

Treasure Hunt Ride – report



On the 11th October 2009, the WDBA organised a ride around Whitmoor common with a difference! It had been a relatively well kept secret, that Pirate Blackbeard had hidden a stash of treasure; in particular several valuable gold necklaces amongst the trees on Whitmoor common. The maps were obtained and five groups of riders set off to find the hidden "treasures!"

Along the circular ride (steward volunteers!) kindly manned various checkpoints. At these checkpoints riders used their knowledge and cunning wit to answer horsey related questions; such as how many ribs do most horse have? Which facial marking on a horse is a white spot always between the nostrils? And what is the "web" of a horseshoe? - depending on the amount of correct answers each team gave they then were able to "open doors" (just like a big advent calendar) on large gold treasure maps, behind the "door" on the map was a number and this corresponded to the amount of gold coins (chocolate foil covered – very yummy and priceless of course!) hidden and available there to the team. The ride itself gave opportunity for some lovely canters with minimal roadwork and stewards helped riders at the road crossing. After following the trail the "treasures" of each team were added up and while the participants were enjoying refreshments - rosettes were awarded and a box of chocolates given to the winning team! (A lot of chocolate was eaten that day!)

We did receive lots of positive feedback from the participants, so if you are feeling lucky, intelligent, chocolate deprived, and would enjoy hacking on an organised ride with a very friendly atmosphere then why not enter another Treasure Hunt ride with the WDBA?

RESULTS! (who found and returned with the most loot!)

1st place = LINDA PIKE and MAGGIE JENNINGS (46 pieces)

2ND place = KAREN LAWSON, LIBBY LAWSON, TINA ROKER and DIANE WYATT (42 pieces)

3RD place = KAREN GUESS, ELOISE SAYERS, and CAROLINE DILBERTO (38 pieces)

3rd place = LORRAINE HOLLOWAY and MAGGIE LOPEZ (38 pieces)

3rd place = LIZ HOOPER, HANA DAVIS and CLARE MASON (38 pieces)

and yes 3rd place was given to three teams as they all collected exactly the same amount of treasure! Spooky!

On a personal note, I would like to say a big "thank you" to all the volunteer stewards who gave their time willingly (we didn't make them walk the plank!) also to Philippa for the amazing refreshments and to Mr John Ellis for opening his yard and allowing us to park horse trailers there safely for the morning.

Vicky Bender-Smith

Dates for your Diary

22 Jan	Quiz Night Normandy Church Hall 7.30	17 Jul	WDBA Stand at Wood Street Village Show
21 Feb	Clearance Working party 10.30 to 12.30	30 Aug	Ash Ranges Ride (tbc with MoD agreement)
22 Mar	Lungeing & Jumping Demonstration	19 Sep	Clearance Working Party 10.00 to 12.30
25 Apr	Wood Street Ride Start 10.00	tbc Oct	Side Saddle Demonstration (eve)
23 May	Ride in support of BHS Access Week Whitmoor Common	15 Nov	AGM
4 Jul	TREC Event Bailes Farm Start 10.00		

Your Committee

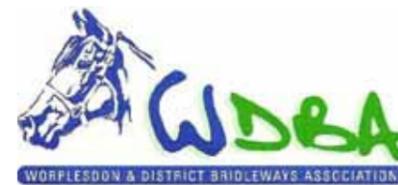
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To contact your Committee or Area Representative please email wdba1992@msn.com or contact the relevant telephone no.



The Worplesdon Bridleways BULLETIN

January 2010

"recommend a friend"

From the Chair

January gets its name from the mythical god Janus which stems from the Latin for 'door'.

Janus was reputed to be the guardian of doorways and the god of beginnings which is very fitting to herald the New Year. What a cold grey winter month it is, especially for those of us who enjoy the outdoors. However daylight is already creeping past 4pm and the horses are getting another 15 minutes more in the field.



As the seasonal festivities are committed to memory our increased waistlines are destined to hang around for a while longer. The early snow and prolonged icy conditions have come at a time when we need the exercise most but the weather has not been helpful and even in our sand school it has been impossible to work for more than five minutes or so before the horses have snowballs on the bottom of their feet.

The past WDBA year has been packed with events to appeal to all of our members and the highlight must surely have been the opening of our resurfaced permissive ride on Normandy Common in May. 2010 promises to be equally action packed. I encourage all of you to become familiar with our updated website www.wdba.org.uk where you will find a programme of events for the year. We recognise the benefits of a good member database too which will enable us to keep in touch more readily and receive your ideas and suggestions easily. We are also establishing website links with other local organisations reaching out to an even wider community.

Our future events have been planned thoughtfully to support the many facets of the WDBA and reflect your ideas gleaned from our questionnaire at the AGM. Since a major objective is to maintain and keep existing tracks in use, we have two more resurfacing projects in the pipeline as well as our usual path clearing sessions. We do need to raise funds to pay for the costly resurfacing work and our two 'events' planned for March and October are in the diary for that very purpose. The lungeing and long reining demonstration at Parwood in November last year was hugely successful and thanks to your support, raised in the region of £600. I was so very proud of my Confettie for behaving impeccably during the display only to be brought back down to earth with a bang when she refused to go back in the lorry! After more than an hour messing around in the dark and freezing cold I was ready to put her on e - bay.....

Our next event on 22nd March will help us understand how pole work and the rhythm of jumping can help with rehabilitation and be an aid to bringing on either young or inexperienced horses. I am looking forward to seeing you there and if possible can you 'recommend a friend' to become a new member.

It is not just us humans and horse owners out and about in the countryside this January. We hear the birds singing to each other in the winter sunshine, marking their territory and house hunting ready for the Spring and see the snowdrops pushing up through the soil to remind us of the warmer weather to come. Make the most of this new beginning and get ready for Summer, it's not really that far away.

Wendy



For the latest news on dates, entry forms and tickets for our events, visit www.wdba.org.uk



Batty about Normandy!



In the Spring of 2009, visitors to the newly resurfaced permissive path across Normandy Common may have noticed several smart nesting boxes installed along the route. Readers will remember that they were supplied and installed by members of the WDBA financed by a grant from the Breathing Places Big Lottery Fund.

You will perhaps have seen day roosts for bats and nesting boxes for birds and dormice. Since Autumn is the best time to check out these new homes for residents, Linda Pike, the WDBA path project manager called upon the skills of a local bat expert who is licensed to hold and record bats to help us with this task. To our delight we found bat droppings in one of the roosts, a single bat in another and best of all, a breeding group of 5 female and 1 male Soprano Pipistrelle bats in another.

Linda then set out to investigate the bird boxes and out of 22 sites, nests were found in 19 of them which was a very encouraging result. Later in the year we hope to report on the dormice boxes. They can only be inspected by a licensed handler.

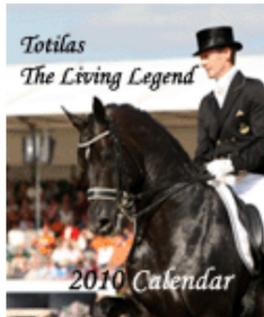
There are now some feeders positioned around the Common and we hope that local walkers will take interest to replenish them. For more detail about the path please telephone Linda Pike 01483 811891

Wendy Ford
WDBA Chairman



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Sheets Heath, Bisley to Chobham Golf Club (1 ½ hours at a reasonable pace)

Sheets Heath is situated a short ride from Pirbright village green. From the green, take the A324 Dawney Hill towards Brookwood. After the railway tunnel turn left towards the National Shooting Centre. Turn right into Queens Road and take the first right into an unmade road, signposted Sheets Heath. Follow this track for half a mile until it divides into three other unmade roads. Take the unmade road immediately on your left, passing Sheets Heath house. The track becomes bridleway 413 after 50 yards. Follow this bridleway over the stream (the stream is shallow enough to be forded, otherwise there is a strong concrete bridge you can use). Turn right at the T-junction. Follow this track (which is nice for canter!), passing a five-bar gate. You will now be on an unmade road. Follow this road for a few yards. It then becomes Stafford Lake and you'll pass the Princess Christian Nursing Home on your left. This single-track road is very quiet, so no need to worry about traffic.

Turn left off the tarmac road onto the bridleway, clearly marked with a fingerpost. Follow the bridleway, passing Stafford Lake Farm and fields with horses on the left. This track is good for a trot or canter. You will then come to Strawberry Farm on your left. Cross over their driveway, keeping the open common land on your right and the woods on your left. You'll see a path going into the woods – take this and keep going straight on. The path eventually turns into another unmade track which heads down towards the A322 Bagshot Road. There is a Pegasus Crossing point on the road, so its easy to navigate. Cross over and continue along the bridleway to Church Lane. The bridleway is very long and great for a trot or canter. When you get to Church Lane, turn right and travel along the lane for 50 yards or so, then turn left into Hill Place Farm. Follow the bridleway round and it turns into a narrower bridleway that takes you in a large circular ride around Chobham Golf Club. The bridleway has been recently resurfaced, so is excellent for trotting and cantering. There are several short bridleways signposted off the main one, but these only go down to busy roads, so not worth investigating unless you are adventurous and want to hack to Chobham.

Wood Street Ride

25 April - a date for your diaries, this will be our first ridden event of 2010; it will be a pleasure ride with a few challenges on the way, nothing too difficult and all just for fun. We are aiming to make this ride suitable for all standards of riders so even if you've never done any competitive events before and are perhaps a little nervous you would be able to take part in this event. Further details and entry forms will be issued soon. We will also need some stewards to help with the organisation on the day so think about doing that if you can't do the ride; it's a good way of meeting other members. Enquiries: wdba1992@msn.com

Report on Lungeing and Long-Reining Demo



"Only one word to sum up last night's demo – excellent!", "Absolutely marvellous!", "I thought Alison was a great trainer", "Loved it", "A really good evening" were just some of the positive comments we received about this event. I don't believe any of us would have predicted such a high turnout (we had over 100 people!) or such positive feedback. It was a fantastic evening at a great venue!

Alison Craig (BHSI), our lecturer for the evening, began by talking about the equipment you need to lunge, including an unusual cavesson called a "Wells Cavesson". This is different from normal cavessons in that it's made entirely of leather and comprises a fixed metal nosepiece and drop noseband.

Jo's part-bred Welsh Cob Zara was used to demonstrate correct lungeing technique. Following that, Alison showed how to produce shoulder-in and leg-yield using the long-reins and a piaffe whip. Next up was Wendy's horse, Kitti. Kitti works at a higher level to Zara, so Alison was able to show how to lunge and long-rein a more advanced horse. The evening finished with a demonstration of how to ride to music. Kitti ridden by Alice Krasno and Zara ridden by Jo Haward were joined by Constance, ridden by instructor Tracey Smale (BHSII). Kitti works at Advanced level, Constance at Advance Medium and Zara at Prelim level. It was interesting to see the difference between the more advanced horses and Zara, proving that riding to music isn't just for the more accomplished horse and rider.

Also joining us for the evening was international dressage press photographer, Caroline Finch. Caroline took many wonderful photographs throughout the evening, including the ones you see here. For anyone interested in Caroline's work, see <http://www.caroline-finch.co.uk/>. Caroline has produced a Moorlands Totilas A4 wall calendar for 2010. This glossy calendar features stunning competition images of this amazing horse achieving 9s and 10s in movements together with a monthly planner (just what you need to note down international and personal competitions). To buy your copy, contact Caroline on dressagephotographer@talktalk.net

Many people were involved in the organisation of this event, and a big thank you to all of you – you know who you are! It was great to be able to use Parwood's facilities, and a huge thank you to Mandy and her team for preparing everything so efficiently.

A DVD of the evening is available at a cost of £4. Please contact Jo Haward on Joanna.haward@ntlworld.com if you would like to order one.

Are you looking forward to our next event? We can tap into a huge pool of expert instructors and lecturers, so we will be doing more next year. Remember to check the WDBA website and your newsletter for details. Do you have any ideas for fundraising events? If so, please let us know.

Photographs by Caroline Finch www.caroline-finch.co.uk

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