

WEST & CENTRAL SCOTLAND

RDA MATTERS

AUGUST 2019

CELEBRATING

50YRS + OUR VOLUNTEERS

SUPRA 2019

IT'S ALL ABOUT OUR HORSES



- + REGIONAL ROUND UP
- + ROYAL RECEPTION
- + LOTS MORE



SAVE THE DATE

HELP OUR HORSES HELP US

2019 SCOTTISH SUPRA REGIONAL CONFERENCE

HOSTED BY
WEST & CENTRAL SCOTLAND REGION

RDA



IT'S ALL ABOUT THE HORSE

WEDNESDAY 23rd OCTOBER 2019

10:00AM - 3:00PM

(doors open @ 9:00am)

INGLISTON COUNTRY CLUB, BISHOPTON, PA7 5PA

TICKETS £20

To book contact scottish.supra2019@gmail.com

We are delighted to be this year's Supra Conference hosts, particularly as it falls during the 50th Anniversary of RDA. We hope to attract a large gathering and have chosen our theme for the conference to be all about our horses and ponies. We have a fantastic line up of talks and demonstrations planned including:

Matching horses to riders for greatest benefit

Learning to 'read' our horses with Felicity George, animal behaviourist

Russell Guire of Centaur Biomechanics on today's thinking on optimising the welfare of our horses.

Kirsty McWilliam of Riders of the Storm on techniques to gain our horses trust and confidence.

For more information contact scottish.supra2019@gmail.com



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Welcome...

This year is a very special and a busy one.

The whole of RDA is celebrating its 50th Birthday. A wonderful achievement. National Office have built and moved into a brand new and fantastic Headquarters. This will provide an excellent 'home' for us all and I very much hope that many of you will take the opportunity to go and see it.

West & Central Region are delighted to have been selected as the Charity of the Year at Blair Castle International Horse Trials, a fantastic opportunity to highlight all aspects of the work that we do, to enlighten and encourage more participants, volunteers and support. Our thanks go to Blair Estates and to other sponsors who have been so supportive.

In September we are looking forward to hosting the Scottish Dressage Championships at Glasgow RDA. It is always a fun, but keen event with competitors from all over Scotland trying to impress the judges. A huge thank you to Glasgow RDA.

October heralds the Scottish Supra Conference. It is the turn of West & Central Region to organise and host this event. This year the title is 'Help our Horses to Help us', teaching us all how to give our equines every chance to perform to their best ability, happily and confidently. I hope that many of you will join us at Ingliston Country Club, Bishopton for a day of learning, socialising and celebration for our 50th year.

Finally, this is my penultimate Chairman's Report for this magazine. Next year will be my last. As with all Regional and National Committee roles, I am required to step down after a maximum of nine years as Regional Chairman. How did that happen?? My reason for mentioning this now is that I am of course looking for a successor. Being Regional Chairman is a fun, friendly, busy, sometimes challenging role. I have, and continue to do so, learned an enormous amount about RDA, people, ponies and myself. I am very fortunate to have a brilliant Regional Committee covering all aspects of our operation, together with the support of the staff at National Office. Ideally, we would have a Vice-Chairman in place next year to get to know everyone and to learn the ropes. If any of you have ever considered being a Regional Chairman and would like to find out more, please get in touch with me. The role is not exclusively for those that have been brought up in the RDA.

I wish you all an excellent season and look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the various events this year. Best Wishes



Kate

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Editor: Regional Publicity Officer, Tami Mawhinney
Cover Photo: DJ from Forth Valley, courtesy of Liz Patton



RDA West & Central Scotland Committee

REGIONAL SUPPORT TEAM

Regional Chairman:	Mrs Kate Bennet	t: 07721 515 190	e:kate@tarandoun.co.uk
Regional Publicity Officer:	Mrs Tami Mawhinney	t: 07586 342 131	e:tami.rdapr@gmail.com
Regional Secretary:	Ms Mary Dunlop	t: 07711 558 535	e:mail@dunlopmj.co.uk
Regional Treasurer:	Ms Rhona Scott	t: 07703 258 272	e:treasurerwcsrda@outlook.com
Participants Rep:	Mrs Anne Brown	t: 07779 375 829	e:mrsbroonbbb@gmail.com
New Group Liason	Mrs Susan Duncan Millar	t: 07909 723 115	e:susanduncanmillar@hotmail.com

DISCIPLINE REPRESENTATIVES

Regional Driving Rep:	Mrs Patsy Muir-Simpson	t: 07799 106 118	e:patsyms@gmail.com
Regional Dressage Rep:	Mrs Nancy Peters	t: 07714 989 708	e:nancypeters@btinternet.com
Regional Show Jumping Rep:	Ms Petra Humphrey	t: 07870 193 174	e:petrahumphrey@hotmail.com

COUNTY CHAIRMEN

Argyll:	Mrs Anne Ritchie	t: 01369 706 949	e:jamesgibbritchie@gmail.com
Ayr:	Mrs Kate Bennet	t: 07721 515 190	e:kate@tarandoun.co.uk
Central:	Mrs Gillie Drapper	t: 07748 183 239	e:drapper@kilewnan.org.uk
Perth:	Mr Dave Anderson	t: 07967 952 985	e:davestjohnstone@outlook.com

COACHES

Regional Coach	Mrs Helen Kallow	t: 07941 808 043	e:thekallows@blueyonder.co.uk
County Coach	Mrs Andi Bruce	t: 07979 038 426	e:bruceandi@ymail.com
County Coach	Ms Petra Humphrey	t: 07870 193 174	e:petrahumphrey@hotmail.com

ADVISORS

Regional Physiotherapist (West):	Ms Kirsten Lyons	t: 07906 570 633	e:kirst1611@yahoo.co.uk
Regional Physiotherapist (Central):	Mrs Gilean Docherty	t: 07971 898 106	e:gilean.docherty@live.co.uk

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Be a Buddy

Have Your Say

IF YOU HAVE AN IDEA FOR A FEATURE OR A STORY FOR THE NEXT WEST & CENTRAL RDA MAGAZINE PLEASE GET IN TOUCH. EMAIL tami.rdapr@gmail.com



RDA West & Central Scotland Groups

Argyll

Argyll Carriage Driving	Jane Isaac	janeisaac@outlook.com	07340 854 843
Isle of Mull	Sue Penny	apenny@waitrose.com	01688 302 292
Oban & Lorn	Jo Hanlon	greyscrubber@btinternet.com	01866 833 122
Woodside	Christine Lambert	bramblecoco10@icloud.com	01369 704 740

Ayr

Carrick	Colin Duthie	colin.duthie@gmail.com	07813 533 144
Winton	Mandy Sinclair	mandy.glenlogan@btinternet.com	01290 551 265

Central

Clydesdale	Ian Berry	17ian-berry@waitrose.com	07966 379 960
Equi-Power Central Scotland	Julie-Anne Griffith	development@equi-power.org	07968 746 246
Forth Driving	Patsy Muir Simpson	patsyms@gmail.com	01786 870 351
Forth Valley	Liz Patton	lizmacpatton@btinternet.com	01259 750 530
Gareloch	Elise Nash	garelochrdasecretary@gmail.com	07801 057 251
Glasgow	Michelle Fleming	rdaglasgow@btconnect.com	0141 945 1369
Linn Park	Lynn Miller	linnparkec@icloud.com	0141 637 9745

Perth

Auchterarder	Belinda Lockett	belinda1957@btinternet.com	01764 662 048
Blairgowrie	Linda Riseborough	blairgowrierda@outlook.com	07434 816 089
Breadalbane & District	Jennifer Valentine	valentinejennifer95@gmail.com	01796 474 444
Glenfarg	Pat Scotland	pat.scotland@blueyonder.co.uk	01738 636 641
Kinfauns Stables	Stewart Duff	kinfaunsstablesrda@ btconnect.com	01738 630 040
Rideaway (Strathearn)	Jane Gourlay	jane.gourlay@hotmail.com	07746 557 823



A close-up photograph of a woman with light-colored hair and glasses, wearing a grey scarf, kissing a brown horse on the cheek. The horse has a white blaze on its face. They are in an outdoor paddock with a wooden fence and trees in the background under a clear blue sky.

HIP HIP HURR-NEIGH!

**CELEBRATING 50 YEARS AND OUR
VOLUNTEERS!**

TAMMIE HENNAN, GARELOCH GROUP

OUR VOLUNTEERSWHAT MAKES AND SHAPES US

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of RDA we took inspiration from this years '50 Faces' campaign to shine a light on the volunteers across our region who make everything we do possible.

Tammie's Story, Gareloch Group (cover picture)

Tammie from Helensburgh was diagnosed with severe post-natal depression and anxiety after having her first child that left her unable to leave the house on her own. Having been a horse rider as a child, a friend suggested she volunteer with Riding for the Disabled. Tammie said: "I was diagnosed with postnatal depression and anxiety after having my first child. It was very severe, to the point I was not able to leave my house without someone with me, I had no confidence and couldn't face the outside world without someone to hold my hand, I was an empty shell of who I once was.

My friend Vicki had begun volunteering with the Gareloch RDA group and told me about the amazing work the group did. I am big animal lover and used to ride when I was younger so with Vicki holding my hand, I went along to meet the horses and quickly fell in love, not only with the horses but also the volunteers who were so warm and welcoming and helped ease my anxiety straight away.

That day I signed up to be a volunteer and went with Vicki twice a week. My confidence grew and grew and I made great friends within the group and a strong bond with the horses. If I was having a bad day, the horses were a huge comfort, it was so therapeutic grooming and caring for these magnificent animals, I felt like I could tell them all my worries and they would never judge me. Horses are brilliant listeners!

We are now 2 years on and I have achieved so much in these 2 years that would never have been possible had I not RDA. I have learned to drive and passed my test (first

time) and was also able to start working again part time. I volunteer 3 days a week, I am training for carriage driving and to become a coach.

It's safe to say that I'm a whole new me thanks to RDA. My family cannot believe the difference in me and, thanks to RDA, my husband has his wife back and my girls have a mummy who isn't scared to leave the house.

Maggie's Story, Clydesdale Group

I joined as a volunteer in 2008 when I moved back to Scotland. It was a great way of meeting new people and using my horse and people skills whilst benefiting a wonderful group of riders.

I had to stop for a couple of years due to health reason ... husband was diagnosed with a terminal illness and I was treated for breast cancer. Coming back to the group was a really positive part of my recovery and I have made lifelong friends who's support through some difficult times was invaluable. I love seeing our riders having fun and developing their skills. I am now the Chair of Clydesdale RDA and wish I could do more!





Dave's Story, Kinfauns Group

I first contacted RDA in the summer of 1986 to volunteer at the St Andrews group, which may have seemed surprising for someone with no knowledge of horses or ponies. However, my background in social care and working on a project for young people with significant learning disabilities led me to become aware of RDA. After that I was hooked and my involvement lasted until late summer of 2015 when I retired.

In 2016 my loving wife and best friend Barbara died of breast cancer and the retirement we had planned was not to be. Suddenly I found myself coping with my grief with all the time in the world.

Looking through our local paper one day I found a small article from Kate Bennet and Mary Dunlop who were looking for a County Chair for Perth and Kinross. That spurred me on to get in touch and before I knew it, I was volunteering at Kinfauns RDA near Perth where I have been volunteering once weekly now for almost 3 years! I was one of the first to welcome Princess Anne to the official opening of

Kinfauns RDA on Oct 6th 2016 and dreaded being asked a technical question about hacking, tacking or feathers!

I am now County Chair of Perth and Kinross and for me, RDA has what I can only describe as the X factor. It is impossible to quantify the physical and mental benefits to children and adults and to witness the endless smiles and laughter of the riders really is something special

Joining the RDA as a volunteer and County Chair came at an important time in my life and has helped me in so many ways, most especially in coping emotionally with my loss and trying to live my life to the full. I have made lots of new friends, been rattling collecting cans in sub-zero temperatures outside football grounds, met a member of the Royal family, attended several fundraising quizzes and the national RDA AGM held in Glasgow.

Now I can't imagine not volunteering with the RDA and remain passionate about the benefits of riding and after all these years I know which end of the pony to feed and which end to avoid...now that is progress!

CHANGING LIVES THROUGH VOLUNTEERING

The people that volunteer with RDA come from all walks of life and span all ages. Many end up giving up their time to a good cause and find that it helps with their own difficulties. This leads to a positive, life enhancing improvement for all. In March this year, RDA National Office released the findings of their volunteer wellbeing survey

- 81% said that volunteering with RDA made them feel better about themselves.
- 88% said they felt like they belonged to the RDA Community.
- 93% said volunteering helped to keep them physically active
- 95% of RDA volunteers feel they have gained knowledge and skills.
- 80% feel the knowledge they have gained has helped them in other areas of their life

Where it all began...

In celebrating our volunteers and 50th year, we could not go without celebrating those who carved the path that we now follow, the trailblazers who established RDA in Scotland. The words written below were penned by Jean Masson on Johan Dunlop's retirements. I think the friendship and camaraderie in these words encapsulates volunteering for RDA, so straight from the horse's mouth as they say .. how it all began

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

by JEAN MASSON

November, 1966, saw a meeting at Ballochneck of some eighteen Pony Club mums, Instructors and the like, to hear the facts about Riding for the Disabled as practised at Chigwell. From this meeting you, Johan, emerged as Chairman and I as Secretary of an as yet un-named organisation to bring riding to disabled people in the West of Scotland. We were immediately backed by a magnificent offer of help from the Somerville family once the new covered school at Kilmardinny was built. Your original committee consisted of Veronica, Phyllis, Elspeth, Ruth, Sally Gordon Brown, Udy, Mary Weipers, Mrs Murray, Effie Thomson, John Tindal, Mr McPherson, Ian McFarlane and Neil Somerville.

After visiting The Drum in January, 1967, where we met the spectral but everlasting More Nisbets, we decided to test the market and held a meeting in March at the Vet. College when Pam Taylor came up from Chigwell and showed films and gave a talk to 170 people. The response proved that there was a need for our services and so your real homework began!

The name of the society was your brainchild and it duly acquired registration as a charity with its own constitution and funds began to roll in.

In June Phyllis, Elspeth, Neil and Ruth went to Chigwell to learn their stuff - they returned in an undernourished but enthusiastic state and full of ideas. Then in November we held assessments for four handicapped Scouts and four Spina Bifs. This latter group with its pressure problems scared us stiff and we decided to learn management and handling on the more robust Scouts before tackling these fragile children. The first lesson took place at Kilmardinny in late December and the four original Scouts were super and really made the helpers feel confident. We never looked back and progressed during the following year to additional classes until we had about 30 pupils. (We are now just short of 50.)

You took Elspeth, Ruth, Gibby and me to our first Conference at Stoneleigh in May, 1968, and taught us all how to use chopsticks properly. I can remember doing Little-Johnny-Head-in-the-Air along some duck-boarding at Stoneleigh and falling flat on my face in the mud; and being plied with brandy by kind gentlemen in the bar which was some consolation. We worked hard at that conference and picked up a lot of useful ideas from the English groups, so that we began to make our rides more varied and free as a result.

You worked away quietly and good-humouredly, overcoming prejudice and opposition with notable success (except for Maudie the Pink!). Howwood and Coltness sub-branches started in 1969 and have since become recognised in their own right. In January, 1970, you became Regional Representative for Scotland and thanks to your contacts and patient persistence, groups started in Aberdeen, the Borders, Forfar, Elgin, Angus, Perthshire and Morayshire. In October, 1971, they were successfully brought together in the Scottish Conference at the Vet. College and Kilmardinny.

You have set us all an extremely high standard to follow. We shall strive to keep St Mungo's as efficient as your groundwork has undoubtedly made it.

If you would like to know more information on the early RDA days, contact Mary Dunlop mail@dunlopjm.co.uk



Words written by Jean Masson on Johan Dunlop's retirement from the St Mungo Group that went onto become the Glasgow Group



Royal Approval



It's smiles all around as HRH, Princess Anne launches RDA's official tartan and meets volunteers and participants at Royal Reception in celebration of 50 years of RDA.

Scottish celebrations to mark 50 years of RDA kicked off in style in April this year with the unveiling of RDA's official tartan scarves at a Royal Reception in Edinburgh.

The tartan was launched by RDA President, Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal, who was delighted to have been presented with her very own RDA tartan scarf at the event.

The Princess Royal met with volunteers and participants to celebrate 50 years of RDA in Scotland. In her address to guests, The Princess thanked the volunteers - over 2,500 in Scotland - without whom RDA would not be possible.

She acknowledged the whole team effort that it takes to help make such a real difference to people's lives through riding and carriage driving.

By special invitation volunteers, participants and their families from across the region were selected to represent their groups. For many

this was the first time they had met Princess Anne, who left a lasting impression.

The event was kindly held at the People's Postcode Lottery office in Charlotte Square, Edinburgh.

Regional Chair for Edinburgh and Borders Kim McCutcheon who led the tartan project said: "It was lovely to launch the tartan at a special event. It would be really special to see the scarf worn across the UK to help support another 50 years of





Smiles all round for HRH, The Princess Royal and volunteers and participants celebrating as they celebrate 50 years of RDA at a Royal Reception held in Edinburgh.

Downpours & Delights

Not even the temperamental weather conditions could dampen the high spirits at the Regional Dressage Qualifiers, Countryside Challenge & Hopetoun Driving Qualifiers.

Regional Dressage Qualifiers

On 28th May Glasgow RDA once again kindly hosted the Regional Qualifiers. It was a day of very mixed weather but even the heavy rain showers couldn't dampen the atmosphere of fun and excitement of the day.

This year's Regional Dressage was well attended and after weeks of fervent preparation, spectators were treated to some excellent displays of dressage riding throughout the day. Carys Marie Williams (Gareloch) came out on top in the Dressage Qualifying Class, riding Ollie to scoop the Lindsay Trophy, while Gill Rankin (Glasgow) riding Rupert trotted off with the Jean Gardner Trophy.

Countryside Challenge

This year also saw the return of the Countryside Challenge back in the field, going great guns and providing enjoyment for all involved. Success came for Mhairi Dawson (Equi-Power RDA) riding Laddie, who won the Punchbowl Trophy in the Intermediate Countryside Challenge Class and for Brody Lawson (Winton) riding Splash, winner of the Jean Masson Trophy for the Novice Countryside Challenge Class.

Equi-power RDA, won the Strathclyde Police Cup for the Tack and Turnout class, with Millie Boo Smith, an Equi-power rider, collecting the cup on behalf of the group.

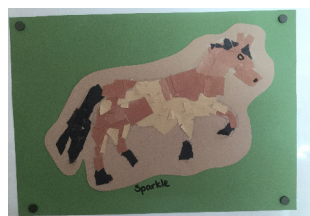
Hopetoun Driving Qualifiers

It was success all the way for Forth Driving at the Hopetoun Driving Qualifiers despite the blustery conditions. Ann Cameron scooped 1st in the Novice Class in an exciting and dramatic finish when as the last Dressage competitor to drive, Ann drove excellently to snatch victory from Daniel Cowan (Fliskmillan). Linda Farquhar swept off with 2nd in the Open Qualifiers, both qualifying for the Nationals. Forth Driving's Lynn Sharp was the winner of the Fliskmillan Trophy, and to cap it all off, they only went and bagged the RDA Challenge Cup for the highest score!

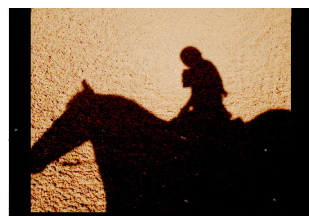
Arts & Crafts The annual Arts & Crafts competition had a record number of entries with very imaginative works, making judging very difficult. The winning entries were Greg Honeyman (Gareloch RDA) for his painting of Bosun, Sophie Bhalla (Glasgow RDA) for her collage of Sparkle and Carys Marie Williams (Gareloch RDA) for her photograph, entitled My Shadow.



Bosun



Sparkle



My Shadow



From left to right: Gill Rankin (Glasgow), Milli-Boo Smith (Equi-Power), Carys Marie Williams (Gareloch), Mhairi Dawson (Equi-Power) and Brody Lawson (Winton)



Lynn Sharp winner of the Fliskmillan Trophy

GOLDEN 50th ROSETTES WERE GIVEN TO ALL RIDERS AT THE REGIONAL DRESSAGE AND COUNTRYSIDE CHALLENGE TO CELEBRATE 50 YEARS OF RDA.



Brody Lawson

ANNE CAMERON



CHAMPING AT THE BIT

RIDERS AND DRIVERS WERE RARING TO GO AS THEY HEADED SOUTH TO THE RDA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS IN HARTPURY

WITH BARELY TIME TO CATCH THEIR BREATH AFTER THE QUALIFIERS, RIDERS AND DRIVERS MADE THE TRIP DOWN SOUTH TO COMPETE WITH 500 OF THE UK'S FINEST RIDERS AND DRIVERS. FORTH DRIVING SWEEPED THE BOARDS WITH AN IMPRESSIVE 1ST IN BOTH THE OPEN AND NOVICE CLASSES WHILE OUR RIDERS GAVE A DAZZLING DRESSAGE DISPLAY TO PACKED CROWDS WITH SOME RED HOT CHILLI PIPERS FLUNG IN FOR GOOD MEASURE. FIRST UP LET'S HEAR FROM OUR CHAMPS!

ANN'S STORY

After winning her dramatic nail biting win in the Hopetoun Novice Class it was Hartpury here we come for Ann.

With only 7 weeks to go to the Champs and a different pony to drive, Ann had some crucial training to help transition to driving Ozzy, a talented pony that has been to Hartpury on several occasions and has always given his best. Fear not, Ann drove superbly to be crowned the National Champion for the Novice Class.

In her own words Ann describes her journey to Hartpury.

"The qualifying competition at Hopetoun was my first ever driving competition and, to my surprise, I did the best dressage test of the day. Hartpury was an amazing experience that I wouldn't have missed for anything. Ozzy was more lively than normal, which was quite a challenge. My mind was a blank at the beginning of the dressage test but it all came back to me thereafter, just in time! Having not competed for many years it was exciting being back in the arena. Thanks to the support team for helping me through."

LINDA'S STORY

Having been placed 2nd at the qualifying event at Hopetoun House in May there was much to be done before Linda, her coach and her support team headed south to the RDA National Championships in Hartpury, Gloucestershire.

This was Linda's third visit to Hartpury having driven there in 2017 and 2018 when she won the Novice and Intermediate Classes

respectively. Now competing in the Open Class could she make it three wins in a row?

Alan Campbell from the Garioch Group, Inverurie held a slender lead following the dressage which he maintained after completing the cones course, so it was all to play for when driving the obstacles. Linda was driving Ozzy, who once again proved his worth, as Linda drove smoothly through the obstacles, but had she done enough? Once the penalties had been added together from all three phases of the competition it was a very close call. Linda had indeed been awarded first place by 1.27 points.

Asked what the highlights of

the event were, several came to mind.

"Having been before I felt calm and collected for once which was particularly helpful before the dressage! I was thrilled to meet the Countryfile team. Anita Rani presented the prizes to all the riders and I enjoyed meeting John Craven who was really interested to learn what we do."

Having recently celebrated her 50th Birthday, Linda was over the moon to win the Open Class in the year that marks the 50th Anniversary of RDA. For Linda this was 'the icing on the cake.'



LINDA FARQUHAR



Anne Brown and Basil, representing Gareloch Group, put in a outstanding display to claim 2nd place in Dressage to Music. For those who know Anne, you won't be surprised to hear that her music was the Red Hot Chilli Pipers! Anne and Basil also picked up a well-earned 6th place in the Dressage Grade 3 class. Erin Lee, Julie McKerracher and Jade Aitken of Glasgow Group all took part in dressage classes. All rode very well and thoroughly enjoyed their first trip to the Champs, but just missed being placed in what was a very close competition. The region was also represented by more experienced competitors Leanne Peters and Carys-Marie Williams of Gareloch, who narrowly missed out on being placed. Everyone is already planning for next year!

It was cherry of the top for Linda Farquhar and Ann Cameron. On the back of their fantastic wins, they took 3rd place in the 50th Anniversary class of the Arts and Crafts competition for their cake iced with the new RDA tartan. What a talented pair!

The National Championship this year were bigger and better than ever. With 500 competitors, competition was fierce but friendly. High notes were the Counryfile filming and 50th Anniversary parade.

All our riders and drivers are planning next year already and we can't wait to get all the news and stories from the field.

For videos and photographs of all the action at Hartpury visit our Facebook page @RDASCot



Icing on the cake



Linda with John Craven



Regional Chariman Kate, getting into the spirit of the Anniversary Parade

REGIONAL ROUND UP

SHOWCASING THE WORK OF OUR
GROUPS ACROSS OUR REGION

We want to hear from all our groups across the region and share your news and stories. Please email tami.rdapr@gmail.com with your stories and photographs or share them on our Facebook page @RDAWCSot

Argyll

Argyll Carriage Driving

We have had a busy start to the season, driving 2 days a week!

Sadly we are short of volunteers these days and regrettably we have had to cancel our Thursday Group for the time being. Our newest coach, Graham, has been in hospital a few times and we wish him well. His partner Mary has been away from the Group receiving a new hip and is doing very well. We look forward to welcoming them back to our driving sessions.

Our Volunteer Recruitment Day in April was a great success and has brought us some enthusiastic new faces and we look forward to working together.

We have a new pony Tiny Tim, who has been a great success with drivers and volunteers alike – he is a little smaller than Red, but is proving to be very capable.

Unfortunately, we had to cancel the RDA Scottish Driving Holiday this year at short notice when a pony at the yard had a suspicious swelling under her jaw. Happily, for the Group this turned out to be a reaction to clover and all ponies tested clear for any infectious diseases twice.

The holiday makers still came to Argyll and made the most of it with ferry trips, castle excursions, flying birds of prey and a BBQ which everyone enjoyed. Patsy Muir Simpson from Forth Driving and the Holiday Organiser has intimated it is easier to have everyone driving! But great fun was had by all.

We hope to be hosting Scottish Groups to our Picnic Drive at the end of the season and are so far ahead of ourselves Christmas lunch is already booked!



Tiny tim driving with Hannah



Pony Club in full swing

Isle of Mull

Hooray for the summer. Much as everyone enjoys our weekly sessions, it's always better when we can really enjoy our fantastic Mull scenery. We know that we are fortunate in our location, and this made us wonder if RDA riders on holiday on our island would like to join us for a session? So, we extended the offer out, and we are looking forward to welcoming visitors from the RDA family. Contact Sue Penny for more information at apenny@waitrose.com.

Summer also brings an extension to the group's social side. Each year we serve teas at Lucy MacKenzie's garden Open Days at Lip na Cloiche, one of the most spectacular island gardens in the UK.

This summer we also had our second "Pony Afternoon." We had an outstanding turnout of young people keen to help offering pony rides while we served refreshments and ran a sell-out tombola. It was great fun, but it's also lovely to work with the young people that we hope will go on to be the RDA supporters of the future.

Oban & Lorne

The most important success we've had this year so far is providing over forty individuals with a weekly hour of riding and engaging with our wonderful ponies. The lessons and rides are the joyful part behind which lies the slog of fundraising, promotion and admin.



Throughout the winter we've run monthly bingo nights and are currently experimenting with Beetle Drives. Luckily, we were given access to retail space in town to use as a charity shop. Managing to scrounge items to sell and slave drive volunteers to staff the shop. we have raised over a whopping £7,000. Thank you to our dedicated volunteers!

We held a Lidl collection in the Spring and are hoping to arrange collections in Oban's other two supermarkets.

On the 19th July we had Open Day in the hope the punters would flock regardless of the weather. Thankfully we had great sunny weather and the die-hard volunteers there to enforce fun and laughter for all... and to keep our riders on their ponies!



Ayr

During a coffee break after one of the RDA coaching sessions we were made aware of the risk to children and young adults of Sudden Cardiac Arrest when taking part in sporting activities, and the importance of having a defibrillator available, which dramatically improves survival rates.

Fergushill Pony Club and friends had planned fundraising for the Winton Group and it was decided that the funds raised would go towards purchasing a defibrillator. The machine would benefit all children, teachers and parents attending the stables. We are very grateful to St John Scotland, Glaxo

Winton

Smith Kline and RDA Winton Group who also made this possible and contributed to the purchase of the unit.

The defibrillator is located in the viewing gallery at the stables and is accessible to all on site.



Clydesdale

Here at Clydesdale RDA we are busy fundraising to buy saddles, tack & hats for our riders and to equip the new viewing gallery/office at the Scottish Equestrian Complex in Lanark. The Blue Barn conversion is continuing slowly but we will benefit from more flexibility with session times and will also enable us to install a hoist (funding in place) and a wheelchair ramp (donated) so that we can offer more riding opportunities to a wider group of participants.

The absence of a load-bearing pony means that, sadly, we have several riders are unable to participate. Those who are riding have been enjoying the South Lanarkshire countryside during Endurance Week and beyond with the old Lanark Racecourse providing plenty of outdoor space for our riders and volunteers to enjoy.

To celebrate RDA's 50th Anniversary our talented Coach Anne Mackie baked delicious cakes and topped them off with the 50th logo... Happy 50th RDA!



It has been an eventful year for us. In March, we were awarded Horsescotland Equestrian Club of the Year, Equestrian Photo of the Year and our trustee Susie Elliot was recognised for 50 years of outstanding contribution to RDA.

Lynne Blore and her vaulters enjoyed success at 2 BEV competitions at Howe in Fife. It's great to see the skills and confidence developing. Especially for those vaulters only having joined this year.

In May we were invited to the Royal Highland Show in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of RDA. The team dazzled the crowds with their demonstration. Laddie and the team truly rose to the occasion.

Our work with Stirling Council is to establish a permanent home for the charity at Kildean continues and work has begun on infrastructure for the area with a new access road leading to the site for the new Equi-Power facilities. We are delighted to be finalists for the Persimmon Building Futures Awards and hope we will secure enough votes to win funding that will help realise our dream.

We are very grateful to the Knox family

for loaning Freckles to the group. He's missed by his fan-club but we are all pleased to see him happy back at home enjoying lighter duties.

We are delighted to introduce new recruit Dana who has been purchased by the group. With more horse-power we can now offer some new riding, vaulting, and equine assisted learning at Southfield, where the Crombie family are taking superb care of our horses.

Equi-Power Central Scotland



It's been mixed fortunes this season with equine flu and strangles being prevalent in the region. Thankfully, our horses were unaffected!

As a precaution driving didn't begin in earnest until mid-April when we began preparation for the ponies and drivers who wished to compete at Hopetoun House and providing fun drives for our more disabled participants. Thanks to the commitment of our drivers, coaches and our volunteers, two of our drivers, Ann Cameron and Linda Farquhar, qualified to compete in the National RDA Championships at Hartpury, where they went on to achieve great success. Lynn Sharp won the Fliskmillan Trophy and the Forth Group won the Hopetoun Challenge Cup, by the smallest of

margins. Our annual outing to Flowdens Farm, hosted by the Annandale and Eskdale Group was enjoyed by all. Combining both competitiveness and fun it is a great way to catch up with friends from other groups. The Gareloch Group from Helensburgh joined this event for the first time. This was the group's first venture away from home and a good test for both Bobbie, their pony, and their team!

Just as important as the driving, is the regular social occasions that is the glue that makes this group quite special! Of particular note, the legendary BBQ hosted by Pippa and Robin MacLean each year.

Our thanks go to all who have supported us and helped us to grow.

Forth Driving

Another pony, Gracie owned by Carol Williamson, is now an established member of our equine team. Thank you to Richard Stirling-Aird who has funded our new carriage (soon to be delivered). Thank you also to Carol and Mark Seymour for their support from money raised by opening their garden to the public; this they have done for many years. Last, but not least, thank you to Lorraine and Sheila for quietly going around giving talks to interested group who support us; in particular to the members of the Trefoil Guild whose generosity has been put towards a new low loading trailer for the transport of our carriages to future events.



Forth Valley Forth Valley RDA members celebrated with our two young volunteers, Grace Melville and Ferne Smith. they are sporting the medallions and are either side of Dan. The girls came first in Kinross High school YPI scheme with their presentation about us! They have won £3000 for our funds; we are super proud of them!



We have had another exciting term. Our Carriage Driving team continue to develop and reach more people. Back in May, we attended the Spifox Charity Lunch in Glasgow, showing off our Carriage to those that made it happen.

Our Riders continue to impress with their skill and enthusiasm. We wish to congratulate our riders, Carys Marie and Leanne, riding Bella and Harley, and Anne Borwn riding Basil for their efforts at the National Competition at Hartpury.

As we rapidly approach Autumn our team of hardworking ponies has increased, with the introduction of Isaac, who is joining the other 8 of the group. We are now able to cater to riders of all sizes and abilities and look forward to working with him

We would not be able to run without the dedication of our volunteers. We would like to say thank you to Ian Ward who retired as our Fundraiser. His position as Trustee and Fundraiser is now in the capable hands of Julia Barr who is hard at work already.

The last few months have seen the team involved in fundraising, training and attended the fabulous Garden Party at Holyrood House.

With plenty to look forward to, the whole team are excited to start back in earnest in September!

Gareloch

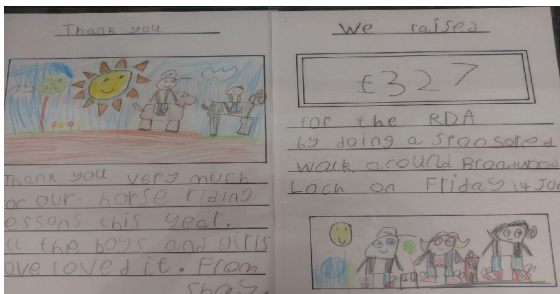


Glasgow

We are pleased to announce that we have managed to secure funding from Patersons of Greenoakhill Ltd. Due to their generosity we will be upgrading all of our lighting, fencing and arena to be more aesthetically pleasing, cost effective and most importantly safer for our riders, volunteers, staff and horses. Work commenced in the summer break.

Our Buy a Bale of Shavings Campaign has raised a whopping £751! This will ensure our horses have plenty of padding to keep them warm and comfortable come winter time. A massive thank you to Glencryan School for this wonderful effort in raising money for RDA Glasgow. Some of the sponsored walkers even had their lesson after this awesome achievement!

We would also like to congratulate our riders who took part in the National RDA Championships at Hartpury this year for the first time. We have all caught the Nationals bug and will be looking to venture south again next year.



Blairgowrie

Well what a year it's been so far and it's going to get even more exciting over the summer months. In August 2018 we held an EGM at which it was decided to keep the group going. In September 2018, at our AGM, it was agreed that finding a new venue for the group, a new Treasurer and a Pony Manager were our main tasks, and we have now had success on all fronts.

Tony the pony joined us in April and has fitted in well with the existing four-legged team. They all worked very well during term time and our riders were delighted to receive gold rosettes and Endeavour Awards at their last lessons before the summer break.

During April we had several meetings with the owners of Easter Rattray Farm and managed to negotiate a deal to rent a courtyard, part of a barn, a six-acre hill field and access to a purpose-built outdoor arena. We plan to be moving in during the summer holidays so that we can start the new term at the new venue. We've now had approval of the site by Kate Bennet, Regional Chair, so things are galloping along. We've also taken some of our volunteers up to the

site and everyone is very enthusiastic, especially as we will have electricity in a heated container office/classroom and access to a plumbed toilet!

Mary Dunlop (Regional Secretary) and Chair for the last eighteen months stood down in April and Rhona Christie, acting Chair since last September, stepped into the role. We also managed to appoint some new trustees and have, at long last, found a Treasurer who took up her position in May. This means we have a full management team, so everything is looking very positive.

We are very grateful to all those who have helped us during the past years and months:

- Sir William Macpherson and family who let us have free use of the Golf Course Road site for the last 40 years;
- to our Treasurer who resigned eighteen months ago but kept working until we managed to recruit a new one;
- to Mary Dunlop for helping keep the group together by acting as Chair and helping us to find our new site;
- to all our volunteers, for their support and help and without whom we would not exist.

To sum up our positive year to date, the following is an extract from a parent about her son's experience with us at lessons - "He thoroughly enjoyed these and I can see a real benefit to him in terms of both the physicality of riding but also the emotional benefits."



Breadlabane & District

A very busy and exciting term for us this year so far. We have 7 new volunteers who have contributed enormously to the group and taken some strain off existing volunteers, we also have seen the welcomed return of a volunteer. One of our new volunteers has put herself forward to become a Coach, and we hope one or two more may come forward. We are re-energised!

We have 5 new riders who have made great progress and on 24th June 3 riders passed Grade 3 Riding and Horse Care, one Grade 2 and one Grade 1, with 3 riders passing Grade 1 the week before.

We have 1 new pony just for this year who has done very well, but will need to look for at least 2 for the spring.

The highlight of our term was our new shed, which is larger and we are very grateful to the League of Friends of Aberfeldy Cottage Hospital for their extremely generous donation. It's fitted out so we will have to have an official opening next term with the Press and Champagne!

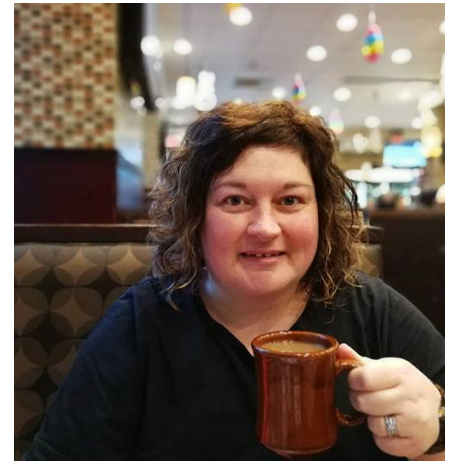
Kinfauns Stables

We are delighted to announce that we have achieved our Volunteer Friendly Award. This is awarded for excellence in volunteer management. This is result of a year and a half working together with PKAVS third interface in Perth learning and implementing the best practices to provide every volunteer with a fun positive experience and ensure they have the opportunity to learn new skills & achieve personal development plans.

At this point we would like to say a massive thank you to all our super 70+ volunteers, without whom we could not

operate at the level we do. Pictured is Elaine Rimmer from PKAVS presenting us with the award.

In March Charlene Meldrum joined us as volunteer fundraising co-ordinator. With lots of previous experience running fundraising events and doing funding applications Charlene is ready to explore all other possible revenue streams. We are so lucky to have other volunteers that have been contributing so much to our fundraising efforts and Charlene is enjoying their continued involvement in the fundraising team.



So far this term we have had a number of inspirational events take place. We celebrated Shona, one of our volunteers, 70th birthday. Shona has volunteered with our groups for over 20 years!

We also had a number of volunteers attend the HRH Reception in Edinburgh



Rideaway (Strathearn)

to celebrate 50 years of RDA and getting the chance to meet Princess Anne.

We held our Easter Egg Hunt searching for coloured eggs hanging in the trees around Crieff Hydro. Skye found lots of eggs and enjoyed the chocolate egg reward at the end more than the hunt itself!

At the beginning of June, we learned of an British Horse Society Scotland event to hear Mike Delaney speak about equine therapy at the Kelpies in Falkirk. We felt very privileged indeed to hear Mike speak about his years as a psychologist and equine assisted learning practitioner. Mike explained how the horse elicits the desire to play; they are sensitive and emotionally congruent and often mirror the body language and energy of the people undertaking the therapy. It is powerful stuff and even Mike says he doesn't quite understand what exactly is going on but it is going on and that's what matters!



BE A BUDDY TO WEST & CENTRAL SCOTLAND

RDA



**Riding for the Disabled Association
Incorporating Carriage Driving**

West & Central Scotland Region Riding for the Disabled provides vital support services to 20 member groups and 600 hardworking volunteers to enable the groups to deliver RDA's life-changing therapeutic riding and driving activities to over 800 disabled children and adults every year. With growing demand every year, we support our groups by providing volunteer and coaching pathway training and workshops designed to equip volunteers and groups with the tools, knowledge and inspiration to make a positive impact for their group.

We rely entirely on voluntary donations, sponsorships and grants. To help us to grow to meet demand and continue to provide the vital training, coaching, compliance and governance support our groups require to operate and thrive, please help us by becoming a Buddy to West & Central Scotland Region RDA. For more information on what we do visit <https://rdawestcentralscotland.org.uk>

To Be A Buddy, you can make a donation via our paypal link <https://www.paypal.me/rdatartan> (please state BUDDY in the notes so we can identify your donation) or by contacting us at TreasurerWCSRDA@outlook.com