

Gipping Riding Society AGM

November 17th 2023 at 6.45pm

Mendlesham Community Centre

Present: Alison Nicholson, Lynne Baines, Jill, Hannah, Kerry and Jessica Baldwin, Lorna Briggs, Kate and Florence Rosten, Sarah Lock, Kirsty and Emma Neve, Rachel and Martha Snow, Claire and Brooke Sturgeon and Kathy Studd, Katie Hull, Amanda and Charlotte Salmon, Sarah Spice, Karen Perkowski, Anna Perry and Kayla, Claire and Freya Button, Emma Reader, Jo Eldridge, Elaine Peasey, Jo Pare and Karen, Samantha Masters and Isabel, Sarah Lummis, Jayne Ackland Snow

Apologies: Helen Whitbread, Clare Limond, Emily Simpson, Julia Hicks

Chairs Welcome

I couldn't be more delighted to welcome you to Gipping Riding Society's AGM this evening. Whilst it is always lovely to meet up with our horses, somehow it's more relaxing without them and we're not having to battle with mud, rain and the cold.

1. Introductions.

Present committee members: Alison - Lynne - Jill - Bex - Amanda - Katie

Absent committee members: Nicola - Sarah

2. Our format this evening is first the formal part of the AGM, followed by presenting club awards, in the form of rather splendid rosettes and trophies. During this, Lynne will make a dash to the Fish and Chip shop and return with one of the main reasons we're all here tonight, the food! We'll get the kettle on make teas and coffees if you'd like a hot drink and there's also some cold drinks. Afterwards Jill has organised a quiz which we'll intersperse with our traditional Horse Beetle. And we're aiming to finish by 9.30.

3. I saw 2022 as a bounce back year after the quiet Covid times and this year has been positively ping-pong with our usual events, new events and competitive results.

As Chairman of GRS I'm very keen that we're inclusive and a friendly welcoming club for all; no matter what level of rider or type of horse, and certainly we're a club for all ages!

Over the year we aim to have a balance of activities so that everyone can take part in something.

We kicked off the year with a talk from Bridget Colston. Following on was our new Online Dressage League and then we had an online Groundwork Challenge, Spring Dressage at Crow's Hall, a truly awesome Helmingham Hall Show, a couple of Show Jumping Evenings at Suffolk Rural, our first Club Camp and in September was our usual Charity Fun Show to raise money for EAAA.

Training - I view training as a very important part of the club's offering and thanks to Bex we've regularly had four sessions a month, again catering for a range of ages and abilities. Anne Gayfer and Lucy Gooderham have coached both flat work and jumping at Tophorn and Suffolk Rural, Rachel Lee has been at Crow's Hall one Saturday a month and the Mini Members have had great fun at Suffolk Rural. Additionally, there have been some sessions with Michael Paveley, which have focussed on aspects of jumping skills.

To say we've been busy with Area 14 competitions is an understatement. We've been represented at Novice Winter Dressage, Combined Challenge, Senior Intermediate Dressage, One Day Event, Show Jumping and Style Jumping, Dressage and DTM at Norfolk Showground, Arena Eventing and Intermediate Show Jumping, and on Sunday there's Novice Show Jumping at Tophorn.

But GRS riders haven't only turned up, they've had some wonderful results and qualified for BRC Championships. These have included Arena Eventing, Novice Winter Championships, Combined Challenge, National Champs and National Intro Champs.

British Riding Clubs relies on clubs to run Qualifiers on their behalf. In Area 14 each club is expected to volunteer to run a Qualifier. As last year, Jill organised the Junior Winter Dressage Qualifier for this area i.e. Norfolk, Suffolk, North Essex.

Additionally clubs are asked to organise training for riders from any Area 14 club – thanks to Sarah for doing this on our behalf with Dressage at WHW.

Before the end of the year we've got another talk by Bridget Colston (Understanding Behaviour and How Horses Learn) two weeks tonight, the continuation of our Online Dressage League, the coach trip to The London International Horse Show and our Christmas Mounted Games and Gymkhana. And more training!

Reflecting on this list reminds me of just how wonderful GRS events are – the committee members and others who help with the organisation are so well organised and you, the members, and non- members create such a nice atmosphere. The feedback we receive is so complimentary about our club and that is down to every single person involved.

4. If I were to pick out a few highlights of the year

- * Witnessing members constantly strengthening our ethos of being friendly, kind and encouraging.

- * The continuation of Mini Member training to promote sound foundations and fun.

- * Jill orchestrating so many successes at Area and National Championship - our juniors have been competitively successful and outstanding ambassadors for us. Special mentions to Kayla, Jess, Brooke, Freya and Harriet, who all achieved top 3 placings at National Champs – remarkable results.

* Helmingham was truly awesome – best ever?

* Our inaugural Camp – we all came back changed people, for the better!

5. Our membership this year has increased to 125 from 114 last year and 97 in 2021. I'm particularly proud that we're a club that welcomes and encourages a wide age range – the youngest of our 46 juniors are under 5 and some of the 79 seniors are well into their sixties and still active riders!

I do need to break the news that Junior and Non-riding membership fees will need to rise for 2024, which probably won't come as a surprise to you. The principle of being a not for profit club remains central to GRS and as such membership fees are set at a price to break even. British Riding Clubs will be charging us £24 (up from £20) per member irrespective of age and a flat fee of £215 as we're considered a large club. Additionally we have to pay Webcollect and Paypal fees, insurance and website costs.

So next year an adult subscription will be £30, junior £28 and Non-Riding £26. We're going to stop having Family Memberships.

Benefits of being affiliated to BRC include: public liability insurance up to £20million when taking part in BRC/GRS events & activities, access to Area 14 and national competitions inc online, Rider magazine & monthly? eNews, discounts & offers on some products and event tickets and access to a salaried full time staff to answer queries.

BRC has introduced a new, IT system for you to do your membership to GRS. This should be up and running but there are teething problems for them and me! Once I've got it sorted I'll send an email to explain what to do.

We will continue to price training and other club activities at cost price to members.

6. Constitution – an update.

Thanks to Kate and Sarah we're close to having it ready to present to you. The next stage is for the committee members to finalise some of the wording and then, at an EGM via Zoom?, it can be finalised.

7. I believe that GRS has had it's most successful year ever and it's reputation has grown significantly.

I would like to end with some thank yous.

My first thank you is to you all. GRS is a great club because our members are kind and supportive to each other.

Next is a huge thank you to the rest of the committee (Lynne, Bex, Nicola, Katie, Jill, Sarah and Amanda) They are a fab team: with enthusiasm, hard work and support for each other when things don't go to plan. Furthermore they have a commitment to making sure you have fun and enjoyment.

Final thank you goes to Nicola and Lynne, who are stepping down from the committee.

Nicola – Nicola has been treasurer for 4yrs and has been highly efficient in managing our income, paying invoices and doing refunds. However, her circumstances have changed and she now feels that her life is heading in a slightly different direction. Her cheerful nature, willingness to get stuck in and sense of humour will certainly be missed and on a personal level I'm so indebted to her sharing the organisation of the Charity Fun Shows. They would have been so very different if I'd had to do the IT side!

Lynne – very often leaving speeches have funny anecdotes which are borderline embarrassing but you can relax Lynne, this one hasn't.

Lynne has been a member and pillar of GRS for about 15years and if she'd been paid for all the hours she's spent on GRS, she'd be on a world cruise this evening. Over the years she's had many club roles – membership secretary. Training organiser, organising members for Area competitions, she's been show secretary for a whole range of competitions, being the club helper at Area 14 competitions and vice Chair. She's also hosted committee meetings at her house and baked countless cakes. Lynne has always stepped in when things needed doing. GRS is certainly going to miss her and so am I. She's always been at the end of the phone for advice, her knowledge of the BRC Handbook would earn her a place on Mastermind and she's shared the tedium of Area 14 meeting with me. Lynne, you've been such a wonderful contributor to our club, thank you.

2021 Minutes were agreed

Treasurers Report

Copies of the report have been given to members, Kate's Husband was appointed auditor.

Constitution

Nearly there with the change to charitable status. An EGM will be held in the near future to vote on the updated constitution

Points League

Bex explained the change to the points system. From 1st November 23 to 31st October 24 members will be responsible for collecting their own points. Each horse has its own card. Points are awarded for all GRS events, Area 14 competitions, training, demos and helping. Cards are available from Bex or to download from the website.

Election of Committee

The current committee who are standing again and were elected as follows:

Allison Nicholson-Chair & Membership Secretary

Jill Baldwin - Teams

Bex Kelly – Training

Katie Hull, Amanda Salmon, Sarah Ahrens

Nominated by Sarah Lock and seconded by Kate Rosten

Lynne and Nicola stood down

New members of the committee standing:

Jayne Ackland Snow is the new Secretary, nominated by Claire Sturgeon and seconded by Kathy Studd

Elaine Peasey is the new Treasurer, nominated by Jill Baldwin and seconded by Kerry Baldwin

Rachel Snow also offered to join the committee, Nominated By Bex Kelly and seconded by Katie Hull.

Presentation of Trophies

Seniors

1. Sarah Lummis
2. Jo Pare
3. Hannah Baldwin
4. Emily Simpson
5. Emma Nunn
6. Bex

Juniors

1. Brooke Sturgeon
2. Jess Baldwin
3. Florence Rosten
4. Emma Neve
5. Kayla Perry
6. Charlotte Salmon

Double Vision Dressage Trophy – Nicola

Tack & Turnout Training Trophy – Sarah Lummis

Stonebridge Jumping Trophy – Brooke

AGM Closed 7.20pm