

**DONKEY BREED SOCIETY – NORTHERN REGION**

**AUTUMN 2016 NEWSLETTER**

Firstly a warm welcome to all the new members who have joined in 2016. Hopefully we will meet in person in the not too distant future.

I am pleased to be able to report that most of our Shows in the North this year have enjoyed high numbers of donkeys, much to the delight of the public watching the classes. Sadly, numbers at Bowes and Stanhope were very disappointing this year. A new Show – Penistone – began holding donkey classes this year, on the same day as Bowes and Stanhope hold their Shows. If you can support any of these Shows then I know you will be very warmly welcomed.

Glendene Show (superbly organised by Helen Naden) had 19 donkeys forward and The Great Yorkshire Show enjoyed donkey numbers in the high ‘teens and gorgeous weather. Congratulations go to Helen Naden with *Glendene Tao*. Pam Moon with *Harvey Moon* was Reserve Champion Donkey. Sadly, this year Halifax did not affiliate to the DBS but there were still donkey classes. The Glendale Show, Wooler, Northumberland had 35 donkeys entered with 29 donkeys forward. The Fancy Hat competition was well filled as ever and, I am delighted to say, was won by a new member to the Show, Christine Logan.

Numbers at Glendale were boosted as the Show also acted as host for the Miniature Mediterranean Donkey Association Supreme Championship.

There was strong Northern representation at the Supreme Championship Show in August. I am delighted that *Toadflax of Brownroad*, driven by Elizabeth Bool, won Reserve Supreme Driving Champion – Elizabeth was also awarded the Best Rein Rosette, and *Frontier Legends Diplomat* brought the Reserve Supreme In-Hand Champion Rosette to John and me in North Northumberland.

The Northern Region AGM was held on 06 November 2016 October at Lamb Hill, Bedale, North Yorkshire. Our thanks go to Bill and Carol Tetlow for their endless hospitality.

13 members were present and the following were all elected: Lorraine Rae (Chairman); Bill Tetlow (Treasurer); Carol Tetlow (Secretary).

At the Northern AGM, the awards for the Northern Region Showing Points were made: the Junior Champion is Imogen Jones-Percival, with the Junior Reserve Champion being Georgia Davey. The In-Hand Championship was won jointly *by Brownwood Desert Cassia* (John & Terri Morris) and *Taka Ra Haka of Todridge* (Geraldine Burton) and the Driving Champion was *Toadflax of Brownload* (Elizabeth Bool).

At the Northern AGM, Bill Tetlow announced that he has decided to stand down as Area Representative for North Yorkshire and everyone present warmly thanked him for all his hard work during his time as an Area Representative. I also announced that I will be standing down as Northern Region Chairman in November 2017, having served 3 years in this position. There was a long discussion on this aspect and the conclusion was that, for the sake of a healthy DBS, no-one should stay in office for ever. It was agreed that people should not serve more than 3 years as Area Representatives so that new members would be given a chance to come forward and make their contribution. Please do get in touch with me if you would like to become an Area Representative.

In thanking all Area Representatives for their contribution to the DBS, I should like to highlight the following reports from Pam and Olwen.

Pam reports that a highly successful evening was held at Oakhill Vets in Preston on 13 October - a good mix of donkey owners, including DBS members, Donkey Sanctuary foster owners, Beach Operators and a new donkey judge, filled the room to capacity to listen to super presentations by Vet from The Donkey Sanctuary, Anna Harrison, "Donkeys are Different", an insight into donkey nutrition by representatives from Top Spec and further food for thought on laminitis and Cushing’s from Oakhill Vet, Leona Bramall. A raffle was held with the top prize of a bag of Top Spec Donkey Forage Balancer and goodies were on sale from The Donkey Sanctuary. Refreshments were supplied by Oakhill Vets and everybody left with more knowledge of donkeys.

Olwen Brown has been a very active Area Representative – because of her farm location she has a very large catchment area and Olwen usually holds monthly meetings, except for August (Show season) and December (Christmas events) with an average attendance of 12 – 14. In January there was a harnessing and harness fitting demonstration, following the 2015 meetings on Driving. This was a practical session for harnessing up and harness fitting. Small groups of members tackled harnessing and spotting the deliberate mistakes in harness size and fitting. In February, a demonstration on the first steps in long reining and a more advanced donkey was introduced to pulling a tyre. In April there was a “putting-to” demonstration and, in July, members went on a six mile walk, long reining donkeys or with their donkeys wearing lead packs (containing their lunches!) along the Longdendale Trail. In September there was the annual Tatton Park gathering where, after a picnic, members walked, long-reined or drove their donkeys around the lovely wooded park. The weather was very kind after a week of rain and the donkeys behaved excellently when surprised by the many red deer grazing or hiding in the woods. In October, there was a bits and bit-fitting meeting where bits for in-hand, riding and driving were discussed and handled and November saw a “First Aid and when to call the Vet” meeting to be addressed by Liz Brown BSc Hons, BVSC, MRCVS, followed by the pre-Christmas “Bring & Share” Lunch.

Thanks as always to John and Terri Morris who are always pleased to hear from anyone wanting to enter their donkey for the Active Donkey Award. Please contact them on 01274 835520.

Elizabeth Bool reminded everyone at the Northern region AGM that she is available for Stud Book inspections and also is still an examiner for the DBS tests.

At the Northern Region AGM we raised £45.00 from our raffle and the proceeds were put towards the national 2016 DBS AGM.

**DATE FOR YOUR DIARY: SATURDAY 17 JUNE 2017**

As you will know, 2017 is the 50th anniversary of the founding of the DBS and, to help celebrate this, each Region is to receive an additional £100 on top of its annual capitation award. At the Northern Region AGM, there was a lively discussion on how the Northern Region would celebrate this momentous occasion and it was decided to hold a Donkey Gala Day, to include classes for all, especially fun classes for children and adults. This will be on Saturday 17 June 2017 at The Wonkey Donkey Visitors Centre, Little Oakes Farm, Cobercroft Lane, Cridling Stubbs, Knottingley, WF11 0AZ. The date is now on the diary section of the DBS web-site and further details will be forthcoming in early 2017 but, in the meantime, please put the date in your own calendar – the more the merrier!

The DBS National AGM was held on 19 November 2016 at the Marriott Gosforth Park Hotel, hosted by DBS Northumberland and held in the Northern Region – it was a very enjoyable weekend and a full report will appear in the forthcoming edition of “Bray Talk”. Thanks to everyone who attended and a very big thank you to everyone who helped to make the occasion such a success.

Towards the start of this year, via “Bray Talk” and “The Donkey”, I asked members throughout the DBS to rummage through their tack boxes to see if they had any old or unwanted halters, bridles or bits they could send to me for forwarding to The Gambia Horse & Donkey Trust, a small charity registered in both the UK and The Gambia.

The aim of the Trust is to help reduce rural poverty in The Gambia through improving the health, welfare and productivity of working animals, especially horses and donkeys. An immediate way of achieving this is to replace the traditional mouthpiece used by local Gambians, which closely resembles an instrument of medieval torture, with the bits we are used to seeing in our donkeys’ mouths. I am delighted to report that a number of DBS members have been very kind indeed and I have been able to forward several parcels to the Trust. Thank you to all who have been so generous to date – but there is always a need for such items so please do continue to send them to me.

With Christmas fast approaching, I know that quite a few of us and our donkeys will be taking part in Church services and processions. Two of our donkeys helped out at the end of November at the Carol Service at St. Aidan’s Church in Bamburgh, followed by the switching on of the Village Christmas Tree lights. Faberge and Fancipants were extremely well-behaved although I am sure I heard a deep in-take of breath from one of them when, during the Service, the Vicar intoned “let us pray” – sounded a lot like “let us bray” in the excitement of it all! After the switch-on, local people were very generous and Faberge and Fancipants collected £102.00 which will be going towards the Northern Region Golden Jubilee Gala Day on 17 June 2017.

I hope you all have a Happy Christmas and a peaceful 2017 and can spend even more time over the festive season with your donkeys than you normally do.

**Lorraine Rae**

**Chairman, Northern Region & Northern Region Council Delegate**

**Note from the Secretary.**

If you received this newsletter by post and you have an e-mail address could you send it to carol.tetlow@gmail.com as this would save the DBS Northern Region the cost of printing and posting if we could send it by e-mail.