

## FRDI CONGRESS OF THERAPEUTIC RIDING SPECIAL SPOTLIGHT EDITION



The **FRDI XIII International Congress of Therapeutic Riding** took place in Munster, Germany Aug 2009. RDA in Australia was well represented at this tri-annual congress. For further information on FRDI Congress visit: <http://www.frdi.net/congress.html>

Every three years FRDI (International Federation for Riding for the Disabled) holds an International Congress for Therapeutic Riding, which features the latest research and development results. The congress is a unique opportunity that brings the world together to spearhead the promotion of equine assisted activities. This year it was attended by 900 participants from 39 countries. It is a unique opportunity to meet and network with people across the world and find out what's happening in other countries.

At this year's Congress, RDA Australia presented an Expression of Interest (EOI) for Australia to host the 2015 FRDI International Congress of Therapeutic Riding.

The McIntyre Centre in Brisbane was the first RDA Centre established in Australia and will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at the time the 2015 Congress is to be staged.

Hosting the 2015 FRDI Congress would be a particularly significant date for RDA Australia to mark - not only to celebrate the last 50 years of RDA achievement in Australia but also to plan for the next 50 years.

Hosting such a prestigious and international event would benefit RDA in the following ways:

- Raise the national profile
- Increase awareness of RDA
- Foster growth of Equine Assisted Therapy
- Foster international relationships
- Provide information, training & exchange of knowledge of professionals including RDA personnel, therapists, equestrian coaches, and the medical profession

- Link RDA to research institutes, universities and hospitals
- Develop professional links with national and international organisations
- Inform and educate the public, charities and professionals about our work
- Showcase RDA
- Increase our volunteer base and volunteers skills base
- Attract professional interest to local RDA Centres

This event has never been held in Australia. Bringing this event to Australia will not only help to raise the profile of RDA's work nationally and internationally, but also, help RDA to lobby government departments for funding to help research and develop equine assisted therapy in Australia to benefit our members.

The next FRDI Congress will be held in 2012 in Greece. If selected to host the 2015 FRDI International Congress of Therapeutic Riding, RDAA has 3 years to raise interest and sponsorship to host this prestigious event.

### FRDI News

RDAA is delighted to announce the election of **Pauline**



**Perry** (President of Tasmania RDA) as the new **International President of FRDI** (Federation of Riding for the Disabled International) at the 2009 **FRDI XIII International Congress of Therapeutic Riding** in Munster, Germany.

Pauline is a valued member of RDA Australia and was awarded an honorary Life Membership of RDA in 2008. She will serve as FRDI President from 2009-2012. We wish her every success in her latest appointment.

**Norma Pierce** stepped down after serving 14 years as **Executive Director of FRDI**. Norma was a founder member of FRDI and served for 6 years on the Executive Board. Norma has been invited to join the RDAA national Board. We welcome Norma

on to the RDAA Board and look forward to working with her.

The 2009 FRDI Therapeutic Congress hosted lectures, workshops & presentations including:

**Lectures:**

- Therapeutic Riding – Opportunities and Limitations in the Concept of Reciprocal Relation between Human & Horse in Therapy
- Relationship with Horses throughout life & its Influence on the Development of the Human
- What do we know about the effects of Therapeutic riding on the body & soul?
- Review on evaluation/studies in Therapeutic Riding & areas of expected effects
- Ethics in Human-Animal Relation

**Workshops with world renowned experts:**

- Klaus Balkenhol, Olympic champion in Dressage and former USEF National Coach
- Susanne von Dietze, author of 'Balance in Movement'
- Reinhard Mantler, founder of Reinhard Mantler Horse-Man-Ship Training

**A spectacular Gala Show with:**

- Olympic champions Ingrid Klimke, eventing and Hubertus Schmidt, dressage
- Demonstrations with the famous stallions of the State Stud farm in Warendorf
- Therapeutic Vaulting & Driving presentations
- Selected Scenes of the play 'The Little Prince', presented by integrated Therapeutic Riding groups

For the very first time patients, parents and young people, interested in the profession as therapy were invited to assist the Congress in Münster.

**Call for Papers - 2009 Scientific and Educational Journal for Therapeutic Riding** - The 2009 Journal will be dedicated to university & college students all over the world. FRDI is inviting students to send in abstracts of their studies, research and work in the field of Equine Assisted Activities. Please submit a one page abstract in English to the Journal Editor Sanna Mattila-Rautiainen: [sanna.mattila@saunalahti.fi](mailto:sanna.mattila@saunalahti.fi) Deadline: Oct 16 09

**FRDI XIII International Congress of  
Therapeutic Riding Munster 12-15 Aug 2009  
Horses for Body, Mind & Soul – RDA Reports**



FRDI Congress RDA members (L to R) Pauline Perry, Denis Keates, Norma Pierce, Julie Nicholson, Fiona Little, and Mary Longden

FRDI holds an International Congress of Therapeutic Riding every three years. This year it was held in the old University town of Munster in Germany – with 900 people from 39 countries in attendance.

Scientific and educational papers were presented on the various aspects of equine related activities practiced by FRDI members worldwide.

Over the years new branches of therapeutic activities have been introduced and it is always interesting and stimulating to hear what others are doing. One of the most valuable aspects of these Congresses is the opportunity they present for delegates to meet people from other countries and share experiences and learn from each other.

The Congress was held at the Halle Munsterland a large Congress Centre with easy access. A highlight was the Horse Gala – a most spectacular equestrian display, with stallions from the Warendorf National Stud and other equestrian events.

Opportunities also existed for discussion on matters affecting FRDI. Of particular interest was a lively discussion on the possibility of changing the name of the Federation. An ad-hoc working party was set up to present some ideas to the members for consideration.

Expressions of Interest to host coming Congresses are called for at the International Council meeting. The next Congress will be held in Athens in 2012.

Expressions of Interest were called for the 2015 Congress. Australia presented a bid to host the Congress in Brisbane – to coincide with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the McIntyre centre. The presentation was very well received and considerable interest shown. There is time for other bids to be submitted, and results should be known by February 2010. At this stage there is no commitment, but should Australia's bid be successful, this would be a wonderful opportunity for all the states in Australia to highlight the excellent work being done here.

As one who has been involved with FRDI for over 20 years I can observe that it is significant that since the Federation was formally constituted in 1991 there has been an Australian elected to each of the Executive Boards. At this year's Council meeting our own Pauline Perry was elected FRDI President (for the next 3 years). This is an indication of the respect with which Australia has been held over many years.

Norma Pearce - Retiring Executive Secretary – FRDI

**RDA Coach Report** - I would like to start my report by thanking RDAA Board and Rosemary McDonald for making the Travel Bursary possible and RDAWA for their support giving me the opportunity to attend and experience an FRDI Congress.

During the Opening ceremony I realized what an honour and privilege it was for me to be part of this Congress Horses for Body Mind & Soul with 39 countries represented and 900 participants. I would like to thank Mary Longden for her invaluable support with my first Congress experience and for introducing me to so many people from all over the world and involving me in meetings and discussions and social interactions.

It was a thrill for me to be at the Congress where on retiring Norma Pearce, was honoured for her many years of dedication and valuable contribution to FRDI as secretary and Pauline Perry accepted the role of FRDI President and Australia's bid for the 2015 Congress.

It would be an exciting opportunity for RDAA to showcase to the other countries just how active and progressive RDA is in Australia.

I sat through many lectures and was aware that not only do we in Australia have therapeutic programmes we also teach riding. There was a lot of research evidence presented which for me validated without a doubt the benefits horses offer to humans. So much happens on so many levels at Body Mind and Soul that I had never thought of.

I'm really enjoying putting together my notes to share with RDAA Coach's to give them a brief idea of how motivating it was for me to be at this Congress and I really hope RDAA's bid to host the 2015 Congress is successful so this experience is available to everyone involved at all levels within RDA.

The most difficult time of the Congress was to make a choice of what presentations to attend as the selection was very comprehensive and the titles of the lectures did not at times give a true idea of their content. Fortunately I made a lot of good choices as my report will share and as interesting and informative the whole Congress experience was I did experience 2 highlights:

1. To be part of the audience in the large congress hall who gave Professor of Psychology Dr Dennis Turner from Switzerland a standing ovation for his talk on Ethics in Human and Animal Relationships
2. Attending 2 practical sessions with Susanne Von Dietze on Balance in Movement and then to have the opportunity to discuss the visit Susanne made to Perth approx 10 years ago. I bought her DVD and look forward to putting her ideas into practice. I plan to make the DVD available to any coaches who would like to borrow it and organise a workshop when she next visits Perth.

Thank you once again - Julie Nicholson



FRDI Congress - Julie Nicholson with the New Zealanders - the Rev Yvonne Hooper and Pam Harwood

## FRDI PRESIDENT

I enjoyed meeting with so many FRDI members at the 2009 Congress. It was a wonderful time to catch up with people, exchange news and ideas. I feel very privileged to have been elected to the FRDI Executive as President.

I consider myself most fortunate to have had the pleasure of working with Norma Pearce for the last three years as FRDI Treasurer.

Norma has been an inspiration to all at FRDI, as consultant on working parties, Board member and Executive Director over a period of 20 years. She has contributed so much to the development of FRDI. I now look forward to working with the new Executive Director, Gisela Rhodes (USA).



Pauline Perry

Pauline and Norma [Photo: Courtesy of G. Hoffmann]

Pauline is currently the President of RDA Tasmania and assisting the National RDA with their coaching program and standards. She is also chairman of selectors for the Australian Para Equestrian riders. Her real love is coaching at RDA and mentoring trainee coaches and volunteers.

## International Congress – 2015 – Progress to Date

An Expression of Interest has been lodged with FRDI to host the 2015 International Congress to be staged in Brisbane by RDA Australia.

The idea of hosting the Congress was explored by a group including Coralie Kedzlie, Rosemary McDonald, Phillip Walliker, Norma Pierce, Katy Ash and myself. The benefits of hosting the International Congress are many and easily defined. In essence the information gleaned from a Congress as well as the international personal networks established provide a springboard for growth and enthusiasm which lasts beyond a decade for the hosting nation.

RDA in Australia began in Brisbane in 1964, so celebrating our 50<sup>th</sup> birthday by staging the 2015 Congress with the host city Brisbane seemed entirely appropriate.

So we had an exciting idea but what would it cost? We worked closely with the Brisbane Convention Centre to establish the facilities needed to stage a Congress of 400 delegates. Once venue requirements were established we could then come up with a cost for the venue. The committee then worked with a professional event organization called Event Planners. They developed a comprehensive budget which included the venue costs and all other costs incurred in the successful staging of a Congress.

We then reviewed the budget and established that the concept was feasible. Two important criteria were that if we were going to stage the Congress it must be done professionally and the event must stand alone financially and not require funding from Centres, States or the National body.

The Expression of Interest document was then put together with a huge amount of help from the Brisbane Convention Centre and lodged with the FRDI in August. All of the work to arrive at the EOI document was done at no cost.

I gave a 10 minute presentation at the Congress closing Ceremony in Munster on Australia's bid to host the Congress. It is easy to sell Australia as a destination and the presentation was well received.

The offer to stage the Congress will be made to the successful nation in February 2010. No other countries have expressed interest at this stage. It is important to remember that it is just an expression of interest and does not commit us to anything.

The next stage is to formalize the organizing committee and establish a business plan with clear financial goals and checkpoints.

This is a wonderful opportunity for RDA in Australia and will establish a platform for new ideas and common goals to carry us forward into the next 50 years of our development.

Denis Keates - CEO McIntyre Centre

*'Attending a FRDI Congress is the Holy Grail of RDA members. I have saved for years but never been able to afford to attend one. What a fantastic opportunity to attend one on our own doorstep.'*  
Jane Sawyer, Cartmill RDA Centre Manager and mother of 4 children with differing abilities.

## RDAA BOARD MEMBERS REQUIRED

The annual general meeting of Riding for the Disabled Association of Australia will take place in Melbourne on the 22<sup>nd</sup> Nov 2009. We now seek nominations for directors to serve on the national board as the board of RDAA rebuilds for the future. We need directors with the skills, time and willingness to support the organisation. To register your interest, please email: [admin@rda.org.au](mailto:admin@rda.org.au).

## BOARD UPDATE

The state and Territory Presidents met with the RDAA board on the 19<sup>th</sup> September in a very constructive workshop defining the future of the organisation, the roles, responsibility and best ways of working together for the future.

### 2009 DIARY DATES

Oct 19	Board Meeting Teleconference
Nov 21	Volunteer Awards Dinner
Nov 22	RDAA AGM & Company Meeting

## NATIONAL OFFICE

The RDAA national office is staffed five days a week by our Administrator, Caroline Partridge. She is contactable by telephone on 03 9731 7388 or you can email Caroline at [admin@rda.org.au](mailto:admin@rda.org.au).

## RDAA COACHING WORKSHOPS

### 2009

- PETstock/National Young Coach Development Program 12-15 Nov 2009, Bunyip, VIC
- Discipline Committee meetings 19 Nov 2009
- Coach Assessors' workshop 20 - 21 Nov 2009 to be held in conjunction with RDAA Discipline Committee's meetings, VIC

### 2010

- Carriage Driving Workshop 26-28 March 2010, Bendigo, VIC
- National coaching workshop: Tentative booking at Marcus Oldham, VIC, July 2010.

## COACHING UPDATE

The coaching department represented by Chair of Program Delivery, Pauline Perry is currently undertaking the four yearly re-accreditation of the OTC and Level One Coach Education Workbooks. This process is a review by the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) as part of their National Coaching Accreditation Scheme (NCAS). The workbooks are reviewed for best current practice and if necessary updated accordingly.

- The RDAA Carriage driving committee has developed a competency based workbook & manual which mirrors the riding workbook.
- Vaulting is also working on a competency based Vaulting & Lungeing for Vaulting Syllabi

With all this great work going on there are some ideas that have developed during my discussions with our ASC project officer. He has suggested that it would be best to look at all that is completed from all disciplines and review at the same time. Also we could consider having a generic component relevant to all, with separate specific modules for each discipline. There will be a presentation developed for the meetings in November for all to consider.

RDAA is currently booking accommodation for the Discipline meetings and Assessors workshop. The following Discipline committees that will be meeting are:

- Riding
- Carriage Driving
- Dressage
- The other disciplines do not require a face to face meeting at this time.

The Assessors Workshop is to review and update the Assessors Syllabus and current assessors to meet current best practice. The presenter will be Adam Horner from the ASC. Adam is RDAA's project officer who is reviewing the coach education syllabi. Adam has also asked whether we would be interested in having our assessor accreditation as part of the ASC, National Coaching Accreditation Scheme. After I have further consulted with Adam I will report back to all coaching personnel as to how the two systems compare and then you can make a decision.

### Meetings, Workshop and RDAA AGM Venue is Quest Flemington

#### Discipline meetings:

Thurs 19<sup>th</sup> Nov, 9.00am - 5.00pm 2009

#### Assessors' workshop:

Fri 20<sup>th</sup> and Sat 21<sup>st</sup> Nov 9.00am - 4.30pm 2009

RDAA AGM: Sun 22<sup>nd</sup> Nov 2009

**The RDAA Awards Dinner** will be held on Saturday evening at The Brass Tavern Moonee Ponds. The approximate cost for the dinner will be \$45.00 meal only. I hope that as many people as possible will come along to enjoy the evening with the RDA family and support the recipients of the awards. Great Company -Great food - Great Venue! Pauline

## **RDA NATIONAL VIDEO DRESSAGE COMPETITION 2009**

The National Dressage Competition is an important part of the RDAA calendar. However, it can be expensive to compete when travel and accommodation costs are taken into account. These costs can also restrict the number of contestants who wish to participate.

So, in response to the current financial climate and in the interests of making the competition as accessible as possible, the 2009 National Dressage Championships will be conducted through the submission of videos by contestants. No travel or accommodation required, compete at your local RDA centre!

This exciting and innovative approach aims to engage a wider audience that we have ever had before. The RDAA Dressage Committee is now running the RDAA National Dressage Video Championships. Details of the competition and competition tests are available at [www.rda.org.au](http://www.rda.org.au). Closing dates for entries is 16 Oct 2009.

## **DAYLESFORD RDA's ASIA/PACIFIC 2009 RDAA DRESSAGE CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Daylesford RDA is a small centre in Central Victoria that re-started in February 2008 after 2 years recess. We have a small & enthusiastic group of riders who ride out of Boomerang Holiday Ranch on Fri afternoons. This year we entered a team in the Victorian State Games & were looking for another challenge when we read about the Asia Pacific Dressage Championships and that we could enter via DVD. *'We can do that'* was the response of the coaches and four of the riders. Then the planning & organising started!

We had to find horses (the Boomerang horses have to work on weekends), the venue, the dressage markers, a cameraman and an atlas (to explain to the riders what it meant to be part of the Asia/Pacific Championships) – all in the one place at the same time. It was a typical Daylesford winter's day – cold, windy and overcast. The Glenlyon & District Pony Club helped out with dressage markers & equipment. Three ex-pony Clubbers marked out the arena at the Pony Club offering competition advice to the riders on the day. Gabi Francis, Brendan Cook and Peta Rak lent us Tammy, Ruby & Jaz respectively. Volunteers groomed the horses and dredged up long

forgotten braiding skills. Parents, families and friends turned up with their respective riders – all beautifully kitted out.

Swine flu and other lurgies were at their peak in Victoria. One rider was too ill to attend; another rider was determined to ride and did so, despite having been sick for the previous week. The cameraman sat at his post at 'C' all afternoon despite coughing and spluttering. The riders all had a practice run and then the filming started. Despite being freezing cold and windy, everyone had fun – but more importantly felt like they had achieved something with many family members and friends turning up to watch their children successfully complete the tests.



It was a great day for the riders, coaches, volunteers and 'conscripted' helpers and well worth the effort to participate – it was an experience that the riders would not have been able to have without the opportunity to submit a DVD recording. We really appreciated the efforts of Rachel Vincent and RDAA in making it happen. It was a lot of work for all of us, but the expressions on the faces of the riders when they completed their tests successfully showed it was worth it. Hopefully Daylesford riders will be back in the competition next year...

2009 RDAA Asia/Pacific Competition results are available at [www.rda.org.au](http://www.rda.org.au)

## **RDA UK ORGANISES WORLD'S BIGGEST RIDING LESSON**

On 30 September 2009, disabled and able-bodied riders around the globe participated in the world's biggest riding lesson by completing a simple routine devised by the RDA UK as part of its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations.



Australian participants included RDA Centres in Queensland, Victoria and NT. Even those Centres short of horses participated – see below!

### World's Biggest Riding Lesson!

This was a fun filled action packed day that saw 20 riders participate in our lesson. As we *only* have 3 horses we had to introduce **other** horses into the lesson! All these horses were assessed to RDA criteria by our Chairperson Lynn Poulton (who was not adverse to a bribe or two).

Some we found did not have the required width for a RDA horse and the muscles were a bit



wooden. Some had steep shoulders and pasterns which for some riders made a hard ride. Some had a tendency towards unsoundness as they lost their heads in the wind.

Chairperson Lynn Poulton assessing trainee OTC coach Rachel Hunker and her noble steed

But all in all after a few gold coins were bandied around all 14 horses joined the lesson and were led by our trainee OTC coach Heather leading Midgee around the paddock while Karen Eva- Stirk held an inclusive lesson in the main arena.



Lester our longest member was part of this special day. Lester started riding with us at age 13. He is now 36. We also had our newest rider Jack and to represent our abled bodied riders Megan joined the lesson riding Fergus. This is a milestone for

Megan as she had a serious accident on a large horse and this is her first time riding a large horse again and she performed well.

Thanks to all of the Volunteers and families who joined us on the day. Thanks also to our dressage judge Lyn Ansell who called the lesson and gave a few pointers on how to handle the wayward horses and gave amusing pointers to the riders on how to keep their seats.

All in all it was a day filled with fun and laughter and all had a great time. It was quite amusing to see adults riding on sticks and getting back in touch with their inner child.

This day was held to help raise funds for the centre as well as building awareness of the centre and its need to find three 14.2 horses to enable the centre to expand its operations as we have many special riders on the waiting list.

As this was part of a worldwide event we as a small centre in the Centre of Australia were thrilled to be part of this great event and bring some recognition to the general public, of the great achievements all centres around the world are providing for disadvantaged and disabled children and adults.

Karen Eva-Stirk Level 1 Coach RDA Alice Springs Inc

### RDA AUSTRALIAN STORY

RDA Australia would love to record people's stories to highlight some of the achievements and the lives that have been touched and improved in the past 30 years through their connection to RDA.

In order to do this, we are asking for stories, photos and case studies from you, which we can publicise and include in a book or booklet, upload on to the website or download as a podcast.

Whatever your role or connection with RDA, it is likely that you can recall at least one incident or activity, or you have a comment that sums up your feelings for the organisation. Your stories will capture the essence and strength of RDA.

Please do not dismiss your story as not being of any interest to anyone. It may be ten words or two pages (preferably not more than that), and, if necessary, RDA will edit it to suit a particular use.

If you have a RDA story you would like to share with us, please email it to [fundraising@rda.org.au](mailto:fundraising@rda.org.au).