



EPSOM RDA NEWSLETTER

Autumn/Winter 2019/20

50th Anniversary Prize Giving

Special points of interest:

- 36 trophies
- 19 Endeavour certificates
- 8 Dressage Anywhere certificates
- 8 cups
- Over 150 attendees
- And lots of cake!

On a sparkling Autumn afternoon on Sunday 17 November over 150 volunteers and riders gathered with their families and friends for our 50th Anniversary Prize Giving.

The Prize Giving is always one of the most enjoyable occasions in the Epsom RDA calendar. It's when we celebrate a year of achievements for our riders from all 14 sessions in front of their families, friends and carers, and volunteers.

This year the occasion was given an extra sparkle by being held in the plush Diomed suite at Epsom Downs Racecourse with stunning views across the Downs. The venue had ample space for everyone to socialise and the

children to burn off energy. The corridor leading into the room measured 11 cartwheels as checked by the daughter of one volunteer!

The Epsom Youth Jazz Ensemble provided music to greet everyone on arrival. A slide show was on display on the screens around the room throughout the afternoon. The slide show illustrated the range of activities riders with their equine partners are able to take part in at Epsom RDA: From dressage to gymkhana games, festive dressing up, a musical ride and countryside hacks all supported by our wonderful volunteers.

The centre piece of the afternoon was the presentation by the Mayor of

Epsom and Ewell to our riders of 36 trophies, 19 Endeavour



certificates, 8 Dressage Anywhere certificates and 8 Cups. All earned by our riders by their hard work and determination throughout the year. The riders' wonderful reactions from smiles, jumps of joy, bows and tears as they come forward to accept their awards was moving and a reminder of the impact that Epsom RDA makes in the lives of our riders and our volunteers.

Here's to another successful year of achievement and fun in 2020.

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Tribute to George Goodwin

George Goodwin

1950 – 2019

George joined the RDA over 10 years ago having retired from a career lecturing in Law. Although retired George still had an insatiable desire to acquire new knowledge in whatever he did. It wasn't long before George became a valuable source of information for his colleagues on Wednesday morning. Not only could George acquire

knowledge, he could retain it and pass it on – many of his friends would have liked such ability! He had an excellent grasp of horse care, was an invaluable source of support to his peers, and kind and helpful to the riders.

George had many other skills, not least that of baking. His cakes, and in particular bread, were well received at the many

barbeques, parties and gatherings we shared together. His Stollen cake was eagerly anticipated each year as Christmas approached.

George was a valued friend, helper and team member for many years at Epsom RDA and will be missed by us all

[Michael Mumford –
Wednesday Volunteer]

Regional Volunteer of the Year—Joe Coulman

Joe Coulman has been a volunteer at Epsom RDA for over 25 years following his retirement from the Fire Brigade. In his years with the charity he has become a much-valued member of the small Maintenance team turning his hand to all manner of tasks to help keep the grounds and buildings at the stables in good shape so our riders, volunteers and ponies have a safe

and well maintained site to enjoy.

We are delighted that Joe's commitment to Epsom RDA has been recognised by the wider RDA organisation with the presentation of the South East Region Volunteer of the Year Award.



Regional Pony of the Year—Marigold

Lady Marigold of Monteith Highland pony of strong character(!), dressage diva, queen of plaits, and a rock steady lead rein pony made it a brace of 50th Anniversary Regional Awards for Epsom RDA by

winning the Regional Pony of the Year Award.

Marigold has been a stalwart of the Epsom RDA herd for over a decade. In that time she has turned her hooves to

all manner of RDA activities including producing a top-class dressage performance winning National RDA Dressage Championships. Her award is very well deserved.

Meet your new Trustees

At the EGM held on Sunday 17 November Epsom RDA Members ratified the Trustees decision to appoint Ray Lee as Chair and also unanimously voted five new Trustees to the Board. This is a significant step forward for the plans to ensure the Epsom RDA community continues to thrive .

Below is a brief introduction to the five new Trustees:

Rebecca Courtman—Safeguarding & Risk

A former volunteer and regular supporter of our equine events Rebecca will be bringing her professional experience to the role of safeguarding and risk. She is a project manager at Disability Challengers, which provides play and leisure time for children and young people with a variety of disabilities. She has extensive training in safeguarding and the barriers of safeguarding when working with disabled children and young people.

Laura Hales—Property & Procurement

A volunteer on Sunday 2 session Laura will be supporting our team of maintenance and gardening volunteers. In addition to the essential day to day work, she will consider

how we use the site to better support our riders and extend our offer to new ones. Laura has experience of the charity sector as a trustee and senior leader. She was Head of Development for Cycling UK, and is currently Chair of African Outreach, a small charity that delivers self-help routes out of poverty in Ghana and Liberia. Laura's current job with the Department of Transport sees her advising Ministers on improvements to local roads.

Tessa Kelly - Hon Secretary

A volunteer on Saturday PM Tessa will be bringing her professional experience to the Board to support the Governance area . She is an Operations Director and currently also Regional Director for EMEA in the food safety and supply chain sector. Her role involves responsibility for a range of operational areas including HR, customer service, training, IT, and sales teams.

Stuart Macfarlane—Events

A volunteer on Monday AM session and a keen horseman since his youth Stuart's background is as a senior event manager working across various industries and within the charity sector.

Stuart will be contributing his experience in working with a range of audiences, improving processes and delivering well designed fun events.

Beryl Randall—Fundraising

Originally a volunteer as a teenager Beryl returned to Epsom RDA in 2017 with the Monday AM session. She has also been the RDA South East Region's Treasurer since January 2019. Beryl's career has been based in the voluntary sector having led a refugee charity with responsibility for generating income, and has further experience managing European, statutory and independent projects and grants.

Epsom RDA Board

Ray Lee—Chair

Angela Wilson—Hon Treasurer

Tessa Kelly—Hon Secretary

Rebecca Courtman—Safeguarding & Risk

Laura Hales—Property & Procurement

Jo Lee—Horse & Pony, Rider Development

Stuart MacFarlane—Events

Ewan McKay—Trustee Finance

Gill McPherson—Volunteer Training, Session Leader Chair

Beryl Randall—Fundraising

Jane Sanders— Communications, Social Media

Epsom Riding for the Disabled Association

St Ebba's Farm
Hook Road
Epsom
Surrey
KT19 8QW
Phone: 01372 743690
E-mail: epsomrda@outlook.com

www.epsomrda.org.uk



Rider Opportunities 2020

Are you a Dressage Diva, a Countryside Challenger, an Endurance Enthusiast or a Junior Jumper?

In 2020 we are going to focus on providing more opportunities for all our riders, whatever their level, to get involved in all of these RDA disciplines. We also want to maximise the opportunities for those that want to compete - both at home and away at RDA Regional and National events.

In the Spring we will be holding our Harold Newton Dressage Competition, back after a year off, and also a Countryside Challenge day. Riders at both these events will be selected to represent Epsom RDA at the Regional events in early Summer. Some may even go on to qualify for the National Championships at Hartpury

College in Gloucestershire in July!

In the Summer we will be holding our second Endurance Month, and entering the National Endurance Competition which challenges groups to see how far they can ride as a group.

Our final event of the year in early Autumn will be a Level 1 Showjumping event. Riders will complete a course of poles (on the ground – our ponies aren't really jumpers!) – there will be rosettes for all entrants!

If you would like to get involved with organising any of the rider events please contact Jo Lee at epsomrda@outlook.com.

In the meantime look out for more details in the New Year!

Mud, Not So Glorious Mud

This may be only the 24th wettest Autumn recorded in England and Wales, according to the Met Office, but it feels like the recent months have seen relentless rain with our fields and walkways suffering as a result.

The maintenance team have been able to put in some temporary measures

by creating new gateways taking the pressure of the muddiest entry points to the fields. However the new field layout needs a long term solution. The Trustees have agreed to invest in the installation of a permanent hard track along Roadside/P1 to P4 fields. This is a priority task to be carried out as soon as the contractor is

able to start.

In addition a mud slab system has been ordered to be laid at the entrance to some of the shelters. This should provide a mud free surface for both horses and volunteers as they move in and out of the shelters.