



Barehoofcare Update

www.barehoofcare.com
"Mayfield", 470 Middle Creek Rd, Yarck, VIC 3719
Ph: 03 57734306 Fax: 03 57734307

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our email address has changed to : info@barehoofcare.com
(the old one will still work for a while, then will disappear into the ether of cyberspace)

Giddy All,

Well things are really happening, despite the economy, drought and bushfire devastation. Workshops are well attended and there are a lot of keen people wanting to learn about horse hoof care, which is fabulous for the horses.

People are becoming more aware of the convenience and great value of our online shop and it is slowly becoming regularly used. Of course, any constructive feedback would be greatly appreciated.

Our tools seem to be selling well, possibly due to the fact I have not had the time to review all of our prices due to the huge increase in the exchange rate! If the poor rate of the Australian dollar continues unfortunately there may need to be some price rises in the near future.

An important part of our rehab centre is the horses' diets, so in this edition we are featuring Horse Nutrition. A lot of the horses that come to us arrive after being on long term conventional medicine. As we all know there are often detrimental side effects from long use of some of these medications. It is my job to try and heel horses with stomach ulcers, inflamed intestines and often diarrhoea.....along with this I have the job of weaning them off these substances. As Albert Einstein famously said "You can't fix the problem using the same logic that created it". Therefore you cannot fight conventional medicine with conventional medicine. So this is when myself and many others look into and start using herbal medicine. In this newsletter we will introduce Sue Martin and Carol Layton who are both trained in Equine Nutrition.

Thank you to all of the great feedback about our newsletters, we're still not as regular as we'd like to be but we have had quite a few distractions and hurdles recently with the fires, release of the new boots and organization of the equine podiotherapy course.

If there is anything you would like us to include or if you have any suggestions for improvement, please just let us know. What we really would like to see is more reader's stories, so please if you have a hoof related story that you would like to share we would love to include it.

We have currently been developing our links page on our website, we now have a list of the diploma students and are working on developing a list of other trimmers. Have a look: <http://www.barehoofcare.com/links.html> any ideas or feedback would be great.

CONTENTS:

<i>Introduction.....</i>	<i>Page1</i>
<i>Feature- Sue Martin</i>	<i>Page 2</i>
<i>Feature- Carol Layton</i>	<i>Page 3-4</i>
<i>The effects of environment.....</i>	<i>Page 5</i>
<i>Articles.....</i>	<i>Page 6</i>
<i>What's happening at Mayfield.....</i>	<i>Page 7</i>
<i>Workshops</i>	<i>Pages 8-9</i>
<i>Brian Rourke</i>	<i>Page 10-12</i>
<i>Equine Podiotherapy.....</i>	<i>Page 13-14</i>
<i>Classifieds</i>	<i>Pages 14</i>
<i>February 7.....</i>	<i>Page 15</i>

Feature: Sue Martin - Natural Equine and Canine Health

Equine Naturopath, Equine Nutritionist, Equine Herbal Practitioner, Equine Myofunctional Bowen Therapist, EMTA Member. PH: 03 5967 4476 natural.equine@bigpond.com Mobile: 0427 674 004

Nutrition

These days as our lives become increasingly hectic and spare time is hard to come by, we are often faced with the most convenient way to do things. There are various pre-mixed, quick, easy and delicious smelling feeds available for horses at the tips of our fingers, but are they what our cherished pets need?

The answer is simple. Would you feed your children fast foods as their staple diet? Hopefully not!!! So why feed your horse on fast, processed feeds? The truth is that a natural feeding regime teamed up with natural supplements will benefit your horse beyond that of a mixture of processed feeds. After all, nature has been successful with supplying us with everything that we need to grow strong for many years. And as for convenience, natural feeds and supplements are available in abundance



How would I know what to feed?

As an Equine Nutritionist, Sue places allot of emphasis on the nutrition of your horse when she is called out for a consultation.

Prior feeds are always considered, along with present feeds, work load, weather conditions, available pasture and the individual horse's metabolism, demeanor and any illnesses both past and present.

It is important to remember that a particular diet is not forever as there are a number of factors which will vary over time and for this reason will change your horse's diet also. If you were to relate this theory back to humans you would see that our diet often changes between seasons, various sports played throughout the year and changes in our metabolism particularly when we consider the changes in our diet from the time we are toddlers, teenagers and adults.



Supplements

When it comes to feeding supplements, it can be very confusing for some owners. Supplements may not always be listed on the packaging of some feeds and often this causes owners to double up on supplements. A good rule to remember is "more is not better."

If you are unsure, ask for help as supplementation will vary considerably depending on many factors including the age of your horse (particularly in young horses). Varying pasture will also have an affect on diet and supplements, for example many Australian soils are deficient in copper which is important in the assimilation of iron and strengthening of the immune system just to name a few. Rosehips are an excellent and safe way of supplementing copper which also have the added benefit of being high in Vitamin C, Cobalt and countless other vitamins and minerals. Garlic is also excellent and safe to feed, it is also rich in Copper and Sulphur and countless other minerals and is often fed to horses for its preventative properties fighting both fungal and bacterial infections

Balanced Equine Nutrition



Independent advice and custom diets for horses

Feeding horses properly is an art and a science. Working out the best diet for your horse or horses from the enormous and confusing array of commercial feeds and supplements, or from more than 100 basic feed ingredients listed in the 2007 *Nutrient Requirements of Horses* from the National Research Council (NRC) can be overwhelming. There are so many products on the market for a huge spectrum of issues that you could easily over supplement, especially performance horses by concerned horse owners. This is not in the best interests of your horses.

Let's have a look at one of the popular hoof supplements on the market. This hoof supplement contains the following amongst other 'fillers'.

Hoof Supplement A

Alfalfa Meal
Yeast Culture
Lecithin
Soy Protein Concentrate DL-Methionine
Vitamin C
Copper Sulphate
Zinc Oxide
L-Tyrosine
Biotin
Calcium Iodate
Pellet Binder and Flavours Added

It is typically recommended when horses present with poor hoof growth, thin walls, brittleness or cracks. The idea is to buy a supplement designed for hooves to solve the problem at usually a fairly high price for long term use. Once the problem is supposedly solved then the hoof supplement may be discontinued or it may be a permanent addition to the diet without any real understanding of what was causing the problem with the hooves in the first place. And this may be in addition to a coat supplement because the coat was dull and 'bleached'. Many horses are over supplemented as owners have nothing better to go on than buy a supplement by its 'problem to be solved' label.

But will this solve the problem? The approach that Balanced Equine takes is to look at the whole diet and to supplement with what is missing and then to ensure that the proportions of the nutrients and minerals are in the right ratios, as guided by the NRC.

Poor hoof growth is more likely due to deficiencies in copper, zinc, selenium, vitamin E, inadequate B vitamins like biotin, pyridoxine, folic acid and B12 and possibly the amino acid, methionine. Methionine, an amino acid with a sulphur bond that is a building block of protein is found in grass and hay so if your horse is on pasture or hay then unlikely that your horse will need supplementing with methionine. B vitamins are provided by the amounts in grass and hay and also by the micro organisms that ferment forage so again unlikely to need supplementing. Biotin supplementation has been shown to be effective in some studies but in others it had no effect. Again grass (and lucerne) is a good source of biotin and unlikely to need supplementing. Omega-3 (anti inflammatory) and omega-6 (pro inflammatory) fatty acids can also be a problem but again not an issue if the horse is eating grass as the main source of forage. To add shine to your horses' coat at a similar ratio of omega-3 to omega-6 found in grass, simply add 15 ml of linseed oil to your horse's diet. All other oils have higher omega-6 fatty acids to omega-3. (Note: Linseed oil must be refrigerated.)

Lecithin is an emulsifier that contains fatty acids and the B vitamin choline amongst other ingredients. Tyrosine is a non essential amino acid which means that the horse is able to manufacture it himself. Both ingredients do not need to be supplemented for a horse on pasture or hay. Other ingredients such as alfalfa meal (lucerne meal) and calcium iodate are sources of calcium, which will help if your horse is calcium deficient but if your horse is not, then the extra calcium could throw the calcium to phosphorus ratio out, assuming there is a significant amount in the recommended dose.



Neither of these photos have been altered or doctored in any way in Adobe Photoshop or any other graphic manipulation program.

The change in diet from an unbalanced diet to a supplemented balanced diet can clearly be seen in each hoof. The hoof on the left side is from a



horse that was having issues with sand cracks and larger cracks. The second hoof is of a horse whose feet despite regular barefoot trimming still continued to be brittle and crack easily.

If you are finding horses with hooves that don't improve, despite your best efforts with regular and timely trimming, then it is most likely that the problem is due to nutritional issues that cannot be solved by trimming alone. Nor can the diet solve all issues with hooves - hoofcare and diet go hand in hand.

The most common deficiencies that cause hoof, coat and skin issues are copper and zinc as most pastures are poor in these nutrients, particularly copper. The obvious solution is to find a supplement on the market that can supply copper and zinc. But how much is needed? Not only is it best to provide sufficient amounts of these trace minerals based on a horse's weight, age, reproductive status and/or workload but it is also necessary to provide them in the right proportions for an optimised, balanced diet. Too much zinc can block the absorption of copper so excess zinc will set the horse up for a secondary copper deficiency even if you are providing enough copper in the diet to cover his requirement. This could mean the copper goes in and comes out the other end with no effect.

There is a way to work out how much to supplement and what with. A pasture laboratory test will tell you what your horse is actually getting for protein, calcium, phosphorus, magnesium and the trace minerals, iron, copper, zinc and manganese and costs about \$55. Balanced Equine will balance the diet with what is missing and in the right amounts and then provide the 'recipe' for a custom trace mineral mix with copper and zinc using salt as the base. Very easy to do once you know what your horse needs and a lot cheaper than the commercial supplements, especially in the long run. Commercial supplements can be used but it really is throw everything at the horse and hope something in there will work and the horse has to excrete the rest. Since no pasture test has come back with results showing the minerals in the correct proportions, no balanced commercial supplement or feed will ever be able to balance a horse's diet as they don't know what your horse is getting from pasture and other feeds/supplements to start with.

Contact details:

Carol Layton B.Sc, M.Ed

Balanced Equine

Graduate of Dr Eleanor Kellon's VMD NRC Plus
and Nutrition for the Performance Horse

Phone: 02 4953 2580

The effect of environment on horses' hooves by Andrew Bowe

The biggest variable that I see in horses' feet in my travels around Australia is the effect of environment. Horses are on their feet for most of the day, so it is reasonable to expect that they are going to need to adapt to any changes in the ground surface to maintain an optimal weight distribution.

The following photos show very graphically how quickly a horse is able to adapt. Taken about six months apart, the photo on the left shows the horse in its dry climate of Western Queensland and that on the right is the same foot after six months living in the constantly wet environment on the Central Coast of New South Wales.



There are two things that the horse has adapted to – a huge increase in moisture levels and a yielding ground surface.



These photos belong to Brian Rourke who – along with his son Mitch as an apprentice – runs a very busy farriery business on the central coast of New South Wales (see Brian's letter on page).

The challenge Brian has with horses in his care is the constantly wet environment. Give me the drought any day!

Of course there is nothing new under the sun and researchers have for many years documented morphological variation as a result of changes in environment. (a good reference is the work done by Mr Gene Ovniczek who was one of the pioneers of studying mustang feet at various locations in the USA – www.hopeforsoundness.com).

Those of you who have done any workshops of ours have heard me talk repetitively about the variation of wall length relative to sole plane. For horses on harder ground it is important that weight is distributed over most of the ground surface of the foot, leaving no significant wall height. However, for those horses on softer ground, the weight bearing distribution is not so important because the feet are sinking into the ground, thus allowing full weight bearing, even with a longer wall which is required for grip. Function is thus maintained on either surface.

This system works well for the adaptable horse – if a horse can adapt, then it can maintain function. Remember that long term soundness is strongly tied to maintaining function.

But let's now consider how we have traditionally accommodated environmental changes with shoeing:

Unfortunately, horses are shod to the same parameters year round. Horses are shod the same for dry hard ground as they are for wet soft ground.

Changes in weight bearing requirements can not be taken into consideration with shoes, which I believe is one of the major factors leading to chronic lameness.

Articles: Barefooters out there ! Having fun

. Moppett is now doing so well in her little boots that figures she should be the lead horse - now often on single tracks I let her do just that. This pic is of Moppett and Yasmin last weekend on a Lake Macquarie Pack and Trail Horse Riders 3 day campout at Congewai. The first day Yasmin wore Bares on the front but was barefoot for the next 2 rides. The last day was pretty challenging but her feet looked fantastic at the end of it. Moppett (little founder feet) wore Epics each day. So pleased with both of them cannot help showing off ! Johanna Yule



A letter form one of our readers - Sylvia Ruwoldt

Hi,

Thought I would write to you about my thoughts on barefoot horses. My horse has been barefoot for 5 years now and I had forgotten what an effect shoes have on the land. My friend bought his shod horse, Cash to stay with my unshod boy, Starlick just before Christmas. I was very happy to have a much needed friend for Starlick but after a very welcome inch of rain the night paddock where Cash was staying was in a very sorry state, while Starlick's was not harmed at all and when the two of us went for a ride on a new surfaced horse trail my boy in his Old Macs left not a mark while Cash's metal shoes took huge divots out of the trail. This even though Starlick is at least 50 kgs heavier than Cash. I was reminded that bare feet are not only better for the horse but they are much kinder on the land. And with Australia's old and fragile soils this is not something to be ignored.

I also thought you might be interested in Starlick's road to bare feet. When I bought Starlick he was shod and of course I continued to have him shod because that was the "right thing" to do. About 5 years ago Starlick became suddenly and excruciatingly lame on his near fore. So much so that my poor boy would stand on three legs to wee and then have to do a funny half rear landing on his off fore to get back to a normal stance. Off to the vet we went, xrays and the diagnosis of ringbone. Bute, paddock rest, more bute, more paddock rest, cortisone injections into the joint, Pentosan in the neck, rolled toes shoes and pads. And after about 6 months we go to a state that I could ride for maybe 15 minutes in a dead straight line without causing him pain but that was about it. The vet's opinion was this was as good as it would get and I should buy bute in bulk and use it as much as Starlick needed and at some time in the near future I would have to retire/euthanize him. Then a chance read in a horsey mag mentioned barefoot as a treatment for ringbone. What did I have to lose? Several books later Starlick had his shoes pulled off. The first thing that happened was great chunks of hoof came away and I thought I would have a horse walking on bloody stumps. I didn't know he had just been walking around on hooves that were way too long (even though I was having his feet done every six weeks). Very quickly Starlick told me he needed boots so I bought Old Macs and he has not looked back. Within 2 months I could see a marked improvement and within six months he was sound. His hooves have continued to improve. Looking back at the first photos I took of his newly deshod hooves he had a long way to go. As the trails I ride on are very hard and stony compared to the paddocks he lives in I ride Starlick in Old Macs on all four feet. Starlick is just a muck about pleasure horse but to me he is the greatest horse out and I would have been devastated if I had had to have him euthanased. It was not an easy path for me because I was on my own with only books and the internet but the results were worth it. There is a great need out there for trained barefoot trimmers so keep up the good work

cheers Sylvia

Snapshots at jasonlove.com



The incident still fresh in his mind, Farmer Dave shares with Bucky a long, meaningful gaze.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT MAYFIELD ?

There is a lagoon on the Goulburn river flood plain near by (at Molesworth) that for the first time in "White Man's" history is dry. This was a comunal place for early settlers to wash their sheep, hence called "sheepwash lagoon".

The drought continues, stretching into its 13th year (the bore we had put in in 2007 is very useful). Due to the drought there are less ponies in the rehab and I have had time to start some of our young ones, all are going very well. Especially Gigolo (previously advertised) I am so glad he did not sell, he is becoming more and more like his sadly missed father.

Fred (previously advertised for sale in this newsletter) has now settled in well into his new home and is going exceptionally well under saddle. He was very lucky to be purchased by the Crombie family as he will be going great holidays with the whole family to the Bundar valley, an untouched beautiful place near Omeo. Next xmas he will be "mixing it" with real horses (Bogong Brumbies)!

Finally we have some regular help in the office. Karen Bates is picking up the job of workshp co-ordinator and online shop manager very well. Hence I have time to put this newsletter together. Karen is very enthusiastic about her challenging new job in the horse industry and looks forward to helping out our customers. Karen previously worked in an office near Marysville and lost her job due to her workplace having being destroyed in the fires.

Karen has been around horses all her life; she started with pony club and was a keen jumper, eventer and hunter. Recently she has been very successfully competing all HRCVA disciplines (including nav rides) barefoot on her lovely WB cross mare Caleche. She has been involved with barefoot performance horses for several years and knows the benefits and also its limitations.

Glenys O'keefe has also started to help me continue working on the website and sort out our technology; the smooth running of which is an integral part of the business. Glenys also has a horsey background and was a prominent Project Hope member when she was working as a vet nurse.

Horses hooves are currently going through massive changes, this is due to the seasonal changes in the diet, extreme s in environmental temperature and moisture. Recently after a little rain in areas horses have shed huge amounts of sole they have been holding onto due to the extreme dry and heat (up to $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch).

One of the biggest advantages of barefooting is that we can trim according to the seasons. However the change of seasons also brings its problems. Especially extreme dry to wet brings on laminitic changes and soft feet. Then the opposite happens when conditions dry out in a hurry and the ground becomes Rock hard before the feet harden up.

All of these factors need to be taken into account when trimming. One needs to learn the difference between a soft ground and a hard ground trim and tread carefully when there are extreme environmental changes, possibly protecting feet with boots when needed.

In changeable seasons like these the real benefit of maintenance trimming shines through.



Kelly on "Fred"

Workshops – now running advance workshops

Standard one day trimming workshop with The Barefoot Blacksmith.

An intensive one day workshop that is informative and hands on. Learn how to maintain your own horse's hooves yourself or just come along to learn the science of healthy feet so you can make informed decisions about your horse's hoofcare.

Workshop emphasis is on safety, ergonomics and how to make a hard job easier. Tools, aprons and hoof stands are provided on the day.

Find out how to trim your horses' feet from a master farrier who's been "down under" horses full time for 20 years.

Standard Workshop Summary:

After registration where participants are issued with a booklet, there is a two hour PowerPoint theory session (coffee break in between). Participants next watch a step by step demonstration of trimming and tool use on a cadaver and then have a go themselves under supervision.

After Lunch there is a demonstration on horse handling for trimming with emphasis on safety and making the job easier. Full participants then go to work on their own horse's front feet under supervision (Auditors watch and help hold horses). Following another well earned break there is further demonstration and discussion and then participants go on to trim the back feet of their horses.

The day is rounded out with a discussion of optimising barefoot performance (including a hoof boot demonstration) and a valuable lesson on functional anatomy.

NEW.....Advanced Hoof Trimming Workshop

This workshop aims to; not only refresh and consolidate your basic maintenance trimming, but also to take your hoof management knowledge and skills to the next level, exploring both the subtleties and variations in equine hoof balance. We aim to help you to solve any problems you may be having – either with your horse handling / tool skills / trimming or your horse's progression as a barefoot mount. We will also update you with recent developments in the continuing evolution of equine hoof care.

Advanced Workshop Summary:

After registration where participants are issued with class notes, there is a two hour PowerPoint theory session (coffee break in between). Participants next trim their horses under supervision followed by a class discussion on each individual horse.

After Lunch there is a demonstration on tool selection and maintenance and dealing with difficult horses. Following afternoon tea there will be a class discussion of cadaver dissections.

The day is finished by a class discussion on management of common hoof pathologies and the holistic approach.

Auditor or Full Participant ?

These workshops are designed for full participants. We have the auditor option for people who physically can not trim, or people without barefoot horses at the time.

The advantage of being a full participant and bringing your horse far outweighs being an auditor.

1. Your horse gets a free evaluation on how it is going as a barefoot mount or how we think it is going to transition from shod to barefoot. All horses feet are different, there are no set measurements etc and there are always little things we can do to help your horse.
2. You get supervised instruction while trimming your horse on tool use, trimming position, trimming technique etc. if you cannot finish the trim to our instructions we will finish it ourselves.
3. If your horse may possibly need boots at some time we will fit them up for you.
4. Bringing your horse has an advantage where we can look at the whole picture (Whole horse) and see if we can see anything that may help rather than just looking at photos. You would not believe how valuable this is for people.

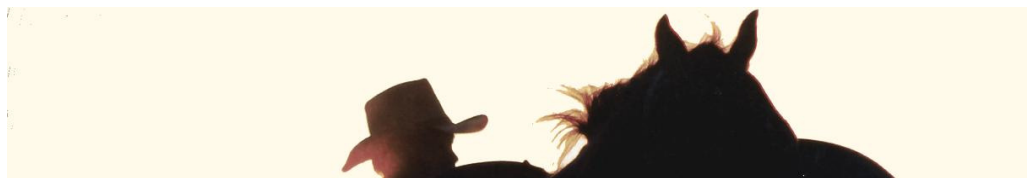
Please go to our website for more details www.barehoofcare.com

Current Workshop Dates

Date: Sat 2 nd May 2009	Home, Yarck, Vic
Date: Sun 3 rd May 2009	Home, Yarck, Vic advanced
Date: Wed 6 th May 2009	Healesville, Vic Midd week special
Date: Sat 9 th May 2009	Yering, Vic
Date: Fri 15 th May 2009	Cowra, NSW
Date: Sat 16 th May 2009	Canberra Expo
Date: Sun 17 th May 2009	Canberra Expo
Date: Mon 18 th May 2009	Canberra Advanced WS
Date: Sat 13 th June 2009	Wandin, VIC
Date: Sat 20 th June 2009	Nhill, Vic
Date: Sat 21 st June	Ballarat, Vic - to be confirmed
Date: Sat 4 th July 2009	Central Coast, NSW
Date: Sun 5 th July 2009	Central Coast, NSW
Date: Sat 11 th July 2009	West Wyalong, NSW
Date: Sat 1 st August 2009	Cobram, VIC

If you are interested in organising a workshop in your area please contact us.

EASYARE DOWN UNDER NEWS www.easycaredownunder.com.au



Mike and Chrisann are currently in the USA spending some Quality time with Garret Ford (The boss of Easycare Inc) and also Dr Tom Tesky. We are guessing they will have lots of news for our next newsletter.

www.easycaredownunder.com.au

Brian and Mitch Rourke

We had the good fortune to meet Brian and Mitch at a workshop on the central coast last year.

Brian is one of Australia's most experienced farriers and would have forgotten more about shoeing than I would have learned. He is a rare bird amongst senior farriers because he is open minded and a lateral thinker willing to embrace the principles of bare hoof care. What's more he has an infectious enthusiasm!

His son Mitch is his third year apprentice and a very nice young fellow. I think Mitch represents the future of the farrier industry – an 'all rounder' who is able to accommodate not only those horse owners who require shoes (whether that is right or wrong is beside the point!) but is also able to provide correct barehoofcare support to the ever increasing number of horse owners choosing to keep their horses barefoot.



The Master Farrier's Story by Brian Rourke FireForge

I have been a Master Farrier -- Blacksmith for 34 years in my career so far I have put on 80,000 sets of horse shoes approximately... maybe a few more trims (Farrier Trims) I must have been doing a few things right as I am still doing work for the same good people.

I run my Business FireForge with the motto Quality before quantity. As well as how many old friends I have... Clientele as well as horses. Can't remember the last time I took a holiday... that's maybe because my whole life is a holiday.

Here at Fire Forge we work on all breeds ... We don't differentiate between the \$50 Childs pony or the half million dollar race horse, they all get the same quality of care.

I won't go into detail as to how I shod these horses as that is not what it's about.

Over the years I have been hearing stories about this Farrier and that Horse Shoer not turning up or he was in and gone in 15 minutes... lost a shoe the next day... took 3 weeks to get it back on. Don't need to elaborate anymore here either.

Cases of horrendous shoeing work being performed and this was accepted as the norm. Why, because there was nobody to tell these horse owners that it was not acceptable or to show them a different way.

I noticed that when a horse springs a shoe and it was not noticed that the section of shoe not touching the heel was 4mm to 6mm longer. you say how can this be... did it grow that much in that 4 days... no it just did not crush and expanded partially to where it wanted to be????

Now if that didn't start me thinking hey where is this leading! So I bit the bullet and looked outside the square... On my bad footed horses and low slung heels I put tips on (a small piece of shoe just covering the toe area) ... fronts and hinds what a miraculous change in a very short space of time. This was the starting point to me questioning the established way of doing things. All of my clients have had to adhere to my policy of at least 3 months of every year with no shoes on. Some moan, but at least the horse had some relief from the shoe.

I am waffling on a bit... You will all see where it is leading shortly. I am purposely not going technical as that is not what I preach. Today's horse owner has been bombarded with way to much of this in the past. sleepless nights thinking what is wrong now.

My old Master would turn in his grave if he could see all the acrylic hoof repair material uses today as well as the so called corrective shoes on the market... they didn't work in his day and they certainly don't have a place in today's way of thinking.

His favourite saying to me was.... After a horse has been shod I have never seen a horse pick its hoof up and say "that's a good job"food for thought.

This happened only a few years ago... a young Apprentice was at the Scone Horse Week festival sitting around with about 30 Farriers some, the best this country has produced. Just off the cuff he said "you know when you do a bad job, the worst

part is convincing the owner that it needed it" every head in that room looked down not wanting to show the others that they have been there!

So the Farrier has bought this on through bad information lack of proper training and leadership (Farrier Organizations that will not change their mind set) they most certainly put quantity before quality due to the running cost of keeping their business cost down.

I am not bagging Farriers as such as I am a Master Farrier and proud of it. I am just saying to them all..... have a look at what is going on around you, listen to your horse owners as they are the ones that feed your family.

Don't come around in a few years and say "what has happened to my business?" FireForge has been through the most remarkable change in the last 12 months. Business is booming while others are falling by the wayside. we are in bad times... I am laughing all the way to the bank with a lot of very happy clients.

The Horse Shoe

This is why shoeing is extremely unproductive and verges on possibly cruelty to the horse. Am I going to get basted for this... Yes.

We all know that a horse's foot expands as it hits the ground hopefully heels first. Just in the rest position as much as 8mm at the heels.... so what happens when the foot is picked up in the shoeing position... it contracts possibly 6 to 8 mm.

If you don't believe this... get the measuring stick out... surprised I thought so!

So as a Farrier we dress the foot out get an appropriate shoe to fit... remember we are now adjusting that shoe to fit on the contracted hoof. We then nail it on... hopefully no further back than the widest part of the hoof.. some horse's have a knack of pulling shoes off... so the farrier puts a couple of heel nails in... I can feel the pain now even before the foot gets put back on the ground.

This horse has now had his hoof capsule restricted by possibly 8mm only in the stationary rest position. why doesn't it complain... they don't know what it is to feel sorry for themselves it's the nature of the beast.... So Dobbin just puts up with it. It is so..... so wrong

The BareFoot Professional

So here is where it starts I was trained by whom I consider the most accomplished Master Farrier of his era (deceased) worked with the most incredible vets still the leaders of their Specialist fields today.

Only one has come on board with my Barefoot journey.....He is dumb struck to say the least as he has seen and assisted with some of our bareFoot wonders.

**This is a hard thing I am about to say....
Have I been getting it so wrong for so long... Answer Yes.**

Here is one answer from a client of 25 years. "You have humbled me... a small statement for such a long career...I take my hat off to you"

So I begin; 2 years ago I started hearing the stories from other Farriers that some new bloke has moved into town and hung up his shingle advertising BareFoot trimming ...took some of my clients. I didn't take much notice as I had loyal Clients... so I thought.

I then started to look on the internet and read a lot of literature pertaining to BareFooting horses. I was not to be impressed as here were people with no trade qualification to back up their claims, were to say the least butchering horse hooves in the name of BareFoot Trimming. We have all seen it no names no drama.

Now they have gone by the wayside and a new breed of people with backed up Data and good theory as well as large numbers of success stories behind them have followed.

So I took the bull by the horns... bit off more than I could chew and then chewed like hell. Took all of my 39 years of experience and dissected it....what a life changing experience for me. I knew that I had the experience needed to convert my own theories into reality.

I do it my way with my convictions now... and have never looked back . I did not just start BareFoot trimming I have always been Bare Foot trimming... there is no other way to explain it...if you take off the shoes they are barefoot. All that was required was to look more closely at the horse's needs, change the parameters to the new theory's being adopted... sounds easy wrong again???

BareFooting is just one 3rd of the simplest equation:

- 1) The animal itself needs to be judged for confirmation- soundness- ability to adapt to this change.... that is the easy part.
 - 2) The owner had to be educated along the lines of dedication and a lot more work involving "am I doing it for me or the horse or both of us?"
 - 3) Environment-terrain: so many things come to the fore here... do I live in a hot and dry climate or a wet and humid climate or year round both of these? Do I live in the mountains or on the flats or both? So here again parameters dictate what is going to work for you.
- We have not started to look at the feet yet:

So here is where I come in... a few questions answered... work the horse through its strides.... do the job of trimming the horse. Explanation time....see you in 2 weeks at no charge for a quick round up..... some like to do there own most would rather me do them. Either way I am happy.

After 4 weeks I have a pretty good indication of where they are going so we set the program... First trim, 2 week round up, 4 week round up, 6 week trim again if needed. It works for the client as well as FireForge. I make a very comfortable living.... I know you are asking how can that be you have to keep going back. Answer ... that is my job....!

I started with 1 Barefoot trim 13 months ago... I now have 130 BareFoot horse on the Central Coast...51 new horses since the 1st of January 2009 and getting bigger every day.

I only travel maximum 50 klm. from the office. Unfortunately I still have over 200 shod horses at present on the books getting less each month. some owners will never change that is the way the world is. The Racing game will change eventually but that is a long way off.

I have a son Mitch who is a 3rd year Apprentice working for me he is a truly gifted young man. I like to think that he is on the ground breaking frontier of being able to see the birth of a new beginning for the horse industry He is the future of my Company. Mitch will be around for a long time to come doing BareFoot trimming.

I have not gone into the fundamentals off Trimming as all of you have done the home work read the books made your own conclusions.... now please tell your Farriers that you are wanting a new direction and if they refuse your request get them to hope off your bus as there is only room for improvement.

A small story... after attending an Andrew Bowe workshop (THE BAREFOOT BLACKSMITH) On the way home Mitch said to me I have been attending TAFE as an Apprentice Farrier for 2 years..... here today, I have learnt more than that whole 2 years course At TAFE. Food for thought again. Some one has a lot of explaining to do in regards to training Apprentices.

Your BareFoot Business

This is my secret to a successful business. Never ask for something that you know that you will never get - don't paint someone into a corner you know they can not get out off - always be punctual... if you make an appointment for 2pm be there, do you like having to wait around time after time?

Always answer the phone... its a lot easier to say not this week on that first call. my clients never have to second guess me as we always arrive on time. New vehicles and trailer... clean attire... all tools are polished... sharp...in good working order... best quality.

If you are not sure of a procedure get a second opinion from someone that knows more about it than you; your clients will respect you more.

We run a laptop in the vehicles with client Data base. Take digital pics for later reference to add to clients data already stored.

The most important part of a BareFoot trimmers tool kit is Literature for the client to read. Its quick saves you having to explain at length and or make mistakes. there is a lot of it out there.

No one client will make you rich... a lot of small clients will if you do quality work with 24hr back up. word of mouth beats a business card anytime. I don't have to advertise... yes I know Business management... my client see to that.

My self imposed 50klm radius ensures that I am never anymore that 30 minutes away from my most remote client. they love it. I do travel out of area, usually they bring horse to me.

The call at 3am not often but it does happen. Remember the golden rule of a successful business... Don't complain just say this is my business that is what I do... it has always motivated me on those cold wet nights... be it helping a mare foal... pulling the stable wall down to get that leg out or comforting a client after her horse passed away... **This is my business that is what I do.**

Brian Rourke fireforge@iinet.net.au, Work Mobile 0432430123, Central Coast, Toukley NSW Australia.

Diploma of Equine Podiotherapy

A career path for those wishing to be full time hoof care practitioner

There has arisen a need for a "specialist" in the field of rehabilitative natural hoof care. Someone whose knowledge goes deeper than just surface barefoot trimming. A professional whose knowledge of the hoof far exceeds what has been traditionally taught in farriers or even trimming courses up till now. A need for an Equine Podiotherapist!

Equethy & Mayfield Forge offer the Diploma of Equine Podiotherapy to meet this need. The course developers are professionals and leaders in the field of rehabilitative hoof care and bring to this course their vast expertise in this field. All the lecturers have successful careers in this new and exciting field.

Why a Diploma Level course when up till now the highest level of education available in professional hoof care in this country has been Certificate III? Because in all fields there are skill levels you can attain and if you wish to be the very best you can be you will naturally choose the course with the best level of education available.

Also this is a totally new career path so to be sought after by horse owners and other equine health professionals such as veterinarians, you need to be seen as having a depth of knowledge that allows you to deal with all aspects of hoof care and not just trimming.

A Diploma of Equine Podiotherapy will set you at the top of your profession from day one. It offers students a way to learn every aspect of rehabilitative natural hoof care, not merely how to perform a barefoot trim. Graduates are specialists in this field and have an understanding of orthopaedic hoof care that re-establishes the natural biomechanics of the horse and promotes soundness for life.

Your instructors make their living from natural hoof care. They have been at the forefront of the development of this industry in Australia. They are not just keen barefoot trimmers they are people who have horses under their care working barefoot in all disciplines. They have tried every method available to know what works and what does not.

They use and teach best practices that respect the needs of the horse as a species and above all teach highly successful non invasive humane trimming. They have rehabilitated thousand of horses now and they want to pass on their skills to those who will be stewards for the horse and hoofcare in the 21st century.

You will not be learning "methods" or "recipes" for trimming and you will not leave this course with a one size fits all approach to your work. Trimming based on that premise is set to fail and most horses with hoof problems fall outside those parameters usually the horses that most need our help!

If you have an interest in working in hoof care for the 21st century and want a career that brings great personal rewards from being part of this huge sea change in our attitudes to equine care this is the career for you.

Prerequisites:

Because this career path is so very new those who are seeking to attain education come from a wide cross section of the community. The course developers felt that to set prerequisites based on previous education was unfair and would prevent many people who have limited recourses from attending. So there are NO prerequisites other than good health and a desire to work outdoors with horses.

The course is structured so that even if you have never done any professional trimming and are a complete novice you will be supported in your learning experience throughout the course by your tutors. The lessons are structured so that as your understanding of anatomy deepens as you build on your practical skills. Many of our graduates had no previous skills till they attended this course (see students comments overleaf).

Due to the devastating impacts of the fires in Victoria where the course is based, the course scheduled to commence at the end of March 2009 has been post-poned. If you would like to register to attend when the course is rescheduled, or to be put on our mailing list for information on future courses please contact the co-ordinator C Ware, Ph 02 6493 6944 or email equethy@bigpond.com



Diploma of Equine Podiotherapy

What past students say:

Within this year I have been able to go from tentatively trimming a friend's horses on weekends to professionally caring for over 100 horses and still expanding. This course helped me achieve my aim of being a professional trimmer and now I am well on my way to being considered the "trimmer of choice" for my region. **Martin Godwin, Dunkeld VIC.**

Not only did this course provide detailed information on the equine foot on a microscopic level (Prof. Robert Bowker) to the practical aspects of physiological trimming for both maintenance and pathologies (Mike Ware, Andrew Bowe) it also focused on the horse in its entirety. From a variety of perspectives (Dr. Mark Curtis, Wayne Anderson, Renee Pearson) we were trained as professionals to closely observe the signals in hoof, body, stance, biomechanics and behavior that would assist us in our aim to bring about a healthy foot and long term soundness. **Marie Farr Yeppoon Qld.**

Participating in the Diploma of Equine Podiotherapy was a definitive step in becoming a more competent Natural Hoof Care Professional. I highly recommend this course to anyone who wishes to develop their knowledge to full potential in an exciting and ever-expanding industry. **Yvonne Heiser-Taylor, Bullsbrook WA'**

Note: Yvonne Heiser-Taylor is now the Equine Podiotherapist in charge of overseeing the hoof maintenance for all the horses of the Western Australian Mounted Police Division. Yvonne also trains new officers in hoof care principles and oversees the transitioning any new horses out of shoes. The WA mounties use barefoot/booted horses for all their official work.

The Dip. EPT is so much more than some "how to trim course"! The benefits realised from any course are proportional to the efforts put in and certainly the open and enquiring approach from the diverse range of quality presenters has compelled me to "put in" the required effort, with obvious results to my clients and my own horses". **Duncan Mclaughlin, Tarago NSW.**

CLASSIFIEDS:

For Sale 3year old rosegrey mare. 14.1 hands freshly broken in ready to train.
Registered APSB, RPSB, English Passport as Partbred New Forest.
Bare foot trimmed, dental record. Rugs, floats etc.
Wormed and vaccinated. Very friendly and quiet to handle.
\$4000 ONO Phone 57769596 or 0419009236 Penny Prosser aylestone2002@yahoo.com.au

For Sale: About 9hh, black, 10yrs old. ShetyXMiniature. Good lead pony. Haven't done any off lead work but I think would be ok for a confident child. Nice nature friendly and quiet. Was told when I got him he had done pony club and trail rides...not very far I'd imagine!! He hasn't really been ridden much since I've had him, but has had regular handling. A no hassle pony, selling as children not interested. \$500.00 Email Susie Walsh: susiewalsh@cirruscomms.com.au

Seminar: The Australian Brumby Research Unit presents:

Professor Chris Pollitt – The current concepts in the treatment of laminitis.

Brian Hampson - The latest brumby research and unique Film footage of Australian brumbies in their natural environment.

When: Friday 8th May 2009, Faculty of Veterinary Science - University of Melbourne, Parkville.

Bookings: Marg Richardson Ph (03) 64 272255, 0419 572255 marg.richardson@bigpond.com

Our online shop now has a bargain bin!

For all your trimming supplies, check out our new online shop **Bargain Bin** through our *products* tag on our website or our new online store directly via www.thebarefootblacksmith.com



February 7, 2009

1939, 1983 and now 2009. Add another charred bookmark to the story of our land.

An evil wind and bone dry bush - the end game of well past a decade of drought - spawned fires that destroyed the heart of our beautiful corner of Australia.

Even though two months have passed and the blackboys and tree ferns are defiantly unfurling new growth, this pen is far too humble to find words of substance after such a tragedy.

But may we offer our most sincere condolences to those who had the misfortune to be in the path of that inferno and have lost family, friends, pets, chattels.

These are very sad times.



***“Loss and possession, death and life; are one:
There falls no shadow where there shines no sun.” (anon.)***

Newsletter produced by: The Barefoot Blacksmith® Team info@barehoofcare.com ph: 03 57734306

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