

The Wylie Centenary Flyer

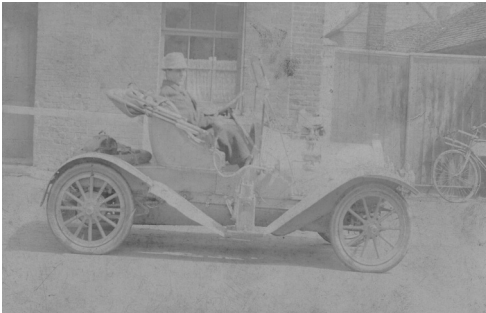
December 2008



Wylies - Past & Future...

This is it – the final Centenary Flyer! How the year has flown by. We started in January with Dick Wylie's 94th birthday, and then in March celebrated Dick and Jean's Diamond Wedding Anniversary!

Our nurses held special nurse clinics with Centenary **free gifts** every month. We also had an extra-special Open Day this summer and a Centenary Ball, both attended by members of the Wylie family. Dick Wylie was the VIP at our Open Day. Like many of you he was interested in our display showing the history of Wylies through the years – it even included a photograph of his father's old car!



His father, Arthur, was born on a farm in Scotland and worked as a grocer before deciding to become a veterinary surgeon. He qualified from Edinburgh University and then moved down south, eventually being able to start his own practice in Grays.

A good qualification was very important in 1908 as there was no welfare state to help folk who fell on hard times. In fact it was exactly 100 years ago that David Lloyd George, Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Liberal government, stated that he was determined to 'lift the shadow of the workhouse from the homes of the poor'. He introduced the Old Age Pensions Act to provide between 1s and 5s per week to people over 70 years old, if their income was less than 12s per week. An additional £16million a year needed to be raised to pay for these pensions and this necessitated increases in taxation. The House of Lords tried to block the proposals, but after a long struggle Lloyd George succeeded. The 1911 Parliament Act then restricted the power of the House of Lords to block any other legislation passed by the House of Commons.

We are proud our practice has been serving the local community for 100 years, but we also know that the reason the practice has survived and grown through the last century is because it has moved with the times and tried to look after its clients as well as their pets. Longevity alone is not enough – after all Woolworths started 99 years ago! Let us know how you think we can improve in 2009 and we'll give you a Wylie Centenary pen!

Editor: Kathy Beasley

Ps. Are you full of Christmas cheer? Spare a thought for the poor wild birds in this cold weather and also stray dogs and cats. Rescue centres always appreciate gifts of food.

1908 – A Year Of Tragedy And Invention!

Many remarkable things happened during the year of 1908, but the most horrific occurred towards the end. On December 28th 1908 Messina in Sicily experienced the worst earth quake ever recorded in Europe, followed by a tsunami. It registered a Richter scale of 7 and killed over 75,000 people. One hundred years on, in the shadow of Mount Etna, 250,000 people now live in the city alone. Hopefully, with modern equipment, the local people should get plenty of warning before the next catastrophe.

In 1908 a housewife, Melitta Bentz of Germany, started experimenting with circles of her children's blotting paper to prepare coffee. She went on to manufacturing coffee pots in 1912. Also the first commercially successful electric toaster was available one hundred years ago in the USA for \$1.45, even though only 10% of US homes were wired for electricity! Prohibition had yet to affect the USA but Iceland banned the sale of intoxicating beverages in 1908 and continued to do so until 1934.

Tea bags and 'teasmades' seem fairly modern inventions but apparently not! Tea bags were pioneered by New York tea and coffee wholesaler Thomas Sullivan in 1908. It started when he sent samples of blends of tea in small hand sewn muslin and china-silk bags. The orders poured in and soon he was packing them by machine. The first 'teasmade' was registered by gunsmith Frank Clarke of Birmingham in 1902. Made of brass and copper, when the alarm clock rang, levers moved causing a match to strike, light an oil fire, heat a kettle, which then tilted pouring boiling water into a teapot!

We do not have such a beautifully complicated device available today, but if you would like a cup of tea or coffee while at our Upminster surgery you are very welcome to help yourself from our machine in the waiting room!

We've Always Employed The Best!

When Arthur Wylie set up his plate in 1908, he, like most general practitioners of the time, worked in a one-man practice. His son, Dick Wylie followed him into the profession and eventually took over his father's surgery. He then went into partnership with Dick Coulton and Eddie Dixon, giving the local pet owners the choice of attending surgeries in Upminster, Hornchurch or Grays. As the practices grew busier assistants were employed, and later Arthur's grandson David Wylie and Hamish Wood also joined the partnership. Some clients will remember these names. Certainly people who worked at Wylies always seem to remember the place with affection. Australian vet, Ian Hobson, is coming over to visit Dick and Jean Wylie in January. He was the first Ozzie to work at Wylies - the first of many from the southern hemisphere! No doubt he will see a lot of changes!

Other past-assistants have gone on to become big names in the UK veterinary world. One was Trevor Turner, who left to start his own practice in Northolt, lectured at veterinary congresses and married a lady famous as a leading light in the Veterinary Nursing Association. Another, Oliphant Jackson, became one of the first experts in 'exotic medicine' and taught many veterinary students the art of handling snakes. Ray Butcher, now our senior partner here, started as a school boy seeing practice. He has since been President of both the BSAVA, (British Small Animal Veterinary Association), and FECAVA, (the European equivalent). He is also a veterinary advisor for WSPA (World Society for the Protection of Animals), and has won many awards worldwide for services to the veterinary profession.
(Below: Dick Wylie & Ray Butcher at our Open Day)

