

ON THE RIGHT TRACK



NORTH LANCASHIRE BRIDLEWAYS SOCIETY NEWSLETTER | DECEMBER 2010

ENSURING THE FUTURE OF THE BRIDLEWAYS OF NORTH LANCASHIRE

Beautiful though the snowy weather is I'm afraid I am now sick of it. We haven't even passed the shortest day yet. Struggling water buckets in and out of the kitchen sink because the outside tap is frozen and then walking like a duck to get to the pony shed without slipping and tipping iced water everywhere may have novelty value in February when there is the hope that spring is just around the corner, but in November... No, no. No fun at all. Enough is enough.

We haven't had a lot of material for this newsletter so apologies if it is all getting a bit samey. Thanks to Helen and Eve who have once again pitched in and sent words. You'll see from Eve's article that we have had big changes in the people who make the NLBS what it is. I think we all rather take for granted that the society will keep up the good work, but it is only when the jobs are actually listed that I realise just what hard work a lot of people are happy to do. Many thanks to everyone. Certainly without the NLBS it would never have occurred to me to do any long distance rides and even if it had I wouldn't have known where to start. Ideas, inspiration and very cheerful meetings at Hest Bank Memorial Hall -

I don't understand why everyone with a horse or an interest in riding isn't a member!

If you have any thoughts, items (or horses) for sale, pictures, comments or recommendations do send them for the summer 2011 newsletter. E-mail them to sheena@creativemarketingsolutions.co.uk

Merry Christmas and happy riding in 2011.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sheena'.

CHANGES at NLBS

When Vicky Lowe informed me that she was packing up as secretary I was devastated. She has been the main trailblazer for the NLBS for over ten years.

Vicky can only be described as a terrier that never lets go! Vicky would ride, explore, walk and drive to any tracks or blocked bridleways she could and then 'agitate' for getting them opened and on the map. Landowners, farmers, countryside agencies, town hall officials - in fact everyone and his dog would not stand in her way.

Vicky always believed in 'going to the top' which was how we gained access to the canal at Bolton-le-Sands when she realized that the head of the 'canal people' was himself an horse rider.. She gave two very spirited presentations at Halton and Caton about access for horse riders on the Lune Millenium Path when the public were up in arms about the lights and tarmac. We now have access.

Not content to preserve bridleways in our area, wherever she goes on holiday with David in their caravan she enquires about access on tracks, canals and moors. We have been at many lively meeting with 'officials' when I have had to nudge her arm to stop her coming to blows in her efforts to get more access. She will be sorely missed.

I may say that Kay Edwards has gallantly taken over the secretary's job and is great.

When Barbara Hartley informed me that she was hoping to relinquish her membership secretary job I was so sorry to lose her enthusiasm. It is mainly thanks to Barbara that we have such a high membership (about 300) and that people remember to pay their subs. Two members from Cartmel have agreed to step into the breach - Adele McLaughlin and Kate Lennox.

When Lynne Hodgson said she'd like to pack up as treasurer I was beginning to think we were doomed to lose everyone. Lynne has faithfully traveled to Grange-over-Sands to bank our money and written cheques to all who needed them. We thank her for all her efforts on our behalf. Sheila Kissack has kindly agreed to become our treasurer and can be reached at 015395 66947. [\(Continued on back page\)](#)

WILLIAM'S THINK TANK

After our unsuccessful trial of boots last year, I decided to have William shod for the summer. He has had shoes on before so it was no problem to get him shod, and we have been able to get out for much longer rides. We have very little off-road riding around Lowgill so most of our riding has to be round the lanes. Having shoes on meant we could do lots more trotting and get a bit fitter (both of us). However we still didn't manage to get out of our local area for any rides, despite good intentions to do so. I'm sure there are a lots of other Bridlepath members who hack around there local area through choice or lack of transport. What I did manage to do this summer was to go and help at two events. This is a great way of joining in and meeting people, and learning new skills without actually having to get your horse there, or even without having a horse, I can highly recommend it as a good day out

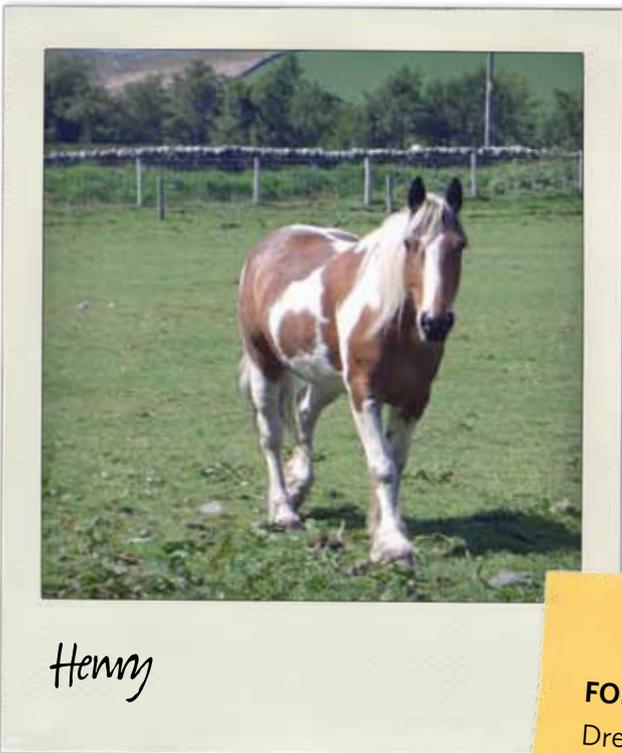
I spent at day helping at the Le TREC event held at Priory Park, Ulverston. The surroundings were fabulous, as I'm sure all the competitors will agree, and so was the great lunch provided by Steve and Linda and Linda's mum (especially Linda's Mum) I was able to meet people that I had seen at meetings but never actually spoken to, also as a judge on some of the obstacle course I was able to learn about the

skills required and as I wasn't actually riding I could stand there thinking 'William and I could do that! No problem!'

The second event I helped at was Ingleton gymkhana, and William and I could defiantly have done that, as age and ability did not matter at all. This is a real grass roots event so there was something for everyone to try. I was helping to run the handy pony course, RUN being the operative word as I was kept very busy picking up tennis balls and fishing nets and helping people on and of big and little ponies. After the handy pony I helped with the games, which were entered with great enthusiasm by ponies and children alike. It was all very entertaining to watch and great food was again provided, this time by the ladies of the NSPCC. Unfortunately, despite all that running around I think William was the only one who got any fitter by the end of summer, I just got a bit fatter from all the good food that I ate. So thank you to everyone who kept me well fed, an unexpected perk to helping at events.



News



Henry

NSPCC Ingleton Gymkhana and Dog Show was held on Sunday 12th September this year. Rachel and Jean Easterby of Greenhall Riding Stables, Lowgill arranged the horsey bits. It was a lovely day, great fun and well attended. Also very good cakes! The event raised the terrific sum of £1000 for the NSPCC.

Tack Sale - We had a full house of sellers (24 tables) and approximately 300 people through the door. Thank you to EVERYONE who helped - set up, take down, man the door, traffic flow manage, caterers, people who sent cakes and sandwiches etc. etc. THANK YOU.

We took over £700 on the day and everyone seemed to be coming out of the hall with bargains so the stall holders had a good day too.

The Westmorland Branch of Riding for the Disabled had a stand selling Christmas cards and other items, they had a good day so thank you to all those who supported them. We hope to have them back next year.

Thank you too, for the donations of tack for the charities we were supporting.

FOR SALE - HENRY

15.1 hh skewbald Irish cob. 15 years. Good to catch, box and shoe. Calm in traffic. Lives in or out. Has looped the Towneley Loop twice. Up to date jabs and passport. For sale due to lack of time. £1,500. Call Jill Brown 015242 61400 / 07795 567 039

FOR SALE

Dressage saddle, double bridle and boots.
Contact Pat Staveley 015242 21309

FOR SALE

Aigle wellies, ladies size 41 (7ish) very dark green, dead posh. Unwanted prize. Test driven once, still in box. RRP £65 Would like £45 ono! Sheena 07736 697 879

ACROSS THE BAY

July 26th

After seeing the video of the Cross Bay Ride at an NLBS meeting last year I decided it was something I had to do. I have always fancied a gallop on the beach but have never managed to get myself organised.

So, in a flush of enthusiasm I contacted Phyllis Capstick of Cumbria Bridleways early in the new year.

The ride was arranged for the 7th of June, going from Arnside and I was first on the list. I tried to persuade some friends to come along but the notorious Morecambe Bay is not everyone's cup of tea and several folk said they didn't even fancy walking across, never mind sitting on an 'orse that hadn't even seen sand before. Point taken. But by that time I'd stuck my neck out and said I'd do it, so I wasn't about to wuss out! In May the news came that the ride was to depart from Humphrey Head and cross to Arnside, and back, of course. This meant a much longer drive for me and whilst I am getting more confident (not necessarily competent...) a long drive with a trailer and then an exciting ride was a bit of a scary prospect. Never mind – I would shut up and get on with it. I wanted a challenge for my 50th year and across the bay it would be. Anthony, my venerable Land Rover, himself pushing 50, was also up for the challenge and whilst he is not an easy drive, he is steady and very strong. Monday, June 7th found us snorting and roaring through the genteel street of Grange, out through Allithwaite and on down the narrow, twisty lane to Humphrey Head. I hadn't been there before, so I drove with tightly crossed fingers in case we met anything coming towards us.

And – over the final cattle grid and down the slope to the sandy, humpy land beneath the steep cliff which is, I think, Humphrey Head. Being a bit hyped I had arrived quite early, some time before Phyllis but after a couple of trailers whose drivers seemed very nonchalant and relaxed. They waved in the general direction of another flat bit further on and I was left to anxiously jiggle over the humpy bumpy bits and make sure that Anthony's nose was pointing in the right direction without any need to reverse for escape.

Jake, at that point was cool and chilled. As long as he has hay he is usually happy. I tied up a full hay net and unloaded him to stand at the back of the trailer. He glanced at the other horses but thought hay was more important. I fiddled about trying to look efficient and feeling a bit of a twit. We don't do rugs, boots and bandages. It is all very utility and a bit rough and ready, but I waved a brush about and fluffed up his fetlocks. A couple of other trailers appeared, but no one familiar and then Helen Wilkinson's little car appeared over the cattle grid and moral support had arrived. Not only that, she also had butties, a flask of coffee and very good cake. Things were on the up. Shortly after, Cecelia Dixon and some other NLBS members turned up along with Phyllis and helpers and Cedric, his tractor and team. Departure time was to be 1.30pm so Jake was saddled and ready in good time. For some reason no one seemed in any hurry and it was actually after two by the time we set off. Jake by this time had decided that this was pretty good fun and he rather liked the other horses and the excitement. His head was up and he let out a few goodly snorts to let me know he was up for it.

Cedric set off in a pony and trap and The Sandpiper, a jingly trailer on the back of a tractor, made it's way around the head and out towards the bay proper. Helen, having imagined that she would climb the hill, watch from a vantage point and then head for home, discovered that seats were free in the trailer, so she jumped in and sat back to enjoy an unscheduled tour of the sands.



On reaching the first ditch Jake thought it might be getting a bit too exciting and stopped to do an enormous poo on the bank. This was a pity as it gave some of the horses behind a chance to think about it and then do a bit of hopping and leaping instead of just crossing calmly. One poor woman almost didn't make it as her beautiful grey beastly was having none of it. Several people went back across to help and persuade but she had a battle royal to convince her horse it was a good idea. It is in situations like that that I realise what a feeble wuss I am. I am heavily into self preservation and the thought of a great rearing thoroughbredy thing fills me with horror. By the time we were all across Cedric said we'd better get on a bit sharpish (time and tide wait for no man...) and set off at a spanking trot. I had thought that we'd walk quite a lot, trot a bit and have a couple of gallops – but I was wrong. We kept up the smart pace all the way. There was no way Jake was going to walk, he was on a mission.

We rattled across the sands behind the trap and on to the River Kent, where we were told to spread out between laurel branch markers and under no circumstances follow anyone. This is because the sand gets poached up and stodgy making it difficult for the horses to move forward easily. It was a bit like being in an old cowboy movie – all steadily walking forward in a line to intimidate the Injuns. The noise of horsefeet thrashing the water was terrific and although Jake is about 15.2 I still managed to get my boots wet, so it was pretty deep. One horse decided it wanted to tuck in behind it's chum and sure enough, it lost its footing and stumbled causing its rider a ducking. Thankfully, the weather was warm and beautiful so although the hapless rider was soaked to the skin, she didn't suffer any ill effects.

Soon after our mega paddle we arrived on the Arnside side of the bay to be greeted by Eve and Co with orange cordial and custard creams. Very welcome as I was a bit surprised by the cracking pace and I thought Jake might have to lie down. He stood stock still and appeared as if he wouldn't raise a trot again for some time. However, because we were on a schedule it was not long before we had to be off again, back across the deepening river towards Humphrey Head. Jake was well up for the challenge and wanted to be near the front.

Just as we got to the other side of The Kent Cedric pulled everyone up and said calmly – "OK, off you go. If you want to gallop, follow the tracks." The chap leading the ride from horseback began to say something like, "When this mare goes, I can't st..." and he was off. About four big, beautiful horses took off across the sands with no further discussion. I thought I'd hold back and conserve energy, doubting Jake's stamina (and mine). Three other folk decided to go for it and shot past the Sandpiper. Jake jiggled and huffed and after a couple of minutes trying to hold him back I thought neither my arms or his mouth would benefit from the tussle so with a rather unladylike 'Bugger it – we'll go' we whizzed off on the first proper gallop I've had for possibly 30 years! It was terrific. Once we'd got into our stride I looked ahead and saw four tiny horses in the distance. I didn't believe they were the first four they were so far away – they must have gone like race horses. Several times I asked Jake to slow down, but he was having none of it and certainly didn't want anyone to overtake. I really think he was having the time of his life and thoroughly enjoying the whole experience.

Eventually, we slowed and managed to finish the ride striding right behind the Sandpiper chatting about the benefits of good chunky Cobs and the wonderful weather and the bay. It was a superb day, an unforgettable experience and with absolute confidence in Cedric and his team I would advise anyone who fancies it to go for it. Thank you Phyllis, Cedric et al.

CHANGES

at NLBS (Continued)

Sue Clowes decided to have a rest from taking the Minutes. Sue not only did this job but has been a great help in many other ways – planning our ride routes, marking routes, car parking (when very tight*), notifying the press of our activities and getting loads of her friends to stand on gates. We thank you for all the work you put into our society. Andy Awde now beavers away at the Minutes and sends them on to Linda electronically.

Sender of Information was a job Barbara Hartley came to by default. So many people sent snippets – rides, shows, sales etc. etc that this became another big job. Again, understandably she wants her computer to have a rest. Thank you Barbara, we'll miss your chatty e-mails that usually cheered us up.

Linda Hobson from Ulverston has kindly agreed to take over this job and now we are getting chatty e-mails again, thank you.

I would just like to thank everyone for their good wishes and cards after my hip op. At seven weeks on Friday (3rd December) I've got on Poppy twice and ridden her down the drive and back, but had to have my leg helped over her back to get off. We now have a slippery frosty drive so I'll have to wait a bit longer. I found when I gave her a kick the usual pain in my right hip had gone – so look out Poppy, I'll be more in control!

Eve Hall

Chairperson, NLBS

* The spaces, not Sue – hic!



NORTH LANCASHIRE BRIDLEWAYS SOCIETY

We are working for all riders in the area.
You will benefit. Please support us!
The membership fee is only £5 per year

To play an active part in the Society brings with it new friends and a chance to participate in many pleasure rides and social activities and a real sense of achievement in promoting safer riding for yourself and others. Even if you do not wish to play an active part in the Society your membership fee helps to provide safer riding facilities in our area for everyone.

Please join now by filling in the following form and returning it to the NLBS Membership Secretary:

ADELE MCLOUGHLIN

Bramble Byre, Howbarrow, Cartmel, Grange-over-Sands, Cumbria
LA11 7SS e-mail: carmel645@btinternet.com call: 015395 36649

KATE LENNOX

Brandywell, Cark-in-Cartmel, Grange-over-Sands
e-mail: kate.lennox@talktalk.net

Cheques should be made payable to: North Lancashire Bridleways Society

NAME:

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE:

TELEPHONE:

E-MAIL [OPTIONAL]:

Please tick here if you are happy to receive minutes of meetings by e-mail

I enclose my membership fee of £5

SIGNATURE: