



Hello everyone, and welcome to the second of our quarterly Newsletters, in which I hope to keep you up to date with events in the Mid Wales/Shropshire Border.

A NEW BABY!

Misty produced a beautiful colt foal on 5 May. Richard and I checked her at 11pm on the Friday, and the foal was up and dry at 5am on the Saturday. It's a good job 99% of mares can manage very nicely on their own! The unnamed little chap is growing fast, and is very bold and confident. Misty is a wonderful mother, and we plan to introduce them to "the herd" when the foal is about 4 weeks old



SPRINGWATCH

An unusual Spring - a glorious April, followed by a wet May. "Wet May, full bay" (ie a good hay crop), and Spring proper seemed to come all of a rush.



We had a very successful lambing this year. One Welsh mule ewe produced four lambs (with Richard acting as midwife). All are doing well.

The wildflowers such as the marsh marigolds (above) have been spectacular this year. There is also a carpet of bluebells outside the door of Sycamore cottage, (below).



Four Footed proFile

Dixie Dream



Dixie Dream is our senior mare and has had a long and interesting life. Richard bought her as a six year old at Newtown Horse Sales for 475 guineas. She was in the catalogue as "A Trotter"

Richard and Dixie had a successful racing career over several years with the Wales & Border Counties Racing Association., and in between whites, Dixie had produced nine foals, all of which have been broken in and sold on and we are still in touch with the owners of four of them. We bought back the first one, Dream Dancer, in 1999.

We brought Dixie back into work when she was 18, so that she could enjoy her last few years. I call her my 27 year old armchair as she is so totally safe, even I ride her. If she senses her rider is about to fall off, she will do a quick body swerve to get underneath him and pop him back into the saddle! That's my kind of horse.

The rigours of her racing career have taken their toll, and gentle hacking is her job description these days, although she can still pick up her skirts and run, and is not above racing the others through the forestry if it takes her fancy.

It has been said that because Dixie is such a safe conveyance, she is boring. Now me, personally, I think boring is good. I can do boring.

BLUE REMEMBERED HILLS

New Cwm Farm is just 200 yards from the Shropshire Hills, with its Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Rhos Fiddle Nature Reserve is only 2 miles distant, and at this time of year the rare and beautiful yellow mountain pansy flecks the grasslands with splashes of pale gold. The boggy areas are perfect feeding grounds for snipe, curlew, and lapwing. In order to preserve this traditional landscape, a local organic farmer grazes highland cattle and hebridean sheep there. A guided walk over Rhos Fiddle is planned for 9 June.

SHROPSHIRE HILLS SHUTTLES

The shuttle bus operates weekend and Bank Holiday Monday until 28 October, and is an excellent way of enjoying the views, and there is plenty to see and do, should you decide to stop off on the way. More information from www.shropshirehillsshuttles.co.uk. Or telephone 01588 673888.

HATCHED, MATCHED AND DISPATCHED

New foal born May 5th – see lead story.

Star Dewi, one of our old retainers has been sold to a five star home not far away. No way would I have advertised him, I was certain I would keep him forever. But there was no-one to ride him and this lovely young lady came along and it was love at first sight for both of them.

Maquire has been sold to a lady who lives near Bishops Castle. She wanted a safe horse for her husband to ride.

HOW TO BOOK YOUR HOLIDAYS

OAK COTTAGE

On the ground floor, the main room of Oak Cottage is open plan and spacious, with a spectacular inglenook fireplace complete with bread oven, and a wealth of exposed beams.

The fully equipped kitchen includes microwave, electric cooker, refrigerator and washer/dryer, with recessed lighting in the ceiling, and under the wall cabinets.

For reservations call 01686.625267 www.wales-holidays.co.uk

Oak Cottage number A323



SYCAMORE COTTAGE

The door to Sycamore Cottage, at the top of steps to a private balcony, complete with seat to relax and enjoy the view, opens into a light and airy kitchen, complete with all modern conveniences.

The main room is open plan, with exposed beams and a delightful window seat, and small seating area.

For reservations call 01686.625267 www.wales-holidays.co.uk

Sycamore Cottage number A324

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June

- 2nd Ramble & Row, Llanidloes – 2:45pm at Clywedog Dam SN 910 869 (walk 7 ml, row 1.5 ml) – book 01597 827562
- 3rd (and every Sunday in June) – Bird Watching Safari, 9:30am Elan Valley Visitor Centre, Rhayader – book 01597 810898
- 9th Guided walk over Rhos Fiddle Nature Reserve, with hebridean sheep.
- 9th 'A Walk in the Marches', Churchstoke – 10:00am Miner's Arms SO 293 973 – 5.6 miles
- 12-14th Bishops Castle Walking Festival www.walkingfestival.co.uk
- 16th Kington Choral Society Concert, St Mary's Church, 7:30pm
- 17th Teme Valley Fun Ride www.lowerbuckton.co.uk 01547 540532 or 07960 273 865
- 17th Hopesay Churchyard Event including Hog Roast and Songs of Praise
- 23rd 'Towpaths & Riverbanks' 10:15am, Newtown Bus Station, 4 mile walk – book before 21st 01597 827567
- 23rd A Gala Night at the Opera, 7:30pm St Lawrence's Church, Ludlow
- 23rd – 24th Gardens Open Weekend in Clun

July

- 1st 'Organic Afternoon', Talgarth – guided tour of Lower Porthamel 2:00pm SO 163 357, 1.5 miles – book before June 29th 01597 827567
- 14th 'Trial Offa' – 7 mile hike along Offa's Dyke, 10:00am Offa's Dyke Centre, Knighton SO 284 725, bus ride and 7 mile hike – book before 12th 01597 827567
- 14th Carding Mill Story, Church Stretton – all day - Morris Dancing at 3:00pm
- 15th United Pack Fun Ride at Clunton.

August

- 5th and 19th 'Elan Valley Village Tour' – 1 mile walk exploring history of construction of Dams – 2:00pm Elan Valley Visitor Centre, Rhayader
- 8th 'Glyndwr's Way' – 10:00am at roadside car park near Star Inn, Dylife SN 861 941 – 9 miles
- 18th Carding Mill Story, Church Stretton – 11:00am to 3:00pm
- 18th Medieval Music concert in St George's Church, Clun
- 25th 'The Chuff & Puff Trail' – 5 mile hike and train ride – 10:00am at Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway, Welshpool SJ 217 075 – book before 23rd 01597 827567

See website for updates

If you would prefer not to receive this Newsletter, please let us know by email, snail mail or phone.