



**Riding For
The Disabled
Association
(NSW)**

2021 Annual Report





Why Blue?

The colour blue represents both the sky and the sea and is associated with **open spaces, freedom, intuition, imagination, inspiration,** and **sensitivity**. Blue also represents meanings of depth, trust, loyalty, sincerity, wisdom, confidence, stability, faith, and intelligence.

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Raymond Terrace & Lower Hunter			

About RDA (NSW)

The primary objective of **Riding for the Disabled (NSW)** is to provide people with a disability, the opportunity to ride and drive and enjoy all the activities connected with horse riding. Riding for people with a disability is both therapeutic and recreational and **RDA (NSW)** is in fact one of the few organisations to offer a multi-diagnostic service, catering for people with a wide range of disabilities.

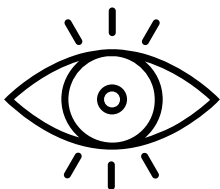
The objectives of **RDA (NSW)** are to encourage, support and assist Centres to provide riding therapy, sport, recreation, training and safety programs for people with disabilities. **RDA (NSW)** offers programs in horse riding, carriage driving, dressage, and Equine Facilitated Mental Health and Learning (EFMH&L) and cater for people with all kinds of disability including intellectual disabilities, specific

learning disorders, injuries resulting from accidents, cerebral palsy, psychiatric disorders, spina bifida, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, thalidomide, visual and hearing impairments, autism and amputees.

RDA (NSW) currently has 39 Centres spread throughout NSW with 90% of Centres based in regional areas. The Centres cater for 1,700 riders annually and are supported by 1,500 volunteers. A community therefore embraces the Centre and not only is the volunteer infrastructure required to adequately support a disabled rider very high but **RDA (NSW)** adopts a person-centric focus where all support services are focused on the rider to create a practical, life-changing experience.

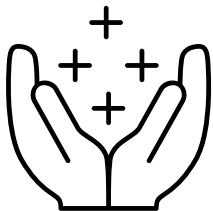
Value Proposition

RDA (NSW) provides the highest standards and training for Centres to develop abilities by enabling them to know they are compliant and supported to help people achieve their goals.



Vision

The equestrian organisation of choice for people with disabilities in NSW acknowledged as the benchmark in service delivery and standards by its stakeholders



Values

RDA (NSW) is a charity that provides horse-related activities to enrich the lives of people with disabilities.



Mission

Person-centred Inclusive Enriching Enabling Respectful Fun Valued

Strategic Priorities

Sustainable Governance and Financial Management To build a sustainable organisation at all levels by developing and implementing recognised high standard practices

Communication To create clear and effective communication strategies with all stakeholders

Marketing (promotion and revenue generation) To increase awareness of the organisation and the services provided at local community level that increases and diversifies revenue streams

Coach development To retain, readitation procedures

Participation To grow participation by broadening the disciplines and numbers and providing pathways via Centre capacity

Volunteers To retain existing, recruit new and recognise a volunteer's value and contribution

Regional Centres

North West

Coonabarabran, Gunnedah, Narrabri,
Armidale & New England,
Tamworth

North Coast

Ballina & District Tweed Valley,
Coffs Harbour

Central West

Bathurst, Mudgee, Orange,
Forbes

Mid North Coast

Kempsey/Macleay, Manning
Great Lakes, Wauchope/Port
Macquarie

Hunter

Central Coast, Kendall, Upper
Hunter, Raymond Terrace
& Lower Hunter

Riverina

Albury-Wodonga, Cootamundra,
Griffith/Leeton, Tumut, Wagga Wagga,
West Wyalong

Metropolitan

Blue Mountains, Ryde, Box Hill
"Tall Timbers", Richmond

Southern Highlands

Illawarra, Goulburn, Cowra,
Moss Vale, Wollondilly, Young



Pearl Batchelor OAM (dec.)

Founder and Life Patron of RDA (NSW)



Directors Reports

Chairperson's Report

To say how proud I am of all our centres, committees, members, riders, volunteers and horses is an understatement. I ask you all to take a bow and pat yourselves on the back. Walking into 2022 I pray that all our members are well, happy, and full of enthusiasm and excited to ride again, ready to welcome all back with open arms.

Covid has been tough on us all mentally, physically and financially. We missed the smiles and laughter of our riders and we hope to have all participants back with us – to reap the benefits of the beautiful companionship of horse and rider. Combined with the expertise of our coaches, assistant and trainee coaches providing the splendid program RDA (NSW) has to offer.

Whilst we have been restricted with Covid regulations and health orders we have still managed to take several positive steps forward. New Regional Reps, Directors and RDA going forward with the Coaching Cert III rollout.

At this year's AGM we were delighted to welcome new Directors onto the Board. Unfortunately due to a variety of reasons, many changes have since occurred and the Board has undergone significant restructuring. My sincere thanks to all who contributed during this very challenging time. This year saw the appointment of two new Regional Representatives who contribute greatly to the communication between the centres and the Board.

Congratulations "Words expressing one's praise for an achievement or good wishes on a special occasion"

Karen O'Neil and Jan Pike were both bestowed the incredible honour of receiving OAM's. To have these two ladies share their wisdom and expertise with RDA (NSW) is a real privilege and we hold your experience and knowledge in high esteem.

Wendy Torr OAM, what an outstanding lady, has been a superb mentor, assessor and coach to many and has been recognised for her outstanding long service to RDA (NSW) at the NSW Sports Awards

Jenny Cameron our newest Board member was recognised for her achievements and was awarded Volunteer of the Year for the Central Coast. Twenty five years is a great effort and Jenny has been a coach, Regional Rep and now a valuable Director.

Well done to all volunteers who dedicate their time to assist the centres, provide care for the beautiful horses and most of all the support and commitment to our riders. The many people who work tirelessly behind the scenes keep our organisation functioning like a well oiled machine. Many thanks to all of you for your dedication. This includes our Office Coordinator and our passionate Life Members.

To be a not for profit organisation run on a volunteer basis makes me proud to work alongside my fellow Directors. It confirms my passion and beliefs that we are here to enrich the lives of those with disabilities, RDA gives them a sense of independence and freedom; seeing the smiles, hearing the laughter and witnessing their achievements is amazing. This is what RDA is all about. Many thanks to these Board Members for your diligence.

There is no I in team and together we have all given that little bit of ourselves to become the organisation that we should all be proud of. I know I am proud of each and everyone of you.



Grants & Fundraising Officer/ Riders Representative Report

We thought 2019/2020 was tough...well hello 2021! Firstly I must say that it has been a privilege to work with our amazing centres, volunteers, riders and horses. Whilst I have not had the opportunity to get out and visit the centres that deliver such fantastic opportunities to our participants, I have had the pleasure of speaking with many centres and helping with grants and fundraising. Times have been tough through covid and it's been a struggle for many centres and volunteers. Committees and volunteers need to hold their heads high as their dedication has been nothing more than outstanding. The horses have been cared for day in day out without fail and the schools and disability services always kept up to date with change and new developments throughout the pandemic. Whilst fundraising has been a challenge due to the impact of covid, nobody gave up. This makes me proud to be a part of such a splendid organization.

Grants too have been a challenge due to much of the governments finances having to be vastly spread across the entire country. Many centres though have been successful in securing grants which is fantastic, these grants come from clubs, banks, Office of Sport, Australian Turf Club and

Racing NSW, and that is just to name a few.

I have met up with the FIA (Fundraising Institute Australia) and will be talking extensively with them to see what they have to offer RDA (NSW) and our centres. By the time this is printed I hope to have something out to the centres as to what support and ideas come from this.

Whilst the riders and participants rides have been sparse, we have had some great stories of private achievements which as usual bring tears to my eyes and a smile to my face. One story that touches my heart strings is of a young ten year old boy with a severe stutter and verbally he can not be understood by his peers. On the horse he speaks fluent and is a happy young boy who is relaxed and happy and that stays with him as he goes back to his school and since commencing the RDA program his level of learning has gone up and up. To get these calls/emails really makes us realize why we do what we do.

Thank to our volunteering who make our Rider's dreams become reality and always know that you too are amazing.

The key to our success
Rests in people like YOU
Who embody the spirit
of greatness by saying
"Yes I can and you can too!"



Executive Officer Report

Since accepting the role of Executive Officer, I have been kept very busy as this comes with great responsibility. It is my pleasure to assist this great organisation in any way possible. Sometimes, my job has involved dealing with issues outside the normal course of day to day administration. We are all here for the one objective: to bring our equine assisted program to all those riders living with a disability so they can achieve their best! We should be all united in this one aim as initiated by our founder Mrs Pearl Batchelor.

Apart from writing memos and official letters, it is my pleasure to set up teleconference meetings for individual RDA (NSW) centres upon request. This role has arisen due to the pandemic and is one of the more positive and less onerous parts of my workload.

I appreciate the efficiency of the Office Co-ordinator, as this area of my duties always runs smoothly in her very capable hands. I am sure that there is a lot she does that is outside her allotted hours.


I would like to take this opportunity to give credit to my fellow Board Member Tracy Lucas, as she has

not only excelled in her portfolio as a "Grants Officer" but has reached out to all centres during various difficult times. Also, by just simply acknowledging the achievements made by volunteers or happenings at each RDA Centre as recorded in their Centre Minutes, Tracy is a great communication link between individual Centres and the Board.

By representing the Incorporated Entity of RDA (NSW), credit needs to go to the tireless efforts of Joe Orland, who writes support letters for individual Centres to enable them to apply for and receive a variety of Grants. Joe also ensures that as each centre's lease is developed or renewed and obtains the best options available for that individual centre.

Our newest Director, Jenny Cameron, has brought enthusiasm and passion to the organisation

Finally, I wish to thank my fellow Board Members for their kind support throughout the illness, multiple hospital admissions and the subsequent death of my beloved David last July 2021. This support was greatly appreciated throughout this emotional journey for me.



Problems are
not stop signs
they are
guidelines

CASP Report

2021 was another tricky year for Coach training and assessments with COVID restrictions, lockdowns and Centre closures throughout the year.

In the first quarter of the year many Centres recommenced programs after a 2020 COVID shutdown and those that had been busily studying throughout 2020 we keen to have their assessments completed. Congratulations to all that completed their training and assessments throughout 2021.

In March we held a Trainee Workshop hosted by Young Centre with 37 people attending. It was a great weekend for Trainees and their Supervising Coaches to get back into the groove and ready for programs and cement the knowledge that they had learnt during 2020 on Zoom.

Our State Coaching Workshop from 2020 was carried over to 2021 and reduced to a 1 day event hosted at Gosford RSL. Creatively we were able to incorporate Rider Biomechanics, games and lesson planning into a conference room. Special thanks to Michelle Wein from Central Coast Centre for being a guest presenter.

After strong interest shown in our Zoom Connections program sessions a 2-day Connections workshop was hosted by Goulburn Centre and presented by Margot and Kathleen from Tumut Centre. This workshop enabled existing Connections Coaches to refresh and provide Coaches that were interested in pursuing this program the opportunity to find out what it is all about.

During COVID lockdowns we again provided Coaches around NSW the opportunity to network via Zoom. These sessions are an opportunity to discuss anything relating to Coaching and enables people to learn from others and their experience.

These Zoom sessions highlighted a need to provide some training on specific topics and it was decided to create a training program to extend from Administration through to Lesson Planning, specifically tailored to those completing Assistant Coach training but was relevant to Coaches across all levels either as a starting point or as a refresher.

In October we welcomed an Administration Assistant, Kirsty, who is helping with behind-the-scenes compliance administration requirements. Our Compliance reporting requirements including AVETMISS and Total VET reporting was completed in time to meet all the compliance deadlines.

CASP also managed the Centre Support Audit process and although not all assessments were able to be completed due to COVID restrictions the Self-Assessment process provides a baseline to ensure Centres are meeting minimum standards required to operate safely.

Further work to develop and enhance the learning resources required for the full Certificate III in Equine Programs for People with Disabilities continued and additional information was incorporated into our Learner Management System, aXcelerate.

Enquiries for external learners continued with the future opportunities for the release of this program publically continues.

Our Coaching Syllabus and training has received compliments from new Coaches as well as from external sources including our Insurance Brokers, EBM. Highlighting that RDA(NSW) is well respected in the community. Feedback is collected and reviewed at the end of training programs as well as on an annual basis as part of our Learner engagement survey.

Our Coaching and Training programs would not be possible without the dedication and support of our Coaching and Safety Panel Members; Wendy Torr, Joan Edwards, Mary Quirk, Jenny Wilkinson and Judy Edwards and other Assessors including Heather Baker, Angus Malcolm, Caroline Rogan, Karen O'Neill, Margot Bulger (Connections), Reigh McCoy (CD), Jan Muspratt (CD), Helen O'Brien (CD).

2022 promises to be a great year of rebuilding and engaging with new Volunteers and Participants and on behalf of CASP we wish all Centres and Coaches all the best for a great year of developing abilities.

Company Secretary Report

The role of the Company Secretary is to support and advise the Board on all matters relating to governance and to attend to matters as required under the RDA (NSW) Constitution and the laws that relate to the operations of a company, in particular the Corporations Act 2001, and those that relate to charities, in particular the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the Regulations under each of those Acts.

This means ensuring that all reports, notifications and other documents as required under the Corporations Act and the ACNC Act are submitted by the due dates and all information is kept up to date. This includes completing and submitting the separate Annual Information Statements to the ACNC for RDA (NSW) and each Centre.

The Directors of RDA (NSW) need to attend to, and be responsible for, all matters as set out in the Corporations Act. This is the same responsibility that Directors of all companies have.

As RDA (NSW) is a not-for-profit charity, the Directors also need to ensure that the company's requirements under the ACNC Act are satisfied.

Apart from these, the Directors also need to attend to the obligations as required of them to ensure that they and the company comply with a myriad of other laws, such as the workplace health and safety provisions, employment laws, Working With Children Check provisions, insurance requirements, to name a few. In addition, there is the RDA (NSW) Constitution.

Due to the nature and size of the organisation, in addition to the statutory duties that Directors need to attend to, RDA (NSW) Directors are also volunteers of RDA (NSW).

In this role, the RDA (NSW) Directors have various portfolios which are designed to assist Centres as may be needed. This includes Directors also providing advice to Centres. As Centres are branches of RDA (NSW), Directors of RDA (NSW) need to monitor the operations of Centres to be able to provide assistance and/or guidance where it is considered needed by an individual Centre.

It is this involvement with the day to day activities of Centres which requires Directors of RDA (NSW) to have both knowledge and experience with the operation of Centres. This combination of knowledge and experience also has the benefit of keeping operation costs to a minimum.

But for the volunteer work that Directors of RDA (NSW) perform in addition to their statutory obligations, the costs of operating RDA (NSW) would require Centres being charged considerably higher affiliation and membership fees.

As there are elements within a few Centres which are pushing for these volunteer roles which are performed by Directors being allocated to employed staff, Centres were surveyed to ask if they would be prepared to pay considerably more than the current costs annually in order to finance the wages of the employees that would be required to fulfil the roles which are currently performed by volunteer Directors. Of all replies received, all but one stated that they were not prepared to pay the additional fees. This is consistent with the view of the Board that we should do what we can to continue in the spirit of RDA (NSW) and keep costs to our riders to a minimum.

Finance Officer Report

As with the 2020 financial year, the pandemic had a very detrimental effect on RDA (NSW) and most of its Centres, particularly the smaller Centres which again found it difficult to operate for the second year in a row.

There has been an increase in the trend whereby grants are made to companies and incorporated associations, with a corresponding reduction of grants being available to unincorporated associations. This does not cause any problems for RDA (NSW) and its Centres. As RDA (NSW) Centres are branches of RDA (NSW), and RDA (NSW) is an incorporated entity, being a company limited by guarantee, it is able to act as the auspicing authority for the Centres. This allows Centres, although not incorporated, to be successful

in applying for grants that are otherwise restricted to incorporated entities. This procedure under the auspicing arrangement varies depending on the particular grant, but generally there are two main methods in which this operates. The first is that the Centre applies for the grant in its own name but receives an acknowledgement of support in respect of the grant application from RDA (NSW) as auspicing authority for the Centre. The second is where the grant is applied for in the name of RDA (NSW) in its capacity as the Centre's auspicing authority, with this application being made on behalf of the Centre.

In all but a very small number of instances, the grant funds are paid, by the grant authority, direct to the Centre which is submitting the grant. In a small proportion of grants the funds are passed through RDA (NSW) for on-forwarding to the Centre. Under this process, the Directors of RDA (NSW) have been actively engaging with Centres which are applying for grants that require support of an auspicing authority.

The value of RDA (NSW)'s share portfolio as at 31 December 2021 was \$2,065,147, an increase over the year of \$273,624, undoing the reduction in value that was caused largely by the COVID-19 pandemic of the previous year. This increase was assisted by the continuation of the Government financial assistance provided to the general economy. This was reflected particularly in the financial and retail sectors.

While the value of the share portfolio is an important factor, as the shares are held on capital account and not used for purchase and resale for the purposes of making a profit, a more important factor is the income that RDA (NSW) derives from its portfolio.

During the year RDA (NSW) earned \$128,785 by way of dividends, with \$37,680 being by way of refundable franking credits. This combined total represents a net return of 7.57% on the carrying cost of the shares.

Along with the return received from its share portfolio, RDA (NSW) derived interest income of \$10,499 in a low-interest environment.

Another "investment" from which RDA (NSW) derives income is the rented residence located on the property which is owned by RDA (NSW) at Box Hill (the suburb now renamed "Gables"). The net rent for the year from that residence was \$10,260.

Apart from the income from the investments of RDA (NSW), the other main sources of income are the Rider Registration Fees that are paid by riders and, for the year, a grant of \$20,000. The management of RDA

(NSW)'s investment portfolio is a substantial factor in keeping these fees to Centres, and therefore riders, as low as possible. To put this into context, the operating result for the year, before the income from investments are taken into account, was a net loss of \$76,787.

This raises another issue – the operating costs of RDA (NSW) and how those costs are funded.

RDA (NSW), in combination with each of its Centres, is a volunteer-run organisation. This means that most of its activities are performed by volunteers at little cost to the organisation. The role of the directors of RDA (NSW) is no exception.

The directors of RDA (NSW) perform two distinct roles. The first is, of course, that of a director, in which they undertake duties that are required to be performed under the various laws that regulate the operations of companies. The other very important role that directors of RDA (NSW) do is to manage portfolios in their capacity of volunteers of RDA (NSW). It is noted that directors of similar-sized volunteer organisations also volunteer their time for the organisation. This volunteer activity is an important factor in keeping costs to a minimum.

The directors of RDA (NSW) understand that there is a move from some sectors of the organisation to alter the structure of RDA (NSW). From information available, the changes being proposed include removing from the directors of RDA (NSW) the activities which they now perform as volunteers and have those duties performed by employees. This will have two major effects.

The first effect is that the role of a director of RDA (NSW) will be limited to attending Board meetings and, in effect, being involved in higher-level policy matters only. The second effect is for RDA (NSW) to employ Managers to take over the roles which are being performed by the directors on a volunteer basis. The employment of the Managers will, of necessity, result in substantial increases in the costs which are required to be paid by RDA (NSW). These additional costs, by way of wages, superannuation, workers compensation insurance, holiday and sick leave, accommodation and so on will, of necessity, be borne by Centres in the first instance, and therefore by riders, if RDA (NSW) is to remain financially viable.

It is noted that, in a survey which was conducted in order to gauge the views of Centres in relation to the above, of all the Centres that voted, every Centre except one voted to reject the above proposal.

Coaching Stats

RDA (NSW) Coaching Personnel

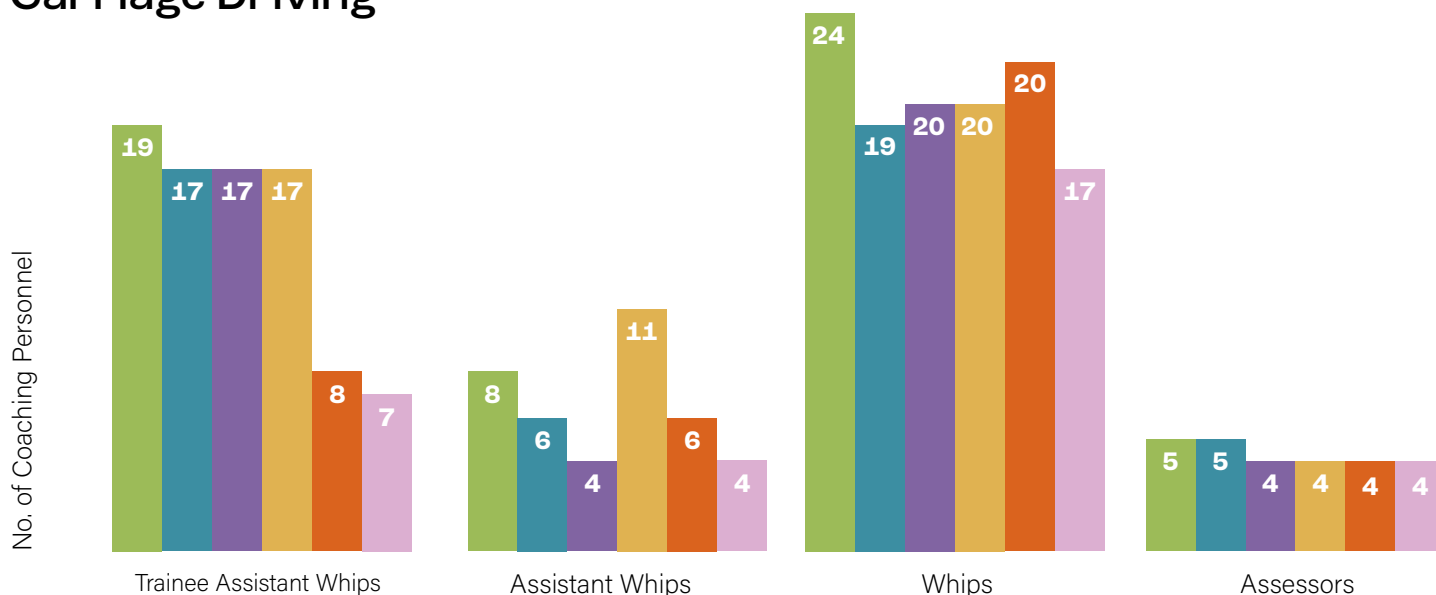
Accredited	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Assessors	9	8	12	14	10	9	11	9
Senior Coaches	20	20	13	10	10	15	14	12
Coaches	112	126	108	119	118	117	89	85
Trainee Coaches	19	21	17	8	10	16	20	14
Assistant Coaches	42	46	49	55	47	71	37	30
Trainee Assistant Coaches	53	74	37	40	69	48	59	40
	255	295	236	246	264	276	230	190
Non Coach - Hippo Horse Handlers	19	19	16	17	17	15	15	15

Assessments Completed								
Senior coaches			2			1		
Coaches	12	15	13		4	3	2	
Coaches (Qld)			3	26	3	4	2	5
Assistant Coaches	18	21	24		13	11	3	7
	30	36	42	26	20	19	7	12

Ratio Clients to Coaches :1	6	5
Clients	1585	1606

Carriage Driving						
Trainee Assistant Whips	19	17	17	17	8	7
Assistant Whips	8	6	4	11	6	4
Whips	24	19	20	20	22	17
Assessors	5	5	4	4	4	4
	56	47	45	52	40	32

Carriage Driving



KEY

2015

2016

2017

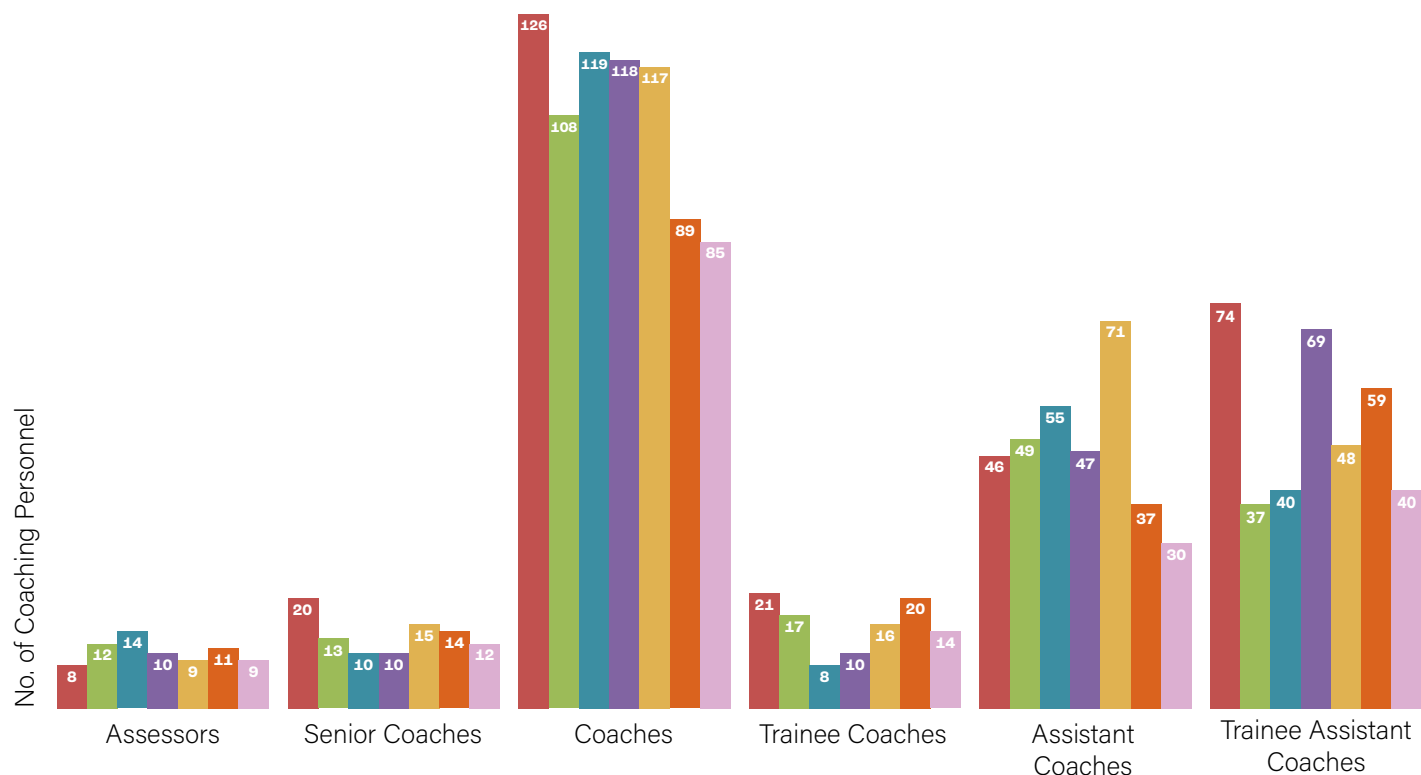
2018

2019

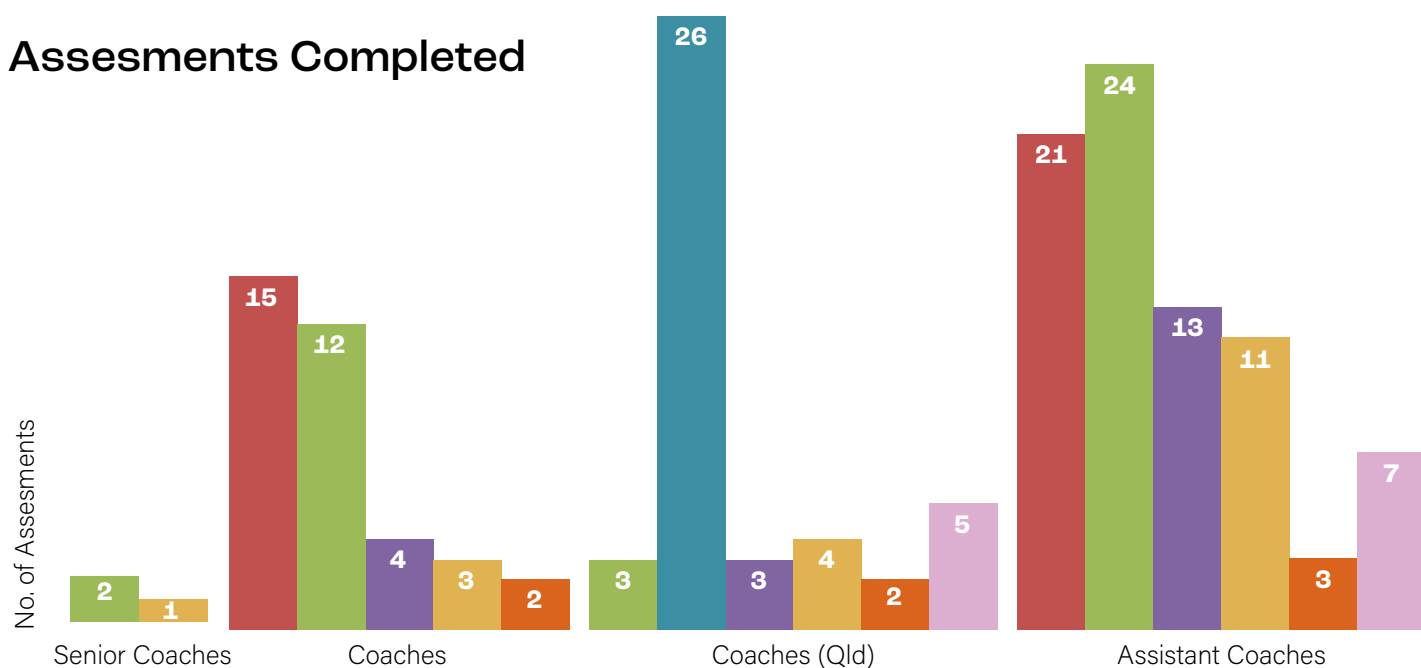
2020

2021

Coaching Personnel



Assesments Completed



Registered Riders

CENTRE	No. of Registered Riders
Albury Wodonga	6
Armidale and New England	9
Ballina & District	34
Bathurst	26
Blue Mountains	9
Central Coast	62
Coffs Harbour	17
Coonabarabran	13
Cootamundra	0
Cowra	75
Forbes	0
Goulburn	24
Illawarra	23
Griffith/Leeton	28
Gunnedah	0
Kempsey/Macleay	25
Kendall	0
Manning Great Lakes	0
Moss Vale	13
Mudgee	26
Narrabri	0
Orange	28
Raymond Terrace & Lower Hunter	46
Richmond	23
Ryde	21
Tamworth	56
Tall Timbers	69
Tumut	19
Tweed Valley	25
Upper Hunter	28
Wagga Wagga	46
Wauchope/PortMacquarie	34
West Wyalong	0
Wollondilly	23
Young	73
Associate Riders	9
TOTAL	890

These numbers are the result of the effects of COVID-19 pandemic which resulted in the compulsory shutdown, or greatly reduced activity, in many of our Centres

Letters of Support



GOVERNMENT HOUSE
SYDNEY

Message from

**Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC QC
Governor of New South Wales
and Mr Wilson**

As Patrons, Dennis and I commend Riding for the Disabled Association (NSW) for your work in another difficult year. Thank you for demonstrating your commitment to the safety, health and well-being of riders, coaches, volunteers - and, of course, equine friends.

The Association has continued to develop innovative ways for Centres to keep riders involved and valued volunteers engaged while planning for and delivering the immense physical, psychological, and emotional benefits of Riding for the Disabled's Centre-based programs. Coaching Workshops have been held by 'zoom' and Centres have reached out to their communities by phone calls, emails and virtual means. Throughout the year, horses have been well cared for and Centres have coordinated regular exercise sessions.

While some events of this past year have had to be suspended - the 2021 RDA (NSW) Musical Ride Video Competition, the Dressage Competition and Gymkhana Gala, and the Mounted Games among them - others have been held successfully, including:

- The 2021 Dressage DVD Competition;
- The March 2021 Trainee Coaching Workshops at the Young Centre - a 2-day event;
- May's Equine Facilitated Mental Health and Learning Workshop held at the Goulburn Centre - including 2 half days for this highly regarded experiential program;
- Racing NSW's Golden Eagle race at Rosehill, which provided a significant charitable donation to the Association.

As riding and other activities resume, Riding for the Disabled Association (NSW) can look back with pride on its determination and its achievements. Congratulations.

**Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC QC
Governor of New South Wales**

Mr Dennis Wilson



OFFICE OF SPORT

DIV21/6473

Ms Jan Pike OAM
Project Advisor
Riding for the Disabled Association (NSW)
PO Box 710
SYDNEY MARKETS NSW 2129
stateoffice@rdansw.org.au

Dear Ms Pike

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a message from the Office of Sport for Riding for the Disabled Association (NSW)'s 2021 Annual Report.

Message from the Office of Sport

Our mission at the NSW Office of Sport is building active communities. The Office of Sport is committed to connecting communities and providing opportunities for all people to participate in sport and active recreation. We are pleased to see Riding for the Disabled Association (NSW) sharing our vision and continuing to provide exceptional programs and support for its riders, coaches and volunteers.

I wish to express my appreciation of Riding for the Disabled Association (NSW)'s adaptable response to the significant challenges of NSW's 2021 lockdown and the impacts of bushfires and floods on regional centres earlier this year.

I would also like to extend my congratulations to Riding for the Disabled Association (NSW) in continuing to support people with disability across NSW and continuing to foster a sense of belonging among participants and volunteers during the pandemic.

I am pleased that the NSW Government, through the Office of Sport, continued to provide funding and support this year to assist in Riding for the Disabled Association (NSW)'s delivery of equine programs for people with disability in NSW.

I am also delighted to see that Riding for the Disabled Association is registered as an Active Kids provider and doing all they can to encourage participation as restrictions ease and community sport begins to recommence. I look forward to seeing riders, coaches and volunteers connecting again through the support of your organisation.

Yours sincerely

Karen Jones
Chief Executive
3 November 2021

OFFICE OF SPORT

✉ Locked Bag 1422, Silverwater NSW 2128
☎ 13 13 02 🌐 www.sport.nsw.gov.au
ABN 31 321 190 047



**MESSAGE FROM
THE VICE PATRON – RDA (NSW)**

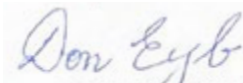
As Vice Patron for Riding for the Disabled (RDA NSW), I am honoured to recognise and acknowledge the extensive contribution given by a dedicated team of volunteers in providing equestrian opportunities and skills to people with a wide range of disabilities within New South Wales.

A special thanks to all volunteers, including coaches, handlers, horse owners & trainers, administration staff, and supporters over this most difficult year. I recall that last year was also a challenging one, due to the aftermath of drought and bushfires. However this year has proved to be more difficult due to the COVID-19 virus, causing some events to be cancelled – including The Musical Ride competition, The Mounted Games, Gymkhana Gala and others.

I congratulate RDA of NSW and the various Centres in keeping riders and volunteers involved through “Zoom” meetings, e-mails, and phone calls, to their wider community, and in co-ordinating the welfare of your horses. However events that were successfully held included:

- In March, a 2 day Trainee Coaching Workshop at the Young Centre
- An equine Facilitated Mental Health and learning workshop held at the Goulburn Centre in May
- The 2021 Dressage DVD competition
- Racing NSW. Golden Eagle race at Rosehill in providing a charitable donation to RDA (NSW)

Congratulations to Riding for the Disabled (NSW) and all its members and volunteers for their efforts and dedication during this difficult COVID 19 year, and I trust you will be able to resume normal activities in the coming year. I feel privileged to act as your Vice-Patron, and I can assure you of my continued loyalty and support and also that of the NSW Mounted Police.



Inspector – DON EYB (Ret'd) – APM OAM
Former Commander – NSW Mounted Police

Awards

Winners Of Each Region AGM Awards 2021

Pearl Batchelor Award

Rosemary Laing	Raymond Terrace & Lower Hunter	Hunter
Anna McPherson	Ryde	Metropolitan
John Smith	Wauchope / Port Macquarie	Mid North Coast
Kerry Southwell	Illawarra	Southern Highlands

Volunteer Encouragement Award

Alexa Hearn	Box Hill "Tall Timbers"	Central West
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Young Volunteer of the Year

Rebecca Wilks	Orange	Central West
Jessica Tillotson	Ryde	Metropolitan
Abby Dickerson	Illawarra	Southern Highlands

Rider / Driver of the Year

Jaden Macko	Raymond Terrace & Lower Hunter	Hunter
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Shush Memorial Award

"Dusty"	Orange	Central West
"Dash"	Kendall	Hunter
"Bella"	Box Hill "Tall Timbers"	Metropolitan

Winners Of AGM Awards 2021

Pearl Batchelor Award

Rosemary Laing

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(Hunter)

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(Metropolitan)

Young Volunteer of the Year

Rebecca Wilks

Orange (Central West)

Rider/Driver of the Year

Jaden Macko

Raymond Terrace &
Lower Hunter
(Hunter)

Shush Memorial Award

"Dash"

Kendall (Hunter)

Pearl Batchelor Medal

2010

Margaret Randall

2012

Wendy Torr OAM

2014

Jan Sharp OAM (dec.)

2016

Margaret Norman OAM

2020

Jan Pike OAM

Life Members

1979 Pearl Batchelor OAM (dec.) - Founder
Josephine MacWilliam (dec.)

1986 Jenny Davis
Margaret Norman OAM
Nan Everingham (dec.)
Sheila Hardy (dec.)
Del Throsby (dec.)
Phillip Edwards (dec.)
Ross Field (dec.)

1987 Aileen Davis

1988 Maureen Turner

1990 Marguerite Francis OAM

1992 Judith Adam

1994 John Plowman (dec.)

2001 Kerry Johnston

2004 Jan Pike OAM

2006 Wendy Torr OAM

2007 Peter Carn

2010 Fiona Little

2012 Bev Amery OAM

2014 Jan Sharp OAM (dec.)
Gerard Murphy OAM

2015 Eric Lengling



North Coast

Ballina & District – Tweed Valley – Coffs Harbour

Tweed Valley

Tweed Valley is a small RDA centre located near the Queensland border in the subtropics. Due to the summer heat and humidity our centre does not commence lessons until the first week in March.

Our team currently consist of two coaches, one assistant coach-in-training and several willing volunteers.

Of the horses we use, we own 10 horses, 4 minis and lease the balance. All horses are exercised regularly by some enthusiastic volunteers. Sadly two of our horses passed away early in the year after complications due to colic, and apart from the usual scrapes and bruises our horses have all been quite healthy throughout 2021.

Our business is to provide horse related services to persons who are classed as having a disability. We mainly do this by providing horse riding lessons to our clients. We also have miniature horses which we allow clients to handle by either patting or brushing. We find this helps nervous clients in acquainting themselves with a horse in a safe, non-threatening way. It also is an activity for those clients who wish to be around horses but who either do not want or cannot ride a horse.

Another activity we are in the process of getting off

the ground is carriage driving. We are still in the start-up phase:

- We own a horse with suitable carriage experience which can also be used in our horse riding lessons.
- We have purchased a carriage suitable for wheelchairs. This carriage is currently with an engineer who is modifying it to better suit our needs.
- Kathy, our second coach, is currently doing a training course to become a whip under the tutorage of Hilary Stubbs of Arundel Park Riding for Disabled.

We anticipate that we will be providing carriage driving to clients by first term 2023.

2020 proved to be a challenging year with the Covid pandemic severely limiting our activities to such an extent they were almost non-existent.

2021 started off promisingly enough in the new covid normal world. Then the Delta strain hit Australia leaving us with further restrictions and lockdowns. In the meantime, the once in a hundred-year drought broke in a big way providing us with a very wet year.

The covid restrictions and wet weather impacted us in



all our endeavours. Lessons were cancelled, the training of our trainee assistant coach and trainee whip greatly slowed and the maintenance of the grounds and equipment were made more difficult with priorities given to the horses' welfare.

Despite the combination of covid restrictions and washed-out days we still managed to have just over half of the scheduled lessons this year. This was achieved largely due to the efforts of Leonie, our head coach and president.

As the provision of lessons is our main revenue source, not being able to provide them during 2020 and 2021 has left us financially stretched. Unfortunately, expenses such as feed, vets and farriers kept going despite our lack of revenue.

Fortunately, Terranora Wholesale Nursery came to our aid by providing us with a reliable outlet for the sale of our mulched horse manure. J.H.

Williams, Equinity, The Rivers Equine Vets, Carlin O'Heaney Farrier Service and Alan Boyd continue to support us by providing us with discounts on various much needed horse products.

We had a couple of successful fundraising days during the year. The first was running a barbeque at Bunnings Burleigh Waters early in the year. This occurred before border closures became an issue.

The second was a golf day in December at the Murwillumbah Golf Club. The weather was kind to us that day with a good time had by all.

On the whole the last two years have proved challenging to say the least. But we are here and eager to rejuvenate Tweed Valley RDA in the new covid normal world and are looking to the centre's future with optimism.



Coffs Harbour

We have had a good year at Coffs RDA in terms of being up and running with only a short lockdown in Term 3.

Our long term volunteer Pete has sadly resigned due to "age" and his cheery disposition is missed. We have maintained a hard core of volunteers and look forward to recruiting in the New Year.

We have two new horses enter our program, Chappie and Peppi who are very popular with all who meet them. We have two new assistant coaches and hope to have them completed in 2022. We have 16 regular riders of whom 7 have been coming to RDA for the past 12 years.

We look forward to another year of RDA with hopefully no rain or Covid to interrupt our classes.



Ballina & District

As we approach the end of our second year of Covid we can look back and be grateful that our centre has been able to operate for a good part the year, unlike some of the centres closer to Sydney. We hope that by the time this report is published things might be back to "normal" for everyone.

This year we welcomed our wonderful new Secretary Helen, who is doing a fantastic job. Our committee numbers have increased to eleven, including several new to the centre, and we now have a fundraising sub committee for the first time in years.

We received a grant from Ballina Shire Council for volunteer training this year, and spent a previous one on a washing machine, computer, wet/dry vacuum, and three first aid kits.

This year we have had thirty riders over three days (down to two days now), approximately half were new to the centre. Most of our riders are school age, some have ambitions to go on to dressage and pony club, and of course to own their own horse! We even have one rider whose ambition is to be a rodeo rider! Many children have advanced to independent riding and trotting during the course of the year.

Over the last year or so we have acquired several new horses making it a herd of thirteen. Our volunteers, under the guidance of Coach Anna, have been working hard to train the new boys

in all things RDA, and great progress has been made. Our two old boys, Leroy and Banjo, are now happily retired and enjoying life after RDA. Happily no horses passed away this year.

Ballina Centre has three coaches, with two taking classes once a week. We welcomed Sue Tuck to the team this year, she assists and gives valuable training for volunteers when she can. If only she lived a bit closer! We have two Assistant Coaches and four trainees.

This year we farewelled long term Coach Peta Best, who has retired after 19 years at RDA, and we thank her and wish her all the best.

Fundraising opportunities were limited again this year, but we did hold a very successful garage sale, managed to get rid of some old tack and make money at the same time. Coffee, cakes and BBQ went down well and it was a fun day for all.

This year we received donations from Ballina Lions, Rabbit Trappers Social Bowlers, Caffe Club Ladies Group, Sheryl Dorey and Minori Pantry Kyogle, and our heartfelt thanks to them all.

Volunteer numbers have fluctuated as usual, but we have had approximately fifty to sixty over the year, coming from four different shires, and this has been very handy when one has been locked down.

Finally, hoping for a better 2022, healthy volunteers and horses, and prosperity for all our centres.

Mid North Coast

Kempsey-Macleay – Manning Great Lakes – Wauchope/Port Macquarie



Kempsey-Macleay

Kempsey/Macleay

Executive summary – Highlights and Achievements

2021 has been a rollercoaster ride for most Australians. The Macleay, like many other regional areas, was hit by a flood in March 2021. Also COVID-19 has continued into 2021 restricting us all in some way. Our volunteers have shown wonderful commitment through all of these adversities. Our regional centre has been fortunate in that we have been able to stay open and continue riding for a good percentage of the year.

When we were unable to operate due to Covid, volunteers spent time exercising and desensitising the horses, cleaning horse paddocks, cleaning out filing cabinets, sheds and planning for the future.

Our 2021 highlights have been minimal but we have been more fortunate than a lot of other areas.

Centre Developments

Major and much needed structural maintenance was carried out on the undercover arena used by Kempsey-Macleay RDA. The roof was lowered and replaced by the Kempsey Showground Trust. This makes the arena a lot safer for riders, horses and volunteers as we previously had to close down if we had a windy day.

Riders/Rides

We have a total of 23 rider registrations of varying ages. While Covid has affected our attendances and continuity from time to time, we have managed to continue opening our centre for most of 2021.

Through any adversity there is always something to put a smile on our faces. One of our young riders this year found horses very intimidating, even touching a horse. In a very short period this turned around for him and he is now one of our keenest riders and shows a lot of potential, much to the enjoyment of our volunteers.

Horse stories

We have had an unusual year with 3 of our horses sustaining injuries or requiring surgery. In March we were down to 2 horses without injuries which made it difficult for our riders. We reduced our individual riding times to cope. We purchased another 3 horses – 2 of which have proven to be very suitable for RDA. One horse was sold on as she was not appropriate for our needs. Fortunately, all horses are back on deck now and we hope it remains that way.

Coaching

Kempsey-Macleay Centre currently has one active coach and one TAC. Regrettably earlier this, after 12 years of coaching, one of our coaches is unable to continue coaching at our centre at this time.

Community Events and Fundraising

Kempsey-Macleay Centre celebrated our 15 Year Anniversary earlier this year. It was postponed from last year due to Covid. We had a very nice morning with rider demonstrations, a sausage sizzle and lots of catching up. Past and present riders and volunteers, families and friends attended along with Margaret Norman (RDA Director), Sue Harding-White (Regional Representative), Melinda Pavey (Local State Member) and Liz Campbell (Local Mayor). A very enjoyable day was had by all.

Volunteers

Our volunteer numbers remain low and our Kempsey High School students who helped out prior to Covid no longer attend our riding days due to Department of Education regulations.





Manning Great Lakes

Our centre at Rainbow Flat has endured a tough couple of years starting with the drought followed by the bushfires which destroyed many fences and the little grass we had. Then, after a lengthy and costly recovery program to replace much of our fencing and signage, we had only 3 weeks of riding before the COVID-19 pandemic forced us back into recess.

This year the centre has battled through a Billy-Goat weed infestation which took hold after the flooding rains in January, and rendered our paddocks unfit for the horses.

The impacts to the centre have been enormous; stretching our volunteer and financial resources to the limit, hand feeding some horses and adjusting others, whilst eradicating the Billy-Goat weed and improving the pastures. Whilst we now have edible grass growing in most paddocks, we are trying to secure a grant that will supply the farm machinery necessary to maintain the paddocks into the future.

The burnout rate of our volunteers has been high during the long riding absence and we are recruiting volunteers across all areas of our operations, spearheaded by a media campaign we started with radio and television stations in mid-November and on our Facebook page in early December.

The media campaign is also recruiting past and future riders to register their interest for the 2022 riding year.

Fortunately some of our longstanding volunteers resumed their previous roles on our committee in late September, after a 12 month sabbatical. This has allowed the centre to be taken out of Administration and returned to Accredited Centre status.

Four horses left our centre this year; Beauty and Comanche have been retired to good homes, while Monty and Gypsy who were leased to the centre were returned to their owner.

We are currently in the market for two horses to build our riding and carriage driving capacity.

After all of the difficulties of the last two years, we are pleased to announce that MGL will be ready to ride on Thursday 3rd March 2022.

Wauchope / Port Macquarie

What a year!!!

After being unable to ride for a large part of 2020, we resumed riding on 4th February, 2021 with reduced numbers. The riders' smiles were wonderful to see, and wow, some of our young riders had grown up. Young Adults! At first, we were rather slow and awkward, complying with all the new Covid Safe regulations and procedures.

We were on a steep learning curve, but after a lot of planning, trials, and tribulations, we are now a cohesive group, ticking all the boxes, with cleaning, physical distancing, QR codes, etc. The furniture certainly looks a lot newer. Has turned from off-white to sparkling white. The power of Lemon Cleaner!

By August we had 34 riders in 6 groups, and several very keen new volunteers, and then we were back in LOCKDOWN. The great news is we recommenced on 2nd November, our riders were very excited, counting down the days.

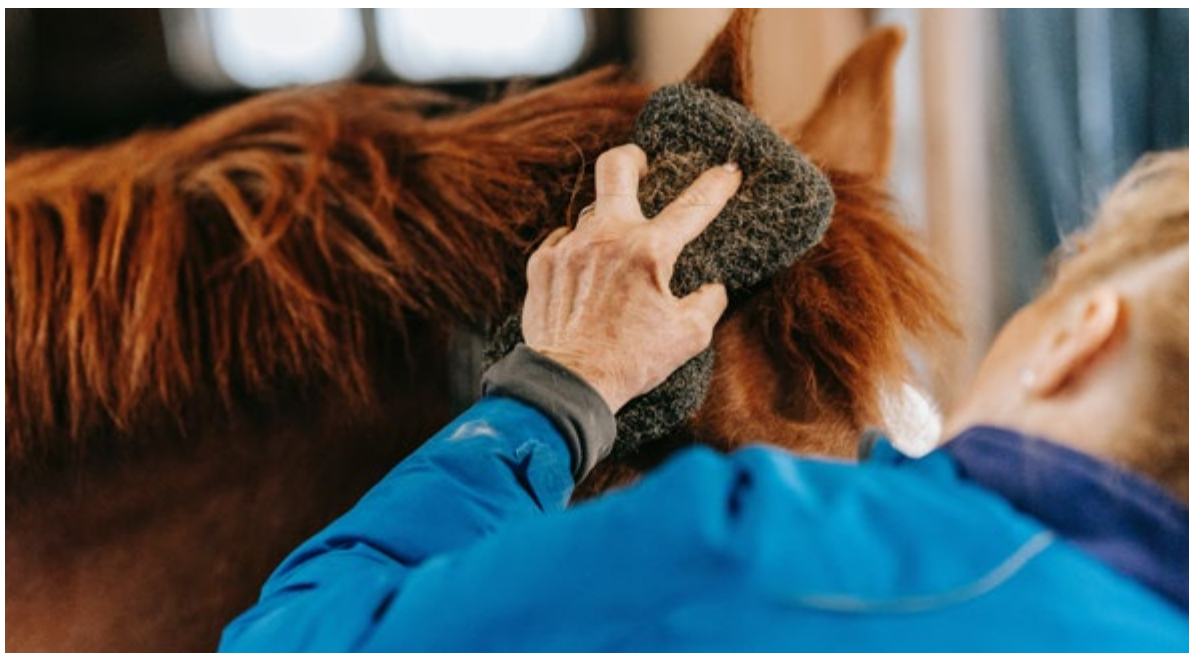
Our horses are all in good order, have been enjoying a working holiday in their agistment paddock, while helping to train our aspiring assistant coaches. They have had lots of grooming, hoof cleaning, saddle, rug, and bridle/headstall fitting, leading at a walk and trot, and plenty of standing patiently. A big thank you to Robyn Coombes and Sorell Masters for sharing their coaching experience and mentoring these new trainees. Both Robyn and Sorell are great ambassadors for this centre.

Sorell completed her Coach Training during the year, and is proving to be a very effective Coach, with a wonderful friendly and encouraging manner. With three coaches, Sue, Robyn and Sorell, and Assistant coach Jaci managing the mounting and dismounting our Instruction programme is back on track.

It was very disappointing for the riders who participated in this year's Musical Ride to find that the competition was cancelled. However, our centre will present each rider with a DVD of their ride, and may refresh and polish up their ride for another try next year

"Ditto" the Braveheart Lion Cub visited with us this year creating great excitement with riders and volunteers. Even Bluey had a snuggle.

A big thank you to our maintenance volunteers who are always busy in the background with maintenance and improvements to water tanks, and new guttering to help keep the tanks full, improvements to fences, gates, feeding yards and a shady tie-up area. We have received a Grant from Port Macquarie/Hastings Council for a new rainwater tank, which will supply the horse trough. We have 43 volunteers. To all our volunteers a big thank you – without you there would be no riding! On a sad note, we have lost 2 long-time volunteers Kevin Waldron and Jim Watts. They will be sadly missed.





Hunter

Central Coast – Kendall – Upper Hunter
Raymond Terrace & Lower Hunter



Central Coast

Executive Summary – Highlights and Achievements

It was a big year for Jenny Cameron who won the 2021 Pearl Batchelor Award and then went on to win Central Coast Senior Volunteer of the Year. This was a very deserving win, and we are so proud of her. Jenny has also agreed to join the Board of Directors, she has years of experience with RDA not only at a grass roots level but also as a regional representative, and we know she will be a fantastic addition to the team.

Centre Developments

We have been informed by the Hunter Development and Juvenile Justice Department that the road that runs along the front of our centre is to be widened to a two-lane road with kerb and guttering and a footpath on both sides. We have been involved in ongoing collaboration, and although we will lose our parking out of the front, we should finally see an end to those potholes. Developments are expected to be completed in March.

Riders/Rides

Like most centres we only rode for a couple of weeks this year. We had eight schools participate this year, along with one private class a week, and two Saturday classes in Terms 3 and 4.

We have contacted the schools to see who will be coming back and have had a great response so far. I think we all want to get back to normal as soon as possible, and some of our riders have made fantastic progress.

Horse stories

We have nine horses now but sadly we lost our lovely little Buntly. He was 29 and had been a great pony especially for the nervous little ones. He will be missed by everyone - he was a real character who destroyed more rugs than any other horse.

On a brighter note we have acquired a lovely new horse named Vegas who is 14.3hh and 16 years old. He has the most beautiful temperament, and we have very high hopes for him. We will start looking for another horse after Christmas. The rest of the boys are loving this long holiday and are all looking well. We will start bringing them in before the schools return so they remember what they do best.

Michelle Wein has been giving our boys all sorts of treatments including massages. She carefully goes over all our horses and gives us updates on





any issues she finds. I think they love these spa weekends; they are a very spoiled lot.

Coaching

We have one senior coach, five coaches and two trainee assistant coaches. There have been obvious difficulties for the trainees regarding lockdowns, but they are getting through the modules, and we will get back to hands-on learning soon.

Community Events and Fundraising

Despite being such an awful year, we have otherwise been lucky with grant applications. We received \$15,000 as a Covid grant and a \$2,000 volunteer's grant. Gosford RSL have always been very supportive of us and generously donated \$2500, even though they have been shut for most of the year.

Garry Kirkby has been giving promotional talks at various clubs including Kariong/Somersby Rotary, Woy Woy Rotary and Lisarow/Narara Lions. Members from these organizations have given kindly and visit when they are able to. We love to show them a class in action whenever the opportunity arises so they can see what we do here.

Volunteers

Since closing down we have established a weekly roster for horse check-ins each day. Due to restrictions, we have not seen many volunteers, but we have managed to stay in touch with everyone and keep them informed about what has been happening. We can't wait to see you all again. Let's hope 2022 will be a great year and we can get back to what we all love doing.

Upper Hunter

Our centre began school programs in May 2021 as per usual much to our delight.

First school term was booming and as we were four weeks into Term 3 the dreaded Covid stopped our riding for the year.

Our centre runs the school program Terms 2 and 3, so we are looking forward to being more productive in 2022.

However the year was not wasted as we were given a grant from the local Scone community which has enabled us to upgrade our lunchroom and waiting room and also add a roller door to our hayshed.

We still managed to have a lovely lunch with old and new volunteers attending at Gundy Pub just out of Scone. It was great to catch up with everyone.

Not much more to tell!



Kendall

Highlights and Achievements

The last 18 months have been very challenging for Kendall, as well as having to cope with fires, Covid and floods, we were evicted from the Showground where we had been based for 4 years. That meant we had to dismantle everything that we had built up and constructed over that time. We also had to find a new location to set up our Centre.

Again, through the generosity of the local community, a very generous family came to our rescue giving us a 25 year lease on a block of land.

So, the construction began again, a very dedicated group of volunteers stuck with us throughout this very trying period. We overcame a lot of hurdles to finally get our Centre to where it is today. The local community have also been very supportive throughout this entire time.

Riders

We have continued to keep in touch with our riders, they are all looking forward to the opening of our new Centre and getting back to the routine of their weekly class and seeing their favourite horses.

Volunteers

It has been very challenging with the amount of work our crew have done, both men and ladies, as well as coping with all the extreme weather conditions in the rebuilding of our Centre. We are very proud to say they have done an amazing job, considering most of the work crew are all late 60's, 70's and up to 80 years old.

Needless to say, all our volunteers and riders are anxiously looking forward to the completion of our New Centre when we reopen again in 2022.

Community Events and Fundraising

We have been fortunate to have great community support with Bato Memorial Golf Day, which had to be postponed to a later date due to Covid lockdown, Westpac/RDA Kew Men's Bowling Day as well as our usual fundraising raffle days throughout the year.

The local media has also been very supportive with articles in the paper showing our progress as well as radio interviews with the local stations.

We have been successful with some grants that have allowed us to purchase water pump, another water tank and helmets.



Horses

We are currently in the process of looking for some new horses, sadly we lost a couple throughout the year through ill health and an accident. Our real character is Dash, who continues to always give everyone a smile through his antics.



Our gratitude goes to all our dedicated feeders and horse carers who have had to go to different locations, where the horses have been agisted through our construction time.

Coaching

Although limited coaching has been undertaken at the various locations, the Kendall team have been involved in zoom training sessions conducted by Nicole King (RTO) Coaching Administrator. Our coaches are Judy Rattur and Sue Tubb and Assistant Coach Marilyn Ferris.

This message was sent to us via Facebook. Sadly Roxanne (coach) passed away several years ago but, her efforts live on!

“ Hi guys, I was a rider with you in 2012/13 you would have known me as Sophie Harrison Robinson. I worked very closely with Roxanne, I never ever got to thank you for what you did for me. I don't think I would be alive if it wasn't for what you guys do for us underdogs who need things like this. Anyway, thank you so much for helping kids that are like me, it meant the world to me and gave motivation and I know it does for kids you work with now. Thanks guys, you really do have a huge impact on us kids. I started when I was 11/12, I'm almost 20 now and horse riding was the best thing I ever got to do, having the opportunity to work with Roxanne for those years was such a blessing. Thank you. ”

Wishing everyone all the best from Kendall RDA.

Raymond Terrace & Lower Hunter

The Covid experience has changed our days at RDA, as it has no doubt changed all our lives in some way or another.

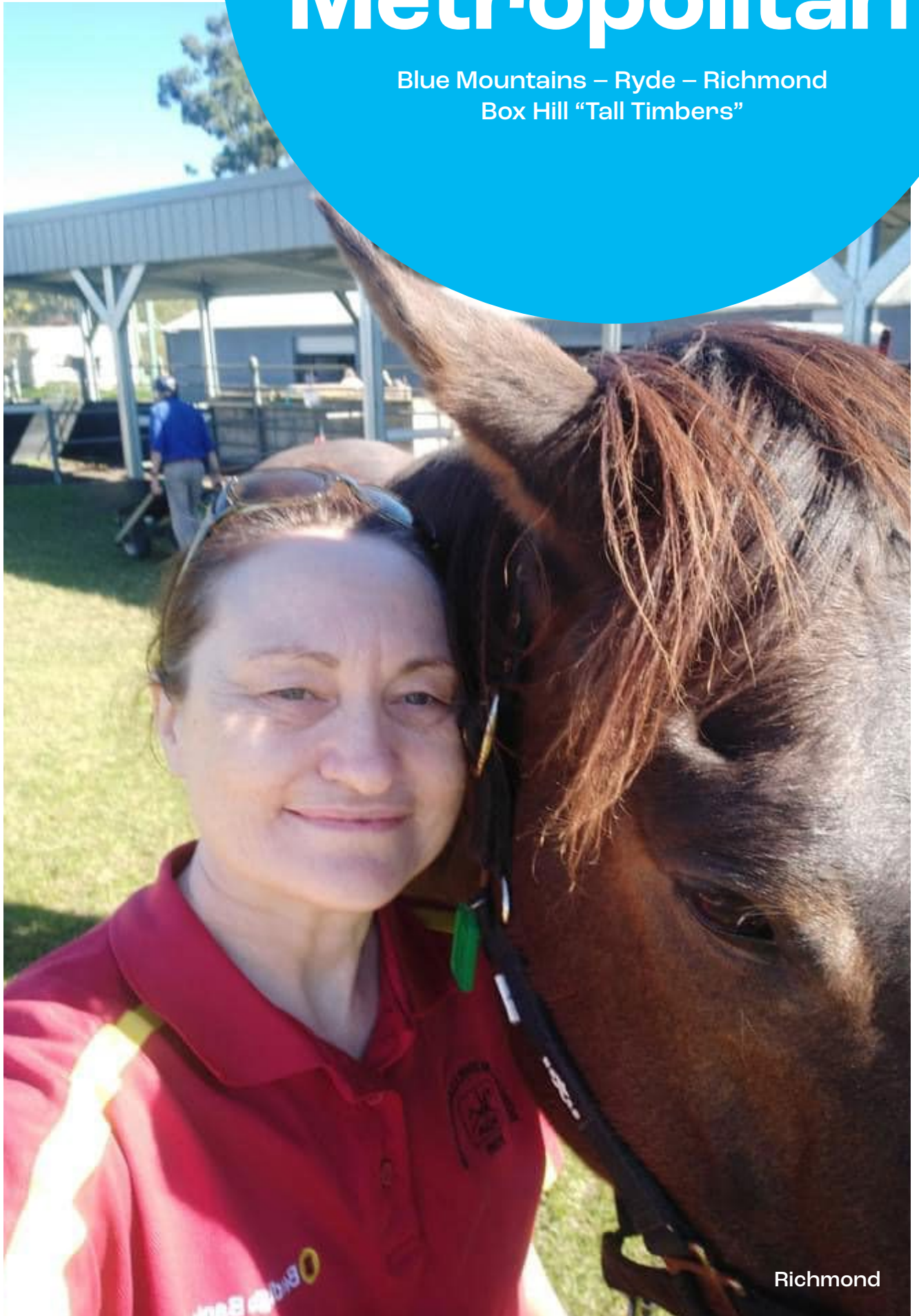
At the end of 2020 we were fortunate to be able to hold several 'trial' programs with limited numbers of riders and volunteers. The trial period lasted around 9 weeks with several coaches organising programs in line with the health and safety requirements. These programs were a great success and because of that we were able to commence 2021 under similar rules.

Fortunately, the numbers allowed on site and in our Arena were increased and we had three programs running during the week and a fortnightly Saturday program. Although we were not able to complete Term 3 due to the return of Covid lockdowns in our area the programs ran for 19 weeks in 2021. All programs except for Saturday completed 'in-house' Mounted Games, with both riders and volunteers enjoying the experience. Families were able to watch their riders compete and all participants were awarded for their participation. Our winners were sent their ribbons and certificates by post, and were very excited to receive their awards.



Metropolitan

Blue Mountains – Ryde – Richmond
Box Hill “Tall Timbers”



Richmond

Ryde

After a bumpy 2020 we were very excited to get classes up and going again in the first semester of 2021. When the students returned, we used this time well for training new volunteers, introducing and accrediting two new horses and graduating a new Assistant Coach. Our new volunteers started well prepared by studying lots of new resources uploaded to our website by one of our young volunteers, whose attention to the website and social media linked us to new and varied communities, building our reputation and support. Two new horses Ollie and Big Jim were gifted to us from a co-op at Ourimbah, Hidden Valley – they've become very popular and are great workers.

And just when we thought we knew how to live with Covid, new lockdown rules hit. Many RDAs sadly had to close at this time. At Ryde however, we decided that keeping our horses working and volunteers connected was a goal worth pursuing, whilst being totally committed to ensuring that our Centre did not contribute to community transmission. We also had to make sure that when we started this ambitious project, we could continue it at least until Christmas. Fortunately, a core of our volunteers was willing and able to help. However quite a few were locked down for the extended period including our President and three Senior Coaches. So, we listed the volunteers, coded them for day of the week, for LGA, for skills, willingness to do extra jobs and availability for morning and afternoon feeding. Then we created non-overlapping rosters to ensure that if we had a Covid case we could readjust our rosters and keep going. We are extremely pleased that none of our volunteers became ill and equally pleased that we managed to care for our horses and the Centre during this challenging time. There was twice daily feeding and four sessions per week when the horses were well groomed, exercised, ridden and attended mock classes. Then the same small teams had to do all the cleaning of the horse yards, gardening, maintenance, cleaning of the tack, equipment and of course, keeping the Centre Covid safe with disinfectant, masks, gloves and special protocols. It became clear though that those of us who could attend the Centre were actually extremely privileged. We were the lucky ones. Our visits to the Centre gave us purpose, our horses as always, returned our efforts in kindness and affection. We had the joy of fresh air albeit through our masks and some camaraderie with others. This was a welcome gift that our Centre was able to give to us during the 2021 lockdown. Our Saturday crew even did some live streaming to share the experience with those less fortunate who were locked in.

While Zooming here and Zooming there, we used the time to work hard in making 2022 a more viable year. We established a "sustainable finances" working party and have trialed and planned a range of new initiatives, which we're getting ready to implement in 2022. We said farewell to two of our favourite horses Jeht and Cutie who have gone to fabulous new homes and we now have two new ponies in training for next year. Also we grabbed the brief window at the end of Term 4 to hold two Coach assessments. Thanks to riders from Semester 1 and the assessors, Joan and Angus, we graduated a new Coach and a new Assistant Coach. We hope to have four more assessments early next year and have already invited around 50 new riders for 2022. We celebrated Volunteer Week and our 10th birthday at Marsfield.

So, another year of the unexpected and another year of knowing that we can pull together, support each other and meet the challenges. Our mission is our riders, our partners and our horses, and our strength is our volunteers and the RDA Spirit.



Richmond

Highlights and Achievements

This year has been another covid tough year at Richmond – we managed to get riding again at the beginning of the year only to be halted again. We did not let this deter us from keeping the centre maintained and looking good. The horses have all been managed and kept fit and well by the horse management team. We have continued with the ongoing farriers, vets, worming's, health checks, dentist etc, thanks to the support and sponsors we get in the Hawkesbury. We also got over some severe storms and flooding in the area and WS Uni did many repairs for us following the storm. We have new horse options on hold until the time is right to take them so that is something to look forward to. The highlights have been getting all the shelters repaired and the new bases put in so the horses have good solid ground to stand on and shelter from the hot summer sun. The centre team have been brilliant in keeping things going and we don't seem to have any illness occurring in our volunteer base, great news.

Centre developments

- It has been a steady year and the shelters, arena roof and gutters have been our main objectives to get ready for better times.
- Paddocks have been levelled and a major rabbit plague averted thanks to a supporter with a rather large digger.
- We've been given some very suitable tack from the local Polo Club and generous individuals.
- Not much funding going on due to restrictions but the potential for a Polo Day and a Race Day at Hawkesbury races for the centre is on the cards once it can be done.

Riders / Rides

- Number of riders remains the same and all eagerly waiting to get back to riding.
- We publish a little up date every week on our Facebook page and encourage riders where possible to enjoy and comment in comments so they feel still connected with the centre.

Horse stories

- The number of horses remains at four until we are Covid better.
- Our horses are all fit and healthy and each one has a character of its own and a hierarchy order of Burger, Elton, Gibson, and Big Mac. Elton and Gibson are both Sky film stars and amazing thoroughbred ex racehorses, who are both so intelligent and kind. Anna was retired this year.



Coaching

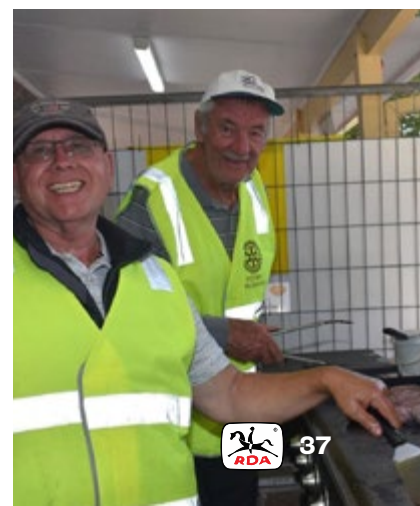
The team have not changed and remain at 4 Coaches and 2 Assistant Coaches available when possible, to carry out lessons etc. Ian Travers has signed up for further coach training and development and recently became the Regional Rep for Metropolitan area and privately studies for disability education and fitness qualifications. Mel Neilson is constantly updating and improving her homeopathic knowledge which also helps the centre horses keep well.

Community Events and Fundraising

- There has been no major fundraising other than our participation in staffing the Hawkesbury Show over the weekend event pre-Covid. Close contacts have been kept with local community groups such as Rotary, Lions and RSL clubs and Bendigo Bank.
- Some donations for feed from local Race Horse Studs, Fairview Park Stud and Godolphin and have been received.
- Media coverage has been very little and we remain in touch with Julie Ryan the owner of the independent magazines who will take articles when we have some in exchange for small ads for us.

Volunteers

- We did a pre-Covid recruitment drive at the beginning of the year with great success but then had to temporarily close, we have tried to keep in touch with most of them for when we reopen.
- Volunteers who have helped keep the Centre going during lockdown and deserve an acknowledgement for their hard work are: Mel Neilson, Mal Cook, John Noble, Bruce Sunderland and Jo Robinson.





Box Hill “Tall Timbers”

Key highlights – awards:

- Karen O'Neill awarded an Order of Australia Medal!
- Fran Prudames awarded Volunteer of the Year!
- Alexa Hearn awarded Volunteer Appreciation Award!
- Kirsty Hardman awarded Life Membership!
- Joan Edwards recognised for 45 years of Service!
- Bella awarded our Horse of the Year Award!
- Violet and Leila awarded Rider awards!

2021 started with lots of excitement and enthusiasm for the year ahead with our Covid Safe plan in place we were ready to go. Our programs were a little different to usual with some schools and volunteers not available, however we were able to transition to a program with the majority of individuals joining into group and individual sessions.

Our Allied Health services grew with Counselling and Speech Pathology now available, and an expanded Occupational Therapy program. We saw an increase in demand for services in all programs resulting in our staff Coaches stepping in to create more afterschool and Saturday options for participants.

Our Coaches participated in additional training including RDA(NSW) State Coaching, Connections Workshops and an AEFL Course to support our expanding programs.

When Covid lockdowns hit for the second year in a row the wind was taken out of our sails; but the team were keen to stay in touch with Volunteer and Participant Zoom sessions recommencing.

Our horses were kept in light work ready to recommence as soon as possible. Our Allied Health programs switched to telehealth.

Our fundraising teams were busy with Bunnings at every opportunity and our goal to try something different was achieved with our first charity Golf Day. While these kept us busy we were not able to achieve our fundraising goals to support the Centre operations. We are continuing our Community Engagement work and participate in regular local



events and opportunities and hope that we can continue to raise awareness in our local area.

We were proud to be nominated as a finalist in the 2021 Western Sydney Awards for Business Excellence and look forward to future connections from this program.

Our NDIS mid term Registration Audit was completed, it is always a good process to go through to ensure we are compliant and operating in line with the industry standards. Our NDIS participants has risen to almost half of our participants.

We enjoyed the last part of our program with Hancock Creative resulting in Social Media training being shared with 4 Zoom sessions offered to all Centres in NSW to share what we have learnt.

Our programs were able to return in a reduced capacity once the Covid restrictions lifted. We have had a significant downturn in volunteer availability across all roles due to family and work commitments but have continued to advertise through The Centre for Volunteering and local pages.

As we near the end of 2021, we have completed the development of a business plan to see us through the next 2 years and are working on creating sustainability in a tough not for profit and volunteering era that is dramatically affected by Covid.

We look forward to celebrating our 50th Birthday in 2022!



Southern Highlands

Illawarra – Goulburn – Cowra
Moss Vale – Wollondilly – Young



Cowra

The Cowra Branch of RDA NSW began 2021 with 88 participants registered. Due to Covid restrictions we could only have 6 students in each class. With the large number of students, we decided to have Cowra Primary School and the High School in the first Semester and then have the Holman Place School during the second Semester so that each school was able to attend 15 lessons each.

We began our classes each Wednesday in March with 3 new volunteers added to our usual 15-20. We had 5 lessons each Wednesday of 40 mins duration. We couldn't do our usual fundraising with the Covid restrictions, so we began private lessons on Tuesdays which were paid for by parents or by NDIS. This helped enormously with our fundraising as we had been given a grant to begin an undercover arena on our grounds. We were kindly given the lease of the local Tip Shop from the Cowra Shire Council which became very popular and a great fundraising adventure.

We also continued with our monthly Bunnings BBQ which is well supported.

We were also training two Assistant Coaches during the year.

Wollondilly

Having been closed since earlier this year we have made good use of our "time off" even though we would much rather have been doing what we love doing the most – working with our riders, horses and volunteers.

Three of our members maintained our grounds by raking up leaves, small branches, twigs etc. In April we were approved for a Burn Permit so were able to burn all the raked-up piles. We also had a working bee early in the year before Covid again closed everything down. We've also been busy raking up manure which and a local gardener has been taking for their garden, which has been great for us.

The horses on the grounds miss the interaction of the riders and the treats that some of the riders bring them, so having people working on the grounds has given them company which they enjoy.

We had a shelter put up over existing outside seats which has been well used by riders and others.

We successfully applied for a local Shire Council grant for shelving and storage, so we now have \$500 to spend on these much needed items. We also applied for a grant from Black Summer Bushfire Recovery, and



the 2021 Volunteers Grant from Angus Taylor MP.

During the First Semester we were able to complete our 15 lessons and were impressed with the huge improvement in riding skills for the students. We tried different games so that the students were always motivated.

We began Semester 2 with Holman Place and only did 3 days before Cowra went into a Covid lockdown. The students were unable to come for the rest of the year but towards the end of the Semester we began bringing the horses in to train them. During this time we had the opportunity to expand our Tip Shop to an Op Shop in the main street of Cowra so volunteers used their spare time to help clean up an empty shop and repaint it. It soon filled with donations of clothing, furniture, etc. and has become a great enterprise.

We ended up having a very busy year and a very profitable one.

the 2021 Volunteers Grant from Angus Taylor MP.

We were extremely fortunate to have local firm Coutts Solicitors give us a financial donation which were gratefully received. Picton Hire arranged for us to have access to a cherry-picker with operator to trim trees close to our building. Local businessman and Shire Councillor Robert Khan kindly donated money towards the purchase of a new water heater.

We had a sign made to name our grounds in honour of Betty Wallace OAM and Graham Wallace OAM. This sign is now up at the entrance to our grounds. Betty's family kindly donated the cost of the sign.



Our members also wished to have a Memorial Garden in honour of Betty, and this came about with wonderful donations of plants and mulch from a local nursery. Betty loved natives, she was particularly fond of a yellow climbing rose, we were lucky to obtain two which eventually will climb up and cover the arch in the garden.

The Governor of NSW was coming to open Betty's memorial garden but due to Covid restrictions this had to be cancelled. We now plan to have Betty's brother, her two sons and their families to open the garden when restrictions are eased.

We have twenty five riders and also a new school, Yandelora from Narellan came on board.

A few of the school children have bonded with some of our seven horses. Kelly's horse Sarge started at RDA, and he and Aileen have bonded which is lovely to see as Aileen rode Smoko for many years, who unfortunately passed away.

Aileen and Sarge featured on an ABC program about people turning ninety, which will be aired next year. We felt proud watching Aileen and Sarge being filmed. Two other riders Tracy and Matilda also rode with Aileen as part of the program. We are so looking forward to seeing the program which will air on the ABC in 2022.

A lovely local lady who wished to remain anonymous donated a sum of money to our Centre which has really helped with buying feed and we are extremely grateful to her.

We also welcomed a new pony "Willow". Even though she spent only a small amount of time with us before closing, she showed she is going to be a marvellous asset to us.

Our Coach Rosie and Trainee Coach Kelly have used the break to further their studies. They have also organised training days which we were able to get in earlier in the year before lockdown. Two of our members indicated they would be interested in becoming coaches. Once everything returns to normal Rosie will start the process for them.

We have really missed Betty Lyons aka B2 since she retired. She worked alongside Betty aka B1 since we started. Another of our original members

Sylvia Biffin also retired. What a wealth of experience these ladies brought to our Centre.

Our volunteer numbers have remained consistent and we are fortunate that the army personnel from the Rehabilitation Unit at Holsworthy are still able to assist us with volunteering. Volunteers also took part in appropriate zoom sessions recommended by State Office.

On Saturday 23rd October, Tahmoor and Thirlmere received a battering from a terrible storm. Many trees came down with branches being snapped off and thrown around. A huge tree uprooted and fell just inside our entrance, and trees had fallen on fences.



A busy day was spent clearing branches etc. From any point on our grounds you could see trees that had been blown over or damaged. Thankfully, the tree in which ducks nest every year stayed safe as did our "skinky" tree; for as long as we can remember little skinks have called it home. Our resident magpies, butcher birds and other small birds all survived.

Fortunately our horses on the ground were safe and none of our buildings were damaged. We received a ride on mower donation, which will be put to good use after the storm debris is cleared.

Moss Vale

We started the year well, with a very successful volunteer training day. We have had new interest from some experienced horse handlers. Our ponies were also in good shape for the coming year.

Our first few weeks were promising with a few new riders and some familiar faces from last year. Of course, Covid reared its ugly head again and all our efforts could not keep us going.

We are full of optimism again this year and hope to have a great year's riding in 2022.

Young

Executive Summary

Our Centre was about to start our riding year when COVID-19 restrictions were introduced across Australia with a nationwide 'lock-down'.

Highlights

Despite reduced operating there were still some highlights:

- The Centre received several large donations from local businesses who realised that not operating doesn't mean no expenses. We very much appreciate their ongoing support.
- The easing of the drought meant green grass and no more dust! No more hand feeding! A full hayshed!



- With public health restrictions easing later in 2020 we were able to have a COVID-19 safe garden picnic in November with our riders at Golden Glance Nursery where everyone visited the gardens, bird aviary and enjoyed a ride on the vintage carousel. Riders received a gift of a potted plant to take home.
- We applied for a Crown Lands Reserve Improvement Grant (CRIF) to re-fence our paddock and put in some smaller paddocks, water troughs and shelters if a horse needs to be restricted. We successfully gained that grant of approximately \$12 800. Work will start work in March 2022.

Coaches

As the restrictions eased Head Coach Cheryl Matthews was able to keep her skills up by returning to her other role as a Senior Pony Club Instructor.

Assistant Coach Susan Turner-Davis completed her Diploma in Equitation Science, while keeping her skills up as an Equestrian Australia (EA) Coach and a Dressage judge. In 2021, Susan was recredited in her Coaching and is now a full Coach with the Young Centre.

Trainee Assistant Coach Julie Morris has been working through her units in the coaching course.

Volunteers

During 2021 we have kept in regular contact with our Volunteers via SMS messages, keeping them informed about the horses and checking if anybody needed assistance.

We were able to have a Christmas get together in November 2021 at the Chinese Gardens.

We survived our first Bunnings BBQ at the new store in Young. In 2021 we continued with our BBQs and had arranged a Golf Day, unfortunately due to lockdowns the day had to be cancelled. Hopefully, we can have one in 2022.

Sadly, were unable to have a Christmas celebration for riders due to lockdown. We would not be deterred! Necessity is the Mother of invention. Julie McFarlane, Amelia Miller and Pammie McCloy one of our Committee members kindly donated a badge making machine. We took photos of our horses and made badge fridge magnets for our riders with a picture of the horse they usually ride with some lollies and cakes. Our Secretary Marie-Louise Tucker played Santa's Elf and delivered them to the schools in the last week of school for the year.



Illawarra

Classes for 2020/2021 were cancelled owing to COVID-19 restrictions. So we took the opportunity to have some major repairs that needed doing. We were fortunate enough to receive funding from the President's Club to replace our wooden arena fencing that had become unsafe, and this was replaced with PVC fencing the same material that is used at race tracks.

We were also fortunate to receive funding from the NSW Premiers Department to be used for maintenance purposes.

With this money [4] ceiling fans were erected in our Rec Shed which has a metal roof and does become very hot in the warmer weather. It was also decided to replace the roller door on our Tack Shed which had become difficult to open and also put roller doors on our Open Bay which houses our tractor and our big ride on mower and the feed shed. The idea being that it would keep the birds from nesting in there and also prying eyes as we have lost equipment from time to time.

A second trotting lane has been installed in the arena as it was decided that having only one trotting lane in the arena was just not enough as we were all used to having the two when running our classes.

We also have had a small grandstand erected just outside our arena for parents/carers to sit on during classes. We have also had a new mounting block built owing to the weathering of our metal one. This mounting block is made of concrete so should last a long time.

Cement ramps in front of our Tack Shed, Open Bay and Feed Shed which makes access to these areas easier during wet weather particularly when using the tractor and the big ride on mower.

The ramp leading from the main carpark down to our Tack Shed has been cemented as this area became boggy during wet weather.

New guttering and down pipes replacing the existing ones on our Tack Shed, Open Bay and Feed Shed have been installed as the old guttering had become rusty.

In this years Kiama Council's Capital Works Program they are hoping to be able to replace our existing driveway into the Centre with an all weather driveway as the existing driveway washes away in heavy rain it has been repaired on numerous occasions but as soon as we have heavy rain it washes away.

All the above improvements have made life much easier for our valued Volunteers and has made such a pleasant out look to our little Centre.



Goulburn

RDA (NSW) Goulburn Centre operated on and off during 2021, under the guidance of the RDA (NSW) Covid Safe Plan and was also the host Centre for the 2021 Connections Coach Workshop. We were absolutely delighted to have RDA (NSW) Coaches attend from different Centres and a very special thanks to Margot Bulgar, Kathleen and Nicole King for organising the Workshop.

RDA (NSW) Goulburn Centre is very fortunate to have 28 regular Volunteers that go above and beyond for our centre every Riding Day.

RDA G has one Coach – Jolene Grove, and two Assistant Coaches in Training – Kim Mahoney and Katherine Fraser.

The Goulburn Mulwaree Council have worked closely with RDA Goulburn and the Goulburn Campdraft Association in finalising a 20-year joint lease to both organisations for the same parcel of land to relocate both organisations.

RDA G has been on a free lease for the past 21 years on private property.

Sadly, and unexpectedly, we said goodbye to one of our much-loved RDA ponies – "Princess Sparkles" will be sorely missed.

We now have welcomed to our RDA Herd a gorgeous pony named Dakota sponsored by our local Mayor Mr Peter Walker and her little 'Mini Me' Mary Lou, both horses have passed our RDA (NSW) suitability checklist and we're looking forward to them both starting their RDA career in 2022.

RDA (NSW) Goulburn Centre is very fortunate to currently have an energetic, dynamic team who are very dedicated and passionate about securing its future.



Riverina

Albury-Wodonga – Tumut
Cootamundra – Wagga Wagga
Griffith/Leeton – West Wyalong



Wagga Wagga

Cootamundra

Cootamundra had a late start to the year due to the COVID-19 safe preparations.

Initially we had a lot of wet weather that made it hazardous entering our paddock. The muddy section even made feeding the horses risky. The coach spread a lot of our oaten hay onto the mud just inside the gate. She also chose to feed the horses from the other side of the fence as this was a much safer option for her as well as the horses. It was also decided that it was unsafe for our carriage driving to pass through this gate, so we drove the carriage in the showgrounds next door instead.

Then when the lockdown came, we had to close before we had really started. We found that there were fewer volunteers starting this year as some of our helpers who had retired from the workplace now returned to work as nurses/carers to assist



with the increased demands on their occupations. Others were concerned about their risks of catching Covid due to health and age factors. Hopefully, we will have more volunteers next year as we are now all double vaccinated.

We were lucky enough to hold one of our Bingo nights – it was not as profitable as other times due to the seating restrictions, but was worthwhile, nonetheless. Our other fundraising canteens were cancelled which will put a strain on our finances. However, everyone has found themselves in this position. When lockdown ended, we could not start straight away as we had to wait for everyone to have their second vaccinations.

Our riders and volunteers are eagerly looking forward for 2022 when we can reopen again in a covid safe manner.

Tumut

Tumut Centre managed to operate through Terms 2 and 4, albeit in a reduced capacity due to COVID-19.

We completed a concrete pathway to the mounting block ramp from the entry gate to the mounting area. This provides much safer and easier entry for wheelchairs. We also concreted up to the gate into the shed.

We had a horse crush built, with input from our local vet and the vet who provides our horses' dental care. The local company who built the crush donated it after quoting \$2700, very generous.

Fundraising has proven very difficult with the restrictions in place, the Tumut Community has once again been very supportive of our horse sponsorships.

Our horses have enjoyed the extra feed available, some a little too much! We've had paddocks locked up all season. The winter wasn't too cold this year, just wet, this held our feed bill down.

Volunteer numbers are small but very dependable. Regular meetings were still held. We are hoping to have a more normal year of operation next year with all vaccinated and restrictions reducing enough to have the schools once again attend and fundraising ventures taking place.



Wagga Wagga

Hi All,

What a year 2021 was! We all thought that COVID would be a thing of the past, but it continued to challenge us through the year. It impacted our classes significantly, with lockdowns occurring, schools unable to send students and a much reduced income stream, with operating costs remaining fairly unchanged.

Late in 2020, we started the recruitment process, as we were in need of coaches to support what we thought would be a more 'normal' year. We employed a full time and part time program facilitator, with training taking place through the year, resulting in them completing their assistant coaching certificates. Despite many challenges, our full time facilitator was able to be assessed and attained her full coaching certificate at the end of the year. We are currently working with our part time assistant coach to have her complete her assessment, although this is extremely challenging with the COVID restrictions in place.

Having two new enthusiastic staff members means we have been able to dedicate more time to providing quality training to our horses and volunteers, and the centre is functioning very well. We are hopeful that 2022 allows a return to increased riding and driving opportunities to a wider range of our clients.

Our horses have had a fabulous time on prolonged holidays out on a farm through the year, enjoying being horses, resting up and enjoying some prime grazing. A few were even spotted taking a dip in the dam on some of those very hot days. The change in environment, and the opportunity to have some prolonged time off does wonders for our fabulous team of horses and ponies, and we are very thankful to our wonderful local farmer who allows us to rest our herd at his property during holiday times.



A good local season has resulted in lovely green paddocks, which will provide some lovely grazing back at the Centre for the horses. Summer storms have damaged many of our old established trees, with limbs being dropped on a regular basis, with some minor damage to fence lines and paddock shelters.

The downed timber provides an opportunity for fundraising through a firewood raffle, so there is always a silver lining to be found if we look hard enough.

In other fundraising news, a grant received allowed us to install additional water tanks and troughs, helping drought proof our property, as well as strengthening our commitment to reducing our environmental impact. We were also successful in obtaining a place in the "Wagga Takes 2" fundraising event, which should provide more fundraising opportunities and increase awareness of our Centre and RDA generally.

Our Centre is very lucky to have a dedicated team of volunteers with whom we have kept in contact through the quieter times. With a volunteer training day planned for February 2022 we are looking forward to welcoming new and returning volunteers back for what will hopefully be a wonderful year.



Albury-Wodonga

Another year has come and gone so quickly. Again, this will be a very short report due to the continued situation with COVID-19.

As everybody is aware there has still been several restrictions in place at times which either restricted or put a complete halt on any riding sessions.

Albury did not escape the complete lockdowns and we for an extended period were not allowed to have any riding or interactions at all.

During this time the normal stalwarts of the centre visited daily to ensure the horses health was always maintained; and the security of the centre was maintained and upheld also. If not for these people, the Albury Centre would not be able to continue.

Because of limited volunteers and riders available the sessions when they did run were cut back to just a Saturday.

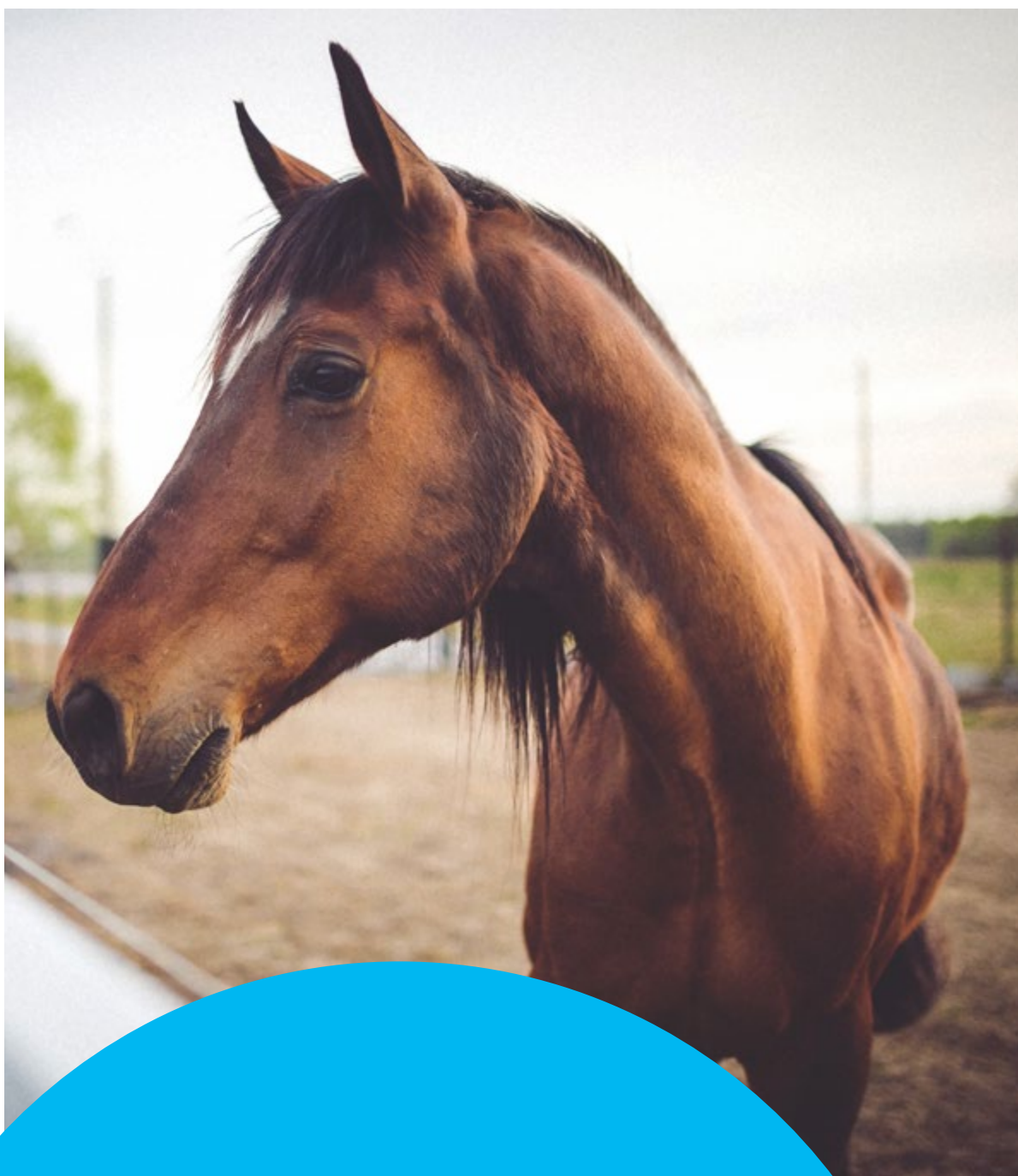
Amongst our volunteers and their direct families, we have had health issues which has also greatly affected the day to day running of the centre.

Fundraising for the club within the community has been nearly non existent due to all of the restrictions.

Keeping this in mind it does not stop the bills coming in though, with the upkeep of the horses, feed, medical, farrier etc, as well as normal administration and day to day running of the centre.

All necessary emails have been forwarded on electronically to board members, when necessary, in some cases this is the only form of contact.

We can only hope for a much better year in 2022.



Central West

Bathurst – Mudgee – Orange – Forbes

Mudgee

We thought 2021 was our Centre's year, well so far so good.

Covid has not kept us down. The committee pulled together and fought hard to get ourselves a place to call home. We had several weeks with our riders and horses and spent lots of time with our amazing volunteers laughing, crying and enjoying the achievements of our riders and horses.

2021 is our 10th year as Mudgee RDA and what a year. Our Treasurer Lorraine Stewart has compiled a folder of 10 years of the history of RDA Mudgee, this will be published in the not-too-distant future. Very exciting for us. A massive thank you to Lorraine for her time and effort. Mudgee has welcomed two stunning new men into our centre for a while, by the names of Theo and Toby. They are on loan from the Nepean centre and have fitted in perfect with our other boys. We believe we do have the most incredible horses as they are so adaptable from Team Penning to RDA – they are just super.

A place to call home, Mudgee is getting a 9x6 home with a verandah that looks on the the arena. This means that when it rains it does not matter as our riders, carers and volunteers can still attend and we alter RDA's program to an indoor program where the riders will still be number one. Our president Tracy Lucas was fortunate to gain a \$15k grant from the Australian Turf Club for the purchase of a new horse float and to have their support will be invaluable to our centre.

Covid has prevented many events from happening for all our centres and we hoped that we would have entered one of our riders in 2021 to attend SIEC. Kasey has had lots of support and education from one of our stalwarts Bob Colley, we hope that we will be able to enter Kasey in the coming future we believe she will reap the benefits plus boost her confidence and self-esteem and as always make our centre proud.

With riding not being stable this year some of our adult riders have lost confidence and we feared we may lose them BUT now we have offered them the option of being volunteers. It has been a hit, they help us with games, music helmets and gates and funny enough now we have a few that are keen to volunteer.

Lots of new volunteers with so much enthusiasm and passion. Isn't that what we are all about? Soon we hope to have our Assistant Coaches Tracy and Diane passed as Coaches. These two speak so highly of their mentors Wendy, Joan and RR Wayne, and not to mention the never-ending support from Nicole. Covid has been a challenge BUT the support has never faltered.



We believe 2022 will be bigger and better and the 3 most important components of our centre – the horses, the riders and the volunteers will continue to strive and deliver a fun and therapeutic program that puts smiles on our riders faces; and provides that moment of independence with lots of love and laughter. We hope to be able to invite others from different centres to come and see what makes us “Love what we do and do what we love!”

Thank you to all our horses, riders and volunteers!



Bathurst

Well, in 2020 I wrote we were looking forward to some degree of normality with our activities. It didn't happen, once again COVID disrupted the best-laid plans. 2021 has been a year of frustration and uncertainty for all RDA centres and Bathurst is no exception. Our riding groups have constantly been interrupted with COVID restrictions and lockdowns.

Despite this, our riders have enjoyed their limited time and that has been the positive side for both our riders and volunteers.

Along with our riders, our non-riding clients enjoy their Pet Therapy days although this year we have been saddened by the loss of our Anglo-Nubian goat, Buddy and one of our pigs, Ernie. Both have been part of our lives for approximately 10 years and are very much missed by all of us.

In April, we, at long last, had our Pet Therapy annexe officially opened by our local member, Paul Toole. We surprised our President and coach, Melinda Gavin by naming the annexe “The Melinda Gavin Pet Therapy Annexe” as recognition of her 20 year commitment to Bathurst RDA and our Pet Therapy program. Melinda, along with a former member, Michael Auld, recognised there was a need for a program to allow non-riders to participate in animal related activities. That program has expanded to be used by many people in our community. It also raises RDA's profile.

Our treasurer, Deirdre Hirekodi, left us in November and moved to Queensland. We thank her for the many roles she has filled at Bathurst and wish her well.

We are so grateful to all our volunteers for their care and commitment to our riders and animals. We thank them for how they collectively make Bathurst an enjoyable place to be.

We look forward to 2022 with the hope that all our centres enjoy a happy and prosperous year.



Orange

President's Report

Our year began as close to normal as we could have wished for. We were lucky to be able to conduct riding with five classes each Wednesday during term 1. Students were happy to be back riding and volunteers happy to assist. Unfortunately, this didn't continue due to lockdown restrictions.

During lockdown volunteers were kept busy with maintenance of the Centre (fencing and pasture management) and care of the horses. One volunteer gained his Assistant Coaching accreditation, while two others continued through their training modules.

The community of Orange continues to support our Centre with monetary donations as well as donations of BBQ items, hay, saddles, and horses. We are so grateful for their support.

Weatherwise, Orange has enjoyed a wonderful year although it has been challenging to keep horses at an optimal weight.

A class of independent riders was welcomed back in Term 4.

We are looking forward to a productive and enjoyable 2022.

Coaching

What a different year we had. Even so, we all made the best of it.

2021 commenced with 5 classes. Then COVID hit, and school restrictions saw us lock down completely.

A highlight of 2021 was Albert Duff passing his Assistant Coach course. Jill Sullivan and Veronica Ford are progressing through their training helped along by Zoom sessions.

Terms 2, 3, & 4 saw volunteers attending the Centre to assist with horse care and participate in training. Thank you to all taking part and to those conducting the training sessions.

Thank you to our "Tuesday volunteers" who keep the grass down, fences renewed and all the other jobs that keep our Centre neat and tidy.

Many thanks to our wonderful volunteers who keep turning up even when we don't have riders.

Have a relaxing break and next year we will be back better than ever.

Volunteers

This year 5 new volunteers joined us. We had an average of 20-35 volunteers each session.

We were happy to welcome a 16 year old prior to lockdown – each Wednesday she helps with the horses. Over the year we have observed her becoming so much more confident in interacting with the other volunteers and the students, and she is good at knowing the horses' quirks. Her love of horses helped her find us, but the acceptance and friendliness of everyone has kept her coming back.

The volunteers and students all enjoyed some changes in programming this year with a new assistant coach and two coaches in training. It was lovely to having new faces and new games for our enthusiastic participants.

Thank you to Marilyn, our coach, who is always there when we need her, always giving clear instructions and interacting so well with students and volunteers.

Many thanks to Albert Duff and his wife for checking on the horses each week while the Centre was in lockdown.

Publicity: three newsletters were published during 2021 - many thanks to Celia for keeping Facebook up to date and taking such wonderful photos.



North West

Coonabarabran – Narrabri
Gunnedah – Tamworth
– Armidale & New England



Tamworth

Gunnedah

The decision was made in March 2020 by our members that the Gunnedah Centre was temporarily unable to continue with Riding and Carriage Driving activities in a Covid safe environment. Sadly for our clients and volunteers the activities went into recess then and have not resumed this year. The executive and members have since meet on a couple of occasions for a formal meeting and to remain connected. There are no clients on our books while we are in recess. It is planned to restart normal activities in February 2022 (if possible) with the return of around 25 clients.

Our centre is not fundraising at this time and has had no sponsorship as such for some years. We rely on and are extremely appreciative of the continued generous support of the local community, its citizens, businesses and organisations.

During 2020 we were pleased to receive a grant from Aurizon to purchase, what we felt to be a very necessary Defibrillator for our Centre.

We have also been fortunate to receive a grant from the Gunnedah Shire Council allowing us to purchase a locally built wheelchair accessed Carriage and to locally purchase and renovate a used Horse Float. The new carriage will complement the one we have, and both new acquisitions will be very helpful when activities are recommenced. We are delighted the centre now owns a Horse Float. For many years horses have been, and some will continue to be, transported voluntarily in privately owned floats without subsidy.

In the past we have been fortunate to have the use of a sufficient number of very suitable riding horses and carriage horses. At present our horse numbers are very low. We are desperately searching far and wide for suitable horses for riding and for carriage driving.

At Gunnedah, prior to Covid, our activity mornings held fortnightly, during school term were well attended by approximately 15 regular adult volunteers. These dedicated men and women are mostly in their senior years and gain reward from witnessing the pleasure the activities bring to our clients. We are actively searching for, and would welcome new volunteers. We are also very appreciative in each normal year to have the support of both the local High Schools. Approximately 20 very helpful Year 9 students appear to enjoy their community involvement at RDA as Junior Volunteers. They assist the carriage clients and with such things as leading and sidewalking the riders. Earlier this year three adult members were tested and duly received RDA(NSW) accreditation. We now have a newly

qualified Coach, Whip and Assistant Whip ready to join the coaching team when we restart.

An active supporter and member of RDA Gunnedah since it was founded 34 years ago was recognized when he received the Volunteer of the Year Award at the local Australia Day Dinner last January. Bruce Hill, who turned 90 last year, devotes many untold hours to RDA Gunnedah and has held numerous positions at the centre. With his kind, calm nature, and his experience of carriages, harness and horses Bruce willingly shares his knowledge widely, especially encouraging trainees.

Narrabri

Although our Centre's activities were impacted by Covid we were so proud when Irene Holden won the Pearl Batchelor Regional Volunteer of the Year Award.



Tamworth

Tamworth Centre has had a challenging year with interruptions from wet weather, wet grounds and mainly the pandemic. There have been very few days when the Centre was able to have horse activities. The horses and ponies have spent considerable time on agistment with generous volunteers.

After much preparation with the grounds, horses and ponies, paperwork and Covid Safe planning, the Centre reopened in April 2021, then Tamworth went into lockdown soon after. The Centre reopened in November 2021 for four weeks on a small scale.

Some participants have been able to attend on the few days we operated and some have not attended this year. The Hillvue Public School students have attended whenever possible, they are very enthusiastic about RDA and very much enjoy their horse activities.

The volunteers have dropped off for a variety of reasons, hesitancy to mix, vaccinations and the school volunteer students either not allowed to leave the school grounds or schools closed. Several volunteers have worked hard maintaining the grounds and facilities. There have been few opportunities to fundraise this year however some Tamworth organizations continue to generously support the Centre. Our new amenities block has been greatly appreciated by everyone. A tentative date has been set in March 2022 to hopefully reopen.



Vales

Volunteer Vale

Our volunteers have a deep, spiritual connection with RDA and we'd like to pay our respects and acknowledge those volunteers who have contributed many years of service and are no longer with us

Gwen Woodham - Wagga Centre

Kevin George Waldron - Wauchope/Port Macquarie Centre

James Frederick Watts - Wauchope/Port Macquarie Centre

Maxine Kerrison - Blue Mountains Centre

Michelle Cooke - Wollondilly Centre

Kima Curry - Illawarra Centre

Simon Fitzgerald - Illawarra Centre

Horse Vale

Cedar and Maggie - Kendall Centre

Buntly, Matey and Kam - Central Coast Centre

Diablo - Tamworth Centre

Smoko - Wollondilly Centre

Billy, Ellie and Piccadore (commonly known as Pix) - Illawarra Centre

Tyson and Joy - Wauchope/Port Macquarie Centre

Annie - Box Hill Tall Timbers, originally from Nepean Centre

Billy and Lumina - Tweed Valley

Princess Sparkles - Goulburn



Ryde

RDA (NSW)

Patrons



Patron

Her Excellency General
The Honorable Margaret Beazley AC
QC Governor of New South Wales
and Mr Dennis Wilson



Life Patron

Mrs Pearl Batchelor (dec.)



Vice Patron

Mr Don Eyb

Directors & Portfolios



Chairperson/ Grants, Fundraising & Marketing Officer/ Riders Representative

Ms Tracy Lucas



Executive Officer Members Protection Information Officer

Ms Olwen Smith



Finance Officer Company Secretary

Mr Joe Orland



Director

Mrs Jenny Cameron

Staff



Office Co-Ordinator

Mrs Lucy Pentony



Coaching Administrator

Ms Nicole King



RTO Administrative Assistant

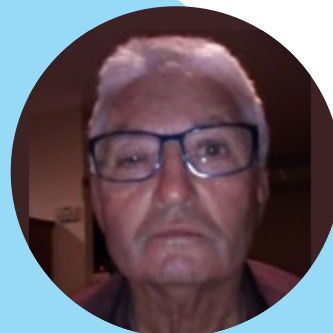
Ms Kristy Ford



Southern Highlands
Mr Angus Malcolm



Mid North Coast
Mrs Sue Hardinge-White



Central West
Mr Wayne Gallagher



Metropolitan
Mr Ian Travers



Hunter
Mrs Jenny Cameron



North West
Mr Glenn Walker



North Coast
Mr Clarry Quirk



Riverina
Ms Margot Bulger

Regional Representatives

Support Staff



RTO CEO & CASP Chairman
Coaching Co-Ordinator
Mrs Wendy Torr Oam



Centre Audit Officer
Mrs Joan Edwards Oam

Thank-You

to all our volunteers & supporters



Without your assistance RDA (NSW) could not service 890 riders who were able to ride during the 2021 COVID-19 pandemic year



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