

## **2009 - 2010 SEASON**

### **Bloodhounds start Summer Hunting**

An Introduction to Hunting Day at Penlan Farm Liveries nr. Cenarth, kicked off the second season of this new pack. A short talk on the history and etiquette of hunting, was followed by a presentation by Miss Jane Tromans in side saddle attire, demonstrating how hunting has changed up to the current day. How to turnout your horse for hunting was provided by Mrs Donna Rooney from Shiral Equestrian Centre and the day ended with hound exercise, giving a number of first time hunters the opportunity to introduce horses to hounds.

Summer Hunting starts with hound training each Saturday at 4.00pm up until Opening Meet on 4th October at the Emlyn Arms Hotel.

#### **Saturday 5th September 2009**

The opportunity of hound training gave mounted followers a chance to ride with hounds and prepare horses for the forthcoming season, while foot followers got a first view of the hounds and home bred pups to be entered for the new season.

Master Robert Thomas put the hounds onto fields off Adpar, to hunt the scent laid by lady runner, Tina Roderick. With the late afternoon sun causing the scent to rise, it was the bloodhounds within the pack that led. The slower pace allowed the field the experience of hunting with hounds across open fields before dropping down into Cwmdu. With hounds hunting best in the shade everyone could hear the long, curled notes from the bloodhounds and watch some fine displays of jumping from ladies Mandy Davies and Cathy Nunn.

Summer Hunting continues with the next Meet at Bigni Cross Country course nr. Mwnt on Sat 19th September at 4.00pm, with kind permission of Mr and Mrs R Linfoot. This should provide followers a clear view of hounds hunting and give horses a number of obstacles to jump in pursuit.

#### **Saturday 12th September 2009**

Hunting across open fields between Cardigan Island and Mwnt, in preparation for Opening Meet, with all the new entry now hunting, the pack of six couple strong went well, despite the dry conditions. The pack worked hard, however, to follow the scent, laid by Paul Davies, amongst deep bracken, before coming back across open fields at Nant-y-Croi farm. The riding good to firm, provided the field with some excellent gallops, with a display of controlled horsemanship from Tracy Huggins, in the backdrop of Cardigan Bay.

A warm farmhouse welcome lay back at Nant-y-Croi, with bacon butties and cups of tea, and a few moments to relive the highlights of the hunting.

Meet on the 26th September is at Mountain Gate, Crymych, at 4.00pm . Opening Meet - 4th October at Emlyn Arms Hotel, 12 noon.

#### **Saturday 19th September 2009**

The last two Saturdays hunting with the West Wales Farmers Bloodhounds have proved particularly purposeful in preparing hounds, horses and riders for the forthcoming season. With Mandy Davies taking the drag on her stunning grey mount, hounds could be heard screaming in full voice through woodland and up over fields to the pure pleasure of both field and foot followers.

Of note is the aptitude and pace of these hounds and how quickly the newly entered pups are to learn from the more seasoned hounds.

Of the field, there was one young rider, Sam Forester, who shone out. Having just taken to riding and under the gentle guidance of mum, Julie, kept pace with the field crossing country and jumping everything before him. Certainly a young rider to look out for in the future.

Saturday 19th, saw the Hunt head out from Bigni Cross Country course, after a cheering round behind hounds, over the full course, kindly provided by Dick and Jenny Linfoot. More experience of jumping to be had, perhaps by Master Robert Thomas before Opening Meet!

The dry evening air, did not help the scent laid by husband and wife team, David and Nikki Rabjohn of Emlyn Running Club, who gave the hounds some challenging hunting over the course before moving onto adjacent farmland. Much to the joy of the field, hounds hunted the laid scent over some 190 acres of stubble fields, separated by open ditches, with plenty of galloping behind hounds in the back drop of the Irish Sea and some outstanding views of the Mid Wales coastline. It was not until the evening cooled and the sun sunk behind Cardigan Island that the pack could be heard in full cry, providing some thrilling hunting for the field and viewing by foot followers.

The benefits of hound training over varied country and terrain, with mounted riders, in the last few weeks of summer have been many particularly in getting the hunt ready for Opening Meet, on Sunday, 4th October at the Emlyn Arms Hotel, Newcastle Emlyn at 12 noon.

### Sunday 29th September

Mountain Gate, Crymych, gave both foot and mounted followers the opportunity to see the young pack work in unison.

The scent laid by Mr Geraint Davies on his family owned horse, gave hounds a comprehensive hunt of the mountain. Having grown up on this part of the Preseli Mountains, Geraint was able to delve into the true coverts of the mountain, presenting hounds and horses with challenges of terrain and orientation. The sheer vastness of the mountain was available to all and the view of hounds running in full cry matched the awesome beauty this part of the world provides. It is unique and one felt privileged to be part of it. Many of the mounted field came back with a feeling of having been on top of the world.

A warm welsh hospitality was received at the end of the evening, with home made cawl and welsh cakes to revive the senses,

## Opening Meet, 4th October 2009

### The Emlyn Arms, Newcastle Emlyn



Joint Masters of the Hunt, Mr Robert Thomas & Mrs Julie Hughes



Graham & Angela Coupar welcoming the Mayor, Councillor Lewis & the Lady Mayoress



Charity efforts endorsed by Mayor of Newcastle Emlyn

Mayor, Peter Lewis spoke of the importance of keeping the traditions of hunting alive in a modern form, using the centre of town as a focal point of the community and supporting local charities.

Master, Robert Thomas spoke about working closely with farmers to keep the land open for traditions, as old as Hywel Dda.

Leaving from the Emlyn Arms Hotel, the local pack of blood hound and otter hounds, followed by a strong field of mainly local riders, with some, travelling from as far a field as Port Talbot, headed up the valley of Cwmdru, hunting through a piece of countryside steeped in hunting history.

The field were presented with some 70 jumps and obstacles across valley, river, field and woodland, over 10 miles, proficiently run by Tina Roderick. A taste of the day can be viewed on [emyr online.co.uk](http://emyr.online.co.uk)

Hounds held the line and spoke well all day, impressing even the old school hunters. It was, however the sight of the father and sons, sisters, mothers, sons and daughters hunting with hounds, that truly made this a family day out



Further photos of the day can be viewed on [emyr online.co.uk](http://emyr.online.co.uk)

### Blaendyffryn Hall Meet - 11th October 2009

A return of Hounds to the Hall, not seen in the last 17 years.

It was a privilege to be greeted by the residents of Blaendyffryn Hall and to be so warmly welcomed.

The local farming community opened up fields, tracks and valleys much to the pleasure of the field. Although few, the field enjoyed the variety of crossing the terrain, this local area provided.

The drag, laid by farmer - Geraint Davies, proved a real sport. With his working knowledge of how hounds hunt, the field had a true feel of this relatively young pack working. The exuberance of the younger hounds in the pack, particularly the deep voice of the bloodhounds could be heard, more so on the damp grass and foliage, than on the open woodland tracks, while the Otter hounds with their love for hunting in water held the pack together along river and through streams. True to the laid scent, there was plenty of opportunity to see hounds working and in full cry over areas of Henllan and Penwrhillan.

A big thank you to the local landowners for allowing the hunt over their land. A donation of £200 from the Opening Meet will be made to the Mayor of Newcastle Emlyn, Councilor Peter Lewis's chosen charity.

### 18th OCTOBER - CROES-LLAN, FFOSTRASOL

Autumn hunting continued from this ideal venue, where the Vintage Show is held each year. A number of local hunting enthusiasts watched veteran runner, Gordon Ormes from the Cardigan Running Club, give Bloodhounds a first class run, dropping down through Cwmiar, all the way to Nant-y-Constable, through valley, forestry and field. Hounds stayed true to the scent of the runner, with newcomers enjoying the experience of hunting with hounds.

The highlight of the day, however, was some open galloping, where the field kept pace with hounds, while negotiating hunt jumps.

Wednesday 27th October is the Children's turn to hunt with hounds. A proper Children's Meet from the family home of the Davies, Fronlas Isaf, providing for lead rein and more capable jockeys to experience safe hunting on the mountain.

Half Term week ends with an invite to hunt from the Penrallt Hotel, Aberporth, with hunting over land not hunted by a mounted pack in over 20 years.



## AUTUMN HALF TERM EVENTS

### Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2009 - Butcher's Arms, Tegryn

Hunting on the Freni Range of mountains in North Pembrokeshire, the Bloodhounds met at the Butcher's Arms, Tegryn, to hunt around the Freni Fach and Freni Fawr.

With some of the most stunning views across Wales, the field had a warm and clear day to hunt with this unique pack of hounds. True welsh hospitality sent us off towards the Preseli Mountains, a range separating Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion, where Wales meets "little England beyond Wales". In these mountains many a huntsman, hound and herdsman has met his match. Pioneering a new breed of hunting, the excitement, vastness and country, where only the best hunters stayed with the pack was offered on the day.

The Hunt was pleased to have their runner, Mark Kallenberg, back, after his 100 miles in 24 hours endurance run. Mark teased and challenged the hounds over the terrain the mountains provided, with a lot of foil interfering with the scent, particularly on the first line. However, the accuracy this pack is able to achieve when hunting the laid scent, proved the quality of their scenting abilities.

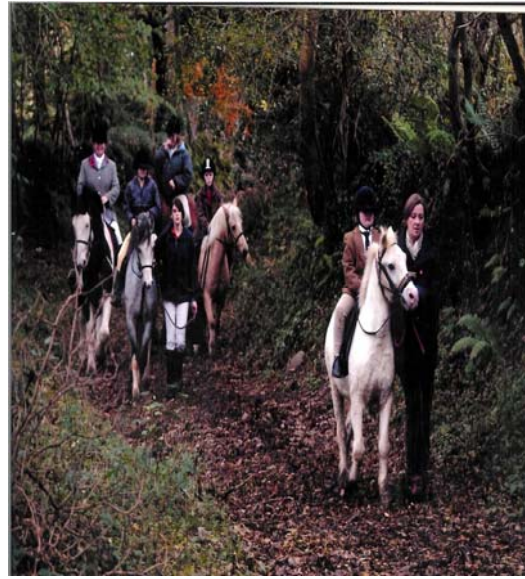
The unusually large turn out of Foot followers, were given a first class view and sound of hounds hunting this unique piece of country, with the field in hot pursuit using every skill of horsemanship to cover the mountain.



### 27th OCTOBER - FRONLAS ISAF, CRYMYCH

#### The Childrens' Meet.





*Photograph compliments of Anthony Reynolds*

*Master Robert Thomas and 1st Whip Sam Forrester-Evans bring the Hounds off the mountain*

### Children meet Goblin - the Otter Hound

This Autumn Half Term saw the West Wales Farmers Bloodhounds hold their Children's Meet at the family farm of the Davies - Fronlas Isaf, Crymych.

Heading through fields to Mountain Gate, First Whip, 10 year old, Sam Forrester-Evans led hounds onto the Mountain, followed by a field as young as four year old Carys Evans, riding Beauty.

The day was designed to give children a good experience of hunting, with an explanation of what was happening at each stage and to understand that the product of good hunting is not always the kill.

Tina Roderick laid short lines for, Field Master, Julie Forrester to give children a true feel of mountain hunting. Using the natural terrain of the mountain, more experienced riders were able to join the chase and gallop, jump ditches, dykes and stone walls, whilst lead reins and less experienced riders were able to watch and join in where able.

The five and half couple of Bloodhounds and Otter hounds hunted the lines speaking well to give all the children the experience of hunting at close hand.

This style of hunting allows young riders to develop confidence in crossing country, in a well supervised setting, negotiating natural obstacles that may never be found on cross country courses.

Children attended as far a field as Tregaron and it was good to see so many young and new faces enjoying the day. Hopefully, these children will take away an experience that will make them want to return and some to hunt in the future, to continue the tradition they are fighting hard to preserve.

Whips for the day were Emily Hughes and Sam Forrester who had been invited to assist the Master, on the day.

Miss Hughes's, antecedents are from Northern Ireland, with family heritage in hunting going back many generations of Celts, particularly Scottish. Already showing a natural instinct of hunting hounds, this may be someone to watch in the future.

Master Forrester, a natural sportsman, particularly when it comes to riding his pony in the hunting field, took the role of First Whip.

The day ended with bangers and beans back at the farmhouse where children were presented with their hunting certificates.

The West Wales Farmers Bloodhounds is the only bloodhound pack hunting in Wales and are committed to their charity work and as last year all the money from the Children's Meet will be donated to the Noah's Ark Appeal.

Last season the Hunt donated over £1600 to local charities and good causes.



### 1ST NOVEMBER - PENRALLT HOTEL, ABERPORTH

It was a privilege to bring the Hunt back to this particular venue, after many decades. A beautiful picturesque, family home now available to all. Steeped in a traditional Welsh setting, offering everything to the visitor - high quality accommodation for the romantic to the family, great food, views and hospitality. As for the hunting?

The field, after a welcome stirrup cup and hors d'ouvres, headed out towards the coast, on this rather stormy morning. With the rain and wind abating, the field hunted the first line. Hounds could be heard over the sound of waves and coughs, as they screamed over stubble fields and open ditches.

Mark Kallenberg, returning after competing, in a gruelling 100 mile run over 24 hours, a fortnight earlier, presented a series of lines to test even the best of packs. Hounds worked the laid scent, Mark skilfully run, trying to outwit this unique pack, much to the delight of foot followers, who got a first class view of hounds casting and in full cry.

The field experienced the chase at full gallop, before taking a slower pace around Mwnt and hunting through farmland all the way to Ferwig, then turning around, to hunt lines all the way back to Aberporth.

A days hunting for, which a second horse could be called for, much to the delight of the stalwart hunters in the field - perhaps next year!

## 8th NOVEMBER - HENLLAN

### *Listen to our interview with BBC Radio*

On Sunday 8th November, the Bloodhounds received a warm welcome back by the residents of Cartref Residential Home in Henllan. A minutes silence was observed and donation from the day went to the Poppy Appeal. BBC Radio Wales attended to capture this new and pioneering sport. Local reporter, Tim Richards interviewed some followers and did an in-depth analysis of the position of drag hunting in the countryside.

Some followers on the day had travelled from as far away as Hay- on- Wye and Brecon to experience this unique style of hunting.

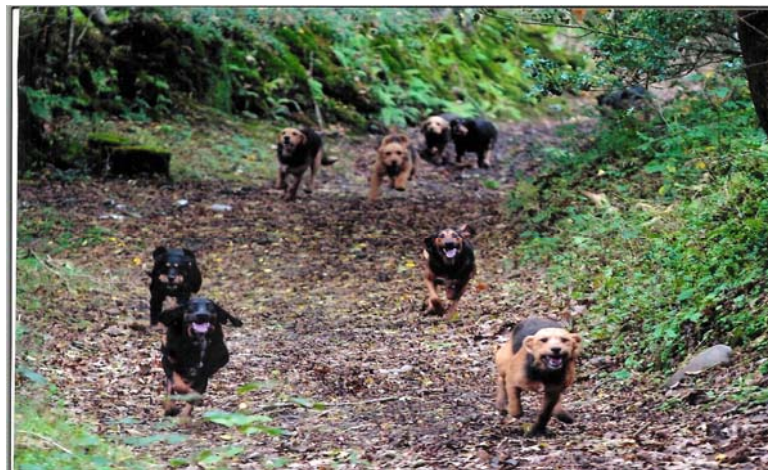
Hounds hunted a piece of forestry, giving the field a first class run towards Penwhrillan. Crossing the main road the field hunted from Trebedw, to a within a few fields short of Horeb, before dropping down through Bangor Teifi and back to Henllan.

## Sunday 15th November

Saw a revival of the Hunt Meet back in Drefach Felindre.

The Bloodhounds gladly took up the offer to find somewhere to hunt, which was not easy, as this part of the country had not been hunted for so long. Hounds therefore, took a long hack to Gilwen Farm, where the first line gave a superb view of the flooded Teifi Valley.

The use of cow tracks allowed the horses to stay off pasture as it was so wet. The third and forth lines took the field into dense forestry, with foxes frequently crossing the line but hounds did not lift their heads from the drag scent. Emerging from the dense cover just short of the parish of Capel Iwan, the field somewhat battered and bruised but replete hacked back to the meet, with home being blown at 16.05



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### Bloodhounds return to the Pelican Inn at the centre of Newcastle Emlyn, 22nd November.

Saw the hunting day start early as usual, but with a hint of stardom for Masters and a few followers, being featured on Country Focus on BBC Radio Wales at 7.30 am. The aim being to give the rest of Wales an insight to this new style of hunting and raising its' profile to the general public.

The weeks rain had saturated farmland, with the Teifi and its tributaries breaching banks to flood many fields, so providing a days hunting, was a challenge for Master Robert Thomas.

The family run business of Paned Un and the Pelican Inn, in the centre of Newcastle Emlyn, provided a warm welcome to this local pack, with monies from the cawl being donated to the Penny Farthing Appeal.

Hunting lines were re- routed and the field crossed farms, keeping emphatically to headlands. Runner, Ms Tina Roderick, ran similar lines to the Opening Meet hunt, just six weeks hence, but water logged conditions restricted the field to a few gorse hedges and open ditches. The

going in the woods was unaltered, with scent holding well and hounds in full cry, un-phased by the conditions.

Boxing Day Meet finds the hunt back in Cardigan. Everyone welcome, with the donation going to the Mayor's charity.

### **29TH NOVEMBER - MYNACHLOG-DDU VILLAGE**

Hunting on the Preseli's always provides the perfect opportunity to see the hounds hunting and in full view you can observe the runner, skilfully try to outwit the pack. The pleasure of watching these hounds hunt him down, casting where the scent has been lifted and re-laid, twisted and curved around rocks and hillside, otter hounds speaking as they pick up the scent around the outcrops of rocks and bloodhounds scenting him on the air can be seen over a distance of up to a mile.

The previous weeks rain had made the going soft and the field small, but the afternoon opened up to sunshine, although a bitter wind on top. The field headed out from Caregwald towards the top of the Preseli's

Choughs and kites flew above our heads and as we climbed towards the top, views of the Gower Peninsula and the three counties of Mid West Wales could be seen along with dramatic rainbows, as rain showers moved around the mountains, not spilling a drop on where we were hunting.

Gorse bushes, streams and large rocks were jumped as the field came across them in their attempt to keep up with hounds. The couple of bogs were skilfully crossed following sheep and pony tracks with special mention to Liz Howell riding her loyal mare Elle, demonstrating strength and accuracy as they stepped and jumped up over freshly cut banks and streams.

The last line took the field back down and out of the wind. Hounds could be heard screaming over the catch grass and through gorse as they shortened the distance between them and the runner. Home was blown at 3.20 pm and the day finished with a welcome bowl of home made cawl from Mary Thomas.

### **PENLLWYNDU PUBLIC HOUSE, NR LLECHRYD - 6TH DECEMBER**

A warm welcome for the return of the Hunt to this popular local pub was received by the Masters and hunt supporters from Landlord Ryan and the field slowly moved off.

More rain and flooding had restricted some of the areas to be hunted and the field met knee deep water in parts, all adding to the thrill of hunting. Watching the otter hounds swim whilst hunting was awesome and their ability to speak too, encouraged the bloodhounds to follow. Once through the flooded lanes the hunt opened up across fields, in full view of Bleanpant Mansion, before heading through woodland, with fallen trunks providing some optional jumping.

Home was blown at 3.40pm and everyone returned to sit down to a full Sunday lunch, to be highly recommended.

### **COOPER'S ARMS, NEWCASTLE EMLYN - 13TH DECEMBER**

The donation from the West Wales Farmers Bloodhounds Opening Meet of 2009 went to the Mayor of Newcastle Emlyn - Peter Lewis, who chose the King George V Playing Fields and who received the cheque from the Children of the Hunt.

Present are the Mayor Peter Lewis, Chairlady of the King George V Playing Fields receiving the cheque for £200 from Sam Forester Evans and Dewi Evans of the hunt.

Graham and Angie Coupar, supporters of the hunt, coordinated the presentation, held at the Cooper's Arms, Newcastle Emlyn before seeing the hunt head out to Gilwen Farm. Having

covered the same country only a month prior the landscape had changed from a flooded river valley to a winter landscape. The overnight frost had thawed making scenting conditions poor and hampered by manure covered fields, hounds worked hard to hold the line but spoke well.

Moving onto nearby woodland the field had a sparkling run of just over 1 mile behind hounds in full cry. Mark Kallenberg gave hounds some challenging hunting as the drag was lifted and placed amongst trees, providing the field with further banks and obstacles to negotiate. By the end of the day the field had covered 8 and a half miles, and had the option of 60 fences.

Masters are now arranging the January to April Meet Card, with January focusing on small days, meeting at or in villages that have not been hunted from in many years.

**To open the new year, the New Years Day Meet will be at the Ffostrasol Arms, Ffostrasol.**

**20TH DECEMBER - MOUNTAIN GATE, CRYMYCH CALLED OFF DUE TO ICE AND SNOW**