

# NESHPES NEWS

July 2009



I know I promised when I became secretary that I wouldn't mention the weather in newsletters but how could I not on this occasion! I hope you have all had a chance to enjoy the lovely weather and miss the storms.

We have seen lots of members out and about enjoying their highlands - whether at the lofty heights of the Royal Highland Show, tackling dressage tests or out on a summers hack its been great to catch up with you all. It's also nice to hear of your new spring arrivals and we look forward to meeting them all soon!

Again, the committee would like to thank everyone who helped out at our show in April. When discussing the show at the following committee meeting we really wanted to say thank you again, especially to those who were competing but still lent a hand for a minute or two - it really did make a huge difference. Now if you could do the same at the Aberdeen Highland Pony Show :) .....

As a committee we are very open to ideas, so if you were at the performance show and have a suggestion for future years please feel free to get in touch. The most important thing is that you put **Sunday 18 April 2010** in your diary :) and spread the word!

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## **Summer pleasure ride - 9th May, Overhall, by Inch**

**As enjoyed by Judith and her trusty steed Bruce.**

As an old hand at pleasure rides with SERC and being on our doorstep, this was an opportunity not to miss. Bruce loaded without a fuss and even the weather was being kind. We were met with a healthy turnout of highlands and their friends along with Sue Knowles and some people from her yard. I knew we were in for a fantastic day with the most spectacular views.

We wandered sedately along the grassy tracks past Sue's other liveries, having to wait for the rear escort to do the gates which caused some of our ponies to get a little excited as they all know that God created grass tracks to gallop along not to stand and wait!

Soon enough came the equine snorts of 'this is more like it' as we rode along through heather and up into woodland, then out onto the sandy forest tracks at the back of the Bennachie.

A couple of steady trots and canters brought us to a steep track where Bruce decided that I should be dragged through the bushes just to improve my seat and to make sure I wasn't snatching a quick 40 winks up there on his back. That is what I like about Highlands, they are such a thoughtful breed!

Upward we strode - women, man, boy and beast - and eventually turned left onto the Black Hill and wow the views were indeed stunning, here we paused to relax and drink it all in. Talking of drink I knew there was something I forgot to take ... a hip flask with a good single malt!! Ah well, next time.

All good things must come to an end and we turned back downhill feeling that strong swing of a Highlands bum sure-footedly picking their way along the path. All too soon we were once again on the grassy tracks going past the other horses who did their very best to wind our lot up with lots of silly whizzies around their paddock, but they were given only the merest glance of contempt from under the hairy forelocks.

We made our way back to the trailers with many a grin on a face that would require surgery to remove. What a superb trek out and many thanks to Sue for taking us out and your very kind hospitality.



## Stock Judging Competition - 27 June 2009

### Royal Highland Show

by team member Sally Smith

Why do I always leave everything to the last minute? Convinced I was going to be last to arrive at an informal team meeting I was somewhat relieved to find I was NOT last .

We were gathered to glean some advice on judging Highland ponies from an experienced judge and a young farmer, before taking part in a new event to be introduced at the Highland Show by the Highland Pony Society. NESHPEs was to be represented by two teams - the maximum number we were permitted to enter . Teams were selected by ballot from volunteers from the membership ,the only criteria to be included was membership of HPS. Just as well, as my enthusiasm for our favourite native breed far outstrips my knowledge . Not so some of the other team members though, and a very enjoyable afternoon ensued, meeting everyone and gleaning an insight into ring craft and having the opportunity to assess some young stock and brood mares. For me, the judges advice to judge from the heart is an adage not to be forgotten.



Now down to business. How had we all got on? This proved to be the most challenging part of the afternoon, as we all convened around the kitchen table for a very welcome cuppa . It was clear that expertise in the show ring did not extend to sussing out the scoring system! Using a thing like a square slide rule, our results were entered, and compared to the order chosen by our judge. We then all had the opportunity to discuss our selections, and to quiz the experts which was an interesting and very valuable part of the proceedings.

A dress code was agreed , and all that remained was for us to turn up outside the cattle rings just before the event on the Friday afternoon. Certainly if there had been a prize for turnout, I think NESHPEs were clear winners. Many thanks to Helen Gauld and Amy Sylvester-Evans for taking the trouble to produce tartan corsages to wear on our waistcoats.

The 9 teams taking part were ushered into two adjoining rings and our task was to judge two groups of four ponies. One young stock, and one of mature ponies. We were each given a card for each section on which to record our decisions.

As this was the first time this competition had been run, it was all a bit new to everyone, including the organisers. However, we eventually concluded our judging - and that's when I had my next challenge. I had been nominated as spokesman for our team - comprising Helen Gauld and Emma Johnston. We(or maybe just I) had thought that only one card per team was to be submitted, so I had recorded our joint decisions on the back of the card. However, all cards were to be handed in. How was I to remember what we had said about each pony! A quick confab served to remind me, and we then presented our thoughts to the judge for the day Sheila Brookes. "Which would you rather discuss first ?" I was asked. No contest there - the older ponies. At least with a bay and a yellow dun, it was easier to remember the attributes of the ponies concerned! I wondered how on earth a judge remembered each of the 27 greys she rode in each class, and came to a decision!

It was some considerable time before a result was announced which gave us a chance to socialise with the other teams taking part. Finally NESHPEs Team Spey - Amy Sylvester-Evans, Jill Munro and Lindsay Gunn - were awarded a very creditable 2nd place. Our team - Esk - with Emma Johnston, Helen Gauld and myself were hot on their heels coming 4th equal - an outcome we were well pleased with .

The experience was well worth while and one I would certainly like to take part in again.



Our prize winning teams with their rosettes and certificates  
WELL DONE!!!

## **Aberdeen Highland Pony Show**

**Sunday 24 August 2009**

It is hard to believe but the show is nearly upon us. Entries have already been flooding in, but there is still time if you have 'filed' yours safely away as entries close on **8 August** - entries are available from the club website.

This show eats up helpers like no other, so if you could spare us a morning, afternoon or even an hour or two we will ensure that you are well fed, watered and praised! We are also on the look out for some people to man the main gates during the show - so if you have some teenagers or friends who would be willing to sit at the gates for a couple of hours in a comfortable chair, with refreshments and we thank you we would love to hear from you!

The committee is already looking towards the day and we look forward to seeing you all there, whether on pony or on foot. Don't forget we also have the NESHPEs Best Member Championship at the show, which promises to be a great display of prize winning stock from this year's Best Member rosette shows.

Sponsorship opportunities for individuals and companys are still available - please contact Karen for any show information.

**Remember, remember the 21st of November!**

**Annual NESHPEs dinner and award presentation.**

**Venue and ticket information will be available soon!**

We hope you are busily filling up your score sheets in preparation for the many annual NESHPEs awards! If you have any questions about the competition, or don't have a score sheet please contact a committee member.

**10th - 11th October**

### **Highland Fling - Highland Pony Weekend at Newtonmore**

Optional ride out - Sat morning  
Highland pony fun-day - Sat afternoon

Official opening of Highland Pony Heritage Centre  
BBQ and Ceilidh - Sat night  
Ride and drive out - Sunday (All levels)

Stabling, turnout and parking for horses, lorries etc.

**ALL WELCOME**

Contact Newtonmore Riding Centre, Ruaridh Ormiston, for more details - 01540 670000

Fun packed program more details to follow.  
Ride outs, bring your own pony, ceilidh, camp overnight etc.

Ponies and horses also available for hire - book early.  
Open day, launch of Highland Pony Heritage Centre.

Email contact above for more details nearer the time or to be added to our email distribution list.  
Just a wee heads up for you all, could be a BIG weekend at NRC!

## Donnie's corner

Aye aye a'body, me here again!

Wasn't winter brilliant? Sum daft eejit told the wifie he thought Mum and Unty Oulie were looking a bittie lean – I seen their ears prick up, then they sucked in their big fat tummies and looked pathetic.

Onywey, the wifie says 'o god, maybe they need a little more than just chaff and sugar beet and hay and she goes and gets them 'nutz' which they got in their supper.

Now, I dinna think me and Fay were supposed to get these nutz, but they were affa tasty. I wouldnae go near Unty Oulie as she'd chase me awa and kick me, and Fay wouldna go near Mum for the same reason. Aye, but, I can usually sidle up to Mum and she lets me have a wee sup, and Fay can chase Unty Oulie away, so whit a rare time we had! I scooped both feeds maist times as I'd scoff mine really fast then go and help Mum wi hers! Mum would then go in a sulk and wander off to get Oulie's, but Fay had usually had hers by then so I got to lick Mum's bowl fine and clean for her (I'm a helpful wee chap that way). I did have to be careful though, as evry so often Mum would go daft and squeal and honk like a foghorn and nip and kick me, but it was worth the risk I tell ye!

The wifie wis getting affa annoyed standing in the field yelling at us and trying to pick buckets up and put them down in different places and me and Fay were rampaging round and eating all the nutz, it was just brilliant!!

As you know, the wifie just winna let me have ANY fun, and I seen she had a smarmy sort o a smirk on her face as she shifted us into a new field – the same one I went into when I wis weaned. Whit a fine big field it is too, but she says 'right you lot, plenty grass in here for you and not too rich, so no more feeds' and off she went!!! Even worse, she sent Fay back off to 'Livvery'. (Apparently Fay needs sum work, though it looked like she wis working very hard when I seen her careering round the hill wi' the wifie screeching 'Whoah ye bizzum!') Onywey, the wifie says we dinna need all the field now there's only 3 of us, and she's put the 'lectric tape up and noo I hiv absolutely nothing to eat!! And the stupid field his that stupid fence I cannae even get my head through!

I'm absolutely starvin', I hate summer and I cannae wait till winter. See ye later. Sniff.

Donnie xxxx



### **Best Member Rosette winners 2009**

**Grampian Foal Show 2008** - no award

**Aberdeen Spring Show** - Morven of Coynach, Lynne McDonald

**Strathbogie Farmers Club** - no award

**Angus** - Morven of Coynach, Lynne McDonald

**Fettercairn** - Tess of Glendoll, J Smith

**NERC Show** - Denmill Catkin, Robin Stewart

**Echt** - Lancelot of Whitefield, Louise Cushnie

We look forward to seeing you all competing for the Best Member Championship at Aberdeen Highland Pony Show along with those from coming shows - New Deer, Banchory, Turriff, Keith, Tarland and Aberdeen Highland Pony Show.



### **COMMITTEE CONTACTS**

**Chairman - Lesley Carnegie - 01569 767370 - l.gunn@rgu.ac.uk**

**Vice Chairman - Amy Sylveter-Evans - 07922 197371**

**Club Secretary - Susie Shepherd - 01330 811 449 - info@neshpes.co.uk**

**Show Secretary - Karen Stewart - 01330 811 802 - stablesbrae@btinternet.com**

**Committee member - Helen Gauld**