

# HORSE AROUND

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE  
WEST PENWITH BRIDLEWAYS ASSOCIATION

AFFILIATED TO THE BRITISH HORSE SOCIETY



Free to Members

No. 19 Winter 2006/7

## *Straight From the Horses Mouth*

Hello Everyone

This Horse Around started out as just a quick flyer before Christmas, but much has been happening. Some good works have started on our Penwith bridleways but wet weather is slowing progress at the moment.

Much clearance work has been done on Bartinney initially instigated by Amanda and a small band of members determined to make improvements to the badly grown in network of tracks. Read more later.

The horse hike programme got off to a cracking start with an exhilarating ride on the Great Flat Lode. We did a slightly different version of our old favourite to incorporate a trialing out of the new 'eazibed' tracks of woodchip. Verdict, like a springy forest floor, they are fantastic to ride on in all paces! Next came the Polgigga horse hike when thick fog cleared to give lovely Autumnal sunshine and consequently brilliant sea views from the coastal tracks around Porthgwarra and Porthcurno. This was soon followed by Mandy's Chapel Carn Brea, a 14 mile ride, and then an epic trip on the Lizard, 15 miles. The stormy weather has curtailed activities since. Weather permitting, (we've never had to cancel the Xmas ride yet!) come and join us on the Christmas Cracker ride contact Mandy not me as stated in the last newsletter. For those with horses that cannot stand still, we will be visiting only 2 pubs this year.

We've seen that loads of people have logged on to our new websites. We hope you are finding them useful. You can also keep track on what we are up to in our quest to improve our bridleways and riding routes. Melanie over at Goldsithney has also been busy with the "Adopt a Bridleway" scheme. More later.

We hope to see you at the Engine Inn, Crippleasease, Nancledra for our usual get together, a quiet drink and a natter. The catalogue will be available for anyone who wishes to order fleeces etc with our logo on, at very reasonable prices. The AGM will be towards the end of March, we still have to fix the exact date. Thank you all for continuing to support our Association.

We wish you all a very happy Christmas and New Year

Margaret

## *In This Issue*

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*and more ....*



*No this wasn't Summer but it could have been. Taken on the cliff by Logan Rock on our Polgigga Horse Hike*

**\*\*\* Christmas Drink \*\*\***



**Our Informal Xmas Drink will be  
on Tuesday 19 December 7:30pm  
at**

**The Engine Inn, Crippleasease, Nancledra**

## **WEST PENWITH BRIDLEWAYS ASSOCIATION**

*Chairman:* Adrian Bigg, Treveffa Farm, Treveffa, Zennor, TR26 3BL

*Treasurer:* Charlie Cartwright *Secretary:* Margaret Bigg,

**Email:** [wpba@btinternet.com](mailto:wpba@btinternet.com)

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**Tel:** 01736 795098

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## Horse Hike on the Great Flat Lode Trails

I had no idea what or where, but they are mineral tramways starting at South Wheal Francis, near Four Lanes. The car park was very easy to find with plenty of space to park and manoeuvre. The weather was gorgeous, sunny with quite a strong wind at times. Always a dilemma what to wear, as you start in a chilly car park and are boiling as soon as we get going. Those in 'the know' set off leading their horses. A little strange but we soon found out why. We had to negotiate a longish low tunnel, so reminiscent of pit ponies – the rest of us dismounted and walked through as well. At the other end was a mounting block – what foresight but on the wrong side for the direction we were going in. This wasn't really the time for practising mounting from the wrong side with the horses keen to get on!



*On the bridleway trail near Wheal Buller*

The tracks were fantastic, loads of places to canter despite the granite 'sleepers' (known as sets) still being in situ for a lot of it. Best just to ignore these as they are embedded level with the trail surface. Some of the trail has been surfaced out like gallops which the county council were keen for us to try out. Not a problem! These woodchip 'eazybed' sections were brilliant.

As far as the route goes, I'm a little hazy, at one point we were looking down on Lanner, we saw glimpses of Stithians reservoir and some of the time were riding Carn Brea. In all a smashing ride,

Domino was knackered (not the only one!) and dripping but kept up very well. Time to get him clipped out.

Christine Hichens

**Hoof Note:** You can download the mineral tramways leaflet via our website.

## Xmas Cracker Ride

**This year's ride will be to suit everyone.** Lots of walking for the horses and talking for the riders! There will be some places where we will be able to send off a faster group but over all it will be slow! We will be visiting two pubs and we do ask members to support the pubs we call at. We have told them we are coming. This is a festive ride for Xmas cheer. If you let me know early that you are coming I may be able to order some mulled wine and food.

Mandy

## Winter 2007 Programme of Horse Hikes

Please note these dates in your diary now			Organiser or Contact
U	Xmas Cracker St Just	16/17 Dec	Amanda
UU	Gwinear (changed venue)	6/7 Jan	M & A
UU	Drift Dam	13/14 Jan	M & A
UU	Tehidy Woods	20/21 Jan	M & A
U	St Just Walk and Trot	27/28 Jan	M & A
UU	Chapel Carn Brea	10/11 Feb	Amanda
UU	Great Flat Lode	17/18 Feb	M & A
UU	Madron	24/25 Feb	M & A
UU	Polgigga	10/11 Mar	M & A
U	Nanledra	24/25 Mar	M & A

**Always check with the organiser or ourselves a few days before.** The exact date will be determined by the interest in the ride and/or weather.

### Contacts:

Margaret and Adrian tel: 01736 795098  
Amanda tel: 01736 871876;

*Hikes are ridden at your own risk. BHS Affiliation covers our members for Public Liability Insurance on organised rides.*

### Juniors on Horse Hikes

All juniors must be accompanied by a responsible parent or guardian who can look after them and their safety on the ride, and can vouch for their riding competence.

If you have a good idea for a Horse Hike or wish to organise one, do please let us know!

We do plan some new HH venues soon.

U Easy Ride    UU Average Ride

## P. P. P... Pick up a Penguin!

Last Summer a policeman in Penzance stopped a people carrier with three penguins sitting on the back seat. He reprimanded the driver and said he'd take no further action if they were taken straight along to the zoo.

The next day the same policeman saw the vehicle again with the three penguins sitting on the back seat, but this time they were wearing dark glasses.

He said to the driver "I told you to take those penguins off to the zoo."

"I certainly did officer".

"Then why are they still in the back seat?."

"Well officer, they enjoyed the zoo so much that I'm taking them to the beach today!!"



## Bartinney Castle

Riders in the St Just and St Buryan areas will be very familiar with Tredinney Common and Bartinney Downs with the ancient Bartinney Castle at the summit of the hill. Approached from opposite the Chapel Carn Brea car park is a gate that leads on to Bridleway 76 and Brane and this gives access onto the Common and up to Bartinney Castle. The whole area has been open access for both walkers and horses for many years under an existing Stewardship agreement. Most of the area is also now Open Access under the CROW Act, but that access does not automatically include horses. The whole area has become very overgrown for both riders and walkers in recent years



**A Horse's Eye View from Bartinney Downs looking over towards St Just**



**Peter Smith surveying the task in hand.**

Last year, West Penwith Bridleways Association working with PAROW reopened access onto the hill from Bridleway no. 47 on the north side of the hill. This Autumn a determined effort has been made to reopen access from Dowran across Numphra Common along Footpath 43 that has been completely overgrown and blocked. Local resident Peter Smith from Dowran came to our aid with his strimmer and hand-tools. Single-handedly he made tremendous in-roads into the dense gorse and heather, restoring a lovely wide path. Mandy, Gill and Beverley gave welcome assistance on the latter stages of the path. The more that was cleared, the further the heavy tools had to be carried.

We give our big thanks to Peter for the enormous amount he has done. It is much appreciated. Final connection was made through to the track leading to the Chapel Carn Brea car park. This tremendous progress enthused all to clear the paths around and over Bartinney Castle. PAROW Paths Officer, Chris has continued the good work with his enormous brush cutting strimmer. He has now cleared the path to the summit, yet more work remains to clear the path down the other side.

The whole area will now be accessible to all, (with plenty of hoof paths) and with PAROW we are working to ensure that a management plan is put into place to keep these paths wide and clear in future years.



**A job well Done!**



## Adopt a Bridleway

You may remember in the last Horse Around we asked that riders 'adopt' the local bridleways they ride by letting us know the condition they are in. Whether good, bad and the nature of any problems.

Our members in Goldsithney thought this an excellent idea and are going to let us know of any problems. To help them identify bridleways they are going to experiment with discretely labelling each bridleway with its official number. This will make recording problems so much easier. The County Council have previously ruled out such labelling as being impractical. We hope to prove them wrong.

For Bridleways in the parishes of St Hilary and Goldsithney you can report their condition to Melanie Mitchell, who is coordinating monitoring in those parishes, Tel: 710839, or directly to ourselves.

**We still would like to hear from more riders in other areas on how you are finding the bridleways and paths you ride.**

## Modification Orders and Dedications

As you know many of the paths and connecting links we ride are not bridleways although they should be.

We are also denied access to some important paths we used to ride. An important part of our Association's work is to preserve and protect our riding. The process for getting bridleways onto the map is via Modification Orders, which are accompanied by evidence, or Dedications. We are starting with some Orders over which there are unlikely to be many objections, but also one in Ludgvan which has been lost to us for quite a few years now. We will tell you more as we progress.

See also the item on Mongoose to Chapel Porth on page 5.

Dedications are a much easier way of getting bridleways on the map. Where landowners are known and are willing to have a path made into a bridleway this route is much more satisfactory.

## Horse Hike on the Lizard

It was great to see such a good turnout of riders at the Lizard ride. We met at Mullion school car park.



We left Mullion and headed down tracks until we came to the hamlet of Predannack which is owned by the National Trust. From here we had glimpses of the sea and moorland in front of us. It was brilliant to ride the numerous tracks across the moor with lots of opportunities for a good canter. We headed down towards Kynance Cove and the views towards Mounts Bay, down the south coast towards Lamorna and beyond, with the Penwith moors in the distance were stunning. On most of the ride we enjoyed open 360% views of the countryside around us including the windmills and satellite dishes. Eventually we rode along the track which came out on the village green at the Lizard. It was really appreciated that Alison Lugg's parents met us there with hot sausage rolls and buttered scones. What a treat!!

My mare (Busy Lizzy) jogged most of the way around only settling at the last couple of miles and we were happy to take our place at the back of the ride as she can be mareish. We had plenty of practice of opening and shutting gates and took our title of "gate champion" in our stride. We returned back to Mullion school via the same tracks, again enjoying lots of good canters. This was a thoroughly enjoyable ride and one I would definitely be doing again. Thanks to Alison for organising this ride.

Tracey Beasley

## Access and Bridleway Update

**Trencrom Hill** (conservation grazing) access improvements. The cattle grid has gone in with side self closing horse gate in the little car park. We had a meeting with the new NT warden and discussed the final installation plans including mounting blocks for those who need to dismount. Natural England are overseeing the project.

### Steeple Woods St Ives - Update

We are continuing to pursue the dedication of a bridleway. The proposed dedication is waiting to go before a Penwith District Council committee as PDC own the land. We have made a good case for the bridleway and it will be submitted shortly.

## WEB Sites

Have you looked at our website(s) yet?

**WPBA:**

[www.bhsaccesscornwall.org.uk/w estpenw thbridlew ays](http://www.bhsaccesscornwall.org.uk/w estpenw thbridlew ays)

**BHS ACCESS CORNWALL:**

[www.bhsaccesscornwall.org.uk](http://www.bhsaccesscornwall.org.uk)

We have had loads of visitors to our sites. We welcome feedback including more information on our bridleways.

### NEW PAROW WEB SITE!

We have now launched a new Website for Penwith Access and Rights of Way Forum,

**PAROW:** [www.parow.org.uk](http://www.parow.org.uk)

It will keep you up to date on the work and projects our PAROW Paths Officer Chris Fry is undertaking.

*Do we have your email address to keep you informed*

*– just email [wpba@btinternet.com](mailto:wpba@btinternet.com)*

## Sparky the Pit Pony

The last surviving pit pony, 35 years old, is living out his days at the National Coal Board Museum in Wakefield. At one time, there were 70,000 pit ponies, used to pull iron girders, pit props and small coal trucks underground. Some were still used right up until the 1990s' particularly in areas where there was no electric power in the mines. There were stables underground and the ponies rarely saw the light of day and many went blind through working in constant darkness or low light. However, they were well treated and looked after.

## TROTting On

The TROT Toll ride near Goldsithney opened on 1 November. Its opening has caused some debate amongst local riders and our members. For riders who can make good regular use of the new off-road route on land previously unavailable for riding, the scheme is excellent and it does support and provide extra income to local farmers and landowners.

The disadvantage is for riders who require only a small part of the whole ride and who only ride on a casual basis. Also many riders are on low incomes and have families and children who always ride out together.

Our Association welcomes any schemes that add to the places we can ride. Also we do hope that solutions can be found to improve the free availability of safe access to our bridleway network for all riders. The TROT is a registered charity based in Kent where the scheme started. Riders pay a fee according to how many miles of toll routes are open in their 'hackable' radius at full adult rate for no more than £2.45 a week (information from TROT Website).

It must also be remembered that incomes in Kent and the southern counties are substantially greater than in Cornwall.

TROT can be a good solution for providing brand new, previously unriden, off road routes for those who can justify the cost against the amount of riding they do.



## **Bridleway Renovations (PPIP) Update**

We are at last seeing some work done by the County Council on the bridleways in Penwith under the **P**ublic **P**aths **I**mprovement **P**rogramme.

### **Madron, Kennel Lane Bridleway –**

Kennel Lane was a washed out boulder-strewn gully.



*Work in progress by Cormac on Kennel Lane*

The pictures say it all. Although work on Madron parish is not scheduled until Jan/March 2008 we got this done in advance because of the reported riding accident. They have done a sterling job I am sure you will all agree.



*Kennel Lane now a really nice bridleway*

The job done is especially good because of the natural rab from the site used to surface the bridleway. Good drainage leats have been made and the drainage was tested during the work by one of the heaviest rainstorms we have had.

***Riders please ride the full width of the bridleway to preserve the surface – don't just wear out the middle!***

### **Paul 13, Lamorna Pottery**

Work has once again started on this important bridleway to remove some of the nasty boggy rocky bits. There is a mini excavator on site and other equipment. However, 'rain has stopped play' it is too boggy to continue for the moment.

### **Carters Grave Lane BW 52 Ludgvan**

Work should have started on this during the summer but is now unlikely to proceed until dryer conditions return in the Spring.

**Rocky Lane (Lamorna) St. Buryan** – Work is shortly planned One solution being considered is a new 'easybed' type of surface.

**Bridleway 43 St Ives** – The one and only bridleway by Steeple Woods and the school has been cleared by the CC. It was very badly blocked by very low tree branches. This has been cleared earlier than scheduled at our request as there had been accidents with riders trying to use it.

## **STEEL HORSE NEWS**

We jumped on our steel horses and ran a bike ride for Ground Force in October using a good section of our planned Ride UK route from Goonhavern to Silverwell and back via Perranporth. These proposed trail paths are excellent to ride or cycle. The whole trip was 17 miles.

Remember the grown in bridleway in Wendron Parish where Basil lacerated his legs? The sensible ones chucked their bikes over the hedge and went down the field. We sent a picture of Basil's legs to the CC, explaining the importance of the bridleway. We have since heard it has been cleared but we are not sure by whom. We would like this bridleway to become a link route to the Kernow Horse Trail in phase 2 of development.

### **Mongoose to Porth Chapel, St Agnes**

There has been an ongoing dispute over alleged bridleway rights over this old path. It had been ridden for years until the National Trust erected a kissing gate to stop horses and cyclists some years ago.

We generally cycle the Porth Chapel to Mongoose track a couple of times a year. It is currently the subject of a long protracted legal battle between the above mentioned parties. A few years ago the NT hired top barristers at great cost to successfully defeat a Modification Order to make the route a bridleway.

Mid-Cornwall Bridleways Association did not give up and resubmitted the Order with new evidence of use before the NT took ownership.

This new claim went to prolonged Public Inquiry over three days, Adrian attended. We await the result. It is such a shame that the NT feel it appropriate to spend monies fighting this claim especially in view of their declared horse friendly policies.



*Alan's Ride: Resting at Ding Dong waiting for the rest to catch up.*

