

Cynlas Newsletter no. 1



Welcome to our first Cynlas newsletter - so much has happened since we moved in at the end of June. Our first day in the farm was idyllic, we waved goodbye to the removal men, went for a paddle in the stream, then lay on the grass in blazing sunshine taking in the fantastic view and the lovely countryside sounds.

Next day, a bit of reality set in, it was raining, the electrics weren't working, and we had enough boxes to fill 3 houses, our lovely electrician told us we needed a complete rewire, so we stopped unpacking, while he got on with it. We were initially without any hot water, but as we were missing Glastonbury this year we felt we were there in body as well as spirit.

First project was to get some chickens - so off to Rhosgadfan, to a lovely place where we were invited to pick the ones we wanted, but as soon as one was put in the box, another would jump out again, so we went



home with 4 beautiful, but possibly random hens. They very quickly went from timid birds huddling

in their house, to free ranging over the garden, to house birds who come in whenever we leave a door open, and get stuck into whatever's on the table.

We brought some vegetable plants with us from Twickenham, so we put our fab Woolworths boxes through their next reincarnation as raised beds, with a special Welsh twist of slate for drainage. Raided all the local garden centres for as many grow bags as we could fit in the car, and voila, our instant veg patch.



Flushed with success from our newly found skills of poultry farming, it was time for pigs. We'd had a productive time at the North Wales show, and met a local rare breed pig farmer, who had some piglets coming up for sale soon, and then in passing, also heard of some saddlebacks who were fully weaned, and available straightaway. We had talked for ages about which breed to go for, but this seemed too perfect an opportunity to turn down. We designed a pig ark with plenty of room for growth, and prudent use of 8'x4' board, then sourced some exterior ply from a



local timber merchant who delivered the next day, and gave Harry and I a lift up the hill on our way home from school. The ark was built in a day, but without

Noah's biblical weather.

We decided on electric fencing, so the pigs could easily be moved around the place, to get on with their job of rotorvating the land for next years veg. Several trips to the agricultural shop (which can fulfill all retail therapy requirements), and we had built a hopefully secure and safe home for our new arrivals. Off to Corwen, on the beautiful drive through llanberis path, to a lovely small holding, and the most adorable pigs you've



ever seen. After we'd chosen (going up from 2 to 3 pigs because they were so

beautiful) we went through the noisiest transfer of beast to boot you can possibly imagine: the minute they were in the car with some food they settled down as if nothing had happened. Back home we conducted a military operation to ensure they went straight from the car into the pen, but they still managed to slip out the side. Most bizarrely one of them jumped through the fence, got a shock, but then chose to jump back in again! Next morning I was off to London on the 5.16, so I was out at 4.30 in my suit and wellies making sure they were all OK - they were not impressed being woken up to be counted.

Meanwhile inside the house things were going downhill, with



rewiring chaos. The internet had finally

arrived, so all the technology joined the fight for the two working sockets in the house. It felt like somewhere between a festival, the Victorian Farm and student digs.



Onwards and upwards, it was my birthday, and I was bought a riding lesson. We went off to the stables where I

was given Wizard, while Harry had Boogie. When I overcame my nerves I really enjoyed it, definitely a good alternative to cycling on these hills, and a great vantage point for really seeing the place. But the pain when I got off was indescribable: I was totally unable to move from the step, not quite a Jilly Cooper heroine yet then.

Farm toys

Have to mention Poppy - Alfie's red Beetle who we bought from Rhyl, via eBay and is being fully restored, as a summer holiday project.



Racing round in the mini tractors is our favourite afternoon game.



Hwyl, Mary Paul Alfie and Harry x

The chickens: SteveMcChicken, Columbinas, Schumacher and Isabella and the Pigs: Spotty, Stripy, Blacky, Maple and Oak

Coming soon - Mary enters her cheese straws in the Anglesey show, we have a go at hatching some eggs in our new incubator, and maybe Poppy finally gets her engine back