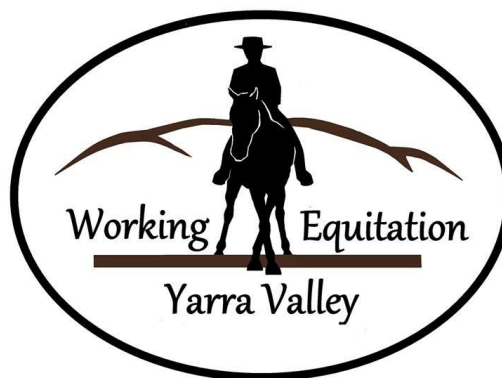


WORKING EQUITATION YARRA VALLEY



NEWSLETTER

JULY 2017

Club Postal Address – 4 Fulford Rd, Wonga Park 3115

Club Website – www.workingequitationyarravalley.org

Club Facebook page – Working Equitation Yarra Valley

Committee members

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VICE PRESIDENT – Kerry Pitcher

kerry.pitcher@gmail.com

TREASURER – Kerry Pitcher

SECRETARY – Lindy Whitfort

lindy.whitfort@bigpond.com

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RALLY CO-ORDINATOR – Lisa Saunders

lisaandian@bigpond.com.au

INSTRUCTORS AND VENUES – Anna Gust

annagust37@hotmail.com

UNIFORMS – Julia Colman

colmanj@southernphone.com.au

OBSTACLE CO-ORDINATOR – Julia Colman

FUNDRAISING – Fay Diamantakis

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RISK MANAGEMENT – Fay Diamantakis

WEBSITE CO-ORDINATOR – Andrew Feher

feher.andrew@gmail.com

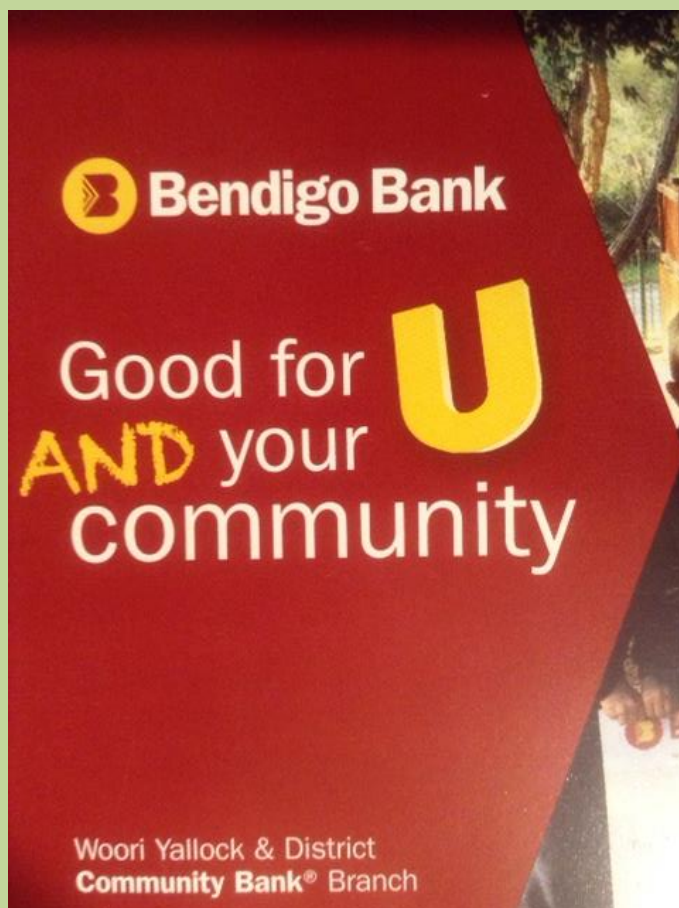
GENERAL COMMITTEE – Debrah Clow

alfranzpark@bigpond.com

GENERAL COMMITTEE – Jeni Silver

jenisilver62@gmail.com

FACEBOOK CO-ORDINATOR –



JULY RALLIES

Whilst the Saturday rally day in July was reasonably well attended it was a bit quieter on the Wednesday. I guess the colder days of winter maybe taking their toll?

Jason kindly stepped in to replace Susie due to her 'trip of a lifetime – one not to be missed' overseas adventure to further her studies with Phillippe Karl and other mentors. I'm sure we will all benefit from her trip in some form or another once she's back instructing again. I can see from the FB photos that she certainly wasn't bored. Susie has written a short blurb about her fabulous trip, see it further down the newsletter in the 'Members out and about' section.

Anyway, back to the rally! There were only 7 riders for Jason so he had a pretty easy day, starting a bit later and finishing just after a short lunch break.

We worked on impulsion, with Jason asking us to do a 'trust me, trust my horse' exercise which proved quite beneficial from where I was watching. The object was to walk, then trot around (once confident) with a loose rein to get the horse to maintain, and take responsibility for gait, rhythm, speed and direction. I could really see the difference in the horses when they weren't 'micro-managed', opening up and breathing and relaxing.

Lindy and I then played a 'cow' game with Deb in the middle and one of us (the cowboy) stopping the other (the cow) from getting back to the herd. Once Dale had a job to do he really opened up, impulsion wasn't a problem then!

I wasn't at Saturdays rally but by all accounts everyone enjoyed Anna's instruction on transitions.

RALLY BOOKINGS

This is just a friendly reminder about member bookings for rally days.

Please bear in mind that YOUR club runs rally days at a loss EVERY RALLY DAY. That means that YOUR COMMITTEE needs to come up with ideas for fundraising to enable us to all ride in comfort in the indoor, year round, at a reduced cost.

This means that refunds for rally bookings already paid for AND set in the schedule with times etc. WILL NOT BE REFUNDED unless you have a DR or VET certificate.

Monies will not be refunded for 'a change of mind', 'not available now', 'something came up', 'can't get the horse on the float', 'the weather is not right' or whatever other possible reason unless it is before booking cut-off date.

If you have a specific reason to ride at a specific time **PLEASE EMAIL LISA FIRST** to let her know, to save disappointment later on, and thus avoiding the above scenarios.
YOUR club needs to pay the instructor for the set number of riders once bookings are closed, so if you're a no-show we still need to pay for the instructor's time, even if you're not there.

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.

RALLY DUTY

A question has come up recently regarding rally duty and riding on the same day.

Yes, by all means you are able to ride **AND** do rally duty on the same day. In fact it is encouraged otherwise it can be awkward to do a special trip just for rally duty. You may as well get some enjoyment on the day by joining in and riding!

Liaise with the other member on duty as to who is doing morning or afternoon, that way you're not there all day. Then when doing your booking request form let Lisa know by putting that info on there when booking in for the rally.

Our club is fortunate to have the use of the indoor arena and the beautiful PRIVATE property at Gruyere, we do not have working bees as such, only rally duty. This consists of supplying milk and some nibbles for morning tea, helping the instructor set up in the morning or pack away at the end of the day, ensuring the poo barrows are emptied and everything is in order before leaving. There are 2 of you on duty each rally and most members offer to help at some stage during the course of the day so it's not a hard job by any means.

NEXT MONTHS RALLIES

Instructors for August rally days will be Natasha Jones on Wednesday and Susie Walker on Saturday and Sunday with full obstacle course set up.

As the Sunday rally is an 'ad-on' in the calendar we don't have anyone on rally duty for that day so I'm asking for some volunteers please?

Also we will need extras to help set up on Saturday morning (7.30/8am) and to also help pack up on Sunday afternoon once the day has finished.

Could you please advise Lisa Saunders ASAP on lisaandian@bigpond.com.au if you are able to help at all on any of the above occasions.

Our next rally days are on **Wednesday 2nd, Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th August.**

Duty roster says that the following have duty for August:-

**Wednesday
Saturday
Sunday**

**Helen Sharp & Allison Quagliani
Bronwyn Farrar & Caroline Perrie
??????????? Volunteers please**

ANWE & WEYV

At the last committee meeting there was a discussion about WEYV re-joining ANWE Vic and the national body ANWE Ltd. It was unanimously decided that due to many varied circumstances that WEYV would not be re-joining ANWE Vic/ANWE Ltd at this point in time.

The committee felt that at the moment our members would not gain any benefits of affiliating with ANWE, in fact the club would be required to pay a club fee and our members would also be required to pay \$10 to ANWE for a yearly subscription. Also each club would be required to nominate 2 members to become part of the ANWE Vic committee and we felt that would be a difficult task at this stage.

The HRCav is currently working on a WE rule book and regulations and we will stay with HRCav and support them in this new venture. Once this has been arranged then new competition cards will be issued enabling us to hold WE competitions under HRCav rules.

ANWE Vic/ANWE Ltd will be revisited in a couple of years as our club circumstances may have changed by then, and it may be beneficial to re-join ANWE.

FIRST AID CERTIFICATES

If any member has a current 1st aid certificate would you be kind enough to advise Anna Gust via email on annagust37@hotmail.com.

We just need to note it on our records.

YOUR INPUT & IDEAS

Anna is asking for members input re different instructors that we could ask to teach at our club. Also if you have any new ideas of what we can offer members on our rally days?

Maybe you have seen, heard or used the services of an instructor that embellishes WEYV's values, and they would be willing to come along to teach at one of our rallies?

Please contact Anna annagust37@hotmail.com if you know of anyone.

WEBSITE VOLUNTEERS

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 feher.andrew@gmail.com

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 26th July**, 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 lisandian@bigpond.com.au

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.

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

MONTH	VENUE	DAY	DATE	INSTRUCTOR/S
JULY	YARRA GLEN	Wednesday	26 th	COMMITTEE MEETING NIGHT 7pm, Grand Hotel, Yarra Glen
AUGUST	GRUYERE	Wednesday	2 nd	Natasha Jones
AUGUST	GRUYERE	Saturday	5 th	Susie Walker (obstacle course)
AUGUST	GRUYERE	Sunday	6 th	Susie Walker (obstacle course)
AUGUST	YARRA GLEN	Wednesday	30 th	COMMITTEE MEETING NIGHT 7pm, Grand Hotel, Yarra Glen
SEPTEMBER	GRUYERE	Wednesday	6 th	Anna Gust- Garoccha
SEPTEMBER	GRUYERE	Saturday	9 th	Ro Jelbart
OCTOBER	GRUYERE	Wednesday	4 th	Natasha Jones
OCTOBER	GRUYERE	Saturday	7 th	Susie Walker (obstacle course)
OCTOBER	GRUYERE	Sunday	8 th	Anna Gust (obstacle course)
OCTOBER	TO BE ADVISED	Wednesday	25 th	Social trail ride
NOVEMBER	GRUYERE	Wednesday	1 st	Susie Walker
NOVEMBER	GRUYERE	Saturday	4 th	Susie Walker
NOVEMBER	GRUYERE	Saturday	18 th	Natasha Jones(clinic)
DECEMBER	GRUYERE	Wednesday	6 th	Anna Gust Garrocha
DECEMBER	GRUYERE	Saturday	9 th	Anna Gust xmas break up fun

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 \$70 odd credited – just for drinking wine!

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

EDITORS CHOICE READING

The "Deadly Sins" of Dressage

Rebecca Didier

The ancient Greeks were among the first civilizations to stress the desirability of moderation, a virtue they called "sophrosyne", as an antidote to the excesses of human behavior. They considered moderation, as opposed to the extremes of gluttony or sloth, as the key to a balanced,

harmonious life. Furthermore, they felt that immoderate behavior planted the seeds of personal misfortune and failure, punishments they called “nemesis” or “retribution”.

What does this have to do with riding?

Immoderation is one of the “7 Deadly Sins of Dressage” because its behaviors stray from the balanced, considerate decisions of the intellect and instead give in to the appetites and impulses of base emotions. Since horse and rider work together in an interdependent relationship governed by subtlety requiring knowledge and frequented by misunderstandings requiring forbearance, success depends upon measured responses and considered choices. A rider must neither indulge in excess nor neglect responsibility. Moderation thus demands that the rider follow a middle path.

Gustav Steinbrecht said that “The training process...must develop the horse’s natural gaits to their utmost perfection, but it must avoid anything that is excessive or unnatural.” And for some riders, that is exactly the problem. In their desire to achieve their ambition, some riders lapse into excess. They become overly ambitious. They let their competitiveness get the better of them, and they can’t leave well enough alone. They treat their horse like a machine. They think that by training the horse extra hard today, it will make him all the better tomorrow. If a little pressure is good, then a little more is better, and a lot more is best of all. But in dressage, that’s not necessarily so. Practicing harder doesn’t necessarily yield better results. In fact, the opposite is more often true.

You have to push your horse, but not to the point that you push him too hard. You want to push him to the limit, but not over. You have to challenge him to ascend through the levels of dressage, but you don’t want to overload the animal.

The art of dressage is educating the horse do as you wish and take pleasure in his work. You don’t want to sour him by making undue demands upon him. On the contrary, you want him to be your partner. Knowing when to quit is key.

General Faverot de Kerbrech (1837–1905), cavalry officer and pupil of Baucher said: “In training, there is always the tendency to proceed too rapidly. To arrive quickly, go slowly with careful, cautious steps. Make frequent demands; be content with little; be lavish in reward.”

When you achieve a breakthrough with your horse you naturally become exhilarated, and you want to try it again. For example, a horse you’ve been working with finally does a flying change. Finally! A flying change! This wonderful thing has happened, and it’s only natural that you want more of it. But you have to control yourself. You’ve got to be considerate of the horse, and the horse has to feel that you’re being considerate of him.

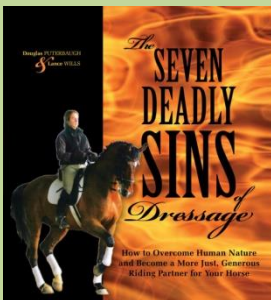
Many riders respond to breakthroughs by demanding the horse repeat the breakthrough again and again. This mistake was noted by Seunig, who said, “Patience is equally necessary in order not to grow immoderately demanding, which always happens when we do not reward an initial compliance by immediate cessation of the demand, but try to enjoy a victory until the horse becomes cross or confused.” Nagging a horse is gluttony because it denies the needs of another being. When you over-practice on a horse, you place your own ambition above the horse’s need to be relieved of your demands. A horse so treated has essentially been reduced to the status of an object.

Take only what the horse gives you, and appreciate his generosity. It’s a mistake to slowly build a horse toward a breakthrough and then not back off and cease the demand when he complies. It’s a mistake because repeatedly demanding more of the horse will inevitably lead him

to rebel, a setback that will require time to overcome. It's far easier to maintain a horse's trust than regain it. Instead, reward your horse when he's obedient. A long pause "on the buckle" can do wonders in making a horse understand that you're pleased with him. Caress him, or on occasion, give him a treat. But the greatest reward is simply allowing him to do what he feels best doing. And don't nag him. If he is doing what you want, leave him alone.

And ask yourself: Are you guilty of one of the other six deadly sins of dressage?

This excerpt from the "7 Deadly Sins of Dressage", by Douglas Puterbaugh and Lance Wills, is reprinted with permission from [Trafalgar Square Books](#).



Do You Know When to try a Bitless Bridle?

By Cynthia on Jul 05, 2017 01:19 am

Do you ever find yourself wondering whether it would be worth trying a bitless bridle? Although riding with a bit is often required by the competitions and clubs a rider is involved in, there are times when trying something different could have real benefits beyond being fashionable.

With a good range of bitless options available these days, there will be something you can use when your horse or riding fits the following situations.



Bella has a wry nose but can be ridden comfortably in a Bitless Bridle.

Mouth or Jaw Problems:

Some conditions make it difficult to carry a bit comfortably – for example, mouth or jaw injuries, or deformed facial structures; also parrot mouth, wry nose, low palette or a very small oral cavity. Tooth eruptions or damage, insect stings, growths and injuries to the lips, bars or tongue can also make it very uncomfortable for a bit to be worn.

A bitless bridle provides temporary or permanent relief for riding when these conditions allow. Naturally, you wouldn't want to ride a horse that is recovering from major trauma, but when they are fit to do so, riding bitless makes it possible.

It's important to find a bitless option that doesn't impact any of the sensitive tissues of affected areas – for example a young horse with teeth erupting could possibly find the curb chain of a mechanical hackamore or a tight noseband painful.



The rope style bitless bridles are very effective and comfortable for starting and basic training.

Starting Young Horses and Basic Training with a Bitless Bridle:

Traditionally, young horses were started in a cavesson (English) or in a rope halter/bosal hackamore (Western). Experienced horsemen of such earlier eras recognised the need to establish good communication without 'ruining' the horse's mouth.

Thankfully, these traditions are continued by many 'natural horsemanship' devotees and classical dressage trainers.

For western riders, the bosal with its thicker, heavier reins is often used to teach the horse to 'neck rein'. In the English world, it has been proven that starting a young horse in a bitless bridle allows them to learn easily without the distraction of the bit.

A bitless bridle also protects against serious pain or injury if things go wrong such as stepping on a rein if the rider comes off, or being jabbed in the mouth inadvertently when over-reacting to something.

Most horses that have had some ground training learn to respond to a bitless bridle as an extension of halter pressure that they've already become accustomed to. Early bitless training allows the horse to learn without painful distractions, and gives the rider a good measure of how effective their teaching is.

When and if a bit is added, the horse already knows how to respond to the rein, seat and leg aids; and so the horse can remain light and sensitive to its use.



The performance horse often enjoys a break from wearing a bit during regular training at home.

Rest and Rehabilitation:

Many riders are now finding their performance horse responds well to a rest from the bit. A bitless bridle gives physical relief from bit pressure in the corners of the mouth and on the bars, allowing them to heal from small lesions or cracks and splits.

When different headgear is used, horses can learn to carry themselves better, move more freely and regain confidence they may have lost if they've suffered some bad experiences with a bit.

Many ex-racehorses respond very well to a bitless bridle due to removing the association that a bit means: the demand to run fast.

Those with 'dead' mouths can learn to be more responsive when pressure comes from a different area. Excitable horses may calm down when painful and distracting pressure is removed and they are taught to re-focus on gentle rein signals coupled with body and leg aids.



Trail riding mounts in Chile enjoy their work more when ridden bitless.

Rider Relief:

Horses that are used by many different riders such as those in a riding school or trail-riding string can sometimes suffer in the hands of the inexperienced, and those who lack an independent seat.

By using non-leverage bitless head-gear, a horse can be protected from constant fearful grip, sudden jerks and inconsistent pressure on the mouth. A well-padded bitless option is preferable to mechanical hackamores and harsh rope or lariat-style options.

Consideration and Convenience:



Endurance horses do well with bitless bridles, allowing them to breathe better, and even to eat and drink during the ride.

Endurance, trail and ranch horses wearing a bridle for long periods, will particularly appreciate the ability to drink, eat on the go and relax without a bit in their mouths all day.

The convenience of a halter-style bitless bridle allows the rider to use just one piece of headgear for catching, tying, ground work and riding. Likewise the horse may appreciate going bitless, so using this option most of the time will improve their wellbeing, and the relationship.

Whatever your riding situation and experience, there will be times when choosing a bitless bridle will benefit both you and your horse.

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:

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
Equine Encounters
Classical Riding Teacher
EA Coach

ANWE Accredited Working Equitation Judge & Trainer
Available for Clinics & Lessons

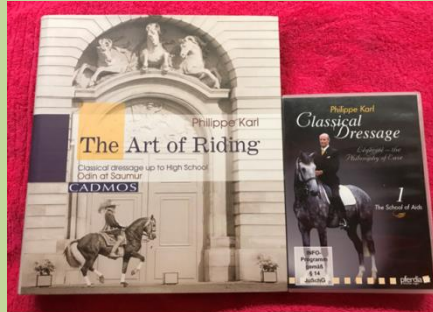
0411 098 462

walker.susieg@gmail.com

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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.



DRESSAGE MASTERCLASS

I received this email re the Dressage Masterclass and thought I would include the info here in case any members were interested in booking a ticket.

After the wonderful success of Saddleworld presents An Evening With Carl Hester, the team at Dressage Masterclass is excited to announce that we will be delivering two Masterclasses at the Australian Dressage Championships at Boneo Park, 18-22nd of October, 2017. We would like to take this opportunity to cordially invite members of the Working Equitation Yarra Valley to these showcase events.

Furthermore, as part of our commitment to Australian Dressage education, entertainment and promotion we would like to offer your members a 10% discount on ticket prices for group bookings of 10 or more people. This offer is valid for tickets to the Friday and Saturday entertainment and education programs, which will be held on the main arena with spectators provided for in the purpose built, undercover grandstand with allocated seating.

The program for Friday at the Australian Dressage Championships includes the Simone Pearce Young Horse Masterclass, The Aussies Abroad Challenge and the CDI-W Grand Prix. The program for Saturday includes Saddleworld presents the Spencer Wilton Young Horse to Podium Masterclass and the CDI-W Grand Prix Freestyle.

Please refer to the Dressage Masterclass website: dressagemasterclass.com.au for further information.

To take advantage of this special offer your members only need email the attached booking form to info@dressagemasterclass.com.au We will then select the best seats available and email the tickets to the person who has placed the booking. Please note that this offer is strictly limited to group bookings made and paid for prior to midnight on Sunday the 13th of August, 2017.

We look forward to warmly welcoming your members to this latest Dressage Masterclass Event.

With kind regards,

Fiona Anderson

Dressage Masterclass Pty Ltd

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.

Susie's educational trip to Germany, Switzerland, France and Belgium.


This trip came from a last minute invitation to join one of our other Legerete Teachers - Mandy Maiden to attend the 2 School of Lightness Clinics being held by Philippe Karl in Zurich Switzerland. But of course you can't go all that way just for 2 weeks - so we quickly planned some extra activities and lessons, and managed to make arrangements with 3 other Master Teachers from our International School: Melanie Bulmahn, Sylvia Stossel and Bertrand Ravoux. Here is a summary of the trip and a few photos. For those interested in more details or interested in visiting these places or teachers - there is more info and photos on my personal FB page.

Day 1 in Tangstedt Hamburg. We make it driving on the 'wrong' side of the road - hitting a few curbs along the way - but luckily no pedestrians or cars got in our way!

Day 2 Hamburg Tangstedt area - lessons and more lessons with the delightful Melanie Bulmahn - lots of learning, laughs and ahah moments today.

Day 3 in the morning, Hamburg area ... we are lucky to ride the beautiful horses of Melanie's students: Irma and Gundel - as usual the horses are great teachers for us!

Day 3 in the afternoon we travel as tourists very faaaast! on the autobahn to magnificent Schloss Schwerin castle. Stunning and incredible History

Day 4-5 in beautiful Switzerland  with [Sylvia Stössel](#) & [Mandy Maiden](#) we go to Sylvia's amazing stable in Neuguet then travel with Cayoosh in tow to Kleindottingen to attend the 2 Ecole de Légèreté teacher's clinics with Philippe Karl. 7 Days at Farmers place B&B which has our accommodation above the indoor arena. They maximise space in Switzerland! Most arenas are in industrial areas as the farmland is too scarce and precious to have arenas on them.


The clinics passed so fast - so much learning and information - I need 3 lifetimes to discover and 3 more to experience! Then u would be very ancient and wise. We reunite with lovely gentle Bajo, Sylvia's wise old grey stallion, then a taste of the Swiss Alps and Swiss food from a stunning viewpoint. I have to pinch myself to see if I'm really here. Next stop the south of France - Auf Wiedersehen Switzerland. Such a beautiful place. We loved seeing the riders, the horses and the clinics, and thank you Sylvia for being so generous with your time looking after us with special memories to take home.

Bonjour France... Enchanté. We fly into Nice and drive to a fancy 'shack' at La Laupie near Marsanne - this was a bargain Air BnB - Highly recommended.

Cruising around Provence... and a special meeting with guess who ...it's a tough life! Phillipe's horse High Noon was unfortunately injured the day before we arrived in France, so we were unable to see his daily training, but we had a very pleasant lunch with PK in his little home village in the mountains of Provence. So with some extra time on our hands there was a chance to be tourists for a change and enjoy the amazing history and scenery.

So some very pretty pottering around Provence villages: from historic Le-Poet Laval to Nyons market. The history and culture here leaves a lasting impression and touches my heart. It was hard to leave it behind. I think I was born here in another life.

From Nyons to Nice Airport. Don't forget to budget for the road tolls on the AutoRoute's. All good plans but 3 hrs on Google maps... 6 hrs on earth. Gee's Louise!! Roadworks squeezey madness chaos in the Airport precinct had us on the edge of staying cool calm and on the right side of the right road. Super driving from MM! A night to forget.

Next stop Domaine Ruhrhof, Butgenbach, Belgium  last stop for 4 days before the home flight.

Was I thinking it couldn't get any better... ? Here I find a perfect and peaceful place with more happy horses - lessons and learning - it's so nice to be in the spirit of here and now. Here I was lucky to have the privilege to ride and learn from Bertrand Ravoux's own horse - the beautifully generous and sensitive Santic - who gave me exactly the lessons I needed to work on. The universe provides the right lessons at just the right time. Bertrand is a wonderful teacher and very generous with his time and knowledge, he has not long been at Domaine Ruhrhof and welcomes new or visiting students for lessons and clinics. And with this fabulous indoor, accom and facilities... it's a wonderful experience. Merci Bertrand !

Dubai 41 degrees outside for 10 hour stopover - sigh - but I booked ahead for one of those fandangled 'sleep n fly sleeping pods" somewhat sort of like a groovy spacious space age coffin - but I did actually sleep and get to stretch out flat, and even did some Yoga in there. 66 Euro for 6 hrs rest - was worth it. Final landing Sunday morning -1 degree and back home with a thud - literally - the landing was a bit ordinary - and with a huge double decker 747 it shook the aisles a bit! I'm so grateful to have had this opportunity, and I hope my horses will appreciate my very expensive new 'hands' and mindset I have brought home!



Susie with Leroy



Sylvia's stable Switzerland



PK and High Noon



With PK and High Noon



Lunch with Many and Sylvia



Susie on Bertrands horse Santic

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