

Newsletter

March 2011

Elisabeth Curtis Centre Riding for the Disabled

Charity No. 1137217; Company No. 7302917



Annick and Charlotte receiving ASDAN awards from Princess Anne



Improving lives
Registered Charity
No.244108

Editorial

It seems like a long time since the last Newsletter. Some very pleasant and positive things have happened since then but it will be a while before we can think of the icy weather of last December without a shudder. Life would have been very difficult for the ponies if it had not been for the perseverance and dedication of our two grooms. Journeys to work which would normally take ten minutes were transformed into dangerous treks of an hour and a half. Checking water troughs involved hammers to break ice and later, struggles with yards of hose pipe to get water over the road to the ponies on Golf Hill, from the only tap that wasn't frozen - the one in the office! Many, many thanks, Ann and Gayl - where would we be without you!

In the last Newsletter, I told you about the RDA conference where we met Princess Anne and two of our riders were presented with Certificates for their ASDAN work. After only three months, the photographs have finally arrived. You can also read accounts of the day from the riders themselves.

The Volunteers' Christmas Dinner was again held at the Swan, Bromham and was attended by 41 people. The food was good, the company great and a pleasant evening was had by all. They must all have been in a good mood because the raffle raised £100!

The Management Committee and the Fundraising Group are always looking for more help with the more humdrum side of running the Centre - the paperwork, keeping us legal and solvent! Not as much fun as working with the ponies and riders, but essential if the Centre is to continue.

We are, therefore, very happy to welcome Jenny Barnsdale as a co-opted member of the Management Committee and the Fundraising Group. She is joined on the Fundraising Group by Ros Ward. Both are full of ideas and enthusiasm - long may it continue! But there is still plenty of room for more people! We are particularly looking for people with computer skills to help with internet research, poster design and paperwork.

Finally, a change has taken place which most of you will not even notice. The Elisabeth Curtis Centre has changed from a charity to a charitable company. The main impact will be that the Trustees i.e. the Management Committee, no longer have any element of personal liability for anything that happens at the Centre. In the event of negligence being proved, the liability of the trustees and members is limited to £1 only. The only changes that you may notice are the new charity number and that, at the next AGM, members will be issued with a new, numbered membership certificate which they will have to sign for. The date of the AGM will be announced in June.

If you would like to become a member and have a say in how the Centre is run, please contact Ruud via the Tuesday evening tray. The membership fee is £5 annually.

Jan

ASDAN AND ME BY CHARLOTTE ROOMES

I chose to do the ASDAN course as I love horses and I love knowing how to look after them. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to ride any more because I have a bad left hip. So ASDAN was a good thing to do.

I especially liked the sections on grooming and knowing about how to look after horses as I was with horses. I did like the homeworks too but not as much. Sharon and Denise gave them to me. I liked the colouring and doing research into all the different types of horses and then putting them down on paper. I put them all in a folder and I felt brilliant when it was finished because I could look back on what I'd already done.

I liked going to Newmarket to collect my certificate and meeting Princess Anne. She said, "Well done", and shook my hand. We went for a pub lunch with the other people and then went to the Horse Racing Museum and looked round all the different horses. We had a lovely day.

ASDAN Certificate

About two years ago, when I was working at The Elizabeth Curtis Centre, Sharon and Denise asked me if I would like to do an ASDAN qualification. I thought it would be a good idea to learn more facts about horses.

I had to do various things which had practical parts and theory involving reading, writing and drawing. The subjects were breeds of horses, grooming, feeding, tack and tacking up and cleaning out. The bits I enjoyed the most involved hands-on with the horse, mainly Huggy.

I loved having to groom him, pick out his hooves and naming the points of the horse using him as an example. Huggy was a good sample because he was patient and calm all the time.

The researching and paperwork was not as much fun. It was a bit difficult and I did learn from it but I liked the practical parts better.

The best thing about doing the ASDAN qualification was that I knew that being with horses was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. I thought that if I tried hard at it, I might be able to go to College and do a qualification so that I could get a job at some stables, helping around the horses.

Guess what, I am now at College doing a Foundation Certificate.

I felt very proud when Sharon and Denise gave me my completed folder because I could see how much work I had done. But, the biggest surprise was meeting Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal, who gave me my certificate and made it all seem so much more special. I was over the moon with joy (and some nerves)!!!

Thank you Sharon and Denise (and everyone at the Elizabeth Curtis Centre) for giving me this super opportunity.

*Annick Topping
January, 2011*

Fundraising

20 November Toy Shop at Bedford School for Girls Christmas Fair took £108.25.
21 November Toy Shop at Wootton Craft Fair took £112.55.
27 November Race Night made £330.50.
10 December Toy Shop at Fernwood School took £110.15.
11 / 12 December Collection at Budgens made £423.77.
25 / 26 February Collection at Tesco, Goldington made £703.06.

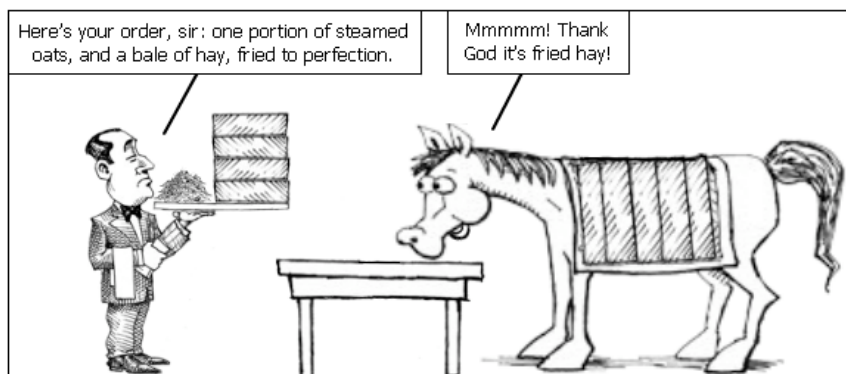
As you can see, the Toy Shop is still ticking over, not making huge sums of money but doing great PR work and keeping us in the public eye.

Only about 30 people actually went to the Race Night, but the event was very well supported by people who couldn't go on the night, so bought horses or sponsored races instead. We had a good time having a "bit of a flutter" with an excellent buffet to calm us down for a while in the middle. Many thanks to all of you who supported the event and to Audrey and Jenny for their wonderful catering skills.

The collections raised good sums, as well as enlisting some new volunteers. They are very easy to do and it is very rewarding to talk to people about the Centre. Many thanks to the volunteers who made these events possible and to the generous people who made donations.

The next collection will be in Olney on 18th June. If you can spare an hour or two, please sign up and come along. As the old saying goes - many hands make work light!

A Horse Restaurant by Eric Perlin



Term Dates for Bedfordshire Schools

8 April - end of Spring Term

25 April - start of Summer Term. N B Tuesday, 26 April is a training day which may affect the riding session.

30 May - 3 June Half Term

22 July - end of Summer Term

Individual sessions may vary; please check with your instructor.

Forthcoming Events

12 March Quiz Night at Bromham Village Hall, 7.30 for 8.00, teams of up to 8. £3.50 per head, under 12's £2. BYO supper. Raffle. Call 01234 297456 to book a table.

12 June Open Farm at Manor Farm, Stagsden. 10.00 - 4.00. Admission free. We hope to take the Toy Shop and to do Pony Rides, weather permitting!

18 June Collection, Olney town centre. Look out for sign-up poster.

1 October Quiz Night at Bromham Village Hall.

19 November Race Night at the Church Hall, Church End, Kempston Rural. We are trying a new venue as the cost of hiring the hall in Bromham takes large bites out of any funds we raise.

Other events - dates not decided at time of going to press. Watch for posters.

May / June Our Open Day

July AGM

September (?) Charity Auction. Please contact Audrey or Jenny if you have any ideas or would like to help.