



Welcome, this is our sixth newsletter. Just for fun - On the right you can see **Dart**, somewhere in the following four pages he is hidden, can you find him?



Diary:

Monday July 16th saw the start of a week that will change our Charity and the way we operate for ever. We went to Holwell farm, at the kind invitation of Sebastian and Philippa Hughes, to prepare for our second pony sale. This time we had thirty four ponies from all over the moor. As the ponies were arriving and we were frantically finding places to put them we all looked at each other and said in true Laurel and Hardy fashion, "another fine mess you've got me into". All was not lost for we had anticipated a certain level of panic so people were allotted jobs and responsibilities. Then down to work; Vanessa and Phillip from Positive Horsemanship and Dru together with other trainers and volunteers began handling the ponies. We kept four back so that **Johnny Kingdom**, who was coming to film for a future television series, could choose a pony that Dru had decided he would train. The week was hard work and very warm and as the



ponies were handled they were released into the yard to walk where they wished. They had been accustomed to all sorts of objects. Umbrellas, furred and unfurled, tarpaulins and footballs, prams, loud noises and loading onto trailers. So used to the objects did they become that they would push the footballs with their noses and follow each other through the trailer on their own. The atmosphere in the yard was fantastic with ponies going where ever they wished, all to the sound of music. **Johnny** was a little unsure

about the task before him because he had a fear of horses. Vanessa and Dru had a quiet few moments with him and reassured him that the advice and instruction given him would enable him to achieve the task. True to his mettle he accepted, listened and then said "**I CAN DO THIS**".

He worked hard both physically and mentally and the proof of his work was Dandy; one of the ponies that had come to us wild and now followed Johnny round like a puppy. Johnny was absolutely whacked but so happy and the emotion of the moment was not lost on those present. I said to Johnny, "You have achieved what few people, so far, can only dream of doing"; and he said "I've done it haven't I?" Sale day was very busy and Johnny went into the ring with his pony, Dandy, and told everyone how he felt and how special he thought our methods were. Vanessa presented Johnny with a certificate proving his ability as a pony trainer and he was over the moon, proudly showing everyone. Sixteen ponies were sold on the day with many others sold in the days following.

At the end of July we took **Golden Flame** and **Rolo** to Widecombe Farmers Market. They had a lovely day meeting the visitors and watching their wild cousins foraging around the green.

On 12th August we held an open day at Brimpts at which demonstrations of pony handling from the very early stages were given.

On September 5th **The West of England School for the Blind** came to the centre and we had a wonderful afternoon with five of the pupils who had come to learn about ponies. The ponies loved all the attention and they behaved as if they understood who they were dealing with. Even Starlight sought out their touch which surprised me no end. The children had implicit trust in Dru and the ponies, knowing that they would be safe and they were. **Frosty** fell asleep on his turn he was so relaxed.

Some of the young people had hearing and physical difficulties as well as blindness to cope with. Each one was given the opportunity to touch a pony all over and feel their



coats, noses, manes and even hooves.

When the child touched a pony such as on the forehead, Dru did the same to the child and explained where their hands

were. There were two poignant moments, one where Little Tom, we called him that because there were two Toms, shrieked with delight, as he felt over **Frostie's** head and exclaimed "they have pointed ears". The other when Big Tom said he could hear that they had different strides therefore they must be different sizes. We take so much

for granted in our lives so to see a different world, one dependent on touch, is very humbling and makes a headache seem so irrelevant.


On the 16th September we went to **Cotehele** for their Equine Day. Vanessa and Dru with other trainers gave demonstrations of handling wild ponies to a large audience and apart from the odd shower we had a great day.

Saturday the 6th October saw us at **Mole Valley Farmers Ltd, Heathfield**. We had been invited there by Mr. Jason McCoy, the Store Manager, for their 20th Birthday Celebration. We took **Golden Flame** and **Rolo** who always enjoy meeting people. Dru and Vanessa, (Butterfield and Bee) gave a demonstration of foal training to an appreciative audience. Two foals were taken to the store having been drifted off the moor a few days before. They were given level one training and later went home to their farm to be brought on in the future as riding ponies. Dru was amused to note that she gave a demonstration beneath a beautiful glass chandelier. Another well attended and organized day given by the staff at Mole Valley Farmers Ltd. We benefited from their generosity again by having donation boxes placed around the site. Food was given free with the opportunity for the customer to help the charity by making a donation. We are very grateful to everyone at the store for their continued support of the DPHT.

Dru with Vanessa, from Positive Horsemanship, has started pony training sessions at farms around the moor. They, together with a band of volunteers started at David Powell's farm at Holne where they worked with seven unhandled ponies that were certificated having reached level one of their training. That is they could be caught, they would lead, have feet picked up, be tied up and loaded onto a trailer. Dru and Vanessa are going to be very busy throughout the coming winter as they continue the training sessions.

Anyone interested in learning this skill should contact Dru on 01626 355314.

Pony News

 We noticed that in the second week of August the ponies' coats were beginning to lose the shine and gloss of summer. They were definitely lengthening and getting thicker ready for winter. What a thought!

This time we will start with **Rolo**, He has developed into a very good looking Heritage Pony and is quite obedient for one so young. **Rolo** has a temperament and a character almost the same as **Charlie**. He is completely 'laid back' and when I work in the paddocks cleaning up he will come and assist by knocking the barrow over or by insisting on holding the broom. All the while he is standing beside me just in case I happen to have a bucket of food hidden in my coat or a spare hand to touch him. Nothing seems to worry

him and he adores visitors and going to meet people off the farm.

Golden Flame went through a period when her authority was challenged. This has now been restored and she is in supreme command. She has mellowed and become very affectionate and will call to us if we don't go to her when we arrive. She, typically, is carrying condition into winter. She seems to get fat thinking about good grazing. She has been working hard with walks and going with us on most of our visits away.

George has developed into an outstandingly good looking Heritage Pony and he knows it. He will prance around the paddock showing off his paces and his superb coat. He is surely the dandy of the pony world. His work is progressing well and he enjoys going for a walk.

Charlie. Bless him, just stands and watches **George** and then carries on in his own sweet way. He has developed into a big strong pony but still loves attention and to be groomed. **Charlie** tends to go in straight lines and will think nothing of barging his way through and for this he needs to be corrected and shown that even ponies need manners. He can be a little slow on the uptake at times and can get himself into all sorts of hilarious predicaments; enough to fill a book. He is always first to come when we call them into the paddocks.

Starlight, what a conundrum this pony is, she is less comfortable around adults but she seems to dote on children, the smaller the better. Recently a tiny person (no names no pack-drill) waddled over to the fence near to her and she virtually went down on her knees to put her face next to the child and she did not move from the tiny fingers poking her. I don't think I breathed for about four minutes. I think the decision has been made to send her to the stallion in the spring. She is a very pretty mare and we hope she gives us a lovely foal.

Blue and his friend **Frosty** are not in the adoption scheme. They are trained as pack-ponies, but, they are an integral part of our little herd. **Blue** can be a little stand-offish in the paddock and likes to have some space around him. Although he is happy to be handled when wearing his head collar and is a joy to work with. He is a big strong pony and well suited as a pack pony and will fit into Dru's **Pony Power Programme** very well. **Frosty**, is a nice well balanced sturdy pony and he loves to be the centre of attention. He stands no messing from the whippersnappers though. Yet he excelled himself on the recent visit of the blind children where he was so gentle and patient with all that was going on around him. He is completely trustworthy and a boon for all our education sessions with both adults and children of all abilities.

For more details on the Pony Power Programme please contact Dru Butterfield on 01626 355314, or DPHT, Dartmoor, Devon, PO Box 397, Newton Abbot, TQ12 9AT.

We have a tail chewer in the camp. **Charlie, George, Blue** and **Rolo** have all had chunks of their tails removed. This is most annoying because they all had lovely long tails. We give them minerals and they have free access to licks so we are not amused. We will need to keep observations to identify the culprit. A certain name keeps popping up but cannot be proven, yet, **but we are keeping an eye on you Flame!**

Believer has been fenced by the Forestry Commission and the newtake walls have been checked by us and it has now got fourteen ponies turned out onto it. We are in the process of putting notices on all the gates and stiles telling people that there are ponies grazing in the forest and asking people to close the gates after them. You can see by the picture that



they have got some serious work to do to get the overgrowth grazed down. We are still working to raise the money to properly maintain the site and to take appropriate care of the ponies. The Charity has taken massive strides this year in promoting the indigenous Dartmoor Pony; the **Heritage Pony**. Be under no illusions they are still in a precarious position but we are making headway. We are working closely with all statutory bodies to promote the pony and their benefit to land management through conservation grazing. This year we are aware that the coming winter will be difficult for some farmers with the price of winter feed and the lack of hay. Some have already indicated that they will sell off their ponies. The **2 B's, Butterfield and Bee** are working flat out handling ponies so the ponies can be sold for a sustainable price.

By raising the value of the stock through handling and holding specialist sales for more discerning buyers, we can encourage pony keepers to continue to breed them for the commons. Can anyone tell me why people will pay £400 for a puppy without knowing anything about it and yet will not pay the same for a **trained pony?**

When investing in a Dartmoor Heritage Pony you are helping preserve the indigenous herds of traditional Dartmoor Ponies running wild and free on Dartmoor. Help the DPHT secure their future. If you are looking for a family pony please contact Charity Manager Dru Butterfield for more information and a Sales List on dru@dpht.co.uk or phone 01626 355314

We are developing a specially designed and presented educational programme that Dru can use at Brimpts and in Believer. We intend to make full use of all the monuments and ancient artifacts we have in Believer to promote the Trust by using our Heritage ponies to bring them to the notice of our visitors.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

The DPHT needs to raise £15,000 per year for our Believer Appeal and we would appreciate your help to do so. By collecting used postage stamps, printer ink cartridges and mobile phones you can help us. We are able to get money back on these items, so the more you collect, the more funds we can raise.

If you are interested in collecting these items for us, please send your used postage stamps to DPHT, PO Box 397, Newton Abbot, TQ12 9AT and address the envelope to **Jenni Whitehorn**.

For the printer ink cartridges and mobile phones, please send Jenni an email on **Tree_hippie@hotmail.com** or contact her at the above address requesting some bags and she will send them out to you.

Adoptions, by definition the title insinuates a form of ownership and of course **this is not** the case. We use the adoption money to pay for professional help for the ponies. That is, veterinary surgeons, farriers and of course their food, equipment and other items such as insurance for your protection. However, the bulk of adoption funds are spent on our education programmes and preserving the gene pool. Any increase in fuel prices and postal charges is immediately reflected in the cost of our products, their administration and delivery to you. These are charges we are not able to control and only make life very difficult for Officer Dru. As a result of increased costs to us in all we have to buy, we need to set the adoption charges at £16-00 for the UK and £20-00 for others. We will continue to give you good value for money and assure you that all the money we receive goes to the ponies. Even our youngest readers know that pocket money negotiations are ongoing because of rising costs.

We are acutely aware of the financial restraints that affect most people in our society today. Every day something becomes more expensive and we all have to manage our resources. The generosity of you, our friends, helps us to focus our attention on the greater picture; saving the ponies.

Next year the centre will be manned at fixed times and by necessity will be restricted to specific days. The reason for this is that some people have unreal expectations of our volunteers by insisting that someone be present when they visit. The centre is run by volunteers and should you wish to see your **adopted** pony; we cannot guarantee that a member of DPHT will be at Brimpts to bring the ponies into the paddocks. The volunteers are unable to staff the centre full time, although the centre is open. To do that we need volunteers available on a fairly regular basis; then we can offer a better service. You may have just the skill we need so do not hide your light under a bushel.

SO PLEASE, VOLUNTEER.

We can teach you all the necessary pony handling techniques. Follow our basic rules and the worst you will suffer is a good licking and a dirty shirt where they have

nuzzled you. We are also considering ways to give visitors safe access to the pony fields when the centre is unmanned and hope to have the new measures in place for the spring. The centre is now effectively closed until Easter 2008. We will have an Open Day at Christmas. Volunteers will still be at the centre, painting, repairing, putting up new information notices and generally tidying. We will continue to give you information through the newsletter and web site so that you will know what is happening.

There is good news to tell you; earlier this summer **Johnny Kingdom**, wild life photographer and raconteur together with **Matt Baker**, television presenter and broadcaster, agreed to become patrons of the Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust. Both men have worked with Dru in handling wild foals and are welcomed into our little family.



Johnny, left, working with the wild pony, Dandy, at Holwell before the sale. **Matt**, right, is a real hands on patron, he recently joined us foal handling whilst recording a forthcoming programme about the DPHT for BBC Radio 4.

Dates for your diary:



Open Day - Christmas: December 28th at Brimpts. We will have a merchandise stall, Teas, coffees and chocolate drinks and hopefully mince pies. The ponies will all be there

and if the weather is not too inclement maybe we can all go for a post Christmas waddle. Please telephone **Dru** on **01626 355314** or on dru@dpht.co.uk to give us an idea of how many will be interested in coming to Brimpts.



The centre will be manned on the following dates, **weather permitting:**

- January, Sunday 20th 1330 until 1530.
- February, Sunday 17th 1330 until 1530.
- March, Sunday 16th 1330 until 1530.

None of the volunteers live close to Brimpts Farm, so if the weather is bad and the roads are dangerous we won't be there either!

Are you are looking for a Christmas present? Do not forget the wonderful prints we have showing Dartmoor ponies in their natural setting. The original was painted by Michael Lees and the prints are excellent value for money and every sale helps the charity. You will also be invited to put your handprint into a leather bound book as a record of your support. Charlie already has his on the

certificate given to you when you purchase. Details are in the leaflet sent out last time or on our web site: www.dpht.co.uk

Thought you might like to see Little Tom, here he is leading Rolo. This made our day.



Have you considered making a regular donation in favour of the Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust? We are not a cash rich charity and raising money for the work we do is very difficult. Any help, no matter how small, that you can give, is much appreciated and will not be squandered. We do not have offices, company cars or full-time paid staff.

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Then return to: Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust. P.O. Box 397, Newton Abbot, TQ12 9AT. **Thankyou.**

£5 £10 £20 £50 £100

Other

I enclose a cheque made payable to the Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust.

Gift Aid Declaration: As a taxpayer I wish the Charity to treat this declaration as a Gift Aid Donation.

Please tick box.

Your details: Title: _____
 Name: _____
 Address: _____

 Post Code: _____

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Thank you all for supporting the DPHT during the past twelve months, we hope that some of you can find your way to Brimpts next year to see us all, both two and four legged friends. We have taken great strides forward this year and our work is too important to stop now. One 'Little Tom' makes the effort worthwhile and with your continuing generosity we can reach even more people.

That's it for this year if we do not see you on December 28th have a lovely Christmas and a happy New Year.

