

TROT – 3rd Anniversary Ride – 10th May 2011

The third anniversary ride of the opening of the Welland's first off-road toll TROT ride took place on 10th May 2011, the venue being Pears Lodge Farm, Whissendine by kind permission of Mr Paul Watchorn.



Tacking up

There was a choice of routes for the event ranging from 5 miles to 16 miles, so something for everyone. There was also a choice of starting times from 12.15 to 19.00 hours but riders were asked to return to the venue no later than 20.30. This again gave a degree of flexibility enabling riders who were at work during the day and children at school the opportunity to come on the ride. Some people rode on their own, others with a friend and others in small groups. I personally completed the 12 mile route with my coloured cob, Boo and we didn't see a soul on the whole of the ride, which for us was sheer bliss!



Marlena & Boo on the TROT

As the name implies the entire route is off-road, much of it passing through the Stapleford Park estate. The only times that one occasionally touched tarmac on country lanes was when crossing from one track to another. The sun shone and despite the dry weather we have been experiencing of late here in the east there was a good covering of grass on the tracks providing plenty of opportunities for long canters. Riders were provided with maps but in addition the route was clearly marked out with orange arrows. Miles of traffic-free tracks with not one gate needing to be opened by the riders. What more could one ask for?



Katy & Tonto talking to Trish while local agent Sandy takes photos.

This is an absolutely marvellous ride based in Leicestershire with wonderful scenery and an abundance of interesting and varied wildlife. As this is not too far from Rutland Water I saw Red Kites and an Osprey flying high overhead and lower down there were pheasants, partridge and skylarks to be seen and heard. Running along in front of us on one of the tracks was a huge hare, as surprised by our presence as we were by it!



Marlena & Boo in front of the catering van!

At the end of the ride refreshments were provided free of charge. These consisted of a wonderful selection of food and drinks that had been kindly donated by Trish Holmes. For those of you living further afield who would like to participate in the ride next year or who would just like to come and spend a few days in this lovely part of the Midlands Trish also runs a B&B for riders and their horses and non-riding partners and dogs. Her website is www.waterlodgefarm.co.uk There is direct access from the farm onto the TROT tracks.