



NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT

FEBRUARY 2014

A Publication from RDA Australia Ltd

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EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the States that have hosted me over the first few months of the year. I very much enjoyed my trip to Tasmania in January where I presented at the State Conference on RDA policies and procedures, governance of centres (following the Constitution, responsibilities to your members, and legal responsibilities of committee members) and risk management. It is a tough session to deliver but everyone participated well and really got into the quizzes and group work. The best session was "learning to read your Constitution" where the reward for the right answers was a Chupa-chup lollypop!

I stayed on in Tasmania for the next 2 days of the workshop, watching sessions on dressage, polework and jumping delivered by Sally Francis and Mary Longden and met many more coaches and RDA riders from Tasmania. I also met and worked with Tasmania's newest horse Goblin. We have been hearing about Goblin's training each issue of Spotlight and it was delightful to meet the big fellow in person.

Then it was off to Perth for an Assessor Workshop in February. Sharon and I enjoyed the fruits of the Swan Valley region on our first day, relaxing with WA Coaching Coordinator, Sarah Lamb at a local winery for lunch. Feedback from the workshop was fantastic and the highlight was the role plays. Not everyone enjoys role plays but comedian Sally Francis brought something extra in her role as a misbehaving horse and an over-enthusiastic volunteer.

Next week I am jetting over to Brisbane for the RDA Queensland AGM where I am hoping to catch up with more RDA members.

In between these trips I have been working on the RDA Strategic Plan for 2015-2018 and putting the final edit on the RDA Volunteer Information booklet which will go to print this month.

We have certainly experienced some extreme weather here in South Australia with a run of 40 degree days predicted over the next 20 days. This has caused interruption in riding lessons and bushfires near at least one RDA Centre. Our thoughts are with all our RDA centres that are facing fires and difficult weather conditions. This issue of Spotlight will aim to update our members on affected centres across the country.

*Karen Aspery
National Executive Officer*

VALE: KEN PETERS

RDA Australia was very sad to hear of the recent passing of former RDAA Board Member, Ken Peters.

Ken joined the Executive of RDAA in 1998 where he served many years, including filling the role of Treasurer as well as Vice President of Promotion and Fundraising.

Ken was heavily involved in the Smiley Badge fundraising efforts and even ran the program for a number of years.

Recently, Ken donated his remaining stock of Smiley Badges to RDA SA which included some of the rarer badges, such as the Grey and Palamino badges.

We will remember Ken for his passion for RDA and spreading our message.

OAM HONOURS

Two members of the RDA family were awarded an OAM title at the recent Australia Day celebrations.

Norma Pearce is an RDAA Life Member and has served RDA on the National Board, as a long-time volunteer in Victoria and has even served on the FRDI Board.

Joann Formosa has coached and ridden with RDA and most recently competed in the 2012 London Paralympics winning Gold in the 1b Dressage class. Congratulations to Norma and Joann – RDA is very proud of you both!

VOLUNTEERS AND INSURANCE

WHAT YOUR CENTRE NEEDS TO KNOW

We have had a few enquiries over the last month about School workers who volunteer with their school group in the RDA lesson.

If you have any people in this position, it is very important that they check if they are covered by Work Cover for any injury they may sustain during their activities at the Centre. If they are not, they must be registered as an RDA Volunteer and given the normal training that every volunteer undertakes as part of their induction.

It is imperative that part of this induction includes signing in and out when they are entering and exiting the centre as well as filling out an Accident and Injury report form in the event of something happening.

Failure to do any of the above creates grey areas for Insurance companies and could lead to school workers not being covered for accidents.

For more about RDA Australia's Insurance, see our [Fact Sheet](#) or contact RDA National Office on (08) 8354 4555.

COACHING REPORT

Welcome back! I hope that everyone had a restful break over Christmas and New Year and are ready for another year with RDA!

The online Coach Registration System was activated in January for the first time and renewal letters sent to all coaches. Many coaches are taking the online option and renewing their coaching accreditation and paying online through the RDAA website. Already we have processed 28 online transactions. Next year we aim to reduce the amount of paper forms and letters sent out by emailing coaches their renewal notices, however paper forms will still be mailed out upon request.

Most States have been suffering record high temperatures and I have been receiving reports of RDA volunteers who have been directly affected by bushfires. Please stay safe over the remainder of the bushfire season by heeding the recommendations of your State fire brigades and have a bushfire emergency plan in place.

RDA Australia will launch the newly revamped Volunteer Information Booklet and elective modules in the next couple of months. They are in the final stages of editing then going to the printers. Each State Office will receive

copies of the booklet for distribution to their centres. The elective modules will be available for purchase through the RDAA office. They are:

- Basic Horse Mastership, Saddlery and Tack and Floating
- Mounting and Dismounting

These are extra training for volunteers that will enable them develop their skills in the RDA setting.

*Sharon Nichols
National Coaching Coordinator*

NATIONAL ASSESSORS WORKSHOP

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

10 participants attended the second National Assessors Workshop in Western Australia, consisting of 2 interstate participants and 8 from WA. 3 were experienced Assessors and 7 were trainee Assessors. Day 1 of the course focussed on trainees working through the Assessor Workbook theory components. Information relating to the 5 theory units was delivered and trainees were assessed and signed off for one practical activity (role play).

The Workshop Program included:

- Role of the National RDA Assessor
- Understanding the RDA Coach Education System
- How to train as an RDA Assessor
- Principles of Competency Based Assessment
- Preparing candidates for the assessment
- Creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment for candidates
- Giving and receiving feedback
- Achieving consistency in Assessment (with exercises moderating candidate assessments)
- Methods of assessment
- Role play activity (simulating an assessment)
- Discussion on ethical assessments and overcoming difficult situations

Sarah Lamb also gave a session on the role and management of assessors in RDA WA, plans for the future and assistance available from the State Office to help trainees complete their practical assessments.

Based on participant verbal feedback the course was declared successful with everyone taking some new knowledge away with them.

VALE: JENNY BAILLIE

Many of our long-standing members of RDA will be saddened to hear of the death in the UK of Mrs Jenny Baillie on January 29. Together with Mrs Yvonne Nelson, Jenny was a co-founder of the Fortune Centre of Riding Therapy and recent Chairman of Trustees. The Fortune Centre was established as a residential centre for further education for young people with a learning disability or emotional disturbance, using horses as a motivation factor for learning. The original students lived in part of the Baillie home, Wootton Hall and meals were taken in the Baillie family dining room. The education centre started on land at Avon Tyrrell in the New Forest with the first staff members living in caravans on site.

From these simple beginnings the Fortune Centre of Riding Therapy is now recognised internationally. Students now undertake a Further Education Through Horsemastership course which is nationally recognised. Students continue to live at the Wootton site in accommodation converted from the former barn and related buildings. It is a fitting tribute to Mrs Baillie and Mrs Nelson that belief in an idea that horses could help people, and the will to make it happen, has seen the Centre develop into the institution it is today.

Mrs Baillie and Mrs Nelson were the speakers at one of our early RDA National Conferences in Tasmania and their enthusiasm encouraged many of our members to visit the Centre and some to take up employment there.

Jenny Baillie was an active and enthusiastic participant in the many causes in which she was interested. These interests were both national and international. Jenny was Secretary General of the first Executive Board of the newly formed Federation of Riding for the Disabled International (FRDI – now HETI). Her warm personality and ability to communicate her enthusiasm to others will long be remembered.

It was with sadness that we learned of her diagnosis of an inoperable brain tumour. She remained at home at Wootton where she was cared for by her family and passed away peacefully on January 29.

We extend our sympathy to her husband, Major the Hon. Peter Baillie and their daughters and grandchildren as they grieve the passing of a much loved wife, mother and grandmother. We pay tribute to her energy, enthusiasm and leadership. The warmth

of her personality will long be remembered by many members of RDA Australia.

*Norma Pearce
RDAA Life Member*

WILD WEATHER ACROSS AUSTRALIA

Just about every State and Territory in Australia has had some extreme weather to start the year off. From cyclones and floods in Queensland to major bushfires in South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia. Tasmania has also had its share with severe winds blowing across the island last week. Thankfully, no RDA horses have been injured.

Queensland

The RDA North Queensland are flooded out and unable to ride at the moment. RDA Mackay and RDA Rockhampton are muddy but not too badly affected. RDA Townsville is also muddy but as they do not operate during summer months, this has not disrupted services. Fortunately, all of the southern centres are okay.

South Australia

South Australia has been sweltering through long stints of extreme heat with temperatures reaching over 40 degrees on a regular basis. Unfortunately this has led to bushfires throughout the State with fires coming very close to RDA Jennibrook Farm, though fortunately not doing any damage to the centre.

Tasmania

Tasmania have suffered through some bad storms, with high winds. Fortunately, no centres have been damaged and no horses hurt but there is a lot of mess from branches and rubbish being blown around.

Victoria

A number of RDA Centres in Victoria have been affected by the recent bush fires. Earlier in the year some volunteers lost their properties near RDA Warracknabeal and RDA Horsham horses had to be evacuated from their agistment properties. In the current bushfires, more volunteers have lost properties near RDA Oaklands.

Western Australia

The only centre in Western Australia that was close to being damaged was the RDA Hills centre which was evacuated during the Hill's fire at the beginning of the year. The fire was heading straight for the centre but thankfully with the wind change it moved away from them and they are all okay, although a lot of devastation happened around them.

STATE NEWS

RDA QLD:

Centres are slowly starting operations for 2014 with several centres choosing to wait until second term to start back, due to the weather.

Last Saturday, 8th February, RDAQ took part in the Queensland State Equestrian Centre Horse Home Show. This event showcased over 200 exhibitors working in horse related industries, including vets, stockfeed suppliers, Biosecurity Queensland, RDAQ, PCAQ, EQ, and many other equestrian groups.

The show provided an excellent opportunity for us to promote RDA to the local community and horse industry people alike.

The highlight of the day was the Grand Finale which featured RDA and many other horse groups and activities. There was not a dry eye in the audience when RDA rider Hayleigh, with her team of RDA Samford helpers, rode confidently into the arena accompanied by very a haunting vocal rendition of "You Raise me Up".

From RDA Mackay

RDA Mackay is in need of a relief coach. The Centre, who usually have lessons once a month, currently don't have a weekend coach and are desperately seeking a coach to run a weekend once a month for approximately 30 riders. RDA Mackay will pay all travel expenses plus \$5 from every rider with a disability for the coach.

RDA Mackay will be starting lessons again on February 18th.

If you are able to help out, please contact Lisa on 0422 515 078, or Mary on 0428 553 047. During business hours, you can also call (07) 4944 1055.

RDA TAS:

RDA Tasmania held a state workshop on January 23-25 with presenters' Mary Longden (Riding), Sally Francis (Jumping) and Karen Aspery (Administration including Roles of RDAA).

The weather was kind throughout, the workshop was well attended and all enjoyed the informative presentations.

From RDA Kingborough

Goblin Returns

It was with great excitement that volunteers and horses welcomed Goblin back to RDA Kingborough after his extended visit with Sally Francis who has worked at

length with him to further his education in readiness to join our riding program for 2014.

Below: Goblin, ridden by Lisa Dolliver, being put through his paces during pole work, coached by Sally Francis



It was lovely to have Sally visit our centre prior to the State Workshop. It was important for Coaches and volunteers to have Sally share what she has been doing and how best to continue with Goblin's education to keep him tuned up. A special thank you to Sally who has done a wonderful job dedicating her knowledge and experience towards Goblin's training.

Goblin's first call of duty was to attend the State Workshop on the 24th and 25th of January. He coped extremely well and it gave some of the Kingborough rider's their first chance to see and ride our 'new' boy.

Tuesday, 11th February was his first day working in lessons. After some fun games with a make believe 'parking lot', a 'car wash' and a 'garage', he has already gained the nickname of "Hummer". Fun aside, he behaved beautifully and both riders were very comfortable riding him.

He has a lovely nature, but that alone does not make for a good RDA mount. It is obvious with a youngster that there is a lot that still needs to be done. Coaches and volunteers have their work cut out for them, but with what we have seen so far, it will all be worth it.

RDA WA:

RDA WA are holding a State Carriage Driving Workshop on April 11-13 at Fairbridge in WA and have extended an invitation to all Carriage Driving Coaches, Trainees and anyone else who is interested in becoming involved.

Funding has been provided for the cost of attending the workshop, so participants will only need to pay for their airfare.

Please contact Joan Cureton if you are interested in attending joancureton@live.com

Diary Dates

Feb 19	RDAA Board Meeting
Feb 23	RDA QLD AGM
Mar 10	RDAA Office Closed – Adelaide Cup Public Holiday
Mar 19	RDAA Board Meeting
Mar 21-23	RDA V Family Fun Camp
Mar 22	RDA SA Centres Forum
Apr 11-13	RDA WA Carriage Driving Workshop
Apr 12-13	RDA SA State Coaches Workshop
Apr 16	RDAA Board Meeting
Apr 18-21	RDAA Office Closed – Easter Long Weekend
Apr 25	RDAA Office Closed – ANZAC Day Public Holiday
May 3-4	National Program Delivery Meetings, VIC
May 16-18	RDAA General Meeting, SA
May 18	RDA SA Mounted Games Competition
May 21	RDAA Board Meeting
May 23	RDA SA AGM
May 31	National Volunteer Awards Nominations Open
May 31	RDA WA Metro Games
June 9	RDAA Office Closed – Queen’s Birthday Public Holiday
June 18	RDAA Board Meeting
June 21-22	RDA Q State Championships
June 28	RDA WA Dressage/Four Phase Challenge

SAVE THE DATE!

19-22 September
Marcus Oldham College
Geelong, Victoria

There’s only 6 months until the National Coaching Workshop!

Start your planning now, apply for grants to get your coaches over to Geelong for this important training event.

Registration forms and programs will be coming out in June 2014.

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER AWARDS

Don’t forget these important dates for the Volunteer Awards Nominations

May 31: Nominations open
July 31: Nominations due to your State Office
October 31: Volunteer Awards Dinner, SA

Start thinking about any volunteers that you think deserve to be nominated for a National Award.

Nomination forms will be posted on our website on May 31!

Please email admin@rda.org.au if you no longer wish to receive RDAA's bimonthly newsletter,

Spotlight.

Next issue: 18 April 2014

Mission Statement

RDA enables people with disabilities throughout Australia to experience enjoyment, challenge and a sense of achievement through participation in equestrian activities to improve their quality of life, attain personal goals and develop life skills.

RDA SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS



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