**Take me there this year with memories**

Covid 19 can’t stop me. I am still going. I am using the power of imagination. I shut my eyes and yes there I am. The National Side Saddle Show is still on. I don’t need to practise. I don’t need to pack. I don’t need to travel. I just need to dream and draw on many happy memories circling around in my head. I remember arriving, meeting, greeting and finding my stable. Collecting my number. Now I am beginning to remember so much as glimpses of past years are dashing around in my mind… Lots of old friends from here and abroad as excited as me. I begin to remember the smells, and sounds from the evening meals oozing from around the lorries and tents on the first night.

Early birds schooling their horses and ponies in the morning mist, swirling around the Addington fields. Arenas harrowed, pristine ready for action. Then gradually riders appearing ready for classes. Stewards and judges suitable dressed are in the arenas for each class as the extremely full show timetable begins to unwind.

Am I going to wake up and discover this world changing nightmare is not real? Unfortunately not. It is happening and is in control. Everything has changed. My horse is untrimmed, her mane and tail are long. My woollen vintage habit is packed away with essential moth balls and the trees in my long, black, leather boots are almost beginning to grow roots.

It’s not all about competing I tell myself. I am missing more than that. It is the occasion filled with all to do with the love of side saddle. Covid 19 has stolen so much from so many in 2020 but nothing can take away my power of imagination. Role on 2021 when hopefully I will need to practise. I will need to pack and travel and new memories will be created; but meanwhile I will thumb through my photo album and stay alert along with the rest of the human race.