



Holly Hedge Sanctuary



Wild Country Lane

Barrow Gurney

North Somerset BS48 3SE

01275-474719

Registered Charity No: 294606

Christmas 2003



Winnie & Dolly meet Father Christmas

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dog, very confident and affectionate. She is also a "PAT" dog visiting an elderly persons home where she gets very spoilt with cuddles and titbits from the tea trolley.

Her charms have also adopted her a "2nd Mum" one of our committee members and dog walker, her "Auntie" Dianne regularly takes her for car rides and walks around Ashton Court.

Win is an example that you can teach an old dog new tricks, all it takes is a little patience, encouragement and lots of love.

Dolly came to us because she had messed on the new carpet. Her owners grown-up daughter had left home and Dolly was distraught, missing her terribly. She showed her distress by toileting when she was left. She was rehomed to a family who were home most of the time but, after 3 years, their circumstances changed. Dolly had to be left for longer periods. The poor little dog couldn't cope with this insecurity so a new home was needed for her. Luckily she came in and went straight out again. Mr. Deans, a kind gentleman who had recently lost his beloved elderly dog Scrappy took pity on Dolly and took her home. She settled in immediately, enjoying her rides in his van and visiting elderly people in nursing homes. She is a great favourite with everyone. She hasn't toileted in the house at all and accompanies Mr. Deans wherever he goes. Dolly has found true happiness at last.

Winnie came to us at 9 years old, after her owners had separated. She had a history of colitis and suffered from separation anxiety. As she was very unhappy in kennels our warden Jenny took her home—just to foster. She ended up falling in love and adopting this endearing little soul. Winnie did have quite a few accidents in the house initially but this is all part of the course for a Holly Hedge warden and, knowing that she was loved and wanted, Win Pooh, as she's affectionately called, eventually overcame her anxieties.

Jenny fills us in on a few more details of this loveable little dog:

Winnie was very subdued and hid under the table or behind the settee. I began immediately to house train her, just as you would a puppy. Within 10 days this little dog was completely clean in the house. Gradually Win came out of her shell and, over the next couple of months a sweet personality started to appear. Now she is a completely different

The picture shows both Dolly & Winnie with Father Christmas at the elderly people's home. After Mr. Deans lost his beloved Scrappy and before Dolly came along he "borrowed" Winnie so that the residents would not miss out on their doggy visits. Even after Dolly arrived Mr. Deans decided that, as the little dogs got along so well he would take them both. So there is now twice as much doggy company to go around—and plenty of titbits for both. Winnie is the one sitting on Santa Claus' knee.



Chief Executive's

The past year has been somewhat of a learning curve for the charity. We can no longer feel complacent that the legacy Esme Berni left us in the hope that Holly Hedge would go on forever, will enable us to do just that. The financial climate has meant that cut backs have had to be made.

We have always been proud of the high standard of care given to our rescues and this must be maintained, but we now have to think about what we can afford to do, such as refurbishing the Dog Isolation kennels. The whole block needs a complete revamp, but we have had to compromise and settle for a new roof on the external runs, so the dogs can be kept dry in wet weather. This will cost approximately £5,000, but it is badly needed.

We are a charity that does our utmost to help elderly dogs and cats rebuild their lives. Now we must ask ourselves, should we be limiting the numbers knowing that vet bills will undoubtedly occur? I've always believed that in certain circumstances, it is kinder to have a very old, much loved pet, who has been pampered all its life in the same home, quietly put to sleep. Others that have had little or no life at all, deserve to end their days on a happy note. But can we justify spending money for perhaps only 1 or 2 more, good years? At the same time, can we just turn our backs and hope these dear old timers don't end up somewhere like an unmentionable, unregistered cat rescue, that refuses to rehome and allows them to literally rot away in a confined, lonely existence. My heart tells me we must do something, my head tells me it's not always possible, if we are to continue our work well into the future.

When I ran the charity from my home, I always managed to find the funds somehow, but that was on a much smaller scale. Now, we have to scrutinise what we spend to ensure the sanctuary's long-term future and that means making compromises.

It would be nice if all the animals we took in were easy to rehome, but this is never the case. We can't dismiss all the animals with problems either, particularly as they are always man-made. The animals that come to Holly Hedge are usually rehomed quite quickly but, from time to time, there are those unlucky ones that can spend many months with us until someone comes along who can see beyond the dog that is barking frantically in the kennel or retreats into the corner. Likewise, the cat that hisses at the first sign of a strange face or recoils at the sound of voice it doesn't know. Others simply wait in quiet acceptance, so are overlooked for those that are more outgoing. Many animals behave differently in a kennel/cattery environment purely because they are in strange surroundings and all the busy comings and goings are totally alien to what was once their way of life. They don't understand that Holly Hedge is a half-way house and there is hope of a real home round the corner. Because they are frightened and bewildered, some behave out of character, which can put many prospective owners off choosing them.

All our pups go out with training cards to be duly stamped by the Training Club, as their pasts can reflect on their future. These little mites can become affected by what they have been exposed to in early life. A well adjusted, well socialised puppy is ready to

face the world.

All of them have their own redeeming features and live in hope that they will be chosen as someone's special pet and be loved and wanted once more. If an animal has problems or doesn't trust humans, they have been let down in one way or another and deserve to be given the chance of a fresh start. So please, if you are thinking of adopting a rescued animal, spare a thought for the ones that have been behind bars for a long time. Look beyond the first impression and take the time to get to know them. They all have their own story to tell if only they can find a listening ear. Much as we care for them, there really is no place like home. As you can see in our Happy Endings, we strive to give them the best chance possible, but we can only do it with your help.

The cat garden continues to be a great success with our feline residents and a good time is enjoyed by all, whether it be rolling in the cat mint, chasing toys or just following the shadows of the wind chimes and anything else that is dangling for their amusement. This spacious area is also useful for staff to assess how well the cats get on with others. There is also a comfortable bench for cat cuddlers to sit and play with the cats. We want to do the right thing by all the animals in our care and we will endeavour to do so to the very best of our ability, but we are going to need the public's help. Flag days, supermarket collections and other events must be organised to get the money rolling in, to ensure we are always here for the animals. Any suggestions would be most gratefully received.

As I am sure, most people know

Report



we have our own website, which has proved to be very effective in finding homes for our rescues. We have just upgraded the site to be even more informative, but in a slightly more businesslike way. We are indebted to Phil Greenwood of Forest Computer Associates for setting it all up and getting us started, he's done such an excellent job.

Our two ponies, Rio and Cher, are now at Horseworld where they will be looked after for the rest of their lives.

As Christmas is just around the corner, we know there are some wonderful, caring people that are busy collecting food and toys for our rescues. This is so much appreciated by all our residents, including our dedicated staff who enjoy playing Santa Claws and giving them lots of nice presents along with a special Christmas

Dinner. Their carers bend over backwards to make up for them being homeless at this festive time of year. It helps us cope, thinking of all the lucky ones we've rehomed enjoying themselves with their new families and hope that next year those that are with us now will be happy and contented in their new homes.

As I seem to have rambled on again, it just leaves me to say thank you to all our wonderful staff and everyone for their valued support and in particular, to the children who have sold their toys and other items and donated their pocket money to help the animals, it is so heart warming.

Wishing you all a Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

Pauline Leeson

BARBARA'S PLUMP-TIOUS PET BEDS & COSY DOG COATS

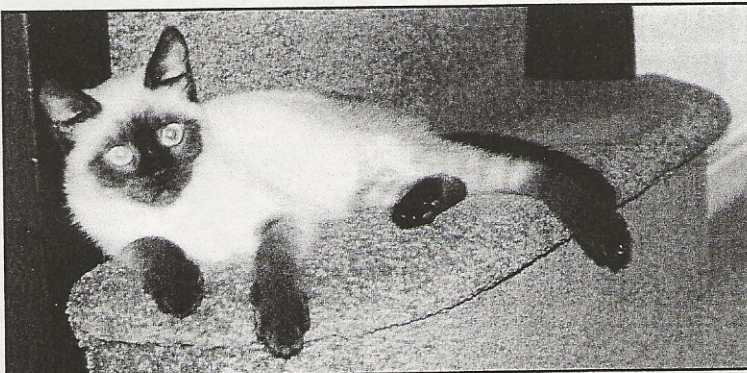
We would all like to say a huge **thank you** to Barbara, who kindly makes lovely pet beds and snug dog coats, and donates them to Holly Hedge Sanctuary to help raise much-needed funds. They are all beautifully made with a great deal of thought and have the animal's comfort in mind. Spare covers are also available. Would you like to treat your pet for Christmas? If so, please ring or call into the sanctuary during opening hours – you won't be disappointed.

Life's a Breeze now

Breeze was one of a litter of kittens that was born in the wild, on an industrial estate, to stray parents. Mum was a little, black moggie and dad, a Siamese. Both had turned feral and were too wild to be caught in a cat trap. The kittens, however, weren't as street-wise and were tempted in by the food. Some kind people, working in an office block nearby, took the time and trouble to watch the cat trap. They

brought all the kits to Holly Hedge from where, after lots of patient handling by staff, they have since been rehomed. We

can only hope mum and dad are caught before more kits arrive. At least their offspring from this litter will never reproduce and add to the problem. As for little Breeze, he has turned out to be a proper little purr box and loves his home comforts. But how different it could have been, if people hadn't cared enough to bother to draw attention to their plight.



Anyway, Breeze himself has something to say about his new home.

"You really did find me a great home to go to. My new mum, called Jenny, is a real soft touch. I had a lot of money spent on me when I first arrived back at my new home and needless to say I decided not to sleep in my new bed and new blanket which is really nice stuff, but I had to show her who was in charge, didn't I!

I purr all the time and I'm a rather beautiful cat. My mum and dad love me loads and I'm good now, except for when dad gets in bed, his feet stick out of the bed and I take great delight in hanging onto them with my claws and teeth."

His new mum adds:- I know that Breeze will live with us until he becomes a colour in the rainbow.

Holly, a special girl so full of love

Holly (then called Kim) was 10 months old when she was brought to Holly Hedge Sanctuary, after her owner's marriage broke up and she was being left alone at least 12 hours a day. A very lonely existence for a little dog who depended on human company, the poor little mite was so lonely she had got into the habit of chewing out of boredom and who could blame her. She was only with us 4 days when she was adopted by a couple who were at home most of the time. We thought she had struck gold dust, but unfortunately, after just a week Holly was brought

back. It seemed she couldn't be left at all, not even for half an hour. She had chewed the hall carpet, kitchen flooring and broken ornaments etc. Sadly, the long periods of loneliness she had been subjected to had taken its toll, Holly had a severe case of separation anxiety. We would need a very patient, understanding owner. Luckily she didn't have to wait long and 10 days later her prayers were answered when she went home with Mr & Mrs Edwards, who were willing to give her every chance – what lovely people! Holly has found the love, companionship

and security she needed to overcome her fears and is so contented with her life.

Holly's new family wrote to us :

"Following the death of our 14 year old "chum" we visited your great establishment where we were introduced to our present "chum" who we have loved and who has loved us, ever since we picked her up. I have penned a verse dedicated to a small animal who is so full of love, a totally committed dog with not a nasty bone in her body:"

HOLLY'S POEM

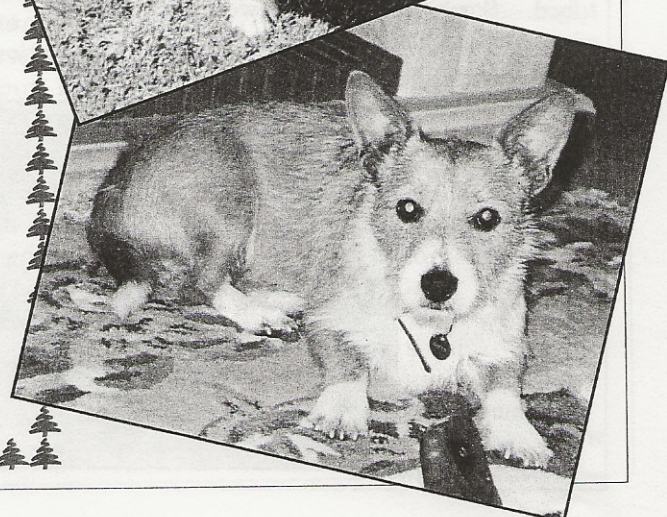
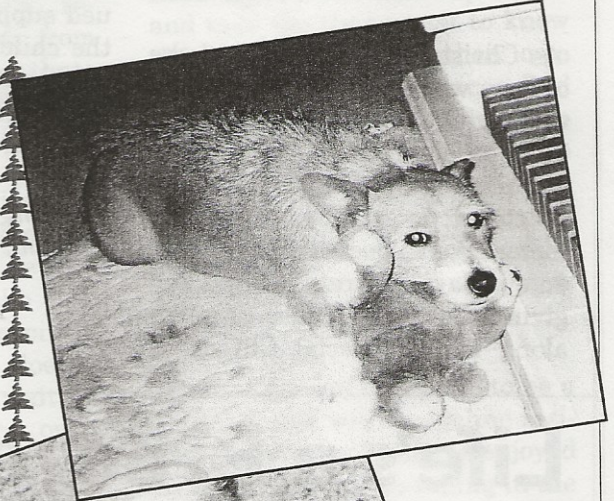
Sad & so lonely she was back in her cage
Just 10 months old but how she had aged
A cute little dog going by the name of Kim
So frightened and scared by the never ending din.

A poor little puppy left out in the rain
Rejected by many just adding to her pain
No-one now loves her or so she believes
Alone and abandoned like dead autumn leaves.

The sadness increases as people pass by
Alone in a cage with those sad pleading eyes
Dog lovers arrive so soon to depart
Without her, alas, it is breaking her heart.

Other dogs are chosen in preference to her
At the animal sanctuary for bundles of fur
Until the day we decided to call
For someone to love and play with our ball.

She has never looked back since that great fateful day
Enjoying life fully just one long romp in the hay
Such a wonderful friend so happy and jolly
Now part of us all our dear little Holly



Cuddles, another Holly Hedge "beauty queen"

Cuddles came to us at 4 years old, when her owners could no longer keep her. She had spent her life in a top floor flat where she could only gaze at the outside world through a window. She was a timid little thing, which was only to be expected, and would show her fear by hissing, spitting and giving the odd cuff with her claws out. Cuddles didn't live up to her name! Staff could see that pretending to be a miniature tiger was just a façade, she really needed reassurance to gain confidence, so she could shed her suit of armour.

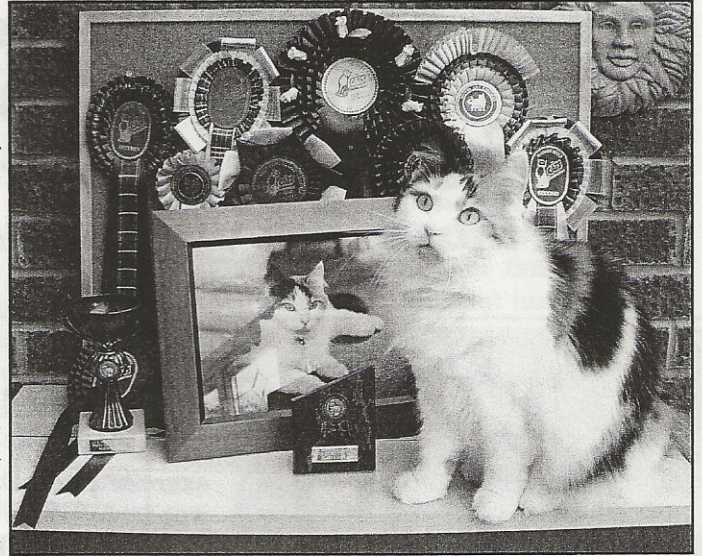
Luckily, after 10 weeks she was chosen by Mary and Robert, who were willing to try to overcome her insecurities and give her the chance of a normal life. Thanks to their kindness and patience, Cuddles is now a loving and more confident cat. She is also quite a poser and looking very pleased with her

achievements.

Cuddles new owners update us on her progress:-

"Cuddles loved to have her photo taken, so we entered her into several photographic competitions. As you can see she's won various rosettes for different categories including several First and Second prizes and won best reserve in the show, which also won her a lovely cup.

When she is not having her photo taken, she loves to play in the garden, which she was not able to do



before, and then likes nothing better than to come in and curl up in her favourite chair or on our laps and be picked up and cuddled, something we couldn't do in the beginning. She is very loved and we wouldn't be without her."

Cuddles' has inspired us to give our other "feline friends" the chance to star. Holly Hedge is planning it's own Cat Photographic Competition to raise money to provide a roof over our cat garden. The entry fee will be £1 and details will be available shortly. Sponsors have offered super prizes and the judges will be Sarah Fisher, renowned Tellington Touch practitioner, as seen in Talking to Animals and Celebrity Dog School, and her partner Anthony Stewart Head of Buffy The Vampire Slayer, Manchild and Little Britain. Entry forms will be available from Holly Hedge, send an s.a.e if you would like to reserve one.

Dan - Oldie but Goldie

Dan came in as a stray on Bonfire Night last year, looking like he'd been dragged through a hedge backwards. He was extremely thin, coat badly matted, sore runny eyes, sore ears, needed a dental, anal glands were blocked, had a growth under his tail and blood in his urine. As he was un-neutered this was more than likely a prostate problem plus he had arthritis. This poor little chap couldn't go into a kennel in his state so he resided in the Prep room where he was given all the t.l.c. and feeding up he needed. We did the usual and reported him to all relevant bodies and 2 days later we had a call from a woman who said we had her dog. She described his colouring in detail and said he had gone missing the day before he was brought to Holly Hedge. When we described

the appalling condition he was in and that there were vet bills involved she said "it can't be mine" and put the phone down! - who knows. It took staff 3 weeks of constant care to nurse him back to good enough health to have his necessary ops. This brave old soldier came through it all and was improving daily. He was with us for 2 months when Christine came to the Sanctuary offering to foster. Dan captured her heart. She even postponed a long awaited visit to Hong Kong because she couldn't bear to leave him. He's now gone from rags to riches.

Christine says: When I took Dan home in January he was quite frail, very nervous and a bit cantankerous. He's completely deaf and he can only see with one eye. It didn't take him long to get used to his new



home; he's become affectionate and very lively for an old boy. My greatest pleasure during the summer was watching him enjoy the garden; he seemed to be constantly amazed at his new surroundings. Being able to look after Dan for the last bit of his life has been very rewarding and good fun too - I haven't regretted it for a second.

**P.T.O. FOR OTHER
GOLDEN OLDIE
STORIES**

A very Merry Christmas to all our Golden Oldies and our thanks to all those people who are making their twilight years so happy.

A selection of stories are included but there are many more that we just don't have room to feature.

Twilight-time with Rover

One of our office workers tells you the story of her first dog, Rover.

"I've always been perceived as a cat person—as a family we always had a cat when I was a child and, from the moment I was a home owner and not subject to the rules of the landlord, I have had at least one cat (and usually 2 or 3). I worked full time until I decided to make a life change at 45 when I gave up my career in a large bank and came to work part-time at Holly Hedge.

There I met many dogs of all ages and some, particularly those I got to know as the office dogs, I became very fond of. Working 2 full days a week I was still not in a position to become a dog owner although the idea niggled at the back of my mind. I learned that dogs are not easy to own and that they take up a lot of time and often need training and a firm hand. The evidence that people do not always understand the task they have taken on is clear in the number of dogs that need to be re-homed through Holly Hedge and other similar organisations. Never having had a dog of my own I knew that if I were to take one on it would need to be the right one.

Then I heard about Rover, 11 years old and needing a fresh start as his owner's health was failing and she was unable to

exercise him. Dianne, one of our wonderful volunteers (and by now a friend) knew Rover and was especially fond of him. She, together with Wendy, another good friend met at Holly Hedge,



offered to doggy sit or walk him on my full days at work. Now it was a possibility. Sight unseen my heart was set on taking on this old boy but would he like our cats and would they like him. He came to visit and the first signs were good and, after discussions with my husband, Rover came to stay. Despite never having lived with a cat and they never having socialised with dogs they soon got used to each other.

He is such a well behaved and sweet natured dog and he has helped me, as a first time dog owner, so much. My nervousness when meeting other dogs and letting him run off the lead soon improved as he showed me that he could be trusted in almost

every situation. Day by day and week by week our confidence in each other grows and with several walks every day we're both keeping fit.

OK, so he's an older dog and I will have to accept that his time with us will be limited but he has already been worth it and we will happily support him into his old age.

An older dog is much steadier and less excitable and has become accustomed to most situations he will be faced with. Although likely to miss his previous owner and home, given plenty of exercise and attention he soon learns that life will go on and can be very enjoyable. He may even find that life can be better with new adventures to experience and new friends to meet.

You obviously have to manage your own expectations as to the life expectancy of the dog and to be prepared for some veterinary expense—but remember that younger dogs are not exempt from these, accidents will happen with the young and inexperienced who haven't yet learned about the dangers of life! In any case my dog is certainly worth it—his big brown eyes tell me that he knows that we'll look after him and that he appreciates it."

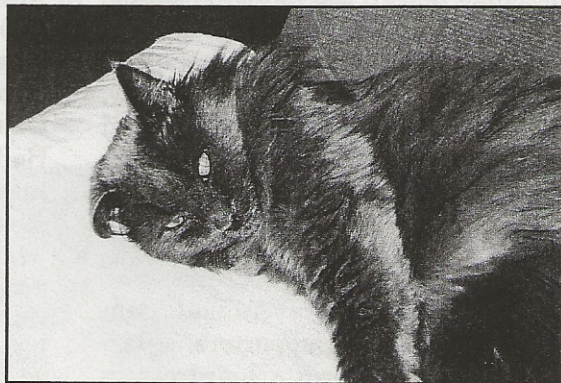
Basil enjoys his retirement with a new baby

Basil's original owners had moved house but the poor old boy wouldn't settle and kept going back to his previous home where he was living rough in the garden. So he was signed over to Holly Hedge. His long coat had got very badly matted, he needed a dental and his ears were full of gunge and, horror of horrors, he was un-neutered. Well, that was soon sorted out, along with having his matts shaved off, 3 teeth extracted and his ears flushed. Although we worry about our "oldies" having to undergo an anaesthetic they have always come back to us safely and Basil was no exception. 3 months later he captured the hearts of a super

couple who would love and care for him for the rest of his twilight years. Thank you Naomi & Justin.

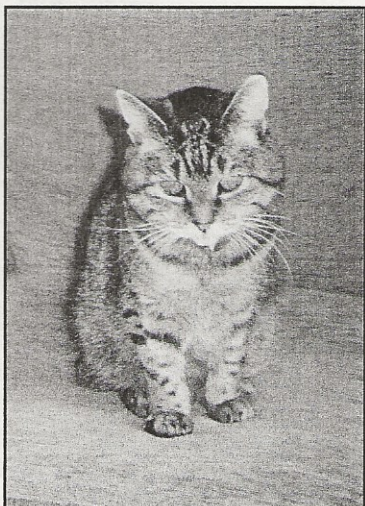
"Basil came to live with us in January. We think he is a very special cat! He settled in straightaway – begging for bacon sandwiches on his first day with us. Since then Basil has established himself as the boss of the household. He is very vocal and wakes us up when he wants to go out in the morning. Basil enjoys his fuss but is not shy about giving us a bop if he's had enough.

Recently we have had a new baby in the house. We have made sure that Basil still feels loved and he has adjusted well to the new routines, getting up at 2 a.m. to help feed the baby! Basil truly is one of the family and we couldn't be without him."



Betty Boo falls on all 4 paws

Betty had been living rough for months and it showed. The poor little mite used to be seen every refuse collection day scavenging for food and looking in an appalling state. She was so frightened no-one could get near her, so a humane cat trap was sent. Her hunger overcame her fear which enabled her to be easily caught. Betty Boo, as we named her, was in quite a state, full of fleas, eyes sunken into her head where she was so pitifully thin (Betty weighed 1.84 kg), ears black with mites, sore gums with lots of bad teeth and an oozing cyst on her head. On top of all that our vet diagnosed a thyroid problem. Poor Betty was obviously an elderly cat and looked so ill we wondered if she would make it. Once she knew she was safe from harm she turned out to be a friendly little cat which was just as well as staff had to bathe her wound and give medication several times a day. She



needed an abundance of t.l.c. and she got it at Holly Hedge. Betty ate 6 mashed up meals a day until she became strong enough to go to Vale Vets at Portishead to have a dental (all her teeth had to be removed except for her 4 canines and 1 upper molar), her cyst and her thyroid removed. As usual Vale Vets did an excellent job and Betty recovered well. She was soon moved over to the main cattery where one of our cat cuddlers fell in love with this brave, frail little old lady. Thank you, Maria & Bert, for giving Betty Boo a new lease of life. Maria takes the story from here:-

"It was in November 2001 that a thin & frail cat arrived in our house. We fell in love with her when we saw her at Holly Hedge. She had been brought in after living on the street for quite a while and had needed several operations to give her a chance of survival. The staff at the shelter had named her "Betty Boo" and we

were told that she probably wouldn't live long, a few months at the most. Would we foster her and provide her with a nice home during those last few months?

And so Betty arrived. It didn't take her long before she took control of our bed, the settee, as well as our dog, Jamie, a Golden Retriever, but all in a very nice and affectionate way. We have had several cats but never one like Betty, who talked so much and so loud and we have never received so much affection, with a purr that can be heard from far away.

This is now over 2 years ago and Betty is still with us. She has grown in weight and is doing ever so well. A few months ago we officially adopted her so that the vet bills are now being paid by us rather than Holly Hedge, so that they can use their funds to help other "rescue" cats like Betty. For us it is a small price to pay for a cat that daily shows her love to the people who are providing her with what she wants and needs in her old age.

Would be rescue another cat in this way if the need arose? Absolutely!

3rd time lucky for Fern, chosen by our 2 longest supporters

Fern was just 3 months old when she first came to us, but nevertheless full of high spirits with eyes full of trust and innocence, knowing nothing of the cruel blows that life can deal. A bouncy little bundle with high spirits, her little undershot jaw made her all the more appealing. She wouldn't be here long. A week later and Fern was off to her new home. Unfortunately, she only stayed for 6 months and the marriage broke up. Back she came, this time very confused and upset.

Then, along came Terry and Barbara who are Animal Concern's longest supporters. Barbara used to own a hairdressers

shop and would run raffles and sell goods to customers to help the charity when there were just a handful of us struggling to pay the next vet's bill. Having recently lost their old dog Mitzi leaving them devastated, they braved a visit to Holly Hedge. It was love at first sight. So home she went with them, tail wagging. We knew no matter what mischief Fern got up to, she would never come back to Holly Hedge (except to visit). This lucky little lady had found two devoted, dedicated animal lovers who would give her the best life ever and a secure, loving future. It's what we dream of and wish for all our rescues.

ten minutes had them both hook, line and sinker. After all the paperwork was completed, I said goodbye and thanks to Holly Hedge and hello Headley Park. From then on the phone never stopped ringing. It was Fern this, Fern that and I thought to myself I must be some sort of superstar.

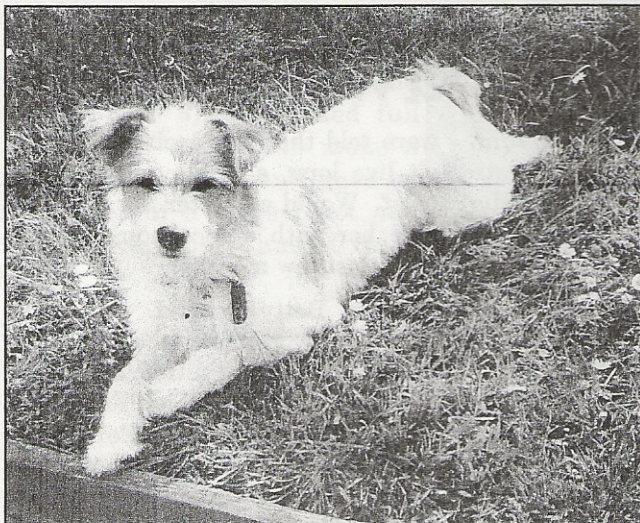
Anyway, after meeting lots of new friends and settling in, we went on holiday to my friend Oscar's mum and dad's caravan at Minehead. I had a lovely time playing on the beach and plenty of walks (we always finished up at a pub so my new dad could have a couple of pints of guinness)! After two weeks of having photographs taken more times than Victoria Beckham, it was time to come home, back to my humdrum life of eating, sleeping, playing and being happy.

Hope all my old friends at Holly Hedge have found new homes like me. Once again, many thanks for looking after me when I was not wanted, but I think I have won the doggy version of the Lottery here.

Love, Fern"

Fern tells us about her new home:

"Remember me, my name is Fern. I had two spells with you because other so called owners did not want me. Anyway, one afternoon in April I spotted two people looking for a new doggy and thought to myself they look ok and in



Blake

Blake, as staff named him, was brought to us as a stray in October of this year. He seemed in good condition, yet after reporting him to the Dogs Home, Dog Warden and Pet Search, no one claimed him. He knew how to sit and give a paw and was a friendly, loveable boy. It didn't take us long to discover why someone had discarded him, the poor chap leaked urine involuntarily, including when he was sleeping. After a urine test showed negative for any illness, he was put on a drug to help him con-

trol his bladder. This helped a great deal, but he still leaked a little bit overnight.

A month later he was chosen by a lovely couple who knew about his "problem", but were prepared to give him a home as he was such a sweetheart. They already had a border collie called Skye and the two dogs hit it off straight away. Blake has since been tried on hormone tablets, which have cleared his leakage up completely and he couldn't be happier. Our grateful thanks to Denise and Paul for adopting him and making his life complete.

Blake's new owners say:-

"Blake stole our hearts at 1st glimpse—we turned to each other and said "Aahh, he's nice". We were told that he had problems with his waterworks leaking but this did not deter us and, having introduced him to our Border Collie, Sky, he came to our home. When he first came to us, if you moved your hand quickly he would cower his head down, he would not come up to you and face you. Now he Woo Woos when we come in—a better greeting you couldn't get. He comes to us, puts his face and paw on our laps. He even tries to get up and have a really good cuddle. He received lots of love from us but he gives us lots of love in

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Have a break, have a Kit Kat

Titch had come all the way from Ireland having spent 2 years in a rescue home, after her owners had off-loaded her in poor condition. Although well looked after by her rescuers, homes in the area were very few and far between, so we were asked if we could help out. As rehoming was going quite well at the time, we were happy to help – in fact we ended up taking 15 cats, who have all been found new, loving owners.

Titch was a shy, little soul at first, but soon got used to her new surroundings and responded well to staff and volunteer cat cuddlers. As you can see, she's now lost all her shyness and enjoys herself to the full with her new canine friend.

Neil & Ellie, her new owners take up her story (she has been re-named Kit Kat):-

"On her first day in her new home she was put in the study to rest and within minutes she wanted to play with her new toys. We have an old golden retriever called Boss and he so wanted to see what we were hiding. We put him in the garden and let Kit Kat out of the study to survey her new home. She explored everywhere and caught sight of Boss from a window. We put garden netting across

the study door with Kit Kat behind it of course and let Boss back in. They looked at each other for a while, bit of a stare off really, bit of hissing from Kit Kat and barking from Boss. Soon they ignored each other and I think feeding them tit bits helped. I was working in the study at the time and decided to get a drink; to my surprise Kit Kat was right behind me in the kitchen, she had squeezed through the netting. Boss was in the

a lead and she was very nervous – Boss came too. Every day I would take her for a few minutes, she wanted to explore the garden. When it was time for her to go out on her own she wanted to be close to us all the time. She is never far away and comes when called. She brings us presents through the cat flap – nice! We have a box ready for her presents to rest before being released!! Boss and Kit Kat are the greatest of friends and go



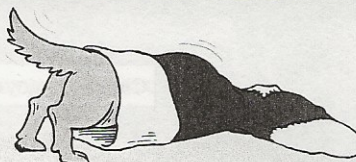
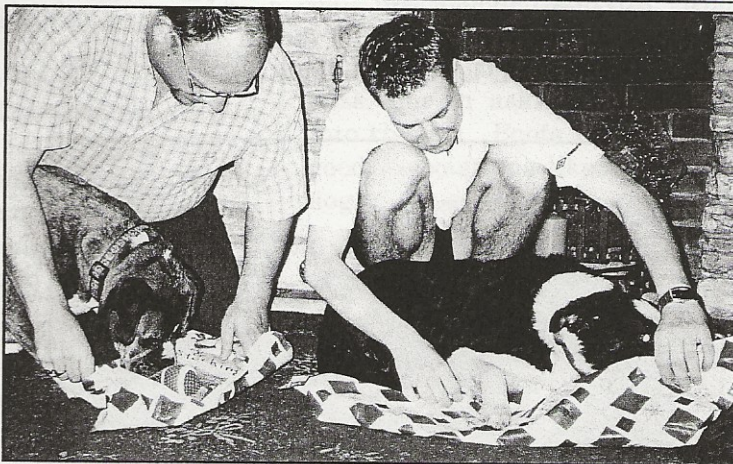
kitchen too, so I gave them both tit bits and made a fuss of both of them and now they are the very best of friends.

When it was time for her to go outside, I took her into the garden on

out for walks together. She greets him with almost a kiss on his nose every morning; it's lovely to watch. She chirps a lot and likes lying on top of the TV!

We love her to bits, thank you."

return. He loves life now and loves playing. We have enough sticks, some of large size, in our garden which have been brought back with sheer determination from our walks with Blake. A day does not go by without him making us laugh. We feel it a privilege to be the ones looking out for him.



SPECIAL APPEAL

Because Skipper uses his truck like he's competing in grass track racing it's now becoming much the worse for wear. We are hoping to raise £500 for a sturdier, more durable set of wheels with remote control so I can pinpoint his whereabouts when he's hiding in the brambles waiting for something to pop out of it's hole. He loves nothing better than to do a runner, sometimes making me late for work. We are appealing for donations towards a new truck for Skipper – it's this brave boy's lifeline.

Sharing your home with a Border Collie

Border Collies are definitely not your average domestic pet. Yes, they do like their home comforts but they are highly intelligent dogs who need far more than just a couple of good runs a day. All border collies have an inherent working and herding instinct which means their brains are continually active. They not only need exercise but mental stimulation too, or they become frustrated and sometimes problematic. Agility and/or flyball are good outlets for them to use their brain power and energy and obedience training is a must. Border collies need time, effort and commitment to enable them to fulfil their full potential. In return they make loyal, devoted companions who are so eager to please owners they can respect.

Boots, a 6 year old Blue Merle Border Collie came from an animal sanctuary in Yorkshire who were closed down due to their lack of facilities for taking in rescued animals. Boots was one of many dogs kept in cages, underfed and deprived of the care and compassion that rescue is all about. He came to us a bag of bones with so much pent up energy after his confinement. Caging a border collie is one of the worst things anyone could do, the mental suffering is immeasurable and can have a devastating effect on how they relate to life in general. Boots sad past did have repercussions. He was rehomed twice and came back to us twice as he was so hard to control. It was 3rd time lucky when Barbara came to Holly Hedge looking for a Border Collie after she had come to terms with losing her old collie. Barbara had always kept this breed and knew their strengths and weaknesses. It really was trial and error at first, with Boots doing his best to assert his authority. But time,

patience, love and perseverance eventually overcame his anxieties and fear aggression, not to mention help given by Animals in Mind and backup by Sandy & David, two of our experienced dog volunteers who took a special interest in Boots. Thank you Barbara for achieving so much and enabling Boots to lead a happy, secure collie life.

Charlie, a 3½ year old Border Collie, came to Holly Hedge because his owners couldn't cope with his collie ways. Being farm bred he had all the traits of a working dog and was not getting the exercise or stimulation he needed. His frustration showed by asserting dominant behaviour. Charlie was only with us for a short while and behaved impeccably so we didn't think he would be too much of a problem in the right home—we were wrong. Alan & Marion had to work so hard, again with the help of Animals in Mind and David & Jean, two very experienced border collie trainers who taught his new owners how to handle him. It took courage, understanding and commitment on their part to turn this dominant reprobate into the much more sociable, happy dog he is today. They still have a little way to go with him but their dedication is commendable.

Thank you both so much for persevering, Charlie is a very lucky boy.

Alan & Marion tell us their side of the story of:

"Our Dog Charlie"

We adopted a blue merle collie named Charlie from Holly Hedge Sanctuary in August 2000.

From the first day he was dominant. Charlie would approach Marion as though he wanted her to make a fuss of him, then he would turn and "mouth" her arms. An animal behaviourist told us that Charlie had never been socialised with other dogs and humans and he did not know how to respond to their actions. Socialisation was the key and his advice was acted on.

Charlie had a fear regarding the back of the car. You had to forcefully put him in as he would not get in by himself. Once in, he would curl up in the corner frozen with fear. When you arrived at your destination he would still be in the same position and would refuse to come out of the car. When you put your hand in to get hold of him he would bite you. Alan persuaded him out with biscuits but this took a long time to work.

We have solved the main fear of

the car by putting food and his favourite toys in there and then putting Charlie in the car—this procedure is repeated as often as possible, especially when the car is stationary in the drive and starting with the tailgate on him and then leaving it open so



Charlie, enjoying agility

- the difficulties & rewards

he can come out or get in when he wants to.

He gets into the car without any problem but is still a bit nervous when we or anybody else goes near the back of the car. He comes out of the car most times without any problem. But, now and again, he gets that frightened look and refuses. A friendly sounding command and a light tug on his lead does the trick.

Charlie was taken to dog training although he already knew basic commands. He also went to agility and flyball. He has actually taken part in two flyball competitions. In one he was part of a pair that won first prize and in the other he was part of a team that came second. He has also gained a rosette having managed a clear round in an agility contest.

After reading many dog training manuals and meeting people with border collies, and learning from their experiences, Charlie has become a much friendlier dog. Alan is confident with Charlie but Marion is still learning to be confident with him.

Boots story is told by Barbara:

Boots came to me on September 24th 2002 and, now that we have had our first anniversary, he is probably 6 years old. He had suffered mismanagement, misunderstanding and mistreatment for much of his five years and more than once been abandoned.

Holly Hedge care had helped him but only a proper home could really save him which is why I felt I must try (my previous dog, also a Blue Merle collie, had died the month before). I had little idea how difficult Boots was going to be. Frequently frightened by the unexpected Boots reacted instantly with aggression. He lunged on the lead at men met in

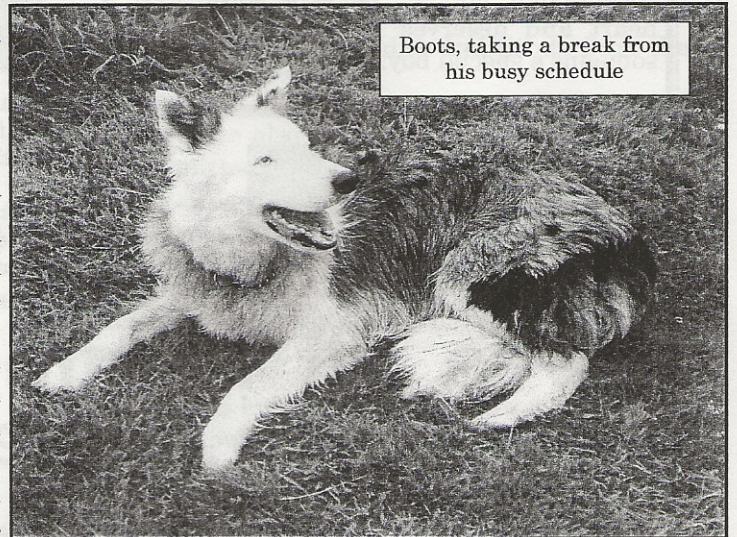
the street, he barked and challenged ferociously everyone entering the house, he refused to get into the car which was the necessary preliminary to going for a proper walk, he leaped up to steal food, he went out into the garden and refused to come back in because he was frightened of going through a doorway with anyone in front or behind. I despaired.

Then I remembered that Holly Hedge had recommended a behavioural charity, Animals in Mind. I telephoned and Andrew came the next day. He met Boots who was immediately friendly and then lunged at him as he turned away. Typical behaviour. Andrew produced a light, strong, open-work plastic muzzle and a special harness to lessen the pull on the lead and on my arm. I put on the muzzle, put him in my car and took him for a walk in Ashton Park. And I never ever had trouble in putting on the muzzle or the harness, nor in asking him to get into the car. Boots understands good associations like any other dog.

We went regularly on Sunday mornings to AIM's Naughty Dogs Walks, as I named them. Boots progressed quickly from special harness to long cloth lead and then, because he was clearly looking back to me for direction and reassurance, being off the lead. The problem of giving him proper exercise, the key to relaxation and reasonable behav-

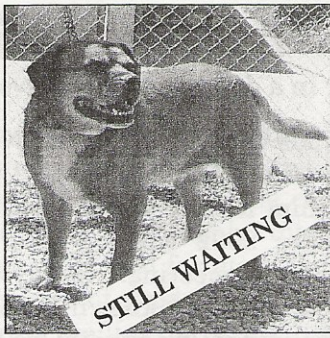
our in a dog, was being solved.

Friends who helped were invaluable—John and Sue May who had him for two whole weeks in October 2002 when I was out running a meeting. Sandy and David, who had known Boots at Holly Hedge, frequently walked too through that winter and have continued since I moved to Charterhouse on Mendip. Their encouragement has been a valuable and practical help, since many of my other friends doubted my sanity.



Boots, taking a break from his busy schedule

Somehow I did a great deal of work for my own charity, The Hawk and Owl Trust; bought, sold and moved house; and helped Boots to become a much more normal dog. Now he is affectionate, likes contact, plays games, grooms himself meticulously, loves his early morning walks with the dog next door—and still loathes cyclists, Horses and balloons. He wears the muzzle on walks, at first when new people visit, and always with small children. He has come a very long way in a year and looks a different dog—fit, with a good coat and a much more benevolent look in his blue eyes. There is still much to do but we are having a good time together.

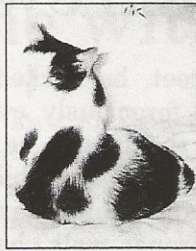


MAX

This dear old chap should not be in kennels at this time of his life. A 10 year old Rottie X he came to Holly Hedge

following the death of his owner. It's heartbreaking to see his forlorn face looking towards the gate dreaming of the day when someone will take him home and make him feel secure and comfortable once more.

Although a big lad he is a softie at heart and deserves the chance to be someone's special boy.



Angel—4 years old

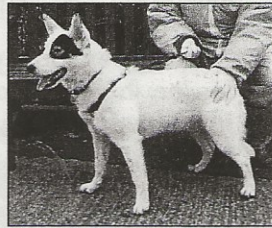
This little lady has been living in a foster home while she gains confidence. She is now ready

to step out into the wider world and find a permanent home. A quiet home with other cats would suit her best.

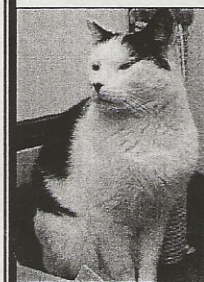


A sweet natured and loveable 10 year old collie x **Bessie** finds herself seeking a fresh start through no

fault of her own. She still has lots of energy for all the doggy delights—walking, playing and just being good company.



Buffy, a 10 month old collie x, needs a family to love and be loved by. With a little effort and some time at training classes this girl will make a super family pet.. All she needs is the chance to show just what a loyal girl she could be.



Charlie, 2 years old, is our darling—he's not one for cuddles but loves to sit close by and enjoy the company of a special friend—his

ideal home would be child-free with space for him to be by himself when he wants and find a welcoming space beside you when he's ready.

We're on the web
www.hollyhedge.org.uk

We're all longing to be chosen, we want to be happy endings too

Fatima, 8 years old, is always passed by.

By no means a "plain" black cat this friendly feline loves to have long conversations if only you've got time to listen. An entertaining lady just longing to make your life complete.



Are you the person that **Jazmin** (a 3 year old Lab x Pointer) has been waiting for—someone to help her to regain her lost confidence. She's a lovely girl who just

needs to know she truly belongs to someone, a doggy pal would help to burn off her boundless energy and she will make a loyal & true friend.

Sandy & Cleo



Two very loving dogs looking hopefully to be homed together. They are both lively for their years (15 & 11 years) and enjoy their walks and lots of cuddles. Please spare a thought for these and other "mature" dogs—they deserve a second chance and are less demanding than some of the lively youngsters. They miss their home comforts, a cosy fire, and a cuddle or two on dark wintry evenings.

Scrumpy, a 3 year old semi long haired cat, is delightful. She comes running and leaps on your lap—sometimes before you've even sat down. She will make a purr-fect family pet but older children only please as this little lady prefers people who allow her a little space.



Sophie, a 4½ year old female, is looking for an adult only home as she hides away from children. She is used to keeping her own company so would be quite happy to live with a full-time worker provide they can give her good

quality time in the evenings and at weekends.