

PRESS RELEASE

SOUTHERN COUNTIES HEAVY HORSE ASSOCIATION

21st November 2011

HEAVY HORSE HARNESS STOLEN IN SUSSEX

One of our partially sighted members has had his entire collection of harness stolen overnight on Saturday 19th November 2011

Southern Counties Heavy Horse Association have just held their 40th Anniversary Ploughing Match at Rogate and amid all the celebration one of its members has just had their entire harness collection stolen.

Dave and Gaye Botting from Amberley in West Sussex went to check on their horses on Sunday morning and found their security container had been broken into and their entire collection of heavy horse harness, bridles and saddles had been stolen.

Wonderful supporters of both Heavy Horses and in particular rare breed Suffolk Punches of which they have a home bred mare alongside their Percheron Mare. They keep their horses for pleasure and are often seen at the Amberley Chalk Pits Museum and Weald & Downland Open Air Museum at Singleton demonstrating their skills of both driving and ploughing.

Dave Botting is sadly almost blind following a deteriorating eye condition that crept up a few years ago. He still manages to drive his horses with the help of his wife Gaye who is now his full time carer but things are getting more and more difficult for him. This is the last thing they needed as Dave may not be able to see his own horses soon and therefore the present time is the most precious to him.

If it was only their saddles and bridles that went missing it would be heartbreaking enough but the thieves also took their full set of leather Dray Pairs harness including the trace chains, leather collars and hames, their single set of 'Ideal' breast harness, their single set of cart harness complete with chains, cart pad, hames and collars and their riding bridles complete with Myler bits and about eight saddles and a collection of bits. Also stolen was their grandson's set of pony harness.

If anyone saw anything suspicious in Amberley or the surrounding area overnight on Saturday 19th November or they are offered similar harness and/or tack they are urged to contact the police quoting crime ref no: WH2/104662?11 or email Dave and Gaye at belongadave@btinternet.com. A full description of the missing items will also be available on www.southerncountiesheavyhorseassociation.co.uk

**** Ends ****

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