

Sally Speaks: How Centered Riding Crossed the Atlantic Ocean

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Author: Sally Swift



Last month, I told you about how my apprenticeship program began. Richard Weiss from Australia contacted me in the Fall of 1985, and in January of 1986, he came over to work with me for three months as I travelled around teaching Centered Riding, providing me with an inspiration to begin my apprenticeship program.

Richard and I kept in touch after he left me. We wrote to each other and spoke on the phone. Richard invited me to come to Australia. In 1988, I went to Australia and travelled around and about Australia with Richard. Richard had an exceptionally good school horse, named Banjo, that he had sold when he sold his riding school to become an Alexander Teacher. He bought Banjo back just for my visit! He tells me that it was the only horse in the world that he knew he could trust to put Sally Swift on! I hadn't ridden in a long time, and I had told Richard when he was over here working with me that I would just love to feel my own work. Richard made that possible for me. I rode Banjo several times.

Richard was teaching in Melbourne – the southeast area of Australia. Eventually we travelled to the west coast. I had been awfully cold in Melbourne, so it was nice to finally be on the warm, west coast. I stayed with Richard for about two to three months travelling with him. As we travelled about, we stayed with private families where we were teaching. People there loved Centered Riding.

Ellie Jensen, who was one of my original apprentices, had been teaching Centered Riding along with TTeam. One of her students, Connie Vits, had come from Germany and was so impressed with Centered Riding, she invited Ellie to come to teach a clinic in Germany. Soon these clinics branched out to other areas in Germany and Switzerland. Ellie says she never advertised – Centered Riding advertised itself and she was always invited back. Eventually more of my Centered Riding Apprentices, including Wendy Murdoch, Sally Haney and Mary Fenton, went to teach clinics in Europe. I also eventually travelled to Europe.

Most people spoke English, but I remember one very funny episode when I was in Sweden. I was teaching in English when I was interrupted. "There's a bit of confusion here" I was told. The students had been listening to me speak about "soft eyes" and they thought I was talking about "soft ice" and it didn't make much sense!

Today, Centered Riding is represented by instructors in fifteen countries outside of the United States, namely Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, England, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, Scotland, Sweden and Switzerland. Additionally, we have subscribers to this eBulletin from Argentina, Brazil, Egypt, France, Hungary, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Saudia Arabia, Poland, Russia, South Africa, Spain and Uruguay.

I never imagined when I first started out teaching Centered Riding that it would spread to so many people of so many countries. No matter what the language spoken, people tell me how much Centered Riding has helped them, and it warms my heart to hear this! I thank each of you for your part in spreading Centered Riding to the "four corners of the world!"



Photo Upper Left: Richard Weis on "Banjo" in 1984. This is the fine gentlemen Sally rode in Melbourne in 1988 to feel the work she was teaching.