



## NEWSLETTER June 2010

### Chairman Report

I do hope you have all enjoyed the variety of events we have put on for you so far this season. Since our last newsletter we have enjoyed some marvellous drives out, training days with and without horses and our step into the public eye, with our Indoor/Outdoor trials at the 3 Counties Show at Malvern.

The club came up trumps at Malvern, with a well run fun competition, that accommodated a great variety of skills and types of horses and carriages, to titillate and hopefully keep driving in the public conscience, and encourage others to have a go. A large thank you to all the team for putting on such a splendid day. It's amazing how much effort it takes to put on an event that looks effortlessly and efficiently run!

Whilst zooming down the M40 to the driving trials at Brighton late on the Wednesday – that pesky work thing made it necessary to leave somewhat later than intended. I got as far as Oxford with the day light beginning to fade, and hot flush of all hot flushes, I realised I had left the shafts to my best carriage safely tucked up at home. Huge amounts of panic – would next day parcel thing actually work, hire a helicopter etc. Blinding flash – Tony Bache had told me he was at Brighton from the Friday – phew, and a few phone calls later, problem solved. So needless to say, the catch word at James's Place is "don't forget the shafts". There is so much to remember to take when you go away to the trials – I fear my head might be getting over full! THANKS Tony.

The moral of my story is that there are nice people about and luckily a lot of them drive horses.

Carol Pawson

**Newsletter:- Please send details to [elspethmorgan@btinternet.com](mailto:elspethmorgan@btinternet.com) or Elspeth Morgan 2 Laburnum Close Wollaston Stourbridge DY8 4NQ. Next Issue Sept 2010**

### Stop Press

Mini Driving trials on the 17<sup>th</sup> July will now take place by kind permission of David and Lynn Smith at Rushock, new schedule can be obtained from the website or contact Hannah Walker on 07811 986827

## **Wolverley training day**

An excellent day was held on the 7<sup>th</sup> March courtesy of Carol and David Pawson, whose kind hospitality was much appreciated.

The Chair had ensured that the day was carefully planned to cover a wide range of subjects which not only responded to questions raised in advance of the meeting but also formed the basis of a lively and interactive forum covering the essential points in an informal and constructive way.

Tony G began the day with an in-depth explanation of the harnessing process, followed by a practical demonstration on how to ensure the harness is correctly fitted, with Carol P's wonderful horse, Mia, acting as model. Then, it was down to the arena where David P, ably showed how the back stepper should balance the carriage and gave sensible advice on how to mitigate the risks involved.

Back to the drawing room where Dawn skilfully guided us through a Pre-Novice BHDTA Dressage Test letter by letter, with constructive input from the dressage judge amongst us.

After lunch Carol G, gave us an enthusiastic resume of the duties involved in stewarding with technical issues being clarified by Tony B's masterful knowledge of the rule book. There was also reassuring advice and guidance on such practical issues as dress code and equipment.

Then outside again for David S's specially constructed obstacle which encouraged us to think about different approaches when negotiating obstacles and gave useful tips on what and how to remember, never forgetting the importance of always having a Plan B.

This was followed by Tony B on the cones which helped consolidate all the previous elements by showing the interaction of skills across the disciplines such as building on circles and serpentines to produce a continuity of flow and evenness of pace.

All in all, a worthwhile and enjoyable day that not only helped give confidence to those setting out but also provided an opportunity for everyone to share their experiences. So a big thank you to all concerned for setting the scene for 2010 in such a genuinely enthusiastic and participative way.

Sue Anderson

## **A sad farewell to one of the best**

Linda Wiggin has lost her Tandem Wheeler "Only Oliver" to Equine Metabolic Syndrome. Oliver was always a cheerful chappie but had struggled against E.M.S. since he was 5 years old. Along with Joseph as a pair and Tandem they had competed successfully with the Midland Driving Trials, The Wolverley and on the Indoor scene. They qualified for Keysoe in 2003 and came a credible 6<sup>th</sup>. Oli was also very successful in private driving and always looked very elegant in his black and gold spindle back gig and black patent harness. Linda always referred to Oli as her anchorman. When things got difficult he would always remain calm until the problem was resolved. In his formative years he also took part in many ridden events, been successful at show jumping, dressage, and mini ODE's. Like Joseph Oli was a Houdini and could escape from any stable or field if so desired. The object was not to run off but just to prove he could do it.

He will be sadly missed

Elsbeth

## Blossom Rally

Members of the WDDC met up on 01/05/10 for a Blossom drive in the Itchingford area. Sabrina DeLisle kindly let us all park at her yard, which also made a great venue for the picnic lunch gathering, after the drive. Always a nice way to end a drive, especially as the weather gods looked on us all favourably that day.

David Smith had worked hard to sort a drive incorporating both lanes and tracks around the 'Bulmer Cider' orchards. There were testing hills but not nearly as 'vicious' as the ones we live, architecturally interesting buildings, and flora and fauna in abundance, so all in all a very pleasant drive. David P and I faithfully followed the instructions to a pub recommend on the last third of the drive – just in case dehydration should set in, and spent a pleasant 15 minutes eating crisps and sampling the local beer. We then followed the route faithfully again and found ourselves back at Sabrinas' yard, only to be bombarded with 'we missed you at the pub, were you lost'. We had quite cleverly found the wrong pub --- you can do amazing things when you forget to take your glasses to read the map. Many thanks David – yet another great day out with WDDC friends.

Carol Pawson

## Presidents drive

We had perfect weather for The Presidents Drive arranged by Dave S and myself. We were made very welcome by Mr Jim Braithwaite and his daughter Dawn at their farm, the Poolhouse ,Romsley,Bridgnorth.

The scenery throughout was superb, the terrain fairly easy going with three off road sections and four on quiet lanes. There were five junctions where routes could be shortened each increasing from about five miles to twelve. About 2/3rds. of the way round we stopped at The Cider House near Wootton for a drink where we were pleased to be joined by Vicki and Simon.

We returned to the parking paddock to enjoy a social picnic amongst the other participants sitting in a large circle with a backdrop overlooking the Severn valley with the Wyre Forest and Clee Hills in full view. Here we were joined by Malcolm and Dorothy, Malcolm has been very poorly for over a year, it was good to see them. Following the vote of thanks, Jim invited us to return to his place on a future occasion.

Madge Edwards.

**FOR SALE**

No items for sale in this issue, but don't forget to send any items to be included in the next issue

## Practice Day at Ivan's June 6<sup>th</sup>

The day started cloudy and dull, with rain forecast. What's new!! So we set off with the usual wet weather gear and thankful of our side-stable for Neddy's comfort. But on arrival, the sun was shining and the side-stable invaluable as a sunshade (for Rocky and for us!).

So began another very enjoyable day at Ivan and Carol Meredith's farm. Twelve turnouts appeared to take advantage of the wonderful facilities and organisation, supplemented this year by a five mile marathon drive that left most of us very envious – two and a half miles of it being mown grassland tracks maintained immaculately by the local racing yard. They must have been watching Ivan's efforts – his fields were similarly mown and absolutely perfect.

The five varied obstacles, of a standard to challenge National competitors, and yet giving the opportunity for newcomers to be introduced to the 'game' with friendly help and advice available and not the pressures of time and a strange environment, were great. And the cones course produced less than half double clears, an indication that the design was about right.

True to form, the final few competitors had to drive in pouring rain and on the edge of a thunderstorm, and the many stewards and 'helpers' all got well soaked clearing up. Many thanks for their efforts – all day, I mean, not just getting wet!

Then we all went to the house for the customary tea and cakes, a wonderful selection from golden fruit to gooey chocolate. Rosettes were nearly forgotten in the general camaraderie until we realised that Vicki and Linda, the scorers, were still out there in the rain (in the car) doing their essential job. When they appeared, tea and cake was promptly offered and proceedings brought to a close by the presentation of awards. After muddy boots and wet coats were reclaimed, we left our generous hosts to clear up the mess and returned home after a very successful day.

Many thanks to everyone.

Carol Gregory



## WHATS ON 2010

Saturday 17 <sup>th</sup> July	Mini Event Rushock
Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> August	Faintree Drive
Sat14th & Sun15th	Weekend Event at Lynne & David Smith's Rushock WR9 0NP