

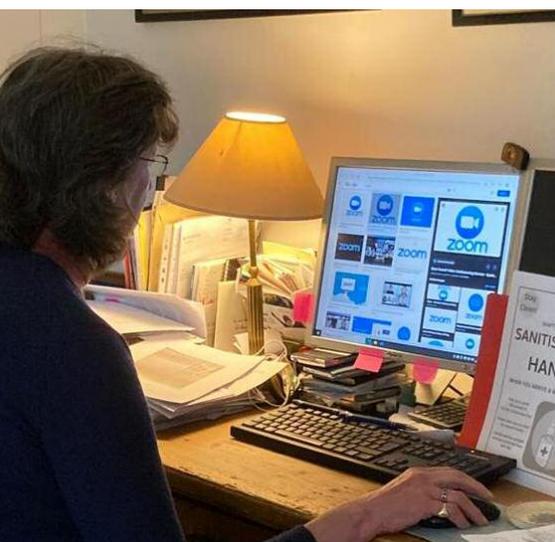
*"In memory of  
Ray Monument, Volunteer  
with Lambourn and South  
Region RDA. Greatly missed  
and always in our thoughts".*



## South Region Chair's Report for 2020

**A**fter a difficult year, not only for RDA but for every one of us, we have gone full circle in the eight months since the lifting of the first lockdown and once again we find ourselves emerging from another lockdown. The Groups that had managed to reopen should find it relatively easy to do so again with confidence. The Groups that have been closed for over a year will need a lot more help to regain that confidence.

Zoom has become such a life line during this difficult year. To be able to see family, friends and colleagues has helped enormously. RDA meetings have continued, and although not the same as gathering for a chat over a cuppa before a meeting it has cut the time of meetings and the travel. With that in mind the Regional team have decided to only do one actual Regional meeting each year and we will continue to meet by Zoom for the other three.



The support from our Regional and County team has been fantastic and the training by Zoom inventive. Thank you to all

involved with delivering the training.

Sadly the 2020 Regional Qualifier was a casualty of the first lockdown and it seemed such a disappointment that the Region organised a South Region Competition. The entries were fantastic which made judging very difficult, what talent we have in South Region!

This year the Qualifier and Championships will be done virtually. This will hopefully mean that Groups who cannot normally attend can film their entries at home, giving their participants the chance to have a go in a qualifying or non-qualifying class.

The Windsor Lions who have supported South Region for so many years sadly had to cancel the RDA Fancy dress competition at the Royal Windsor Horse Show and their Sponsored ride in Windsor Great Park. They are hoping to be able to run the sponsored ride this year.

Many of you will know Ray Monument who for many years ran the South Region promotional caravan. Very sadly he succumbed to the Covid virus in January. He had retired from the caravan and last summer would have been his last going out on the road promoting the work that we all do. He was still very much involved at Lambourn RDA where he will be hugely missed. Ray was the most kind, gentle man who was so generous with his time, he came to Lambourn RDA with no horse knowledge but embraced all aspects of RDA Group life.

Abingdon RDA have started building their fantastic new indoor school, it is massive, and we look forward to using it for training and other activities within South Region. Some of their funds were provided by South Region as part grant, part loan. We have an agreement with them for the grant part of the funding, enabling the Region to use the arena free of charge for the next 10 years.

Trish Willats is retiring as County Chair for Hampshire and I would like to thank her for all that she has done for the Hampshire Groups. Ali Lacey will take over from her which is wonderful news. Ali has worked closely with Trish since becoming a County Coach so knows what is involved in the role. Ali and Trish will work together while Ali finds her feet and will be ably assisted by Karen Howells as County Coach.

Trish's Group put her name forwards for a President's Award, and I am delighted to divulge that their request was successful. In due course Trish will be awarded this prestigious award by our President. Very many congratulations Trish, a well-deserved award.

Thank you everyone for all you have done to support our Groups and let's hope for a better and more normal year than the last one.

With best wishes for 2021

Frances Lochrane

## Speckles - An RDA Legend

We have to inform you, with heavy hearts, that our much loved pony Speckles is no longer with us.

We have been served over our 45 year history by many wonderful horses and ponies, all of whom have enabled us to provide live changing therapy, fun, and opportunity to the riders we set out to help. Speckles was with us for almost half of this long history, purchased as a five year old in 2000, and deserves the title of "irreplaceable" above any other.

Speckles' achievements over two decades of RDA service are staggering. We have long lost count of the number of placings, and, indeed, winning titles, he has earned at regional and national level. Almost exactly a year ago, at his last ever regional show, he brought in four scores of 70% or above with four different riders, and went on to win two overall championship titles at Nationals, one with a first time competitor. He represented our group away from home on various occasions, exhibiting at the Game Fair and Blenheim Horse Trials, turning his hooves to para dressage training days, and even visiting a rider too unwell to come to the stables in her own garden. He was nominated on multiple occasions for the RDA Horse of the Year award, and anyone taking care of him at shows would feel as if they



were part of a celebrity entourage: "Is that Speckles?" "Can I take a photograph of Speckles?" He rarely needed an introduction when entering a warm up arena, and prize giving MCs would read out his name like an old friend: "from the Abingdon Group... of course, Speckles".

Much of the earlier portion of Speckles' RDA career was devoted to carriage driving, at which he excelled. I suspect that he continued to miss pulling Father Christmas' sleigh each Christmas long after our group wound



down its driving component. A true ride-and-drive, he was also an incredibly consistent, versatile, understanding pony under saddle. Much like the rosettes he won, it would be impossible to keep track of the number of our riders whose first ever RDA pony was Speckles, or who rode off the lead rein or trotted for the first time on Speckles, who learned to canter on Speckles, or who competed at their first ever show on Speckles. Even for some of our other horses, Speckles was their first equine friend, their travel buddy, their example (for younger recruits) of how the professionals do it.

14.1hh, stocky, sensible, and (usually) gentlemanly, Speckles was anybody's ride, and the recipient of countless claims of true love and everlasting friendship from those who rode, handled, or cared for him. He commanded a respect even from other horses which could only come from his vast experience of his job. Many people involved with our group have been with us for much less time than Speckles, and even those who had known our yard without him on it were still struck on occasion by the sense that he knew what he was doing more than anybody else. When we describe what we want in an ideal RDA pony, we are describing Speckles: safe, but not slow. Sturdy, but not too wide. A schoolmaster who is kind and patient, but still makes sure his riders actually learn to ride, and have fun doing it. Unfazed by almost anything, especially with an RDA rider on board. Lead rein or no lead rein – whatever you needed. I think the only thing we might have changed was his light colouring. Many knuckles over the years were worn down by scrubbing purple shampoo into his feathers and tail, but what else would do for a pony watched by so many adoring fans?

Like all the best and most memorable equines, Speckles wasn't completely meek and mild: he never stopped being able to switch on what seemed

## Abingdon Group

to be an internal turbo booster to get from his field to his breakfast in as little time as possible (whether you were ready for it or not), and was notorious for his character building party trick of pretending he was completely unable to halt on the centre line when practicing a dressage test. Each spring, the soundtrack of the stables was a chorus of little (and sometimes not so little voices) pleading him to "woah, Speckles", although, given that he'd always pull it out of the bag when it really counted, it's hard to complain when that was his only major flaw. Even in his later years, he kept a spring in his step, and would always know when his leader wasn't quite paying enough attention.

But, always understanding his job, Speckles seemed to have an innate understanding of the needs of whoever was on his back. "This rider likes a bit of speed... OK, I can do that, woohoo! This rider is nervous, and they need my help to let their potential shine through... I can do that. This rider can't see, and this rider can't hear, but I can handle that. This rider has ambitions, but they need to work hard. This rider likes to have a laugh. This rider just needs me to be their friend, and I can do that too." He was a wise old man with a twinkle in his eye.

It's hard for a post like this not to be sad, because it is unlikely that we, or indeed anybody else, will ever encounter a pony quite like Speckles again. To say his horse shoes will be difficult to fill is an understatement, But, ultimately, we should all feel incredibly lucky to have had the opportunity to know, work with, and love one of the best RDA equines we will ever have the privilege to meet, and should be excited to look forward to where his legacy will take our group next.

Please, don't be sad. Share your favourite memories of this special pony with us. Did he help you achieve a milestone? Did he make you smile? Did he help you when you were struggling with something? What was your favourite thing about him? Speckles, like all of our much-missed equine friends, will be with our group as long as we continue to celebrate his memory. After twenty wonderful years with Team Abingdon, he's earned nothing less than a celebration.

## Andover Group

### *A New Year and a New Approach for Andover RDA*

Andover RDA's participants come from the local special schools (Andover has 4) as well as adult services, Mind and Enham. This year, as with many groups, we have not held sessions for our children and one reason for this is that schools have managed their priorities associated with off-site learning and activity to minimise the effects of the Covid-19 threat. Multiple and serious challenges in schools are associated with health of children, families and



teachers plus staff shortages. Whether these issues will resolve quickly is unknown. This situation will be familiar to many groups and it has encouraged us to think about developing individual referrals for our services and to form a non-school referred ride this year.

We have managed to hold one "quiet corner" activity, last term, with our most enthusiastic school. This school populated 3 of our 4 earlier children's rides and they are champing at the bit (please forgive the idiom!) to get things going again. In 2019 this school encouraged us to do some sensory work with wheelchair users and the experience was so very rewarding for everyone that we count it as one which will help to inform a new approach to schools in 2021. The style of the approach will seek to bring children into contact with their ponies as much on the ground as in the saddle, making our ponies accessible to more kinds of ability. The approach will also involve the schools more in the design of the sessions, allowing us to

negotiate different relationships with school staff, relationships which ask them to bring something to the experience alongside us.

Another school has experienced severe social problems associated with children from vulnerable families being unable to come to school. This, together with the school's staffing issues, has reduced the anticipation of potential off-site activity for this new year because of the work needed, reduced human resources and financial allocation and priority. Alongside these challenges, the health and safety of pupils, staff and our volunteers while working with children with BESD must be considered. Children's social and family upset during the Pandemic has increased challenging behaviour symptoms. This situation will take time to settle. Again, a more bespoke approach from us may help children to feel secure when they are with us. They need recover from the challenges that lockdown has brought.

Our adult riding, outside of lockdowns, has so far survived in the main throughout the Pandemic. However, our riders with the need for multiple close contact support volunteers have not ridden. We have a small core of more able riders who have made good progress, and this has brought cheer to



what could have been a very gloomy 2020. It might be that when we begin to regenerate our adult riding, we separate ability somehow so that our more able riders can continue to progress, allowing our more dependent riders sessions more tailored to their needs.

We have so far survived the economic challenges that Covid-19 has forced. We are concerned about our resources



along with all groups; we lost 5 fundraising opportunities last year. Our fundraising hero was Siobhan Booth, a stalwart volunteer with the children's rides. Siobhan was entered for the London Marathon and overcame her disappointment when it was cancelled by running the Virtual London Marathon. I don't think that I have ever experienced a wetter day! However, Siobhan prevailed, with 3 bubbles of 6 people along the way cheering and waving, plus the support of her husband Jon. She was met by three ponies with more volunteers at our children's riding site.

One of the 5 fund raising plans that we were unable to achieve was a quiz night with supper. Our customary cheery events like this, race nights, quiz nights, suppers etc, all crammed into the village hall, seem now to be things of the past. We must try to think about fund raising differently now. Online events are marvellous! We look forward to an evening with Sophie Christiansen for example and we are most thankful that we not only have Zoom but also Sophie! Maybe when we are all vaccinated, we can cram ourselves back into a village hall again, who knows? Meanwhile we have a golf day planned, good open spaces and fresh air!

All in all, we feel that as sad as last year has been and as worrying as things still are, this situation has taught us something and indicated the way forward. Perhaps this is a silver lining in our cloud, maybe it will help us all to develop in a way that will equip us for a changed future. We at Andover RDA extend our best wishes to all Riding for the Disabled groups in the UK and wish everyone a Happier New Year.

Mary Childs  
Chairman Andover RDA  
January 2021.

# The Pony Express: How we kept everybody in touch



Broadlands Pony Express  
2020 Round Up



Hello Friends, Riders and Volunteers!

With the advent of Covid, we needed to stay in touch with our valued volunteers, riders and supporters. So, we decided to create a digital weekly newsletter, which we could send around to everybody, who had given us permission to email them. We also knew folks would miss their regular contact with the ponies, other volun-



Read all about it!  
**Barnyard News**

teers and riders. We started off small and simple, and it grew like topsy.

## It takes a community

We started asking people for their pony memories or funny stories. Then, we created two regular features - The Herd and Meanwhile Back at the Ranch. In The Herd, Suzanne would write about our ponies on a weekly basis: giving us updates on health issues, farrier visits, and power struggles amongst the mares! Whereas MBatR gave updates on work on the school arena, and other projects which were undertaken during lock-

down. One of our young volunteers, Megan, supplied us with marvellous photos and video clips of the ponies, which helped brighten the newsletter. And Phil, our wizard web designer, who donates his time to handling the Broadlands website, created a lovely red pony logo. We used that to bring a bright positive colour into the newsletter, giving it a name and brand.



## Keep it cheap, or better still free

Everybody donates their time, so we really don't have any costs. We have a free account with MailChimp, which we use to distribute the newsletter. We use free stock photos from sites like Pexels, but the best images always come from our own volunteers at the stables. We also set up a free YouTube account and posted little video clips of the ponies, so people could watch what was happening.



## Broadlands Group

## Will there be enough News?

We were closed, then we were open. Then, we were closed again! Apart from the Covid updates, we had lots of news to share. Most of it was good news as we used the time positively and were able to share the news in a regular fun and interesting way. People also made the news sharing their fundraising activities and new hobbies. We ran pony and rider profiles too.

Whilst our Covid year has been surprisingly positive, not all the news was so. We suffered the loss of two ponies to illness and a fabulous loyal volunteer. It was difficult, but we still shared the news so people were in touch with what was happening. From the feedback, it seems it helped our readers to grieve - we were not together at the stables, but we were in this way.

## The Feedback

We've had some great feedback from our readers. We try to keep a positive outlook every week, and people appreciate it. Everybody loves the ponies - and in the midst of lockdown, this really was the safest way for folks to see their favourites again. Our aim was to keep everybody in touch with the news from Broadlands, and it seems to have worked.

## Hampshire and Surrey Borders Group

### Christine Pike. 1935 – 2020

In 1975 Christine came to RDA when it was in its infancy. A new group was being started in Aldershot by a soldier who had gained support from the army to help his disabled child with riding. The opportunity to ride was extended to children at a nearby special school. The group needed volunteers and Christine answered an advert to join them. When the soldier was to be transferred to Germany, Christine took on the organising of the group, affiliating to the official RDA in 1976.

In Christine's own words: "After the meeting closed Chris [the soldier who had been acting as organiser] explained to me that the committee had no idea of the situation and the paperwork involved and the need to restart the group from scratch, and he doubted I would manage it. I gave it a try, and we were up and running by the time we held the first AGM in April 1977. In the early days as Organiser only about six Helpers were able to return, no pony owners willing to help, too many riders...."

Her 'can-do' attitude served our group well and Christine ran the Aldershot Group of the RDA for the next 21 years.

At first Christine cycled from Fleet to Aldershot to help. In those days the group used Army Saddle Club horses which were far too big for the children and the helpers. The group then borrowed ponies from local owners: two were taken by trailer and Christine rode a third to Beaumont Barracks Indoor Riding School for the morning session. In 1977 the group bought a Dodge horse box with which they collected up to five ponies from local

owners, plus their tack, and then returned them after the session.

The group ran two sessions a week in term time on Tuesdays at RMP Beaumont Barracks indoor riding school and on Thursdays at Badshot Lea Primary School. In 1993 the indoor school was declared unsafe so another venue had to be found for the Tuesday group. Over the next few years other indoor schools were used. The Thursday group sessions were held out of doors on the school playing fields, so when rain was forecast a decision had to be made whether to go ahead or to cancel. Many phone calls were needed to tell pony owners, collectors, lorry driver, and volunteers not to go ahead. It was a stressful time knowing that if you got it wrong there would be either some very disappointed children or very wet tack and helpers.



Christine worked tirelessly to raise money for the group, organising collections from outside garden centres, supermarkets, point-to-points, Aldershot Horse Show and Farnborough Air Show, no matter what the weather, and even in retirement helped with collections whenever possible.

Christine ran the group till 1997 when she persuaded Rachel Plumbe to take over, but still stayed on as a regular helper/volunteer. She and her husband Bruce carried on assisting with the care of the group's own ponies which had been bought under Rachel's leadership when it was no longer feasible to borrow ponies. They finally hung up their buckets and boots from poo-picking the fields in 2016. Christine passed away in June 2020.

## Lambourn Group

Ray joined the Lambourn RDA group in 2012, with no experience with horses, but a willingness and kindness to help in whatever way he could. He always had a smile, never complained and he quickly became a very valuable member of our team.

Between 2015 and 2020 he also took over the responsibility for looking after and manning the South Region publicity caravan, which was a huge responsibility. Ray did an amazing job travelling around the region to various events and shows to publicise the work of RDA. He stocked the caravan with RDA gifts and was always happy to chat and meet new people, regularly giving up his weekends to go out and about. He could often be seen with a horse shaped hat on his

head, or a unicorn, depending on the occasion!

In fact, his dressing up will be very fondly remembered by the whole group as every year, he really enjoyed becoming Santa's helper to give out Christmas presents to all Lambourn's participants. He embodied everything about Christmas, spreading joy wherever he went.

Ray has left a very large gap in the Lambourn RDA team and he will be very greatly missed. So many lovely words have been said in his memory,

### A Tribute to Ray, January 2021



a small selection of which are included below:

*"We will miss his lovely, happy face and kind, kind spirit."*

*"Such a warm and kind man will be sadly missed by all."*

*"A very kind soul who will be greatly missed."*

*"He will be missed so much by so many."*

*"He was one of the first people in RDA I met. Always kind, thoughtful and wanting to help."*

He will always be in our thoughts.

Ray Monument  
26.9.46 – 27.1.21

## A look back at 2020!

2020 was a very difficult year for all groups and we hope we will not have to look back at another year quite like it, firstly with the outbreak of the Equine Herpes Virus, which shut us down for a few weeks at the start of the year and then of course the Covid pandemic!

On a bright note, our fundraising got off to a great start with a Burns Night Celebration which was a sell out! We were chosen by the Tesco's Bags of Help scheme, and although this had to be cut short, they generously split the funds between the three charities anyway! We also managed to squeeze in our annual Bridge Lunch before any of us realised just what was coming, which was just as well!



We were also delighted to welcome two new horses to our equine team. In February, Milford Sound ("Millie"), a 14.1hh strawberry roan New Forest mare joined us. She is 13 years old and has done a bit of everything. Although we were only able to do a few riding sessions with her before the lockdown, she settled in very quickly and now is an established member of the team. At the end of the year, we also added to the team with Harley (Harlequin), who has very kindly been given to us on loan. He is a piebald, Irish cob and standing at 15.2hh, he is our biggest horse. Harley moved from South Bucks RDA, where he had been a much loved member of their

team for a number of years and we are extremely lucky to have such an experienced RDA horse. It's amazing how quickly we become familiar with new terminology, such as 'Lockdown', 'Social Distancing' and 'Covid Safe Environment'. Unknown terms prior to March, these have now become everyday expressions!! The challenges faced by everyone during the first Lockdown were extremely difficult, and we missed our riding sessions enormously. We had to ensure our ponies were looked after and kept fit and well, and we are extremely fortunate to have a fabulous stable manager and weekend groom who continue to do an amazing job to keep everything running smoothly at the yard.

After contacting and updating our volunteers and participants, we then had to turn our focus to fundraising to try to make up the loss of income from riding, and the planned fundraisers, such as The Lambourn Open Day, which were cancelled due to the constraints imposed by the pandemic. Luckily, we have an extremely proactive Trustee who heads up our fundraising and he very quickly applied for some of the local grants available to help out, which gave us some much needed breathing space.

As well as coming up with new ideas for fundraising events, we continue to be overwhelmed by the support and generosity of so many people who have come forward to help to keep our group going.

Thanks to a great article in the Newbury Weekly News, Tom Dunlop was inspired to do something to help and started by running the Lambourn Gallops, but once completed, he then decided to go further afield. We were thrilled that Tom Dunlop received acknowledgement from RDA UK for all his running which raised over £5,000 for our group, not only getting nominated for the 'Brilliant Person Award', but also receiving the 'Above and Beyond Award'!



4Legs Radio, a local radio station also contacted us to set up a fundraising campaign. The first fund raiser, in May was an on-line quiz which was great fun, followed by an on-line duck race

in July which was highly entertaining with a commentary from Trainer, Pat Murphy. The last of their fundraisers was a 2-day Music 'Requestathon' for 12 hours each day to play requested tracks in return for a donation. In total, these fundraisers raised £1,100 for our group, which was a tremendous help.

We are also being supported by a local church for two years, and although most events during the year had to be cancelled, we were lucky that one outdoor event did go ahead in one of the few periods we were not in a Lockdown. A covid safe pop-up café was manned by Church and RDA volunteers at a 'Sculpture in a Landscape', an open-air art exhibition, which raised just over £800.

Our own members also became quite inventive with ways of raising money. Our Chair, Frances Lochrane took part in the 2.6 Challenge, which replaced the London Marathon, by cleaning 26 saddles in an amazingly fast time which raised over £1,700. Our Stable Manager and her daughter walked 100 kilometres in less than a month as part of the May Anyway Challenge and they raised close to £1,000, at the same time as looking after our ponies and keeping up with schoolwork!

## Lambourn Group



In July we had a Virtual Coffee Morning with 102 people taking part in their own homes. The parent of one of our riders baked hundreds of the most delicious cakes, which were then boxed up and delivered. It was a huge success, raising around £1,000. As a result of the success of this fundraiser, we organised another Virtual Coffee Morning, this time in December with mince pies and Christmas cupcakes raising another £700 for our funds.

the Government guidelines and once all this was complete, we received the green light from RDA UK.

At last, towards the end of July, we were able to open again for riding, even if it was on a limited scale. Just 8 riders came over two days, all riding separately with time in between to make sure everything could be sanitised properly. The system we put in place worked extremely well and

both volunteers and participants were confident the yard was a Covid safe environment. We continued to ride through the summer until the end of August, to try to make up for lost time, before taking a short break.

thinking laterally about how we can continue to offer as much contact with our ponies as possible whilst working within the Government guidelines.

Along with many other organisations and businesses, we then had to go into Lockdown again! We had hoped there might be an exemption for sport therapy, but unfortunately this was not granted. We did manage to return to riding briefly before Christmas and luckily Santa managed to join us to give our riders presents. We had also hoped to have socially distanced mince pies and mulled wine in place of the usual Christmas parties, but sadly this had to be cancelled – the resounding theme of the year!

RDA UK continue to provide tremendous support, both in regular updates, but also in the form of grants to help those groups struggling financially. Although, to date, we have been fortunate not to need financial support, we are incredibly grateful to know the RDA UK team are there if we need them.

2020 was certainly a very challenging and difficult year for everyone, and we would like to thank our wonderful volunteers for helping to keep us going as much as we did. Many RDA groups across the UK were unable to ride at all, so we feel very lucky that we managed to keep over half of our sessions going in between Lockdowns. A brilliant team effort!

Jill Fitzpatrick, Publicity Officer  
Lambourn RDA



As soon as we could, we started to put a plan together to re-start riding. Risk assessments were done, we bought automatic sanitisers, paper towel dispensers and special sprays to clean down all areas around the yard the ponies and all equipment including tack and riding hats. We also had to buy some new hats to allow each rider to have their own designated hat. The yard was zoned, and we purchased a thermometer (gun like forehead type) as an extra precaution. We held a few small training sessions, which were limited to six people at a time to remain within

Unfortunately, at the start of the Autumn term we were still unable to offer riding to everyone, due to the social distancing constraints. Our Volunteers worked with the additional sanitising and spacing requirements with their usual calm and ease so that everyone was happy we had provided a safe environment. Our school groups, unfortunately, were not able to return and we really missed seeing them all. We trialled an unmounted session with a rider and two support workers for riders who we are unable to get onto ponies due to the constraints and this worked well. It is certainly a time for

## Newbury Group

HRH The Princess Royal visited us at the Newbury Group on 8th October. Having cancelled her visit in March due to Covid we were so thrilled she was able to reschedule. It was very exciting to welcome HRH to Wyld Court, our stables, but we had to follow the rule of 30 so sadly we couldn't invite all our volunteers. The Princess met and chatted with some of our helpers and all nine of our ponies. We then had a riding display by four of our riders who have managed to continue lessons, through part of last term, with one of their parents as sidewalkers. The Princess chatted with all the children and they all had huge smiles and were very relaxed – she also gave them each a rosette.

Various long service awards were presented to Bridget Tooth, Jo Stevenson-Hamilton, Amanda Cook, Carol Steljes, Carolyn Whitehead, Cassilda Courtier-Dutton and Judy Millar. Zara Campbell-Harris from the Wyfold Group received the Presidents Award. The Princess also presented a plaque to our landlord, Alan Rind, who has generously allowed us to use his stables and land at Wyld Court for the past 25 years.

Last year we severed a partnership with the stables that has been our RDA home for the past 5 years. We felt sad that we had to leave, but the lack of suitable mounts meant that the partnership with our lovely riders was under threat as we could not provide some of them with a suitable pony for their regular rides. The riding sessions mean so much to our riders, for some of them it is the total highlight of their week, and for one or two the only reason to get them out of bed and out

What a difficult and challenging year this has been for everyone. Very sadly we have been unable to provide coaching as Covid19 restrictions have prevented us from hiring ponies for our rider or the schools bringing them to the stables. But we are looking forward to restarting as soon as possible.

Our annual fundraising Driving and Horse Shows were cancelled twice. We are hoping they will resume again

of the house if they are having a bad spell.

We felt the partnership with our riders was more important than the one we had with the riding school, so we set about finding a new venue and the start of a new partnership. Fort Widley, which sits on the chalk hills behind Portsmouth offered us a new RDA home. The move went very smoothly and easily as Fort Widley was already a member group of RDA, so we did

this year after all the terrific hard work of contacting people to change the date so many times.

The Driving Show is to be held on Sunday 13th June 2021 at Mount Apollo, Mounts Hill, Cranbourne, Ascot, Berks SL4 4RH. The Moss End Horse Show will return, by courtesy of Mr & Mrs Bellm, to our super venue of the Priory Field, Church Lane, Binfield, Nr. Bracknell, Berks RG42 5NS on Sunday 27th June 2021.



## Solent Group

not need new inspections and approvals. The journey to the Fort is longer for some of our riders and volunteers but almost every one of them wanted to come along with us, which we were delighted about. We had our first session on Thursday 9th January, which went very well and we hope the partnership with Fort Widley and our riders and volunteers will go from strength to strength.

Shirley Harris  
Solent (formerly Shedfield) RDA

## Warfield Group

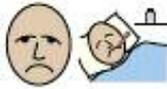
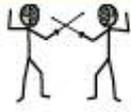
If you are interested in coming to support us, please take a look at our website for updates and schedules. [www.mossendshows.com](http://www.mossendshows.com)

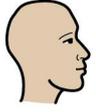
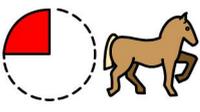
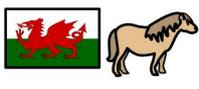
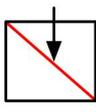
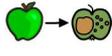
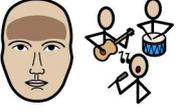
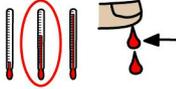
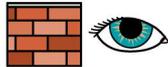
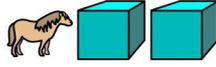
Let's hope for a bit of normality by the summer. Stay safe everyone.

Mary-Lou Bruce  
Trustee  
Margaret-Anne Hodson MBE  
Warfield Group Chairman and Group  
Organiser

# A Picture Quiz.

The answers are all related to horses, stable management and horse riding.

1.  .	2.  .	3.  .	4.  .
5.  .	6.  -	7.  -	8.  -
9.  -	10.  -	11.  -	12.  .
13.  -	14.  .	15.  .	16.  .
17.  .	18.  .	19.  .	20.  -
21.  -	22.  -	23.  -	24.  -
25.  -	26.  -	27.  -	28.  -
29.  -	30.  -	31.  -	32.  -
33.  -	34.  -	35.  -	36.  -

37. <b>4</b> 	38. 	39. 	40. 
41. 	42. 	43. 	44. 
45. 	46. 	47. 	48. 
49. 	50. 	51. <b>4</b> 	52. 
53. 	54. 	55. 	56. <b>L</b> 
57. <b>t+</b> 	58. 	59. 	60. 
61. 	62. 	63. 	64. <b>As</b> 
65. 	66. 	67. 	68. 

We hope you enjoy this challenging quiz which represents part of Class 5 of the South Region Competition 2020.

Answers to the quiz are inside the back cover.

# SOUTH REGION RDA COMPETITION 2020

A Special Competition was held in 2020 to replace the Regional Qualifier with Classes for all South Region RDA Groups. Entries were welcomed from Participants, Volunteers, Coaches and Trustees. There was a good response with an extremely high standard in all classes.

## RESULTS

<b>Class 1 Virtual Cake Bake</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Judge's comments</b>
Under 10	Abigale Nye	Wellington and Dummer RDA	"Cake looks show-stopping, soft cake with crunchy and indulgent topping"
15 -50	Alana de Capua	South Bucks RDA	"Cake looks delicious"
50 +	Colin Armfield and Sue Rigby	Windsor and Ascot Driving	"Cake looked very good"
<b>Class 2 Photograph of any subject</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Judge's comments</b>
Under 10	Florence Leese	Wellington and Dummer RDA	Judge said " Lovely use of light"
15 -50	Adele Neale	Wellington and Dummer RDA	Judge said' 'Warmer inside showed a good view into the distance"
50 +	Clare May	Woolbeding	Judge said" The horse had obviously enjoyed trashing its rug!"
<b>Class 3 Painting or Drawing Relevant to RDA</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Judge's comments</b>
Under 10	Isla Cowling	Lamboun RDA	Judge said "Lovely expression of joy, even the ponys smiling and very obviously all to do with RDA "
15 -50	Alison Tolmi	South Bucks RDA	Judge said" Well drawn, lovely feeling of the relationship between horse and rider"
<b>Class 4 Story or Poem Entitled "What I Miss About RDA"</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Judge's comments</b>
Under 10	Louie Marshall	Hants and Surrey Borders RDA	Judge said " Lovely reflections"
15 -50	Adele Neale		Judge said "Love and acrostic poem"
50 +	Lesley Bull	Hants and Surrey Borders RDA	Judge said "Some funny limericks"
<b>Rachel Plumbe Cup which will be awarded to the entry in Class 4 who in the judge's opinion summed up what is most missed about RDA during lockdown</b>			
	<b>Name</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Judge's comments</b>
	Lisa Budd	Wellington and Dummer RDA	Judge said" I think it really gets over the relationship of mother/daughter and horse/ experience – Lovely"
<b>Class 5 Picture Quiz</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Judge's comments</b>
Under 10	Tianna Kalirai	South Bucks RDA	Judge said " Well done to all who entered this class he enjoyed the thought process of the answers"
15-50	Maisie Hughes	Bucks and Greenacres RDA	
50+	Claire Watson	Aylesbury and Wendover	

# WINNING ENTRIES

## CLASS 1 – VIRTUAL CAKE BAKE



Alison Nye - Under 10



Alana da Capua - 15-50



Colin Armfield & Sue Rigby  
- 50+

## CLASS 2 – PHOTOGRAPH OF ANY SUBJECT



Florence Leese - Under 10



Adele Neale - 15-50



Clare May - 50+

## CLASS 3 – PAINTING OR DRAWING RELEVANT TO RDA



Isla Cowling - Under 10



Alison Tolmi - 15-50

## CLASS 4 - STORY OR POEM ENTITLED "WHAT I MISS ABOUT RDA"



### Louie Marshall – Under 10

Every week I go to RDA  
To see my friends and horse My horse is  
called Tea  
And he is brilliant of course.  
We ride and laugh  
And the leaders are lovely  
We do hard tricks and stretches And talk  
to our horses kindly  
We have Covid-19 in England Which  
means I cant see Tea  
I miss his fur and smell  
And my RDA family  
When the pandemic is over  
I cant wait to see my friends  
My horse and my leaders  
Where we will have a party that wont end.  
To go on a hack  
Will be the first thing I want to go  
To feel the wind and watch the birds And  
have fun with everyone we know!

### Adele Neale – 15 - 50

**W**elly Wearing  
**H**aynet Filling  
**A**rena Setting Up  
**T**rotting On

Independence Giving

**M**ucking Out and Mucking In  
**I**ndividual Targets  
**S**miling Faces  
**S**ometimes Soggy

**A**chievements Weekly  
**B**iscuit Eating  
**O**vercoming Obstacles  
**U**nderstanding Our Strengths  
**T**rusting Each Other

**R**iders, Ponies & Volunteers  
**D**oing it Together  
**A**s a Team



### Lesley Bull – 50 +

There is a group leader in Fleet  
Whose house is really quite neat  
But paperwork galore  
Fills a corner or more  
And things can get under your feet

Then one day a lockdown came  
And life didn't look quite the same  
She packed up her files  
Walked hundreds of miles  
But no RDA! Such a shame!

The horses, the riders and her friends  
The bag with the folders and pens  
The tea that we share  
With people who care  
Even the poles that we use to do bends!

She missed all those things very much  
Couldn't wait 'till they'd all be in touch  
But paperwork in the room  
That needs more than a broom  
She missed perhaps not quite so much

Social distancing keeps us apart  
And RDA can't safely restart  
What matters more?  
Friends or the floor  
Being littered with folders and charts?

Oh! Roll on when we can all see  
Friends, riders and ponies – all three  
And we have all got  
Riders mastering the trot  
And everyone's Coronavirus free!

## THE RACHEL PLUMBE CUP

### What I miss about RDA by Lisa Budd

I settled down to observe,  
leaning against the fence that framed  
the ménage. The wood felt warm and  
prickly against my skin. The surface of  
the ménage glowed in the heat of the  
spring sunshine.

Overhead, red kites and  
buzzards circled. Mewing and gliding  
with their appreciation of the  
countryside below them. Periodically, a  
clamour of rooks would take to the air  
to ambush them. The aerial acrobatics  
delighted me as they played out this  
scene of combat. The gentle breeze  
was warm and comforting against my  
face. The cotton ball clouds hung  
across the sky with no purpose, no  
ambition, just drifting, for the pure joy  
of it. This was my very favourite kind  
of day.

Among the hubbub of  
subdued activity, I focused on my  
daughter who had entered the ménage

with her posse of helpers. How small  
and vulnerable she looked in this vast  
space, full of magnificent beasts and  
big people. Yet still she strode  
purposefully to the mounting block that  
awaited her at the side of the arena.  
This was her moment.

Her steed for the next half an  
hour or so was Chloe. A gentle, white  
welsh pony full of patience and  
kindness. Chloe knew her job well.  
Only the best of the best get to be RDA  
ponies. Picked for their exemplary  
behaviour and composure, much like  
the favoured rides of the Queen.

It was undeniable that my  
daughter felt like the Queen too as she  
mounted and sat proudly upon Chloe.  
Yes, she was physically taller because  
of the pony beneath her, but it was  
more than that. There was something  
about being mounted that made her  
feel a hundred feet tall. With a

straightened back and head held high  
she was ready to take on the world. I  
recall this feeling from my childhood  
dalliances with horses and I could see it  
in my child then. I knew she felt lifted.

I watched as, under  
instruction, Maddy directed Chloe to  
move forward with an encouraging  
'walk on' and a gentle squeeze from  
her legs. Having been born with a cleft  
palate, speech has never been her  
strong point. Yet here she was giving  
voice to her commands with such  
clarity and purpose. Chloe responded  
and stepped forwards with her precious  
cargo.

Though I was away some  
distance from them I could see the  
pleasure that crept over Maddy's face.  
Or perhaps I couldn't, perhaps I felt it.  
Either way, I knew the significance of  
the moment. She had communicated  
with this white beauty and the pony

had responded accordingly.

I looked on as Maddy and Chloe worked in partnership to follow the commands of instructor. I recalled too how it felt to be the master of something so powerful, so huge that it could, should it wish to, crush you in seconds. I remember the lessons it taught me, that you should ask and not demand. You should work together. Your objective was not to overpower but to guide. I have tried to instil these learnings in her, but I had no need to. Atop of Chloe she was learning all these things for herself and was being rewarded magnificently for her efforts.

Motor skills have been a cause of great frustration for Maddy as she grapples to do things that her friends do so effortlessly. On many occasions I have seen her meltdown in frustration. Her body unable to carry out the commands her brain is transmitting. It is different though when you are mounted. These commands move to a different level of consciousness, they become a feeling, not an action. And there she was, steering, coaxing and succeeding with every fibre in her body.

When Maddy is concentrating she becomes silent, expressionless. To the casual onlooker she might look like an empty shell, somehow off in

another place. But she is not. She is so profoundly, deeply present in her senses that it is to the exclusion of all animation.

Life without filters is both a blessing and a curse. Often it is so overwhelming that she has to run and hide. Screwed up in the tightest ball with eyes and ears covered because the buzzing from 'that fly', 3 rooms away, is so utterly unbearable. Anyone who knows horses will know that flies are part of the package. I gazed at her, absorbed in her activity. Focused with such intensity on her purpose. The flies buzzed around her. She didn't notice. Her senses were being stimulated from every direction and yet there was no overwhelm. No panic. No need to run and hide. The session came to its conclusion with a flurry of twists and turns, stops and starts. All choreographed by her new found skills and executed with the steadfast patience and kindness that oozes from the pores of an RDA horse.

She dismounted Chloe and I saw her hand hesitate for a second, buried in the soft, silky fur on her shoulder. She closed her eyes and breathed in deeply. I knew exactly what she was doing. She was savouring every part of the experience. The scent is unique to every pony, but

always with a sweet hint of earth and hay. A rich elixir made up of every girl's dreams. It never fails to swell the hearts of those who inhale it. Her hand moved slowly up Chloe's neck. She stroked her cheek tenderly as she gazed longingly into her eyes. I knew she had connected with this wonderful pony on a level that is not possible to connect with humans. She whispered goodbye to Chloe and made her way to the edge of the ménage.

As she came closer, I could see the focus melting away and, in its place, the animation returned. The expressionless face was replaced with a huge smile and her eyes sparkled with the acknowledgement of her achievements.

We said our goodbyes to the staff and walked slowly up the drive, hand in hand. I wondered if it was my perception. She seemed to walk a little taller, prouder, more engaged. Her gait was noticeably freer of the burdens that she carries day to day.

She had surfaced, however briefly, from her confusing, overwhelming world full of challenges. She'd emerged into a world of success, achievement and sensory delight. She had arrived. And THAT is what I miss about RDA!!

## Picture Quiz Answers

47	Hand (other)	24	Hoot pick (equipment)	1.	Horse Shoe
48	Hurdle (racing)	25	Dock (points)	2.	Chestnut(colour/points)
49	Daisy cutte r(behaviour)	26	Groom (health)	3.	Socks (markings)
50	Seat (tack)	27	Star (markings)	4	Cantle (tack)
51	Forehead (repeated)	28	Vice (behaviour)	5	Piebald (colour)
52	Fly mask (tack)	29	Cannon (bone)	6	Coat (points)
53	Dressage (sport)	30	Transition (sport)	7	Reins (tack)
54	Saddle pad (tack)	31	Poll (points)	8	Waist (tack)
55	Bay (colour)	32	Irons (tack)	9	Bridle (tack)
56	Elbow (points)	33	Cheek piece (tack)	10	Showjumper (sport)
57	Trot (sport)	34	Dartmoor pony (type)	11	Hoot (points)
58	Rug (tack)	35	Crest (points)	12	Forelock (points)
59	Newmarket (racing)	36	Fence (equipment)	13	Hay net (equipment)
60	Bell boots (tack)	37	Forehead (points)	14	Barrel (points)
61	Browband (tack)	38	Noseband (tack)	15	Saddle (tack)
62	Warm blood (type)	39	Mane (points)	16	Legs (points)
63	Wall-eye (markings)	40	Quarter horse (type)	17	Blaze (markings)
64	Ascot (racing)	41	Hay seeds (food)	18	Snip (markings)
65	Aintree (racing)	42	Brushing boots (tack)	19	Dam (other)
66	Salt lick (food)	43	Halter (tack)	20	Feathers (points)
67	Pony cubes (food)	44	Thrush (health)	21	Skirt (tack)
68	Saddle horse (equipment)	45	Welsh pony (type)	22	Frog (points)
		46	Diagonal (sport)	23	Gait (sport)

  
WINDSOR  
GREAT PARK

  
Organised by the  
Lions Club of Windsor

  
WINDSOR GREAT PARK  
**CROSS COUNTRY RIDE**

A unique opportunity to ride  
in the beautiful surroundings of  
**THE WINDSOR GREAT PARK**

by kind permission of the Crown Estate Commissioners

**Saturday 11th and  
Sunday 12th September 2021**

Every penny raised and donated supports  
Riding for the Disabled Association and  
other worthwhile causes

Please visit [www.windsorlions.co.uk](http://www.windsorlions.co.uk)  
email [horse@windsorlions.co.uk](mailto:horse@windsorlions.co.uk) or call 0845 833 2832



The Lions Club of Windsor would like to thank our generous  
patron **The Shanly Foundation** for their continued support.

**SHANLY**  
FOUNDATION

Charity No: 283758

## 2021 Dates for your diary

**May 24th** - Entries open  
for South Region Virtual  
Qualifier

**June 25th** - Entries close  
for South Region Virtual  
Qualifier

**July 12th** - Entries open for  
National Championships

**August 27th** - Entries close  
for National Championships

**September 11th-12th**  
- Windsor Lions Sponsored  
Ride, Windsor Great Park

**September 25th and 26th**  
- Live Streaming of National  
Championships

If you would like to help with RDA in any way by volunteering or fund raising  
please contact any of the people listed below:

### REGIONAL AND COUNTY CONTACTS

**Regional Chairman** Mrs Frances Lochrane - 07798941229 flochrane@btinternet.com  
**Regional Driving Rep** Mrs Sarah Clunie - 01491 599701 clunie@talktalk.net  
**Regional Dressage Rep/Equine Advisor** Mrs Waveney Luke - 01865 874440 waveney@jandwluke.com  
**Regional Physio** Mrs Elspeth O'Donnell - 01483 808952 elspethodonnell@gmail.com CPTRH  
**Regional Rep** Nona Dane - 07854 379271 anon\_dane@hotmail.com  
**Regional Publicity Officer** Mrs Jill Fitzpatrick - 07977 911990 jill.fitzp1@gmail.com  
**Regional Showjumping Coach** Mrs Theresa Drake - 01628 528982 theresadrake@btinternet.com  
**Regional Coaches** Felicity Smettem - 01296 651598 fsmettem28@gmail.com  
Mrs Theresa Drake 01628 528982 theresadrake@btinternet.com  
**Participant Representative** Natasha Wait - tasha@wait.uk.com 07766853559  
**Berkshire County Chairman** Jenny Whiteman - 01491671793 keith.whiteman793@btinternet.com  
**Buckinghamshire County Chairman** Julia Hayes - 01296651925- hayesclan@me.com  
**Hampshire County Chairman** Ali Lacy - ali10lacey@gmail.com 07754553436  
**Oxfordshire County Chairman** Moo Nowell-Smith - 01844339650 - moo@nowell-smith.com  
**Regional Vet** Ryan McCarthy - 07710801525 ryan@gvgbrooksequine.co.uk

All other contacts can be found on the South Region website [www.southregionrda.com](http://www.southregionrda.com)