



New year, new challenges?

I'm pleased to write that the details of our 2009 events have been finalised and that our yearbook will be available in late February/early March to all members. It will be posted in full on the website, too. If you have already renewed your subscription, the yearbook will be sent to you as soon as it's ready. Membership costs the same as last year. Volunteers, you are welcome to join if you wish, but it's not essential.

You can join by returning the enclosed form with your cheque, or by paying online with a credit card. Please renew before 31 March to avoid paying for late renewal. You can enter all our events online, too. The online payment system is very secure and saves us a lot of time and effort so please consider using it if you have not tried it yet?

Event entry fees have been held at last year's prices, so don't get credit-crunched – start saving now!

We start the season with our tried-and-tested training day followed by an inside-out event at Blandings, 28-29 March, open to all classes. I'm sure pioneering small-pony-driver Janet Sycamore would be pleased to see more short hairy legs taking part (ponies' not people's, obviously). The flattish marathon – section E only – will not be more than 7k so it should suit moderately fit ponies and horses.

This is a very good starter event for anyone and is especially suitable if you are bringing out an inexperienced horse or pony or if you are a newcomer – or just rusty. Of course, if you wish to have a non-competitive first-time-out, come for some training on Saturday. You are welcome to steward for us on the Sunday – this lets you see how it's done if you've not volunteered before and you can learn a lot from our experienced helpers – and get a free lunch.

April 25-26 - our traditional two-day event at Ashfields, with a charity ball on Saturday night - £49 for a three-course meal and entertainment. There will be alternative catering arrangements for those not dancing away the night.

May 30-31 is our Euston Park event, with national novice qualifier (NNQ) classes and a BDS members' pleasure drive round our marathon course on Saturday morning, £15, organised by Eunice Binder, Suffolk AC – call 01473 830326 to book. Liz Hourd is running long-distance drives; a venture drive, newcomers and bronze, from 15k, all weekend. Please tell your local BDS friends about these drives: Liz is keen for more people to try this exciting activity. It's easy: you need a groom, a fit animal, and it costs from £25. You can enter on our website shortly. Call Liz Hourd for more details – 01949 860332

We are planning to have full catering facilities at all our events although Sandringham Club, 27-28 June, may be the exception to this: to be confirmed. We'll have our own camp, which was so successful last year.

This year we have a brand new venue, Elveden Park, near Newmarket, thanks to the enthusiasm of Lady Clare Iveagh. Four permanent obstacles designed by Wilf



David Taylor rose to the randem challenge at Normanhurst national in August. MW

Bowman-Ripley will be ready for our first event in July, 18-19, and there's a training day on Friday, 17 July. The marathon's round beautiful parkland and there's lots of space for arenas. If you can't make it to Elveden in July, there's a one-day event on Sunday, 27 September, so make sure you can come to at least one of them. Owing to the game at Elveden, please don't bring your dog to this venue.

7-9 August sees the first planned national event at Ashfields. Please contact Hilary Ray if you'd like to volunteer and see what it's all about.

There are new dressage tests for some of the open classes this season. It is our policy to encourage drivers at all levels to come to our events and therefore we allow some classes to choose from a small selection of current tests. This option attracts drivers from other clubs and so it also improves the competition. Because all scores are factored, the test results are comparable and no-one has an advantage or disadvantage.

Ideas for new members: if it's your first season, do phone for a chat with any committee member - we are always happy to help. However experienced a driver you are, if you have not competed in driving trials before, there's a lot to learn and we won't expect you to know everything. We'd also be pleased to hear from any more experienced drivers who'd like to mentor newcomers – do get in touch!

Competitors: be popular with the entry secretary and get your entries in early - before the closing date. Please let us know if you are sharing a carriage or groom or anything else with another driver so we can schedule around you.

Volunteers are always welcome to any of our events. We try very hard to make sure you enjoy your East Anglian Experience and to look after you well. Please tell Hilary Ray which events you'd like to attend: there's a form enclosed or phone or email her. Why not bring a friend or two? Never done it? We'll put you next to a friendly "old hand" who can train you and show you how it's done.

Everyone can tell us how we can improve the East Anglian Experience! Please do.

Annual General Meeting

The AGM, 23 November, was well attended. I don't know how many came for the delicious free lunch but it was a very good-humoured meeting and everyone seemed happy with 2008's events. Please remember that we are all volunteers running the club, yet that still means we want to hear your constructive comments as we are always trying to improve your enjoyment at our events. If you have a complaint, please tell us because if you don't, we can't fix the problem. Better still, if you can contribute to any improvements, step up! When more people help, it's more fun and also you'll learn a lot and get to know more people.

We congratulated Mark Bell and the junior drivers from East Anglia who raised their own funds and took part in the Junior World Championships in Austria in July. Charlotte Snow, Harriet Bradford and Katie Bell were also on the team of eight. They came back aglow with bronze team medals and Mark won gold in his class.

Sadly Robin Hyde-Chambers resigned from the committee owing to his work commitments. Janice Parker also stepped down although she will continue to help when she can. They were both thanked for their contributions. Jo Meech was presented with a cheque for a warm jacket as a token of recognition for her many years of organising volunteers. I'm sure we'll still see Jo helping at events but she wants to do less this year. Nigel Collins has left us as our official Safety Officer yet he's generously going to pass on his skills to Nick Westwood and Stephanie Richards who will take over this role for 2009.

It was suggested that, this season, to save the same ol' people doing the bulk of the work at events, classes of drivers (and their grooms) could help put things away. For example, the novice drivers could clear away the dressage arena(s) and the open/multiple drivers could clear away the cones at each event. The bits and pieces need to be stowed in our trailer. If eight people help to clear an arena, it takes about 15 minutes. This was accepted – so look out!

It'd also be very helpful if someone would offer to take the marquee down (when we've finished with it) on a regular basis. It's much easier to do with a group and when you've done it before, it's a doddle. Call Fiona now to take up this offer to improve your teamwork!

Sadly, owing to the appalling weather in the morning many people could not attend and we were without our urbane President, Guy Stainton, to present the trophies. Chairman David Taylor stepped in and, as most people had returned their trophies and cups, these were re-distributed.

Volunteers wanted

Our team of volunteers enjoy our events as well as being darn good at their observing and recording tasks. We always welcome an extra pair of hands and eyes and stewarding is a good way to make new friends and to learn the rules. "It's more fun than I thought", said Sue Hargreaves, who wrote for the dressage judge at Blandings.

Spectating is the first small step to becoming involved, of course. Do you have interested friends or neighbours who'd like to come and watch? Can you help us to find more people who might help us in the future?

If you aren't driving, can you spare a morning or an afternoon on Saturday or Sunday? Bring a friend? You can enjoy close-up spectating and learn a lot – as well as have some fun – being one of the team. We always need more helpers. Can you help to find more people? Volunteers get a free lunch and refreshments and can be added to the

newsletter mailing list, if they wish.

Please call Hilary Ray 01206 251339 and leave your contact number if you'd like to join the volunteers or to put her in touch with new people who are interested.



Diana Irwin was presented with the Kilbarry Cup by David Taylor for winning the open horse class points league.



Volunteer co-ordinator Jo Meech, retired, was presented with a bunch of flowers and a cheque towards a warm jacket.



David presents Mark Bell with the David Taylor Challenge Trophy for his gold medal at the Junior World Championships in July in Austria.

Crinkly Camp – 22-24 May

Crinkly Camp has become an institution: it's a three-day training camp for grown-ups (crinklies are over 25) at Ashfields. Top instructors are invited and it's a great opportunity to practise your driving skills in all phases.

The cost is £250 for one driver (EACDG member) and groom. If you wish to come on this very sociable camp, please enter and pay online soon, or send your form (from the yearbook) and cheque, payable to EACDG Ltd. to Mike Watts. If you come by yourself, without a groom, the cost is £212.50 (EACDG members). We regret that we cannot guarantee a place for you until we have received payment: "first come, first served". If you wish to hire a stable at Ashfields, please contact Zoe now. Bed and breakfast places nearby can be recommended by Zoe, too.

We present - trace carriers

John and Jo Attenborough enjoyed judging the novice and pre-novice classes presentation and were pleased with the effort made. Trace carriers were particularly ingenious: one person had made theirs out of a pair of spur straps.

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Your committee 2009

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Course Builder ...and helpers	Tony Clarke 01702 510077
Safety Officers	Nick Westwood, Stephanie Richards
Volunteer Co-ordinator	Hilary Ray 01206 251339 or 07795 148199 hilary_ray@hotmail.co.uk



Janet Sycamore groomed for ten-year-old Nadia Hughes and Mable in the first Wix World Cup event on 24 January. If you look closely you'll see we used onions for knockdowns!

If you have not got the 2009 BHDTA rule book, get a new one from their office for £10 plus £2.95 p&p – and read it! www.horsedrivingtrials.co.uk, 0845 643 2116, BHDTA, East Overhill, Stewarton, Kilmarnock, KA3 5JT

Send any item for publication in the newsletter to Fiona. No responsibility is taken by the EACDG Ltd or by any individual for any item or animal advertised in this newsletter or on the website, nor for the results or effects of following any advice or ideas published.

Optional small pony class

If you drive a pony of 11.2 hands or under, you can enter this class. It's open to singles and multiples drivers in any class and your ponies must be fit enough to enjoy the experience, of course. Two-wheelers are welcome.

You'll drive the dressage test with your normal class and drive the same cones course as everyone else with more time allowed. Drive section E only (the part of the marathon with the obstacles in it) with a longer time allowance based on a slower speed. If you are a small pony driver or newcomer who'd like to compete in this class, please consider taking part. You'll have the opportunity to win your own class rosettes and points in the club's league. Call Janet Sycamore, 01284 828828, for a chat – leave a message if you get her answerphone.

EACDG Events 2009

Keep this as your own reminder!

Date	Event type and venue	I've entered	I've volunteered
28 March	Blandings training	yes no	yes no
29 March	Blandings inside-out event	yes no	yes no
25-26 April	Ashfields two-day event	yes no	yes no
22-24 May	Ashfields Crinkly Camp	yes no	yes no
30-31 May	Euston Park two-day event, NNQ, BDS pleasure drive & long-distance driving	yes no	yes no
27-28 June	Sandringham Club two-day event	yes no	yes no
Fri, 17 July	Elveden training	yes no	yes no
18-19 July	Elveden two-day event	yes no	yes no
5-6 Sept	Ashfields Club Championship	yes no	yes no
Sun, 27 Sept	Elveden inside-out event	yes no	yes no

**Please contact Hilary Ray if you'd like to volunteer – all are welcome – free lunch!
01206 251339 or 07795 148199 or hilary_ray@hotmail.co.uk**

Why not join the EACDG?

Here are a few reasons why you might consider joining us:

- friendly competitions, consistently and fairly run
- a variety of local venues with good facilities
- classes for everyone so competing's fun at all levels
- a tradition of friendly support and encouragement
- training – and trainers – to suit you
- a regular newsletter and a yearbook packed with useful information
- secure online entry, a forum and website for internet users
- schedules and results published online
- a paramedic on site at all events
- catering available at events
- free get-togethers at events + drinks
- affiliation to the national governing body, the BHDTA, which insures our events and drivers...
- the club is run for the benefit of all its members and not for profit

Driver members also benefit from:

- personal liability insurance at EACDG events
- rosettes for themselves and grooms
- points leagues and traditional trophies

Helpers, volunteers and supporters are vital to the running of our events, of course. The supporter membership ensures you are sent every newsletter and have a yearbook. We try to make sure every helper receives a newsletter and a thank you note after each event they have attended and we invite all to a free lunch at the end or the beginning of the season.

Our friendly club is established as one of the leading horse driving trials clubs in the UK. We aim to support and encourage people to enjoy horse driving trials, to offer training to drivers, grooms, volunteers and stewards to match their level of interest and experience and to provide enjoyable competitions for everyone and run them consistently and fairly.

Whether you are a new driver wishing to compete, a volunteer helper or if you have an interest in watching the sport, you are welcome to join us at any of our events. Experienced drivers can also find good competition in all classes and those who wish to move on to national competitions will find there are many people who'll offer advice and help them to meet their goals.

We have an excellent range of venues with top-class facilities for events, training, camps and spectating. Our knowledgeable judges and experienced trainers are drawn from a pool of people with local and national expertise.

The EACDG is affiliated to the British Horse Driving Trials Association which insures our events and drivers attending our events and training. We use the (mostly) familiar BHDTA dressage tests at our events which means that everyone gets to know them and they offer a consistent

East Anglian Carriage Driving Group Ltd.

path into more advanced classes for those who wish to progress.

The club is run by a committee of elected officials and other volunteers. Anyone can stand for a place on the committee and we endeavour to listen to our membership, grooms and volunteers, and to take account of what is wanted at events and in general. The club is not run for profit although we try to cover our costs for every event;



Clockwise from top left, Roger and Jackie Driver are members of long-standing, as is Sue Squirrel; Wendy Wyatt enjoys the scrutiny of John and Jo Attenborough, Euston Park; Kerry Bowness from Horse & Hound joined the pre-novice class at Ashfields; Charlotte Snow and Bureside Ringo, also successful in the show ring. Caronne Daft travels from the Midlands to enjoy our events. MW

any funds remaining are used to replace or upgrade equipment, for day-to-day expenses – postage, newsletters, printing, phone calls – and saved for a “rainy day”. Occasionally an event is subsidised by the club or by the BHDTA, such as steward training. A free lunch has been offered at the AGM as a token of thanks to our members, supporters and volunteers.

Join in now!

If you'd like to join us, as a driving member or supporter please either complete and return the enclosed form or join online at www.eacdg.co.uk

If you'd like to register your interest as a volunteer and to receive the newsletter, please either contact Hilary Ray by phone or email or complete and return the enclosed form to her in the post.

Remember that you can call any member of the committee if you wish to have a chat about the club and its activities and what you can do to join in and play a part.