

The Wylie Centenary Flyer

January 2008



Eating Unwisely Is Nothing New!

Dogs occasionally swallow inedible things that get stuck. Using our endoscope we can retrieve some of them without needing to operate, and recently recovered a sock from a Labrador puppy this way! But a bone caught in the oesophagus is always cause for concern, and an oesophagostomy operation is fraught with hazards, even with modern techniques and antibiotics. However, incredibly, a dog survived such an operation 100 years ago!

An Old English Sheepdog was diagnosed as requiring an oesophagostomy due to its 'great distress, difficult breathing, increased salivation and inability to swallow'. A bone was stuck at the entrance to the chest and removed 'with great difficulty' after administration of an anaesthetic. Although advised a milk diet for a week, the dog stole some solid food on the 3rd day, showed no 'bad effects', and was fully recovered within 2 weeks! Obviously dogs then were just as naughty and determined as our own!

Has your pet eaten too well over Christmas? This month our nurses are giving **free post-Christmas weight checks** for your pets. They have lots of helpful advice and also have a special Centenary gift for you. So – don't delay – book a nurse appointment now!

Editor: *Kathy Beasley*



Wylies's Centenary Celebrations Start Now.....!

It's amazing but true – there has been a Wylie Veterinary Surgery in this area for 100 years!

Arthur Wylie opened his surgery in Grays in 1908. In those days a veterinary surgeon spent most of his time treating farm animals and horses. Very few people with dogs and cats would take them to the surgery for treatment.

Arthur's son, Richard, followed his father into the veterinary profession, qualifying in 1935. Once qualified, Dick Wylie went into partnership with Dick Coulton and Eddie Dixon, so forming the Wylie, Coulton & Dixon practice, with surgeries in Upminster, Hornchurch and Grays. Many of our clients still fondly remember all three men, even though they retired in the 1980's. Sadly Dick Coulton and Eddie Dixon have since passed away, but we are pleased to say that Dick Wylie has just celebrated his 94th birthday on the 1st January this year!

The Wylie veterinary dynasty continued with Dick's son, David, who qualified in 1964, and joined the partnership shortly afterwards. After David's retirement there were no more Wylies to join the 'firm', but the other partners, from Hamish Wood, Ray Butcher and myself, to Andrew Hoey, Richard Doyle and William Lewis, have always been proud to be associated with the Wylie name. It seems only right that the practice should still be the Wylie Veterinary Centre, and during this, our 'centenary year', we will not only be looking back at past achievements, but also to what we can do for you and your pets in the future!

The Good Old Days?!!

Times have certainly changed! In January 1908, 'The Veterinary Record' had an article about the 'vanishing bus horses of London'. Motorised vehicles were starting to be used, and this was going to have serious consequences for everyone associated with the horses – owners, farriers and vets. Another article described an accident involving a flock of sheep and a car, the driver having seen the farmer waving his arms but 'thought he was drunk'!

Scientific studies showed 'beyond doubt' that whooping cough was 'an infectious disease' possibly associated with cats! Meanwhile 'Blackleg' was killing cattle. 'Would it not be possible for V.S. to discover some neutralising agent to be injected into the animals to counteract the deadly effect of the germ?' one reader asked. A request ahead of it's time, especially as prevention then included hanging 'a leg of the affected animal in the chimney'!

Some problems are perennial – colic in horses, tetanus in dogs, horse lameness and foaling mares. Mange was treated with a 2.5% solution of Carbolic Acid. Thank goodness we have effective spot-on preparations now!

Even then there was concern about cruelty associated with the transport of old horses abroad. Also TB was a big problem. No mention of badgers, but TB was widespread in the dairy herds and consumers needed protection. Both sterilisation and pasteurisation were 'troublesome and did not free milk from extraneous matter'!

Consumers complained about 'deposits of hair, mud, excrement' in milk, also 'clippings of dirty finger-nails and fragments of tobacco'! Centrifugation followed by the addition of boric acid or formaldehyde 'in minimal amounts' was not believed to exert 'any deleterious action', but hydrogen peroxide was even safer!

