

**Newsletter July 2014**[View this email in your browser](#)**Notes from Andrew**

Hi all,

We have had another busy month despite the wintery weather.

Our first dressage day was a "high" for everyone and the bad weather did not deter these dedicated horsewomen. Congratulations to the participants for braving the rain, hail, thunder and sunshine. A rainbow did come out in the afternoon. It was amazing to see how well your horses behaved in Adam Wootton's indoor. Some riders could not even hear the caller due to the hail stones on the tin roof. Lucky we had the facility as otherwise it would have been a wash out. (We need to build one for ourselves!)

Our thanks also go to Sherryn our judge on the dressage day for driving all the way from Torquay. Our participants really appreciated your quick feedback while both good and bad points were still fresh in our minds. It was a worthwhile exercise and we should do it again. By the way, this was the first event that actually returned a small profit for the club - thanks to the many volunteers and their contributions to the

day.

Lisa has sent emailed you the details for our August Rally on the Wed 6th and our two clinics on Sat 9th. There is also details on the FB page under Events. The morning in-hand horsemanship clinic is nearly full - just one spot left, but there are still places left in afternoon ridden clinic on Working Equitation with the obstacles.

If you are looking to order uniforms and getting items embroidered please see the update later in this newsletter.

Until next time

Andrew

**Welcome** to our newest members Deb, Margaret, Denise & Des

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## Upcoming Rallies

Wednesday 6th August - Rally at Melrose Farm

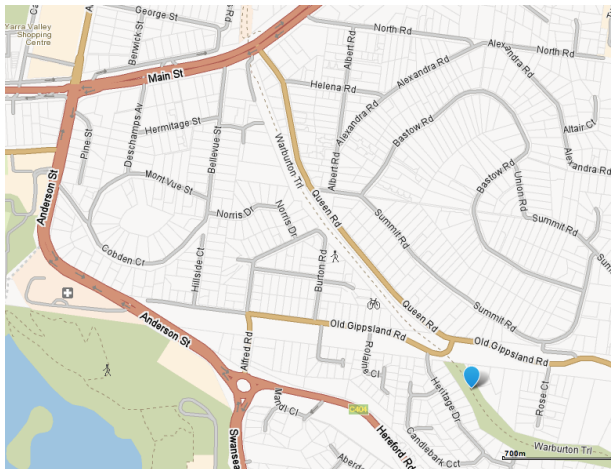
Saturday 9th August - Clinic at Adam Wottens - Morning Clinic - Horsemanship  
- in-hand demo from Susie at lunch  
- Afternoon - WEVY Introduction

Wed 10th September - Rally (note this a new date replacing the 3rd)

Saturday 13th September - Rally (note this is a new date replacing the 6th)

Thursday 11th September - Club Committee Meeting at 7pm at Wellers of Kangaroo Ground

Wednesday 17th September - 2 hour Trail Ride along Warburton Trail. Meet at Old Gippsland Road, Lilydale 10am  
(click on map to link to map site)



Be sure to book in at least 7 days in advance.

See you there!

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**Out & About**

Pics from the Dressage Day at Adam Wootens

Suzanne & Thunder



Kerry & Cordelia - About to do their first ever test!

More pics...

Caroline & Elle



Leanne





Karen &amp; Bouwe



Laura, Di &amp; Lisa - rode the Introductory Test



Anna &amp; Felix did the Intermediate Test



Fay &amp; Kerry!



Anna &amp; Felix



## What is Dressage?

### Part One

It's funny how we differentiate between "Dressage" and other disciplines like jumping or cross country or obstacles. And we do it here too because there is a





Julie



Lisa &amp; Ronnie

certain expectation associated with the names. But its good to remember that ALL riding requires and involves "Dressage" training. Dressage literally means the gymnastic training and development of the horse. That's one of the reasons why we call Working Equitation : Dressage with Obstacles. Its important to realise that you can't have one without the other. It's only through good dressage training, that we can achieve good jumping, good work around obstacles, good horsemanship or good work in the field. And the first thing that surprises people when they come to try the WE obstacles is that it's not as easy as it seems, and what's not working in the basic dressage training is usually reflected in the obstacle course. This helps people understand the reason for dressage.

Further it's a bit odd that people say their horse "doesn't like dressage" or "loves to jump" etc. There really can be no such thing as a "dressage horse" or a "jumping horse". The reality is more simply that the particular method of "dressage training" the horse has been given has not worked for that horse so far. It's not the horse's fault. Most of the time the problem is that the training is poor. The horse should not be blamed or labelled because of poor training. If people advertise their horse as not being suitable for dressage, they may as well say that the horse is untrainable. (and that's rarely the case). The problem I think lies more in our imagination, or lack of it. Sadly for the horse, modern dressage has a reputation of 'going round in mindless miles of tiring repetitive circles' which few horses would want to do. On the other hand, good classical dressage training is a different thing. Like working equitation... it's dressage with a purpose, and more importantly it must always be for the welfare and long term health of the horse - physically & mentally.

## Part Two

Dressage, as we discussed in a previous post, translates to "training" derived from the French word – to train. But, the more interesting question is... who are we training? The horse, of course. Or maybe not?

The horse, while still a yearling can already naturally and by itself do everything we set out to "train" it to do – to the highest level of Piaffe. So why does it take so many years of training to learn dressage movements under saddle?

Balance



Nice Try Vicki!



Kerry &amp; Cordelia

The big difference for the horse is the balance. You may easily run, but put a child on your back and try to run - how much harder is it? A lot. We need our child rider, to be a good "balanced" load to carry. And we most certainly wouldn't like them leaning back behind our centre of gravity, falling to one side or the other, or worse using our sensitive mouth to stop themselves from falling, or to force us to stop when we were already in the balance for running. Even humans need training to find ways to balance and to carry loads with greater strength and core stability so we don't damage our backs. This doesn't come automatically to us. We learn it. Usually after we've hurt our back. Perhaps this is one of the reasons Pilates is so popular.

#### Pony Pilates

It's the same for the horse. To find ways to rearrange and re-establish balance in all paces and all movements, while carrying a load, is no easy thing for a horse. Further, if the load cannot balance itself, it's much more difficult. Not only this, but to learn a language of cues based on physical pressure and weight aids, is a highly complex achievement for a horse. This is very different to the subtle body language he learnt from his mother and the herd. So rather than thinking about dressaging our horse - we may be better to think about doing "Pony Pilates".

#### Leadership

Add to this situation an inexperienced rider... a leader who is not sure what to do, or afraid to be a leader, who is unsure which cues to train for what responses, or who keeps changing the rules, getting distracted, or moving the goal posts, and you have a pretty good recipe for confusion, anxiety, tension and resistance. Even highly experienced trainers and riders can't stay focused 100% of the time, and can often question and change their own methods as they learn new and better ways.

Further, there are physical limitations of one-sided unbalanced uneven horses or riders, which adds more levels of difficulty for both.

#### It's all about us

For me it's clear, dressage is first the fundamental training of the rider; learning to ride, regardless of the discipline, with refined aids of balance and tact, but always with great respect, knowledge and empathy for the sensitive nature of each horse. Only when I am aware and sensitive to my subtle weight, seat, leg and rein aids can I expect to pass on this knowledge and balance to my horse.





L to R Susie, Julie, Anna, Sherryn, Karen, Lisa, Kerry, Suzanne, Laura, Vicki, Sarah, Gary



A little artistic photography from the President



A break in the weather!

### Who's training who?

So, naturally when we have a situation where the student is teaching the student... (as we do in thousands of cases of inexperienced riders on inexperienced horses) we have a potentially risky business that is fraught with mishap. And this is reflected in the statistics that reveal the sport of horse riding as 20 times more dangerous than motorbike riding.

### Sensing & Feeling

As I develop a deeper and more sensitive understanding of my horse's physical and emotional nature, I discover how dependent I am on their courage and generosity, and their outstanding ability to trust and to forgive. I want this, this feeling of empathy to guide me on the path to fine horsemanship.

by Susie Walker

### Working Equitation; harmony, balance & respect





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## Noticeboard

### For Sale



### Beautiful Clydesdale X

Boo is a beautiful looking buckskin Clydesdale x 15.3hh 8yo mare. She is an honest horse with a lovely temperament and will try her best to please you. She has good conformation, is easy to ride with correct walk, well balanced trot and a fantastic up-hill canter.

A genuine horse with no agenda, Boo is a submissive mare who is unspoilt and straightforward to ride. She has been schooled by an EFA level 2 dressage coach, and had some jumping training with a local Yarra Valley jumping instructor. She has had intermittent work over the last 12 months through no fault of hers, and time commitments force this sale.

She is a lovely horse, good ground manners, educated on the flat and over a fence. She would suit a knowledgeable rider who can get her out and about and bring her on through the grades. She would be ideal for a lady looking for a nice all-rounder.

\$6,000 neg

Yarra Valley area

Phone Sharon on 0417 707 791

### Horse Obsession

Equine Myofunctional Therapy or EMT can help your horse improve their performance and overcome physical issues that may be holding it back. Remedial, Sports & Rehabilitation Massage. Improve circulation, range of motion, muscle function and reduce risk of injury.

Phone Safy on 0424408725 or visit [Horseobsession.org](http://Horseobsession.org)

### Toyota Landcruiser Prado GXL Auto Petrol 1996. 8 seats



Good car with no mechanical faults. You are welcome to have mechanic inspect. Asking \$7,500 neg.

Has built in GPS, dvd player/multimedia radio with reversing camera. Tinted Windows. Heavy duty tow bar. Fantastic to tow with.

Done 201000km. Regularly serviced.

Phone Safy on 0424408725

### **Black KN Melodie Dressage saddle**



Extremely Comfortable saddle in very good condition.

17 in, Medium - wide gullet, Made in Austria \$1800

Contact Susie - 0411 098 462

### **Wanted!**

For WEYV an old (low cost) float or trailer to restore for the storage & transportation of equipment.

Contact Susie - 0411 098 462

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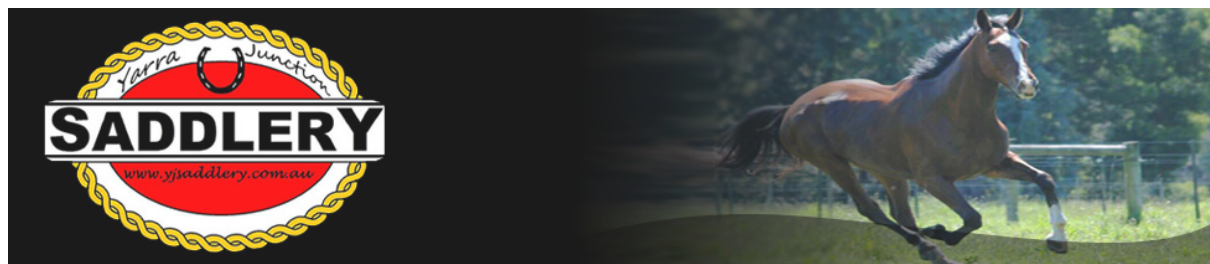
## **Uniforms**

Other than an ASA approved helmet, and safe riding boots, our uniform is not required at rallies, but is necessary for official HRCav competitions and events. When you are competing at a HRCav event under your WEYV membership, you are required to wear club colours.

The club uniform for HRCav competition comprises:

- White collared shirt or white shirt with stock
- Optional – Liver Chestnut neck scarf (pinned)
- Black or dark brown riding pants
- Liver chestnut (dark brown) vest with club logo affixed
- Black, brown or white saddle blank with club logo affixed

### **Badges**



### From Yarra Junction Saddlery

#### **Shirts**

White HorZe Show Shirts - \$45 with WEYV embroidery



#### **Saddle Blankets**

Quilted Saddle Blankets - \$57 with WEYV embroidery





Order from the Uniform Coordinator (Leanne)

Sample vests and buttoned Competition shirts are also on their way. Details soon!

**Uniform Contacts, Ordering & Selection Information** - [Click here!](#)

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## Gear Guidelines

### Less is more

At WEYV, we are of the opinion that 'less is more'. Equipment for handling horses should be effective without causing stress or injury, and gear should be designed for maximum safety of the handler and horse. Tack should be well made, correctly fitted and comfortable for the horse.

Classical training aims to train with respect for the horse. It avoids employing gadgets and gimmicks that force, trick or restrict the natural movements or habits of horses. We don't think there are quick fixes or magic pieces of tack that make our work easier. Often the times when we think we need stronger equipment to control a horse are the times when we need to rethink our training methods.

### Preferred gear for leading, tying, in-hand work, lunging

- A halter and lead rope is the most common form of in-hand restraint.
- We prefer leather or webbing halters (rather than thin rope halters) as they are wider at the sensitive pressure points of the poll and the nose, if the horse should pull back or stand on the lead.
- The safest knots are those that can be quickly untied even if the horse has pulled on it.
- Tying should never be done from the bit. If the horse pulls back from a tie or gets loose, or stands on the lead rope, there is risk of severe damage to the mouth.
- Lunging can be safely done from a halter, bitless bridle or cavesson.
- Lunging from the bit, or in side reins, running reins or draw reins is not permitted at WEYV.

### Bridles & Bits

- If you are competing at an HRCav event you will need to refer to the HRCav Event rules. Only saddlery and equipment specified in the discipline specific Rule Book is permitted at Official Events. <http://www.hrcav.com.au/default.asp?Page=1323>
- At WEYV rallies, clinics and unofficial events we have guidelines in relation to bridles:
  - o Gear assistance and checks take place for each new combination
  - o You are welcome to use a fitted bitless or a bitted bridle.
  - o If you use a noseband it must be fitted loosely enough for the horse to chew naturally. (Two finger width fit between the nose and the band).
  - o Crank, flash and drop nosebands are not recommended.
  - o Martingales, side reins, running reins, draw reins are not permitted.

o Please refer to the HRCav Dressage rules in relation to bits.

o Ordinary single jointed snaffle bits with cheek pieces are useful for schooling dressage, and also for one-handed working equitation.

### Saddles & Girths

- Any type of saddle may be used.
  - For official HRCav competitions, if a single buckle girth is used the HRCav requires that the saddle be fitted with a surcingle as well.
  - For official WE competitions (when available) you are able to compete in any saddle as long as you stick to the general cultural theme. (ie Western Horse, Western Saddle, Western dress. Spanish Horse, Spanish Saddle, Spanish dress etc.)
  - Correct saddle fitting is a high priority for all ridden work. For horse welfare and your safety professional saddle fittings are recommended, and may be arranged at our rallies from time to time.
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### Club Sponsors

#### Fay Diamantakis Massage Therapy

0408 035 411



[Ranger Floats](#)



[Yarra Junction Saddlery](#)

All Members of WEYV will receive a 5% discount (excluding sale items)



[Organic Origins](#)

All WEYV members receive 10% discount





### Your Committee

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