

HORSE AROUND

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
WEST PENWITH BRIDLEWAYS ASSOCIATION

AFFILIATED TO THE BRITISH HORSE SOCIETY



FREE TO MEMBERS

No. 5 SUMMER 2002

Straight From the Horse's Mouth

I hope you all managed to get out and do some riding whilst the weather was good. Recently the weather has been atrocious for the end of May, making the going more like winter conditions.

Since the last newsletter we have held a very successful first AGM at the Yacht Inn, Penzance, with an excellent attendance. We enjoyed a very informative talk on Equine Homeopathy given by our local vet Cathy Faye. Your committee remains the same, but we do have a change of rein with Adrian Bigg now Chairman, Margaret as Hon. Secretary and Charlie Cartwright as Treasurer.

We have run two recent horse hikes: One in April when 12 riders met at Drift Dam and rode out to Higher Bostraze and around and back through Sancreed, a distance of 10 miles. Then on the 4 May we met at Chapel Carn Brea and rode out to St. Just by way of Kelynack and Cot Valley then on to Botallack and lunch on the hoof at the Queen's Arms. The landlord has now installed a hitching rail for their horse customers. I hope more hosteleries will follow suit. We then headed back up to Tregeseal and Bosvargus and back, a distance of 12 miles. A big thank you to both Gill and Amanda for organising these trips. If you want to join in a horse hike, you can always give us a ring to find out when the next one will be. If one is being held in your area we will ring interested people. Those who are on the internet will automatically receive an email.

Three of our members took part in Mid-Cornwall Bridleways Group Jubilee Ride from Wheel Busy, riding tracks around the Chacewater area (see inside).

Thank you to everyone who has renewed their subs. If you haven't yet renewed, this will be the last time you will receive a newsletter, unless we get your subscription before the next edition. (We simply can't afford to continue to send it.)

On the access front, we are now starting to have regular meetings with the CC Mapping Officer and our Area Field Officer, to discuss and try and get access problems resolved. More on this later. Also, we are working with the National Trust and hope to have some positive news about a proposed new horse route. More in the next Horse Around.

Finally, I hope you like the name Horse Around and our new look newsletter. Do I hear a neigh of approval? Margaret

In This Issue:

Carter's Grave Bridleway
Horse Passports
Van Man/Motor Bikes
Parish Surveys
Bridleway Problems

Program of Horse Hikes
ENDURANCE, why do we do it?
Mid Cornwall Jubilee Ride
... and more

Featured Bridleway – Carter's Grave Lane



Bridleway No 52 in Ludgvan is the longest definitive Bridleway in West Penwith, at over 1.5 miles long, it provides a route direct from the A30 at Cannonstown through to Nancledra, connecting to quiet lanes.

There are spurs off south towards Crowlas and a byway north to Trencrom Hill, and south to Whitecross. It is very old. At the eastern end is Heather Lane, and the bridleway is commonly known as Carter's Grave Lane and is reputed to be haunted. Unfortunately the surface in places is very poor, generally too boggy in winter. There are one or two very difficult spots. This winter motorbikes have been using it and cut a foot deep ruts in it making matters much worse.

It is one of our most important bridleways. It is generally kept cut back by Ludgvan Parish but requires attention to the drainage and surface in many places. A 'Pegasus' crossing is required on the A30 to provide a safe link to St Erth and beyond.



Is Endurance for you? See inside.

Or just come on our horse Hikes

See Summer Program of Hikes

Picture: Jill Thomas on Tarafiya
Amanda Nicholson on Troy

WEST PENWITH BRIDLEWAYS ASSOCIATION

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Membership

The good news is that our membership continues to grow steadily – over 100 individual households. A big thank you to all of you who have renewed your membership promptly – it makes our tasks a lot easier.

Your membership is vitally important to us if we are to continue to be a strong voice on rights of way issues. There is a greatly improved climate for getting action on bridleways. We have only just started out and our efforts are now beginning to yield some positive results towards getting a better deal for riders,

Stick with us – it makes good horse sense!

Horse Passports

By the end of 2003 all equines will need an official identification document. This is to bring the UK into line with European legislation. The objective is to prevent horses entering the human food chain if they have been administered with any medication not intended for use on food producing animals. The Government also thinks it desirable to have a central database on horses for the purposes of disease control and veterinary surveillance.

For those who own large numbers of horses and ponies, such as riding schools, trekking centres etc. further details will be announced at a future date. DEFRA have a fact sheet on Horse Passports. Check out the DEFRA website. Or contact Paul Newman at DEFRA tel: 020 7904 6213 or email paul.w.newman@defra.gsi.gov.uk.

DEFRA will be organising who can issue the passports eg. BHS and other recognised societies and the passports will last for the life time of the animal. The average cost could be between £20 and £30 but this could be dependent upon the organisations that have been authorised to issue them.

More on Horse Passports when we get further information.

“Van Man”

We would like to thank the many drivers private and commercial who show great consideration when meeting us on the road. However within the space of one week, whilst out riding on our ‘quiet’ lanes, Adrian and I have had three instances of vans not slowing down as they pass, and spooking our normally bomb proof horses. This prompted us to write to the companies concerned and send them a poster to give advice to their drivers. A few drivers just don’t think – probably often through ignorance, or with their mind on other things.

We do not wish to wage war on commercial vehicles, but if you feel your safety has been compromised by inconsiderate driving let us know, and we will send the company concerned a poster we have produced, If you would just like one to put up at work, then send us an A4 sae. You can also download it off our website. However, don’t forget to always acknowledge good courteous driving with a nod, smile or a salute of appreciation.

Summer Programme of Horse Hikes

We are planning hikes as follows over the Summer. More will be scheduled subject to demand.

Drift Dam,	15 th or 16 th June
Nancledra	6 th or 7 th July
Great Flat Lode, Camborne	20 or 21 July
Gwinear	10 or 11 th August
Goldsmithney	31 st Aug or 1 st September

Always check with the organiser or ourselves at least a few days before. We do need to have an idea of likely attendance, and the exact date will be determined by the interest in the ride/and or weather. Please phone us early to find out more about these rides.

Adrian and Margaret Tel 01736 795098

Most Hikes will find a suitable hostelry for a lunch stop.

If you have a good idea for a ride or wish to organise one do please let us know.

DON'T TAKE IT FOR GRANTED!

Quoting from a similarly titled article in the last ‘Your Horse’ magazine: “Thousands of miles of off-road hacking could be lost forever unless riders join the campaign to improve, maintain and reclaim Britain’s network of bridleways”.

Remember - that is why we need your support.

WHAT IS A DEFINITIVE BRIDLEWAY?

A route used by horses that has been put on the ‘Definitive Map’ held by the County Council. Rights of way on the Definitive Map are (in theory) directly protected by law.

WHAT IS A RIGHT OF WAY?

It is a path/route that has been historically used as a highway (by foot, horse, or vehicle). Many (and probably most in West Penwith) have never been correctly recorded on the definitive map.

CAN YOU RIDE ON A FOOTPATH?

It is often stated that it is illegal to ride on a definitive footpath. This is not always true, many paths designated only as a footpath have always been regularly ridden. They just have never been correctly recorded on the definitive map. Please note explicit permissions may have been given in some cases by the land owner. Seeing a hoof print does not necessarily mean anyone can ride the path.

WHAT IS THE CROW LEGISLATION?

The CROW (Countryside Rights Of Way) Legislation 2000 is the legislation that came about from pressure by the Ramblers for a ‘Right to Roam’.

It DOES NOTHING for other groups of users than walkers.

WORSE it gives 25 years to get all undesignated rights of way on the definitive map - but no new practical mechanisms to achieve it. After 25 years ALL CLAIMS to historical rights of way will be LOST.

WANTED! Area Contacts

As we grow we would like to get more of you to directly help us. We wish to identify a key member (or members) in each area who would like to liaise with us about local horse routes and any problems.

If you would like to help us, please let us know. Many hands make light work or perhaps enable us to drive a coach and horses through! Please phone 795098 (Adrian)

Bridleway Problems

You will only too well be aware of many problems on our bridleways. E.g. blocked, overgrown, never seem to have existed, end on a footpath, too dangerous to use etc. etc.

We are starting a formal list of these problems as part of our parish surveys. We have detailed several specimen problems (listed below) and we have asked the CC for advice on how they best can be addressed (and by whom). We hope that this will lead to some being sorted, but, more importantly the answers we get should give us guidance on how best to achieve some of our goals.

Ref WPBA 001 Cam Brea to Brane ends on undesignated boggy track
Ref WPBA 002 Padlocked Cattle Grid on a Byway
Ref WPBA 003 Impassable Bridleway at Porthcurno
Ref WPBA 004 Blocked/Dangerous Boulderstrewn Bridleway at Lamorna
Ref WPBA 005 Impassable Bridleway at Lamorna
Ref WPBA 006 Cattle Grid on Bridleway at Cripplesease
Ref WPBA 007 Gates in bad repair on Higher Leah bridleway St. Buryan
Ref WPBA 008 Ennis Bridleway never cleared/institated, Paul

Please Help us to Help You!

We do want feedback from you on problems you are aware of. Don't just grumble to yourselves. If you let us have a report on a bridleway near you (good or bad) it will help us and all riders a great deal.

Maps

As part of our ongoing task of completing a survey and report of all ridden routes in each parish, we are producing maps. We hope to be able to make them available to our members in a non copyright format. If you have detailed knowledge of riding in your parish and are willing to check the information, we have mapped to date, please give me a call on 01736 795098.

Adrian

Is Your Parish Council Active on Rights of Ways Issues?

Many Councils are very supportive of the Footpaths and Bridleways in their parish. Many have joined the County Council's 'Paths Partnership' scheme. Under this scheme the parish receives direct money from the County for looking after its own paths. This has the advantage that maintenance and priorities are under their local control.

Is Your Parish in the Paths Partnership Scheme?
Does your parish take a real interest in your footpath and bridleways?
Do you know who your councillors are?
Do you know their views on the parish paths?
Do you ever attend a parish council meeting?

If you don't know the answers or are unhappy with the paths in your parish, ask a councillor to raise the issue and always go along to a meeting if any rights of way matters are being discussed.

You will learn a lot of how your representatives look after your interests (or not) if you do attend the occasional meeting. You may be surprised!
All councillors (and MP's) take a lot of notice of individual concerns - they do need your votes. Please write and lobby your concerns -it does work!

Area Get-togethers



To give you a chance to discuss the riding problems in your area, we are meeting for a drink and chat at local

hostelries. See our maps and have a social chat with fellow members. The first meet will be at **The Engine Inn, Cripplesease, Nancledra** on **Wednesday 12th June, 7.30pm onwards.**

All are welcome

PENROSE OUTDOORS

A reminder that Penrose Outdoors, Truro (Nr. Tescos) will give 10% discount to our members upon production of your current membership card.

Motor Bike Trail Riding

On the whole, we manage to co-exist with bikers fairly well, but recently, we have had a spate of problems and incidents reported to us. We have some sympathy with the bikers, because like us, they have very few places to conduct their sport. Many of our members report that bikers they meet are very considerate and switch off their engines. However on confined tracks they cannot see us until it is too late, and we have reports of dangerous and inconsiderate behaviour. In general, riding motor vehicles on bridleways is illegal and dangerous and destructive to the terrain. I have seen deep ruts in the Carter's Grave Lane bridleway at Whitecross and some local action has put up signs to say, 'No Motorbikes'.

Riding motorbikes on definitive By-Ways is legal as long as they are taxed and insured.

If you do see trail riders out on unsuitable bridleways, or not riding considerately whilst you are on horseback, please report it to the police. Try and get a registration number and also ask the police for an incident number. Then you will know your call has been properly logged. The police have informed us they are active in trying to catch the culprits and would be pleased to receive any information.

The problem seems to have suddenly become fairly widespread as Mid-Comwall Bridleways Group are also experiencing an escalating number of similar problems.

ENDURANCE , why do we do it? - by Mandy and Troy

I never fully appreciated the word Endurance until I entered the Golden Horseshoe ride at Exford. The day before the ride saw the horses being vetted in brilliant sunshine. I didn't pay much notice to the locals warning of the bad weather that was on it's way.

I woke on Monday morning to hear the wind howling and the rain lashing against the bedroom window. My first impulse was to turn over and get back under the duvet! True to all the tales told about this ride it lived up to it's reputation. One minute we'd be riding down into steep valleys holding onto the horses tails the next climbing up the other side hanging onto their ears! The tracks followed the rivers and were very stony (lameness being one of the main failures), or there was mile after mile of boggy moorland this being the hardest going for Troy. He found the constant pulling himself out of the mud the hardest bit and on top of it all still the wind blew and the rain fell down. We were both relieved to see the halfway halt at 25 miles, but dismayed to see Paul stood out in the rain as the barn was already full. Trying to make a horse warm and comfy in the rain wasn't easy he was still shaking with two rugs on. We had 20 minutes to present him to the vet. He passed but his pulse was 56/56 which was high for him but we put it down to the cold conditions. We managed to get inside the shed for our second 20 minutes and got him to eat some food and to dry off a little.

Getting back on when you're wet through, with your boots full of water took some willpower in itself, but we set off for our second loop. I was trying to keep the horses in front of me in view as every now and then the fog would descend and you couldn't see. I had visions of getting lost all alone on the moor not a pleasant thought Then Troy decided he needed a drink at the river a long drink by which time the other riders were long gone and we were all alone. It was at this time that Troy decided he didn't want to go any more. I didn't know if he'd just pulled a muscle, "tied up" or hit "the wall". As you're not supposed to move a horse that's "tied up", I was very worried about walking him but unless the RAF turned up and flew us out the only way off was on foot. I led him along quietly which he seemed quite happy with, but when I tried to ride him he felt stiff and reluctant so I ran up my stirrups/loosened his girth and trudged on through the mud and across two rivers. Part of me is sure that Troy just wanted me to have a taste of what I was putting him through and to see how I liked it!

It was during this 3 mile hike that I vowed never to enter the Horse Shoe ever again. My relief when I saw checkpoint 9 was immense so was Troy's. He then decided to liven up and drag me towards the waiting vet. The vet checked him over his gut sounds, his temperature and pulse were all fine and he trotted up sound ,so it was looking like he'd just 'hit the wall' after all and apparently lots of horses do and you just get back on and continue once they come through it, something to know for next time. The vet decided to take blood tests anyway and is having them screened for any deficiencies, muscle damage or virus's so we'll know for sure what went wrong. We await the results. My disappointment at having to retire was eased somewhat when I learned that only 12 out of the 27 that started my class finished day one, and only about 5 finished day two. The hundred mile class also suffered high casualties with only a few finishers. The F.E.I ride which included world champion Dato Kamaruddin from Malaysia as well as two from France one from USA and many of our top riders didn't see any one finish to claim the first prize of a £1 500 holiday.

Now as I sit here all warm and cosy it didn't seem quite so bad after all and should I let it beat me? Perhaps I will have another go!

Golden Jubilee Ride with Mid Cornwall - by Helen and Chips

Sunday, April 14th, "Chips" and I headed over to Wheal Busy, near Chacewater, to take part in Mid-Cornwall Footpath and Bridleways Association Golden Jubilee Ride.

We arrived in the rain, tacked up in the rain, set off with the first group of 4 riders in the rain! Don't let the elements put you off, the skies cleared and the sun shone through as w1 rode along wooded tracks and down quiet country lanes. The very few difficult road crossings were well marshalled by members of the Association.

The halfway stage was just outside Bissoe, where we were given a welcome pasty and a drink and met up with a few other riders as they came in after us...I did catch a glimpse of our Adrian and Margaret here!

The second stage of the ride took us along part of the "Coast to Coast" trail, 11 miles of mostly off-road track between Portreath and Devoran. Through the old mining landscape of the Poldice Valley and an endless canter through Unity Woods. Passing Killifreth Engine house...well worth a return visit., and back to Wheal Busy, a truly enjoyable 10 mile ride. After being presented with a beautiful commemorative rosette, a hic-cup with loading, we were on the way home, excited at the prospect of returning to explore the fantastic bridle routes the area has to offer.

Many thanks to Mid-Cornwall group for a memorable day out with Chips.

Helen Lewis

Lands End Trekking:

A Fun Show was held on 18th May.

The results are:

The Old Success Perpetual Cup for Best Ridden Hunter

1. Mark Denness on J.J.
2. Charlotte Bennetts on Beauty
3. Charlene Cock on Molly
4. Bridie Watts on Flash

The First & Last Challenge Cup for Best Veteran

1. Naomi Watts with Flora
 2. Lizzie Usher with Flash
- The Lands End Trekking Centre Challenge Cup for Best Cob Type

1. Sue Andrews with Lottie
2. Sara Hicks with Gem
3. Sarah Hicks with Dolly

The Lands End Perpetual Cup for Best Mountain & Moorland

1. Kerry Angove with Bracken
2. Miranda Elrick with Bramble
3. Georgina Angwin with Molly

Best Coloured

1. Claire Hodgkiss with Whispering Wind
2. Robert Elrick with Lyonesse
3. Andrea Bennetts with Zero
4. Lilly Brookes with Bilbo
5. Zoe Bowers with Arranz

Condition and Turnout

1. Poppy Barlow with Espy
2. Chris and Helen Matthews with Lady
3. Chloe Barlow Griffin with Conker

Best Youngster

1. Robert Elrick with Lyonesse
2. Mick Anderson with Rhani

Family Pony

1. James Ley with Blue
2. Naomi Watts with Flora
3. Bridie Watts with Tara
4. Charlotte Bennetts with Beauty

Midi Jumping

1. Mark Denness on J.J.
2. Lucy Hardy on Saqqara
3. Charlene Cock on Molly

Maxi Jumping

1. Mark Denness
2. Charlene Cock
3. Lowena White

Pairs Relay

1. Sarah Ingreys & Charlene Cock
2. Charlene Cock & Lucy Hardy
3. Kerry Angwin & Jenny Hicks

Chase-me-Charlie

1. Lowena White
2. Mark Denness

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