



## EAR EAR – NOVEMBER 2023

### The Newsletter of the Eastern Region of the Donkey Breed Society

Hello!

Not sure if you are all suffering as much mud, mud, rain, rain as I am – yet still some annoying flies around. We could do with a good sharp frost to end their activities!

Despite the grey wet gloom outside, we can still report back on events this year, success in some challenges, a new Area Rep, things to do indoors in the next month and perhaps inspire you to join in, from your armchair or a field!

As ever, please contact any of the committee with any ideas or requests (details at the back of this newsletter),

Carole

**BE QUICK** –Christmas wreath making at Annette's, near Bury St Edmunds on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup>

December. All very welcome. A friendly and social festive affair! Lots of nibbles and chat with no (real) donkeys involved. Why not come along and enjoy some festive spirit – if you don't know anyone when you arrive, you will by the time you leave! Please let Annette know by 1<sup>st</sup> December (so she can ensure enough craft materials supplied). Contact details at the end of this newsletter.

### Regional Chairman's letter

It's been a great year so far for our region and every event we have run has been well attended and hugely enjoyed. It was lovely to see so many turnouts at Blandings, near Newmarket. Blandings is a custom built, driving dream that welcomes donkeys and also have events of their own. Check them out here <http://www.blandingsfarmcarriagedriving.co.uk/index.php> We did get a bit wet but dried off and had lovely food and a lot of chat as well as using their wonderful facilities.

The ERADS show had good entries, some of whom had travelled some distance and we found a really super judge who helped those newer to showing and the juniors to have a really good day. Unfortunately I was really ill that day, so if I looked spaced out, it was because I was (I went on to develop pleurisy some days after – something I seem strangely susceptible to despite grabbing every vaccination going!). I've provisionally booked the same date which will be Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October at Skylark Garden Centre, Wimblington. It's a very safe venue with plenty of room, proper loos and a lovely café.



I'm really looking forward to the Wreath making that I couldn't attend last year, at Annette Staveley's premises. I'm rubbish at crafts but surprisingly good at two of them, wreath making and dry felting. Maybe we can find someone to guide us in dry felting donkeys for 2024 sometime. But it's not just about the Wreath making, it's about getting together and talking donkey. Since I joined the DBS some 20 years ago I think, I've had so much fun with them as not only do people really love their donkeys, they also want to have fun with them. Both at Blandings and at EARDS I was struck by the expressions on the donkeys' faces. They were so interested and alert- in between the delights of exploring some fresh grass. It makes me proud of the DBS that they offer opportunities for people and their donkeys to get out and have some fun.

I really enjoyed doing the Bronze award which I am sure everyone can do and we are happy to arrange a day or even come to you at your premises, for you to take it. Just get in touch with me or one of the committee in your area. I went on to take the Silver, the first aid certificate and the long reining. I really want to complete my Gold and I must make 2024 the year I do this.

Safe Haven is the donkey charity working in Israel and also in brick kilns in Egypt. Anna Harrison who presented the webinars on worming, vaccinating, feet, teeth and skin that you can find on the Donkey Breed You Tube Channel on [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjUvK-UeUJMPTjpHMG5K\\_Iw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjUvK-UeUJMPTjpHMG5K_Iw) works with them and you'll find interesting articles from her on donkey care on their website too, such as this one on doing your own donkey health check <https://www.safehaven4donkeys.org/publications/donkey-health-check/> I'm sure all of our thoughts are with this charity as they continue to work through such a difficult time in that area.

My New Year resolution is to keep on enjoying the Donkey Breed Society and the opportunities it offers to meet new people, learn more and help promote donkey welfare. If there are any events you would like us to put on or would like to put on yourself, why not contact us? What we'd really like are suggestions for venues in your area where we can hold events. Our training day at West Anglia College was very well supported, it would be good to do one in every county.

Have a great Christmas and let's hope 2024 brings us all what we would like for ourselves and our donkeys.

Liz Wright

### **Juniors Points Scheme – get your results in!**

It's nearly the end of the year.

If you are a Junior member, or have any in your family / friends, then please get their points in for our Junior Award Scheme. We award 2 prizes, one for each age group and also certificates for all. Points are awarded for the following activities (or anything else you think should be considered). The Junior does not have to own a donkey, they just need to be a paid-up member and help out / take part.

Please get your list of activities to Joss Goodchild, contact details at the end of this newsletter. Please get **entries in by midnight Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December.**

Mucking out, grooming, taking a donkey for a walk, attending a parade, attending a training day, taking a donkey to a club / school / church, sending in an article to this newsletter or BrayTalk or The Donkey, being a spectator at a show, entering a show, drawing / painting a picture featuring a donkey.

### **Anna Harrison – expert donkey vet - 2024 VISIT**

Anna, who has delivered many of the Donkey Breed Society videos on YouTube, that give detailed info. on worms, worming, teeth, feeding etc, will be coming to our Region for an event next year. We don't yet have a date or a venue, but if you contact Liz Wright with anything you'd like covered, we can try and include it. Anna is hugely experienced in the donkey veterinary world and has a passion for donkey health and well-being and is heavily involved in helping SHADH (Safe Haven for Donkeys in the Holy Land). What she doesn't know about practical donkey care is almost non-existent and she has the ability to explain things in a clear and down to earth manner.

This really is an opportunity not to be missed!

## Seasonal Photo Show

After our very successful and inclusive photo show early in the year, we are holding another 'Seasonal' show this December. Open to paid-up members of the DBS, who live in the Eastern Region

£3 per entry, multiple entries per class permitted. All photos to have been taken in 2023 and must have at least one donkey as the main subject, except for class 7 – 'No donkeys allowed' (a chance for all other pets).

Placings rosettes to 3<sup>rd</sup>

**Closing date 31<sup>st</sup> December (midnight)** Judge – tba

**How to enter** - Email entries to Joss, [Jossbmg@icloud.com](mailto:Jossbmg@icloud.com), or post to Joss Goodchild, 6, Great Lane Reach, Cambs CB25 0JF

Payments via PayPal (Friends and family option please) to [caroletravell@btinternet.com](mailto:caroletravell@btinternet.com)

If you prefer Bank Transfer or cheque, please email Joss for details

As ever, the class titles are to be interpreted as you wish – as long as they tie in to the class name and abide by the rules above .Good luck!

**Class 1 – 'Festive**

**Class 2 – You're a star!**

**Class 3 – Summer**

**Class 4 – Autumn (can also cover Halloween)**

**Class 5 – Generations (of people and / or donkeys)**

**Class 6 – Best friends**

**Class 7 – No donkeys allowed (photos of other pets / animals)**

All photos may be published in any DBS publication inc website, magazines, Bray Talk, newsletter and Facebook. Parental permission required for any photo containing a minor.

## Gransden –publicity stand and display report

On Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> September the Eastern Region of the DBS made our usual appearance at Gransden Show, near Sandy, Beds. The show kindly put up 2 pens for us and Rosemary, with her 2 minis, and Carole, with 2 standard mares attended together with willing assistants and spent the entire day talking to the public, answering questions on donkeys and donkey welfare as well as – of course – promoting the DBS.

At 12:30 we were then joined by other members and their donkeys, and gave a 30 min parade with commentary. Annette and helpers, Marc and Kate, Tom and Debs and Tom Bysouth helping handle a 'first timer' donkey. As ever, the donkeys were well behaved and very popular. For some of the donkeys this was their first parade and they were understandably a bit wary, but with calm and reassuring handling, they made it around the ring and soon settled.

The show was a great success, lots of advice given, lots of people going away with far more knowledge than when they arrived, some money raised for our local funds and new people introduced to the DBS (and who came along to our training day a month later).



## **ERADS Show report**

On 7 October the Eastern Region Autumn Donkey Show was held at Skylark Garden Centre, Wimblington which is between Huntingdon and Kings Lynn and has a really lovely café.

The weather was kind to us and we had a really good entry of standard and mini donkeys. Although this is a Championship Show, there are classes especially for those new to showing plus four fun classes for everyone to enjoy, ranging from Donkey the Judge would like to take home with them and Best Ears! Our judge for the all the classes, was Mrs Lewis, and she had a lot of decisions to make throughout the day including the driving.

What I as organiser took from this day was how much fun it was and what a great time we had. The help and support was wonderful and thanks to Carole Travell, Tom Bysouth, Lindsay Coker and Mick Knight for their support and for the competitors for being so friendly and enthusiastic. Huge thanks to Skylark Garden Centre who are so kind in allowing us to use this lovely venue which is so easy with its parking, hard standing and sheltered showground and so much space plus toilets and café on site. Mrs Lewis and her continual good humour made judging look so pleasurable too.

The overall Champion Inhand came from the winner of the Youngstock class while the Reserve was the winner of the adult geldings and stallion's class.

Inhand Champion - Jade Weaver with Perehill Poetry in Motion. Res Wendy Sawyer's Justa Huggermugger shown by Yasmin Sawyer. The Driving Champion was Daniel Street with Sage.

Fun Class Champion was Luna Bunker with Wendy Sayer's Justa Flibbertigibbet.

Next year's show will be 5 October 24



Our judge, Elaine Lewis, with exhibitor William Turner. Elaine also came to help give 'words of wisdom' at our Milton training day



The 'Donkey the judge would most like to take home' class, eventually won by Trish Anderson



Young handler, Luna Bunker, confidently leading out her family's donkey and going on to win the overall 'Fun Classes' Championship



Young handler entrant Courtney Crofts, being given some assistance by steward Tom Bysouth (who was having a great day at his first ever stewarding event)

## **Open Training Day at Milton, Cambridge**

On Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> Oct, the DBS Eastern Region held a training morning at West Anglia College indoor school, at Milton near Cambridge. The event was open to both DBS members and non- members, with or without their own donkeys, plus our 'ever reliable' demo-donks Mandarin and Tintin, owned by DBS member Carole Travell. Members Tom and Debs McKay brought 2 of their donkeys to practice long-reining and to have a go at agility.

We had asked attendees what sort of thing they would like us to cover, and, as a result, we had sessions on general care, foot care / handling, body condition scoring, harness fitting and long-reining intro, inhand showing and also an introduction to agility demonstrating how to use easily procured items – and how the activity could benefit your donkey relationship and training in a wide variety of fields including 'just' going for a walk.

Hot drinks and an amazing array of refreshments were managed by Joss Goodchild, with trainers being Carole Travell, Liz Wright and Elaine Lewis.

We had a fun raffle with a great variety of prizes (Elaine Lewis's cake and Tom & Debs McKay's veg box being some of the stars!).

The morning was a great success, very sociable with lots of questions asked and answered. We will be holding more in the future. If you can find a (covered) venue, somewhere in the Eastern Region where you think such a day would be welcomed please just get in touch. We don't have local knowledge of venues but if you can help with that, we'll do our best to arrange the rest! We already have some planned for the West of the Region in the Bucks / Milton Keynes area.

**Latest events calendar** This is a bit sparse at this time of year, but the next newsletter will include lots more things to watch out for / take part in.

When	What
2 <sup>nd</sup> Thurs of each month	Thursday club at Annette's nr Bury St Edmunds
By 10 <sup>th</sup> December	Junior points scheme – results in
Up to 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2023 May	Photo show – Closing date midnight 31 <sup>st</sup> December
3 <sup>rd</sup> December	Christmas wreath making at Annette's (near Bury St Edmunds).
In the Spring (date tba)	Open training day in the Milton Keynes area. We can cover (almost) whatever you would be interested in. Please contact Tracey to make suggestions / express interest. This will be indoors so safe from the rain!

**Contact details – full details of how to contact the committee members are at the rear of this newsletter, so please do get in touch if you want to come along to anything or ask questions.**

## **Walking Challenge Results**

Congratulations to 2 members who both achieved 100 miles with each of their donkeys. They will be receiving some gorgeous congratulatory rosettes. They are Barbara Sheringham and Albert and Cedric, and Joss Goodchild with Dante and Gift – well done!

The challenge runs from 1<sup>st</sup> October to 30<sup>th</sup> Sept each year, with rosettes awarded for various distances obtained. Get in touch with Annette and she can happily tell you more.

Don't forget!

### **Second Thursday of every month**

**Informal donkey get-together at Annette's nr Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk**

---

**Who's Who** – please make contact if you need any help or have any ideas or suggestions.

Regional Chairman	Liz Wright	01354 741538 <a href="mailto:ewright757@btinternet.com">ewright757@btinternet.com</a>
Regional delegate to National Council	Joss Goodchild	<a href="mailto:jossbmg@icloud.com">jossbmg@icloud.com</a> or 07788 810090
Eastern Treasurer	David Poole	c/o Carole
Eastern Secretary	Carole Travell	07889 162715 <a href="mailto:caroletravell@btinternet.com">caroletravell@btinternet.com</a>
Committee members	Tom Bysouth	<a href="mailto:Thomas_Bysouth@hotmail.com">Thomas_Bysouth@hotmail.com</a> 07596 167314
	Diana Dunstan	<a href="mailto:dianadunstan@yahoo.co.uk">dianadunstan@yahoo.co.uk</a> 01462 713796

#### **Area Reps (all committee members)**

Bedfordshire: Diana Dunstan, 01462 713796   [dianadunstan@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:dianadunstan@yahoo.co.uk)

Bucks – Clare Bysouth   01442 825879   [clarefrances33@gmail.com](mailto:clarefrances33@gmail.com)

Beds - Tracey Robinson   [doofydan6@gmail.com](mailto:doofydan6@gmail.com)

Cambridgeshire: Liz Wright, 01354 741538   [ewright757@btinternet.com](mailto:ewright757@btinternet.com)

Essex East - Jude Pearce 07814 738408   [jude303@btinternet.com](mailto:jude303@btinternet.com)

Essex West : Carole Travell, 07889 162715   [caroletravell@btinternet.com](mailto:caroletravell@btinternet.com),

Hertfordshire Maggie Taylor 01582 768746   [Maggie.taylor3@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Maggie.taylor3@hotmail.co.uk)

Lincs / Leics – Chris Voight, [silvetouch@btinternet.com](mailto:silvetouch@btinternet.com) 01406540874 / 07515 632472

Northants: Currently vacant

Suffolk/Norfolk: Annette Staveley, 01284 830240   [astaveley1@hotmail.com](mailto:astaveley1@hotmail.com)