

BORDER HOLIDAYS AND HORSES – Adams Anchorage and New Cwm Farm Newsletter for December 2009



Hello to all readers and welcome to the Winter 2009 newsletter. We have had another busy three months. Whoever said nothing ever happens in the countryside? We could rival The Archers! Perhaps not quite the sometimes weird storylines, but it's certainly been busy, busy, busy!

Seasons!

We have had the end wall of our bungalow renovated, thankfully during the few dry weeks in early autumn, just one wet day when the boards were off.



(Before and after photos)



The weather has seriously changed now, with waves of storms passing over, and rain being flung down in angry handfuls.

With winter approaching we are getting huge clouds of starlings in the afternoons dipping and swirling, swooping and chattering as they search for a night time roost. There is a great noise from the whirring of their wings, and trees are black with birds when they land. It is mesmerising to watch the random fleeting shapes swooping and swirling like a flying shoal of fish.

Hatched, Matched and Despatched

Frankie, our superb black ride and driving cob, has been sold to a five star home in Alvechurch. On the return journey we brought back Samson, a piebald ride and drive cob to re-school and sell on. Samson took exception to the journey and proceeded to trash our trailer! We had to stop on the hard shoulder of the M42, and the motorway police who inevitably turned up, very kindly said "What's the problem and how can we help?" We got Samson sorted, he had thoroughly frightened himself, and he stood like a statue for the rest of the trip!

Dave, a part bred Irish Draft gelding has been sold to a pony club mum who lives near The Stiperstones. He is a really nice unspoiled young chap, and Wendy will bring him on as a riding horse for herself.

What Was I Saying?

In the last newsletter I mentioned that the Air Ambulance was a vital asset up here in the hills, and just a few weeks later Richard had to make use of it. He was unloaded by a horse he had been riding for a fortnight, but which obviously took exception to something or other and set in to buck in some order. It wasn't the falling off that was the problem, but landing on the hard surface of the yard. Fortunately Tony our builder was here and made the necessary phone calls.



Richard had broken his hip, which had to be pinned and plated at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital.



Unfortunately as a farmer and horse breaker, Richard won't be able to work for some months, and he is not a patient man! But it's the first serious riding accident he has had since he was 16, so he's not done too badly. (Christmas is cancelled this year!)

The Air Ambulance is supported purely by private contributions, and receives no government funding. Check out their website at http://www.transportcafe.co.uk/air_ambulance_service_heli_copter_shropshire_west_midlands.html

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Adams Family BBQ

Richard's sister and brother in law hosted a barbeque on Vron Top, part of The Beacon, a large area of common land just the other side of the Beguildy valley.



It was a glorious September day, wonderful food, spectacular scenery, and excellent company. Who could ask for anything more?



New Kid on the Block

Ben – another failed housedog! Ben came to us at the age of 7 months because his lady owner was becoming increasingly dismayed by his excessive exuberance.



He immediately made friends with Bill and Sam, and is showing a gratifying interest in the sheep. Which is just as well, since Sam (lovely dog though he is) just grins as he watches Bill run his socks off working the sheep and seems to be thinking "Ha ha, I'm getting the same dinner as him tonight!"

A Shropshire Lad

My mother once lightly asked me if I would like a Shropshire Lad, and I replied that I had married one! Richard was born in the cottage hospital in Clun, and has lived in the Clun Valley all his life.

2009 is the 150th anniversary of the birth of A E Housman, whose life was immortalised by his most famous work – A Shropshire Lad. This spellbinding cycle of poems, set in the rolling hills of a half-imagined pastoral Shropshire, intertwines beautiful descriptions of the surrounding landscape with Housman's trademark pessimism which was probably a reaction to the second Boer War (1899-1902).

Undoubtedly his most famous verses are:

Clunton and Clunbury,
Clungunford and Clun,
Are the quietest places
Under the sun.

In valleys of springs and rivers,
By Ony and Teme and Clun,
The country for easy livers,
The quietest under the sun.

These lines are as true now as they have always been.

The family-run Wood Brewery in Wistanstow, near Craven Arms, produce a beer called Shropshire Lad, also one called Shropshire Lass, and their Pot 'o Gold was voted Britain's best bitter, see www.woodbrewery.co.uk

Calendar of Events

I have had comments that the Newsletters contain details of events which have already happened! Not very useful. So I have decided to give events by the month, rather than the exact date, all twelve months to appear on the Thing to Do page of the website, and just the relevant months in the Newsletter. Hopefully this will be more useful.

December

Royal Welsh Agricultural Winter Fair, Builth Wells
Bishops Castle Lights Festival and Street Party
Newtown Santa Run
Christmas Lights Switch-on and Carols, Clun
Carol Service at St Mary's Church, Bettws y Crwyn
Midnight Communion, St George's Church, Clun, 11.30pm
Christmas Eve
Hogmanay at The Anchor Inn

January 2010

History Group, Kerry
Burns Night at The Anchor Inn

February

United Pack meet at New Cwm Farm

March

St David's Day meal at The Anchor
Mothering Sunday
St Patrick's Day meal at The Anchor Inn
Palm Sunday Communion at St Mary's Church, Bettws y Crwyn
Our lambing season starts

Comments?

We really do welcome comments of all kinds. We get many plaudits, which is of course wonderful, but equally we welcome suggestions for improvements, as we would much rather know why we have fallen short, rather than have guests vote with their feet.

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