

HORSE AROUND

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
WEST PENWITH BRIDLEWAYS ASSOCIATION

AFFILIATED TO THE BRITISH HORSE SOCIETY



FREE TO MEMBERS

No. 29 WINTER 2010/11

Straight from the horse's mouth

Hello Everyone

A thousand apologies to you all, particularly those of you waiting for the new horse hike programme, for not sending out a newsletter until now. A combination of having some all important time out from bridleway work, taking a bit of holiday away, family commitments and difficulties of an ageing Mum has taken their toll on our time. We hope you all had a good Summer.

Although an age ago, I will hoof off with commenting that we had an excellent attendance at the AGM where we had an interesting presentation by Lindsay Setchell of Hoofing Marvellous on Barefoot riding. Although going barefoot is not for everyone she gave an insight into the possibilities and the appropriateness of youngstock starting out and continuing with barefoot. She also covered nutrition and passed around lots of little packages of various types of horse feeds from herbages to grains. Anyone who has an idea for a speaker for the next AGM or knows of someone who would like to come and give us a talk – horse related of course – please let me know.

The Madron horse hike took place on a truly gloriously sunny and windless day in April. Anne took us on a lovely easy ride. The St Just charity horseride in aid of The Mermaid Centre also enjoyed equally good weather in May. The theme was continued in a big way with "The Kernow Trailblazers" who completed an epic ride of the Kernow Horse Trail from the Devon border to Lands End in June. Read about their intrepid journey. A ride on the Great Flat Lode took place on one of the hottest days of the year and a lovely picture in The Cornishman ensued and repeated in this Horse Around. More recently, Sue Knapman and crew from Trescrowan livery yard put together another "Ride 4 Life" charity ride raising over £1,000 for breast cancer campaign. Last September a total of £1,177.75 was raised – we will get the official figure for this September later on. Well done to everyone involved in making this event a success. We certainly enjoyed the 8 mile ride.

The new austerity that will engulf us could mean that 30% of Cornwall Council's budget is being cut. We just hope that Cornwall's unique environment and access to it is recognised as being very important for bringing in money to the county. We also hope that PAROW fits in with the government's 'Big Society' agenda – of volunteer organisations playing a key role in providing services – in our case clearing and improving our riding network. More on our sister organisation later.

I hope you all enjoy this edition of Horse Around and find it informative. Written contributions and information is always welcome. See you out on a horse hike soon.

Margaret

Christmas Cracker Festive Ride - 12 December

Decorate your horse and be of good cheer! A social ride with a few pub stops around St Just and Pendeen.

In This Issue

***The Kernow Trailblazers
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Devon Trails***

and much more ...



Be Seen Be Safe

***Dawn, Lesley and Mike from St Ives
(Wearing Hi-Viz "buys" you the length of an arena in
extra stopping distance for a car at 30 mph)***

Christmas Get Together

Engine Inn

Crippleasease, Nancledra

Tuesday 16 December

7:30 pm onwards

Refreshments Available

ALL WELCOME

WEST PENWITH BRIDLEWAYS ASSOCIATION

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

Treasurer: Beverley Jenkin, **Secretary:** Margaret Bigg,

Email: wpba@btinternet.com

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

Tel: 01736 795098

Horse Hike on the Great Flat Lode

In the searing heat of Sunday 27th June five riders gathered in the South Wheal Francis car park, drawing envious looks from someone with bikes on their roof – we had a key. We gathered at 10.15 and were pretty quick off the mark to beat the worst of the heat. Armed with plenty of fly spray and water we set off through under the low tunnel under the road to Four Lanes. The rider with the tallest horse rode through!, everyone else dismounted and led their horses. Surprisingly there were few walkers and cyclists en route so we were able to have some good canters. The ground was hard but with care the horses all remained sound. (Cornish horses seem to have tougher feet than up-country ones!) We always observed the 'walk only' rule past Wheal Buller Riding Centre. From here we headed along the Tresevean Trail above Lanner. Only a small loop of the ride was on the road, which was quiet anyway, and gave us fabulous views over Stithians and towards St Austell. The ride was planned to be short because of the heat but on the return journey, as we were all still going well and the horses still comfortable, we rode a loop taking in the Wheal Uny mine complex where we stopped for a photoshoot at the engine houses. As we found a kind young man to take the photo for us, we were able to get us all in. This photo later appeared in the Cornishman. We completed a very pleasant 9 miles in surprisingly comfortable weather conditions with no mishaps. Thanks to Margaret and Adrian for arranging the ride.

Emily Barraclough



Winter 2010/11 - Horse Hike Programme

Please note these dates in your diary now

Organiser
or
Contact

U or UU	Tehidy Woods	7 November	M & A
U	Polgigga	21 November	Beverly/ Peta-Jane
U	Xmas Cracker Ride (St Just)	12 December	Amanda
U	Madron	9 January	Anne
UU	Mining Trails (Lanner)_	23 January	Lorraine
UU	Gwinear	6 February	M & A
U	Morvah	20 February	Chris H.
U or UU	Marazion	27 February	M & A
	EGB Training Ride St Just	6 March	Amanda
U	Helston/Loe Pool	20 March	M & A
	AGM (Penzance)	22 March	
U	Nancludra	3 April	M & A

Other rides may be organised according to demand. We always 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
Amanda Tel: 871876; Beverley 871151, Anne 330623,
Chris Hichens 788729, Lorraine Barnfield 01209 214145

Horse 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

Membership Renewal

We sent out renewal invitations last March for those due. We thank all who have renewed. Some have undoubtedly ended at the bottom of your in-trays, If so we have sent another reminder with this newsletter.

For those of you who find renewing by post tedious you may now renew (or join) online. (paypal credit/debit)

RENEW ONLINE

www.bhsaccesscornwall.org.uk/westpenwithbridleways/JoinOnline.htm
(address is case sensitive)

BRIDLEWAY DEDICATION – BAKERS PIT NANCLEDRA

We have good news on this is issue. We have been working with Cornwall Wildlife Trust and Cornwall Council to get a proper definitive bridleway route from Georgia to the bridleway around Castle-an-Dinas and down to Chysauster.

After much badgering from us, the legal process has now started and the Wildlife Trust has now removed the cattle grid and dangerous gate they had installed on the track past the reserve. They are also going to modify the iron gate at the Castle-an-Dinas end which closes too fast and lethally. However they have been much too slow in doing this. We have not seen any cattle grazing there yet either!

Progress is frustratingly slow on all these issues, BUT we persevere on.

Trencrom Hill – We note that grazing has never yet taken place there despite the installation of bridleway gates and cattle grid by the NT a few years ago!

My first Lizard horse hike!

It was Sunday morning, 11th July. The sun was shining and not many clouds in the sky. Liz Harris and myself parked up outside Mullion school with Straff and Gem in the horse box. Nice drive-in, drive-out parking, we like this, said Liz.

By 11am Adrian, Margaret, Alison and Val had arrived and we were all mounted and ready to go. Alison led us away from the windmills which were quite a sight, and we went along some weaving tracks with varying surfaces heading towards the coast. The horse-flies were out in force unfortunately and the horses were getting a bit touchy. We had ridden a good couple of miles before we actually felt the sea breeze over the cliffs, which all horses and riders welcomed. The tracks were in good condition on the whole but most had difficult gates into them. We all took turns to open and close them but they were a real challenge. We went past some beautiful cottages with fantastic views across The Rill Downs of the Bishop Rock, Kynance Cove and Predannack Head.

Soon small streams and gullies appeared as we picked our way down stony paths. One area which Alison called "The Rockies" sticks in my mind, but all the horses were very careful and sensible.

Finally, in the distance I could see Kynance Cove Car Park which was full to the brim, and the Lizard beyond! Shortly after Kynance Cove, Alison announced that we were only 15 minutes away from the Lizard Green which was to be our lunch stop. One last canter stretch before we reached our destination – perfect! Only 7.2 miles so far, said Adrian!



Anne and Straffy enjoying lunch on Lizard Green

We were met by a welcoming party consisting of Alison's parents and friends who supplied us with the "best ever home-made pasties", fruit cake and a gorgeous cup of tea. Alison's dad even offered the horses a bucket of water! What more could you want?

I sat on the grass beside my horse and enjoyed!!

After a generous 30 minute stop we remounted, said our good-byes and thank yous and set off again on a slightly different route back.

Although Margaret had said that this next path was an official bridleway, it turned out to be very overgrown with fallen bushes, a narrow bridge and giant steps. The general assessment was that it needed a lot of attention.

After that the tracks improved dramatically as we passed through Kynance Cove again and re-joined paths that I recognised. The views seemed even more amazing as we looked back towards Mullion. Above us, the hollow whistle of gliders being launched from Predannack airfield – (the pilots must've had the view of the century!!).

We had another couple of nice canters and then we slowed down, mainly because my horse was being a total plonker and I'd lost all brakes, but also because the flies had rejoined us as we rode inland from the coast. We could see the graceful windmills again and a glimpse of Mullion school. Just to finish the day nicely, we met a herd of cattle finding their way to a new field. They didn't take any notice of us and we just sat and watched them, all colours shapes and sizes and some with young calves at foot, walked past in no particular hurry!

The horse-boxes were a welcome sight when we arrived back. 14.3 miles in all!

What a fantastic day – and thank you to everyone involved, especially Alison and her parents!!!!

Anne Bressington



Horse Hikers ready for the return trip

In Brief

Horse Falls Asleep on top of Vet

A vet was rescued in Devon after becoming trapped under a sedated horse. The Crediton vet was called to a farm after the horse had become stuck in the fence. Devon and Somerset fire Service was called out and found a heavily sedated horse had fallen asleep on top of the vet trapping her. Fire fighters freed the women from underneath the horse and released the animal from the fence. The vet was not injured in the incident.

Chinese Lanterns Danger

Chinese lanterns made of a wire frame clad in paper and a place for a candle have become a popular thing to launch into the night sky at wedding receptions and parties. Many are released simultaneously and look very pretty. However, the result of sending this "litter" into the sky is causing great welfare problems for grazing animals who could ingest bits of the wire.

The wire can also get into hay and other forage and also damage farm machinery.

Origin of Pub signs

The present day signboard originated in medieval times to enable a largely illiterate populace to recognise names or distinctive symbols. Village pubs often have sporting associations such as The Cricketers or trade associations like The Carpenters or Masons Arms. The Plough is common in agricultural areas while The Nag's Head showed that a horse was for hire. The importance of inns to travellers is indicated by names such as The Travellers' Rest, The Packhorse and The Three Horseshoes, while the once significant wool trade is illustrated in names such as The Woolpack, The Golden Fleece and The Weavers' Arms.

In a town in the Netherlands traffic lights and signs were removed 10 years ago and it has proven to be a great success as the number of accidents has plummeted. During road re-surfacing work, I have noticed that once the centre white line is removed traffic travels a lot more slowly. Perhaps something can be learned from this?

How Scarey is That!!

In India, they are improving the road infrastructure to motorway standard and speeds, but nobody seems to have thought about the 'old world' way to travel; by horse and cart. But consequently, the danger of replacing a cart track between villages with dual carriageway means drivers can meet Ox carts going against the flow of speeding traffic as locals tend to do as they have always done!

PAROW Moving Forward

In our last Horse Around we reported that Penwith Access and Rights of Way Forum (PAROW) had been successful in getting Local Action Group (LAG) grant funding to enable us to continue employing two paths officers Chris Fry and Kirsten Gorvin for another year. We are now working with Rob Poole (our Rural Development Officer) to secure funding for the next two years.

Rob has also been successful in securing us additional grant funding to replace PAROW's ageing Land Rover Discovery with a first class Land Rover Defender vehicle, already kitted out for carrying tools fuel etc.



**Chris Fry
("Jolly Green
Giant")
With the new
PAROW
vehicle**

PAROW has specific targets to achieve to meet the requirements of the grant funding, this includes doing much work on historic sites and access to them as well as solving local problems on our paths. As usual much of the work done by PAROW has benefitted riders as well as walkers, with work done on bridleways, tracks and moorland paths .

Chapel Carn Brea – Horse Access

We have been in discussion with the National Trust over improved access on Chapel Carn Brea. The Trust has been trying to confine horse access to the single path around the back of the hill connecting the gate off the Crows-an-Wra lane to the old "roman road" leading down to Newshop on the A30.

The Trust are now grazing six Dartmoor Ponies on the hill which makes the Trust's claims about the damage done by horse access somewhat farcical.

When we met with the NT on the hill to discuss these issues we encountered the ponies near the summit. The ponies then proceeded to climb all over the summit of the old archaeology of the old chapel. Lindsey the NT warden said "tut tut naughty ponies", the irony of this was not lost. Horses under the control of riders would never go up there but stick to the old metalled road.

We understand why the Trust may not wish riders to canter/gallop up to the top but we see no reason to stop us going up for the view.

Why are the places with good views always reserved for "walkers only"? Horses and riders like good views too.

The Trust has promised to make the gate access to the old lane much safer – at present there is a big drop on going through the gate.

Also in liaison with the Trust and the adjacent landowner PAROW is now clearing the old "roman road" that runs down to Newshop, enabling a circular route and improved access from Newshop.

We are continuing to work for improved access on Chapel Carn Brea.

Carnyorth Common Update

You will remember the ongoing saga of unsafe gates, cattlegrids etc. on Carnyorth Common by St Just.. A new guy from Natural England has now been brought in to sort the issues.

He agrees that many mistakes have been made in the installation and how the grazing project has been handled.

He informs us that the cattle will be taken off the moor for the winter enabling all the gates to be tied open. I have not heard whether this has been done yet.. He also acknowledges that the current cattle are the wrong type for the job.

Those of you who know the moor will also note that the cattle grid has now been moved off the ridden track (by Hector's House) which is also a definitive footpath. The bypass gate is now on the track itself. We had a big issue with the reconstructed grid/gate arrangement because it was done without prior consultation and protection for riders from the grid. We got protection for the grid instated but the arrangement is not as we would have designed it.



Old arrangement



New arrangement
(viewed in same direction)

In desperation we (PAROW) have adjusted the gates on the moor to make them close as slowly as we can. However the one on the other track by Hector's House, where 18 months ago there was a serious accident, is still totally unsafe. We have been promised that this will be re-engineered by Natural England.

It takes so long for anything to happen yet we have had umpteen liaisons on the moor with contractors, Natural England etc etc. and the meetings are still going on.

Bridleway Problems Update

Trannack Mill Bridleway, St Erth

PAROW working with the local farmer has now replaced the old un-hung broken gate with a brand new gate and horse latch, overhanging branches have also been cleared. The bridleway is now once again being used by local riders.

Embla Vean Bridleway, Nancledra to the moors.

This was washed out by the Zennor Floods 18 months ago and has been closed ever since. After high level intervention we have got funds allocated for its repair. Work should be starting any day soon.

Tredavoe Bridleways, Paul.

These have also been closed after becoming dangerous because of rain damage. These will be done next after the Embla Vean bridleway.

Sancreed 17, Grumbla to Brane.

We have been concerned about this bridleway for a long time as unsatisfactory remedial work has been done by local residents. Recent rains have now done further damage. As a result Cornwall Council are intervening and doing some drainage work and repair, and ensuring that the unsatisfactory remedial work is remedied.

Public Paths Improvement Programme

This old County Council programme is still not quite completed. Sancreed, Madron are still to be finished. A brand new gate has been installed on the Madron Carn bridleway replacing an ancient iron one that was impossible to open.

Steel Horse News

The Cornwall Council cycle forum continues to be very urban orientated (to meet 'political' ideals) and we wish to push to a more off road agenda. There seems no enthusiasm/understanding to cater for the serious/leisure off road 'adventure' cyclist. In Devon they more readily recognise the needs and potential market. We want to change this and a presentation of the recently ridden and proposed Kernow Horse trail route by WPBA members (read about it here) is one objective we have to try and generate interest. The Kernow Horse Trail will be on natural surfaces and will serve as a challenging route for mountain bikers. We need support from all quarters to get this project off the ground. Although the mining trails are brilliant for all, we need to get the message through that there is a need for well signed non-sanitised trails.

The Mineral Tramways project is now finished and there is some concern where maintenance funding will come from in the future. However, during July and again later in the Summer some surface maintenance work has taken place on several stretches of the trails network. The re-alignment of the hedges at the Wheal Buller road crossing to Lanner has made this much safer to cross by horse and bike as visibility is much improved. On the coast to coast trail at Carnon Valley, beside the former passive treatment plant, a new alternative route has been opened to avoid the sometimes flooded section. The new Tolgus trail link from the Gold Centre to Portreath is unfortunately being put on hold as they did not get the necessary consents to enable it to be completed within the project timescale and also a river crossing bridge needs to be a lot bigger than originally designed and budgeted for. New grant funding needs to be found to proceed. You may come across a group of mobility scooter users on the trails that have recently formed a club called "The Rolling Ramblers". It is proving to be a great success – enabling them to access the countryside.

Pub Crawl

In an effort to highlight the fact that 2,400 pubs shut last year, around 40 a week, this summer celebs. have been getting on their bikes, riding to country pubs, and playing impromptu gigs and drinking lots of beer.

Bamboo Bikes

An American company is doing a brisk and steady trade in selling bamboo bikes in Kenya and South Africa. The idea is to manufacture affordable bikes for 3rd world countries that are virtually carbon neutral. The bikes are made from bamboo with carbon fibre binding. Apparently, they are so smooth to ride – even over cobblestones. This non-hi tec solution is going down a storm as the cost basis is very cheap and everyone seems to want bikes, but until now could not easily afford one.

Don't forget to visit :

BHS Access Cornwall
www.bhsaccesscornwall.org.uk

Also **Online Interactive Riding Maps** for all areas of Cornwall

Also BHS Access South West
www.bhsaccesssouthwest.org.uk

National Trust – Penrose Estate - Loe Pool

We have been working with the NT on improving horse and cycle access around Loe Pool, near Helston.

The Trust has now confirmed that they have just finished work completing the route from Helston Porthleven Road (boating lake) car park to the NT Degibna car park.

Access is already available from the same carpark via Penrose to Loe Bar on the Western side of Loe Pool.

This now makes a complete circuit of Loe Pool now possible but we still are asking for another barrier to be removed to make the route shorter and simpler. We will be mapping the whole route when completed.



New Gate with horse friendly latch on the newly opened route.

Previously there was a padlocked gate and "No Horses" signs.

Cycling and Riding Exmoor - Simonsbath to Withypool – (part of the two Moors Way)

Exmoor has more than 50% of it's PROW network as bridleways. It's a horse riders and mountain bikers dream place with stunning and spectacular scenery. We managed 2 off road rides, one trail around Wimbleball lake with more than it's fare share of ups and downs. The second Simonsbath to Withypool was a truly stunning ride and a bit gruelling so it was a great excuse to stop and gawp at the scenery. We cycled through a couple of beautiful steep sided valleys as we followed the river Barle. We completed a big ascent overlooking Withypool and it was like sitting on top of the world as the scenery just went on forever. The climb was worth it as the return descent ran for 1.5 miles back down to a wood taking us only 5 minutes to get back down! I'm not going to tell you how long it took us to go up!

An intermediate ride of 9 miles brilliant - we can't wait to revisit the area either on bike or horseback.

However on this bridleway there were some very nasty features for horse riders to navigate and also some horrendous gates.

Did you know?

Cornwall Council spends £80k a year on bottled water!

That could be better spent keeping more of our bridleways open

Fifty Miles of Devon Trails – For Bike and Horse?

In the summer we went to explore and check out (on our bikes) the new Devon Tamar Trails, the Granite Way and the Plymbridge Tavistock Trail.

The Tamar Trails in the woods on the Devon side of the Tamar, opposite Gunnislake were brilliant, for horse riding and for cycling if you have good stamina. These old mining trails, created under the Tamar Valley Mining Heritage project have not been “sanitised” like some of the Mineral Tramways Trails. We can't wait to return with our horses as the trails are all off-road. However these are not really family cycling trails, but more for the mountain bike freak simply because of the challenging gradients involved.

The 14 miles of Tamar trails run in the wooded valley from Mowellham Quay nearly to Horsebridge the start of our Kernow Horse Trail. The section from Morwhellham Quay is very steep and energy zapping but it gets much easier and the views open up once near the Horsebridge end. There are also some extreme MB courses at a few points – “the Corkscrew” and “Rock Drop”. It was quiet when we passed through but all users need to potentially look out for ‘flying’ cyclists crossing the trail at one point.

The next day we cycled The Granite Way – 16 miles of boring and monotonous tarmaced Sustrans trails, but the views across Dartmoor were good, and essential for horse riders if allowed. We joined the route at Lydford and cycled to Okehampton and back. We crossed a spectacular viaduct by Meldon reservoir. There are many “No Horses” signs, but I'm pleased to report that many local riders were ignoring the signs. There is no reason why horse riders should not use the trail; it's just pure discrimination.

We completed our adventure by cycling the Plym Valley Trail, which is also part of the West Devon way that runs coast to coast across Devon. Again ironically there were ‘No Horses’ signs everywhere yet the route was along another disused Pony railway to haul moorland granite down to Plymouth Docks. The trail was again tarmaced and wider than many of the lanes we ride and share with cyclists and motor traffic! This is a lovely route that goes across many viaducts giving views below and across the wooded valley. The speed of the cyclists was incredible and we believe a bit of horse traffic would slow down the speed merchants to the benefit of walkers, their dogs, and kiddies on small bikes wobbling about. Although this 20 mile trip was very pleasant to cycle or horse ride, both these trails could have been made much more interesting if the surface was unsealed and more ‘off-road’.

With our BHS hat on we are in discussions with Devon County Council over the ‘cyclists and walkers only policy’ on these trails – it has got to change!.

Devon is actually investing lots of their Exeter airport ‘sell off’ money on horse and cycle friendly trails and has a keen Bridleway Development Officer. Can Cornwall also have one please?

Adrian and Margaret



Some BHS News

NECD and The British Horse Society

The British Horse Society is working in partnership with the National Equine Crime Database (NECD) to help reduce the opportunity for equestrian crime in the UK. The NECD provides the most advanced equestrian crime prevention service in the World, helping to deter criminals by ensuring stolen items are almost impossible to sell on, and providing a multitude of cutting edge equestrian crime prevention services including NECD Checkit and NECD Textit.

The BHS will benefit from every new subscriber who registers with the NECD; all you need to do is quote the promotional code: NECD BHS. To subscribe, simply visit www.necd.org.uk or call 0800 0199044.

Variety of Horses in Need of a New Home under the Assisted Rehoming Scheme

The Assisted Rehoming Scheme launched earlier this year now has a variety of horses registered who are in need of a new home. The scheme has been launched to help match up horses in need of a new home with those who have registered their interest in rehoming a particular horse or pony.

Horses and ponies in need of a new home can be registered for free on to the scheme. Any BHS Gold member with experience of looking after horses can submit an application to join the database, for which a one-off administration fee of £20 (inc. VAT) is payable.

For information on how the scheme works, how to register and horses currently available can be viewed on the BHS website under the section Horse Care. For further information please contact Emmeline Hannelly on 01926 707791 or email e.hannelly@bhs.org.uk or tel: 01733 261456

Protecting the Tracks and Paths We Ride – YOUR HELP is wanted! (from Riders, Walkers and Cyclists)

As you know many of the paths and tracks we ride are not definitive bridleways and as such there is no legally recorded right of way on such paths. However that does not mean that no right of way exists it just means it never has been recorded map. However from time to time our rights to use such paths are challenged. We then need to act by proving that the paths have always have been ridden and getting the paths recorded as bridleways.

There are two such paths on which we do urgently need your help, and on which our right to ride has been challenged

1. Track from opposite the Balnoon caravan site to Halsetown (South of St Ives)

This track has been ridden and used freely by all for years until about a year ago but riders have now been challenged (sometimes aggressively) by a resident along the track. Interestingly the track is also registered “Section 15” Common Land on which there is a right to “air and exercise” which has been deemed to include horse riding.

2. Track past Hellangove farm from the Badgers Cross to Chysauster Road which connects to Castle-an-Dinas.

The right to use this track also has been challenged.

If any members have ever used either of these two tracks OR know of anyone else who may have done, please do contact us. email: treveffa.farm@btinternet.com or Tel 01736 795098

Kernow Trail Blazers – Successfully Riding the route of the Kernow Horse Trail for Charity

Four of our members, trailblazed the route of the Kernow Horse Trail, which runs from Devon to Lands End, in aid of charity. They arrived at Lands End in style at 5:45pm on Friday 18 June, six days after starting their ride at Horsebridge on the Devon border.

Andrea Simmons, Bev Jenkins, Peta-Jane Field, and Lizzie Matthews and Kate Gason who had joined them for most of the way, galloped the last few yards up the cycle track to reach Land's End. Led by Bev and cheered on by their stalwart band of supporters. The aim of this ride was two-fold. Firstly, to raise funds for ShelterBox and The Brooke Hospital - which they did very successfully as their sponsorship added up to well over £1,000.00 - and secondly, to see if it was possible to ride the length of Cornwall avoiding main roads. Thankfully, it was, and successfully proved the concept of the planned BHS Ride-UK Kernow Horse Trail. They deserve full congratulations on completing this epic trip of over 120 miles. in six days.



***The Start
The River Tamar at Horse Bridge***

Peta- Jane tells the story:

From Horsebridge on the Devon Border and we wended our way on bridleways and country lanes to cross the south of of Bodmin Moor without mishap, to our overnight stop at Woodlands Farm near St Neot.

On the second day despite our best endeavours, after some lovely bridleways and country lanes we all got lost in Cardinham Woods! Eventually a kindly forester and showed the way out, which although a bridleway was not signed! Then skirting the north of Bodmin missed a turning for the track leading out to reach the Camel Trail. Navigation in unfamiliar areas is very difficult on horse back. Andrea's I-phone bit the trail early in the ride so the option GPS OS mapping was quickly lost. Some places had wonderful stretches of clearly marked bridleways or byways. The Camel Trail was a joy to ride, full of people on bicycles and others walking with children or pushing prams. There was even a woman on a mobility scooter exercising her dog! No-one minded the horses at all, in fact the riders were delighted to be greeted with smiles and cries of "Oh, what lovely horses!" The delays meant that we very nearly missed our reception party at St Wenn where it seemed the whole village had turned out to greet us!

After a peaceful night in their paddocks, the horses were fresh and ready for the ride from St Wenn to St Newlyn East. The planned route across Tregonetha Downs was overgrown with bracken and brambles, but the Trailblazers found a different but found another bridleway to rejoin the planned route. With the exception of finding a mare and foal trapped on one bridleway and having to ride along a road which seemed to house the most ferocious dogs - and a momentary panic about which road was the A30 and which side of it they should be on - the remainder of the Kernow Trailblazers' third day was spent ambling down minor roads with high hedges.

At St Newlyn East, Jo and Tony Lutey provided livery for the horses at their Trevarth stud near St Newlyn East. Having settled the horses in their corrals - they all seemed to be quite happy with their temporary accommodation wherever they stayed - the Trailblazers visited The Pheasant Inn where they were served delicious food by a very convivial host.

The weather played a huge part in the sheer enjoyment of this ride. Waking every day to sunshine and happy horses was without a doubt a great bonus as was being able to picnic at lunch. After a lovely morning's ride which took us from St Newlyn East via the picturesque villages of Fiddlers' Green, Zelah and on through shady woods to Ventongimps, we stopped for lunch at the Callestock Cyder farm.



***Andrea, Lizzie, Peta-Jane and Beverley
(and Kate off camera)***

Fellow horse rider, Lorraine Barnfield, met us at Unity Woods, near Chacewater and then high onto Cam Marth, where the whole of Redruth's outskirts and beyond were laid out before us." We stayed with Lorraine at her equestrian Centre near Lanner and then on the following day, we followed the trails south of Camborne to a glorious ride along a shallow stream as the sunlight filtered through the trees in Pendarves Wood.

Bidding farewell to Lorraine and her gang at Barripper Cricket Club, the Kernow Trailblazers rode to their lunch stop in Gwinear before heading towards Rosevidney where we were to stay for their last night on the trail. The following morning it seemed almost as if the horses sensed they were on the home stretch. After crossing the A30 at Canon's Town, the territory became more familiar. Even so, after passing Chysauster and skirting Nancledra, we managed to make one last wrong turn, towards Lady Downs instead of towards New Mill!

By now the horses knew they were heading for home and quickened their pace. A brief moment of worry as a sea mist rolled across the moors between Ding Dong mine and the Tinner's Way, but then Amanda Nicholson was spotted who was looking out for us and we all made way on the well-known homeward paths towards Land's End.

Sheila Jackson

It is with great sadness that, in August, Sheila Jackson lost her battle with breast cancer. Sheila organised the Tinner's Way Charity in 2008 which we all enjoyed. This year despite her illness she organised a Ride to Live, Live to Ride event at St Just. The ride raised around £1,000 in aid of the Mermaid Centre, Treliske, despite having a major operation only 10 days before the ride

Sheila managed to ride for about 2 miles. Chaucer was a star, just so well behaved. Sheila, and her charity work will be missed by us all.



***Sheila and
Chaucer
on the charity
ride in May***