

A Year of Horses, Friends, Deadlines & Airports

Words and photography by Samantha Mattocks (unless stated)

During the course of the year, I am lucky enough to be able to visit some of the leading Arabian farms in the world, as well as several shows and training centre open days. When it comes to writing the reports, there is not always time or space for me to go into as much detail as I would perhaps like to, so in this special end of year edition, I share with you some of my memorable horses and moments from 2012, as well as the people that went into making these times so very special. I hope you enjoy reading about them, as much as I will enjoy reliving them.

January

I spent a wonderful Christmas break with family and friends and on 3 January, it was time to head back into the office and start planning the year ahead. As anyone in the northern hemisphere knows, with the short, dark days it can be difficult to be motivated at this time of year but the 'Tamini's' are an excellent team and we all encourage each other along. In the back of our minds, we have that the first deadline of the year is tight as on 23 January, I will fly just under 11,500 miles to the other side of the world for my Australasian adventure. My journey will take me away for a month, and I will land right on another deadline, so with that in mind, we push on and put the February edition together in record time. I did, however, have a visitor to start the year and that was Sean Johnson from Australia. Sean had lived in the UK for several years, working as a teacher, but has now returned to his homeland to work there. Sean had made a visit to the UK over the Christmas/New Year period to catch up with friends he hadn't been able to see before he left and it was lovely to have him here for 24 hours and to share our horses with him. Like us, Sean and his family specialise in Crabbet lines and it was great to spend time with him. Back to the deadline and the cover horse for this edition was Shanghai EA, the lovely WH Justice son that just missed out on a European Triple Crown title in Paris at the end of 2011. With his ribbons and garlands, Shanghai makes a handsome cover and as he goes off to press, my parents take me down to Heathrow Airport so I can head to Auckland, New Zealand, for my first stop on my Antipodean adventure. Rhodium Arabians is the focus of my first few days Down Under. Located near the little town of Waiuku and the captivating Karioitahi



Beach, Rhodium Arabians is owned and founded by Fanus and Ria Crous. They have a wonderful open day every few years and it is really



Rhodium Stud

lovely to be back among their classic straight Egyptian lines. The foals that I fell in love with during my first visit in 2009 are now of breeding age themselves and I am already planning my 2014 visit so that I can see the results of these breedings and the next generations of RNZ-



RNZ Sphebe

Danna Lingard



prefixed Arabians.

RNZ Sphene (ex Tallelee Mahrousha) is my personal favourite at the farm. She wowed international visitors at the first open day and she has grown into a beautiful young mare. Sphene is sired by the impressive black/bay beauty, Simeon Saraaf (Anaza Bey



Ansata Nile Pharaoh with Rhodium Farm Manager Hugh Kelly.

Danna Lingard



Rhodium deer

Iemhotep x Ansata Misty Nile). Exciting times lie ahead for this stud and they are well worth the visit. Their story appeared in the March edition of *The Arabian Magazine*.

From there, I went on to visit Gerzanne Stud, found in Te Puke, kiwi country. The stud celebrated 45 years of breeding in 2012 and is owned and founded by Sue Spratt, and run with her good friend Bev Jones. I love Gerzanne for many reasons, just one of which is the wonderful garden there. Busloads of tourists used to visit and

that Sue created it is easy to see why as the paths wind down and around the property and you can lose yourself in the beauty of the place, and at several of the turns, you can see their straight Egyptian Arabians grazing gracefully in the background. Remembering the beauty of their property, I ensured that, for this visit, I brought my decent camera with me and I captured many wonderful images from their garden. Sue and Bev also took me to Newdick's Beach, a Maori beach just near to them, and again, I captured



RNZ Forizego (Ansata Nile Pharaoh x RNZ Sphene), taken two days after his birth earlier this year.

SP Crocus



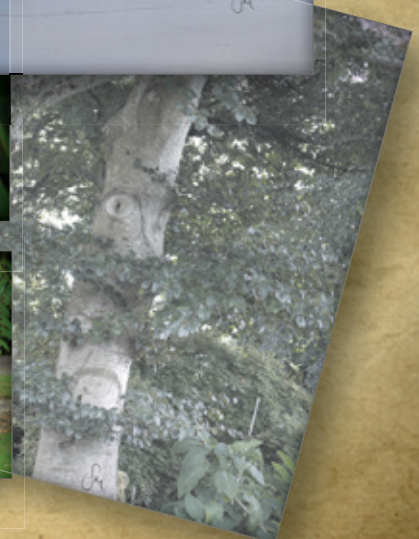
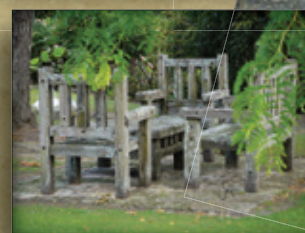
SS Seth

Shahh x Simeon Setavi by Simeon Sadik), a seven-year-old stallion that has proven to be a wonderful foundation stallion for the then-revitalised Rhodium Arabians. The Saraaf daughters at the farm have all gone on to excel and are now being crossed with the stud's superstar sires, Rajah KA (Makhnificent KA x Rahimah KA) and Ansata Nile Pharaoh (Ansata



Rajah KA

Danna Lingard



some beautiful images of the seascape.

Amid enjoying the horses, including some truly ethereal grey mares



Simeon Setami



Samantha and Stephen during the birthday celebrations



Celebrating Samantha's birthday at Gerzanne Stud with friends including Bev Jones (second right) and Sue Spratt (right).

and their young foal SS Seth (TF Fezzan x SS Bahiya), who is certainly enchanting and cheeky in equal measures, I celebrated my birthday at Gerzanne and Sue and Bev ensured that I had a memorable day. This culminated in a sumptuous dinner cooked by Sue and it was a wonderful evening and a great way for me to spend my birthday in spite of being so far from home and my family. Thank you both again so much. Their story was captured in the October edition.

February

The day after my birthday, I had a full day of travelling. I said a sad farewell to Gerzanne early in the morning and Sue and Bev dropped me in Te Puke where I caught the bus to Auckland airport, giving me a chance to enjoy some of the breathtaking New Zealand countryside. From there, I had my Australian visa arranged and I boarded a flight to the Gold Coast. The Australian part of my adventure had begun!

At Gold Coast Airport, I was picked up by Kelli and Michael Greene of



The mighty Brisbane River.

The Palms Arabians. Their home in Queensland is found at the foot of the Tambourine Mountain and I would be lying if I said that I wasn't worried about spiders, snakes and bugs. After the cool of Waiuku and the pleasant sunshine of Te Puke, Queensland was hot and steamy! I was

sister, and quickly found a feline friend to cuddle there!

I was only at the farm for one full day, and Kelli took me to Brisbane on the Thursday morning. This area was devastated by flooding in 2011 and as we went down the Brisbane River, the longest river in this part of the state, you could still see desolation on the riverbanks. With the width of the river in places, and the fast current, it was all too easy to imagine how horrific it must have been for residents when it broke its banks. Australia suffers from perhaps the most extreme weather than anywhere else in the world and a vicious circle of drought – fire – flood – seems to go around. In spite of this, the Aussies are among the friendliest people in the world and they will do anything to make you feel welcome into their home.

That evening, the Greene's kindly threw a birthday party for me along with Kelli's parents, Colleen and Doug Rutherford. The highlight has to be the possum that lives in the roof of Donna's bungalow, which had a baby with it. At regular intervals during the evening, the possums would reach down and take bread and other items from our outstretched hands. It was a magical moment indeed and one that I will treasure!

Before I left the next day, Kelli asked me who my favourite horse at the farm was as they wanted me to have a photograph taken. The 2010



colt The Palms Maa'zerati (Maa'zooz x St Cloud Park Mona) was my immediate answer, a beautiful grey with the sweetest temperament. Kelli used her lovely photographic skills to take a lovely image of 'Mazza' and



Kelli Greene

Samantha and The Palms Maa'zerati.

Saba Arabians. This is another favourite place of mine to visit, and this time I got to see their new property at Bilpin, and it was great to spend time with Louise and Glenn once more.

By the time I returned to Deb's that afternoon, good friend Jennifer Saunders had arrived; poor Ron now had a houseful of horse-mad women to contend with!

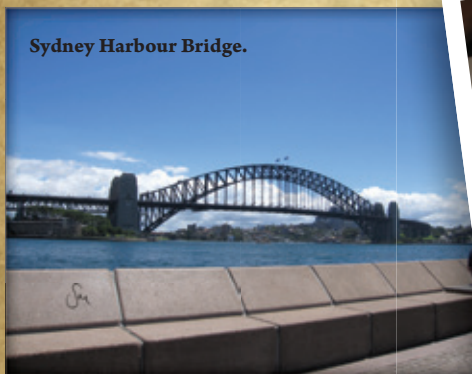
On Monday, I was dropped at Sydney airport as the East Coast Championships judge Joe Polo arrived and from there, I flew up to Taree in possibly the smallest plane I have ever been on! My destination was Eagleridge Arabians, owned by Jenni and Paul Ogden, and Jenni was there to meet me.

Flooding is something that affects their farm greatly and just two days before, the stables had been flooded. Arriving at Firefly – a place I have always wanted to visit if just for the name – it was something of a relief to see that the waters had descended.

I finally got to meet a stallion I have wanted to see for years: Afrikah ERA (Sanadik El Shaklan x Arabian Park Egyptian Echo), and he did not disappoint. Handsome, exotic, good-natured, correct, he is all that many of us want in a stallion and it was wonderful to have finally met this gorgeous boy.

Gloria Lanigan currently lives with Jenni and it was great to be able to spend some time with this fascinating lady as well as meet Colleen Jackson, a breeder from Western Australia. The presentation of Eagleridge Arabians the following morning was very enjoyable and there is real depth to Jenni's programme.

I was joined for the presentation by



Sydney Harbour Bridge.



Birthday cake with Glenn and Louise

I and without further ado, it was time for me to head down to Sydney, New South Wales.

Arriving in the pouring rain, my friend and host for the next two weeks was there to pick me up. Deb Barrett of Shiraz Arabians in the Kurrajong Hills kindly took care of me on my 2010 visit and she and her husband, Ron, were generous enough to offer me their home as a base for this visit. Shiraz Arabians is home to their lovely homebred stallion Magneeto (Magnum Forty Four x Gemallah) and this year, Deb showed me his lovely colt foal out of Simeon Sudar. He just needed a name!

Another birthday party – on Saturday, and shared with Ron – was followed by a birthday lunch with Louise Cordina and Glenn North of



Joe Polo was the international judge at the East Coast Championships.

SWD Images

breeder Trish Houston, who lives in the Hunter Valley. After my ride back down to Sydney fell through, Trish very kindly stepped in and after watching the horses, she drove me down to the Hunter Valley for an overnight stop before continuing to Mulawa Arabian Stud the following day.

Trish, however, had a treat lined up for me and after a glass of sparkling shiraz – it has to be tried to be believed – she took me out into the Aussie bush for a ride on her straight Egyptian mare Suraya Al Saba (Thaqib Al Nasser x Ses Bint Fabo), the first of Thaqib's children born in Australia. This was the first time I had been horse-riding for 12 years and I thoroughly loved every moment of it – thank you Trish so much for reminding me just what I've been missing all these years! And thanks again to you and Rick for a great evening.

The next day, Trish and her daughter Haley dropped me at Mulawa Stud



The beautiful mare Karmaa.

Stuart Vesty

for a wonderful few hours wandering quietly among the horses with Scott Benjamin. Karmaa (Kaborr x AN Marieta) is a 1986 mare and is so ethereal. Of all the horses at Mulawa, Karmaa is permanently on my



East Coast Finals Night.

'must see' list and it was lovely to go down to some of the bottom paddocks and give most of a bag of apples and carrots to her! Trish and Haley kindly collected me and took me, via Saba Arabians Galston farm, back to Deb's home in the



Giacomo trying to keep water out of the stables at Simeon Stud during the huge storm we experienced there.



Kurrajong Hills.

The next day was Thursday 9 February and was the start of the East Coast Championships. The show was covered in depth in the March edition, but the classes of the East Coast Cup have stayed with me all year. To be at a show – yes, one where people are 'captive' on the showground – and to see all the halter people return to the ringside in the evening to watch

the ridden classes was something very special indeed; I wish that this happened in more places around the world. These classes easily had over 20 horses in each and it was quite nail-biting at times. EBL Juliett (Jive Magic x Stirling Scarlett) and Phantom Menace (Gumbanero x Roc) were two derivatives that really stood out for me, with EBL Juliett also taking a starring role in the halter classes. Australia really does do 'Anglo and part-bred' Arabians well and all really were a joy to watch.

Mention must also be made here of the super-talented artist, Tara Brown, who I admire tremendously. I must confess that for the first three hours at the show, Tara and I just stood and chatted, admired the horses, looked at her latest works, and then said a reluctant goodbye. Tara is always wonderful and a very inspirational artist.

The day after the championships ended, we had two visits scheduled – to Simeon Stud for a private display and then to Saba Arabians for their presentation. However, as we sat enjoying lunch at Simeon Stud, a huge storm rolled in and as we were in the bottom barns half an hour later, the heavens opened. I have never known rain like it and as Joe, Marion

Richmond, Tracey Garrison, Italian trainer/handler Giacomo Capacci, Deb, Jennifer and I stood in the

barn, the trickle of water coming down the hill turned into a stream and then a small river! Giacomo valiantly tried to keep the water out of the stable of Simeon Seis (Imperial Madheen x Simeon Se), who had been named Reserve Yearling Filly Champion the night before, but the torrent of water meant that he was fighting a losing battle.

While the impact on Simeon was minimal, the rain meant that the presentation at Saba Arabians sadly had to be cancelled. Such a shame as I truly love to watch their horses but we still made the short journey from Simeon to Saba and we settled down inside to

enjoy an afternoon with Glenn, Louise,

Deb, Jennifer, Joe, Trish, Haley and Dianna De Silva, of Rothbury Park Arabians, home of the black stallion Sobek (Asfour x Harts on Fire), and David Marshall of Holly Farm NZ in New Zealand's South Island. Amazingly, the sun came out just long enough for the arena to dry enough that, as the sun began to set, we lit the torches around the arena and enjoyed a mini-presentation of some of Saba's best.

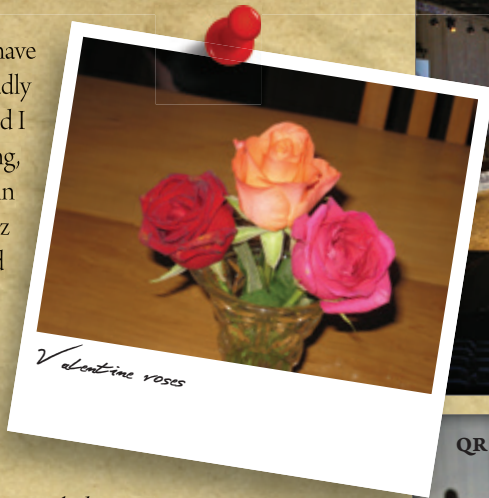
To pick out just one horse is difficult, but I never tire of seeing Thaqib Al Nasser (Ansata Halim Shah x Imperial Madanah) and this desert-like straight Egyptian stallion has truly stamped his mark on their breeding programme. He is always the perfect ending, although Louise did take me quietly to see Orashan's (Messaoud x Ora) last son, Orion Al Saba (ex J'adore Madinah) as a small treat for me as I loved that late, great stallion so much.

Fairview Arabians was my next stop, for dinner the following night, and again torrential rain marked our journey, so much so that Deb had to pull over and stop driving at one point. This is a very poignant



place for me to visit as this was where I met the lovely Vivienne Hall in 2010, and she sadly passed away a few months later. Peter has continued with their lifelong breeding programme and this would be a final chance to visit Fairview before he moved to Queensland. Allan Preston from Nalla Arabians joined us, along with the Ogdens, Gloria and Kerry Higginson.

The rest of the week was meant to have one final stud visit, but this was sadly cancelled, and so Deb, Jennifer and I enjoyed time at home in Kurrajong, and also a 'ladies lunch' up in Bilpin with Deb, Jennifer, Tara and Liz Hallam. It was here that I happened upon a name for Deb's young colt foal – Te Hana – as named after the brand of sparkling wine we enjoyed! Te Hana is Maori for 'to shine' and it seemed to be a fitting name for this future star; indeed, as I write this, Deb has just mailed to say he went Reserve Champion in the Breeder's Sweepstakes Class at the National Stud Show! An auspicious start for this classy young colt. With a day out in Sydney enjoyed with Deb and Jennifer – I have finally seen the opera house in all its beauty – it was time for a 'last supper' at Deb's. Peter and Allan joined us and the table was decorated with the valentine roses Ron thoughtfully got for us – red for Deb, peachy-yellow for Jennifer and deep pink for me – and all too soon, it was time for me to say my goodbyes and return to England. Having departed on Saturday 18 February, I landed on the Sunday – straight into the March deadline!



March

The theme of the March edition was the Egyptian Arabian and Rajah KA, owned by Rhodium Stud, was the cover horse. With the bumper edition completed, I headed back to Heathrow, this time to go east to the Dubai International Arabian Horse Championships. I have missed the past two Dubai Shows due to other



commitments - being in Australia in 2010 and the United States in 2011 - and it was interesting to be back. The arena had been moved to a smaller hall and was full of flowers depicting the sponsors' names and, as



such, there was little room in the showing for the horses to move. However, the show did retain the glitz and the glamour that it is so known for and I did enjoy being back.

Pianissima (Gazal Al Shaqab x Pianosa) made her final competitive appearance at the show, a heart-stopping moment as the competition was so fierce. Her many admirers need not have worried, however, as she won in style and claimed her Gold Championships title, a title that ensured she remained unbeaten in all her years of showing and it was wonderful to see.

Another highlight of the show was QR Marc (Marwan Al Shaqab x Swete Dreams) taking his second Gold title of the year, the first being at the Abu Dhabi International Arabian Horse Championships. With Paris around the corner as I write this, QR Marc goes into the show as

All Nations' Cup Gold Champion Stallion and he is tipped to add the elusive world title to his ever-growing collection. Part of my desire to go to Dubai was thanks to Sheikh Ammar Bin



Humaid Al Nuaimi, Crown Prince of Ajman, and Elisa Grassi, who takes care of the Ajman Stud's publicity. Sheikh Ammar had asked me to write a feature on the beautiful mares and fillies of his farm and the successes that he had enjoyed with them. This feature ran in the March edition and my trip to Dubai included a visit to the Ajman Stud on the



Saturday morning. This was the first time I had been to Ajman Stud and it did not disappoint. Elisa took me around the new barn, built to house the ethereal white mares of the stud, and every stable held a new treasure to enjoy. The presentation of just nine horses was also delightful, and it is hard to single out just one or two. AJ Marahel (Marwan Al Shaqab x Hed AB Maria) was one of the first Marwan daughters born and she was shown with a lovely bay filly foal by AJ Portofino (Vervaldee x Magic Jamilla), AJ Marateb; a star of the future no doubt. And mention must be made to Bess-Fa'Izah (WH Justice x Sharon El Kendal), ever beautiful and in foal to Shanghai EA. It is always special to see this mare and she never disappoints. With the showfinishing on the Saturday evening with the championships, I made my way to a different hotel to watch the last of the Six Nations' Rugby Football Union matches with friends and then caught the red-eye flight back to Heathrow. It would have been lovely to stay for the Sunday and attend the Dubai Stud's annual open day, and see QR Mare in his

golden colours, but in the UK that weekend, it was Mothering Sunday on 18 March and sometimes, family is more important. My dad sweetly collected me from Heathrow Airport and we were home at 9am, in time to give mum her presents and enjoy the day with her; special times. The last Sunday of March is given over to Johanna Ullström's open house and this year, I drove the 350 or so miles from the UK to Belgium



on Saturday 24 March to make my first trip to her open house. I had memorably been to Johanna's in 2007, when I fell and broke my wrist, so it was with some extra-spatial awareness that I returned!

This time, I arrived as the preparations for the open day were almost finished and I took the opportunity to wander through the barns at Darby Farm. Here, among the beautiful horses all bathed and ready for tomorrow's presentation, I met some of Johanna's Swedish friends including Mariana Eriksson and Pia Pahlstorp as well as Johanna's mother, Eva. Veronica Mann-Werstern and her husband Anders were also there, along with Johanna's fiancé Jeremy Malou, and that night, we went into Sint-Truiden for something to eat. We all know those wonderful days in early spring when the promise of summer is there and Johanna's open day proved to be just that – a glorious late March day where the temperature soared towards the 29°C

mark. Watching the parade with Mariana and her fellow Swede Ingela Gyllenkrok, whom I had met in Wels 2011 with Joanna, we enjoyed an incredible display of horses, sunshine and a very generous flow of wine!



The barn at Arctic Tern.



Swedish guests Mariana Eriksson, Ingela Gyllenkrok and John Tengberg with Samantha.

Particularly special was Johanna's bond with the mare ZT Sharuby (ZT Sharello x ZT Bint Ruby), a 21 year old ethereal grey, and the pair did a wonderful display of join up around the arena. Also noteworthy was the end where all the white mares were led in and her grooms sat down in

the sandy arena in front of each horse; Johanna is well known for doing this in show-rings around the world but to see if done here with around fifteen horses was just incredible. After the crowds had gone, I was party to one of Johanna's legendary BBQs and as everyone relaxed after a long weekend of hard work and precise timing, there was lots of laughter and fun well into the night, including the team photograph where everyone wears woollen hats, as knitted by Johanna's grandmother!

Thankfully, the Monday morning dawned bright and sunny as well and we all spent some time sitting outside and reminiscing over the previous day's parade before I got in my car and drove back to England.



The team plus hats!

Johanna

April

Tuesday 2 May marked the next deadline for *The Arabian Magazine* and this was our first black edition. The three-year-old colt Magic Magnifique (True Colours x Magic Mon Amour) was the cover star, as photographed by Gregor Aymar, and he proved to be a popular choice.

I managed to sneak a visit to our local group show in early April so that I could see my parents' ridden mare make her first outing of the season. Pysanara (Psynergy

x Martina Nareena) duly won her class and went Reserve Open Ridden Champion as well as Reserve Supreme Ridden Champion. It was lovely to catch up with friends at our local group and enjoy seeing the progeny of horses that I have grown up with compete in the ring.

Again, my travelling meant that we had to cut the deadline short in order for me to go to the United States and Canada for two and a half weeks. My body decided that now was a good time for me to go down with a chest infection and having contracted acute bronchitis in Vegas the year before, I was somewhat worried about returning. However, with some incredible stud visits lined up, I was duly dropped off at Heathrow on 18 April where I met up with Jayne Howell from Howell Arabians; we were travelling over together to the Arabian Breeders' Alliance World Cup where Jayne's filly HA Lady Freya (Chancellor MW x Poetic Psyche) would be showing in the yearling classes. HA Lady Freya had already taken the Champion Yearling Filly title at Scottsdale this year and I was looking forward to seeing her in the flesh.

With Jayne helping look after me, and a steady stream of hot

honey and lemon, I made it through the show. On the first morning, we went to the stables to see Freya and as I looked over the door at her, all I could say was 'wow'. This filly really is something special and she went Reserve Champion in her very competitive section, unlucky not to win, and was Supreme Top Ten. Congratulations again Jayne!

The highlight of the show, however, had to be Eden C



HA Lady Freya

Stuart Vesey

(Enzo x Silken Sable). I have seen this chestnut seven-year-old stallion show many times across Europe and the Middle East but never have I seen him show like he did here. With his well deserved 20s in movement, he won the class and also the title of Gold Champion Stallion. What a moment!

Having dined with Sue, Emrys and Rod Jones of Bychan Arabians,





Eden C

as well as Ed Houghton of Thirteen Oaks Arabians, on the Sunday night, I left Las Vegas on the Monday morning to head to Dallas, Texas. There, my dear friend Julia Turner would meet me for a couple of days of girly time before we would head south to Houston and see the wonderful horses of Michael Byatt Arabians.

Julia and I met in Poland in 2009 and have remained firm friends ever since. The beauty of the Arabian industry is that it allows us to make friends the world over so that we never feel too far away from home. Julia specialises in English pleasure and it was lovely to stay with her and her family. We went out to see her pure-bred mare Noble Aphroditie (IXL Noble Express x EA Aphroditie) who had a beautiful filly at foot, Heir's Athena (by Afires Heir). English pleasure is a world away from halter and ridden showing and it was lovely to be

able to meet just two of Julia's horses.

On the Wednesday, we rose early and embarked on the 235 mile drive from Dallas down to New Ulm, home of Michael Byatt Arabians. Like many before me – and doubtlessly many to come – it was wonderful to visit this home of legends such as Gazal Al Shaqab (Anaza El Farid x Kajora) and his son Marwan Al Shaqab (ex Little Liza Fame) to name but two. Arriving just after 1pm, Michael and his manager Robert Cass made us feel very welcome and we enjoyed an intimate presentation of horses. One bonus horse was CR Jasmeenah (WH Justice x Fforget Me Not), who was at Michael's for breeding and showing and who, later on in the year, would go on to win an historic US National Champion Mare title. Bred by Carol Ratcliffe, CR Jasmeenah is now owned by Aljassimya Farm.

There was one horse I was keen to see while at Michael's, the hot new kid on the block, ZT Marwteyn (Marwan Al Shaqab x ZT Ludjteyn), and Michael duly arranged a special showing of this remarkable stallion. You can read all about my visit in the June edition of *The Arabian Magazine*.



CR Jasmeenah

Emma Maxwell

Having changed my flight to Florida to later in the day, Julia and I stayed well into the evening at Michael's, sitting on his veranda, drinking wine and listening to the horses gently snorting in the paddock in front of us. Was there anything more perfect in life than this?

After a late night, Julie and I had an early



ZT Marwteyn

Gigi Grasso



Gazal Al Shaqab

Gigi Grasso

morning and all too soon, it was time for me to leave her and head on to the next stage of my adventure: Florida. My first stop was Hennessey Arabian, owned by Frank and Carol Hennessey, where I would spend one night before going on to Rohara Arabians on the Friday morning. Frank, Carol and I, along with the irrepressible George Z, had a fun evening on the Thursday night before I bade them a brief farewell for my Rohara adventure.

Rohara Arabians is home to some truly incredible Arabian horses, both those bred by Rohara's founder Roxann Hart and those owned by clients. From the



moment I arrived, I felt that I was in heaven and everywhere I looked was a horse to marvel over. Roxann has so much experience in the Arabian industry and she was happy to share her thoughts. Indeed, my subsequent article would become, at that moment in time, the longest feature I had ever written. Also found in the June edition, the Rohara story is one well worth reading. Just to pick out one horse from here would be unfair, but Rohara Marcus (QR Marc x Verteyna)



The front gates at Rohara Arabians.

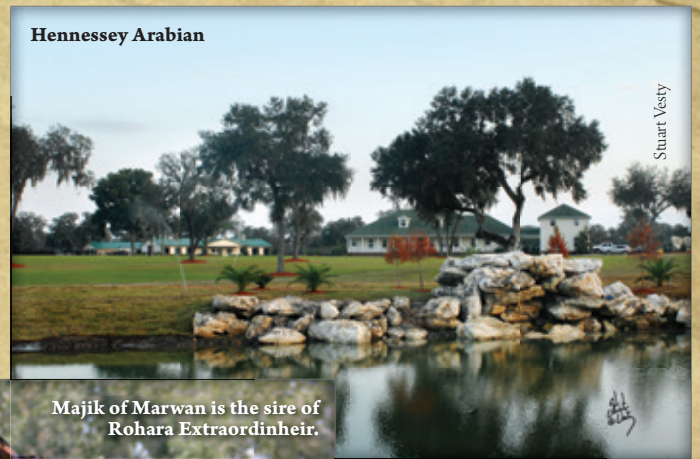
moved my soul. Watching him ride around their vast indoor arena was one thing but to go and stand next to him and have him look into my eyes... I was in tears and he is a horse that will long stay in my heart.

Rohara Arabians also has a great team around it and we went into the local town of Ocala on the



Mares of Hennessey Arabian.

about their horses while my head is still full of Rohara Arabians and Frank and Carol kindly realise this and we head back to Ocala to sample some of the local produce and enjoy the Floridian sunshine. Later that afternoon, back at the farm, Michelle Watson and Cliff McCurdy come over to visit. They own Victoria Arabians and have the British-bred straight Egyptian stallion Shahim Al Nakeeb (NK Hafid Jamil x Shameerah), now owned by Tom Oben and Eline



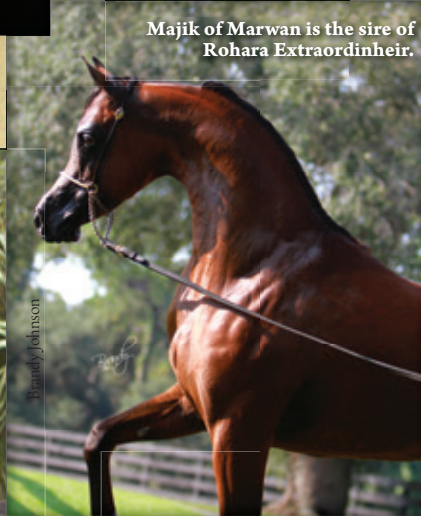
Hennessey Arabian

Stuart Vesty

Majik of Marwan is the sire of Rohara Extraordinheir.



Rohara Marcus



Brendy Johnson

Raes of Anais el Arab, Belgium, there on lease. It is always interesting to meet other breeders and share visions and ideas, and this afternoon was no exception. On Sunday, Frank, George and I sit down to do the Hennessey Arabian interview, as published

Friday night for dinner and there we name one of the beautiful filly foals I saw that day: Rohara Extraordinheir (Majik of Marwan x WH Esdee). She is another to watch for and she makes her show-ring debut over Thanksgiving weekend.

Leaving Rohara was hard. As a place, it had captured my heart and the horses there had captured my soul. If people decide to only visit one great breeding programme in the world, I would have to say this one. Roxann truly has created something special and I loved my 24 hour glimpse into this world.

Upon my return to Hennessey, I realise that I cannot start making notes



Embra

April Visel

in the October edition, and with the sun still burning brightly in the sky, it is time for us to bring the mares and foals in. I have the pleasure of leading Embra (Monogramm x Emilda) into her stable; this grey beauty has since returned to Poland but has left a wonderful legacy



in the United States.

Of note for me at Hennessey is their beautiful mare H Emandila H (El Nabila B x Emandoria), now four years old. Hers is a noble line and one that will be important to Hennessey Arabian in the years to come.

That evening, April Visel flew in for a photo shoot and George treats us all to a traditional Polish supper in his flat. I was diagnosed wheat and dairy intolerant just before I left for the US and George very sweetly made me gluten-free golabki (stuffed cabbage rolls).

Monday was a quieter day and a chance for me to pause for breath after a hectic couple of weeks. That afternoon, just before sundown, April,



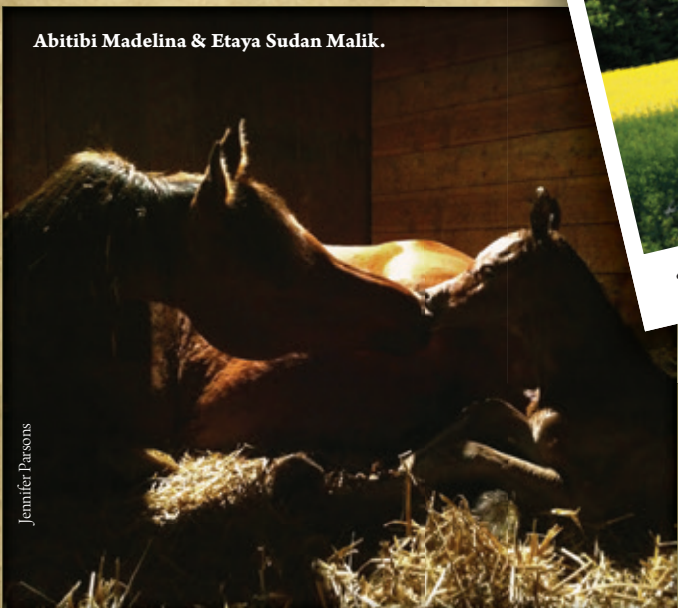
Shahim Al Nakeeb

April Visel

George and I head off to Victoria Arabians to do a photo shoot with Shahim. Cliff and I stay one side of the pond – where an alligator was shot just a few days before! – while George, Michelle and April go to the other side with Shahim to catch the brilliant evening sunlight. The results are pretty impressive!

May

Tuesday 1 May saw me load up my cases again, say a heartfelt farewell to all at Hennessey, and head to



Abitibi Madelina & Etaya Sudan Malik.

Jennifer Parsons

Orlando Airport, this time to head north to Canada and to Etaya Egyptian Stud owned by Jennifer Parsons and Chris Fichaud with their daughter Mercedes. I have not been to Etaya since September 2008 and

I was keen to return.

After the warmth of Florida, Toronto was cold and I was glad of the extra blankets Jennifer had put in my bedroom! Having taken a day out just to catch up on life, it was time to see the horses and this included Etaya



Etaya Shai Zahra

Stuart Vesey



Etaya Egyptian Stud



Etaya Sudan Amirah

Sudan Amir's (Imperial Mistaar x Etaya Amira) first foal crop. While the Etaya story was printed in full in the September edition, it is worth mentioning their incredible colt by Etaya Sudan Amir once more. Etaya Sudan Malik (ex Etaya Sudan Amira) has everything that you would want for in a foal, let alone a colt foal. Pretty, typey, correct – and attitude! Etaya Shai Zahra (Simeon Shai x Abitibi Fleur) once again reduces me to tears, and I am happy to be back with this wonderful collection of Arabians, developed from two foundation mares that were half-sisters.

Jennifer and Chris had decided that I needed a little treat and so the night before I headed home, we made our way to Rama, Ontario, and having been told it was a 'little r&b' gig, it was actually to see Gladys Knight, complete with one Pip! It was a brilliant and memorable night and to say that I've seen *Midnight Train to Georgia* live is pretty special. All in all, there are few places where you can go in the world and feel like you are at home, so thank you again Jennifer and Chris.

I left Toronto on Friday 4 May, landing back in sunny Heathrow on the Saturday morning. After so much travelling, my body clock was somewhat out of synch and it was with difficulty, and after a very sleepless night, that I once more headed to Belgium by car on the Wednesday, this time to travel to north of Antwerp and Jadem

Arabians. Owned by Christine Jamar, with the support of her husband Guy, Jadem Arabians is home of one of the most beautiful collections



Jadem Arabians

April Visel

of Polish Arabians outside of Poland itself and I was there to do an article and brochure on the farm. Jadem Arabians is always a place of peaceful activity – all year round, there are always mares to be bred with semen



Horsefly Films

Samantha with Christine Jamar



Mystic Dream J

April Visel

orders arriving in from across the world and Christine stands some truly impressive stallions at stud with her including Triple Crown winner Abha Qatar (Marwan Al Shaqab x ZT Ludjkalba). Of her own horses, her homebred bay Ararat son Extreme (ex Elegantkah) has crossed well with her Ekstern (Monogramm x Ernestyna) daughters and her new up and coming sire is Mystic Dream J (Extreme x Mysterious Lady J). While I was there, Horsefly Films arrived, along with Scott Benjamin, to shoot a new stallion video and again, it was fascinating to watch. Some



Noft Al Nayfat

Avalon

of the special effects used to make haunting images and bits of film and I look forward to seeing the finished result.

Also while in Belgium, Christine arranged for me to speak to Naif Al Mubark, Manager of Al Nayfat Stud in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and I conducted a brief interview over the telephone. Al Nayfat had great success in Vegas with Noft Al Nayfat (Ajman Moniscione x Eagleridge Passionata), Yearling Filly Champion, and you can read their story in the June edition.

After three days in Belgium, I return on the Saturday morning once more to Jadem to have one final cup of tea with Christine and enjoy the peaceful surroundings of her farm. Christine is always a generous and welcoming host and again, Jadem Arabians should certainly be on your 'must visit' list. I bade my farewells and headed back to

England; the June deadline was now upon us!

The cover horse for the June edition belonged to Al Nayfat Stud, Mascot des Alpes (Marwan Al Shaqab x EAMT Marihuana), a good-looking and typey three-year-old chestnut colt that has enjoyed a successful season. Bred in the UK, Mascot des Alpes has great things ahead of him for sure. Once again, our bloodline focus for this edition was the Crabbet and Russian Arabian and it never ceases to amaze me just how popular this issue is; these bloodlines are certainly not dead!



In the middle of my deadline, I took part in the Race for Life to raise money for Cancer Research. This is something that I do every year, having originally started to do them when Jackie Keen, one of our proof-readers, was fighting cancer. Sadly, Jackie lost her fight and the name of another subscriber and friend was added to my bib this year, that of Tina Hughes. I am always humbled by how generously my friends and colleagues give to my Race for Life fund – thank you again.

June

At the start of June, I typically head to the US for the Egyptian Event held in Lexington, Kentucky, but with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee taking place this year, I decided to stay at home. As Anna Bishop, Director of The Pyramid Society said, "I can't compete with a Queen!" Having enjoyed the once in a lifetime celebrations with my family, I took the advantage of an unscheduled week at home to enjoy some holiday as well as visit friends. This included making the short journey south to Howell Arabians, owned by Jayne and James Howell, owners



of HA Lady Freya. Their farm in Hertfordshire is home to an elite but beautiful collection of Arabian horses, and is also where Arabian



HA Lady Freya

Stuart Vestly



special to be able to share my part of the world with my overseas friends.

The deadline duly began for July and the cover horse her was the very special British-bred mare, the 2011 World Champion CR Jasmineah. This was a beautiful cover and Emma Maxwell told her story beautifully for Aljassimya Farm.

June was also the month that we quietly launched *The Arabian Magazine Online*. We didn't want to just put

Touch Show Training, owned by Louise Brian, is based.

Jayne and James' lead sire is the ten-year-old stallion ROELaheeb (Essteem x ZT Ludjbrosiaa) and they have competed with him over 2012 with great success. Instantly personable, they have great hopes for this bay beauty over their mares. You can read more



ROELaheeb

Emma Maxwell



Ava

Erwin Escher

our magazine as a 'click-turn-click' set of images and pdfs on the internet, and the team worked hard to make something different and interactive where people can send in their own news from their own part of the world. Find out more at www.thearabianmagazineonline.com.

Halfway through the deadline, I went to the Menton Arabian Horse Show, my first visit to the event that is much talked about. Held on the French Riviera, the show is a precursor to the title shows later in the year, with many of the horses winning here going on to take top honours later. It was a proud moment for the many Brits there to see Pat Hannay's black three-year-old filly Ava (Vervaldee x Aziza) take third place in her class and then go Filly Top Ten, a terrific achievement for a small owner/breeder.

July

At the end of June, I finally made it to my first proper British show of the year, the Midland Arabian Festival. This B Show, held this year on 1 July, is located at the Malvern showground and I really enjoyed being there and actually able to see some of the horses that have been written about this year, even if it was from my view in the tradestand area. This was the first time that I got to see Design For Life (Designed x Lianna), a yearling colt that everyone in the UK was talking about. As I presented him with his Gold Champion Colt



The Howells with HA Lady Freya in Scottsdale this year

about Howell Arabians in our July edition. On Monday 11 June, I was back in the office and working away, trying to get ahead with the July edition, when my telephone rang. It was Allan Preston from Australia, asking me what time I had lunch.

He had flown all the way from Sydney to London, and then taken the train to Norwich just to see me before going to Poland to look at some horses! It was the most wonderful of surprises and that afternoon, I went up to meet Allan and brought him to our home in South Norfolk for a couple of days of sightseeing and catching up. It really was the most wonderful surprise and very



Samantha with Allan Preston at home in Norfolk





suffered as a result. Food for thought for next year should they choose to leave the rings in the same place!

August

Into August and the beauty of my chest infection meant that I could sit and enjoy the Olympics without feeling guilty! The equestrian sports were remarkable to watch and it has been interesting visiting shows across the world since; nearly everyone comments on how amazing the Olympics were and say that they were, perhaps, the best in recent memory. What a summer we had here in Britain!

The first weekend of August, however, mum wanted us to enjoy a family weekend and so we made our way back to the Malvern showground, this time for the NPS (National Pony Show). This was the first time I had been to the show and there was plenty to interest us away from the Arabian classes!

As it was my parents wedding anniversary that weekend, we decided to stay at The Cottage in the Woods, the one place that everyone who visits Malvern wants to stay. Well worth it for the views alone! The next day, we left early and made our way west, over the nearby border and into Wales and we headed to Bychan Arabians for their open day.

This annual event is much enjoyed by all of those that visit and, again, this was the first time I had been in several years.

Sue, Emrys, Rod, Ryan and Rhiannon Jones all put on a wonderful display and while there may be around 30 horses shown, the time flies. Of particular note to me on this visit was Psyniah BJ (Psynergy x Haniyyah), a beautiful, smooth and showy chestnut yearling filly while Lyla Rose JCA (Brandon Bey JCA x Forever Rose), who I had seen in the United States the previous

garland, I, too, fell under his spell.

The July edition finally went to print, in spite of all the interruptions for shows, and we had a team night out to celebrate the launch of *The Arabian Magazine Online*. There followed a two-week break for the Taminis, a brilliant chance for us to recharge our batteries before the second part of the magazine year. I visited various friends around the country, as well as enjoying a university reunion, and mention must be made to a lovely couple of days spent at Caroline Sussex's Binley Stud. Located in Hampshire, Binley is home to straight Crabbet Arabians and Caroline has a beautiful collection of horses. Next year, she is opening up her home to be a bed & breakfast for people and horses



Lyla Rose JCA



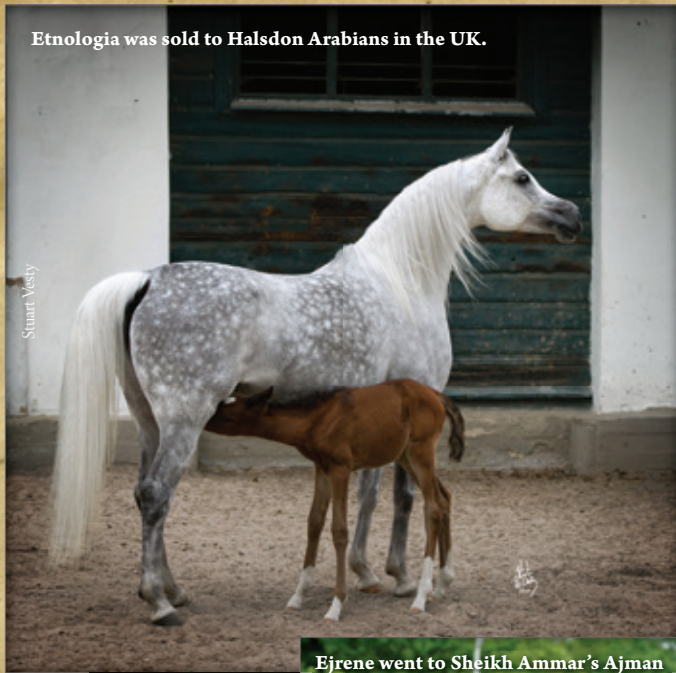
Psyniah BJ

and this really is a lovely part of the world to explore.

Always following this summer break, we have the British National Championships and while this always took a lot of planning when showing horses, it seems to take even longer now that we have a tradestand there! With Bec Clarke helping me run the stand, we duly made our way to the show – and lo, another chest infection for me. It was touch and go as to whether the show would actually go ahead or not as there was torrential rain in the weeks leading up to the British Nationals. The show team worked wonders to ensure that the Nationals did take place and while the rain held off this year, the main ring was out of use meaning that it would be the main arena as used for the Midland Arabian Festival that was the main ring for the Nationals. As a result, there was not as much through traffic in the tradestand area and all stall holders

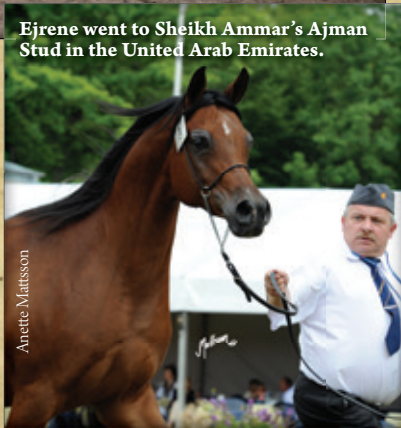


year, flew over the ground and is just a horse that makes you smile.



Etnologia was sold to Halsdon Arabians in the UK.

Stuart Vesey



Ejrene went to Sheikh Ammar's Ajman Stud in the United Arab Emirates.

Anette Mattsson

That night, mum, dad and I watched the Olympics from my hotel room – 'super Saturday' where Team GB won six gold medals, three of them in the evening track and field events. What a Games we were having! With my chest infection continuing, I made the reluctant decision to miss the Arabian Horse Days in Poland this year. I did, however, tune in on the livestream to see where one of the lots, Etnologia (Gazal Al Shaqab x Etalanta), would go in the Pride of Poland Sale. Etnologia is a firm favourite among many on the circuit and I was slightly tearful to see that she went to Halsdon Stud here in the UK. Her paternal half-sister, the striking bay Ejrene (ex Emocja) was the top lot and has gone to the Ajman Stud. It will be interesting to see how both mares produce on from here.



Mettlewood Jubilee Tribute

Erwin Escher

Revived and feeling better, on 17 August I made my way back down to Hertfordshire, this time to Nina Hutton-McKenzie's Mettlewood Stud. As with so many in the Arabian industry, Nina is an exceptional host and comes from the 'make my house your own' way of doing things. She has some wonderful horses including the very handsome part-bred stallion Mettlewood Jubilee Tribute (Mettlewood Saracen's Gem x Francesca's Cruise), who is producing beautifully. Nina also has an upcoming stallion in the form of the grey Vervaldee son A Sound of Thunder (ex Pashonate), who has just started his breeding career. The Mettlewood story appears in the December Paris edition of *The Arabian Magazine*.



A Sound of Thunder

Erwin Escher



The deadline for the September edition began the next day and the cover here was Barzan Al Shahania (Stival x NW Siena Psyche), a top-class two-year-old colt bred in the United States and owned by Al Shahania Stud of Qatar. Having won unanimously in Las Vegas back in April, Barzan is now competing in Europe and the Middle East and his cover image was beautiful and eye-catching.

Once again, I was away for



QR Marc with the Knocke Arabians team.

much of the deadline. On Saturday 25, I drove down to Ebbsfleet International Station and boarded the Eurostar to Lille. I was off to the Knocke Arabians Arabian Horse Celebration, as hosted by Paul and Ria Gheysens, and this year, I would be helping compère the event. This is always a special weekend and due to Ramadan, the Celebration was held a week later and thus clashed with the UK International Arabian Horse Show, located at its new venue in Addington. Bec



kindly stepped in and covered the tradestand for me, allowing me to go to Knocke and enjoy the beautiful horses there once more – including the current Abu Dhabi Gold Champion Stallion and Dubai International Gold Champion Stallion, QR Marc.



Magnums Tulip

After a Saturday afternoon run through, during which I wrote a beautiful introduction for QR Marc, we got together in the evening for a lovely dinner in windswept Knocke. The day of the Celebration itself began with terrible weather but by the time we were ready for the first horses to come out, we had brilliant sunshine beaming down on us. The Knocke story is also found in the December Paris edition, and again, this is a stud that is well worth visiting. The cross of QR Marc on the Polish damlines that Paul and Ria have at Knocke Arabians is outstanding, and Marc remains the king of the stud.

September

With the deadline continuing for the Aachen

and Veronica heading back to Belgium that night, Ingela, Lisbeth and I strolled across the Charles Bridge, arriving at this historic part of the city at sunset. Finding a local restaurant, we then walked back to our hotel and enjoyed a nightcap before saying our goodbyes over breakfast on the Monday morning, 3 September. The show is well worth a visit and I look forward to returning again.

Finally, after so many interruptions, the Aachen edition went to print and on Friday 7 September, I headed back to Belgium again, by car, to the Egyptian Event Europe. This time, I went with my parents and it was my dad's birthday that weekend, so we stayed in a historic of castle in the Netherlands.

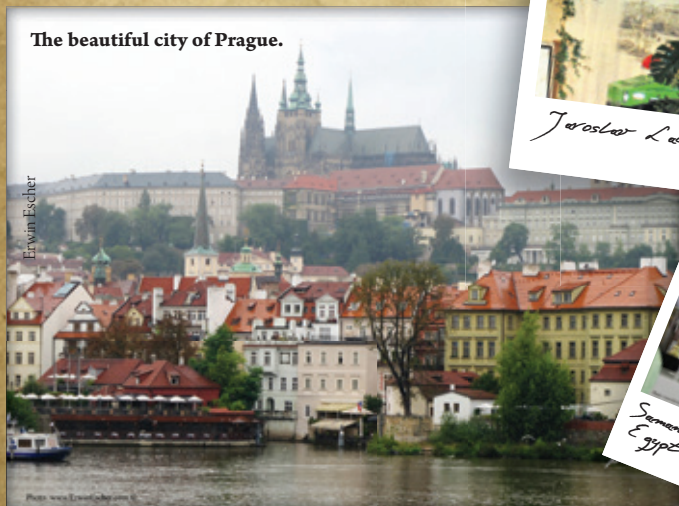
The Egyptian Event Europe is one of the best run shows I have been



Suhalia Al Saba

Erwin Escher

The beautiful city of Prague.



Erwin Escher



Jaroslav Lacinia making an entrance!



Samantha and her parents at the Egyptian Event

edition, I flew to Prague on 31 August for the three Arabian shows that are held there – the National Show, the European Cup and the international show, the Prague Intercup. Meeting up with Veronica, her friend Lisbeth Tessmar, Ingela and Johanna, I was an honorary 'Swede' for the weekend, and by the time we parted on the Monday morning, I had picked up a few phrases!

The show itself was enjoyable and the city of Prague is absolutely stunning. The shows are run by ECAHO President Jaroslav Lacinia and he recommended that, on the Sunday after the championships had finished, we take a walk into the old city of Prague. With Johanna

to, with everything running smoothly and with the organisers' friends all working hard, too, to ensure that there is no hold up in the proceedings. The weather was glorious all weekend and on the Sunday morning, I had a wonderful surprise as Saba Arabians' beautiful mare Suhalia Al Saba (Thaqib Al Nasser x Simeon Siboni) was shown in the first mare class of the day.

Suhalia won in some style and I went into the arena to collect the trophy for my friends. Ever

beautiful, this lovely young mare has since been sold to Al Waab Stud in Qatar, and I am sure that she will do very well for them.

On Monday 10 September, we returned to the UK and



Samantha's much-missed mare Crystal Belladonna.



I had to make the very difficult decision to have my foundation mare, Crystal Belladonna (Donax x Bright Crystal) put to sleep on 19 September. Two months on and I am still saying her name as if she is still here with us ...

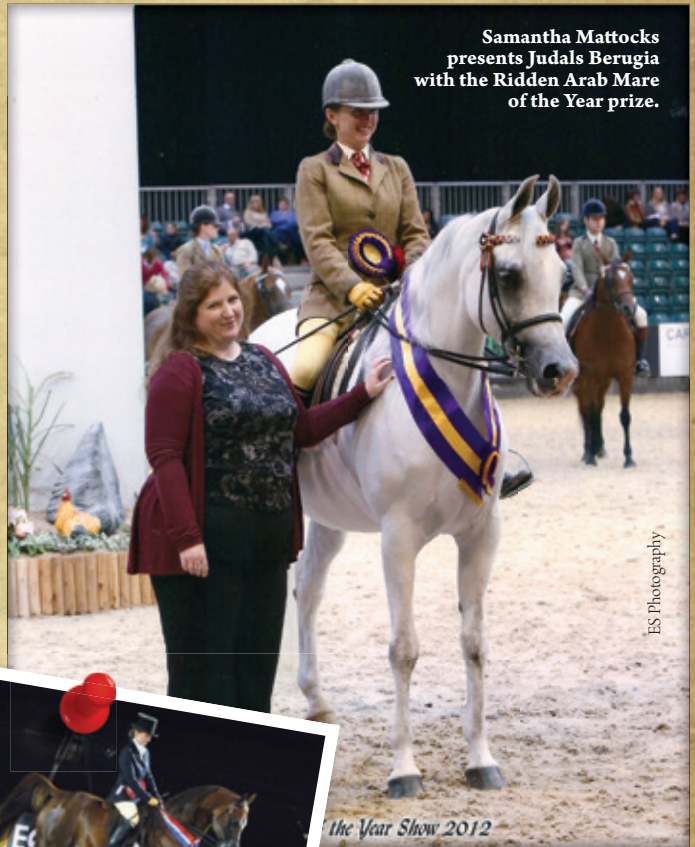
25 September saw the deadline for our October edition, which celebrated the Australasian and Polish bloodlines. With Hennessey Arabians one of the big features in this edition, it was only right that some of their beautiful Polish mares should grace the front cover. But as was the way all year, no sooner had I started one magazine when it was time to dig out my passport again, get into the car and head back to mainland Europe – this time, to Aachen.



this is the perfect way to spend your day after Aachen. While the rain had held for Christine, it fell down halfway through the Schoukens' presentation, but Tom and Glenn valiantly, and carefully, continued to show off their horses. A wonderful end to a perfect weekend.

Having stayed over in Belgium on the Monday night, we headed back home on the Tuesday, collected the cats from the cattery, and I went straight into the office to continue work on the October edition.

I only had two full days to work in the office on the October edition, however, before it was time to get in my car once more, this time heading to the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham for the Horse of the



My parents also come to this show with me and we always have a wonderful weekend of horses, friends and laughter. This year was no exception and we had a thoroughly enjoyable time and the horses shown there this year were wonderful. El Dorada (Sanadik El Shaklan x Emigrantka) had me in goosebumps before she'd even taken a step, such was her beauty, and she was a worthy Silver Mare Champion. QR Marc added another Gold title to his 2012 collection – surely the December World Championship will be his?

October

Monday 1 October saw us make our way from Aachen to Jadem Arabians for Christine's annual gathering for friends and clients from across the world. The sun always shines on Christine's day and it is a wonderful chance for people to look at the horses she has there in a perhaps more relaxed manner than a formal presentation. I was the speaker for the event again and it was an honour for me to be able to share the horses of both Christine and her clients on this day.

All too soon, it was time for us leave and make our way south through Belgium to Schoukens Training Center. Tom, Cathy and Glenn always put on a wonderful display for their friends and clients, and altogether,



and thoroughly enjoyed every minute of the day and a half that we were there. Patros HB (Psytadel x Padisha Ibn Estopa) took the ultimate Supreme Ridden Arab Horse of the Year title and gave a good account of himself as he left the main arena, lit in the traditional HOYS spotlight.

The full report appeared in the December Paris edition.

Having spent the Saturday morning visiting the Arab Horse Society stand and stable – pleasingly with the mare Maiad (Imad x Myah) surrounded by adoring and newly-converted fans – and worked out an arrangement to sell the refreshing SG Naturally range through the magazine, mum and I watched some showjumping. Always enjoyable, it was with some reluctance that we dragged ourselves away to make our way back to sleepy Norfolk in time for one of my guilty pleasures – *Strictly Come Dancing!*

The October edition finally went to print on Thursday 11 October and



the very next day, I loaded up my car for a week away in Wales. Having spent the weekend with friends, Monday 15 October saw me return to Bychan Arabians, this time to do an in-depth interview of Sue and Emrys' story.

Like Rohara earlier in the year, this was a fantastic visit and one that left me feeling very energised. There is something about visiting stud farms that have been breeding for four decades and I think if you cannot take away a positive energy from that, then you are in the wrong business. The Bychan story – at that point the longest feature I had ever written – was published in the December Paris edition, and I will be revisiting their story in the future. Beautiful horses, lovely people, amazing history. Leaving Bychan on the Tuesday morning, I drove the short distance from their farm to that of Peter, Bev and Mark Gamlin. Again, theirs is a stud with great longevity and I am looking forward to writing their story over the winter months. The Gamlins may be small breeders, but they have certainly produced some beautiful horses over the years, and as with Rohara and Bychan, there is so much to be explored in their history.

Wednesday morning saw me drive up through the breathtakingly beautiful Brecon Beacons to Vlacq Stud in north Wales, home of my Deputy Editor Laura Pyke, her mum Sue and dad David. Laura had arranged for us to have a facial treatment in the nearby town of Wrexham and it was lovely to have some time out. After a brief 24 hour stay and catch up with the Vlacq horses – 'Mr Bond' is still my favourite – I drove the 250-odd miles back to Norfolk. There was just time to enjoy a weekend off before all the Tamis got ready for what is traditionally our busiest month of the year...

November

1 November officially saw the deadline for both the December Paris edition and also this Collectors' Edition, but we started work on both issues well before that date. With so much to write about, and with Paris being such a key show, there is always a lot to do and as I sit here on 21 November, writing this now, I know that I am



Sue and Emrys Jones at their daughter Rhiannon's wedding in October this year.

Sweet Photography



The European Championships in Moorseele (and below).

Erwin Escher



Erwin Escher



Mr Bond!

almost at the end of my word limit for the year! However, this year we had the European Championships held on the first weekend of November. The show had been put back a week due to a huge antiques fair being held in Kortrijk, so on Friday 2 November, my parents and I again loaded up the car and again drove to Belgium. The full report of this wonderful show will be featured in the February edition next year; with that one week difference, it is just impossible for me to physically write everything and for all the photographs to have been organised in time for the Paris edition.



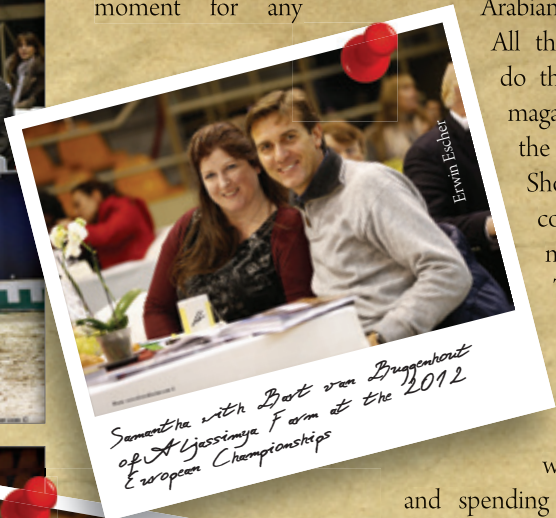
Suffice to say, however, that this was one of the very best shows that I have been to in a long time and I am very much looking forward to reliving the classes over winter as I write up my report.

Design for Life



they have helped make up the tapestry of my year, a tapestry that is rich in colour and experiences. It would be impossible to select just one or two highlights – there truly have been so many – but seeing Gazal Al Shaqab in the flesh for the very first time has to be a noteworthy moment for any Arabian horse aficionado.

Mascot Des Alpes



All that is left for me to do this year is finish this magazine, which celebrates the fantastic Scottsdale Show through its front cover, and then we move into December. The Paris World Championships are sure to cap what has been a fantastic year and then, the focus will be on Christmas

and spending precious time with family and friends.

As the New Year bells will ring out to start 2013, I very much doubt that I will be thinking of the year ahead. But as I return to the office on Thursday 3 January 2013, I will be planning to do it all again. The New Year will see a different route, it will certainly involve different horses, but one thing is for sure: it will doubtlessly be a remarkable experience and I for one am looking forward to the journey – and then to sharing it with you through these pages. Thank you for reading. 🍷

The cover for the Paris stallion edition was Guiliano (Legacy of Fame

x SC Psavannah), a superstar sire owned by Mulawa Arabians in Australia. Extremely photogenic, we could not decide between two different, yet similar, shots of Guiliano and so we have printed two different covers for this edition, something we last did with the legendary Maleik El Kheil (El Shaklan x Muneera) back in July 2009. You can read more about Guiliano in both the June and December Paris editions of *The Arabian Magazine*.

With the Paris edition printing, this brings my year of horses, friends, deadlines and airports to a close. I thought that this would be a fun feature to write to share some of my favourite moments around the world, and I had no idea that it would breach over 10,000 words, thus being the longest feature I have ever written. All the farms, horses and people are worth it however, as

Samantha says that finally meeting Gazal Al Shaqab was her highlight of the year.

