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Editorial

I can't believe that Newsletter time has come around so quickly. In fact, it's been and gone! I am writing in the lobby bar of our hotel in Turkey at half-term. Thank you, mum, for taking us all away again.

The Newsletter continues to be very popular and is, *apparently*, an avid read. To celebrate this, we are sending out TWO copies to each of you. Please pass on a copy to an interested horse-owner or friend! Also, if your tack room, tack shop, show or riding club would like a wad of copies for general distribution then let us know. All the previous issues are published on the website and are still available as hard copies.

The last few months have been crazily busy once more. We moved into the new offices at the end of August. It's still a little crowded in there as the upstairs rooms are not quite finished. The new stables should be finished soon too. We want to get on and upgrade the operating theatre as soon as possible. Then we can do far more of our own elective surgery, with the help of our consultant surgeon (details inside).

Thank you to all of you who came to the Practice Opening Day (aka the annual BBQ). The turnout was amazing considering the dire weather that we all suffered in August, especially that Sunday. The jazz men improvised in the stable area, Frank produced samosas and spring rolls, and we are grateful once more to Adam Johnson for doing the hog roast, despite overhead lightning strikes! Thanks also to Luke and Clare of Ockley Bouncers for bringing in the bouncy castle once the storm had passed, and to Simon and Christine Elliott for getting the door sign done so quickly and lending us their "Newshield" van.

Meanwhile, the practice turnover has held steady despite the credit crunch. However, we will have to increase our fees, in line with small business inflation, in January 2009. We also need to improve our cashflow, so we will be introducing new measures to encourage prompt payment! To improve our efficiency we hope to introduce "free zones", with no visit fees for routine visits, in your area for one day a week. If you are prepared to fit in with us we hope to be able to reduce the cost to you. This will also be announced in the New Year.

Understandably, some of you are confused by the new Pharmacy Regulations, which were introduced by the government in 2005 and are strictly policed by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate. We cannot just sell you prescription drugs if we have not seen your horse in the last six months, and only a vet or a pharmacist can dispense the drugs from the clinic. So please don't just turn up and get upset if the girls cannot give you a "box of bute". The pharmacy rules are explained in more detail inside.

A final thank you to the kind client who nominated me for the Petplan Equine Vet of the Year Award 2008. Around 130 vets were nominated, so this was a real honour. The nomination is anonymous, so this is the only way to express my gratitude.

We look forward to seeing many of you at the Autumn Practice Talk, which is almost a winter event this year! Merry Christmas to you all.

Ben Mayes



Autumn Talk – Wednesday 3rd December, 7:30pm

Many of you have been asking about the date and talk titles. I am touched that the Autumn and Spring Talks have become such a highlight in your seasonal calendar. Hurtwood Park Polo Club, Ewhurst, have kindly agreed to host the Talks once more. We are very grateful to Kenny and Jayne Jones, the staff and members at the Club for their hospitality. The bar will be open and complimentary sandwiches will be available. **Frank Low** will be present on

'**Worming, a new approach**'. Frank will be supported by **Mark Baker** of Fort Dodge Animal Health who will also be talking on vaccination, '**flu the mutating virus and West Nile Fever, an American killer, is it coming here?**' That's without mentioning African Horse Sickness! Anna will bring us back to earth with an update on **Grass Sickness**. Ben will finish the evening with a quick overview of the **Emergency Services Protocol**, a British Equine Veterinary Association project that aims to facilitate emergency horse rescues.

This promises to be an action packed evening, with something for everybody, so please come along. Hurtwood Park Polo Club, GU6 7SW, is at the Ewhurst Green end of Horsham Lane. This is five miles from the Ewhurst turning off the A29 just north of the Clemsfold A281/A29 junction west of Horsham (one mile south of the practice), do not turn off and the club will be on the right. See you there!

Judy's bit... Surgery at Mayes and Scrine... exciting news!

We are very pleased to be able to advise you all that we are now able to carry out more surgical procedures "in-house".

Expert surgeons Dr David Platt BVSc PhD CertVR DEO FRCVS and Mark Murrell BA VetMB CertES(Orth) MRCVS have agreed to act as consultant surgeons for us and will visit to carry out elective (pre-planned, non-emergency) surgeries. David and Mark have many years of equine surgical experience between them and Mark is shortlisted to win the Petplan Vet of the Year award (*why not me? Ed*), so we are very flattered to be working with them. They are also on hand to discuss orthopaedic cases and provide specialist opinion on x-rays should this be required.

We are well on with our development plans to improve our facilities for surgical procedures under general anaesthesia. Anna Hammond, who recently rejoined the veterinary team at Mayes and Scrine, is a very experienced equine anaesthetist and we have purchased

a new general anaesthetic machine (equine "circle" system). Our dedicated operating theatre is about to be upgraded with a new overhead winch, ceiling and lighting system. Builder dependent, this should be finished early in the New Year. In addition, we now have two sets of stocks to allow certain surgical procedures to be carried out on "standing" sedated horses, avoiding the need for a general anaesthetic if at all possible.



New offices update...

We've now moved into the new offices and the stables should be finished soon. Here's the story so far in photos.



Reception



Main office



Stables

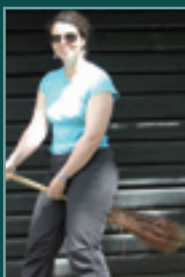
Caption Competition (from Issue 11)

Our unbiased impartial judge has pronounced in his wisdom:-

First Prize "Ben, I definitely said a car with more Vroom – Not I'll make do with my broom!"

Second Prize "With the rising cost of fuel, Judy started looking at alternative forms of transport"

Third Prize "Brush broom by Ann Summers – the latest toy to take you to heaven"



Congratulations to Debbie John, our winner, and to Gavin Kenny and Michael Bray our runners up. A year's supply of wormers are on the way to Debbie and baseball caps for them all! Thank you to all who entered the competition and amused the Mayes and Scrine staff!

Judy Scrine

Judy has provided a picture from her recent trip to Papua New Guinea, again in need of a caption. The prize of a year's supply of wormers – appropriate for your horse – is up for grabs once more. Please submit captions to the practice email, office@equinevetpractice.co.uk



Prescription charges

Under the new Pharmacy Regulations, which are updated every year, instead of dispensing equine medicines to you, we can write a Veterinary Prescription for you to take to a pharmacy or use to purchase the medicine online from a legal source. If your horse or pony is on long-term medication, this may be of benefit in terms of drug costs. However, there are some rules over the prescribing of veterinary medicines:

- We have to have examined or consulted on your horse's condition in the previous six months. If this is not the case, we have to re-examine the animal before a prescription can be issued.
- The prescription has to be signed by a vet from the practice, ideally the vet who examined the horse last. This may take up to 48 hours to action, although we will do our best to get it done as soon as possible.
- The horse or pony must have a passport. If the section [Medical Treatment Section IX part 1(a)] indicating that the horse is not

intended for human consumption is not signed by the owner/keeper we are unable to prescribe or dispense many drugs, e.g. bute, pergolide.

- Some of the drugs prescribed may not be licensed for use in horses or ponies. An "unlicensed product consent form" has to be signed by the owner/keeper each time such drugs are prescribed or dispensed.
- If a licensed equine (otherwise, small or farm animal) medicine is available, then we cannot prescribe or dispense a cheaper human equivalent. This is called the "cascade system".
- We charge **£5 per prescription** each time one is issued. This allows for the document to be prepared, checked and signed by the vet, copied, recorded and sent to you, if required.
- All of this takes time. We will always have the prescription prepared for you within 48 hours, but, when ordering, please allow plenty of time before your horse runs out of medicine, especially if you are ordering from an online pharmacy.

Anna Writes: Colic, what to do before the vet arrives

Colic, the word strikes fear into the heart of most horse owners but the first thing to remember is "don't panic".

While it is very distressing to see, the majority of horses recover uneventfully and the cause often remains a mystery. The other golden rule is don't get hurt yourselves, if the horse is in uncontrollable pain it may be very difficult to handle so no heroics please. Colic simply means pain in the abdomen and can come from many sources e.g. the liver, kidneys, bladder or the guts. The symptoms can vary from mild tail swishing, lip smacking, dullness to agitation, kicking at the belly, rolling, pawing the ground, sweating and general distress.

Obviously the first thing to do is call the vet and try and remember information like when the symptoms first started (if known) and was there any change in management recently e.g. change of pasture, diet or worming. You should remove all food from the stable including haynets and any objects that the horse could get entangled with. If the horse is quiet, either standing or lying down, it's probably best to leave them until the vet arrives. If the horse is attempting to roll it's best to walk them on a soft surface, like an arena, and prevent them from rolling from side to side, if possible. If the horse is not violently painful lunging can be useful, but again, on a soft surface so that they don't hurt themselves if they do lie down.



If you are lucky and the colic symptoms subside such that you don't want a vet's visit it is important to continue monitoring them in case the symptoms recur. It is also wise to keep all food away from them overnight, including a straw bed, and re-introduce food in small quantities the following day.

Assuming your horse is still in pain we will examine them quickly on arrival and get basic information like the horse's heart rate, gum colour and gastrointestinal sounds. After this we may sedate the horse to allow a more detailed examination i.e. a rectal examination to assess the horse's gut position and we may stomach tube the horse to see if there is any fluid build up in the stomach which needs to be relieved as horses cannot vomit. At this point we will make a decision as to whether the horse can be managed by medical therapy at home or if it needs surgery at a referral hospital obviously in consultation with you, the owner, as to your preferences. Having said all of that scary stuff the majority of horses recover with painkillers administered into the vein, and carry on the next day as though nothing had happened, despite your sleepless night.

Bleeding, what to do before the vet arrives...

If you find your horse bleeding one day, take a deep breath and try to assess the situation. Ask yourself: "Is there much blood in the stable/ground? Is it trickling out and can you count the drops? Is it bright or dark red? Where is it coming from?" It's wise to remember that a 500kg horse has 40litres of blood and can afford to lose 10litres without suffering unduly. A horse that has blood all over its legs may be bleeding from its nose and wiping it on its legs, so a careful look can give us, the vets, very useful information. In any case try, if possible, to stay calm and call your vet with as much information as you can. Leave the horse in its stable or wherever it will stay quiet. Keep your horse in as calm an environment as possible

and stop other horse coming past and people bustling around them. If the stable has poor lighting try and find a torch to allow a good look at where the blood is coming from.

In the rare case of an arterial bleed- which is identifiable as bright red blood spurting out, try and stem the flow by applying as tight a bandage as possible with plenty of padding underneath. If the blood soaks through use a hard object e.g. a tennis ball and press it against the wound, then pad the area with soft material e.g. a towel and bandage tightly over the top. The majority of bleeding will stop if sufficient pressure is applied to the area. In cases such as these we will endeavour to be there as quickly as possible. And remember a little bit of blood goes a long way.

Frank Writes: Inches from catastrophe

Many of you will have met Lisa from our nursing staff. One fine sunny day, Lisa was out riding on her usual route through the woods, however this time she was on her new horse Mickey. As they rode, they popped over a few small jumps. Suddenly Mickey mistimed a jump and landed awkwardly throwing poor Lisa to the side. As Lisa dusted herself off she looked back to see if Mickey was ok, she saw that Mickey was stumbling on his right leg. As Lisa approached Mickey, she saw a huge wound between his right leg and his chest. Not only was there a massive wound, but there was an 8 foot piece of wood stuck in it!

Luckily Lisa had her mobile phone with her and she immediately called the practice. Judy Scrine quickly arrived at the scene (*on the back of Lisa's husband's quad-bike, Ed*) and was able to quickly assess Mickey's condition. After stabilising Mickey, Judy was able to remove the offending log. Mickey was then rushed to our surgery in Warnham.

Once at the surgery, Mickey was given a general anaesthetic which lasted for about an hour. During the surgery we were able to determine the extent of the wound; it was about a foot deep and nearly two feet long. The deepest part of the wound was mere inches from the brachial artery, the major blood supply to the right leg. If the piece of wood had pierced this blood vessel, Mickey would have died at the scene probably

faster than Lisa could call the practice. The wound was heavily contaminated with dirt and bark, but fortunately the majority of the muscle attachments were not severely compromised. Although the tissues were extensively debrided under anaesthetic we made the decision not to close the wound with sutures as this would only have trapped any bugs and remaining contamination.

Mickey did extremely well after surgery. He was fine walking in a straight line, but initially he was unable to turn to the left, because of the wound gaping open. However, after seven days of strong antibiotics, Mickey was able to go home and with the more-than-capable Lisa in charge of his aftercare, he soon made a rapid recovery.

We are happy to say that, 6 months after the accident, Mickey is now back in work and living life to the fullest



Who's who of Mayes and Scrine...



Ben Mayes MA VetMB MRCVS, Director. Ben was a Mid-Surrey Pony Club boy and qualified from Cambridge Vet School in 1992. He joined Colin Bond in Warnham in 1994 and took over the practice in 2001. Ben is married to Catherine, the accounts manager. They have three children, Jude (8), Archie (6) and Darcey (2). Ben is a general equine practitioner in every sense. He is experienced in stud work, (including AI), competition horses and "specialises" in vettings. Ben is a member of the British Equine Veterinary Association Council and is active in insurance liaison, welfare and the Emergency Services Protocol.



Judy Scrine MA VetMB MRCVS, Director, is a Sevenoaks girl and qualified from Cambridge in 1991. She worked in a predominantly equine practice in Cleveland/North Yorkshire for several years before joining Howard Robinson MRCVS in Charlwood in the mid 90s. Judy joined Ben at the practice in 2001. Judy is an all-round equine practitioner and she is the practice guru on competition horse lameness. Judy lives in an historic medieval cottage with her dog, Tiggy, and works hard to maintain her garden in pristine condition. Despite her seniority, Judy likes to party and is known for her eclectic tastes and exotic travel. She has recently returned from Papua New Guinea and is heading to Oman for her next trip.



Frank Low BSc(Hons), BVSc, MACVS, MRCVS joined Mayes & Scrine in September 2006. Frank recently passed post-graduate exams in Equine Medicine in Australia during a summer sabbatical. Despite this Frank enjoys surgery and stud work as well. Born in Hong Kong before spending his early years in the USA, Frank spent his formative years in Queensland. His parents had a small-holding in the bush, and they had ponies and horses – mainly used as working beasts, e.g. cutting and roping. Frank qualified from Queensland University vet school in 2000, and initially worked in Australian equine practice, gaining valuable experience, including stud work, before moving to England with his partner Kelly. They live in Dorking and enjoy the gym, mountain-biking, trips and providing board and lodging for visiting Aussies.



John Little BA BSc BVM&S MRCVS John Little BA, BSc, BVM&S, MRCVS came to Mayes & Scrine in April 2007. He has settled in extremely well and has proved his credentials as a caring, experienced equine vet. John was brought up on a thoroughbred stud farm in Ireland. He has his own broodmares and young-stock and grew up hunting and competing in pony club. John enjoyed university life. He has degrees in Microbiology and Philosophy, finally graduating from Edinburgh as a vet in 2002. John initially worked near home in Ireland, before a brief period in France and almost four years at our neighbouring practice in Arundel. John enjoys fitness and has embraced the "scene" near his home in central Guildford.



Anna Hammond BVM&S Cert EM (IntMed) MRCVS returned to Mayes & Scrine this summer after a sojourn to Nottinghamshire, having worked at the practice in 2005/6. Anna qualified from Edinburgh in 1994 and has worked extensively as an equine veterinary surgeon. This includes an extended internship at Liphook, running an equine practice in New Zealand, stud work in Australia, a three-year Residency in Equine Internal Medicine at the Royal Veterinary College, and working for Mayes and Scrine and in Nottingham in general equine practice. Anna's Certificate in Internal Equine Medicine and her considerable experience is a great asset to the practice. Anna's husband, Richard, is head of Surgery at Nottingham University's new Vet School and relishes the long commute in his hairdresser's car. The Hammond family, including Mags (5) and Fergus (2), love being back in West Sussex, where they enjoy the weather, enforced DIY, and sailing.

*Next issue
the office staff*

Despite lobbying from me,
we're not sending any
Christmas cards out this
year, so, as the festive
season approaches...



Insurance Charges

Mayes and Scrine do not charge for the considerable time spent by vets and lay staff on filling-in insurance forms, providing insurance histories, liaising with insurance companies and so on. This is a service to our clients who have, sensibly, insured their horse or pony. However, in recent years veterinary insurance has become much more complex, e.g. in many instances you are obliged to inform the company of all veterinary consultations that have occurred without claiming during the year prior to renewal. When you make a claim, they often ask us for a full print-out of all your notes. Policy exclusions of pre-existing or any veterinary-attended conditions often apply. Particularly since the credit crunch, it can now take several months to receive any settlement from the insurance company. To ensure that payment is received quickly, we encourage clients to fill-in and submit insurance claim's forms as soon as possible after the incident, even if the condition is still undergoing treatment. To encourage this, we now ask for the insurance company to pay the client, not the vet. The horse owner is responsible for filling in the insurance form and for paying the vet's bill (under our Terms of Business). The insured (the owner) then claims the money back from the insurer. We will endeavour to return the completed vet's section to you within five working days.

**We expect prompt payment of the bill, whether you are insured or not.
We no longer support direct payment of veterinary fees to us by an insurance company.**