

Newsletter

November 2015

Elisabeth Curtis Centre Riding for the Disabled

Charity No. 1137217; Company No. 7302917



Abigail & Roisin at the RDA National Championships at Hartpury in Gloucestershire.



RDA

It's what you **can** do that counts

Chairman's Report

For those of you I haven't met, my name is Victoria Liston, and I have now taken on the role of Chairman. I volunteer mainly on a Tuesday evening, and was the Secretary of the Management Committee prior to taking on this new role. Work permitting, I will be trying to visit the other riding sessions so hope to meet a few more faces soon.

I would like to start this report by thanking Jan and John Tozer for all they have done for the Centre over many years. They have recently resigned from the Management Committee, and Jan resigned as Chairman. They will be continuing to support the Centre so we will not be losing them completely. As many of you will know, they have worked tirelessly on behalf of the Centre, spending countless hours fund-raising, undertaking maintenance and improvement projects, and dealing with the huge range of tasks involved in keeping an organisation like ours running.

Jacqui Whinnett has also resigned, so I would like to thank Jacqui for her contributions to the Centre.

As I am finding out, there is a lot to the role of Chairman, so I would like to thank all the members of the Management Committee, the Riding Committee, along with our amazing grooms and fellow volunteers who have been so supportive and patient while I find my feet. A number of projects have been undertaken at the Centre since the last newsletter. New doors from the stables into the school have kindly been made by Jacqui and her husband Malcolm. The top of the mounting block has been painted with non-slip paint, as the rubber had perished. Heritage Arboriculture kindly spent an afternoon pruning and maintaining the pine trees in the Sensory Ride. Luckily they managed to complete the work just before a heavy rain shower. The stables have had a fresh coat of paint, and to help us with this task a number of volunteers from RK Harrison came along, so our thanks to them for all their help.

Most recently, work has been undertaken to update our bathrooms; the job isn't quite finished, but we have a new sliding door on our accessible toilet and both bathrooms have been replaced. Our thanks go to I M Plumbing and Heating, A T Plumbing Supplies, Moore's Skips and Hazelwood Homes, as well as everyone from the Centre who has been involved.

As well as helping us with painting the stables, RK Harrison have also been fundraising for the Centre, as we are one of their charities of the year. They arrange an annual Charity Ball, which Jan, John, Ros and Roy attended on behalf of the Centre. The event sounded like a great success. They also nominated us for an award from the Aviva Community Fund, and we were lucky enough to receive an award of £1,000. I attended an event in London along with a representative from RK Harrison, to receive our award, and it now is on display in the hallway. Thank you to everyone who voted for us.

I would like to end with a request for help. Our Saturday morning session is currently without a permanent session organiser, so if you think you could help, please let Kirsty know. Our Management Committee has been shrinking over the past few months, so if you are interested in becoming more involved in the running of the Centre, please do let me know. Alternatively, if joining a committee is not for you, but you have a particular skill or area of expertise, and would like to help on something specific, again please do let me know.

Victoria Liston (Chairman)

Contributions to the next newsletter

We always welcome articles and suggestions for the newsletter, maybe you would like to share what you enjoy about coming to the Centre? The next newsletter will be out in February, so if you could let me have any contributions by the middle of January.



*Some of you may know
Victoria, our new
Chairman, from her help
with the ECC Calendars
photoshoots*

-Ed.

Donations

In 2014, two teams of four cyclists cycled in relay over 500 miles in 3 days on gruelling mountain roads in the Vosges region of France and Germany. Team Axis, from Axis Electronics raised £2342.66. The Spokesmen team, who were raising money in memory of Cathy Pettipiece, who volunteered at the Centre, raised £746.92. We also received a further donation of £142.13 in Cathy's memory.

In July, the One Stop store in Molivers Lane raised £260 for us.

In August, we received a donation of £750 from the Harradines, who have been generous supporters of the Centre for a number of years, and we are very thankful for their support.

HARTPURY 2015: 19th July

Ten weeks after Abigail & Roisin qualified at the Regional Championships at Oaklands College, Team Saturday, including honorary members Jenny & Cathy, geared up again, for the National Championships at Hartpury College, although judging by the dense email traffic between us on this alone, Kirsty & I hadn't really wound down. Of the 9 people involved– the above plus Jacqui, Lizzie & Fiona – only 2 had been before, Roisin in 2011 aged 7 when she rode Silver, & Kirsty as a helper in 2003 & 4, but this was her first time in charge. We debutantes had also been novices at the Regionals in May: a new experience, which both excited and made us all slightly nervous. Lolly was also making her debut.

A couple of weeks before Hartpury we set up a low budget & reduced countryside challenge course in the top field. Abbie & I had fun taking props from & back to the school. We 'test drove' our course, with Abbie as the pony & me as the sole helper. She was well behaved, didn't attempt to cow kick, buck or gallop off up the field, but she wasn't too impressed when I asked how her girth was umpteen times.

They say "seeing is believing". Now I've seen & been behind the scenes I really understand & appreciate just how much admin, planning, organising & preparing goes into getting riders, helpers & ponies ready for both the Regionals & the Nationals. The list of requirements, supplies & accessories for our ponies when they travel & stay away overnight is lengthy to say the least. We did leave the kitchen sink behind, but did take a wheelbarrow. Thanks to Gayl, Ann, Eileen & Denise who regularly updated our list we didn't forget anything for the ponies.

Lolly & Muscadeu's deluxe spa treatments started with a bath on Friday, then, for several hours on Saturday morning, we set to work with buckets, water carriers, a teapot, a hose, Jacqui's super shampoo, elbow grease & jaw work. They both looked somewhat forlorn & resigned when yet more water came their way, although at one point quite a bit of it went Lizzie's way. Lolly, usually the most patient, pliant & placid of ponies, decided enough was enough and craftily shifted herself onto the hose to stop its flow of water. By the end they were transformed from their workaday appearances to looking fit & ready for the red carpet. At the appointed hour of 2.30pm, "suited, booted" & boxed, they set off with Mr Banks & Jenny. Several hours later we rendezvoused at Hartpury; the journey for some being quicker & more direct than for others. Sadly Muscadeu was not able to compete, due to an issue with his vaccinations prior to him joining the Centre, meaning he couldn't be unloaded at Hartpury. Our options were to take Muscadeu & Lolly home Saturday evening, easily rejected, or to stable them overnight at a nearby farm commissioned for this purpose. Off they trotted, still in Mr Banks' box. Thus, their working weekend for which they had a 4* wash & brush-up & club class travel became a mini break, a Jolly for Lolly! Jacqui & Jenny, their devoted & adoring grooms for the weekend, checked on them at midnight Saturday then again a few hours later: they were in fine fettle. Whilst we were discussing using Lolly to compete & how Muscadeu would be up the road without her, the kindness of strangers intervened. Katy Downing, stable manager for the weekend & RDA Youth Co-ordinator, overheard our deliberations & immediately offered us her Fell pony (Waverhead) Ted: they'd just returned from giving, according to Liz, an apparently marvellous & entertaining display of side-saddle riding & theatrical dressage to music. We all Fell in love with Ted in an instant.

Sunday morning arrived in no time at all: I discovered each day has two 6'o clocks. I went for a walk around the showground & campus with my camera. As some riders had to compete soon after 8am there were already quite a few people tending to their ponies: mucking out, feeding, washing, grooming, schooling etc. I'm glad I did so because that half hour or so keeps returning to me: it's the Before & After atmosphere of a place, which reminded me of my childhood & teenage summers on the Kent coast where I grew up.

We were joined by Cathy, Lizzie & Fiona who came to help for the day, plus Abigail, Roisin & their families. Abigail & Roisin received & absorbed the news about Muscadeu well. I was taken by their composure, & was even more impressed by how they coped with riding a 'strange' pony

contd.→

HARTPURY 2015: 19th July (contd.)

within about an hour of first meeting him. Katy & Ted aren't part of an RDA Group, but with only one quick walk of the countryside challenge course for Katy, & none for Ted, they went into the ring, with Abigail riding & Jenny & Lizzie helping, without any outward sign of being complete novices. And, they both did brilliantly.

Bearing in mind the circumstances Abigail & Roisin did very well: Abigail also had to handle a sudden switch of ponies at the Regionals in May. They said they enjoyed themselves, which was the main thing. Just being at the Nationals was a positive experience for them & a significant achievement, with only 11 other riders from across the different RDA Regions in their class.

The weekend was interesting, tiring, challenging & eventful. Ultimately, it was special, joining hundreds of riders & their ponies from across the country together with hundreds more helpers all with a common cause, purpose & passion. It's easy to exist in a Bromham bubble, albeit a "small is beautiful" one: being at Hartpury was a reminder that we're part of something bigger than ourselves, that every day every week there are thousands of people uplifted by their experience of riding &/or helping at an RDA centre.

"Tally Ho" until Hartpury 2016!

Pauline Evans

Sunday 26.7.15 (a week later)

Ann's Afternoon

In June we watched Gayl whilst at work one morning. The clock's ticked its way to the afternoon, and we're now going to shadow Ann for the next 3 hours or so. She arrives between 3 & 4 o'clock weekdays.

After each session, helpers put out the ponies. Here's Ann driving up Chestnut Avenue. As she nears our fields she does a quick head count – currently 7 – to ensure all are present & correct.

Except on Wednesdays, when helpers are still there, she unlocks the Centre before going to the fields to check the ponies, move the fence to access fresh grass, and to medicate if necessary: Bonny looks forward to her daily treacle sandwich, containing her anti-inflammatory and pain-killer powder - "a spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down...." On Tuesdays she brings the ponies in and prepares them for the evening session which starts at 6.30: feeding, picking out their feet and grooming them. If it's wet they might stay in after the Tuesday morning rides.

She mucks out all the stables, on a Wednesday ably-assisted by Jenny, who after a brief rest and a cuppa following the session says has "work to do."

Although all Ann's days follow a pattern, they're all different, and she likes each one. Her favourite job is simply "looking after the ponies". She only declared a least favourite job when pressed: going up to the muck heap behind the hay barn in the rain (this heap only comes into existence when the skip is full).

The ponies have Fridays and Sundays at leisure. On these days Ann's routine is slightly different. On Fridays she and Gayl work together doing jobs that need both of them: clipping the ponies and harrowing the fields.

contd.→

Ann's Afternoon contd.

It's also the day when the farrier, saddler, dentist, chiropractor and vet visit, so the ponies are brought in to their stables.

Ann has Saturdays off, Gayl Sundays, so Ann comes in for about 2 hours both morning and afternoon: when the hay man delivers it's between 8.00 & 8.30am.

Other tasks shared by both include ordering supplies of hay, shavings for bedding and feed, and arranging maintenance of the tractor. All in all they're kept busy.

Ann joined the Centre 6 weeks before Gayl did, in March 1999. Ann's favourite pony during that time is Chunky, closely followed by Alfie. As well as job-sharing they share a passion for dogs. Ann has 5: Buster, Tilly, Jez, Molly and Nova. She walks them across the fields and into the woods before going home each evening.

Where would we be without our grooms? Day in day out, on high days and holidays, come rain, shine, gales, mud and muck, plus dodgy joints, they not only look after our ponies, they smile and laugh whilst doing so. It's been a pleasure to paint these pen portraits of, "The Giggling Girls."

P.E.



Ann and Gayl - laughing as ever!

TONGUE-TWISTER

Huggy hurries.
Huggy hurries hastily.
How hastily does Huggy hurry?
Huggy hurries as hastily as JJ jogs.

JJ jogs.
JJ jogs jauntily.
How jauntily does JJ jog?
JJ jogs as jauntily as Bonny bounds.

Bonny bounds.
Bonny bounds briskly.
How briskly does Bonny bound?
Bonny bounds as briskly as Muscadeu marches.

Muscadeu marches.
Muscadeu marches merrily.
How merrily does Muscadeu march?
Muscadeu marches as merrily as Rupert rushes.

Rupert rushes.
Rupert rushes rapidly.
How rapidly does Rupert rush?
Rupert rushes as rapidly as Lolly lopes.

Lolly lopes.
Lolly lopes lightly.
How lightly does Lolly lope?
Lolly lopes as lightly as Storm scurries.

Storm scurries.
Storm scurries smartly.
How smartly does Storm scurry?
Storm scurries as smartly as Huggy hurries, JJ jogs, Bonny bounds, Muscadeu marches, Rupert rushed and Lolly lopes.

P.E.

45-Word Equine word search

X	P	B	L	N	E	C	K	-	S	T	R	A	P	Q	W	C	A	N	T	L	E	E	G	J
R	U	P	E	R	T	O	Y	T	D	B	E	N	S	O	N	K	M	B	S	F	D	P	T	K
D	P	A	L	O	M	I	N	O	J	E	H	G	F	D	S	S	K	E	W	B	A	L	D	V
N	K	S	D	F	G	H	J	K	K	D	Q	W	S	R	T	T	Y	U	E	Z	P	X	C	B
M	A	D	E	P	I	E	B	A	L	D	F	R	U	G	S	M	N	L	B	V	P	A	S	D
Z	I	F	C	Q	A	Z	X	C	V	I	D	H	G	K	T	L	P	Z	A	S	L	G	H	F
X	J	S	A	D	D	L	E	P	B	N	S	D	A	U	R	P	W	E	Q	D	E	K	J	W
C	H	M	R	H	E	R	T	Y	N	G	Q	W	R	I	A	R	T	Y	A	F	-	L	H	I
V	T	N	R	S	U	F	G	H	M	J	K	L	P	O	W	O	I	U	S	D	G	F	G	T
E	B	O	O	T	S	G	V	B	B	N	M	Q	W	E	B	O	D	Y	-	B	R	U	S	H
X	Q	B	T	Z	X	C	G	R	D	O	C	K	Z	X	E	N	B	V	C	X	E	Z	A	E
E	W	V	S	Q	W	E	T	Y	U	I	B	A	S	D	R	D	F	G	H	J	Y	J	K	R
R	E	C	L	K	J	C	H	U	N	K	Y	I	G	I	R	T	H	W	E	R	T	Y	U	S
C	O	L	I	C	S	D	C	F	G	H	J	K	L	P	Y	H	A	D	E	W	Z	X	C	V
I	R	X	Q	W	E	R	K	F	Q	W	E	R	T	I	-	O	H	I	U	M	N	B	V	I
S	T	Z	H	O	O	F	-	P	I	C	K	X	B	C	R	U	F	X	L	Z	D	C	D	W
E	Y	A	P	O	I	U	Y	T	R	E	W	Q	A	L	O	L	Q	W	S	D	F	H	A	Y
S	T	R	A	W	A	Q	H	A	S	D	F	G	J	K	A	Q	P	U	G	Y	Q	E	F	D
P	H	S	E	R	T	Y	A	U	I	O	P	L	K	J	N	C	O	Y	R	I	B	S	D	Q
O	Y	D	D	A	N	D	Y	-	B	R	U	S	H	G	F	D	K	S	E	M	K	T	S	W
I	T	F	Z	X	C	V	-	M	L	D	F	P	O	M	M	E	L	A	Y	H	N	N	A	E
U	R	G	A	S	S	D	N	G	A	T	Y	U	O	X	C	V	B	N	M	G	Y	U	T	R
T	E	J	E	T	Y	U	E	F	Z	N	D	G	F	A	R	R	I	E	R	F	U	T	T	T
D	W	K	R	H	J	K	T	D	E	I	E	S	D	F	G	H	J	K	K	D	L	E	Y	S
S	T	I	R	R	U	P	S	Y	T	R	L	A	M	I	N	I	T	I	S	S	A	W	R	E

APPLE, PIEBALD, BEDDING, POMMEL, BLACK, RIBS, BLAZE, RUGS, BODY-BRUSH, RUPERT, BOOTS, SADDLE, BUCH, SKEWBALD, CANTLE, STIFLE, CARROTS, STIRRUPS, CHESTNUT, STRAW, CHUNKY, STRAWBERRY-ROAN, COLIC, SUGAR, DANDY-BRUSH, TACK, DAPPLE GREY, TAIL, DOCK, WITHERS, EXERCISE, FARRIER, GIRTH, GREY, HAY, HAY-NETS, HOOF, HOOF-PICK, JACK, KAI, LAMINITIS, MANE, NECK-STRAP, NUTS, PALOMINO

How many can you find?

from Sue Brown - an ex-volunteer.

HEIDI'S "A £ FOR A LB"

For those of you who don't know her, Heidi's been riding at the Centre for at least 12 years, currently on Wednesday afternoons. She's qualified twice for the RDA National Championships, competed once and won, riding Silver. When Silver's future home became uncertain she managed to raise enough funds to buy him, including saving her birthday and Christmas present money. He now lives happily at Animals in Need, Pine Tree Farm, Little Irchester, Northants. www.animals-in-need.org/news

Due to illness Heidi's weight has plummeted, and she's been in hospital on a special weight-gaining programme. As an incentive to reach a target weight by the end of September, and to raise funds for the Centre, she suggested a sponsorship scheme, whereby every pound (lb) she put on a pound (£) was donated. She gained about 12lb, and she raised £270, both notable achievements. As part of the deal, Rupert, Heidi's favourite pony, received carrots, which he was happy to share with his stable mates.

Easyfundraising. Do you shop online?

I shop online regularly now and I have trained myself to always go to www.easyfundraising.co.uk before placing an order. I have been surprised a couple of times that even quite small companies are prepared to donate some of their profits to charity. I have, of course, nominated Elisabeth Curtis Centre as my chosen charity and have donated about £50 almost without realising it! Please take a look. It really is easy.
-Ed.

Fundraising

Baby Quilt donated by Tudor Rose Patchwork; 100-square Draw raised £95.

Sun 7th June Open Farm, Brown's of Stagsden. Took Toy Stall, donated goods, notelets, quilt, collecting box. Total takings £289.70 + Pony Rides £220.00

Sat 20th June ECC Open Day. Total takings £1253.44. Very well done to all who gave their time and/or donations.

Sun 21st June Quiz at White Horse, Sue & Nigel presented us with a further £800 as a result of their fundraising.

Sat 27th June Kempston Church End Fete. Takings as follows.
Donated goods: Plant Stall £39.00, Tombola £80.00, Jewellery £11.50,
Quilt £55.00 (raffle & sale of cushion cover)
Notelets £3.00 = 50p profit, Toy Shop £25.90 = £13.00 profit approx.
Total takings £214.40
Total profits £199.00 approx.

contd.→

Fundraising contd.

Sat 11th July Wootton Fun Day. Tombola £70.10, Quilt raffle £50.00, "Cuddly" tombola £73.00, total £193.10 profit.

Sun 12th July Bromham Show. Quilt raffle x 2 £100.00, Ros' jewellery £9.50, collecting box £32.70, total £142.20 profit.

3 July Handbags and Gladrags event, run by Mary and Kyle at The Ship, Bromham Road, Bedford, raised £34-36. Many thanks to Kyle and Mary.

Sun 9th August St. John's Country Fair, Moggerhanger. quilts raffle - £89, jewellery - £51, collecting box £5-93, minus stall fee of £10 = £135-93 profit

6 September Biddenham Show. Quilt raffle took £34, jewellery took £126.30. Well done!

Wed 7th Oct Quiz at White Horse (New Owners) Quiz took £185, raffle £61, total £246.

Forthcoming Events

Sat 21 November, Autumn Fair at Church Hall, Church End, Kempston. 10.00 - 2.00. Soup and sandwiches, small cakes only. Unlucky Dip with mice!, jewellery workshop, quilt raffle, tombola, Toy shop, Bric-a-brac.

Sat 5 December Budgens collection, 8.30 - 3.30,

Also, Biddenham Xmas Fair 2.00- 4.00, Ros taking Jewellery and quilt raffle.

Wednesday 9th December Volunteers' Christmas dinner & raffle at The Pheasant, Kimbolton Road.

Term Dates for Bedfordshire Schools 2015/16

Friday 18th December - Autumn Term ends.

Monday 4th January 2016 - Spring Term begins.
(Mon 4th - Bedfordshire Schools Training Day)

Monday 15th - Friday 19th February - Half-Term

Thursday 24th March - Spring Term ends

Monday 11th April - Summer Term begins.
(Mon 11th - Bedfordshire Schools Training Day)

Monday 30th May - Friday 3rd June - Half-Term.

Friday 22nd July - Summer Term ends.

Dates may vary according to session - please check with your Instructor.

Edited and compiled by Jan & John Tozer

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