



## Tim Hirst BVM&S CertCHP MRCVS

14<sup>th</sup> July 1980 – 28<sup>th</sup> July 2019

Tim Hirst qualified from the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies in Edinburgh in 2003 and first earned his spurs as a farm veterinary surgeon at Parklands Vets in Northern Ireland. The long hours and 1 in 2 rota did not faze him or in any way curtail how he lived his life then, which is how he continued to live his life until the very end: to the max! He came away from his time over the water with lots of experience, many good memories and a vet student that he somehow managed to convince to become his girlfriend and who was to later become his lovely wife, Jo. The words of his boss at Parklands John Grant sums Tim up perfectly: “He was a friend to all who met him”



Moving to the West Country he joined The Rowe Vet Group in Wotton-under-Edge where he immediately threw himself into both work and play. His enthusiasm, optimism and permanent positivity, coupled with the obvious love he had for his day to day work quickly endeared him to the farmers and under the tutelage and experience of Phil Marsh MRCVS he soon became the excellent clinician we all knew him to be. Unfortunately, the skills he developed treating cattle and sheep were not translated into those required for keeping his car on the road and intact. Various practice vehicles came and went with alarming regularity, something that continued throughout his career. A particular low point came with a phone call into the surgery to ask “has my new car arrived yet?” When he was informed that it had indeed been delivered that morning, he requested that someone drive it out to where he currently was as he had managed to write off the old one he was returning on his way back!



The Rowe Vet Group and the George Vet Group shared an emergency farm rota for several years before merging in 2007. One of the best things to come out of this was that Tim became part of our practice. It is sometimes hard when two different practices come together, especially when it involves something as important as the provision of veterinary services to farming businesses, but with Phil and Tim on board it couldn't have gone any better. Tim immediately embraced the change in the way he embraced most things in life: "this is amazing!"



He soon became an integral part of the George Farm Vets team, going on to complete his Royal College Certificate in Cattle Health and Production and ultimately becoming a director of the practice. He instigated many things in this role, one of which was taking the George admin staff out on calls so they could see the other side of what they did day to day. Val has never forgotten the speed at which Tim separated calves from their testicles whilst she held the bucket for him, or the fondness by which Tim spoke of the farms that he looked after whilst they drove between calls. He backed up and supported the vets in his team, always checking to see if they had been out on call all night and needed looking after the following day. He was always the first to volunteer when the difficult or dirty job came in, leading from the front by example.



True to his Yorkshire roots (except in his fondness for Fosters), Tim always called a spade a spade and could not abide histrionics or fuss, something which went a long way towards explaining his disdain for professional football, his love of rugby and his tendency to brush off major car/bike/horse/boat/ski crashes as "minor incidents"



2012 saw Tim and Jo getting married on an amazing July day that will live in the memory of all of us who were there. It was an occasion filled with happiness, laughter and love, with great food, bad dancing and hundreds of people united in their desire to celebrate this amazing couple. They lived first in Nailsworth and then at Gully Farm, where their endless hard work, DIY triumphs and disasters and Jo's ruthless project management created a fantastic home that we all love to visit and which they threw open to their many friends from the word go.



Like most farm vets, Tim was a want-to-be farmer, proudly managing his flock of slightly odd-looking sheep, timing his holidays to perfection so that someone else usually ended up lambing, treating or rounding them up. A well trained dog would have been useful, but with the exception of their current pooch Freya (needless to say schooled by Jo rather than Tim), Tim managed to raise nothing but strong willed and unruly terriers. Chili, the most famous of these, used to demonstrate Tim's lack of responsible owner tendencies by being handed in to the practice as a stray on a frequent basis, once making it as far as Guildford in someone's horse box before Tim noticed she was missing.

Outside of work Tim was physically incapable of doing nothing. Often to the initial annoyance and exasperation of his friends, he would be like a cat on a hot tin roof demanding that we "come on and do something!" when all we wanted was to relax and doze off the hangover. Invariably, he would get his way and we would end up on a "Timmy Adventure" somewhere, risking life and limb but having the time of our lives and making memories that will be with us always. Tim loved all country sports, especially horse riding and shooting. He famously entered into a team chase having never really ridden before and needless to say, the high-speed, adrenaline-fuelled danger of it all had him hooked and he went on to ride with the Berkeley Hunt for many years.

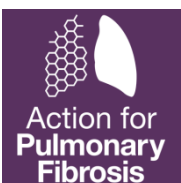


We embarked upon our shooting careers together, deciding that it was something we should really be able to do. There followed many many hours sitting in a hide trying unsuccessfully to get a pigeon for dinner as neither of us had a clue what we were doing. Those days never felt wasted however as we sat enjoying the fantastic countryside around us, taking the mickey out of each other as we missed yet another one and working out the excuses we would have to give our girlfriends when we returned empty handed once again. There was never a dull moment with Tim, just an endless stream of experiences, activities and fun for him and the countless friends he had. Whether it was building and racing a banger car, sailing around the Western Isles, walking through the bogs of Tíre, making homemade cider (dodgy) and perry (apocalyptic), watching the horses at Berkeley point to point and Badminton or just enjoying a night out, he was always the life and soul of the occasion the like of which will never be replaced.



The huge volume of messages, anecdotes, expressions of sympathy and love that have come in to the practice in the short time since his passing tells us the regard in which he was held and the extent to which he will be missed. All of us at The George Vet Group would like to extend our deepest sympathies to Jo and the whole of Tim's family. He was a great colleague, a fantastic friend and will be forever in our hearts.

Tim's Funeral will be held at St Mary's Church in Thornbury at 1 pm on Friday the 16<sup>th</sup> of August, followed by a big party with Tim's favourites, fizz, canapes and pizza at Gully Farm, Rockhampton. Please wear bright colours as this will be a celebration of Tim's life. Also, please send any special photos and memories to [timsagoodegg@gmail.com](mailto:timsagoodegg@gmail.com)



We are holding an event in his memory on Sunday the 15<sup>th</sup> of September when colleagues, friends and family will be cycling between 35 and 100 km in aid of Action for Pulmonary Fibrosis, Tim's charity of choice. If you would like to support this, please donate via the following link: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/george-vet-group>