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**B B C** Worldwide

# Vets in Practice

## SERIES 9

A national outbreak of foot and mouth disease adds a horrendous problem to the young vets' already complicated lives

National Television Awards 1999  
Most Popular Documentary

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Documentaries

11 x 30 minutes

**B B C** Worldwide

# Vets in Practice

## SERIES 9

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**Documentaries**

11 x 30 minutes

**BBC** Worldwide

# Vets in Practice

## SERIES 9

### Introduction

A prime-time favourite with viewers of all ages, *Vets In Practice* appears regularly in the top 10 British TV ratings and has turned Trude Mostue and Steve Leonard into national celebrities.

The young vets in this series first appeared in the BBC1's hugely successful *Vets' School*, which followed their training. *Vets In Practice* took up their individual stories after college as they set out on their careers. Four years and nine series later, the students are now seasoned vets practising all over the world. But they still encounter surprises, shocks, laughter and hard-to-handle emotions in this most rewarding and sometimes heart-breaking of jobs.

As well as the drama of treating sick and injured animals, viewers are also hooked by the ups and downs of the young vets' personal lives and career moves. Their loves, their hates, their aspirations and the inevitable stresses and strains that go with the job are all captured on camera.

In Series 9, Trude and her best friend, Maria, are settling into a new practice of their own, Emma and Joe have split up and are forging new lives apart, and Keith Leonard gets an attack of malaria in his new job in Kenya. An outbreak of foot and mouth disease affects them all, especially farm vets Mike Sandiford and Tom Leonard and horse vet Sally Kingsley. Other patients include a dog with cancer, a budgie with an overgrown beak and a kitten who refuses to eat.

**Documentaries**

11 x 30 minutes

**BBC** Worldwide

# Vets in Practice

## SERIES 9

### Production Credits

Series Producers

**Amanda Reilly**

**Miranda Steed**

Directors

**Carole Lochhead** (Episode 1)

**Debbi Moore** (Episodes 2, 3, 9)

**Rachel Pinnock** (Episode 4)

**Mandi Startup** (Episodes 5, 7)

**Isabel Pritchard** (Episodes 6, 10)

**Colin Naphine** (Episode 8)

Documentaries

11 x 30 minutes

**BBC** Worldwide

# Vets in Practice

## SERIES 9

### The Vets

#### **Trude Mostue**

Trude was born in Oslo, Norway in 1968. After a varied career working both as a herdsman tending 400 goats and a vet nurse in her native Oslo, Trude decided to move to England and apply to the Bristol Vet School. Viewers took to her from the start, empathising when she nervously tackled a tricky procedure and agonising with her when she thought she wouldn't pass. However, she now has several year's experience behind her and a year ago she joined fellow Norwegian, Maria Lowe, in setting up and running their own practice in Bristol called Viking Vets. Probably the series' most popular star, Britain has followed Trude's love life with interest. She recently became engaged to fitness enthusiast Howard Thomas, whom she met whilst training for the Bath half marathon. They are hoping to marry in 2003.

#### **Maria Lowe**

Norwegian born Maria Lowe and husband, Andrew, live above the recently opened Viking Vets in Henbury, Bristol with their two young sons, Jack and Isaak. The practice was set up a year ago with fellow Norwegian Trude Mostue and one veterinary nurse. So far it has been a great success and they have expanded, now employing an additional vet and three nurses. Maria is the most experienced of our band of vets. She qualified eight years ago at Langford in Bristol – her knowledge has been of great value in her new business venture – and is often the vet on call, so has to deal with all manner of injuries and illnesses.

#### **Tom Leonard**

Tom started working for a practice in Preston in 1994 and has stayed with the same firm for over six years. Farm vetting in Lancashire provided Tom with an intimate knowledge of the countryside. He was recently involved as a Ministry vet helping to deal with the foot-and-mouth crisis. He is now working as a locum in Alsager, mostly treating small animals. A keen sportsman, Tom spent much of his spare time at Glasgow's Vet school playing for the hockey club and has since continued to pursue many sports and outdoor activities alongside vetting.

#### **Keith Leonard**

At 27 years old, Keith is the youngest of the Leonard brothers. He graduated from Liverpool University as a vet in 1997 and started his career caring for large animals in Carmarthen. Working as a locum vet, Keith moved around the country gaining experience in many different practices before travelling to Kenya. Here he explored another side to veterinary care, helping to build a brand new clinic with the KSPCA. Keith has returned to the UK and now specialises in small animals, a far cry from operating in the open air surgeries of Africa. Keith values his spare time and tries to keep a balance between work and play. Regularly climbing and kite surfing, he works to live, finding ways to explore his outdoor activities even in the urban sprawl of London. In the future he would like to work in one practice for long enough to see his patients throughout their lives but for now he has more travelling and exploring to do.

**Documentaries**

**11 x 30 minutes**

**BBC** Worldwide

# Vets in Practice

## SERIES 9

### The Vets continued.../2

#### **Fiona Green**

One of the original vets from the series, Fiona was a mature student in veterinary studies at Bristol University and had a first-class honours in physiology when viewers first met her. In 1999, Fiona's great passion (scuba diving) took her to the Bahamas, where she worked as an underwater photographer, capturing pictures of the Caribbean reef sharks at Stuart Coves dive centre – though she also appeared in front of the lens for an American TV commercial, acting as a stunt double in the underwater shark scenes! She used these extra skills to help support her as she worked at the Humane Society, a charity-run practice in the heart of Nassau. Back in Britain, Fiona has now been made Associate Partner at her practice in Hampshire. Working with small animals again and settling in a house is a far cry from her travels around the world, but brings her back to her love of veterinary care.

#### **Mike Sandiford**

Mike always wanted to be a vet and after graduating in 1996, went to work at an animal orphanage and ostrich farm in Botswana. He spent a year working and travelling before coming back to England and settling in Malmesbury where he has been working as a large animal vet ever since. Although he is required to work occasionally with pets, he prefers to work with the local farmers and their livestock. He loves his life in Malmesbury but has a desire to travel in the future. Mike still socialises with some of his vet school colleagues, including Emma Milne and Hannah Pollard.

#### **Emma Milne**

Emma decided that she wanted to be a vet at a very young age (6-7) because of her love of animals. She graduated in 1996 from Bristol University Vet School with a BVSc qualification. She started off her working life in Dulverton, Somerset before moving to Cheltenham. After working in a number of practices in the area, she is now happily settled at Vets on the Park, treating small animals. It was her romance with, subsequent marriage to and separation from fellow vet school graduate, Joe Inglis, that established her as one of the main characters in *Vets in Practice*. She now lives in Cheltenham with her boyfriend of a year, her two dogs, Pan and Badger, and three cats.

#### **Joe Inglis**

Joe graduated in 1996 and moved to Bideford in North Devon for his first veterinary job. He moved with Emma Milne to Cheltenham in 1997 after their engagement and still lives in the town in a house he has recently bought. Joe works in a small animal practice in Carterton, Oxfordshire and is renowned for his participation in extreme sports, from snowboarding to his new love of motor bikes.

Documentaries

11 x 30 minutes

**BBC** Worldwide

# Vets in Practice

## SERIES 9

### The Vets continued.../3

#### **Hannah Pollard**

Hannah graduated in 1996. Since then she has worked in a number of different practices in Nottinghamshire and Southend. Currently, she works at a busy, small animal practice in Oxford. Hannah likes all aspects of small animal vetting so the variety the job offers is perfect. To extend her skills she is doing extra study in surgery. She has recently bought a house on the outskirts of Oxford, which she is renovating. She lives with her dog Hester and has an active social life based around her practice and her love of keeping fit.

#### **Sally Kingsley**

Sally qualified at the vet school in Liverpool in 1999. She has recently moved South to take up a veterinary post concentrating on horse work. Sally is a keen horsewoman outside working hours too. Her first love is her horse Polaris who was bought for her as a 16th birthday present by her parents. Her dream is to compete at Badminton, the biggest three day event in the world. If Sally gets any free time she likes to spend it either working out in the gym or out clubbing with friends.

#### **Steve Leonard**

One of the original graduates from *Vets School* and one of four Leonard brothers. Since appearing on television, Steve has been inundated with fan mail and was voted one of the United Kingdom's 50 most eligible bachelors in *Company* magazine. Like his co-star Trude Mostue, Steve has gone on to star in several spin-off programmes and also presented the BBC series *Ultimate Killers*. Steve does not appear in Series 9.

Documentaries

11 x 30 minutes

**BBC** Worldwide

# Vets in Practice

## SERIES 9

### Episode Synopses

#### 1. Settling In

There are plenty of clients for Trude Mostue and Maria Lowe to see at their new practice. Trude gets a fright when Smokey the cat comes in with ticks and one jumps onto her. Trude's next patient is Shandy, a 12-year-old dog with a suspected tumour on his leg. A biopsy shows that it's malignant - Trude operates but she's worried that Shandy might not be able to cope with the anaesthetic. Owner Pamela Winstone, whose husband died from cancer some months ago, is worried the tumour may spread. She's never been parted from Shandy and there's an emotional goodbye before the operation.

Maria also has a cancer patient to deal with. Two rats, Millie and Mollie, are sisters and have a lump in exactly the same place under their arms. Because the lumps are growing quickly and may ulcerate, Maria decides to remove them. She has a novel way of bandaging the wounds using Tubi-grip, which fits around the rats' bodies like waist-coats. It may look quite comical but, in practical terms, it means they can't pull the stitches out of their wounds.

With everything ticking over at work, Trude sets herself a new personal challenge – to run the Bristol Half Marathon, which she does in two hours and 10 minutes. For Maria, juggling work and bringing up her two young children, Jack and Isak, is proving the hardest challenge.

In Berkshire, young vet Sally Kingsley is celebrating. She's fulfilled her ambition of becoming a horse vet. The Hall Place Veterinary Centre is in the South of England which means Sally has to leave her home and family in Yorkshire. Her day starts by giving Beth the horse a dental. Beth's sharp teeth need filing down so that her owner can put a bit in her mouth.

That evening, Sally's off to be the official vet at the local greyhound racing track in Reading, where she has to check that the dogs are fit to run the course. Half-way through the routine evening, one of the dogs, Sarah's Model, is injured in a collision. She's cut her back leg and Sally has to stitch the wound in a makeshift room near the track.

The next day, Sally is called to an emergency. A former race horse, called Kite, has collapsed in a field. Kite is in a bad way when Sally arrives and gives Kite a rectal examination. He's suffering from a blocked gut but once Sally's given him a laxative he's on the mend.

**Documentaries**

**11 x 30 minutes**

**BBC** Worldwide

# Vets in Practice

## SERIES 9

### Episode Synopses

#### 2. Early Days

It's been two months since Emma announced that her marriage to Joe Inglis was over. The house that's been their home for two years has been sold and the day has arrived for them to pack up their belongings and go their separate ways. One of most difficult decisions they've had to make is what to do with their beloved dogs, Pan and Badger, who have been with them since they were puppies. For now, they will go with Emma who's moved into a house with her sister, Alice, leaving Joe to look for suitable accommodation.

A month later and in an effort to move on with their lives, Emma resumes her maiden name, Milne, and lands a job at a new practice in Cheltenham called Vets On The Park. She starts work the day the practice opens and she's pleased when she spots a familiar face - Julie Irons, the nurse at the previous practice. Emma reveals that she is now "now ready to take the world on again". It will be an exciting challenge to help build up a practice from scratch which, ironically, had been her dream with Joe.

Emma's first patient is a long-haired cat called Denzel, whose coat needs de-matting. He's a little too feisty for the owner to cope with, so Emma opts for a mild sedative to keep him calm. She is then able to put her hair-dressing skills to the test. It's early days for the practice and will take some time before things start getting busy but, on the plus side, Emma gets the chance to give Pan and Badger their annual vaccinations and Julie's rabbit some dental treatment.

Joe decides that familiar territory is the best thing for him and returns to work at the practice in Carterton, where he's been for the last year. Linda Day brings in her very poorly 10-year-old dog, Sally, who has severe breathing problems. Joe takes an X-ray, which reveals that Sally's lung has collapsed, pushing her enlarged heart over to the far left side. She needs urgent treatment.

In Hampshire, fellow Vets' School graduate Fiona Green has a mystery case to deal with – a tiny white kitten called Fluffy who's refusing to eat. Fiona suggests Fluffy should be syringe-fed but, when that doesn't work, she has to investigate further. Blood tests indicate Fluffy is anaemic and, suspecting a blood-borne parasite, Fiona prescribes antibiotics in the hope they will kill them off.

**Documentaries**

11 x 30 minutes

**BBC** Worldwide

# Vets in Practice

## SERIES 9

### Episode Synopses

#### 3. Old Friends

Emma Milne is busy working hard at her new practice in Cheltenham but, just when she thinks she's in for a quiet day, an emergency case arrives. An elderly Jack Russell, Jilly, has been taken ill. Jilly has a recurring womb infection and, as her own vet is three hours away, Emma has to step in and perform an emergency operation to remove the infected uterus. Surgery goes well, but that's only the first hurdle for this poorly little dog. It will be a couple of weeks before they know for sure if she will survive.

Over in Oxford, one of Emma's best friends from Vet School, Hannah Pollard, has spent the last three months settling into a new job at a very well-established practice. Over a routine ferret spay, Hannah explains why she has chosen to specialise in small animal practice. "Large animal work isn't for me as it usually happens in the middle of the night in the middle of a field!" she laughs. Hannah is also presented with two exotic creatures who have just woken from a long sleep and have decided to come out of their shell. Both are in need of a boost.

Another familiar face, Mike Sandiford, returns to the series and, in contrast to the girls, he's very much a large animal vet. He's currently based in Malmesbury and looks after the farms around Wiltshire. He doesn't mind being out in all weathers and is thoroughly enjoying himself.

Saturday brings a rare opportunity for the three vets to socialise. Mike has arranged for them all to dress up in camouflage and spend the afternoon paint-balling. However, neither of the girls has done it before and they're feeling nervous.

Documentaries

11 x 30 minutes

**BBC** Worldwide

# Vets in Practice

## SERIES 9

### Episode Synopses

#### 4. New Horizons

After a year of hard work, Keith Leonard is leaving to work as a volunteer for the Kenyan equivalent of the RSPCA. They haven't had a vet before so Keith will be worth his weight in gold. Ashley Hayland, who works for the charity, collects Keith and his friend, ex-veterinary nurse and RSPCA officer Fiona Moore, from the airport and whisks them off to the house that will be their new home. The bonus is it has palm trees in the garden and a white sandy beach just a stone's throw away. But Keith can look forward to some back-breaking work before he even starts to tackle any animal cases. Part of this new assignment in Mombasa will be to help build the surgery where he will treat the strays and abandoned animals.

Back in Cheshire, older brother Steve is still working as a locum and living directly over the practice in far less sumptuous surroundings. His first client of the day is a West Highland white terrier called Jack. His owner, Angela Newton, is going away and Jack is going into kennels so needs vaccinating against kennel cough. Steve applies some newly acquired tricks of the trade to administer the vaccine. He warms the liquid first before quickly squirting it up the little dog's nose.

Meanwhile, life is full of changes for the third Leonard brother, Tom. The recent depression in farming has had a profound effect on the mix of small and large animal veterinary work at his practice in Preston and, after spending the last six years working as one of the large animal vets, Tom has been forced to shift his sights towards working with pets. When cat lover Cheryl brings her rescue cat, Phoebe, to see Tom he is shocked by her condition. The little Persian cat has so many problems that she might not survive.

#### 5. All In A Day's Work

Joe Inglis' day is full of domestic pets – he has seven vaccinations in the morning, followed by routine surgery and a budgie with an over-grown beak that needs trimming.

For Mike Sandiford, a typical day is spent on farms in Wiltshire with large animals. This morning he's visiting a local farm in Malmesbury to test its 180 cows for tuberculosis. The disease is on the increase in this country, particularly in the South West, so cattle in the region are tested annually.

Tom Leonard graduated six years ago and, of all the vets who have appeared in Vets In Practice, he's the only one who's stayed at the same practice since leaving vet school. He's always specialised in farm animals but a decline in the farming industry has forced him to take on more small animal work. Today he's tackling a tumour removal on 12-year-old Ziggy, a boxer dog. At the end of the day there's a surprise announcement from Tom. After six years with his practice in Preston, he's handing in his notice. He feels drained by the long hours of work, and working every other weekend, and has decided to locum for a while. He's even considering the possibility of going to New Zealand, where dairy farms could offer plenty of work. This, however, is before the foot and mouth outbreak hits the country, which of course, will affect all the vets...

**Documentaries**

**11 x 30 minutes**

**BBC** Worldwide

# Vets in Practice

## SERIES 9

### Episode Synopses

#### 6. On The Attack

Trude Mostue's day gets off to a difficult start at the Viking Veterinary Practice in Bristol, when a Rottweiler called Rolfe is brought in with a sore paw. The trouble is, he's not keen to have it looked at and Trude's only hope of examining his foot is to sedate him. Easier said than done...

In Hampshire, Fiona Green's having to repair some damage after a fight between two of her more aggressive customers. Star the rabbit has attacked her mother, Bubble, and taken out a chunk of her tail. In the short-term Fiona needs to repair Bubble's tail, but she also needs to adopt a longer-term strategy. She believes the best way of avoiding a repeat performance is to spay both rabbits, but it will be some time before Fiona knows if her intervention has helped.

After months of trying to get fit in a local gym, Trude has developed more than just friendship with the gym owner, Howard Thomas. Fiona, meanwhile, is enjoying her long-term relationship with boyfriend Nick. Back from the Bahamas for over a year now, they are feeling more settled and starting to think about marriage.

Whilst love may be blossoming outside work, back in the surgery the victims keep pouring in; Trude has to deal with Monty the cat, who's been in a fight, and Maria tends to Olwyn the whippet, savaged by eight Border Collies whilst out for a walk with her owner.

With all the madness behind them, Trude and Maria look forward to the prospect of a family christening in Cornwall at the weekend. Maria's youngest son, Isak, is to be christened and Maria has asked Trude to be godmother. And after joking that she was not responsible enough, Trude arrives at the ceremony – with just minutes to spare!

Documentaries

11 x 30 minutes

**BBC** Worldwide

# Vets in Practice

## SERIES 9

### Episode Synopses

#### 7. Vets In Crisis

The foot and mouth virus is rampaging through the British countryside for the first time in more than 30 years, throwing the lives of farmers across the country into turmoil. Joe Inglis and Tom Leonard have answered the call of the Ministry and gone to help fight the outbreak.

Like most vets in this country, Joe has never seen a case of foot and mouth and needs to be trained before he can be sent out to check the farms and smallholdings around Gloucester for signs of the virus. He needs to learn everything from the symptoms of the disease to how to complete the paperwork for valuing livestock and trace the route of infection.

Tom has completed his training and has already been in contact with infected animals. He is now classified as a "dirty vet" and can only go to farms where the livestock is condemned, either because they are infected or there is a significant risk that they could be. Today he has to supervise the slaughter of the animals on two farms in an area of the Staffordshire countryside where there have been several confirmed cases of the disease.

He has to ensure that the virus doesn't enter or leave the farms, so everything is disinfected – including his mobile phone. After 16 cows are culled at one farm, a team from the Ministry move in to disinfect it from top to bottom. The farmer and his family won't be able to leave the farm without a special licence for several months in case they spread the disease. They're not planning to replace the cows they lost. For them, this is the end of farming.

There are no outbreaks of foot and mouth in the area near Windsor Castle in Berkshire where horse vet Sally Kingsley works. Though horses aren't susceptible to the virus, they can carry it, so it's causing problems for her patients. Windsor Great Park is closed and there is nowhere for the horses to burn off their excess energy, which is leading to some unusual injuries.

Documentaries

11 x 30 minutes

**BBC** Worldwide

# Vets in Practice

## SERIES 9

### Episode Synopses

#### 8. Under Pressure

Maria Lowe has been on call over the weekend at the practice in Bristol and has admitted two patients, Honey the terrier and a stray budgie. Honey has been run over by a car and has a badly damaged hip. Trude's x-ray reveals that it has come out of its socket, leaving a chip of bone loose. She is going to have to open it up, remove the bone fragment and cut the head off Honey's thigh bone. It's an operation she's never performed before, so she's relying on Maria being around for moral support.

Keith Leonard is working as a volunteer at the KSPCA, an animal charity in Mombassa on the east coast of Kenya. He has been helping to build a new clinic and everyone is delighted at the progress that's been made. Keith's boss from the UK, Maggie, comes out with some essential equipment, and Keith starts preparing for a trip to Wasini Island, a world-famous diving location that has a problem with feral cats. They are threatening to get out of hand, so Keith and a team from the KSPCA are going to trap and neuter as many as they can to stop them breeding.

After her stressful day, Trude relaxes with her new boyfriend, Howard. After five months, their relationship is getting serious and even though Trude already has two cats, they've bought another, a pedigree Burmese called Kevin. He is creating havoc with all his youthful energy, so tomorrow he's going to be castrated.

There's trouble in Mombassa when Keith falls victim to malaria and is admitted to hospital. Back home in Cheshire, his worried mum tries to get hold of him to find out how he is.

Documentaries

11 x 30 minutes

**BBC** Worldwide

# Vets in Practice

## SERIES 9

### Episode Synopses

#### 9. Foreign Bodies

At her Hampshire practice, Fiona Green is presented with one of the most puzzling cases of her career. A 14-month-old dog called Thai has been brought in by her worried owner, Wendy Thompson. The puppy is being sick repeatedly and unable to keep anything down, so Fiona decides to keep him in for observation and run some blood tests.

A thousand miles away, Keith Leonard has spent the last three months adjusting to his new life as a volunteer in Kenya, where he has been helping the KSPCA build a new surgery from scratch. Only a week ago, he was taken ill and admitted to hospital with malaria, but he's back just in time for the grand opening of the new clinic. Everyone is delighted with the fruits of their labour. It's been a long-awaited clinic and the donations and fund-raising mean the vets even have some modern new equipment to work with.

Once Keith has christened the new facilities and performed a routine castration on the inaugural patient, he travels 24 kms South to the tourist destination of Diani. As well as having one of the world's most beautiful beaches, it is home to a group of Colobus monkeys whose survival is under threat from the busy main roads that surround the area. Keith is here to help build a *Colobridge* that will enable the monkeys to safely cross the busy roads.

Although malaria is now a distant memory for Keith, it caused such a scare for his mother, Bet, that she has decided to venture all the way from Cheshire to see for herself how he's doing. Keith arranges a dolphin-watching trip on the Indian Ocean, during which he teaches his nervous mum how to dive for the very first time.

Meanwhile in Buckinghamshire, England, vet Sally Kingsley's latest patient is Eddie, a white horse who has eaten something poisonous causing severe damage to his liver. Sally decides to take a liver biopsy to determine the seriousness of the condition.

Documentaries

11 x 30 minutes

**BBC** Worldwide

# Vets in Practice

## SERIES 9

### Episode Synopses

#### 10. Big Decisions

Trude Mostue has been dating 43-year-old gym owner and motivation expert, Howard Thomas, for six months and now that things are getting more serious, she has decided to move in with him. As she moves the last of her things into his house, Howard declares he's the happiest man alive.

Back at work at the Viking Veterinary Surgery, Trude's first patient is a 10-week-old guinea pig called Munchkin. His owner, Teresa Godfrey, explains that he broke his leg when he fell from the breakfast bar into the dog's basket. Trude decides surgery is the only hope of trying to save the leg.

In the next-door surgery, Maria Lowe is also examining a guinea pig. Pickles has been brought in for a harmless nail clip, but Maria suspects his sore foot is down to the fact that he is bearing too much weight on his little legs. Owner Tracey Bull and her son James are advised to put him on a diet.

Three months into her new job, Hannah Pollard is settling well in Oxford. At the Beaumont Veterinary Hospital, her challenge is to operate on a 12-year-old Cocker spaniel. Jessie has some mysterious lumps and it will be a tense week before the results are back from the lab.

Trude has another small, furry animal to tend to when Hector the rabbit is brought in by his owner with a suspected fungal ear infection. Upon close examination Trude discovers an ear full of mites.

With their business well-established, Trude and Maria take time out to reflect on their personal relationships; Maria and Andrew spend an evening reminiscing in the pub and, on a boat trip with Howard, Trude makes an announcement...

Documentaries

11 x 30 minutes

**BBC** Worldwide

# Vets in Practice

## SERIES 9

### Ratings

Episode	UK Txn Date	Channel	Time On	Viewers	Audience Share
1	29.08.01	BBC1	19.00	3.5 million	20%
2	30.08.01	BBC1	19.00	4.6 million	23%
3	06.09.01	BBC1	19.00	4.5 million	23%
4	07.09.01	BBC1	19.00	3.9 million	20%
5	12.09.01	BBC1	19.30	4.2 million	18%
6	14.09.01	BBC1	19.00	4.2 million	22%
7	19.09.01	BBC1	19.00	4.3 million	21%
8	21.09.01	BBC1	19.00	3.9 million	20%
9	26.09.01	BBC1	19.00	4.4 million	22%
10	28.09.01	BBC1	19.00	4.5 million	24%

### What The Papers Say

"If you're the sort of person who gets withdrawal symptoms if they don't see a cuddly hamster having its leg sewn back on at least twice a week, you'll be thrilled to hear *Vets In Practice* is back." **Daily Star**

"Must see TV: Best Factual ... it's good to have Trude, Emma and co back." **Mirror**

Documentaries

11 x 30 minutes

**BBC** Worldwide

# Vets in Practice

## SERIES 9

### Press Feature

**Trude Mostue always attracts press attention, but the announcement of her engagement prompted quite a few features. This is just one of them.**

Hello Magazine: September 11th, 2001

TALKING CANDIDLY ABOUT THEIR LOVE TV VET TRUDE MOSTUE AND FIANCE HOWARD THOMAS

Trude Mostue and her fiancé Howard Thomas make a striking couple: she, the diminutive, pretty blonde star of *Vets In Practice* with the lilting Norwegian accent, and he the 6ft 6in muscle-man personal trainer-cum-life coach who spends his time teaching people how to turn their lives around.

He certainly turned Trude's life upside down when they met last year. She employed him to help her get fit, but within months she had ended her year-long relationship with her boyfriend, the model Brian Povlsen. And by Christmas last year she and Howard were engaged.

Pic: Trude, wearing a Jemima Khan dress, and Howard, in a top by Barkers and trousers by High and Mighty, snuggle up with their cat Kevin. Trude has moved into Howard's Georgian cottage in Bristol, which he has spent the past four years restoring. TV's most popular vet has commandeered a room to use as her office. There, dressed in a cashmere top by Shi and leather trousers by Louise Kennedy, she relaxes with her fiancé, who makes his living as a personal trainer and life coach. Howard's shirt and trousers are by Fenwicks

"I've never come close to marriage before," says the 33-year-old vet, sinking into a leather sofa in the stylish cottage she shares with Howard in the fashionable Clifton area of Bristol.

"But then I'd never met anyone before who I thought I could spend the rest of my life with. People always say you'll know it when you meet 'the one', and I finally understood when I met Howard. I felt as if I was coming home; the pieces of the jigsaw seemed to fall into place. I never felt there was enough depth to my relationships in the past and now, as far as I am concerned, this is my first relationship. I know that sounds disrespectful to my ex-boyfriends but none of them compare to this one."

Trude took the first step to total commitment when she moved out of her own flat in Bristol and into the Georgian home that Howard, 43, has lovingly restored.

It is here in this tasteful haven of leather chairs, soft fabrics and ethnic furniture that it becomes instantly apparent there is more to shaven-headed hard-looking man than might at first appear.

"He's such a dark horse and that's what I found so attractive," says Trude as Howard delicately lights candles in the sitting room.

**Documentaries**

**11 x 30 minutes**

**BBC** Worldwide

# Vets in Practice

## SERIES 9

### Press Feature.../2

Hello Magazine

The former rugby player for Salford, who gave up a lucrative career in finance five years ago to pursue his interest in life coaching, also writes poetry and penned lines of love for his proposal to Trude on the downs above Clifton, where they had first met.

"I thought he'd fallen over, but he was actually on his knees attempting to read a poem to me," she explains proudly. "It was really sweet because it incorporated words from a David Gray song that has special meaning for us."

A man of such sensibilities was not the picture painted in a tabloid story earlier this year, however, in which twice-married Howard's first wife accused him of physically assaulting her during their marriage.

"It could have been a recipe for disaster," says Trude defiantly, "but I chose to trust him. I knew all about his life and I never doubted him. He was married briefly when he was very young and he has two lovely children - who he sees a lot - with the woman he was married to for 15 years.

"His past doesn't bother me because I want him for everything he is now, and he is a product of his past. If that means having been married twice before and having had two kids with someone else, then that's fine because the person he is now is the person I am in love with. And I would rather trust a man who has lived and made mistakes than someone who is young and doesn't know what they are going through."

Howard, on the other hand, found the delving into his private life much more disturbing: "It was because it was a good relationship, it just wasn't the right one."

It was also the first time that Trude's squeaky clean image had been tarnished since she first wooed viewers in the launch series Vets' School a decade back. She can laugh about it now - and admit that there are worse things than being accused of being a good lover. But it was a stressful period.

"I had finished with Brian before I actually got together with Howard but it didn't come across like that. In the press it looked as if I had announced to Brian out of the blue that I was engaged to Howard when, in fact, Brian and I had split up months before."

It was only by announcing her engagement to Howard, it appears, that she could finally close the door on her relationship with Brian.

**Documentaries**

**11 x 30 minutes**

**BBC** Worldwide

# Vets in Practice

## SERIES 9

### Press Feature.../3

Hello Magazine

Now Trude and Howard's thoughts are firmly focused on the future and the June wedding they are planning for next year is almost certain to take place in the fjords of Norway. "Mountains have always been special to me," says Trude wistfully, "I spent some important moments of my life there and they are very spiritual places. The problem will be the weather but rain or sunshine we will still feel it is special."

They are just back from a weekend in Norway to check out possible locations and to visit Trude's parents, who have been steadfast in their support of her choice of husband.

"We were already engaged when I introduced them to Howard, so they knew he was different from the others. I think they have always thought I needed someone like him. In fact, my sister always used to say my ideal man would be someone older than me with his own career and ambitions, who would probably have a past and have been married before. All the boxes were ticked."

Trude's parents have been happily married for some 30 years and she concedes that her high expectations might have contributed to why she found it so hard to commit to someone before now.

"I didn't want to compromise. I have done that in relationships in the past. Perhaps I never had the integrity to choose what I wanted before, and that has been a significant change in my life. I have a tendency to go with the flow but I think as you enter your 30s you realise you have to sort your life out and take charge of your own future. I am finally choosing what I want and not what everyone else wants."

Howard has his own theory, that Trude has been looking for traits of her father in a potential partner - and he could well be right. "Howard is not a father substitute but he has the same calming effect on me, and I have enormous respect for him as I have for my father. My father is also a bit of a dark horse - and he loves poetry."

Howard loves children - like her father - and has managed to maintain a successful relationship with his own two, despite his divorce five years ago. He insists all his son's friends are in love with Trude, and want her to come and watch rugby with them. "Howard's are really sweet children and they adore him," says Trude. "I don't see them an awful lot but we are good mates. But I am not trying to be anything more than their friend. I don't want to be a replacement for anything. They have their father and their mother. They are a part of Howard and they are fantastic."

The couple would like to have children together one day and are looking to buy a larger house in Bath with a family in mind.

**Documentaries**

**11 x 30 minutes**

**BBC** Worldwide

# Vets in Practice

## SERIES 9

### Press Feature.../4

Hello Magazine

"I've never been conscious of my biological clock ticking in the past," Trude insists. "I can hear some vague ticking now, though, but that's because I'm with someone that I know I would love to have children with. When you are in love and content with a partner you do get broody."

She is clearly a woman who has decided to put her whole house in order and is currently deciding where she wants to go with her career. Her first step has been to resign from *Viking Vets*, her practice, and take some time off to consider how to move forward with her future in television.

"I have had ten years non-stop with two parallel careers and I've had a really wonderful time, but like most ambitious people, I have had to be quite egocentric and there has been little space for anything else in my life.

"I am in the middle of a period of re-evaluating. Howard has inspired that - he is good at confronting such issues. He always says: 'You don't have to do anything you don't want to. You have the power to change it.' And he's right."

Trude, meanwhile, is back on air with the ninth series of *Vets In Practice*. And with another two series already commissioned, she will remain a regular fixture for some time. She's aware, of course, of the downside of fame.

"I realise there are certain things that go with the job - like interest in your private life - and stalkers - I have one of those too," she says, adding, "I'm very protective about my relationship with Howard."

There's no doubt in her mind that the huge hulk of a man sitting next to her on the sofa will be central to her life from now on. "He is the rock in my life and someone I know I can rely on. I know he will be there for me, will support me no matter what, and will love me for whatever I am and whatever I do."

Picture captions:

Trude perches in front of Howard on her scooter - her main mode of transport around Bristol. The couple hope to marry next June and are planning to hold the ceremony among the mountains and fjords of Norway. "Mountains are very spiritual places," says Trude

Trude, 33, chats with Howard, ten years her senior, in his Shaker-style kitchen. Howard who specialises in coaching individuals in achieving their personal goals, has obviously helped Trude, wearing a beaded dress by Jenny Packham, to reach a major decision: she has just decided to give up her veterinary practice *Viking Vets* to dedicate herself wholly to her TV career

Documentaries

11 x 30 minutes