



RDA Newsletter

Riding for the Disabled Association (NSW) Raymond Terrace & Lower Hunter Connections

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From the President

Brrr... even though its mid-winter with temperatures hovering around 4 or 5 degrees in the morning, it's wonderful to see our riders and volunteers still enjoying our riding programs with our special horses. It's a big commitment to get up and get going in the winter mornings but the rewards are there. Well done everyone - and the good news is the days will soon be getting longer and mornings lighter. With the cooler weather, our horses all look forward to a bit of hard feed and fresh hay that has recently been purchased (thanks Phil) and look so warm and snug in their rugs.

Behind the scenes, the new Management Committee has been focussed on necessary business things such as updating banking details, budgets, upgrading the Office computers, updating policies & procedures and tweaking a few issues with the new Website.

We have had several wonderful and generous donations over the past few months which are gratefully received. Our Centre relies on income largely from riders' fees and arena hire. So, the addition of donations is of great assistance in meeting the running costs of the Centre.

Special thanks to

- Cardiff Mens Bowlers Fishing Club
- Christadelphian Church
- St Philips College - Nelson Bay
- Officeworks (Marketown) - \$200 office supplies (laminator & supplies)

We would also like to thank our individual donors for their generosity as every dollar is important to our Centre.

And finally - great thanks to everyone who volunteered at the Bunnings BBQ on Sunday 20th. It's always a busy and dynamic day chatting to the sausage sizzle crowds and a good chance to meet and catch up with volunteers over the onions from across our RDA programs who we don't usually mingle with.

Alison
President
Management Committee



PROGRAM NEWS

Stroud Carriage Driving - We're Back!

After a couple of training days to get our heads round the COVID safety protocols we had our first driving day on May 4th. How lovely it was to see our drivers again and judging by the smiles on their faces they were happy to be back too.

It was a specially exciting day as our newly accredited Assistant Whip Faye Barnes and pony Ruby (owned by Whip Helen Huckerby) were making their debut, together with our new Co-ordinator Diane Dufty.



We also welcomed another new member to our team, Helen Murrell, an accredited Whip, who joins us from Manning Great Lakes Centre.

We have a series of graded activities planned, designed to improve driving skills, and hope to bring them all together in an end-of-year Gymkhana.

Photos:

Above: Helen and Ellie

Left: Faye and Skip

Outside Capers

Our riders learn all sorts of skills and have all sorts of fun at RDA, after all, we are in the business of smiles.

Some of our riders in the photo to the right: Jaymii is on Waffles and Santana is on Albus with our volunteers Anne, Jenny and Rads who are finding the breeze to make their flowers spin.

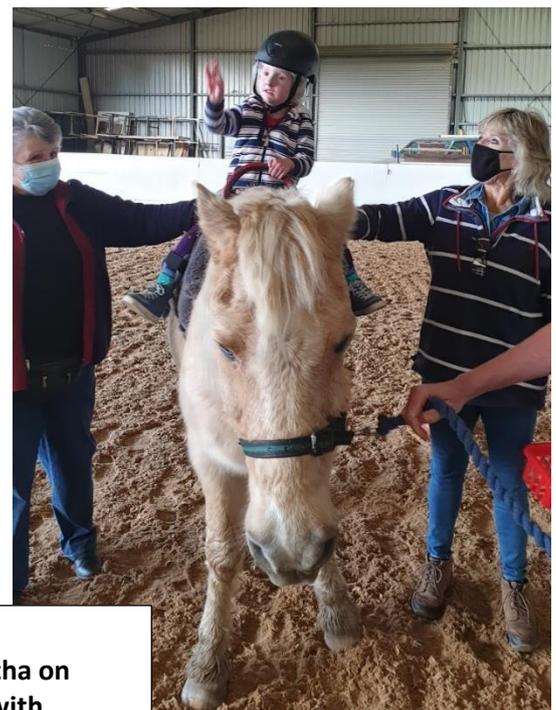
Multi-tasking at its best!



Tuesday Snaps



Above: Arena fun with Tuesday Riding Group.
 Right: Getting ready for riding
 Top Left: Lachlan with Supa and Volunteer Allen
 Top Middle: Jaymii on Waffles
 Top Right: Shannon on Supa



Left:
 Connor on Waffles
 SLAM DUNK!

Right:
 Samantha on
 Chase with
 Jenny and Terri

VOLUNTEER NEWS

RDA (NSW) Young Workshop for Coaches, Assistant Coach and Carriage Driving

Saturday 27th and 28th March 2021

I was so excited when I saw the workshop was going to include Carriage Driving – it felt a long time since there had been any face-to-face training for us. Rosemary Laing (my Supervising Whip) and I immediately enrolled and offered the services of our RDA pony Tinker. Yes, they could use her in the long reining so off we set. The first morning included a big session on Risk Management and the practical difficulties of bringing horses into the centre via a public road. A challenge that Raymond Terrace luckily does not have. Later in the morning, we got a chance to identify our other carriage driving folks and chat to them. In the afternoon, the trainees were separated into two groups for practical work with ours being Long-Reining. One lady used a Young Centre harness pony, as Young Centre had brought their own pony.



Faye Long Reining Tinker

Reigh, the Young Carriage Driving whip oversaw the exercise and it was fascinating to see the differences in the harness set-up despite us all doing the same training exercise. Rein management was another thing we all did differently: should they be put into the terrets or tucked under the back band? These questions arise when dealing with one set of reins - managing two sets of reins is even more challenging!



Reigh, demonstrating a method of storing reins during harnessing up.

Sunday was blessed with more superb weather and by this time, our tea breaks were animated with much laughter as we all got to know each other.

Photo Right: Rosemary and Molly on their stretching barrel.



Tea break was followed by a most useful session on “Cones” layout. Reigh had a couple to share which were simple to set up and yet very adaptable for differing driving ability. We learnt that RDA Young give all of their riders a drive in the carriage before their actual riding lesson. This prompted discussion on the merits of doing this and quality time versus quantity of riders/drivers in the program. As you might expect, each Centre had their own philosophy on this and there was no right or wrong.



Photo Above: Reigh and Carriage Driving Group

We would like to extend a huge thanks to the ladies who provided us wonderful food during the workshop, and to the Young Trotting Club who kindly stabled Tinker during our stay but most importantly to Wendy, an RDA Young volunteer, who provided us overnight accommodation after the workshop when we were having a few mechanical challenges.

Faye and Rosemary

AUGUST For HORSES

'August For Horses' is a fundraising opportunity, where you can hold an event in the month of August to raise money in support of the cost and care of our wonderful horses as the horse's official birthday falls on the 1st of August

 **Riding For the Disabled
Raymond Terrace
& Lower Hunter**

You are only limited by your own imagination.
Virtual tea party, BBQ birthday bash, morning tea at work, trivia night - the opportunities are endless.

REGISTER YOUR EVENT TODAY
For more information visit rdaraymondterrace.org.au

Two of our volunteers Allen and Lesley with Connor on Waffles



[#waveforvolunteers](#) [#NVW2021](#)

National Volunteer Week
17th to 23rd May 2021

We would like to recognise all our volunteers who do an amazing job around our Centre.

Our Volunteers include our Management Committee, Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Carriage Driving Whips, Program Volunteers, Fundraising Volunteers and Maintenance Volunteers.



Thank you to Friday Riders and Families doing the “Wave for Volunteers” for our social media page and to recognise our volunteer’s great contributions.

Thank you to all our volunteers at RDA for your time and support!

Wish List Items

- 3 x Monkey Grips
- 2 Stock Saddles for wide horses
- 4 x 20L Kentucky Black Fence Paint
- Brush Cutter
- Tractor with Backhoe and Bucket

Volunteer Corporate Day to paint Outdoor Arena
Volunteer Grants Officer
Electrician and Plumber

If you can assist with any of these items, please contact our Centre via phone or email,
raymondterrace@rdansw.org.au
02 4987 1402



Equine Facilitated Mental Health Program –

available to be taken by qualified coaches of RDA NSW only. A means of assisting people with Mental Health issues by using the horse as a tool for reflecting the emotions and feelings and reactions of the participants in a safe environment. The program can be run as a group session or a one-on-one session whereby you have a participant, a Mental Health Professional to support the participant, a coach to facilitate the session and a horse and horse handler to be there for the horse and move it out of danger if the participant becomes aggressive or has a meltdown, in whatever form that takes.



Whilst we were there the initial thing we did as a group was to announce who we were, what we were agreeing to and what that should achieve – e.g. “My name is XXXXX and I agree to be responsible for myself, THUS, ensuring the safety of the group”. Once everyone had said that we spent a few minutes to reflect on our feelings and come into the moment, zoning in and out to our surroundings ready for the session ahead. The horses were loose in the arena at that time. The horses had an opportunity to adopt a person from the group. If that didn’t happen straight away, then the participants move around the group of horses watching to see if any horses show an interest in them. I was thrilled to be chosen by a little black pony called Merlin, who apparently is normally very naughty and likes to nip people. He just wanted me to hand groom him and give him kisses. When the horse handler tried to intervene, he pushed her away as much as to say I don’t want you, only my chosen person to touch me.



Another session we did some role play and instead of the coach telling everyone what to do they ask the participant if they want to do things like e.g., would you like to say hello to your horse. We watched the reactions of the horse and participant and asked questions that dig deeper and deeper to get them to analyse their feelings and assess what/how to do things differently to achieve better outcomes for them and their family and friends. Also was valuable to learn how to approach the horse differently to get a better outcome.

The horses used in the sessions are not ridden so it is ideal for horses retired from riding who are gentle, placid, and not showing signs of aggression/sickness or sour behaviours.

I would like to take this course further and have already completed part of my EFML handbook ready for the next 10 hour session. The sessions are very personal for the participants and are held behind closed doors so coaches who take part would partner up with their local Mental Health Professionals (MHPs) and see about clients who they feel would benefit from the sessions. Training is given to MHP, coach and horse handler as we have to be conscious of avoiding triggers to individuals own feelings, upbringings etc. RDA is intending to run part of the course nearer to our centre so sharing the travel around the group. It is suitable from people with PTSD, anxiety, depression, personality disorders to name but a few.



There is also a similar course EFL – Equine Facilitated Learning without the MHP element but instead a counsellor/parent/carer supporting the participant with a view to helping participants to grow personally and develop life skills through interaction with the horse. This would help build self-esteem, help with anger management, team building etc.

With the blessing of our centre, it is anticipated that we may be able to offer these services in about 12 months' time following completion of the prescribed training courses.



Meet two of our Tuesday Coaches – Carol and Hayley

Carol has been with our Centre for 25 years and has been involved as a Coach, on our Management Committee and as our Program Co-ordinator. It would be safe to say she has seen a LOT of changes within our Centre and the Charity world.

Hayley was trained as a Coach while volunteering with Carol and over the last couple of years has taken on the task of organising the Mounted Games for our riders.

Thank you, ladies, for the amazing job you do at the Centre.

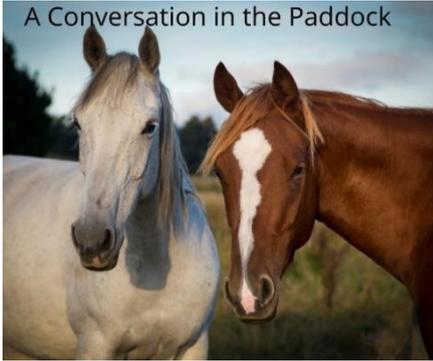
SMILES – IT'S OUR MAIN BUSINESS!

IF YOU KNOW OF A BUSINESS THAT WOULD BE HAPPY TO TAKE A DONATION BOX OR ARE A BUSINESS THAT WOULD BE HAPPY TO TAKE A DONATION BOX PLEASE CONTACT US TO ARRANGE DELIVERY



HORSE CHATTER

A Conversation in the Paddock



A Conversation in the Paddock “HAY-a-lujah”

It was a decent morning in May when the horses were standing around having a chin wag about the happenings of the school term and what they would do for their upcoming holidays.

Early morning chats were a popular time for the horses at the RDA Centre Raymond Terrace, it gave them a chance to prepare for the day and check the roster as to who was teaching what riders and volunteers in the day’s program, it was important work this teaching riders and volunteers, after all volunteers had to be good at putting riders at ease and making sure they had the appropriate amount of smiles and laughter for the day to ensure they wanted to come back to visit us again in order for the riders to learn what they were capable of doing on horse back.

We loved living at the Centre with our Caretaker and his family, after all he does give us special treats at Christmas time and for this we sometimes humour him by letting him dress up in his Santa Hat, his wife who is always kind and assists us in the looking after our health and their dog Ellie who likes to have a chat at all sorts of times of the day about the rabbits and how they play but oh when the riders and volunteers come it’s like having a big extended family!



After sorting out the day’s work and ensuring the new trainees, presently “Belle”, were getting their work done with steadfast consciousness one of the horses stated they were a bit concerned about that diminishing haystack near the stables.

Even though the grass had been plentiful, they all agreed it was time for a **hay delivery** again. “What was that fella’s name again?” asked Supa. “**Richard Barnett**” stated Tiger. “That’s right!” exclaimed Supa. “Did you know he’s been **supplying us hay for nearly 6 years**” added Waffles. “WOW!” exclaimed Supa.

Waffles continued to impart his wonderful knowledge “yes he has been **truly kind to our Centre**, he only **charges us \$16 a bale and some places are paying up to \$30 a bale, only putting his price up by a couple of dollars in that time**. This is such a **massive saving** for our owners as **we eat around 120 bales every 2 months** which adds up to **\$1920 every two months**”.

Just at that moment, as the horses were digesting this information, the horses were astounded to see the hay truck appear in the driveway as if their very conversation had made it magically appear (bit like horns on unicorns they thought) and they started racing each other for joy. As their trusty Caretaker, Phil, appeared to meet the truck and unload the hay Supa exclaimed “oh this is so exciting – nearly as exciting as playing tic tac toe in the Sensory Garden! Thank Goodness for businesses like Richard Barnett that grow their wonderful hay and support our Centre”.



COMMUNITY NEWS



Did you know you can buy a Share in one of our RDA Horses for as little as \$50 a year! Check out Share-A-Horse on our website: <https://rdaraymondterrace.org.au/share-a-horse/>



Instagram



Follow us on Instagram and Facebook?

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/rdartlh/>

Instagram: @rda_raymondterrace

Parent/Carer Representative

At RDA Raymond Terrace and Lower Hunter, we have a Parent Representative who is there to support our **parents**. Our Parent Representative is Jane, who is there if parents need information or just a chat. Being a parent of a rider, she understands that some days are hard to wrap your head around the happenings of the Centre and life in general. If Jane does not have the answer to your questions, she will endeavour to find it for you and in confidence.

Jane's contact details: 0418 208 190 or janemusgrave@bigpond.com



Thank you to Ken from Medowie Christian School Equestrian Team for the donation of 8 pairs of child size riding boots and a bag of jodhpur pants.



Special Thanks:

St Phillips College Nelson Bay
Fundraising by Students and
Teachers
\$483.60

Marketown Officeworks
Donation of A3 Laminator,
3 packets of A3 Pouches
2 packets of A4 pouches

Cardiff Mens Bowlers Fishing Club
Donation \$700



Big shout out to all our volunteers, families and Management Committee who were able to assist at the Bunnings BBQ in June raising vital funds for our organisation.

News and Updates

State Annual General Meeting

This year we were unable to have a hands-on workshop with horses, to the disappointment of all. However Central Coast managed to produce a very interesting workshop, focused on updating the coaches on mentoring in the workplace, developing lesson plans and methods to teach new skills to our riders. In the afternoon session we were treated to a talk on biomechanics of the horse by a very experienced horse person Michelle Wein, with interesting facts that none of us will forget, such as the average head weighs 5 kgs.

The State AGM with voting took place after the workshop with Jan Pike and Margaret Norman farewelled from the RDA (NSW) State Board. Two new board members joined the team to give a full complement of board members.,

The RDA Volunteer of the Year was awarded to Jenny Cameron our much-loved Regional Representative and member of Central Coast Centre. Jenny has been a coach at Central Coast for many years as well as an Assessor.

One of the most valuable parts of the weekend is that as a group from Raymond Terrace Centre, we have the opportunity to learn, discuss and most of all enjoy each other's company. This gives us a renewed enthusiasm to bring back to the Centre and our riders.



Back Row: Faye (Asst. Whip), Alex, Hayley (Asst. Coach and Coach), Jenny (Volunteer Co-ordinator), Judy and Susan (Coach and Asst. Coach)
 Front Row: Jenny (Regional Rep and Award Winner and Janet (Coach)