# WORKINGEQUITATIONYARRAVARRAVALLEY

# NEWSLETTER

## <u>AUGUST 2017</u>

<u>Club Postal Address</u> – 4 Fulford Rd, Wonga Park 3115

<u>Club Website</u> – www.workingequitationyarravalley.org

Club Facebook page – Working Equitation Yarra Valley

#### Committee members

**PRESIDENT – Helen Sharp NEWSLETTER EDITOR – Helen Sharp** VICE PRESIDENT – Kerry Pitcher **TREASURER – Kerry Pitcher** SECRETARY - Lindy Whitfort **EVENTS CO-ORDINATOR – Lindy Whitfort RALLY CO-ORDINATOR – Lisa Saunders INSTRUCTORS AND VENUES – Anna Gust** UNIFORMS – Julia Colman **OBSTACLE CO-ORDINATOR – Julia Colman** FUNDRAISING - Fay Diamantakis **RISK MANAGEMENT – Fay Diamantakis** WEBSITE CO-ORDINATOR – Andrew Feher **GENERAL COMMITTEE – Debrah Clow GENERAL COMMITTEE – Jeni Silver** FACEBOOK CO-ORDINATOR -

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## Good for AND your Community



#### **AUGUST RALLIES**

Natasha Jones was back for the Wednesday rally with a pretty full and enjoyable day.

Susie also had 2 full (and cold) days with the full obstacle course on offer again. These seem to be very popular weekends with a few riding either 2 horses or riding for both days.

I must put my 10 cents worth in here and mention that I think that it's a bit sad that with a club that now has 56 members it always seems to be the same few that volunteer or offer to put out/pack up the obstacles.

These obstacle days are for YOU so please do your best to help out when required.

## WEYY CONSTITUTION AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

WEYV was specifically established to provide opportunities for riders to participate in "Classical Working Equitation' and "Classical Dressage Schooling'.

What is Classical Dressage? Basically it's handling, riding and training with the 1st priority being respect for the physical and emotional nature of the horse – for its welfare and long term soundness.

WEYV Statement of Purpose -

- 1. To provide an opportunity for riders (Adults and juniors) in the Yarra Valley to participate in Classical Working Equitation Training events, classical dressage schooling, riding clubs rallies, clinics and lessons.
- 2. To provide for the health, welfare, wellbeing and safety of riders and member horse trainers.
- 3. To provide for the health, welfare, wellbeing and safety of members and visitors horses.

A Classical approach to WE has been the heart and soul of WEYV since its inception. Hence our instructors have a strong Classical dressage background. Clinics and lessons in Classical Dressage are inherently linked to the culture and aims of WEYV and Classical WE.

This is the foundation of our obstacle training.

## RALLY FEEDBACK FORMS

Don't forget to fill in the Rally Feedback form at the end of your lesson on rally days. They should be located on the lunch table upstairs. Your thoughts on the lesson and anything else relating to the club is much appreciated.

## <u>RALLÝ DUTÝ</u>

#### Duty roster says that the following have duty for September:-

# WednesdayFay Diamantakis & Bridget LawrenceSaturdaySue Hain & Jenny Boucher

If you are unable to make it to that rally please ensure you swap with someone else. Contact Lisa for details.

## NEXT MONTHS RALLIES

Instructors for September rally days will be Susie Walker on Wednesday and Ro Jelbart on Saturday.

Both instructors will have a few obstacles out to use for training.

As this will be the 1<sup>st</sup> rally that Ro has instructed at our club I have included a paragraph below on her credentials. According to those that know her - they love her lessons.

Ro Jelbart is a talented rider and trainer with very broad experienced and an exceptional background that spans from pony clubs to eventing and dressage in England and Australia, at County and State levels. Ro successfully completed her BHS qualifications before emigrating to Australia and has since continued to successfully train and teach. She is a Level 2 TTeam practitioner, an EFA/NCAS Level 2 Coach Educator and an EFA/NCAS Assessor of Australian Coaches.

In the past 2 years Ro has undertaken the challenge of training Welsh cobs and, with the frequent use of TTeam techniques, she has endeavoured to improve their posture and preserve their personality, which is so often lost in training and showing. In 2009 Ro embarked upon a course of classical riding and rode with the renown French Master Philippe Karl at Bathurst. During the subsequent 8 years Ro regularly attended Legerete clinics conducted by international and master trainers.

## WEBSITE VOLUNTEERS

We still need someone to take up this role – **ANYONE ??????????** Andrew is asking for volunteers to learn about the website updates and the booking form. Both are routinely done on a monthly basis or as and when we change something in our procedures.

No "techo- geek" knowledge needed, it's just a process using logic.

If you think that this is something that you could help us out with please contact Andrew on <u>feher.andrew@gmail.com</u>

## **COMMITTEE MEETING NIGHTS**

The committee meets generally on the last Wednesday of the month at the Grand Hotel in Yarra Glen.

All members are welcome to attend the meeting, or just join us for a meal beforehand. Wednesday is Parma night and there are some pretty special looking parmas to be ordered.

The next meeting is on **Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> August**, meet there at 6.30 to order meals, meeting starts at 7pm sharp.

We would love to see you so please join us. It's also a great opportunity to get to know some of your fellow members.

### CLUB UNIFORM

Details of how to order our new jackets will be available shortly once the committee have discussed this at the next meeting.

In the meantime if you have recently ordered, and paid for a polo shirt please contact Julia on 0437 741871 to arrange collection. She has them waiting for you.



At each of the rallies there will be some 'samples' of our new polo shirts for members to try on prior to ordering and purchase. They come in sizes 8-10, 12-14, 16-18, 20-22, we have these sizes to try on but I think they may come in 24-26 if required. They are a small fitting so don't be alarmed if the size you would normally take won't fit! The shirts are only available in black but we are looking into a white alternative.

We now have a number of 'spare' polos in various sizes for purchase 'on the day' for those that didn't place an order.

As these polos have a sponsor logo on the rear they are not able to be used as an 'official' uniform under HRCAV competition rules.

## CLUB CALENDAR

For info and bookings email Lisa Saunders at <u>lisandian@bigpond.com.au</u> Book early: Closing dates for bookings & payment is 5 days prior to event. **PLEASE NOTE THAT RIDING PLACES FOR RALLIES ARE LIMITED SO DON'T LEAVE YOUR BOOKING TO THE LAST MINUTE OR YOU WILL BE DISAPPOINTED.** 

Lisa will have a waiting list available for those that have missed out.

VENUE	DAY	DATE	INSTRUCTOR/S
YARRA	Wednesday	$30^{\text{th}}$	COMMITTEE MEETING NIGHT
GLEN			7pm, Grand Hotel, Yarra Glen
GRUYERE	Wednesday	•	Susie Walker
GRUYERE	Saturday	9 <sup>th</sup>	Ro Jelbart
GRUYERE	Wednesday	-	Natasha Jones
GRUYERE	Saturday	,	Susie Walker (obstacle course)
GRUYERE	Sunday	-	Anna Gust (obstacle course) TBC
TO BE	Wednesday	$25^{\text{th}}$	Social trail ride
ADVISED			
GRUYERE	Wednesday	-	Susie Walker
GRUYERE	Saturday		Susie Walker
GRUYERE	Saturday	$18^{\text{th}}$	Natasha Jones(clinic)
GRUYERE	Wednesday	•	Anna Gust Garrocha
GRUYERE	Saturday	$9^{\text{th}}$	Anna Gust xmas break up fun
	YARRA GLEN GRUYERE GRUYERE GRUYERE GRUYERE GRUYERE TO BE ADVISED GRUYERE GRUYERE GRUYERE GRUYERE GRUYERE	YARRA Wednesday GLEN Wednesday GRUYERE Saturday GRUYERE Saturday GRUYERE Wednesday GRUYERE Saturday GRUYERE Sunday TO BE Wednesday ADVISED U GRUYERE Wednesday GRUYERE Saturday GRUYERE Saturday	YARRA Wednesday 30 <sup>th</sup> GLEN 6 <sup>th</sup> GRUYERE Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> GRUYERE Saturday 9 <sup>th</sup> GRUYERE Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> GRUYERE Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup> GRUYERE Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup> TO BE Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> ADVISED 25 <sup>th</sup> GRUYERE Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> GRUYERE Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> GRUYERE Saturday 4 <sup>th</sup> GRUYERE Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup>

This is a new and updated calendar with the new entries highlighted

## **GOODWILL WINES**

Our club has a charity account with this company, if any wines are ordered through Goodwill Wines and our account is nominated we will then benefit from the order by having cash paid into our account. Easy money, we already have \$80 odd credited – just for drinking wine!

Don't forget to order your special wines for our club fundraiser. Go to <u>www.goodwillwine.com.au</u> to place your order.

## **EDITORS CHOICE READING**

## WORKING EQUITATION DRESSAGE

The inspiration for Dressage in Working Equitation is derived from the ranching experience and skills needed to handle cattle in the Iberian region. This is a departure from the genesis of Traditional Dressage



which was training for warfare, or FEI Dressage, into its own style and discipline.

When you read the definition of Working Equitation you frequently see the following: "a discipline created with the objective of enhancing the equestrian techniques developed in countries whose riders use horses in different aspects of "fieldwork" or "in the field". Let there be no confusion, this means one thing. " In the



field" describes "ranching", or "cattle working"!

Imagine if you will, you are working Iberian cattle, which are nearly wild, or at least feral. These cattle are very different than what we are accustomed to in the Americas. They are as likely to charge at you, as to run from you! With that in mind you will readily see that impulsion would be your horse's most valuable asset. It requires an athletic, nimble "handy" horse to excel in this often dangerous line of work.

Initially you might not see a significant difference between WE Dressage tests and that which you currently practice. But by the time you reach the Masters Level, the tests demand your mount to demonstrate the ideal qualities needed by a horse capable of successfully negotiating a pasture with these amazing semi-wild cattle.

As you and your horse rise through the levels of WE Dressage, you will find suspension is less important than impulsion and the point of balance of the horse is lower as the horse needs to be prepared for rapid departures.

which has evolved

It does not matter what your previous experience is, you and your horse will enjoy and benefit from dressage time through WE. After all, Dressage simply means, *training*!

For our readers who have been intimidated by the very concept of dressage, take heart. It isn't really scary at all. Dressage instruction is available for the uninitiated in a number of ways. Simply finding a local dressage instructor for lessons is likely the easiest. If that isn't your cup of tea several WE Organizations and groups are active in the US. Those groups offer clinics with Dressage and the other phases of Working Equitation for riders of all levels. Likely there is a group only a short distance away. Working Equitation is just developing in this country, you will find yourself right at home with riders of similar capability.



There is a long history of dressage riding among the great Vaqueros of old. The early Spanish influence on the training and development of the ranch horse is clearly evident in artistic portrayals of the Vaquero at work during the early history of the US. With the exception of our Buckaroo and Californios riders, much of that influence had been lost in the show arena and in training the western horse in general. But it is now returning with significant participation.

## What is Working Equitation?

A dressage rider and Lusitano breeder shares her passion for this emerging sport.

**AUTHOR:** 

SANDRA ADAIR DAUGIRDA

**PUBLISH DATE:** 

MAR 5, 2015 IN 'DRESSAGE TODAY'



Credit: Courtesy, Linda Graham Rebecca Algar and Magicos Takara, a Quarter Horse-Andalusian-cross mare owned by Sharon Lee, navigate a bridge in the Ease of Handling Phase.

Say "equitation," and many riders think of a hunter-jumper flat or dressage-seat class, but far too few are aware of the exciting equine sport of working equitation (WE). For an individual horse and rider, this three-phased competition begins with the Dressage Phase—a test of classic dressage skills and movements, then continues to Ease of Handling Phase, which demonstrates their partnership by navigating an obstacle course, and finally, the Speed Phase, which measures their gusto by redoing part of the course at speed. Like dressage, there are many levels from Introductory through Advanced. Although WE has long been an international competition, it is a young, wide-open sport in the United States.

The following is an interview with Linda Graham of Runaway Farm in Magnolia, Texas. A dressage rider, breeder and chairperson for WE at the historic Pin Oak Charity Horse Show in Katy, Texas, Graham became captivated with WE in 2007, when she watched a competition in Brazil where Olympic-level dressage riders participated for the sheer fun. Several years later she rode her 8-year-old Lusitano stallion, Amuleto VO, in their first event. In both 2012 and 2013 Amuleto won Pin Oak's L3: Basic Championship (Level 3 of 6).

Here Graham shares her passion for the discipline and explains why WE is an enjoyable and beneficial addition to the repertoire of any dressage horse and rider.

#### Q:Why do you love working equitation?

Linda Graham: I love it because my horse loves it. Horses like variety. They want to have a job. WE broadens a horse's scope and teaches him to be a good partner in any equine sport you care to pursue. It is especially good for improving dressage skills. The obstacle course is not only fun, it hones your aids. For instance, at the lower levels (L1/L2) Amuleto and I worked on basics like bending, leg yields and transitions. Now that he is schooling the higher levels (L3/L4), doing flying changes around a line of poles gives him a visual reference for the timing and purpose of the change.

As I learned in my last clinic, developing the collection and balance required to canter around a very tight set of cloverleaf barrels is an excellent interim step toward achieving good canter pirouettes. Plus, accustoming a horse to many of the obstacles serves a practical purpose, especially if he regularly goes out for a hack. He learns what it's like to open and close a gate, jump a log on the path and cross a bridge.

Q:What qualities help to make a horse and rider successful in WE?

LG: The rider must enjoy a challenge and be open to trying different things. The horse must have a good mind and a willing attitude. He also must be balanced. At the higher levels he needs the ability to lighten the forehand and achieve true collection. Success in the third phase of WE—Speed Phase—requires impulsion, straightness and accuracy. So a horse must be easily adjustable both physically and mentally.

One of the reasons baroque horses do well in this sport is that they can be brilliant in the Dressage Phase, obedient in the obstacle course, turn on the afterburner in the Speed Phase and then walk calmly back to the barn. They understand that it is a game and they want to play.

As I watched my new Lusitano filly, Infanta, entertain herself today by cantering circles around the trees in her paddock, I knew I had an awesome WE prospect. But for aficionados of any breed or discipline, the real plus of WE is that you don't have to abandon everything you know and start over at the bottom. You can bring the horse, the tack and the training you already have and simply add another layer of expertise.

Q:How do you train for the obstacles in lessons with your dressage instructor?

LG: I am fortunate to train locally at Haras Dos Cavaleiros, in Magnolia, Texas, with Tiago Ernesto. He likes to use obstacles to add variety or a break from tension during dressage work or as a different way to teach a skill. They are his primary training focus maybe 10 percent of the time. He will teach a horse three or four obstacles at a time, and when he is proficient at those, add another. There are around twenty different obstacles that a course designer may include in any competition. Most components are easy to assemble, such as barrels and poles, gates and hay bales, and there are many websites that describe the obstacles as well as YouTube videos of all three phases of WE.

Q: What do WE judges look for in the different phases of competition?

LG: A competent WE rider is always in balance with his horse, giving the impression of harmonious cooperation. By maintaining a correct position, with a commanding but relaxed presence, the rider is able to direct the horse with nearly invisible aids. The WE dressage tests correspond loosely, all the way to Grand Prix, to those used by USDF/USEF. They are scored similarly. In the second phase of WE competition, the judge wants to see horse and rider navigate the obstacles with calmness and precision. As in dressage, he gives a score of 0 to 10 for negotiating each obstacle as well as for the quality of riding between the obstacles. There are also collective marks for agility, style, maneuverability and harmony. The Speed Phase is solely a timed event without any concern for style. It tests the rider's coordination and anticipation and the horse's qualities of submission, speed, attention and finesse. There is a fourth phase, the Cow Trial. But this is only in international team competitions at the advanced level.

The History of Working Equitation



Credit: Courtesy, Casey McBride Linda Graham and Amuleto VO

By Helena Ragoné, PhD

All riding disciplines, like all breeds of horses, can trace their origins to how horses have been utilized both in the past and in the present. At its most basic, working equitation assesses a rider's skill and the progression of a horse's training. A relative newcomer on the world-equestrian stage, working equitation debuted in the United States in 2008. But its origins date back to the mid-1990s when it was developed in southern Europe as a way to preserve and promote the riding traditions of Italy, France, Portugal and Spain, as well as to showcase the horses typically bred and used there for ranch work. Today, the World Association of Working Equitation, based in Portugal, standardizes the rules and oversees international competition. It lists on its website 12 countries that are currently members. There are several more, including the United States, where the sport is in development with the goal of future membership.

Breeds that typically excel at working equitation are known for their ability to work cows and bulls. They include the:

• Murgese horse of Italy, whose roots can be traced to the 13th century and the legendary warhorses of Emperor Federico.

- Camargue horse of southern France, one of the world's oldest breeds, known for the stamina, hardiness and agility it developed in the marshes and wetlands of the Rhone delta.
- Iberian horses of Portugal and Spain, mentioned in Homer's Iliad and ridden by William the Conqueror in the 1066 Battle of Hastings.

Much like the American Quarter Horse, all of these European breeds are legendary for their ability to execute lightning-fast turns, stops and spins. Extremely agile, they are able to canter sideways. This makes them ideal for working the breeds of cattle found in southern Europe, which tend to be aggressive and difficult to rope. In moving the herds, riders use a long pole or lance both to prod the animals and protect themselves and their horses should the cattle charge. Riders carry this same device in the Ease of Handling Phase of working equitation.

## MEMBERS ADVERTS

I am happy to take adverts from members to appear here in this spot. I generally send out an email a week before the newsletter is due out calling for anyone that would like to make a contribution (of any sort)

#### WORKING EQUITATION AT PANTON HILL

Susie has some Working Equitation obstacles for riders to use on her property in Panton Hill. She is offering lessons to a group/s of members that would like to practise their WE skills or learn new techniques.

She has a 60x20 outdoor arena and can set out up to 10 obstacles for a group of 4-5 riders for a 3 hour group session or rounds, including morning tea.

The price will depend on the number of riders. Obstacles that are available are:

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Stock pen Gate Collect and drop pole and ring 3 barrels Side pass poles Jump Rein back & Bell corridor Slalom Varied footing Bank: Raised Tractor Tyre

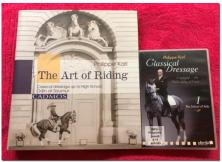
Susie Walker

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Equine Encounters Classical Riding Teacher EA Coach ANWE Accredited Working Equitation Judge & Trainer Available for Clinics & Lessons 0411 098 462 <u>walker.susieg@gmail.com</u>

#### FOR SALE

Philippe Karl *The Art of Riding* book and *Classical Dressage* DVD. Both in very good/excellent condition. Selling both together for \$30. I can bring them to the next rally or they can be picked up from my place at Upper Beaconsfield. Phone or text Pam on 0407 510 489 or email ambersprings@optusnet.com.au.



## Hay for Sale:

Organic Grown Rye and clover Round Bails: \$50.00each Square Bails \$9.00 each Delivery available at a small charge.

Please contact Ray Jarvis 0403 429 751 Please mention my name Lisa Saunders

## **EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

The following was sent to me by past, and founding, member of WEYV Karen Gillings. She has asked me to put it in the newsletter, in its entirety, in the hope that members may know of someone that can give her Friesian mare a forever home. Please pass onto anyone that you think may be interested.

This is also a reality check for us horse riders! Things can, and do, go wrong. Horse riding can be a dangerous sport and even with all the best intentions/training etc it is a fact of life. Ride safe and be aware.

Hello my dear Friesian loving friends. This is a long post of which I apologise. It's also heartbreaking for me, so pour yourself a drink & settle in for a read. As some of you may/may not know I had a near fatal accident in Kenya on 30<sup>th</sup> June. I was thrown from a bolting horse. I have amnesia of the event. I'm very, very, very lucky to be alive and was in a coma for 5 days, in ICU for a further 3 & in a ward for 2. I got the all clear to travel home to Aus on 23 July with an escort. It was agony, I'm in Perth with my mum indefinitely because I need 24/7 support .There is no suitable help for me in Melbourne. Hopefully I'll get to a level of independence sooner than the medics claim. Prognosis is up to 18 months before I can lead a normalised life, if at all. I'm going to beat that as best I can but some days I just want to cry all day!

My injuries are numerous, too many to mention. The biggest concern is brain trauma/damage. The list of specialists I need to see is exhaustive. It's slow and frustrating but I need to remind myself daily that I'm alive!

Sometimes life serves up lemons and I've been served an overdose recently so some tough decisions have to be made so that I can heal (& pay for my health care journey).

I need to sell my stunning pure bred Friesian BB1 mare Leilani. I bred her myself 🙁

The reasons are various. I cannot let emotion rule me right now. I must try to be logical. I don't know if I will ever want to ride again or be able to. She is an extremely talented, capable, drop dead gorgeous mare. Ticks all the boxes to succeed. If I ride again it could be years & I will keep her bomb proof big brother to ease me back into the saddle ,IF I ever feel the need . At the moment I'm terrified & feel nauseous even thinking about patting a horse. I'm hoping that the horsey network system will weave its magic & help me find the perfect home for my princess Leilani.

Despite whatever people might think of me, my honesty, integrity and genuine nature has always identified me so this is an incredibly genuine sale of a superior horse. If I had not had this accident I would never sell her. It was my intent to work towards the highest level dressage my capabilities would allow and/or high level Working Equitation both of which she could achieve easily. She is also incredibly brave and confident so could put her hoof to anything.

She is 5 yrs old, GREEN broke by Mark Ashton in the Yarra Valley VIC. Mark is a wonderful horseman and an allround deeply respected and lovely man. He adores her.

She has been spelling since April when I put her out to move house. She is agisted in Arthur's Creek. Mark will bring her back into work in September. She will need a few rides & he will tune her up ready to be tried. So at this point I'm looking at **EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST ONLY** until she is with Mark in September.

She is by Ster champion Friesian stallion Age B out of a wonderful Ster mare Iris Meike whom I owned until my marriage broke down 5 years ago.

Both are exceptional horses of absolutely quality. I believe that Leilani will definitely reach Ster rating, however I was in the process of moving house/selling this year when the Keuring was on & saving my pennies so couldn't participate.

Leilani tries hard ALWAYS, she always wants to please yet she is a bit of a diva & likes to think she's the queen of the farm. Just what's needed for a top competitor to turn heads.

She is very well mannered yet as with all Friesians in my opinion she requires strong leadership. No vices, no dirt, just a little arrogance. Her manners are well established, she needs regular reminding and regular practise of all things as she is young.

Her movement, confirmation and presence are to die for. She has that draw dropping effect on everyone that meets her.

She is sound, @15.3/16 hh, green & ready to start her career and seriously loves a job. She gets a very, very slight stifle stickiness only occasionally (another Friesian trait) it lasts for seconds and only from a stand still. She has Pentosane monthly as a preventative. It has NEVER affected her! Most people wouldn't even notice it. I'm just anal about being honest & want to mention it.

She has been doing ground work/horsemanship since a very young age. She has even participated in corporate leadership training and loved helping the humans learn. A friend's toddler has groomed her, lead her and walked under her tummy! I've taught join up, ground work and round penning to beginners using her. She adores affection and is so cuddly, comes when called, will do anything for food etc..... Friesian!

She is largely polite and respectful yet as a youngster can be impatient. She's ready to learn, ready to achieve and ready for her new forever home.

I will not give this mare away! She is simply stunning and deserves an outstanding home,

preferably with a rider who is committed to classical methodology and truly understands the psychology/evolution of the horse.

I'm asking \$25,500 .00 Ono

<u>WITH</u> her Fryso saddle - fully mounted (will need re fitting as she's grown since it was last used) designed specifically for Friesians. Imported from Holland - cost me \$3,500 alone. Saddle blanket, her bridle with rubber bit (she is still a little concerned about the bit & the rubber bit is perfect for now) All her rugs (most Buccus) & Cottons \$22,500.00 Ono without these items .

This is not a cheap horse. This is a serious horse! She is a potential champion and quality mare with added residual value for breeding. My life has turned upside down & my heart is breaking, yet I must be brave, I've travelled so many tough journeys over the last 5 years and this is the toughest.

I'm really reluctant to talk to:-Time wasters Bargain hunters People looking to lease her People with advise

This mare is exceptional and deserves the very best of everything that I wish I was healthy enough to give her . She needs a confident rider simply because she is young. She is kind, willing, beautiful and my pride and joy.

The photos attached are not dressed up for a sale. Everything about this mare and the sale is authentic and genuine.

I hope this explains it all Sorry for the waffle. Karen







## MEMBERS OUT AND ABOUT

Again, here is a spot that you could tell us all about your fabulous ride last week on Neddy, with your friends. Or about a competition or clinic that you recently attended.

## Molyullah Mountain Trail by Sue Hain

At the end of July I had the fantastic opportunity to attend the inaugural opening IMTCA Mountain Challenge at Molyullah Mountain Trail, just south-east of Benalla.

It was an exciting and very intense two days of clinics with Eva Hartman teaching everyone how to approach and tackle each of the obstacles. It was so rewarding to watch both horse and riders grow in confidence and ability.

Attempting the course really makes you realize the benefits of exposing our horses to different situations and it is really reassuring to know where our horses are troubled BEFORE we meet a situation on the trail or generally out and about, and becoming so much more aware. Some of the horses who were completely unruffled by what appeared the more difficult obstacles found the seemingly EASY obstacles more tricky, so in all a great opportunity to be more aware.

All of the obstacles are beautifully, structurally sound and have been well thought out to provide maximum athletic benefit to our horses. It was really interesting to watching some of the horses taking time to have a really good stretch with forelegs up on the tyre in no hurry to get down. The rocker, (Teeter Totter) another of the obstacles, also had horses pausing to find their own balance and rocking the obstacle gently to find the sweet spot.

On day three, competition commenced and although an initially small group, riders became enthused and began to enter more and more events as they considered how well their horses progressed. One young lady was the youngest ever to win the amateur event on her pony, and the growth of both horse and rider from the clinic day to competition day was truly remarkable. Another lady came with her horse that she had only owned for just on one week and in the end her young daughter entered many events and also placed for a prize.

All in all, well worth the visit in such beautiful surroundings.

ED:- Sue also won a few sashes, one of them being blue but she omitted this piece of info!



Sue with her youngster Marley

#### **SNAKE ISLAND**

#### **From Bronwyn**

Hello everyone,

I have made enquiries about riding to Snake Island and am awaiting possible dates for 2018. I was wondering if anyone from WEYV might be interested?

The ride starts on the low tide from Port Welshpool across to Snake Island where you spend a night or two on the island and explore then ride back across on the low tide.

There is a bunkhouse for accommodation and yards or a paddock for the horses.

Let me know if you are interested as I need an indication of numbers Bronwyn 0419 575 383

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