

April 2019

All the latest news and advice from your
local, independently owned practice

Farm news

What's inside...

37 years of vetting

From the horse's mouth

A day in the life of Sid

Letters to the editor

Then and now

The Sid Special

For more information call our practice on 01332 294929
or email farmandequine@scarsdalevets.com

 **Scarsdale Vets**
Farm

scarsdalevets.com

From the Editor

This month, we thought we'd do something a little different in the farm newsletter to mark a momentous occasion; one that will change Scarsdale Vets forever. It's the end of an era; the close of a chapter.

For some of you, the news of Sid's retirement after 37 years will be a surprise, for others it'll feel like it's been imminent for at least the last ten years. There have been false rumours - three years ago, I was informed by a client that Sid had been sacked, and none of the Markeaton staff will forget the day we thought Sid had died of appendicitis – but the time has finally come to say goodbye (and thankfully, from neither sacking nor death).

Knowing Sid is a bit like knowing a whirlwind. His boundless energy, enthusiasm and zest for life can't help but make a lasting impression on you, and his kindness, thoughtfulness and cheerfulness make him a delight to work with and to be around. He's dedicated, inspirational and hilarious, and it's a pleasure and a privilege to know him.

So Sid, this April newsletter is dedicated to you. Thank you for all that you are, all that you stand for, and for being such a great vet, colleague, mentor, boss and friend.

All the very, very best for your retirement.

We'll miss you!



A day in the life of Sid

6.00am – Up with the lark to fit in 2 hours of scanning before breakfast.

8.30am – Successful scanning session completed. Diagnosed plenty of sets of twins, cystic ovaries and an unusual abdominal tumour.

8.40am – Operate on unusual abdominal tumour. Remove it using exciting and novel method.

9.00am – Visit McDonald's for breakfast.

9.15am – Chair a management meeting at Pride Veterinary Centre. Forgot ID badge, so use "don't you know who I am?" line to sweet-talk way past reception.

10.00am – Visit farm to conduct exciting and novel surgery on calf's larynx.

11.00am – Drive car into 'shallow ford' (aka flooded river). Abandon car. Walk to next call.

11.30am – Arrive at farm to correct an LDA in a cow. Surgical kit still in car. Doesn't matter – perform surgery using only a small pair of nail scissors and a single strand of baler twine. Farmer impressed and delighted with result.

12.00pm – Return to Markeaton on foot. Need to train for walking the South West coastal path, anyway.

12.15pm – Remove extra limbs from a few lambs using exciting and novel technique.

1.00pm – Conduct interviews for new intake of Nottingham vet students. Get wrist slapped by Vet School Dean for making inappropriate comments about students' boyfriends.

2.00pm – Test a herd of bison for TB. Narrowly avoid death.

3.00pm – Visit a farm to see some sick cattle. Diagnose rare and unusual disease.

3.30pm – Drive courtesy car into large concrete hole when trying to leave farm. Write off courtesy car. Doesn't matter – need to train for a marathon anyway. Run back to Derby.

4.00pm – Purchase a new suit suitable for the Derbyshire County Show – president again this year. Advise Di to buy new hat.

4.10pm – Practice knowledgeable and important facial expressions to use at the Derbyshire County Show.

4.15pm – Practice lassoing technique in case required to catch rampaging bull at Derbyshire County Show.

4.20pm – Buy and sample whiskies to ply farmers with at Derbyshire County Show.

Straight from the horse's mouth

Anyone who's spent time with Sid will know his love of storytelling. Sid answers a few questions for us below:

Can you tell us about some of the happiest moments of your career?

- Coming out of church 30 years ago on my wedding day to find an honour guard of 30 farmers lining the church path with rectal gloves and pitch forks.
- Being lovingly and politely displaced in the practice by some of the many excellent vets whose careers I have enjoyed watching develop and blossom.
- Some of the weird surgical jobs, particularly the sheep brain surgery. To be able to delve inside a living brain, remove a cyst and then see the animal stand up and walk in a straight line (it had been circling) and start eating – great!
- Watching a student's face when they actually find an ovary or hear a DA ping!
- I still love putting the jigsaw pieces in place, asking that last 'stupid' question and solving the 'odd unusual case'. It is a sad dichotomy of large animal vetting that it does rely on building up caseload and experience. Just when you've probably seen most things, age and the various acquired injuries catch up on you and curtail the career. I still really enjoy the surgery, but I can't see to thread the b!@#^* needle!

And the saddest?

The many deaths – old farmer friends who helped me as a young new graduate, and my three business partners; Tony (Thompstone), David (Bell) and James (Hollingworth). I wouldn't be where I am today without their help.

4.30pm – Check some medicine prices – must make sure cheaper than internet pharmacies.

4.45pm – Chair another management meeting at Pride Veterinary Centre. Forgot ID badge, so use "I own this practice" line to sweet-talk way past reception.

5.30pm – Take Lottie the Labrador for a walk with the gun. Shoot a few rabbits for dinner.

6.30pm – Drive to Ancashire in new courtesy car. Check out the local McDonald's. Hastily wipe cow blood off face and arms, before arousing suspicion.

7.30pm – Give talk to Ancashire Farmers' Society about TB. Cheerfully throw in a joke about shooting alpacas. Farmers hang onto every word and are delighted with talk.

8.30pm – Get in car to drive home from Ancashire.

8.31pm – Receive disapproving phone call from RCVS.

8.32pm – Narrowly avoid litigation attempt by British Alpaca Society.

9.30pm – Arrive home and receive distraught phone call from assistant who is too ill to do their night on call. Selflessly offer to cover on call.

9.35pm – Fire up a smokey barbeque and cook rabbits.

10.00pm – Get called out to a caesarean birth. While on farm, find a few other caesareans that need doing too. Also untwist a uterine torsion and pop a prolapse back in.

1.00am – Arrive home. Wind down with a newspaper and a glass of red.

1.30am – Write another Scarsdale quiz. Make sure questions are as obscure and difficult as possible.

2.00am – Quite tired now. Consider retirement.

Any particularly funny incidents you'd like to share?

Too many to mention! So many practical jokes played in the first few years that would have got people struck off now. I did enjoy watching one of the least favourite students have a horrible moment when Mr Gilman's parlour gate took on a life of its own when he had one leg either side, 30 seconds after he had refused to listen to instructions in its use!

And any particularly embarrassing ones?

Again, numerous, but one that comes to mind was listening to a horse owner describe how useless a vet was, who had examined a horse while it was away on loan and declared it unfit. The owner wanted me to give a second opinion. Only on going to examine the horse, which had now been returned to its rightful owner, did I realise that I was the vet who had seen it the first time at the other address. Much to the owner's annoyance I said I thought the other vet was an excellent chap and agreed with his diagnosis!

Finally, is there any parting advice for farmers that you'd like to give?

- We are in business to cure the sick, not raise the dead!
- Two broken wooden pallets tied together with string are not a cattle crush.
- There is no such thing as 'immaculate conception'. The cow that has not been seen bulling, that we scan and find in calf has definitely been served by something!
- Sheep die!



Sid's life(line)

Sid has had a long and illustrious career, which has included a lot of charity work. Here Sid gives us a few highlights – see how many you know!

Summer 1982

Qualified from the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, Edinburgh. Awarded the medicine bursary and the Logsdon award (ironically for public health, which I hated!). Spent a short period as a locum vet at home in Scunthorpe.

20th June 1987

The ultimate walk – the Ramblers Association Lake District 4 peaks race (climb all 4 peaks over 3000 feet, run the 50 miles between them and return to base within 22 hours). The race is now discontinued on H&S grounds (much to my son's annoyance who wanted to beat my time!).

1990

Became Junior Partner, basically because I had developed the lab and nobody else knew how to use the equipment when I threatened to leave.

September 1982

Joined Taylor, Thompstone and Partners in Derby as one of 6 vets (supported by 6 staff). Started on the grand salary of £7000 (I had been prepared to accept £6000!) with a 4 bedroom flat and a fully paid up car and petrol – absolute luxury for a newly qualified vet! In the early days, there were numerous long-distance walks with teams from the surgery for various local children's charities. I also walked the Lyke Wake Walk twice (42 miles across the entire width of the Yorkshire moors) and the 40+ mile Derwent watershed grim moorland walk.



1st April 1989

Married my wonderful wife and lifelong companion Diana, who was at the time working as a fire-eater in the circus!

September 1996 – Summer 1998

Spent 2 years part time at Liverpool Vet School studying for my DBR (Diploma in Bovine Reproduction).



2010 -2016

Member of the Advisory Board for the VDS (Veterinary Defence Society).

Spring 2006

Joined a small panel of people interviewing new prospective vet students. Have continued to help every year since (although have received a couple of warnings about insulting students!).

2000

Became joint Senior Partner of what is now Scarsdale Vets. Along the way we have bought or acquired:

- Mr Mason’s equine and farm work from Eastwood
- Springwood Veterinary Practice (farm, equine and small animal)
- Pool House’s farm work

The practice was also one of the co-founders of XL Vets.

2005

Attended the first open days for the new Nottingham Veterinary School. Two years previously, I had seen an announcement in the Vet Record saying Gary England was to be appointed Dean, so I emailed him and said I wanted to be involved. Out of the 52 Nottingham open days since then, I’ve helped with 45. In the early days I had my wonderful lurcher, Maisie, with me who was so laid back when being examined by students that one of the vet school professors thought she had died during an ECG practical!



2006

Ran the full Edinburgh marathon for the Bubble Foundation charity. Went on to run the marathon two more times as 10km relay races (The Hairy Haggis race), finally finishing nicely in 2015 with my whole family – myself, Di and my two sons, Tom and Sam making up the relay team.



2012 – 2016

External examiner for the DBR (Diploma in Bovine Reproduction) back at Liverpool, which was very interesting – particularly getting to read a lot of the new research before it reached the public sphere.

Letters to the Editor

A Fine Teacher

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am very grateful to Professor Parker for all that he has taught me. Over the years, through his various courses and informal on-farm lessons, he has instructed me in the art of artificial insemination, coached me in the craft of lambing ewes and taught me to trim feet. I am also aware that he teaches final year veterinary students, as well as vets seeking to gain the prestigious Diploma in Bovine Reproduction. Most important to me though was when he drew my attention to his published research paper entitled 'The effects of Estrumate on the male psyche'. Since that day, I have discovered a side to myself that I never knew existed, and I frolic in my new-found freedom. Thank you, Professor.

Yours, Carefree near Chesterfield

Peachy Warnings

Dear Sir/Madam,

As an experienced dentist, I am writing to warn your readers of the dangers of eating peaches. Deceptively soft, these fruits contain a hidden danger. Only recently I saw a patient who I was initially afraid was a pirate, but then I realised that his front tooth had been knocked out by a peach stone. I enclose an anonymised photograph of the unfortunate victim, who required extensive reconstruction work on his front teeth. Please do be careful everybody.

Yours, Disturbed of Derby Dentists



Mistaken Identity?

Dear Sir/Madam,

I have noticed a striking resemblance between Sid, Chris Parker and Tom Selleck. Furthermore, I have never seen them in the same room together. Could it be that these three are the same person? Have we had a famous actor amongst our cows all these years? And who is the mysterious Chris Parker, anyway?

Yours, Confused of Coton-in-the-Elms



Sid



Chris Parker



Tom Selleck

A Generous Soul

Dear Sir/Madam,

I would like to pass on my sincere thanks to Sid for his generosity – there is no-one kinder. Over the years he has donated the following to me after his visits:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 4 Green coats | 1 Stethoscope |
| 7 Calving ropes | 3 Thermometers |
| 9 Bottles of lube | Several medicine bottles |
| 3 Pairs of artery forceps | 4 Scanner batteries |
| 1 Full surgical kit
(very useful for first aid) | |

I can only hope the other vets will be as generous in future.

Yours, Indebted of Ilkeston

FOR SALE

MOUSTACHE OIL

One large pot. Part used, but still gives an excellent shine.
OPEN TO OFFERS

COPPER COLLAR/NECKLACE
Suitable for adult cows with arthritis. Commissioned by Sid and beautifully handcrafted from copper wire by local artisan farmer. Hardly used (due to unfortunate early demise of previous owner). Free to a good home.

WARNING: DO NOT USE OUTSIDE IF THUNDERSTORM RISK.

★ CALL NOW ★

Then and now – 37 years on

Way back in the summer of 1982, the veterinary world was about to change forever – Sid was about to qualify as a fully-fledged vet from the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies in Edinburgh. But what's changed in the world since then?



	1982	2019
Politics	 <p>Margaret Thatcher is Prime Minister. Argentina invades the Falkland Islands, beginning the Falklands War that was to last for three months.</p>	 <p>The year begins with Theresa May as Prime Minister. The headlines are dominated by Brexit, Brexit and more Brexit!</p>
Music	 <p>Michael Jackson releases his Thriller album, Survivor serenade us with 'Eye of the Tiger' and the Eurovision Song Contest is held in Harrogate, Yorkshire (where it was won by Germany).</p>	 <p>The 2018 Christmas no. 1, We Built This City (On Sausage Rolls) tumbles down the charts to make way for Ava Max to claim the first no.1 single of 2019 with Sweet But Psycho.</p>
Hatches, matches and dispatches	 <p>Prince William and Catherine, future Duchess of Cambridge, are born, Ozzy and Sharon Osbourne marry, and Grace Kelly (by then known as Princess Grace of Monaco) is killed in a car crash.</p>	 <p>Meghan and Harry expect their first baby in the spring, Katy Perry and Orlando Bloom announce their engagement, and we said goodbye to Gordon Banks, England's World Cup winning goalkeeper.</p>
Finances	 <p>A pint of lager costs 73p, a pint of milk 20p, a litre of diesel 36p and an average detached house £45,000. The twenty pence coin is first issued into circulation.</p>	 <p>The average pint of beer costs £3.69, a pint of milk 49p, a litre of diesel £1.29 and an average detached house about £330,000.</p>
TV/film	 <p>Channel 4 is launched in the UK, we are enthralled by Only Fools and Horses, Knight Rider and Dynasty, and E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial, Chariots of Fire and Gandhi take cinemas by storm.</p>	 <p>Game of Thrones and Poldark are set to grace our TV screens for the last time with their final series. Small children all over the world eagerly await the release of Frozen 2 in November.</p>
Technology	 <p>The first CD player is sold by Sony in Japan, the Commodore 64 is launched and genetic engineering is first used commercially when human insulin produced by bacteria is marketed.</p>	 <p>There is talk of CDs becoming obsolete in favour of music downloads and streaming, Apple prepares to release the iPhone XS's successor, and home DNA testing kits promise to reveal everything from our ancestry to our chances of severe illness.</p>
Farming	 <p>There are approximately 13 million cattle (including 2.3 million dairy cattle) and 31 million sheep in the UK. The average dairy cow yields just under 5,000L/yr.</p>	 <p>There are approximately 9.6 million cattle (including 1.9 million dairy cattle) and 22.5 million sheep in the UK. The average dairy cow yields about 7,500L/yr.</p>



SCARSDALE ROCK

To the tune of
Crocodile Rock



I remember when Sid was young
Him and Sandy had so much fun
Calving cows and lambing ewes
Had an old Discovery; partnerships of their own
But the biggest kick they ever got
Was doing a thing called the Scarsdale Rock
While the other vets were working round the clock
They were hopping and bopping to the Scarsdale Rock

Well Scarsdale Rocking was something shocking
When their scanners just couldn't keep still
I never knew how Sid got his name and I guess I never will
Oh Lawdy mama those Friday nights
When Sidney wore his wellies tight
And the Scarsdale Rocking was out of sight

La lalalala la lalalala la lalalala la

But the years went by – Markeaton; Pride
Sandy married Jacqui; Sidney stayed with Di
Long nights sweating in a calving shed
Working until sunrise, hardly getting to bed
But they'll never kill the thrills they got
Disbudding calves to the Scarsdale Rock
Burning fast as the hooves went past
We really thought the Scarsdale Rock would last

Well Scarsdale Rocking was something shocking
When their scalpels just couldn't keep still
I never knew how Sid got his name and I guess I never will
Oh Lawdy mama those Friday nights
When Sidney wore his green coat tight
And the Scarsdale Rocking was out of sight

La lalalala la lalalala la lalalala la

I remember when Sid was young
Him and Sandy had so much fun
Happy times at the Scarsdale ball
Danced the night away even though they were on call
But the biggest kick they ever got
Was doing a thing called the Scarsdale Rock
While the other vets were working round the clock
They were hopping and bopping to the Scarsdale Rock

Well Scarsdale Rocking was something shocking
When their syringes just couldn't keep still
I never knew how Sid got his name and I guess I never will
Oh Lawdy mama those Friday nights
When Sidney wore his calving gown tight
And the Scarsdale Rocking was out of sight

La lalalala la lalalala la lalalala la
La lalalala la lalalala la lalalala la
La lalalala la lalalala la lalalala la

With apologies to Bernie Taupin / Elton John

37 years of vetting...

Sid's built up an impressive tally of clinical achievements, and has a particular flair for unusual surgeries. Here are some of his highlights:

- Removing a cyst from a sheep's brain (he's never had so much fun with a Black & Decker!)
- Open heart surgeries on cows with wires (unsuccessful but fascinating!)
- Ovarian cyst/tumour removals
- Amputations of extra limbs of calves and lambs
- Extracting bolus guns from rumens
- Partial laryngotomies on calves (the 'Sid technique' for laryngeal abscesses!)
- Removing slug bait from a rumen or two
- Marsupialising a cow's pelvic abscess
- Thousands of caesareans, calvings and LDAs (Sid introduced the Utrecht left-sided LDA technique to the practice – before this they used two vets, one each side)
- Rectal examinations on approximately one million cattle (no wonder he has shoulder trouble!)
- Altogether, a grand total of 8 years on night duty.

End note

We hope you enjoyed reading this very special, celebratory edition. Normal newsletter services, with the high-class journalism you are accustomed to, will resume in May.

Farm and Equine Centre
Markeaton Lane, Markeaton, Derby DE22 4NH
01332 294929

Alfreton
01773 304900
Pride Veterinary Centre
01332 678333

Allestree
01332 554422
Shelton Lock
01332 700321

Hilton
01283 732999
Stapenhill
01283 568162

Langley Mill
01773 304914
Stretton
01283 565333

Mickleover
01332 518585
Wollaton
0115 697 6586