

Drum Beat

The Royal Drum Horse: Janus 1984 to 2009 by Stephanie Bandy

HEAVEN CAN BE
FOUND IN THE
BEATH OF OUR
HORSES, AND THE
SOUNDS OF OUR
BARN.



One of most beloved Royal Drum Horses to have served for the British Royalty and a major roll for setting standards within some breeders' programs is the majestic "Janus". The magnificent skewbald gelding stood 17.2 hands and weighed in at more than a ton.

Janus was born in 1984 and in 1989 at the age of five joined the army and began his service for the "Household Cavalry", the most senior regiment in the British Army. Janus as an infant. As tradition goes, Royal Drum Horses are given a Greek God or hero's name, or the Roman name for those gods. Upon his arrival at the Household Cavalry's Hyde Park Barracks located in Knightsbridge, where he was based at during his time of service, the chestnut and white tobiano gelding was given the name Janus.

Janus the god is usually portrayed as having two faces since he looks to the future and the past. The gold is also depicted as holding a Key. He is the god of new beginnings and transitions and thereby the god of gates, doors, doorways, passages and endings. The name was perfect for the new recruit who was transitioning from his private life on the farm to his high profile career.

For over 10 years Janus was a Drum Horse for the Blues and Royals Regiment and was responsible for leading the procession of horses carrying the famous 300 pounds of solid silver kettledrums. Over those years Janus was involved in several prestigious state occasions, including the Queen's Golden Jubilee Celebration, the Queen's Birthday Parade and the State Opening of Parliament.

Janus held the status of being a Major while in the Army. His regimental number was #7280. Janus was retired in May of 2002. During his years of service 1989 through 2009, like other Drum Horses such as Spartacus... Janus



became one of the most beloved Drum Horses by the public. A retirement party took place to honor him. His ceremony was held at the "All the Queen's Horses" extravaganza at Windsor Castle when celebrating the Queen's Golden Jubilee. The spectacular event was a tribute to the Queen's lifelong interest in horses. Janus proudly paraded along the side of a



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1000 other horses. After his long service to crown and country Janus retired to The Horse Trust, and lived there until his passing at the age of 25 under his favorite tree on September 2009 at the sanctuary. His two best friends at the sanctuary were two other retired drum horses Constantine (Eric) and Leonidas (Leo). The three were inseparable.

IDHA is compiling historic information on Royal Drums and other Drum Horses that served in other military or police units, or other types of instrumental band units. If you have any other information about the life and times of Janus... please write admin@DrumHorseAssociation.com Attention Historian

