

BONUS PULLOUT 2013 CALENDAR

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January 2013

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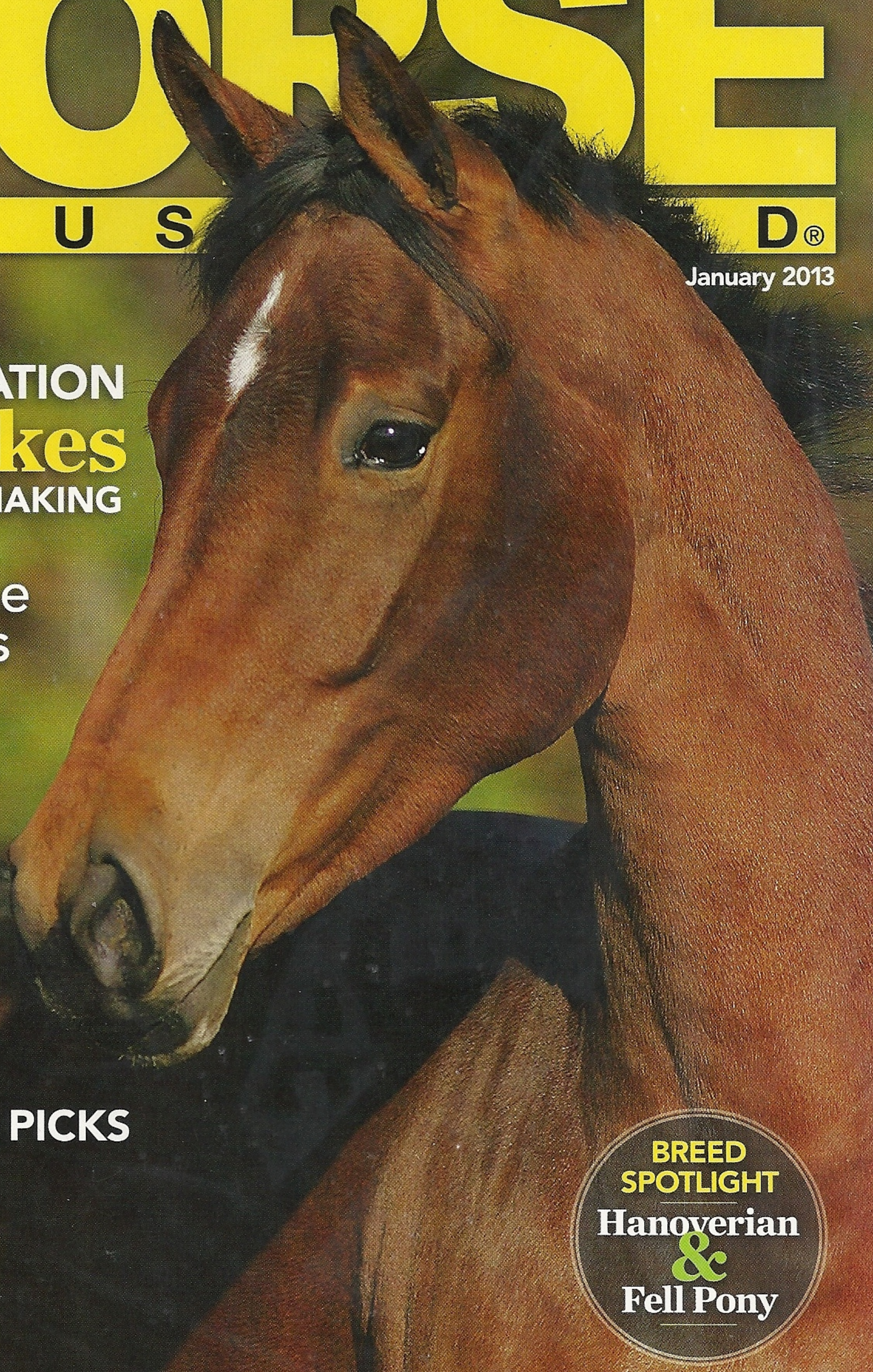
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BREED SPOTLIGHT
Hanoverian & Fell Pony





THE FELL PONY

By *Kim Abbott* / PHOTOS BY BOB LANGRISH

A native of northern England, the Fell Pony is touted as an all-around equine companion for children and adults. Under saddle and in harness, the Fell is known to be sure-footed and agile, with good stamina.



Historically, these traits lent themselves to packing, mining and farm work: The Vikings used the Fell's ancestors to plow and pull sledges, as well as for riding and packing. In the 11th and 12th centuries, these ponies hauled loads of fleece, food and metal ores. During the development and growth of industry, native ponies, including the Fell, were employed in mines in northern England.

During World War I, many horses and ponies were exported for military use, and by the end of World War II, only about 50 registered Fell ponies remained. Additionally, crossbreeding for military and agricultural purposes and the decrease in registering ponies further contributed to the breed's decline. However, unregistered semi-feral stock that remained on the fells (mountains) of northern England helped restore the breed. Today, there are between 400 and 450 Fell Ponies in North America, and an estimated 7,000 to 8,000 around the world, with the majority located in the United Kingdom. It is currently classified as "At Risk" by the Rare Breeds Survival Trust.

The Fell Pony stands 14 hands and under and is commonly black, brown,

RESOURCES


► Fell Pony Society;
www.fellponysociety.org

Fell Pony Society of North
America; www.fpsna.org

The Fell Pony Family Album,
by Mary Jean Gould-Earley

bay or gray in color. Enthusiasts enjoy jumping, driving, trekking and riding in endurance events with their ponies. Fells also compete in trotting races in their native Cumbria, England, where they are also known as "galloways."

Every year, the Fell Pony Society in the United Kingdom tests the ponies' skills at a performance trial featuring a course of varying terrain, such as steep, twisting hills; boggy ground; a water crossing; and natural obstacles like fallen logs.

Fells are still used in their traditional role as pack ponies at Queen Elizabeth II's Balmoral Estate in Scotland, where they carry stags and grouse down from the moors after hunts. The queen's husband, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, also drives a four-in-hand team of Fells. 

KIM ABBOTT is the Senior Associate Editor for Horse Illustrated magazine.



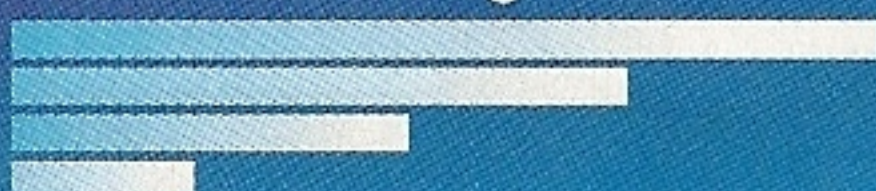
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