

# East Region Newsletter

Autumn 2004

No. 2





## A Word From The Editor

W elcome to the second edition of the East Region's Newsletter!

Thank you for your kind feedback on the first issue. It was very much appreciated, and don't forget that we always need fresh material, so please keep it coming in. E-mailed submissions are particularly welcome, since they cut down the production time dramatically! We always welcome:

- i competition results
- i proficiency test results
- i helpers news
- i items on gymkhanas/fun days
- i holiday news & photos
- i adverts etc.

I hope you enjoy the latest issue.

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[www.rda-east.fsnet.co.uk](http://www.rda-east.fsnet.co.uk)

Since its launch I am happy to say that over 40 enquiries have been received regarding riders, ponies and facilities in the East Region!

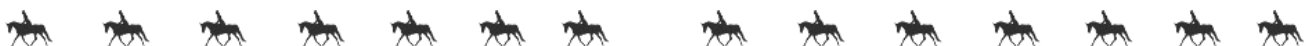
Special thanks to Andrew Gourlay for his help and expertise in the production of this newsletter.

Cover photo:

Ellie Bowen riding Tango at Wimpole 2004

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# East Region Conference 2004



The East Region's Conference was held on 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2004 at Priory Barn, Preston St. Mary, Suffolk. If you weren't one of the 120+ delegates, you missed a great day!

Having been greeted with a steaming cup of coffee and homemade biscuits, delegates were treated to a series of entertaining and highly instructive talks.

Ed Bracher, the new Chief Executive of RDA, started by giving a very positive and upbeat assessment of the association, and went on to elaborate on some of his ideas. This was very well received, and he gave a thoroughly encouraging picture for the future.

Lynn Fox talked on "RDA and the National Curriculum? - Justifying Riding", and was lively, amusing and also very positive. The key to her whole address was that we already teach items that are essential to the National Curriculum, and that schools should be begging for our support! She also told us some exciting news regarding RDA's involvement within a new examination scheme - hopefully we will hear more about this in the near future.

Dr. Lucy Grove gave a fascinating insight into Autism from a parent's and a professional's view. Her son James has ridden at the

Shelley Centre for several years, and RDA has played an important part in his development.

Sally Campbell-Gray presented a graphic 'down to earth' item addressing a common sense approach to Health & Safety within the Groups.

Finally Sue Ram and Linda Lancaster rounded off the morning with an entertaining slide show with commentary on their epic "coast to coast" drive.

During the lunch break, (a rather tasty selection of finger-food, accompanied by drinks from the licenced bar), a video of the musical ride entries from the national championships was shown in the marquee - and very entertaining it was too!

Sadly Jane Holderness-Roddam was unable to join us at the last minute, but Ed kindly agreed to give us 'second helpings' and told us a little more about his background. His previous experience in voluntary work will no doubt prove invaluable, and approaching the administration of RDA from a slightly different perspective can only be beneficial to us all. He also presented 25 year Silver Jubilee awards to Elaine Smith, Judy Davies, Janet Abbot, Valerie Pitchers, Dymphna Jackson (who are pictured on the previous page, in no particular order).

The day concluded with an interactive question & answer session from the delegates.

The general consensus was that the day was an uplifting experience, and everyone went home with a very positive attitude for the future.

SD

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## **An Award Winning RDA Instructor**

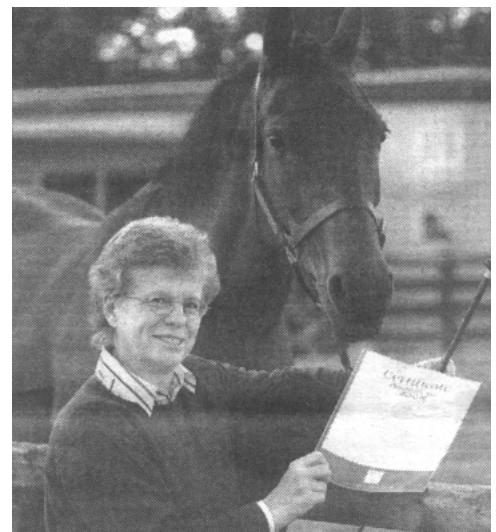
A student from the Old Tiger Stables, Soham, has been presented with an award for her work with horses.

Jessamy Saltmarsh worked on an NVQ in equine studies through Otley College, Ipswich, and has won the King's Saddlery award for top part-time student.

Mrs Saltmarsh, 55, works for the Newmarket group of Riding for the Disabled and teaches disabled children from schools in Cambridge how to ride at Old Tiger Stables once a week.

She attended the awards ceremony at Otley College and was presented with a certificate and a book voucher by Ben Gill, president of the National Farmers' Union.

*Taken from the Newmarket Journal*



## Buckenham House Group RDA

# Both Sides of the Coin

Like many little girls, I was a pony mad child, always playing with my Britons model horses, reading books about ponies and riding imaginary horses round the garden. However, my parents did not have the finances to indulge this passion. So my early horse experiences were confined to watching horses at ploughing matches, seaside ponies and the occasional lesson with a friend when I could save enough pocket money. I had never heard of Riding for the Disabled until Blue Peter raised money to buy Rags the pony for them. I was fascinated watching the programmes about his training and progress.



In April 1994 I moved away from Norfolk to start a new job in North Suffolk. I was pleased to find that one of my new colleagues was a fellow horse lover. Not only was Lynne Kemp an experienced rider, with her own pony, but she also introduced me to the concept of Riding for the Disabled, for which she had been a volunteer, in various groups, from the age of fourteen. However, at the time, my non-working hours were fully occupied by the Open University degree I was taking.

On starting my final course in 1997 I began to worry that I would have nothing to do with my spare time once my degree was completed. I asked Lynne whether her RDA group still required helpers, which of course they did. So I started helping with the Gateway Club sessions on Wednesday evenings, then held at the International League for the Protection of Horses (ILPH) stables at Overa House, Snetterton. At the time I was concerned about my lack of practical experience with horses but, I need not have worried, as full training was given and the other helpers were always willing to advise. I soon discovered the satisfaction that seeing the riders' pleasure and progress brings. I was so impressed by the ability of some of them that I was inspired to fulfil my childhood ambition and started having lessons myself.

Over the next few years horses took up more and more of my time; with riding myself, helping at RDA sessions and being secretary at fund raising shows. Obviously my assistance was appreciated since in 2000 I was proposed onto the Buckenham House Group committee, where I began to appreciate the cost of keeping our group riding and the need for constant fund raising.

I had just about established myself as a seasoned RDA helper, when in January 2003, I suffered a stroke which landed me in hospital with no use of my left limbs. My family and friends were not surprised that one of my main concerns was whether I would be able to ride again. Lynne, by now a RDA Group Instructor, came to visit me regularly and reassured me that riding is considered beneficial for hemiplegia in post stroke patients and agreed to try and organise something for me.

In 2002 we had moved from riding at the ILPH to Middle Farm Equestrian, East Harling, and I had helped with trying out some of the new horses for RDA suitability. I had fallen in love with an elderly, skewbald, part-Arab mare called Derri, so I was thrilled when Lynne told me she had arranged for me to ride her. As soon as the hospital would let me go home for weekends in February, we were at the stables early on Saturday morning. Derri was totally unconcerned by my wheelchair and was quite happy for me to fuss her, probably the smell of Polos in my pocket had a reassuring

affect. Mounting was the hardest part as my left leg could not take enough weight for me to spring up, but with Lynne and two other helpers somehow I made it into the saddle. Once astride it all started coming back and I found it easy and reassuring to sit on Derri's long elegant stride. After my first session I was left with mixed feelings; part of me was depressed that I could not ride like I used to but another part was delighted that I could get on the horse at all let alone stay on, without side walkers.

After a few sessions, with a specially made set of ladder reins, that enable me to steer one handed, I began to understand the benefits of riding for disabled people. For me, as a previous rider it was a start of returning to normal life but for a non-rider it must offer a wonderful opportunity to be in control and be free of the constraints of disabled life. Personally it helped me relax and encouraged me to use my stroke-affected side and therefore regain balance which I am convinced helped me regain the ability to walk as well as I have.

In the Spring, now having group lessons with Laura, a girl with cerebral palsy, I moved from Derri to a bay pony called Arran who, probably because of his younger age, adapted better to my one handed steering. With Arran my confidence grew, especially after we competed in a dressage competition within the group, in which I won my first ever rosette, and a musical ride demonstration in front of family and friends. Even before my stroke I would never have had the confidence to ride in public and the stroke had left me even more self conscious but with Lynne's teaching and my trust in Arran I was willing to try anything.

I cannot thank Buckenham House Group enough for enabling me to ride with them during my recovery and in the future I hope to be able to give back in return as this year I was elected as Committee Secretary.



So now I feel that I am truly a member of the RDA as I have felt the satisfaction as a helper of watching riders developing skills and confidence while also having enjoyed the benefits myself of regaining balance and co-ordination. Of course as a rider I have had to change my ambitions from before my stroke. No more can I dream of riding cross-country. Now I would like to achieve more in flat work and maybe compete further in dressage. It seems that what started as a means of filling some spare time has turned into a focal point for me.

I would like to add a postscript saying that Arran and I competed at Wimpole this year and qualified for the National finals. Middle Farm Equestrian kindly let us hire Arran for the weekend to go to Hartpury and we were delighted to take third in our pony and rider class and fourth in the introduction to dressage.

Lucy Fisher

Buckenham House Group

# Longmead Group's Proficiency Test Presentations



Ben White receiving the Progress Cup

Longmead Group, who ride at Wix Equestrian Centre in Essex, recently held proficiency tests for the riders from Market Field School, Elmsett.

## Grade I - Riding & Theory

Ryan Henson  
Lucy Cousins  
Jordan Dean

## Grade I - Theory Only

Ben White  
Harry Burt  
Thomas Aldis

## Gr. I - Riding Only

Cameron Craig  
Lynn Moor  
Alistair Harris

## Grade II - Riding & Theory

Rebecca Brazier  
Edward Linley

## Grade II - Riding Only

Ben White  
Thomas Aldis  
Harry Bert

Ryan Bloomfield also passed his grade I theory and grade II riding.



# Pony Club Camp 2004

by James Wright



Me and Nellie worked really hard at Pony Club Camp as you can see in this picture. We were doing a dressage lesson with Holly our instructor. Nellie and I had to look nice for the Tack and Turnout so we could win. We done well by getting fourth place. It rained heavily on the first day and the field got all muddy as well as by boots. All the days after were very sunny and hot and we had to keep refilling Nellie's bucket of water, sponge her down with a sponge and water to keep her cool. Even though it was hot she didn't stop eating as Nellie loves to eat.

Nellie and I worked hard with the show-jumping, getting a fourth place in the end. On the last day we did a one-day-event which was dressage, show-jumping and cross country, this was fun. We also did a fancy dress, I was "Eric the Viking" and got sixth place for this. There were lots of people there watching us riding and clapping us each time we had down the course. I won nine rosettes from second to sixth place. I met some children and we were friends their names are Harry, Richard, Simon, Leroy and Katie who were in my group. At the end of the day I went on a real live quad bike and it was really really fast and great fun. Thank you to Janet, Vicky and Marie-ann for letting me go and also to Nellie.



N.B.

James rides at the Sadlers Farm Group and attended the Essex Union South Junior Pony Club Camp this summer.



# A First Time For Everything



We the Upminster Group thought it's about time we 'had a go' at a 'Musical Ride'. It had always seemed a project a little out of our reach, which proved to be very wrong. First of all the FUN we had, which cannot be measured, the making of costumes and props brought a feeling of working together on a different theme to our usual sessions. It was important to make sure the same riders would be able to ride for the necessary time it took to rehearse and film also permission had to be given by

the parents for photographs and filming. The important thing for us was that we wanted to show the ability and dexterity of our riders, with the fun of dressing up, showing off a little and experiencing the feelings that music can inspire in us all. The most rewarding part of our efforts was to see our riders faces when our cameraman gave them each a copy of the video with their picture on the cover. They felt like Stars and they were. We made some mistakes and we learnt a lot from the experience. I certainly would recommend 'Having a Go'.

Joyce Truscott, Instructor for the Upminster Group.

## The Regional Musical Ride Results

### Theme Ride

- 1<sup>st</sup> Snow White - Barrow Farm Group
- 2<sup>nd</sup> A Boy's Winter Dream - Upminster

### Drill Ride

- 1<sup>st</sup> Boys & Girls - Barrow Farm
- 2<sup>nd</sup> The Football Match - Barrow Farm
- 3<sup>rd</sup> It Will Be OK On The Day - Elisabeth Curtis Centre
- 4<sup>th</sup> The Disco Scene - Barrow Farm
- 5<sup>th</sup> Grease - Barrow Farm

# A Word About Holidays

We all know, I hope, that RDA run National Holidays. Each Group early in the year receive a 'Brochure' and a form, and more of these are available from National Office. Then there are County holidays, where either a few days or a weekend are organised by the County for the County.

What is less known is that quite a few Groups throughout the country run their own Holiday 'camp' whether it be one day or a weekend. We here in the East Region are now organising four of these camps - there may be more that I do not know of (let me know if you do one).

Let's look at a typical day camp:-

These are usually put together by your Group at your normal place of riding, for your own riders. What is the point of that? I hear you saying. Well, usually your riders come for one hour a week, at the most, where as when coming for the day they can do things they probably do not get the time or opportunity for, i.e. grooming.

A typical day could go like this:-

10.00 am	Arrive, coffee, biscuits
10.30 - 11.00	Grooming, maybe a tack and turnout competition.
11.00 - 12.00	Lesson
12.00 - 12.30	Untack, turn out horses. Gather and discuss ride over cold drink.
12.30 - 2.00	Lunch. This could be a picnic, barbecue, Pub - depending on your facilities and riders.
2.00 - 3.30	Outside ride, visit to place of interest, swimming etc.
4.00 - 4.30	Afternoon tea and cakes.
4.30	Riders collected.

I know that many Groups could not arrange this type of day, maybe no venue or unsuitable riders. For those Groups who may be able to, it is such an opportunity to give your riders such a different riding day. If you arranged it to follow on immediately from your last ride of summer, your helpers may not even notice it!

Jace Horner, East Region Holiday Rep.

*Wimpole 2004*  
*Photographs by Andrew Gourlay*



# Ellie Bowen - My Day at 'The Nationals'



Saturday morning and everything was loaded onto the lorry and we began our long journey from Grange Farm in Henstead to Hartpury College, Gloucestershire. It took about seven hours. My dad drove through some torrential rain and thunder storms until we reached the sunny west country. The college grounds were buzzing with competitors from the first day of competition. I was excited when I saw all the stable blocks and the immaculate arenas. Tango had behaved amazingly well for the really long journey to her first national championships. She took it all in her stride and settled in straight away when she came off the lorry and into her stable. Her stable was opposite a horse called Mango and I could hear some of the young riders saying...'Mango and Tango'!

Tango was exercised in the warm up arena sat night after her journey to loosen her up as I didn't want her to be stiff. As well behaved as ever, she

seemed to know what would be happening tomorrow and settled in to a good nights sleep, as did I!

I woke up the next morning very nervous. Tango had her breakfast, and then I had mine in the college canteen. Everyone was very friendly the whole weekend. I was due to ride just after lunch, so spent the morning plaiting up, grooming and mucking out. My first test was the freestyle to music. It was to be held in the indoor arena. I went to each a few of the competitors so I could see the arena. There were mirrors and flags on the walls and a large viewing area. After warming up, it was my turn to compete. Everything went very well and Tango was perfectly behaved. I had lots of comments about my music test afterwards which was nice. I had obviously left a good first impression.

My next test was in the large arena outside. I warmed up again with the other competitors. One of the stewards gave me a confidence boost when she said I needn't worry after my music performance. I just thought to myself, I just had to give it my best. Tango did an excellent test and I was very pleased. The arena was rather daunting as it was at the bottom of a big bank where spectators could sit and watch on tiered seating.

We waited in the marquee for the results. It was very hot in there. I came 3rd in the freestyle to music and 5th in the grade IV test. I was thrilled with the result as it was my first major national event and Tango was a little superstar.

We said our goodbyes to everyone and set off on our long journey home. The weather was a bit kinder to us on the return journey. We arrived safely back at nearly midnight. Tango was pleased to be home in her own stable...I'm sure she told all her stable mates about her national adventures!

It was an amazing experience to be part of such an event, and I am already looking forward to next years competition.

I would like to thank my dad for all the good driving that he did, also Wendy Murray whose lorry we borrowed, and Anna Haig who was my groom for the weekend.

Ellie and Tango x

## SUSAN WATERFIELD FOR WHOM “CP” MEANS “CAPABLE PERSON”!

We have a rider in the Norfolk Broadland RDA Group of whom we are very proud. Susan has Cerebral Palsy but her grit and determination are an example to us all. Susan needs a walking frame or electric buggy to get around, and now has advanced osteoarthritis of her left knee, but this doesn't stop her working or riding. She is also one of our Group's Trustees and serves as a Committee Member.

If I list, below, some of the things she has achieved in the past few years, you will see why she has our admiration.



- In 2000-01 Susan planned and completed a 7 week unaccompanied tour of Australia, including the Rainforests and the Great Barrier Reef of Northern Queensland and then on to Alice and Uluru (Ayres Rock), before returning to Brisbane to visit friends and relations. While out there her love of flying was not forgotten as she enjoyed a passenger trip in a Tiger Moth (a pre-war open-cockpit biplane) doing aerobatics. She also went riding with the local RDA Group.
- After a 15 year break from driving, Susan decided to resume driving and also took instruction for the RoSPA Advanced Driving Test, which she passed in August 2001.
- Since the age of 18, Susan had wanted to learn to fly, but always thought it was for the 'very' able-bodied and so out of her reach. Not letting this deter her entirely, she took a passenger flight in a glider at a local club, which she later joined as a flying member. However, deterioration of her left knee made it difficult to obtain full movement of the controls.
- In the meantime she had applied to the Royal International Air Tattoo Flying Scholarships for the Disabled, set up in memory of The Late Group Captain Sir Douglas Bader. She successfully gained a 'mini' Scholarship consisting of 10 hours dual instruction in a powered aircraft, plus Ground School at Goodwood Flying School, Sussex.
- Having had a 'taster', she re-applied to the Scholarship the following year and was awarded a 'Full Overseas Scholarship'. This involved a six weeks intensive power flying course at 43 Air School, Port Alfred, in South Africa. The Private Pilots Licence Course was very demanding with long days and lots of study. The students usually had to be up before dawn to pre-flight the aircraft before setting off for flying instruction. Susan also had to study for and sit the PPL written exams in Air Law, Navigation, Meteorology, Radio Procedure and knowledge of the theory of how an aeroplane operates, alongside physically able young men and women who were starting their training with the view to becoming Commercial pilots. Needless to say, she

passed her exams with 'flying colours' and managed a couple of solo flights before having to return home. She would like to continue with flying lessons to obtain her Private Pilot's Licence.

Susan is currently employed with the Norwich and Norfolk Voluntary Services as the NVS Physical Disabilities Befriending Scheme Co-ordinator. This involves recruiting and training volunteers, matching and supporting partnerships between a physically and/or visually impaired client and a volunteer. She also sits on a number of Disability Forums and committees.



Yes, for Sue "C.P" certainly stands for "Capable Person"!

Val Soame

Group Secretary

Norfolk Broadland RDA Group

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## NORFOLK COUNTY CHAIRMAN RETIRES

Christine Stone has been the Chairman of Norfolk for 12 years, and has retired from the post this year. Her retirement was marked at a lunch party organised by the incoming Chairman, Hilary Hodges, and attended by representatives from all the groups in Norfolk.

Christine was presented with a square cut crystal decanter, engraved with the RDA logo and a short inscription, two glasses and a bottle of vintage port.

Christine's chairmanship has encompassed many changes to the structure of RDA through which she has steered the groups in her charge with boundless good humour and understanding. She will be a hard act to follow!



Christine is not retiring from RDA completely, she will continue to work with her own group, Norwich & District, and to run the East Region Dressage competition at Wimpole Hall.

Norfolk county would like to welcome Hilary to her new role and wish her the best of success in helping Norfolk RDA to grow and flourish in the coming years.

Lynne Kemp

Publicity Officer, Norfolk.

# Hollesley News

## Woodbridge Road Race Sponsorship

Chelsey Collins, aged 11, recently took part in the Woodbridge Road Race and raised £210 in sponsorship. She decided to donate the money to the Hollesley Group to go towards the care of the ponies and horses at the Group's center at Sutton, near Woodbridge.

Chelsey lives in Capel St Andrew and attends Hollesley Primary School. Her mother, Debby, is a riding instructor with the Hollesley Group.

Shirley Green, the Group Chairman, said: "We are extremely grateful to Chelsey for nominating our Group to receive the sponsorship money she has raised and would like to congratulate her on completing the Road Race. The money will go towards veterinary, farrier and feed costs for our animals."



*Photo: Chelsey Collins with some of the members of the Hollesley Group at their center at Pettistree Hall Farm*

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## Rotary Club Award

In March 2004, Rosie Clarke was presented by the Rotary Club of Woodbridge Deben with the Club's Vocational Award for 2003. The Group had been contacted by the Rotary Club, who had approached several local charities and organisations, asking for a nomination for this Award. Rosie's name was put forward by the Hollesley Group for her work as Group Secretary, fundraising organiser and riding instructor.

Rosie, accompanied by Shirley Green (Group Chairman), attended a dinner given by the Woodbridge Deben Rotary Club, at which she received the award together with a cheque for £200. In her speech of thanks, Rosie said she was accepting the award on behalf of the Group: our RDA work is, after all, a team effort, with no one individual being singled out. She donated the cheque to Group funds.

Shirley and Rosie briefed the Rotary Club on the Group's aims and activities. Apparently, what they said was very well received, as the Rotary Club made a donation to the Group of £500!

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## Hollesley Group Annual BBQ

RDA (Hollesley Group) held its annual BBQ on 16 July. The event was very well attended and enjoyed by adult riders and carriage drivers, carers and Group helpers.

The occasion was a very special one this year: Ted Price, who had been a founder member of the Group in 1986 and responsible for master-minding the Group's move to its center at Pettistree Hall Farm, Sutton, in 1992, retired from the Group, to the very great regret of everyone. Ted had taken

charge of the renovation of the derelict farm buildings (inspiring volunteers to become acquainted with the mysteries of drainage, demolition, painting and restoration tasks!) and had overseen the day to day maintenance of the center as well as assisting with riding sessions.

Sue Diggins (Regional Chairman) attended the BBQ and presented Ted with a montage of personalised "cartoons", reflecting Ted's involvement with the Group over the years. Sue and Shirley Green (Group Chairman) paid tribute to Ted for all his dedicated work over so many years.

Ted's long-suffering wife, Dorothy, was presented with a plant to thank her for all her own hard work for the Group over the years. A very small acknowledgment of all the times she heard her husband say: "I'm just going down to RDA for an hour to sort out a leaking tap", knowing full well he would probably spend most of the day at Pettistree Hall Farm!

He will remain in close touch with the Group to advise on maintenance problems, but his regular attendance, wit and ability to "get jobs done" will be sorely missed.



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## Essex Bulletin

- i Car Hipkin, an instructor for the Colchester Garrison group, has won Essex Sports Coach of the Year 2003/4 in the 'category 3 male/female coach, coaching disabled sports people', and has also been put forward to 'Sport England Coach of the Year, coaching disabled performers'.
- i Jane Partridge has won Coach of the Year in the Braintree District Sports Development Forum, Sports Awards 2004.
- i Barrow Farm group have revamped their indoor school adding a viewing gallery, new loading ramp and hoist - which will be a great bonus for the group.
- i The East Region stall has been round to various events this summer and has done well. It is a good way to be seen and promote the Association and hopefully recruit new helpers for groups.



# Three New Brooms For Buckenham House



Christine Osborne, Linda Trounce and Judy Burroughes

An era has ended at Buckenham House group, for the last 18 years the group has been ably organised by three ladies, Judy Burroughes (Chairman), Linda Trounce (Secretary) and Christine Osborne (Treasurer). At the groups AGM on 23 January all three ladies announced their retirement, Judy and Linda are retiring from the committee completely and Christine is retiring from the position of treasurer, but remaining on the committee.

Presentations were made to thank these ladies for their years of hard work. Judy was presented with a whisky decanter and glasses, Linda with champagne glasses and Christine with a decorative plate.

Existing members of the committee were elected into the now vacant positions, Chrissie Gooderham takes over as Chairman, Lucy Fisher as Secretary and Gill Fellowes as Treasurer. Long may they reign!



Gill Fellowes, Lucy Fisher and Chrissie Gooderham



There followed a ceremonial exchange of spades between Judy and Chrissie; our group organises horse shows each year as our main fund raiser. It has long been accepted that the digging of the hole to empty the portaloos at the end of the day is a job reserved for the Chairman.

No wonder Judy has held on to the position without challenge for 18 years!

# Lions Club Donation to East Norfolk Group

A local branch of the Lions Club have kindly donated some money to East Norfolk RDA with which they have purchased a mounting block and a set of cones. Pictured are David Grimmer, president of the Lions Club, who came along to present the equipment and to watch the ride; Martin, helper; Kirsty riding Hento and Lynne Kemp (wearing an inane grin and quite a lot of tinsel, well it was Christmas - *her words, not mine*)!



The story was also featured in their local paper, the Great Yarmouth Mercury, who said:

"A club for disabled riders has been given a new mounting block and eight coloured cones by a charity organisation. The East Norfolk Riding for the Disabled Association, which caters for mentally and physically handicapped children and adults, was given the equipment by the Norfolk Broads Lions Club. The association is also looking for volunteers - they do not need to have previous experience or know anything about horses. Sessions take place on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and alternate Saturdays at Croft Farm Riding Centre, Thrigby Road, Filby."

They also published the following Group photograph showing:



Jackie, a helper; Rhianna riding Rory; Hayley, helper; Emily riding Jake; don't know the name of the girl holding Josh, she is not a usual helper (too young) but was just holding Josh while Susan took the picture; Emily riding Josh (yes, they do have 2 riders called Emily in this group and very confusing it is too especially since they both ride spotty ponies with similar names); Lynne Kemp; Kirsty riding Hento; and Martin, helper.

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## Huntingdon Tote Donation

On the 26<sup>th</sup> September, the Tote at Huntingdon racecourse very kindly raised money for RDA National, by donating the entrance fee money for all those riding in the Mascot race.

This was due to Carolyn Pratt who sadly died at Burghley as it was her special charity. They had an auction and the Woodhurst Group had a bucket collection and raised £456.

# TRAINING IN THE EAST REGION.

We have had some very varied and interesting training days in the Region this year. The training days have all been well attended and the feedback has been very positive and appreciative - which is nice for those of us who have arranged them and the Trainers who so ably contributed to their success.

I thought I would mention all the training days briefly so that those of you who weren't able to attend might be tempted next year. We do understand the calls on the time of all our volunteers but we encourage Groups to pass on the information about these days - somehow the communication still slips on its way down! We also encourage Groups to pay for their instructors and helpers to attend, and this to include travelling expenses.

The first day, in March, was entitled 'Lets make all this paperwork less of a hassle!' Aimed to be a somewhat lighthearted approach to the forest of papers from RDA which fall through our letter boxes. To encourage people to attend, lunch was promised. Whether it was because of that or because of a genuine desire to learn is not completely certain! - but we could hardly accommodate the numbers and feedback was good. A similar day will be held in Essex at the beginning of next year.



Next came 'Teaching to Teach' at the College of W. Anglia. This was a highly professional day for instructors, presented by Claire Heald, BHSII and Clive Milkins BHSAI, RDASI. A lot of very valuable knowledge was gained by all those who attended.

In May and October our two Regional Physiotherapists, Pat Messam and Tish Woulds, with the support of the resident instructors, presented two excellent training days, looking at ways to help, provide actual therapy and progress some of our physically handicapped riders at The Magpie Centre, Norfolk and Barrow Farm, Essex. A great deal was learnt and appreciated by those who attended these days.

The day on 'Games and Activities' at Digswell Place, scheduled for June but which took place in September, was most helpful to a number of instructors and helpers. Anne Mitchell and Sally Dowsett from Barrow Farm gave us a demonstration which included a basis for some excellent ideas which could be adapted to all levels of riders. We also had an interesting talk about communicating with adults from Training Centres.

Our final day this year was in October at the Elizabeth Curtis Centre near Bedford. We were lucky enough to have, as our main trainer, Maggie Bradley, Chairman of our National Training Committee. She presented a fund of ideas for games and activities relevant to Proficiency Tests and the National Curriculum, as well as life skills and riding skills! It was an inspiring day enjoyed by all who came, braving the torrential rain and high winds.

Of course, Training has gone on as usual throughout the year with Group visits by myself and our County Instructors and Assessors. Many thanks to them all for their input - and thanks to all Groups who are operating so effectively. There will be changes next year so do ask your Group Correspondents to pass on ALL the information that come through. It is important!!

Sally Campbell-Gray, RDASI

Regional Instructor.

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## Waitrose Donation to West Suffolk Group



WAITROSE presented £1,500 to the West Suffolk Group of Riding for the Disabled Association at Culford Riding Stables.

Children from Priory School in Bury St Edmunds attend every week under the tuition of Suffolk County Instructor Carolyn Hall, who has held the sessions for the past 30 years.

The West Suffolk Group also holds weekly riding sessions for the River Walk School and Child Development Centre from Bury.

Ms Hall, who is also chairman of the West Suffolk Group, said: "The riding helps with balance, coordination and speech and is recognised by the medical profession.

We are extremely grateful to Waitrose for supporting us so generously. The money will go towards the hiring of ponies and buying equipment." Mark Daws, manager of Waitrose in Bury St Edmunds. said: "I was approached by Carolyn in the store who explained to me what she and the other volunteers did for disabled children. I thought this activity was really worth supporting. I am very pleased Waitrose has been able to help."

*Article taken from the Bury Free Press and Mercury.*

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***That's all folks! Remember to keep sending in the 'copy' for next year's issue, and visit our website at [www.rda-east.fsnet.co.uk](http://www.rda-east.fsnet.co.uk) to view the latest news items, photos and forthcoming training dates!***