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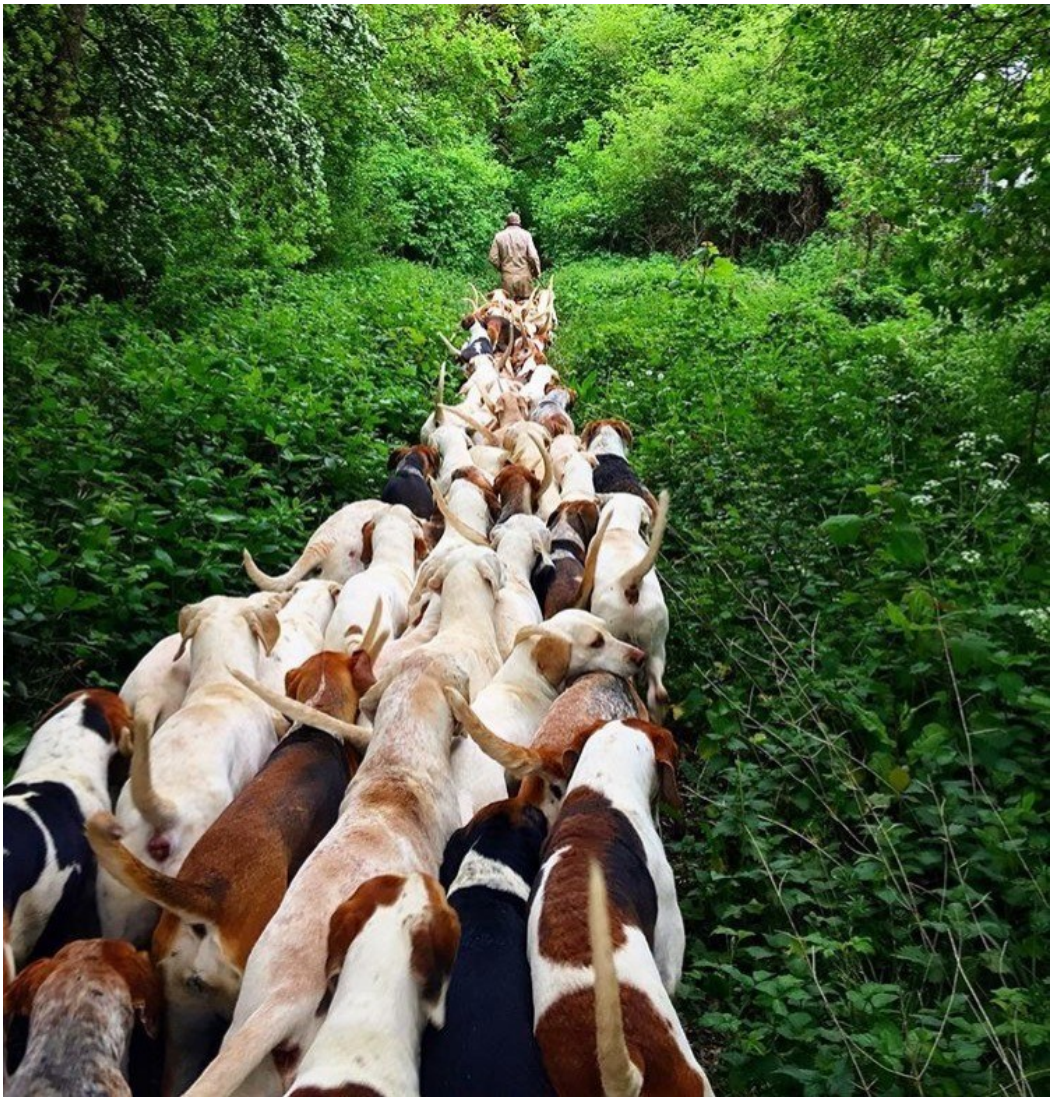
Surrey Union Hunt Newsletter, May 2017



www.surreyunion.com

"Going strong since 1798"

Some sad goodbyes… and a warm hello

We are very sadly having to say goodbye to three people this season; our whipper-in, Luke Newton, and two of our masters, Dave Robinson and Edmund O'Reilly Hyland. The good news is that Luke, Lauren and Charlie are only going to be at the OSBWK, so they won't be far away and hopefully we will still see them around!

To wish them well, a farewell party was very kindly hosted at Lukyns by Alice Dunsdon MFH and her mother, Sarah.

We are also very sorry to be saying goodbye to our fantastic Chairman, Nigel Morland, who due to personal reasons has had to step down from his position in the hunt. He has been an exceptional Chairman for the past four years, so we are very sad to see him go. We are very lucky that our former Chairman, Ian Agnew, has kindly agreed to step into the breach while a new Chairman is confirmed and appointed.

On a happier note, we are delighted to be welcoming Rob Mardles as our new whipper-in. Formerly amateur whip at the Crawley and Horsham, Rob and his girlfriend Charlotte have been busy getting to grips with the ins and outs of the hunt, and if you don't already know him, you will be sure to meet him over the coming months.

Surrey Union Hunt Newsletter, May 2017

From the kennels

As I come to the end of my first season as huntsman to the Surrey Union, I thought I would reflect on some of the highlights of the season. Back in the summer, taking the Bitch Championship with Starlight at our hound show and then the success we enjoyed especially with the bitches at Ardingly was brilliant and very enjoyable. Autumn hunting proved a very difficult time of year with 8 ½ couple of puppies to enter but I was very pleased with how hounds coped with the conditions and we had some lovely early mornings and some evenings. As opening meet drew closer, scent marginally improved and things got a lot better in late October.

Opening Meet at Gosterwood was an enjoyable day with many mounted enjoying a nice day with some good jumping. November and December turned out to be quite challenging scenting wise, staying very dry in the run up to the festive period. However, we did enjoy a very good day on Holmbury Hill from a meet at Joldwynds, with hounds hunting a particularly fast trail found above Peaslake, and finishing in the dark.

Over Christmas and into the New Year we enjoyed our best hunting. We did lose one or two days due to frost and the fog, but hounds showed some good sport through January and into February. We were kindly invited to take hounds to the Royal Artillery and enjoyed a day hunting Salisbury Plain, although it did take its toll on some of the mounted field. We were also invited to the Croome & West Warwickshire but the day was sadly lost due to fog and at the end of the season the Avon Vale.

We also visited the Vine and Craven when their hounds were coughing, which provided a busy days hunting with a good show of Surrey Union subscribers making the journey up midweek.

As the end of the season approached, conditions started to prove a struggle with scent particularly difficult into March. But despite that we had a successful final day of the season, which happily allowed us to finish on a good note.

Now begins a very busy time as we prepare for the Point to Point, hound and puppy shows, and try and squeeze in a bit of holiday! We have one litter of puppies already on the ground, out of Fashion by Pytchley Darkness, which I am very happy with, and have another litter on the way—so puppy walkers will be needed shortly!

On a different note, I'd like to wish Luke well in his new position at the Old Surrey, Burstow and West Kent, and welcome our new whipper-in Rob Mardles and his girlfriend Charlotte to the kennels. I'd also like to thank Ali for her continued hard work and for always having the horses in tip-top condition. And, of course, all the Masters for all their hard work and keeping the show on the road. I very much look forward to the start of Season 2017/18.

- Harry Beeby

Surrey Union Hunt Newsletter, May 2017

A message from the Point to Point Committee

The Point to Point Committee is in full swing with the preparation for this year's event. Following on from the great success in 2016, the Committee have managed to confirm sponsorship for all races and have trade stands queuing up to secure their prime pitches!

As the event grows year on year, the Committee have decided to introduce e-ticketing to both ease congestion on the gate and to make accounting a far smoother process. In order to service the new e-ticketing facility, a brand new dedicated website has been built and launched. We think it looks great, but don't take our word for it, take a look for yourselves at: www.surreyptp.co.uk

The Committee would like to urge supporters to purchase their tickets for the event via this new facility. It is completely secure with the tickets being emailed straight to your home computer (for printing) or to a mobile device for scanning on the day… it couldn't be easier!

If you have any questions or would like to be involved on the day then please email the Surrey Union Hunt Point to Point Committee at info@surreyptp.co.uk

We thank you for your ongoing support.

- The Point to Point Committee 2017

Leave a lasting legacy

Writing a will can be a difficult task. But not writing one could end up being even worse than the stress of working out what you'd like to happen to your estate if the worst came to the worst. It is estimated that half of people haven't written a will at all – which might end up meaning that your entire estate reverts to the government.

Perhaps it goes without saying that the Surrey Union are always hugely grateful if someone chooses to remember us in their will – but it can sometimes seem like an awful lot of both time and effort to make any changes. The good news is that it needn't be that difficult. The simplest thing to do is to write a codicil and include it with your existing will. And why would you want to leave any money to the hunt? Well, in case it wasn't an obvious choice, we came up with this jaunty jingle as encouragement:

As you care for horn and hound,
Please mention 'em in your will
Before you go to ground.

In all seriousness however, we have plenty of plans in the pipeline to try and re-develop the Kennels site. But as optimistic as our plans might be, it sadly boils down to funding. We know that everyone has plenty of people vying for their attention. But please do at least consider us before leaving everything to the RSPCA!!

A very successful Hunter Trials

This year's Surrey Union Hunter Trials were held at Heath Farm, Munstead on 1 April. The weather was fantastic and the entries were exceptionally full. We have never run so many horses round our course in one day. There were just under 300 horses entered and quite a few of them went round the course twice in different classes. Sarah Halsey, Katharine Meller and Ali West were on fire in the start box (with help from Nigel Metson and Jamie Wilkes in the collecting ring). Fortunately we had no hold ups, and managed to run ahead of time all day. No April Fool for us! A huge thank you to all the helpers from the hunt who were able to volunteer, and who helped make the day such a huge success – we really couldn't have done it without them. We made £8275 for the hunt – a record figure.

Particular thank yous need to go to Ann Metson for helping me to organise it, Frances King for organising the Jump Judges, Tyra for helping in the Secretaries, Lizzie Calvert and Lulu Hutley for doing the most important job of feeding and watering everyone, Harry Beeby and Paul White for collecting sheets, Ian Agnew, Nigel Morland, Luke Newton and Sharon Saunders who tirelessly scored all day and of course Rupert Harvie for allowing the hunt to run it in the first place and for course repair/GDB duties. I hope I haven't missed anyone out!

Catherine Heilbron and Woody

Lots of regular Surrey Union visitors were competing, along with a handful of subscribers (the rest were mostly too busy helping!). Congratulations to Sue Jefferies and Dave Robinson for coming 3rd in the pairs – Sue was also 2nd in the 100cm open, while Dave Robinson probably won the prize for the best fall: he managed to fall off in the collecting ring before he even got onto the course!

Ashleigh Hyde came 2nd in the 80cm and won the Taylor Challenge Cup for being the highest placed Surrey Union member (riding my horse, Ross), and Hon Secretary Catherine Heilbron won the Best Hunter Perpetual Challenge Cup for being the highest placed SU subscriber in the 90cm.

– Becca Harvie

Sue Jefferies and Dave Robinson

Ashleigh Hyde and Ross

In other news...

They will go to the ball

This year's Hunt Ball was at a location new to the Surrey Union – the Bat and Ball in Wisborough Green. As usual, Emma Godwin did an excellent job of organising it all, along with her trusty team. Many thanks must go to all of them, and to Richard and Caroline Hayward at the Bat and Ball.

We had some fantastic items donated for the auction, including Diamond Hospitality tickets to the Joshua and Klitschko fight at Wembley, others to see Adele, a private day's hunting, a day's sailing in the Solent, and much more besides.

Julian Portch was on hand with his camera to document the evening, and despite the many sore heads to be found across Surrey the next day, it was certainly an evening to remember.

Our next party to look forward to is the Hunt Supporters' Club Summer Party on 14 July, so don't forget to put the date in your diaries.

THE PETERBOROUGH
Festival of Hunting
Wednesday 19th July 2017

A Celebration of Hunting
East of England Showground
Peterborough, PE2 6XE

www.festivalofhunting.com

THE FESTIVAL OF HUNTING IS THE ANNUAL SHOWCASE FOR THE WORLD OF HUNTING BOASTING THE GREATEST GATHERING OF HOUNDS IN THE COUNTRY

2017 will celebrate the 129th Peterborough Royal Foxhound Show as well as the popular Inter Hunt relays where opposing teams of riders race each other over a mirror image set of jumps.

There will be a variety of equine showing classes including In Hand and Ridden, as well as qualifiers for the Horse of the Year Show. Other classes include Ridden Hunters, Working Hunters, Working Hunter Ponies and Coloured Horses and Ponies.

These qualifiers are fiercely competed for and bring the best horses and competitors from all over the country. Also competing at the Festival will be the Harriers, Beagles, Basset Hounds, Draghounds, Bloodhounds and Terriers.

As always, the Show is a day not to be missed with a wide range of fantastic shopping and informative displays ensuring there is something for everyone.

Advance tickets: Adults £12.50 – Gate price £15.00
Children under 12 FREE

Advance ticket booking and information
Email: foh@eastofengland.org.uk | **Telephone:** 01733 363513
Twitter: @festofhunting | **Instagram:** @festofhunting
www.facebook.com/festivalofhunting
www.festivalofhunting.com

Lycetts

In other news...

The Surrey Union go to the races

Twenty-two Surrey Union supporters headed off to Cheltenham for Ladies Day at the Festival. Sam Riddington had done a fantastic job of organising the whole thing, a coach picked up the keen racegoers in all their finery from *The Punchbowl* pub on a sunny March morning. We truly were blessed when it came to the weather; those of us who had chosen to wear tweed regretted it fairly quickly!

Horses were picked and backed (and money both lost and won), plenty of champagne was drunk, and a good time was had by all. Even more of a bonus was that only one person—the poor coach driver—had to face the drive all the way down the M4 back to Surrey.

Plans are in the pipeline for a potential summer race trip to Glorious Goodwood already, so anyone who is interested, please do let us know!

Above: Surrey Union supporters enjoy the sunshine

Below: Lizzie Calvert MFH and George Gunn toast a winner

A previous year's fall: with thanks to George Gunn and apologies to Jonathan Chenery

Whoopsy daisy!

This year's Tumbler's Awards for the 2016/17 season were awarded at The Scarlett Arms in April. Every tumbler (well, those that had paid up for their fine!) received the customary bottle of port—but this year's big prize went to Peter Speck.

Some might call it bad luck; in previous years winners had managed to rack up a fair few tumbles, while Peter had only had two falls this season. That was enough to win him the Tumbler's hipflask, however. We hope that the 2017/18 season brings with it as few fallers as the past season. However, the hunt photographers, and of course our Secretaries who dutifully collect the Tumbler's fines, may well disagree!

The Surrey Union and Riding for the Disabled

The Riding for the Disabled Association at Casi's Farm in Cranleigh is currently fundraising to replace our core building. The Riding High Campaign target is £560,000 and we have now reached 71% of that figure thanks to the generosity of the Surrey Union and several associated individuals, together with many other organisations.

We have been providing therapy and enjoyment to children and adults with disabilities in the Guildford area for nearly 50 years. We currently have about 260 riders with a wide range of disabilities and the operation depends on nearly 200 volunteers. We work with 7 different special schools and 5 adult centres. We only have one paid employee, the stable manager, and we raise about half our annual operating budget of £50,000 through very modest riding fees and add to that the proceeds of a sponsored ride around the Surrey Hills on Good Friday.

We are fortunate to own our facility with paddocks, indoor and outdoor schooling areas, stables, tack room, classroom and so on. Unfortunately it is the core building which houses the stables, tack room, classroom, viewing and waiting areas and toilet, which was originally built as an agricultural barn in the 1930s, that has now been declared as structurally unsound. We currently operate under a safety protocol that stops operations if high winds or heavy snow are forecast. Have a look at our website (cranleighrdagroup.co.uk) and the link to a short video about the project.

The Surrey Union's generous donation from your own sponsored ride has been added to the Riding High building fund and we also look forward to further help from your Point to Point in May. This will be particularly timely as we hope to actually start the demolition and re-build just after Easter. We intend to keep operating

An artist's impression of the new stables, arena, viewing area and classrooms

The Surrey Union and Riding for the Disabled

in an arena in one of our own paddocks with temporary stabling and portacabins, however the timing of the build has been chosen to coincide with our summer term and the following holiday period. So the fundraising campaign continues energetically to try and match the post-Easter outward cash flow.

On a more personal note, I first volunteered at Casi's Farm around the turn of the century when I lived at Munstead on the north west corner of Stilemans. That must have been the time I became aware of Surrey Union, initially just enjoying the spectacle of your meetings as guests of Geoffrey Lawson. However it wasn't long before Geoffrey recruited me as an additional 'server' of port and mince pies for your December meet. I used to walk Geoffrey's labradors together with my own and when he 'volunteered' his staff to puppy walk some of your young hounds, they were added to my morning exercise. I think they were called Badger and Barrister, two very lively scavengers who often led my lab astray. I lost them all one morning and eventually found them shredding the corpse of one of Geoffrey's prize carp that his gardeners thought they had successfully buried. Ian Shakespeare told me that only one of them 'graduated', however my morning walks were never the same again.

The current indoor arena with riders, instructors and volunteers

Our group at Casi's Farm has always enjoyed both practical and financial support from individual members and supporters of Surrey Union and your latest contributions are extremely welcome. We intend to be around for at least another 50 years once we complete the current project, so thank you all.

- Colin Russell, Director, Cranleigh RDA

SAVE THE DATE

Friday 14th July 2017

SUHSC Summer Party

DIA DE LOS MUERTOS

Surrey Union Hunt Newsletter, May 2017

Diary Dates for Summer 2017

Point to Point

Saturday 13 May, 11am (first race, 2pm)

Peper Harow, Godalming, GU8 6LA

The Surrey County Show

Monday 29 May; Stoke Park, Guildford

SUH hounds will be parading in the main ring, while the SUHSC are hosting the terrier racing

Family Dog Show & Country Show

Sunday 4 June, from 10.30am

The Kennels, Ruckman's Lane, Okewood Hill, RH5 5NE

The Puppy Show

Sunday 25 June; The Kennels, Okewood Hill

Summer Party

Friday 14 July; Holly Barn, Wintershall Estate

Early bird tickets £40 before 14 June. Email: suhsummerparty@gmail.com

The Festival of Hunting

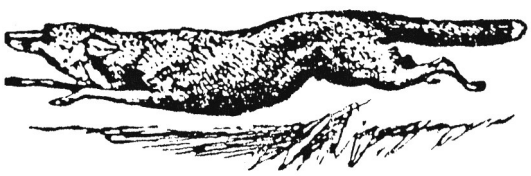
Wednesday 19 July; The East of England Showground, Peterborough

Surrey Union Tennis Tournament

Sunday 10 September; Slades Farm

The Surrey Union hounds will also be parading at The South of England Show at Ardingly on 10 June and The Cranleigh Show on 2 July.

For more information, please see the website: www.surreyunion.com



"Going strong since 1798"