

EACR at the Essex Country Show – Barleylands, 8th & 9th September 2012

I have spent my time this summer worrying about whether the outdoor shows we have taken part in are going to get called off because the site conditions are too wet or too windy. Not this time. In fact the exact opposite was true. We enjoyed probably one of the hottest weekends of the year.



Flat pack furniture hasn't got a thing on this!
Now, where's the spanner?

Simon Higgins, Roger Hobson, Tony Lowe, Andy Martin and I met on site on Friday afternoon to set everything up. Our stand was situated in pretty much the same place as it has been for the last couple of shows, so it felt like home from home.



Marion Squier (left) thought that she'd never get the hang of the mini ring, but she cracked it with help from Penny Sloman (right)

It took us a couple of hours to set everything up to our satisfaction before we called it a day. Again, Andy camped out on site which is useful for him and also makes sure the equipment has a guardian overnight. Early Saturday morning I arrived back on site to avoid the rush in the car park, open everything up and put the kettle on. The Show officially opened at 10.00am each morning and it was pretty much non-stop activity for us until 4pm. We each managed

to get a little break at lunch time to wander round the show to see the model boats, steam engines, and monster trucks, together with visiting the various craft stalls.



Non-stop activity at the mini ring

Over the course of the two days we took positive enquiries across each of the 6 Association districts, with the highest concentration of these being on the Southern District, who will hopefully benefit from over 20 new recruits. There was also an enquiry from a group of 6 scout troupes involving 200+ youngsters possibly having a training day on a mini ring, hand bells and tower bells. It will be interesting to see how that develops. There were also enquiries for other Guilds and Associations including Suffolk, Surrey, Middlesex and Cambridgeshire which goes to show the wide catchment area that the Show enjoys.

We also met the Bishop of Bradwell who heard us first and came over for a little chat. This was a very pleasant surprise and he said he was glad we were having a very productive weekend. He then went on to meet the organisers of the Churches Together in Essex Marquee elsewhere at the Showground and separate from us entirely.

So after yet another successful Show, all that remains for me to do is say a massive thank you to all my helpers, including Andy Martin, Simon Higgins, Roger Hobson, Penny Sloman, Peter Sloman, Jim Laken, Hilary Donaghue, Tom Pinnock and Marion Squier.

**Tracey Southgate
Public Relations Officer**

12th September 2012