

DONKEY BREED SOCIETY

Scottish Region



Christmas Edition



December 2017

Season's Greetings from the Chairman

It is hard to believe that this first year "in the chair" is now over - and another one has begun! We have achieved some of the events requested by members, and with your support and help, 2018 will see more donkeys "out and about" and more social events taking place.

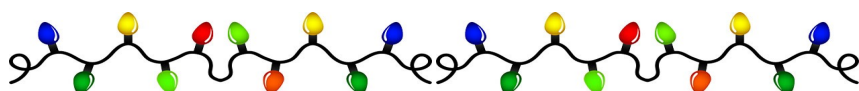
I would like to convey a special welcome to the 10 members in Scotland who have either joined the DBS for the first time this year, or have re-joined after several years' absence. The Society needs enthusiasm, but members must also be able to feel valued.

It has been an interesting year meeting donkey owners in various parts of the country. As we now get into winter, a question I am often asked is whether or not to rug donks. My first comment is always to remember that donkeys already have a rug on - their own - which, in a fit donkey, will grow really thick in the winter (starting in August!). Clare Strang has written a really excellent article on this subject in this autumn's edition of Bray Talk explaining the "dos and don'ts". There is nothing to add to her article other than to emphasise that by not rugging an overweight donkey, they will utilize their fat to keep warm so by spring, hopefully, should be slimmer.

With regard to our Area Regional Meeting held in October, I would like to thank again those who came from most areas of Scotland to attend. All members will now have had the minutes of that meeting, so will know that Mary Sivewright and Netta Sangster have retired from being Area Reps for Highland and Grampian. Diana Milligan has kindly agreed to cover the area for the coming year. Mary is now so busy judging horses and is attending shows all over the UK. She has just informed me that her name has been put on the HOYS judging panel - a great honour. Congratulations Mary.

My best wishes to you all for a very Happy Christmas and a positive New Year. May all be well with you and your donkeys in 2018.

Jean Flint



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Pamela Charles' Boris wearing his Santa hat

Photo Gallery



British Driving Society Event at Kilgraston School, Tayside in September 2017



Lothian & Borders Donkey Events by Claire Armet

On Sunday 2nd April six of us with donkeys and chat on our minds met at the Buccleuch Arms, St Boswells for lunch. We had hoped to celebrate Jenny Porter's birthday with her but sadly she was unwell and was unable to make it. We toasted her health and sent Alison Bell home with birthday gifts and our love. We were so busy chatting that we forgot to take any pictures. We are just so not the selfie generation!



A beach walk was planned for Tuesday 18th April. We had some last minute drop outs and so it was only Alison Robertson with Mick, Sheena McConnell-Ferrie with Sydney and me with Baxter that made the trip to Yellowcraig near North Berwick. Sydney was so excited he rolled in the carpark. So you can imagine how excited he was when he saw all the sand on the beach to roll in. Continued on back page.....

Prize-giving in Scotland

Prize-winners at the Scottish Championship Show being presented with their trophies by Rosemary Clarke, DBS Chairman of Council.



(Left) Mary Sivewright, prominent Scottish donkey breeder, exhibitor and judge from Rothienorman being presented with an award by Rosemary Clarke for a lifetime's contribution to the Donkey Breed Society. This took place at the Scottish Annual Regional Meeting held at Huntingtower Hotel, Perth.

Mary's prefix "Blackford" set the standard in the 1970s and 80s for everything that is desirable in the breeding of a show quality donkey. Her bloodlines have won many championships throughout the UK. Most famous of her donkeys was "Choirmaster" who won the Royal Highland Show supreme championship no less than 9 times. His progeny also went on to become champions.

Mary has recently retired as Area Representative from the Donkey Breed Society Grampian & Highland Region and is now a busy horse judge with commitments for judging throughout spring and summer across the UK.





Young Handlers - DBS Scotland needs you !

Message to Members from Robert Cunningham, former DBS Young Handler.

I have been a member of the DBS for most of my life, beginning as a Junior Member and having now completed my 6 Probationary Judging appointments. When I was a child, I remember attending the Championship Show and competing against rows and rows of other Young Handlers. At home across the border the numbers were less, but there was still a dedicated group of Junior Members competing. These past few months I have met up with some other similarly aged members who have become close friends, from England and Northern Ireland. In chatting to my fellow members, I realised something: there have been no Junior Members to take our place when we grew 'too big' for the Junior Classes.

To me, this presents a major problem to the Society, and a problem to which we should devote our every attention and resource to addressing. Yes, the fundamental aim of the Society is to improve the Breed, but this is impossible without members, and if there are no new members coming up through, and few members joining otherwise, the Society, in my opinion, is at severe risk of folding within the next generation. The dozens of Junior Members have gone, and very few of them have become full members in their own right.

The Society needs to look closely at its membership and must decide what it can do to encourage new membership from outside, and increase the retention of us Junior membership. Otherwise it will not survive.

So what can we do? In my opinion, those in the best position to combat this situation are not those at Council, but rather are those at regional level, like you and me. All members should look in their local area and decide whether there are any young people with an interest in donkeys that could benefit from membership. If membership doesn't appeal, then it must offer something different so it does appeal, for example, fun classes at shows, in addition to Breed classes, or fun days with events specifically tailored to young people, from here, membership can be encouraged.

So my message to the membership is simple, without new younger members, the Society will soon reach crisis point, let us plan ahead and prevent that ever being a problem.

Robert Cunningham

DBS Golden Jubilee 2017 Scottish CD spanning 50 years of donkeys in Scotland.



The Donkey Breed Society was formed originally as The Donkey Show Society in 1967 and subsequently renamed in 1970 when it became a charity. The broad aims of the Society are to preserve and improve the standard of donkeys in general by breeding from good stock, and to promote the welfare and protection of the donkey by educating owners and members of the public.

A Golden Jubilee video slide show is free to all Scottish members and a copy will be sent to you. It features faces past and present enjoying their donkeys over the last 5 decades in Scotland. Please contact Alison Robertson if you would like an additional copy.
krobertson@btconnect.com

Showing: DBS Scottish Champions



(Left) Elma Cunningham with Gamlingay Love In A Mist being presented with the Reserve Supreme Champion Trophy at the DBS Supreme Show 2017. Love In A Mist was also overall champion at the Royal Highland Show.



(Above Right) Lizanne Kempself's Eddieston Lady Naomi - overall Champion DBS Scottish Show.

(Far Left) Nicki Donaldson's Balnuth Jacksean, winner of the Scottish Points Trophy.

(Left) Frontier Legends Diplomat, owned by John and Lorraine Rae, Border Union and Turriff Champion.

UPDATE FROM SHOWS AND JUDGES COMMITTEE

As Chairman of Shows and Judges I thank all DBSS members for bringing their donkeys out to shows up and down the country. They are greatly admired by the general public and other exhibitors alike, whether in hand or carriage driving. Showing is an expensive and time consuming hobby but to have rosettes hanging on the stable wall then it's worth it. Not to mention shiny silverware on the sideboard.

When out and about with your donkeys please spend a little time with any new exhibitors. They will be apprehensive about showing their donkeys for the first time. Just remember that not so long ago you were in their shoes.

As a result of letters and telephone calls I have been asked to put together a Code of Conduct for our competitors. This will be published in the next Bray Talk, The Donkey and the new DBS website. Copies can be obtained from me or the Society Secretary.

This year sees a change to UK Championship Show qualification. You must obtain a card for each donkey and have it signed by the Judge on the day. If the Champion and Reserve have already qualified then a third animal will be selected by the Judge as the qualifier. Cards can be obtained from me or the Society Secretary (usual contact details).

Elma Cunningham
Chairman, Shows and Judges Committee
Donkey Breed Society

Spooky Walk at Hillhead!

At the end of October a Spooky Walk was held at Elma Cunningham's Yieldshields yard. Attendees had a super time. Alison Robertson brought Alistair and Sheen McConnell-Ferrie came with Sydney. Coco and Seonaid represented the Cunningham yard. Another 8 folk joined the throng through the woods and passed the 'props' including Tomb Stones, Ghosts, Skeletons, Scary faces and Cobwebs

What was really funny, earlier in the morning Jacqui and Elma were up in the woods putting out the props. A man came through with his dog and got quite a start when he saw the tomb stones. He asked when were they putting them back in the cemetery! (Photos by Jacqui Methven)



Yellowcraig Beach Walk - cont. from page 3....

It was a beautiful day and we met a number of holiday makers who were of course keen to make friends with the boys. We almost made it to North Berwick for ice creams but decided that not only donkeys need to watch their waistlines. We did of course, have the usual fabulous picnic which we might have been unable to manage if we'd indulged in the ice creams.

Donkeys also took part in the British Driving Society's show at Hopetoun in May. Kendall Young drove her hiny Small Person as the leader in her recently established tandem together with her pony Sophie.

There were excellent numbers forward at the Royal Highland Show with all the classes being competitive. Elma Cunningham's Gamlingay Love in a Mist looked stunning as Champion. Elma did us all proud when she appeared on TVs Landward on the Sunday. We didn't even hear her knees knocking.

All 3 donkey turnouts in the driving class performed really well. They were all forward going and obedient. This class takes place around 5pm on the Saturday in the same ring that the in-hand donkeys use. It is well worth a look. The donkeys generally go well as it is a nice level surface and usually quite firm.

On Sunday 16th May Mick, Sydney and the tandem of Baxter & Jools took part in the fun driving event at Heriot together with a variety of horses and ponies. They completed a drive out of around 3 miles before tackling skills and cones. Sheena & Sydney finished 6th against good opposition. We then progressed to a lovely tea with scrumptious cake.

Active donkeys are lots of fun (plus they give great opportunities to eat cake!)

Claire Armet



Your local Area Representatives

Highland/Grampian

Diana Milligan - 01339 884238

Tayside, Stirling & Fife

Jean Flint - 01577 830250

Lothian, Borders & East Dumfries-shire

Claire Armet - Tel 01875 835377

Argyll & Bute, Clyde, Greater Glasgow & Forth Valley

Elma Cunningham - 01555 750370

West Dumfries-shire, Ayrshire & Galloway

Kendall Young - 01292 570329

Find us on Facebook

Contacts

If you would like advice or help about any aspect of donkey care, please feel free to contact your local Donkey Breed Society Area Representative. They are experienced donkey people from a variety of backgrounds including showing, breeding and welfare.

Visit us on the web at
www.donkeybreedsociety.co.uk

