

The Tall Timbers' Times



Volume 23 No.1

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RIDING FOR THE DISABLED ASSOCIATION (NSW) "TALL TIMBERS" CENTRE, BOX HILL

SNIPPETS

2010 already! Welcome to Tall Timbers' 10th year at Box Hill. Welcome to those of you that are new to our Centre either as a rider, volunteer or supporter, we hope you enjoy being part of RDA.

Congratulations to our Award winners for 2009. Kim Kozis, Thursday Coach, was our 2009 Volunteer of the Year; Paul Akers was presented with our Volunteer Encouragement Award at our Volunteer Lunch along with an award for Indi, our Horse of the Year. We enjoyed another yummy lunch and watched Kerry's 'Year in Review' DVD, looking back at everything we achieved during the year. We also recognised volunteers who have made a significant contribution to the centre including Charlie Aquilina, Barry Sloggett, Bruce Forbes and Gerry Wynand. This was also an opportunity to present our Service Badges to each of our volunteers reaching 1, 3, 5, 10, 15 & 20 years of service. Congratulations to all especially Jan Muspratt and Joy Harris (pictured below) who reached 20 years of service.



Before we finished riding for the year we held a Supporters Day, an opportunity for members of service clubs, businesses, horse sponsors and owners and individuals who have supported the program throughout the year, to come and see our riders in action and see how their support benefits our riders. As staff, Kerry and I and the Committee feel it's an invaluable opportunity to put faces to the names of those we deal with throughout the year. We hope to continue our relationships with all of you and look forward to catching up throughout the year.

We said Good Luck to our Semester 2 riders with Presentation week attended by their family and friends. Each rider was presented with a certificate and Achievement report from their time at Tall Timbers.

Thanks to the Kuringai Lions Club for supporting the Riders Christmas Party in December with our Saturday program, Independents and Tots on Horseback riders

attending. Amongst lots of chatter and food, the presents for the riders were well received. We also presented the Bill Harvey Memorial Trophy to Peter Perosh for being the Most Improved Saturday Rider. The Kuringai Lions Encouragement Award was presented to Ivan Shvedov. Congratulations both of you, you have done extremely well throughout the year. We also took the opportunity to present an award for Significant Contribution to the centre to Carmel Norris and Dinah Moore.

To start the year, we held an Awareness Week stand at Rouse Hill Town Centre in an effort to build our community support and engage some new volunteers to help us with our program.

We also welcomed our Semester 1 groups to our centre with Orientation sessions commencing on the 8th February. As part of this year's Semester 1 program we have 3 new groups participating; Rouse Hill Public School, Giant Steps (Gladesville) and William Stimson Public School. We are very excited to welcome them to Tall Timbers and are looking forward to sharing the joy of RDA with the riders and their families.

Our Driving group have also begun for the year at Rossmore and before too long will start preparations for this year's State Carriage Driving Competitions including Dressage, Cones, Barrel racing and the Photo competition.

We are gearing up for our first major fundraisers for the year, Model Railways on 27th & 28th February and Castle Hill Show Catering on 12-14th March. If you are able to assist on any of these days or make cakes for the Model Railways, please contact the office. In March our Semester 1 Ride-a-thon and Walk-a-thon will be held during regular classes, if you can support the riders and volunteers in this fundraiser it would be appreciated.

We have five riders and four horses attending the State Mounted Games Championships and Horse of the Year competition at the Easter Show on Easter Monday, 5th April. As always spectators are encouraged so if you are planning a day at the show why not make it Easter Monday and cheer the TT Team on. We wish Justin, Josh, Erin, Natalie, Katrina and the horses Pippa, Ishmar, Kruger and Indi luck for all their events.

We are looking forward to another year of smiles, fun times and first time experiences for our riders.

Nicole King

2009 RDA NSW STATE DRESSAGE CHAMPIONSHIPS 13TH – 15TH NOVEMBER

By Wendy Moreland, Coach



What a successful and happy weekend it was for us all. At approximately 2 pm on Friday 13th! Our trusty steeds, Ishmar, Pippa, Mikey (Danielle's pony) and Gossip (Wendy's horse) all prepped & washed, walked on to the truck and were soon en route to SIEC at Horsley Park. A big thank you to Chanida our very caring Horse Manager, for preparing Ishmar and Pippa and packing all the gear and feed, you did a great job.

Nicole and Kaye drove to the venue prior to the horses leaving Box Hill and prepared the 4 stables, which enabled us to stable the horses while all the gear was unloaded and packed away in the tack room. We were given time later in the afternoon to take the horses into the Indoor Arena, to get them accustomed to their surroundings – all our horses had been to SIEC before, so didn't find it too intimidating.

Nicole, Danielle and her Dad and I, stayed at SIEC, so were up bright and early to prepare for Saturday's competition. Kaye, Denise, Debbie, Kirsty and Jasmine all came early, to help with stable cleaning, plaiting and preparing the horses for the day's events. Our riders, Natalie Gross, Amanda Wilson, Erin Christie and Danielle Weymark all arrived looking immaculate in their riding apparel.

There is a prize given for the Centre with the best decorated stables (hotly contested with Raymond Terrace Centre). Our riders had done beautiful collages of themselves and their respective horses, which took pride of place on their stables. Then with the help of the Wilson Family, with Lesley in charge, the stables were transformed with ribbons and bows etc. TALL TIMBERS Centre won the best decorated stables!

Natalie was our first rider to compete (this was Natalie's first ever State Championships) she rode Ishmar in the walk only section. Ishmar has been representing Tall Timbers for a number of years and is a great horse for Natalie to make her first appearance on. The pair completed very accurate dressage tests on both Saturday and Sunday – Coach Kaye Bracken was delighted.

Next we had Amanda on Gossip and Danielle on Mikey (nickname for Burrowa Michadot) both riding Grade 3, walk, trot & canter tests, plus the Grade 3 Freestyle.

Amanda and Gossip (28 years young) have formed a wonderful partnership and together they completed their two compulsory dressage tests and the Freestyle with great accuracy and style. All the hard work was worth it, Amanda - well done.



Mikey is Danielle's own pony and this was their first competition together. The pair started their partnership in June 2009 and with Coach Debbie Stewart, have progressed really well. Danielle rode very well completing her two compulsory tests and the Freestyle very competently with most encouraging marks from the Judges.

Another first time competitor was Erin riding Pippa. Coach Denise Corbett has done a great job, as Erin has only been riding for a year and trotting for a few months. Erin was very nervous, but Pippa is an old campaigner and carried her safely through her walk & trot tests. However, I am sure Erin won't mind if I tell, that during their first test, Pippa decided she did not want to do a right hand turn, instead calmly lifted her legs and walked out over the small arena fence – not once, but twice!! Erin learned from this experience and she made sure

Pippa did GREAT right hand turns in her other two tests. Well done Erin.



On the Saturday night we had a barbecue, very well run by Jenny & Jacqui Armstrong (Ryde RDA) and it was good to relax & socialise for a few hours. During this time, Nicole announced the winners of the Video Dressage Competition held earlier in the year. Dinah Barron (Regional Representative) did the honours.

Results for our Tall Timbers competitors were:-
WALK ONLY

1st Natalie Gross, 2nd Hannah Moore, 3rd Natalie Fulton
WALK/TROT 1st Danielle Weymark 2nd Harrison Luke
WALK/TROT/CANTER 2nd Amanda Wilson

On Sunday morning the riders all rode their final tests, with the presentation of awards being held in the early afternoon. Results :-

GRADE 1A Section C

Test 1	1 st Natalie Gross / Ishmar	65.71%
Test 3	1 st Natalie Gross / Ishmar	59.38%

GRADE 1B Section C

Test 11	1 st Erin Christie / Pippa	55.88%
Test 13	1 st Erin Christie / Pippa	61.11%
Freestyle	1 st Erin Christie / Pippa	60.97%

GRADE 3 Section C

Test 31

1 st Amanda Wilson / Gossip	63.50%
2 nd Danielle Weymark / Burrowa Michadot	60.75%

Test 32

1 st Amanda Wilson / Gossip	65.22%
2 nd Danielle Weymark / Burrowa Michadot	61.13%

Freestyle

1 st Amanda Wilson / Gossip	63.75%
2 nd Danielle Weymark / Burrowa Michadot	57.77%

RDA NSW SECTION C CHAMPION Amanda Wilson
RES.CHAMPION Danielle Weymark

TEAMS COMPETITION 1st Tall Timbers

After the horses left for Box Hill, it was clean up time and many hands were a great help. I must make mention of Joan Edwards who was Gear Steward on Saturday and Judy Brightman who did a fantastic job as the Announcer as usual. A big thank you to Kaye, Denise, Debbie, Kirsty, Jasmine, Krystyna and the riders'

families, who all pulled together to make the weekend such a happy one and to the riders – congratulations on your sportsmanship and co-operation.

Congratulations also to Nicole King and Louise Neal (Ryde RDA) who organised and ran the Championships.

DOLL AND BEAR SHOW

By Lyn Tester, Rotary Club of Holroyd

The Rotary Club of Holroyd held its 2nd Annual Doll & Bear Show at Merrylands RSL Club on Sunday, 18th October, 2009.

Exhibitors came from far & wide to show their talents and wares. Dolls and teddy bears of all descriptions and amazing craft was on display, as well as supplies of the raw materials for enthusiasts to make their own. Jewellery, hand made cards, as well as the clothes for dolls and bears were available. The day proved a great success with the stalls being completely taken, and hundreds in attendance. On this occasion RDA were the recipients of the profits of the day, and at the Christmas meeting of The Rotary Club of Holroyd, our Pip Lovely was presented with a cheque for \$3,000 towards our program.



“TALL TIMBERS” WISH LIST

Thank you to everyone who responded to our wish list. Every little bit helps us to provide our service and reduce expenses.

Concrete pathway

Electrician for electrical appliance safety tagging

Monetary Donations to support the program

Fly masks, cob and full size ready for summer

Stationary - stamps, copy paper, etc

Mouse proof metal cupboards for rug storage

Horse stuff, garlic, hoof oil.

Manure rakes

Saddlery gift cards to assist with purchase of helmets and saddles

Sponsors for vehicles (F100, Jackaroo etc)

Sponsors for the program

Portable PA system

Horse float – angle load

Volunteers – extra hands for our program, garden and property maintenance, and fundraising

VOLUNTEER LUNCH

By Joan Guppy, Monday Volunteer

Where did the year go? Time flies!! Tempus Fugit even!!! All of the above and the scary thing, is that we are all a year older, but the good thing, is that we are still here and were able to gather together for our annual Volunteer's Lunch to celebrate another year at RDA and mull over our achievements.

Karen welcomed us all and thanked everyone for their efforts during the year then invited us to partake of lunch and what a spread it was!! We had a lovely variety of cold meats and salads, followed by a good choice of desserts. For most of this was the first of the Christmas Season celebrations and we all ate well and felt good, deciding that the diet starts on 1st January.

As a Monday Volunteer I was very pleased to see that we were well represented with almost a complete contingent of our group, taking up one and a half tables.

It is always nice when the service awards are presented and Karen had the task of reading out a long list of volunteers who have achieved their 'one', 'three', 'five', 'ten' (and over) service badges. Martina and I were very happy to receive our 'ten' award, Kerry has clocked up 15 years and we have already had Nicole with us for five years. Well done to everyone.



Joan Guppy and Martina Scoble – 10 years



Sue Groth and Kerry Souter – 15 years

Personally, I have been very impressed with the way Floss has performed this year, she is so gentle and patient, which prompted me to vote for her in "Horse of the Year" - never mind girl, Indi beat you to it, but there is always next year!

One table was heavily laden with donated prizes for the "Lucky Door Raffle" and many of us went home with nice little gifts – all part of the fun of the day.

We watched a DVD of activities throughout this past year, which was put together brilliantly as usual by Kerry. Lots of memories came flooding back as we saw the kids who have passed through our classes and hopefully gained from their experience.

As always we finished off with the HUGE group photo – Kerry rushing between camera and front row to make sure she gets in them these days!!

Thankyou to everyone who helped organise the lunch, we had a great day and I wish everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year.



Paul Akers – Volunteer Encouragement Award



Barry Sloggett – Award for Significant Contribution

KIM KOZIS – TALL TIMBERS VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR



As volunteer of the year I have been asked to write a little piece about my involvement with RDA – a history spanning 40 odd years....I know, I don't look old enough!

It all began in a small way back in the early 60's in the UK when my parents, as amateur performers, put on musical revues to raise money for the, then, new organisation known as RDA. I was a self-centered, horse mad teenager who was only mildly interested in the concept of Riding for the Disabled and more focussed on my own riding. So, fast track to Singapore 1987, where, as an expat wife with no work permit, I was looking for something to become involved in. Quite by accident I came across RDA and my life was to change! Not only did I become a coach both in riding and carriage driving but also was active in caring for the RDA ponies 24/7.....an absolutely wonderful experience. In '92 we moved to the UK and I was lucky enough to live within driving distance of the famous Diamond Centre where I coached one day a week for a couple of years before returning to the work force full time. 1999 saw me moving back to Sydney and the first thing I did was look up Tall Timbers at Kellyville where I spent a couple of months volunteering before the centre re-located to Box Hill. Once there, I formalised my coaching credentials and since have enjoyed being a member of a brilliant team from whom I am constantly learning. I've watched with pride as the centre has grown from strength to strength developing facilities, new ways, sessions and programmes to include all sections of the disabled community. My personal favourite is the Tots on Horseback programme which I find particularly inspiring, having the chance to work one to one with our youngest riders.

My experience of RDA in 3 different locations and 2 different hemispheres has been one of immense pleasure and satisfaction, being able to combine my love of horses with helping others to enjoy that same relationship even in the smallest way. I can attest to years of utter amazement at the achievements made by riders with impossible disabilities and the joy they find in our wonderful horses. The benefits of RDA world-wide are unquantifiable but the smiles are just as rewarding no matter where you are!

VOLUNTEER ENCOURAGEMENT AWARD PAUL AKERS

Kerry has asked me to write a few words on who I am, seeing RDA has been kind enough to give me the encouragement award for getting rid of a few weeds. Well the official version. I am 59, retired, having spent 40 years in Banking and finance, in addition I spent two years as a National Serviceman Army Cook, where I excelled at lumpy custard and lumpy mashed potato, which is what all army cooks aspire too. So I guess you could call me an over achiever. Happily married with two great sons, two lovely daughters-in-law, and a cute grandson. I enjoy fishing, boating, and I sail competitively every Wednesday on a 40.7 foot yacht, generally as a bowman, and occasional Saturdays as a rat.

Why am I at RDA? Well my darling wife gave me an ultimatum last May. "If you get bored this winter you can go back to work". I then found RDA on the volunteers Australia web page, with an ad for a gardener. So why not do a bit of weeding, plant a few trees, have a quiet coffee in the shade of a tree, and watch the world go by? Well it became a little more than that, weeds I could understand, but I had no knowledge of horses, and in a relatively short time I learnt;

- Walnut is not a horse colour.
- If Apex start sneezing there is no shame in keeping your distance, and Preen can do wonders on those strange stains on clothing.
- If a child tells you how Santa can get a Pony down a chimney, don't argue!
- I found an odd sense of happiness watching a kid struggle out of a wheelchair and with great difficulty climbs on a horse, and on the kids face is the biggest smile you will ever see. It makes you stop and think.

Thank you to all who helped with the plants and mulch, and all of you for not saying "why are you doing that?" I kept asking myself that!

Why give me the encouragement award? All of you who turn up to help make a kid smile, have my encouragement and admiration.

Paul Akers



TALL TIMBERS' HORSE OF THE YEAR INDI

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a great holiday, because I know I did!

So much has happened in the last few months but the best bit came at the end of last year. We got a surprise day off, I wasn't sure why but I could see all the different volunteers had come in on the same day. Anyway, that afternoon I was told that I'd won Tall Timbers Horse of the Year! I was shocked. I got lots of pats and carrots and I even got a trophy. They said I won because I 'do everything' but I like mixing things up - it stops things getting boring. So...Thanx everyone for loving me! I had a good rest over Christmas. It was nice to just sit and do nothing for a couple of weeks. The only thing that would've made it better was if the mozzies had left me alone, I was so itchy! I had rugs (several because I kept ripping them when I was scratching on the trees) and put fly spray on but they just kept biting. Why do they do that???

I'd let myself go over the holidays so I new I'd have to start exercising again soon, but I really had no motivation. The first time the saddle was put on I was not impressed but I'm slowly getting there. It was all worth it the day the float turned up and I was asked to get on it. I hadn't been on a float in 2 1/2yrs but Ishmar and Kruger were with me (I wasn't sure I wanted to leave Boomerang behind but I had to trust that the others knew what they were doing) so I walked straight up just for something different. Once we were all loaded I was so excited, I had no idea where we were going. When the doors opened we were in the bush, I couldn't wait to have my saddle put on - this was gonna be fun! After a pick at the grass we had our tack put on and off we went. We wandered through trees, crossed creeks and I led out in front the whole way, it was so cool. I hope I get to it again sometime.

We had a new horse come in a couple of weeks ago. His name is Anchor and he's huge! Well I guess huge is an overstatement but he is compared to me. On a sadder note we lost poor old TJ last week. At his age the hot summer was hard for him but at least he got to live out a happy retirement, and I know he'll be watching down over all of us.

Anyway, I hear things are going to get noisy again around here soon. Let the fun begin!
Love Indi (from Indi's Diary as told to Chanida)



PRESENTATION WEEK SEMESTER 2 WEEKDAY RIDERS

Presentation Week is held on the last riding week of the Semester. Parents, family and friends are invited along for the opportunity to watch the lesson and see the presentation of awards.

We were also able to share an extra large block of Cadbury chocolate which had been generously donated by an anonymous donor from Woolworths Head Office.

Thank you to all those who were able to come along and support the riders.



SUPPORTERS DAY

By Pip Lovely, Hon Vice President



At the end of our last term for 2009 Tall Timbers organised a Supporters Day which enabled us to show our appreciation to all the caring people who during the year of 2009 and for the coming year have supported this worthwhile organisation.

As the people walked down the driveway they could see on the fence to the outside arena their name (or their company name) on display thanking them for their support or advertising the horse they were sponsoring.

This day was an informal combined Thank You and Christmas celebration morning tea where we could all mingle and ask the many questions as to how their contribution had been distributed.

The Tall Timbers' Committee and our coaches were there to make sure that each supporter was informed as to how their horse was progressing and of the plans for the Centre in the future. It was fabulous to see so many supporters there as it shows that our work is appreciated in the community. As well as representatives from many services clubs and organisations, Ray Williams MP, who has been a long time supporter of our Centre also attended as well as Prakesh Arjyal representing Ageing, Disability and Home Care.

Tall Timbers committee supplied a tasty morning tea and after this many of the guests chose to look over our amenities and check out their horses that were waiting in their yards.



Thank you to the organisations which supported the RDANSW Tall Timbers Program

Ageing, Disability and Home Care, United Way Sydney, Profield Foundation, Primary Club Australia, Castle Hill Country Club, Sylvia Foster Trust, Rotary Club of Galston, Lions Club of Blacktown City, Lions Club of Kuringai, North Shore Railway Modellers, Rotary Club of Holroyd, Our Lady of Mercy College Parramatta, The Hills Shire Council, EAC Charity Club, Commonwealth Bank Banking Products Division, Lions Club of Baulkham Hills, Cemcut Concrete Cutting, Parramatta Probation, Woolworths Fresh Food Kids Community Grants, The Fairbridge Foundation, Bunnings Dural & McGraths Hill, Windsor Polo Club, International Animal Health Products. (For privacy we do not disclose some names of individual donors but thank them for their generous support).

Thank you also to our current horse sponsors and Friends of our Horse Team

Mrs Margaret Greig, Karen O'Neill, Kirsty Hardman, Inner Wheel Club of North Sydney, The Gallur family, Rotary Club of Granville, Value Plus Animal Health Care Products, Bendigo Bank Galston, The Soroptimist Club of the Hills, Sharon Warner, The Lions Club of Crestwood, Mrs Anthea Hendy, The Box Hill and Nelson Progress Association, The EAC Charity Club, International Animal Health Products.



SATURDAY RIDERS' CHRISTMAS PARTY

By Kaye Bracken, Saturday Coach

Saturday 12 December 2009 was the day for all our Saturday riders, Independent riders, Tots, parents, friends and volunteers to come together for our annual Christmas party and to celebrate another great year in the saddle at RDA.



Our party room was looking very festive, thank you Kerry and Nicole and thank you also for setting out our "Trophy table". As all our riders, parents, family and friends started arriving, so did the fabulous array of delicious food for us all to share. Everyone was very excited to catch up again in a relaxed social atmosphere and for once we had time to chat!

John Norris was there to represent the Ku-ring-gai Lions Club which has sponsored our party for many years and providing all the great presents for our riders. The Lions Club also provides the trophy as an Encouragement Award to the rider who has shown considerable improvement and shown a desire to improve throughout the year. This year the trophy went to Ivan Shvedov who has been so enthusiastic every ride to learn and understand more about his horse. He tries hard every lesson and his obvious enjoyment is a joy to watch. Ivan especially loves going out on a trail ride. RDA is very grateful for the ongoing support of this Lions Club.



Unfortunately this year Joyce Harvey could not be with us to present the annual Bill Harvey Memorial Trophy for the Most Improved Rider of the year. Joyce and her late husband Bill attended RDA Tall Timbers for many years and were heavily involved in all sorts of fund raising activities. This year the trophy was presented to Peter Perosh who has really tried his best every ride and, although difficult as times, always beams. It has been just great to watch Peter get stronger and be able to sit longer on his horse for the whole lesson.



Certificates, progress reports, and even better, the presents, were all handed out to riders eagerly watched by all our wonderful parents, family and volunteers – lots of great photos taken.

Congratulations to all the riders and award winners – I hope you have enjoyed your year with us as much as we have enjoyed assisting you with your riding. On behalf of Judy and myself I would like to say thank you to everyone for making this day so special – thank you Chanida for all the great work you do with our special horses and for always being available to work that extra Saturday when needed. Thank you Jan for making the weekly trek from the Northern Beaches to organise all the horses, grooming, saddling, cleaning up, etc etc etc and always being there for an extra pair of hands. Your many years at RDA are invaluable and you have been a great support to me.

And last, but in no way least, thank you to all our wonderful volunteers and horses – we could not run without you. All the best for 2010.



BILL HARVEY MEMORIAL TROPHY FOR THE MOST IMPROVED RIDER OF THE YEAR - PETER PEROSH

By Maria Perosh, Peter's Mum



Peter is aged 11 and has cerebral palsy. His muscles were constantly tight yet too weak to fully support his body weight and he walked in his walker with a severe crouch.

Following 9 Botox Injection treatments over 7 years to help relax the muscles in his legs and the deteriorating issues with his hip, it became necessary for multi-level surgery in Oct 2008 which consisted of a left hip reconstruction, hamstring and calf lengthening and both feet having to be reconstructed with bone being taken from his pelvis to make up the shortfall from his feet. The physiotherapy and hydrotherapy was intense and ongoing over the next year.

Peter had been horse riding with RDA for a few years prior to his surgery and in February 2009, we had decided it was time to get Peter back in the saddle. Horse riding assists with his posture, balance, trunk strengthening and hamstring lengthening. Although initially painful to be sitting on "Angel", Peter persevered. In December 2009, Peter was awarded the 'Most Improved Saturday Rider'. He was so proud, as was the family, although Dad felt he should have been awarded the medal for taking him every fortnight and coping with all the whinging.

Thanks RDA.



VOLUNTEER SURVEY RESULTS WHAT DO YOU MOST ENJOY ABOUT RDATT?

The friendly atmosphere and learning something new all the time.

Working with the kids and seeing how excited they are.

Seeing the joy on the children's faces during classes and the improvement they demonstrate throughout the semester is very rewarding. Getting to meet a great bunch of people is also rewarding.

I enjoy walking with the riders and seeing the enjoyment that they get from being on their horse and doing the activities. I also enjoy the social side as the workers and other volunteers are a lovely group of people.

Seeing the difference in the children's demeanour after a month or so of riding and forming friendships with other volunteers.

Just being with the horses and now am enjoying even more seeing the delight on the kid's faces when they accomplish something they haven't done before.

I really love just about all the aspects, but particularly the horses, riders and camaraderie that develops among many of the volunteers. It has given me a focus I really needed. And I have learned HEAPS!

Seeing the joy on the riders' faces and the interaction with the children and their improvement throughout the term.

I like seeing the improvement which riders make during the duration of the program, due to the work and activities that the coaches provide them with to learn from. I also like the positive and friendly attitude of the coaches and volunteers!

RDA CARRIAGE DRIVING and the HILLS CLUB – A 20 YEAR PARTNERSHIP

by Janet Muspratt

(as printed in the Hills Club newsletter 'The Spokesman' Feb/Mar 2010)

The RDA Tall Timbers Carriage Driving group is about to start up again for another year, which will be its twentieth year of driving. Carriage driving started at the original Tall Timbers Centre at Conrad Rd Kellyville in 1990, but moved to my property at Rossmore in the 1990s where it was much more convenient for all concerned, including the horses. Since then, the land at Kellyville has been sold and the new centre has been developed at Old Pitt Town Rd Box Hill, but driving has stayed at Rossmore.

The Hills Harness Club has had a close association with RDA Tall Timbers going back to the late 1970s, with club members giving rides in their vehicles at the annual Gala Days at the centre, firstly up and down Conrad Road and later in the paddocks beside the centre at Kellyville. Sadly that area is now completely covered in houses with not a sign that RDA was ever part of the scene there.

The Hills Club has supplied most of the Whips (driving instructors), ponies and volunteer ground helpers over the years. The first Whips to be accredited at Tall Timbers were Graham Randall, Ken Thomas, Sandra Ferris, Aileen Pamment, Chris Reinhardt and me. Ground helpers in the earlier years included Joy Harris, Joan Thomas, Jenny Fawbert, Jeanie Muspratt, Bill Arnold, June Malmberg, Margie Randall, and Max and Kath Smith. Margaret Moore (Whip) and Alan Ongley and John Moore (helpers) have continued the Hills Club association in more recent years. Drivers have quite often been Hills members too, including our first driver Michelle Harris (still driving), Greg Pike, and current drivers Linda Ongley and Lynne Buckingham.

Vehicle building, maintenance and repairs have been done from time to time also by Hills people including Bill Arnold, Eddie Dobbin, Alan Ongley and John Moore. To top off the support that the club has given to RDA Tall Timbers carriage driving, there is a special fund within the Hills books which is used to purchase equipment for 'our' RDA from time to time such as helmets, reins and leads. Hills Club cones, gate numbers and dressage letters are also always on hand for use when required.

A number of horses and ponies have done service over the years including my ponies Berkeley (the first driving pony for RDA TT), Elle, Harlequin and Nicholas; Cadet belonging to the Randalls, and Sonny Boy belonging to John and Margaret Moore. Nicholas and Sonny Boy are the current driving ponies.

Driving has progressed from the first lessons mostly walking in a small arena at Kellyville to the current ones held in paddocks of about an acre each with drivers concentrating on perfecting their skills in activities such as dressage, cones driving and barrel racing. Along the way, highlights have included Greg Pike competing in the World CDE Championships for Drivers with Disabilities at Wolfsburg in Germany in 1998, driving a borrowed German Fjord pony and vehicle, accompanied by Ken Thomas as Whip; several successful visits to the

Royal Easter Show competing in the RDA classes by Michelle, Greg and former driver Fiona McGonigal; and competing in the NSW and Australian CDE Championships at Gundagai and Parkes, other CDEs at Camden and Raymond Terrace, as well as at Castle Hill and Stroud Shows.

The successful formula which has endured since 1990 is to drive once a month on a Saturday morning, it having proved the most suitable time and regularity for the drivers, Whips and ground helpers. For quite a few years now, Margaret Moore and I have been the Whips, with our ponies Sonny Boy and Nicholas. We have settled on having a limit of four drivers – two per pony, with each driver having about 40 minutes of driving. Current drivers are Michelle Harris, Linda Ongley and Lynne Buckingham, with a new driver to start this year, whilst regular ground helpers are Joy Harris, Alan Ongley, John Moore, Felicity Rowntree, Debbie Lyshak, Tiffany Cornall and Lyn Sclanders.

We have a special accredited wheelchair loading vehicle which Michelle always uses, and Margaret and John bring their accredited pony sulky for more ambulant drivers. RDA regulations require the wearing of helmets, a Whip in the vehicle with the driver, and at least three ground helpers per turnout to be alert for any problems and assist if needed. Another requirement is that the Whip holds a second set of reins in the interests of safety, but in the true spirit of RDA carriage driving, the driver takes control of the horse and does the all driving – something that has been encouraged right from the start of Tall Timbers carriage driving way back in 1990.



CONDOLENCES

Our sincere condolences to Sue Groth and family on the passing of Neil. Sue has been a volunteer at our Centre for over 15 years and Neil was also a volunteer after he retired.



RAFFLE RESULTS

The Treasure Trove Raffle was drawn and the winners were:
First Prize Ticket No RBR 23398 – J Zammit of Rozelle – sold by the Girraween Holy Family Community Church
Second Prize Ticket No RHR 05123 – D Magjar of Wattle Grove – sold by Challenge Southern Highlands
Third Prize Ticket No RBR 15272 – N. Cartwright – sold by Riding for the Disabled Tall Timbers Centre Box Hill

We raised \$ 1953.00 for our Centre sold the 3rd prize ticket. Thank you to everyone who supported this Raffle and to the Rotary Club of Granville for their organisation.

UP COMING EVENTS

Please support our fundraising efforts – mark these dates in your diary and let Kerry know if you can assist.

MODEL RAILWAYS EXHIBITION

27th and 28th FEBRUARY

Helpers and Baked Goods needed

Forestville Memorial Hall cnr Starkey and Warringah Rd
Thank you to the North Shore Railway Modellers Association and the Lions Club of Kuringai for their continued support for our Centre. Helpers are needed to assist in the canteen and we also need cakes to sell.

CASTLE HILL SHOW

13TH 14TH AND 15TH MARCH

We will once again need your assistance with catering (kitchen duty) at the Castle Hill Show. We provide meals for the judges and stewards over the three days. Come along and help for a few hours or more. Tickets for the show are issued to helpers. Please let Kerry know when you can help.

RIDE A THON/WALK A THON

13th – 20th MARCH DURING CLASS TIMES

Our Semester 1 Ride-a-thon and Walk-a-thon will be held during regular classes, if you can support the riders and volunteers in this fundraiser it would be appreciated.

TALL TIMBERS AGM & OPEN MEETING

WEDNESDAY 24th MARCH 7.30PM

All members are encouraged to attend. New members please phone the office for an application. \$11

membership is due now. **Let us know if you'd like to know more about joining the Tall Timbers Committee.**

WINDSOR POLO

SUNDAY 28TH MARCH

Helpers are needed to assist at the gate to raise funds for our Centre. If you can spare a few hours of your time it would be greatly appreciated. Match - Aust v NZ

RDA NSW STATE MOUNTED GAMES AND HORSE OF THE YEAR COMPETITION

SYDNEY ROYAL SHOW

EASTER MONDAY 5TH APRIL

Keep this date free to support our riders and horses. It is held in the Schmidt arena from 8.30.

BUNNINGS BBQ

23rd MAY AND 29TH AUGUST AT DURAL

Let us know if you can help at these fundraisers.

RDA NSW COMBINED ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND STATE WORKSHOP

SATURDAY 1ST AND SUNDAY 2ND MAY

The combined AGM and Workshop will be hosted by RDA Orange. The Theme for the Workshop is "Teamwork at RDA enhances abilities".

TRIVIA NIGHT

SATURDAY 15TH MAY 7.30

We are holding a Trivia Night in the arena at Tall Timbers. Make up a table of 8 or join another. Only \$15 per person which includes supper. BYO drinks and nibbles. All proceeds assist with the cost of running the Centre. **PRIZES NEEDED** – if you have any contacts or are able to request prizes from your local businesses they would be gratefully received.

REGIONAL DRESSAGE DAY

at Tall Timbers Centre. Date to be confirmed

HELP US SAVE PAPER AND POSTAGE

Please tell us if your details have changed or if you no longer wish to receive a copy of the Tall Timbers' Times. We are happy to send a hard copy of the newsletter but we can email it to you instead (the email version in colour!) if you prefer. Just let us know.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Our policies and procedures manual is available at the office for your perusal and input. At any time suggestions can be placed in our suggestion box.

RIDING FOR THE DISABLED ASSOCIATION (NSW)

**"TALL TIMBERS" CENTRE
125 OLD PITT TOWN ROAD,
BOX HILL. NSW. 2765**

PHONE (02) 9679 1246

FAX (02) 9679 0638

EMAIL: talltimbers@rdansw.org.au

Website: <http://talltimbers.rdansw.org.au>





RDA TALL TIMBERS MEMBERSHIP

We would love our volunteers and supporters to become Members of our RDA Centre. Membership is only \$11.00 including GST and helps pay for our newsletter, tea & coffee, and promoting our Centre. You are also eligible to vote at Annual General Meeting held each March and at Special Meetings.

Please be a part of your Centre. Ask Kerry for an application form.

Expressions of Interest also welcome to become part of the Tall Timbers Committee

TRIVIA NIGHT **SATURDAY 15TH MAY 7.30**

In the arena of RDA Tall Timbers Centre.

Great prizes! Lots of fun!

Make up a table of eight or join another.

Only \$15 per head includes supper.
BYO drinks and nibbles.

Phone 9679 1246 to Book
Bookings ASAP or by 7th May



"Tall Timbers" Centre
125 Old Pitt Town Road
BOX HILL NSW 2765