

The Clydesdale Horse Society



Newsletter - Spring 2026



The Clydesdale Horse Society

Company Reference (SC204832)

Charity Reference: (SC011766)

Contact the Secretary:

Ian A Roy, BA.,
7 Turretbank Place, Crieff,
PH7 4LS
Telephone: 07720 895870

Website

www.clydesdalehorsesociety.com

Email:

secretary@clydesdalehorsesociety.com

Welcome to Our Spring 2026 Newsletter

24th January 2026

Dear Member,

It hardly seems six months since I wrote the introduction to the 2025 Summer Newsletter. Where have these last months gone?!

Whilst in the first six months of the year we look forward with great anticipation, first of all to the National Stallion Show and then in June to the Royal Highland, in those second six months there were also many highlights. The Society merchandise stand was out and about at the Aberdeen Clydesdale Show, The Kelpies, TeenRanch Charity Clydesdale Show, and the foal shows at Lanark and Fife. We closed the stand for 2025 at our own Winter Fair, having also ventured south earlier to the Royal Lancashire Show for their Clydesdale Friday. Thank you to everyone who supported us through the purchase of goods for sale in 2025 and we are looking at ways in which we can freshen up some of our merchandise in 2026. Watch this space!

Huge thanks too to Lyn at Whistlefish for her continuing marvellous support of our work last year - for the share of the surplus from their Christmas Card Sales, her sponsorship of our raffle prizes and the wonderful merchandise which we are able to sell.

In the office the challenges continue with the ongoing debate over shaving of tails which is fully articulated on pages 9 and 10 of this newsletter. The other challenges we faced affecting our organisational structure, regulatory reviews and possible changes to grading up, were all fully explained in three proposals set out in paperwork sent to all members at the end of December in advance of the Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) held on 23rd January.

The minute of that meeting will be sent out with papers required for the Annual General Meeting which will take place on 14th March. The changes to the Constitution of the Society and the changes to the Stud Book structure were approved at the EGM. The proposal for changes to grading up were carried for further discussion at the AGM.

Remember that to attend and vote at any General Meeting of Members of our Society requires you to have paid your Annual Subscription for that year.

With that, and in the meantime I hope you enjoy the read in this newsletter.

Have a great season.

All the very best. Ian

2025 Winter Fair

A packed show ring welcomed a great display of Clydesdales to Lanark on 15 November 2025 for the Clydesdale Horse Society's Winter Fair - giving esteemed Judge Alistair Christie plenty to think about. With Father Christie sitting at the far end of the show ring with eagle eye at the proceedings there was no pressure on son Ali – aye right!

In the end after about 4 hours of showing it was Scott Greenhill's 2024 born filly, Fordelhill Elena (pictured on front cover of this newsletter) that took the honours ahead of Collessie Alanna owned by Ronnie Black (pictured below). No mean feat for Elena, bearing in mind Alanna's success in the Showing Ring over these last four years.



It was Ronnie's Senior Colt Foal, Collessie Diplomat (pictured page 5) who took the Foal Championship ahead of Karen Harper's Senior Filly Foal, Redcastle Ceilidh Dancer (pictured page 6). As reported elsewhere in this newsletter Karen's day had just begun and she went on with her filly to take the 2025 Champion of Champions Award, much to her obvious delight.

All the principal winners are noted on page 4 for your interest.

All the soundings suggest that it was a good show with an impressive array of horses forward. Any show like this can only go ahead with the wonderful help we receive from volunteer helpers, too numerous to mention here. We thank them again now as do we thank everyone who came along to support the show in any way. But as ever it is the owners and the breeders who brought their horse along and gave us all a wonderful day to whom the ultimate accolade and thanks must be given. We appreciate every single one of you for being there.

2025 Winter Fair Results

Novice Handler

Deirdre Swanson

Senior Colt Foal born on or before 30/04/2025

Ronnie Black – Collessie Diplomat

Senior Filly Foal born on or before 30/04/2025

Karen Harper – Redcastle Ceilidh Dancer

Junior Colt Foal born on or after 01/05/2025

John Graham – Burnbank Trademark

Junior Filly Foal born on or after 01/05/2025

David & Beverley Walker – Galcantray Lola

Young Handler Class (Age 12-16)

William Greenhill

Junior Young Handler (Age 8-11)

Harry Martin

Gelding Born in or before 2022

Steven Ritchie – Tulloes Monte Carlo

Mare or Filly Born in or before 2022

Ronnie Black – Collessie Alanna

Filly born in 2023

Boat Clydesdales – Boat Lady Roberta

Colt or Gelding Born in 2023 Or 2024

Alan Matear – Clairabell Sir Benji

Filly Born in 2024

Scott Greenhill – Fordelhill Elena

Winter Fair Gallery

2025 Winter Fair Foal Champion

Collessie Diplomat



2025 Winter Fair - Junior Foal Class Winners



Above - Junior Colt Foal

Burnbank Trademark

Right - Junior Filly Foal

Galcantray Lola



2025 Champion of Champions

One regular fixture in recent years at the Clydesdale Horse Society's Winter Fair has been the class affectionately known as Class 13 (lucky for some), the Champion of Champions class which was the brainchild a few years ago of the late Jim Young and David Walker.

Prizes totalling £600 are available for the first three in this class where qualifiers come from the Champion of Shows which have affiliated with the Clydesdale Horse Society during the year.

This year's judge was Matthew Bedford who had seven excellent horses forward and, in the end, and much to her great delight he selected Karen Harper's Redcastle Bred Redcastle Ceilidh dancer (pictured below) as this year's Champion.

The aforementioned Fordelhill Elena owned by Scott Greenhill came in a creditable second and Collessie Alanna was third.

In response to suggestions made to us in recent times it has been agreed by the Council that for 2026 every affiliated show is presented with a Golden Rosette to present to their Clydesdale champion. Effective from the 2026 Winter Fair which will be held this year on 21st November 2026 at Lanark Agricultural Centre, qualifiers for this class are invited to wear and display this rosette in the Champion of Champions Class in recognition of their earlier success as an Affiliated Show Champion.



Further Winter Fair Gallery

2025 Winter Fair—Gelding Champion

Tulloes Monte Carlo



2025 Winter Fair Young Handler Winners

Pictures Courtesy of Neil Hiddleston

William Greenhill (Left) and Harry Martin (Right)



Gerald Fallowes Funding of Foal Shows and Others

We remain extremely grateful to the Trustees of the above Trust for continuing to fund work that we, as a Breed Society do, to encourage the continuation of the showing skills which appealed so much to Mr Fallowes when he was alive.

The annual grant we receive specifically offers a contribution of £200 to each of the established foal shows. These days it costs a lot to put on a show, and this small contribution is a very welcome addition to the funds which shows of necessity must raise to allow their events to continue.

The Gerald Fallowes Trust Grant also allows us to make an annual contribution of £2,000 to the National Stallion Show, grant funding to pay for Northern Ireland Stallion Parade, Stallion premiums, funding towards the Society's Stand at the Royal Highland Show and a contribution of up to £3,000 to underwrite the cost of running the annual Winter Fair.

The Trustees of this Trust operate within restricted guidelines as laid down by the late Mr Fallowes in his will and we, together with the Rare Breed Survival Trust are fortunate to benefit from his generous legacy and we thank them for their generosity.

2025 Foal Show Winners

Eight of the nine established four shows went ahead This year and the Champions in each are noted below.

Kilmarnock - Littleward Amber – Matthew Carrick

Lanark - Redcastle Ceilidh Dancer – Karen Harper

Fife - Collessie Aurora – Ronnie Black

Ormiston - Greenknowes First Edition – Annette and Ailsa Noble

Forfar - Gersa Lady Georgina – Mikey and Jacqueline Munro

Grampian - Gersa Lady Georgina – Mikey and Jacqueline Munro

Co Londonderry - Cloghan Maisie – Geoffrey and Lesley Tanner

Kilpatrick Foal Show - Burnbank Elegance – John Graham

Sorting of Horses Tails and Tail Clipping

For almost two years significant pressure has been brought to bear on the Clydesdale Horse Society, as well as some other heavy horse societies, over the way owners present their horses for showing, particularly around clipping of tails.

Animal rights charities and several members of the public have written to us challenging our traditions on tail clipping and indeed the British Horse Society has also become involved in the debate. Some of these bodies are generating wider publicity resulting in others including the Royal Highland Show and The Great Yorkshire Show taking an active interest in our actions and reactions on the matter.

The Clydesdale Horse Society stands by its traditions on this matter. This Society would never condone any practise which compromises the welfare of any horse. We can also categorically state that our Society has never received a complaint from the vet of any Clydesdale horse owner condemning the traditional practice of tail clipping as being a welfare issue.

Equally we cannot instruct owners as to how they are to sort the tails of their horses for showing. There is no legislation governing this practice and we hope this will remain the case. Petitions have been raised with both the governments at Westminster and Holyrood to encourage both the UK and the Scottish Governments to legislate.

We have been in touch with the Scottish Government outlining in detail the Clydesdale Horse Society's traditional approach to the sorting of tails and the many practical reasons for doing so especially for mature horses, including breeding animals.

Whilst it is clear that at the moment no legislation is planned which will prohibit the clipping of horses tails, we are equally aware that the matter is being kept under review by ministers in the Scottish parliament. Recently we have been advised that Ministers will consider proportionate measures, such as advice on the clipping of tails, in future updates to their equine welfare code of practise.

In light of these developments and in the hope that we can encourage Government bodies not to legislate or heavily regulate within their equine code of practice, the Council of the Clydesdale Horse Society decided at a recent meeting to implement the following rule for application at our own Clydesdale Horse Society Winter Fair in 2026 and in 2026 for Affiliated Shows which award the Clydesdale Horse Society Shield for the best Yearling and Two Year Old Colt or Filly presented at their show.

Sorting of Horses Tails and Tail Clipping

The following is an extract from the Minutes of the Council Meeting held in September 2025:

1. No yearling or two-year-old Clydesdale with a clipped tail which has entered a show affiliated to the Clydesdale Horse Society, will be eligible to compete for a Clydesdale Horse Society Shield.
2. No Clydesdale aged under 3 years old with a clipped tail will be permitted entry to the Clydesdale Horse Society Winter Fair.
3. It is recognised that in the first year of this rule there will require to be some latitude given to horses whose tails may have been clipped during 2025.
4. This rule will be communicated and highlighted to all show Secretaries as part of the 2026 Affiliated Show Regulations.
5. A communication will go to every judge on the Clydesdale Horse Society Judge's Panel informing them of this decision and asking them to apply it.
6. Shows which choose to appoint Judges who are not on the Clydesdale Horse Society Judges Panel must inform their nominated Judges accordingly.
7. This decision will be communicated to The Great Yorkshire Show, The Royal Highland Show, The Shire Horse Society, and the Scottish Government. Furthermore, the Society's Executive Committee will be given the latitude to circulate this rule to any other relevant party who raises questions on the matter.

At its meeting in November 2025 Council extended this rule to include the award of the Cawdor Cups at both the National Stallion show and The Royal Highland Show. Horses under 3-year-old with clipped tails will not be eligible to compete for these trophies.

We can confirm that the Scottish Government has been made aware of this rule change and has "welcomed the positive and constructive steps the Clydesdale Horse Society has taken to safeguard the welfare of younger horses at shows associated with the society."

It has reaffirmed that it "has no plans at this time to legislate to prohibit tail clipping of horses". They did go on to say that they will give due consideration to proportionate measures, such as including advice on tail clipping, in future updates to their equine welfare code of practice.

“The Horse Malt” Charity Auction

At Pentland Auctions in November and early December 2025 a 200 litre Cask of the first batch of “Horse Malt” from Drummygar Distillery was presented to raise funds for the Clydesdale Horse Society.

The vision of Drummygar Distillery is to host open days where visitors can watch teams of horses plough, sow, and harvest, celebrating not only the whisky but also the traditional skills and people who make it possible.



This project could not have happened without the incredible support of: Redcastle Stud for their land, expertise, and unwavering support at every stage; Benny Duncan, Scottish Plough Champion 2025 for bringing the equipment, Clydesdales, and his skill in ploughing, sowing, and harvesting and Warminster Maltings, England's oldest maltings, and one of the last to still malt barley by hand in the traditional way.

The society is indebted to John Anderson for donating this wonderful lot into that Auction and the magnificent sum of £5,000 was raised. Thank you John!

Slainte Mhath!



Farewell ...Old Chum



For the last couple of years our exhibition has begun to look a bit tired and jaded. It served us well for the last eight or nine years but more latterly it has only made an appearance annually at the Royal Highland Show.

Following an unfortunate accident last year's Royal Highland Show which prevented us from opening the unit during the week of the show it was decided that our good friend be disposed of and that we would take a different approach to our stand for the 2026 Highland Show.

The unit was sold at the Lanark Market Agricultural Sale in late November.

We have many memories of happy times where it served us well and we now look forward to a new chapter of exhibiting at the Highland this year.



SCONE PALACE INTERNATIONAL HORSE TRIALS

A great crowd of enthusiasts and Clydesdale Breed supporters gathered around the ring at the inaugural Scone Palace International Horse Trials to watch the amazing sight of 18 entries in the Scone Palace Ridden Clydesdale Final.

Qualifiers from a wide range Ridden Classes at affiliated and entered and gave a magnificent display and in doing so created a fantastic representation of our Breed much to the acclaim of everyone gathered. Huge congratulations are due to everyone who entered and special plaudits to Yvonne Pringle who came out on top of the tree riding home bred Mardoug's Highland Park. Kaitlin Marshall capped off what was a fine season by coming in second followed by Blythe Duncan in third spot. The future of ridden Clydesdales is certainly very bright indeed.



The Clydesdale Horse Society was proud to sponsor

this class for the very first time and we are delighted to be able to confirm that we will be continuing that sponsorship in 2026.



Earlier in the day Catherine Hodge put up a tremendous display only to be pipped to second in the British Ridden Heavy Horse of the Year Qualifier, and we also congratulate the qualifier, P Roscoe for making a long trip to Scotland and topping the field with Bosley Minns George.

Inspiring Aberdeenshire Lifetime Achievement Award

George and Ruth Skinner have been inspiring the life of many over many years.



Both, now octogenarians, the couple come from traditional Aberdeenshire farming backgrounds. They have the most inspiring hands-on work ethic and dedication to the north-east rural economy through a way of life that continues following their lifetime of work, in the business they and their family have built together, sharing interests that they inspire others to follow.

George is a familiar face at Thainstone Mart – in his trademark boilersuit and flat cap – and was instrumental in establishing and running the Royal Northern Countryside Initiative which takes the countryside to school classrooms all over the north-east of Scotland.

During their lifetime together, George and Ruth diversified their farm business to include a riding school which has allowed people of all ages and abilities to enjoy being among horses, and their farm has proudly facilitated riding for the disabled and, Ruth's passion, carriage driving for the disabled.

George and Ruth are the humblest of couples, valuing the reward and satisfaction of hard work, a steady pace of life and the beautiful surrounding of their beloved Aberdeenshire – it is said George can give an accurate weather forecast just by looking across at Bennachie.

Yet they are also forward thinking. They have devoted a great deal of time in helping others and the community value them personally and professionally.

We congratulate George and Ruth on this signal achievement.

We Will Remember Them



The picture is of Clydesdales owned by Robert Melvin and Audrey McGregor at the Remembrance Day Parade in Crieff in November 2025.

There we remembered the Fallen Heroes of World Wars and conflicts past and it seemed fitting to show this picture as we remember friends and colleagues lost to our Breed in 2025.

Deaths of Members and Friends in 2025

It is always the sad task at this time of year to take stock of those members and friends of our society who have been lost to us the last 12 months. At this time, we put on record the names of folks who have died during the last year.

Robert Aitken, Fintray; Tony Bull, Nantwich; J B Cameron, Somerset; Eric Hinds, Northern Ireland; Fred Grieves, Hartlepool; Andrew Kennedy, Northern Ireland; Rev Peter Kerr, Northern Ireland; Robin Lang, Ceres; Sophie McDonald, Yorkshire; Hilary Middleton, Bedfordshire; Kyle Sloan, Northern Ireland; Mr Swan, Conon Bridge; Pat Watson, Aberdeenshire.

We send our condolences to all their families and close friends as we remember them with fondness, and we thank them for the contribution they have made to the Clydesdale breed across the years.

It is always possible that there will be names which are not included in this because we haven't been told about them. Working on the notion that it's better to be told twice than not at all we would appreciate being informed of any other names known to you who sadly fall into this category in 2025.

We will remember them all with gratitude and thanks.

More Photos



An intrepid trio of Winners at Scone 2025

Blythe Duncan, Kaitlyn Marshall and Yvonne Pringle



'Get 'em young' - Young handlers at the Winter Fair

Adam Martin and Mirrin Young

Social Media

11,000 Facebook Followers

It was around nine years ago we set off on this Facebook adventure, and it is a delight to be able to record that we now have 11,000 followers following our Facebook page.

We use this page to promote our Breed in a constructive and healthy manner, and we are always happy to post information about shows and other relevant matters which is likely to be of interest to Clydesdale people.

Horses For Sale

Unfortunately, we cannot process horses for sale on our Facebook page but wherever we can, we are happy to add those to our website when we are asked to do so. If you would like a post made on the website about a horse you have for sale then all you do is send us some narrative, up to three or four pictures and an email address or telephone / mobile number to which any interested parties can contact you.

This is a service to our members and does not come with a cost to them, but we have the right to charge £25 for any post made on behalf of folks who are not members of the Society. Typically, a post will be made within 24 hours of receiving the request.

More Thank You's

Thank you Amanda and Neil

We are greatly indebted to **Amanda Stewart** for supplying the majority of the photographs for this newsletter and to **Neil Hiddleston** for his photographs of Young Handlers on page 16 and judges on page 19.

Thank you both so much.

Beth

A year or two back Beth Noble applied for and received a grant to assist her in developing her new business involving Carriage Driving Experiences, Weddings, Grooming Experiences—all wrapped into Lochside of Leys Clydesdales. Fantastic news.

As part of their “Come and See Santa (two legged), Samson and Mae (four legged)” Experiences last Christmas Beth raised £180, £100 of which she donated to the Society and the balance to support Samson and Mae in their adventures in the local community—as well as some lovely carrots. Beth - a huge thank you - we so appreciate it.

Membership and Member Information

Membership Numbers

On 31st December 2025 membership numbers of the Clydesdale Horse Society stood at

Annual Members – 533

EU Members - 27

Junior Members – 47

Life Members – 233

Life Membership

Several people have asked about Life Membership in recent times. For information, the cost of Life Membership is currently £800. Life Membership is set at 20 times the annual subscription, the latter of which is currently set at £40, and has been this sum for the last 10 years,

Should anyone wish to join the Society and pay a Life Membership it is possible for this membership to be paid in four equal instalments of £200. The first instalment will be paid when the decision is taken to join as a Life Member and for the remainder a loan is created. The three remaining instalments will be on 1st January each year thereafter until the loan is extinguished.

If this is of interest to you contact the Secretary who will provide all the information and the terms under which the arrangements operate.

What a Pair ... What are they thinking?



To Judge or Not To Judge - That is The Question!



**We are often asked:
'How do I join the Judge's
Panel of the Clydesdale Horse
Society?'**

There is a formal process for this with paperwork which needs to be completed.



Prospective judges must complete a personal statement setting out their credentials for the position and their experience with Clydesdale Horses. They must also find a proposer and a seconder who are members of the Clydesdale Horse Society who can endorse the applicant and who can offer sufficient assurance that the applicant is suitable to join the Society's Judge's panel.

The application is then placed before the Executive Committee who will make a recommendation to the next Council meeting.

No one can join the Judge's Panel until they've been a member for one full year.

We are also occasionally asked about potential future judges being mentored by an existing judge in the show ring, provided that the show in question agrees. Council discussed this matter some years ago and remains keen that such mentoring should happen, particularly to encourage younger people onto the Judges Panel.

For further information about joining the Judge's Panel and to receive a copy of the necessary paperwork please email the Secretary.

Affiliated Shows Website Page

Last year we tried something new and it appears to have been quite successful.

We created a special affiliated show results page on our website allowing interested parties to check out all the Society awards at these shows. A fair few of you commented that you appreciated this extra effort so we will continue it in 2026. Please help make the job a bit easier by returning shield and medal paperwork to the office quickly.

Gift Vouchers

Did you know that you can purchase a Society gift voucher as a gift for a loved one, family member or friend. These come denominations of £10 and above and they expire on the first anniversary of the issue of the voucher. If this is something which anyone would like to take advantage of contact the Secretary.

Use of Email

The cost of postage using Royal Mail is one which is ever increasing. During 2025 the Society's postage bill amounted to £4,500.

We try to minimise these costs by using second class mail as much as we can. However, with the large volume of passport correspondence passing through the Society's office every year and along with the advice that we should always send passports using first class mail for better security of delivery, it is sometimes hard avoid these costs.

We use Franked Mail which offers a better level of security of delivery and gives us a cheaper rate. But did you know that the cost of sending a passport by First class franked mail is still £3.30.

We try to communicate as much as possible using email which saves money and that is why I am forever asking folks to allow us to use their email addresses. At present 79% of our members allow us to do that and we are grateful to them. This leaves 160 people for whom all correspondence is sent using posted mail. We appreciate that within these many don't use email or don't have email, but if you have email and are still getting papers sent to you we will be most grateful if you could allow us to convert you across from post to email correspondence.

Foal Registrations in 2025

Foal registrations over the last two years would suggest that there is something of a lull with registrations of foals on the ground , with numbers being quite a bit down from that which we had previously recorded. In 2025 numbers were

Colt foals - 78

Filly Foals - 74

Grade Up Female / Unregistered Male - 1 / 6

Stallions - 19

We anticipate around 20 foals being added to these numbers from EU Registrations.