esa Swaby rode Huggy Bear to 2nd place in the dressage and 6th in the Countryside Challenge.

Roisin McLoughlin rode Silver to 2nd place in the Countryside Challenge and 1st in the dressage.

Charlotte Daniels came 1st in the Countryside Challenge and 2nd in the Senior dressage (Walk and Trot).

Charlotte Adams came 3rd on Sunny in the Countryside Challenge, while Sunny came up trumps again for Leah Rednall in the Senior dressage taking 1st place.

James Walker came 2nd in his Countryside Challenge class.

All this means that Roisin, James and Charlotte Daniels will be going forward to the National Championships in Gloucestershire on 9/10 July.

While not everyone qualified for the National, we have had lots of very positive feedback about the day. Here are a few comments: "I thought the competition last Sunday was great - LOL (loads of laughs). Thank you for letting me take part." Keavy. " The competition was fun!" Charlotte Adams. "A fantastic day out for all the family. A week on and our daughter is still talking about it. She treasures her rosette and shows everyone. Taking part has been great for her confidence. Thank you." Caitlin's Mum.

If you would like to read their full comments, please go to our website www.elisabethcurtiscentre.co.uk



*James Walker on Huggy Bear came second in the Countryside Challenge and qualified for the Nationals with Roisin and Charlotte Daniels.
Well done, James!*



Roisin McLoughlin (7) on Silver came first in her "Introduction to Dressage" class. She was also awarded the trophy for highest percentage mark in all dressage classes. Well done Roisin!

Medieval Bromham - some new friends for ECC

Some of you may have attended the Medieval Joust at Bromham Village Hall in May. The authentic mounted games and foot combat were interesting and entertaining, while the joust itself was seriously scary. Imagine a man on half a ton of horse charging at you, full gallop, with a huge lance aimed straight at your chest - not for the faint hearted! They also laid on a meal which was certainly fit for any baronial hall!

One of the brave knights, and his good lady, are residents of Bromham, and at his instigation the event was organised as a fundraiser for the Elisabeth Curtis Centre. Martyn and Miranda Smith got together with lots of friends, from all over the country, as well as other members of the Pitzhangar Lodge, to bring an event to Bromham which they would usually present in places like Warwick Castle or English Heritage sites. The weather was not kind on the day with strong winds and the threat of rain, but the brave souls who attended enjoyed an afternoon out with a difference.

Martyn and Miranda, along with Bob and his wife Ellen, from Pitzhangar Lodge were very pleased to be able to donate £940.50 to the Centre as a result of the joust and mounted games. Many thanks to Martyn, Miranda and a whole host of friends, as well as other members of the Lodge, for all the hard work they put into this memorable day and for helping the Centre to keep running.

Martyn and Miranda have gone one step further and offered to do a short demonstration of Medieval Mounted Games at our **Open Afternoon on June 25th**. It will be from approximately 2.15 to 2.35 and will feature two beautiful, black Friesian horses. It will be worth coming out just to see these stunning creatures in action! Martyn and Miranda don't look too bad either! Unfortunately they cannot do a full joust because we do not have any flat land.



Miranda collects rings with her sword during a demonstration of Medieval mounted games. See her in action at our Open Afternoon 25th June.

Some Very Enterprising Young Fundraisers

The Sports Traider charity recently initiated a project to challenge local schools to raise funds for sport related activities. Ten boys, aged 12 and 13, from Bedford Preparatory School took up this challenge on behalf of ECC and the Sports Traider charity itself. They collected unwanted sports kit from the school community and held two bring and buy sales. They also managed to get some signed sports items from the Harlequins Rugby team and other sources, which they raffled. The boys were delighted to be the area winners and to donate £301.48 to the Elisabeth Curtis Centre. Many thanks to Robert Salvesen, Adit Shah, Joshua Taylor, Alex Stammers, Harry Jackson, Ray Park, Emilio Llanaj, James Smith, Oscar Garrad, and Jim Cooper for all their hard work. I am sure we will be hearing more of such enterprising characters in the future!

Spirit of Young England Awards.

The magazine "This England" has recently set up an award scheme to celebrate the work of young people in the voluntary sector. Most press coverage of young people seems to show them getting into trouble but we know this is not the case. We are very pleased to announce that our young volunteers are the first to be recognised with a certificate and a donation of £100 to the Centre. There was a full page article in the magazine with three pictures - wonderful free publicity. I just wish that more of them had been around when I took the photos! Many thanks to all our young volunteers; please keep coming!

Thinking about Parking.

The Management and Riding Committees have been talking a lot recently about fire safety. As part of this discussion, we have been considering what might happen if a fire engine needed to gain access to our buildings while Chestnut Avenue was full of cars. I think the short answer is that any vehicle that was in the way might get a "nudge" from the fire engine. There are also large lorries, such as skip lorries, using Chestnut Avenue. To avoid damage to your car we would like to suggest that, where possible you park beyond our gates, preferably in the community hall car park. It is a tricky situation! However, please do not park on the grass verge. It is an offence and one which Bromham Parish Council is cracking down on.

AGM of Elisabeth Curtis Centre - Wednesday 13th July 2011

This year will be the first AGM of the new charitable company and there will be some new procedures to consider. Please come along if you are a member and want to vote. If you are not a member you can still come along and be part of any discussions. The four remaining members of the old Management Committee will all be standing down this year. Sandra and Allan are willing to be re-elected, but Jan and John would prefer not to if someone can be found to take their places. Jenny, Julia and Abbie have been co-opted onto the Management committee and hopefully will be elected as full members by the meeting. The AGM takes place at Bromham Village Hall, 7.30 for 8.00 p.m.

Fundraising

Since the last Newsletter in March 2011 we have only had one fundraising event - but we certainly have a lot coming up in the Summer and Autumn!!

On May 7th Audrey and Jenny took the Toy Shop to Wootton Fun Day. The weather was very uncertain that day with lots of grey clouds and the threat of rain, but "the girls" toughed it out and managed to take £108. Well done, girls.

18th June is a collection in Olney town centre. The sign-up sheet is on the school door if you would like to help.

25th June is our Open Afternoon. As mentioned earlier, we have a new attraction this year - Medieval Mounted Games, but we still have lots of old favourites that, at the time of writing, nobody has offered to run. I have lots of items for a tombola stall (more always welcome) but no-one to run it. Please look at the list in the school to see if there is anything you could help with. We would particularly like to see more of the riders and their families getting involved. Lots of you have experience of this kind of thing and are full of ideas!

We would also like to have a drawing and painting competition this year. Pictures can be any size and any medium. There will be classes for riders and siblings. Entries need to go to Jan by 22nd June at the latest and must be clearly marked with the artist's name, age and whether they are a rider or sibling. Prizes will be art materials and will be awarded to the first three in each class.

14th August is the Summer Fair at the St. John's, Moggerhanger, the Sue Ryder Care Facility. We will be taking the Toy shop and any plants left over from Open Day. It is a great day out for all the family. Please come along and support the Centre and Sue Ryder.

10th September - Charity Auction, Church Hall, Church End, Kempston Rural. This is a new venture for the Centre fundraisers as well as a new venue. Regrettably, we have decided to move some of our events away from Bromham Village Hall as the fees are now more than double the cost of Church End.

Audrey and Jenny have been working hard to persuade people to donate items or services for the auction and have about 40 lots at present. There is a terrific variety of things on offer, from Beauty Treatments to an MOT for your car. More information soon. Tickets will be **£7.50 per head which will include a Fish and Chip Supper.** We will be running a bar with sensibly priced drinks. Our auctioneer for the night will be David Fletcher, one of the valuers from the BBC's "Flog it!" Some of you may know him from Peacocks Auction Rooms in Bedford. There will **only be room for about 60 people** so if you want to book tickets now, please contact Audrey or Jenny via the Tuesday morning tray.

1st October Quiz Night at Bromham Village Hall

16th October Apple Day at Bromham Mill. We are hoping to take the Toy Shop to this event.

19th November Race Night at the Church Hall, Church End, Kempston Rural.

20th November Wootton Craft Fair. We may be taking the Toy shop to this event.

? December Carol singing at Bedford Railway Station.

Term Dates for Bedfordshire Schools

22nd July - end of term

6th September - start of Autumn Term. (N.B. 5th September is a training day and may or may not effect riding)

24th - 28th October - Half Term Break, (N.B. 31st October is a training day.)

16th December - end of term.

4th January 2012 - start of Spring term. (N.B. 3rd of January is a training day.) It is quite possible that riding will not re-start until **Monday 9th January**. It is very hard to heat a building like the indoor school! Please check with your instructor.

13th - 17th February - Half Term Break

30th March - end of term.