



1st Cumwhinton Horse Trials – July 18th 2004

'CUMBRIA'S FARM TOURISM INDUSTRY JUMPS AHEAD'

IT was more than a year in the making, but the new Cumwhinton Horse Trials run on the outskirts of Carlisle last month is already firmly established as major rural event in Cumbria. North West Farm Tourism Initiative provided valuable funding to assist with design and construction, and marketing of the new course. And set close to the M6 Motorway network, the new facility has an ideal location to become a major regional tourist attraction.

Described by organisers as "a phenomenally successful first event" more than 400 British competitors took part, and the 200 volunteer organising team had no difficulties in keeping things running smoothly in line with the complex timetable of dressage, cross-country, and showjumping.

Local riders were well represented at all levels, with the highest number of 'first timers' in the intro section. Other riders had travelled significant distances to compete, and most were stabled locally either at Carlisle Racecourse or in other local yards with appropriate facilities.

The day's winners included Olympic rider Ian Stark, victorious in a novice section with Scot's Law. But arguably the biggest cheer was reserved for local rider John Collier (see pic above) BHSI, proprietor of Blackdyke Farm Riding & Competition Centre near Carlisle. John won a small bet struck with the event caterers by sailing over the life-sized carved crocodile 'lying in wait' at the Trout Farm Water Complex. John was riding his sixth-



Local competitor John Collier clears the croc in front of the sponsors marquee

placed pre-novice horse Lowmoor Brooklyn.

Cumwhinton farmer Peter Bainbridge and his family decided quite some time ago to further diversify their farm enterprise and took the bold step of going for the top end of the equestrian market. With the help of NWFTI, they have built a cross-country facility challenging enough to stage an Equestrian One-Day-Event, and one that has potential to become world stage.

A Farm Tourism Initiative Marketing Grant proved invaluable to draw in sponsors, spectators and competitors, from across the region and beyond. The sponsors hospitality marquee and area had a fabulous setting beside the Trout Farm water complex attracting enthusiastic praise.

The weather was mixed, with some morning rain on both days. But the Sunday afternoon was all about sun and summer, when nearly 4000 people enjoyed the best of the cross country action and browsed around the trade

stands alongside the main arena.

"I really enjoyed the day, even though I'm a non-horsey person," said Carl Bendelow, who is the CREA NWFTI Manager.

"The course is surprisingly big and it's good to wander from fence to fence, and talk to people. And I'm sure there's scope for adding to the activities on the day, like picnic areas, and fun things for all the family."

Cumbria Tourist Board's Chris Collier said:

"Farm tourism is changing the face of the rural economy. More and more farms are diversifying into the sector. I'm sure that the success of ventures like Cumwhinton will play an important part in attracting more visitors to the county."

[www.cumwhintonhorsetrials.co.uk
/map.htm](http://www.cumwhintonhorsetrials.co.uk/map.htm)

Do You Know Someone Who Deserves An Award? Cumbria Tourism Skill Awards celebrate the achievements of the committed and highly skilled staff who work in Cumbria's tourism industry. They present opportunities to recognise and reward those people who are making a difference, and to celebrate local tourist businesses committed to training and staff development.

2004 is the second year of this competition, and there will be 11 award categories:

- Excellence in Customer Service
- Unsung Hero
- Most Outstanding Young Tourism Manager
- Most Up and Coming Cumbrian Chef
- Most Valuable Volunteer
- Best New Entrant to the Industry
- Most Impressive Tourism Trainee
- Most Promising Tourism Student
- Tourism Team of the Year
- Tourism Ambassador Award
- Lady Inglewood Award for Tourism Training

The Awards send out a strong, positive message about our industry as a whole, and promote tourism as a career choice which offers rewards for ability, loyalty and dedication.

The Awards are organised by Cumbria Tourist Board in partnership with England's North-west Tourism Skills Network. Winners in each category will receive a cash prize and engraved trophy at the 'awards final' scheduled to take place at the end of the year.

To nominate someone for an award, or for more information about the categories, please contact Paula Scott at Cumbria Tourist Board on 015394 40447 for an application form. Closing date for returned nomination forms is 8 October 2004.

Taste England !

LAUNCHING this month, "*Taste England*" will be VisitBritain's fourth themed marketing campaign and follows on from *Outdoor England, City Culture* and *Waterside England*.

"*Taste England*" will highlight: food and drink from regional producers; exceptional local dining-out experiences; regional food traditions; food trails; local cookery schools and their courses.

NWFTI officers Katie Burton and John Perkins work closely with their Cumbria Tourist Board colleagues to gain as much profile for the North West Farm Tourism Initiative as possible within the VisitBritain campaigns.

A recent success was highlighting NWFTI in the promotion of Savin Hill Picnic Service in the recently launched brochure "*Waterside England*". Savin Hill Farm received NWFTI assistance to establish a picnic delivery service across Cumbria. All delicious regional food - much of it from the farm itself, can be delivered to you at a choice of stunning lakeside locations.

In addition to the themed marketing campaigns, VisitBritain have two new national "Enjoy England" campaigns per year: September and January. Each will have a fully integrated marketing and PR campaign including TV advertising and national newspaper supplements.

For more information contact Katie or John at: Cumbria Tourist Board on 015394 40430

New Photo Image Library - from people who are focused on tourism.



"Photo library image of a typical junior competitor at a Lakeland Agricultural Show" © MT

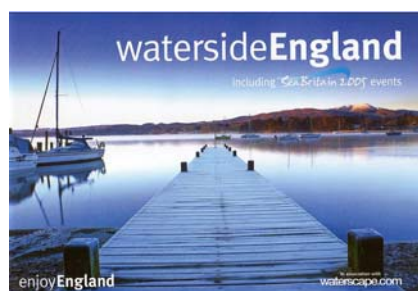
CUMBRIA Tourist Board now has a professional photography service dedicated to helping tourism businesses with quality marketing images. CTB's in-house photographer will produce great shots for marketing literature and websites for both members and non-members.

A new photo image library includes everything from farmers markets to locally-produced food and drink and rural landscapes, and is being regularly updated.

To discuss your photographic needs, call **Ben Barden** at Cumbria Tourist Board direct on **07771 904001**, or email him at bbarden@gocumbria.org



John Perkins



YOU'D BE AMAIZED!



Hatton Farm Maze "The entrance - but where's the exit?"

FEW fads borne of the USA fail to make these shores - sooner or later, and one of the latest farm-attraction ideas to find its way here is the *Amazing Maize Maze*, to be found at Hatton Farm in Cheshire.

The family farm run by the Fryor family, Hatton Farm has recently benefited from a NWFTI marketing grant for *'the maze in the maize'*, and for other farm attractions, although they've enjoyed most success with the maize adventure, details of which can be viewed on www.naturaladventures.co.uk

Son Dave Fryor, is the family member in charge of farm diversification and says the maize is going very well, and they're now planning a series of 'Autumn Romantic Moonlight Mazes'.

Dave said: "The whole five acres site has a sound system with speakers at most corners – we play music and have DJ's, and it's a very exciting place to be as we 'strategically'

light the site. It's sculptured out in the shape of the famous Cheshire Cat, and is being generally recognized as the biggest (artificial) cat in the world. Everyone brings a torch with them, and it's all a very exciting and new place to be."

"It's five acres in size, and 100,000 maize plants were hoed-out to create the two miles of paths, and there's 67 decision points in the maize. And it's the only maze in Britain in which you play an interactive game as you go around, working together as a team – to find your way out.

"There's also crossword clues; you can talk to 'the mad hatter', and all the pathways are colour coded, but you really need to experience it - to fully appreciate it."

Dave says they brought over an American specialist who he found on the web, and they soon began bouncing a few ideas around onsite. And needless to say, they've had quite a bit of local media exposure.

'The Amazing Maize Maze' is now the hub of

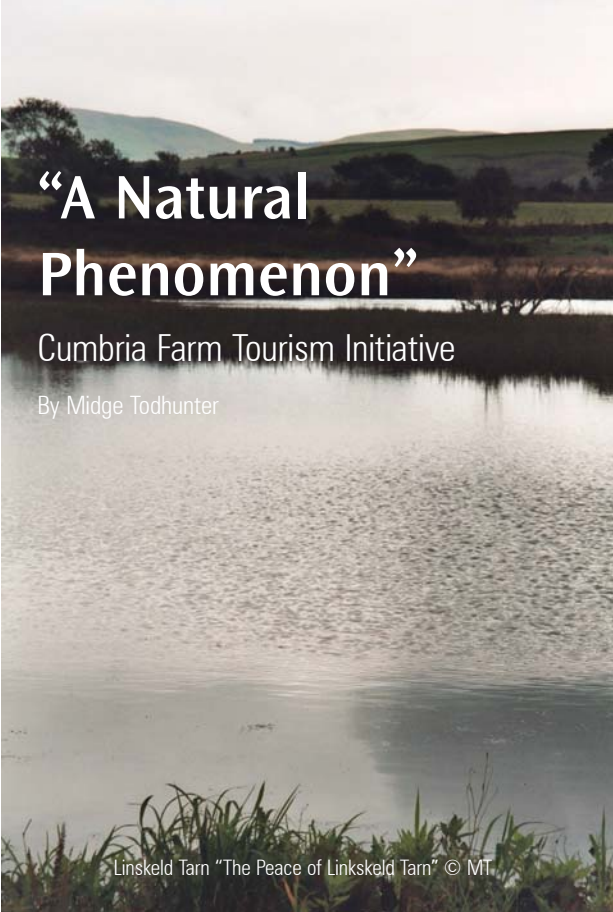
Natural Adventures Farm, near Stretton in Cheshire, which also includes nature walks, mini maizes, power buggys in the courtyard, and other add-ons, all run on the family farm

"It's real entertainment we're offering people here. I may not sound like a farmer, but you should have seen me the other day when I got a tractor stuck in the mud!"

On the farming side, the land is all arable with potatoes, wheat and barley. And what happens to the maize crop? – it all goes as cattle feed, just as it was intended.

Another farmer doing exactly the same is Jonathon Hewitt of Red House Farm, Dunham Massey near Cheshire.

Red House Farm has also received advice from NWFTI. The farm is always looking at ways of diversifying and have introduced the BEAST for 2004 - see website www.redhousefarm.co.uk.



“A Natural Phenomenon”

Cumbria Farm Tourism Initiative

By Midge Todhunter

Linskeld Tarn “The Peace of Linskeld Tarn” © MT

THERE’S a profound aura of peace and tranquillity sitting protectively over Linskeld Tarn: a place which invites you to stand and stare, regardless of time and motion out there in the real world, which perhaps all of us secretly crave to leave behind.

Little wonder then that otters, red squirrels, waterhens and seemingly a thousand teal and mallard make this their home and haven. Migratory birds use it as a staging point; a place to congregate before tackling the North Sea in flight formation, or crossing down over Europe to winter in Northern Africa.

Landowner Pauline Young says it’s extraordinary how much the tarn is used by migratory birds on the wing. She said: “It’s as though they’ve arranged to meet here: we’ll see perhaps a couple of swans arrive, and then a few more will drop in a day later. They’ll feed for a while, before moving on as a group for their thousand miles flight to winter in

warmer climes.”

Six acres of peat and wetland, Linskeld Tarn is a natural phenomenon which refuses any attempt to be drained. Although plenty have tried. When Robbie and Pauline Young came here to Linskeld Farm 15 years ago, only livestock rearing was on the agenda, and Robbie made several attempts to drain the water, as others before had tried.

Robbie says: “Our cattle would use it as a water source and I was afraid they would get stuck and perhaps sink, as they often came home having been half submerged. But it didn’t work: it’s a natural wetland, and it’s no good thinking otherwise.”

Nothing wrong with that – as plenty of nature lovers will say.

The Young family are what is commonly known in Cumbria as “natural-born triers”. They built up a good herd of suckler cows and followers, and a large flock of lambing ewes. But foot and mouth took their sheep, and constraints on cattle movement in the county ‘put paid’ to what little profits from their cattle there may have been that year. So they’re embarking on a course of diversification.

They now have 11,000 free-range laying hens, with another 5,000 on the way in December. The remaining cattle on their 180 acres holding will go this autumn to make way for the new hen ranges, and the rest of their land will be grass-let to other farmers. And the tarn will be managed as a wildlife sanctuary and tourist attraction.

Farm tourism email updates.

Visit our website www.farmtourism-matters.org and JOIN the email list to receive regular snippets of information on farm and tourism developments

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