

More than 230 retired racing staff from around the UK enjoyed a Christmas lunch with Racing Welfare

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PRESS RELEASE

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Racing Welfare's Christmas lunches are an annual event held for retired stud and stable staff around the country. This year lunches across the whole of the UK were held over just two days, the 8th and 9th of December.

The charity's programme of community social events ensures that members of racing's retired workforce are not alone (especially at this festive time of year) and have regular opportunities to catch-up with old friends and colleagues and to share stories and memories. Throughout the year a series of coffee mornings and outings are held for retired staff from all of the main racing centres.

Although Christmas lunches have been a regular fixture in Lambourn, Malton and Epsom, this was the first year that Racing Welfare has held one in Newmarket. More than 80 attendees enjoyed the meal, which was held at The Racing Centre, with many guests meeting old friends who they had not seen in months or years.

In the Lambourn area, 69 guests enjoyed a traditional Christmas meal at the Village Inn in Liddington. A quiz and raffle which guests took part in raised a further £215 for Racing Welfare.

In the South-East celebrations took place over two days; on the 8th 20 guests went to the Toby Carvery in East Ewell (near Epsom) and on the 9th 20 retired racing staff from Arundel enjoyed a superb pub lunch.

In the Malton area, 40 retired racing staff attended the party held at the Union Inn, Norton. Pub manager Paul Cook (also a retired racing lad) provided a stunning buffet. Entertainment included a raffle, bingo and a DVD of stories and pictures. Attendees were able to share their racing stories, paper cuttings and photos with Charlie Roberts of the Sporting Memories Network. Charlie and her colleagues are currently obtaining 1 million memories of sports people and this includes those from the racing industry. One attendee described the occasion as "*the best Christmas lunch ever*".

In total more than 230 guests enjoyed this annual festive celebration; next year promises to be even bigger with a lunch planned in Middleham and an even greater number of guests planning to attend in Newmarket.

ENDS.....

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Notes to Editors

Racing Welfare is a UK-wide charity whose headquarters are in Newmarket. It serves the needs of racing personnel from the beginning of their careers through to retirement. The wide range of help provided includes provision of affordable housing, mentoring schemes for young workers, advice for those coping with illness and disabilities; through to specialist counselling and support at times of need or personal crisis.

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