

ASSPIRE!

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN REGION OF THE
DONKEY BREED SOCIETY



Summertime!

Dear All,

Who would ever have believed it? Temperatures here in Cumbria struggled to reach a high today of 13 C – can it really be midsummer? There is an upside I suppose. After all this rain we might have expected the grass to shoot up, rich in sugars, but that's not going to happen with the temperatures so low.

Thank goodness that *Asspire* has arrived to brighten up the day!

There's no need to say very much more in that case other than suggest you go and grab a cup of coffee or tea before you read on; but wait a moment – there's just one thing you need to do first – send in your short paragraph for the region's special commemorative booklet.

All you need to do is:

- ✚ send us one or more clear, good quality photos of your donkey(s)

✚ tell us about he/she/them in a short paragraph or two (Sarah Booth has volunteered to edit your text if you are uncertain of your penmanship so don't be put off by the writing bit!) - this could be a description, anecdote, or bit of both - anything really! What they enjoyed/enjoy doing and so on . . .

You don't even have to own a donkey - perhaps there is a donkey you've looked after, sponsored, have memories of that you would like to flag up!

You can either send these to Sarah Booth via email northerndonks@gmail.com or by post, Colley Mill House, North Rode, Nr Congleton, Cheshire CW12 2PL.

Don't miss out! (For more see p.19.) Do your entry now and then you can reward yourself with reading the rest of this edition of *Asspire*!

Best regards,

Allison.

(Allison Roberts, Chair & Regional Delegate, DBS Northern Region)

Welcome to all our new members and returning members!

In the News this Summer

THE 50TH DBS CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW

Saturday 19th August - Moreton Morrell

College, Warwickshire CV35 9BL As ever we will be

sending a large contingent to **The Championship Show!!**

This is the crème de la crème of our DBS Shows, with donkeys and their humans from all over the country. If you are entering, we wish you all the very best and we just know you'll do the North proud! If you're not entering, why not come and join us to cheer on your Region!

Can you remember who did rather well last year . . .?!



Three New Shows for 2023

We're delighted to announce new/returning Shows this year – see more on p.22. They are **Ripley – 13th August, Keighly – 2nd September and reinstated Romily – 3rd September**. Please support these Shows as we need to keep donkeys and messages about their welfare, their versatility and the joy that they bring, in the public domain!



Also in the News . . .

Booboo makes Uncle George's day . . .

Pam Moon's Booboo made a very special trip to Lytham in June, to a very special gentleman. The Booth family's Uncle George is in his nineties and has, for many decades, sponsored donkeys – he quite simply adores them. The family thought it would be a lovely idea to spring a donkey-shaped surprise on Uncle George and, with Missy away staying with the Browns, Pam kindly stepped in and offered Booboo's services. A plan was hatched! On what was an extremely hot day, but fortunately there was a big shady tree outside to keep the trailer cool, we travelled to the seaside to put our plan into action. Uncle George was totally made up, it was the best surprise ever. Booboo just knew that Uncle was special and lowered her head for him to stroke. Everyone was extremely moved. Pam, Steve and Booboo a huge, heartfelt thank you from all the family and mostly from Uncle George himself, who simply had the best day ever!

Carys mixes summer exams with Showing!

Super-student and super-donkey knowledgeable person Carys, sheltered from the sun with prize-winning donkeys at Bury Show. Carys told me that the exams were going well - it was, however, very hot and I think she would rather have been outside with the donkeys! That said, just as we'd all packed up at Bury, the heavens opened in biblical proportions, and it was a very wet drive home for all of us.

You will find further pictures from Bury, later in this edition.



If you've been out and about doing interesting things with your favourite donkeys this summer, do let us know about it and we'll feature it on our news pages. northerndonks@gmail.com

Remembering Beth

Earlier this year, we were saddened to hear of the passing of Beth, a lovely lady who threw herself into the world of donkeys and horses and was much loved by those of us in the Northern Region who were fortunate enough to spend quality donkey time with her. Here, Alison Sargeant tells us a little bit about her very special friend . . .

‘Having taken early retirement before fifty, after a successful and demanding career in research, Beth joined Erdigg a National Trust property in North Wales as a Volunteer with the Equine department. Here, she met Medina who headed the team looking after a selection of Shires, an Irish draught horse and two large standard donkeys. Instantly they became very close friends. Having no previous experience Beth was a natural, immersing herself in the stable daily care, learning quickly and becoming completely devoted to the horses but most importantly the donkeys. She was extremely active in helping organise and run the popular donkey walks and talks at the National Trust stables. The DBS were also invited to a very successful show and parade held in Erdigg House grounds, again the public flocked. Raising the profile of the donkey was important to Beth.



It came as no surprise that very shortly Beth and her husband Jon had two rescue donkeys of their own, beloved Neenah and Ben; having first successfully obtained the mandatory qualifications in donkey welfare. Beth's passion and enthusiasm for all donkeys was infectious, as was her excitement on the arrival of her own two. Here she met Pam Moon, the acting welfare officer organising the rehoming who became a great mentor and friend. Pam suggested joining the Donkey Breed Society, the nearest being the Northern Region. Beth and Jon then went on to re home all the shire horses and the two donkeys, Tambo and Lofty from Erdigg after the equine department unfortunately closed during the Pandemic.

My husband Gray and myself were already close friends and neighbours with Beth and Jon so had been aware of her dedication and passion in this new world. It was no surprise that with her enthusiasm we soon had our own two rescue donkeys! Beth was thrilled and tireless in her support. Our two boys loved her regular visits armed with their favourite treats, looking after them with her husband whenever we were away. We too joined DBS region and met the amazing Olwen Brown and the rest of our wonderful "donkey family". Here we all supported each other and gained our bronze award, Beth was adamant Silver next! The DBS shows, regular meetings and training days were firm favourites including the donkey walk and wildlife quiz at our farm last year. Being surrounded by so much experience and knowledge was invaluable but most importantly the strong friendships with our common bond, our donkeys. That was important to Beth.

As a group we have lost a wonderful active member and dear friend who was taken from us all too soon after her own courageous fight. Beth was always positive and incredibly practical, a fiercely loyal friend and one of

the kindest, most generous people I have had the pleasure to call my dear, dear friend. Her devoted husband and the love of all animals, especially her beloved donkeys, were always so important to her and in Beth's memory a collection was made at her memorial service which raised funds which were divided between Cancer Research and The Donkey Breed Society.'

Alison Sargeant



Lovely memories of an 'Introduction to Driving and other things' Training Day at Olwen's in 2019 – it was the first time that I met these guys – what fun we had! I love these pics. We went on to enjoy more training days and worked hard for our Bronze Awards! Beth was an inspirational, kind and happy person who is very much missed.

On behalf of the Donkey Breed Society, and particularly the Northern Region, I would like to send our love and condolences to Jon, Beth's husband, and to her family and friends. It was an honour to have spent time with Beth and you can rest assured that Beth's memory will live on in the DBS.

Sarah Booth.

It's Colin's Column!!



Dear Juniors,

I hope you are enjoying the summer holidays. I have loved seeing many of you at shows, the best one was the Coronation Show, I was very proud to pull the trolley carrying the Royal family of junior members.

I must tell you about a new member of our donkey family, she is a filly foal called Vera, she is very sweet and fluffy. Vera loves galloping round and round the menage, she even jumps the trotting poles. Her favourite game is chasing the collie dogs. Moss keeps out of her way now but Tim thinks she is a sheep and tries to round her up. It's funny to watch a little foal, not much bigger than him, chase him out of her way with his tail between his legs!

We have some new fencing in our field we are all quite upset because we have been slowly eating our way through so we could get into the woodland. Our secret was discovered and this new fencing will stop us having some tasty trees to nibble. We can't even start some new holes because wire mesh has been put over the wood. Sometimes our humans are spoilsports.

With a huge sigh,

Love,
Colin X

Our Vera!



Ask Colin . . .



Q: I am looking forward to taking my donkey on a day long picnic trek in the autumn. What should I take with us to make sure that we both have a safe and happy time?

Can I come, especially if you are having a picnic?

If you are walking on a public road your donkey should wear a bridle and you should wear high viz. Your donkey's feet should be checked to make sure they are not too long, but also very importantly, not too short. It's not a good idea to have a trim less than a week before your walk, bridleways in the North are stoney or gritty and can quickly wear down a newly trimmed hoof to lameness.

I hope your donkey is carrying the picnic in a saddle bag or pack. We like to feel we are helping, especially as we hope part of the picnic is for us.

For a day's picnic, saddle bags, or even a rolled pillow case, over a thick numnah will not damage our back, kept in place by a surcingle.

Please take your camera with you and send me a photo.

Have a lovely day.

Q Is there anything I should be looking out for or checking, in the late summer, that could be bad for my donkey's health?



In late summer/autumn trees are ripening their seeds and dispersing them (this means they are falling off the trees). We donkeys search for them for tasty snacks. Unfortunately, most of them are very bad for us, for example **acorns** (left) from the oak trees and **sycamore seeds**

(below right). We get cross when we see people on their hands and knees searching for them and taking them away in buckets. Olwen says it's for our own good! So, if you have trees surrounding your fields, check carefully for poisonous seeds and remove them, you will annoy us but will keep us safe.



Colin X

Well done to those who took up the Challenge and recorded their activities!

Teddy the Miniature Donkey and his buddy Matthew the donkey, visited [Highhouse Barn](#) in Northumberland, as part of a Donkey Discovery Talk for visitors. They even met some sheep in the lamping shed.

Joseph and [Bandit](#) the donkeys, attended Trinity Church in Harrogate for Palm Sunday.

Matthew and [Teddy](#) the donkeys attended [Shincliffe Church](#) in Durham, to celebrate Palm Sunday.

Sox and Bandit attended Dream Big Role Play Centre in Chester-le-Street for an Easter visit.

Joseph and Teddy attended The Blow Lounge Salon in Seaham for an Easter Community Event.

Marie, from Blackberry Donkeys, shared the activities of her donkeys earlier on in the year – a lovely record of their Spring in the North East of our Region.

(Please zoom in using the zoom bar on your computer to read the texts in this article pp 8-11.)



Sarah, our Northern Region Secretary rediscovered her love of Art . . .

I knew that mine could not be that imaginative, that would take time and experience! However, I could try some half and half drawings.

I began with 'Missy the Unicorn'. See separate attachment. This was a swift representation and I used the fact I couldn't find some jazzy colours and glitter! Anyway, it allowed me to dip my toe in the water and build confidence!



Then I decided to cut a little more into Freddie's picture – I wasn't going to turn him into a unicorn, he would appear as nature intended! I also decided to take out some of the fence, from the picture. I quite like working in pen and ink and this was done quite quickly.

Both pictures were totally different to my usual sketched/inked/pastels landscapes that I enjoy doing on holiday. I haven't really done any artwork for ages – it probably shows! – but it was great to start up again. Thanks to the Challenge I will be doing a lot more from now, something for me. A few hours of immersion that have been very enjoyable when it's been raining outside.

I hope I've met the challenge! The photography took about an hour, they do love coming up and poking their faces into the camera and then the drawings took a good few hours too. Our Poles Sunday outing took a couple of hours and then a few further hours flexing my editorial muscles on Angie and the Calendar!



Have a go at 'drawing in' – it's great fun!



Donkey Lovers' Easter 5hr Challenge

2nd April - 14th April 2023

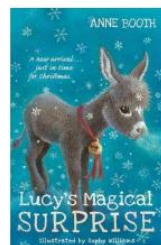
2nd April 23 – Visit to see Judith and her Donkeys – 1 hour.

I went to see Judith and her Donkeys. This is me with Paddy and Tara. I love giving them lots of cuddles and attention and helping Judith out when I can with all six Donkeys. I also like talking to Judith about each Donkey and what they have been up to.



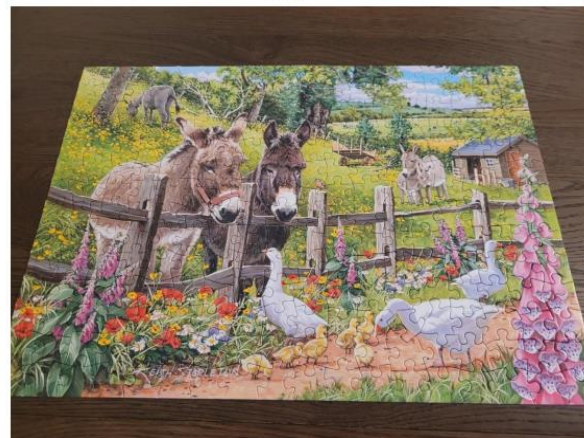
10th April 23 – Reading my Donkey Story Book for 1 hour.

On Easter Monday I had a quiet afternoon at home on the sofa with my cuddly Jelly Cat Donkey who I have named "Paddy" and read my favourite book which my Nana & Pops bought me for Christmas. I love this book as it's about a little girl who helps when a Donkey Foal is born.



12th April 23 – Completing my Donkey Puzzle – 1 hour and 30 Minutes.

On Wednesday it was a very wet day, so I decided to complete my Donkey Puzzle, I enjoy doing puzzles, but I really enjoy doing puzzles when they are of Donkeys. I have two Donkey puzzles one is called "Jack and Jenny" and the other is called "Meadow View" I am now searching for my next puzzle but can't seem to find anymore with Donkeys on.



1

Phoebe sent in her challenge – she had been very busy and enjoyed a range of activities – brilliant Phoebe, very well done!

14th April 23 – Visiting Island Farm Donkey Sanctuary – 1 hour and 30 Minutes.

I visited Island Farm Donkey Sanctuary in Wallingford, Oxford. Island Farm Donkey Sanctuary is a registered charity that cares for abused and ill-treated donkeys. They have over 120 Rescued Donkeys. I was able to pet some of the less nervous donkeys and bought a rosette as a keep sake to say I have visited here.



Total of Donkey Fun Hours - 5 Hours

This is Jaelynn who wrote a super poem and read it to Julie and Allison when they visited Oak Tree Animals for World Donkey Day. She had also written a story. Jaelynn was there with her brother Kofi-Ray. Our picture shows Julie Connolly, Area Rep for Cumbria presenting Jaelynn with her rosette. (More on p.14.)



Whilst their mum, our Chair, had set the Challenge, Dougal and Hamish Roberts were also allowed to take part in the Challenge, with their entry being ratified by Pam Moon and Sarah Booth! Well done boys! Their challenges follow . . .

Donkey Lovers' Easter Challenge

Entry from Hamish and Dougal
of High Grains, Bewcastle, CA6 6PT,
owned by Allison Roberts, G055

I have not counted the routine hours spent with these boys every day such as feeding, grooming, hoof picking, and even most of our outings on the fells and through the forests, choosing rather to recount some of the less usual activities we enterprised during the challenge period. (Nor have I counted the hours spent on DBS Northern Region work though it most certainly was donkey-centric!).

Date Saturday 01 April

Activity Preparation for leading the Palm Sunday procession from the parish boundary at Kirk Beck Bridge to the church.

This involved extra special grooming, given that Dougal had indulged in a thorough roll in the mud – it had been raining for almost all the previous week, so the rolling spot was squelching wet. Fortunately for me the rain kept the boys in their stable most of the day giving the medallions of mud clinging to Dougal's long hairy coat a chance to dry out somewhat. It also meant that after the mud had been brushed out and then more normal grooming achieved for both boys I could shut them into their stable till morning, for that is their normal routine. Surely that way there would be minimal top-up grooming next morning.

Early evening saw me cleaning and soaping both bridles ready for the morning

Timings 16.00 – 17.00 (one hour) 19.00 – 19.20 (a wee bit of an hour) Total 1 hour 20 mins

Date Sunday 02 April,

Activity Palm Sunday – activities are itemised in stages

Timings 07.00 – 07.15 and 08.15 – 09.00 (1 hour)

The day started extra early so the boys could be fed, finally groomed and polished (well tails and manes detangled) with bridles on, ready to set off down the two mile farm track to the bridge (this involved five gates to open and close by the way).

09.00 – 11.40 (2 hours 40 mins)

Once they are wearing their bitted bridles the boys know they are expected to act grown up and responsible, aware that bridles mean meeting people. Meeting people also means keeping to a schedule so no pauses at favourite snacking places along the track, and no dawdling either. We had a rendezvous at 09.40 at the road end with one of the boys' favourite people, we call their Auntie Ann. She took Dougal in hand while I did the same for Hamish.



By 09.45 we were at the bridge awaiting those of the congregation "youthful" enough to walk the short distance up the hill to the church. In ones and twos people started to arrive, all doing that donkey worshipping things everyone does, much to the boys' pleasure. In the small band that had gathered by 10.00, the start of the service, we had the vicar in a white surplice as well as a retired bishop in mufti.

Somehow we as a group had edged uphill of the bridge to a cattle grid, I suppose because there was a space to let cars go past our little throng. This of course meant they rattled as they crossed the grid bars. But neither donkey batted an eyelid at these noisy interruptions.



The service started with the passing out of hymnbooks, Palm Sunday service sheets along with crosses for everyone but Ann and me! So we winged the five verses of the hymn after the familiarity

of the first verse had been sung lustily. Still no eyelid batting by the boys surrounded by singers. A prayer followed, then wonderfully, unexpectedly the vicar stepped up to each of the boys in turn, laid his hand (his surplised arm flapping in the wind by the way) and blessed them. Yet again no eyelid batting. Ann and I had tears in our eyes at this though. Finally off we set up the hill, watched by the rest of the congregation who joined us at the church gate to follow Hamish and Dougal to the very door.



I've previously tried to tempt the boys into the church building, without any success, so we four set off back down the hill while the service continued without us. And once back through the first of the five gates we took off the boys' bridles so they knew they were officially off duty.

15.00 – 15.30 (30 mins)

To their delight, half way home I left the boys in the pan acre field – mostly rushes and rough grass – then at 15.00 I found them at the furthest point of the field to bring them home the last mile.



Can you make out the drystone wall just below and running parallel with the skyline? There are two donkey dots at the wall.

Total 4 hrs 10 mins

Date Friday 07 April, Good Friday

Activity A great friend, Anna came for the day with her one year old daughter, Erin. Some of the time was spent meeting and touching the donkeys, a first for Erin but a frequent experience for Anna who has been coming here for decades. Sadly we didn't take pictures.

Timings 14.00 – 14.20 Total 20 mins

Date 08 April, Easter Saturday

Activity This afternoon we enterprised an expedition way beyond field boundaries and out onto the High Fell shared by a group of commonsers. Out there it was wild and windy with great views to the Solway Firth glistening in the pale sunlight miles off to the west.



Timings 14.30 – 15.50 Total 1 hr 40 mins

Date Monday 10 April, Easter Monday

Activity Distant relatives of my husband's called in during the afternoon, trailing two teenagers along with them who sat patiently while we four adults talked. Knowing my husband's proclivity to nap in the afternoon and to involve the youngsters in some alternative activity I whisked the visitors off out to walk with the boys. And thus we did the shorter fell and forested walk of about two miles. Hamish and Dougal enjoy meeting new people – according to the animal communicator who has relayed some of their experiences to me they chat together about visitors, admiring some and laughing about others. I wonder what they thought of these four!

Timings 15.00 – 16.45 Total 1 hour 45 mins

Look out for further 'challenges' in the future!

And remember, you can send your pics to us and tell us what you have been up to at any time!
northerndonks@gmail.com.

History in our Region

We continue our series of interesting moments and/or places in time that link in some way to horses, mules, donkeys and ponies, and have their roots in our Region. If you would like to contribute a little bit of local history, do get in touch northerndonks@gmail.com.

S. Booth.

If you are currently having déjà vu, it is probably because you were a member of the DBS in 1975 and read this article in the summer edition of 'The Donkey Breed Society Magazine'!

Liz Brown has asked me to reprint it today as it is as important now as it was then.

Read on . . .

"The Eye of the Master Maketh the Horse Fat"

SUSAN ANSDELL

I have been asked to write an article on the dangers of over-feeding. The more one looks into this question, the more it becomes a veterinary matter, on which I, of course, am not qualified to give authoritative views. However, this is meant as a layman's look at the problem in a broad sense, and to show that overfeeding can be as detrimental as undernourishment.

You may think it strange to read an article on overfeeding, written in January when the big problem to most of us is how to get through the winter with fit, healthy animals and budget our feed costs. Thinking ahead to spring and summer though, there will probably be donkeys seen at shows who could do with a little weight-watching!

Of course, it is an acceptable fact that show animals should be well covered. Apart from hiding some faults of conformation, one would not like to see hollows over the hips or any signs of under-nourishment. My concern is when layers of fat appear, usually on the neck first, and worse still in ridges over the shoulders and along the sides. This is very unsightly and would lead one to wonder what might be happening internally. Obesity in man is a known cause of heart disease; might it not be so with animals? One veterinary dictionary, in describing cattle in particular, stated that fatty degeneration may arise in the feeding of bulls and cows for show purposes year after year with little or no exercise. The enormous amount of fat carried by them in showyard condition becomes virtually pathological. Such animals are liable to become breathless when compelled to make vigorous movement, owing to the incompetence of the heart to supply sufficient blood to the lungs for aeration, occasioned by the deposition of fat around the heart and among its muscle fibres, the fat interfering with its contraction and relaxation. This is obviously looking at the extreme, but there is no doubt that an excess of fat around the organs does interfere with their being able to function properly, and therefore creates undue and unnecessary strain.

Apart from its effect on the internal organs of the body, there is evidence that overweight can be a factor (among many others) in causing infertility. Laminitis is one of the most usual complaints in overweight ponies, and although not quite so common in donkeys, it does occur.

There are legions of books written on the subject of feeding, stable management and good husbandry in general, and one should acquire as much knowledge as possible, but always remember that they are written for the horse, and that we must be flexible and adapt that knowledge to the needs of donkeys and to what use each donkey is to be put. Good grass in the summer and plentiful good-quality hay in the winter (fresh water and salt/mineral lick at all times) should be adequate to keep the average pet donkey in good condition, with the addition of a few pony cubes in really hard winter. The in-foal mare needs more rations, with the addition of vitamins, as do young stock and stallions. The donkey in work, like the horse, will need a programme of feeding to produce energy, coupled with exercise. The balance of good grooming – so that the skin can breathe – exercise and feed is the basis of any well-conditioned healthy animal. Obviously, though, this will be of no avail unless coupled with a regular worming routine, and inspection of the teeth: sharp edges make it impossible for the feed to be chewed and thoroughly digested. I am not suggesting that we should “do” our donkeys like racehorses, but that we should use our eyes and feed sensibly. Ensure that the donkey is exercised, either naturally out at grass, or by working some form (driving?) or walking out whenever possible and try to achieve that balance which is the art of good stock keeping.

To help put matters right for an overweight donkey, cut down the feed gradually; any sudden change in diet can upset the digestive system. Start exercising daily, beginning slowly with about ten minutes and increasing every day. It is worth training the donkey to lunge, as you will be able to save your breath and give him plenty of trotting around you – remember to change direction or he will become one-sided (and giddy!). After he has exercised, “strapping” with a cloth or stable rubber helps to bring up muscle. It should be done for about twenty minutes per side – down the neck and shoulders, over the quarters and flanks (not over the kidneys). You will end up with splendid muscles, even if your donkey doesn’t! Having cooled down, you both probably could do with a drink, then give him a small feed of crushed oats.

Having written this article, I shall be at the mercy of my fellow donkey-owners if I appear this summer with overweight donkeys! And as I write this, there is a lot of noise outside; my donkey friends are either laughing at me or calling for their tea.

Susan Ansdell

Donkey Breed Society Magazine XV Summer 1975



If you are in any doubt whatsoever as to the health status of your donkey, talk to your vet immediately.

You can also talk to your Area Rep., or to anyone on the ‘Useful Contacts’ list towards the end of *Asspire* for a friendly chat and support. Please don’t let your donkey start to accumulate fat, it’s so easily done but can be remedied.

(library picture)

Catching up with Events around the Region . . .

In this edition, we travel to Cumbria for . . .

A Walk on the Wild Side and lots more!

What a lot of “firsts” we’ve been clocking up here in Cumbria recently! The first of these “firsts” was Julie Connolly’s glass sun catcher day, hopefully setting a trend we can sustain. To my knowledge this part of the Northern Region has been largely inactive previously – that’s about to change.

Following on that “first” Julie and I have recruited Oak Tree Animals Charity near Carlisle to join the DBS as club members so that’s our second “first”, if you follow me (the animal charity has four donkeys). We worked with them on an event they organised on world Donkey Day where families with young children came to participate in donkey-centric activities, in the torrential rain it has to be said. And while there we invited all the visiting children to submit a diary showing they had achieved five hours of donkey activity over the month of May; you might even recognise the concept as similar to the recent Easter challenge. Lo and behold, we had a submission! A rosette had to be presented – see p.8!)

Another “first” involved a Cumbrian fell and forest walk. Although lots of DBS walks are organised the length and breadth of the country this was a very definite first for Cumbria. Happily it was warm and sunny as the band of donkey lovers gathered in remotest Bewcastle where Hamish and Dougal waited to escort their visitors out onto the fells and forest walks they call their playground.

Debbie Hornby who is often seen competing at shows brought her lovely, glossed-coated Donkan to join us – so here’s yet another of these “firsts” because in all the years my boys have been here they have never, ever met another donkey!

My anticipated trepidation was fortunately unnecessary. The three donkey boys showed little more than a passing interest in meeting each other, preferring to get on with the exploring. Among the assembled walkers was the young lady from Oak Tree Animals Charity who had successfully completed the challenge. And here is yet one more “first” – Julie Connolly, the area rep for Cumbria presented Jaelynn Fell with her well-deserved rosette! It was a lovely picture, we’ll show it again!



Let’s hope she will have more awards to present – we’ll be conjuring up lots of wheezes to encourage donkey activities, and maybe even convert some participants into DBS members. But till then enjoy some of the pictures from the walk and here’s the last of our “firsts” – I’ll not talk you through them!

For more about Oak Tree, click on: [About - Oak Tree Animals' Charity - Cumbria Animal Rescue - Helping local animals in need!](#)



The Region's Early Summer Gallery . . .



Congratulations! Success all round for five progenies of Liz Brown's stallion Brownroad Kingcup (all pictured above)



Bury Show





Bury rocks! If you haven't been, either as a competitor or a spectator, try and go next year. We have a lovely ring all to ourselves and lots of people enjoy watching the donkeys and visiting them when they leave the ring too. It's a great opportunity to tell people all about donkeys and about the DBS!



And then there was Honley - lovely show, shame about the force 10!



It was certainly blowy, well done to all those who continue to support this super Show.

You can't top the views either. What a stunning location. You might not be into Showing but if you are into discovering glorious countryside and having a prime picnic location, why not visit a Show!

Exciting Competition coming next season:

Some people bag Wainwrights, can you bag the most picnics at Shows with donkeys in 2024?

More details in the Winter edition of *Asspire!*





The Northern Region of the Donkey Breed Society

BE A PART OF THE HISTORY OF OUR GLORIOUS REGION!

**Entries for the Special Commemorative Booklet – to be published in the year of
The Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla are now required!**

Please help us to create, for the Region, a special commemorative booklet, celebrating your own donkeys, or those with whom you come into contact. We want to pay tribute to the donkeys that have filled, and continue to fill, lives in the Region with so much joy.

Let your donkeys be part of the celebration!

HOW: Send *good quality* pictures (up to 4) together with a short piece telling us about your donkey(s) (max. 175 words, not to worry if you go over we can edit it) to:

email northerndonks@gmail.com OR post to Sarah Booth Colley Mill House, North Rode, Nr Congleton, Cheshire CW12 2PL.

CLOSING DATE: Friday 1st September, 2023

THE PLAN IS: to create a gorgeous commemorative booklet that will go on sale in time for Christmas, raising funds for our Charity and creating a lot of smiles along the way! A brilliant present for family and friends and featuring donkeys that you know!



Let me tell you about . . .

Thank you and we look forward to hearing from you.

[Please note that we reserve the right to edit copy and pictures in order to create a clear, professional finish.]

Cracking days out for Regional Members and friends!

Chair, Allison Roberts looks ahead to a few forthcoming events . . .



How would you like to “be more donkey”?

Intrigued? Read on! What follows is something a friend of mine wrote after a day as a visitor to the Donkey Sanctuary, Manchester. She works for World Horse Welfare and having worked with me and my boys before she started with WHW, is quite donkey savvy.

“When I had navigated myself all the way south to Manchester it was a relief to see a room full of people like me from other animal welfare organisations. You can imagine the buzz of noise as we gathered, uncertain of what was going to happen during the day. Then when we were told we should all “be more donkey” I was really puzzled, I can tell you.

We were taken out into a big yard where there were lots and lots of donkeys, of all shapes, colours and sizes, milling around quietly; what’s more, they outnumbered us. Not one of the donkeys came near us. Not until we’d been taken through some relaxation exercises did we all start to relax and then, lo and behold the donkeys started to approach us!”

Got it yet? My friend and everyone else in the yard had become more donkey!

Well now, we have been offered a chance to experience what it feels like to “be more donkey”, for the Donkey Sanctuary is offering us a day – you can choose either its Manchester or Leeds base. You can book onto the Leeds session on 28th September or the Manchester session on 20th October.

The days are going to be broadly the same at both venues although the timings are different. The lady looking after us in Leeds, Cathryn, suggests, “Maybe arrive around 12.15 and have a cuppa and a slice of cake with a view to starting at 12.30. We could initially talk about the work we do here, then take you on a tour around the site before having a practical couple of hours with our donkeys, aiming to finish around 3.30.” Robina in Manchester suggests we start at 10.00 and finish at 3.00. Both places have cafes and small shops and both will take us round their operation.

If you live up near the Scottish border there is also a chance to visit Donkey Heaven, the sanctuary near Melrose. While they don’t offer the “Be more donkey” session they are happy to take us round their operation and explain what they do. There is a café across the road where we can buy refreshments, or you can bring a picnic to enjoy near their donkeys. This will be on Friday the 6th of October, starting at 11.00 and finishing 15.00.

Grab your place early – it’s going to be popular and places will be allocated “first come, first served”. We are offering the Manchester day for £20 if you are a DBS member, but better still you can take advantage of a special offer that is £30 for two if you bring a non-DBS friend. For Leeds and Melrose the DBS member fee is £15. The special Bring a Friend deal is £25 for both. On each visit we as a DBS region will make a donation to the Centre as a thank you.

Email allisonroberts254@outlook.com to grab your place, stating which sanctuary you’d like to book and naming your non-DBS friend.



What else is happening?

JUST SOME OF THE EVENTS WE ARE GOING TO IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS.

The Region's Autumn/Winter Calendar will be out in September!

Please note that all members, from all over the Region, are warmly invited to attend events across the Region – you don't have to stick to events in your area – travel a little and enjoy a lot! We will keep you posted on a variety of events/activities in the Region this Summer.

Emley Show- Saturday 5th August

Lovely show, lots of trade stands to wander round before and after showing.

Halifax Agricultural Show - Saturday 12th August

Definitely the flattest showring you will ever run on, Halifax is a great show.

NEW! Ripley Show – Sunday 13th August

Four in-hand classes and a Local Donkey Class.

Donkey Championships Saturday 19th August

Historically us up North do very well at the donkey championships – watch out for details in Bray Talk and The Donkey

Poynton Show - Saturday 26th August

One of the favourites, always good entries and tradition says the Champion gets the cider in!

Chatsworth Country Fair – 1st – 3rd September

Country Fair over 3 days, donkey driving class and donkeys welcome in other driving classes.

NEW! Keighly Show - 2nd September

Five in-hand classes including Young Handler.

NEW! Romily Show - 3rd September

Six classes including: Veteran, Ridden, Long-reining/Driving.

Stanhope Show – 9th /10th September***Bowes Show – 9th September******Penistone – Saturday 9th September***

Penistone is celebrating its 150th show – let's support them and show them what crowd-pullers donkeys can be!

Eggleston - Saturday 16th September

Entries needed or another we will lose. Lovely little Village show.

For further details re the above shows, search online where you will find schedules and entry forms.

Sunday 24th September Northern Region Autumn Show to be held in North Yorkshire

– Whitcliffe Grange Livery, Littlethorpe, Ripon HG4 3AS -

Featuring Northern Champion of Champions! Full details coming soon!

Pam Moon.

In the Autumn, on Sunday 8th October, we'll be enjoying an Autumn Picnic at Rivington – look out for the Autumn/Winter Calendar for more details!

For further details/information relating to all forthcoming events and if you are wanting to organise an event of any sort in your area, please ring Olwen on: 01457 762336 we can then provide support if needed and help to let everyone know about it!

Useful Contacts

Northern Region Chair and Regional Delegate: Allison Roberts allisonroberts254@outlook.com 01697 748311

Vice Chair: Liz Brown, 07517382472

Northern Region Secretary & Hon. PR Officer UK: Sarah Booth, 07970375562 (phone signal is awful, so leave a message or text me and I will get back to you!) northerndonks@gmail.com

Northern Region Treasurer: Sarah Pennell, 01889 591497

DBS Awards Regional Link & Training: Olwen Brown 01457 762336

Colley Mill Donkeys Junior Club (DBS Affiliated Club): Sarah Booth, as above.

AREA REPRESENTATIVES

Introduce yourself to your Area Rep and say what you would like to see happening in your Area. Area Reps are always keen to hear your ideas and if you can volunteer some help at any time, that too would be most welcome, although not obligatory!

Area Rep – Lancashire – Pam Moon

Pam: 07842 535993 pam.moon@talktalk.net

Area Rep – North & East Yorkshire/Cleveland

Caretaker rep Allison Roberts (details as above)

Area Rep – Cheshire/Greater Manchester – Olwen Brown

Olwen: 01457 762336

Area Reps – West Yorkshire – John & Terri Morris

John & Terri: 01274 835520 throstlenest@hotmail.co.uk

Area Rep – Derbyshire & South Yorkshire – Janet Thornhill

Janet: 07976 556649 janet66thornhill@gmail.com

Area Rep – Cumbria - Julie Connolly

Julie: 07501 331014 julieconnolly1@aol.com

Area Rep – Northumberland – Geraldine Burton

Geraldine: 07833 602311 gadburton@yahoo.co.uk

Membership!

Don't forget to check your Membership status – have you renewed it?!

You can renew your membership on the National DBS Website:

<https://www.donkeybreedsociety.co.uk/membership>

Thank you for being a member, your support is much valued locally and nationally.

And finally,

Miss Wickham and Toadflax of Brownroad
(aka Missy & Colin) talk about Showing . . .



‘We love the Summer season, don’t we Colin?’

‘We do it every year – such fun don’t you know.’



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 from the late Summer months and early Autumn, to northerndonks@gmail.com to reach us by the beginning of November.

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