

DBS NORTHERN REGION - THE THURSDAY BULLETIN . . . IS BACK !!



Good morning!

With the majority of our Region in Levels 2 and 3 it seemed appropriate to issue Bulletin No. 7, the 'it's not quite a lockdown but almost' edition! Then, along came an England-wide lockdown and it has become the 'another lockdown, with a few small exceptions' edition.



Today is pesky (that's just my opinion, others might love them) fireworks day and in this issue we'll be looking at keeping animals calm and safe. I'm also reprinting Joy's Parkin Recipe as I always feel that a bit of Parkin round a bonfire is rather scrummy!

There are lots of pics of our fab Northern Region donks, tales of what you've been up to this autumn and a look at how some of our donkeys are honouring fellow equids that have served in theatres of war, this Armistice Day. I make a further plea for Nativity pictures past, and a number of other things!

Remember, remember, a Bulletin is smaller than a Newsletter but we hope that it is nevertheless enjoyable. To those amongst us who are poorly at present, or who have relatives who are poorly, we all send our love and positive vibes to you and please, do remember that you have Area Reps who can be a real help. Don't be afraid to ask! This is a time when many of us lurch from feeling optimistic one minute, to feeling fearful, sad and confused the next. We're all being challenged let's support one another and hug our donks - in reality or virtually through the pages of your Bulletin.

Stay safe, Sarah x

The Region's news, this Thursday . . .

Autumnwatch <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0079t1p> is back and no doubt, if you're a fan, you've been enjoying the most recent series. We love it here! If you haven't yet tuned in, you have a few days to go and can no doubt catch up on i-player. The website is informative and it's nice to escape to for a little while – although we are fortunate enough to be surrounded by lovely countryside, sometimes watching other people's surroundings re-sets your perspective on your own environment and you start to notice things hitherto unseen!!

Zoom in on a 'Ned Talk' with our Chair and super-Vet! Sunday 29th

November at 7.30 pm. 'When to call the vet?' this is the title of a zoom session with Liz which will be both interesting and reassuring. Liz plans to pilot this talk, with a Q&A session, and further talks on subjects that you would like to cover, before launching a

national DBS programme. Your support would be great, and we know you will find it very useful. To participate, email Sarah at northerndonks@gmail.com to register your interest. If you would like to submit questions prior to the event too, if you don't fancy speaking live, then please pop them down in your email and Liz will answer them. A few days prior to the event you will be sent a log in for the Zoom meeting and we look forward to seeing you there!

Also in the news

Fab Farriers are in the *Forge*! The following is part of a much longer article that appeared in the *Forge* magazine, the publication of the British Farriers and Blacksmiths Society, as the Northern Region spearheads the 'fab farriers' awards!

Farriers that take on board the fact that donkeys are different to ponies and horses, that they need to be approached differently, their hooves worked differently and that it is necessary to display patience, are much valued by donkey owners and guardians across the country. In the Northern Region of the Donkey Breed Society we wanted to recognise these wonderful people. We are in awe of their knowledge and the fact that some, have clearly gone out of their way to learn as much as possible about our lovely long-ears!



*Recently, we asked our Region to put forward their farriers, men and women who had gone above and beyond, for a DBS Northern Region Certificate. This has since become known as, 'A Fab Farriers Award'! We would like to introduce to you, the first four farriers to receive certification. We hope, in future editions of *Forge* to provide notification of further recipients and as the Donkey Breed Society stretches across the UK, we are rolling out the certificate to farriers in our regions across the country from January 2021. The Donkey Breed Society exists to support and train owners and interested parties in the care, management, and welfare of donkeys; that we have farriers we can trust to do their best for the donkey is vitally important to us all.*

*The Northern Region is a large region. It covers Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cleveland, Cheshire and Greater Manchester, Derbyshire, Cumbria and Northumberland. Between our members we have well over 275 donkeys and counting! Some of our members shared their experiences of hooves and trimming in the Autumn edition of the Northern Newsletter, *Asspire*.*



We then hailed the first four farriers in our Region to receive certification: Graham Smith from Grantham nominated by Sarah Standing, David Beardmore from Lancashire (also in the pic above) nominated by Sue McCafferty, Josh Milburn, near Penrith nominated by Allison Roberts and Darren Slater from Cheshire nominated by Liz and Olwen Brown and Sarah Booth.

If you feel that your farrier is worthy of a certificate, if he or she has gone the extra mile in terms of really understanding that donkeys are different, then please do send your nomination, giving your reasons, anecdotes, words of warmth and we will include them in the 'fab farriers' feature in

the Winter/Christmas Newsletter. Email to northerndonks@gmail.com. Thank you.



Allison is still challenged by bales . . . !

In the wilds of Cumbria, all is not so calm and bright on the bale front. In a previous issue we left Allison Roberts foraging for a solution to a feeding quandary. The challenges continue. Allison takes up the story . . .

Heeding all the warnings of barley straw shortages prodded me into buying a year's supply in one great purchase – ten giant packs of 21 small bales each. My supplier said that he couldn't source any more unless I took giant bales – they are a nightmare to handle for us. Small bales it must be. (Why are they called square bales, I wonder?). One bale usually lasts two days so 210 is more than enough for 365 days, if we have none of that rejection malarkey that donkeys can suddenly do.

Normally I buy two of these packs at a time which is easier to manhandle than the whole lot at once but this year only two deliveries were made. Aaaaagh - they were bundled unceremoniously off the trailer in our yard with two of us picking up, moving and stacking them as fast as we could but 11 bales in all broke as they were unloaded. Imagine the mess (and waste). The Scot in me gathered up as much as was salvageable into old dumpy bags, then I did a second trawl through the mess – that's for the sheep to eat, then I did a third scrape for sheep bedding. The yard might recover to its former groomed state one day.

The barn is satisfyingly full but the boys seem to be piling through it at an alarming rate. This year's bales are lighter, the straw chopped shorter and much less densely packed so I fear my arithmetic no longer applies. There's an "issue" looming I fear, then again we do seem to have survived the straw-strewn yard once this year already – it might have to be big Heston bales later on.....



And staying in Cumbria . . .

Allison also got in touch to say, 'today the new harness or saddle to allow the boys to carry panniers was finally delivered. Here is the first trial run'.

Now, I believe this is Hamish as Dougal decided to have a roll prior to his turn! There is a lovely story as to the creation of these gorgeous panniers and Allison will share all with us in

the Christmas edition. I can't wait. I have serious pannier envy!! [SB].

And now it is time to say hello to some more gorgeous Northern donks and other animals!

Donkeys love pumpkins, right?

Pat Mather sent us this picture of her donkeys trying to deny all responsibility for eating the pumpkins (right)!!



And then considering alternative uses for them!

Football anyone?!



This lovely line up is from Terri Morris

... Terri says,

‘ this is Gus, William, Hetty, Peps and Max whose combined ages add up to 112 years. Max is still a teenager but Gus, Peps and William are all now in their twenties and William's mum, Hetty, the big

donkey in the middle is 32 and has lived with us for 24 years. She is the matriarch of our little herd being the only survivor of our early donkeys’.



This is Hetty giving a rather shy little Rosie the once over! Doesn't Hetty look wise? She looks as if she's just about to impart some good advice!! [SB]

And now over to Sue Stead . . .

All Donkeys Are Different. People look at a donkey and think lovely fluffy docile animal, but all donkeys are different, just look at my three.

Jacko.

The baby of the family, the surprise foal we did not know we were having, the love bug of a donkey with the looks to go with it, well I think so. Jacko is alert to all that is happening and he usually takes his lead from the warmblood horse. He watches out for the other two donkeys. Although he is now a strapping lad of 11 he is still the biggest whimp going. We have brought him up to be exposed to everything and anything but he is still wary of puddles, surface changes, sweeping brushes etc. On the other hand he likes to clean the sit



on mower, he even chases it when it is going. He will approach the horses the dog and strangers who come to the stables just to be noticed and make friends. Jacko always is the first to discover new grass, the bit of hay that has been dropped and he loves trimming the trees and the hedges. We have a bit of a weight problem with him but it is difficult when he shares the stable and the paddocks with the other two who are now elderly ladies.



Jojo Jojo is a brown donkey and Jacko's mum, she kept her secret very well when we first brought her home. Jojo is a quiet calm donkey on the surface but she can be quite lively at times and occasionally difficult to handle. She appears to take everything in her stride but she weighs situations up carefully. We think she is about 24 but not quite sure. I think in her quiet way she is the boss of the

three.

Millie Millie is a little grey donkey who is full of character, we think she is also about 24 years old. She is the donkey that when we went to see them originally pushed her way out of the stable to see what was going on. Nothing has changed in the 12 years she has lived with us. Any door or gate left open Millie is through it. She has raided the feed room countless times because the humans forgot to shut the gate or the door. Millie loves attention and she is the



donkey that would live in the house if we would let her. Very little upsets her she copes with most situations and she can be quite independent from the other two. The only thing Millie does not like are visits from the vet or the dentist but fortunately this is usually only for injections or general tooth care. That's my three how about yours ?

Tell us about your donkeys! Introduce us to their very unique characters!

Pictures and stories for future editions to: northerndonks@gmail.com.

Remembrance Day, Sunday 8th November

Although in some places it is being suggested that socially distanced remembrance events can continue, despite lockdown, others, sadly, will be severely curtailed.

The Donkey Breed Society's recent partnership with the War Horse Memorial Organisation has raised considerable awareness of the 'purple poppies' that commemorate the bravery of horses, donkeys, mules and other animals and birds involved in conflict. It was planned that in many locations around the country, purple poppies would be laid at local cenotaphs, to remember these brave animals and birds, alongside the red poppies and wreaths that ensure that not one single person is ever forgotten.

Fortunately, prior to lockdown and on a lovely sunny morning just a few weeks ago, Liz and Olwen visited their local village of Broadbottom, in Greater Manchester, to take their purple poppies to the cenotaph. As these beautiful pictures show, it was a fitting tribute to *all* who have gone before.



If you are able to take a walk past your local place of remembrance this weekend, with dogs and/or donks and could quietly lay a purple poppy (either knitted, or made from tissue, like Olwen's, or card) with a few words of remembrance, to remember all the animals and birds that gave their lives in the World Wars

and other conflicts, that would be wonderful. If you can take a little picture and forward it to me (northerndonks@gmail.com), I will then pass these to the War Horse Memorial Organisation, as they would love to know where poppies have been placed.

Thank you, on behalf of the DBS and the War Horse Memorial Organisation.

<https://thewarhorsememorial.org/>

Bonfire Night – how do your donkeys cope with bangs, fizzes and bright lights?



I must admit to a personal loathing of bonfire night when the farm up the road lets loose a volley of whiz, fizz bangs although this is somewhat juxtaposed with 'ooohs' and 'ahhhs' if I stop chuntering long enough to look out of the window and see the gorgeous pinks, purples and golds, raining out of a dark sky. So, loathe it or love it, what do our donkeys think of it? I asked Liz Brown our Chair and vet for her thoughts . . .

Lots of donkeys enjoy watching the fireworks! We find that if they can see the source of the noise that they are calmer. Sometimes this may mean keeping your donkeys outside during peak firework season! However, some donkeys really don't like it. They can become very upset and stressed. There are many ways to try and help relax your donkey- keep in the routine the donkey is used to and ensure they have distractions in the form of food. A radio playing can help. If your donkey is very upset, speak to your vet who may be able to prescribe anti-anxiety medication such as sedalin. This needs to be given before the fireworks start to have the full effect. It is often used as a sedative so your vet may need to check your donkey before prescribing it.

So maybe you're on animal watch tonight – time to whiz up something tasty to keep you warm?!

It's the return of Joy's Parkin – it went down a treat on the Hartington walk and picnic, and I have made it several times since – you can also add pieces of apple (toss them around in some flour so they don't sink to the bottom) and raisins, in fact whatever floats your boat! (Apologies to the Parkin purists out there!) SB.



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!)

Ring up a Rep!! Your Reps are here for advice/support/a friendly chat:

Area Rep – Lancashire – Pam Moon

Pam: 07842 535993 pam.moon@talktalk.net

Area Rep – North & East Yorkshire/Cleveland – Pat Mather

Pat: 07850 584785 pat_mather@msn.com

Area Rep – Cheshire/Greater Manchester – Olwen Brown

Olwen: 01457 762336

Area Reps – West Yorkshire – John & Terri Morris

John & Terri: 01274 835520 throstlenest@hotmail.com

Area Rep – Derbyshire – Sarah Hudgins

Sarah: 07971 996817 derbyextracer@hotmail.co.uk

Area Rep – Cumbria - Ann Marie Harrison

Ann Marie: harrison.anm@hotmail.co.uk

Area Rep – South Yorkshire - Jane Bramwell

Jane: 01433 620110 l.jane.bramwell@gmail.com

Area Rep – Northumberland – Geraldine Burton

Geraldine: 01434 681335 gadburton@yahoo.co.uk

And finally,

Your help is requested in order to make the Winter/Christmas edition of *Asspire* a real cracker!!



I am particularly in need of pictures of nativities past, with your donkeys. Please email pics to me with a brief description, together with your permission for them to be used in the press. Why? Well, the War Horse Memorial Organisation is planning a very special 'virtual' Christmas event, UK, if not world-wide, with choirs, readings and some beautiful festive music and they have asked me to source some nativity pics that can be shown as

we listen to the music. Hence why I would love your pictures to be a part of this. To get you in the mood, here are some that Terri has recently forwarded to me.

It would also be nice if you would like to send your messages of festive cheer to the Region. We can publish your messages, thoughts, poems or whatever, and I am sure this would raise the spirits of a lot of people after this difficult year. The usual offerings of pictures, anecdotes and anything else donkey related, would be fantastic! It is after all, *our* newsletter!



**Stay safe everyone and thank you for supporting the Northern Region's
*Thursday Bulletin!***

