

This blacksmith combines his work with hobby

by KENDACE BORRY
MANHEIM — About 14 years ago, John Brosey, Manheim R6, was having difficulty in finding a blacksmith to shoe his horses. Not one to leave the problem unsolved, he decided to learn to do his horses himself. Then the neighbors started to ask him to do their horses, and their friends asked, and well, Brosey has been shoeing horses ever since. Serving his apprenticeship under Adam and Bill Beam,

Talmadge, he has been a professional blacksmith for 12 years.

The same involvement with horses has given Brosey his latest hobby - photography. For the past year, the horse enthusiast has been doing his own photography and developing. Citing horses as his favorite and most usual subject, he has also done senior pictures for high school students, portraits, and wedding shots. He takes his camera wherever he goes, and never misses an opportunity to catch a shot on film.

The two activities go well together and Brosey has many opportunities to combine his job and hobby. Owing his own four year old Reg. Quarter Horse, he not only shows it in horse shows, but also has used it for roping, cutting, trail riding, and pleasure riding. He also takes his cameras to shows, and has served as the blacksmith on call. In fact, almost all of his time is spent in some horse-related field, whether he be working or just relaxing.

As a blacksmith, Brosey is a firm believer of the saying "no hoof, no horse". "Every

horse needs some form of corrective shoeing," he stated. "You have to see the horse move, walk and trot. Each horse has its own balance that must be dealt with. Also, how the horse is used must be taken into consideration."

To deal with each of the 140 to 150 horses he sees every six to eight weeks, Brosey checks each horse before he starts the shoeing process. Not only watching the horse while it is in motion, he walks around the animal, examining its feet from every angle. Then he is ready to start his work.

First each hoof is trimmed of the growth it has accumulated since the last visit, usually about 3/8 inch. Then he selects the proper shoe for the individual horse, and nails them in place, being careful to fit each shoe.

"I believe in a natural foot on a horse," Brosey explained. "I want to make the horse feel as comfortable as possible."

The biggest hoof problem Brosey sees in horses today is "thrush", a foot fungus disease, caused by neglect of the owner. The fungus occurs when the horse is allowed to stand in a badly drained stable which has not been cleaned out.

To avoid thrush, clean conditions of the stable area should be maintained. The hooves of horses should be



One example of his photography is this picture by John Brosey, taken of the covered bridge located near Landisville, in Lancaster County.

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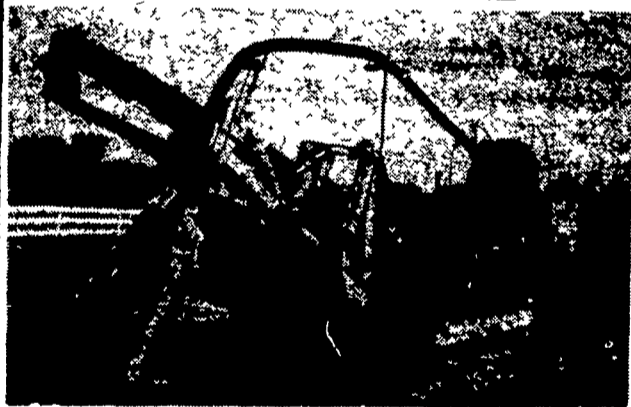
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cleaned every day. If a horse does have the problem, medication should be ap-

plied to the affected area.

Brosey recommends hot iodine in the treatment of thrush. "Thrush requires moisture to survive," he noted. "If the wound isn't too deep, and the horse is kept in clean stalls, the iodine should do the job."

The blacksmith believes it is good for a horse to have a break from shoes, the ideal time being over the Summer. But because most horses have their heaviest use over the Summer months, many horses will go barefoot over the Winter which he agrees is all right. He added that there are some horses, however, which can't go without shoes though, due to their tender feet.

Brosey doesn't like to put borium on his horses as a rule. Borium, which is sometimes used to give a horse traction on a slippery surface, is added to the bottoms of the shoes.

"Borium can tear a leg up on a horse," he said. "While it lets a horse grip on a road or gravel, it doesn't allow the foot to give the way it's supposed to. Therefore, it creates excess tension which travels up the leg. It can cause lameness."

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