

A Halloween ride on the wild side - Hawkchurch and Forde Abbey.

Setting off on an energetic Bubbles to meet Wendy Hill at the junction of Beech Land and Woodhouse Road (Google EX13 5UF) I met "little" Chris on her lively, little New Forester and her dog Tessa. Flossy the pointer raced around us greeting Wendy and her wolf dog Shanty with great joy. And it was a very joyful day, mild and damp with a tang of autumn in the air and the most glorious colour in the trees.

We walked briskly down Scouse Lane, past the Fairwater Head Hotel, joined Wareham Road and then turned left down Hawkchurch Road into the village. At this stage things got a little tricky: three horses, three lively dogs and all the traffic from the blocked A358 being diverted through Hawkchurch village. Well, we kept the drivers

continued overleaf ...

Welcome

Welcome to the November 2010 edition of the quarterly Three Counties Bridlepaths Group newsletter. Here you'll find out what we've been up to, a form for joining or renewing your membership (renewable in March each year), a calendar of 3CBG events, committee contact details and a guide on how to report bridlepath issues in your area. With your next newsletter (February) you will also receive a list of upcoming rides for 2011.

We hope the darker days haven't curtailed your riding too much, although perhaps it's inevitable at this time of year. Remember to wear decent hi-viz gear, especially important as the light is poorer now. This can mean that drivers see you up to 30 metres sooner than without hi-viz, which can mean the difference between safe riding and an unnecessary incident.

We have a couple of fun events coming up to help while away the Winter months - see the Events calendar below. It would be nice to see members at upcoming events, not just the committee as is so often the case, so please do join us at any events which pique your interest, it would be lovely to see/meet some of you!

Best wishes and safe riding!

3CBG Committee ■



amused and the dogs safe but it was touch and go and gave us very little time to enjoy the picturesque village of Hawkchurch with its grey stone church, cottage gardens and well kept village green. About 1km after the village green (on our left) we took a right hand turning on to a farm track (Furzehill Farm) which is the beginning of a green lane leading to the river crossing at Buddlewall. The track through the farmyard was a bit spooky (cows in open barns, silage bales and a milking parlor) but once we reached the green lane (which has been cleared and drained) the riding was perfect. The lane goes downhill to cross a small brook and then continues through two new rider-friendly field gates to the hamlet of Buddlewall. Chris left us here taking the road back to Tilworth and Hawkchurch.

Wendy and I continued along the track into the river crossing, this is the most amazing place to stop and stare; the horses can drink and riders can contemplate.

We continued up the track through Lower Holditch turning right towards Holditch and bearing right after 1km, then after another 1km crossing the Headstock Road into another green lane. This is a very ancient lane that has been the southerly route out of Forde Abbey for centuries.

About 100metres after the ford we turned sharp right through an open field gate (blue bridlemway sign) onto bridlemway W44/97 following this through another field gate (avoiding a cattle gird), down a metalled track and into the garden of a cottage (@600mts). The grassy path down past the cottage and then into another field was enchanting; a short canter up the field and into another field then led us to a metal gate (blue bridlemway sign) that forms the entrance to the hamlet of Hewood. We walked through this isolated and peaceful place and emerged after

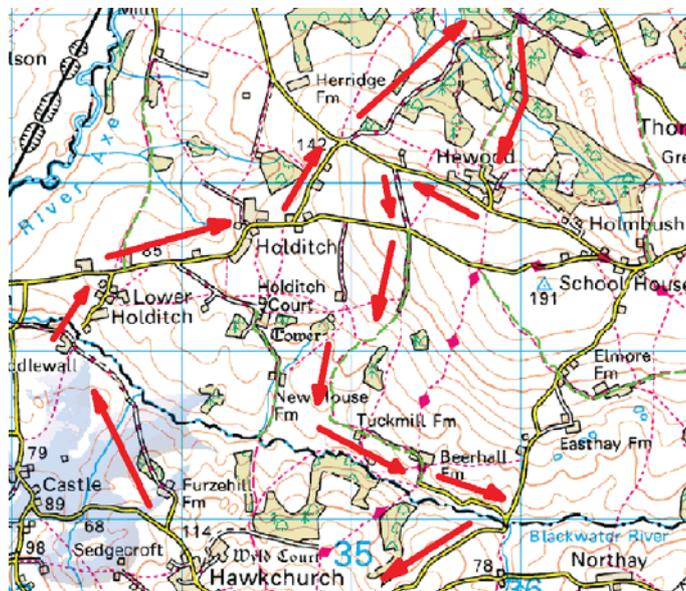
200mts onto Headstock Road, turning right for about 500mts and the left onto another green lane (Lavers Lane). This looked good for a canter so we took off at speed. At the end of the track we crossed Holditch Lane into bridlemway W44/47 (Spearhay Lane) which we followed for about 1km. This track is well maintained but the final element requires a little bit of ducking and weaving. It emerges at the corner of a field (*3CGB could consider putting a field gate in here as it is often wired in the summer*) and continues diagonally across the field, through a gate, veering right and the left onto a hedge lined track. This portion of the track has been well drained and rides well.

We continued past Tuckmill and through Beerhall Farm where the dogs are gruff but not too bad. Pausing to let Violet nibble comfrey leaves on the bank (said to be a natural wormer) Wendy and I agreed that it's likely all footpaths were once bridlemways and that it was a shame to have lost so many great routes. The end of the farm track comes out onto Blackwater Lane; we turned right towards Hawkchurch and travelled up the sunken lane, enjoying the rays

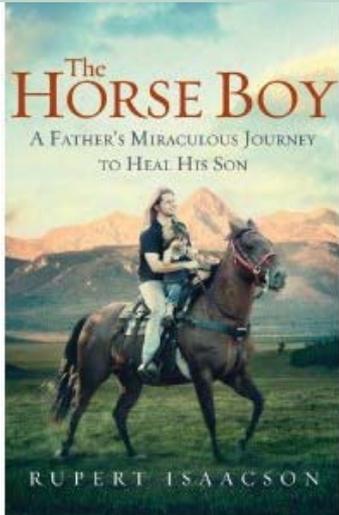
of the setting sun through the beech trees; horses and dogs, tired and mellow. Wendy turned away at the lane to Corshay and I continued back, crossing Hawkchurch Lane onto Wareham Road and forking right past the Fairwater Hotel and back to Woodhouse Lane.

It was a memorable and lovely 12km ride through some very old tracks, quiet lanes and well maintained bridlemways - I would recommend it to all riders. The pumpkin soup (thank you Wendy) and mulled cider were delicious and Chris Moore joined us for this seasonal fare.

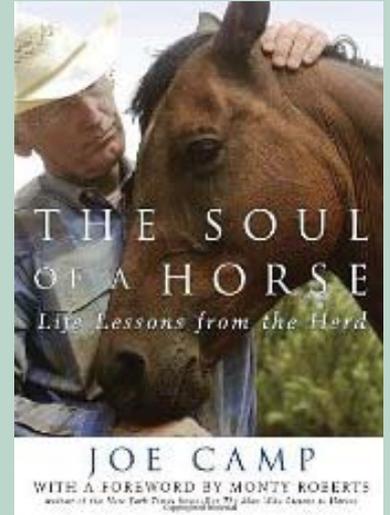
Shelley McIndoe ■



Winter Book Group



The first meeting to review *Horse Boy* by Rupert Isaacson was a great success, and we also watched the film of the book, which was fascinating. Both are a great insight into one family's journey as they coped with an autistic son and his development, largely through his communication with horses. The next book group will be at Shelley's on Wednesday 1st December, to discuss Joe Camp's *The Soul of a Horse*. Available on Amazon and elsewhere, ISBN 0307406866. Please contact Shelley to let her know you're coming along and bring your favourite tippie.



GETTING INVOLVED!

- Volunteers still needed to offer horse and rider B&B along or near the East Devon Long Distance Route. Please contact Shelley
- Keep an eye on the bridlepaths in your area; report any problems and suggest where our money might be best spent, e.g. on replacing a problem gate or contributing to better path surfacing
- Come along to 3CBG events, tell us about great routes you've ridden and suggest any events which you'd like to host or to help organise!
- Please send ideas, newsletter copy or info on routes to Charlie at charliembarrett@hotmail.com



Notifying Local Authorities about Bridleway Issues

Please let the relevant authority know about any problems you've encountered. 3CBG can support you in this but issues do need to be logged with the authority by individuals too, in order for it to be taken seriously.

Dorset: phone 'Dorset Direct' on 01305 221000.
Somerset: Go to the Somerset County Council website at www.somerset.gov.uk. Click on 'Services' at the top, type 'right of way' into the search box and 'Report problem with public right of way' is the third option in the results list, click this then click 'Do it online'. Or contact the South Somerset Rights of Way Officer on 01460 260354. There will be a demo on how to use the online system at the next AGM.

East Devon: Email prow@devon.gov.uk or phone the East Devon Public Rights of Way officer on 0845 155 1004

Remember that to report an issue effectively you will need the grid reference of the problem location (and bridleway number if possible).

3CBG Events calendar:

- Friday 26th November 2010, 7pm. DVD night at Shelley's; contact Shelley on 01297 678182, 07780 991101 or s shelley . m c i n d o e @ d c h f t . n h s . u k Please bring a snack (e.g. crisps, dip). We'll watch *Stretchy Horses* by Celia Cohen (one of our members and a brilliant equine physiotherapist) and then something more escapist! *Please make sure you arrive by 7:00pm - thank you.*
- Wednesday 1st December 2010, 7.30pm. Winter Book Club at Shelley's (contact Shelley to confirm attendance).
- April 2011, TREC taster day, details in a later edition



3CBG Committee contact details

Chairwoman: **Shelley Thirlaway**
01297 678182 or 07780 991101.
shelley.mcindoe@dchft.nhs.uk
Secretary, Web & Newsletter Editor: **Charlie Barrett**, 01460 30527 or 07720 320874.
charliembarrett@hotmail.com
Treasurer: **Lesley Rigby**,
01297 442522,
nlesleyrigby@yahoo.co.uk
Events Co-ordinator: **Chris Moore**, 01297 678577,
pat.moore1@btopenworld.com
Events Co-ordinator: **Jane Sherwin**, 01297 35811 or 07920 776798
jane_sherwin@hotmail.co.uk
Committee Member: **Lynn Wason**, 01297 445662
Committee Member: **Celia Cohen**, 07967 688063

Membership Form: Three Counties Bridlepaths Group

(Affiliated to the British Horse Society)

Application for Membership/Subscription Renewal 2010/11

Name(s) _____

Children _____

Address _____

Post Code _____ Phone number _____

Email _____

Area where you ride/keep horse if different from above _____

NEW MEMBERS: Joining fee £10 per household, which includes 1st year's subscription of £5 for 1 adult. Additional adult members £5 each. EXISTING MEMBERS: £5 per adult. Children 16 and under in same household FREE. Subscription is renewable by March (AGM) each year, or joining fee applies.

Please send your completed application form with cheque made out to Three Counties Bridlepaths Group to: Lesley Rigby, Bridlepath Lodge, Woodhouse Hill, Uplyme, Lyme Regis, Dorset. DT7 3SL. Please do not send cash through the post.