

Little



Voix



N° 12 Mars 2010

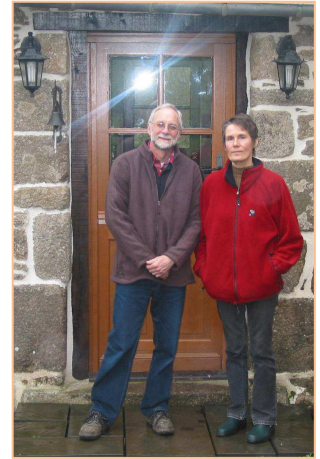
DES ALPAGAS à

la GRAND-MÈRE !

Since the very first time that we had contact with these adorable animals, we dreamt of one day keeping some ourselves. However, it was not until we decided to give up our jobs in England, to live in the tranquility of rural France, that we were able to actually fulfill this dream! We just wish now that we had more land and a smaller renovation project so... more alpacas!

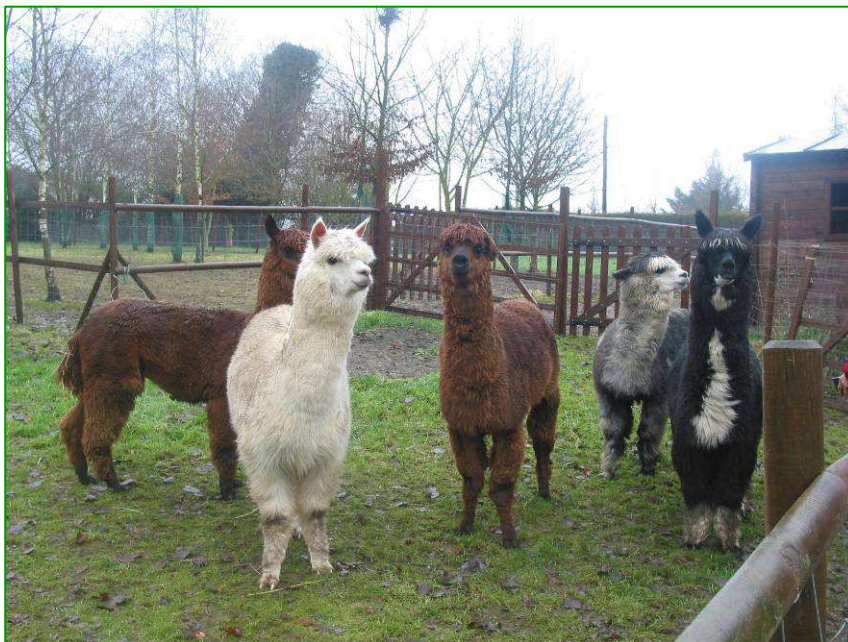
Les attraits d'une France rurale et paisible ont amené Ron et Judi Bourton à quitter Leeds, dans le Yorkshire, et à venir s'installer, en 2006, à Plénée-Jugon, au lieu-dit "La Grand-Mère". Alors, comment occuper leur retraite de façon originale ? Tout simplement en réalisant leur rêve : élever un animal si attachant dont ils sont tombés amoureux, "l'alpaga"...

Ron et Judi racontent leur passion qui débute en 2007, en anglais, of course !



Initially, we decided that we would buy 3 alpacas so our search began, but in 2007 we found a little herd for sale and fell in love with them all! We convinced ourselves that we choose just 3 once we got to know them and then we would sell the others... how wrong we were... we haven't been able to part with any of our first 6 animals!

Three of the females were pregnant when we got them but we had a long wait, as the gestation is 11.5 months! Our first cria (the name for a baby alpaca) arrived a month early and took us by surprise although fortunately her birth did not test our midwifery skills! This little female, Chameli, became totally adorable as she was lavished with lots of adoring attention! Her new French family, who already had 2 alpacas, now takes her for walks on the beach! Our next youngsters were 2 pretty little males, born close together later that year. They moved together to live with an English family in the Pyrenees!



We hope that some of our girls are pregnant again and in Spring we will remate those that are not. Alpaca mating is wonderful as the male is very vocal, making a sound called "orgling"! All the herd get involved as the male takes up to half an hour during which time we have seen caressing and displays of wonderful gentleness... maybe next time we'll sell tickets!! We expect our next cria, probably 3 or 4 of them, to be born early in August.

Females generally have their cria on a fine morning, as they seem to have control over the exact timing of the birth, although Pegassou, our oldest and most experienced female chose a miserable rainy afternoon in November, so sometimes they do break the rules!! We had to provide our 2 winter-born cria with little coats to keep them warm until they grew some fleeces... this is why it's best to have the young in Spring!

With both of us moving from very different careers, our learning curve has been huge! We have had to master many new skills since our alpacas arrived, as even the vet hadn't seen one before! We quickly became familiar with giving them injections through their enormous woolly fleeces, shearing off those huge fleeces, cutting toenails and generally caring for our new little family! Although Ron learnt to shear, he isn't yet quite as good as the professionals... we have had several **"bad hair day alpacas"**!

Having bags and bags of wonderful fleece tempted Judi to learn to spin and, whilst she feels she is still quite a novice, she is now hand-spinning and using the spun wool to make unique garments for the family. As the alpacas are of various colors, black, brown, white, cream and grey, she uses them in their natural colors, as they are very beautiful. Alpaca fiber is hypoallergenic and contains no grease so is very light and soft and wonderful for babies and children as it isn't itchy like mohair! Unfortunately, Judi just doesn't have enough time to meet all the demands of family for alpaca jumpers!



We handle our alpacas as often as we are able so they have become very friendly and will walk on a lead, although they are a little wary of strangers at first. Spending time in the paddocks with the alpacas you become aware of their gentle humming sounds as they communicate with each other...each has a slightly different sound which is very calming and tranquil.

Our alpacas do, however, alert us to any visitors... human or animal... they line up facing the direction of the "intruder" and if they perceive a threat to the herd, they can scream! When they first spotted our new kittens, they screamed... maybe they thought they were little tigers!! Now they play together; kittens and alpacas are a joy to watch as they chase each other around!

Whilst our lives have been enormously enhanced by all of our animals, the peacocks, doves, hens, and cats, it has been our alpacas that have made our lives in France... simply perfect!



Paradise is... living with alpacas!

Alpaca Facts:

- alpacas come from Chile and Peru.
- alpacas are members of the camelid family along with camels and lamas.
- they live up to 20 years.
- alpacas eat grass, hay and granules containing the necessary minerals and vitamins.
- around 15 alpacas can be kept on a hectare of land.
- alpacas use a communal dung area so are easy to clean up after!
- alpacas cannot be kept alone, you must have 2 or more.
- whilst they are very hardy, alpacas do appreciate some shelter from rain and the worst weather.
- alpacas must be vaccinated, wormed etc as other animals.
- alpacas are sheared once a year.
- if pets are sought, it is best to buy young males who will need to be castrated at 18 months - 2 years.
- alpacas can be used to protect flocks of chickens and sheep from foxes.
- alpacas do not challenge fencing but 1.2 m sheep fencing is needed as their thick fleeces make electric fencing useless!
- alpacas can be trained to walk on a lead but are not usually used to carry packs.

TIRE PAR LES CHEVEUX... FARFETCHED...

Épisodes à suivre...



CH. 1 - CREUSEZ-VOUS LA TÊTE – RACK YOUR BRAINS.

FRANÇAIS

C'est une grosse tête

J'en ai par-dessus la tête

Elle ne sait plus où donner de la tête

Faire la tête

C'est une tête brûlée

Il a une tête à claques

Est-ce que vous perdez la tête ?

Où ai-je la tête ?

A tête reposée

Tête-bêche

Faire un tête-à-queue

Faire une tête de circonstances

ENGLISH

From head to foot

He gave orders over my head

I could do it standing on my head

To fall head over heels (in love with sb.)

Two heads are better than one

She has a good head for drink

To go off one's head

Head on beer

The Head of State will decide

I can't make head or tail of this

To toss heads or tails

To come to head

And **last** but not **least**: comment traduiriez-vous « *Ce mec a une tronche pas très catholique* » ??

Traductions dans le prochain numéro – Translation in the next issue of our newsletter.

Le français possède un esprit très cartésien...

Il est vrai, n'est-il pas ? La preuve par 9...

En effet, le français :

Remercie son employé quand il **n'est pas content** de ses services.

Passes des **nuits blanches** quand il a des **idées noires**.

Parle des **quatre coins** de la terre, alors que la terre est **ronde**.

Quand il veut avoir de l'argent **devant soi**, il lui faut le **mettre de côté**.

Dit d'un pauvre **malheureux ruiné** : il est dans de **beaux draps** !

Parle **d'embarras de voitures**, quand il y a **trop** de voitures et **d'embarras d'argent** quand il n'y en **pas assez**.

Possède une anatomie très particulière : il **peut dormir sur ses deux oreilles** !

Dit d'un homme qui se meurt, il **s'éteint** et d'un homme mort, c'est le **feu**.

Désigne par le **coup de grâce** celui qui **tue**.



Le coin du rire

AMIS BRITANNIQUES...

Toute la France **votera** les **14 et 21 mars**, pour **élire** les représentants de la **REGION**. Vous n'êtes pas électeurs, puisque la loi ne vous permet, pour l'instant, que de voter dans votre commune. Mais la **Région BRETAGNE (3 200 000 habitants dont 33 000 étrangers)** a voté un budget 2010 de **1,154 milliards d'Euros** sans augmentation des impôts. Les principaux investissements :

- Les transports, avec le programme «Bretagne à Grande Vitesse» : 52 millions d'Euros.
- Les lycées : 121 millions d'Euros.
- Les autres dépenses couvrent la relance économique, le social, la culture, les actions internationales, etc.

60% du budget provient de l'État et 40% des impôts et des emprunts.

Votre Région d'adoption est magnifique, accueillante, puissante. Soyez attentifs à tout ce qu'elle propose, et avec l'Association **FRANCO-BRIT, PARTICIPEZ !!!**



INFORMATIONS ASSOCIATION FRANCOBRIT

CHRISTMAS PARTY

11 décembre 2009 à Hénon
*Bonne table
Bonne ambiance
Merry Christmas !*



LOTO - BINGO

29 janvier 2010 à Quessoy
*des numéros
en anglais ou en français
et des gagnants.*



Prochaines rencontres / next meetings

Le vendredi **12 mars 2010**, 20 h à **PLÉMY** : Salle municipale

Soirée Quizz-Photos LONDRES - PARIS

Le vendredi **23 avril 2010**, 20 h à **QUESSOY** salle Dolmen

Échanges divers

Le samedi **5 juin 2010**, 14 h à **QUESSOY** – Boulodrome près de la mairie

Concours de Boules Bretonnes

Le vendredi **25 juin 2010** : **Dîner de Fin d'Année**

Comité éditorial : Pierre Ecobichon, Brigitte Dauly, Emile Boulaire, Marie-Thérèse Tourneux, Emile Boulaire. Mise en pages : Albert Le Bournault. Soutien des Mairies de la Communauté de Communes du Pays de Moncontour...

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