

SWHP

The Horse Hospital

Newsletter of the Society for the Welfare of Horses and Ponies

Summer 2013

NATIONAL CRISIS

Since our Winter Newsletter we have been inundated with bad cases from all quarters. There is a national crisis in the UK with a horrifying number of unwanted horses and ponies; these are critical times for all equines.

We currently have unprecedented conditions: so many un-saleable equines, with some owners shelving their responsibilities by either leaving them to die in fields with no food, or taking them onto the commons and mountains and abandoning them. All the charities are full to capacity; the SWHP currently has double the amount of equines at the hospital than it would usually have at this time of year.

There is unfortunately only one option left for these poor unwanted creatures and that is they have to be put down. It is a very sad day that it has come to this.

People often ask us why there is such a problem and we can put it down to a number of factors, some of which come down to a lack of funding. We have said many times before that the passport and micro-chipping laws must be enforced; we should go back to licensing stallions and all horses should be registered with a national equine database. These would be steps in the right direction. DEFRA can do it with agricultural animals, why not with horses?

Some we have taken in, like Rebecca II pictured below, have been a much loved pony or horse at one time. She was a mare rescued from Llantrisant common. She was so weak, that on the sixth day she hadn't the strength to get up, so we had to make the decision to end her days. She did have an owner, who was asked to



Rebecca II – Mare taken in from Llantrisant common. She had only six days of care and love before she died.

collect her from the common. He failed to do so leaving her there to die. She was the sweetest mare and was most probably a much loved family cob in the past. It is always very sad when a horse is euthanised, and Rebecca touched many of the staff here. It was such an unnecessarily sad ending for such a lovely mare.

FLORENCE

Florence has just been picked for the Junior Intermediate Show Jumping team for the Riding Club qualifiers for the Nations at Lincoln. She was out of another successful mare called Ermintrude, who was found near Tredegar golf club, both in an emaciated state.



BODGER, BADGER AND THE GOAT



In March of this year we received a report about a number of ponies on some land in Merthyr, all in need of care and attention. One of our supporters went to check and found two little Shetland colts in a terrible way. Both were very thin and needed to be taken into our care immediately. Our vet came out to check them over and thought they were both between 1 and 3 years of age.

When we wormed them we were appalled by the amount of redworm which was coming out with their dung and we feared that the worm damage might be too extensive especially for Badger who looked so poor.

Sadly Badger lost his battle on Monday 1st April, our fears had been confirmed, his neglect and worm burden had been too much for him to survive.

We now had another worry; Bodger was on his own and needed a friend. Bring on George the goat (who is actually a girl). We had been loaned a goat to be a companion for one of our other ponies, Tinker, at the beginning of the year and so it was fortunate that Tinker was now well enough to be with other equines and George was free to become Bodger's new friend.

Having a goat on the premises brings about its own responsibilities and as we did not have an active holding number at the time we went through the necessary procedure, which was a relatively easy process, and the paperwork duly followed. George the goat is fully traceable and everything is in order. What a shame that a similar system has not been implemented and followed through for equines. We have reported in many of our newsletters our frustration at the inadequacies of the current passporting and micro-chipping system currently in force, or not in force as the case may be. Even the National Equine Database has recently been closed down, which was one of our only ways of tracing a horse or pony that entered our system that actually had a micro-chip number.



Redworm from Badger's droppings



George, Ann and Bodger

SWHP HORSE KEEPERS

We are very lucky to have so many wonderful horse keepers who take on our equines either on a temporary or long term basis. Some of our keepers have more than one SWHP equine at a time and look after them for many years. We are extremely grateful to every one of our keepers and we understand what a huge commitment it is to take on one of our horses.

We would like to mention one keeper in particular called Fiona who has had ponies from us since 2005 and who currently has a lovely pony of ours called Mistletoe. Over the last 8 years Fiona and her family have taken care of 9 of our ponies, all of which have gone on to fabulous homes. Fiona's children have helped us many times with small ponies which we have backed or recently put back into work at the SWHP. Being very able small riders they have offered to try out the ponies before we put them up for adoption to ensure that the

pony is ready for a new home and a small rider. They have also taken SWHP ponies into their own home on a short term basis to get them going and ready for re-homing. We are so indebted to the family and hope that the children don't grow up too quickly so that we can benefit from their help for years to come.



*Four SWHP ponies at Fiona's, October 2011
From left, Eloise, Mistletoe, Minstrel and Easter*

DOTTY

Dotty is an aged 15 hh chestnut mare who was taken in by Cardiff City Council at the end of 2012. She was part of a small herd that had been abandoned and were roaming loose on the roads. When she was found she was producing milk, so she must have had a foal recently; but sadly no one knows what had happened to



Dotty

it. The Council asked if we would help and we agreed to take in Dotty and a couple of the others. They were signed over to us on 7th January.

Dotty was looking extremely emaciated when she came to Coxstone, with a swollen stomach and many rain scalds. She is thought to be about 20 and she is a very sweet, well handled mare. Dotty has improved in our care although she has suffered two bouts of colic and still needs to gain some weight. We are hopeful that we will be able to find someone to adopt her so that she can spend her last years in comfortable retirement.

She has a freezebrand which we looked into and which took a lot of detective work. We found out that she was born in Canada, then went to Denmark and finally arrived in South Wales. We think she might have been a trotter. What a shame she can't tell us her story.

THE VALENTINE PONIES

A very sad case was brought to our attention in February of a report of a dead pony and two dead cows. DEFRA were called for the cows and we were asked to take in five ponies that had been given to the neighbour by the owner to hide them as their condition was so bad.

The neighbour had nowhere to keep them and so asked us if we could take them on. Unfortunately one of them died before we got there.

We collected the remaining four ponies from her farm and one had to be carried into the trailer because he was so weak. They all had massive problems, all due to pure starvation.

Jenny realised that there must be others hidden at another site, so she called Redwings to see if they could assist. In all over 40 ponies were taken in by Redwings

who likened it to the terrible Amersham case back in 2008.

The owner is a Welsh Pony and Cob Society (W.P.C.S.) judge and has been a bad keeper for years. It has been said that members of the W.P.C.S. have spread the untrue rumours that the SWHP stole the ponies. Why would we do that when we are full to capacity here? Unfortunately the W.P.C.S. do not like us drawing attention to their members who are bad keepers, and say that they can do nothing unless these members are prosecuted for cruelty. We would suggest that W.P.C.S. could be more proactive in their approach and thereby create a better image for their society.

I am a life member of the society and so feel it important that I speak out.



Romeo



Cupid

TYSON II & BEAU

Back in November 2012 we received a call from a person desperately needing our help. A man, who owned two equines, had died leaving them in his will to the couple who owned the field they were kept in. This couple had no equine knowledge and were desperately worried about both of the horses which were now standing in a flooding field. We popped out to see the horses and realised that they needed to be taken into our care as they were both in danger. Neither of them were badly in a bad way and we could see that they had been looked after really well.

Beau, the little Shetland chestnut gelding, was re-homed as a companion almost immediately and Tyson, who is a Percheron x Cob, remained at the SWHP for a little longer. We found out that he suffered with C.O.P.D. and could not be stabled or eat hay, so he was wrapped up in a warm rug put out in the field and given haylage, which suited him really well. We brought him gently back into work and he has been a delightful character and a real favourite in the yard.

We were told that the owner had been a farrier and we could tell this when Tyson was getting ready for his first trim, he picked up each foot before he was even asked and he was as good as gold.



Tyson II

MANMOEL

The situation on Manmoel Common this winter has been desperate with so many ponies needing help and ponies dying through starvation and serious worm burden. We have taken in 9 ponies from Manmoel so far this year and Bransby Horses have also taken in a significant amount. Ann Keating and the team from the Welsh Re-homing

Project have been very active up on Manmoel helping the ponies in need and organising the feeding of hay. We have been up to the common on numerous occasions with hay that has been donated to us to be distributed amongst the ponies.

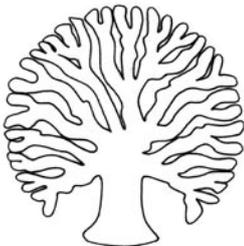
Many caring local people rallied (to help the ponies), by raising funds for feed and this has been a great

success. Unfortunately some well meaning people fed the ponies unsuitable food and in one case a stallion had severe colic and he had to be put to sleep.

Pictured below Cyndi from Manmoel Common.

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*Cyndi, one of four ponies
taken in from Manmoel Common*

SLIPPERS NEW SLIPPERS

We received a report over Christmas from a concerned member of the public about a Shetland pony mare who had extremely long front feet. We went out to visit on Boxing Day evening and were shocked at what we found. As the pictures show her front feet were in an appalling state – so overgrown that she could barely walk. We named her Slipper.

She was loaded into the trailer and brought back to Coxstone where she received painkillers and was x-rayed to check for damage to the pedal bone. Fortunately there was only slight rotation in the left hoof and one of our farriers, Lee Morgan, is hopeful that with regular remedial trimming she should come right. He has now made her some wonderful slippers to help encourage her feet to re-shape correctly. She is a real little character – a very lucky pony.



LOTTIE

She had been turned out with her colt foal, Archie just after foaling. Archie had fallen in a river and needed rescuing; the owner apparently having gone on holiday leaving his son to look after the horses. She is in a wonderful new home and is excelling in Lizzie's capable hands.



Lottie coming 8th at her first show with a double clear round.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our thanks go to Alan and Josh at Wye Valley Country Stores, Monmouth, for all their support and help with our feed requirements.

Our thanks go to NAF for supplying all our feed supplements and for their continuing support of our charity.

Our thanks go to Brian and Vicky Tew of Overmonnow Budgens for helping towards the cost of the newsletter.

Our thanks go to all our volunteer field officers and Redwings field officers who carry out home visits for us.

Our thanks go to Pets at Home in Cwmbran and Bristol who have been very supportive.

FUNDRAISING

THE POWER OF THE COFFEE MORNING

Many people ask how they can help raise funds for the SWHP and we often mention that having a coffee morning can be really rewarding both socially and financially. Over the last six months we have received many donations following a coffee morning. So if you are wondering how you can help why not get some friends together maybe in your biggest room, down at your yard, at your school (with the permission of the headteacher!). It doesn't have to be a grand affair, although we like those too, just a great way to get together with people, have a natter, eat great cakes, have a nice cuppa and raise some much needed funds for the SWHP.

Sian Lloyd holds regular Coffee Mornings for the SWHP at the Priory in Monmouth, which are always great fundraisers. There is usually a Tombolla and a chance to buy crafts which have kindly been made and donated to us. If you would like to find out when the next one is being held please do get in contact with us.

POP IN SUNDAYS

Since our last newsletter we thought it would be a great idea to open to the public on the last Sunday of each month between 11.30 and 2.30pm. The idea being that it would give people a chance to touch base with us on a regular basis and to come and see our most recent rescues and horses and ponies looking for a new home. We don't charge an entrance fee and it's a very informal affair with scrummy cakes and tea and coffee and a chance to have a chat. We have been thrilled with the response and turnout – especially when you consider the cold months at the beginning of this year. We would like to say a big thank you to everyone who has attended and of course to the people who are making the cakes, giving up their free time to man the refreshments and to our fundraising team. Please do POP IN to the next one if you are free, we would love to see you.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

SWHP A.G.MThursday 13th June 2013, at Skenfrith Village Hall, 7.00pm

SWHP SUMMER OPEN DAY – SUNDAY 7TH JULY AT COXSTONE, 11.00am - 3.00pm

DUCK RACE Saturday 21st September, 2.30 - 4.30pm at Swan Meadows, Abergavenny

SWHP Fun Ride in September 2013 – date to be confirmed on our website.

SWHP FUNDRAISING AUCTION – SAT 19TH OCTOBER – SKENFRITH VILLAGE HALL – Lots kindly accepted- please call us on 01600 750233 or e-mail us swhp@swhp.co.uk

SWHP CHRISTMAS OPEN DAY – SUNDAY 1ST DECEMBER AT COXSTONE

We would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to everyone who has raised money for us over the last year, whether you are a private individual or part of a group of fundraisers. It would take pages to name you all. We would like to mention a few names however.

Maggie King and her band of loyal helpers including Rhyddid Riding Club raised a total of £7,000 last year, which is amazing. This achieved through coffee mornings, long rides, boot sales, going to sales and also with the support of Robinsons in Cardiff who have been wonderful.

Animal Friends Charity Shop in Ross on Wye who have supported us since 2008. Last year they donated a massive £5,000. So if you have any good charity shop items, please consider taking them to Animal Friends which is located at 2 Brookend Street, Ross-on-Wye. HR9 7EE.

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