



NEWSLETTER

August 2015

From the Chair.....

Hello all,

Well we have certainly had some strange weather over the last couple of months- blazing sun, rain, hail....who knows what will come next. I hope all your ponies and horses are well and that you are managing to enjoy getting out and about with them. The flies (and wasps) are now beginning to be a nuisance so please make sure your equine friends have sufficient protection against them- there can be nothing worse than being bitten from head to toe.

There was sad news from one of our members who lost her horse suddenly- we send our condolences to her and her family on their loss. After investigation, it was due to a heart attack, brought on by blocked arteries from being overweight in the past. It makes one realise that even though we ensure that our ponies do not get overweight, (today everyone is aware of the dangers, even in the showing world), the damage can already be done and is hidden from sight. It has certainly been a wake up call for me and my little people!

We have had a very busy couple of months showing- all the ponies have been out and about apart from Zebedee the broken one, and we really enjoyed the Shetland Performance show at Malvern, and the New Forest show again. Our next foray will be to the Royal London at Rugby- taking a lorry full so that will be a challenge! Oh, and yes....I have bought another one...couldn't resist!

Hope you enjoy the rest of the summer- make the most of the light evenings- they will all too soon start drawing back in ☺

Ros & the little people

VHPRC OPEN SHOW
& VETERAN CHAMPIONSHIPS
20th SEPT 2015
LEYLAND COURT

WE ARE SEEKING HELPERS

If you can help, or know someone who can, please get in touch

We hold our meetings on the first Wednesday of the month

FABULOUS FOOD!

Rose & Crown,

68 Parkfield Road, Pucklechurch, Bristol, BS16 9PS

Prince Fluffy Kareem

Our July speaker was Faye Cary, who is a huge supporter of the charity Prince Fluffy Kareem. I had originally heard about this on facebook and had thought it referred to a rather dodgy page (sorry Faye) so had not investigated it, but when our original speaker was unable to attend, Faye kindly agreed to step into the breach, and a fascinating talk it turned out to be. Essentially PFK is a charity (UK registered) formed from a small group of people dedicated to improving the conditions for the pyramid horses in Cairo, Egypt. These horses are used to take tourists and local Egyptians on rides to the pyramids and surrounding desert. Since the uprising in 2011, Egypt has suffered a huge decline in tourism, and this affects both the horses and their owners who rely on tourists for income.

This, combined with poverty, little knowledge or understanding of equines, widespread equine babesiosis, and appropriate fodder being expensive in a desert country, has resulted in inadequate conditions for the working animals. Babesiosis is caused by microscopic parasites that infect red blood cells and are spread by certain ticks. Although many people who are infected with *Babesia* do not have symptoms, for those who do effective treatment is available. Babesiosis is preventable, if simple steps are taken to reduce exposure to ticks.

PFK was started by a Norwegian lady called Marte who, when living in Egypt, saw horses and camels in extremely poor condition yet still expected to work. The families were poor and unable to allow their animals time off work as they relied on the income. They were also superstitious, wary of vets and doctors, often relying on home remedies. Saddles are made of wood and not conducive to a horse's back. Most families do not have proper stables or paddocks; horses are tied up if not ridden.

An example was Kareem who was used to provide rides for tourists 18 hours a day yet was on the verge of exhaustion and starvation, covered in sores. Kareem is the grey stallion who started it all. He was bought by Marte in June 2011, extremely emaciated, suffering from equine babesiosis (malaria) and on the brink of death. At first he was just named "Fluffy" due to his fluffy, wavy fur (he blocks the clipper in 5 seconds!), but shortly after it was decided he would need a more official name; Kareem, with "Prince" thrown in as a joke, as Egyptians love to call their horses and dogs names like "Prince" and "King". Kareem is about 10 years old now and until 2011 he had spent his life working around the pyramids, both as a cart horse and a riding horse. Little did he know that one day he would create awareness for the conditions of his fellow pyramid horses, and be known by people from every corner of the world!

Marte had no experience of keeping horses but contacted a stable provider, Sherif, and together they started a 'saddle sore project' where they bought saddle pads made by a local man Mohammed for £2.50 each to protect the horses' backs from the lethal saddles. For 4 months they funded this themselves. If the pads were 'stolen', they were rewarded for bringing them back- an extra piece of income for the owners! From this, Marte and her helpers started to produce nosebands that were kinder than those used generally, often bits of wire or rope. Bridles were even made up of scavenged chains, so Mohammed made fluffy covers to cover them. Gradually, owners have swapped to using proper bridles.

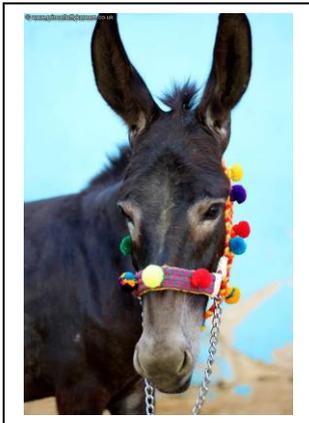
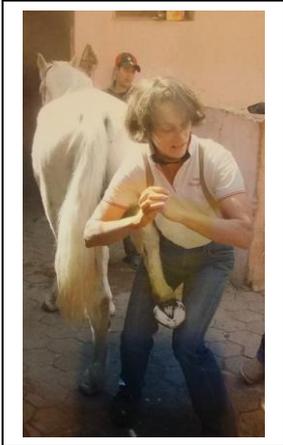
In 2012, an Australian vet, Dr Jude visited and set up a laminitis clinic to teach locals how to trim feet correctly. Due to the strange diet the horses have (very rich and concentrated due to lack of hay) laminitis is common despite the horses appearing extremely thin and undernourished. Also in 2012 another Australian, James, a dentist, treated horses at a clinic and showed the team how to deal with various problems. A basic dental kit has now been purchased through donations. Other initiatives have included a bit drive, as many horses had wire used in their mouths. Horses now have wormers available- but all these have to be taken in as hand luggage as border guards will confiscate anything.

In 2013, they secured a tenancy on a large property (which can be seen on their facebook page) and they are always open. Foster horses are taken in, and if the recovery is going to be slow, the family is given a replacement horse until their own is ready to go back to work. In the very worst cases Marte buys the horses from the family and they are put to sleep. Fostering allows the horse to stay in a stable, eat, rest and get daily treatment, all free of charge. The owner is then relieved of the expensive feed costs, treatment and the responsibility of caring for a critically sick horse.

Faye asked us if anyone would be interested in buying raffle tickets, the proceeds of which would go entirely to the charity- there were some amazing prizes that had been donated. The draw took place in July and some of our members were pleased to find they had won prizes. The total amount raised by Faye was £1628- amazing amount, so well done to her. The VHPRC also donated some money from the camp fees and our monthly subscriptions- every little helps. Sponsors are also welcome by the charity.

There are more pictures and descriptions/ updates on the PFK facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/princefluffykareem?fref=ts> - but please be warned, many are quite graphic. However we are pleased to support this amazing charity in their work and hope we keep in touch.

ROS



Shetland Agility

Whilst at the Shetland Performance show at Malvern in June, I decided to take Phoenix, my 3 year old Shetland round the agility course. Some members may remember that several years ago I did some agility with Willow, and even bought some equipment, but as usual, my time got taken up with other things and I have not yet got around to doing any with the rest of them - so this was the perfect opportunity.

Phoenix is quite a character, and I wasn't quite sure what he would make of some of the obstacles, but as he is hopefully one day going to make a driving pony, I thought it would be a good idea to see what he found scary - or otherwise!

The course was set out as follow:

- 1 **Whirly bird**- pony to touch with nose (this was a shiny ball on a stick – actually a bird scarer, which was merrily whirling in the wind, so I thought it might be a challenge!)
- 2 **Tarpaulin**- a red tarpaulin laid out between two poles, walk confidently across- (remembering Willow's experience, again possibly a challenge)
- 3 **Halt and Wait**- pony to stand and wait at first pole, handler to step over to second pole, relax the rope and invite pony over (hmmmm....)
- 4 **Narrow gap**- walk confidently through. Not a problem – he is only 26" tall, but wait.....there's a carpet between the barriers either side!)
- 5 **Crazy corridor**- walk confidently through. Not a problem either, except that there are pennants and flags fluttering madly across the gap!!!
- 6 **S Bend**- walk through without touching or stepping out of the poles. But the handler needs to walk backwards....
- 7 **Double gates**- open first gate (leave open), lead pony to 2nd gate- open, walk through, turn pony and close the gate. (Becomes challenging when the 'gates'- actually jump stands and ropes- keep falling over in the wind, just as we get to them ☺)
- 8 **Control of paces**- Trot at A (blue zone) and at B (red zone) slow walk to finish.....no probs!
- 9 **Curtain**- walk confidently through. (Or have a complete meltdown because the strips of plastic were too completely terrifying so the lady has to hold them to one side before dragging handler through)
- 10 **Podium**- Pony to step on to podium, front feet only- immobility, step back(reverse) off. LOL!!!!

Well, it didn't go quite to plan - we were allowed to have a practice run first (which actually became two, as they wanted to take pictures). The scary ball was an instant hit - Phoenix not only touched it with his nose, he head butted it and tried to take bites out of it. Top marks scored ☺. The tarpaulin, jumped completely from one side to the other the first time (no mean feat for a 26" pony), was negotiated at rather a brisk speed so reasonable marks 8/10. Halt and wait, though not too bad, showed that Phoenix loves his mummy and didn't want to wait on the other side of the pole, so only 6/10 there. The narrow gap, once he had investigated the carpet and found it to be not quite so life threatening, was again brisk but fairly controlled. The crazy corridor was nearly a meltdown moment- the bunting wasn't so bad, but the flags blowing in his face at various points did pose a few problems, but he was very brave and decided that if I could go through it, so could he- 8/10. The S bend and double gates were near perfect, despite as mentioned previously the fact that the gates were a little unreliable- 9/10 for each. Again, being of a small stature was a distinct advantage in the S bend, far more manoeuvrability!! The control of paces was also a good score- in hand showing definitely has its advantages here. And then came the curtain.....Phoenix dug his heels in and flatly refused to go anywhere near the fluttering strips, so again they had to be held aside while he dragged me through as quickly as he possibly could!! Only 5/10 for that- and possibly a rather generous score at that considering we didn't really do it properly. Finally, the podium. Phoenix, in the practice round, once he realised that only the front feet go on it, not all 4 (yes, he tried, bless him) really took to this....perhaps being up higher gave him a new viewpoint. In the real test, he was up on the podium before me- indeed I nearly fell off backwards, so keen was he to show off.

Total score on the day- 86/ 110. And 2nd place....to a pony that apparently had all the apparatus at home and practised regularly (made me feel rather a mean mummy at that moment!). However, I am definitely going to start setting up a course of obstacles in the paddock- that will sort the men from the boys, Willow! Now where can I buy one of those bird scarers....



DIARY DATES

Sept - Dengie and nutrition
Oct - Fire Brigade
Nov - Terri Hill (zebras)
Nov 15th (Sunday) Your Horse Live visit
Dec- Quiz and nibbles
Jan - AGM

Your Horse Live visit (contact Rowena if interested- deposit required, limited spaces)

Dressage Riders Show Jumpers Eventers

If you would be interested in competing for the club at area competitions, please contact Laura Hayden, Team Co-ordinator.

Tack Shop Club Member Discounts

Did you know you are entitled to special discounts at local tack shops ? Think of all that money you can save ! Here is a summary of just some of the discounts available and the contact details:

Chris Puddy : <http://puddys.co.uk/saddlery/>
- Discount 10%

Wadswick Countrystore:
<http://www.wadswick.co.uk/> - Discount 5%

Patrick Pinkers:
<http://www.patrickpinker.com/?id=296> –
Discount 10%

It is also worth asking if you visit other tack shops, remember always take your membership card with you ! Please note these discounts do seem to be rather selective and some items are excluded, unfortunately this includes saddles.

Please keep checking the website for up-to-date news regarding speakers and rallies –

www.vhprc.co.uk

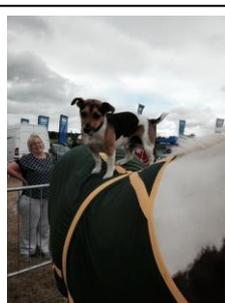
Any articles/ photos to Ros at rossteward@hotmail.co.uk

Showing out and about

Some of our members have been showing this season- hopefully more to come ☺



Linda Knight's Bertha jumping @ Leyland Court with Rachel Hawkins



Sue Fews' Rolo @ South Glos Show being a farriery display model with Fordy's Harvey



Sue Fews' Aladdin and Tobago @ Chepstow, qualified for RIHS 2016



Claire Phipps (nearly a member) with Aston McFluffy @ Timsbury



Jane Jones' LB @ Twerton



Chloe Little and Croft Limited Edition



Chloe Hayward 3rd in dressage



Jane Jones' LB @ Bicton



Chloe Little @ Cherif champs

Please send your photos, whatever you do with your equines.....

A Quiz for you....

As the speaker for our August meeting was unable to come because of a very poorly pony (we hope it recovers quickly), we had a chat and a quiz....but in tables rather than teams. And there were no prizes, so no pressure (haha). Here are the questions- can you work out the answers? They are all names of villages or districts within the old county of Avon.

- 1 Our Patron Saint
- 2 May 27th – June 4th 1940
- 3 To gain a car
- 4 To play a part on a metal
- 5 Not a high inn
- 6 A cathedral in London
- 7 Place your bet wisely
- 8 To secure some water
- 9 A cold water baby
- 10 A holy building and a cumulus
- 11 A drink is at the top
- 12 Part of a lamp
- 13 Put some nuts underground
- 14 A man's name
- 15 A wartime tank
- 16 Not a new country
- 17 Cover a prickle
- 18 A great mastication
- 19 To mend a track
- 20 Where the open waste ground stops

How did you do??? Here are the answers.....

- 1 St George
- 2 Dunkirk
- 3 Winford
- 4 Iron Acton
- 5 Publow
- 6 St Pauls
- 7 Backwell
- 8 Nailsea
- 9 Winterbourne
- 10 Temple Cloud
- 11 Portishead
- 12 Wick
- 13 Almondsbury
- 14 Harry Stoke
- 15 Churchill
- 16 Oldland
- 17 Thornbury
- 18 Chew Magna
- 19 Patchway
- 20 Downend



Congratulations to Sue Fews on the arrival of 5 new additions... well done Millie ☺

Did you know?

If you don't know your 'false curb' from your 'swan neck' then here is some help with some jargon busting on commonly used conformation terms.

1. Conformation, not confirmation

Let's get started with this common mistake!

2. Back at the knee

Also known as calf knee, a conformation fault where, when viewed from the side, the horse's knee is behind an imaginary vertical line dropped down from the front and top of the foreleg. This fault tends to become more pronounced as the horse gets older and can lead to unsoundness through excessive strain on the tendons and ligaments.

3. Over at the knee

The opposite to back at the knee and not considered too bad a conformation fault – it is believed, in moderation, to be a bonus for the hunting/racing set as it reduces the strain put on the tendons. In dressage, however, it is deemed a fault.

4. Bone

At least "nine inches of bone" is desirable in a hunter – but many people have no idea what it means. You measure a horse's bone around the cannon just below the knee and the bone should feel flat, not rounded.

5. Bridle lame

When a horse nods its head in trot, so it appears lame, but is not actually taking uneven steps with its legs. Often caused by poor riding when a jockey uses too much hand and too little leg, so the horse is not properly engaged.

6. Butty

A short-coupled, compact horse, often a cob type or a small hunter.

7. Condition

Some say synonymous with fat, but not necessarily the case! A horse in show condition will be round and well covered, but should not ripple with fat nor have bulges over its shoulders. Any judge worth his salt will be able to see through the blubber, which is often used to try to hide a multitude of sins.

8. Curb

A swelling at the back of the hock and just below it, often caused by a ligament strain and seen as a sign of weakness. A severe fault in showing circles.

9. False curb

Often mistaken for a real curb, but something else entirely. There's no soft-tissue swelling and it should disappear when the hindleg is lifted. But it's a conformation fault, which occurs when the head of the splint bone is enlarged.

10. Ewe neck

Sometimes referred to as an "upside down" neck and not, as some believe, the neck of a horse with poor condition. An animal with a true eweneck is physically incapable of working properly over its topline and will always carry his head too high and hollow his back. A dip remains in front of the withers and the muscles bulge on the underside.

11. Swan neck

The opposite of a ewe neck, with a pronounced curve on the topline, but still a conformation fault, as the horse will not go correctly and may hollow his back.

12. Furnished/unfurnished

Young horses are often said to be unfurnished because they haven't yet filled out their frame.

13. Lady waisted

Although this sounds deceptively charming, it actually means that the horse is nipped in at the "waist", or herring gutted like a greyhound!

14. Leg at each corner

Built solidly, like a table. Generally a good thing, but deemed "old fashioned" by some.

15. Length of rein

The distance between the rider's hand and the bridle – or another way of saying long or short necked.

16. Topline

The horse's topline includes the muscles over the neck, withers, back, loin and croup – from the side, his withers should be higher than the croup.

Do you know any more??



Qualifier Shows

The show season has already started (it gets earlier every year!)

These are the shows that have already offered to hold our qualifiers for the Veteran Championships in September- if anyone knows a show secretary that would hold qualifiers- please ask them to get in touch with Ros.

22/8/15 Blackdown Mendip @ Urchinwood (in hand only)

23/8/15 Cadnam, Hants

31/8/15 Berkeley show

5/9/15 Chew Stoke

6/9/15 Cadnam, Hants

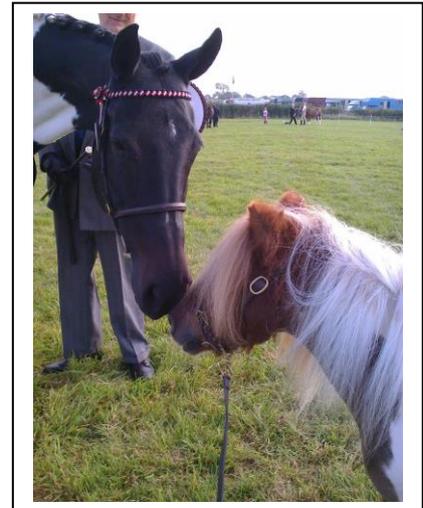
2016 qualifiers

Foxham 19/9/15

Cadnam 20/9/15

WE ARE SEEKING HELPERS

If you can help, or know someone who can, please get in touch with Ros



To date, we have the following numbers of qualified ponies and riders:

Junior inhand- 8

Senior inhand- 6

Golden inhand- 5

Junior ridden- 11

Senior ridden- 8

Golden ridden- 7

Mature rider- 7

Well done....keep them coming! ☺



A Rare Breed....

The Exmoor pony is one of the oldest in Britain, thought to date back to Celtic times. The Exmoor pony society was set up in 1921 by moorland farmers to protect the pure bred ponies, conserving and protecting the breed standard and maintaining Exmoor's heritage. The studbook became closed in 1962. The society works with the Exmoor National Park Authority and Rare Breed Survival Trust for many years to ensure that the Exmoor Pony, which is on the Trust's watchlist in category 2, survives both in its natural habitat and through breeders.

Situated in the heart of the beautiful Exmoor National Park, the Exmoor Pony Centre is a small charity run business, owned by the Moorland Mousie Trust, working to promote and protect the endangered rare-breed Exmoor pony. It was founded in 2000 by Val Sherwin and Sue Wingate. The trust was named after the Moorland Mousie books written by Golden Gorse, the pseudonym of Muriel Wace.

The book, written in 1929, is a story about the life of an Exmoor Pony called Mousie and was read by Val as a child. On a visit to Exmoor to purchase an Exmoor pony Val became aware that many of the foals, mostly colts, would go to the meat market for slaughter. Although she originally intended on buying one filly foal, when realising what might happen to her brother she bought him too. They were named Abbi and Yorrick. It was from this experience that an idea was born. When the charity was founded its aim was to ensure that no more foals would leave their mothers on the moor to go to the meat market. Since those early days, the work of the trust has moved on to encompass all aspects of Exmoor pony welfare.

The Exmoor Pony Centre, owned by the Moorland Mousie Trust, was opened to the public in the year 2006. Located in the heart of the Exmoor National Park it is the hub of all our activity with the Exmoor Ponies. It provides a permanent and specialised base for the foals when they arrive straight off the moor. It is the home to some 20 of the permanent residents, including Abbi and Yorrick. At the Centre, visitors to Exmoor who might otherwise not be lucky enough to see an Exmoor pony have the opportunity to come into close contact with them. Funding for the development of the Centre was provided by DEFRA's Rural Enterprise Scheme and the Exmoor National Park Authority Sustainable Development Fund. The Centre is run by a small team of dedicated staff and volunteers.



The characteristics of the Exmoor are: There is little variation between adult Exmoor Ponies although they naturally range from about 11½ hands to 13½ hands, the majority are 12 - 12.2 hands. The ponies are very stocky and strong, with deep chests and large girths. The large capacity of the digestive system is important in winter as they consume large quantities of rough material which provides them with internal warmth. Their colouring falls within a limited range of bay, brown on dun, with black points (with no white markings) and as such they blend in very well against their native background of heather, grass and bracken. They should have mealy markings on the muzzle and around the eyes. The prominent flesh around the eyes provides a defence system against harsh weather, and is known as a 'toad eye'. The ponies have neat, hard feet with a slate-grey sole, making them well suited to coping with rough terrain. Their legs are short, straight and set apart, and their action is straight and smooth - not as exaggerated an action as some breeds. A good Exmoor pony will have well laid back shoulders and a deep chest. The ribs should be long, deep, well-sprung and wide apart, with a broad back and level across the loins. In summer their coat is close, hard and bright, but to withstand the cold, harsh Exmoor winter they grow a coat in two layers which provides them, in effect, with thermal underwear and a raincoat! The hairs next to the skin are quite fine in texture and form a layer of insulation. The outer hairs are coarser and greasy giving waterproof protection. That this system is highly efficient is best demonstrated by the phenomenon of snow thatching: snow collects on top of the ponies coat as insufficient body heat is lost to melt it; and the snow can be periodically shaken off. The tail is neatly set in and the fan of short hairs near the root of the tail is called a snow chute. The mane, forelock and tail are thick and full, and also shed water efficiently.

Exmoors are very versatile. They can be shown in hand or ridden, jump, drive and do dressage. Here are some of them.....photos courtesy of Irene Baker.



For more information:

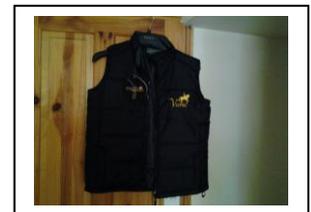
<http://www.exmoorponycentre.org.uk/index.php>

<http://www.exmoorponysociety.org.uk/>

VHPRC Clothing

Are you aware of the range of clothing we sell?

Here are some of the lines. Deb Vickery will be happy to discuss your requirements at every monthly meeting (or by phone if you are unable to come). New lines always being sought.....



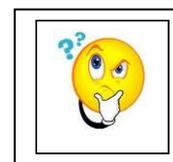
Who Am I????

The committee thought it might be fun to have a competition to guess the committee member from some, perhaps, unusual facts about them.....so here is the third contender.

- 1 My birth weight was 1 ½ lbs.
- 2 I was born in Wiltshire
- 3 I love skiing
- 4 I have an HGV licence
- 5 Steak is my favourite food
- 6 My favourite flower is a daisy
- 7 Jack Russells are my favourite dog

So.....who am I? Write the name of the committee member you think it might be at the next club meeting and the one drawn out (provided it's correct of course) will win a prize ☺ Is it: Sue Fewes, Jane Jones, Deb Vickery, Renee Sawyer-Fry, Rebecca Jones, Laura Hayden, Rowena Moulding, Gill Hutchings?

The answer to last time was.....Linda Knight !!



A Worrying Time....

On the 6th July this year our beautiful mare Izzy somehow injured herself in the field. This was a very nasty wound to her Lf pastern dorsal fetlock; she was immediately on antibiotics and the wound thoroughly cleaned and dressed.

One week later the wound was infected and no progress made; we were seriously thinking of having her put to sleep. At this stage we knew it would cost a lot of money and no guarantee that Izzy would regain full movement of this joint.

Charlotte and myself cried buckets and really thought we should not put her through all the trauma and six month period of box rest and constant dressing changes. So we told our vet, the lovely Carys Chadwick from B & W Equine, that we would have 24 hrs to make the decision.

The following day on the 14th July, we had made our minds up that Izzy was Charlotte's horse of a lifetime and damn the cost we owed it to this mare to give her every chance and we would take it week by week.

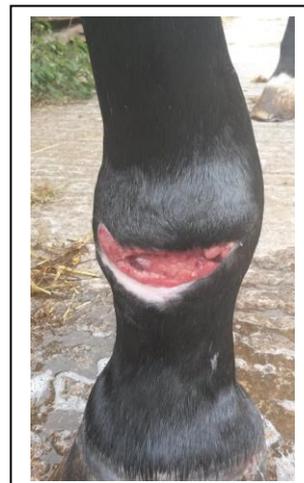
So that evening of the 14th Carys removed all the non healing flesh, which was not a pretty sight, and we started from the beginning with lots of dressing and more antibiotics.

Izzy is being a real star. She is fabulous with the vet and she knows the routine for her dressings. She has put up with the box rest brilliantly.

Today Monday 10th Aug we can see a massive improvement and we are only talking 5 weeks today!!! We have now got a good granulated wound, and no need for any more proud flesh trimming; we are now what we think half way there to recovery. So it could be 3 months and not six.

We take regular pictures and are hoping the outcome is now looking good for Izzy, We will update you in a few weeks, and I would like to say Carys from Bushy has been marvellous!!

Deb Vickery



Everyone sends best wishes for a speedy recovery 😊

Catching up.....

Earlier in the year two of the guest speakers at one of our meetings were Teejay and Tom otherwise known as Steam Horse. They are a stunt team who not only work on films but also take part in various pageants and re-enactments throughout the country.

I was thrilled to find them at Evesham last weekend for the battle re-enactment of the conflict between King John and Simon De Montford in 1265. A colourful spectacle with many troops battling and, of course, the horses. As well as knight to townsfolk sword fights on horseback we were treated to jousting, firing arrows from cantering horses at targets, using lances against shields and chopping off cabbages on poles representing heads, (health and safety wouldn't allow the real thing).

Before they joined the others Tom showed me the chain mail he was wearing for the battle. It was very heavy, at least 25 kilos, and could easily put you off balance if you leaned forward whilst mounted.

When they went to the display area they didn't wear the armour but villager costumes. This was Tom's horse's first time out and was a little unsure of himself but with encouragement from the others he soon gained confidence. Teejay and her horse were excellent, so confident, hitting the targets and slicing cabbages with ease.

Perhaps something for a rally in future. Lead me to the cabbages!



Rowena

