



## CHRISTMAS WORDS OF WISDOM FROM LEATHER WISE Issue IV



### A MESSAGE FROM THE LEATHER LADIES!

Well, they say that time seems to fly by more quickly the older you get so judging by the speed that this year has flown by we must be getting ancient!!



Having said that, we are in the mood for celebrating – not only because it will be Christmas soon (and we both like an excuse to put our feet up with a mince pie and a glass of sherry!) – but because on 01 January 2007 we will be **CELEBRATING OUR FIRST BIRTHDAY!!**

And what a fantastic first year we have had! It was certainly a big step to leave the security of our previous jobs and 'go it alone' but worth every late night and increasing number of stress lines.... We have met loads of interesting people and have been pleased to find that the majority share our passion for chocolate biscuits and cake (as well as leather, of course!).

So how are we going to celebrate? We thought we would like to make January a special month for all our customers and so will be offering **A MASSIVE £50 DISCOUNT** on our **1 Day 'Simply Leather'** course on **Thursday 18 January** or on either of our **2 Day 'Intensive Leather'** courses being held on **Monday and Tuesday 29/30 January** or repeated on **Wednesday and Thursday 31 January / 01 February**. These courses will cover all leather products such as footwear, garments, leathersgoods and upholstery.

The places are limited so strictly 'first come, first served' – you had better get booking now! Due to popular demand we will be offering both 'Simply Leather' and 'Simply Upholstery Leather' courses every month...and remember we can always tailor training to meet your requirements. Why not have a look at [www.leatherwise.co.uk/training.htm](http://www.leatherwise.co.uk/training.htm)



**And there's more....!** We will also offer **A 10% DISCOUNT** on all standard Garment, Furniture, Footwear and Leathersgoods Appraisals that we receive during the month of January. For further information on this invaluable service look at [www.leatherwise.co.uk/manufacturers.htm](http://www.leatherwise.co.uk/manufacturers.htm)



### WELL FANCY THAT!

In December 1786 the Danish ship Metta Catharina was travelling from Russia to the Mediterranean when it was struck by gale force winds and sank off the Cornish coast in Plymouth Sound. On board were reindeer hides that were tanned with willow bark and birch oil. Miraculously, the hides were recovered almost 200 years later in a remarkably good state of preservation thanks to the mud on the sea bed in which they had become buried. In fact, so well preserved were these hides that they are now being used to manufacture modern leathersgoods such as wallets etc.

### WE'RE ALL GOING ON A CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY!

To allow us time to get over the Christmas festivities we will be closing the office from Fri 22 Dec 2006 and will re-open for business on Tues 02 Jan 2007. We hope that you all enjoy your Christmas break too and look forward to working with you in 2007.



Merry Christmas

From

Amanda and Chris!

PS. We thought you might like to see some problem solving that we carried out recently for a certain Mr S Claus .....



## INVESTIGATION REPORT

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| The North Pole                | <b>Sample description:</b> One piece of reindeer leather with dark staining on the grain surface. |
|                               | <b>Date received:</b> 25 <sup>th</sup> December 2006  |
|                               | <b>Leather Wise reference:</b> XMAS/06  |
| <b>Contact name:</b> S Claus  | <b>Report date:</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> January 2007  |
| <b>Client order number:</b> - | <b>Invoice number:</b> FOC  |

### INVESTIGATION OF DAMAGE TO REINDEER LEATHER

#### ANALYSIS CONDUCTED

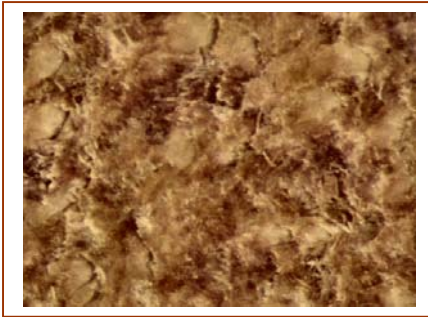
The leather was carefully assessed visually and the nature and location of any damage noted. There appeared to be large patches of dark staining that appear on both sides of the leather and also lines on the grain surface only around the neck and belly areas.

A sample of the stained leather was analysed using fourier transform infra-red spectroscopy (FTIR) and compared with an unstained area. The results obtained indicate that the dark staining is due to fat. This could be due to uneven distribution of the fatliquor during the manufacture of the leather, or due to an excess of natural fat in the hide before processing.

The lines were examined in more detail using a light microscope which revealed that the grain surface in the lines has been abraded. The location and pattern of the damage is characteristic of that caused by a harness that is too tight (see pictures overleaf).

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*Figure 1*  
*Abraded*  
*area*



*Figure 2*  
*Normal*  
*area*



*Figure 3*  
*Locations where*  
*abrasion has*  
*taken place*

An excess of fat and a harness that is suddenly too tight indicates that there has been a rapid expansion in body mass whilst the animal was working. This is likely to have been due to an over consumption of fattening foodstuff in a short space of time.

## CONCLUSIONS

The dark staining and abrasion to the grain surface has been caused by a sudden occurrence of obesity in the reindeer. This has resulted in an excessive amount of fat in the skin and an ill-fitting harness.

Circumstantial evidence (time of year and origins of the reindeer) suggest that this was a result of excessive consumption of carrots, mince pies etc during the evening of 24<sup>th</sup> December.

It is recommended that Mr Claus should restrict the diet of his reindeer during future Christmas Eve journeys!!

**Amanda Michel**  
*Director*

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*Director*

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