

*"I don't see the point of these new-fangled quad bikes.  
Sheep dogs don't need taxis..."*

# Sheep Tales

**The National Tour**

'**Sheep Tales**' is a funny and thought-provoking entertainment about shepherds and shepherding. It is drawn almost exclusively from newly-collected oral history interviews with sheep farming folk in Shropshire, Wales and North Northumberland; chronicling a century of dramatic change.

*"Counting sheep is easy, lad. You just count the legs and divide by four"*

In words and song, **Sally Tonge** and **Chris Eldon Lee** (of the veteran comedytrio **Three Men in a Bowtie**) present the story of shepherding; season by season and decade by decade.

*"Honestly, my husband's sheep frequently went to market wearing more make up than me!"*





**'Sheep Tales'** is an intimate, low-tech show, designed as an after supper entertainment: Lamb Casserole or Shepherd's Pie perhaps? It can also be presented in two halves, between courses, and Chris and Sal would be more than happy to round off the evening with some suitably silly songs.

**Sheep Tales** includes stories of the severe winters of 1947 – when being a hill shepherd was deemed a worse fate than being an infantryman – and 1963, when helicopter drops were a lifeline. There are detailed descriptions of the art of lambing:

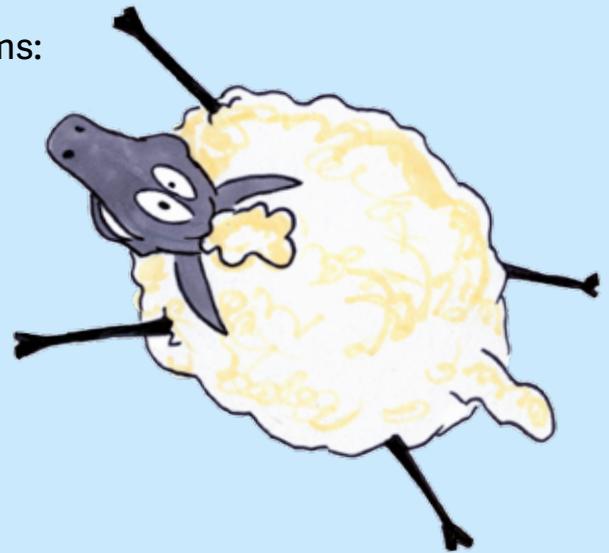
*“Triplets can be tricky. Their legs get jumbled up and you have to rearrange them in the womb. You know those wire coat hangers you get when your dry cleaning comes back? Well, it's a bit like trying to separate tangled coat hangers, blindfold, inside a duvet, wearing oven gloves”.*

Chris and Sal describe the ancient art of how to castrate a ram with your bare teeth:

*“And he did that right up to the early 60s... when those stupid welfare regulations intervened”*

And they sing about the encroachment of wind farms:

*They came with their clipboards  
All oozing with charm  
With grants for this new wind farm.  
The landscape's idyllic,  
But bloody acrylic  
Is cheaper than fleece  
So we can't make ends meet  
It's bound to end in defeat*



And as the last generation of traditional shepherds hang up their crooks, they explore the fragile future of the industry. It's a timely, entertaining and enlightening evening, charting a changing way of life, from the shepherds' viewpoint.

Performance space 4ft x 6ft.  
Sound and light provided.  
Stage preferred.

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*Performed in  
memory of*  
**Diana Herbert**  
*who's bright  
idea this was*

