

The kindest treatment of the horse is gained through knowledge.

Calendar of EVENTS



INTRODUCTION TO HORSES

Friday, February 21

JUMP SCHOOL


Friday, February 28

Friday, March 21

EQUINE MASSAGE THERAPY CLINIC WITH JAMIE DOWNEY

Friday, April 11



Galloping horse, animated 
using photos by Muybridge (1887)

Fun fact

In the gallop (and canter) there is a moment when the horse has no feet on the ground. Believe it or not, it wasn't until 1887 that this was finally proven!

Eadweard Muybridge, a pioneering early photographer, captured the first moving picture which happened to be a galloping horse!

TRIVIA QUESTION:

In the Olympics there are three equestrian events.

- 1. Dressage*
- 2. Show Jumping*
- 3. Three Day Eventing*

What was the Three Day Event originally called?

The answer will be in next month's issue of The Mane Bit.



This coupon entitles you to a **FREE** introductory lesson at HHRS on

Friday, February 21st

5:00 – 7:00PM

The evening includes an introduction to grooming, safe handling, equine behaviour, and anatomy. This a great way to introduce your young animal lover to the world of horses.

Claim your spot!

Call us at (905) 473-3847

or email us at info@harrogatehills.com

*Please note – This session includes a **FREE** assessment ride.

Despite the cold weather and snow we've had some really fun rides this winter!

There's something to be said for riding out in the snow, and the horses sure love it too!



FUN FACT

Did you know that horses start growing in their summer coats around January 15!
Spring is coming!!

The winner of January's Trivia Question receives a \$25.00 Greenhawk gift card.
Congratulations to Isabelle Lumley

TRIVIA GUIDELINES:

- Place your answer in the box found in the lounge and include your name and contact information.
- There will be a random draw from the correct submitted answers and one person will win a prize.
- The winner will be announced in the following month's Newsletter.

The answer to January's Trivia Question is:
(One of Harrogate's horses has a condition that people used to associate with the phases of the moon. What did they call it?)

Which horse at Harrogate has it and what is the proper medical term for the condition?)

Moon Blindness
Maverick and possibly Mrs. V are the horses who have this in our barn. It is officially called Equine Recurrent Uveitis.

A STORY FROM THE OLD FARM IN GORMLEY



I knew that gate should have been fixed. It was barely hanging on its hinges and when you were turning the horses into the back field you had to line the horse up just right to get him through it. On that morning, I didn't get it just right and the horse I was leading was loose.

I wasn't actually too worried. I knew that Willie,

a three-year-old thoroughbred, would not go far away from his pasture mates who were already grazing in the field at the back of the property. Willie of course thought it was just grand to be loose. He ran around on the freshly cut grass of the baseball diamond while his less agitated colleagues stood on the other side of the

fence enviously watching him frolic.

I remember thinking that I was about to waste my morning having to go get grain to entice him to give up on his newly found liberty. Worse yet I would be obliged to fix all the divots he was making in the manicured playing field. On the west side of the property there was a summer sports camp, and our horses were absolutely not allowed on that side of the property. I knew I had my work cut out for me and all the way around, the morning was looking like a write off.

I watched a bit resentfully as Willie dropped his head to graze and then I went back into the barn to find something sufficiently appealing to convince him to leave his feast.

While I was rummaging through the barn I heard the rumble of a small engine. I grabbed my scoop of grain and went out to see what it was. As I emerged back into the sunlight, I saw that the young man who had been cutting the grass on the west side was inexplicably driving the

lawn tractor directly towards Willie. He explained later that he had just wanted to try to 'herd him up' for me. Willie saw the tractor rumbling towards him and edged closer to his field mates. As the tractor drew nearer, his colleagues fled to the other end of the pasture and Willie was alone, face to face with an arm waving man on a shiny loud machine.

I yelled at the driver to stop and turn it off, but he couldn't hear me and Willie did what could only be expected. He hesitated a second longer and then turning away from the fence and his friends in the field he bolted towards the only opening he saw. Poor Willie. He galloped around the west side of the arena where he had never been before, encountering all manner of equipment, flags, swimming pools and tennis courts.

I assumed he would turn around and come back and so I ran up the driveway on the east side of the arena and grabbed some jump standards and poles to make a quick barricade. The equipment was quite spread out and in the interests of time I ended up building a maze rather than a

barricade, but I knew it would visually be enough to discourage him in the unlikely event he should circle back around the arena and try to make his way towards the front of the property. Then I ran around the arena in the hopes of either catching him or at least sending him north again, away from Stouffville Side Road.

I yelled at the driver to stop, but he couldn't hear me....

As I got to the front of the arena my heart sank for there was Willie, standing in the middle of the parking lot, wide eyed and in full blown panic mode.

He had managed to get through all the equipment, around the swimming pools and past the cabins and had found his way through an open gate. He was trembling, tail up, nostrils flared and I'm certain he couldn't even hear me speaking to him.

As he stared off to the east he saw the horses far up in the front field. It must have given him comfort for he quickly decided that his safest bet was to get to where they were. How to get there became his next immediate concern. I was within 15 feet of him when he bolted again, this time galloping past me and heading east towards the horses he had spotted. Regrettably, despite the optical illusion, the driveway that he was now galloping along did not lead to those horses. It only led to one thing and that was Stouffville Side Road.

I felt sick as he galloped headlong down the driveway. I lost sight of him as he passed behind the grassy hill and as I looked up the highway I could see a large gravel truck hurtling towards the end of the driveway. I closed my eyes as I ran and when I heard the trucker hit the air horn I prayed with all my heart that Willie would at least be killed instantly. There were screeching brakes and then nothing. By this time other people at the farm had come out to see what was going on and were running

towards the scene of the accident.

Before I could get to the road, Willie appeared, head high, trotting up the driveway. He was bloodied everywhere yet his trot was steady and sound. All the horses from far up on the east field had now galloped down the hill and up to the top paddock and yet he did not acknowledge them. His unblinking, glazed eyes never even glanced their way although moments earlier their company had been his only goal.

He turned north on the driveway and began trotting towards the jumps and rails I had put up on the east side of the arena. Never once taking a lame step, he wove in and out of the jumps, negotiating the maze with grim determination. I yelled to someone to tell the truck driver I would be back after seeing to the horse and I ran after Willie. His pace never changed as he wound his way down the driveway towards the back field where the whole nightmare had begun. All his field mates ran to the fence, but he didn't even glance at them either. He just kept steadily trotting and to my amazement he entered the

barn. I ran as fast as I could and when I got there, I found him, standing in the middle of his own stall, shaking, bleeding and in shock.

I checked him quickly to ensure that the bleeding was not arterial and then closed his door and ran up to the

he required much sewing up on various places on his body but all his major joints, although deeply scraped, miraculously had not been permanently damaged. He was to stay in his stall for the next two months recovering and I am happy to say that recover he did.



front office to call the vet. (another story before cell phones!) As I ran towards the office, I was informed that the driver of the truck had continued on his way. I felt sort of badly for him. There is no way he could have stopped in time, and I guess he just decided the aggravation of the whole situation was not worth it.

The vet arrived and many stitches later the final tally of Willie's injuries was surprisingly low. His jaw was broken in a couple of places,

There are a few things I learned from this episode. First, for years people had told me that if there is a fire in the barn you must get the horses out and put them somewhere where they can't come back in the barn. It had seemed a bit far fetched to me that a horse would do that and yet after watching Willie I have almost no doubt. He had gone like a machine, oblivious to everything around him, determined to get to his stall where he felt safe. I would

have trouble doubting the fire stories ever again.

Also, I learned that sometimes people do things with horses that are dangerous and foolish, but they do them out of ignorance not malice. Education, as is the case in many things in life, is the answer. I am sure the grass cutter will never again think

to use a lawn tractor to try to 'herd up' a loose horse.

Finally, Willie moved with us to this farm and lived almost two more decades after his accident. Except for a few scars and a lump on his jaw, there were no physical signs that he had once bounced off a speeding gravel truck. He did however maintain a bit of the three-year-old *joie*

de vivre into his old age so perhaps some of his mental development might have been arrested on that day. It didn't matter. We are just glad to have him.

Oh, and in case you're curious, I didn't bother to replace the divots in the baseball diamond!



Monday, **March 10**
Wednesday, **March 12**
Friday, **March 14**

3 full days of fun!

March Break Camp is a great opportunity for less experienced riders to get the horse time which helps develop foundational horsemanship and riding skills.

Camp participants will have a one-hour riding lesson in the morning, while the afternoon is spent with the horses in the barn.

Our goal is always to have riders spend as much hands-on time with the horses. Participants will learn about the fundamentals of stable management, how the horse communicates, how to tell if the horse is healthy, and some basic first aid tools for when he's not.

- One-hour lesson on the horse in the morning (all our beginner riders have assistance). The main focus of the lessons will be understanding non-verbal communication with the horse, how the rider impacts the horse's natural balance, and reviewing the important principles of riding.
- Learn how to safely groom
- Learn the procedures that keep students safe while enjoying the horses
- Learn how the horse sees the world
- Learn to better understand his behaviour
- Learn about different injuries and ailments
- Learn what is required to meet his nutritional needs
- Learn how to keep your horse healthy and comfortable

\$120 for one day | **\$115/day** for two days | **\$105/day** for three days



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2025
MARCH BREAK

5 day

INTENSIVE BOOTCAMP



We've been having so much fun with the *Jump Schools* and want to keep the momentum going! Get ready for show season by joining us for our **5-day Intensive Bootcamp** over the March Break.

If you're planning to show this year, this Bootcamp is the perfect opportunity for more experienced riders to get in extra miles and build confidence before show season kicks off!

What we will be practicing:

- Working in all three seat positions, with and without stirrups
- Using different releases over fences
- Riding balanced turns and corners in canter
- Developing balanced and efficient simple changes
- Putting it all together over a series of fences
- Counting strides and measuring distances
- Reflecting on what the judge will be looking for
- Protective gear for horses over fences
- Braiding practice and other expected elements of rider and horse turnout

March 10-14, 2025

\$595.00 for all 5 days

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Stay tuned for unique and exciting adventures with horses, as we present new learning opportunities beyond your regular weekly lessons.

The kindest treatment of the horse is gained through knowledge.

