

A Year of Horses, Friends, Deadlines & Airports ~ the Year that was 2014

Words and photography unless stated by Samantha Mattocks

The time of year has come again for me to, once more, share my A Year of Horses, Friends, Deadlines & Airports. I am thrilled that so many of you enjoy this piece and it provides a wonderful look back at the previous 12 months, even if the year has not, perhaps, gone quite as hoped for and planned at times. This is a great time of year to not only reflect but also to look ahead, and that is just what I am doing – our 10th anniversary is just around the corner, after all!

January – Emandoria’s Triple Crown

The arrival of a New Year always brings much promise for the 12 months ahead. The blank pages in the diary show 52 weeks of hopes and dreams – and yes, in our case, deadlines and shows.



For the ‘Taminis’ – those who work for *The Arabian Magazine* – the year began on 6 January. The Christmas decorations had come down and we had Gigi Grasso’s lovely image of Ajmal Maghreb (Ansata Hejazi x Ajmal Maghrebeia) to enjoy on our *The Arabian Magazine Calendar* as we made our way into the office. It might have been grey outside but with the Paris World Championships to relive, as well as finalising plans for the first few months of 2014, there was much colour to enjoy.

The cover of our February edition was the 59th Annual Scottsdale Arabian Horse Show. This huge event has long been a supporter of

The Arabian Magazine and it is always a pleasure to share this show through our pages.

I do love writing pedigree pieces and the year got off to a wonderful start as I was able to write about one of my all-time favourite Arabian horses: Emandoria. Sired by Gazal Al Shaqab (Anaza El Farid x Kajora) and from the Michalów State Stud’s phenomenal ‘E’ line, being out of Emanda (Ecaho x Emanacja), Emandoria had, at nine years of age, taken the elusive European Triple Crown title. Countries the world over have their Triple Crowns but, in my opinion, the European is one of the hardest to win. To take this coveted title, the horse has to take Gold at our three title shows, the All Nations’ Cup in Aachen, the European Championships, and then the Paris World Championships. Not only must they win all three titles, they must do so in the same year.

Emandoria became the 15th winner of this illustrious title, the first being awarded 20 years ago in 1994. She took the crown while on lease to Sheikh Ammar bin Humaid Al Nuaimi, the Crown Prince of Ajman and owner of the Ajman Stud, located in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). It was truly a pleasure to write about this mare and the rich history that there is to be found within her pedigree.

Indeed, the Ajman Stud had a very successful Paris show, and a feature was devoted to the success of this farm. Ajman Stud remains the most victorious farm in the Middle East for success at the World Championships and, writing this just a week before this year’s World Championships, I am sure that the winning ways of this beautiful stud will continue.

Left: Emandoria took the Triple Crown title in Paris last year; below: One of the incredible views from Table Mountain.





Clockwise from above: The stunning scenery of South Africa; Sunset over Franschhoek; The Americas Edition front cover; one of Kanz Albidayer's first foals, ex Bidayer; WSA Charismma with his wives.



February – the beauty of Kanz Albidayer

This month had a tighter than usual deadline for the March magazine as the following month was going to be very busy for me. Gracing the calendar in the office for the month of February, we had the beautiful Antham (Rushan x WN Sharazada), captured by Nancy Pierce of the USA. Meanwhile, our March cover was the superb young stallion, Kanz Albidayer.

Sired by Ajman Moniscione (WH Justice x Anthea Moniscione), Kanz Albidayer is out of the full sister to multiple champion Marajji, DL Marielle (Marwan Al Shaqab x RGA Kouress). Rising six, Kanz Albidayer is owned and bred by Sheikh Mohammed bin Saud Al Qasimi from Sharjah in the UAE. Sheikh Mohammed's Albidayer Stud is renowned the world over as breeders of champions, and their homebred

superstar Kanz Albidayer has won more than most. Progeny from his first foal crops are proving to be classy, typey and correct, and there is

With the February edition wrapped up, I headed off to Heathrow Airport. However, this was to be a trip with a difference as I was travelling to Cape Town, South Africa, to enjoy my first holiday in eight years. Arriving into Cape Town in the morning, with the majestic and breathtaking Table Mountain easily visible from the plane window, was a sight that I will never forget. I spent a very wonderful seven days in and around Franschhoek Valley, enjoying sunshine, vineyards, excellent food and wonderful company. I also fulfilled a long-held ambition of mine to visit Table Mountain and it was every bit as special as I thought it would be. The sun shone and the views were just breathtaking, as was the unique flora and fauna at the top of this mountain, one of the New7 Wonders of Nature. My time in South Africa made for a truly memorable trip and I must thank my hosts for such an amazing time.

Arriving back to a cold but fresh England, there was time for me to enjoy my birthday with my family and friends, and then it was into February.



so much more to come from this stallion. He is an exciting horse and I look forward to seeing his story progress over the coming years. It is always wonderful to pay respect to older horses in the magazine and the March edition saw us share the story of WSA Charisma



Clockwise from above: Mario Matt (left) with his Olympic Gold medal. Marcel Hirscher stands right with his Silver medal; the dirt tracks of Australia, the vast open roads down under; sunset over South Australia.

(Carmargue x Bint Shantu Halima), owned and treasured by Lynda Free. His story is truly a special one and the character of this now 24-year-old stallion remains captivating. If you didn't see this story, I recommend that you get hold of the March edition now and read it; his is a story well worth sharing.

One great excitement in February was the Winter Olympics, where Arabian horse breeder, Mario Matt, took Gold in the men's downhill slalom. Watching the event on television was very exciting and congratulations must go to Matt once more for achieving the ultimate sporting goal.

February is always a quiet time – those in the northern hemisphere prefer to stay indoors through the dark, and damp, days of winter and just get this shortest month over and done with. Meanwhile, those in the southern hemisphere make the most of the longer days and busy show and foaling season. For my own part, I was looking forward to the month being over as March was going to be a very exciting month for me.

March – back to the Land Down Under

Saturday 1 March saw me turning over my calendar to a lovely photograph of Ganges (Monogramm x Garonna), as taken by Anette Mattsson from Sweden, and then the rest of my day was spent packing. For on the Sunday, I was off back to the Land Down Under and the only person that didn't seem excited about this was my cat, Merlin. He kept on climbing into my suitcases, one by one, and the finally sitting

on my handbag. For me, it is always hardest leaving my four-legged family as you can't just pick up the phone and call them.

However, my sadness at saying goodbye to Merlin aside, I was excited to be heading back to the other side of the world. It is no secret that I have a huge love for Australia, as well as the people and horses there. This visit would see me going to this captivating continent for a month, visiting four states and taking in the Australian National Championships mid-trip.



© Samantha Mattocks 2014



There is no denying that flying from the UK to Australia is the longest trip in the world. I always do this flight in one go, with a change in Hong Kong, arriving into Sydney Kingsford Smith Airport in the morning. It is possible to enjoy stopovers on this flight, but I prefer to get on with my journey and get to Australia; and of course, at the end, I just want to get home! One day, a magic carpet will be invented so that we can enjoy all the fun of travelling to a destination, and then return



home immediately.

My trip Down Under this year had a very busy itinerary. I usually do an 'Aussie Diary' but it is fun to change things around and so I have kept much of my visit for here.

Landing into Sydney, I said my goodbyes to Clare and Paul, friends I had made on the Hong Kong – Sydney leg, and made my way to flight connections. I was going straight up to Brisbane, Queensland, to start my trip with a few days acclimatising with my



Clockwise from left: enjoying a beer on the Sunshine Coast with Jenni; Samantha with Simeon Shiffran at the Simeon Stud; Samantha with The Palms Maa'zerati; The mare Moondarra Mirage moved Samantha to tears.



good friend, Jennifer Saunders. Normally, there are three of us in the Kurrajong Hills, Sydney – Jenni, Deb Barrett and myself – but Deb was sadly diagnosed with a brain tumour last year and was in hospital at the time of my visit. Jenni herself is, around 20 November, flying off to Moscow for pioneering stem cell treatment for her Multiple Sclerosis, so it was perfect to spend some relaxed time with her and her friend, Pete.

The first official stop on my busy schedule was The Palms Arabians. Owned and run by the Greene family – Diane and Terry, Donna, Michael and Kelli and their boys, Riley and Patrick – The Palms is a true boutique farm. This was my second trip there and, as so often with places that you visit regularly, it was wonderful to return. I always love going back to a place and to seeing how their foals are growing up, how youngstock have matured, and how the older horses are turning into majestic, proud kings and queens of the herd.

In addition to writing a piece on The Palms Arabians, as featured in our October edition, I had two farms to visit while I was there. The first was Wayne and Miranda Beasley's Charaway Arabians, which was covered in our December edition. It is always lovely to meet in person a horse that you have seen and heard so much about and, for me, it was their homebred stallion True Vision (True Colours Eastwinds Elluscion), a classy 2004 chestnut, that I was itching to see. He did not disappoint, and he captivated me with his gorgeous eyes and gentle expression. I

found it hard to tear myself away from him, he really is just lovely. Dinner that night was with the Beasleys, including their young son, Lane, at Heath Rowbottom's. Heath is one of Australia's top trainers and it was great to have the chance to get to know him better.

In addition, his other half, Mark Deegenars, is a great chef and he made me a scrummy gluten-free cake for dessert! After a very entertaining evening, it was time for me to head back to The Palms for the night.

Saturday saw a presentation at The Palms, as Mandy Watson from Queensland was visiting along with Sandee Andrews from the US, who was over taking part in an endurance ride.

Sandee and I first met in the US at Las Vegas, and we all enjoyed a fabulous morning watching the horses, before enjoying some champagne! One of my loves at The Palms is their young stallion, Maa'zerati (Maa'zooz x St Cloud Park Mona) and, as is becoming tradition, I enjoyed a photoshoot with this gorgeous, sweet-natured boy at the end of the parade. Indeed, it was a very special day altogether and I shared my experiences of The Palms Arabians in the October edition.

That evening saw something different. Michael and Kelli's sons, Riley and Patrick, are huge 'footy' fans – Australian Football League (AFL) is like our rugby league – and that evening saw the new strip for the local Park Ridge Pirates, for whom the boys play in the junior leagues. It certainly was an entertaining evening and one that is, apparently, still talked about even now!

My final visit while staying at The Palms was to Deb and Ian Watson's Moondarra Arabians, a small farm where versatility is key. Moondarra was built on Crabbet/Russian lines but, in more recent years, Deb and Ian have made the move to the Polish bloodline. This couple have some truly lovely horses but for me, it was Moondarra Mirage (Mustafa x Bright Light) that moved me to tears. A 1996 bay, this mare is so proud, so regal, and she had that 'old soul' look that I love so much, something that can perhaps be contributed to her



classic Crabbet damline. It truly was a pleasure to stand before such a mare and she truly was captivating. The Moondarra story was shared in our October edition.

From The Palms, it was back to Jenni's for one night and before flying back down to Sydney for the Australian National Championships, held at Horsley Park Equestrian Centre. I last attended the 'Aussies' in 2010, so it was good to be back. What I love about this show is the true sense of camaraderie between the exhibitors, and the way that the Board of the Arabian Horse Society of Australia (AHSA) take such active roles in running the show, be it through being a ring steward, running the tradestand, or being in charge of the collecting ring. Also, Australia is home to some remarkable derivatives of all different shapes and sizes and they continue to fascinate me every time I return to the country.

I was delighted to find myself in the same hotel as Colleen Jackson from Western Australia, who I had met on my 2012 visit and again in Lexington, Kentucky, as she is a breeder of straight Egyptians. We had a lot of fun in the evenings, catching up and sharing our plans for the year ahead.

The show itself, held over four days, was very enjoyable. I was lucky enough to be able to sit with the judges' panel, which included Jaroslav Lacina from the Czech Republic who was there with his wife, Martina. I also met David McSorley, partner of judge Adam King, and I would end up spending some time with this lovely couple at the end of my trip.

The standout moment for many during this show was the terrific thunderstorm on the Saturday afternoon; I have never experienced a storm like it! The rain was coming in sideways into the walkway at the top of the arena, and some of the walkways outside quickly flooded. The show was stopped as the horses and riders in their beautiful costumes took shelter inside the arena, and it was debatable whether the power would last. After half an hour or so, when the drumming of rain on the roof was all you could hear, the storm passed enough to allow the show to continue. Very dramatic indeed!

The Sunday of the show is given over to the youth and amateur classes. Again, I was very impressed at how many of the big farms stayed to encourage and coach the next generations in the ring. There was a lovely atmosphere to the show all day and I very much enjoyed it. The show reports from the 2014 Aussies ran in the May and June editions of *The Arabian Magazine*.

Having enjoyed dinner with the judges and AHSA Board members the night before, Monday morning I left the hotel and headed to Forest Hill Arabians, home of Jenny and Peter Pond, and with Allan Preston, Chairman of the AHSA, and Jaroslav and Martina. We spent a pleasant morning wandering the paddocks and enjoying the wonderful hospitality of the Ponds. We profiled their farm in the May edition of *The Arabian Magazine*.

From there, we went to Mulawa Arabian Stud, which would be my home for the next three nights. There, we had a lovely welcome dinner and joining us were the amazing photographer Stuart Vesty as well as Jen Miller and Sophie Dia Pegrum from Horsefly films. All were over to capture the horses of Mulawa Arabians, as well as other select stops in Australia. The laughter continued long into the night but a busy day lay ahead.

Tuesday morning saw us head to Simeon Stud for a private visit with Jaroslav and Martina. It is always a treat to visit Marion Richmond's famed Egyptian stud and to walk the paddocks with her. Joining us were a small number of guests, including David Gillet from Diamond Road Stud, and Doug and Colleen Rutherford, who had been judge and judge's escort at the Aussies respectively. After walking the paddocks, we enjoyed Marion's amazing hospitality, dining on the balcony at the back of her house with a view of one of the most beautiful mare paddocks in the world. I then left with Stuart, Jen and Sophie to experience a Vesty/Horsefly photo/film shoot, which was very entertaining. Witnessing such events always offers a different insight into the images that we see in magazines and on screen, and the three of them were great company.

Later that afternoon, Scott Benjamin, who works closely with Mulawa Arabians, took me around their vast farm. The Mulawa property is very beautiful, as you can no doubt imagine from the photographs that we use to illustrate their articles with. It really was a treat to stay there and enjoy some quiet time before heading off, once more on my travels.

Wednesday lunchtime saw me arriving back at Sydney Airport but this time, my destination was south. I was off to experience the Crabbet Arabians of Victoria. This part of Australia is rich in these bloodlines

Clockwise from below right: A water dragon at Mulawa; The Blue Lake; Jaroslav and Martina at Mulawa.



and, having met several breeders during the 2013 World Crabbet Convention, I was keen to visit the area for myself and to meet some of these remarkable horses. I did have to smile, however, as I flew into Avalon Airport; cue Roxy Music on my iPod!

My host for this part of my trip was the lovely Lisa Mullen of Aldersyde Arabians who, with husband Adam, took very good care of me. My report from this visit was featured in depth in the June edition of *The Arabian Magazine* but I must mention my brief trip to Fenwick



Stud. The Fenwick name is part of the rich history of the Crabbet Arabian and it was an honour to be able to visit there. Some of the best horses bred at Crabbet Park were exported to Fenwick, under the management of the late Mrs A D D McClean, and her vision really brought the Crabbet Arabian in Australia to life. I loved being able to visit there and to walk the paddocks – and there might be a series of photos showing my excitement but I am not sure that they will ever reach publication!

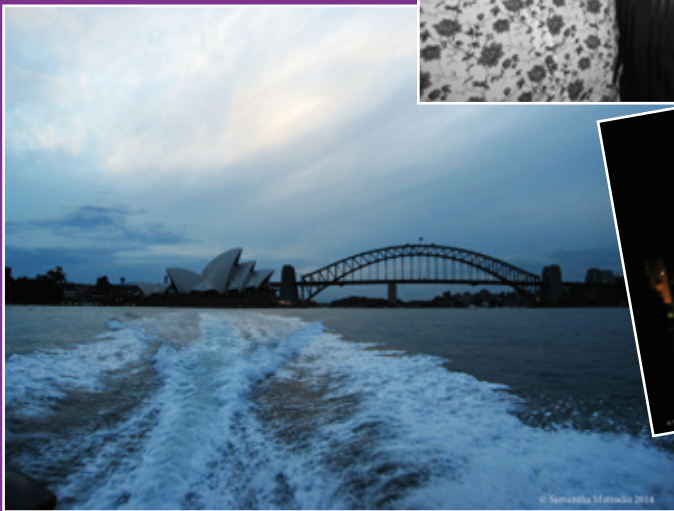
The afternoon of my visit to Fenwick Stud, Lisa kindly took me to Kate and Doyle Dertell's Future Farms. This farm specialises in both halter and performance, and the couple excel in the show-ring both as breeders and trainers. Since my feature on their farm will be printed in the February 2015 edition, naturally I don't want to give too much away now; suffice to say that it was a wonderful visit and I was reluctant to leave.



Clockwise from above: an encounter with a baby Eastern Brown Snake; Samantha with David and Adam; Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Opera House by night; Madama Butterfly!; One of the stallions of Forest Hill; going across Sydney Harbour on a water taxi.



After some sightseeing, including Mount Gambier's famed Blue Lake, we stopped for a brief visit to Kate Luckock's Ennerdale Stud. Kate also breeds beautiful Crabbet Arabians, as did her mother before her, and again, it was lovely to see her horses against the beautiful backdrop of this part of Australia.



The Saturday of my time in Victoria saw Lisa kindly driving me down to South Australia to visit a Crabbet farm there, a drive of some 400km each way. Our visit to Melandah Stud, owned by Mel and Dave Somerville, was very enjoyable indeed and I just loved seeing their pure-bred Crabbet twin colt foals. However, it was their pure Crabbet colt foal Melandah Adonis (Ebjarah Moollah x Beaucheval Spellbound) that made me wish, not for the first time, that I lived in Australia! He really would be an asset to any breeding programme.

Leaving Melandah Stud, Lisa drove us to Mount Gambier, where we were staying the night. As it was around midnight, we were treated to the sight of hundreds of kangaroos coming out of the nearby forest and on to the road. It was simply a magical sight and even Lisa said that she had never seen so many kangaroos; stunning.



My final day in Victoria was spent looking at Lisa's own horses, including the incredibly charismatic and affable stallion Aldersyde Resemblance (Arfaja Harlan x Fenwick Champagne) and her 2013 foal crop.

We then set off in the sunshine to enjoy some sightseeing along the Great Ocean Road. This included my first, and hopefully only, encounter with an Eastern Brown snake, the most deadly snake in Australia. Lisa and I had gone for a quick walk on the beach at Anglesea when Lisa spotted the baby brown. Thinking it was dead, she nearly picked it up to show me but thankfully, decided to throw some sand over it first to check! The snake was very much alive and, in retrospect, I probably got closer than I should. We both survived the experience, I am pleased to say, and we warned some dog walkers as we left the beach that there was a 'deadly on the rocks'!





Tuesday, I flew back up to Sydney for the final time of my visit. David McSorley met me at the airport and we went for dinner with David Gillet of Diamond Road Arabians, who I know well through my visits to Simeon Stud. David M and I then made our way to King Estate International in Ebenezer, just outside Sydney, where he and Adam lived. There is a lot of history to King Estate International – KEI – and I hope to share this in a future edition.

My remaining time Down Under was spent relaxing and enjoying the company of David and Adam. I also met their two dogs, one of which was Ollie, a beautiful and very cuddly Doberman that is a grandson of the dogs on the very popular 1980s programme *Magnum PI*. They also have a beautiful little Jack Russell x Mini Foxy cross, Honey, who was abandoned in the Aussie Bush on Christmas Eve 2013. Honey decided that it was more fun to sleep with me than anywhere else so she kept breaking into my bedroom at night – something she continued to do after I left; I miss that gorgeous little dog.

While I was there, I was able to visit Deb in hospital. David kindly took me and left me there for as long as we needed, and was waiting outside with a very big hug when I left! It was an extremely emotional visit and was one that I know we both will treasure. It was while I was there with Deb that I mentioned I was having my hair cut; she asked me to keep my hair for her for a wig. Well, after she said that, I decided to have all my hair cut off to above shoulder length; it has not been anywhere near this length for over 10 years, but Norman Ironside did an amazing job. Once again, David held my hand through it all and provided me

with plenty of gin and tonic afterwards!

My final full day in Australia was spent having a very relaxed visit and lunch with Louise Cordina and Glenn North of Saba Arabians, a place that I never tire of visiting. Next time, I hope to have longer there than just a couple of hours but it seems that time is never your friend when you are travelling.

With all the cases packed, however, it was time Adam, David and I to head up into Sydney for my very last night treat – *Madama Butterfly* at Sydney Harbour Opera House. To get to the ‘theatre’, held in the outdoor gardens, we had to get a water taxi across the Harbour. I honestly felt like a Bond girl as I sat at the back of the boat, newly-short hair ruffling on the breeze, with two dashing men sat next to me! Performed outside, this incredible version of Puccini’s famous opera had a full moon rising up out of the water among other beautiful effects. And, as the famous aria, *Un Bel Di*, was sung, there was not a dry eye in the house.

The three of us spent the night in Sydney – enjoying *Dirty Dancing* on the television as it happened to be on when we got back to the hotel! All too soon, it was time for me to head home once more. There were emotional goodbyes all around and it was with great reluctance that I headed out of the Australian sunshine and into the temperature-controlled environment of 24+ hours of airports and aeroplanes.

My flight home was eventful, to say the least. Arriving into Hong Kong, we flew into a terrific storm, with the South African pilot coming over the speakers to say that it would be a bumpy landing but we were in good hands! We were the last plane down as they shut the airport the moment we landed. Our pilot told us that the plane in front of us had aborted their landing at the very last moment so we really were incredibly lucky to get down at all. It turned out that we were in the middle of a ‘black storm’, where the rain that falls is so big and heavy that it smashes windows and we just had to sit it out. Having decided not to sleep between Sydney and Hong Kong, thus ensuring I slept on the longer flight back to London, this wait was quite tiring. When we eventually did board the next plane, we sat there for well over an hour-and-a-half as the backlog of air traffic had to be cleared. Much later than scheduled, we finally took off and, of course, flew into the storm that had moved on ahead of us. Several passengers screamed as the plane ‘danced’ around the sky and I did wonder whether this was it and would we fall out of the sky there and then. I think it was with some relief to all passengers that we landed in a sunny Heathrow the following morning.

I had not told anyone about my hair cut, or the fact that I left a bag containing my locks with David to give to Deb, so my parents were amazed when they met me at the airport! My month in Australia had, again, been the trip of a lifetime but it was lovely to return back to my sleepy part of South Norfolk and to see Merlin Cat once more. I only had a few hours to adjust as tomorrow was April – and it was straight into the next deadline! This account of my time in Australia is very, very brief, there really is so much more that I could add, but I have to say a huge thank you to everyone that made me feel so very welcome while I was visiting. Australia has a very special place in my heart, and I truly have some very special friends there – thank you.

April – The Source of Egyptians

April Fool’s Day dawned but for me, it was no joke! Jetlag or no jetlag, it was straight into the office, with Merlin, and time to begin our



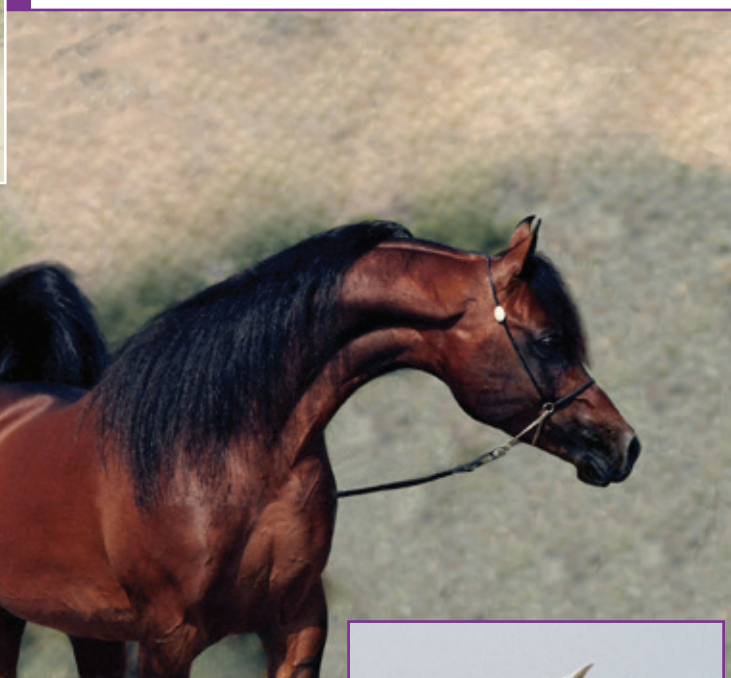


Arabian Magazine for the renowned Australian photographer, Sharon Meyers – congratulations again Sharon!

One of the most exciting stories that we have printed in recent years ran in this May edition. This was an interview with Tim Farley, son of Walter Farley, the author of the much-loved book *The Black Stallion*. This interview was exclusive to *The Arabian Magazine* and we were more than thrilled to be able to run this feature.

As we were completing this edition, the news reached the world that the incredible Ali Jamaal (Ruminaja Ali x Heritage Memory) had passed away. The news was announced by Greg Gallún at the Arabian Breeders' Alliance World Cup in Las Vegas, as Greg had shown the stallion to his National Championship titles. This was very sad news indeed and all thoughts were with his long-time owner, Lenita Perroy. With all the travelling I had already done this year, I felt that I would give Vegas a miss this year. Going to the same shows, year on year, can become a little bit repetitive and I felt that I needed a break. However, I am already making my plans to go to the show in 2015 and I can't wait to be back! Instead, April was spent with my family – a now annual trip with my mum to a spa for precious mother and daughter time, and then a very relaxed Easter.

Clockwise from below: Ali Jamaal; Maleik El Kehil at the age of 35 years old; Walter Farley with 'The Black Stallion'; the May 2014 front cover.



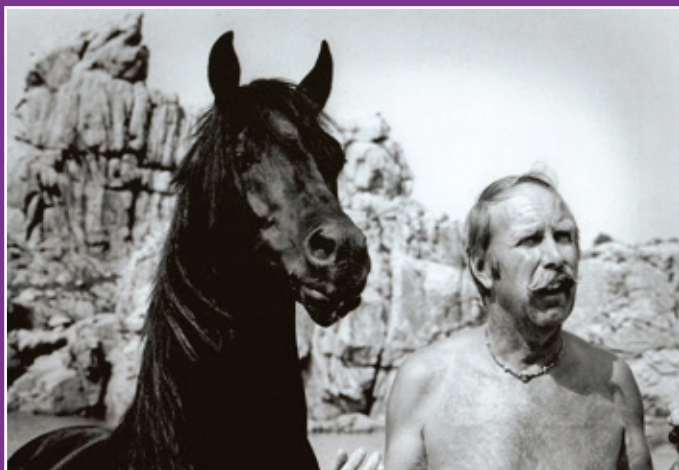
annual Egyptian and Black Edition. Always popular, this issue coincided with a beautiful image of a straight Egyptian Arabian on our calendar. Dalima Shah (Ansata Halim Shah x AK Bint Dalia II) is owned by Erwin and Annette Escher and photographed by Erwin. The couple, who own Rothenberg Stud in Germany, have been a part of *The Arabian Magazine* for many years now and we always love to share their images.

Our cover for this edition was Ashour Al Hasan (Asfour x Sukkhara), owned and bred by Hasan Rifat and Rick Cummins of Australia. This cover also marked the first cover with *The*



Another reason for my deciding to spend more time at home this summer was because we had three foals due at our own Ivy Arabians – the most that we have ever had in one year. The past nine years have been fully devoted to *The Arabian Magazine* and I knew that I

needed to be here for our own mares and foals. I feel that it is also good to put life in perspective sometimes and have a change to your regular pattern. Certainly my break from visiting shows left me very refreshed and ready to go in the latter part of this year, as well as very excited about

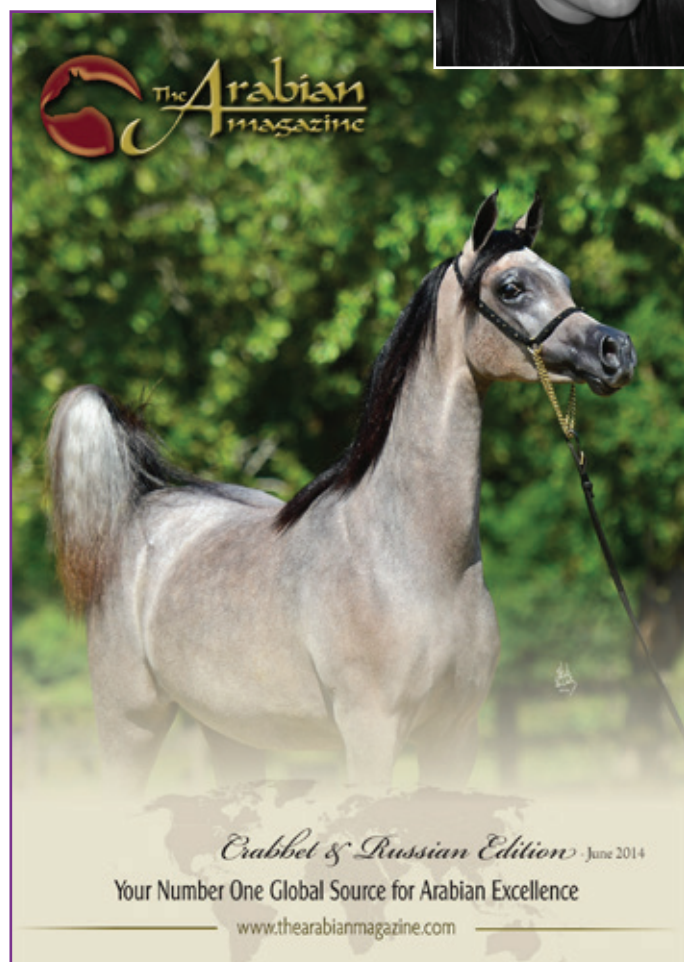


the next. Unfortunately, our planned summer of three beautiful foals did not turn out that way, but we will come to that later.

May – Those Russians...

I always love planning our June edition for it celebrates two of my favourite bloodlines – that of the huge-moving Russian Arabian, and then the one that is steeped into my life with the Arabian horse, the Crabbet Arabian. We had some wonderful features lined up for this edition, including my look at the horses I had seen on my trip to Australia. Other highlights were the stallions of Sax Arabians, which have been built on Russian bloodlines, as well

Clockwise from right: Samantha with her old university friends, the band Tinderbox; The peacock at Emma's wedding; Three generations at Samantha's Ivy Arabians; June cover.



as how Russian Arabians have impacted on South Africa.

The cover for this June edition, which would be at the Menton Show, was Sara Al Shahania (WH Justice x Lumiars Love Song), a yearling filly owned and bred by Al Shahania Stud in Qatar. This classy filly is being shown selectively across Europe and we look forward to seeing her out as a two-year old.

Also of note in the June edition was a celebration piece on Maleik El Kheil (El Shaklan x Muneera), who celebrated his 35th birthday in May. It is no secret that I simply love this stallion – I just need to see him and I am moved to tears – and it was an honour to be able to share this birthday celebrations through the pages of *The Arabian Magazine*. Bred by Joanna Maxwell with her late husband, Pat, at their Lodge

Farm Arabians, Maleik has lived for many years at Al Aryam Arabians, located in Abu Dhabi. One of the last living sons of El Shaklan, I am truly honoured to have seen Maleik so many times over the past years, and I hope that, come 2015, I will be able to see him once more.

Also in this edition was the Pride of Poland preview, something that is eagerly awaited by those that make the annual pilgrimage to the Janów Podlaski State Stud in Poland. Among this year's lots was the reigning Best in Show, Norma (Gazal Al Shaqab x Nina) and she was just one of many Polish beauties up for auction this year.

Back to May itself, though, and our calendar image for the month was Paulgren Park Playboy (Rhyl Jupiter x Ashmir Silver Dream), a part-bred Arabian and one of Australia's many wonderful derivatives. He was captured by the



talented Australian photographer, Suz Worsley-Deacon.

Deadline aside, my month began with heading up to north-west England, Royton to be exact, for a wedding. Emma, the daughter of one of my best friends, Diane, was getting married and I went up for the very happy occasion. It was a wonderful wedding and a truly was a special weekend, not least as a peacock appeared while the bride and groom were being photographed and almost stole the show! I wish Emma and John a lifetime of happiness together.

The following weekend saw me going to a gig in Suffolk. Tinderbox is made up of two of my old university friends and I have tried, several times, to see them perform; the last time I saw them live, they were busking on Grafton Street in Dublin back in 1998, and to finally see them in concert was a great experience. Monique and Dan, the Tinderbox duo have produced three albums to date and they provided me with the music for the video I did on the magazine a few years ago. Unbeknown to those



watching them on this May night, they were recording the gig to bring out a live album, due out in the last week of November. And I am now immortalised 'in vinyl' as Monique dedicated a song to me, making a great evening truly an unforgettable one!

Saturday 17 May saw me compete in what will be my last Race for Life – for now, at least. I have raced for the past seven years and, with the generosity of many of you, passed the £10,000 mark this year in raising funds for Cancer Research. With that in mind, I decided to up the stakes this year and undertook the 10km race, rather than the 5km. Alicia Braty, ex-Tamini and someone that had raced with me before, joined me as did long-term family friend, Cathy. At the time of writing, the total raised is at £10,612 and if anyone would like to donate, the JustGiving page is still open – visit www.justgiving.com/the-10k-taminis/ Thank you to all that have raced alongside me. I might well do another Race for Life in the future but for now, I'd like to turn my attentions to other charities and raising money for them instead.

The end of May arrived – and so did the first of our foals! On 29 May, my precious 'Shamsi', Shams Al Thahabiyya (Psadisho Ibn Esstashan x Rosaliah Gold), had her first foal, sired by Designed (Master Design GA x Hanniyah). Shamsi hadn't shown any signs of waxing up but, when my dad went down on the Thursday morning, there was a second horse in the stable! Our clever maiden mare had foaled all by herself, and there was a beautiful colt at her side. 'Teddy' was swiftly named as he is just so cuddly. He also has this other worldly quality to him, that he has been here before, and so, with the help of HRH Princess Alia Al Hussein of Jordan, who named his dam for us, we called him Shams El Kahraman – the amber sun. Strong, chestnut, beautiful, correct, and huge moving, this lovely boy is the fourth generation of our precious

straight Crabbet Siala line. He fills me with joy and I cannot wait to see him out in the show-rings next year.

June – The blackest month

June came in like a lamb and went out like a lion. My heart full of the beautiful Teddy, I turned the calendar to show the gorgeous Amir Al Shaqab (Gazal Al Shaqab x Amira Madrona), photographed by Glenn Jacobs of Belgium.

With the magazine deadline later in the month, I was able to enjoy 'Teddy time' and also a now annual trip to the BBC Good Food Show with my mum and friend Cathy. We also celebrated Father's Day, where I was able to indulge one of my other passions, cooking, and make a feast for my dad.

I had a lovely surprise this month as I received a telephone call from Will Oppen. Previously, Will was the Breeding Manager at Al Shaqab Stud and he has since returned to his old job in Argentina, at Zichy-Thyssen Arabians. Will was over in the UK on business and he came



Crystal Silvern Aphrodite.

over to The Arabian Magazine offices for a chat. It was good to catch up with him and find out what he has been doing since I last saw him. We met again just a few days later for lunch, which was lovely, and he is now back in Argentina.

The weekend of 21/22 June was the Menton Show and I was tempted to get a late flight and go over. However, with the magazine deadline about to begin, I decided to stay at home and get a head start on the July European edition. And it was just as well that I did.

My first homebred Arabian is Crystal Silvern Aphrodite (PHA Silvern Risalm x Crystal Belladonna), my 'Lucy'. She was in foal to Psadisho



Ibn Esstashan (Esstashan x Psyada Bint Psyche) for our 2015 AHS Futurity Foal and I was excited by the prospect of her second baby. As mentioned, we had three foals due this summer but something kept niggling in my mind that we would only have two, that Lucy would be the one to lose hers, and that it would be a colt.

The long dark hours of 1am onwards of Monday 23 June will be forever etched in my memory. Suffice to say, my prediction was right – Lucy lost her foal, a colt, but she did so midway through foaling him just a few days off his due date. He was stuck fast, half in, half out, of Lucy, and it was almost two hours before the vet arrived to sedate my poor mare. To watch a mare that you love, any animal that you love, suffer and struggle and be unable to do anything about it was horrific. I was convinced that I was going to lose her. The foal, who died during the birthing process we think, was stuck as his back leg was locked into a bent angle, so she could not push him past her pelvis. I thought she would either die from the effort, colic, or, when he was finally free, everything else would come with her from the strain she had put on her body.

Waiting for the vet to arrive was the longest time of my life, and my dad and I tried to calm Lucy the best that we could – but what could we really do? She was slick with sweat, in pain, scared, and pushing herself around the stable floor in a bid to get her foal out of her. Fear truly does have a smell, something that I never believed until that night ...

The vet finally arrived and swiftly went to work. He cut the foal out of her – and that is as horrific as that sounds. I wanted to be there to comfort Lucy but to hear the saw... I just couldn't. Finally, he was out, in three pieces, and we then had to work on saving Lucy, who was beyond exhausted.

The vet left just before 5am and Lucy was still down – exhausted, distressed, in pain, broken hearted, and with little will to live. We stayed with her, giving her sloppy food and water to try and give her the energy to get up. But every time she went to stand, her back legs did the splits in spite of all the fresh bedding around her, and she was down again. The fear was that her pelvis was broken and if so, then it would be two horses we lost that night, not just one.

Just before midday, Lucy had another vet visit and we were told that, as she had been down for 11 hours by that point, the outlook was not looking good. They would give her an epidural morphine injection and if that did not work, they would put her to sleep at 3pm. I was beside myself and also completely numb. For Lucy however, those words seemed to be a trigger and she started trying to stand again. We had been told to keep her down until she had the injection, which would be when the nurse arrived to assist the vet. The very second the needle was removed, Lucy leapt up and stayed up. The first thing she did was turn to me and rest her head, eyes against me, to my chest. We all cried. She was up, she was shaking, she was very weak and she still had the placenta to pass, but she was up. Thank you God. She was not out of the woods by a long shot but she was up and by doing so, she had given herself a fighting chance.

While all this was happening to Lucy, I managed to get injured. We all do it, getting in the way of a 400kg plus 'animal' in a bid to protect them. My hand was crushed between her head and the stable wall. I was also crushed underneath her, my leg pinned straight. I look back and I swear, she didn't move at all in that time. She had been pushing herself around the stable every 30 seconds or so but she didn't move again until my dad – who someone found enough super-human

strength to lift Lucy enough so that I could wriggle out – had pulled me clear, and then pulled me up as I couldn't put any weight on my leg. Once Lucy was up on the Monday, I spent my time sitting in a chair outside her stable; I could barely stand and could hardly walk. Lucy kept inching closer and closer to me so in the end, we moved my chair so that I could be right next to her. When Lucy finally passed the majority of her placenta, 18 hours after she went into labour, my mum said she'd take me to hospital. Instead, the vet looked at my leg and prescribed wine, rest, ice, and painkillers; that worked for me!

The next day, I was convinced that Lucy wouldn't be with us anymore when we went down the stables but thankfully, she was. The last bit of the placenta finally freed itself 36 hours after she went into labour. Now it was a case of making sure that she didn't get an infection and to try and get her through it. We had her out in the paddock, rather than being in the stable where she lost her foal, and we decided to make a small corral between the other paddocks so that she could go and see her friends. It was so moving – we took Lucy through and, as one, all our other horses stopped what they were doing and moved, as one, towards her. Tears anew were wept.

I named Lucy's lost foal Crystal Moon, or 'Baby Moon', just so that he had an identity even though he was not for this world. I will never breed from Lucy again – maybe by embryo transfer if I win the lottery! From the vets own advice, I know I could never breed Lucy naturally again, and from my own experience of this, I could never contemplate putting her – or I – through that again.

So my beautiful ten-year-old mare is now already in a life of retirement. From being down for so long, she has nerve damage to her hip. She throws her leg out when she trots, so she will never be ridden or shown again. Her destiny now lies in being 'nanny' to the weaned foals. The fact that she is still with us, and didn't even have any bruising inside her, is a miracle. She is a fighter, that much is true, and I am grateful every day that she chose to fight; I don't think I could have borne it to have lost both her and the foal.

As for my hand; I have severe nerve damage and I am undergoing therapy on it. It will take well over a year to heal. It is painful and frustrating in equal measures, but I would put my hand in the same place again, time and time again, to try and protect my mare. Lucy knows; she keeps sniffing it and blowing on it. That bond that we have with our Arabian horses is so, so strong.

While all of this was going on, we had a magazine to put together. I am sorry that your July edition was late and I hope this helps explain why. There was no way I could do any work for that first week, when every moment was spent with Lucy. But focus has to be found, and autopilot exists for a reason.

Our July cover star was the incredibly showy Ghazwan Aljassimya (Marwan Al Shaqab x Athina El Jamaal), owned and bred by Aljassimya Farm. This cover was American photographer Kelly Campbell's first with us and the image of this colt, cavorting in front of the impressive Santa Ynez skyline, remains one of my favourites of the year. I very much look forward to seeing this colt out and about once more in 2015. With the magazine done, it was now time for all of us to have our annual summer break, and for me to concentrate on both Lucy and myself getting better.

July – back to the shows

The month began with the arrival of our last foal, what should have



been our third but was actually our second. Psyana (Psynergy x Martina Nareena) was in foal to Adawy (Borneo x Ashiqa) for her first foal and 'Paddy' arrived, without warning, on the late afternoon of 3 July. All went well with the arrival of this lovely little grey colt, but I couldn't help but cry just after he was born as the sense of Lucy's



Clockwise from above: Back to Malvern once more!; The incredible view from Bychan Arabians; Samantha with Gail Mailloux, who was over from the USA; Shannon enjoying the wild North Sea; Psyridescent, photographed by Emma Mazwell at 11 weeks, was born in July.



loss hit me anew. We named this super little boy Psyridescent and we hope that he will sparkle as much as his name suggests! With Teddy and Paddy, we have what I collectively call 'The Teddies' and they both, Teddy in particular, helped get me through this summer. I look forward to their futures and all the joy that they will hopefully bring. July was noteworthy as we had a visitor over from the US, Gail Mailloux. Gail and I meet regularly at the US Egyptian Event in Kentucky, where she is on the Board of Directors, and a chance conversation last year revealed that her parents were stationed at Hardwick Airbase in the Second World War – Hardwick Airbase being my local airfield! Every July, there is a dance in one of the old hangers and everyone dresses up in WWII costume and dances to a Big Band. Gail decided to come over and experience this, as well as to see where her parents met and

fell in love. It was wonderful to be able to share our part of the world with Gail and for her to see, first hand, this part of England that has such a strong meaning for her family.

Gail stayed on to attend the British National Championships and she was especially inspired by the ridden classes – there was much discussion on her Facebook page about this – and it



was lovely to see her so enthusiastic about this.

For me, this was only my second show of the season, the first having been the Australian National Championships, and I was very much looking forward to having *The Arabian Magazine* tradestand there once more. The sun shone for all three days of the show – I cannot remember the last



time that happened – and it was great to be back with the best of British again. I must also thank the many of you that came to offer kind words and support for what happened to me with Lucy; it truly meant a lot.

Gail headed home straight from Malvern, so we went to Caroline Sussex's for the night. Caroline, one of the founding members of the Crabbet Organisation here in the UK, owns Binley Stud and she also now runs a beautiful bed and breakfast from her Binley House Farm. It was lovely to walk the paddocks with Caroline and to see her straight Crabbets. Thank you again to her for providing such a wonderful last night for Gail's stay.



August – the month of Polish Arabians

This month started in the traditional way – a trip to Wales to Bychan Arabians for Sue and Emrys Jones' open day. This year was their 50th anniversary and while it rained for much of the parade, it was a delight, as always to be there. I had planned to get back to visit



Clockwise from above: The storm clouds over Poland; Padrons Psyche in August this year; the Ridden Arabian Star Series (RASS) Finals.

them again this autumn but, having had a reasonably quiet year thus far, it all went very busy! My report from their open day ran in the September edition.

We broke up our journey back from Wales by staying with Caroline again, and then it was all systems go for our second visitor of the summer. This was Shannon Lawlor, an extraordinary



Canadian artist who I first met in Poland several years ago. Shannon was returning to Poland once more this year and decided to come and visit me, and Merlin, as part of an extended trip. Arriving on 8 August, we celebrated Shannon's birthday the next day and our other international visitors included Deb and Ian Watson, who had shown me such wonderful hospitality back in March, as well as their friend, Lyn Hall, who was over from Australia and travelling with them. We spent a lovely afternoon with them here, as well as some of our own family and friends. I then showed Shannon the very best of Norfolk and Suffolk, including our wonderful coastlines, before we headed to Norwich Airport for the flight to Poland; little did we know that the 'Norwich' stamp in her passport would become such a talking point later on when she tried to get over to Belgium!

It is always so lovely to return to Poland and to know that, ahead of you, lies an incredible week of Arabian horses. The weather this year was interesting to say the least – the show was stopped a couple of times due to the intense storms that blew in, something that resulted in the show being moved inside. My report from this terrific event was detailed in depth in our October edition but looking back now, I can say that I have two overriding memories from the event. The first was Altamira (Ekstern x Altona) having to trot through deep puddles of water in the show-ring – and still scoring two 20s for movement. The second was the incredible and moving sight of the Michalów mares, headed by Georgia (Monogramm x Gizela) in the indoor arena on the Saturday night. It was this moment that ensured that this wonderful mare was awarded my *The Arabian Magazine* Arabian of the Year award for 2014, which you can read as the lead story in this issue.

Having enjoyed all that Poland had to offer, Shannon and I returned to Hardwick for just two nights before heading back to Europe, this time to visit Knocke Arabians. Owned by Mr and Mrs Gheysens, the annual Knocke Arabians open day falls on the same weekend as the UK International Horse Show and so, sadly, I have to miss the latter. However, my weekend at Knocke more than makes up for it and the entire time is spent surrounded by not just the Polish beauties, the incredible group of broodmares that make up the heart of the stud, but also the stallion giants of QR Marc (Marwan Al Shaqab x Swete Dreams) and Padrons Psyche (Padron x Kilika). Indeed, I arranged a small surprise

for Shannon on that first night, enabling us to visit the Schoukens Training Center and for her to meet Padrons Psyche in person; I think that she very much enjoyed that experience!

The rain seemed to have followed us from Poland and although the afternoon of the open day was sunny, it was very wet underfoot following a deluge overnight. Along with Eric Blaak from the Netherlands, I provided the commentary for this event. My report from Knocke Arabians was featured in the Paris edition of the magazine and it was, once more, a wonderful weekend. I always love to visit there and to see the foals grow up, and I thank Mr and Mrs Gheysens once more for their hospitality.

Being at Knocke meant that I was unable to enjoy first-hand the inaugural Ridden Arabian Star Series (RASS) Finals, where *The Arabian Magazine* had sponsored the mare class. However, my mum, Tina, represented me on the night and my Facebook feed was awash with comments from delighted exhibitors and spectators. *The Arabian Magazine* will be part of RASS again in 2015 and I look forward to seeing this innovative idea continue to grow.

Leaving Knocke, Shannon and I returned to the UK and spent the night in Teddington (the irony did not escape me!) before I returned her to Heathrow airport in the morning. It was an emotional farewell but I am very much enjoying seeing how this trip inspired Shannon through her new series of paintings. There is so much still to come from this talented young woman!

Arriving back to Hardwick, having been away for almost two weeks,



it was straight on to the September edition and I think it was the fastest turnaround ever to get this done. However, continuing the



Clockwise from above: September cover; Deborah Burt (left) with Samantha Mattocks, presenting *The Arabian Magazine* prize; Gallardo J; Eden C at the All Nations's Cup, Aachen.



adversity that this small team seemed to be facing, Claire, our Artistic Editor, tragically lost her mother to leukemia this month. To get the magazine out, once more, in such trying circumstances shows the determination of Team Tamini, and my thoughts remain with Claire and her family as we approach the Christmas season.

September – back in the swing of things

This month's calendar star was the beautiful FT Shaella (Shael Dream Desert x Soul Pretty TGS), as photographed by Gregor Aymar of Germany. This mare is so beautiful and she has many fans around the world – and rightly so.

The start of the month saw me heading down to London to award *The Arabian Magazine* prize for the Best Arabian Art in any medium at the Society of Equestrian Artists' annual *Horse in Art* exhibition. I took advantage of being in London and arranged to meet up with Clare, who I had made friends with on the flight to Australia, and she came with me to select my winner. There were a good number of Arabian

paintings at the exhibit this year but there was one standout winner for me. This was Terence Gilbert with *The Arabian*, and he is featured within the pages of this edition.

We then got the September Aachen edition to print. The cover was the ever-lovely Aja Europa (Aja Justified x HB Marais), bred by Aja Arabians in the UK and owned by the Royal Cavalry of Oman. April Visel captured this ethereal photograph of Europa and there are high hopes for this beautiful young filly.

We welcomed Barry Shepherd back for this edition as he wrote a very interesting feature about the Arabian horse in the Middle East – I hope to get more from him in 2015! We also featured our extensive coverage of the British Nationals. Thank you once again to all the writers, as well as Marilyn and Peter Sweet of Sweet Photography, in helping to bring this altogether, no small feat!

With the September edition at the printers, it was time for me to focus on my dad's 70th birthday. This involved cooking up a feast for the actual day of his birthday – something that I did while signing off the proofs – and then preparing for his party at the weekend. A great time was had by all and it was lovely to be able to spoil my dad so much for once.

With two trips looming, I began work on the October edition early. However, I had barely begun when it was time to head off to the All Nations' Cup in Aachen. Always a highlight, this year's show seemed to be lacking slightly compared to previous years, which was a shame. This might have been because of the very varied judging panel – but who knows? However, the right horses rose to the top and it was, all in all, a very enjoyable show.

The day after Aachen, we went to Jadem Arabians for their regular open house. Once more, I provided the commentary on the day, and everyone very much enjoyed seeing Christine Jamar's young horses. The young colt, Gallardo J (Emerald J x Gomera J) particularly caught the attention of many and he went on to win the European Yearling Male Championship with his new owners, Al Muawd Stud from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Our report from Aachen was featured in the Paris edition.

After a wonderful lunch, it was time to head down the road to Schoukens Training Center. Tom, Glenn, Cathy and the team always



put on a full and varied presentation, which I also commentate for. This year's highlights included seeing Eden C (Enzo x Silken Sable), who was garlanded in gold the day before in Aachen, and then, once more, Padróns Psyche. I have discovered that it is nigh-on impossible



Clockwise from above: WH Justice in California; Lorenzo who performed at the European Championships in Belgium this year; the Polish mares of Athbah Stud on the October cover.

to introduce this stallion and talk about him without crying! The Schoukens team never cease to amaze me in that they put on such a huge presentation the day after one of the biggest shows of the season – well done and thank you!

Normally, we stay overnight but, with a further trip away planned while on this deadline, my dad kindly drove us back to Norfolk through the night; thank you dad!

October – back to Santa Ynez once more

The regal beauty Bidayer (Emigrant x Eskalopka) was our October calendar star. Photographed by Scott Trees, it is this mare that gave Albidayer Stud, in Sharjah, UAE, its name. Writing this, I have realised that, totally unplanned, our May calendar image and our May theme for the magazine both matched in terms of bloodlines, and they did again in October, with the magazine having its Polish theme. April Visel had back-to-back covers as we featured her image of three mares from the Athbah Stud in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the cover. This was a very different photograph and one that I particularly liked.

However, before we could get this edition to print, an issue that also featured a lot of Australian stud coverage, I visited Santa Ynez in California, USA. I had been invited to the second Foal Festival and, having not visited this part of the US since 2011, I was keen to

and I was thrilled to be back.

My coverage of the Foal Festival was extensively featured in the Paris edition – I think those that read it can tell that I very much enjoyed the event! The day after the show was spent with Bart van Buggenhout, visiting Aljassimya Farm's impressive farms and seeing their plans for the future. We also made a visit to Gallún Farms, where we saw WH Justice (Magnum Psyche x Vona Sher-Renea) and I took a video of him on my phone that has since been seen by my thousands of people – the power of the internet!

It was wonderful to catch up with friends while in the Valley, including Sigi Siller and Janina Merz of Om El Arab International. I also had the chance to meet Janina's beautiful baby son, Luca, who is the happiest baby I think I have ever seen!

My last day was spent with Carol Steppe of Day Dream Arabians, whose company I had also enjoyed during the show. It is always a pleasure to spend time with Carol and her enthusiasm for the breed as a complete, versatile Arabian is to be applauded in this modern era where the in-hand showing is everything. She put on a small but beautiful presentation of her horses for me. Hello Darling (Hi Hello Boy x Charlotte DDA) moved me to tears. Foaled in 2008, I saw this deep bay beauty when she was just a yearling and she captivated me then. Now grown into a beautiful young mare, Hello Darling is just breathtaking. She is in foal to WH Justice for a 2015 foal and I know that I am not alone in wanting to see this special baby!

Flying back from Santa Barbara to London, I was lucky enough to receive a very rare upgrade on the main flight so I did manage some sleep. Arriving back home around 4.30pm, very tired, it was straight



Right: Excalibur EA could potentially win the Triple Crown this year; below: Samantha's dad, Trevor, riding a camel during the WAHO Conference.

into the office to do the layout for the October edition. This can be a challenge at the best of times but it seemed to flow



okay this time around...! I was in the office at 5am the next morning and worked through until 8pm to get the magazine done. It was

exhausting. Needless to say, I ended up with a cold and chest infection that lasted from early October through until mid-November but for once, I did try and rest as much as I could.

The end of October saw us heading to the European Championships, held in the new venue of Azelhof at Lier, Belgium. This show was a great success in many ways and it remains one of the highlights of the showing year. The display by Lorenzo, in particular, will stay with those that witnessed it for many years to come. I always love the European Championships when they are in Belgium and I don't think that I am alone in that. A detailed report from this show was featured in the Paris edition of *The Arabian Magazine*.

The final week of October saw me begin hand therapy to help with the nerve damage sustained this summer and then a balmy Hallow'een at the local Banham Zoo with my niece who was enjoying her half-term break. However, there wasn't much chance to rest – the last deadlines of 2014 had already begun.

November – the busiest month

This month is always the busiest of the year for Team Tamini. This is when we do two editions back to back – the Paris issue and this one. The reason behind this is, quite simply, so that we can have some time off in December to spend with our families and loved ones. Plus, to



try and get material out of people in the post-Paris, pre-Christmas weeks has previously proved to be difficult. While doing the two magazines at once does make for long days, the whole team agrees that we would rather do this as the pros definitely outweigh the cons.

The horse that has kept us calm on the calendar this month is Om El Shahmaan (Sanadik El Shaklan x Om El Shaina), bred and owned by Om El Arab International and taken by

Johanna Ullström when he was standing at her training centre in Belgium, ArcticTern.

The focus for the first part of the month was the Paris issue, which returned from the printers just three days ago. EKS Mansour (EKS Alihandro x EKS Phateena) graces the cover of this edition, another Stuart Vesty photograph. Owned by Al Shahania Stud, EKS Mansour will make his European show-ring debut in 2015.

To mark this edition going to print, I escaped down to Dover to stay with friends Phil and Noelle Skingle on 14 November as, on the Saturday, we were off to Twickenham to watch England play in Rugby Football Union's Autumn Internationals. While England suffered a shocking defeat, we still enjoyed a great day. I stayed down in Dover for an extra night to make the most of a bit of chill-out time.

My parents, meanwhile, were at the WAHO Conference in Qatar and you can expect full and detailed reports from this event across the first editions of 2015.

All this brings me nicely to the here and now. Sitting here, on 24 November, on a thankfully sunny, if very cold, day. Winter is arriving, bringing with it torrential rain and our little sleepy hamlet was cut off last night by flooding. This is my last article to write for 2014 – all that is left for me to do is put the layout together, and then write the editorial. Paris beckons at the end of this week, a show that might give



us another European Triple Crown winner in the form of Excalibur EA (Shanghai EA x Essence of Marwan EA), a very showy three-year-old grey colt.

December, marked on our The Arabian Magazine Calendar by the beautiful, and sadly now late, Melody HA (Ecaho x LC Supremacy), photographed by Kelly Campbell. It looks like it's going to be a busy month for me. The first week, in particular, is scarily busy but come the afternoon of 12 December, my Christmas holiday starts and some of the Taminis get together to celebrate another year. However, having written this much already, I would like to share some final thoughts on 2014, the year that was.

Reflections...

This year was certainly different to any that I have had before with the magazine in that I chose to stay at home and just 'be' for once, rather than continue my race around the world. That decision could be argued as being both a good one for me and a bad one for the magazine – but with so many people acting for the magazine around the world, and ensuring that it is in the right place at the right time, I feel that *The Arabian Magazine* was well represented over the summer months.

With what happened with my beloved Lucy, and the ensuing emotional and physical fallout from that, there is no doubt that my plans to be home were the right ones. No one could have foreseen that my dream of watching three foals playing in the sun would turn into what it did – a summer numbed by the horrors of what we'd witnessed, something that will stay with me forever. And, of course, there are the physical injuries. We all suffer them with horses – it's just that mine are going to be with me for a good while yet and are, of course, a daily reminder of the early hours of 23 June.

Knowing all of that, would I do it again? Would I get in the way of my precious mare while she was in trouble, knowing how badly I'd be hurt? Of course I would. I think that any of us would – self-preservation goes out of the window and we just want to help those that we love. And the beauty of adrenaline means that you can just keep on going, only realising later just how painful things really are. Above all, I count my lucky stars everyday that Lucy is still with us; it so easily could have gone a different way.

The enforced time out from the magazine can, in hindsight, only be a good thing. I feel so excited for next year – the 10th year of *The Arabian Magazine* – and I have a lot of plans for 2015, something that can only be positive. Sometimes in life, we do have to withdraw from what we love the most in order to rediscover our own identity again. 'Sam TAM' is a nickname that follows me around the world and this year, from April to August, it was good to be just 'Sam' again.

There is no doubt that I could not have got through this year without

the incredible support of my team, who all had their own deep, personal losses in their own different ways. We are the smallest Arabian magazine team in the world and for me, we are the tightest, most close-knit group of individuals that you will find. We might be spread all over the UK and the world but my word, we are there for each other. So – Claire, Laura and Carol in particular, a huge, huge thank you.



Lucy in September this year.

My parents, especially, and close friends were also beyond wonderful but the thing that truly kept me going was Teddy. That foal...! He makes my soul soar and my heart sing. In the days when all I could do was stand in the paddocks and cry, he was the one that would gently head-butt you and then show off with such amazing Arabian grace that he took your breath away. He let me cry into his foal-soft mane, and then he turned and walked off with such style that he showed you a glimpse into the future – that there is better to come.

We all have our high days and our low days. Some are higher than most,

some are lower than we ever feared. But we always, always come through them. The unwavering support of those closest to you, my dear parents come instantly to mind there, will certainly help get you through. But in my experience, it is those beautiful four-legged family that we have in our lives that ensures that we truly do come through each minute, each hour, each day. And before you know it, you are back in the sunshine again, with the promise of exciting times ahead and a clear future before you.

I wish you all a peaceful festive season and a gentle New Year. I will see you all in 2015.

Samantha xx

