



# NEWSLETTER

## Autumn 2019

### From the Chair.....

*Hi Everyone,*

*So the winter is fast approaching, so we must all prepare for shorter days & longer nights. Sometimes it's very hard being a horse lover. As you may know I lost Coco in August it was a terrible time & I never want to go through anything like it again. But I am not ready to hang up my boots so very rashly have got myself a new horse, so welcome Little Mix aka Jessie, she is a young horse so will be a while before I am out & about. Hope I have done the right thing.*

*Hope to see lots of you at the show on 29th September at Leyland Court & don't forget the dressage series starts next month at Woodfield. Good luck & enjoy your horses & ponies you don't know what's around the corner, be kind & stay safe.*

*Jane & Jessie*



VHPRC Dressage Series  
@ Woodfield, Cann Lane

*If you can help, or know someone who can, please get in touch  
Contact: anyone on the Committee!!! 😊*

Dates are on the website

**We hold our meetings on the first Wednesday of the month**

**Bitton Sports and Social club**  
**(BS30 6HX)**

**Opposite Fonthill Garden Centre**  
**Bar available but only snacks**

## Why Equine Massage Therapy is more than just a treat for your horse

We all want our horses to be kept in the best possible condition because we love them and because we want to be able to enjoy them, in whatever capacity; whether that may be as our companion, our “happy hacker” or as or top competition steed.

But what treatment to choose, how often, and in what circumstances, is the question that I am asked by clients, and see in on-line forums most frequently because, let’s face it, the choices out there are seemingly endless: massage, physio, osteo, chiro, Mctimoney, cranial-osteopathy, bowen, reiki..... and so much more.

As a horse owner I wholeheartedly understand what a wonderfully expensive money-pit horses can be and that balancing your horse’s health and your finances is tricky. All the more reason then, I think, to have a clear idea about what you want to prioritise.

Some things just make sense to have as part of your horse’s regular routine, because they can prevent more intricate and ultimately costly problems developing. For me, and the reason that I trained in this field, one of the most important regular visit should be from your equine massage therapist.

Massage is one of the least invasive of the “hands on” therapies, but vital because a good equine massage therapist will work on all of the major muscles, and their muscle groups that are interconnected in some way to ensure that they are healthy and working to maximum efficiency for the whole body, every time.

A difference in gait, behavioural changes, a dip in enthusiasm or a drop in performance can all be early signs that something is not right but to get to this stage, a significant amount of stress and damage to muscle tissue may have already occurred.

People generally think of trauma as an injury, or incident, a kick or a knock. But chronic trauma, caused by repetitive strain, lasting muscle tension, overuse, or an imbalance in muscle development is very common and can result in the horse being taken out of action for the short- or sometimes more devastatingly- the long term. It starts silently you see, without any apparent symptoms, but it doesn’t go away unless treated and continues to build until one day you notice a difference in your horse and you have to seek remedial care.

Has your horse developed a slight toe drag; is he or she suddenly unwilling to work to the same level; do you see muscles twitching; is he or she uneven on one rein, unwilling to take up the contact? These may all be signs of trauma developing somewhere that can easily be remedied. Early detection and prevention is a lot easier on the horse – and your wallet.

A regular once-over by a massage therapist can prevent all of that; it can treat early onset of trauma before it develops into something more significant and can also provide early detection of other issues.

A good quality massage not only helps speed up repair of damaged muscle tissue, it supports your horse as muscle develops, ensuring the fibres lie in correct fashion, and increases blood flow for maximum efficiency of healing. Tight muscles in the horse’s body increase tension on the more delicate tendons and ligaments further down the legs which can lead to strain or other injury.

Healthy muscles support the whole dynamics of the horse; improved efficiency of stride means the horse is working less hard for more effective movement, which in turn means that he or she can perform better, for longer.

Increased circulation also results in a shinier coat. And of course, let’s not forget the reason that most people think of a massage for their four-legged friend; massage releases endorphins in exactly the same way that it does for humans, creating a sense of well-being for the horse.

My favourite time is when we have finished the massage and we watch how the horse moves afterwards; they all react differently. Moving better and more “correctly”, some horses skip out to the field with all the joy of a spring lamb; some are extremely relaxed and look like they just need a snooze..... Either way, you can visibly see the difference in your equine after each treatment and that is thanks enough!

**Nicky Burston at Equine Massage Therapies is offering fellow VHPRC Members**

**a special price of £40 for a massage which takes up to 2 hours and includes**

**full static & movement consultant and head to hoof massage.**



**Contact Nicky via facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Horseymassage/> or message: 07764 372229**

## HOYS BOUND

Laura and Jack (from Sue Few's yard) attended a HOYS clinic at the equestrian college in Keysoe on Monday 16th September, held by SEIB Search for a Star, as they qualified at Stretchholt some months ago for the Traditional class.

Big county shows are new to Jack this season, he is naturally a spooky pony, he can get tense in the ring and backs off when passing banners/ boards/ flower pots etc. The trainers and judges at Search for a Star gave Laura some simple exercises to do before going in the ring.

10m circles - start in walk and if you can do this in trot and canter after. Start a 10m circle at the beginning of the long side of the arena, being careful not to over bend and fall out through the outside shoulder. You should feel slightly more contact in the outside rein. As you rejoin the track, travel up the long side but keep the bend/angle you gained from the circle. Try not to get your pony to cross over its front legs. You want to be moving forward along the outside of the arena but with you pointing head/shoulders slightly in; before you come to the corner of the long side straighten up and push forward. Let your pony travel.

Leg yields - in trot come up the three quarter line and leg yield to the outside of the track - more contact should be in your outside rein. Keep your seat central and use your inside leg to move your pony across; once you hit the track ask for canter. Canter up the side of the arena, but turn before you reach each corner. - again leg yield to the outside of the track. And repeat.

This really helped Jack relax and concentrate on what he was being asked to do, rather than looking at everything spooky.

We wish Laura luck on her exciting visit to HOYS!!!



Local stories

### Because he's worth it

Report by Laura Barwood. Photos by KDM Photography

**T**his is Jack, who was bred by travellers and has moved from home to home since he was a foal. I bought him two years ago as a 10 year old, after having him on loan for a month. He had been sat in a field for about a year, he wasn't registered with any societies and he hadn't done any schooling.

I've had lessons with Matthew Lawrence, who has taught me since I was young. Matthew has done wonders with both Jack and I. I've worked really hard with him over the last two years and have had a go at local dressage and showing, which he has done amazingly well at. Jack really likes and is loose and forward, although he can be very spooky. I have to remind myself that this is all new to him, even though he is 12 now.

This year I decided to try some bigger shows including Bath and West, Royal Windsor, New Forest Show and SEIB Search for a Star. We qualified at Search for a Star and will be riding at HOYS in October. I cried like a baby when we qualified, as Jack is the first pony I've owned in 12 years. He is my world and I can not wait to be going around Birmingham arena. He definitely makes all the hard work and early mornings worthwhile.

He is my world, says Laura

Back to heading to HOYS



From Linda Knight....

## 3 Things that tell me Trooper is Growing Up (eventually!)

1. I can pick his feet out without him biting my bottom.
2. I can leave rugs on his wall to dry without him pulling them off and stamping on them.
3. I don't need the breeze block in his water bucket to stop him emptying his water all over his stable floor.



As you can see Trooper  
finds life very tiring!!  
*Zz Zz Zzzzzz.....*

And if further proof is required....here are some pictures of him out and about! Go Trooper ☺



Rachel Marina Rose Hawkins partnering Trooper in his first workers.....and winning!

## An Interesting Invitation

Team Windwillow were delighted and honoured to receive an invitation from Gwyneth Edgar to attend the final ever Gwynbeth show this summer. It's an unusual show as it is basically funded by corporate sponsors, but in the past anyone has been able to enter as with usual shows. This year, as it was the last one, people from a wide range of breeds were invited to give a showcase for the sponsors, and Izzy and I were asked to bring our Shetlands Allengrove Pringle and Windwillow Phoenix Fire. Essentially it was a "Corporate day to which horse and ponies attend to receive monetary and physical awards whilst engaging in showing competition in a spirit of good will, comradeship and respect for each other. There is limited entry to showing classes and some will be filled by invited partnerships - the invitation has no effect on judging results." The event this year was Friday 16th August at the Elms Hotel and Spa, Abberley, not far from Droitwich.

We entered 2 classes each: Izzy in Young Handlers and Shetlands, and me in Shetlands and Coloureds. Izzy started riding for me 4 years ago. As a beginner she rode one of my smaller Shetlands just to exercise her, but it soon became apparent that she was keen to learn about showing. She started with Megan (an experienced pony on the show circuit) both in hand and under saddle, soaking up techniques like a sponge, not only against children her own age, but also in open classes against adult handlers at affiliated level. As she started to outgrow Megan, her mother and I decided to purchase a Standard Shetland for her to progress onto, rather than only being able to continue showing in hand. I had seen Pringle advertised on facebook some months previously and contacted the breeder in Cumbria to ask if he was still available, which he was. It wasn't until he arrived that we realised that a) he had only been gelded 5 weeks previously at the age of 5, and b) he had had minimal handling, particularly in the show ring! However after a lot of hard work, Izzy has progressed well and is now riding in open showing classes, and competing in working hunter classes and dressage.

I first saw Phoenix (aka 'the naughtiest pony on the planet') as a feral colt, unhandled, aged 7 months in 2012 when I went with a friend to collect him plus another Shetland colt and a Welsh A colt from the breeders Sandra and Charles Seward. Having managed to get them home and unloaded from the trailer, I had a good look at him and told my husband I rather liked him- so he became an early Christmas present! Both as a 'junior' (under 3) and now as a 4 and over, he has continued to maintain good results against quality competition. Last year he was given some time out while I concentrated on my other youngster, but to maintain his interest and prevent him becoming too naughty (which occurs when he gets bored!), I introduced him to agility. He has developed his skills in this, standing on raised platforms, jumping obstacles, carrying weights, even being draped in tarpaulins, and it's something we will continue to train for, aiming at competition level hopefully next year. Shetlands are very bold and curious and like to be busy- this has been ideal for him to avoid getting bored with showing.

We travelled up to the venue early in the morning as we were allowed to park up earlier- the young handler classes started at 11. Having arrived and been directed to our parking slot (being a hotel, the parking was interesting for large lorries and trailers) and had a look at the ring situated on the front lawn of the hotel (very posh but worryingly close to the croquet lawn), we decided to go for a coffee from the Spa 'café'. This caused quite a stir with the ladies in robes and towels relaxing tranquilly so we explained we were with the horse show- they then were very interested in what we were going to do. The price of the coffees also caused a stir with us- 2 coffees and a hot chocolate for a tenner! Water it was from that point....

Because of the impending weather which was promising torrential rain, the young handler class was brought forward by half an hour, so Izzy and Pringle made their way round with 4 other combinations. They weren't actually placed in the ring but were given certificates which indicated their prize money (we had been warned NOT to lose these!) so they wouldn't know till later how they had done.

Then we were asked to congregate on the lawn to be led into the hotel for 'tea' (which was actually lunch). We were quite surprised to be greeted by a Scottish piper....in fact apparently Pringle grew to 18 hands when the bagpipes started right behind the lorry! We duly trooped in to the large dining room where we were provided with a very lavish afternoon tea- finger sandwiches, dainty cakes, scones....and lots of Prosecco! It was great to meet some new people from different parts of the country who had a variety of breeds entered and we soon got quite a happy buzz going. Towards the end Gwyneth gave a little speech which was very touching, and presented some personal awards; I was extremely touched to be the recipient of one of these, which was a hand cut stainless steel fruit bowl- absolutely beautiful and it will always be a wonderful reminder of a special day.

Having finished tea, we then returned to the show ring where we were privileged to see a performance by the Shetland Grand National team. Despite tricky conditions (yes, the weather had indeed started to turn rather blustery and wet) they competed several races which was very entertaining, particularly for the corporate sponsors who were quite merry by now (I have never seen so much alcohol imbibed at a show!) Once this was complete we were given 10 minutes to get our ponies ready for our classes which would follow on from each other due to the worsening conditions. Fortunately there were some trees which provided some shelter ....though I was a bit worried about falling branches! However we took the chance and waited to be called in for our classes.

Izzy and I were both in the Shetland class, again with 5 competitors, with a combination of Standard and miniature Shetlands forward. Both ponies were really well behaved and performed perfectly- Izzy was placed 1<sup>st</sup> and I was 4<sup>th</sup>. Again we were given certificates for prizes which were left in the care of Emily (Izzy's mum who is our third member of the team and whom we couldn't do without- she grooms, takes photos and anything else that's required- apart from map reading!) I had a further class- the coloureds- by which time I was quite wet....however Phoenix gamely performed again against much larger ponies and horses, and again was placed 4<sup>th</sup> out of 5 so I was very pleased.

We were given 10 minutes after the classes were finished to get changed into evening gear and back in the ring for the final performance. By now the rain was absolutely torrential and we were pretty much drowned rats within minutes! However we grinned and bore it, and were called forward several times for various awards, each of which came with a beautiful velvet sash and certificate. Izzy came away with reserve champion young handler, champion Standard Shetland, and 2 further awards, whilst Phoenix was champion miniature Shetland and 2 further awards. We were in the ring for more than an hour while 90 awards were given out so everyone was completely sodden, though we did manage to sneak under the tree in the middle which gave us a bit of shelter! Cunningly I kept all my certificates under my hat- probably the driest bit of me! Altogether our winnings came to over £300 which was amazing!

Having changed into dry clothes, our adventure wasn't completely over- we had arranged to stay at a yard nearby due to the late finish. We found the address with no trouble thanks to Emily's satnav (no map reading remember?) however we overshot the actual driveway as the people hadn't made their way to the entrance by the time we got there, so after driving up an increasingly narrowing lane in the dark and pouring rain which was rather alarming, we had to turn the lorry round in a deserted farmyard, made our way back down where they were waiting for us. However, the entrance was now the wrong way for the lorry to get through, and after getting wedged on a large gate post (yes, now a nice hole in the side of the lorry!), we had to back out, go back down the lane, make a 3 point turn in someone's driveway and back up again, now facing the right way to get in the gate. Finally parked up, we stabled the ponies, gratefully accepted a cup of coffee and headed for bed! In the early light of the next morning, turning the lorry round without hitting various obstacles (abandoned cars, baths, bins, barrels etc) was the next problem to solve! However again with brilliant teamwork and some very physical effort from Emily to move as many as she could, we managed a 30 point turn so we were headed the right way to leave, loaded the ponies, skipped out the stables, waved goodbye to our hosts and headed off to the first motorway services to grab a much needed coffee before finally heading home.

It was a brilliant day out- if rather wet- and we were extremely privileged to have been included. It was amazing that it ran at all- a couple of days after the show we heard that Roger, Gwyneth's husband, had suffered a series of strokes. Yet she had kept her emotions in check in order to provide us with a very special experience- what a remarkable lady she is. It is good news that he is on the mend and progressing well.



Ros Steward

## 18 horse-related superstitions that some people swear by

Horses have been around for, well, donkey's years. They're inextricably woven into the fabric and folklore of Britain — and many countries round the world, too. Here are a few horsey superstitions...

1. Never wear anything new out hunting or competing.
2. It's unlucky to rename your horse.
3. Green is an unlucky colour for equestrians — and even a green handkerchief in the betting ring at the races is considered to bring bad luck.
4. Seeing one light grey horse is bad luck (unless you are with your lover), but seeing two together brings good luck.
5. A horseshoe is lucky if hung outside your home — the iron wards off evil spirits — but be careful to hang it the right way up, otherwise all your family's good luck will drain out of it... although others claim a horseshoe should be hung upside down to stop the devil sitting in the bottom of it, so that's a challenging one...
6. A bridegroom must carry a horseshoe in his pocket to ensure a happy marriage.
7. The shoe of a two-year-old filly placed in your butter churn will stop witches stealing your butter. (A problem I'm sure many of us share...)
8. A horse neighing outside your door means your family will get sick. (This could be a problem if you keep your horses at home...)
9. Piebalds are lucky, skewbalds are unlucky.
10. You should do 13 plaits for geldings and 12 for mares...
11. ...Although others believe it should always be an even number of plaits, including the forelock, to avoid bad luck.
12. A light grey horse appearing in a dream for three successive nights means an elderly person will die...
13. ...Unless they're three light grey colts, in which case a young person will die.
14. A horse found in its field all sweaty with a tangled and twisted mane and tail has spent the night being ridden by pixies.
15. Dun or buckskin horses are regarded as unlucky by the Bedouin, and also in Romania.
16. The Hungarians and Spanish think black horses are lucky – the French and Bedouin believe the reverse.
17. One white leg, buy him/Two white legs, try him/Three white legs, send him far away. (Sell him to your foes)/Four white legs, keep him not a day. (Feed him to the crows)
18. In some ancient cultures, vows taken on horseback had special sanctity and could never be broken.

## WE ARE WHAT WE EAT

It is widely accepted that many diseases in man are the result of our modern way of life and more particularly the modern diet. Horses are no different and many equine diseases are also diet related.

This is an appropriate time of year to consider diet related disease when the risk of the most common disease, laminitis, is high.

When discussing diet it is logical to start with a description of the gastro intestinal tract (GIT) and its function. Understanding its function is fundamental to recognising the potential for serious and often fatal diseases such as colic, laminitis and less serious but still common problems such as gastric ulceration.

A good starting point is to consider what evolution has created. It has taken 55 million years for the horse to evolve from its earliest known fossil ancestor to the modern horse, however domestication is a mere 5000 years. This means that the way the GIT functions is largely unchanged in tens of thousands if not millions of years. However, the diet and feeding practices have changed significantly in modern times and is the source of many problems. Many of these changes have been made for our convenience and not necessarily for the benefit of the horse.

Horses are trickle feeding grazers which means that the GIT expects a continuous input of forage which is bulky but low in protein, carbohydrate and fat content. A natural diet is primarily fibre and contains very little of these complex ingredients.

The digestion process begins in the stomach where gastric acid starts to physically break down the diet. Stomach acid is very strong, stronger than battery acid and many times more acidic than vinegar. A common problem today is gastric ulceration (EGUS) which occurs when stomach acid attacks the sensitive lining of the stomach because there is insufficient food in the stomach to absorb the acid or there is not enough saliva to neutralise the acid. It is very important to understand that in the horse stomach acid is produced continuously but saliva is only produced in significant quantities when the horse is eating. The natural habit is to be grazing and eating for 16 to 17 hours per day which will ensure adequate amounts of saliva. Stabling, stress, work and restricted feeding times will therefore reduce saliva production and increase the risk of ulceration. Man on the other hand produces saliva continuously to assist with speaking but acid is produced mainly when we eat. The common practice of withholding food before strenuous exercise will also increase the risk of EGUS because it reduces saliva production and leaves the stomach partly empty. A horse should not undertake strenuous exercise within less than two and a half hours after a main feed but do give a small feed of a double hand full of chaff about 30 minutes before exercise.

The next stage in digestion occurs in the small intestine (SI) where proteins, carbohydrates, sugars and fats are broken down into absorbable nutrients by chemicals called enzymes released by the SI itself. The SI is short and food moves through continuously towards the large intestine (LI) even if it is not fully digested.

Digestion in the LI is very different and occurs by bacterial fermentation much like the rumen of a cow or even your septic tank. These bacteria break down fibrous substances such as cellulose which are indigestible by other areas in the GIT. The stomach and SI contents are acidic but the LI is mostly alkaline and this pH can be badly disturbed if significant quantities of food material such as sugars and starch which are found in lush grass arrive in the LI undigested. The useful LI bacteria are very sensitive to the presence of sugars and starches which can dramatically disturb the balance between good and harmful bacteria making the LI vulnerable to malfunction.

The LI comprises 65% of the whole digestive tract so the health of its bacterial populations is vital to the health of the horse. When significant numbers of bacteria die as a result of undigested foods arriving in the LI they release toxins into the circulation and can cause serious disease such as laminitis. These toxins can also affect the motility and emptying process of the LI and cause colic.

The way to avoid these GIT diseases would appear to be simple. Remember what evolution has created and feed small feeds of concentrates which can be digested fully in the time they take to passage through the SI. The bulk of the diet should be fibre fed ad lib which will ensure adequate saliva production, reduce the risk of EGUS and supply the LI with the bulk its bacteria require.

However, things are rarely as simple as we would wish. Many strains of modern grasses have been developed to feed farm stock which have much greater metabolic demands to produce milk or meat. These grasses can, in some cases, be too rich for horses which are not working hard and if owners also feed concentrates they can easily overfeed their horse. The use of bagged forage in which nutrient levels can be higher again can also lead to overfeeding. A simple rule of thumb is to feed your horse a total of two and a half percent of its body weight in food per day. If your horse is overweight and it needs to lose weight that percentage can be reduced to one and a half percent of body weight. Feeding is as much an art as a science and if your horse has enough energy for the work he is asked to perform and he maintains condition his diet is most probably adequate. If he is overweight or gaining weight he is storing fat and must be eating more than he is utilising.

Science underpins knowledge and guides wise practice but remember the horse has not read the text book and is still a grazing animal. The old mantra of a little and often and keep things simple are as valid today as they were 100 years ago.

If you're into showing, chances are you've experienced at least a handful of these cringe-worthy situations...

**Put your hands up if you can relate to one of these 17 show ring scenarios...**

**1. When your horse won't stand for the judge to get a rosette**

*And why is it always when it's a red one?*

**2. When the steward calls you in first, but they were actually pointing to the rider behind you**

*Oh, well done you. I'm so happy for you... promise*

**3. When you wait all day for your class and then canter on the wrong leg**

*\*Slumps back to lorry in shame.*

**4. When you canter on the wrong leg but your horse refuses to pick up the right leg**

*Well this is just embarrassing. I swear he's never done this before.*

**5. Just any wrong leg in general, anywhere in the show ring**

*Wrong canter lead = instant drop down the line.*

**6. When your horse spooks at the ice cream van**

*Apparently he's more of a savoury fan.*

**7. When an unruly child scares your horse in front of the judge**

*Children under the age of 12 should be banned from the ringside*

**8. When the judge asks what breed your native is**

*Classic.*

**9. When the judge asks if you're still eligible for the young rider qualification (and you were ineligible 15 years ago...)**

*I don't know if I should be flattered or offended...*

**10. When you cut up a producer on the go round**

*Just received a death stare from a showing celebrity.*

**11. When your horse won't trot up for his conformation**

*\*Shoots 'the look' at your groom to slyly run up behind said horse for encouragement*

**12. When your horse stops to do his business right in the middle of your show**

*When you've got to go...*

**13. When your lead-rein jockey cries because he/she is bored in the line-up**

*Not every kid is cut out for the showing life. On to the next...*

**14. When your young horse is clearly not ready for a 30-strong go round at your local county show**

*I never signed up for a game of buckaroo.*

**15. When you're aware of a class winner's connection to a judge**

*We're all thinking it, but no one will say anything...*

**16. When you look at your marks and realise you got the lowest of the class**

*We suppose someone's gotta finish last...*

**17. When you're pulled in top, get dropped and the judge proceeds to tell you why**

*Insert false smile.*

*I can relate to quite a few actually!!!!*

## DIARY DATES

Oct - Sally Ann Haigh - update on her progress  
Nov - Gary - his Australian ride continued  
Dec - AGM (information to follow)  
Jan - Mini Quiz/Auction and Nibbles  
Feb - Nicky Burston - Equine Massage  
Mar - Sharon Woolaston - Dressage rider

If anyone has some ideas for speakers at our meetings, do please contact **Beth Bracey** with details.

If anyone would like to compete for the club (dressage, show jumping, cross country etc) please contact **Rachel Hawkins 07814 561106** She would be delighted to hear from anyone, at any level!!

**Sunday 13th Oct - Arena Eventing at West Wilts**

**Sunday 3rd November - Senior Novice Dressage at West Wilts**

**Saturday 4th January - Combined Training at Hartpury**

## QUALIFIER SHOW DATES: For this season.....

**2020 Qualifiers:**

**27th Oct - Tumpy Green**

**If you hear of a show that would hold qualifiers at no cost to them, please contact Jane Andoniou**



### Dressage Series Dates

**October 20th**

**November 24th**

**December 15th**

**February 23rd**

**March 22nd**

**Championships April 19th**

Please keep checking the website for up-to-date news regarding speakers and rallies – [www.vhprc.co.uk](http://www.vhprc.co.uk)  
Any articles/ photos to Ros at [rossteward@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:rossteward@hotmail.co.uk)

## Do you remember being a pony-mad child in the 80s?

1. You **avidly followed the exploits of Fred, the *Horse & Pony* pony**. You may even have owned a share in him.
2. You had **posters of iconic grey racehorse Desert Orchid** all over your bedroom.
3. Your heroes were **Virginia Elliot** and **Harvey Smith**.
4. You **sneakily got hold of your mum's copy of Jilly Cooper's *Riders*** and fell madly in love with Rupert Campbell-Black, even though you were a bit embarrassed by all the sex stuff.
5. You had a **jute rug for the stable, which you'd thatch (pack) with straw** to keep your pony warm on cold, wet days, and a New Zealand rug to keep him dry in the field.
6. Your favourite books (that you were actually allowed to read, unlike Jilly Cooper) were by **Josephine Pulein-Thompson**, or the **Ruby Ferguson 'Jill' series**. You wished you owned Black Boy and Rapide.
7. You had the **original My Little Ponies** that actually look like horses (albeit multi-coloured ones), but went off them when they got wings and fish tails and silly stuff like that.
8. Your mum answered your plea for a pony by buying you a **Sindy pony**. Sadly, you couldn't quite hide your disappointment.
9. Your riding instructor spent some time each lesson teaching you how to do **round-the-worlds and scissors**.
10. Your riding hat was basically a **cardboard and velvet shell with a chinstrap**.
11. You used to **hack out for hours with your mate and her pony and a saddlebag full of Disco crisps and Wagon Wheels**.
12. Hardly anyone had trailers, so you used to **hack to local gymkhanas**.
13. You got a **copy of the Pony Club annual in your Christmas stocking** every year.

**What do you remember from your childhood days??? Let me know for the next newsletter!!**

## TRACEY BRIMBLE



Our August speaker was Tracey Brimble, an equine podiatrist.

She spoke about her journey and work, using some interesting examples to illustrate her talk.



I am a rather traditional horse owner, I compete and train regularly on my own three horses in dressage, show jumping and eventing, one of whom I bred and backed myself. I became a barefoot trimmer due to the loss of my first horse with navicular.

I religiously followed the veterinary advice for joint injections, exercise, and latterly remedial shoeing, which as I now know had no hope of saving her, she was PTS in 2000 at the age of 13.

My second horse was purchased at 6 years old, all was fantastic (shod) until she was almost 10, then she developed the identical foot problems my first horse had. I knew this wasn't a coincidence due to my riding, or the horse's own genetics so I investigated the care of the feet.

To cut a very long story short the internet screamed "take the shoes off" at me, I did and she walked away sound and is now 19 and still eventing fit.

Once I'd opened Pandora's box I couldn't ignore what I'd learned, I trained as an Equine Podiatrist through the need to understand what was going wrong with all our horses feet and became qualified as a result, then my phone started ringing and it hasn't stopped.

It is now my pleasure to help others retrieve their horses from the fate of my first horse, and of course even better to care for many life long unshod horses as well.

Whilst I trained as an Equine Podiatrist I firmly believe the horses I've worked with have trained me far more than the initial training on its own. I have adapted and developed my methods and continue to do so as the horses respond to my care. They are all individual, and I treat them as such.

I live in Chew Magna and work in Somerset, Wiltshire with the occasional foray into Gloucester.

Contact: 07974 749 043

Email: [traceybrimble@btinternet.com](mailto:traceybrimble@btinternet.com)

Qualification: DAEP

Professional Membership: Independent

If you are interested in finding out more about trimming, this site might be helpful:

[https://hoofgeek.com/barefoot-horse-info/?fbclid=IwAR0MTRSgHHwboE2NjYojhmreQm3K6nf42NYqcANY2Lj4O\\_M1Fv3Xau4KSo](https://hoofgeek.com/barefoot-horse-info/?fbclid=IwAR0MTRSgHHwboE2NjYojhmreQm3K6nf42NYqcANY2Lj4O_M1Fv3Xau4KSo)

## A FOLLOW UP FROM PAUL BROWN (VIA BETH BRACEY)

I am Paul Brown and I am a Cognitive behavioural therapy coach/practitioner who specialises in anxiety, stress and mental and physical well-being and mental health awareness. I am a mental health first aider and I deliver mental health awareness presentations to organisations as well as having 1-2-1 sessions with employees and private clients. A large section of the population are ignorant as to what the definitions of mental health and mental illness are.

According to the World Health Organisation mental health can be defined as: A state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.

Mental disorder/illness is defined as: comprising of a broad range of problems with different symptoms. They are generally characterised by some combination of abnormal thoughts, emotions, behaviour and relationships with others. Examples are schizophrenia, depression, intellectual disabilities and disorder due to drug abuse. Most of these can be successfully treated. I also believe that to progress, manage and control mental illness a person needs to find their balance of wellness. This is done through professional support, complementary therapies, motivation, pro-activity, time-management, self care, mindfulness, visualisation, resilience and the 8 dimensions of wellness.

1. Emotional- Coping effectively with life and creating satisfying relationships.
2. Environment- Good health by occupying pleasant, stimulating environments that support well-being.
3. Financial- Satisfaction with current and future financial situations
4. Intellectual- Recognizing creative abilities and finding ways to expand knowledge and skills
5. Occupational- Personal satisfaction and enrichment from one's work.
6. Physical- Recognizing the need for physical activity, healthy foods, and sleep
7. Social- Developing a sense of connection, belonging, and a well-developed support system
8. Spiritual- Expanding a sense of purpose and meaning in life

When I talk to people and we start to discover what causes their mental health to fall a common term that springs up is anxiety. Anxiety in basic terms is a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease about something with an uncertain outcome. Anxiety affects how we feel and behave and can cause physical symptoms. Mild anxiety is vague and unsettling, while severe anxiety can seriously affect day-to-day living.

### What is anxiety?

According to the American Psychological Association, the definition of Anxiety is – An emotion characterised by feelings of tension, worried thoughts and physical changes like increased blood pressure. People with **anxiety** disorders usually have recurring intrusive thoughts or concerns and they may avoid certain situations out of worry. Anxiety has been shown to be a part of life, it may not be nice, but affects most people at some point in their life. It affects people at different times and in different ways, some people will thrive on it and use it to drive them on, where as other people will buckle under anxiety and will severely disrupt their life. Anxiety sometimes goes hand in hand with stress, and stress will be part of most people's lives as well, whether this be at home, work or in a social situation. It is usually clear to the person who is stressed what is wrong and what is causing their stress, but anxiety can cause a person a great deal of suffering and the cause is not always clear.

Anxiety can cause a person to think things are really bad when they are not as bad as it seems. In some people the anxiety can cause them to think the most negative thoughts. The problem is because the person may catastrophise situations and events in their life, they will not confront their fears. By confronting their fears they may get to the bottom of what is causing their anxiety.

Symptoms of Anxiety – This is not an exhaustive list and these symptoms will not affect everyone who suffers from anxiety. It should also be noted that if someone gets anxious and at the same time they drink a lot of alcohol or take controlled drugs their symptoms may be affected severely.

There are several different anxiety disorders, each with a distinct set of symptoms.

However, common symptoms can include:

sweating, dizziness, trembling, increased or irregular heartbeat, back pain, restlessness and fatigue, muscle tension, being easily startled.

So don't suffer if you are constantly anxious about situations then seek help. There are possible treatments:

**Stress management:** Learning to manage stress can help limit potential

**Relaxation techniques:** Such as yoga, meditation breathing and mindfulness.

**Exercises to replace negative thoughts with positive ones:** Write a diary of your thoughts and the situations that triggered the anxiety, write down positive thoughts and outcomes, learn what the triggers are.

**Support network:** Talk with a person who is supportive, such as a family member, friend, or a work colleague.

**Exercise:** Physical exertion can improve self-image and release chemicals in the brain that trigger positive feelings

If your symptoms do not retreat, then seek advice from your GP they can advise on other more specific treatments.

For a limited time I am offering a special offer.

If you would like to talk to me to discuss my services and what I can do to help you I will offer 1 hour sessions for £40 face to face or £30 for a Skype session

In the New Year I am hoping to start delivering two day Mental Health First Aid training accredited by MHFA England.

Contact me at [paul@balanceofwellness.co.uk](mailto:paul@balanceofwellness.co.uk) / 07957101185