

HPEC Newsletter March 2024

Hello to all members of the HPEC. I have recently volunteered to create a newsletter to keep members of the club informed of news and events. I hope this communication sees you well and enjoying your Highland ponies.

Like most clubs the HPEC has had a period of being in the doldrums created by firstly the worldwide pandemic, followed by economic challenges for pony owners. We are a club run by volunteers, some of whom have also faced personal challenges in recent times and as such this has also impacted on activities and communications. We are determined, as a committee, to rise to the challenge and rejuvenate the club, particularly as 2024 marks 50 years since the club was born.

Following on from lunch at the Coore Arms, Scruton, North Yorkshire, on March 17th, the AGM was held at the village hall in Leeming just off the A1. Members travelled from Yorkshire, Northumberland, County Durham, Cumbria and Scotland to attend. The main item of the agenda was the ways that we could revitalise the club, increase membership to make the club more viable and take things forward for hopefully the next 50 years.



(Lunch at the Coore Arms)

The first piece of good news is that the website is now up and running, having been recently redeveloped. It includes a forum, which has the great advantage over other internet formats of being very secure (members of the club only) where threads being discussed don't disappear in a welter of later comments.

Several events will be happening in the next couple of months including:-

1. 7 April 2024 - HPEC Spring Show at Mill Lane Stables, Selby. This show has both in hand and ridden classes dedicated to Highland ponies, with an HPS Panel judge (on this occasion Louise Allan nee Cushnie). It has also, excitingly, been allotted one of the much coveted, highly prestigious HPS Bronze medals to the winner of the In hand Championship (HPS membership however is a requirement), whilst the organisers will be awarding rosettes to the highest placed member of the HPEC in each class.
2. 3-5 May 2024 North East Highland and Fell Camp run in conjunction with the FPS North-East Support Group. This is the 18th year of this event and promises an entertaining and

exciting blend of equine sessions, tailored to a variety of different levels, and evening gatherings of fun and enjoyment.

3. May/June (TBC) Dewley Stud visit (Heddon on the Wall, Northumberland). This will allow visitors to meet this year's foals, their dams and sires and some of the young ponies who are being brought on as future stars.
4. 22 September – the Autumn Show at Mill Lane, Selby
5. A social/ gathering at Longtown, Cumbria aimed at bringing together all lovers of Highland ponies from the North-east, North-west, south of Scotland and further afield, to network, renew old acquaintance and create new ones whilst stimulating all lovers of Highland ponies to get involved in and create events.



(The AGM at Leeming village hall)

Meanwhile, the North-east group of the HPEC have once again agreed to sponsor the youngstock classes at the Great Yorkshire Show, which has in the last few years gone from strength to strength in numbers entered. The core body of the HPE has also agreed to sponsor some of the classes at the Malvern Highland Pony Show on the 13-14th July and will be awarding rosettes to the highest HPEC member in classes. Hopefully this will encourage members from all parts of the UK and promote the club to those who are not yet members.

As a club we have run Performance Awards for many years, and they have in the past had a high take up of members taking part. Recently support has been less strong, but they are an excellent way of being involved in HPEC activities regardless of geographical location. It is worth remembering that these are free for members to enter, with many trophies and rosettes awarded for different disciplines which cater for competitive Highland pony owners but also have a section for the non-competitive with the Happy Hackers for those who prefer a more personal challenge with their pony. This year's Happy Hacker top award went to Katherine Owen and Corrybrough Rory, whilst the points Champion was Alison Payne's Connell Daibhaidh of Castle Green (ridden by Pamela Brown) and the Reserve was Linda Graham's Dalesman of Combebank.



(Alison, with Lucy, at the AGM displaying the trophies and rosettes won by Castle Green in 2024)

Lastly, as previously mentioned, this is the 50th anniversary of the HPEC and a variety of events are being planned to celebrate this. One such event will be the 50-mile Challenge, which can be completed either with a ridden pony, driven pony or a pony lead in hand. All those who complete the challenge will be awarded a certificate and a 50th anniversary rosette. Further details will be available soon, so look out for further electronic information. We hope to dedicate discussion areas for this on our forum and Facebook page.

Wishing you all the best

Alison Payne (Newsletter and Promotions)