



The Side Saddle Association[®] **SADDLERS SIDE SADDLE FITTING TRAINING WORKSHOP**

The Side Saddle Association hosted a Saddlers Side Saddle Fitting Training Workshop on Monday 28th September 2015 at Moreton Morrell College and Pittern Hill Stables in Warwickshire.

The workshop was available to bona fide side saddle specialist saddlers and was presented by Janet Senior SSA 'A' Instructor, BHSAI (Reg'd), Examiner and Judge; and Roger Philpot SSA 'A' Instructor, Examiner and Judge. Saddlers travelled from Austria and far and wide across the UK to take part in what proved to be an educational and interesting day for all.

The workshop was planned to stimulate discussion, to share thoughts and ideas, to educate and develop the skills and knowledge of side saddle specialist saddlers to enable the Association and Saddlers to work together in partnership for the future development of side saddle riding with the main emphasis on saddle fitting and balance for the welfare of the horse and stability and positioning of the rider. The day focused on participation and interaction.

The day commenced with Janet Senior giving an overview of what was to be covered and a review of delegate's objectives for the day. Roger Philpot then spoke about a range of side saddles, different types and their differences.

Focus was then given to seat shape, sizes, pommel placement angles and widths and reviewing the suitability of a saddle for the riders shape and size.

After a short break the day moved on to practical application using a mechanical horse, this was an interactive session with rider demonstration.



The practical session covered side saddle balance and its effect for the riders, position, security and comfort, as well as its effect over the horse, horses comfort and welfare.

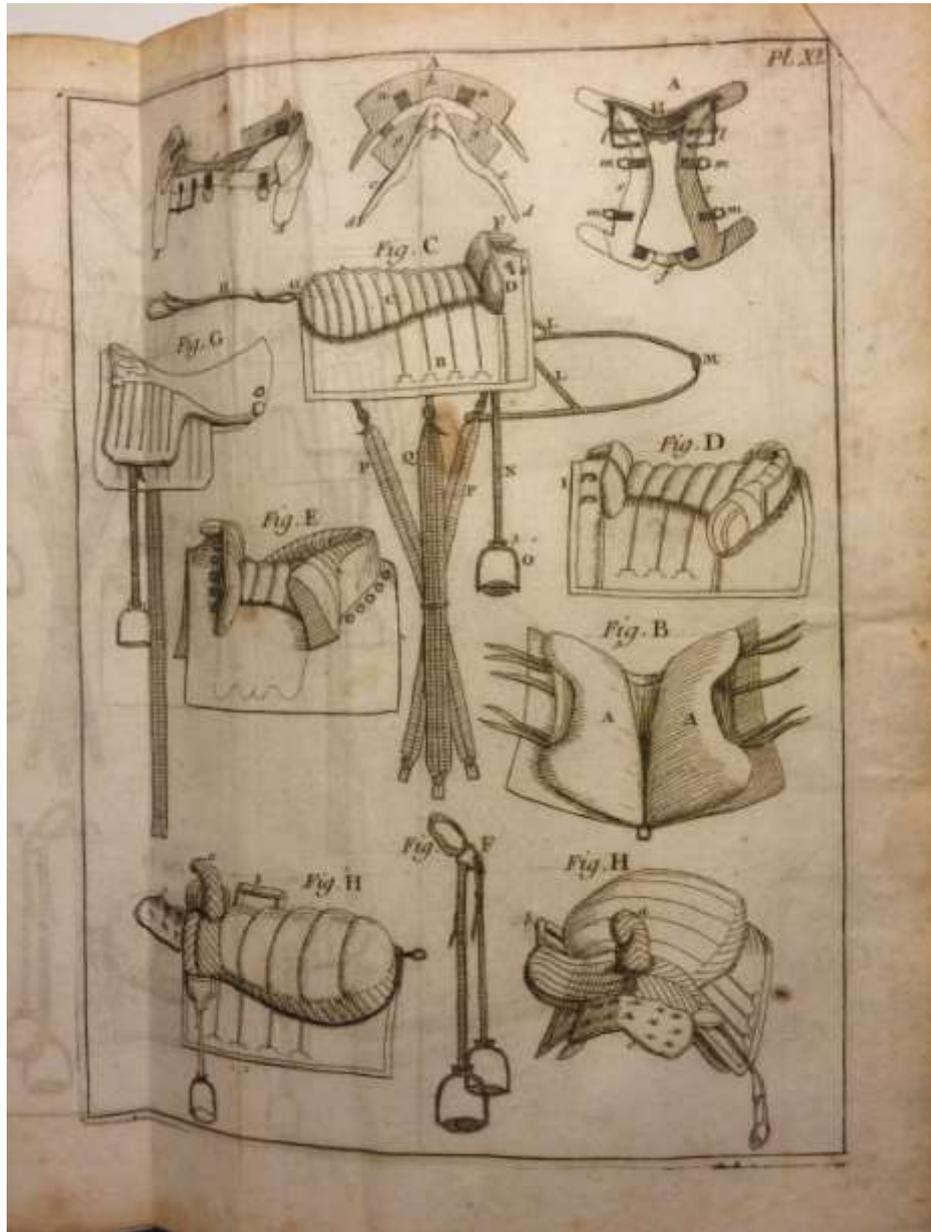


Discussion and practical application around the use of queens and pads took place with a focus on what should work and what does not and potential quick fixes and more longer term solutions.

The saddlers were then invited to have a go themselves which proved to be a fun and beneficial experience.



Following a working lunch with lots of lively debate and discussion the group moved on to Pittern Hill Stables where Roger Philpot showed his collection of saddles from across the world and across the ages and gave an informative overview of the history and evolution of side saddles.



The final session was a practical application with horses and riders. The guinea pigs for the session were Liz Rogers and Kelle King who rode on the flat and over jumps. The two different stamps of horse were ideal for making comparisons and discussing the various factors that may affect the fitting of a side saddle including breed, type, shape, paces and way of going as well as the saddle movement and balance and the rider's level of ability, balance and stability along with the horse's level of education and established way of going.

The day concluded with a summary and review of the various points covered with a keen desire from all participants to attend another workshop to include some practical saddle fitting sessions working with different horses and riders.

Thank you to all involved in making this an educational, enjoyable and interactive day which everyone benefitted from.