

Welcome to the World of James Herriot

This is the original home and place of work for Alf Wight vet and author. James Herriot was Alf Wight's pen name.

Dining Room.

This is a dual-purpose room: A dining room on special occasions and primarily an office/waiting room. We can see how it has been used as an office by the desk in the corner with various account books, a typewriter, and filing cabinets.

Key points:

1. The dining room was used as a waiting room, customers would sit and wait at the dining room table for their appointment.
2. Typewriters and account books were used, there were no computer systems like we have today.
3. Light switches were brown/black, round, and prominent as opposed to the white, flat, and square ones we have today, with light intensity control in some cases.
4. The telephone in the hallway is very big with a numbered dial, very unlike what we have today.

Sitting Room.

This room was used as a family room; Alf Wight would relax on an evening reading one of his many cherished books and listening to music on the radio, record player and watching television. His favourite singer was Bing Crosby. Various toys were left lying around by his children Jim and Rosie as they played.

Key points:

1. The style of toys has changed over the years, including the materials used to make the toys.
2. There was only one channel on television, and the programs were on an evening. This meant that the radio was the main source of entertainment for adults and children alike with the news, music and children's hour on throughout the day, every day.
3. The original fireplace of Alf Wight's home was the only source of heat for the house. There wasn't any central heating in the 1940's.

Dispensary.

The dispensary is the room in which all the medicines and supplies were stored. There were no antibiotics when Alf Wight first started out, most medicines would be made up by the vets themselves for various treatments. For different animals different dosages were needed and this was a tricky procedure, finding the precise amounts.

Key points:

- 1. Different coloured and shaped bottles represented different ingredients. Some ingredients were liquid, some powder, and others oil.**
- 2. There are weighing scales and a recipe book for different medicines as well as the veterinary reference books.**

Breakfast Room.

The room was used as an informal family room. It is small so the fire when lit would make it a very warm environment. Often Joan, Alf's wife, and the children would eat their meals here. The children would also use the room for homework. Joan would use it for needlework or sewing. In an emergency, the room was also known to be used as an operating theatre.

Kitchen & Scullery.

This is the central room of the house, a place where all the family would congregate. The first half of the room would have been used as the kitchen, where all the cooking, baking, and pickling would have taken place. The aga was a fuel-burning stove and would always have been hot, it was a way of having hot water for the tap. The back of the room was used as a scullery area for washing clothes, and for food preservation.

Key Points:

- 1. Pickling and jamming was a way of preserving food to last for long periods of time as there were no fridges.**
- 2. Several brands of food tins such as Heinz and Oxo are still around today.**
- 3. Washing machines still needed filling with water, handles turn the clothes and the taps drained the water away.**

Memorabilia Room.

The memorabilia room is a room dedicated to Alf Wight with a wide variety of James Herriot Border Fine Arts. It is the largest collection of James Herriot memorabilia in the world.

Foldyard and Farrier Room.

In the Foldyard is a short film to watch, narrated by Christopher Timothy. The running time is approximately 12 minutes. The yard has a fascinating collection of hand tools that were in everyday use on a farm. The farrier's workshop shows a setting in which a farrier would work. It combined both the skills of being a vet and a blacksmith.

Garden.

The garden is the same as it would have been when Alf Wight lived and worked here and is now home to the statue of Alf Wight himself with his dog Hector, which was installed in March 2015. The statue commemorates 100 years since his birth; the 3rd of October 1916.

TV Studios.

The TV studios are set out as they would have been on a real set in the filming of All Creatures Great and Small. The filming wasn't done at this location, most of the filming for the first series was done at Askrigg in the Dales and Pebble Mill in Birmingham.

At the end of the TV studios is the restored original Austin Seven motor car that was used in the filming of the series.

The Interactive Gallery.

An educational and fun way of learning through play. Children can interact with the games and pretend to be a vet in this room.

The Veterinary Science Rooms.

In the veterinary science room, there are over 4000 exhibits that chart the history and progress of the veterinary profession over the years. Although some of the equipment may not look modern, a lot is still used on farms to this day.

The All Creatures Great & Small Room.

The new All Creatures Great and Small was launched in 2020 and produced by Playground Entertainment for Channel 5 in the United Kingdom. It was filmed in the Yorkshire Dales, and in **THIRSK**. This room has been superbly put together by the set designers of the new series on Channel 5.