

## **Chairpersons Report**

Happy New Year!

On behalf of Ayr Riding Club and myself I would like to wish all our members and families a very happy 2008.

I would also like to extend a very warm, sincere thank you to the current committee for their continued support. They are an absolute credit to Ayr Riding Club and I appreciate all the time and commitment they put into the club.

For those of you who are not aware I am the new Chairperson for Ayr Riding Club. Don't ask how that happened, it just did!! Cathy Rawson served the club for the last 5 years and has now moved on to thoroughly enjoy her retirement.

Well, 2007 was a bit of a whirlwind year for me with lots of upheaval, and some rain, lots of frustration, and more rain then I moved house and it rained, the dog got run over and it rained some more – I think you get it now! I hope 2007 was good for you but I truly hope 2008 is great for us all and if we had a dry spell that would just be a bonus.

This is Ayr Riding Club's 50<sup>th</sup> year anniversary, there are many things planned and I would be delighted if all our members could be involved in some capacity. Please keep an eye on our website which will be updated with all our events which everyone will be welcome to join in. We will also keep those who don't have computers up to date with events and rallies. The Riding Club is yours, we strive to make it as accessible to everyone but we don't have all the ideas they usually come from our valued members and that includes you.

In the riding club we have many different levels of rider and we recognise this. Last year, I was on the committee and responsible for the show jumping lessons again I don't know why they picked me because I am not the bravest and prefer my horse to keep four hooves on the ground. Some people call me a chicken (ok well maybe it's just my husband) but in all seriousness I identified that some people may feel a bit daunted by attending some of the show jumping lessons etc. I advertised some novice / novice show jumping lessons and I have to say the response was fantastic. It ranged from people who had not done much jumping, people who had done a lot of jumping but lost their confidence and many others with younger horses whom they did not want to over face. The same attitude with the show jumping seems to apply to the Dressage arena, people are afraid they forget their test they think their horse can't do dressage (hey, what are you doing when you do flatwork) and others are worried about what people think. It is this market I would love to tap into I want everyone to enjoy getting out and about with their horses, if you decide it really is not for you then fine but at least you have tried, maybe you would like to watch others instead, well I have the perfect solution come along and help!

That leads me nicely onto our very valuable helpers. Believe it or not we cannot run events without helpers. If you have helped us out in the past then thanks so very much – your not off the hook though – we really struggle to get helpers at all of our events but it is a shame to expect the same ones to come forward all the time. I completely appreciate that people have very busy lives but please give a thought to your committee members. The Committee members are all volunteers, but we are also riding club members who love to have the opportunity to bring our horses to events too. So if you can spare some of your valuable time we would really appreciate it if you could get in touch.

Thank you for your continued support and as the new Chairperson I will be delighted to meet you all at some point please come and speak to me and if there is anything I can help you with including any ideas and suggestions I will gladly take them to our committee meetings and we can discuss them with a view to trying them out.

Good luck with everything you do this year, stay safe and enjoy your horses.

***Kirsteen Watson, Chairperson***