

EXMOOR PONY STAR

2016 NOMINATIONS

ANCHOR EASTWIND A/494 2009-2016

Where do I start with the incredible pony that was the wonderful Kitty...bought from the Wallace's by Penny Beattie as a yearling for a birthday present for Penny's 90 year old mother, Anchor Eastwind certainly didn't believe in living her life quietly! A massive character on the yard as a youngster (she would be caught when she decided it was time to come in, she was completely non-plussed at being left alone at the yard if we took everyone else away - the first time we did this we came back to find her flat out sunbathing in the field! - and she made us laugh with her very masculine whinny which she felt it appropriate to make heard at every opportunity!) and she gave us our first taste of success at in-hand showing at county level as a 3year old where she matured into super trot...until the second class of the day when, displaying true Exmoor attitude, she didn't see the point of repeating an exercise that she'd only just completed! Kitty started to be backed as a 4 year old but we came across some issues with bony spurs on her spine exactly where a riders weight would be and on taking our vets advice, retired her from ridden work before she really started to allow her to become a broodmare. Kitty returned to Exmoor to the Anchor Herd as a 5year old to run with Dunkery Nuthatch (visiting stallion in 2014) and returned to us in October of that year when she blood tested positive as pregnant.

We were over the moon in March 2015 when Kitty produced a smart filly (the first homebred for us!) and spent the next 6 months proving herself to be the most wonderful mother to her beautiful daughter. Kitty then returned to the Anchor Herd late in 2015 to run on Winsford Hill as a broodmare and she took to this role like a duck to water! Despite chasing us (literally!) back to the trailer the day we turned her out with the Herd, she quickly settled into life where hers had begun and soon established her own little group where she could be lead mare (obviously!). Kitty thrived out on the hill, she absolutely loved the freedom and soon reverted to type being ever elusive (Sam Harris, Rachael Fear and I spent one day walking the moor for 5 and a half hours trying to spot her!) and a true wily hill mare.

Her time on the moor was cut all too short one evening in September 2016 when she was hit by a driver who did not even bother to stop and check she was ok before driving off at speed across Winsford Hill. Kitty was found the next morning with a broken Pastern and Emma Wallace had to make the heartbreaking decision to put this special little mare out of her misery. Kitty taught us all so much about Exmoor ponies and their attitudes - she certainly left an impression (good or bad depending on her mood for the day!) on everyone who met her! She is missed every day but her spirit definitely lives on in her beautiful daughter Seðmar Karoo. Rest in peace Kitty, heaven has certainly gained a fabulous pony in the big moor in the sky.

APPLEY DAPPLY 428/3

Appley Dapply first came to live with Julia in Brighton in 2009 as a 2 year old. Always full of character, she made the whole yard smile with her creative antics, including pulling other horses' rugs to give them fillet string 'wedgies' and climbing through hedges. The yard owner was less enamoured with Appley's apparent resistance to electric fencing, letting the whole herd into the 'resting' half of the field.

Julia had never backed a horse before, but with guidance she and Appley were the perfect pair. Appley took everything in her stride, not fussing about her first 'sit on' or her first hack. Never losing her quirky way of doing things, once she progressed to slightly longer rides, Appley once showed her lack of desire to go any further by sitting down! A throwback perhaps to an inhand agility event as a youngster where Appley sat down and had a nap part way through! Appley was unphased by almost any hazard you could ever face, and was quickly a popular hacking companion – especially for those with nervous horses. Aged 4 she nurse-maided a stropky Highland (5 times her age) across the Downs on many a ride, going first when he was too scared.

When unsure, Appley would freeze and investigate the obstacle – such an honest little pony. On one occasion we accidentally rode through a village fete – Appley happily trotted long the narrow road, followed by a bus, past a bouncy castle where children were appearing over the castle wall and screaming with delight.

As she grew older Appley turned a hoof to a range of activities – a bit of local showing, trec, and dressage and cross country. It was endurance that was her and Julia's passion, and Appley was soon a force to be reckoned with, trotting everywhere and juuust about contending with the minimum speed required, bless her – not a bad pace when you're only 12-and a little bit hands high.

She safely carried Julia whilst pregnant, and after weeks or months without being ridden Julia could hop back on and take her straight out on a hack, or a snowy gallop across her own field. Always trustworthy, Appley was wise beyond her years and rode like a 'big horse' keeping up with everyone. I think her head she thought she was a 14.2 coloured cob like so many of her field companions.

Sadly in 2014 Appley became lame, and after extensive vet investigations, box rest, field rest and a huge insurance bill, no definitive cause could be found. Appley packed a lifetime of fun into her short 9 years, but sadly when nothing more could be done for her, Julia had to make the heart-breaking decision to prevent her from any further suffering. Appley has left a huge hole in her herd and in many people's hearts – what she lacked in size she made up for in personality. A more cheerful, happy-go-lucky pony would be hard to find.

BEINNLIAH DHUGHAILL 224/3 - MY MIRACLE PONY

Dhughail was my Christmas present 21 years ago as a foal. He was my first pony and still remains the best present ever. He has always been an amazing pony, proving very easy to break when the time was right. I was only ever interested in hacking and spent a year competing in Endurance with him, which he loved, before falling pregnant with Kendal. He then became a wonderful child's pony, giving both my kids lead rein rides, proving very patient with Liam, who has severe ADHD. He spent two years on loan to RDA, where he was very popular, before coming back home when he was 15, and teaching both kids to ride properly.

The next couple of years he endured a torn check ligament and had to undergo double stifle arthroscopy, which showed cartilage damage and DJD. This led to him being retired from jumping but he still went to pony club and did some dressage and showing. Then came January of this year when we found him on 3 legs in the field, totally unable to weight bear on one leg. Emergency vet visit confirmed that he had dislocated his fetlock and torn his collateral ligament and we faced losing him, but after a couple of conversations with other Exmoor owners, the decision was made to get head vet out, an equine orthopaedic surgeon. He gave us the chance to splint the leg, immobilising him in stable. We were facing 6 months of box rest and could still lose him at the end of this. The hope was to get him paddock sound so he could happily live out the rest of his life in as little pain as possible, medicated as required. Dhughail is amazingly tolerant of coping with box rest and amazed everybody, even the vet, when, after 4 months of total box rest and being fitted with various splints, his fetlock was so stable that he was able to start being walked out for gradually increasing times and allowed into a very small outdoor pen. After a further month, when he was up to 30 minutes walking every day he was allowed out in the paddock with his buddy for the first time. He was his usual well behaved self and, although he did have a wee run around, he didn't go mad as expected. A month of being allowed to finally be a pony again, playing in the field with our youngster, who was very good with him keeping him well exercised, and having physio brought us to the final vet visit. None of us could believe it when he was 100% sound and hasn't had any pain relief since the week after his accident. He was even given the all clear to be gradually brought back in to ridden work. He has now been ridden a few times and loved it and will gradually start to do more once the better weather arrives.

DARSHILL BANSHEE 458/8

I would like to nominate Darshill Banshee aka Dave.

Dave came to me in August of last year. We got off to a slow start with some rocky patches. He was very nervous, not keen on being caught and we didn't seem to hit it off at all.

Well, he's got his brave pants on this year & has been a star. He's turned into a gem to catch, been praised by the farrier for his improvements & is learning to wear tack, lunge & work over poles.

The highlight of our 2016 was going to Rare Breeds of the Year & even though he went from thoroughly over excited to downright bored, we came away with 2 second places & the biggest smile I have ever had!

Best of all, he's my friend, my boy, my Uppity Bog Pony Come Good. We look forward to an exciting 2017 with the words of the Judge at Rare Breeds "He will make a cracking Ridden Pony" ringing in our ears.

Onwards for Dave & me. Thank you for reading.

DUNKERY WIGEON 78/158

I believe that Wigey deserves to win the 'EP star' as he is such a dude!

He is a stallion, but his temperament is to die for, he is so well behaved, no one knows he is a stallion unless they are told.

Wigey has brought so much joy into our lives, my Granny has always since a child wanted an Exmoor and she couldn't off have asked for a lovelier one to look after, if we can't find her you can be sure to find her in his stable!

Since riding Wigey I have met some lovely really people who all share the same passion, and love for the breed!

We have been so close to qualifying for HOYS this year, but were lucky enough to qualify for Olympia instead, where he went on to be 'BoB' for the second time!

We also have one of his sons 'Butttdown Lyko' who is proving to be an exciting prospect, where not just his conformation but wigey's temperament has been passed on to his stock!

OMEGA 14-39C

Omega, 14 year old treasure which my 4 yo daughter has learnt to Trot canter and jump on as well as learn why horses are the best animals to have as friends! Scarlett and Danny have had 8 months together and this pony will be her forever pony. She plays in her den at the field and Danny goes over to join in, he stands there while Scarlett sits on him bare back and sings to him, and when Scarlett wants to ride Danny out in her fancy dress outfits! Danny never objects to anything! We love him!

My daughter is 4 and we got Danny in June off a close friend. I've had my eye on this pony since Scarlett was born.

Scarlett had a Shetland who she got her confidence with but we all know that a bigger stride is easier to ride to.

Within weeks Scarlett's rising Trot was perfect and we know canter (on lead) and jump.

Danny has looked after Scarlett every day, we've done shows and pony club rallies and he has impeccable manners.

Danny is also a perfect family pony, I hack him out to keep the work in him and my 24 yo sister has competed him at county level and won.
Danny really is a perfect pony.

PETER RABBIT 482/001

My story of our exmoor pony Peter is both heartwarming and heartbreaking at the same time. In March 2015, our Welsh d Daniel aged 30, sadly came down with colic. We was keeping an eye on the horses out in the field while on the phone to the vet, at this point Daniel was walking about. Then suddenly a turn for the worse Daniel got down to roll kicking his stomach, and couldn't get up. I started racing up the field to him, but Peter beat me to it. He raced from the other end of the field to Daniel and made him get up, he then stood at the side of him, stopping him from getting back down. He wouldn't leave Daniels side. We couldn't believe our eyes watching what he did this is nature in its truest form.

It seemed ages waiting for the vet but Peter never left him, and kept him walking around (doing my job).

As the vet was closer to us she rang and we got the ponies in, and walked Daniel round until she arrived. Sadly after tests and trying our best we had to say our goodbyes to our dear friend of 29 years (brings a tear to my eyes writing this bit). But we are left with the lovely memories of how Peter cared for him. Peter is our true friend, he's the first exmoor pony we have had. It was my Auntie that wanted an exmoor pony as we have always had Welsh d's. We bought Peter not knowing a lot, but learned so much and had so much fun in doing so. Made some lovely friends along the way at different shows.

He has qualified for the exmoor pony of the year twice in hand. This year he won his first handy pony which shocked us all after he had to wear balloons and walk under a line of washing.

He has met royalty at the Great Yorkshire show in 2015, were we came 2nd and Camilla came into the ring to speak to everyone, she was really nice and very easy to chat to. All Peter wanted to know if she had any treats!! But he took it all in his stride.

Peter Rabbit is our star pony.

ROSEFINCH A/256-A

I want to nominate Rosefinch. Once in a lifetime a pony turns up in your life and changes your life for ever Rosie is that pony

Born on Winsford Hill to an old fashioned anchor mare Widgeon. She was bought by Val Sherwin who was a founder of the Moorland Mousie Trust. Val was fond of Widgeon off spring and two others are great trekking ponies at the Exmoor Pony Centre.

Rosie was sent north to go grazing. She had attitude from the start and never ever forgets. She hates blacksmiths with a passion sniffing him all over and then pinning him in the corner of the stable he smelt of smoke. She was professionally broken and I hacked her about and showed her a bit. She was sent to Pam Brown to promote Mmt Exmoor's in the showing and oh boy did she do that! Her showing successes were too numerous to mention. Reserve champion at the Great Yorkshire galloping under spotlights at 10pm jumping the floodlights at her first indoor championship they eventually had to be turned off, galloping her heart out at Malvern only to collapse with colic half an hour later that just summed her up. Kicking head height at hoys in hand whole crowd gasped then did the same at Olympia despite endless practise.

She has three foals from three different stallions all have done incredibly well in the showing all are beautiful but none of them could replace Rosie. She hates going through gates, doesn't like hanging baskets, but is so so clever. She is now doing dressage the more complicated the better. My lovely teacher gets on Rosie shows her the movement. I then get on Rosie and she does it provided I push the correct buttons. "Everyone should have a Rosie" my dressage instructor says.

She went round the Native Pony Performance Trials this year with me. I am a really nervous jumper she cantered between fences trotted up to the jumps and hopped over them. She won clear cross country one stop showjumping (do you really want to jump this Mum?! didn't) and a great dressage mark. She loves pleasure rides, she loves carrots, she loves hacking she loves me and I really really love her.

SMOO 21/126

I would like to nominate Smoo. Only been with me just over a year but proving to be a pony in a million. I've had a rough year health wise and debated on and actually put Smoo up for sale in the summer but something just wouldn't let me part with him and I decided he was going nowhere. Little did I know this was the best decision I would ever make. In November this year my beloved Fjord who is only 8 started to act 'odd' spooking at things and bumping into his stable.

Standing staring at the back of the stable and not being able to find his hay net or feed bowl. Vet was called and I was delivered the news he had an eye disease (Uveitis) now this is a horrific disease which there is no cure but through steroid drops and good management can sometimes be controlled. He needed a specialist, so the specialist was called and delivered devastating news that Rio's offside eye was 'dead' no pressure in it and was starting to shrink and couldn't be saved, his nearside eye was heavily infected with uveitis and there was no sight in either eye and no possible way of him regaining his sight, it was too late. Rio needed to go out and graze and be a normal horse until he has surgery to remove his eyes and we were worried about how he would cope, if he couldn't cope it may have been the end of the line. In stepped Smoo, they were put in a field together just them and I couldn't have asked for a better result. Smoo doesn't leave his side. He gets led out with Rio and bought in with him and slows down to let Rio walk with him. Out grazing he is never more than a couple of feet away he is Rio's eyes and without Smoo Rio's future may have been difficult but he will be his buddy for life.

Rio copes better and better each day with his loss of sight so much so that we are planning Rio's future to carry on with his dressage when he's had his surgery, he may not be able to see but this won't stop us I've had so many inspirational messages from people who still compete with blind horses. All these horses have a seeing eye friend to enable them to be as much of a normal horse as they can. A meeting is planned the first week in January to discuss surgery, we have been practicing loading in the lorry and Smoo leads the way and Rio follows. He gains so much confidence from Smoo he may not have his sight but he has his health and the rest of his life with thanks to Smoo. He really is an Exmoor Pony Star to both me and Rio. Smoo was bought to be my HOY's pony and hopefully one day this dream will come true but for now he has the most important job of all...being Rio's seeing eye friend.

THREESHIRE TORFRIDA 187/3 'Daisy' 1992 - 2016

Threshires Torfrida was the third foal bred by Liz Barker , and was born in a field of buttercups . It was felt that the name 'Buttercup' would more suit a cow than a pony so the stable name 'Daisy' was chosen . With her black legs – rather than fluffy buff coloured- Liz described her as her little thoroughbred .

Daisy was bought in foal to Knightoncombe Goldcrest as a 4 year old by Fiona Macnee , and subsequently produced Cosmic Doris who herself went on to have foals – her three fillies Helix , Izar and Juno have enjoyed success in the showring and various disciplines .

Once broken Daisy proved to be a very sweet pony with children , and even drank coke from the can. Her sweet nature was evident when she went on loan to a tiny Sarah McCormack , who rode her initially with her arm in plaster .

Once back with Fiona , Daisy bred another two foals before coming to me as my riding pony . By then I had bought Helix with plans to breed from her , but as she was too young to breed or ride I needed a pony to fill the gap . Daisy was a lovely forward going feisty pony despite her slight build and I took her on two of Sarah Burnley's long distance (Intrepid) rides . She was always enthusiastic, when riding over the moors the only way to negotiate ditches was to jump them whatever the size , quite a shock when my plan was to ride in and out of them ! I also bred two foals from her and she was an excellent mother .

Daisy was an amazingly sweet pony , she was always very vocal , nickering softly to you whenever you were near . We had quite some conversations . Once Daisy got a leg stuck in an iron grid when with Fiona . The grid was removed by use of an angle grinder , Daisy didn't bat an eyelid at the flying sparks .

A few years ago Daisy went on loan to Anne Farley as companion to her Arab and as first mount for her granddaughter Chloe . She filled both roles admirably , both Zebedee and Chloe were besotted with her . Always a very friendly pony , she loved her humans . When I took Daisy to Anne's I didn't think she was concerned about being somewhere different initially , she just took her time to walk round the field and discover her new lovely home . A couple of hours later when I was leaving , she called to me and followed the horsebox's progress along the drive .

In May this year the decision was made to say goodbye to Daisy as she was becoming increasingly uncomfortable due to arthritis . Just a month before – after a number of unsuccessful attempts – her daughter Helix gave birth to a lovely filly foal . Very noticeable in baby was her black legs , just like Grandma's .

The circle of life.

VIBURNUM A/266 BOWS OUT 1982 to 2016

'Vibe' to her friends, and there are many, has been a wonderful child's pony, a great ambassador for Exmoor ponies and a very special family pony. Coming to us from the Anchor herd as an unhandled foal she took just a couple of weeks to handle with her super temperament already evident. Within a week, and despite our lack of experience in handling wild foals at the time, Vibe was easily caught in a large barn, was being led around outside and was comfortable with all those who came to see her.

Vibe's promotional work for the breed lasted over 30 years at Bath & West, Devon County, Exmoor National Park events, Rare Breeds Survival Trust events and much more in and around Exmoor to be followed in later years by events in the North East the last being the Glendale Children's Day in 2014 which welcomes over 1500 children to learn about farming and the countryside. Climbing up steep steps out of the rear entrance of a marquee at Devon County, being taken into the centre of a large marquee surrounded by tables and chairs where a celebratory meal was in progress for over a hundred people, going through a stonemason's marquee as the only entrance to her stable at Bath & West and having hundreds of children running towards her and climbing on the pen at the Children's day never phased her.

As a youngster Vibe won several championships and went on to have a successful in hand show career as an adult but she much preferred her ridden career away from the ring. Vibe could be trusted with the tiniest child on her back even before she was broken to ride. When she was some seven years old my niece decided she wanted to ride when the ridden ponies were turned out. We had no plans to have Vibe as a ridden pony but we just put my niece gently on her back. Vibe looked round as if to say "oh I have to do this now" and never looked back. We did have her professionally schooled and she went on to enjoy many ridden activities with various young people. We were astounded one day to find my young and totally inexperienced nephew riding Vibe out on the moor in only a halter when he was supposed to just be holding her for a film crew. It is a measure of her temperament that, despite the miles of open moorland that had been her home, Vibe was wandering quietly around and my nephew was thoroughly enjoying himself. Vibe has been a great mother to her own foals and the orphan Haddon Lucky who she looked after as though she were her own. Her last year had been spent as 'nanny' to her great granddaughter Pinkery Maytime who adored her and only spent time with her mother when she needed a drink!!

WITHYPOOLE JENNY'S PRINCE 23/383

We were fortunate enough to be able to rehome Monty, a exmoor pony from the exmoor pony rescue centre. We have had him since April 2016 and he is 3 years old. He is the most gentle natured, loving pony who has fitted in really well within our family herd consisting of Shetland ponies, miniature Shetland ponies, a miniature horse and Cob.

When Monty originally came to us, he was frightened, scared and not used to a lot of human contact. My mum spent a lot of time individually with him gaining his trust and he soon settled with us and with the other ponies. We have spent a lot of time with Monty working in an arena where he now jumps over poles well. We have taken him out to get him used to traffic which he has adapted well too and was not fazed. He now adores human contact including spending a lot of time with my young children. He loves giving kisses and having cuddles. He is great for the farrier and the vet.

Our goal for next year is to take him showing and to share with others his kind, beautiful nature as well as his good looks. Therefore this is why I feel that Monty deserves this recognition as he has achieved so much in such a short period of time. He is a credit to the Exmoor Ponies and a credit to us.