



Riding for the Disabled Association NSW

Bits 'n' Pieces

AUTUMN/WINTER EDITION 2024

Welcome to the latest edition of Bits 'n' Pieces! Olwen has kindly passed the reins on to me to share in the wonderful stories, updates and celebrations from our fabulous Centres.

We love to celebrate all of the great work that our hard-working volunteers and horses contribute to getting our riders into classes with smiles on their faces, as well as everything positive that our organisation gives back to our communities.

I have also added a new page called 'Extra Bits 'n' Positive Pieces' so that we can all share what's working well for our centres.

Well done to Wagga Centre and Lizzie who were the first to send in their updates and are soon to celebrate their Centre's 50th anniversary!! We look forward to getting some great coverage of that amazing event to share with everyone.

Keep up the great work everyone and I look forward to hearing more from all of you.

Warm Regards

Linda Bower
Honorary Director
Marketing/Fundraising

Linda.bower@rdansw.org.au

WAGGA CENTRE

From Lizzie at Wagga Centre:

Please find attached a few photos from our last two terms.

We have also started planning for our 50th birthday next year and cannot wait to celebrate. We are planning on having an open day at our Centre with a dinner to follow.



The Wagga Centre has been lucky enough to become one of the charities to benefit from the Miss Wagga Quest. The entrants show their community spirit by helping to raise funds and awareness for local charities. We had a few of the entrants join us to celebrate our volunteers for Volunteer Week.

They had a great time meeting everyone and learning about our Centre. (Photo riders are Caspar and Lillian with RDA ponies Gypsy and Storm with a few of the Miss Wagga entrants).



We have had a few new Sponsorships come through for a few of our beautiful hard-working horses. We get excited every time we receive a new request and the sponsors are loving their photos and certificates.



After a lot of hard work and a few years of fundraising we were able to purchase a new Ute for our Centre, which was long overdue. It is definitely a step up from the previous Ute that served us well for many years.

ORANGE CENTRE

Greetings from RDA Orange Centre!

We have had a lot happening this half of the year starting with our studious volunteer, Jill Sullivan, having her final assessment for her Coaching Certificate. After completing the online course, getting in some solid preparation and practice, Jill is now fully qualified to be a Coach of RDA NSW. Congratulations Jill! That gives us two coaches, one assistant coach and one coach in training!! It allows us lots of flexibility in attendance and in who takes the classes.



Jill Sullivan before she received her full coaching qualifications.



Farewell to Fay and Marj, two of our longtime and hard-working volunteers.

Our Tuesday maintenance team continues to update the grounds and keep them in great condition. The fencing is nearly complete after 3 years of replacing the old, barbed wire and creating new paddocks. All the paddocks have now been numbered so the horses can be moved around according to the feed required and the state of the paddocks. We have some enthusiast mowers who keep our long driveway, car park and outdoor arenas well maintained, even during winter. We also have a very keen painting team who have brightened up the buildings and furniture with a brighter look with red, white and yellow highlights.

We have also had lighting put into the inside arena and stalls, which has made a huge difference on these dull, wintry days.



Some of the maintenance team with one of 7 new troughs that have been installed.



Class in troop line ready for fun activities.

Thanks so much to our community who have been generously supporting us with donations that have enabled us to finally get these things done to make our RDA experiences so much better!

We have had quite a change in horses this year too, as we had some that are getting old. Ra, Jitterbug and Sahra are three ponies that have been loaned to us from a Clifton Grove local. We also received Bella and Goldie. Another local is lending us a beautiful palomino named Izzy and we just purchased Molly. These should all work out nicely for our groups.



Student from Kinross Wolaroi school helping out at Orange Centre.

Vale Alex Livermore

It is with deep sadness that I am advising you of the passing of Alex Livermore. Alex was the husband of Orange RDA centre president Robyn. Alex up until a few years ago was a very active member of the centre.

Alex will be missed by many.



WAUCHOPE/PORT MACQUARIE CENTRE

Our year started with a training day with a fabulous turn up of volunteers. The day was well received with a greeting from our President Mr. John Smith, followed by a program with a variety of subjects, the majority being hands-on. This was followed by a light lunch.

We currently have 2 coaches, 2 assistant coaches, 38 volunteers, 28 riders and 10 horses. We operate every Tuesday during school term, out of the Wauchope Showground, using their covered arena and other facilities. Unfortunately, several of our volunteers are suffering ill health, we hope they get better soon.



Nick de Groot, Lex and Johnathon, Gordon Robinson, Tim Walker, Barri and Georgia
Presentation of a saddle to us from Hastings Co-Op by Nick and Tim in April.

Several of our horses have been out of action, due to ill health or injury, but all are on the way to recovery except Ricky whose eye is very slow to heal...

A Thursday Training Day June 2024 with volunteers.



Billie

Hamalky

Bluey

We are trialing 5 new horses - Billy and Hamalky have just started taking riders, Gus, Noble and Indie are in the trial stage and we hope that Indie and Noble will be able to take riders very soon.



Mr. John Smith and Mrs. Robyn Coombes both are Life Members. John Smith our President is the first to arrive and one of the last to leave, He liaises with showground, keeps our grounds in good order and always checks on our horses when they are at the showground.

Robyn has been a long-standing member of our RDA; Robyn has been a coach who has coached and mentored many volunteers. Robyn not only trained her own horses but assisted with training our RDA Horses.

Both John and Robyn were presented with Certificates of Recognition for the service they have provided to our RDA. Unfortunately, since then Robyn has resigned from active coaching due to her health.

We had a visit from Mr. Pat Conaghan, Member for Oxley, after we had received a grant that allowed us to purchase two new horses Gus and Noble.

Pat was very impressed with our Centre.



John Smith, Gus, Lyndsay Hartman, Pat Conaghan, Noble, Emily Dalziell and Sorell.



Josie on Billie, Sorrel on Hamalky going through a training run.

We are looking forward to re-commencing on the 6th August after the school holiday break.

COOTAMUNDRA CENTRE

From Olwen at Cootamundra Centre:

Cootamundra RDA held a stall at the Cootamundra Connections Workshop at the Cootamundra Town Hall, Tuesday 25th June 2024.



Cootamundra RDA had a great write-up in the local Paper 'Cootamundra Times'.

In the photo below Lilly is driving the carriage, pulled by Ralph and under the supervision of Whip Bev.

Cootamundra Times

0408 004 975 - 0413 763 216

editor@cootatimes.com.au

A Newspaper
By The People
For The People

\$3.00

Riding for the Disabled 'Too Wonderful for Words'



Bev and Lilly.

Riding for the Disabled began in 1990. It is a voluntary organisation. The purpose of RDA is to provide opportunities for people with a disability to get close to horses, to ride or be driven in a customised buggy. There are many significant benefits from these experiences. My invitation to visit RDA came from Trish Taylor, the Contact Person for the organisation. Trish has been involved with RDA since 1999, when her daughter was two and a half. Trish had seen the enjoyment and support her daughter experienced with RDA and wanted to help others have this experience.

When I went through the gate on Pinkerton Road, next to the Showgrounds, I entered another world. Monday, the weather was perfect, I met volunteers and horses. There was Ralph, a former pacer, bought for \$1 when his racing days were over, a beautiful horse. Bev and Olwen had charge of Ralph's buggy and assisted young people onto the seat, beside Bev. There were 'dual controls' and Lilly and others held the reins and could give directions which Ralph dutifully obeyed. Then, there was Luke whose wheelchair was carefully pushed up a ramp and next to Bev. Luke loved the

bumps, which Bev avoided for the most part. Luke could not speak but his smile and laughing said everything.

Olwen explained that a number of young people coming had cerebral palsy or some form of autism. They had difficulty speaking but communication seemed to happen. 'Sometimes it is there, in the smiling and enjoyment. There have been occasions, too, where someone found the words'.

For a newcomer, like me, these sounded like mini-miracles. Julie, another volunteer, talked about the horses sensing things, picking up feel-

ings and reacting accordingly. Having the words isn't everything. Being able to hear and feel what is being said, silently or with difficulty, is more important.

In another part of the facility, there was the opportunity to ride horses. I saw Trevor, like Ralph, a safe and familiar presence for the young riders. The riders in these cases could climb on and walk safely on a set routine. For some of the young people, there was the opportunity to practice other skills, balls thrown and caught, sorting and linking of colours, all while on horseback. The volunteers knew the horses by name and cared for them. They knew and cared for their visitors and noted their changes and growth in confidence. Bev is one of the originals, from 1990. 'None of us is getting any younger. We need new people to assist on the three hours on a Monday and to keep this wonderful work going.'

My brief visit convinced me. This is wonderful work, satisfying and inspiring for volunteers and encouraging and supportive for people with a disability.

There is the possibility of catering for more people with a disability if there were more volunteers. The continuity of this organisation is also dependent on new volunteers. The opportunity is open for people from twelve years onwards to volunteer and no necessity to have horse experience as this can be provided.

Trish Taylor is the contact person. Her phone number: 0499 563 956.

Richard White

Online Shopping Now Available

CENTRAL COAST CENTRE

Celebrating at Central Coast Centre:

Jenny Cameron – Life Member

Jenny was the very appreciative recipient of the prestigious Life Membership award in May 2024. With 27 years of continuing dedication to the Central Coast Centre, Regional Representative for the Upper Hunter and Central Coast Area and a previous Board Member, Jenny has well and truly earned this accolade.

Jenny continues to coach, mentor and assist everyone at her Centre, and they are very proud to call her their own.

Congratulations Jenny, it is so well deserved!! She is seen with Jan Pike OAM PLY and Honorary Board Director Tracy Lucas.



Linda Bower – Volunteer Encouragement Award for 2024



Our Secretary Linda was thrilled to receive this award and celebrated in her (un)usual exuberant fashion. She enjoys everything RDA and loves handling administrative tasks for the coaches, whilst recognising her Centre's volunteers in any way that she can. Congratulations Linda!

You will also be a great asset to the Board as a new Director of Marketing/Fundraising.

Belinda Jones – Rider Encouragement Award for 2024



Belinda is a very enthusiastic rider from our Centre and her infectious delight in riding puts a smile on everyone's face as she celebrates every achievement during her classes – and in general.

Belinda was so thrilled to be at the State AGM with her father to receive her award. She just loved looking at all the other presents and insisted on having a pretty bag to put her award into. She is such a joy and we are so proud of her!

Gaynor Hobart Retires as Centre President

Gaynor joined RDA in 2011 after seeing a stand at a local shopping centre. Jenny Cameron was there and encouraged Gaynor (a fellow Englishwoman) to visit our Centre to 'have a look'. Gaynor, who had worked with horses after she left school, quickly joined and progressed with her coaching studies to become a Senior Coach in 2016. As a Coach she loves to watch the improvements and delight that the riders receive at RDA.

After we put out the urgent call for some new coaches, Gaynor has been mentoring the recruits from our volunteer base that offered to undertake this training (initially 6, now 5) and has been continuing to assist them through this arduous learning process - as well as supervising lessons and overseeing our Centre's horses' health.

Gaynor was unanimously voted in as Committee Centre President in 2017 and has only stepped back from this position to become a Vice President this year.

Gaynor's horse knowledge is very well respected, as is her gentle and calm demeanor.

Thank you Gaynor for everything that you continue to do and for being such a wonderful President of our Centre for 7 years.



KENDALL CENTRE

RDA KENDALL CENTRE



Training day at RDA Kendall

RDA Kendall has a new President Terry Jessop.

Vice President Sue Tubb and Judy Rattur

We thank Jenny McGregor for all her hard work and dedication while taking the Kendall centre through very trying times.



Centre right and bottom left putting smiles on our participants



RDA Kendall receiving the trophy for 30 years of operation.

Congratulations RDA Kendall on celebrating 30 years of operation!!

WOLLONDILLY CENTRE

We started the year with Bonnie the Brumby back from Jason Sharp, the wonderful horse trainer who broke Bonnie in and taught her all she needs to know to be a marvellous edition to our horse family at Wollondilly. She even knows how to camp draft and has a genuine, gentle and kind temperament. She is also a very relaxed girl and a joy to be around and is seen below being ridden by Kelly and led by Rosie.



The horses are enjoying their new stalls on riding days. The apprentices from Simec-Tahmoor Mines relocated them for us and installed a new safety fence. As you can see below, the apprentices have been a marvellous help to our Centre. They have improved access from the car park to our clubhouse by concreting and making a ramp. They also installed a railing around our verandah.



We have also been assisted in a much-needed way by people from the Department of Community Justice. These amazing men mow our grounds on a regular basis and while doing so rake up small branches etc. into piles which we can burn at a later date. They continue these services over winter, so our grounds always look neat and tidy.

The Army personnel from Holsworthy Rehabilitation Unit still attend each riding day and are a great help as side-walkers or horse leaders. They absolutely love the interaction with horses and riders.

We applied for a grant from Federal MP Angus Taylor and were pleased to receive \$500 to be used for First Aid Courses and Fuel Vouchers. Angus Taylor has always been a supporter of our Centre.

We also received a grant from our local OSCA group for Equine Massage Therapy.

Some of the horses have already received theirs and Rosie took some photos and the look of utter bliss on their faces was amazing.

Members from OSCA are coming after the school holidays to see the last two horses receive their therapy.

Hopefully, we may be able to offer this to our horses on a regular basis.



The grant we received from the Black Summer Bushfire round has been finalised with a follow-up of slashing in an area of our grounds. Hopefully, we can continue this on a regular basis, especially before summer.

Our wonderful friends at Camden Lioness Club gave us a donation of \$500 which we will use to re-stock the Horse First Aid Kit and purchase new equipment for rider games.

We are also grateful to the Board of RDA NSW for funding from the Golden Eagle race win. This has enabled us to tick off a few things on our bucket list. With this money we were able to have the gutters on our clubhouse and shed cleaned, the walls of the shed were cleaned, and whirly-gigs were installed in the roof. Hopefully, this will help us avoid the disaster of a few years ago when we lost a load of hay which fell victim to moisture then mould.

Our Coach Rosie received an Australia Day award from our local Wollondilly Shire Council.

She was named Wollondilly Citizen of the Year.

We are all very proud of her.



Our Treasurer Evelyn also received an award earlier this year.

She received a Senior award from our local member MP Judith Hannan and was invited to a morning tea at Judith's office.



We have three new helpers who have fitted in very well and are enjoying working with riders, fellow volunteers and of course our wonderful ponies and horses. Two of our volunteers attended a training workshop run by CASP which they both enjoyed and gained a lot of knowledge from.

KEMPSEY-MACLEAY CENTRE

Kempsey-Macleay has well deserved celebration:

Past and present volunteers joined some of our riders with their family and supporters to gathered at the Frederickton Golf Club on Tuesday, 16 July 2023 for a very enjoyable celebration and recognition luncheon.

The morning kicked off with some great entertainment from the local ukulele group, followed by a delicious lunch and lots of talking and laughter.

Presentations saw 15 dedicated Centre volunteers recognised for their service and presented with a volunteer's badge.

There was more to celebrate when 2 volunteers received 5-year service pins and then we recognised the huge achievement of two other volunteers with 1 collecting a 10-year pin and 1 an amazing 15-year service pin.

Excitement followed when our volunteers cheered loudly as riders were presented with achievement certificates and badge ranging from most improved to most entertaining rider and lots of other titles in-between.

Some of the riders that collected awards will be representing our Centre at SIEC in August when they compete in the Mounted Games.

Centre President Wendy Dunbar read a tribute to Yvonne Couper and Marie Purkis outlining their outstanding achievement of attending the first community meeting in 2005 to rally up support to start a Riding for the Disabled Centre in the Kempsey-Macleay area, which thankfully was a success.

These two wonderful ladies are still strongly committed to the Centre today and for this reason the Centre proudly presented both the honour of Life Membership of our Centre.



MUDGEES CENTRE

From Tracy Lucas:

As the President of Mudgee RDA Centre, it brings me immense joy to reflect on our recent achievements and the incredible impact our programs have on our participants.

The inauguration of the Rideability Hub was a momentous occasion, symbolized by the cutting of the blue ribbon, a memory etched in our hearts forever. I extend my gratitude to Coach Diane and representative Ian Flood from Peabody for their unwavering support.



I am thrilled to introduce our one and only mare Chiquita and her remarkable journey to victory at the local show, a testament to the profound bond between our horses and our participants. Erin (Chiquita's mum) and Chiquita, your success fills us with pride.



Let us welcome Boys, the spirited duo comprising Sparky, the lively five-year-old standardbred, and Sunny, the wise 12-year-old. Their integration into our centre has been met with open arms, with Sunny excelling and Sparky displaying his youthful exuberance. Within the next few weeks, we hope that Sparky joins in our program.



Our four beloved boys, Toby, Sparky, Sunny and Theo, represent the heart of our centre. Each a standardbred or thoroughbred, they grace our arena with grace and strength. Theo, son of Octagonal, embodies gentleness and charm, a sentiment shared by all our equine companions.



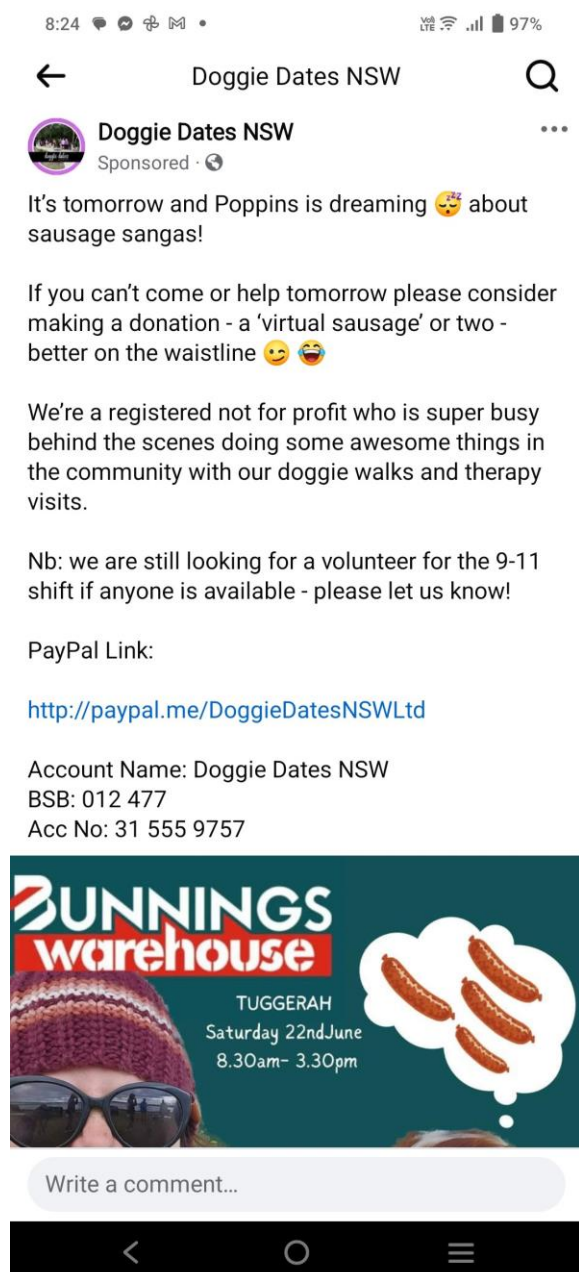
These horses, though large in stature, are giants in the eyes of those they touch with their love and companionship. They are cherished members of our Mudgee RDA family, bringing joy and empowerment to all who cross their path.

Together, we continue to uphold the values of inclusivity, resilience, and compassion that define our centre. As we look to the future, let us stand united in our commitment to enriching the lives of our participants and celebrating the remarkable bond between humans and horses.

Extra Bits 'n' Positive Pieces

Here's a new page in our newsletter to give you some hints and things that are working at our Centres and remember - every good idea is a shared one!

Fundraising tips today and here is a good idea that I recently saw on Facebook for a group that was advertising their Bunnings BBQ:



It's actually a great idea because not everyone eats sausages and may not be able to get to their local Bunnings on that day!

It's always good to have your bank BSB and Account Numbers and/or Paypal link (if you have one) ready so people can quickly deposit their donation.

You might also like to add your address and a contact phone number so that people can visit to find out what your centre does.

See also the Buy a Biscuit or Bale of Hay fundraiser idea on the State Office Facebook page on 1st August – the Horses' Birthday. You can use that at any fundraisers/stalls (plus add your centre's bank/paypal details).

Contact me at:

linda.bower@rdansw.org.au

if you need assistance with that.

I hope you have enjoyed your first Extra Bits and Positive Pieces article! Next week tips for attracting volunteers.