Northern Ireland Regional Delegates Report May 2019

With the year well underway the region has hit the ground running with numerous events taking place kicking off with the Ploughing and horse skills event at Cultra in which many turned up to display donkeys preparing the ground.

Early last summer Anne Brown had been in touch with the ever popular BBC1 programme ‘Countryfile’ about filming the Donkey Breed Society NI region at their Traditional Planting Day at The Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, Cultra. Everything came together two weeks ago where there was much excitement and organisation to be done.  We couldn’t have asked for a better day. The sun shone and everyone worked together, tirelessly to make the day a massive success.

This has been an amazing opportunity to showcase our Traditional Working Display and for our society’s members and their donkeys to be shown at their best. It has been a wonderful achievement for the Donkey Breed Society NI to be selected to display and demonstrate their amazing donkeys along with a fantastic display of traditional farming implements and driving turnouts on the number one farming and environmental programme in the UK.

A great day as always in Portmore Equestrian Centre for the Whip and Collar Driving Club May Day driving show.This was the first affiliated show for the Donkey Breed Society Northern Ireland. Mrs Joanne Parrett (Judge)  and Lesley McKeag (steward) up on 200 entries on the day. With a mix of classes there was entertainment for everyone. This show just keeps getting bigger and bigger.

Some of the members were pleased to support Stephen in the Darkness into Light 5k Walk in aid of Mental Health and Suicide Awareness. Bert the donkey was the star of the show, even the Lord Mayor and police had to get selfies. It was an early start but a great feeling to be part of it.

We are holding a training evening focusing on ‘Driving your Donkey’ on Thursday 30 May at 6pm, Saintfield .

The evening will include how to get started,  long reining, fitting different types of driving and working harness, ensuring the vehicle is attached securely to the donkey etc.

A fun filled family event promoting the cultural history of rural Ireland and Irish heritage in general will be in June. Our talented Donkeys will be hard at work making hay at Trim Castle.

Stephen Cherry

NI Regional Delegate