

ASSPIRE!

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN REGION OF THE
DONKEY BREED SOCIETY



WARNING!!

There is a very heavy crop of acorns this year.
Check your field(s) regularly if you have any
overhanging oak trees.

ACORNS CAUSE COLIC AND ARE ADDICTIVE!!



Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness!

Dear All,

Welcome to the Autumn edition of Asspire!

Where has this year gone! Suddenly it's October, the stables have been painted and we're thinking about our winter routine. Haynets have been re strung and we are ready for the darker evenings. Sadly, it's unlikely that we will be able to participate in our usual Christmas donkey activities but hopefully we can continue the initiative and resilience we showed over the summer and have some online activities to keep us busy. Please let me or Sarah know if you have any ideas and we can help promote them!

Just a little reminder - if you haven't re-joined The Society, please do so otherwise you won't be receiving this wonderful newsletter again!

Stay safe everyone and let's see lots of lovely longeared photos!

Liz

Liz Brown, Chair, Donkey Breed Society, Northern Region, Chair, DBS Northern Region.





Colin's Column . . .

(the thoughts of a much loved and very versatile Northern donkey!)

Dear Juniors!

I have some exciting news! This summer I received a letter, just for me, with my name on the envelope. When the letter was read to me, I was even more excited. It was from Casey Blue who used to ride and handle me at shows when she was a girl. She is grown up now and is getting married! The very exciting bit is that she wants me to take her to the church in my carriage. She said she had so much fun with us donkeys that she wants one of us to be part of her happy day and chose me!

The wedding is next year so I have a long time to practise standing still, looking handsome and smiling. Olwen said she will decorate the carriage and my harness with flowers, but the colour is a secret.

I've not much other news apart from our stables have been white-washed, they look very smart but we donkeys are trying our best to make them grubby and more lived in!

I have missed seeing all my friends at shows and having a nice chat. We all look forwards to next year when hopefully we can meet again. Keep safe juniors, perhaps you can write to tell me your news.



Love, Colin X

PS This is a photo of Casey with my old pal Bertie.

MORE JUNIOR NEWS . . .



Some very eager junior members-in-the-making came to visit the **Colley Mill Donkeys** in August. They found out all about grooming and feeding and generally caring for our beautiful



long ears. They played games in the mini-ménage and made shapes with the jump poles. Missy, Barney and Freddie thoroughly enjoyed meeting them all!

It was a lovely reunion for all the children, who used to go to nursery together, before they were going to different schools in September.



Later in the afternoon, after a picnic lunch, they had fun with crafts – making fairy doors to put on the tree trunks and also making some lovely, colourful flowers to ‘plant out’ either at home or amongst among my pansies!



We were looking forward to an autumn meet up but will have to make our groups much smaller now, but we will continue in some way!

Rueben - a retrospective . . .



Probably even before Rueben was born it was inevitable he would become a lover of donkeys, following in his Grandma's and Daddy's footsteps. Born in February 2018 he attended his 1st show 3 months later at Erddig Hall, a boiling hot day so he spent most of the day in the shade of an umbrella.

At home Rueben has no fear of being in amongst the donkeys and likes to give them their treats and get hands on with grooming, caring, mucking out and poo picking!

He has now started riding Booboo and going for walks on her. He sits very naturally and confident so I have no doubt they will be strutting their stuff in the showing as well, his biggest challenge will be to stop Booboo eating grass every time they stand still!

Roll on 2021, please let there be opportunities for the children to enjoy shows again and get amongst their friends whilst us grown-ups nag them to stay clean until after their classes.



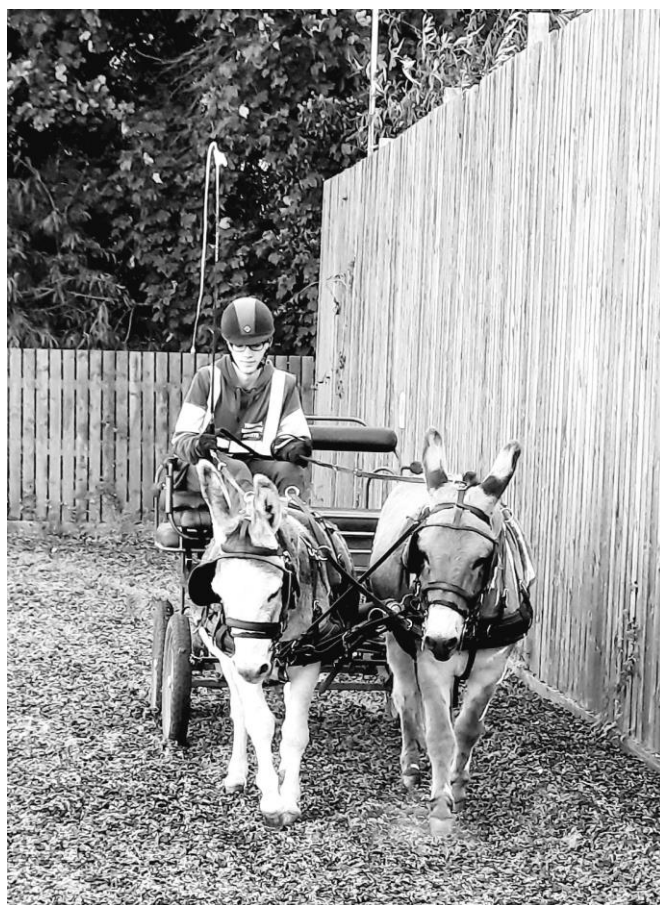
Pam Moon

Luke's been long-reining and driving . . .



Because Luke is very practical and interested in mechanics and engineering, he's been invaluable in helping Pat and I with various tweaks to the tack so that we're getting the best out of the donks and our driving experience. And because he's young and clever he reminds us when we forget stuff. It's taken a year or more to get to this point. Helped a lot by the fact there's been no events to go to at all so we could concentrate. Before we moved to the donkeys' new home in Monk Fryston our chance to drive was very limited but since we got here with a lovely quiet lane or two to drive on we've made fabulous progress. And we couldn't have done it without Luke.

Annie Dundas



We really value the interest shown by all our juniors and the connection that they enjoy with their donkeys. It's good to see our juniors enjoying a range of activities too – using and developing skills to support their peers and other members of the Society.

Juniors – we think you're great!!!

STUDENT NEWS

You can be a student at any age! There are lots of equine-related careers courses nowadays, from age 16 to . . . well, that's up to you! From college diplomas, university degrees, masters and PhDs, in management, equitation, rehabilitation, international horseracing and equine science the list is endless. There's a brilliant site that gives access to all the many courses available around the country – check it out, it's fascinating and you will be able to access a huge range of courses:

<https://www.equine-careers.co.uk/equine-college-courses/>

There is an amazing array of courses that can be studied from home too. I'm just putting that out there, in case anyone fancies tackling a course whilst at home?! If you do, let us know how you get on.

Remember that you can still be working on your **DBS Awards** – even if we are not getting together for training days. If you go to our DBS website and then click on 'our charity' and then 'education', scroll down to see the range of Awards. Choose an Award and click to check out the criteria for that Award. Get studying! If you have any queries, get in touch with Liz, our Chair, and she will point you in the right direction. Give it a go!

The DBS Interview: in each seasonal newsletter we turn to a well-known, respected, and revered member of the Northern Region and find out a little about them, their donkeys and where their donkey journey has taken them to date.

Getting to know . . . Olwen Brown

If you haven't had the pleasure of meeting Olwen, if you haven't visited her lovely home, that envelops you with all the senses and feelings you dreamed of as a pony/donkey mad child, if you haven't been to one of her training days and experienced all that knowledge, then you have missed out – big time!

I could cheerfully listen to Olwen talking about all her lovely donkeys, the shows, the social side of the DBS, the Nativities, the Palm Sundays and the Junior Camps, for ever! This might suggest that Olwen never stops talking, but that's not the case; conversely, sometimes Olwen appears quite shy. I think however that she is a great listener, and this is what allows her to be so empathetic, to be able to pinpoint a most appropriate response. She is also self-effacing and will probably not enjoy reading this article! I was eager to find out more about our Region's oracle . . .



The meaning of 'Olwen' is 'white footprint'. In Welsh medieval stories, wherever Olwen stepped, four white flowers would appear!

Olwen's first encounter with a donkey was when she was walking to school and a boy offered her a donkey for 10 shillings, but her father wouldn't let her have it. Eventually, however, her first donkey did find his way to Olwen, having been living in someone's garden. Olwen recalls with detail the donkeys that then tumbled into her life: there was Peter 'Ponky' the 'wonky donky' and then Mary – there was Bertie who was found in a bad way in a horse sale, all these lovely and very special donkeys were

nurtured and adored by Olwen in the early years of her donkey career. ‘No,’ she corrects me, ‘not a career, a way of life . . .’.

Olwen has been showing donkeys for over 37 years and has been a DBS member since 1983. It was a chance conversation with a friend, at Romiley show, in which the Donkey Breed Society was mentioned, that led Olwen to join. And from the beginning it wasn't just all about shows but the aforementioned Nativities, Palm Sundays, Junior Camps and so on.

Alongside showing donkeys and ponies, Olwen was teaching Rural Studies. Husband David was a Geography teacher and then along came Liz. Liz's first show was Cheshire County, when she was just 4 and a half years old. She was in the Donkey Lead Rein class on Peter and also in the pony Lead Rein. It was clear she was destined to share her mother's passion for equines and other animals.



Enthusiasing small children and enlivening their interest in donkeys, ponies and rural life, enriching the lives of older students through her amazing knowledge of the countryside and the animals that live within it, was a huge part of Olwen's teaching career. This rural studies teacher from Stockport, relished the small farm at the field centre where she was teaching. Peter the donkey lived there and so did many of Olwen's animals until she moved to Brownroad Farm in 1985. Not only a teacher but farm warden as well, Olwen's job at the at the field centre, saw her teaching environmental studies from nursery to college age students, in all schools throughout Tameside. She took her students on visits, including visits to dairies and brought the countryside to hundreds of children and young people – I can imagine that so many probably have a real love of the

countryside and draw comfort from it today, thanks to Olwen's knowledge and passion. It must have been the cruellest blow of all for Olwen, and her students, when in 1990 she discovered about the closure of the Centre through the local Press, no less.

That infinite desire to pass things on however continued and I think I speak for all our Area when I say that you *always* come away from Brownroad Farm having learnt something new! I firmly believe this heralds from Olwen's teaching background. She wants people to learn and engage in new things and her ability to support the learning



of others comes very naturally to her.

Many DBS juniors have passed

through the Farm, learning so much along the way – eighteen in fact and counting! Olwen recalls that at one time, there were so many juniors that you could expect with regularity 14 forward in a ridden class and the same in driving classes.





Olwen has always been a brilliant Area Rep. Her aim being to, 'include everyone, and to make the DBS accessible for everyone' and she is so very good at doing this. She writes to every new member in her area. She says that she has always wanted the Area to be 'active', full of lots of activities – and when we could get out and about, we certainly have had some lovely active training days at the Farm. Olwen and Liz are so generous with their time and encouragement. Nothing is too much trouble.

Influenced the most in her donkey life by Bill Tetlow and Jenny Gadie – sources of much help and encouragement, with Jenny's brilliant introduction to pack saddles, Olwen and her husband David, to whom she was married for 26 years, and who was stalwart in supporting Olwen's love affair with donkeys, sound as if they had tremendous fun at the shows and social get-togethers. Bill, Olwen describes as a terrific 'tease'! Humour would bounce between Bill and David often with uproarious results – such lovely happy memories. It was a time of sunny

summers, lots of shows, picnics and social events and when the phrase to which all good husbands might endeavour to subscribe, 'treat her like a thoroughbred and she won't become a nag' was not considered in the least bit offensive!! Olwen did say that Bill had always been a great photographer and what fun it had been to see his photographs in the last newsletter – a wonderful record (once you've got past the horror of certain items of clothing!) of a happy past.



I asked Olwen about the changes she has seen over the years, during her involvement with the Donkey Breed Society. Mention 'breeding' and it can be a contentious subject, but Olwen feels there is now positivity in the less indiscriminate breeding of today and that luckily there is also less breeding of miniatures for profit. The promotion of the stud book and stud book inspections has been extremely positive, seeing far less faults such as parrot mouth and kinked tails. Approaches to donkey welfare – is hugely improved, particularly in terms of weight.



In terms of shows, Olwen says that alongside showing, she has enjoyed seeing, and participating in the development of, the non-serious side of shows such as handy donkey and so on. Her fancy dress entries have proved legendary and there remains a 'hound of the Baskervilles' as a reminder, on the table in the scullery! She is extremely pleased that standards amongst the donkey community remain high, particularly in terms of tack and juniors. 'Driving with donkeys has always very smart and it's certainly good to see this thriving too.'



I wholeheartedly agree with Olwen that, 'donkeys take up the whole of your life', I have certainly found this to be the case in my retirement! Olwen

feels that many more opportunities present themselves with donkeys rather than horses. I ask her to elaborate: 'we've met royalty at Windsor, been a part of the Lord Mayor's Show, driven at the Burghley Horse Trials [I've just discovered there is a little video of this on YouTube, Donkeys at Burghley Horse Trials 3rd September, 2017, check it out if you haven't done so already or if you fancy a trip down memory lane. SB]. We have been trekking in some lovely places and made a lot of friends. Yes, it most definitely is 'a way of life'.



Just when I think that Olwen cannot possibly fit anything more into her incredibly busy life, I am reminded of her charity work in her local community. For some time now Olwen has been working with a group that supports babies from families in her community of Greater Manchester, who are experiencing hardship. To raise funds, she has knitted many adorable characters over the years and the ones that I recall, fit snugly over a chocolate orange 'egg' and were much appreciated by our family at Easter!! Cascade Baby Bundles is a charitable organisation supporting families in need by distributing new and pre-loved clothing and essential items to their little ones*.



Finally, yet loathe to leave this lovely comfy kitchen and having enjoyed another visit to Brownroad Farm so much, I ask Olwen what it is about donkeys, that is so special? She says the psychology is different from ponies, 'there's mind-reading going on, it's about persuasion, you 'ask a donkey, tell a pony''. And I think she is absolutely right and if anyone knows, it is Olwen.



* To find out more about this brilliant cause, check out www.cascadebabybundles.org.uk or info@cascadebabybundles.org.uk



The Irrepressible Rosie Wants Everyone to Know What A Big Girl She's Becoming!

Well, what a difference just under 5 months makes! As you can imagine, with not much else to do during lockdown, I've been taking an enormous amount of photos and videos of Wychbrook Desert Rose, our precious little foal who was born at the beginning of May.

I'm sure you'll all agree that, when you see a person or an animal every day, you don't really notice the changes in their appearance. So, when I



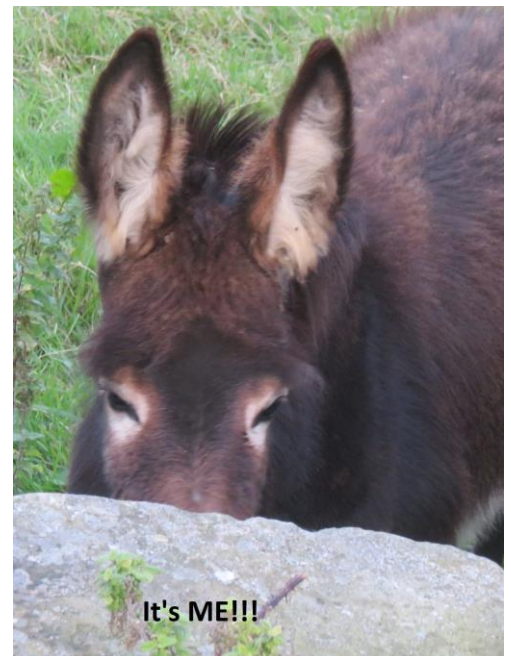
was looking back at some photos of Rosie that I took on the day she was born it was amazing to compare them with more recent pics and realise just how much she has grown in those 5 months. She's no longer such a 'little' foal anymore!

She is now a very strong character with a distinctive – exceedingly ugly – bray that can probably be heard at the other side of the village, a very playful nature and a love for rolling in the muck. She's even recently discovered that she's capable of jumping over a small sheep practically from a standing start! A very useful skill if this particular obstacle should ever be included in a handy donkey class!

We love her to bits!!

Terri Morris

[And so do we, she brightened our lockdown . . . SB]



Didn't we have a lovely time . . .



Fuelled by Joy's amazing Parkin (see heavenly recipe on p22.), the Northern Region enjoyed a great day out at the beginning of September. Riding, long-reining, leading we were pleasantly polite towards those cyclists who were reluctant to respect our procession (fortunately they were in the minority) and smiley and welcoming to those whose day was made

a little brighter for having seen our lovely donkeys and dogs!



We came across a man with a penny-farthing and all manner of modern-day bicycles. Our donkeys were beautifully behaved. Olwen gave them all gorgeous blue and white rosettes to wear. Well done to juniors Izzy Brewis and Amber Taylor who rode Romance and Missy! Thank you to our marshal, Sophie, who wore the 'Mind my Ass' high vis jacket and saw off the cyclists (!) and to all who made this such a lovely day out!

Baby Anna Brewis was our youngest participant at just four weeks old!



Are you preparing for winter?

Olwen takes a look at her hay nets and advises us to do the same . . .

Winter is fast approaching and it is time to prepare our stables for their long period of occupancy. Apart from the obvious stable maintenance I always review my store of hay nets.

We have a variety of equines ranging from the large - thoroughbred and Cleveland Bays, middle sized – Section As and donkeys and finally small, the Shetlands. All require different size nets with different sized holes. As we feed hay at least 3 times a day we need to fill at least 42 nets! Sometimes the weather favours us and we save 9 nets a day feeding the donkeys from a large hay barrow wheeled into their yard but only when it is dry. Also, our beloved donkeys will share nets, horse and ponies won't! 7 donkeys = 3 nets!



Hole size is important. The larger, less greedy horses get large hole nets. Greedy animals get small hole nets so they cannot access the hay too quickly. Animals that gain weight easily require less hay but need to eat to continue gut health so: smaller holes = a longer feeding time = better digestion for less hay.

Observe each hay net, are the holes the right size or have your donkeys enlarged them by nibbling? If too large a little net daring with baler twine will suffice.

Check the cord used to close the net – is it frayed? There is nothing worse than filling a net, tightening the cord and it snapping. It's no good knotting it, the cord won't run smoothly when tying up and it will be even more difficult to release the 'quick release knot' that you should be using to tie up the net.

Some small nets come with a short, thick cord; some large, large hole nets come with a long, very thin cord. I've learnt to replace these cords immediately after purchase after years of frustration. I use cotton washing line to replace cords. It is very strong, smooth and flexible.

Nowadays, all nets are woven plastic/nylon (how I miss the tarred jute nets of my youth, they smelt lovely) and so are washable. You will be surprised how much dirt comes off a net after a good soak in soapy water – don't forget to rinse them.

When you have maintained your nets, fold them up and store, you will be a step closer to being prepared for winter.

Olwen Brown.



These hooves were made for trotting . . .

FARRIERS & FEET!!

At the beginning of September, Sarah Standing sent in a super observation on the subject of farriers and I am delighted to say that this has inspired the theme for this issue, as we gear ourselves up for whatever the weather might throw our way.

We read of Sarah's experiences, Sue McCafferty's experiences, we chat to a farrier, sing the praises of farriers around our Region and share a special announcement, and then take a look at our own feet!! Why not put yours up, enjoy a cuppa and a read!

Rasping it like Graham . . .

My relationship with Graham couldn't be more loving 🐾 that's because I listen to his advice, opinions and I have the greatest respect for him. Now I know when all my animals need Graham for a hoof trim. However, that doesn't mean that the donkeys or ponies do!

Graham has run his business for over 30 years, he recruits apprentices for 5 years per student. I really didn't realise the qualifications for a farrier. They are astounding!

Many times, due to his popularity, Graham is unable to attend my animals, so I mentally prepare myself for the young guy who has some experience with handling my donkeys! I have to say that most of the guys look tired, as if they've just fallen out of bed, unshaven and scruffy! I'm amazed by their A level results to become a farrier: Maths, Science and English. They have gained an A and B. They are very well spoken, good looking, and living the dream life travelling around with their white van, meeting all the pretty girls with their horses, flirting, exchanging numbers, but NOT WITH ME however, I'm a 57 year old menopausal breed of woman that just wants a hoof trim!!

I pay great attention to detail. I want them to understand my donkey must be level on the ground, balanced properly. Their hoofs are important to me, and I have knowledge gleaned from Graham! So, they have a guy who's in his 4th year, another perhaps in his first or second year. But they are not Graham, so I'm obsessed that they do the hoof properly. As the guy's head is lowered to the ground, so is mine, we are almost nose to nose, I'm like, 'well.....anything wrong, any laminitis, any sores?' There's no reply, just sweat pouring down his face. Why? Because my donkey won't keep still, so, I release the rope and walk her around, so she stands balanced.

You can see he's frustrated at my control. He explains how he has a long day ahead, perhaps 40 or so others to shoe, so time is not on his side about balance. I explain to him, how would he like it, if I were to push him over whilst putting on his shoes?! He shakes his head, looks at me, his reply: 'what's that got to do with me trimming your donkey?' At that point, I must admit I became angry, I explained that he could undoubtedly ruin the work and trust of me picking up their feet whilst trying to pick them out. It takes time and patience for animals to trust. Again, he looked at me in disbelief probably because most farriers are more interested in the pretty girls than an old hen like me with donkeys . . .

I asked him to sweep up after he'd finished trimming my 5 donkeys and 3 ponies, and I didn't feel this was unreasonable. We all have to start somewhere and a little stable-side manner goes a long way and then maybe one day he will rasp it like Graham.

Sarah Standing

Doing it patiently like David . . .



In 1984 we got our first donkey – a rescue mare from HAPPA. She lived happily with my friend's donkeys until we bought our own smallholding in the late 1990's. She was lonely with just my horses for company, so we acquired another donkey mare and then someone was looking to rehome two and suddenly we had four. And a trimming problem.



One of the new ones was terrible for the farrier and this knocked on to the other three. They worked their way through three or four farriers – kicking, twisting, spinning – the full works! In despair I was ringing loads of farriers to find one to take them on. Finally, a farrier over Blackburn way gave me the number of

his apprentice who was already used to donkeys as that farrier owned some. A very young man duly arrived and took no messing from the girls in such a kind and patient way that I was impressed. He has been our farrier ever since. His name is David Beardmore.

David has made it his business to learn all about donkey feet and the differences between them and horses and his patience is outstanding. Many years on he attends to our five boys regularly. A few years ago he received a mention in *The Donkey* magazine as he had helped out a donkey owner who was doing a long trek and I think one of the donkeys had lost a shoe and they were miles from home. He has taught trainee farriers at Myerscough College and he is so knowledgeable about hooves. The donkey he is trimming in the photos is the last of our mares, Smokey, who passed in her sleep at the age of 42. She was the one who used to be most trouble on foot day and as you can see, she ended up loving her farrier! The boys we have now queue up on hoof day as they trust him so much.



Sue McCafferty

And then there's doing it like Darren!

At our place he's known as 'the donkey whisperer' on account of him having calmed Barney from being a nervous wreck around farriers, and in need of sedation, to an almost slobbering mess who looks as if he's falling asleep! Darren just has this aura of calm and they fall for it!



Here he is at Liz and Olwen's, again with a very chilled and compliant donkey.

So, I asked Darren to share his top tips for maintaining healthy donkeys' hooves over the winter, and he said:

Spray on a preprepared iodine solution (available in farm shops) after picking out, but do not apply more than twice a week. This has the effect of hardening the sole.

Avoid any oil-based products. Apparently, this could possibly be contentious in some quarters, but remember Darren knows donkeys extremely well (he is also the farrier for the Sanctuary at Buxton) and in his experience, such products do not support healthy hooves for donkeys.

I couldn't be more delighted that Darren is our farrier and I know that Olwen and Liz feel the same. That extra special donkey know-how and an acknowledgement and understanding that donkeys are different and have

different needs to horses and ponies is priceless.

Now for a special announcement !!

The Northern Region feels that it is only right and proper that we acknowledge the work of farriers like Graham, David and Darren and all the other farriers that you guys have out there in the Region, who you feel really know what is required to work with donkeys. Farriers who have taken on board the fact that donkeys are different to ponies and horses, that they need to be approached differently, their hooves worked differently and they have clearly gone out of their way to learn as much as possible; this they are practicing with great knowledge and empathy.



We have lovely DBS Northern Region certificates for you to present to your chosen farriers. All you need to do is write to us, perhaps enclosing a pic of your farrier working with your

donkeys, saying *why* your farrier should receive a coveted certificate and perhaps giving an example of how he or she goes the extra mile.

Then, once you have received the certificate you can proudly present it to your farrier, on behalf of the DBS Northern Region!

Get singing the praises of your favourite farrier! Send nominations to northerndonks@gmail.com.



And what about *our* feet?

Putting my foot in it . . .

Something that we all probably have in common is an above average wearing of boots, be they wellingtons (all varieties, smart to cheap and cheerful), walking boots/shoes and other sturdy sorts, trainers or equiv . . . therefore, our feet are often enclosed for a greater part of the year which isn't, to be honest, terribly good for them. I actually don't like human feet very much but nevertheless I cosset mine at every opportunity.

Breathable materials these days might be a godsend but unless you are unfortunate enough to suffer from anhidrosis (a disease which means you are unable to sweat, not as good as it sounds as it can be fatal because you can't regulate your body temperature) you will be sweating away, through your feet and into your socks even on relatively cool days. This can result in rubbing, bacterial infections, even if we keep our feet very clean, and some nasty little things called seed corns. (Perhaps it's our version of 'seedy toe'?!). Personally, I am a martyr to my seed corns – mine result from a combination of poor circulation and dry skin – too much information perhaps but if I can help one person with seed corns or any other foot problem to seek help, my life on this earth will have been worth it! My message is clear, 'make friends with your local chiropodist'! She/he is worth their weight in gold and a good old session for the price of a farrier's visit to just one donkey – well, go on, you're worth it! Donkeys don't need their humans going lame!

I am indebted to www.chiropdy.org.cuk for the following advice:



'Getting professional help can be beneficial to maintaining the long-term health of your feet.'

Our feet contain 26 bones which are bound together by ligaments. Ligaments are supported by the muscles which are in turn supported and supplied with thousands of different blood vessels and nerves. This makes our feet extremely sensitive objects.

Perspiration and sweating of the foot can cause bad odours, this can be really unpleasant. We tend to notice this when taking part in activities that cause the feet to sweat such as running or sports. Wearing good fitting socks or stockings, ones which are not too tight on the foot and shoes which have good air circulation and are made with light material can help your feet to breathe easier. Bathing daily and using a medicated foot powder can also eradicate odour as well as being useful for general foot care.

Athletes foot is a fungus-based skin disease which manifests itself in dark, warm and moist places most notably when your feet are inside your socks and shoes. It causes the skin to have lowered resistance to infection. To prevent and heal athletes' foot you should always bathe daily in fungicidal soap and look to keep feet as dry as possible, this can be done by changing socks and shoes regularly. Fungicidal spray or powder can also be used to help prevention.



Anyone that has experienced an ingrown toenail can relate to how painful it can be, sometimes making sufferers unable to walk. They are caused by the nail curving and damaging skin causing infection. General foot care steps can be applied to prevent ingrown toenails, making sure to wear properly fitted shoes and socks can be a good start. When cutting the toenail, be sure to cut straight across without rounding the corners, improper cutting is the biggest causer of ingrown toenails.

Here are a few general rules that should be taken into consideration for taking care of your feet.

- *Do not wear tight fitting socks or stockings.*
- *Avoid the use of any strong antiseptics such as Lysol, Bleach, Iodine, Carbolic acid.*
- *Do not use remedies or pads on corn or callouses, also never try to cut any corns or callouses. SEE YOUR CHIROPODIST!! (SB)*
- *When drying skin use olive oil and be sure not to rub too hard when drying.*
- *Try to avoid bruises, cuts, cracks and burns. Also in cold and extreme weather avoid frostbite.*
- *Avoid applying excessive heat to feet such as the use of hot water bottles or electric blankets.*
- *Avoid exposure to damp around feet.'*



Hmm, that last one could be a bit difficult! Abraham Lincoln advises us to, 'be sure you put your feet in the right place, then stand firm' and this is easier to do if you're not in agony, favouring one more than the other and in the process putting your back out! Our mental and physical health can, strangely, be reflected in our feet and if our feet are feeling good, our mental well-being can also be enhanced, as devotees of reflexology will no doubt tell you.

While we're on the subject of feet and well-being, Hellenistic philosopher Zeno of Citium claimed that it is 'better to trip with the feet than with the tongue' and that does make sense. Interestingly, he was a founder of the stoic school of philosophy in Athens, around 300 BC; this was to be the philosophical inspiration for modern cognitive psychotherapy and the precursor of CBT. I certainly endeavour to adopt stoicism when my corns are at their worst!

So, just as we spend a lot of time and money nurturing the feet of our 'perfect companions' (it was Colette of *Gigi* fame who said, 'our perfect companions never have fewer than four feet'!) and before the winter sets in, let's make sure our own two are also in perfectly fine fettle!



And finally, whilst we're on the subject of feet, let me share a couple of inspirational foot quotes: 'Don't place your mistakes on your head, their weight may crush you. Instead, place them under your feet and use them as a platform to view your horizons.' *Anon.*

'I will not let anyone walk through my mind with their dirty feet.'
Mahatma Ghandi

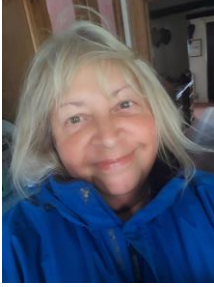
Well said! Sarah Booth.

VETERINARY UPDATE . . .

MICRO-CHIPPING!

This needs/needed to be done by 1st October, so if you have forgotten get it done asap! Not sure if your donkey is micro-chipped? Ask your vet to check. Here are some lovely pictures of Sarah Standing's donkeys and ponies having their various checks and also worm paste! I have worming envy looking at these pics, as my donkeys turn this into a huge drama, running up the hard-standing wiping their mouths on the floor – they are such divas! I even have to conceal Barney's deep in a carrot! I am getting quite good at carrot carving though!





From your Secretary . . .

Sarah Booth northerndonks@gmail.com

I love autumn and I intend to carry on loving autumn even though these are troubled times in which we reside. Perhaps it's because things aren't like the old 'normal' that we actually notice things more acutely? Recently, as Stuart and I discovered an idyllic part of Cumbria for the first time, the seascape was that bit more sparkly, the light and shade more defined and the sunshine exceptionally soothing. We were socially responsible as we met with Stuart's sister Heather and her husband Steve and enjoyed a gorgeous walk and picnic.

Last Monday, we discovered Bennington Carriages <https://www.benningtoncarriages.co.uk/> – carriage heaven, the holy grail of carriage driving, and the sun shone as Simon mended our 'mini' and once again we have two wheels on our wagon! It was a real pleasure to meet Sue Mart, her sister, Simon, and the lady whose name I didn't get but who makes the best coffee in Lincolnshire! What a lovely place – it is brilliantly covid-safe so do have a little trip out there. Look out for our winter edition and an article by Sue, with promise of a donkey driving weekend at Bennington in the future!! If that idea appeals to you, let me know!

Don't forget, we've also a 'hooves across the borders' camp to look forward to next September – hello to DBS members Karen and Tom in Northumberland and to our friends in the Scottish region, we will see you soon!!

Take care everyone, Sarah xx



From your Treasurer . . .

Sarah Pennell Treasurer
Northern Region



Hi Folks

Hope you are all well and enjoying the autumn season. Just a quick reminder that I have the purple poppy pin badges at £3 each. They are a lovely design and all money raised will stay in the region for our use in the future. If you would like one, then either send me a cheque made payable to Northern Region of the Donkey Breed Society and send it to me, Sarah Pennell, Highfields House, Shields Lane, Roston, Ashbourne, Derbyshire DE6 2EF. Alternatively, you can make a bank transfer to account Northern Region of the Donkey Breed Society, sort code 30-96-26, account number 59780068, and email me when you've done this. Please write poppy in the ref line or on the back of the cheque and I'll post the pins straight off to you.

Take care and enjoy these mellow days of Autumn, Sarah.

thepennells@btinternet.com

This is *your* Region . . .

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IF YOU HAVE ENJOYED THIS EDITION OF ASSPIRE, WHY NOT HAVE YOUR SAY IN THE NEXT ONE!!

Contribute to future copies of ASSPIRE, sharing your knowledge throughout the Region! Send pictures, articles, snippets of news to northerndonks@gmail.com.

Please note that views expressed in this Newsletter are those of contributors and not necessarily representative of the Donkey Breed Society.

Joy's Parkin

Joy's Parkin – it went down a treat on the Hartington walk and picnic, thank you Joy. Enjoy – make some this weekend! More recipes from Joy next time!



8oz SR Flour

8oz Porridge Oats

8oz margarine

4oz brown sugar

1 lb golden syrup

2 tsps ginger

Pinch of salt

1 egg

A cup of milk

1. Melt together the margarine, sugar and syrup.
2. Add, once melted, to the dry ingredients.
3. Beat into this mixture the egg and milk.

Pop in a greased (lined if you wish) baking tin at 180° (or 170° fan) until done!

(I guess you could stick a skewer in and if it comes out clean it's ready? Don't overbake though, personally I think you need a bit of squish! SB)



The cyclist was unable to keep up with Pam's mum and Joy after they had eaten Joy's Parkin!

The origins of Parkin: Parkin is a gingerbread cake traditionally made with oatmeal and black treacle, which originated in northern England. Often associated with Yorkshire, particularly the Leeds area, it is very widespread and popular elsewhere, notably in Lancashire. With resting Parkin becomes moist and even sometimes sticky. In Hull and East Yorkshire, it has a drier, more biscuit-like texture than in other areas. Parkin is traditionally eaten on Guy Fawkes Night, 5 November, but is also enjoyed throughout the winter months. It is baked commercially throughout Yorkshire but is mainly a domestic product in other areas.

First encounters with a donkey . . .

Ever wondered where you first encountered donkeys. For most of us it would be at the seaside that magical place full of childhood memories.

Both my husband and I spent most of our childhood holidays at Bridlington on the east coast. He was an avid donkey rider and we have photos to prove it, I on the other hand I never had the opportunity to ride a donkey. My childhood home was an animal free zone so I had to make do with my imaginary farm in the back garden.

These thoughts were sparked by a photo Liz Barrett put on the Donkey Breed Website of children riding donkeys at Bridlington.

Alan eventually started helping the donkey man at Bridlington leading the donkeys to and from the beach.

Who would have thought that in later years we would have our own donkeys?

Photos of Alan riding donkeys as a child, early to mid fifties, present day picture of Alan and Millie doing the donkey walk in North Yorkshire a few years ago.





A huge thank you to Sue and Alan Stead for these gorgeous pictures and allowing us to share in Alan's 'donkey journey'.

Indeed, thank you to *all* our contributors this autumn.

And finally . . .

It is a time of somewhat confusion and to those experiencing some sort of mini lockdown and/or extra restrictions once more, or for the first time,

keep safe, we're thinking of you and

we will all emerge again soon!