

Newsletter

February 2013

Elisabeth Curtis Centre Riding for the Disabled

Charity No. 1137217; Company No. 7302917



Sue & Nigel of the White Horse, Bedford present a wonderful donation to the Centre.



Editorial

Hopefully everyone has recovered from Christmas and New Year by now and is looking forward to a beautiful Spring and a sun-drenched Summer. Snow is just a temporary inconvenience!

Things have been fairly quiet at the Centre since the last Newsletter in November - long may it continue! **The Christmas Dinner** for our wonderful volunteers was held at the Prince Of Wales, Bromham, and went well. The food was hot, the service cheerful and lots of good prizes had been donated for the raffle. However, we are thinking of changing the venue to an excellent pub in Bedford which has the advantage of being able to take up to 60 people.

The White Horse in Newnham Avenue, Bedford has supported us for many years, with their own fundraising events and inviting us to take the Toy Shop to craft fairs and beer festivals. They have just made a donation of £950, raised from a long running tombola, and have offered to do a quiz with supper, on Thursday 11th April, which could raise as much as £600. (Please note the date in your diary now and tell your friends!) It is really heartwarming that some people are prepared to go that extra mile to support their local charities and we are delighted that Sue and Nigel and their amazing team have us on their list. A huge "Thank You" to you all!

The Calendar has proved to be a great success and has raised close to £1,000 for the Centre. I hope nobody who wanted one has been disappointed. We can order a few more but it has to be a minimum order of 10. Call me asap if you are still looking for a copy. Next year we are thinking of doing packs of Christmas cards with pictures of just the ponies on them - unless anyone has a better idea?

Another fundraiser which was surprisingly successful was the collection we did at **Christmas at Tesco**, Riverfield Drive. This made us £330.07. It seems people can still be generous, even when times are hard for many. Many thanks to the volunteers who helped with the collection and to the Tesco customers who made it such a success.

Finally, all of **our volunteers are special people**, but some of them are prepared to go that little bit further. We would like to offer huge congratulations to Helen and Sam who have completed their RDA training and are now fully qualified Group Instructors. Monday and Tuesday mornings in particular, and the Elisabeth Curtis Centre, are very lucky to have them. Well done both of you and thank you.

Regards,

Jan (Chairman/editor)

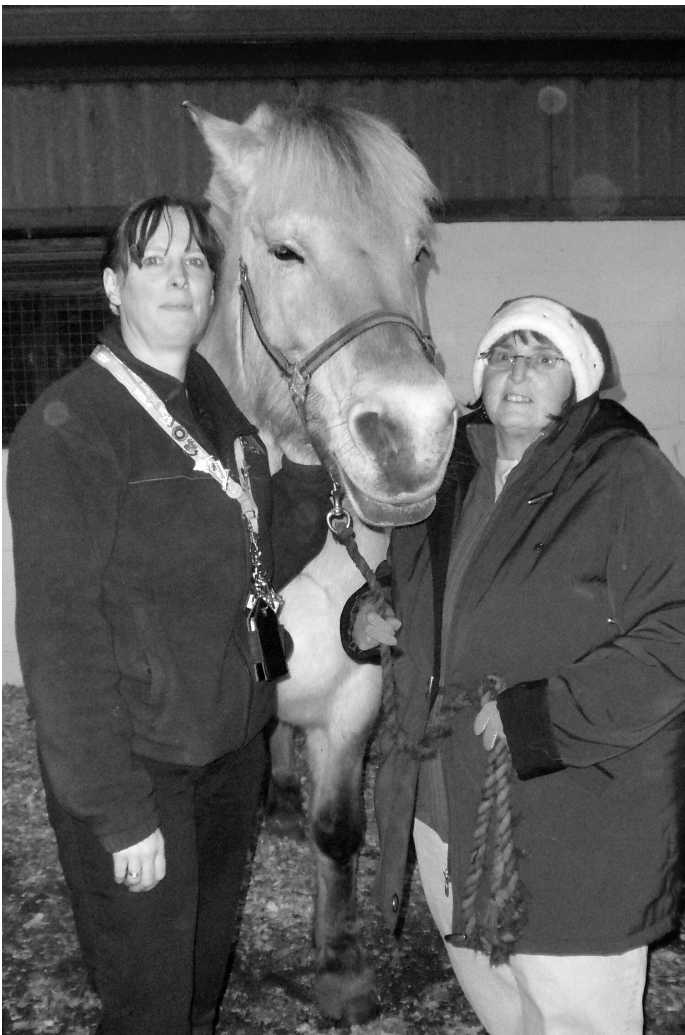
More Donations

Despite continuing difficult times we are still receiving donations and the Centre remains on a sound financial footing. The good folks at the Asda warehouse at Marsh Leys decided to support us as part of their charity funding. I was very pleased to meet Debbie from Asda and show her around the Centre. I was also pleased to receive a cheque for £200 plus the offer of more support in the future. Many thanks to Debbie and her colleagues.

We also have to say “Thank You” again to The Parklands Residents Association for a donation of £250 which they raised through carol singing and a quiz. We are very lucky to have such nice neighbours!

Finally, every year at Christmas, we receive a donation of £200 from Dave and Mary Hallam-Saunders which goes towards the costs of taking some of our riders to the RDA shows. Thank you both for your generosity.

We also receive a donation from the family of Luke Fowler. Luke rode with us some years ago when he was at Rainbow School. We would like to say thank you to them but we no longer have their contact details. So if anybody knows Luke or his family please pass on our thanks and ask them to put their address on their letter next year!



Debbie from Asda presents the Centre with a donation (and makes a new friend!)

The Gift that Kept on Growing.

In the Spring of 2012 we were contacted by the De Parys Rotary Group, asking if they could do some work for us. We decided to ask them to help us protect a part of the Centre which most people don't see, but which will be very important to the horses and ponies in the future.

In March 2009 we planted about 70 small trees in part of our grazing known as Golf Hill. This will shelter the ponies from wind and sun, and help with the drainage problems. It will also provide an excellent wildlife habitat. But, this is in the future! Until the trees are at least ten years old we have to protect them from the ponies, who love to graze on fresh spring leaves when they can reach them. We do this by means of an electric fence, but have always been aware that the small trees could be wiped out overnight if the fence failed.

We asked the De Parys Rotary Group to put a wire fence around the trees. They replied that they didn't feel they had the expertise to do this, but would pay for the materials to have it done professionally. This would have meant them paying about £200, with the Centre paying the remaining £800. After some deliberation, the Management Committee agreed to this. The Rotary Group said they would carry on fundraising and to let them know when the work had been done. They seem to be very good at fundraising, as they then offered to pay for all of the fencing costs plus giving us enough to buy three new riding hats.

What was originally a donation of about £200 somehow turned into the princely sum of £1,200! Our trees will now be safe until they are big enough to fend for themselves. A huge "Thank You" to Ross Dougall and all the members of the De Parys Rotary Group for their hard work and generosity.

Fundraising

1 December Bedford Girls' School Christmas Fair. Toy Shop took £156.50 (profit approx. £78); Jewellery £16.00; total takings £172.50 (total profit £94 approx)

5 December Carol Singing around Parklands, arranged by Parklands Residents Association, raised £250

13 December ECC Volunteers' Christmas Dinner at Prince of Wales. Profit of £47.60

15 December Tesco Collection, Riverfield Drive. Made £330.37

Forthcoming Events

Saturday 16 February 2013

Quiz Night at All Saints' Church Hall, Church End, Kempston Rural. BYO Food & Drink.

Thursday 11th April 2013

Quiz Night at The White Horse, Newnham Avenue, Bedford
Supper included. Details to follow.

Saturday 4th & Sunday 5th May

Beer Festival at The White Horse, Newnham Avenue, Bedford.
Taking Toy Shop etc.

Saturday 8th June, 2.00 - 4.00 pm - ECC Open Afternoon

Minutes -The Secretary's Lament

*The meeting is done,
The great go for their dinner.
The secretary stays,
Getting thinner and thinner,
Racking her brains
To record and report
What she thinks
They will think
That they ought to have thought.*

Term Dates for Bedfordshire Schools

Monday 18th February to Friday 22nd February - Half Term

Thursday 28th March - Spring Term ends.

Monday 15th April - Summer Term begins (N.B. Monday 15th April is a Bedfordshire Schools' Training Day and may affect riding - it is probable that riding will not start until Tuesday 16th - check with your instructor)

Monday 27th May to Friday 31st May - Half Term

Wednesday July 24th - Summer Term ends

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