

Newsletter

February 2012

Elisabeth Curtis Centre

Riding for the Disabled

Charity No. 1137217; Company No. 7302917



Hilary accepts a generous donation on behalf of the Centre from the good people of Stevington. See page three for full story.

Newsletter February 2012

Editorial

It seems like a long time since our last newsletter in November 2011. I know most of us have probably forgotten Christmas already, but I would like to mention the Volunteers' Christmas Dinner which was held at The Prince of Wales in Bromham. Thirty-nine people came and seemed to enjoy themselves. Some quarters could almost be said to be riotous, so loud was the laughter! Everyone was also in a generous mood as we raised £92 from the raffle.

The ponies are all well, thanks to the continuing care of our wonderful grooms. All of them are very happy that we have avoided the freezing conditions of the last couple of years. We did have a problem with a frozen trough which were quickly sorted out by Allan and John. One of the troughs stopped refilling, so the ponies decided to express their dissatisfaction by kicking it across the field. Strangely enough they did have access to the other trough which was working, but the only pony which thought to go and use it, was Rupert. Perhaps there is more going on in that shaggy head than we think!

Perhaps the best part of the last few months has been the amazing number of donations that have come in, many of which were considerable sums. We must say a huge thank you to all contributors and to all of you who keep mentioning us in the right places and raising public awareness of our work to ensure these donations keep coming our way. Details to follow.

I must also say a special thank you to Paul Mead, dad of Philip, a Tuesday Evening helper, for putting us forward for a two-page special feature in "The Villager" magazine.

I don't know if this has been significant in the level of donations but I know it has led to another influx of volunteers. Welcome to all our new helpers; I hope your association with the Centre will be a long and happy one.

Jan

(Editor/Chairman)

Cover picture

“Christmas Greetings from Stevington” by Hilary O’Dell (Wednesday p.m Organiser)

At the Stevington Village Concert on Tuesday 20th December 2011, I was presented with a cheque for the magnificent sum of £523, plus Gift Aid, by Pat Pickup, editor of the Stevington Magazine. The money had been generously donated by villagers in lieu of Christmas cards to friends and neighbours. I thanked all present on behalf of the Centre for their excellent gift and assured them that the money would be put to very good use!

Further ASDAN Successes

RDA and ASDAN have been working together since 2005, developing tailor made programmes that can utilise and measure RDA activities for educational gains. As you may have read in previous newsletters, riders from the Tuesday evening sessions have, over the past 3yrs, been working towards two different awards - Towards Independence and Transition Challenge. The awards, particularly for the Towards Independence, are very much focused on the riders and their riding and can be adapted to suit individual abilities. Our riders have very much enjoyed their ‘homework’, some of which you can see around the Centre at various times.

Whilst moderation of the riders work took place in late June 2011, we presented the certificates in Autumn 2011. Pictured receiving their certificates (along with Bonny) were:

- **James Walker:** Towards Independence (James has now commenced the Transition Challenge);
- **Annick Topping:** Transition Challenge - Gold Award, (all 5 modules. Although Annick no longer rides with us, she was very keen to complete the Award and did so via ‘homework’ in her own time);
- **Charlotte Roomes:** Transition Challenge - Gold Award, (Charlotte had to stop riding with us for a while, but still wanted to complete her Award. Similar to Annick, she achieved this in her own time). Charlotte is once again riding with us and is currently working towards her RDA Bronze Proficiency Award, focusing initially on the Horse Care and Knowledge section – Good Luck Charlotte.
- **Paul Draper:** Transition Challenge – 2 modules, (not pictured).



L-R: Sharon Thompson (Instructor), Charlotte, James, Bonny and Annick



“Young Shire Horse”

This lovely horse was drawn by Kim Thompson, a wildlife artist. She has a passion for Arab horses and has worked with the RDA. She has kindly given us permission to use her images copyright-free. To contact her regarding a commission email: kim.thompson7@btinternet.com

Young Equestrian Leader's Award (YELA)

YELA is a new and exciting award that has been developed by Riding for the Disabled for the British Equestrian Federation (BEF) in consultation with many of its Member Bodies to increase and encourage the number of young people volunteering in the Equestrian industry. It has been running since approximately April 2011.

The award runs over three progressive levels - 20 hrs to achieve the Bronze standard up to 120 hrs to achieve the Gold Standard. The award is open to all young volunteers between the ages of 13 yrs and 25 yrs and is based along the lines of the Duke of Edinburgh Awards, i.e. completion of a log book along with reflecting on the work undertaken and skills developed.

The Tuesday evening session is fortunate to have a large number of younger volunteers, so this was an ideal opportunity for some to undertake the Award and for us as a session to 'give something back' to the young people for the time they willingly give and to support them in achieving this Award.

Pictured are Fiona Bowser and Tara Malciw (with Sam – one of our Riders on Bonny) with their Bronze certificates. Phillip Mead was also successful in achieving the Award.

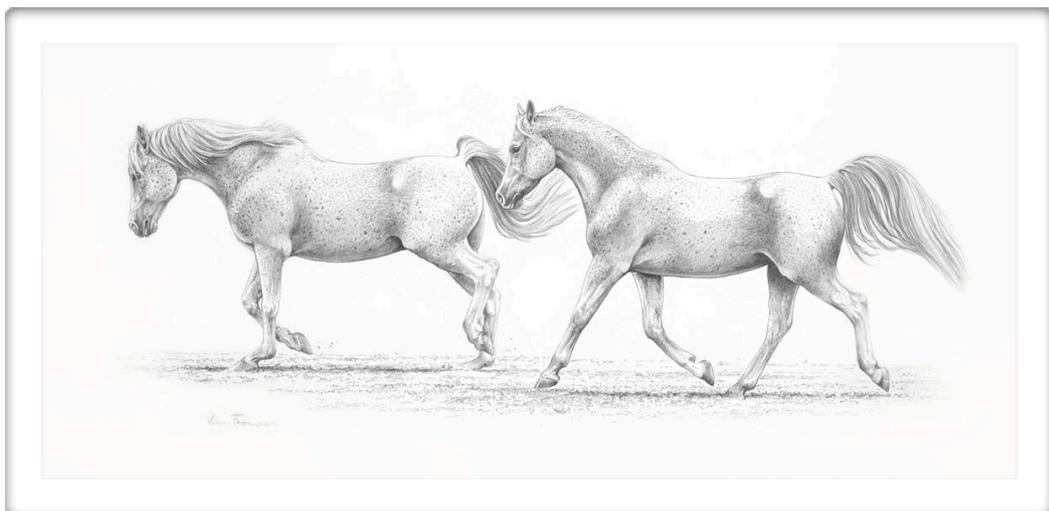
If any other young volunteer would like to undertake the Award, (and we hope lots more from Tuesday evenings will be), please speak with your instructor. The cost is £12.50 per candidate for the Bronze Award.

Sharon Thompson (Instructor)

Denise Rawlings (Trainee instructor)



L-R: Fiona, Bonny, Sam and Tara



**“Grace and
Beauty”
by
Kim
Thompson**

Do you shop online?

If so, you might like to consider a scheme called easyfundraising.org.uk. There's a link to this from the Elisabeth Curtis Centre website. Once you have registered for the scheme, you can go to your online retailer via the above website. and buy as normal. The retailer will then give a percentage (variable between suppliers, average 5%) to the Elisabeth Curtis Centre. Thousands of retailers participate in this, including Amazon, Argos, John Lewis & M&S. Please have a look; it's a very simple but effective way to raise funds for the Centre, and it won't cost you a penny!

Who's afraid of what?

Some practice for the next quiz! Each of the following phobias is a fear of something. Can you work it out from the list below?

Answers on page 10.

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1) Entomophobia | 2) Pyrophobia | 3) Gymnophobia |
| 4) Leukophobia | 5) Agliophobia | 6) Xenophobia |
| 7) Cacophobia | 8) Hemophobia | 9) Selenophobia |
| | 10) Gynophobia | |

*a) Blood b) Fire c) Foreigners d) Insects e) Nudity f) Pain
g) The colour white h) The moon i) Ugliness j) Women*

Donations

Once more we are overwhelmed by the generosity of our supporters. In these difficult times it would be reasonable to expect a reduction in the amounts people give. Thankfully we are continuing to receive substantial donations!

Mrs Dicker, of the **Stancourt-Dicker Charitable Trust** in Tunbridge Wells, has again sent us £5,000. What can we say? She has become a great friend of the Centre and we hope this will continue for many years.

The White Horse pub, in Bedford raised an astonishing £1,401 by running a Tombola over several weeks. They have since told us that we are their selected Charity for the coming year. Excellent news!

Sainsbury's of Fairfield Park, Clapham, are still supporting us. They have raised £800 for us so far and there is more on the way!

North Beds Young Farmers raised £627.05, and Jan gave a short presentation at one of their meetings.

Stevington Village raised £523, more about this later.

Parklands Residents Association raised a total of £522 from a Quiz Night and the annual Carol Singing event.

Ros Ward's birthday collection raised £167.25. Thanks to all Ros' friends and family.

A belated thank you is owed to the **Bedford Lions** who gave us a donation of £2,000 last August which was missed out of the November Newsletter.

To all of these, and the equally important large number of smaller donors, we all say a heartfelt "Thank You". You really are the lifeblood of our organisation.

Fundraising

We would like to welcome a new member to the Fundraising group, Siobhan Woodbridge. New members always welcome!

5th November: Charity Fair at Bromham Village Hall. Jan and John ran a Tombola stall and raised £102.

19th November: Race Night at Church End, Kempston Rural. Although not as well-attended as we'd hoped, a good night was had by all, and we managed to raise £339.20 from our very generous racegoers.

3rd December: Christmas Fair at Bedford School for Girls. Audrey and Jenny took the Toy Shop and raised £170.

25th February: Quiz Night at Church End, Kempston Rural. Raised £233.40. Well done to all, particularly Ros, our latest quizmaster!

Forthcoming events

5th & 6th May: Beer Festival at The White Horse, Newnham Avenue, Bedford. Saturday & Sunday afternoons 12.00 - 5.00 p.m. Taking the Toy Shop. We are their Charity of the Year, so more events may occur.

2nd June (may be 9th June): Olney collection. Please watch out for the sign-up sheet!

17th June: Chilli Fiesta at Old Warden Park, Shuttleworth. Taking the Toy Shop. Fun for all the family - not just chillies!

23rd June: Open Day at the Centre.

19th August: Fete at St. John's, Moggerhanger. Taking Toy Shop.

20th October: Quiz Night at Church Hall, Church End, Kempston Rural.

15th December (Sat.): Tesco Collection, Riverfield Drive, Goldington.

Praise Be!

A woman knocked at the Heavenly Gate.

Her face was tired and old,

As she stood before the man at the gate,

For admission to the fold.

“What have you done,” St. Peter asked,

“To gain admission here?”

“I’ve served as an RDA chairman, Sir,

For many and many a year.”

The Pearly Gates swung open wide,

St. Peter rang the bell.

“Come in and choose your harp, my dear,

You’ve had your share of hell!”

Anon

Term Dates for Bedfordshire Schools

Friday 30th March - End of term.

Monday 16th April - Training day.

Tuesday 17th April - Summer Term begins.

Monday 4th to Friday 8th June - Half Term, including

Monday 4th & Tuesday 5th June - Bank Holiday

Friday 20th July - End of term

Dates may vary, according to session. Please check with your instructor.

Answers to Phobias quiz (page 7)

1(d); 2(b); 3(e); 4(g); 5(f);

6(c); 7(i); 8(a); 9(h); 10(j)