

PORT COLBORNE OLYMPIC TORCH CELEBRATION AND RIVENDELL ARABIANS

The City of Port Colborne, situated on the north shore of Lake Erie at the south end of the Welland Canal, is huge with enthusiasm and well known for many annual festivals and celebrations.

A once in a lifetime opportunity presented itself when the Olympic Torch Committee announced the torch would be coming through our town, and our Mayor and his staff immediately went to work. They contacted every type of sports organization, including Rivendell Arabian Sport Horses, requesting their involvement. The day's activities would spotlight many Olympic sports and strive to allow hands on participation for the local school aged children.

Response from local groups was amazing, including the Para-Olympic association. Janet Henderson from Rivendell Arabian Sport Horses volunteered to bring a horse to the market square for the torch arrival, and offered to host an open house at the barn in the afternoon.

The day was a wonderful success with 2,500 people turning out to watch the torch arrive. The main streets were lined with flag waving supporters and the market square activities offered children participation in five different sports.



Janet and her daughter Bri trailered “Rivendell Brego”, a 4 year old purebred gelding (out of the pure Crabbet mare Seffers Amber Rose) to the market square to promote the breed and Dressage Niagara. Brego is a very typey dark bay gelding and was stellar in how he handled the crowds of people. There were times when he had twenty or more people around him. He dropped his head to allow the children to touch his face, standing with a hip tipped. It took Brego all of ten minutes to figure out why he was there and was a wonderful ambassador for the breed for the two hour party. Janet and Bri handed out CAHR and AHA promotional material as well as invitations to the barn open house.

The barn was beautifully decorated for Christmas. Janet and her army of friends and family had a table set with hot drinks, candy canes and the obligatory Timbits. Also set up was a table with more promotional material as well as a few of the national and regional awards won by the Henderson family members and their horses.

Trudy Tattersall and her lovely Canadian gelding, Phoenix, gave the crowd a lovely demonstration of what dressage can be. Phoenix is a 5 year old and was quite composed and relaxed. The pair were beautifully turned out and showed everyone the talent that made them one of Dressage Niagara’s 2009 champions.



Bri Henderson and Sarah Smith did demonstration rides on Rivendell Arwen and Rivendell Elanna. Trudy Tattersall rode her Canadian horse, "Phoenix". Janet provided commentary for the crowd of nearly 50 people, explaining the basics of dressage and the history of the Arabian breed.



Rivendell Arwen is a 7 year old Arabian/Hannoverian cross mare. She started her show career in 2009, competing in breed and open dressage, as well as long distance. She earned three Regional Top Five awards in dressage and sport horse and is the year end Reserve Champion for Training Level dressage with Dressage Niagara. She successfully completed two limited distance rides.

Rivendell Elanna is a 4 year old purebred mare who was started under saddle in March 2009. She competed in limited distance rides and is in training for FEI pony dressage.

Many of our visitors were children. We had all ten horses in the barn and with the half doors open. The horses were happy to greet the many visitors, especially Rivendell Elessar (aka Stryder - *Ecaho x Seffers Amber Rose). He is a two year old colt who was more than pleased to be adored and was an absolute gentleman.

The Olympic Torch Run was a wonderful reason to be involved with such a great day. Smiling faces, happy kids and beautiful horses – it doesn't get any better!