



The SaddleMag

THE VALE OF AYLESBURY WITH GARTH AND SOUTH BERKS HUNT

AUGUST 07
FREE

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Contents

August 2007

News	2
The Vale of Aylesbury with Garth and South Berks Annual Puppy Show Or how the great and the good got very, very wet	5
Jim Randall – a Tribute Peter Viney reminisces with an old hunter	6
The Chairman's Report by the Chairman of the Vale of Aylesbury with Garth and South Berks Hunt	7
Pat Eddery: Master of Musk Hill Simon Double and Eunice Scaddan welcome you to the world of racing syndicates	8
Pedro McDonald Takes Off Has he been inhaling too much of the anaesthetist's gas?	10
Vale Training Services Ltd Kate Mason explains how the rural training company has expanded	11
Shire Lane Hunter Trials and the South Oxfordshire Sponsored Ride Two great events to look forward to this autumn – don't miss them!	12
News from your Hunt Clubs A round-up of news and events from your local Hunt Clubs	14
Innocence and Experience Kate Waddington and Eleanor Ayres on hunting for the first time	18
A Guide to Horse Wounds Sally Wise MA Vet MB MCRVS explains how to recognise and treat different wounds	20
Hunting in Arabia Oliver Cornock on hunting from the other side of the world	22
Restaurant Review: The Crooked Billet Chris Barber visits Paul Clerehugh's famous pub	23
Pony Club Focus Focus on the South Oxfordshire Hunt (South) Pony Club; news and reports	24
At the Kennels, Kimble Lesley Sunderland visits Kate Robertson and the Hunt horses	26
In the Old Days... An extract from the Hertfordshire Hunt Club archives	27
Got Nothing to Do? Want Something to Do? Dates and events in and around Herts, Bucks, Oxon and Berks	30
Caption Results and a New Competition A bit more fun at the end!	32

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contact Susie Bell for details.



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HUNT NEWS

Congratulations to huntsman Gerald Sumner and his wife Kerry on the birth of their second child, Rose, on 5th May this year. George, their first, will be two in October so they have their hands full now.

Joint Masters Valerie Barr and Cathy Fleming retired at the end of this season. Jane Vowles is taking over from Val and we wish her luck in her new job – there's no more sneaking home at 2 o'clock on a wet day for Jane!

Val Barr said, 'To be a Joint Master at a time when Hunting has been so debated and regulated has been both challenging and rewarding. The farmers, landowners and gamekeepers have been the most supportive any hunt could wish for – my thanks to everyone who has made hunting in the Central Hills so enjoyable.' Seconded by Cathy Fleming: 'I have made so many friends and had many wonderful days hunting and trailing. Enormous thanks to everyone who has been so supportive. I shall be coming out as often as work commitments allow and hope to see some of you on the campaign trail as well.'

The Garth & South Berks Hunt Supporters' Club cross country ride took place on 27th May in the wonderful rolling grounds of Marlston Farm and Brockhurst School, home of David and Cathy Fleming, plus some land belonging to neighbouring farmers. There are about sixty optional cross country fences over approximately ten miles. Secretary Amanda Stewart, who first organised this ride three years ago, took 120 pre-booked entries and an astounding 60 more on the day, despite sometimes torrential rain, giving her the highest turnout ever.

Colin Tett from the Vine & Craven Hunt supplied all the hot drinks and food, including excellent burgers, and the mobile tack shop did good business, too. Thanks are due to everyone who helped to make the day possible, including the Flemings, Chris Austin, Jo Paulin, Nicola Bain, Mariella Kingsbury, Andy O'Regan, Dee Johnson, Pete the Train (really), Chrissie Wardle, Steve Nash, Stuart Gray, Wally Hetherington, Helen Brookes and Bob Dearlove.

Look out for the ride next year – it's surely the area's best kept secret but that can't last for much longer!

Three other notable retirements at the end of this season are Carolyn Drake, secretary of the Garth & South Berks Hunt for an amazing 39 years, Nigel Loli, chairman of the Vale of Aylesbury Hunt Supporters' Club, and Graham Fryer, chairman of the Old Berkeley Hunt Club. Amanda Stewart is taking over from Carolyn, Ian Parkinson from Nigel and 'Pedro' McDonald from Graham.



AMANDA STEWART



IAN PARKINSON



PEDRO McDONALD

Mrs Carolyn Drake, secretary of the Garth and South Berks Hunt has retired for the third, and, she says, last time. At the Puppy Show in June, Hunt Chairman Alan Jackson presented Mrs Drake with a fine crystal bowl and said a few words to mark the occasion:

Carolyn Drake was born Miss Mowbray to Sir George and Lady Mowbray at Warrens Wood. In 1968, 39 years ago, she became joint secretary to the Garth and South Berks Hunt. During that time she has also been a joint master with Nolan Best, Sean McCormick and Katie Benyon – so at least there was someone with a sensible head to keep the tearaways in check.



A well-deserved retirement: Carolyn Drake and Kebs have a combined age of 102

In those days Carolyn also ran the hunt Show and the cross country competition at Great Auclum, so she didn't have much spare time on her hands.

As master, she recorded every single day's hunting in her diaries. It is said that no one is permitted to read those diaries until after her death. Whether they reveal secrets about her or about everyone else is anyone's guess, but rumour has it that the embargo is in force because she has been so rude so often about the huntsman!

It is also said that not once in her entire life has Carolyn ever stayed behind a hunt official: she has always taken her own line, as anyone who has ever followed her, mounted or on foot, will know. However, despite her

reluctance to follow everyone else in the hunting field, Carolyn was at the forefront helping the other hunt secretaries when Mike Murray was taken seriously ill last season, and her help was very much appreciated. We all hope to see Carolyn and Kebs hunting for many seasons to come.

The Tumblers' Club was started last season to 'fine' anyone who fell off their horse while hunting and contributing tumblers have raised £440 for the Chiltern Air Ambulance. The person who notched up the most falls (five) was Majid Mohammadi, fittingly since he's also the Hunt Treasurer and is always looking for ways to increase the Hunt's funds!

Other brave, high-value fallers were Chairman Alan Jackson and Pedro McDonald. Alan, Pedro and Malcolm Angell paid money up front so they could keep something on account for future falls – I wonder if any of them ended up in credit?

Other contributors included Annette Sumner, Nigel Loli, Jo Roadknight, John Perriss, Jon Quesnel, Roger Edmunds, Gaby and Joe Hill, Pam Davies and Clive Gough.

Peter Janes, foot follower, also gave a donation to the club which set us thinking: if you have a spare £10.00 note on you when you next see Heather Munn, it might be worth thinking about who you'd like to see hit the ground and putting in a request!

It was with great reluctance and sadness that Ian Parkinson was obliged to cancel this year's Terrier and Lurcher Show due to circumstances beyond his control – problems at the kennels meant he was forced to cancel at the last minute. People came from as far afield as Sheffield, London and Bedford – as well as a great many from the local area – only to be turned away at the gate. Ian regrets any inconvenience the late cancellation may have caused and promises that it will definitely run next year, one way or another! If you were one of the show's sponsors and you would like to discuss your sponsorship, please call Ian.

The Old Berkeley Hunt Cake by Valerie Barr

In May take about 50 couple hounds and put them in a large mixing bowl. Mix well until they get to know each other. Add the most supportive farmers, land owners and keepers any hunt could wish for, a dedicated and professional hunt staff, masters and area managers, a chairman, a deputy or two, a committee, trustees, a treasurer, secretaries and, of course, hunt clubs with most excellent chairmen and committee members – a vital ingredient.

Spice up the mixture in June with the Puppy Show, silver spoons and prizes, tea & speeches, the open day, a barbecue and some terrier racing.

Carefully add essence of hound exercise, bicycles, grass keep for hunt horses, holidays and summer events, and mix well.

In September transfer the mixture to a large saucepan and put on a low heat to simmer with Shire Lane Hunter Trials, Pony Club hound exercise, early morning trail hunting, quad bikes and terriers. Increase the heat towards the end of October and add the opening meet spices, fearful hunt jumps, the Tumblers' Club, plaiting, clipping, hunt coats, stirrup cups, hunt teas, photographs and whisky raffles.

Bless the mixture In November on St Hubert's day with a large jar of incense.

Add Christmas cheer in December with Christmas Eve and Boxing Day Meets, port and whisky.

In the New Year add a full bag of weather, point-to-points, the farmers' supper, the Hunt Revue, the Hunt magazine and clay shoots, taking care not to add any shot to the mixture. Turn up the heat until the cake is cooked at the end of March. Cool the cake and ice with friendships and rosettes from the Halton Ride.

At Easter take a chocolate break at Kimble, and present the cake to the famous cake stall.

In April wash the bowls, pans, spoons and cooker and prepare to begin once again.

Good Hunting!



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NEWS

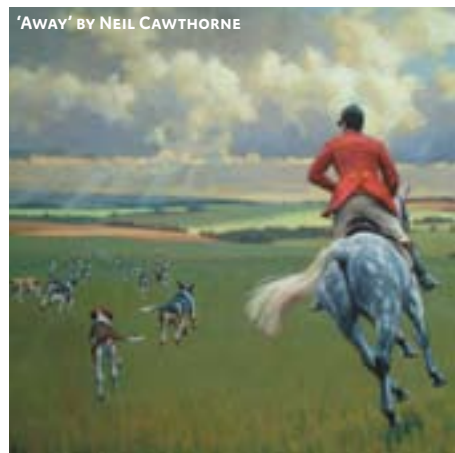
Local trainer, and Senior Master, Alan Hill's regular point-to-point jockey, James Tudor, just pipped Richard Burton to the post in the Volkswagen Touareg Men's Open series championship this season, with 37 wins to Burton's 34. Tudor also won the South Midlands area award, along with lady rider Maxine Filby. This is his best year so far.



JAMES TUDOR AT KINGSTON BLOUNT, MAY 2007

From Classic to Contemporary: the Society of Equestrian Artists' 28th Summer Exhibition is currently on tour and will form the Autumn Exhibition at Palace House in Newmarket. It features over 300 works across all media by international equestrian artists including many who have works in celebrated private, Royal and museum collections in the UK and abroad. It is open from Thursday 4 to Saturday 20 October 2007.

To attend the Private View please contact Nicole Langstaff by email at press@equestrianartists.co.uk or tel. 07930 440943.



'AWAY' BY NEIL CAWTHORNE

Many of you will have sponsored either Ben Sargeant or Michaela Pulman for the London Marathon this year – here are their reports.

Michaela Pulman said: 'No matter how long the Marathon took, even if I had to crawl through the finish, I was going to get that medal because I'm NEVER going to run it again. My knees were bugged through training and my physio said she had never known such a reluctant runner!

I went up to London the day before to collect my number and electronic shoe tag and then my husband, Mike, and I spent the night in London. The train taking us to the start at Greenwich grounded at a station three stops from our destination: it was so overcrowded it had tilted, got stuck on the platform and we had to walk to Greenwich, four miles away! There were people everywhere at the start and it was surreal; a nervous, excited buzz ran through the crowd in anticipation of the off. And then I was off, but I wasn't: the crowd was running so slowly that I wouldn't call it running. I remember reading not to get caught up in the rush and burn out too early but I can't do anything slowly so I spent the whole race dodging around people. I thought I might get bored but the crowds were ecstatic and incredibly encouraging.

I had also been warned about 'hitting the wall' (equivalent to a horse tying-up) but I had experienced this once in training and after that I improved my diet – pasta, pasta, pasta, banana, pasta and lots of non-alcoholic liquid. Fortunately I like pasta and so do my children but Mike doesn't – he will have to learn to cook!

There were only two moments it nearly got to me. At 22 miles I had a blonde moment and told myself there were only another 2.2 miles to go but at 23 miles I remembered it was 26.2 miles. And when I came into Horseguards Parade, it said 600m to go. I thought to myself, 'I can sprint that'. Of course, 600m is a bloody long sprint and after the first room I realised how stupid I was so I slowed down again and still managed to sprint the last room to the finish.

It was a fantastic feeling. Very emotional, exhilarating and draining. I was on such a high! I can't say it was exhausting because I didn't feel tired. Mike saw me cross the finish and couldn't believe how energised I looked, like I'd had a walk in the park. He said it would have been nice to have seen me physically challenged by the event!

It took me 4 hours 23 minutes and my knees never played up once. I think the enforced lack of speed may have played a role in that, but I do feel I could have done it faster, maybe in 4 hours. We had a lift back home by car with my parents and children and I put the horses to bed before going home for a shower and then out for a celebratory drink and meal. On the Monday I was on such a high and fighting fit but on Tuesday walking downstairs or downhill was agony on the thighs, though upwards was fine. I carried on and rode and by Thursday I was fine again. So never say never, because now I am having second thoughts!

A huge "thank you" to everyone who so kindly sponsored me to support Spinal Research. I raised close to £1,400.'

Ben Sargeant finished the marathon in 4 hours and 55 mins. He says, 'The first 18 miles weren't too bad but then it began to get harder and harder and the last two miles were horrible. The support along the way was brilliant and I would like to thank everyone who sponsored me. I raised about £1,500 for the Countryside Alliance. So, who's coming with me next year?'



MICHAELA PULMAN

BEN SARGEANT

MARATHON FOTO

THE PUPPY SHOW

The 2007 Puppy Show was held at the hunt kennels on Friday 15th June. Strictly by invitation only, the puppy show is seen by many as the highlight of the hunt's social calendar.

At precisely three o'clock, just as the first puppies came out for judging, heavy rain had everyone reaching for their umbrellas. Some even ran back to their cars for coats and boots. The rest, in true Glastonbury spirit, braved the rain in light summer clothes.

The rain let up eventually, gave us nearly an hour of warm sunshine and then, just as judging finished, another shower had everyone heading for tea slightly faster than was decent. As the Chairman said in his speech later on, 'They say the sun shines on the righteous, so I can only conclude that at least half of you are sinners!'

Huntsman Gerald Sumner has produced a good set of puppies in his first full year as huntsman – with, it should be said, the help of the many volunteers who do a bit of everything from helping at puppy show practices to hedge-cutting and mowing in preparation for the great day.

Kate Robertson, Sue Betts and Elaine Almack worked extremely hard to turn the stables barn into a welcoming place for tea and speeches. There were flowers on every table, and enough tea, coffee and cakes to keep everyone happy.

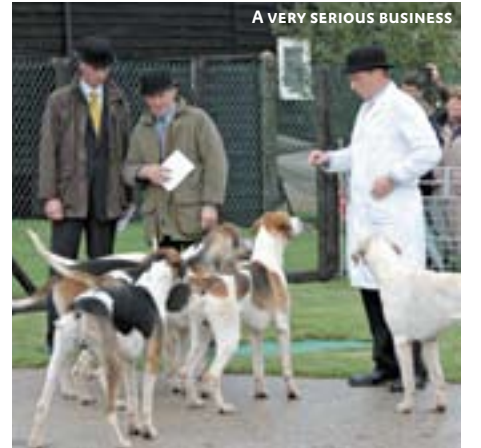
The judges this year were John Pritchard from the Warwickshire Hunt and Gary Joynes, professional huntsman of the Berkeley Hunt. Champion dog was Galway, walked by Mrs Helen Jackson, and champion bitch was Decimal, walked by Mrs Diana Wynn. The best entered working dog was Google '06, walked by Mrs Di Haynes and the best entered working bitch Salad '06, walked by Harriet Worthington.

Chairman Alan Jackson thanked all the puppy walkers for their hard work and presented the prizes to the winners. He also presented a crystal bowl to Mrs Carolyn Drake (see page 3) and a boxed set of very smart glasses to Elaine Almack, who recently left the hunt stables after eight years to work for the Bicester with Whaddon Chase Hunt.

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THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT, 2006–2007

Alan Jackson *reflects on the past season's hunting.*

Jim Randall by Peter Viney

During 2006, I had the privilege of producing five video diaries charting the life and times of this remarkable ninety-one-year-old gentleman, a man who has led his life to the full as a soldier, teacher, rugby player and horseman.

Over the years Jim encouraged many people to ride, including myself. He rode out with me some forty years ago across country and introduced me to many of the superb bridleways we have in South Buckinghamshire.

Jim is in fact one of the last surviving troopers from the cavalry regiment, The Royal Scots Greys. He served initially with them in Palestine in 1940. Whilst on patrol with his regiment, he covered many miles on horseback in that country from Tiberius in the north to Jericho in the south.

Sadly for him the mounted 'policing role' he had enjoyed so much came

abruptly to an end upon the mechanisation of the Greys. Within a very short space of time, after desert warfare training in Egypt, he found himself stuffed in a tank. From then on he was very much on active service, initially as a Wireless Operator/Loader in the Western Desert. He saw action at the battles of Alam Halfa and El Alamein. He took part in the landings at Salerno in Italy which proved to be the worst period that the regiment faced during the War. Later, he was promoted to Tank Commander and witnessed the destruction of Europe as the Greys fought their way through France, Belgium, Holland and Germany.

Before the end of the war, Jim was promoted to sergeant and eventually, on returning home in 1945, he found a letter waiting for him from the War Office to say he had been mentioned in dispatches.

Before the war, Jim had trained as a

teacher at Culham College Oxford. It was at college that he was introduced to rugby. Whilst in the army he played the game in Palestine and the Western Desert. He later joined Chiltern Ruby Club and played for them in the 1st XV before and after war service.

Once back in 'Civvy Street', he returned to the classroom and within five years he was appointed Deputy Headmaster at Whitehill School, a position he held for over 30 years before retiring in the late 1970s.

Throughout his life Jim has never lost his interest in horses and, of course, those of us who rode out with him knew that one of his greatest passions was hunting.

ABOVE, L-R: Jim hunting in Woodmans; Jim on Beano, his favourite horse (picture courtesy of The Bucks Examiner); with the Greys in Palestine, 1940

It seems only yesterday that I accepted John Gardiner's kind invitation to take over from him after fourteen seasons in the job so, to start, I should like to thank all the landowners, farmers, staff and gamekeepers for their hard work this season – and, of course, all the other people whose land we have crossed. We hunted some 109 days and we were visited by the Old Berks, the Royal Artillery and the Vine and Craven. We visited the Vale of the White Horse where Philip Hague, our former huntsman, is now in residence.

I've enjoyed my visits around the country, from Englefield House to Flamstead. Our Hunt country covers a large area and a lot of different terrain. It was a season I believe has gone remarkably well, but it would have not done so were it not for the immense support that we get from everyone involved. I have never been in such a situation where we have so few paid staff but so many people who give their support and time freely because hunting is part of their way of life.

Gerald Sumner and his team have coped admirably with everything thrown at them. Hounds have looked and performed extremely well – imagine how difficult it must be to get to know such a huge country with a new pack of hounds and all those new people! We have a lot to thank our Hunt staff for. A visit to the stables and kennels show just how much Kate Robertson and Gerald care for their horses and hounds.

Alan Hill's return to the mastership has had immense benefits, helping Gerald and being aided by a team of very professional and knowledgeable masters. This has led to a growth in subscriptions and we now have over thirty full subscribers, a big increase on last season.

Majid Mohammadi has worked extremely hard to transform our finances. My year as Chairman has shown what a team effort it is, with tremendous fundraising work in evidence. We also have a superb new website for which we owe many thanks to Cathy Fleming and Amanda Stewart, and a new look for the Hunt magazine, thanks to John and Susie Bell, not forgetting the Hunt committees, the chairmen of the point-to-points, Hunt dances, shoots, Jim Benner's book, Malcolm Angell's video and other fund raising activities – suffice to say that without their support the existence of this Hunt would be impossible. And our secretaries, Mike Murray, Amanda Stewart and Clive Gough, our area managers, the unsung heroes behind the scenes helping ensure that subs are collected and that the meet card gets out, the gate shutters – you are all due praise. We owe Nigel Loli and his helpers huge thanks for the day that Mike Murray had a heart attack out hunting. It's very good indeed to see Mike out and about

again and we have sent a cheque to the Air Ambulance as thanks for their part in the Mike's story.

We have seen several retirements this season (see News, page 2) and they will all be missed, but we welcome Jane Vowles, who is stepping into Val Barr's shoes as master, Pedro McDonald and Ian Parkinson as Chairmen of the OBH Club and Vale of Aylesbury Supporters' Clubs respectively, and Amanda Stewart who is taking over from Carolyn.

The very existence and growth of a Hunt like ours is exactly what this government and others thought they would kill with their law but we have managed to evolve through the enforced changes and we are stronger for it. Most important is the fact that we are still here as a Hunt. I want to see a continued unity of purpose, a team working together, a Hunt bound by tradition.

We have superb country. I believe David Fleming has organised at least twenty new fences so our subscribers can find challenges as good as anywhere, though you can, if you prefer, still enjoy riding in our wonderful country without jumping your socks off, so don't worry! However, we all have responsibilities to our hosts the landowners and farmers, so please don't leave gates open, don't get stock mixed up, don't block roads and do follow the Master's instructions. It's all basic commonsense.

Our finances are excellent, we have supportive trustees, a sound base that many hunts would envy and our list of subscribers is growing – we must be doing something right. I believe we are looking forward to a bright future. Communications are improving dramatically, though they can always be better. There are tremendous fundraising activities run by some incredible people, we have people like Carolyn Drake and Heather Munn who have hunted for fifty seasons and more and have seen so many changes, we have people who have helped enormously and to whom I am very grateful. Indeed, while I thought my business life was going to get easier, the Hunt and its vitality can be quite time-consuming and that is why I am so grateful that both Guy Portwin and Nolan Best, who have been helping me and Alan Hill with the management of the Hunt, have both become Deputy Chairmen.

Looking forward, I can only reiterate that we need that unity of purpose to continue to make this Hunt one of the most successful and enjoyable that there is. I hope to see you all in the autumn.

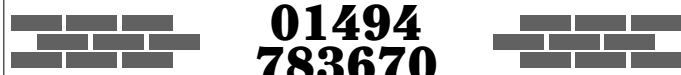
(Adapted from a speech given at the Vale of Aylesbury with Garth and South Berks Hunt AGM on 20th May 2007.)

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PAT EDDERY

MASTER OF MUSK HILL

Simon Double, Racing Manager and Director of Pat Eddery Racing, looks on from the smart side of the paddock rails.

Pat has had a great career and is a marvelous jockey. I can't understand why he is giving up when he is so young – he must have made more money than I did.'

The words of the legendary nine-times Derby-winning jockey, Lester Piggott on 23rd June 2003, the day another racing legend, Patrick James John Eddery announced to the world his intention to retire from race riding.

At the press conference, held at Windsor racecourse, many seemed surprised at Pat's intention to quit from the saddle when the 51-year-old was still fit, healthy, booting home winners and only needed some 239 more domestic winners to beat the all-time career record set by Sir Gordon Richards, 4,870 winners. However, Pat wanted to get out at the top in one piece. Of course, his motives may have been sound but after riding over 4,600 winners in some 40,000 races over a 36-year period, life out of the saddle was to have a bittersweet taste for a while.

The founding of Pat Eddery Racing, a racehorse syndicate organisation, with his wife Carolyn and two other directors, yours truly and John Newman, made the change in lifestyle and routine an easier pill to swallow.

Initially, the company had six syndicates comprising ten horses which, after being broken in at Pat's 107-acre Musk Hill Stud in the Vale of Aylesbury, were sent out to the country's leading trainers. Pat visited their yards on a regular basis to ride out the horses on the gallops on specially arranged owners' mornings and when the horses ran he was at the course to look after the owners and to brief the jockeys. Pat Eddery Racing attracted over a hundred syndicate owners during the first two years. The company had five winners and a plethora of places including a Group 3.

However, Pat and Carolyn felt frustrated when the horses left Musk Hill after being broken in. Not only was the place a bit lonely without them but they missed the hands-on approach to training.

The logical step was for Pat to take up the reins as a trainer. The syndicate owners were asked whether they'd like the horses to be trained by Pat and not surprisingly, there was an overwhelming 'Yes'. Owners could come and see their horses much more regularly (every Wednesday and Saturday is the norm) and there was a feeling that having everything under one roof would be better.

Pat's first runner, Perez, having been off the track for over a year was second but Pat didn't have to wait long for his first winner. Visionist, having won first-time up as a two-year-old trained by Jamie Osborne, won on his four-year-old debut for Pat, only his sixth runner.

However, if you'd been following the Master of Musk Hill's first season, you'd have noticed that it was rather a quiet start to his training career. After running well early on, the horses were not right in mid-summer and the yard effectively 'lost' three months of the season. Musk Hill sent out six winners at a strike rate of 7 per cent.

Never mind a 'quiet' first season, 'baptism of fire' might have been more appropriate. However, Pat has patience in abundance. This is the man who won every English and Irish Classic at least once, notched up four Arc de Triomphe, two Breeders' Cups, twenty-nine centuries and eleven championships. Yet, as an apprentice on 10 shillings a week, he went a whole year and had over 70 rides before recording his first winner! Not just patience but the will to win is also in the Eddery genes.



TOP: on the gallops at Musk Hill Stud

CENTRE: Cavort after her win at Wolverhampton

BOTTOM: Secret Tune in training at Musk Hill Stud. Owned by Prince Khalid Abdullah and Pat's first ever runner in a Group, he was third in the Group 3 Queen's Vase on 22nd June at this year's Royal Ascot

All photographs by Simon Double

Clearly the owners believe in Pat as he has a third more horses in training than last year. At the latest count it was 46 and owners include some of the world's leading owners such as Prince Khalid Abdullah and Coolmore's John Magnier. Other well-known figures include Sir Peter O'Sullivan and Channel 4's Jim McGrath, who says of Pat: 'His whole attitude is tremendous. For a man who has a reputation for being laid-back, he is very, very professional about the whole thing.'

They say behind every successful man is a successful woman (a cliché but invariably true) and Assistant Trainer, Carolyn Eddery, is a tour de force at Musk Hill. She, like Pat, rides out every morning and is responsible for the feeding regime of the whole yard.

At the time of going to press, the yard has nine winners on the board, five of which are syndicate horses. And we're not half way through the season yet.

Would Pat ever consider a come-back as a jockey? Channel 4's Tommo recently asked Pat that very question at Musselburgh, just before Secret Tune won.

'No, I'm enjoying the training too much,' came Pat's reply with not a hint of hesitation.

On the Pat Eddery Racing website, the 55-year-old Dubliner is quoted as saying, 'I was very lucky to have had a marvellous career as a jockey, riding all round the world. If I achieve as a trainer, half of what I achieved as a jockey, I'll be very happy.'

You wouldn't want to bet against it!

J

JAMIE CORRIE
Motor Engineering

Uxmore Farm Barn,
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Reading, RG8 0TY

Tel. 01491 681003

Eunice Scaddan: Novice Syndicate Member

I first met Simon Double about six years ago on a quiet hack in Sarratt.

'So, tell me Simon, what you do?' I asked.

He described the job of a race manager and how syndication works. When I enthusiastically said that it sounded very exciting he said two important things:

'Well, if you have travelled all the way up to Newcastle on a wet November evening and your horse finishes last it can be a little disappointing. And do NOT expect to make any money.'

About 18 months ago I was vaguely looking for a new hobby when my riding friend Susie Bell (your editor) was talking about the publicity work she had recently done for the launch of Pat Eddery Racing. Though I was not a racegoer I was aware of Pat's status as a Champion Jockey and the prospect of a new venture with an illustrious ex jockey-turned-trainer just down the road in Aylesbury and, you guessed it, Simon Double as one of the race managers – well, I had to pay a visit.

I had missed the regular yearling parade that autumn so I went for a couple of private viewings before signing up for a twelfth share in a beautiful spirited chestnut filly. I was looking for a horse that would race early in the season to give me a feel of whether or not I was going to enjoy this new interest. On her official Naming Day the syndicate members voted for 'Cavort', toasted her with champagne, and then went to the pub for lunch. We are all, bar one, first-time syndicate members and I think this is why we have developed a great sense of camaraderie in the group.

Cavort was fourth favourite in her first race and the excitement and expectation was immense: in our naivety we thought she must surely win! Thirteenth out of fifteen was 'a little disappointing'. Since then she has had two wins and a second to the great delight of everyone. Now we have matured and can enjoy our days out at the races whatever her fortunes.

By the end of June last year I was thoroughly enjoying the experience when one final share was advertised in Alfresco, a strikingly handsome bay colt whom I had my eye on from day one but, knowing he was always going to be out late in the season, I had not taken a share in him. So I now am involved in two syndicates!

Alfresco only had two races last year when the decision was taken to have him gelded as he was very exuberant and, though he is easier to handle now, he still has a quirky personality and is a lovable character. We have had an amazing spring with him – six races with two wins and a second.

In the 18 months since I have been involved in horseracing I have travelled to at least eleven racecourses, driven hundreds of miles, taken friends, family or joined syndicate members and there have been social days at Musk Hill where the hospitality is renowned and there is such a great family atmosphere.

I know I have been exceptionally fortunate in having four wins from my two horses. There is nothing quite like that first win with Cavort, but even more thrilling was Alfresco's first win: I was the only syndicate member present and was invited to step up and receive the trophy. Though it was a cold March evening at Lingfield it could have been Ascot in June. The thrill could not have been greater (maybe one day I'll find out if that's true)!

STOP PRESS: Cavort had a brilliant second on Sunday 17th June at Folkestone. It was very exciting and was probably her best race to date! Watch this space...

For full details of racehorse syndication at Pat Eddery Racing, please go to www.patedderyracing.com or call 01844 296153

Thought you'd seen it all? Think again!

by Pedro McDonald, chairman of the Old Berkeley Hunt Club

I suppose last year was a good hunting season. Autumn hunting was nice. Fine days, firm jumps, hard ground and a warm wind – and that was just the horse in front. Yup! I enjoyed those days until my horse kicked me in the chest because she didn't want to come out of her field so early in the morning! A short visit to the hospital; an Xray – just like an ordinary day at work.

Then the Opening Meet – the first time I could wear my new Hunt Buttons – purchased from Mike Murray at £5 per button! My goodness, I would hate to buy a house off him. Trouble is, when I got off my horse that first day three buttons were ripped off and two got lost in the mud. I've decided to have a standing order with Mike for those buttons.

The Opening Meet did not have as many fallers as the year before. I think there were just three of us – Alan Jackson, me and someone else. Alan and I always fall at the second fence. It has become quite a tradition. However, this time we did not bargain for that fifty-season witch Heather. I was just rubbing myself down and getting my breath and my horse back when she trotted up behind me:

'That'll be £10 for the Tumblers' Club, please, Pedro!'

Taken aback by her effrontery, I said I preferred my sloe gin from a flask not a tumbler, and preferably somebody else's gin. But, dear readers, she would not go away until she'd got her money. Just sat on her horse looking down at me, smiling sweetly. I rummaged in my pockets for some cash. I found I only had a twenty quid note on me so I gave her that expecting a tenner in return.

'Ah! I see you want me to keep an extra £10 in credit for your next tumble!'

The cheek of the woman! She still hasn't given me my change. I rode on feeling not a little peeved.

Soon I realised it was after 1pm because the Chairman was no longer on the hunting field. Have you noticed that he always leaves at exactly 13.00 hrs on the dot? I suppose his horse can only have batteries for a couple of hours or is it that he's going off home to buy another business before tea? Anyway, the hounds were running around happily and the day ended cheerfully.

I think it was another day that I took a friend along – the one I rode with when I made those films *A Ride in Middle England*. It was the day of the late start and the inedible barbecue at the Kennels. You remember. He'd never hunted before because his wife (lovely woman) thinks that hunting hurts horses whereas we all know (as the Grand National Trainer said this year) that hunting *makes* horses. I can honestly say he and his horse had the time of their lives. Instead of the five minute wonder that is showjumping or cross country competition he jumped and galloped around for a couple of hours with us.

'I think I had better get back,' he said anxiously at last.

'Don't be silly,' I said. 'Enjoy it. After all your horse is.'

We clattered around an hour more and got home after dark with the hounds in tow. Suddenly there was an awful scream as his wife saw him and his horse, both of them covered in sweat and mud.

'My God you've killed him!'

'He's just a bit tired and sweaty, darling,' he whimpered.

'Never again!' she screeched. 'Never again!'

I left them to it and packed up my horse and went to eat one of those execrable hamburgers. As I ate it I remembered what a wise old hunting farmer had once said to me.

'You see, Pedro,' he whispered to me with his whisky breath, 'Those five-minute wonder events are for people who don't really love *riding*. They find the open fields, the chaos, the rain, the mud on the tack, those funny people following on foot and the music of the hounds all too disorganised. Instead they want just a short flurry of activity and then wrap up the horse in an initialled rug and put on its little travelling booties. Ah well!'

Yes, it has not been a bad season but we have had some disasters. Have you noticed how nearest and dearest rally round? I remember when Master Emma Pearse fell off up at James' place near Flamstead. Head over heels through a jump and ended up against a tree, a bent and bleeding nose with the tip pointing to her right ear. She was pretty stunned for a moment but it was alright because, at exactly the right moment, her friend Jonathan came up on the quad bike. Brmmm brmmm! He took one look at her and raced on shouting at the top of his voice:

'I can't help – I've got a terrier down a bloody hole...!'

We got her back to the farmhouse and a quick scrunch and her nose looked as good as mine does on a normal day. Sympathy can misfire so easily, can't it? I remember another day when we were all jumping a ditch with an overhanging tree above. My mare Malibu (a horse who hates ditches), reared up and leapt 5 ft into the air. My face made intimate contact with the branch above. There was blood running down my face as I cantered to where the rest of the field were parked. On seeing my blood-splattered face one of my acquaintances shouted at the top of her voice.

'My God, Pedro, what happened! Is the horse alright?'

The horse! You see? Misguided sympathy.

I have nearly finished my review of the year with the VAGSBH and I am glad to say that this year I have only been shouted at twice by the Masters (or was it a couple of the Mistresses? I'll leave that to you to figure out). Naturally it was all over riding on the wrong bit of land. I am still confused about the set-aside, and the plantings, and the turf and the ploughings and all that stuff. Next year I have decided that to get round this I am going to buy a hoverhorse which will make the warm wind that we started off this season with seem like nothing!

So keep a good clearance...

Here comes Pedro on his hoverhorse!

From sausage-making to computing for the terrified, they've got it covered

by Kate Mason, joint owner of Vale Training Services Ltd

Nestling in the heart of the Vale hunt country is one of the area's best kept secrets: the Marsh Hill Training Centre.

The Centre was opened in April 2003 by David Liddington MP, and has supported rural businesses ever since. The training delivered by the Centre is organised by The Vale Training Group and Vale Training Services Ltd. The business was set up in 1982 by a committee of local farmers as a cooperative to cater for the land-based sector's training needs, with the aim of improving standards of rural training within Buckinghamshire and the surrounding areas. In 1986, Kate Mason was employed part-time to manage and oversee the general running of the business. At that time, the business provided 15 training days a year with around 35 trainees passing through.

Since then the business has seen enormous growth, assisted greatly by the building of Marsh Hill Centre in 2003 at Marsh Hill Farm and it has become Vale Training's new home. This gave the business a permanent office, its own training facilities including an IT suite, a workshop, a kitchen and a function room. This facility also provides a meeting place for a number of other rural groups such as the Young Farmers, the Old Berkeley Hunt Beagles, Vale Arable Group and Bucks Farming Club. The Marsh Hill Centre works alongside Vale Training



and Marsh Hill Farm to provide a comfortable working environment and to increase opportunities and knowledge within the rural community.

Nearly a year ago, Vale Training changed ownership: Vale Training Services Ltd was created in October 2006 and is owned and run by Kate and Tim Mason. The ethos of this new business, as before, is to deliver affordable, personalised, training to the rural sector. In 2006, the Company saw around 1,200 trainees pass through their books with over 420 training days. This has been achieved by catering for a range of training needs – Computing for the Terrified, Sausage Making, Trailer Towing, Health and Safety, Tree Climbing and many more. This year has seen a revival in livestock courses, particularly for sheep-related topics. Clients range from national companies such as Johnson & Johnson to smallholders with just



a few head of stock.

Over the past five years, Vale Training has had a close association with a number of rural bodies including DEFRA, SEEDA, and Rural England. This has resulted in a number of grants being secured which have stimulated growth within the local rural economy, such as farm diversification and funding for women's management courses.

What about the future? Kate and her staff will continue to offer a personal and honest support service to farmers, and those living and working within the rural area, helping them to develop their own businesses, as well as skills. Courses will be developed, with an emphasis on high standards and low instructor/trainee ratios, and they will continue to meet the changing standards that are being set by Government departments. Whatever your rural training requirements, Vale Training can help you achieve success.

Contact Kate Mason on 01296 612201 or info@valetraining.co.uk if you would like details of any of the courses.



Shire Lane Hunter Trials

The Old Berkeley Hunt Club's annual cross country event drew record entries in 2006. This year's date for your diary is **Sunday 9th September**. Event secretary Paula Angell reports on 2006.

This event is kindly hosted by Jef Bell and Linda Rogers and the course and ground conditions were perfect last year. Excellent entry numbers totalled some 200 rounds which gave the secretaries, commentators, scorers and dozens of fence judges a very busy day's work! The generous fence sponsors were rewarded with their own named jumps which made for additional interest in the commentary.

The teamwork at this event is always excellent and this is certainly felt by spectators and competitors who remark on the friendly and relaxed atmosphere. Although there were a few loose horses they were soon caught (well, apart from the one who decided to have a tour of the village first!) and fallers escaped with a few bumps and bruises. Huge thanks are due to all the helpers and organisers, particularly Terry Fryer who spends hours behind the scenes before a horse goes anywhere near the start line! So many of the team have been coming together to help at this event for so many years that it is a wonderful way to catch up with old friends and share the excitement of seeing horses ridden at speed across country.

What more could you want to do on a Sunday? You could hardly have more fun...

2006 results:

Class 1, novice riders: Kirsty Barr on Little Boy Blue

Class 2, pairs: first, Gill Farrar and Malcolm Angell; second, Bethany Wallis and Sam Edwards.

Class 3, junior cubhunter: first, Sophie Strange; second, Charly Gammell. Rosettes to eighth place plus rosettes for every unplaced clear round.

Class 4, senior cubhunter: joint first, Matt Wilkinson and Susie Lyons (22 clears from 50 entries).

Class 5: foxhunter: first, Henrietta Seligman; second, Tanya Viol; third, Rosalie Eustace; fourth, Malcolm Angell. Henrietta won the Stepping Stones and Bayleaf trophies and Rosalie won the Vale of Aylesbury Hunt members cup. Malcolm received The Dick Dalton Memorial Cup for the highest placed VAGSBH member over 40.

Susie Bicknell gives a first-hand report of the Pairs class

It was my partner's second ever hunter trials and my first since a fractured arm in January. And the first time together. Our confidence waned somewhat as we waited our turn: people fell off, a loose horse disappeared into the woods, a long delay, then a very professional-looking couple set off and reappeared in what seemed like no time at all. 'Too good,' we thought wistfully, thinking of our rosettes. Then it was our turn.

Whoops, I just knew that 'dimple' jump was our downfall – in the literal sense, as my partner fell off there. A nasty little narrow jump in the middle of the wood. How dare they? We were doing moderately well until then (that is, only 5 refusals between us). Not to be deterred, Simon sprang back on. My horse always knows when his nose has turned towards his horsebox, and the second half of the course was done at more or less full gallop with no refusals (well, just a couple more).

We had had a great time, notwithstanding the fall and the refusals. And, by the way, we're busy building our very own 'dimple' jump to practise: just you wait 'til next year. We'll be back with a vengeance...



South Oxfordshire Sponsored Ride

Fancy riding through thirteen miles of private land that's open to the public only once a year, taking in up to 60 optional cross country fences as you go? If your answer's 'Yes,' this is the ride for you! Ride Chairman Bob Pitt gives us the lowdown.

Date: Sunday, 7th October

**Entry forms from: Annette Sumner,
Glory Hill Cottage, Glory Hill Lane,
Beaconsfield, Bucks HP9 1XF
Tel: 01494 677636**

E-mail: secretary@sosr.org.uk

Website: www.sosr.org.uk

**See also: entry form enclosed with
this magazine**

The South Oxfordshire Sponsored Ride is in its 22nd year. The ride runs through thirteen miles of fabulous private park and woodland with 60 optional fences, all at a maximum height of 2'6". Twenty of the fences also have more challenging options, with a maximum height of 3'6".

We offer senior and junior prizes for collecting the most sponsorship. These are rather nice trophies and can be kept. We have radio communication

between the checkpoints, the Secretary's tent and a paramedic team in their four-wheel-drive vehicles. Mounted stewards patrol the route, and tractors and other pulling equipment are always available, so there's no need to worry about your horsebox getting stuck in the mud if it rains.

The ride is a charity organisation and our only costs are for stationery, printing, marquees and paramedics; everything else is given free of charge, and all staffing is voluntary. We donate 50 per cent of our takings to the Vale of Aylesbury with Garth and South Berks Hunt and the other 50 per cent is split between charities including Riding for the Disabled, Macmillan Cancer Relief, the Police Benevolent Fund, the Air Ambulance, the Ghurkhas, Motor Neurone Disease, the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Fund and Watlington Hospital Trust.

This is my thirteenth year as Chairman and I am lucky to have a long serving committee. Nick Nixey, who runs the course, repairs the fences and negotiates with some of the landowners, has been on the committee longer than me. Mike Murray, who handles the communications, mounted stewards, checkpoints and liaises between the hunt and ourselves, has also served for longer than me. Trevor Hannon has also been on the committee for a number of years and he looks after the waymarkers and the flagging on the course. Jo Roadknight is in her second year as Treasurer and she keeps our money balanced. We have a new member this year, Annette Sumner, who has taken over as Secretary.

We look forward to welcoming you to our ride; we are absolutely certain you will enjoy yourself!



News from your Hunt Clubs

Social events and fund-raising with your local Hunt Club

Off the Hoof Team challenge –9th June 2007 by Becky Wynn

It took months of planning and discussion but was eventually put into action with Sarah, Richard, Di Wynn, Annie Roads and the support of the Hunt Club.

It was a day purely based on entertainment with a hint of friendly competition. The entertainment was enjoyed by the competitors but especially the spectators as the photos prove (see also www.ruralshots.com). There were twelve teams of four to include at least one lady, some of whom had never participated in any of the disciplines before. These included: a quad biking course, clay shooting, cast fishing and a scurry.

The day was topped off with wonderful weather, refreshments and a barbecue throughout the day. This was followed by prize-giving in the evening and a pig roast. First place was awarded to 'Where's Kenny?' with Martin Lambourne, Trisa Lambourne, Kenny Lee and Paul Rogers. Second place went to 'Try anything Once' with Helen Jackson, Jamie Jackson, Murray Graham and Adrian O'Shaughnessy, and in third place came the 'Young Guns' with Alex Caines, Edward Caines, Robert Redman and Rachel Stokes. Other prizes were awarded to Martin and Trisa Lambourne for 'Best Man' and 'Best Lady'. Murray Graham took the title of 'Best Old Git', and 'Best Laugh' went to Willy Redman, the latter two judged by John Reynolds and taking home a painting by Henry Castle.

The highlight of the day was the relay, 'Scurry', and this provided entertainment and comedy, as water, a large welly to wear, obstacles and running and jumping were involved. You can imagine the bedlam! Alan Hill gave an excellent commentary throughout. It was a totally relaxed day and no one went home without a smile on his or her face.

We hope to hold the event again next year on **Saturday 7th June**. Thank you to all competitors, helpers and organisers for all your hard work and making the day such a success and above all raising good funds for the hunt.

Diana Wynn, South Oxfordshire Hunt Club



Old Berkeley Hunt Club Clay Shoot

The OBHC Clay Shoot on Sunday 15th April was Chairman Graham Fryer's last duty before he retired at the OBHC AGM on 18th April. It was organised as usual by Roger Hance, and was held at Standalls Farm, courtesy of Roger Goodchild. With an unseasonably hot, sunny day in evidence, over 90 people turned up to take advantage of Standalls Farm's naturally good clay shooting layout. Roger has hosted the shoot, which raises funds for the OBHC, for the last ten years, though it has been running for at least fifteen, and the whole operation runs very smoothly: OBHC supporters provided nearly all Roger Hance's help, Sandie Hance was secretary and Terry Fryer ran the magnificent barbecue and food stand with Susan Hargraves' help. Her chocolate cake is definitely an outstanding memory of the day!

This is a very friendly shoot, attracting all sorts from expert

shots out for the generous prizes (the open class went to an exciting shoot-off round) to amateurs wanting to practise in an unpressurised atmosphere. There are also prizes on offer for the best lady shot and the best junior. Many thanks to all those who helped on the day – Geoff and Heather Munn, Ron Higgs, Graham, Terry and Aimee Fryer, Roger Goodchild, Paul Pusey, Val Barr and Susan Hargraves, to name but a few of the kind people that gave up a Sunday to help raise funds. The most onerous task of the day was picking up the cartridge wads from the field afterwards, but even that was quickly done.

We look forward to seeing you there next year or, if you can't wait that long, the Old Berkeley Beagles hold a fund-raising shoot at Standalls Farm on **30th September**. Go to www.oldberkeleybeagles.co.uk for more information.

OBHC diary date: 9th Sept Shire Lane Hunter Trials (see page 12)

Welcome to Ian Parkinson, the new Chairman of the Vale of Aylesbury Hunt Supporters' Club

Born on 21st July 1954 in Haddenham, Bucks, where he still lives, Ian left school and went to agricultural college for three years before becoming a farmer/contractor. He is married to Susan and they have two daughters, Yvonne and Victoria. Ian started helping with Hunt fences and terriers in the early 1960s with the South Oxfordshire Hunt Terrier Stan Clark and he stopped earths for Jim Bennett after the Hunt's amalgamation into the Vale of Aylesbury in 1970. He also helped with the terriers for Ginger Dover, Adrian Yates and Nigel Kirk. He was very proud to receive the Hunt Button in 1999, an outstanding achievement. In 2003 Ian became Terrierman for the VAGSBH with Stuart Gray and Countryman Gary Morgan, and now with Mark Norris. He is also on the committee of the SOHC. One of Ian's first acts as chairman of the VAHSC has been to get a 'Sponsor A Hound' scheme off the ground. With the aid of a 'hound catalogue' (pictures of nearly every hound at kennels) he has been signing people up (see back page) at £15.00 a time. The money is dedicated to the welfare of the hounds and, in return, sponsors receive a colour certificate with a photo of 'their' hound on it. It has been a great success so far, with thirty two hounds sponsored. Please talk to Ian if you'd like to sponsor a hound.

Membership of the VAHSC is £12.00 per person or £20.00 for two from the same family, and runs from October to September. Membership gives you a 10 per cent discount on all VAHSC events and merchandise. To join, contact Paul Winterbottom at winterbottompaul@yahoo.co.uk.

Friday 19th October: AGM interhunt and group quiz at Haddenham Village Hall. The AGM starts at 7.00pm and is followed by the quiz at 8.00pm with a fish and chip supper included. £10.00 per person.

Friday 7th December: Ferret racing and supper at Haddenham Village Hall. The fun starts at 7.30pm and entry is £10.00 per person. Please contact Ian Parkinson on 07850 305565 or at ianagricon@hotmail.com for further information.

Hertfordshire Hunt Club news:

The 2008 Hunt Calendar: Featuring photographs by John Bell, it will be available for purchase soon so keep an eye out for it at shows and meets.

You can also order a copy by posting a cheque to James Dickson at Grove Farm, Flamstead, St Albans Herts AL3 8BA or calling Emma Pearse on 01582 873263 if you wish to pay by credit card. The cost is the same as last year: £10.00 per Calendar plus £1.70 postage. Please remember if ordering by post to include your address.

HHC notecards: These notecards, also featuring photos by John Bell, make great cards for general correspondence, so please do look out for them at meets and show and buy some for yourself, friends and family. They come in pack of twelve cards and envelopes: three cards in each of four different photographs.

VAGSBH v Bicester Hunt Clay Shoot



This annual clay shoot was hosted by The VAGSBH this year at Meadowbrook Farm on Wednesday 20 June. There were approximately 20 farmers from each hunt with an average score out of 40 shots – 29.5 for Vale and 28.3 for Bicester. The Top Gun went to Bob Blundell winning the 'Allan Wynn' trophy and A. Goodwin winning Top Gun for the Bicester.

Richard Wynn

Garth Hunt Club diary dates:

8th September: Henley Show at Greenlands Farm, Hambleden, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 3AS. Helpers wanted. **Snowman's Ball**, Henley, all details TBC.

Contact Amanda Stewart on 01491 681124 or e-mail amanda.stewart@btconnect.com.

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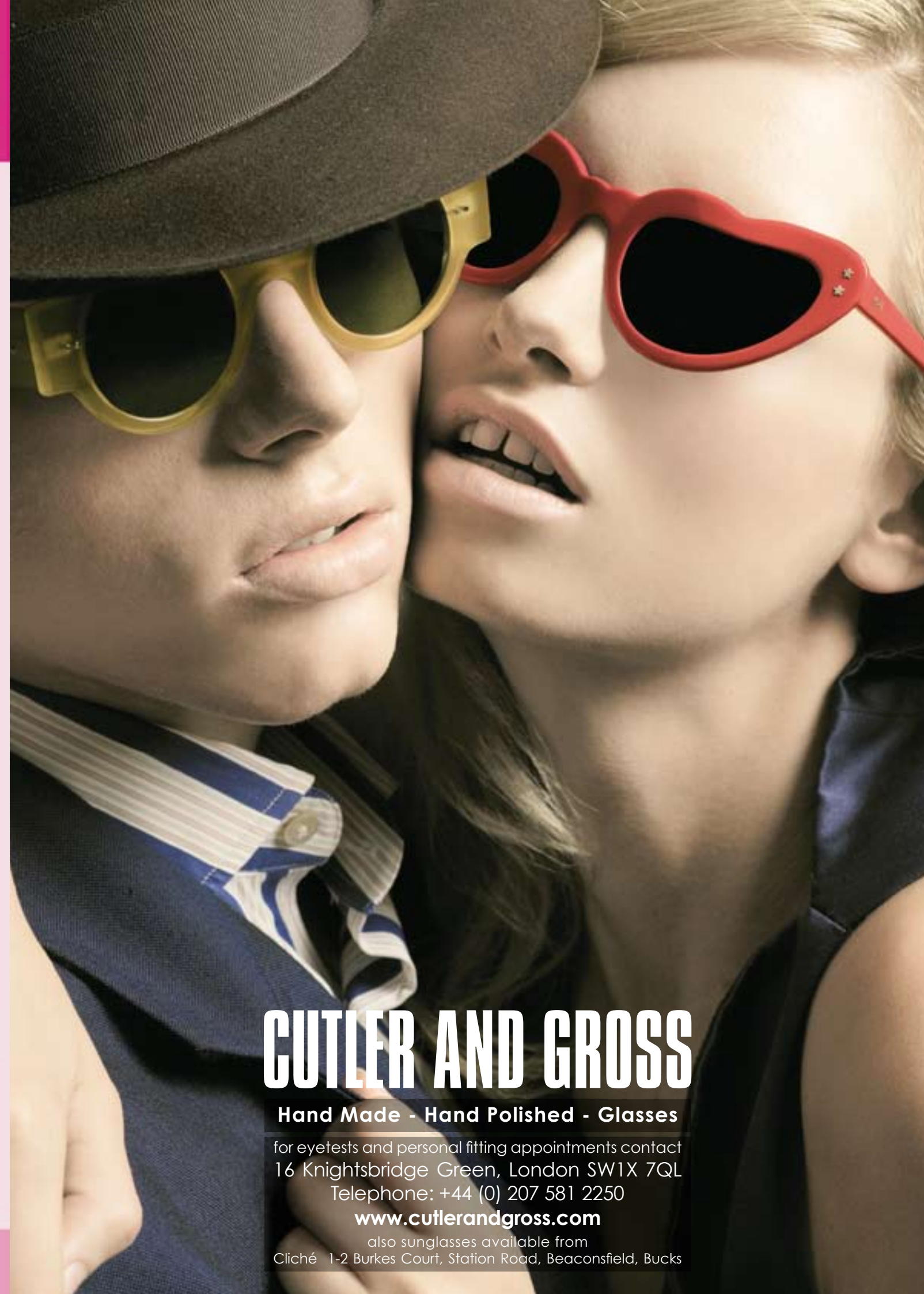


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INNOCENCE & EXPERIENCE

From opposite ends of a long, muddy field, Kate Waddington (seasoned hunter) gives advice on what to take and do if it's your first time, while Eleanor Ayres (hunting virgin) recounts hers.

Never been hunting before? Don't worry – here's some invaluable advice that's sure to give you the confidence to try it.

The idea of galloping across vast tracts of open country, jumping hedges, ditches and gates is enough to put the fear of God into most people (jump jockeys, Irishmen and very good riders excepted!). But most hunting, particularly here, is not like that.

If you have never been before, it's really not that scary but you do have to be well prepared. The most important bit is your horse: most horses love hunting but a horse that is difficult and unruly at home is going to be worse hunting, and that's no fun for anyone. A horse that goes in a snaffle at home is probably best in a slightly stronger bit. Add in a running martingale as it gives you a neckstrap. I always have one: you never know when the 'Oh s**t strap' may come in handy. If it's good enough for Kieran Fallon, it's good enough for me.

You do not have to have the full hunting kit before coming out. A hacking jacket or black showing jacket is fine, but you may want some extra layers on underneath. A pair of tights worn under your breeches on a cold day makes a big difference and, if your boots are difficult to get on and off, put on a pair of pop socks under your socks and pulled up over your breeches or jods.

Tack up your horse before you leave home, as trying to tack up while he is whirling round at the meet is no fun. When you finish, your horse will be tired, muddy and thirsty, so take a can of water. I always take hot water with me: I wrap the cans up in a couple of rugs and it's amazing how warm the water is when I get back. My horse drinks some of it and is washed off with the rest and put into a warm rug. By the time we get home he is dry and ready to get clean pyjamas on for bed!

Unless you are teetotal, bring a hip flask as you'll appreciate it when you have been out for a while and it's a good way of meeting new people if you're a bit shy. The flasks where the top is permanently attached are easier as you can't drop the top.

If you need someone to 'nanny' you for the day, just ask at the meet. We all help and plenty of people are 'non-jumpers'. Hunting is a very social sport, so don't forget your manners – a smile always helps. Don't tear past people or, worse, run into the back of them as it can cause serious damage and that's not going to help you make new friends! If your horse might kick, tie red tape around its tail and stay at the back of the field. If your horse hasn't been out before or is young, some green tape warns everyone.

At the beginning of last season I took a friend out on one of my horses. She had never hunted before but it had always been a dream. She described it as one of the best days of her life. Give it a go, you can't judge until you have tried!

P.S. For the girls (and some boys, I dare say), make sure it's waterproof mascara!

Kate Waddington

I've ridden at Rose Hall Farm in Sarratt since I was a child so I've always been surrounded by hunting, but had never actually participated. I'm all for equine excitement, but my preconceptions were that the normal rules of engagement were abandoned when hunting, and all kinds of terrain were negotiated at high speed, that sane horses became unstoppable, and that jumping 5ft fences was mandatory. In my discussions with friends who'd been hunting the responses varied from, 'There's really a lot of standing around, you know,' to 'Don't worry, everyone's out of control!' Despite the fact that my horse had never exhibited such a tendency, I had an irrational vision that I



LEFT: Kate Waddington, from the meet at Bower Farm, Aldworth in March 2006

If you are interested in going hunting for the first time, please contact Clive Gough, Secretary, on 01494 758069.

RIGHT: Eleanor Ayres, at the meet at Monkton, Speen, in March 2007



couldn't dispel: that he would transmute into an unstoppable nightmare and would pass the master – the ultimate hunting faux pas.

After much encouragement from Bill Martin and Barbara Dickens, Susie Bell and Sharon Higgs at Rose Hall, my horse Ferdie donned a new Pelham bit and I attended my first meet at Chenies Manor on 17 October, 2006. I chose a local meet for my maiden outing so I'd be able to go home alone if I had to at short notice. It was a lovely morning in the Chess Valley and there was a low mist. The scene at Chenies was magnificent; I've attended meets on foot but now I saw things through the eyes of a bona fide participant. The mustard coats of the hunt staff marked the sense of occasion, the riders laughed and chatted over their port, inquisitive hounds were everywhere, and foot followers were plentiful.

After the master's speech, the huntsman set off at a trot with the hounds and the field followed. The sound of the clattering hooves was exhilarating. This was it, we were off, I was committed! We soon turned into a wood and stopped. And waited. In spite of my anticipation and a hunger to keep moving, Ferdie was happy to stand still, as he had done at the meet – this was very promising behaviour but I couldn't relax yet.

When progress recommenced we moved into some open fields. 'Aha,' I thought, 'This is it; he's going to take off and fly past the master and I'll be sent home ignominiously, my hunting career curtailed!' I stayed with Bill and Barbara, my diligent chaperones. The rest of the field cantered down a hill, but we held our horses until we reached the bottom. Then I let Ferdie have his head and it felt fantastic to be running with so many other horses. I pulled him up easily and then I knew he would be OK: I knew that hunting wasn't going to make him 'lose his mind'.

The day continued with a mixture of woodland and open fields, moving on with intent and standing waiting. There were a couple of small fences but Heather Munn was always there to lead the non-jumpers around. There were certainly no obligatory five footers! Throughout the day I was warmly welcomed. In fact, there was real care taken by the officials to get to know me during the season, and I have found the hunting field a friendly, sociable place. It strikes me that there is a harmonious mixture of traditional and modern in the 21st century hunting field: while the customs preserve this sport (superficially at least) as the epitome of rural Englishness, it feels anything but old fashioned. It is relaxed, welcoming and brings together people of a wide variety of backgrounds and ages.

I hunted six more days that season. The opportunity hunting offers to ride on private land is unparalleled, with longer canters and gallops and better views than most bridledways. I was one of the last in the field that first day at Chenies, I didn't want it to end. 'Goodnight,' we chorused as we left, a charming if inaccurate custom of saying goodbye! I was on such a high as I hacked home and indeed for the rest of the day. The combination of the initial nerves giving way to euphoria rendered me exhausted that evening. And I know that Ferdie thoroughly enjoyed his day but in contrast to me I'm not sure he slept at all that night, he stood with his head held high over his door, alert, staring intently to the horizon, just in case the hunt was still out there and he could go and rejoin it.

Eleanor Ayres

Ashley Wilde

GROUP



Janet Reger

A beautiful private lounge room floor with marble mosaic background and elegant english style furniture to give a sophisticated and timeless appeal. The bed took in 22% polyester and 68% cotton with a soft touch for maximum luxury. The inclusion comprises of dark, yellowed, cotton, quilted bedspread and a pair of fully lined curtains with tie backs.

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A GUIDE TO WOUNDS

Sally Wise MA Vet MB MRCVS from Baskerville, Horgan and Partners explains which wounds need immediate veterinary attention and which may be dealt with on the yard.

Much of my work involves treating wounds and advising on their management. Horses and ponies are notorious for injuring themselves and any owner should be prepared to deal with a wound on their animal: immediate treatment makes all the difference to quick healing. It is also vital that owners can differentiate between wounds that require veterinary attention and those that will resolve without such intervention.

Initial Management

If the wound is bleeding profusely it is important to stem the blood flow (Fig. 1). This can be achieved by applying pressure directly to the wound. Ideally, use something clean against the cut and bandage tightly over it.

Providing the horse can move relatively comfortably, it should be taken back to the yard or into a clean, dry area with good lighting. The wound can then be cleaned thoroughly, either by cold hosing for 10-15 minutes or by using cotton wool and saltwater or a very dilute (1 in 50) antiseptic solution such as hibiscrub.

Many wounds go unnoticed but these can still allow entrance into the body of the Clostridium tetani bacteria that cause Tetanus. You should know whether the horse has been vaccinated, as otherwise, even the smallest of cuts will need a special visit by the vet to give an anti-toxin to prevent tetanus infection. It is



FIG. 2

FIG. 1

very important that all horses and ponies are vaccinated against tetanus.

Wound Assessment

The type of treatment necessary and whether the vet needs to be called depend on the type of wound and what structures are involved. As an owner, you should be familiar with the emergency signs, such as how lame the horse is or where the wound lies.

Type of Wound

Wounds can roughly be classed as one of three types:

(1) **Abrasion** (graze). Characterised by loss of hair and the superficial layers of the skin.

(2) **Puncture**. Often quite small but may have penetrated much deeper than appears and have damaged underlying structures.

(3) **Laceration**. Full skin thickness exposing deeper tissues.

Grazes need not necessarily require veterinary attention (see below) whilst lacerations require immediate veterinary assessment. The seriousness of puncture wounds often relates to where it is on the horse's body. These are examples of a laceration:

A laceration to the palmar (back) forelimb: The tendons of the back of the leg, the superficial digital flexor tendon (SDFT) and deep digital flexor tendon (DDFT) are just under the skin. They run in their tendon sheath from one third of the way down the cannon to the middle of the pastern. Any wound in this area that goes through the skin risks causing a penetration to the sheath or damaging the tendons. Although such a wound doesn't look too bad, it should be checked by a vet because of its position. It may require stitching for it to heal fastest.

A 'degloving' injury (Fig. 3): A laceration to the forelimb encircling the limb. Often

from getting in caught in wire. This wound requires stitching and prolonged immobilisation. As the blood supply to the lower part of the wound is very limited it may not heal completely following stitching. If this is the case, the leg will have to remain bandaged whilst the wound heals by the second intention process.

Location of the Wound

Any wounds that penetrate the skin in the region of joints and tendon sheaths are potential emergencies. Wounds are doorways for infection into the body. If a synovial structure, i.e. joint capsule or tendon sheath, is penetrated and infection sets in, the horse will rapidly become very lame and often never return sound. To prevent this, the area has to be flushed clean, usually under a general anaesthetic, and the horse given specific antibiotics. Wounds into the chest or abdomen are also emergencies and the vet should be called immediately.

Lameness

How lame the horse is gives an indication as to how much damage has been done. If a horse is very lame it may suggest that bones, tendons, ligaments or synovial structures are involved and that other veterinary treatment is necessary.

Cause

How the wound occurred is also important as it may point to other problems. For



FIG. 3

FIG. 4



example, if a horse was kicked there may be bruising or fractures that complicate the wound healing.

Managing Superficial Wounds

If it has been decided that the wound is simple enough and the horse sound enough not to require veterinary attention, treatment can be administered.

Thoroughly cleaning the wound reduces the chance of infection. Wounds on the lower limbs of horses should be covered to prevent further contamination and to prevent proud flesh forming. Application of a gel such as Intrasil gel™, Vetguard gel™ or Dermagel™ and a clean dressing such as Melolin™ secured with gamgee and a polo bandage is ideal. Over-tight bandaging not only inhibits wound healing but can cause sores and tendon problems. Wound powders and purple spray can dry out, irritate and slow healing of wounds and should generally be avoided.

Wound Management Prior to the Vet's Arrival

The wound should be thoroughly cleaned. This is often best achieved by cold hosing for 10-15mins. If there is a delay before the vet arrives, covering wounds on lower limbs prevents further contamination and limits swelling that may preclude stitching. A clean dressing, dry poultice or even Clingfilm under a soft bandage should be applied. There should be plenty of clean water available for the vet to further wash the wound, plus adequate lighting.

Veterinary Treatment

Your vet will assess whether any other structures have been involved. If they suspect synovial involvement they may take a sample of joint or sheath fluid. They may want to X-ray or ultrasound scan the area if they are suspicious of fractures, bone chips or foreign material in the wound.

Your vet will decide how the wound should be managed. They will take all the factors above into account, along with the temperament of the animal, duration since injury and economical issues.

Lacerations are best treated by stitching or stapling (Figs. 2 & 4). If too much tissue has been lost, the wound is too swollen, stretched too tightly over a joint or is too old, then treatment to allow the

wound to heal by a process called 'second intention' will be started. Healing occurs this way by a clot forming in the wound that is then replaced by fleshy granulation tissue. Epithelialisation is the process during which skin forms over this bed of tissue. Bandaging and immobilisation of even a stitched wound is important to prevent excessive movement pulling the edges apart, to reduce pain and inflammation and to prevent further contamination.

Common Misconceptions of Wound Healing

1. A wound should have air to it.

No. All wounds repair better when covered, although this isn't always possible on the horse. Despite common opinion that the wound should be 'aired' and left to 'dry out', dessication of the wound inhibits the epithelialisation or skin-forming process. In addition, wounds on the lower limbs of horses have the tendency to produce excessive granulation tissue or proud flesh. This can prevent healing as the skin cannot form over the proud tissue. This is much more likely to happen if the wound is left uncovered.

2. Poulticing wounds is useful.

No. Wounds can be cleaned sufficiently through flushing with clean water and

application of a gel as described above. Poulticing the wound causes maceration of the skin often with subsequent dermatitis. It provides an inappropriate environment for adequate wound healing.

3. Wound powder/purple spray should be used on open wounds.

No. Both of these products dry the wound out hindering epithelialisation. The main component of purple spray, gentian violet, has even been shown to cause cancers following use in open wounds. Any antibiotic and antiseptic creams used in the initial stages of wound healing have the potential to irritate the wound and slow the healing process.

The main point to remember is that there can be often more problems than the visible cut. In all wounds, the most likely complication of healing is infection and prompt cleaning and protection from further contamination is vital. If you are in doubt you should always call your vet.

Baskerville Horgan & Partners will be providing further articles in forthcoming issues. If there are any specific areas that you would like us to cover, then please drop us a line 47-49 Cambridge Street, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP20 1RP, for the attention of the Practice Manager.

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Why not try Hunting... in Saudi Arabia?

A dispatch from our Middle East correspondent, Oliver Cornock

Having been in search of the sand grouse in Iraq a few years ago, I found myself further south down the Arabian peninsula in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. More precisely I was in Riyadh, the capital of this relatively young state, in the central Najd region.

Saudi has grown at an enormous pace in every sense – in terms of its economy it's the largest oil exporter in the world. Given the recent price per barrel it has some very deep pockets. At the same time its population has grown dramatically and within a century the area has altered beyond recognition. Huge social and economic change has undeniably altered traditional patterns of life, but as in all rapidly changing countries, culture and heritage are firmly held onto, a source of comfort and pride.

The majority of the Saudi population trace their ancestry back to the great tribal clans of the peninsular and vast sand-scape of the Rub' Al-Khali – the Empty Quarter. Areas forever solidified in the western mind by the great British 19th- and 20th-century adventurers Wilfred Thesiger, Freya Stark and Gertrude Bell, to name but three. An integral part of desert existence has inevitably been subsistence-hunting. Today, as shopping malls and supermarkets spring up on the outskirts of Saudi's cities and are an increasing focus of leisure time, it is easy to see the enormity of cultural shift that has taken place. I wonder how Thesiger would now view the 'avaricious, petulant and wonderful' people he wrote about in such stilted colonial terms...

Traditions do carry on in some form or another, however, and hunting is no



ABOVE: The saluki is a symbol of wealth and prosperity

exception. So much of what many term the great Arab hospitality is derived from desert dwelling – the need to welcome the weary traveller even if he was an enemy is a very practical premise, based firmly on a 'There by the grace of God' basis! The desert is no comfort zone and has taken many lives. This legacy manifests itself in what, to the western eye, is very lavish entertaining, strict etiquette and strong principals.

As in many cultures hunting is seen as a manly endeavour – the Kings are often photographed with falcons as a symbol of their noble heritage. They are also an extremely prestigious gift for honoured visitors. Lady Cowper-Coles the outgoing



ABOVE: A hunting display at the Janandiryah cultural festival, Riyadh

British Ambassadors wife has been the recipient of two such gifts. Indeed many a 4x4 cruises around Riyadh with a large sticker of King Abdullah with an impressive bird perched on his arm.

Hunting is central to desert culture. Many still have salukis, the elegant Bedouin gazelle hounds. Traditionally a gift and never bought, these are symbols of wealth and prosperity. I have been fortunate to visit Saudis' Istirah, or rest gardens, where they often keep their hunting dogs. In Islam dogs are considered unclean but the saluki is, to a degree, an exception. In a bizarre mix of ancient and modern, today's coursing is a bit different from what went on in the past: wealthier Saudis have great desert camps set up from where they go out in 4x4s specially converted to enable good viewing to hunt their birds and hounds. Some are even reputed to have elevating seats that enable them to get an even better view!

The other tradition is that of the rifle, or bunduqiyya. Both a weapon to settle the innumerable feuds of the last centuries and in certain Arab lands still employed to that end, it is also a hunting tool. These beautifully engraved Enfields (left) and other less well-made local versions can often be seen proudly displayed by their owners. However, shooting is not seen as being as pure as hunting with birds.

For all the negative images in the press and the inescapable problems of the Arab world, the descendants of the indomitable Bedouin proudly carry on their traditions in new and varied forms more suitable to the times they live in, just like, I suppose, the English foxhunter.

EATING AT... THE CROOKED BILLET

Noted food reviewer Chris Barber goes in search of a decent post-hunting meal: first stop, Paul Clerehugh's famous pub in Stoke Row



Rarely can a local pub have attracted more media attention than The Crooked Billet. Of course, they famously hosted one of Kate Winslett's weddings, and have won many awards. When you go there, though, you could be forgiven for wondering what it's all about, and how it has become so successful – it is so simple. But that's the key: simple – not flash or expensive, no snooty staff, just a warm welcome and good honest food.

Well, that doesn't sound too difficult to replicate, and indeed Chef Proprietor Paul Clerehugh also manages to run the superb London Street Brasserie in Reading – but us old hands in the pub/restaurant game can assure you that the Clerehugh winning formula is very difficult to come by.

I met up with Paul at The Crooked Billet, right in the heart of hunt country and very much my local, to prise from him some of the secrets of his very evident success.

I asked whether he saw any similarities between running a pub in a local community and being a hunt supporter.

'Many, yes indeed, the local pub or restaurant needs the support of the community to survive, as does the hunt,' he said.

'Country life in general needs to be appreciated – whether you hunt, shoot, fish or

just enjoy a walk in the country viewing the change in seasons. And a village pub must embrace the countryside and its community, source local and wild ingredients and use the skills of local people wherever possible to gain that community's respect.'

What does Paul think is the best way of describing how his cooking reflects his life in the country?

'I have a great respect for the country, and it is the source of the food I love – golden butter, full fat milk, beautiful meat and bread that is traditionally baked (not steamed as is now commonplace) – good, nutritious food from British farms. It is vital to make the connection between life, death and the kitchen, and how we acquire food. This is something children should be taught.'

He is right that many people think no further than the plastic wrapper their jointed and boned meat comes in. Its connection with the live animal it once was has been severed in their consciousness.

I asked what a top chef like Paul would cook for hunters if they came to The Crooked Billet for a reviving meal after a day's hunting. His reply had my mouth watering:

'Well, I would be following the hunt, too, so it would need to be something that cooks

slowly, such as a shoulder of mutton. This is a great hearty cut of meat and I would braise it on a bed of onions, garlic and potatoes in a very low oven (140°C) with a splash of white wine and stock. An Aga is perfect for this, and it can cook for three, four or more hours – just put it in the oven before you go out and it simply doesn't matter how long it cooks for: you can be as late as you like or even go to the pub for a drink on the way home!

'When you get back home, take out the lamb and turn the oven up to crisp the potatoes as you decant the port. Serve it with some mashed swede and curly kale, and that's it – even better is the news that it's practically a one pot dish, so there's hardly any washing up.'

For a taste of the real countryside, I can strongly recommend a trip to The Crooked Billet, and with Paul at the helm you can guarantee that the ingredients and cooking are of the highest order.

The Crooked Billet, Newlands Lane, Stoke Row, Oxon, RG9 5PU. Tel: 01491 681048, Fax: 01491 682231 Website: www.thecrookedbillet.co.uk



Chris Barber is a cook and food writer dedicated to the life and cuisine of the country. Having spent eleven years as personal chef to HRH The Prince of Wales, he knows a fair bit about organic farming, and was heavily involved in the development of Duchy Originals, as well as implementing The Prince's vision of living off the land. Chris moved to Oxfordshire in 1998 and has since owned, cooked in and been involved with a number of country pubs and inns, including The Goose at Britwell Salome, The Lord Nelson in Brightwell Baldwin and The White Hart, Nettlebed. Chris is now a partner in The Castle at Hurst, Berkshire.

Chris contributes regularly to the local and national press with recipes and rural affairs feature writing, most notably with a stint as food writer for Country Life, but also with freelance contributions to The Sunday Times, Olive magazine, and The Observer Food Monthly. He has a regular column in The Reading Post Food Monthly, and now runs his own consultancy, Leith's Food Solutions. Chris is also a founder and director of The Henley Food Festival.

Pony Club Focus

THE SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE (SOUTH) HUNT PONY CLUB

Jo Roadknight profiles the club

The SOH(S) branch nestles in the heart of the southern Chiltern hills and the valley beyond the spectacular ridge towards Oxford, and draws its members from Marlow to Lacy Green along to Marsh, Sydenham and Wallingford. Our club was established in 1930 and now has 127 members, most of whom have their own ponies although some of the clever mums manage to share ponies and rallies! Our youngest members are four years old and we have ten members over 18 and three over 21! About a third of our members are over 15.

School holidays and half terms are packed with events and training for all abilities, from very tiny members and their mostly tolerant tiny ponies and very fit Mums cajoling them on leading reins over small fences, to regular training with Captain Richard Waygood, Gill Watson and Ernest Dillon for the older members. We also have regular rallies and year-round evening training sessions for dressage and show jumping. Friday night is shooting practice for Tetrathlon and we have occasional swimming training, too.

We even have polo taster days at Easter and have the highest proportion of regular pony racers on the circuit of the local point-to-point race days (all four Quesnel girls race as do Gaby and Joe Hill; Claudi Smethurst has

moved onto to a horse that is too tall now but she was a regular at the back of the pack). We also have our own race day in September (9th September, everyone is welcome) and some practice sessions with Alan and Lawney Hill on their farm at Aston Rowant.

Most of our training takes place between Lane End and Fawley with our senior camp held each year at BCA in Burchett's Green and our non-residential junior and mini camps at Fawley as guests of our last DC, Anne Smith. Over 90 per cent of our members attend a camp. We also have regular evenings at members' houses to take our badges and to do some preparation for our PC tests.

To manage all these events, we have the most fantastic team of willing Mums and Dads with the most amazing muscles (for building things), patience and stamina – thank you all so very, very much.

We also host quite a few competitions of our own – the Hambleden Horse Trials in May, our summer show at Tetsworth in June, Hunter Trials in September (this year they are on 30 September at Rose Hill, near Henley-on-Thames) and Indoor Show Jumping at BCA to which everyone is welcomed. We also send teams to the wider PC events and recently came first at Newbury showground competing against other PC teams over show jumping. Not only that, we have three members, Lucy Quesnel, Rachel Kelleher and Camilla Bingham, who have qualified for the Winter Dengie Series National Finals – well done team!

We also get groups together to visit HOYS and Olympia and to other talks and displays.

SOH(S) has extremely strong links to our Hunt as our DC, Helen Jackson is also a master of the VAGSBH and we have a very keen 'brat pack' of our own ('cub hunters' might be a better term!). On Saturdays in our country we can have up to twenty members aged six to 17 out at once. Jane Adderly, our chief instructor is also out hunting most days and is always willing to offer help and advice to members so that they get the best out of their hunting days.

It is not hard to spot an SOH(S) member – our PC shirts are the brightest pink and worn with pride all over the country at events and shows. Watch out, too, for the 2012 Olympics – we might even have an ex-member on the winning rostrum!

BELOW, L-R: Alex Jackson at the Headington & Cotswold Eventer Challenge, Chloe and Emma Jackson and Tommy and Lucy Quesnel – winning show jumping team at the Craven Hunt PC competition, Jess Waddington competing her mother's ex-racehorse at a hunter trials at Rosehill EC.

Photos courtesy of Adrian O'Shaughnessy



To join the South Oxfordshire (South) Hunt Pony Club, call Helen Jackson on 01494 881321

PONY RACING

Claudia Smethurst has the makings of a jockey

Poppy was my Christmas present last Christmas and for her Easter present I took her Pony Racing at Kimble point-to-point. (I had to 'qualify' Poppy for racing by taking her hunting three times). It was my first time and I was so nervous, especially when we had all been called to mount our ponies in the ring and then had to try and walk in a controlled way to the start behind the huntsman. Some of the ponies were really naughty and so Poppy thought she would canter to the start as well – if that had been the race, we would have won easily!

Once we started the real race, it was really exhilarating. I finished eighth out of ten but was still really happy. I have been pony racing three times since then and I still get really nervous and so does my Mum. At my last race at Kingston Blount point-to-point I came last as I was expecting to, but I still had such fun.

Part of the fun (apart from galloping really fast without grown-ups shouting at us to go slower or be more careful) is dressing up in our racing colours like real jockeys. Last year, I wanted the same colours as the jockey who won the Grand National so Mum made them for me using the linings of two cheap skirts from Asda. We have a kit inspection before the race when Jane Adderly checks we have surcingles, safety stirrups, medical armbands, hats and body armour as well as a neck strap (which Mum forgot once and we had to borrow a stirrup leather). I feel very impor-



tant being taken down to the start by the huntsman and it is very funny that the Starter calls you by number and not by name and you have to say, 'Yes, Sir,' like a real jockey. Pony racing is just brilliant fun and I will really miss it as we have now sold Poppy and my new horse is 15hh and too big to race, but I certainly want to ride in a point-to-point when I am older.

Thank you to Jon Quesnel and everybody else who has organised the Pony Racing for all of us. (You do not have to go hunting to qualify now but can attend three pony club rallies if you want to instead, says Mum.)

HORSE TRIALS AT ROSEHILL

Lucy Ogston reports strong results for the Woodland Hunt PC

The Woodland Hunt PC held a successful Horse Trials at Rosehill, Henley-on-Thames, on Sunday 17th June, with 102 competitors taking part in a range of classes. The event was blessed with fine weather and near perfect going as well as grateful organisers! It was an open show, with members from the Woodland Hunt, South Berks, Herts, Vale of Aylesbury, and South Oxfordshire Hunt Central PCs all entering teams. Competitors ranged from eight years old to adult, creating an exciting day of competition in all three disciplines. The show jumping phase caused some fun in Classes 5 & 6 with a number of competitors experiencing trouble at the first fence... was this down to the young rabbit that kept popping out of the bushes to watch?!

The WHPC would like to thank all its sponsors, judges, helpers and, of course, competitors for making it such an enjoyable day. Thanks must also go to Mr & Mrs Walter Gilbey and Richard Stacey for the use and preparation of the excellent facilities at Rosehill. The WHPC had many successes, with members placed in each class (full results are available elsewhere):

Class 1: Suzannah Bodie WHPC (1st); Best Dressage, Suzannah Bodie WHPC; Best Team WHPC

Class 2: Lucy Johnson WHPC (1st); Best Dressage, Sophie Shields

Class 3: Anna O'Donald WHPC (1st); Best Dressage, Anna O'Donald WHPC; Best Team WHPC

Class 4: Axie Finch (1st); Best Dressage, Suzanne Kalderen Anderson; Best Team The Hay Team

Class 5: Alyssa Yallop (1st); Best Dressage, Georgie Bird WHPC; Best Team SBPC

Class 6: Jo O'Mahoney (1st); Best Dressage, Jamie Knapp WHPC; Best Team Herts Hunt PC

Pony Racing dates:

Practice: **Tuesday evenings started in July – all SOH(S) pony club members welcome. Contact Helen Jackson on 01494 881321.**

The real thing: **Woodway Farm, Aston Rowant, Sunday 9th September.**

First Race 1.00pm. There are six races: three for 13.2hh and under, three for 14.2hh and under.

More details are available from Jon Quesnel on 01491 576338



AT THE HUNT KENNELS, KIMBLE

Meet the real stars of the day: the hunt horses who do such an important job day in, day out with (usually) good grace. Lesley Sunderland talks to Kate Robertson



When I arrived at the Hunt stables, I was greeted by Kate and her loyal friend Brian. Both smiling and one sniffing, but with five dogs you soon get used to that.

This will be Kate's nineteenth season with the Vale of Aylesbury with Garth and South Berks Hunt and her long experience of the job shows in the immaculate stables. Kate is assisted by Sue Betts, new this season, and both are full-time, while Abi helps them part-time. Elaine Almack, who worked with Kate for eight seasons, left recently to work for the Bicester with Whaddon Chase Hunt.

I visited at a relatively quiet time for Kate as the horses are turned out for a holiday mid-April and only come back to the stables on 1st July. Most stay with hunt supporters for a few weeks and this eases the strain on the kennels' paddocks.

However, don't imagine that Kate spends all summer sitting with her feet up – far from it! Her summer jobs include creosoting, painting, mowing the grass, general tidying and tack maintenance. She also gets saddles fitted and rugs washed and mended so that everything is spick and span when the horses return. So, to those all-important horses:

Autumn was back early from his break with Guy and Polly Portwin, a little overweight and only six years old. 'Naughty Auti', as he is affectionately known, is a 16.2hh chestnut gelding, an impressive, sweet horse. He arrived last October and will be ridden by Gerald Sumner, the huntsman.

Corky is a nine-year-old bay gelding who has been at the stables for one and a half seasons. He is a good hunter and was ridden by Josh Bentley, the whipper-in, last season.



He has a reputation for being aggressive over food, which is strictly respected. He is 16.1hh and a three-quarter-bred horse.

Julie is a black Shire-cross mare. She has the traditional white blaze and a wonderful temperament. She is 16.2hh and twelve years old. She is Gerald's ride, but Philip Hague hunted hounds with her, too. Apparently a budding film star, she was one of the horses in *Bridget Jones: Edge of Reason*. Julie was bred by Rachel Matheson, who has supplied many horses to the Hunt over the years. This will be Julie's fifth season with the Vale.

Indigo (Indie) is also in her fifth season, also a film star, and also came from Rachel. 16.1hh, she excels at hunting hounds and whipping-in. She has been described as a 'hunting machine': strong and goes better in front. You can visualise her across country the way Kate tells it. It sounds like Josh has a challenging ride! At sixteen, she has passed her MOT for the coming season. Both Julie and Indie are spending their summer holidays at the Nixey's farm at Cuxham.

Monty is a chestnut thoroughbred, an ex-event/racehorse on loan from Barbara Callow. At 16.3hh and fourteen years old, he has had two-and-a-half seasons at Kimble. He is Josh's ride and apparently lives up to his colour! Monty is staying with Kate Waddington for the summer.

Diamond is seven, a 16.3hh dark bay gelding who arrived in February from The Old Berkley Hunt. A little rumour of bad behaviour came with him, but they hope he will be a good ride for Gerald. Both Diamond and Corky have been at Mrs Bennett's at Winchmore Hill for the summer break.



Five horses retired at the end of last season: Storm, the giant, has gone to relax with a friend of Kate's. Beanie is hopefully in foal to one Albany who stands at the Pferde Stud. This will be an exciting event for next year. Sunny has also gone to be a broodmare and Murphy has been accepted at the blood bank. Alfie has been retired to stay at the kennels with Jorrocks who is already happily retired.

Kate insists that retired horses are found appropriate homes to wind down from their service with the Hunt and the fact they only have well-bred horses give the mares a dual purpose. Generally they retire between thirteen and sixteen years old but each horse is treated individually. Unsurprisingly, arthritis seems to be the biggest problem affecting Hunt horses; their job is not easy and they have to be tough, though they get five-star treatment to keep them going. For example, I was amazed when Kate told me that their farrier, Gordon Rotherham, flies over from Ireland every week to look after the horses' feet – and equally amazed that there was only one shoe thrown last season! He must be quite a guy. And I was intrigued to learn that all the horses are snaffle-mouthed – an ideal close to my heart. Corky does need a grackle noseband, but there's always one!

Another four horses are needed for the coming season, bringing the working total to ten. Kate gave me a fascinating insight into how the Hunt horses are managed. I was most impressed with the professional attitude to their health and comfort. Well done to Kate and her colleagues and good hunting for everyone – horses and people – next season.

IN THE OLD DAYS...

A taste of the Hertfordshire Hunt's glory days, courtesy of the Herts Hunt Club

The Hertfordshire packs of harriers were carefully bred, from the old southern hound, and quite different from the foxhound. Most of the packs were maintained for short periods as private packs for the pleasure of their farming owners. They were used to hunt hare and occasionally deer. Squire Wortham's Harriers hunted the Royston district. Old Matt the huntsman was famous for his holloa, heard from Therfield to Royston, and Sir Peter Soame of Heydon for his breeches, kept damp all night, and pulled on by sliding down the banisters.

Prior to 1750, foxhunting in Herts was by trencher hounds, meeting at dawn, run by farmers and local landowners. In 1725 John Calvert was first Master, with kennels at Cheshunt and Redbourn – this was one

of the very first packs kept solely for hunting the fox. In 1793 Lady Salisbury became Master of the Hertfordshire Hounds, known then as the Hatfield Hounds. She was a daring rider and sportswoman and one of the first Englishwomen to gain renown in the field. She drove to meets in a carriage drawn by four black horses with an outrider. The meet was often at Bramingham. In October 1794 it was reported 'at Hatfield ... Reynard contrived, after a run of some length, to evade the hounds; and at length, instead of the fox, it was discovered they had for nearly twenty minutes been running a shepherd's dog...'

In January 1796 the Hatfield Hounds 'having run a burst of more than an hour, they crossed upon a fresh fox at Bramfield, and clattered him two and

a half hours more to earth at Baldock. The two chases... were full forty miles in extent.' Lady Salisbury gave up at 78, but still hunted with the harriers. The huntsmen were Tyler, Hooper and Wilkinson, who wore scarlet, but the Hunt uniform was sky blue with black collar and cuffs, and silver buttons with the initials 'HH'. One regular visitor to Hatfield 'to enjoy the pleasures of the chase' was the Duke of Wellington. On one occasion in 1819 a shepherd, under his employer's instructions, fastened up the farm gates, refusing to open up for the Duke. He told his master he had stopped the soldier that Napoleon could not. In 1828 Lady Salisbury gave up the hounds to the Herts Hunts Club, and they were renamed the Hertfordshire Hounds.

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As well as large-scale estate work, A&M Contracting can tackle most outdoor tasks, small as well as large, from jump building at Shire Lane to domestic patios and ponds (director Andy Nash even tells us that on occasions when the weather has prevented outdoor work, they've turned their hands to kitchen building and decorating too!).

Andy's also asked us to say that in the unlikely event you have a job to be done outside which *doesn't* feature on their list, please do give him a call – much of their work comes from repeat business, and you really can't ask for a higher recommendation than that.

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GOT NOTHING TO DO? WANT SOMETHING TO DO?

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August 2007

- 1 CHECKENDON EC:** Clear Round Show/Jumping
- 2 ADDINGTON EC:** Whaddon Chase Pony Club Area Show Jumping Championships
- 3-5 ADDINGTON EC:** National Side Saddle Champs
- 3-5 GATCOMBE PARK:** Gatcombe Festival of British Eventing
- 4 PATCHETTS EC:** Unaffiliated Dressage
- 4 WINDSOR RACECOURSE:** Racing Afternoon
- 4 CHECKENDON EC:** Clear Round Jumping
- 4 FULLERS HILL FARM:** Affiliated & Members Dressage
- 4 THE COLLEGE EC:** BD Eastern Regional
- 4 MILTON KEYNES EC:** Jo Burchell XC Training
- 4 MILTON KEYNES EC:** Jo Burchell Summer Evening Show Jump (training)
- 4 WENDOVER:** 'Shoulder of Mutton' IRHH fun day
- 5 PATCHETTS EC:** Affiliated Dressage
- 5 THE COLLEGE EC:** BD Eastern Regional
- 5 CHECKENDON EC:** Clear Round Show Jumping
- 5 MILTON KEYNES EC:** Family Show, mixed events
- 6-7 WINDSOR GREAT PARK:** Smiths Lawn Horse Trials. Tel: 01298 84986
- 7 MILTON KEYNES EC:** Novice Evening SJ
- 8 THE COLLEGE EC:** BSJA Senior PA
- 10 PATCHETTS EC:** Annette Lewis SJ Clinic
- 11-12 ADDINGTON EC:** British Dressage Midlands Summer Regional Championships
- 11 PATCHETTS EC:** Unaffiliated SJ
- 11 FULLERS HILL FARM:** Open Unaffiliated SJ
- 11 THE COLLEGE EC:** BSJA Senior Amateur SJ
- 11 GROVE FARM:** Dressage Clinic
- 11 WOKINGHAM EC:** Cross Country Clinic
- 12 PATCHETTS EC:** Affiliated SJ
- 12 WOKINGHAM EC:** Dressage
- 12 THE COLLEGE EC:** Unaffiliated SJ
- 14 ADDINGTON EC:** BSJA Senior SJ
- 14 PATCHETTS EC:** Stuart Reeve-Young Jumping Clinic
- 15 Patchetts EC:** Affiliated Show Jumping
- 16 HEYTHROP PC:** Open One Day Event
- 17-18 ADDINGTON EC:** Brightwells Auction
- 18-19 SNOWBALL FARM:** British Eventing One Day Event
- 18 PATCHETTS EC:** Unaffiliated SJ
- 18 SNOWBALL FARM:** British Eventing One Day Event
- 18 THE COLLEGE EC:** Unaffiliated Dressage
- 18 WINDSOR GREAT PARK:** Endurance Ride
- 19 PATCHETTS EC:** Affiliated Show Jumping
- 19 HILL GREEN FARM:** Wing Dressage Open Unaffiliated Dressage Championship Qualifier
- 19 WOKINGHAM EC:** Show Jumping & Clear Round
- 19 SNOWBALL FARM:** British Eventing One Day Event
- 19 MILTON KEYNES EC:** Horse Camp
- 19 WINDSOR PARK EC:** SJ and Dressage, Windsor Park
- 19 WIDMER EC:** High Wycombe RC Junior Open Show

- 20 SNOWBALL FARM:** Cross Country Schooling
- 21-22 ADDINGTON EC:** BSJA Senior SJ. Inc HOYS 6- and 7-year-old qualifiers
- 21 PATCHETTS EC:** BSJA Junior Training
- 21 MILTON KEYNES EC:** Open Evening SJ
- 22 PATCHETTS EC:** Annette Lewis SJ Clinic
- 23 PATCHETTS EC:** Stuart Reeve-Young Jumping Clinic
- 23-26 ADDINGTON EC:** CSI-BV Addington and Finals of European and Challenge Cup (International Veterans' Show Jumping)
- 25 PATCHETTS EC:** Showing, Shires Chiltern & Thames Rider
- 26 PATCHETTS EC:** Affiliated Dressage
- 26 SHIRE LANE:** OBH Riding Club One Day Event (London & SE Horse Trials Qualifier)
- 26 MILTON KEYNES EC:** British Eventing One Day Event
- 26 PRIMROSE HILL FARM:** Whaddon Chase Pony Club Open One Day Event
- 26 WINDSOR GREAT PARK:** Berkshire BDS Carriage Driving. Tel: 01379 586686
- 26-27 WHITEHOUSE FARM:** Swallowfield two-day Show
- 27 PATCHETTS EC:** Affiliated Dressage
- 27 HALL PLACE EC:** Annual Show
- 27 GREAT WESTWOOD PARK:** Home Counties Welsh Pony & Cob Society Show
- 27 BEACONSFIELD:** 11-4p.m Country Show, IRHH
- 28 MOUNTED PONY CLUB HOUND EXERCISE:** 2pm. Merriebank, Bank Green, Bellingdon HP5 2UT
- 29 BERKSHIRE COLLEGE:** Garth Hunt Pony Club SJ
- 30 WEEDON PARK, AYLESBURY:** Bucks County Show
- 30 ADDINGTON EC:** Affiliated Dressage
- 30-2 SEPT BURGHLEY:** Burghley Horse Trials

September 2007

- 1 MILTON KEYNES EC:** Three Shires Show
- 1 CHALFONT ST GILES:** Country Show
- 1 PATCHETTS EC:** Unaffiliated Showjumping
- 1-2 ADDINGTON EC:** Affiliated Amateur Dressage Championships
- 1 WINDSOR PARK EC:** Driving, Windsor Great Park
- 2 WINDSOR PARK EC:** Show Jumping and Dressage, Windsor Great Park
- 2 CHESHAM VALE XC:** Open Cross Country Fun Jump. Tel: Sue Bloss on 01494 776151
- 2 MILTON KEYNES EC:** Buckingham Riding Club Unaffiliated ODE
- 2 NEWLANDS PARK:** Chalfont Heights Open Show. Tel: Rebecca Walker 07739 514570
- 2 DEEP MILL:** GMRC Open Unaffiliated Dressage
- 2 BISHAM, MARLOW:** OBH South Pony Club Open Show. Tel: Sue Cownley
- 3 SNOWBALL FARM:** Affiliated Senior SJ
- 4 PATCHETTS EC:** Stuart Reeve-Young Jumping Clinic
- 4-5 ADDINGTON EC:** National Hunter Show
- 5 PATCHETTS EC:** Affilated SJ

- 5 CHECKENDON EC:** Clear Round SJ
- 6-9 BLENHEIM:** International Horse Trials
- 7-8 ADDINGTON EC:** Show Hack, Cob & Riding Horse Championship
- 7 MENTMORE:** EIR Insurance Golf Day raising funds for IRHH
- 8 PATCHETTS EC:** Unaffiliated Dressage
- 8 FULLERS HILL FARM:** Affiliated Dressage
- 8 GROVE FARM:** SJ Schooling
- 8 NINE ACRES:** OBH Riding Club members Trecette
- 8 CHECKENDON EC:** Clear Round SJ
- 9 SHIRE LANE, CHOLESBURY:** OBHC Open Hunter Trials. Tel: Frances Aidley 01442 891622
- 9 WOODWAY FARM, ASTON ROWANT:** SOHS Pony Club Pony Racing. Tel: Jon Quesnel 01491 576338
- 9 MILTON KEYNES EC:** Summer Unaffiliated Show Jumping
- 9 WOKINGHAM EC:** Dressage Championships
- 9 CHECKENDON EC:** Clear Round SJ
- 9 PATCHETTS EC:** Affiliated Dressage
- 9 HALL PLACE EC:** Cross Country
- 10 PATCHETTS EC:** Affiliated Dressage
- 12 ADDINGTON EC:** Cherif Championships
- 12 PATCHETTS EC:** Affiliated Show Jumping
- 13 ADDINGTON EC:** Affiliated Dressage
- 14-16 WINDSOR GREAT PARK:** National Carriage Championships
- 15-16 NEWBURY SHOWGROUND:** Royal County of Berkshire Show
- 15 PATCHETTS EC:** Affiliated Show Jumping
- 15 DUNDRIDGE MANOR:** Rotary Club of Chesham Sponsored Ride
- 15 SNOWBALL FARM:** Hunter Trials
- 15 FULLERS HILL:** Open Unaffiliated SJ
- 16 PATCHETTS EC:** Unaffiliated SJ – Chiltern & Thames Rider Championships
- 16 WOKINGHAM EC:** One Day Event
- 16 SNOWBALL FARM:** Cross Country Schooling
- 16 WINDSOR GREAT PARK:** Polo Season concludes
- 16 ROSEHILL EC:** High Wycombe RC Open Hunter Trials
- 16 KNIGHTON DOWN:** Bourne Valley Riding Club Hunter Trials. Tel: Lindsay Hills 01264 772388
- 16 TWIN TREES EC:** Eventer Trials
- 17 HIGH WYCOMBE RC:** AGM. Tel: 01494 882041
- 18 PATCHETTS EC:** Annette Lewis SJ Clinic
- 19 PATCHETTS EC:** Stuart Reeve-Young Jumping Clinic
- 20-23 MILTON KEYNES EC:** Equine Affairs Unaffiliated Three Day Event
- 22 THE WENDOVER BALL:** IRHH. Tel: 01442 890222
- 22 ADDINGTON EC:** Unaffiliated Dressage and Combined Training
- 22 PATCHETTS EC:** Unaffiliated Dressage
- 22 DEEP MILL:** GMRC Cross Country training (members)
- 22 WOKINGHAM EC:** Cross Country Clinic
- 22 GREAT WESTWOOD PARK:** Lions Club Sponsored Ride. Tel: 01923 237834

- 23 HYDE PARK, LONDON:** Horseman's Sunday, 40th Anniversary, 12noon. Horses in Radnnor Place from 11.30am. Tel: Ross Nye 01483 535910
- 23 PATCHETTS EC:** Affiliated Dressage
- 23 HILL GREEN FARM:** Wing Dressage Open Unaffiliated Dressage Championship Show
- 23 GROVE FARM:** South Bucks RC Open Show/Dressage
- 23 HALL PLACE EC:** Open Show with Dressage
- 23 DEEP MILL:** GMRC Open SJ
- 23 TRING:** IRHH Sponsored 26.5mile Sponsored Bike Ride. Tel:01442 890222
- 24 PATCHETTS EC:** Affiliated Dressage
- 24 SNOWBALL FARM:** Affiliated Dressage
- 26 ADDINGTON EC:** Indoor Working Hunter Evening – HOYS Warm Up
- 27 ADDINGTON EC:** Affiliated Dressage
- 29 PATCHETTS EC:** Affiliated Dressage – Pet Plan Area Festival
- 29 WOKINGHAM EC:** Dressage & SJ Clinic
- 29 GROVE FARM:** Cross Country Training
- 29 WINDSOR GREAT PARK:** Running4Women Windsor, 8k Race
- 30 ROSEHILL EC:** SOHS Pony Club Open Hunter Trials. Tel: Mrs L. Hulse 01844 353839
- 30 PATCHETTS EC:** Affiliated Dressage – Pet Plan Equine Area Festival
- 30 WINDSOR GREAT PARK:** 26th Half-Marathon

October 2007

- 3-7 NEC BIRMINGHAM:** Horse of the Year Show
- 7 HALL PLACE EC:** Mini Cross Country
- 7 WOKINGHAM EC:** Hunter Trials
- 7 WOOD END:** Flamstead Pony Club Hunter Trials
- 7 DEEP MILL:** VAH Pony Club Hunter Trials
- 12 HIGH WYCOMBE:** IRHH Big Quiz. Tel:01442 890222
- 13 SNOWBALL FARM:** Hunter Trials
- 14 DEEP MILL:** GMRC Open Cross Country Hunter Trials
- 14 SNOWBALL FARM:** Cross Country Schooling
- 15 HALL PLACE EC:** Afternoon/Evening Dressage
- 16 TYLERS GREEN VILLAGE HALL:** IRHH, Dorothy's Floral Delights. Tel 01442 890222
- 18-19 ADDINGTON EC:** BHS
- 18 WENDOVER HEIGHTS:** High Wycombe RC Winter Equine Problems explained for members and day members. Tel: 01844 273250
- 19 HADDENHAM VILLAGE HALL:** Vale of Aylesbury Hunt Supporters Club AGM and Inter Hunt Quiz. Tel: Ian Parkinson 01844 291276
- 20-21 ADDINGTON EC:** British Dressage Talent Spotting
- 20 WOKINGHAM EC:** Dressage & SJ Clinic
- 21 HALL PLACE EC:** Cross country Ride
- 21 GROVE FARM:** South Bucks Riding Club Hunter Trials
- 22 ADDINGTON EC:** British Show Horse
- 22 SNOWBALL FARM:** Affiliated Dressage
- 23 ADDINGTON EC:** Intelligent Horsemanship
- 23 HALL PLACE EC:** Show Jumping
- 25 ADDINGTON EC:** Dressage
- 25 PATCHETTS EC:** OBH Chilterns Indoor Open SJ
- 26 HALL PLACE EC:** Autumn Novince Show
- 27 ADDINGTON EC:** David Hunt Dressage Demo
- 28 ADDINGTON EC:** Pony UK
- 30 ADDINGTON EC:** Show Jumping
- 31 ADDINGTON EC:** Sport Horse

November 2007

- 3-4 ADDINGTON EC:** BSJA
- 4 SNOWBALL FARM:** Unaffiliated Indoor SJ
- 4-5 STONELEIGH:** Your Horse Live
www.yourhorselive.co.uk

- 7 OBH RC:** AGM. Tel: 01494 785279
- 8 ADDINGTON EC:** Affiliated Dressage
- 12 HALL PLACE EC:** Afternoon/Evening Dressage
- 12 GMRC:** AGM. el: 07736 611222
- 13 ADDINGTON EC:** Affiliated Dressage
- 15-16 ADDINGTON EC:** BSJA
- 16-20 ADDINGTON EC:** Brightwells Auction
- 18 SNOWBALL FARM:** Unaffiliated Indoor Dressage
- 24-25 ADDINGTON EC:** BD National Convention
- 25 BERKSHIRE COLLEGE:** High Wycombe RC Open Indoor Jumping Show
- 30 IRHH & WWFC DINNER DANCE:** Adams Park, High Wycombe. Tel:01442 890222

December 2007

- 1-2ADDINGTON EC:** Show Jumping
- 2 SNOWBALL FARM:** Unaffiliated Indoor SJ
- 3 BERKSHIRE COLLEGE:** BHS Equine Specific First Aid Course
- 6 ADDINGTON EC:** Dressage
- 7 HADDENHAM VILLAGE HALL:** Vale of Aylesbury Hunt Supporters Club – Ferret Racing. Tel: Ian Parkinson 01844 291276
- 10 HALL PLACE EC:** Afternoon/Evening Dressage
- 11 ADDINGTON EC:** Show Jumping
- 13 ADDINGTON EC:** Dressage
- 15-16 ADDINGTON EC:** Show Jumping
- 15 HEMEL HEMPSTEAD:** IRHH 24hr swim marathon. Tel: 01442 890222
- 16 HALL PLACE EC:** Christmas Party/Show Jumping
- 16 SNOWBALL FARM:** Unaffiliated Indoor Dressage
- 16 BERKSHIRE COLLEGE:** OBH South Christmas Open SJ
- 17-22 OLYMPIA, LONDON:** International Horse Show
www.olympiahorseshow.com
- 28 PATCHETTS EC:** Flamstead Pony Club Open Indoor SJ

Where is it?

- THE PONY CLUB:** Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 2RW. E-mail: enquiries@pcuk.org. Web: www.pcuk.org
- BERKSHIRE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE:** Burchetts Green, Maidenhead, Berks, SL6 6QR. Tel: 01628 824444. E-mail: enquiries@bca.ac.uk. Web: www.bca.ac.uk
- ROSEHILL EC:** Henley on Thames, Oxon, RG9 3EB. Tel: 01628 824078
- DEEP MILL FARM EC:** London road, Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire, HP16 0DH. Tel: 01494 890005. Web: www.deepmillfarm.co.uk.
- ADDINGTON MANOR EC LTD:** Addington, Buckingham, MK18 2JR. Tel: 01296 712402. Fax: 01296 717121. E-mail: info@addingtonmanor.co.uk. Web: www.addingtonmanor.co.uk
- MILTON KEYNES EVENTING CENTRE:** Castletorpe Road, Hanslope, Bucks, MK19 7HQ. Tel: 01908 511329. E-mail: admin@mkcec.co.uk. Web: www.miltonkeyneseventingcentre.com
- GREAT WESTWOOD EQUESTRIAN PARK:** Old House Lane, Langleybury, Kings Langley, Herts WD3 8RS
- SNOWBALL FARM EC:** Dorney Wood Road, Burnham, Bucks, SL1 8EH. Tel: 01628 666222. E-mail: shows@snowballfarm.co.uk. Web: www.snowballfarm.co.uk
- THE COLLEGE EC:** Church Road, Keysoe, Beds, MK44 2JP. Tel: 01234 708400. Web: www.thecollegeec.com
- PATCHETTS EC:** Patchetts Equestrian Centre, Hilfield Lane, Aldenham, Watford, Herts WD25 8PE. Tel: 01923 852255. Web: www.patchetts.co.uk
- GROVE FARM:** Welders Lane, Chalfont St Peter, Bucks, HP9 1XS. Tel: 01494 676392
- WARWICKSHIRE COLLEGE:** Warwick New Road, Leamington Spa, United Kingdom, CV32 5JE. Tel: 01926 318128. Web: www.warkscol.ac.uk

- FULLERS HILL FARM:** Amersham, Bucks. Tel: 07711 199166
- HALL PLACE EC:** Sulham Hill, Tilehurst, Reading, Berks, RG31 5TX. Tel: 0118 942938
- WOKINGHAM EC:** Berks. Tel: 0118 9775549
- DUNDRIDGE MANOR:** St. Leonards Nr. Tring, Herts. Tel: 01494 778226 or 01494 863067
- HILL GREEN FARM:** off Hemp Lane, Wigginton, Nr Tring, Herts. HP23 6HD. Tel: Wing Dressage Group, Ms Sally Ann Hoyle 01494 758932
- CHECKENDON EC:** Lovegroves Lane, Checkendon, Reading Berks. Tel: 01491 680225
- WHITEHOUSE FARM:** Spencers Wood, Berks. Tel: 0118 9884362
- SHIRE LANE:** Hastoe, Nr. Tring, Herts
- OLD BERKELEY HUNT CLUB (OBHC):** Tel: Frances Aidley 01442 891622
- OBH RIDING CLUB:** Mrs R. Dutton, Rosemount, Pednor Rd, Chesham, Bucks, HP5 2ST. Tel: 01494 785279 . www.obhrc.org.uk
- NINE ACRES** Chesham Road, Wigginton, Nr. Tring, Herts
- CHESHAM VALE CROSS COUNTRY COURSE:** Cricket Meadow, The Vale, Chesham, Bucks. HP5 3NP. Tel: Sue Bloss 01494 776151
- MIDDLEGROVE FARM:** Great Missenden, Bucks. Tel: Janet Pusey 01494 862985
- GREAT MISSENDEN RIDING CLUB:** Tel: Ginny Gray 07736 611222. www.greatmissendenridingclub.co.uk
- NEWLANDS PARK:** Gorelands Lane,Chalfont St Giles, Bucks. Tel: Chiltern Heights Riding Club, Rebecca Walker 07739 514570
- WINDSOR GREAT PARK:** The Crown Estate, The Great Park, Windsor, Berks SL4 2HT. Tel: 01753 860222
- WINDSOR PARK EQUESTRIAN CLUB:** Tel: 01276 472169
- HIGH WYCOMBE RIDING CLUB:** Tel: Rebecca Brown 01296 747069
- WIDMER EC:** Pink Road, Lacey Green, Nr Princes Risborough, Bucks HP27 0PQ
- TWIN TREES EQUESTRIAN CENTRE:** Thomcote Road, Biggleswade, Beds SG18 9AG. Tel: 01767 627414
- LITTLEBOURNE FARM EC:** Northwood Road, Harefield, Middx UB9 6PU. Tel: 01895 824350
- IRHH IAIN RENNIE HOSPICE AT HOME:** Fundraising Office, tel: 01442 890222

- If you don't see your club or event represented here, please contact Terry Fryer (see page 1 for details).



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AND FINALLY... A NEW CAPTION COMPETITION

Like last time, witty captions submitted for this intriguing picture will be printed in the next issue, with another prize to the writer of the best caption (the judges' decision is final, and bribery may be refused). All entries to Susie Bell (see page 1 for contact details), including your name, address and phone number.

Here are the best entries from April's competition (the photo was kindly provided by Malcolm Angell, a man whose dedication to your amusement clearly knows no limits):

*Them that don't wear britches ends up with stitches.
The whip may be leather but I'd swear the watch strap's plastic.
Arthur decided that safe sex wasn't all it was cracked up to be.
Hit me, baby, one more time!
Angels on (or is it off? Ed.) horseback.
Beauty is only skin deep.
My idea of exercise is a brisk sit-down.
That sure was one hell of a party!
And this is my good side...
Angell delight!*



April's winner is Lindsay Rose (with Arthur), who wins a bottle of champagne. Next month it could be you...



*The Vale of Aylesbury
with
Garth & South Berks Hunt*

CALENDAR 2008

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