

# Merry Christmas from HAMPSHIRE HORSE



[hampshirehorse@hotmail.com](mailto:hampshirehorse@hotmail.com)



On-line at [www.petercox-photography.co.uk](http://www.petercox-photography.co.uk)

What's On:

DECEMBER 2005 (Issue 14)

## Portchester Horse & Pony Association

**Sun 11 Dec:** **Show Jumping Rally**, with Amanda Napleton. £10 per rider/horse. Lead rein 1-2pm, novice 2-3pm, intermediate 3-4pm. Crofton Manor Equestrian Centre, Titchfield Road, Stubbington (nr. Fareham).

**Sun 18 Dec:** **Trip to Olympia**. Contact Anita 023 92528936

**Sun 8 Jan:** **Dressage Training Rally**, Crofton Manor EC. Max 4 riders per group. £17/rider.

**Rallies are for members only. New members always welcome.**

**For further details please contact Jo or Corrie on 023 9261 7841**

**Sat 3 December:** **Meon Riding Club Annual Winter Indoor Showjumping Event** at Crofton Manor Equestrian Centre, Titchfield Road, Stubbington (nr. Fareham). Classes from 2'3" to 3'3". Schedules from Mr. R. King, Wheelers Farm, Froxfield, Petersfield GU32 1DR, or visit [www.meonrc.fsnet.co.uk](http://www.meonrc.fsnet.co.uk)

**Mon 5 – Thurs 8 December:** **Mark Rashid Clinic**, Hurstbourne Equestrian Centre, Hurstbourne Priors, Whitchurch. Mark is a well know American clinician and author of 4 well known books inc. Considering the Horse and A Good Horse is Never a Bad Colour. Details [www.amandabarton.co.uk](http://www.amandabarton.co.uk). Ring 01590 622393 or email [amanda@barronandsmithers.com](mailto:amanda@barronandsmithers.com)

**Fri 30 December:** **Mounted Games Training Day** with Martin White, MGA County trainer, at Crofton Manor Equestrian Centre, Titchfield Road, Stubbington (nr Fareham). Tel: 01329 667323, email: [enquiries@croftonmanor.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@croftonmanor.co.uk)

**Wed 22 February:** **An Evening with Andrew and Bettina Hoy**, Merrist Wood Campus, Worplesdon, Guildford, Surrey. Contact Event Secretary 01483 884147

**Thurs 23 February:** **Lecture Demo with Monty Roberts**, Merrist Wood Campus, Worplesdon, Guildford, Surrey. Contact Intelligent Horsemanship, Lethornes, Lambourn, Hungerford, Berks RG17 8QS. Tel: 01488 71300

**Fri 3 – Sun 5 March:** **Going Barefoot Clinic with Dan Guerrera** at Northwood Farm, Forestside, near Rowlands Castle. Full details to be featured in the January issue of Hampshire Horse, or email [kate.steed@btinternet.com](mailto:kate.steed@btinternet.com)

**Wed 22 March:** **An Evening with John and Charlotte Lassiter**. Merrist Wood Campus, Worplesdon, Guildford, Surrey. Contact Event Secretary 01483 884147

**One Day Equine Courses** at Merrist Wood Campus, Guildford, 10.00am – 1.00pm, Tel 01483 884040

**Sat 10 December:** **Travelling the Equine** (Learn to trailer your horse safely)

**Sat 4 February 2006:** **What to look for when buying a horse** (Learn the skills needed to know what you should look for when buying a horse)

**Sat 25 March 2006:** **Lunging and Long Reining** (Learn to lunge and long rein your horse to improve training techniques). To register please contact the Campus direct or visit [www.guildford.ac.uk/mwSite/mw\\_index.aspx](http://www.guildford.ac.uk/mwSite/mw_index.aspx)

## Peter Cox Photography

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all

I would also like to thank all those people who have purchased my photographs during 2005 - I look forward to working with you all again in 2006

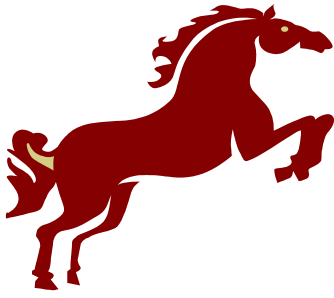
Please note that Christmas orders are now being taken - last date to receive orders to be guaranteed delivery is Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December - orders after this date will be subject to an additional £6.00 delivery charge - Order book MUST close Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December - please see web site for details - if you are not sure please phone

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And there's no point trying to find them either, because they are all outside. But if you look across the fields you'll find horses and ponies of all ages and breeds, muddy (they don't wear coats), shaggy (they are not clipped) and unshod (none of them have shoes). The natural breeding herds consist of mares, foals, geldings, a stallion and prized dressage horses, living side by side, growing wild, woolly coats, just as nature intended.

When Lucinda wants to know what the weather will be like, she simply throws open her bedroom curtains and looks down into the fields below and is guided by her horses. "If they are galloping around I know it's going to be cold, and if they have rolled and are caked with mud it's going to be wet and windy," explained Lucinda, who has rewritten the text books on keeping competition horses. She admits that some people think she is mad and her methods radical - but dig deeper and you'll see they are based on common sense.

Lucinda believes in giving horses as much freedom as possible, and is one of the country's leading experts in the development and use of complementary and alternative therapies for horses. She is

careful to ensure that the herds consist of pretty similar characters, so there isn't much snapping or aggression. It's all part of what she calls her "naturalisation" process, a basis for her fascinating philosophy of "stress-reduced" training and management. "Horses are herd animals and were designed to live and roam in the great outdoors," said Lucinda. "Yet we find it perfectly acceptable to stick horses in individual cubicles called stables and nail lumps of metal on the end of their legs."

The first clue that man's natural inclination was floored came with the so-called horse whisperers. These therapists, made famous in literature and film, took the time to understand horses so they could train them to fit into man's world the natural way. Lucinda's horses will never need a horse whisperer. Her involvement in competitive equestrian sports stems from her love and respect for the animals. While working alongside some of the top competition horses in Germany and England, she became aware that an alarmingly high percentage of highly-talented youngsters never fulfil their potential, and that far too many competition horses suffer stress-related injuries and disorders. In the worst cases, this leads to premature death. It seemed outrageous to Lucinda that dressage horses should often suffer terminal lameness when the aim of dressage training is to produce the ultimate athlete.

Lucinda explains that the more we make horses fit into the human environment, the more psychological stress there is on them. "The more natural we can make their lives, the better it will be for them. None of my horses wear any shoes, they live with their friends in groups of six to eight in the fields all year

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### Hampshire Horse


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round. I visit them several times daily to feed them and check on them, and during the week I bring each one up to the stables to work on. "I think they consider me as one of them." Horses move a lot more freely without shoes, says Lucinda. The theory is that shoes protected the feet of the carriage horses who, at the end of the 19th Century, might have been clocking up hundreds of miles a week on hard roads. But, she points out that no one works horses like that now. Another theory is that they prevent bacteria and disease but no one keeps their stables in that sort of squalor now. She says when the horses are together there are no rules and it's wonderful watching them play. Horses have far better defenses against the weather than we think and know how to look after themselves. "When in their group, each horse will take turns to be alert for dangers. That means the others can sleep. In stables, it's every horse for himself. They are alert to every sound and may suffer sleep deprivation".

Lucinda first "saw the light" after a competition a few years ago, after doing everything conventionally for 20 years. "I had the best trainers, the best horses, the best stables and yet I wasn't happy. So I decided to give this way a go. My Grand Prix horse, Panduc, was on the verge of breaking down and I just wasn't prepared to let that happen. I love my horses beyond reason and will give them anything they want. It's just a case of listening to them and having the courage to go through with it. He often showed signs of stress, he was tense and always at boiling point at canter in his tests. "One day, after his first intermediate 11 win, I was so unhappy that I went back to the lorry in tears. I should have been celebrating - we had just won. But it didn't mean anything to me."



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Slowly, Lucinda began to rethink her whole way of treating horses and it dawned on her that she was part of the stress in their lives. "I soon realised you can't achieve harmony and partnership if you are totally dominant. "We are stopping our horses from being horses. The artificial environment that we have created for them means they don't know how to be themselves any more."

Now that Lucinda doesn't have to spend hours mucking out, turning out, bringing in, feeding and watering her horses, she has more time to observe them. "I breed happy, relaxed foals from happy, relaxed horses. These foals are approachable. Within an hour of birth they walk up to me and rub themselves against me. Often I would bring the youngsters with me when I go out for a ride. When I first went to put the bridle on them they push their noses in and want to join in."

IF you decide to turn out your horses this winter, for 24 hours, seven days a week, follow Lucinda McAlpine's golden rules:

- Provide shelter. Keep your horse in a field where there is shelter from hedgerows, a windbreak of some description or a proper field shelter.
- Feed according to the work the horses are doing. Lucinda adds in naked oats and any desired supplements after their daily exercise.
- Warm from the inside out. Feed high fibre food such as Le Brick, a concentrated horse feed, at a maintenance level to the whole herd.
- Provide ad lib hay. Preferably in big bales as it keeps itself unspoilt. If small bales are used, feed under the shelter.

- Exercise your horse throughout the winter. If a horse looks cold, bring him in and run it around, if possible in a school to get it warm.
- Most horses swiftly realise movement generates warmth and start exercising themselves in the field more effectively.
- Do not rug them - centrally heat them with food and exercise.
- Notice that the horses huddle together to keep each other warm when it is cold and are instinctively drawn to the warmest places. If there are patches of rain scald, massage the areas with a product such as tea tree cream which will also help form a protective barrier and boost the circulation.
- Observe your horse and see what it appears to need and try not to impose human responses. What to us may seem the pits is fine for a horse. When the rain stops, the cramped up horse with his bottom to the wind who looks so miserable will be trotting out in the fields once more. (Thanks to [www.thisisworchester.co.uk](http://www.thisisworchester.co.uk))

**If you found this article interesting, you may like to visit Lucinda's web-site [www.lucindamcalpine.co.uk](http://www.lucindamcalpine.co.uk)**

#### **Hampshire Horse**

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## Bridleways.co.uk - the first six months

The bridleways.co.uk website has now been live to the public for six months. Overall the bridleways team are pleased with progress so far, and initial targets and expectations have been exceeded.

There are many good equine related websites already available online, so we felt we would opt for the challenge of providing a database of places to ride with route instructions. Although the website was launched in May 2005, we have in fact been working on the website since November 2003. So far we have been focusing on adding content and routes to make the site interesting and useful to registered users. This is a huge task that will take time to complete, but we are beginning to get support from the grassroots riding community, so our task is becoming a little easier.

We have found the riding community to be very enthusiastic about the website with many providing suggestions on how the service can be further improved. Looking to the future, we are keen to work with any organisation that has a collaborative approach, that way everyone is a winner.

We have had favourable coverage in a number of equine magazines and local newspapers, which has helped bring initial awareness to the website. But we still have a mountain to climb to get to our target number of regular users. In July we held our first competition that generated significant interest, we will be holding further competitions in the future. Launching a new website from ground zero is always daunting, particularly when using new technology. Apart from a few technical challenges thrown at us in early October, the service has proved to be very resilient.

We hope you all share our enthusiasm for moving the bridleways.co.uk website to the next level.

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## HAMPSHIRE HORSE

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December 2005

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