

IN PRAISE OF OLDER LADIES

It has been said before - the old ones are the best. I'm sure the two ladies in question here will forgive the reference to their maturity. I'm of course talking about my No 1 whip, Peggy Pickwood, and her pony Flikka. I say No 1, since Roger Warren is my No 2 and now there are more! I recently seem to have developed rather itinerant 'grooming around' habits, of which Peggy is beneficently tolerant! Oh, and I do take the whip hand myself!

Peggy's driving career has seen her rattling along at BDS rallies and GWHC drives, competing in driving trials and taking in the odd show for good measure. Many rosettes and awards have come her way over the years and both she and Flikka are still going strong, despite Peggy having to contend with a broken leg last year and a broken hip a few years before that - (neither were driving related accidents)

Going strong was what Peggy and Flikka were really doing as the day unfolded at the recent Killerton one day event. The dressage test, despite a good drive by Peggy, was a little disappointing, the long grass making Flikka adopt a type of swimming trot, though she pressed on willingly. Next, the cones section: there were a couple of senior moments - but why not if you are senior?!

We had all to play for in the marathon, our favourite bit!! Flikka bounded in to action, thoroughly enjoying herself along the pretty section A drive. There was a short test of my maturity when I ran uphill to help Flikka and was then briefly left gasping to catch up when Peggy engaged canter, blissfully unaware that I was still on foot behind! Flikka herself chose to career on at canter when we let Sue Joll overtake us, with Peggy and myself hanging on tightly behind! Lastly, the obstacles: Peggy's driving skills and judgement were as impeccable as ever, as was Flikka's enthusiasm. No mistakes on route and safely back just over minimum time!

A lovely day, much enjoyed by us all- and to crown it all a 6th place rosette to come home with. I told you the old ones are the best! Thank-you, Peggy, for all the fun and experience you've given me.

Kate Fincham-Powell