

## BORDER HOLIDAYS AND HORSES – Adams Anchorage and New Cwm Farm Newsletter for December 2007



Hello again, and a very warm welcome to all readers. This is the time of year when we reflect on the summer and autumn, and gird our loins for the coming winter. The pickles and jams have been made, and the Christmas cake baked in readiness. Although we tend to get more winter up here in the hills, it is the one season which has a wonderful ethereal beauty – crispy nights and sparkling days, cold and gin-clear, when the sky goes up for ever.

### ***WE'VE BEEN CERTIFIED!***

(Some might say "About time too!")

Terrific news! The Camping and Caravanning Club has given The Anchorage certificated status!



This means that we can take up to six caravans and an unlimited number of tents on our new site at the head of the Clun valley, with its breathtaking views. We have installed the necessary water supply and a chemical disposal point, there is a shower room and a laundry room on site, and we have a rolling programme of landscaping and tree planting.



As from next Easter we will also be offering our two 3-bedroomed static caravans for holiday hire.



The campsite is open all year; Ash and Chestnut caravans from Easter to October.

### ***FLICKS IN THE STICKS***

This is a winter entertainment during the long dark evenings. Many local village halls arrange showings of top class films; last winter's included "The Queen" and "The Devil Wore Prada". The final film was "Precious Bane", a dramatisation of the book by Mary Webb, who lived in Shropshire and based her books in this area. I bought the book some time ago but didn't start to read it as it was written in dialect. The film was stunning, the characters entirely believable, and the story totally credible. The dialogue was, in the main, lifted straight from the page, and the two main families – Sarn and Beguildy – are the names of nearby villages. It was a hauntingly beautiful film, and even now I find my mind drifting back to it in quiet moments.

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### **Four Footed profile**

#### **NIPPER**

It has been said that horses choose their owners. I think Nipper chose us. She was bred in the purple and was left there for four years with no human contact.

At that point her owner asked a local girl to break her in. The girl quite sensibly declined the offer, as the mare was a bundle of natural instincts, and consequently frightened of almost everything. Her size (16.2hh) made her, frankly, dangerous, but she had the biggest, kindest eye of any horse I've ever seen, and Richard took on the challenge.

The breaking in had to be done with great sensitivity. When Richard eventually got on her back, she spent most of the time on her hind legs, and as I write no-one else has been able to ride her.



We called her Nipper after her late owner, and when we acquired the mare, we kept the name. Her papers show her name to be Mauna, which doesn't seem to suit her at all! So Nipper it remains, although I sometimes call her "Nipsy Wipsy Tiddy Pipsy" which is pretty silly by anyone's standards. Eventually Nipper will be for sale, possibly next year after this winter's hound exercise, but we will be looking for a very special home for this very special mare.

#### **HATCHED, MATCHED AND DESPACHED**

Misty and her foal Trooper have been moved to The Anchorage, as the foal is now seven months old and his training must begin, and also he must be weaned. He was turned out with several aunties at New Cwm, and they spoiled him rotten!

#### **RED KITES, WHITE OWLS AND AITCHES**

Just recently we have been thrilled to see Red Kites along the Bettws top, just half a mile from The Anchorage. Although still rare compared to the common Buzzards, Red Kites are increasing in numbers here, as elsewhere in England.

Barn Owls too are to be seen. This year I put up two barn owl boxes at New Cwm Farm, in the hope of encouraging roosting and eventually breeding. It will probably take a while for these rare and beautiful owls to risk investigating the boxes!

Jays, by contrast, are very common, and are usually seen in pairs, two or three times a week. Flashes of blue and white, a dusky pink rump and a harsh squawk! Why "aitches"? When my sister was a little girl she knew these birds were a letter of the alphabet, but she didn't call them "J's", she called them "H's"!

#### **December**

- 5 - Clun Ramblers and Peramblers all day walk and pub lunch 01588 640027
- 8 - Flicks in the Sticks "Starter for ten" Clun Memorial Hall 7.30pm
- 8 - Christmas Carol concert with Chester St Cecilia Singers at Powis Castle, Welshpool 7:00pm
- 8 to 9 - Christmas tales from Medieval times with storyteller at Stokesay Castle, Craven Arms 11 to 4
- 12 - Clun Ramblers & Peramblers Fish & Chips walk 01588 640846
- 12 - Acoustic Jam night at the White Horse Inn Clun from 8pm
- 14 - Carols around the Christmas Tree, followed by a Ceilidh at Newcastle Community Centre
- 15 - Bishops Castle Farmers Market 9am-2pm
- 16 - 8-mile hill walk at Crugyn Ci and Dolfaenog, Elan Valley. Meet at Nantgwyllt Church car park at 10am, back about 2.30pm.
- 20 - Bishops Castle Footpath Walking Group "Cilfaesty Hill" 01588 620422 (NB Cilfaesty Hill adjoins New Cwm Farm)
- 21 - Live Music at the White Horse Inn Clun "The Cover Girls" from 8pm
- 29 - Flicks in the Sticks at Llanfair Waterdine (TBC) 01547 510625
- 30 - 3 hour heath land walk with Peter Carty. £3. Carding Mill Valley Chalet Pavilion. Contact 01694 722631
- 31 - Hogmanay at The Anchor Inn. See in the New Year with a Haggis supper and Real Ales!

#### **January**

- 3 - The United Hunt will meet at New Cwm Farm before taking the hounds out for exercise. 11:00am.
- 13 - 6.5-mile hill walk at Cefn Cwm Coel hill, Elan Valley. Meet at Nantgwyllt Church car park at 10am, back about 2pm.
- 15 - Burns Night at The Anchor Inn. Traditional Scottish fare provided by mine hosts Michael & Alex Steedman.

**February** 17 - 5-mile hill walk Pen y Garreg and Nant Hsegog, Elan Valley. Meet at Penbont car park at 10am, back about 1pm.

**March** 1 - St David's Day celebration at The Anchor Inn. A Welsh menu!

Check website for updates!

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

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