

HORSE AROUND

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
WEST PENWITH BRIDLEWAYS ASSOCIATION

AFFILIATED TO THE BRITISH HORSE SOCIETY



FREE TO MEMBERS

No. 22 WINTER/SPRING 2008

Hello Everyone

2007 ended very positively with lots of horse hikes taking place, with pictures appearing in the Cornishman, culminating with the Christmas Cracker ride, which turned out to be one of the most enjoyable ever. The wet and poor riding weather and horse colds at the start of the new year prevented the early horse hikes from going ahead. The Halamanning Ride did take place and a big thanks to Alison for organising this. The poor weather has enabled us to catch up with some outstanding bridleway work. We are now going to concentrate more on getting riding routes on to the map. Why not have a look at the BHS website. You can now view the Modification Orders in the County Council's pipeline that hopefully will result in more bridleways on the map.

Last November, the BHS invited us both to Saddlers Hall, London to receive a national award for the work we have done on horse access. We feel greatly honoured to have received it. (We would have preferred a little more anonymity but it is nice to know our work is appreciated.) Our trip to London turned out to be an excellent break for us. We did enjoy the London Eye, the enormously big 'bike wheel' which takes 30 mins. to complete a revolution. The views from the pod are fantastic.

Our feet are firmly back on the ground now and bums back in the saddle. Adrian's recovery has continued well and his leg is now bending well enough to ride his bike. He is also back on Eric but will wait a bit longer before returning to Horse Hikes.

We promised you exciting news in the last Horse Around. Well here it is! PAROW has taken delivery of the long awaited tractor. This has been on our wish list for a long time. Getting a tractor and flail will mean we can get much more clearance and improvement work done on the bridleways and tracks we ride. The tractor also comes with a front bucket which will help in some path repairs. More in this Horse Around.

We have something a little different lined up for you this coming AGM. We have invited Linda Holloway, the Enforcement Officer with Cornwall County Council to come and talk to us. I think you will find her slide show both interesting and entertaining.

Finally it just remains for me to thank you all for your support, and to remind you that it is membership renewal time. Those of you who have paid in advance for two or more years membership will find their new card for the coming year enclosed. Otherwise you will find a renewal invitation enclosed. Please do renew promptly it helps us no end.

And, PLEASE DO REMEMBER TO COME to the AGM – We do like to see you.

Margaret



Christmas Cracker Ride 2007 – a cracking 13 mile ride

In This Issue

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and more

AGM 2008

Monday 31st March

7.00pm for 7.30pm prompt
at the Yacht Inn, Penzance
(opposite the Jubilee Pool)

This year we are pleased to welcome Linda Holloway of Cornwall County Council's Countryside Service who will be giving an interesting and often amusing presentation on her work in dealing with the various problems that riders face on our bridleways.

Please do come along and have an interesting and social evening. There will also be an update on the progress being made in improving our riding in Penwith.

WEST PENWITH BRIDLEWAYS ASSOCIATION

Chairman: Adrian Bigg, Trevessa Farm, Trevega,
Zennor, TR26 3BL

Treasurer: Charlie Cartwright Secretary: Margaret Bigg,

Email: wpba@btinternet.com

Web: <http://www.bhsaccesscornwall.org.uk/westpenwithbridleways>

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Horse Hike to The Kings Arms, Paul 4 November

Drift Reservoir was a very pretty sight when it came into view after Beverley Jenkin, Liz Matthews and me had the most enjoyable hack to join up with our fellow horse-hikers. Several other members were already there, waiting patiently for us and, after a brief few moments rest, we were joined by more before heading off on a very chatty and gently-paced horse hike from Drift Reservoir to Paul.

Beverley did a fantastic job guiding us along little lanes and down bridleways leading us safely across the A30 down through Chyenthal towards Kerris. This was very much a ride of two routes – the long one there and the short one back! But as always, it was such a great delight, visiting other members' regular riding areas – for me, riding in woods is truly a great pleasure and this ride was no exception. We rode through very leafy woods, with tall overarching trees, still amazingly in leaf, and on the way we passed a house buried deep in trees with its entrance marked by two very imposing granite pillars with spherical stones atop – "The Gingerbread House!" chorused the entire ride - and so it looked too! And then as we rode out of Lamorna Valley up the bridleway to Castalack and onwards to Sheffield and Paul, the horizon broadened and way over on our right lay a wonderful view of the sea! And the Kings' Arms at Paul was a welcome sight too! All the tracks were really good, still lots of grass and soft going but we kept a calm steady pace, so no horses became heated or over-excited. For much of the way we were led by two of our younger members – in fact the age range on this ride summed up what the Bridleways Association is all about – it is open to youngsters and their ponies as well as we somewhat older ones and our horses! It is so good too for the horses to be in new territory, – ears prick up as different vistas come into view and unknown tracks are followed. This is why the Horse Hikes are such fun! Indeed, when asked to write about this one, I have to confess I was not too sure exactly where we went – but I do know my little horse Wizzy and I had the most wonderful ride, meeting some new faces to talk to, which is important when you are new to an area or perhaps even new to the experience of owning a horse. When you are able to ride through trails and tracks which have been recently cut-back, you realise too how important it is for these bridleways and by-ways to be kept open for us.

Peta-Jane Field

Kings Arms – Lunch Over – Ready to Go!



Spring/Summer 2008 Programme of Horse Hikes

Please note these dates in your diary now			Organiser or Contact
U	Madron	Sat 29 Mar	Anne
UU	Drift Dam	5/6 Apr	Gill P.
UU	Gwinear	Sat 19 Apr	M & A.
	BHS Fun Ride (Bodmin)	26/27 Apr	M & A.
UU	Great Flat Lode	3 / 4 May	M & A.
UU	Halamanning (StHilary)	10/11 May	Alison M.
UU	Poldice Valley	17/18 May	M & A.
U	St Just	31 May/1 June	Mandy
U	Polgigga	14/15 June	Beverly
UU	Lizard	21/22 June	Alison Lugg
U	Drift Dam	28/29 June	M & A.
U	Nancledra	12/13 July	M & A.
UU	Chapel Carn Brea	28/29 July	Mandy
U	St Erth	9/10 August	Tracy

Other rides may be organised according to demand. We welcome suggestions for new rides.

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 Gill 01736 810552
Alison McCarthy Tel: 01736 710117
Alison Lugg Tel: 01326 241545
Anne Tel: 01736 330623 Tracy 01736 755099
Mandy Tel: 01736 871876; Beverly 01736 871151

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!

U Easy Ride UU Average Ride

Fancy a bit of Cross Country??

(but want to keep your own feet on the ground...)

The Western Hunt Pony Club is looking for volunteers to help jump judge at our cross country events. We would like to create a list to call from when we need to boost our own numbers. (Often it is difficult for parents of the younger members to be on the course when they are also needed as "groom" to their child's pony.) You can help at as many events as suit you.

For your efforts we will give you a packed lunch, a nice day out, and the satisfaction of supporting our young riders. No experience necessary, we will train you on the day.

If you are interested please contact:

Shelley Meister 01736 710581

UPDATE - Improvements to our Bridleways - The County Council's PPIP Programme

Rocky Lane – St Buryan

Many of you may know this lovely bridleway that runs from near the Merry Maidens down through the woods to Lamorna Cove. For many years Rocky Lane has lived up to its name, being a steep washed out 'boulder garden'; impassable on horse.

After years of campaigning, it is currently being renovated. It is a really major job. By the time you read this it should be just about complete.



Cormac Team busy resurfacing Rocky Lane



Much attention is being paid to the drainage culverts which are being installed where appropriate, to divert the surface water into the adjacent woodland and field.

The picture on the left shows the further work in progress. This will now be a lovely bridleway to ride and short cut to St Buryan from Lamorna and Castallack.

Carter's Grave Lane, Ludgvan – Penwith's longest bridleway.

As we reported in the last Horse Around a fantastic job has been done on the western half of this long and important bridleway from Canonstown to Nancledra (see right). The Eastern half is to be worked on in the early summer.



Towednack

A significant planned improvement in Towednack is clearing of the moorland bridleways which in many places are stony gullies through gorse. This work will help safeguard the moors by creating good firebreaks.

St Hilary and Marazion Update

We are still awaiting the CC to repair the gates on bridleway 1 in Marazion across fields from Green Lane.

There are several other issues we are seeking to resolve where bridleways are not correctly recorded on the definitive map. We are working with local riders to instigate appropriate Modification Orders. One big issue is bridleway 81, Gwallon which does not exist. It is recorded in the wrong location, it should go through Gwallon Mine. If we can get it re-instated on the correct route this will save riders having to cross the dangerous bypass.

The adjoining bridleway 80, although currently a dead end, has been cleared by 'Jolly Green Giant', Chris. It is being enjoyed by local riders

PPIP Update

Work on our paths and bridleways by the County Council under their Public Paths Improvement Programme (PPIP) is continuing, but progress is still behind schedule. There is still work outstanding in Ludgvan, St Levan, and St Just.

Towednack and St Ives are currently being surveyed.

Work is about to start in Morvah and Zennor but the amount of work required is relatively small.

THE REVISED SCHEDULE FOR PENWITH:

Schedule	Parishes
Majority of works completed	Marazion, The St Michael's Way, Penzance, Perranuthnoe, Paul, St Buryan, St Levan, Ludgvan
In Progress	St Just, Sennen
Jan-Mar 2008	Morvah, Zennor
Apr-Jun 2008	Towednack, St Ives
Jul-Sept 2008	Hayle, Gwinear-Gwithian
Oct-Nov 2008	St Erth, St Hilary
Nov – Jan 2009	Madron, Sancreed

Steeple Woods St Ives

Many of you may know Steeple Woods in St Ives leading up to Knills Monument which is an obelisk style monument visible for many miles around. Steeple Woods is managed by the Steeple Woods Project; a voluntary conservation group. They have done marvellous work restoring the woods and paths. Horses are able to use many of the paths on a permissive basis. This is a great bonus to local riders as St Ives parish only has one official bridleway despite it covering Carbis Bay and Lelant.

The Project is also very keen to restore horse access to a path that always used to be ridden connecting through to Steeple Lane. On the map the path is only designated as a footpath. The land is owned by Penwith District Council. We are organising the necessary permission, to get the path reopened to horses initially on a permissive basis, and this should happen by early summer.

Bakers Pit Nature Reserve - Nancledra

The Cornwall Wildlife Trust own this reserve and importantly the track and the path that runs from the end of the Georgia Road to the bridleway around Castle-an-Dinas. The Trust have made tremendous improvement to the path connecting to the bridleway. This route always has been ridden. The Trust has agreed to dedicate the whole route as a bridleway. We are working with the Trust and the County Council to ensure this matter is progressed. Unfortunately the Trust are putting a cattle grid but with bridleway gate on the track as part of their conservation grazing scheme.

DO WE HAVE YOUR CURRENT EMAIL ADDRESS?
Please email wpba@btinternet.com. Don't forget to also visit www.bhsaccesscornwall.org.uk

Horse Hike to Barringper

The horse hike from Gwinear coincided with Remembrance Sunday and so it was quite appropriate that we met outside Gwinear Church. Our horses, wearing poppies, assembled, we managed to observe 2 minutes silence together in the saddle at 11.00 a.m. before setting off. The parishioners inside were completely unaware of our mini church parade vigil, only a waiting car driver sat patiently.

Our route took us past Trevaskis Farm vegetable packing station - a place guaranteed to cure your horse of flapping plastic syndrome - then over the bridledways on Polmenor Downs. At Penhale farm, another member joined the ride. We then rode a large loop of tracks and bridledways before eventually coming to Barringper where we called in at the Mount's Bay Inn for refreshments. A newly constructed hedge, separating pub garden and car park, with a lovely thick grassy top, provided all the horses with their lunch! Moving off from Barringper, we headed towards Roseworthy where the beautiful wooded track takes us under the imposing viaduct through a short tunnel leading on to Old Mill Lane. The lane runs along the secluded valley emerging at Roseworthy farm. Eventually we turned left up to Roseworthy Barton where we encountered some pigs which stirred up the horses for a few moments. They soon settled before crossing over the railway bridge and on to rejoin Polmenor Downs. We retraced our hoof-steps back to Trevaskis Farm and on out to the road to Gwinear. Another very dry and sunny day made for a really pleasant ride out. Beverley Jenkin took the lead mostly and paced lots of nice canters.



Snack Bar at the Mounts Bay Inn

Mares Only! Horse Hike

Only four horses and riders went on our horse hike from Madron church – and all mares! It was held on a Saturday to avoid competing with parking with Sunday worshippers.

We set off for Kennel lane (which is still in good condition after last year's renovations), eventually joining the road leading up to Carfury and on past Ding Dong on to the moors. We rode on past Nine Maidens taking in the lovely panoramic views as we squelched along the boggy pathway down to Four Parishes. We took the track to Men-an-Tol and emerged on to the road to Lanyon farm.



On the Tinner's Way near Men-an-Tol

By now the forecasted heavy drizzle and rising wind was setting in from the west. We were pleased to have got off the high moor before the rain started. We decided to forego a visit to the pub at Newbridge because of the deteriorating weather conditions.

After we passed Lanyon Quoit, we turned right into a grassy lane known as Rabbit Run. We came out by Higher Boswarva and a short piece of road work delivered us to the bridledway across Trengwainton Carn. This is a particularly lovely bridledway to ride. We came out at Carn Lodge gate and not long after, we arrived safely back in Madron. All mares together - had been a very cordial ride with 'ears up' most of the time. The only skittish moment was on the Carfury road, when a young dog from inside his garden surprised Anne's horse and in an instant, we all found ourselves facing the way we had just come!

A big thank you to Anne Bressington who led this 8 mile ride and to Sandra Barnes for her excellent local knowledge of places that used to be regularly ridden.

DISCOVERING LOST WAYS!

The government's Discovering Lost Ways Project (or should it be **Discovering Lost Causes!**) was intended to put lost bridledways onto the definitive map before the deadline of 2026, set by the CROW Act (which gave only walkers open access) – the so called 'Right to Roam'.

The government has been wrestling with this project since its inception. They have run into huge problems as they realise the enormity of the task. Seven years into it, and several million pounds spent, and they haven't managed to get a single 'lost way' on to the definitive map. Natural England have just announced they recommend scrapping the project. They are talking about simplifying some aspects of RoW legislation which is the real stumbling block for us all. We anxiously await the Government's next move – in the meantime we will be lobbying our MP, Andrew George, who has signed an EDM (Early Day Motion) calling for more bridledways. What will happen to the 2026 deadline is very concerning. – Surely the 2026 deadline must be abandoned if the project is not honoured?

We riders must therefore take more action of our own to get the routes we ride secured onto the definitive map as bridledways.

'Aging' Dressage Diva

After Twister proving himself in his jumping skills, I thought venturing into the calmer pursuit of dressage may be fun and a challenge. Having nearly qualified for the Riding Club's Novice Dressage to Music Championship in 2006, I thought it unlikely I would ever do any better. How wrong I was!

The 2007 Area 19 Qualifying Competition for Riding Club Dressage was again at St Leonards and was postponed to August due to the boggy ground conditions following all the rain in July. By this time I was in the middle of a difficult summer with multiple visitations from children and grandchildren and was not feeling either very fit or well rehearsed. However as part of one of the Threewaters Novice Dressage teams off we went and guess what? Our team WON and qualified for the National Championships. We had 2 1st s and a 3rd = 5 points. We also had an individual 2nd so she qualified as well. Next question — -Do we go? The Championships are held at the Lincoln Showground —not exactly very near!

With one replacement we decided we MUST go -we might never do it again (especially me at my age). None of us was prepared to drive all that way so we hired Dick James and his large lorry to take us all. By this time we had had several team meetings and training sessions so we all knew each other.

7am on 7th September saw me loading Twister to take him to Chiverton plus tack, feed, posh clothes etc. We offloaded and re-loaded into Mr James huge lorry with the others, (my one fear was that Twister wouldn't go in). No problems at all! He just strolled straight in as if he did every day! Off we went. I travelled in the living with a fellow team member and the 10 hour journey went by in a flash -lots of chat, snacks, snoozes etc. The horses travelled really well too. On arrival at the massive Lincoln Showground we settled the horses in their temporary stables after taking them for a stroll to stretch their legs and get some grass. There were about 700 temporary stables! We finally settled ourselves down in the local Travel Lodge. Sharing a family room with previously unknown team members was interesting.

Saturday was competition day and we were up bright and early. After our and the horses breakfast we were free until the afternoon. Some of us were quite laid back whilst others were really wound up. One member was seen putting her horses studs in at 9am! I was determined to see something of the rest of the Championships so wandered around watching some fascinating events. I particularly enjoyed one called "Rural Riders" where 6 riders perform a dressage test all together in a 60metre arena.

Each of the 4 team members had to ride the same dressage test in different arenas. The placings in each arena are added up to form the team score. All our horses went really well and we had a 1st, 6th, 7th and 12th. The 12th was dropped giving us a total of 14 and 4TM overall. Out of 27 teams not a bad result. My individual 6th was a good result for me too. There was a pig roast in the evening following which we all fell into bed after a long but very successful day.

Sunday we loaded up for the long journey home. A 3 day trip for 4 minutes of stardom each. Was it worth it? Absolutely! I'd do it all again given the chance.

Heather (Gibbons)

Horse Hike from Polgigga

The horsehike from Polgigga was the third in a row in the lovely Autumnal weather. We meandered down to Porthgwarra cove along the byway giving views of a silvery shimmering sea. We found some faster paces across the downs then over the new horse board walk and up the rise. (The recut tracks across Roskestral and Ardensawah cliff are lovely to ride.) On reaching Arden-Sawah, we had some road work before getting down to Porthcurno and joining the coastal bridgeway. Being half term, we met lots of walkers and families out and we exchanged pleasantries where ever we encountered them. Many enjoyed the spectacle of seeing us out riding and wanted to touch and pat the horses. As usual we had refreshments at the Logan Rock Pub at Treen following which we rode back out on to the cliff bridgeway and on to the Logan Rock viewpoint. Dawn lead the return canter back along a section of the coast bridgeway.

We walked along the narrow stretch where we met people walking. They did have to stand into the hedge to allow us to pass; all very good humoured, but I wish this bridgeway track was cut out to its proper width to allow safe passage for families and horse riders meeting.

We reached the top of Porthcurno and turned right inland on to the recently re-drained bridgeway to Trendrennen. The surface is much improved after the renovation work by the County Council. We rejoined the coast road to Trethewey and back to Polgigga and although car traffic was busy, drivers were considerate. Riders and horses enjoyed a splendid 9 mile ride in glorious sunshine.

Motor Bike Heaven? !!!!!



One entrance to the Great Flat Lode Trail where there used to be a horizontal V 'stile' which horses could easily step over.

The County Council in their wisdom have removed all the 'horse stiles' which allowed horses but stopped motorbikes getting on to the Great Flat Lode Trails, Camborne.. It is reported that there is now a new motorbike problem.

This has been done to enable disabled access.

It is a pity that the County Council are not yet taking the same view of the impossible gates that we find on our bridgeways, that often prevent the less able riders from using them!

Many riders are not able to hop on and off their horses to open difficult gates. There is one nearby bridgeway with four or five difficult gates within a relatively short distance.



Dawn, Beverly and Margaret on the cliff bridgeway near Treen

PAROW - Penwith Access and Rights of Way –

www.parow.org.uk

Our brother organisation has continued to make great progress in clearing many of the paths and tracks we ride. Our PAROW Paths Officer, 'Jolly Green Giant', Chris Fry has been doing much work on clearing 'The Rings' at Caer Bran near Brane the paths over which provide an important link from the lane to Brane up 'Burnt House Lane to Bridleway 17, down to Grumbla and Sancreed. He also has cleared 'Devils Lane' near St Just which links onto Carn Kenidjack. This lovely old lane was getting more or less impassable. It is now wide and clear. He also is continuing with work on bridleways in Perranuthnoe and Paul.

PAROW also of course does much work on our footpaths. However it is surprising how much of the work he does is of direct benefit to riders.

We are working hard with Penwith District Council and the County Council to secure the future of PAROW. The Paths Officer until now has been substantially funded by grant monies which have now come to end. Substantial support from Penwith District Council is enabling the project to be kept alive whilst longer term funding is hopefully being secured.

The really good news is that Natural England have funded a brand new tractor and flail for heathland management and other work on our paths, and other projects. We have only just taken delivery of this fantastic piece of kit. We are hoping this will enable many of our paths and bridleways to be cleared and maintained much more efficiently. We are working with the County Council to see how such work can be integrated into their parish driven paths maintenance programme.



Chris with the newly delivered compact tractor and flail

STEEL HORSE NEWS

The Great Flat Lode Trails and the Poldice Valley Coast to Coast trail are at last in the process of being linked. From Wheal Buller through to Lanner crossing over the A393 and skirting Carn Marth and Carharrack. The bridleway to Sparry Bottom was nearly impossible to ride, cycle or walk and mostly carrying and pushing your bike. Now there is a fabulous new track surface. This skirts United Downs and eventually emerges at Crofthandy and the Tailings Dam, St. Day and Poldice valley. They are still building the Crofthandy section and have upgraded a footpath to a bridleway to complete the link. All good stuff!

Good progress is being made on the other new sections of the trails for us to ride and cycle.

Also the links that we cycle/ride from the Great Flat Lode over the railway bridge and on to the Red River valley past Tucking Mill are becoming a designated bridleway trail. In the future there is a brand new viaduct planned over the valley and trail carrying a new Camborne link road.



The newly surfaced old bridleway lane near United Downs and Caharrack – Before it was a washed out ditch and boulder garden.

In Brief

Did you know the horse industry is bigger than the pop industry?

Did you know there are 40 + horses on the Isles of Scilly?

Over 69,000 houses are to be built in Cornwall by 2026. What is that going to do to our rising traffic levels? Perhaps oil will be rationed by then and everyone will be going about on horse-back – I wish!!

Cuba goes Equine - Cuba has reverted back to the horse and cart for transportation, and has also given up on using buses due to the country's severe oil shortage. Even the tractor is giving way as down on the farm they are re-learning how to drive Oxen.

Riding High - A Victorian meteorologist, Clement Ray, rode his horse up to the top of Ben Nevis (4,406 ft) every day to forecast the weather. There existed a meteorological station on the summit from 1883 to 1904. The ruins are still there today.

Fancy riding with your feet? - Have you ever seen the Edinburgh Tatum? Sparticus the big drum horse, carrying drums either side, has his reins attached to the stirrups (as do the trumpeters' horses). I bet he's not traffic shy!

Equine Flu has hit Auzzie racing stables – they've never had it before in Australia.

African Horse Disease (AHD) is now threatening southern Europe. We are hoping that climate change doesn't mean it will threaten Britain.

Say No to Floridisation - Horses can become incredibly ill if they drink fluoridised water. It's not good for farm animals either!

More than 70 French towns have gone back to the future by introducing horse-drawn carriages to replace petrol and diesel-powered vehicles for local tasks such as collecting rubbish, street-cleaning and taking children to school. And at least 30 more are set to join the revolution this year. The seaside resort of Trouville is using horse-drawn carts to pick up glass bottles for recycling. And they have been used in the same way, as well as for carrying water tanks to clean the streets, around Beauvais airport. Promoters say the carriages are particularly good for the environment when used for work that involves lots of stops and starts over short distances.

Critics counter that the horse – which produces around 20 kilos of dung daily, enough to fill a suitcase – is hardly pollution-free. They point out that, before the advent of the car, environmentalists were seriously worried that a proliferation of horses would leave cities knee-deep in muck.

