



FORGE

FORGE IS THE MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH FARRIERS AND BLACKSMITHS ASSOCIATION

**Tales from Sweden's
first FWCF farrier**



**We go behind the scenes
with Henrik Jansson**

————— The Voice of the Professional Farrier —————

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Toby B. Daniels DipHE DipWCF
Derek T. Gardner AWCF

BFBA farrier on FRC council

Simon Moore FWCF
Daniel Harman AWCF GradDipELR

WCF farrier on FRC Council

Robin P. May AWCF

The May 2024 issue of *Forge Knowledge* contains the article:

- Kinematic investigation of gait characteristics and limb coordination of the asymmetric horse
By Mark Aikens BSc(Hons) DipWCF



CPD Committee

Chris Linssner (Chair), Ben Benson, Abby Bunyard, Aaron Myall, Phoebe Colton, Daniel Harman, Alex Mercer, Stephen Britten, Jamie Hughes, Dan Stern, Iain Nixon, Jason Brown, Merv Allen and Doug Campbell.

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Contributions in the form of articles, reports, letters and photographs are welcomed.

President's address

I sit here tonight thinking, "Wow - how did two years go that quickly!?" It really doesn't seem to have slowed down at all. Looking back on the last two years as President and the last 11 (ish) as an EC member, I am so amazed by what we have achieved as an association. The EC when I first started was in a real flat point of having been hit really hard some 10 years earlier by Foot and Mouth, and worked hard to balance books and keep afloat. I was inspired by Cliff Barnes to join the EC and Association as I was invited to be part of the Trailblazer scheme. I saw how the BFBA worked behind the scenes to help stabilise and support farriers and the wider industry, and how much Cliff and his team supported individual members.

I realised that as a farrier (busy in my own world), I was so unaware of what was going on around me and also aware that the association desperately needed some new blood and energy. Cliff and Craig d'Arcey did a great job then over the next few years of supporting, guiding and (I'm sure at times!) of reining me in. It was apparent then that we had no real way of communicating and hearing our members unless they physically came to a meeting, with no real presence outside of Stoneleigh and nothing online or on social media. I have tried over the last ten plus years to pull, kick, drag, and push farriery (especially BRITISH farriery) into the equestrian limelight.

Over the next 7 years I am pleased to be able to have made huge improvements to stabilise and support the association. We brought in a new database that saved us £5,500 a year. We invested in new members of staff that have revolutionised the office and the day-to-day administration. We brought the kickstart that is Claire Brown into the Association, who showed us all the power of PR and marketing. Claire taught me so much in how to deal with situations and also how to look at myself and what I do. Claire and I both pushed hard to make sure that the equestrian industry were aware of the BFBA - we are now able to represent UK farriers on NEWC (the equine charity council), the equine council (where DEFRA meets equestrian industry) and the BHS, and we also have equestrian press come to us for quotes and opinion. That is a huge achievement I am so proud to have been part of. When Covid came and the world shut down, Claire and I were able to use our connections to effectively work with the FRC and equine charities to provide guidance to enable farriers to continue supporting their clients. We developed a red/amber/green chart used by farrier associations internationally and vet associations in the UK, providing real relief to the industry.

I was pleased to also be able to broker a deal to buy the Forge&Farrier website (the biggest farrier website in the world!) to then align with the BFBA. Sadly one of the hardest jobs I have had to do was to interview for a replacement editor of Forge for Gill Harris, who retired after 21 years as editor-in-chief. Gill was a huge pillar of support to the EC and wider industry. However with Gill on board we have (I'm relieved and proud to say) found an amazing Editor in Sarah Shephard, who has hit the ground running and given Forge a noticeable new feel!

One of the main failures that we had was the fact that because we are an association made up of volunteers, we are by default doing things in our spare time (and when do we all ever have spare time!) By luck, I fell in to having the opportunity to join and work with the BFBA but I know for others that wasn't there. The EC was also just 6 people all trying to do something, but with very little help. By starting

smaller committees and sub-committees with members that had not had a chance to do things, we saw more people having chances to help and more to make a difference. We went from one craft committee and an Executive Committee, to now having a Forge Magazine Editorial committee (chaired by Liam O'Hara) and a CPD committee (chaired by Chris Linssner). The Blacksmithing Committee is also about to have a resurgence.



The biggest and most notable journey I am proud to have started and been on with the BFBA is the Focus event. My first year was five gazebos around the end of the forge (with the international in), running on only one day. Due to a technical oversight that first year it wasn't even advertised in Forge magazine, but we still managed to get 200 people to turn up! Slowly, and definitely with the addition of Holly Flack on board, it has hit an upwards trajectory - this year becoming the biggest Farriery event in the world! I am so proud to see this happen - it is my genuine belief that we have some of the best Farriers and practitioners in the world here in the UK.

The camaraderie that we see when we get together at Focus and at events is truly amazing. Coming together as an industry and community is how we all can help to stabilise and support each other. We are now all aware of needing time out to ourselves and our mental wellbeing. Branches and their CPD evenings have already made such inroads to help the industry regroup and help each other, in everything from improving standards to also agreeing we need to charge more.

My phone has always been on for anyone that has ever reached out with an issue, a suggestion or even a complaint! I have always tried to be there when ever asked to represent or support those that have asked. My apprentice, clients, family and fiancée can confirm my many, long phone calls from farriers - taking a "quick call" has become a running joke!

I am incredibly proud to have represented the association up and down the UK and abroad in the USA. My career highlight was definitely at the Royal Welsh on behalf of the BFBA (AND as a proud welshman, I even remembered how to speak Welsh!)

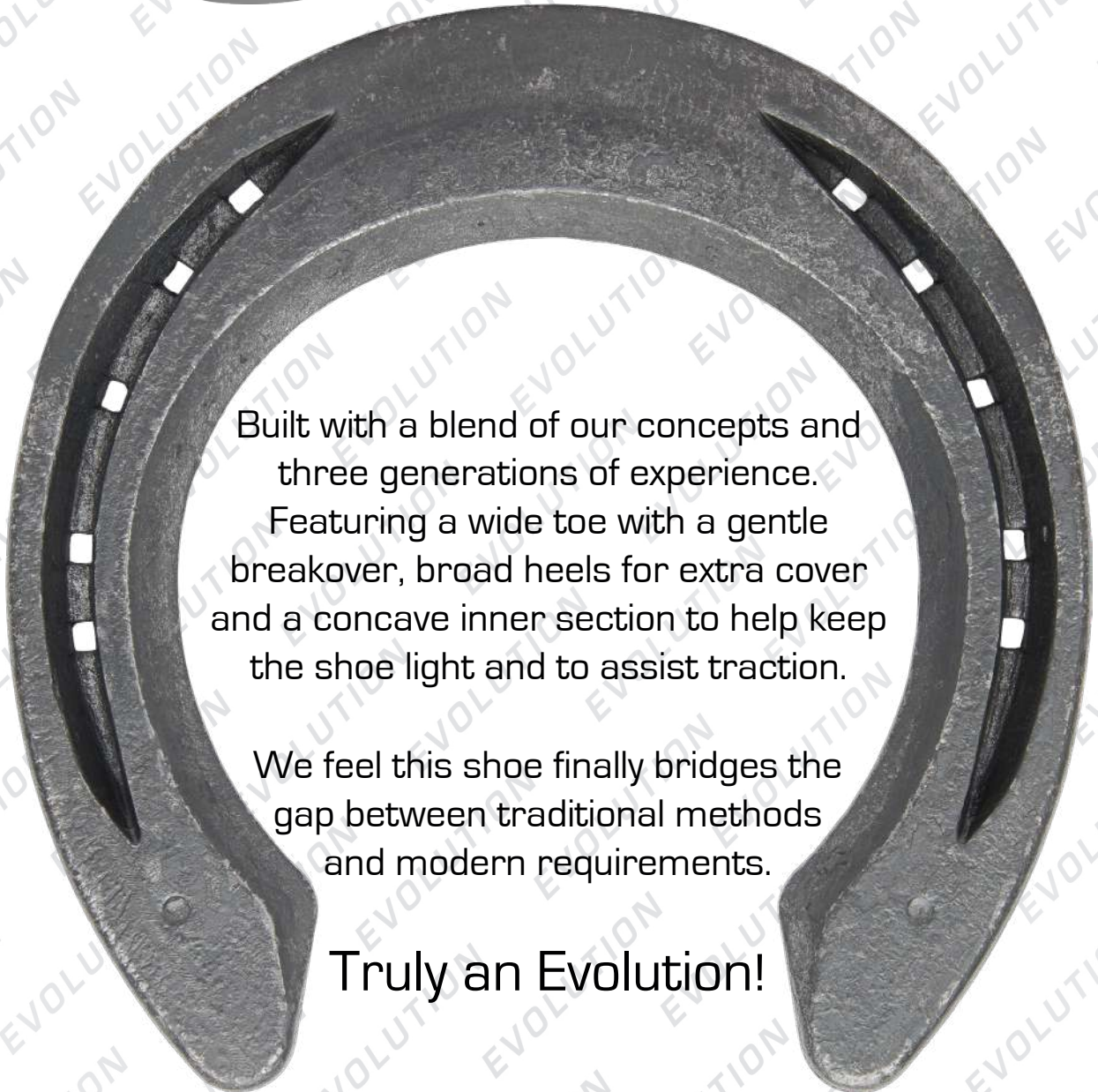
It has been a real honour (and at times bloody hard work, I'm not going to lie!) to have served you all and been President of such an amazing and special Industry association. I would like to thank all those that sat on the EC for the last two years and all those members of the various committees for their invaluable contribution. I would especially like to thank the branches and those few members who tirelessly help and promote and organise for the branches. You are our touchpoints and our relevance, and you all do an amazing job. I do think that if BFBA's founding father James Anstey could see us now, he too would be pleased to see how far we have come!

Thank you all for your support and membership contribution. I hope to see you all soon and wish Abby Bunyard AWCF the best of luck for her presidency after the AGM. Good luck and god bless!

**Ben Benson, AWCF, Master Farrier, ATF
BFBA President**



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BFBA on Tour: Sharing our History in Belgium

Words by Abby Bunyard, AWCF, Vice-President of the BFBA

BFBA Vice-President Abby Bunyard was invited to give a presentation at the Farriers Education Association's Conference in Belgium all about the history of the BFBA and to promote and get some ideas for this year's Focus event. The Conference took place on the weekend of 1st-3rd March 2024, and is run by Filip Verniest. Abby shares some details from her trip:

Friday morning

Leaving Dorset at 4.45am on Friday 1st March in hurricane wind and rain, the ferry crossing to Belgium was at the forefront of my mind! On arrival at Dover I met Mark Aikens DipWCF BSc(Hons) to continue our journey onward to Belgium together. Little did I know that this would be the very start of my educational weekend!

Mark and I chatted over a beer on the ferry about a whole host of topics including new products, scientific articles, client farrier relations, apprentice education, and bringing in para-professionals to the BFBA (which encapsulates both teaching and learning - win win!) By working together we can provide a platform for us all, comrades, clients and apprentices to all upskill.

My largest regret of this part of the journey was not having a pen and paper to hand. The ideas that flowed were thick and fast - it was a whirlwind think tank, and Mark was a mind-blowing inspiration and generously willing to share his knowledge. I felt privileged to be able to discuss these ideas with him, and the ferry journey I had previously been apprehensive about was thoroughly enjoyable.



Filip Verniest and Didier Rondelez ▲

Friday evening

Arriving at the hotel, we joined in with some round-table discussions with roughly 35 other attendees as a taster of the topics we'd be covering on the following day. Despite half of the conversation taking place in Dutch, I managed to keep up with the aid of Google Translate, Didier's patience and the excellent PowerPoint pictures.

This was followed by a lovely meal and huge amounts of conversation and introductions by Mark to anyone and everyone he knew! A long, tiring but educational day - in the morning, it was my turn to deliver my presentation and educate others on the history of the BFBA.

Kees Alblas' presentation ►



▼ Hans Horn's presentation



The crowd watching Kees Alblas ▲

Article continues on page 6 ►

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Saturday morning

BFBA were first up at 9.30, giving the history of our fantastic organisation from 1908 all the way through to the present day. I shared details around our educational system in the UK and promoted Focus with a little taster of this year's speakers, and a fantastic short clip of last year's event to show everyone what they'd missed out on. Hopefully we'll have inspired a few new faces to join us this year!

Knowledge and information sharing is an integral part of what we aim to do at the BFBA. Being able to share this with the attendees at the Farriers Education Association Conference was a brilliant opportunity to expand our audience and I was so pleased to have been able to attend and deliver our talk.

With my part over, it was time to enjoy the rest of the Conference!

The next 3 speakers Gertjan Korsman, Hans Horn, and Kees Alblas were in Dutch which, surprisingly and mainly thanks to their PowerPoint skills, I managed to keep up with and learn something from them all. After the coffee break, we had talks from Jan Krogh and finally Domenico Cellaro.

Jan Krogh started his lecture with a very different tone: **Do not shoe bad horses; walk away.**

He then went on to explain why he takes that approach. Fourteen years previously on a Friday, a dog had walked around behind a horse he was shoeing. The horse startled, and its jaw hit Jan's neck as it came sideways and down. The horse then pulled back and ran off.

Jan then did what all of us would do. Instinctively he ran, caught the horse and finished the job.

By Monday, Jan wasn't feeling so good and popped into the nearest hospital. It turns out his C2 vertebrae was broken into three pieces - a potentially catastrophic injury which in a severe case could have resulted in paralysis.

Jan was given 2 options. The first was to have surgery with a 40% chance of survival. The second was immobilisation via a halo brace attached to his body and head with no timeframe for removal.



They had never done the surgery before, and the Neurosurgeon had never seen anybody survive this injury. His words were, "When we get someone in with this severe an injury, we put them in the cooler. No one survives." Jan planned his funeral, said goodbye to his wife and children, and went in for surgery that day.

I feel there is a lesson in this for us all. In an ever-changing world where the expectations and demands are so high and people continually change the goalposts, we need to stop for just one second and really weigh up the odds. We may not all be as lucky as Jan. He survived the operation (luckily for us, too, as he gave the most fantastic lecture!) but he appreciates that every day is a gift. And, he no longer takes a risk by shoeing bad horses.

The post-operation scar ▶



▼ *Jan's Neck Operation*



A close up of the X-ray image ▼





Abby Bunyard promoting the BFBA and Focus ▲

Saturday afternoon

The afternoon was full of live horse shoeing demonstrations, with Jan and Domenico putting into practice the lectures from the morning.

The day was rammed with so much information, technology, passion and positivity that I truly was sad to be at the end.

Saturday evening

To top the whole weekend off, it was a lovely surprise to be able to sit with Didier, Filip and a few of the other guys leaving on Sunday to have a proper relaxed beer and wash up of the last two days.

I was overwhelmed by the hospitality from both Didier, Filip and the members of the Farriers Educational Association, and would advise anyone of our association members to go next year.

The venue is an hour and twenty minute drive from Dunkirk, and the cost for attending Friday and Saturday including food and drink, was €240 (£205) but a discounted fee is offered to BFBA members.

Domenico Cellaro was the last to speak - an Italian professional farrier Equine Biomechanics and Biometric scientific researcher. His presentation and the science behind his findings were second to none, and easily portrayed to a multinational audience.

Domenico then went on to introduce me to Nico and Alessandro Rusconi, a father and son parentship of Mondial Horse Nails.

I was also introduced to Davide Visani, roller motion pads and the Colleoni tradestand, all now thinking of coming over to join us at Focus!

Lunchtime was taken up with the trade fair, so I took full advantage of the time speaking to the traders, seeking new products and sourcing ideas - especially anything I thought our association members would like to see at future Focus events.

Look out for information on the next Conference via FEA-Farriers Education Association on Facebook.

This year's Conference took place at: Bizni's Hotel, Lokeren, Belgium

Domenico Cellaro's presentation ▶



The last supper on Saturday night - amazing hospitality ▼



Didier saying thank you at the end of the lectures ▼



A Day in the Life of Sweden's First FWCF Farrier

Henrik Jansson is Sweden's first FWCF farrier. Here, he shares a day in his life as a farrier based at the University Animal Hospital in Uppsala, Sweden.

My name is Henrik Jansson and I'm a farrier at the University Animal Hospital at Swedish University of Agriculture Sciences, located in a city called Uppsala about an hour north of Stockholm. Here, I will share a day in my life with you!

I have my wife Inka and 3 sons aged 14, 15 and 19 and 2 Jack Russell terriers. When I'm not shoeing horses, I like to spend time with my family and I love to play ice hockey or golf with my 3 boys.

I grew up on a farm just outside Uppsala where my grandfather breeds draft horses. I have always had horses around me, but the real interest started at the age of fifteen. My father had a welding company on the farm as well.

I met my wife Inka at the age of 20 and she shared my interest in horses. Becoming a farrier felt natural given the interest in horses and the ironwork produced on the farm.

Besides the University I also work as an examiner for the Swedish Farrier Association, examining school tests, Journeyman's Certificate test and Master Farrier tests. I'm also involved in a Further Farrier Education, run by the Swedish Farrier Association, to educate farriers in remedial shoeing. That leads the farriers to become approved farriers by the Swedish Agriculture Agency.

In addition to that, I work alongside another Swedish farrier Rickard Svård AWCF to work together with Jay Tovey FWCF who runs Farrier Tuition, educating farriers from the Nordic countries in the English system. Currently there are two groups in Sweden, one group aiming for the Diploma WCF and the other group for their AWCF exam.

My morning routine is about the same every day, starting with breakfast at 6.30 and at 7.00 it's time to cycle to work! My job is located across town about 9 kilometres and takes about 25 minutes. It's the perfect amount of time for some mindfulness or listening to farrier podcasts from around the world. It almost makes you feel like you know people you never even meet. It's strange how small the farrier world is, yet so big and so much to learn!



▲ Henrik's cycle to work in the centre of Uppsala



Farrier Facts

- Grown up with draft horses, trimming his own horses since the age of 16
- Farrier school 2003-04
- Gesällbrev 2006 (EFFA certification)
- Continued exam 2007 (to become approved farrier by Swedish Agriculture Agency)
- Start to consult for the SLU University 2007
- Teacher for the continued education in farriery 2008
- Competed nationally and internationally
- Full time and Head Farrier for the SLU University 2009
- Board member of Swedish Farrier Association 2009-2013
- Master Farrier 2013
- AWCF 2022 (Passing with an A in the theory)
- FWCF 2023 (First ever farrier in Sweden to pass this exam)
- Thesis in "Treatment of P3 fractures type 2 and 3"



Photo by Alex Ridgeway BSc Hons DipWCF

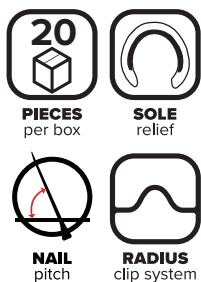
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7.30am: Arrive at work and change into work clothes, have a cup of coffee, start the computer and check the day's schedule. I would guess that 75-80% of the clients I see are remedial shoeing cases. If time allows I do normal shoeing as well, which I also think is important to keep all the basics at a good level and to see healthy horses and not just the sick ones! My day until lunch is booked up with return visits from clients I've met before. After lunch I normally don't book horses, instead I focus on those who came in with urgent problems during the day or night, horses that have been in the hospital for more than a day in need of foot care, re-shoeing after surgery or MRI, lectures for students, research and so on. The afternoon can be calmer, or the opposite with a lot of stress depending on the cases that have entered the hospital in the last few hours.

8am: Every morning I start by preparing the horses for surgery or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). All horses due for surgery on the day will have their shoes removed, both to save the mattresses in the recovery room and to minimise the risk of the horse injuring itself with studs when it gets up after anaesthesia.

After shoeing, I keep a journal for each horse, even if the shoes are only removed for surgery. The journal must contain the horse's anamnesis, what I have done with trimming, type of shoes used, shoe cycle and if the owner needs to take anything into consideration e.g. speed, soft surface, hard surface, shoe cycle etc.

8.30am: The first horse enters the forge. Today the first horse had neurological problems in the spine which caused the horse to start brushing its front feet. I try to prevent the shoes from interfering while the vet helps the horse with its main problem, the nervous system. This particular horse works quite well and has less disturbing problems when it gets wider lateral branches and a set toe in both fronts. I also shoe this particular horse with hinds, with regular shoeing as a service for the client.



Scuffmarks on the foot and shoeing with wider lateral branch and set toe

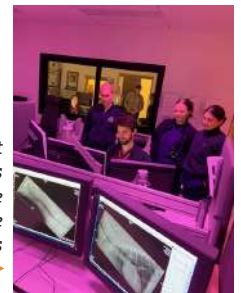


Veterinary students practise how to remove a horse shoe from cadaver limbs



Horse in standing MRI scanner

The radiologist reads the images with students before Henrik gets the diagnosis



10am: The second horse arrives: a 28-year-old cold-blooded trotting horse. It's a 3-4 degree lame in the right front when it walks. The owner suspects that it may be an abscess in the foot, as the horse has had it before and the owner thinks the horse has a similar type of lameness. However, when I saw the horse, my first thought was not the foot. It was severely swollen just distal to the carpus, but to be sure I cleaned up the foot with my hoof knives, found nothing in the foot and got no response from the hooftester. I decided to have a veterinarian take a look at the horse and send it for an ultrasound. You get pretty spoiled as a farrier when you work like this, with all the help and equipment you could possibly need at hand! Unfortunately, the ultrasound showed a complete rupture of the superficial digital flexor tendon and given the age of the horse, the owner decided to euthanise it. That's the downside of the job - even if it's not my horse, it still feels sad that you couldn't help it.

11am: The third horse arrives. It had had an MRI the day before, stayed here overnight and waited to get remedial shoes on before going home. The MRI showed a split of the DDFT in the area of the navicular. The horse was shod with elevated heel approx 8 millimetres and speeded up breakover in both fronts. The owner and horse live quite far away from the hospital, and in this case I know their farrier at home. I gave the farrier a phone call to see if he is comfortable to refit the shoes once at home before the revisit to the hospital. I think it's a good idea to try to be in contact with the farrier at home so they can have the horse's problem in mind while shoeing, hopefully leading to a more successful treatment. The owner needs to agree for me to contact the farrier at home - it's like any hospital where you get professional secrecy of our clients.

12pm: Time for lunch and a break with my colleagues.

1pm: It's time for preparations for the lecture I will give to the veterinary students tomorrow. The clinic will cover how to remove a shoe, and the basics of how to use hoof knives. They practise on cadaver limbs that I put shoes on before the students arrive. The veterinary students must know the basics of taking off a shoe and looking for particular issues, such as abscesses. They don't need to nail a shoe back again - they need more practice for that! However, they should know how to protect the hoof until the farrier comes, or if they were to find an abscess, how to bandage or plaster the hoof.



▲ Henrik finds an abscess in an emergency case

2.15pm: An acute horse arrives at the hospital, which had been found lame in the paddock earlier the same day.

Once we have an emergency horse like this and the foot is suspected, both myself and a vet work together to see if it is a foot problem or if the vet should continue looking for the cause of the lameness. In this case, it was an abscess in the foot that was the cause. We cleaned up the foot and put a gypsum cast over it, and booked a revisit within 7-10 days to see if there are more to clean up or if the horse can be shod and get back to work.

3pm: Time for some forge training! The horses for this day are ready. If there is time during the day, I try to practise forging or reading if I have a case the next day that requires it. But today is forging day. I try to keep fit with my blacksmithing, believing it makes everyday work easier. Everything from the fit of the shoe to seeing the shape of the foot raises the level up a notch and besides, I also enjoy just standing by the anvil and playing with a piece of iron!

I'm also quite competitive, so I enjoy going to farrier competitions or competing in whatever you can compete in.

4pm: A farrier showed up to fill up the stock of shoes he needs for tomorrow. We run a small farrier supply store, selling the basics with shoes and nails.

4.30pm: Time to end the day. Change clothes and jump on the bike and head home. A podcast in my ears again, the podcast in the afternoon I usually take a break from the world of farriers and listen to the day's news or economy, e.g. the stock exchange.

5.30pm: Dinner with the family. My wife Inka is good at cooking, so everyone in the family really appreciates this time of day. The most important time of the day when the whole family sits at the table and talks to each other, no phones or anything to disturb us. We try to have this time every day.

7pm: Time for me and my boys to pack up and go to hockey practice. Just a bunch of guys get together and play hockey for an hour.

The youngest in the squad is my son who is fourteen and the oldest is a little over fifty. But everyone is competitive regardless of age, so in this case age is just a number! I used to be faster than my boys, but time flies... Depending on who in the family won the game, the ride home in the car can be difficult with all the competitive guys.

10pm: Home again! Time to just fall asleep and wait for the sun to rise again.



Henrik and his boys at the hockey ▲

University Animal Hospital, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

At the animal hospital, approximately 5,000 horses visit us per year. We also have a small animal hospital, X-ray department and laboratory. In addition to just shoeing horses and being part of the animal hospital, I also give lectures to the veterinary students on the subject of hooves. I also assist in various researches that include the subject of hooves, horse biomechanics and more. This university is the only one in Sweden that trains veterinarians and currently there are approximately 800 veterinary and veterinary nursing students at the university.



Photo: Mark Harris ▲
A photo over the Swedish University of Agriculture Sciences. The arrow shows the placement of the forge.

Pricing and Planning for the Future

Words by Joe Gillings AWCF

On Monday 12th February, 28 farriers attended the CPD day at Plumpton Racecourse organised by the Sussex Branch of the BFBA. Farriers travelled from further afield than Sussex, with people coming from Hampshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and even one from Scotland!

Our first of two guest speakers was David Nichols AWCF from Total Foot Protection. Dave's lecture was a farriery related business lecture, with a lot of questions and discussions with the audience. It was a very well received lecture, especially with the current financial climate.

Our second speaker was Matt Machan representing St.James Place wealth management. Matt was a professional cricketer for Sussex and Scotland, whose career was ended early due to injury. Matt spoke about pensions, investments and planning for your retirement. With a large amount of the audience in a similar age bracket, and a lot with

young families, this lecture was a real eye opener for many.

After the morning's lectures we had a very nice lunch in a private box, followed by an afternoon's jump racing with a chance to catch up with everyone and speak more to the lecturers. Jamie Hubbard and Luke Blomfield even managed to get one over on the bookies, which is always good!

Apologies to anyone who came who isn't in the photo, which was taken at the end of the day.

A question in Matt's lecture was "Would you rather have 1p that doubles every day for 30 days, or £50,000 every day for 30 days?"

If you google the answer, you may be shocked, as half of the audience was on the day!



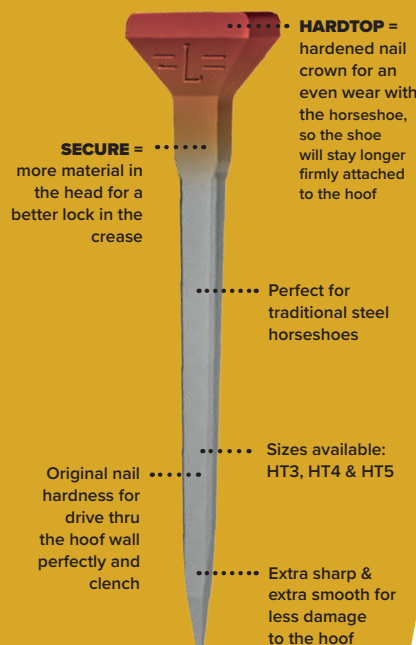
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Starting the Conversation on Isolation

Words by Tiffany Gardner CJF, DWCF, APF-I

This is part one in an article series about isolation, community and mental health.



The key to surviving in this world for animal, or human, is to avoid isolation. If an individual is isolated, there is slim hope for survival. If an individual is in community, there is hope of survival, and the potential to thrive.

Humans need, and were made for community. We need each other, we need connection. But in today's world, it is difficult to connect with people, even the most basic connection.

Merriam Webster's dictionary defines isolation as:

- To separate something from other things with which it is connected or mixed
- To keep a person or animal separate from other people or animals by putting them in a different space
- To put a person, country or organisation in a situation where they are seen as being separate.⁵

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) points to loneliness and isolation as serious public health risks.¹

Farriers are vulnerable to isolation. Who and what ends up suffering

from the result of isolation? The individual, their body, mind and spirit. Their work and those they are closest to. It is worth it to look into isolation; what isolation is and the effects of isolation.

There are two main types of isolation, physical isolation and social isolation.

Physical isolation is the circumstance of being alone and physically cut off from people.

Physical isolation can be experienced in a variety of ways:

Discipline: When a child is put in time out, they are being put in physical isolation. When an offender is placed in jail, they are put in physical isolation. The desired outcome of this physical isolation is that the experience will be undesirable, and cause the individual to make a different choice and bring about a behavioral change.

Disease prevention: Another more recent experience of physical isolation many experienced in the world was the covid restrictions many governments placed on their citizens. Covid created world wide physical isolation in our lives in an effort to prevent the spread of disease.

Physical distance: People who live or work in remote areas, experience physical isolation. Remote locations carry the additional burden of lack convenient resources such as grocery stores, fuel stations, hospitals and emergency services near by.

Choice: Many people, especially introverted personalities, prefer the company of themselves to those of others. They live alone, work alone, and are satisfied with being separated from people. This might represent many farriers, as we may crave a lifestyle where it is simplistic, away from the craziness and business of the city life.

The practice of solitude is not the same as physical isolation. Solitude is being alone in your own head space; enjoying your own company and giving yourself time to reflect. Solitude is positive and necessary for creativity and reflection. When a person experiences too much solitude, the positive effects start to decline, and it can transform into physical isolation.

“But there are other words for privacy and independence. They are isolation and loneliness.”

- Megan Whalen Turner

Social isolation is the lack of relationships with others and little to no social support or contact. Social isolation is objective and can be measured as fact, whereas loneliness is feeling like you do not have meaningful or close relationships. A person with a lot of connections and friends can still feel lonely.¹

Farriers are vulnerable to social isolation.

Regardless of how many clients we may interact with day to day, the boundaries we need to place on the client to farrier interaction to remain professional, limits the level of human connection with many of our clients. Many of our conversations might stay as surface level chit chat. Farriers may feel drained after interacting with clients, and lose the desire to reach out to their own social group and therefore lose important connection with them.

The following symptoms associated with social isolation are warning signs of unhealthy social isolation:

- Avoiding social interactions, including those that were once enjoyable
- Cancelling plans frequently and feeling relief when plans are cancelled
- Experiencing anxiety or panic when thinking about social interactions
- Feeling distress during periods of solitude

- Feeling dread associated with social activities
- Spending large amounts of time alone or with extremely limited contact with others

Social isolation can involve emotional isolation, which is an unwillingness or inability to share one's feelings with others. When socially isolated individuals lack emotional interaction and support, they can become emotionally numb — detached from their own feelings.²

Social isolation may come and go as you journey through life. Life has seasons or chapters. As your life circumstances change, your community may change, which might lead to social isolation. There are many circumstance changes that may lead to physical and social isolation.

All people, not just farriers, go through these life circumstances. But, our lives as farriers do place us at a higher risk in a few categories – remote locations, physical impairments and social media.

All these circumstances will have an accompanying impact to your social circle, your connections, your relationships, your support systems, probably leading to temporary social isolation. That temporary social isolation may become long term if you are not proactive about re-building your connections and support systems.

Circumstances that can lead to isolation

Intimate partner violence People in abusive relationships sometimes avoid contact with others because of an unwillingness to reveal their true situation

Loss of loved ones Isolating after the loss of friends or family members can be common, especially among seniors

Mental health issues Issues such as anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem often result from social isolation, but they can also cause it

Remote location Individuals who live in remote areas or who work away from home can experience feelings of isolation

Physical impairments Physical challenges, hearing or vision impairments can all reduce an individual's ability to interact socially and create a sense of isolation

Social media Social media can help people stay connected to others, but it can also lead to isolation if it becomes a substitute for in-person socialisation

Unemployment Shame associated with losing a job or being unable to secure new employment can lead individuals to self-isolate.²



The connection between our physical health and mental health is often overlooked. But, mental and physical health are deeply interconnected. People experiencing social isolation are increasing their risk for the following health consequences:

- Sleeplessness
- Reduced immune function
- Poor cardiovascular health
- Higher risk for coronary heart disease and stroke
- Reduced cognitive function
- Higher risks of premature mortality²

Loneliness has also been associated with higher rates of:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Suicide
- 40% increase in the risk of dementia²

Social isolation is a major mental health concern. Individuals who experience any of the following should consider consulting a medical or mental health professional:

- Confused thinking
- Delusions or hallucinations
- Excessive feelings of anger or fear
- Extreme swings in emotion
- Inability to cope with daily problems
- Major changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- Numerous unexplained physical ailments
- Prolonged depression
- Social withdrawal
- Substance abuse²

“The content of your character is your choice. Day by day, what you choose, what you think and what you do is who you become.”

- Heraclitus

A few years ago, the Facebook farrier community participated in the “push up challenge to raise awareness for mental health.” We do not know how far the ripple effect was that the challenge had, but if it brought to light just one person’s struggle and helped them out of it, it was well worth it. Mental health is not a small matter. Our minds are our most powerful asset.

Choice plays a powerful part in our lives. Some of our social isolation may seem out of our control, but there are many aspects that are in our control and a result of our choices.

Why do we choose isolation? The most glaring reason is, it is easier. It is easier to be by ourselves, than in relationship and community. It is the easy choice.

Maybe we choose isolation out of fear: fear of accountability, fear of judgement, or fear of exposure. Fear has two acronyms: Forget Everything And Run and Face Everything And Rise. How do you want to handle your fears?

Maybe we choose isolation because of our lack of awareness, specifically, social awareness. Being a farrier lends itself to giving farriers freedom - freedom to be real, authentic, sometimes authentically weird, and individually yourself. This is the beauty of our job: freedom!

However, there is a line where who you are speaks louder than what you are trying to say. This can become a problem with your clients and fellow farriers.

You could be alienating yourself by being unaware of how your actions and words affect others. If you are trying to grow your business, there is a level of personal development and growth that MUST occur to

facilitate the business growth.

Maybe we choose isolation because of our lack of confidence? A lack of confidence will hold anyone back from putting themselves out there. It is tied to a fear of judgement and low self esteem. A farrier might avoid a clinic or gathering because they are fearful of judgement because they are not confident their skills will measure up.

Maybe the opposite could be true, maybe we choose isolation because we are over-confident? An over-confident person may avoid clinics and gatherings because they don’t see the need to go because they know it all. Or when they do show up, people avoid them because of their ego, arrogance and being difficult to coach.

It is important to identify the reason for our isolation. Whether it is by choice or by circumstance, you have the power to change! To make a different choice, or work to change your circumstances.

A different choice might be becoming part of community. Community is a unified body of individuals; people with common interests; people living in a particular area.⁵

Benefits of Being in a Community³

1. Support and safety
2. Connection and belonging
3. Influence
4. Sharing
5. Learning
6. Acceptance
7. More connections, more chances of success!

*"Alone, we can do so little;
together, we can do so much."*

- Helen Keller

There is no community out there like the national and world-wide farrier community. Farriers band together and support our own. Our passion connects us, we share because other before us share; we learn from to grow and get better; we accept each other, and we find a sense of belonging in a world we struggle to belong in.

Community is mostly talked about in a positive light. However, community is not always positive. Gang and cult like communities have control and polarizing viewpoints at the center of the community. When a community has exclusivity as a cornerstone of the community, and a mindset of being the only way, everyone else is wrong, us against them mentality, this is when community becomes a bad thing, toxic.

As amazing as the farrier community as a whole is, there is also a very real danger of toxic community mentalities. Farriers are passionate individuals, but we do not all practice our craft the same way. We potentially encounter polarising view points every day. If another farrier's experience or opinion differs from ours, farriers could choose to respond with judgement, instead of a curiosity and open mindedness. This closes the door to a positive opportunity to build community.

Choose your community wisely. The beauty in today's day and age, we have the privilege to choose our community to an extent. Choosing your community might involve moving and change. But existing in a toxic community is never a good thing. It is worth it to get out and make a change for a positive and growth focused community.

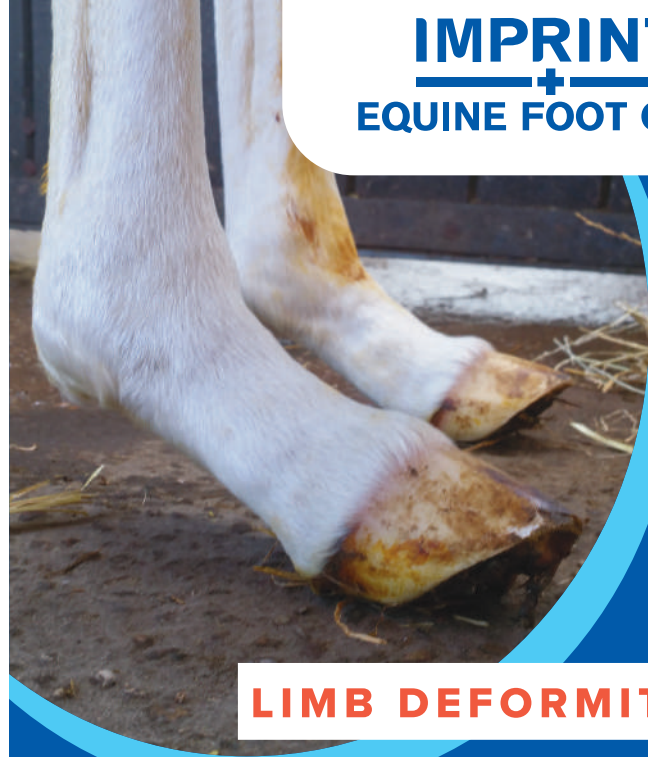
You can change the script of your life. As the dark of winter has come to an end this year; the hope of the spring season has emerged; the promise of the summer and autumn seasons fill your thoughts and diary, take a moment to take stock of the level of isolation vs community in your life. If the balance is off kilter, maybe it is time to make some changes.

No time like the present to make a change. Start the conversation...

Look out for part two of this article in an upcoming issue of Forge.

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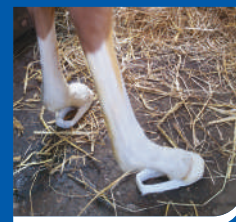
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The BFBA Edward Martin Cultural Exchange

Solomon Tovey DWCF from Bedfordshire is taking part in the BFBA Edward Martin Cultural Exchange programme and arrived in the USA in March for his three month educational trip. Here, Sol shares what he got up to during his first few days in Texas.

On March 10th I landed in Dallas and was picked up by James Cockrell CJF and his wife Aimy. A short drive to their place (and not even three hours from being off the plane!) we were making shoes in his forge at his house.

James shoes a mixture of horses, but like most farriers around here we shod a lot of quarter horses. Going from warmbloods and thoroughbreds and it was interesting learning about the disciplines they have the horses do here. The forces on the legs from sudden starts and sharp stops mean there are subtle differences in the shoeing.

James and Aimy also introduced me to frozen margaritas while I was with them, which go down pretty good after making some 24" 1 1/4 x 1/2 heartbars! We managed to find a horse to take some concave on the last day, spinning 11" 3/4 x 3/8.

From James' I was driven up to Dusty Franklin CJF AWCF's horseshoeing school and was met by Mason and Chris, both students at the school.

We drove 6 hours north to Kansas for a competition there, getting into a hotel and then setting up the next day to compete.



The competition format was making pairs of specimens. Each class was openly judged by Tim McPhee, who was great at giving feedback to everyone in a busy contest. The classes were a good reminder to be hitting the basics; sole pressure, good nail fit and (due to the nature of the contest), how well the shoes paired up.

After the contest we found a bar in Salina to perch in for the night, and then drove back down to Dusty's school.





Five star Horseshoeing school was a great time to get some practice in for the WCB competition in Madison. The timing worked well as while I was there it was certification week, meaning a lot of examiners for the American Farriers Association would be walking around and be able to share their knowledge on the practices we were having.

The shoes for Madison have been a great challenge in strength for the heavy shoes class, but also technical shoemaking and accuracy in forging.

Being at Dusty's allowed to relax in the evenings, with Dusty taking me to a great restaurant, Trappers, where we ate steaks and he showed me some variations of whisky to try out. The evenings were full of things to do - one evening we went to watch one of the students, Tee Jay, practicing some bull riding and then the next day we were at a gun range shooting AR's and handguns.

All this all amongst shoeing, shoemaking and then a pack of Coors light to finish!



The BFBA Edward Martin Cultural Exchange

The BFBA Edward Martin Cultural Exchange is organised by the British Farriers and Blacksmiths Association and the American Farrier's Association.

It offers graduate farriers the unique opportunity to represent their respective Associations on an educational three month trip to the USA and the UK, allowing them to travel and expand their farriery knowledge and skills whilst working with some of the most highly regarded farriers.

Waiting Our Turn Since 1571

This is a historical year for the Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths and for the craft of blacksmithing as a whole, Past Prime Warden, Alderman and Past Sheriff of The City of London Alastair King DL is next in line to become the 696th Lord Mayor of the City of London. Alastair will be the first Lord Mayor whose Mother Company is the WCB since the granting of our charter in 1571 by Queen Elizabeth I. Alastair will be sworn in as Lord Mayor at The Silent Ceremony on the 8th of November 2024.

The day after The Silent Ceremony, The Lord Mayor's Show is held, the biggest day in the City's calendar where some 7,000 people, 200 horses, and around 150 floats will take part in a three mile-long procession to mark the Lord Mayor's first full day in office. For which a processional float from the WCB whose decorative components have been designed and will be made by blacksmiths from all around the country.

The Lord Mayor's Show brings the whole community of the City together - whether it's those who live, work, study or visit there, to cheer on those taking part. They will also welcome the new Lord Mayor who in turn will be 'shown' to the people of the City, which is the original purpose of the Day and includes swearing an oath of allegiance to the sovereign at the Royal Courts of Justice.

The procession is built around the state coach in which the Lord Mayor travels and is accompanied by the Pageant master, City Marshal, Pikemen and Musketeers that reflect the Show's history which stretches back more than 800 years. They are joined by military bands and units, modern business city floats, community groups and charities in a blaze of colour and noise that show the modern face of the Square Mile.

The main concept for the parade float is being developed by lead blacksmiths Ian Parmenter AWCB of Parmenter Forge whose concept for the float is that of a busy and noisy working forge, along with Doug Campbell FWCB of Caimbeul's Forge, led by Mayoral Committee Chair Colonel Jane Davis.

The float will show the busy scene of the blacksmiths forge including four teams of smith and strikers, helve hammer and anvil and forge. There will be six side panels designed by Doug Campbell FWCB, the side panels will be made by blacksmiths from around the country including Rhys Harlen FWCB from Darent Valley Forge, Simon Grant-Jones FWCB, Simon Hall AWCB, Don Mallet AWCB who will run panels for the Blacksmith's Guild and the Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers based at the Metalsmiths Training Centre in Lyneham.

In addition to the float, lead blacksmiths Ian and Doug have been tasked with designing and making the gifts to be presented to the Lord Mayor for this year's prestigious and historical event. Although we can't say much about this portion of the project, Ian and Doug have also recruited Annabelle Bradley from Malham Smithy in Yorkshire who has also designed one of the gifts and along with her team of blacksmiths will make her piece at this year's Great Yorkshire Show being held on the 9th to the 12th of July.

Parts laid out on the scale drawing with the measurement specifications for a panel ▶



▶ Ian Parmenter getting the first cuts of the project done



▲ Rhys Harlen at his forge checking out the scale drawings

A professionally filmed and produced documentary by Nick Johns from Forwards Film Group, will record the events leading up to and including the Lord Mayor's Show and include interviews with working blacksmiths regarding the importance of the craft.

We have also made contact with the Victoria and Albert Museum, and it is hoped that once Alderman Alistair's term of office is concluded, the gifts and other suitable items along with the documentary will become an exhibit in the V&A's Ironwork Gallery the Lord Mayors "treasures", are to be released should another Lord Mayor come from the WCB and returned again once their term is completed.

It is hoped that the display and its contents help to make the public more aware of the Livery Companies within the City of London, particularly the WCB, its craft members and its craftspeople who make up its ranks.

To celebrate and pull the project together as it nears its completion, there will be a forge-in held at Stoneleigh Park with kind permission from the BFBA who are supporting the WCB by providing the site, where blacksmiths from around the country will join to light fires, forge steel and celebrate this historic event.

Items to be made at this event will include a fire basket which will have been designed by an award holder of the WCB and selected by the Mayoral Committee, any small items which those attending would like to make and add to the Charity Auction, the posts for the panels and any finishing touches needed for the panels, the gate and the gazebo and of course we are hoping to forge some solid friendships along the way.

Doug Campbell at work forging part of the detailing for a panel ►



A Farrier's Guide to the Government's Spring Budget

Words by Liam O'Hara AWCF

On 6th March 2024, the Chancellor Jeremy Hunt announced the spring budget. At the BFBA we feel that the following points are important, and would like to share them with our members.

VAT Threshold

From 1st April, the threshold at which businesses must register for VAT has been raised to £90,000.

Ahead of the budget, the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) said the 'artificial barrier' had capped profit and productivity for businesses and ultimately slowed UK growth. Companies turning over less than £90,000 will no longer have to register for VAT.

National Insurance

From 6th April 2024, National Insurance rates will be cut for around 29 million workers:

Employees will see the rate they pay on annual earnings between £12,570 and £50,270 drop from 10% to 8%. This follows an earlier cut from 12% to 10% on 6 January 2024. The average worker, earning £35,400 a year, will save over £900 annually, because of the two rate cuts, according to the Government.

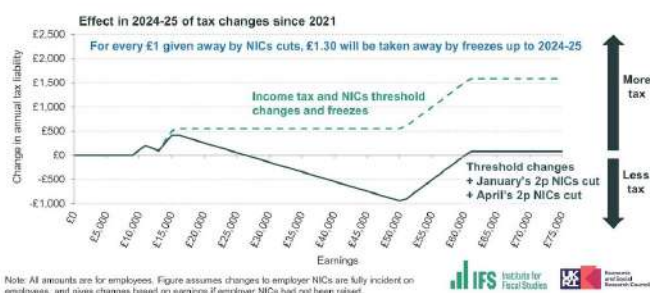
Self-employed workers will see the rate they pay on annual profits between £12,570 and £50,270 drop from 9% to 6%. This – combined with the previously-announced abolition of mandatory class 2 contributions – will save the average self-employed person on £28,000 a year around £650 annually, the Government says.

However, despite these new rate cuts, some employees will still pay more tax and national insurance overall due to freezes to tax thresholds.

Income tax and national insurance thresholds remain frozen until 2028.

Despite the cut to national insurance rates, both national insurance and income tax thresholds – which determine when you start paying each tax – will remain frozen until April 2028 (as announced by the Government last year).

For some, this will offset both the Autumn Statement and Spring Budget cuts to national insurance, as shown in the below graph from the Institute for Fiscal Studies:



Fuel duty

This UK-wide tax on petrol and diesel will remain at 52.95p a litre for the next 12 months, as the temporary 5p cut has been extended again.

UK ISA scheme

A new 'UK ISA' will be introduced. This will give savers an additional £5,000 tax-free allowance a year to invest in "UK-focused assets". This is in addition to the existing ISA allowance of £20,000 a year. However, we don't yet know when this new ISA will become available as the Government says it still needs to "consult on the details".

National Savings & Investments (NS&I) will launch 'British Savings Bonds'

Starting in 'early April', these savings accounts will offer a fixed rate for three years on deposits of between £500 and £1 million – though we don't yet know what that rate will be.

Child Benefit shake-up to end 'unfairness' in system

The Chancellor has confirmed that the 'grossly unfair' Child Benefit rules – which require anyone earning between £50,000 and £60,000 and claiming the benefit to pay some of it back – will be fixed.

In the short term, you won't have to pay any of your Child Benefit back until you start earning £60,000 a year, and you'll only lose the benefit entirely if you earn above £80,000. A consultation will also consider whether to change Child Benefit eligibility to being based on household income, rather than on individual income, by April 2026.

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A thanks to Mark Aikens

The BFBA Executive Committee and the Forge editorial panel would like to thank the outgoing head of the editorial panel Mark Aikens for his outstanding contribution to Forge magazine over the years.

Mark joined the editorial committee in early 2019 and has served as head of the editorial panel since 2021. He has done a great job of building an enthusiastic team and a network of people happy to contribute articles and content, ensuring each issue of the magazine has a wealth of interesting content for our readers to enjoy.

Thanks to his hard work and efforts in balancing the position alongside his other commitments, Mark leaves Forge magazine in an excellent position.

We have now welcomed new members to the editorial panel, including our new head Liam O'Hara. Details for the full panel can be seen in the contents page of the magazine - please do reach out if you have any content or ideas for a future issue of Forge.

New QEST Rising Star Award

Do you know an emerging maker worthy of recognition that you'd like to nominate for an award?

QEST is delighted to be collaborating with international luxury interior furnishings brand Sanderson to launch a prestigious new prize, the 'QEST Sanderson Rising Star Craft Award'.

This prize aims to recognise an emerging talent who is making a positive contribution to their craft, the wider craft sector and community. This person is a committed maker who has been practising professionally in their craft field between two to seven years.

It's open to craftspeople across the UK with a career-changing cash prize of £25,000!

Makers must be nominated by a credible person – which includes craft industry professionals, tutors, colleagues, peers, or others and who must know the maker and their work well in a professional capacity.

Please note: nominators can only put forward one candidate for the Award.

Nominations close on Friday 17 May with the winner announced in October.

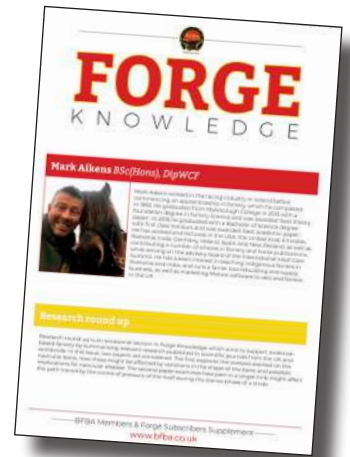
In the May 2024 issue of *Forge Knowledge*

Forge Knowledge is a member-only benefit offering an opportunity for gaining CPD.

In May's issue of *Forge Knowledge*, hear from Mark Aikens BSc(Hons) DipWCF as he shares an article on kinematic investigation of gait characteristics and limb coordination of the asymmetric horse.

There is a perception that horses with asymmetric conformation of the distal limb may be more prone to lameness and gait abnormalities. As part of his studies towards his BSc (Hons) Farriery Science degree, Mark Aikens set out to gather quantitative data exploring the impact of asymmetry on various limb and kinematic parameters.

Also included is a research round up exploring two papers: the first on analysing the stresses exerted on the navicular bone and their implications for navicular disease, and the second on how chronic osteoarthritic pain affects the path of the centre of pressure of the equine hoof.



Apprentices are entitled to FREE BFBA membership. They can get their own copy of Forge Knowledge and Forge by emailing membership@bfba.co.uk



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- Huw Dyer AWCF -





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A Guide to Shoeing for the Event Horse

With the eventing season finally underway, many farriers will now be focusing their efforts on supporting their clients' horses to be at peak performance for their competitions. Here, Mark Humphrey AWCF shares his insights on shoeing event horses, and how managing these horses has improved his farriery skills.

In my career, I have shod a few top-level horses, and managing these horses has been the tempering and annealing of my skills and knowledge as a farrier. One of these horses was "The Lion", one of the oldest to compete at Burghley¹. Although sound to compete, he had several managed pathologies which needed next-level attention and cooperation from his team (the rider and owner, Matt Heath², the vet, Peter "Spike" Milligan³, the grooms who worked on him tirelessly at events, the physio and myself).

The required diligence level was intense, and working up to a big competition was sometimes stressful. One source of this pressure was his shoeing regime. "The Lion" ran in a different shoeing package from his day-to-day shoes for his competitions. The emphasis between competitions was support and stability, whilst, for a competition, we increased his breakover, gave him a better grip and reduced concussion. We learnt over time that his competition package had a limited window of effectiveness, and because of this, he was generally shod one or two days before travelling to an event. Couple the time proximity with upright feet, prone to nail bind due to lack of wall, and you have a particularly high-pressure situation. Still, with careful planning, mindfulness, and much elbow grease from all involved, he competed at the top level until he retired at 19 with only a few (dozen) bumps in the road.

My Ethos

When at college, I was always, as I'm sure many of my generation were, engrossed in the theoretical lessons taught by "Slim" Symons FWCF⁴. Many of the lessons learned in those classrooms stay with me today. In many ways ahead of his time, he discussed everything from trimming Elephants to nailing on bicycle rims in an engaging narrative that never really felt like learning. Still, the lessons he taught are remembered to this day. For those who missed this era, the main crux revolved around your reasoning and logic for what you choose to use and the correct application of said choice.

In simple terms, just thinking about what the determining factors of the horse are;

- Conformation
- Discipline
- Level
- Pathologies
- Hoof quality
- Age
- Shoeing cycle

Against the expectation of the owner/rider;

- Competition schedule
- Work requirements
- Surfaces worked on
- Surfaces competed on (i.e. shoeing specifically for wet conditions at the early events)
- Budget
- Shoeing cycle (or what the client believes it should be vs your assessment)

I use these factors as the basis for my everyday work. I believe the process of examining, reasoning and rationalising every horse you do is the basis for solid and sound farriery. Often seen, farriery problems can be avoided or easily remedied if farriers take a moment to evaluate their choices before unthinkingly tapping on a type of shoe just because that is what they use or have freely available.

I find that I add either hammer modifications or grinder modifications to nearly every shoe I fit. These slight modifications can make a difference; I have collected evidence using my Hoofbeat⁵ gait analysis system that even minor shoe modifications, such as rolling a toe or softening a heel with your hammer, can impact how well the horse uses itself on every step and footfall.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

Reducing breakover forces, enabling softer landing or better foot placement could make the difference between soundness and career-end repetitive strain injuries. From a farrier's point of view, they take seconds to achieve just a few hammer blows or a pass with the finisher. Like so many things, it just requires thought and diligence. I do the basic mods on most shoes now out of habit, adding breakover to shoes by softening the sharp edges or grinding the lateral toe on the hinds (Figures 1 & 2).

If we, as farriers, can provide a balanced, stable platform, we can reduce the instances of lameness. As we know, repetitive strain injuries are a constant battle and, in some disciplines, more common than the traditional conditions we learn about in college. Limb stability, foot balance and positional placement are the best defence against this type of injury and can be easily achieved without any significant heroics on most horses (Figure 3).



Fig.3

Assessment

Before shoeing, I like to see a horse move. When possible, I have them trotted up every time I see them.

As a rule, I am more interested in how the limb loads than how the foot lands. Although one leads to the other, and there are some definite links and reasoning to associate footfall, dynamic loading is part of the stride when the limb is under the most significant force; thus, imperfections are amplified. A stable loading phase is paramount to the longevity of any sports horse.

When I do vet referral work, I use gait analysis as part of my initial assessments, follow that with recurring measurements when needed, and watch the horse move every time.

Technology is not designed to replace a well-trained eye but can achieve some things our eyes cannot, so it can be added to your arsenal as another tool when possible. I use Hoofbeat for gait analysis and the Metron hoof system⁶ to capture images of the hoof. These are great tools for gathering impartial data and removing speculation from oft-awkward conversations with colleagues when dealing with referrals.

When watching a trot up, I am looking for:

- Freedom of movement
- Footfall in relation to the body
- How the foot lands
- Displacement of the fetlock
- Hock stability

When assessing the front limbs, I would look for a slight heel-first landing, which, on loading the fetlock, descends evenly on the axis between the bulbs of the heels; this would confirm good foot balance in a dynamic assessment. Any toe-first or strong heel-first landing would suggest poor foot balance and/or pathology. If the fetlock does not descend on the axis between bulbs, the loading platform is not level or requires further intervention.

When dynamically assessing the hind limb, it is more of a whole limb assessment that gives you the information. Footfall is still part of this, but I find it less useful to indicate balance than looking at the entire limb. Even loading down the limb with slight mediolateral instability in the hock and the fetlock descending along the axis between the bulbs of the heels indicates an even load.

I am looking for off-axis loading or a medial swing with a stabbing action as a poor indicator—a slight heel first landing with no apparent displacement and good stability through the whole limb.



Fig.4

For the static evaluation, I look at;

- Limb alignment
- Body symmetry
- Limb placement or stance
- Coronary band symmetry
- The shape and size of the heel bulbs

For the assessment, I am looking for outliers. Aside from poor conformation, look for deviations in the coronary band and sharp-looking or asymmetrical heel bulbs.

Look at the stance of the horse;

- Is there a limb that is out of position?
- Move the horse and let it settle again.
- Does it happen again?
- Are the heels of the hoof aligned with the back of the frog?
- Is the solear border uniform in shape?
- Any bruising or anomalies in the white line?

Foot dress

This is a widely discussed topic for me, so I won't delve deeply into this other than to bullet point my basic ideas and principles.

From the solear aspect, I am looking for the following;

- Flowing symmetry and even thickness of hoof wall
- Heels dressed to the widest part of the foot.
- To maintain as much hoof mass as possible
- Minimal frog dress, looking for health and symmetry, usually just the sides, if at all
- Sole exfoliated but not stripped, you can always re-trim
- Bars sculptured, don't trim good horn, don't leave bad horn
- I trim from the caudal aspect forward
- I add symmetry to the wall from the solear aspect

From the dorsal aspect

- I try to do as little as possible dorsal dress
- Back up from the sole aspect of the wall rather than rasp the dorsal surface
- Flatten lumps and bumps, but don't overdo it for the sake of aesthetics
- If the toe is long, back it up; don't thin the dorsal wall

That is it—a simple, functional trim that maintains the structures of the hoof capsule and emphasises its symmetry and proportions. Don't over-trim to achieve symmetry; you can add to the balance when fitting your shoe.

Shoe Selection

For event shoeing, I prefer a concave shoe. In my van, I carry three different ranges of readymade shoes, one of which is pre-drilled. These are my go-to shoes, but when selecting the shoe, I discuss the horse's competition and work plan for the next cycle.

If the schedule is favourable, I can rotate into a more beneficial package and reshoe before the next fixture.

My guiding considerations are;

- Work/competition schedule
- Current ground conditions for the next venue
- Known pathologies
- Conformation flaws

While I try to satisfy each question above, the current ground conditions significantly impact my final selection. Fitting a shoeing package incompatible with the current conditions can be an ultimately futile endeavour that can cause more harm than good; for instance, shoeing with length and width when the ground conditions are poor can lead to an increase in shoe loss. At times, when the shoeing package required is at odds with the ideal package the horse needs, I shoe the horse as close as possible to the event and then remove the package after the event. The Lion was shod normally in wide webbed fullered shoes (1 x 5/16), then "plated" to run in Avanti⁷ front shoes, drilled stud holes, with flat 3rd millennium⁸ pads and magic cushion, then concave stud holed shoes behind. These were applied as close to the event and removed again the following week.

I use a variety of toe clips, side clips, and occasionally unclipped front shoes (although unclipped with stud holes are not a standard selection). I choose the type of clip to suit the style of shoeing, the ground conditions, and the horse's conformational needs.

My ideal shoe fit would be to the widest part of the frog, with a small amount of width (my old boss, Stuart Spence⁹, used to describe this as enough for a mouse to run around the edge). On a toe clip all the way around, on a side clip from the clips back (Figure 4).



Fig. 5

The shape should be as symmetrical as possible, fitting the heels onto the centre of the section. When necessary, I modified the heel quarters back to the heel to increase cover whilst maintaining symmetry. Depending on the foot's shape and where/how much material I need, I use extra fullering, hammer boxing, spreading the section, or upsizing and finishing back into a reverse check to achieve this (Figure 5).

Stud Holes

I like my stud holes to be in the heel quarters when possible. I always punch two in each. Even loading is better for every stride than the occasional increased torsional forces applied when turning tightly at speed. Although both types of force can be potentially harmful, I don't believe either force is less damaging; it is a matter of odds. The horse will take more straight-line steps at a greater speed, thus amplifying the force applied through the limb versus only a few high torsion turns at a slower speed on each course. Even on a show jumping round, there are fewer turning strides than there are straight-line strides. The dressage phase has the most turning strides due to the test duration and the arena's size, forcing circular work, and I try to encourage my clients to reduce stud height for the dressage phase to reduce the risk of damage. However, the lower speed reduces the force of impact considerably.

I countersink all of my stud holes using a 1" deburring tool (Figure 6). This widens the ground surface of the hole, which prevents the burring when the shoe wears, encroaching over the stud hole, making tapping difficult or impossible in some cases. If I punch my stud holes, I will drill them and countersink for uniformity before tapping them (See Figure 5).

Shoeing Cycle

The shoeing cycle is one of the most critical aspects of shoeing any performance horse. My shoeing cycle varies between 3 and 5 weeks, depending on the shoe package, ground conditions, event schedule, and pathologies. Ideally, I like to have my horses running in the first half of the cycle, especially for an important event. We try to plan events and shoeing schedules around each other to achieve this, although this isn't always possible with the greener horses, who run more regularly. We book them in for checks at three weeks, then again at four and shoes at five if they haven't been done before.

The shorter the shoeing cycle, the less deformation from your trim.

Short cycles allow for shoes with a closer fit without overgrowing.



Fig. 6

Nailing and finish

I want to mention my nailing protocols. I use four nails per shoe on most horses. I have been doing this for a few years and found no difference in the number of lost shoes, but the hoof wall quality has increased. That being said, I happily use six nails when the situation arises that I deem necessary; poor ground conditions or big competition are the usual culprits for adding more nails. I don't usually add more for frequent shoe pullers; I shorten the cycle and fit the shoe closer. More nails only compromise an already damaged structure.

I use slim copper nails. I haven't found any problems using them; the advantages of them looking good and having an antibacterial coating are customer pleasers. I see no disadvantages to using them and have suffered no increase in shoe loss.

Below is a list of things that I regularly tell my clients, apprentices or anyone who will listen to me;

- The hoof is a conical structure, which means it gets wider as it grows
- Dorsal dressing does not alter pedal bone alignment
- Don't dress what isn't there; you can build alignment with a shoe/pad/Adhesive
- Heels grow forward as they grow higher
- Shorter shoeing cycles are the key; five weeks maximum
- Lay clips; don't cut them in
- Different shoes for different jobs; one type does not suit all.

Conclusion

- ▶ Short cycles are the key to better hoof health
- ▶ Shoe to the current conditions
- ▶ Manage the client's expectations and educate them on the use of shoeing cycles
- ▶ Use fewer nails when possible
- ▶ Counter sink stud holes
- ▶ Explain your reasonings to your client so they understand the process

References

- ¹Burghley Horse Trials
- ²International Event Rider currently based near Oakham, in Rutland.
- ³Well known vet, with his own podcast
- ⁴Renowned farrier, legendary lecturer at Hereford College, FWCF
- ⁵Gait analysis system using hoof-mounted 3-axis accelerometers
- ⁶AI based calibrated photo analysis system
- ⁷Brand of Rail type shoes
- ⁸Type of plastic pad, with a Christmas tree shaped frog support
- ⁹Stuart Spence AFCL, Based in Hose. ATF. Where I served my apprenticeship.

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Ian Gajczak

Ian has been shoeing horses for over 20 years and runs a small professional multi-discipline business in South East Scotland. During his time as a farrier, Ian has competed, presented clinics and judged at national and international events.



Paige Poss

Paige has dedicated over 25 years to the hoof care industry, where she specialises in trimming horses' hooves, conducting distal limb anatomy studies, and creating educational materials. Paige co-founded Anatomy of the Equine, LLC, a platform that publishes education materials for farriers.



Haydn Price DipWCF GradDip ELR

Haydn has run a mixed practice in South Wales for 38 years, developing a special interest in performance and lameness shoeing techniques. He specialises in farriery specific biomechanics and the use of gait analysis systems. Haydn was lead consultant farrier to the BEF for 20 years.



Stuart Muir NZCEF, CJF, DipWCF, APF

Stuart, originally from New Zealand, is now the resident farrier at Rood and Riddle Equine Hospital in Lexington, KY, USA. His clientele consists of sport horses and horses with diagnosed pathology, and he enjoys the challenge of working on complex pathology and rehabilitation cases.



Ula Krzanowska, MSc Architecture

Ula, the Hoof Architect, is a full-time farrier with an architectural background. She currently works on all types of horses, from pets to high performance horses and veterinary referral cases. She incorporates the understanding of 3D space and physics into addressing hoof form.

Full speaker bios are available online:
bit.ly/FocusSpeaker24
Tickets are now on sale.



BCGA completes major revision of key safety code for the farriery sector

New safety guidance, produced by The British Compressed Gases Association with the Department for Transport for use by the farriery sector, has been published.

Code of Practice 50, 'The Carriage of Gas Cylinders On Vehicles' has been brought completely up-to-date by the trade body, to include the latest information and guidance for the industry.

Available for free download from the publications' area of the BCGA website, Code of Practice 50 is a complete rewrite of BCGA's previous document, Guidance Note 27, which was one of the most commonly accessed documents within the association's extensive library of safety material.

The new Code includes details on legal and safety requirements, threshold quantity calculations, compliance, where required, with the Agreement Concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), and information on roadside inspections.

Gas fuelled vehicles and fuel labels, personal safety and guidance on the action to take in the event of an incident are also featured.

Jake Lake, Technical Manager of the British Compressed Gases Association (BCGA), said: "Gas cylinders are commonly used and many thousands are transported every day without incident, but to ensure that they are safe for transport there is specific legislation in place, as well as supporting guidance.

"Code of Practice 50 references the appropriate legislation and sets out best practice for their carriage.

"It was reviewed by the Competent Authority in the Department for Transport and reflects best practice for the carriage of gas cylinders. The publication was last updated in 2017 and significant resources have been deployed to bring this new version together.

"It is aligned with the requirements of both the Carriage of Dangerous Goods and Use of Transportable Pressure Equipment Regulations 2009 (as amended) which sets the legal framework for the transport of dangerous goods in Great Britain for work purposes, which implements the Agreement Concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR).

"It's of relevance to the farriery sector and, like all our publications, has been produced in accordance with BCGA's commitment to mission safety in the compressed gases industry."

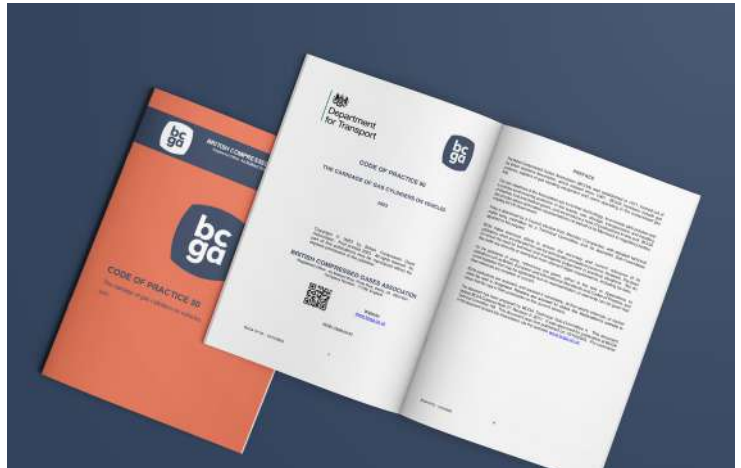
The UK membership body for the compressed gases sector, the BCGA is committed to stringent quality, safety and environmental measures.

Its members operate in a highly regulated industry, with a focus on best practice in technical, safety, health and environmental issues, and they volunteer their own expertise and insight to drive forward best practice in these key areas.

Overseen by the BCGA's Technical Committee, the subcommittees play a key role in developing the Association's highly regarded and free to access library of technical documents, including Codes of Practice and Guidance Notes.

These are used as a point of reference and referred to across the industry and in related sectors, both nationally and internationally.

For more information, visit bcga.co.uk.





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