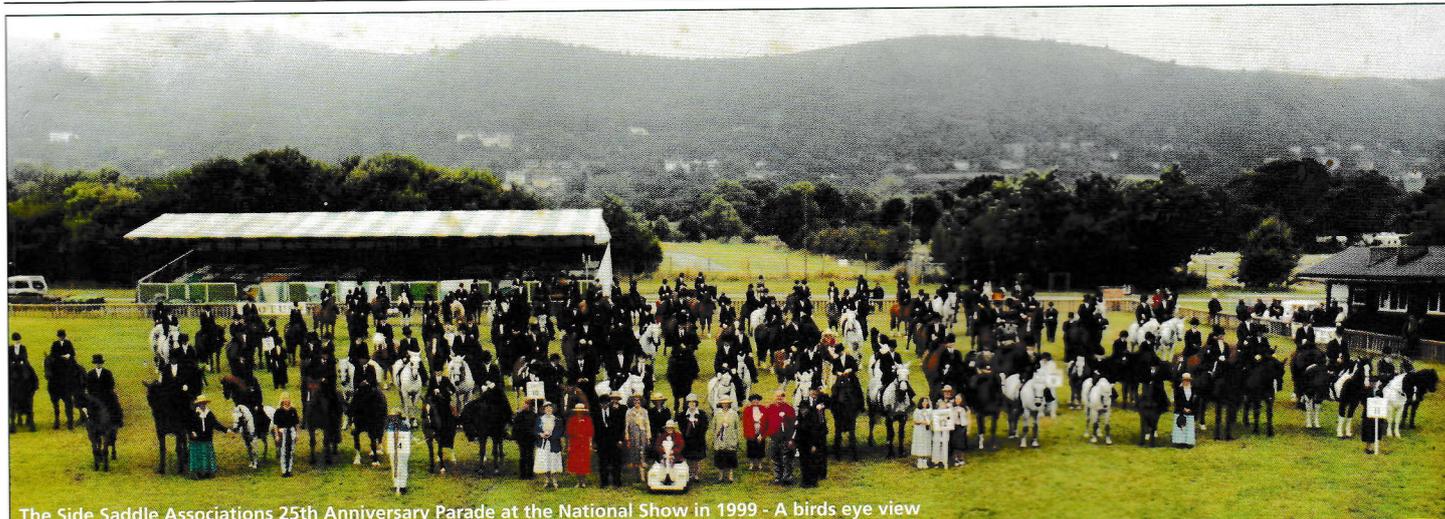


2010 MARKS THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL SIDE SADDLE SHOW

Patricia Drake briefly delves into the history of the National Show and recalls some personal memories feeling a book could be written on the Subject – there is so much to tell you



The Side Saddle Associations 25th Anniversary Parade at the National Show in 1999 - A birds eye view

The first National Show was held at Malvern in 1981, with the late Bob Willmer as Show Director. It was a one day show and the brainchild of the late Bilette Mackie, the Association's Chairman at the time, feeling it was an ideal opportunity to give competitors the chance to compete in a wide variety of classes, all riding side saddle. I am told there were 23 classes with the Adult (37 entries) and Junior Equitation Championships (32 entries).

Before the Association ran its own National Show, the competitions for the Rider of the Year Title were run within other Shows: Hickstead twice, Knebworth once and The Royal Show twice. Sadly the archives I have do not contain details of the 1981 Show but in 1982, with the late Les Moul as Show Director, the catalogue shows 130 competitors taking part over two days with 30 scheduled classes. 2009 saw 192 catalogued competitors, 4 bringing their horses from Overseas, and 78 classes restricted to side saddle riders. I think the record number of catalogued competitors is 201 in 1999, the Association's 25th Anniversary, with 59 classes. (The 1986 Autumn Newsletter incorrectly reported 206 competitors. I suspect a number crisis as 151 to 203 were not allocated!)

In 1982 the Championship classes were sponsored by Devitt (Midlands) Limited; The other main sponsor was Langstons of Reading which was the first year the Langston Working Hunter Championship came to the Show (it was held at the Greater London Horse Show in 1981). The Caldene Clothing Company, owned by Carl Uttley, joined the sponsors list in 1985 taking on the Working Hunter Pony Class. It was in 1986 Mr. Langston and Mr. Uttley teamed up and the Championship Title Classes became "Langston & Caldene"; in addition to sponsoring the qualifying rosettes throughout the year and donating prizes. It was a sad day for us all when this era ended in 2003. What loyal supporters Carl and the late John Langston were to the Association and National Show and latterly how grateful we are to Andrew Langston (John Langston's son) for sponsoring the Langston Working Hunter Derby.

Reading the 1982 catalogue is amazing. The Junior Novice Equitation was cancelled,

presumably due to lack of support and sadly some competitors are no longer with us but names like Dale Atkinson, Anthea Derby, Elizabeth Gray, Vivienne Hogg, Maureen James, Claire Lewis, Topsy Rix (now Ingleton), Laura Szutowicz, Jean Wake to name but a few, are all included and as we know are still active within the Association today. Anthea Derby (who I believe holds the record for riding at 25 consecutive Shows) and Maureen James both competed in the Large Working Hunter, taking 1st and 2nd places respectively; Claire Lewis has attended every Show (only once not riding) with her mother Valerie, so I think they all four share an unbroken record attending, in various roles, all 29 National Shows. Roger Philpot tells me he has attended every Show since 1983 and Vivienne Hogg reports having attended all except for the 2 held at Keysoe. Are there similar records?

The Show stayed at Malvern for a further year with the late Bilette Mackie as Show Director. 1984 saw a move to Huntingdon Racecourse with Pat Willstrop at the head of the team for 2 years; in 1985 Joanna Gillespie took over for 2 years, the start of her total of 14. Then it was on to the Newark & Nottinghamshire Showground from 1987 to 1990, Joanna being succeeded after 2 years by Francesca Gordon.

In 1991 the Show moved back to Malvern (in total we were there for 13 years), with the then S.S.A. Chairman, Roger Philpot, and Secretary, Maureen James, at the helm. With no official Show Director for the next 3 years, Anthea Fosse, who married the then Chief Show Steward Bryan Freemantle (a role he carried out for many years assisted by the late Judy Dudley), was listed as Secretary prior to becoming Show Director for a further 4 years.

The last year at Malvern, 1999, saw the return of Joanna Gillespie who has remained Show Director until her recent retirement, 2 years at Keysoe and 7 years at Addington. In 2005, the Show welcomed a new Title Sponsor namely Tessa Mitchell.

Over the years we have been lucky to have received support from so many sponsors. It would take pages to mention them all

individually but the contribution from each and every one has been significant, appreciated and has given so many people the opportunity to enjoy their side saddle riding and competition. Some have been or are members but others have just wished to support the Members, the Show and the Association – Thank you.

Many classes have found their way in and out of the Schedule since 1981; 1985 saw the introduction of Dressage to Music; then there was the natural progression of more showing and dressage classes; 1991 was the first year of the Hutton + Rostron Show Jumping classes and we are indebted to the late Geoffrey Hutton for his enthusiasm and encouragement to the members, particularly for the presentation of the Salver for the Area Team Relay which riders and competitors alike enjoy; in 2003 the Show was offered a H.O.Y.S. Ladies Hunter Qualifier and Christopher Parker of Juniper Green Organic Gin generously came in as sponsor; a particularly popular introduction in 2002 was the Oakley Family's Open Pas Seul, the Caro Cripps, in memory of Ginny's sister Caro which became the adult class when the juniors requested their own, introduced in 2007, known as the Rococo.

At this point I feel I really would like to mention the Scoring Teams. Alas, there are too many to mention by name but you know who you are and many of you have been helping for years - the Show could not happen without you and we are very grateful. The original "manual systems" were put in place by the late Owen Dunt; the late Ralph James introduced the first "computerised systems" and Anthea Derby has latterly written individual programmes for all scored classes. It goes without saying that systems have changed and "grown up" as more scored classes have been introduced; percentages required for the Dressage; endless sheets to add up and re-check. In 2009 there were 29 scored classes, some with 2 or 3 judging sheets, in addition to the calculations to find the winners of the individual awards and overall championships within classes; there are the Association's Points Trophies contested over the week-end. How lucky we are to have had so many people willing to take on the enormous task of producing these results for us.

You will have your own lasting memories but some for me are; the wonderful breakfasts supplied and cooked by our late President, Betty Skelton; Amanda James, with 2 ponies to ride, with her list of "Things to do when for the Day" attached to the front of her bicycle, her parents of course far too pre-occupied helping with the Show to look after their daughter; the late Jackie Bredin on the look out and helping with turnout explaining in detail how, "what, where, when and how" things should be done (leading to her putting pen to paper and producing the Handbook Guidelines for Equitation Turnout); Joanna Gillespie running the Show assisted by newly born son and heir "Baby Giles", in his pram; the unforgettable sight of 126 mounted riders parading for the Association's 25th Birthday celebration photograph; everyone joining in the Line Dancing at Malvern; the "Jokers" who changed the Working Hunter fence heights to around 4' during the night and waiting for the competitors' reaction when they came to walk the course; the Fun Dog Shows; Anne Phillimore and Christine Lawer arriving on so many occasions barely visible in the car

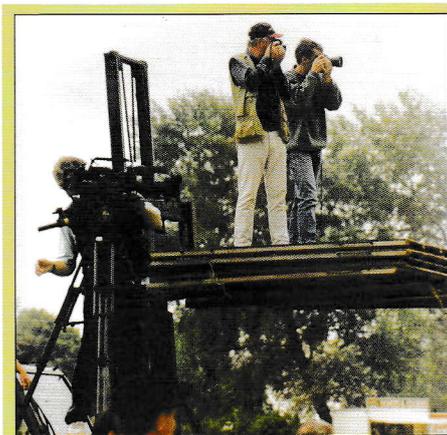
laden with boxes of rosettes, all beautifully sorted and labelled for each class; the amazing change in riding skills when it comes to the Area Team Show Jumping Relay; the sight of Liz Mole and my mother, Bill Barham, armed with mop and bucket when self-appointed curators of the showers at Malvern and Addington – no one dared to leave them dirty; meeting Stable Manager Fran Penn at the most peculiar times of the day and night looking so pleased with herself having procured urgently needed supplies of loo rolls – I never liked to ask "Where from?"; Margaret McLoughlin in pursuit of an unsuspecting judge or writer who had "run off" with a mark sheet; Party Time on Saturday evenings (I have often wondered what riders' equitation marks would be if they rode their tests with as much enthusiasm, accuracy and in the same rhythm as "bopped"?); the amazing array of the Association's trophies all displayed for Presentations (I am pleased I never had the task of sorting them out); I could go on for ever!

I am sure you will think 'well she might have mentioned'..... I am sorry there just

was not room so with apologies to you with recollections and moments I have missed..... I thank you, visitors, competitors, owners, lorry drivers, grooms, judges, officials, stewards, helpers and supporters, in whatever capacity. Without all of you we would not have been able to enjoy or take the opportunity to compete and meet up with our friends annually over the last 29 years and attend, here I quote, "The National Side Saddle Show - there is no other Show quite like it". Take that as you will!

I have found it fascinating "delving" and know there is so much more I could have told you in this article so if anyone has Schedules from 1981, 1983, 1985, 1989, 1990, 1992, 2004 or Catalogues from 1981, 1983, 1984, 1987, 1988, I would love to borrow them so I can copy them to make the collection complete andif you have further moments which should be recorded, let me know and perhapsI will start writing!

Patricia Drake April 2010



In the main picture the 125 horses and riders, plus banner carriers (representatives from each Area) and dismounted supporters were counted into the Main Arena at Malvern for the Celebratory Parade. Co-Founder of the Association, Valerie Dunmore-Francis and her husband William, were among the Sponsors and guests who watched the parade from a special vantage point. To mark the occasion and in celebration of her 90th birthday in June 1999, a special presentation was made to the President of the Side Saddle Association, Betty Skelton seen in the centre front in her buggy.

HOW IT WAS PHOTOGRAPHED AND FILMED.

The photographer is Chris Cook from Pleasure Prints who is standing on a fork lift purloined from the unsuspecting Woodhouse Staff who were working on the stables.

Both photographs are courtesy of Pleasure Prints, the official photographers at many of the National Shows.

IT HAS BEEN INTERESTING TO LEARN THE WAY THE ADULT RIDERS OF THE YEAR WERE FOUND AT EARLY NATIONAL SHOWS.

- In 1982 riders performed a Trot figure of eight, lengthened strides across the diagonal, a Canter figure of eight with a simple change of leg, Extended canter (not gallop), Free walk on long rein, Halt, forward to canter one circle, Halt, rein back, walk forward, halt, salute. Each movement carried 10 marks plus 10 each for Straightness and Suppleness; 15 for Horsemanship; 10 for Turnout. Turnout was judged prior to the class which was judged along the lines of today's qualifying classes, although marks were used and tests had to be ridden within the arena laid out. The top 4 riders were invited to ride 4 unknown horses for the Title of 'Side Saddle Rider of the Year'.

- In 1983 the test required specific movements, performed in a 50m x 23m arena marked out with coloured markers. The 1983 Handbook tells us The Rider of the Year was the member gaining the highest, accumulative marks from placings in the following classes: Equitation Finals, Combined Training and Versatility classes.

- In 1984 the format changed again and the Title was awarded to the rider with the highest aggregate of marks from the Equitation (including Turnout) and Equitation Jumping classes. The Arenas had dressage markers.

- In 1987 the Ride Off was re-introduced when the riders were required to ride each others horses and perform the Equitation Qualifying Test. Now of course unknown horses are used.

- In 1991 the Intermediate Championship was introduced having been piloted in 1990, and place points were awarded for each of the five Judges results (Equitation 2, Equitation Jumping 2, Turnout 1) with Turnout place points being divided by 2.

- The 1994 Summer Newsletter reminded competitors of a rule change; in future Turnout would be judged after the ridden phase and no assistance was permitted from grooms/helpers.

- In 2002 the test changed from that ridden since 1992 and since then have changed annually.

THE NATIONAL SIDE SADDLE SHOW 2010

FRIDAY 6TH, SATURDAY 7TH AND SUNDAY 8TH AUGUST 2010 AT ADDINGTON MANOR, BUCKS.
SCHEDULES TO ALL MEMBERS – ENTRIES CLOSE 19TH JULY 2010

OVER 70 CLASSES FOR ALL SIDE SADDLE RIDERS – FROM NEWCOMERS TO EQUITATION CHAMPIONSHIPS.
CLASSES FOR NATIVES, PONIES, HORSES, HUNTERS, RIDING CLUB HORSES, VETERANS, FAMILY HORSES/PONIES ETC...

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