



Hope in the Valley Newsletter

Hope in the Valley is a charitable riding group for physically disabled children. Manned entirely by volunteers, its aim is to give these children between the ages of 3 and 16 the opportunity to experience the pleasure, independence and therapeutic benefits that riding a horse brings.

Autumn 2008

Picnic ride



On 2nd July, Margaret and Peter Fogg generously invited volunteers, riders and parents to share their beautiful home at Mopeshole for a picnic ride. In spite of threatening clouds, we escaped with no more than a few light showers, and each of the four rides was able to enjoy a jaunt through the woods (counting the fluorescent green marks left by 'fairies' on the tree stumps) and around the fields.

The riders also enjoyed a scavenge around the garden, finding all manner of pink and red items that had been hidden there.

The sheep, dogs, guinea pigs and rabbits didn't seem unduly concerned about all the extra attention, and proved to be a great attraction for everyone.

We were honoured to welcome Jane Holderness-Roddam CBE LVO, National Chairman and Director of RDA who was also an Olympic rider in the Mexico

Olympics in 1968. She presented all the riders and ponies with rosettes to commemorate our Ruby Anniversary year. Each rider also received a special Ruby Anniversary tee-shirt and party bag.

We also said goodbye to Ron Sharp, who is retiring as a volunteer and Margaret and Peter Fogg were presented with a gift to thank them for sharing their home for the afternoon.

Delicious food was supplied by parents and volunteers and enjoyed by everyone. Maureen, Cindy and Sara kept everyone topped up with tea and juice.



Important dates

Wednesday 3rd Sept	Volunteer training day and AGM
Wednesday 10th Sept	First riding of term
Wednesday 8th October	Regional AGM NO RIDING
Wednesday 29th October	Half term
Wednesday 3rd Dec	Christmas Party and last riding of term
Wednesday 7th January	First riding of term

A night with Ruby Murray!

It was the longest day of the year, and on 21st June around 30 volunteers, parents and partners enjoyed a taste of India in the heart of Rodmell. Jenny Brown had excelled herself, with the most beautifully decorated Indian-style marquee and jewels for each of the ladies to wear on their foreheads. The guests enjoyed a range of delicious curries, and the Ruby Anniversary Committee demonstrated their stunning organisational skills once again.

Hope in the Valley Riding Group Reg. Charity No: 1074384

A member of the Riding for the Disabled Association incorporating Carriage Driving registered under charity number 244108
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www.hopeinthevalley.org

Pony news

Some new faces: two chestnuts and a big bay boy

Chester. Chester is a 13 hand Chestnut Welsh Section C who has been a pony club pony for most of his 21 years. Originally from the Oxford area he has lived with Carol (and Sonny) for 4 years now ('slumming it in Sussex') and having been outgrown by Kirsty (Carol's granddaughter) is now ridden by local young riders Ella and Lilly. Chester is not keen on Pigs but apparently LOVES Cross Country. Carol says he is a clever pony who

hates to be separated from his friends.

Chrismi. Chrismi is a local lad who has recently come to live with Jane Walsh (and Jonjo, Kiki and Mailee). He is also 21 years old and also a Chestnut Welsh Section C. However at 13.1 he is a little bit taller than Chester and slightly chunkier. He is regularly ridden by Jane's grandson Finlay and also enjoys pony club activities. Liz Mills describes him as a 'bossy' pony who does not like stony ground or Kiki!

Dylan. Dylan is about 15.2 and having been retired from Plump-ton College found himself living at Nicola Cramond's (with Taylor and Kerry). He is dark bay, about 20 and of Irish origin. Despite being a bit stiff behind he likes to keep active; he enjoys hacking out with Taylor and is hoping to become a regular member of the later Wednesday sessions. He likes Extra Strong Mints and Kerry but finds Nicola's sheep very irritating.

Nicola Cramond

Photographs

We are hoping to set up a photo-sharing web-site to enable photographs from Hope in the Valley events to be uploaded and shared by all volunteers and parents. It will then be possible to order prints of them at a low cost. The trustees will discuss this at their next meeting in September and details will be emailed. If you wish to be able to access and order photos using this system you will need an email address, which should be advised to Nikki Terry.

Dressage at Hickstead

On 4th June our riders and volunteers had a brilliant day at Hickstead where they were all placed in the RDA South East Region Dressage Competition. They all worked incredibly hard, attending six practise sessions throughout May to prepare for the event.

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped in the weeks before the event and on the day to make it such a success.

The results were:-

Sophie Pengilly	1st in unled test
Kelly Gunn	6th in led test
Harry Dale	1st in unled test
Karl Lee	3rd in unled test
Ahid Ghbaya	2nd in the Class 11 Test 12 Grade 1
Lily Hill	3rd in the Class 11 Test 12 Grade 1

Ahid qualified to compete at the National Championships at Hartpury in July.



National Championships 2008

The weekend of the 13th and 14th July saw the annual RDA National Championships at Hartpury in Gloucester, and this year Hope in the Valley had three qualifying riders (Ahid, Charlotte and Valentine). Lesley, Sheila, Hilary and I, not to mention Heineken and Rose, set off on Friday morning, hoping for a sunny and successful weekend. After heavy traffic, torrential rain and six hours driving we finally arrived at Hartpury and settled the ponies for the night.

Saturday morning dawned cloudy but dry as we prepared Rose for Ahid's dressage class and gave a grubby Heineken a lengthy bath ready for the following day. Ahid arrived with several family members to support him and started his afternoon by scoring 88% in the Horse Care Test, a tribute to his and Jenny Brown's hard work on Wednesday afternoons. He then did a fine job of warming Rose up in a busy ring before riding a good dressage test achieving a 7th placing out of 15. Riding independently at a big national event is no mean feat and Ahid should be very proud despite narrowly missing a rosette.

After an evening of tack cleaning and liquid refreshment (!), Sunday began bright and early with some much desired sunshine and Charlotte and Valentine's large Countryside Challenge class. Getting people and ponies to the right



places at the right times proved somewhat chaotic, with both girls also riding a dressage test as part of the Combined Training, but somehow we succeeded.

Charlotte was somewhat hindered by Heineken's belief that the Countryside Challenge course was in fact a picnic ride for ponies (how should he know he wasn't to eat the food in the farm shop?) but worked hard in her dressage to come 2nd. Valentine and Rose (far too ladylike to nibble the props!) were also unplaced in the Countryside Challenge but came 4th in dressage. Overall for the Combined Training Charlotte came 4th and Valentine 5th. Finally we were all pleasantly surprised when Heineken was placed 6th in the fiercely competitive Tack and Turnout competition (though Rose may now want to boycott any competition that finds Heineken more attractive than her!). So a very successful day for all.



The two girls and their families headed off for a celebratory meal while we loaded belongings and ponies and headed home, eventually arriving about 10pm, exhausted but pleased with our weekend. The Championships are a very special event, celebrating the talents of RDA riders from across the country, and I feel privileged to have played a part, as without the hundreds of volunteers present it would not be possible for them to take place.

Karen Potter

Our logo

If you are receiving this by email, you may have noticed that the colour of our logo has changed from green to blue (and the rest of the newsletter has been changed to match too).

The change was decided upon by the trustees at their meeting in July

Recycling

Don't forget, we can make money from your old **mobile phones** and **ink and toner cartridges**. There is a box in the Sheila Blair Gallery for you to put them in and Hilary Bowles will do the rest



NAME THE HORSE COMPETITION



This wonderful and irresistibly cuddly 'Pony with no name' was kindly donated to the Group by Margaret Fogg's daughter Hannah & son-in-law Nigel.

At the Picnic Ride the winning name was chosen and now **Baton Rouge** is living happily with his new owner Anne Burnett, a golfing friend of Nikki Terry's.

On behalf of the Trustees, riders and helpers we would like to thank all the parents who have made donations, some of which have been used to produce this newsletter. Thanks also to Jenny Brown, Nikki Terry and Sheila Camilleri who supplied the photographs.

Contact details:

Sheila Camilleri (Group
Organiser & Child
Protection Officer)
01273 846136
sheilacamilleri@f2s.com

Nikki Terry (Hon.
Secretary)
01273 470471
hopeinthevalley@mac.com

Sylvia Ager (Volunteer
Co-ordinator)
01273 842816
sylvie-a@amservice.com

Group mobile number
(Wednesdays only)
07842 209384

Newsletter editor:

Mary-Jane Sharratt
01273 845596
mary-jane@uwclub.net

Contributions to future editions are welcome. Please email or send to Mary-Jane at 11, The Dymocks, Ditchling East Sussex BN6 8SU

Fun Day at Felbridge



On 7th May 2008 our riders, ponies and volunteers travelled to Felbridge Showground at East Grinstead for the South East Region Fun Day.

It was a very warm day, and immensely enjoyable. In particular, congratulations are due to Charlotte who came first in the Countryside Challenge Led Junior Class and Valentine who came second. This achievement qualified them both to go to Hartpury for the National Championships in July.



Riders' news

There will be no changes to the riding list for the Autumn term. We are hoping to continue with a 'pre-session' riding slot from 1.15 to 1.30pm dependent upon availability of suitable ponies and volunteers. This was trialed during the Summer term with great success and some you will have met little Joe Louis Stevenson who has benefited from his introduction to riding with Hope in the Valley.

Sales table

The sales table has proved to be a great success and Diana Crook is now looking for more things to sell in September. If you have any unwanted items at home, please pass them to Diana. Books, videos and DVDs are particularly popular as well as jewellery.

Volunteer news

New volunteers: Welcome to Maddie Leonard, Julie Champion, Gill Browning

Retirements and Leavers: Georgina Forbes, Charlie Grimes, Vanessa Platt, Ron Sharp and Karen Potter (who will be back to visit as often as possible).

Thank you to all those who found the time to complete the Volunteer Survey Forms; the winner of the Marks and Spencer voucher was Ian McLean. Several very good ideas emerged and they will be shared with you shortly.

On **Wednesday 3rd September** there will be a training session for volunteers. This is a great opportunity to ask questions and to make the most of your volunteering experience with Hope in the Valley. The training session will be followed by the **AGM** and refreshments.

The **Regional AGM** is taking place at the The Haven Centre, Crawley Down on **Wednesday 8th October**. There will be no riding on this day to enable volunteers to attend. There will be an interesting speaker and a chance to meet the Regional Committee and volunteers from other RDA groups in the South East Region.