

EQUINE NOTES for SEPTEMBER 2017.

“If you are fearful, a horse will back off. If you are calm and confident it will come forward. For those that are often flattered or feared, the horse can become a welcome mirror of the best of human nature.” Claire Balding.

“To calm your own and your horse’s nerves, breath deep and slow, so as to slow and steady your heart beat. The horse will reflect your attitude.”

Hello Again,

It is amazing just how much we have come to rely on computers. My new computer arrived six weeks ago, but proved faulty and was returned and I had to wait four weeks while Amazon tested it. They did not automatically replace it, and it left me all at sea. Some of my documents went missing and some students’ notes and letters. If I had reception for an iphone maybe I could have continued to work but I have to lean out of the bathroom window to get reception for any kind of mobile device. The pleasures of living in the country!! I was told about some ponies and a foal at Bridport that were in a field with ragwort and little grazing, I hope my report had a successful outcome as I have not heard back from anyone. The information had come by phone via The Diary.

The British Horse Society has a network of welfare officers who investigate equine issues but in theory can only advise and hand out pieces of paper giving advice. Often we are met with abuse from the owners who possibly feel guilty and are furious that they should be approached about their animals’ condition. Sometimes the owners are doing all they can, but need help and are grateful, but these are few and far between. If I find a case that needs more help than I can give I contact a World Horse Welfare officer. They have more clout and are often retired police officers, they then often liaise with the RSPCA. I have found this the best way to get a problem resolved. It seems to me though, that an RSPCA officer will come within a few hours to rescue a trapped seagull but take days to visit a reported equine problem.....

Sid, my Arab had a vet’s visit recently, to give his anti tetanus jab. He is now protected for another two years. Tetanus is rarely seen these days but to see a horse suffering from it remains in the memory. Humans can also acquire it though open wounds, even a prick from a rose thorn is dangerous, so if you are around animals, especially horses, do get inoculated.

All my winter rugs have come back from being cleaned and reproofed, the hay is in the barn, smelling delightful, the grass is still growing, and the horses are starting to change to their “Blackberry” coats. Time to get your clippers sharpened in readiness for winter.

I had a lovely afternoon and evening last month at the local hunt puppy show, conversing with local farmers, discussing Brexit, the weather, harvest and rural topics and looking at some well reared and walked hound puppies.

Ziggy and Oska my two rescue horses from Ferne animal sanctuary and World Horse Welfare are fat and happy and are great companions, or as my vet puts it, “Field ornaments,” but I cannot live happily without a horse as a companion.

For those of you who own dogs, please be aware that Kennel Cough is around. One of my bitches contracted it possibly following a show I judged a week or two ago. So far she is the only one of the pack to puff and blow, gasp and grunt, but as it is so contagious I was unable to attend Paignton Championship Dog Show last weekend at Exeter. So £30 worth of entries were wasted. If your dog should get the virus, please leave it in the car and not take it into the vet's surgery. The vet will come out to your car, and other dog owners will be grateful for your thoughtfulness.

I am here on behalf of the British Horse Society, as a contact for all equine welfare issues, so please consult me in confidence.

It is great to be back on line once again, and within easy contact for most people.

Heather Lee B.H.S. contact for Equine Welfare. E.Devon & W.Dorset