



Harrowing Times

JANUARY—FEBRUARY 2015

A Happy New Year to all NSTG Members and to the Advertisers in Harrowing Times!

Was your new 2015 membership card enclosed with this issue of Harrowing Times? If it was then you have renewed your membership of NSTG up to 30th September 2015. If not then it is now time for you to do so! Otherwise this edition will be the last you receive and you will lose all the other benefits of being a member of NSTG.

A Very Happy New Year

This Issue:

- Names & contact details for new Committee Members
- Dates for Events and Course for the New Year of 2015
- How to medicate your Animals - or maybe not!
- Looks back on "Sheep husbandry" & "Alpaca felting" courses
- A hen story! Recipes, games and seasonal thoughts
- New advertisers and new traders offering discounts

Deadline for magazine print is the 16th February 2015

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How [Not] to Medicate an Animal.

From time to time we need to get pills down the throats of our animals. Unlike humans, it is not just a question of a spoonful of sugar helping the medicine go down, though sometimes with small children a little bribery (or if we are feeling mean – coercion) is necessary. My children are now large, and it will not be long now before they are finding ways of ramming anti-dementia medication down my throat. But until then, let's think about animals.

Dogs come at the top of the table for ease of medication. All you have to do is wrap the offending pill in a piece of ham and the dog will gulp it down. It will be in its stomach without touching the sides. We used to have a Newfoundland that was as bloody-minded as a camel. If she decided she did not want to move, she would lie down and refuse to budge. She was too heavy to drag and was not impressed by begging or charm. However she too could not resist slices of ham. The solution was to lay a trail of ham to where we wanted her to go. It worked a treat, but cost us dear in packets of ham.

Then there are cats. The solution is very large prawns. Bury the pill in a monster prawn, surround it by lesser prawns, separate the cat from its siblings (who will also want prawns) and wait. Generally we find that this approach works. If it does not, prepare yourself for major injury. The most docile cat, when confronted with an attempt



to make it swallow something it does not want, immediately reverts to a feral state and becomes an electric bundle of fur, rage and claws. Whether you succeed or not you will emerge from the experience with blood-soaked hands. Even wrapping pussy up in a towel is seldom effective. Ours develop supercat strength and are quite capable of breaking out of a mere towel.

By Richard Barr

Which brings me to horses. Half a ton or so of horse cannot be wrapped in a towel, even if there were one big enough to enfold an equine, so we are left with subterfuge. The most obvious solution is to drill a hole in an apple and push the pill far in. With Trudy (who needs regular pills for Cushings) this worked a few times, until she realised what was going on. Then she would carefully chew round the pill, spit it out and finish the apple.

Her next move was to avoid apples altogether. Even though all her life she has dreamed of living in an apple orchard, she made up her mind that she would never eat another apple even if that was the last piece of food on earth.



But she does like carrots. Or did. The same technique worked for a while till she found a way of locating the pill inside the carrot.....

At great expense my wife tracked down some pill sleeves – the tasteless outer covering into which you slip the pill – which is supposed to dissolve in the stomach. For a while this worked but you cannot pull the wool over the eyes of a horse for long. Soon Trudy realised that she was being deceived again. Now we are down to embedding her pill in her bucket of food. So far it seems to work, because she cannot resist her daily dose of Old Faithful, but it will not be long, I am sure, before I look in the empty bucket to find that it is empty, but for one solitary pink pill sitting in the bottom.

Speaking of which. Next time I will deal with taking an animal's temperature.

