



Holly Hedge Animal



Sanctuary



Wild Country Lane

Barrow Gurney

North Somerset BS48 3SE

01275-474719

Registered Charity No: 294606

Christmas 2005

Mungo & Midge, two little crackers!!

These 2 beautiful cats, aged 18 months & 2 years, came to us when the person 'supposedly' looking after them for a friend rang in and said she was moving the next day and couldn't take the cats. She went on to say the friend didn't want them back. Both were un-neutered and Midge had had 2 litters of kittens. We got them in as a matter of urgency and found out Midge still had milk; apparently the kittens were already rehomed, we can only hope with responsible owners who would get them neutered, unlike their parents. A week later Mungo & Midge went to the vet to be neutered and have their very dirty ears flushed out. At least there would be no more unwanted kittens to add to a list of many. Their relationship would now be purely platonic. Once vaccinated and in the main cattery their sweet little faces and endearing natures captured the hearts of Linda & Darren. What more could this inseparable pair wish for at Christmas!



they seemed to settle in. They loved it when we were able to let them out, especially having the cat flap as they come and go as they want.

We had only had them a month when it was Christmas time. Midge went out on Christmas day at teatime and then didn't come back. We walked around that evening calling her and

shaking her favourite toy but to no avail. Mungo seemed lost without her. We laid awake nearly all night worrying about her, and in the morning we made up some leaflets on the computer and walked around our local streets, pushing them through letter boxes, asking people to check their garages. Then, at around 7 p.m. on Boxing Day, the cat flap went and there she was—tired, hungry and a bit dazed. She slept for a day or so and did not want to go out at all. She is such a nosy cat we think she was in someone's garage sniffing about when they went out, probably overnight, and when they saw our leaflet they let her out. She was then named the cat that ruined Christmas!!

This is their story:-

"We remember the day we came to look for a new cat at Holly Hedge; we were shown Midge and Mungo. We had definitely considered having two cats as we both worked and they would be company for each other. Midge seemed to be a very forward cat who came straight up to you and wanted a cuddle, where Mungo was very quiet and seemed timid. We fell in love with them straightaway and went through the procedure of adopting them.

When we got them home they hid under the bed for a while, but Midge was soon out exploring. Mungo didn't know what to make of it all, but before long

Mungo has filled right out now. He thinks that I am his mother; he has to have his daily cuddles, kneading me and getting my clothes wet where his is suckling. He is fantastic with a ping-pong ball and flies around the house chasing them and keeps it going for ages.

They love to chase each other and have regular playful catfights; it sounds like a herd of elephants going up and down the stairs.

We can't believe they have been here for over a year now, they both have wonderful personalities and are great company. We would not want to be without them."



Chief Executive's Report

It's official, our title is now Holly Hedge Animal Sanctuary. We are in the process of changing all our paperwork and working on a new logo. The registered Charity number stays the same, so just in case any of our readers have been kind enough to leave us money in their will, you don't have to change anything. That gets the formalities over and done with, so on to Sanctuary news.

Christmas is only two weeks away and Holly Hedge are experiencing the usual 'out with the old' and 'in with the new' attitude. We have coped with the usual bouts of 'cat flu and kennel cough' which is always a worrying time and slows up rehoming but it's a problem all rescues encounter. We have certainly had our share of poorly animals needing veterinary treatment and lots of TLC. We are most fortunate to have such wonderful staff who lavish great care on their charges to bring them through some very debilitating illnesses, sometimes under great pressure when the demands of the job can take its toll, but the animals are never let down and our staff must be commended for their devotion and hard work. It is so uplifting to see dogs that have left us to start a new life, coming back to see us and being so pleased to see their carers again. Even months later they don't forget the kindness shown to them, which really says it all.

It goes without saying that not all animals that come into Holly Hedge are unwanted or

neglected; some cases are genuine and there are times when we feel as sorry for people that have no alternative other than to part with their pet as we do for the poor animals. But at least they know they are in good hands.

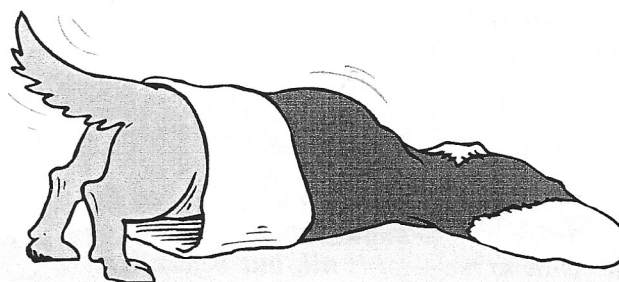
We are in more demand than ever with desperate pleas for help coming in from all directions - Wales, Ireland, Norfolk to name but a few. These calls are from people who are battling against the odds to help dogs in the pounds who are given 7 days to be claimed or put to sleep. With no accommodation to house these unfortunate animals themselves they take the time and trouble to ring round reputable rehoming centres trying to find places for them. Whilst in the council run pounds no vet treatment is forthcoming. We try to help as much as we can but the problem is insurmountable. Thankfully there are other charities that also do their bit and many lives have been saved. Although we have grown in size and reputation we still need to raise the profile of the Sanctuary and make the public more aware of all the good work that is carried out here. At last we have a small but flourishing dedicated team of fundraisers who are helping to spread the word and

raise money at the same time; they are doing an excellent job for which the Charity is truly grateful.

Already our rescues are receiving lots of nice food, treats and presents brought in by caring public. If only these people could see their appreciative little faces light up, they would know the joy these gifts bring to them. We at Holly Hedge do everything possible to make it a happy time for them too, including cooking Christmas dinner with all the trimmings, which always goes down a treat. Hopefully, next year those that are with us now will all be celebrating the festive season in their new homes.

All of us at Holly Hedge, four legged and two legged, would like to convey our sincere thanks to our loyal volunteers who give their time so willingly - that includes dog walkers, cat cuddlers, home checkers, foster carers, people who donate food, knit cosy blankets, and those who contribute their hard earned cash. Because of your kindness we are able to give our rescues the quality of care they deserve. We wish each and every one of you a Merry Christmas and Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Pauline Leeson



ODE TO BILLY

NOTICE ON THE PET SHOP DOOR

FOR SALE PUPPIES!

CUTE AND CUDDLY X FOUR

MUM CAN WE GET ONE?

OR JUST GO IN TO SEE

10 MINUTES LATER OUT THEY
CAME WITH BILLYNOW THE 1ST FEW MONTHS OF
BILLY'S LIFE

WERE REALLY FUN AND HAPPY

LOTS OF WALKS AND CUDDLES

FOR THIS CUTE FLUFFY CHAPPY

BUT SADLY BILLY GREW AND
GREW

THE CHILDREN BOTH GOT BORED

AND SADLY FOR BILLY

HE JUST BECAME IGNORED

HE CHEWED UP THE KITCHEN

THE GARDEN HE DUG UP

HE JUST WANTED ATTENTION

THIS POOR FORGOTTEN PUP

NOTICE AT THE DOG POUND

HUNG ON KENNEL DOOR

ADOPT ME MY NAMES BILLY

DAYS LEFT ONLY FOUR!!

SO BEFORE YOU GO TO BUY A
PET

REMEMBER BILLYS RHYME

YOU SEE A DOG SHOULD BE FOR
LIFE

NOT JUST CHRISTMAS TIME

BY JENNY RANDALL, WARDEN,
HOLLY HEDGE ANIMAL SANCTUARY

Thank you!

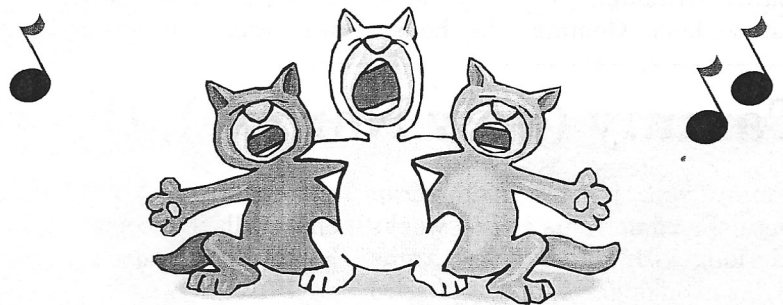
May we take this opportunity to say thank you so much to Nici Dunn and her team at ASDA, Cribbs Causeway for collecting trolley loads of pet food, you've done our rescues proud.

Many, many thanks to Barbara who makes beautiful dog and cat beds and donates them to sell for our funds. They are so popular and very cosy. Many of our 4 legged friends go home with 1 or even 2, as they do like their com-

forts. And to Cherry who makes exquisite hand made Birthday and Christmas cards to help raise funds for the day to day running of the Sanctuary. Both these lovely ladies work so hard and we would like them to know they are very much appreciated.

Thanks to the kind people at Warmley Tower Post Office who collect food and money regularly, this is such a great help to us. We are so fortunate to have such loyal supporters. Thank you.

***6 We wish you a Merry
Christmas**



...and a Happy New Year*9*

Thank you!

We would like to say a big thank you to Leanne Barnes and members of her Dog Training classes held at Golden Valley Veterinary Hospital at Nailsea, also to the vets and staff for raising money to buy lots of lovely soft beds and blankets for our rescued animals. They really appreciate a nice cosy bed to

snuggle into, especially on a cold winter's day. Thank you all once again.

We at Holly Hedge can wholeheartedly recommend Leanne's training classes, her method of training is kind and gets results – as lots of our rescues and their owners will vouch for.

Possum & Minkey—devoted sisters

These devoted sisters were two of an unwanted litter of kittens that were brought to Holly Hedge at 4 ½ months old. In spite of crawling with fleas and being pot-bellied with worms they purred non-stop. Staff soon sorted out their 'unwelcome visitors' which made them feel much more comfortable. A month later, after being inoculated and neutered, the lucky pair were chosen together. As you can see by their lovely photo they're still very close and wouldn't be without each other.

Caron, Paul & Elliott, their new family, update us on how the two sisters are faring:-

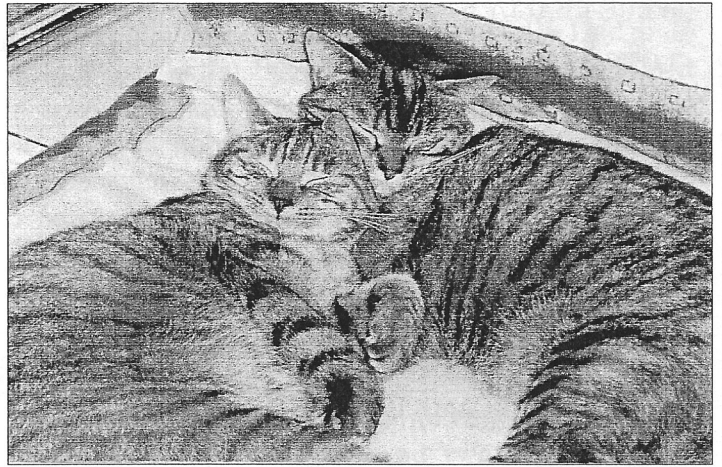
"In 1997 we came to Holly Hedge to get a cat and ended up leaving with two black short haired cats called Poppy (aged 7) and Gemma (aged 6 months). Sadly in Oct 2004, we lost Poppy through ill health. Although we had decided just to keep Gemma, the house

was too quiet, so we came back to Holly Hedge with the idea of finding a playmate and companion for Gemma.

We had decided we only wanted one cat, however upon seeing Possum and Minkey we all fell in love with them straight away. After a lot of thought we decided that we would like to have both of them and so we did.

It didn't take them long to settle in. They went every where together. They would sit/sleep/lie on the same chair. They chase each other around the house with Gemma watching on.

You cannot drag anything behind you as they will always chase it and very often we find them at the top of our curtains. When it is bed time they like to sleep on top of your feet, but you have to be careful because as soon as you move they see this as a sign to play. Of all three Minkey is definitely the one who is in charge. They really have brought lots of fun and enjoyment into our house."



Tammy (now Nonnie), the tale of a farm kitten

Tammy was just a little scrap when she came to us at five weeks old along with lots of other kittens all born on a farm and trying to survive. They were riddled with

chosen to start a new life, and enjoy all the comforts of a real home. Beats a draughty barn any day!

hiding place. However, she enjoys company and likes to be noticed. She is also quite an explorer and goes hunting in this and neighbouring gardens.



fleas, worms and ear mites. Some of the little ones didn't like being handled at first, but Tammy, although on the timid side, never objected. Four weeks later she was

Eddie and Lorna, Tammy's new owners, tell us how she has settled:

"This is Nonnie in her garden. She is a dainty cat with very pretty markings.

She came to us at nine weeks old in the summer. The only female in a litter of eight, she was originally rescued from a farm which was getting overrun with kittens.

She is rather timid and dreads the bangs and clatterings of the weekly recycling lorry! When that comes by she bolts upstairs to a

In the autumn she went missing for nine days. We think she must have had a fright and been driven out of her territory, unable to find her way back. One evening our neighbours were on their way to a dinner when they saw her in a square about half a mile from here. They immediately recognised her and brought her home. She was cuddled, given milk and cried over. The next morning she had a check-up at the vets. Apart from being extra hungry and just a little grubby, she was fine.

Her being found, recognised and restored to us was hardly short of a miracle."

Silent Susie

Suzie came to us a frightened, confused little dog at a year old. Her owners had found out she was deaf and no longer wanted her. To make things worse the poor dog was having a phantom pregnancy which was very distressing and made her even more on her guard. Staff were careful not to startle her when approaching and gave her as much time, consistency and training as a busy sanctuary would allow. But it was obvious she needed 1 to 1 attention and a special person she could relate to and trust. Vicki, who was then a warden, felt so sorry for her she persuaded her parents to come and see Suzie. Their hearts went out to her and, knowing it would be an uphill struggle, took her home. Suzie was with us for almost a year but it was worth the wait to find the right home. A real success story thanks to Malcolm and Pat's patience, understanding and perseverance but most of all lots of love.

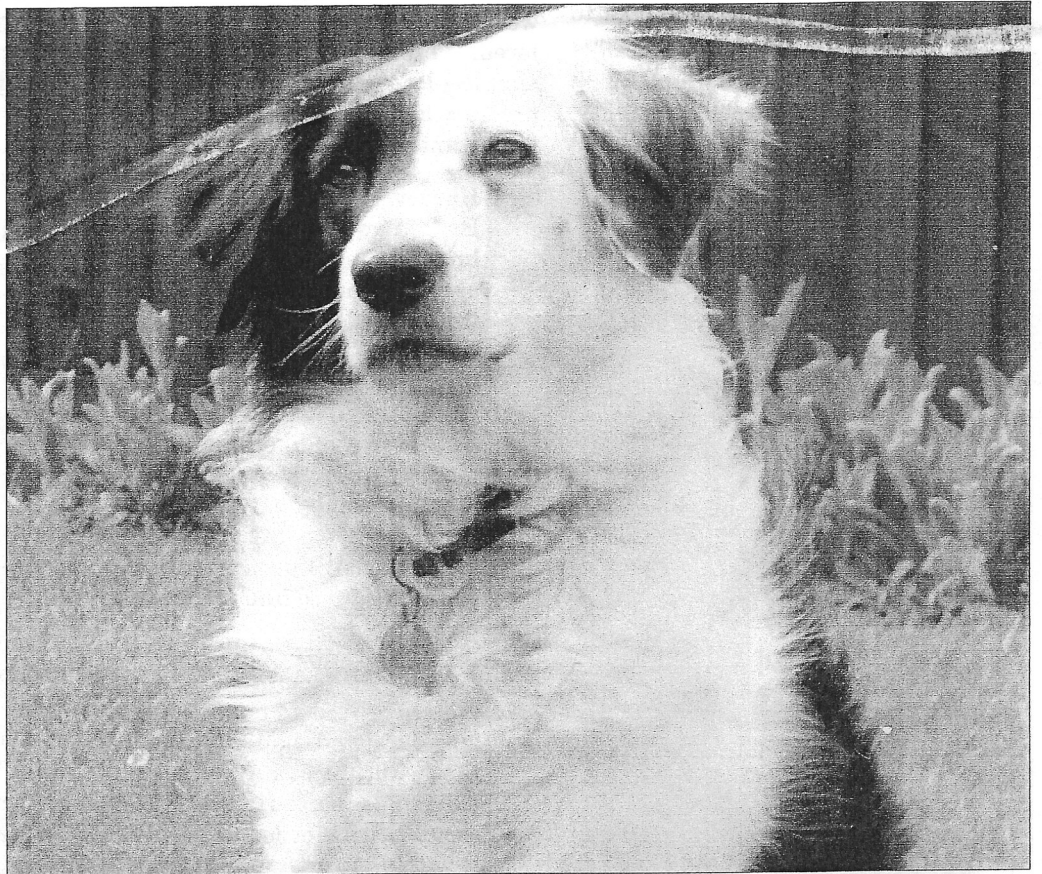
This is their heartwarming story:-

"It was in October 1999 that Suzie arrived; she had been a long term resident at Holly Hedge Animal Sanctuary where our daughter was warden, she trusted no-one and only the chosen few escaped being bitten. Victoria, our daughter, was one of the few. We were warned not to look at her when she arrived and under no circumstances could we put a hand down to smooth her, she would not hesitate to

bite and we soon found out just how quick her reactions were. Looking at her that first time she looked so sad, there were scars on her face where she had been beaten in the past and those eyes were the saddest we had ever seen but, worst of all, Suzie was completely deaf. We could offer no words of comfort nor a comforting cuddle. She was street-wise and looking for a fight, we had taken on the biggest challenge ever.

For two days Suzie didn't sleep, for once her eyes were shut she was defenceless and she didn't trust us. We also discovered the garden we thought was escape proof wasn't; on many occasions if there was an opportunity she took it, cat flaps and six foot high fences meant nothing to her; life was not going to be easy.

We enlisted the help of an animal behaviourist, he encouraged us and gave us confidence, we could get through this. We were taught sign language as was Suzie and, very gradually, we were allowed to smooth her. The breakthrough came when Malcolm took her on an agility course to gain her confidence. It was a success, gradually they bonded, he spent hours patiently training her to come back on given signals, to run the course and, most importantly, not to bite any-one. It hadn't been easy, some days we cried in sheer frustration but, five years down the line, Suzie enters agility competitions, she loves nothing more than having cuddles and the tail wags constantly. But, most important, she has learnt to trust humans again."



Harvey—a misunderstood puppy

This loveable, lively Springer x Labrador came to Holly Hedge at just 6 months old. He was brought in because the family couldn't cope with his fun loving puppy ways. For 3 days of the week whilst his owner was at work he was chained to a kennel in the garden, which was a very unkind thing to do. One day he managed to get off his chain and dug up the garden probably from sheer boredom. From then on he was not allowed in the house. Puppies need playtime and stimulation, especially a Springer x Labrador, no wonder he got up to mischief, he was left on his own far too long. Harvey was such a friendly boy, and loved children and other dogs, 3 weeks later he went to his lovely new home where he could enjoy being a boisterous puppy and lead a normal life.

This is how things progressed once he got home:-

"We have been the very proud owners of Harvey, our black Labrador X, for 16 months now.

We remember how we came to Holly Hedge in September 2003 searching for a family pet. We had considered offering a home to a rescue dog for a very long time and

now, finally, our search had begun. We recognised that we were an "inexperienced dog family", never having owned one before. My husband and our two sons were full of excitement and optimism. I, however, was just a little apprehensive—appreciating the important step we were about to make, and the commitment we would need to give to a dog in our care.

We wandered round the kennels hoping to find just the dog for us. We soon did. 'Lucky', as he was originally called, was lying quietly in his kennel having just returned from a walk. He has the most beautiful face, and I think that we probably chose each other within a matter of minutes.

Sue came and inspected our home and garden and suggested a few changes that she wanted us to make. I confided my apprehension to her and she said, quite simply, "you have two lovely sons, with super manners—just apply the same principles to training Harvey as you have with Ben and Sam". These words were the wisest we were offered. Training Harvey was very simple—lots of love and affection, praise when he did well and most importantly—BE CONSISTENT!

Harvey settled immediately. He knew that he'd been brought into a loving home and he was so very good from the first day. We had been told to expect some chewing from him. Someone even suggested that a six month old Labrador was likely to 'eat our kitchen from the inside out—units, skirting boards and all!" He did chew a little—but our kitchen is still intact and I am very grateful to him for that!

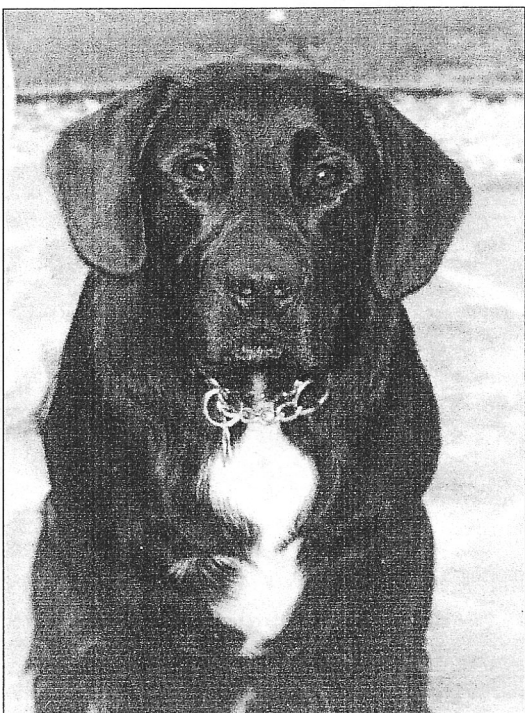
Our long daily walks to the local fields began in earnest. We have lived in our home for 20 years and had no idea of the beautiful countryside that surrounds us. Harvey is as sociable with other dogs as he is with all humans. He bounds

up to them in anticipation and has learnt, over a period of time, that not all dogs have his boundless energy! Harvey is an absolute pleasure to be out walking with—full of fun and energy, completely safe with other dogs and humans and always so obedient when we call him back to us. At home he is a joy—very obedient, gentle and steady.

Just six weeks after having Harvey my mother suffered a severe stroke and was in hospital for 3 months. Daily visits to the hospital were fitted in around Harvey's walks. She has since been in a nursing home, where we visit her many times each week. Harvey is a regular visitor there and is very popular. Thank goodness for Harvey, he has walked beside me for miles, during the times that I have cried and worried about my mum. He's always there with a loving, gentle look and a little mischief in his eye!

To any family who is considering adopting a dog I would say to them—think very carefully as it is a very big commitment. Any responsible dog owner, I'm sure, would agree. You will be washing your kitchen floor several times more each week, you will be Hoovering more than ever before, you will have a wet dog, wet clothes and muddy boots to deal with during the autumn and winter months. Your garden will not be as pristine as it once was. You will wince as the vet administers an injection, just as you did with your children. You may also turn into one of those dreadful "doggy people" who carry photographs of their beloved pet with them at all times. I do!

The rewards, however, are immeasurable. If you are as fortunate with your dog as we are with Harvey your life will be further enriched, you will be fitter and full of fresh air, you will meet lots of other, like-minded dog owners and you will have added another loving member to your family."



PEDIGREE DOGS

The numbers of pedigree dogs needing homes are on the increase. At one time our isolation kennels were almost filled with Springer Spaniels, most of them in poor condition. We have taken in English Bull Terriers, Dalmatians, Mastiffs, Dobermans, Shih Tzus, Yorkies and a Chinese Crested to name but a few. Here are just some examples that have happy endings. We would just like to add that we ask the same donation for Pedigrees as x breeds. All animals are equal in our eyes and deserve happy, fulfilled lives.

Zana a new name to celebrate her new life

Zana, a beautiful, sweet natured German Shepherd dog came to us with a few battle scars. As a result of some serious attacks by the other dog in the household she had been hospitalised and her owners reluctantly decided it was best that she found a new home. Although their other dog had been the instigator she had lived in the home longer and it was obviously a "jealousy thing" that couldn't be resolved. So she came to Holly Hedge for her own safety. In spite of all this Zana loved to play with dogs at the sanctuary. When she was chosen several weeks later we thought she was going to a really nice home. However, just before her aftercheck was due, we received information to say that Zana was being kept in a concrete alleyway attached to the house but that she was not actually allowed indoors. We didn't waste any time and paid an unannounced visit within the hour. It was immediately clear that the information was accurate as there was no trace that Zana had ever been allowed indoors. When we asked to see her living accommodation it was exactly as described to us. Naturally we were not prepared to leave her in such comfortless conditions. In spite of assurances that they would integrate Zana into the house, we could no longer trust their word and she was taken straight back to Holly Hedge. We felt so bad for this dear,

sweet girl who deserved so much better but it goes to show that people are not always what they seem to be, which can shake your faith in human nature.

Thankfully, Zana has now been found a wonderful home with people that love her dearly. She isn't restricted as to where she is allowed to go in the house and has almost 3 acres of garden to play in with her canine companion, Horatio, who she adores; if he ventures out into the garden by himself Zana always goes out to find him—just in case the dear old chap gets lost. Zana now has all she could wish for thanks to John and Ann, not forgetting Horatio, of course.

John & Ann tell us Zana's story from their point of view:

"It was at the end of last year that sadly we lost our lovely black Alsatian. He had been part of our lives for over 12 years and we missed

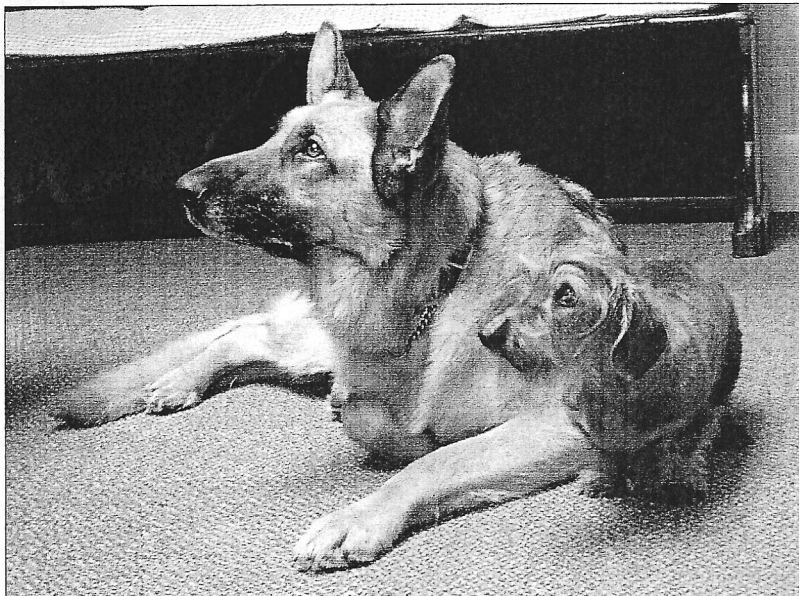
him terribly.

For sometime we had discussed what we should do when this terrible time came about and decided that at our stage in life a puppy would not be an option and certainly not fair on our very aged miniature Dachshund. So off to the Sanctuary we went.

Within minutes we fell for this beautiful animal who sat staring out at us from her kennel. Now she too is part of the family and has settled in well.

Zana mothers the Dachshund who has completely accepted her. He will permit her to lie with him on his sheepskin rug and be licked and sniffed like a puppy, something he would never have tolerated before. However, one aspect of play which totally baffles Zana is that he does not dash off around the garden so that she can chase after him. Try as she may to goad and nose him into moving he just stands his ground. Perhaps she thinks he needs a key to wind him up. If he's out of her sight in the garden she will go and find him and bring him back in.

We are very lucky to have found this gorgeous creature who has an endearing habit of flirting with the "boys", and can only hope that she continues to enjoy our company."



PEDIGREE DOGS

Finding a new home for Benson was never going to be easy. For the first 2 years of his life he'd been left alone in a flat for 14 hours a day whilst his owner was at work, he saw only a few other people and never met other dogs. Taking this into consideration his social skills, when he arrived at the sanctuary, could have been worse. He was ok with some dogs, but not others, and fine with all people, although he didn't like being put back in his kennel.

Benson stayed at Holly Hedge for a year and, during this time, became a more affectionate and trusting dog. He also developed a great love of toys, especially footballs, frisbees and anything that squeaked. As he

was with us for such a long time the staff developed a close bond with him. We were so thrilled when Ann and Colin decided to take him on and proud of them for working through problems that arose.

Seeing how happy they all are now demonstrates exactly how rewarding it can be to take on a "not-so-perfect" dog and give them a second chance.

Read Benson's story and decide for yourself:-

"My name is Benson and I am a

Benson—a not

German Shepherd (approx 5 years old) and no one wanted me. I had turned off of people, so my manners were not too good!

One day this couple came to see me. I thought I would play along and go for and walk and guess what—they actually liked me. I was taken in a car for a home visit, where I met my new sister, a dear old lady called Sandy. She gave me a nice lick and we became instant friends. Then we went in my new home—well, I took one look at the carpet, rolled over, sighed, and fell instantly in love. Never mind the owners the carpet

Cont on Page 9...

Bentley—a patient wait rewarded

Bentley, a 10 month old Doberman, came to Holly Hedge because his owners' circumstances had changed and he was being left alone for 8 to 10 hours a day. The poor dog was distraught and not coping at all well being on his own so much, especially since he was rarely exercised so he couldn't let off steam. Being a puppy still his owner realised this lifestyle wasn't fair on him and wanted him to find a home with more company so he could enjoy himself. He was such a loving boy, we couldn't understand why he stayed at the sanctuary for 6 weeks before being chosen. It seemed the ideal home—in the country with people around most of the time; our only concern was that Bentley wasn't used to cats and there were 2 in the household. He was walked round the cattery corridors on the lead several times to gauge what sort of reaction he had to our rescues and he didn't take much notice of them. We thought this wasn't a bad sign and that, if there were initial problems, he was young enough to be trained so ... off he went happy as could be. Unfor-

tunately things didn't get off to a good start with the cats in spite of enlisting the help of a dog trainer. Bentley really didn't want them around and it showed; the poor cats didn't feel safe in their own home any more. So, as they had been there first, reluctantly and with much soul searching sadly back he came. It was 2 months before the right home came along—with no cats. What a lucky chap to have been chosen by Lynn & Jeremy who dote on their boy. He couldn't be happier.

Bentley tells us about his holiday last summer:-

"Just to let you know I have been away on my first holiday on Ex-moor. I was very good and did lots of running off my lead but always came back when called. I went into towns and villages and walked nicely down the streets on my lead, enjoying all the fuss people made when they saw me com-

ing. So many people stopped to smooth me and say 'Hello' as we walked. When we went to the beach I was scared of the water and ran away from it every time a wave came in.

It is the first time Lynn and Jeremy have seen me really "run".

They said I go very fast and as I run towards them it sounds like thunder. They say I run like a deer and glide through the air with all 4 feet off the ground. I even brought them an ice cream to share with me as you can see from the photo.



Thank you, Holly Hedge, for taking care of me and all the other animals and for finding me a new home where they love me to bits!"

Lucky Bentley, his new home was well and truly worth the wait.

PEDIGREE DOGS

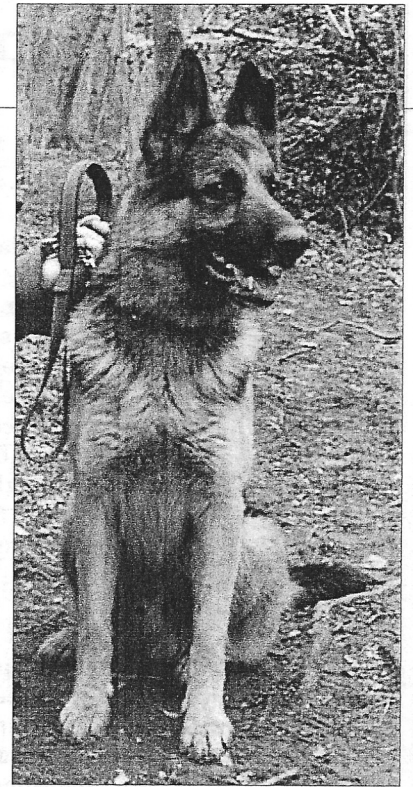
so perfect dog

was just what I wanted. Then began 6 months where my owners wanted to tell me what to do. Huh! I wasn't terribly impressed, but they were persistent and they did keep rewarding me with my favourite gravy bones.

My new owners have a motor home, so there has been plenty of new adventures for me. We have just come back from a week's holiday. The first days were by the side of the River Ouse—great stuff. After watching another dog I eventually got brave enough to have a go at swimming myself. Then there were two days of

adventures in the woods at Sandringham, what a place for a dog to rummage. Then we went to Cromer and I was introduced to the sea, strange salty stuff. I couldn't understand the waves; at first I barked and snapped at them, but still they came rolling in and getting me wet, but oh, what fun I had.

Remember, no dog is a lost cause, and all dogs, however difficult, will come round with time, patience and love. So, come on, all you folks, give another of my friends a chance; after all, nobody wants a dog's life!"



Sally (Mastiff) finds a loving family

This unfortunate dog had had 3 homes before she was brought to us due to a relationship break-up. Her first owners emigrated and sold her to a farmer who bred a litter from her. He then sold her on to a couple who only had her for six months, then they separated and neither party could keep her. In spite of all the upheavals in her life she was amazingly so loving and well adjusted. It was discovered, on checking her over, that Sally was having a phantom pregnancy which can be very distressing. But she was used to life's knock backs and resigned herself to coping. After being at Holly Hedge for 10 weeks this big, gentle girl was chosen by a family that would give her the stable, loving home she so deserved—for the rest of her life.

Sally's new 'dad' takes up her story:-

"We visited Holly Hedge looking for a dog. We weren't really sure what kind of dog; we had just lost our Rotty called Max. When we saw Sally my partner fell in love but I wasn't convinced, then we took

Sally for a walk around the woods—that was it, I was hooked. During the next week I visited nearly every day to walk her. We had just moved house and it didn't have any fences, we did a temporary job and made an appointment to be assessed—we failed. My partner and the kids were distraught so the next day the materials were obtained and at 8 o'clock that morning the garden started to look like a builders yard. At 5 o'clock that night we finished. The call was made to the assessor, we couldn't believe it, she said she would come on Sunday morning.

Sunday arrived and there was a knock on the door, we took her to the garden and she couldn't believe how much work had been done in one day (I could as I had a job to stand up). Then she said the words

we wanted to hear, "that's fine", the kids faces lit up, my partner started to cry and I was just glad I could now sit down. The assessor left and we all breathed a sigh of relief.

About an hour later we received a call from Holly Hedge to say that Sally could come home. I was blown away, we were at Holly Hedge within the hour, we just wanted to get her home to be a part of the family.

Sally settled straight in, it feels that she has always been here. I have never met such a good natured and laid back dog.

Thanks to you all."



PEDIGREE DOGS

Emily finally finds a place to call home

Emily and her mother Kaboola (Boo for short) were brought to Holly Hedge at the end of October 2000 after their owner died. They settled in well as they had always lived outdoors and a large double kennel with duvets to lie on was well accepted. Neither were spayed so that had to be done when the timing was right. As they were inseparable and totally devoted to each other we knew it would be very hard to rehome them but that didn't deter us from trying our best. The girls were a great favourite with staff and volunteers as they had such sweet personalities and loved everyone. When out on walks Boo always carried a soft toy in her mouth, much to the amusement of visitors.

A year later, in spite of much advertising they were still with us, which was such a shame as the devoted pair had so much to offer. Then out of the blue a nice couple came in who had previously owned an Akita. After several visits walking and getting to know them, they were reserved, we were overjoyed. There was just one snag, the two existing cats, but they were used to an Akita, but we were apprehensive. Would two be a bit too much and would Boo and Emily accept them? We decided to take them over to see. Things didn't go too badly at all, so after giving lots of advice we said our fond farewells and wished Mum and Daughter all the luck in the world. They settled in well, but Boo decided she didn't really care for cats and didn't want them around. In brief 1 week later the poor cats had left home and the poor dogs were back at Holly Hedge. It was very upsetting for all concerned. The girls quickly settled back in, especially when they were promoted from their kennel to the staff room, with their own garden and comfortable settees to lie on. The only thing was they thought it was good fun to partly demolish the settees when no one was around. They did a good job too, but they weren't to know, bless them! Almost 3 years passed and no one was interested in adopting them, but they were happy with their lot. It was discovered Emily had a thyroid prob-

lem which was soon stabilized on medication and she was doing well. One day Boo went off her food (which was unheard of). She saw the vet but nothing obvious was found, so a course of anti-biotics was given, still she wasn't her usual happy self, so blood tests and X-rays were taken. A tumour was found in her stomach, which didn't seem to be too advanced. The vet hoped, with the help of steroids, she could still have a good quality of life, albeit for a short time – and for a few weeks she rallied round. Then she began to go downhill and we know there was only one thing we could do. We called the vet in to put her to sleep, no more could be done for her and we didn't want her to suffer. Rachael our kennel supervisor took Emily for a walk in the woods but she only went a little way, then stopped and looked at Rachael, Emily was crying real tears, such sadness in her eyes as if she knew. Rachael put her arms around her and comforted her as best she could, then gently led her back to the staff room where her mum was lying peacefully. We were all devastated, the Sanctuary was in mourning for this dearly loved old girl who had been with us for 4 years. As for poor Emily, she was totally bereft. She had only known a life with Boo and was lost without her, she would lie on her duvet, her face to the wall, her world turned upside down. Even on

walks her tail stayed between her legs & her head was bowed, she had lost all interest. We bought her special food to tempt her to eat but she seemed inconsolable. We made sure she had extra walks and even more love and attention but the sadness wouldn't leave her. We decided if her unhappiness continued it would be kinder to put her to sleep.

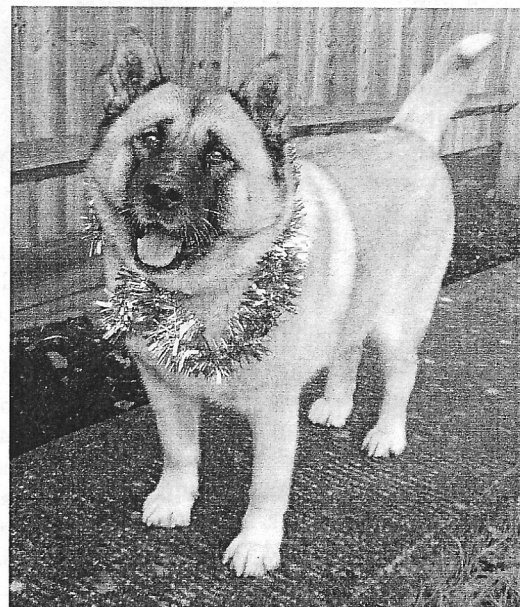
David and Sandy, 2 of our longest volunteers would come and take her for rides in the car to new and interesting places which she started to enjoy. She soon began to look forward to her outings and couldn't wait to get into the car. Gradually Emily ac-

cepted her mum would never be coming back and got on with life once more. It was the greatest thing in the world to see her tail held high again and the sadness in her eyes fading away. It was a dream come true when Nicholas and Gloria came to Holly Hedge and chose our Emily. Because she had been with us for 4 years we asked that they get to know her well before adopting her. As they only had Emily's best interest at heart they were happy to do so. 6 Weeks later aged 8 years Emily left us to start a new life and she's never looked back. She has been to see us twice and was so pleased to see her carers. She hadn't forgotten anyone, but she was more than happy to say goodbye and jump eagerly into the car and go home.

Nicholas & Gloria say:-

"Emily became the 6th member of our family a year ago. Shy at first she soon found her place in our everyday routine, and has brought us love, joy and endless entertainment, not to mention showing us another aspect of the countryside during our daily walks. We wouldn't be without her."

There will always be a special place in our hearts for Emily and dear departed Boo. We can't thank Nicholas and Gloria enough for giving our Emily a new lease of life.



Samson, happy at last!

The office had a phone call on 6th June 2004 from a man who said his next door neighbour had died a few days before and that his Old English Sheepdog had been left with no one to take care of him. As he was barking he had taken him into his home but was unable to keep the dog because his wife had just had a baby and that they were moving house. We said that the poor thing could come in at once.

Samson arrived shortly afterwards looking like he badly needed a haircut. On his admission health check it was discovered that, under all his matted fur, he was quite underweight and was covered in sores and scabs, not to mention crawling with fleas. Call it instinct but office staff felt there was something not quite right about the story. How right they were. It turned out that his owner hadn't died and the people who brought him in had had him from a puppy and were his real owners. We were also told that if Samson did anything wrong he was punished severely. He also never went out for walks and spent a lot of his time outside or inside in a cage. What sort of life is that for any dog let alone a big bouncy Old English. He had forgotten how to play and showed staff no affection to begin with. His eyes had lost their sparkle, his lovely face was expressionless.

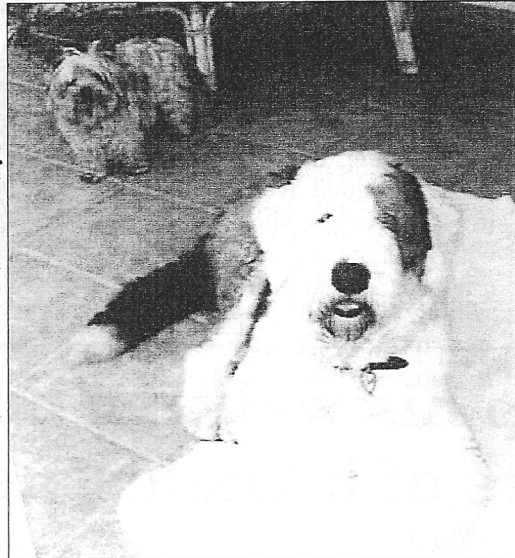
Our dedicated staff set to work, slowly but surely teaching him how to play with a ball and how to give and receive affection in abundance. All his matted fur was shaved off and soothing cream put on his sores. At last Samson began to develop a character, he became fun loving and full of beans. His only drawback was that he hadn't previously been socialized with other dogs and seemed to take to only the chosen few; others he could be quite growly with.

Samson was with us for 4½ months and his mixing with other dogs improved but he still had a fair way to go. It was his lucky day when he was spotted on our website by a lovely lady who had recently had her 14 year old Old English Sheepdog put to sleep. She came to visit him along with her 7 year old

Yorkie, he responded well to both of them and showed no animosity towards her little dog which was our main concern. A week later staff said their fond farewells as he went to his new home in the country, not far from the beach, where he could live life to the full. As you can see he couldn't be happier, the bad old days just a distant memory. Now he knows life is for living—full of the joys of being a much loved boy.

Soon after Sam, as he had been renamed, told us how things were going:-

"Although it is early days I am sure that I am going to settle into my new home. I have been on my best behaviour, and haven't done anything wrong yet.



I like being fussed and cuddled by my new Mum and am getting to know the little dog that also lives here. I have plenty of toys to play with but I like my big blue ball best of all.

So far the days have been as follows: a nice breakfast about 8.30 and then a lead walk about 9 a.m. This lasts for about 10-15 minutes and is a bit scary, but I am told that it is to get me used to noises, cars and vans, and people who are about. Then I have a nap or sometimes we play ball in the garden, or I have a chew on my toys.

The best time is about midday, when we go for a short ride in the car and then I am put on an extension lead and we have a lovely run in a big field and a walk through the woods. This takes about an hour and then I come home and have a lovely sleep on my

settee.

Sometimes someone new comes to see us in the afternoon and I try to get them to play with me, and we have another walk. Then it is dinnertime which I really like. After that we play inside with the toys until Mum decides to make supper and sits down to watch the TV or read. Then we dogs snooze until it is time for bed.

Next week I think we are going to the beach. It is just round the corner from my new home, but so far I haven't been because there will be other dogs there. But I think it is time to meet some dogs and I will be on my extension lead, so I shouldn't get into too much trouble. I have met Timmy, who lives across the road. He is a bit bigger than Zak and they seem to like each other, so maybe I will also be his friend.

Thank you for looking after me at the Sanctuary."

Later, a further update arrived:-

"Zac & I had a wonderful Christmas, there was a tree with lights and lots of presents. We had so many new toys that I couldn't count them all. We had lots of visitors, most of whom I hadn't met before. Zac seemed pleased to see them so I wagged my tail a bit and everyone seemed nice. When I felt more confident I took my new toys to each of the people and they all played with me, it was really good fun!

Then Mum told us she had to go away for New Year and that Zak and I had to go to kennels for 3 days.

Well, it was horrible and I hated it. Zak didn't seem to mind too much, but I just sat with my back to the fence and wouldn't talk to anyone. But then Mum came to fetch us; I was so excited when I saw her and jumped up and down. When we got home Zak and I raced round the house and garden to make sure nothing had changed and when I looked in the big dog basket in the hall ALL our toys were there! Well, it was like Christmas again! We ran about with the toys and shook them and had a wonderful time; after dinner we were so tired we just fell asleep. Next morning when I woke up and saw that I was at home again I was so happy and my tail just wouldn't stop wagging.

Love to you all. From Sam"

Sparky by name, Sparky by nature

Sparky enjoyed a one to one relationship with her lady owner until she passed away. She was used to plenty of company and very quiet surroundings, rarely venturing outside. The bottom fell out of her world when she was taken from the only home she had known and brought to the Sanctuary. Bewilderment was written all over her face. She was a tiny little thing with a cauliflower ear, which was a result of a haematoma. This made her look all the more appealing, she looked so cute and cuddly – and so she was but on her terms. Sparky liked to get to know people first before she allowed them to be familiar with her, and if any one tried to over step the mark she would tell them off by giving a good clip with her claws out. This didn't go down very well with prospective owners, hence she was with us for 8 months. Staff thought she was a sweetheart and such a character, we knew if the right person came along she would be a purrfect companion. All she

wanted was a quiet life and someone she could relate to, it was worth the wait when Shirley arrived at Holly Hedge and pronounced Sparky was the only cat for her. This was the ideal home and a dream come true for our Sparky. Look at her now, a very contented, tranquil little cat, and not a claw in sight?

Shirley, Sparky's new mum writes:-

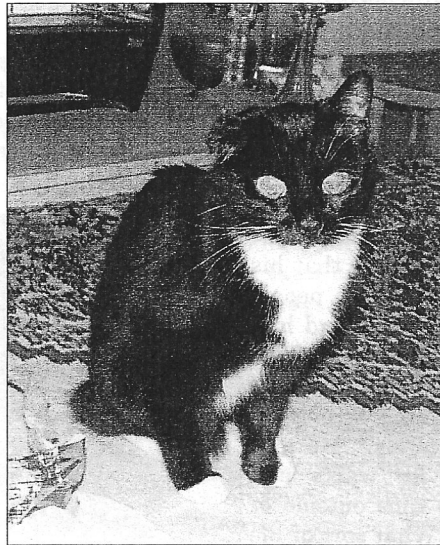
"We went to Holly Hedge in September 04 to look for an older cat. We went round several times and chose Sparky who was eight years old, her owner had died and the family did not wish to keep her so she was signed over to Holly Hedge, she was kept mainly as a house cat and had

hardly been out in the garden. We had her about 2 months before she ventured out for the first time. Her first time out lasted about 30 seconds before she took fright at a car going by and ran back indoors. Over a few weeks she gained confidence to stay in the garden for up to 30 minutes at a time, but never goes far. She has settled down to be a really loving cat and is very happy with us. She is also very

healthy for an older cat and we hope she lives with us many more years.

Her favourite resting place is across my chest so I'm pinned down.

We are now bosom pals"



Mog hangs up his walking boots after 10 years of homelessness

Mog was 11 years old when he was brought to us in September last year. The old chap hadn't had much of a life and relied very much on a kind gentleman who had been feeding him and looking



out for him since he was a year old. Then a new young cat moved in next door who wanted to prove his street cred and was attacking poor Mog, who was too old to stand up to himself. He could no longer come for his food as he was so fearful of being bullied. The kind people who did their best for him were so worried as they hadn't seen Mog for several weeks. After making some enquiries they found out that the dear old thing was also totally homeless, his so-called owner had up and left to live abroad not giving a second thought to his cat. When we heard of Mog's plight we immediately took him in. He looked a little worse for wear but nothing that worming, de-fleaing, good food and TLC couldn't sort out. 6

weeks later he was chosen for his obvious charm and wonderful nature. It didn't matter that he was an older boy. He needed a fresh start with someone who would love and care for him for the rest of his life.

Mog's new owner says that:-

"Mog has settled in very well. During the summer he loved to go out in the garden and bask in the sun. When the sun moved around Mog would move with it. Now the cold weather is here he will venture outside, do what he has to do, and then rush back in.

He is my constant companion, a real lap cat and a proper gentleman. I'm glad we chose each other."

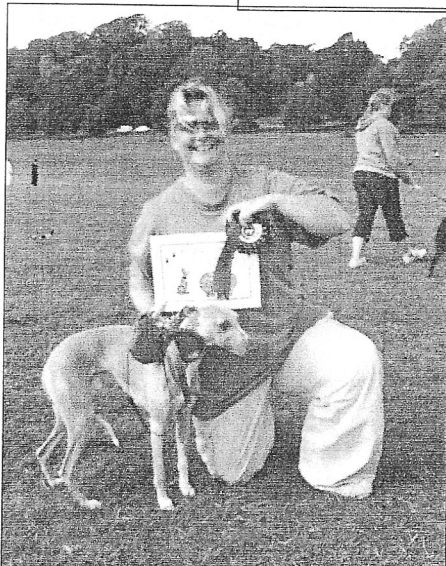
SPONSORED DOG WALK & MINI DOG SHOW



Some of the first to complete the course—well done!

We would like to say a huge thank you to every one who participated in the sponsored dog walk and mini dog show held at Ashton Court on 25th September 2005. Also to the hard working organisers and helpers who made the event so enjoyable. It was heart warming to see so many former Holly Hedge dogs as well as other canines who brought along their 2 legged companions to help raise funds for much needed new kennels. Skipper the disabled dog started the walk off in his "Chariot of Fire" and to show he was just as good as the rest walked round twice. All the dogs were exceptionally well behaved and a credit to their owners. Watching the dogs that

**Daniel, 4 yrs,
Best in Show**



had once been homeless themselves, walking and strutting their stuff to help our other rescues was such a wonderful sight, our hearts swelled with pride, it was a happy, inspirational day filled with nostalgia and much reminiscing. We are profoundly grateful to every one for their support. The amount raised on the day was £5,173.00 with still more money to come. We look forward to another successful day and seeing you all again on Sunday 24th September 2006.

Many thanks to Christine Bigott for judging the mini dog show, which couldn't have been easy with so many appealing faces.



A proud moment for 17 year old Sandy Britton, who won first prize in the Golden Oldie Section

KENNEL FUND

We now have just over £19,000 in the new kennels kitty which is a brilliant start but we still have a long way to go so we can't sit on our laurels. Thank you to everyone who has contributed. We are indebted to Colin, Geraldine and Sonia for their unwavering hard work raising funds towards this project, and putting in a great deal of time and effort. They have achieved so much, thank you. We have also received a wonderful £2,000 donation from Kay, one of our valued supporters for which we are so grateful. Also to individuals who did sponsored events towards the new kennels. They are:-

Alice Dobie £250
Bupa Junior Great South Run

Andy Price £140
Bristol Half Marathon

Mrs Roach £50
Bristol Half Marathon.

Mr P Harris £40
Bristol Half Marathon

Angie James £172
Sponsored Swim

Steve Jewell £256.50
Sponsored Abseil

Laura Croker £100
Bristol Half Marathon

Congratulations on completing and thank you all for doing so well. We are another step further towards our goal.



Brian, a dear old soldier who fought against the odds



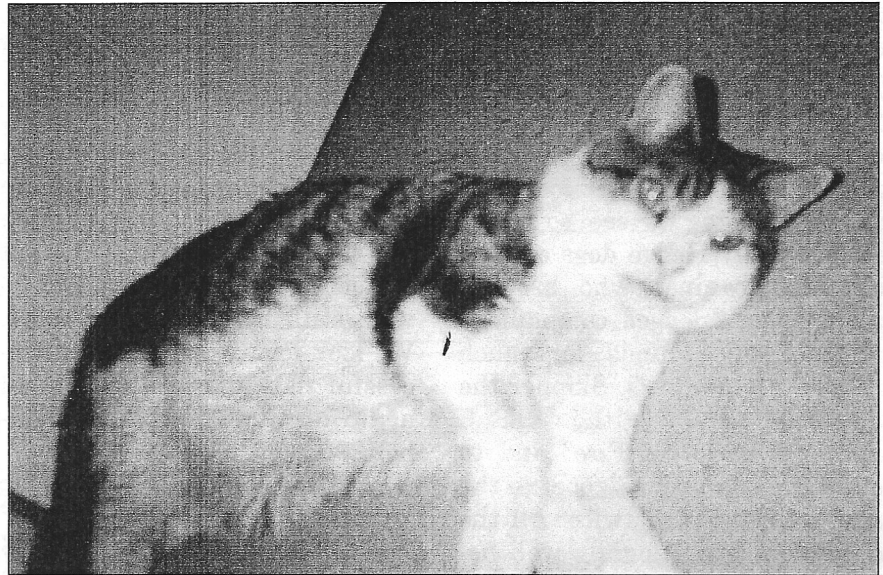
Brian was phoned in to us by a gentleman who was concerned about the condition of a bedraggled cat that had been straying in the neighbourhood for around 3 weeks. We were told he was very dirty, badly matted and undernourished and was being sick at least once a day. We got him into Holly Hedge as a matter of priority. On his admission health check he also had pale gums, rotten teeth and a blocked tear duct. Staff also noticed he was drinking water excessively, so it was straight to the vets. The vomiting was due to fur balls, but his overall condition caused concern. Brian (as staff named him) was tested for FIV & FeLV. Our worst fears were confirmed, this poor old cat, his age then estimated at 10 – 11 years was diagnosed with Feline Leukaemia. In spite of all this he purred loudly and loved to be cuddled and even thrived on lots of love and good food. With loads of TLC he soon looked like any normal, healthy cat. We were in a quandary as we knew, if some kind hearted person was willing to give him a chance, it wouldn't be fair on other cats in the neighbourhood to allow him access outside. As Brian was so used to the great outdoors it wasn't fair to confine him to a life of being a house-cat, so fundraisers were prepared to raise money to put a large wire pen in the garden so he could have the best of both worlds but not be in contact with other cats. The

Charity would be responsible for his vet bills. We were overjoyed when the Deacons chose him, knowing that his life expectancy could be short lived, but Brian had no intentions of going to Pussy Cat Heaven and now 7 years on he's still here to tell the tale. With any cat diagnosed with FeLV another blood test was taken several months later. That time it was negative which meant he wasn't shedding the virus. A future blood test was also negative; this meant the virus was dormant. It has been known for FeLV to be slowly

knows!

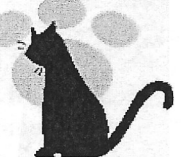
In June this year we received the latest update:-

"We have had Brian for a number of years now, and I can honestly say that his character and personality are unique. He loves a ride on the bonnet of the car and will wait in the drive for us to come home so that he can jump onto the bonnet. He adores my husband and loves being picked up and put on his shoulders for a fuss. He is doing very well despite a few age related health problems. He loves people



eliminated, which means the cat becomes naturally immune to reinfection. This was the case for Brian and now at approximately 17 years old this grand old man is still enjoying a good quality of life. Perhaps the fact that he knew how much he was loved and had the greatest of care had something to do with it. Who

and will go to anyone. He sits in the drive and watches all the people going by. He loves sitting on my daughter's lap and being combed. I certainly hope that he will be with us for many more years to come because he is part of our family."



"We wish you a Merry Christmas"



From living rough to living the high life Ambrose, aged 10 years +

Ambrose had been straying for over a year, he would meow plaintively at people's doors in desperation hoping some kind person would take pity on him and allow him inside. He so needed love, warmth and comfort. A few people felt sorry for the old boy and gave him food, but no one could take him. He had already spent one cold winter out in all weathers living rough and really couldn't cope with another. It was March and freezing cold so Holly Hedge was contacted. We went out to pick him up and bring him in to a warm, cosy cattery. Ambrose as staff named him was such a friendly chap even though it was apparent he was the worse for wear. He had scabs all over his body due to a flea allergy, his throat was red and sore, he had a painful ulcer on his lip and a grade 2 heart murmur plus badly needed a dental. The vet also noticed his left thyroid was up. Ambrose was booked into Vale Vet's at Portishead where they cleaned his teeth and removed 2 rotten ones. He was also given a full MOT whilst under anaesthetic, as well as blood tests for thyroid, FIV and FeLV. As the Vet thought, it showed positive for thyroid but thankfully negative for the rest. Ambrose soon started to look and feel much better, he purred loudly for everyone and blossomed into such a handsome boy. It took 5 months to find him a home, with a lovely lady who didn't mind that he had to take tablets daily because of his thyroid condition. Caroline had already fostered a dear old

cat called Tammy who had recently been put to sleep and came to Holly Hedge looking for another 'needy' puss, so Ambrose was put forward, fussed over and taken home to his new life, never having to fend for himself again!

Once settled into his new home Ambrose got in touch!

"My name is Ambrose and I'm writing to say a big thank you for looking after me so well at the Sanctuary. My new mummy is Caroline and she loves me very much. She cuddles me at least 10 times a day, which I like a lot. I am allowed on all the furniture and I even sleep on the dinner table sometimes. Mummy never tells me off, she just moves me over to eat her dinner next to me.

My step-brother is called Vinnie, he's 1. He's black and white, and naughty. We play catch me if you can in the garden every day. The only things I don't like is mummy makes me eat tablets twice a day and I'm not keen on that. She also keeps us in at night, I'll never understand that either, but I guess it must be for our own good.

Anyway, thank you once again for looking after me,

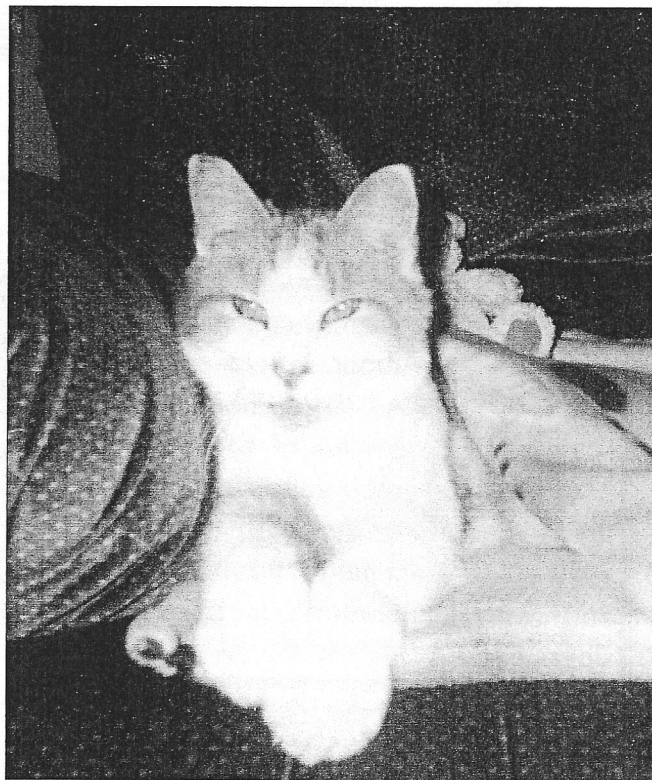
and waiting for the right mummy to choose me. I always enjoyed the fuss you all made of me when I was there. There was a man who was very nice to me, but I can't remember his name, he told mummy about me. (He hardly showed her any other cats because he knew I was special).

Mummy gives us nice food. She says "no cheap rubbish in our house"!

My nanny and granddad think I'm beautiful; nanny buys me new fluffy blankets and kisses me all over when she visits.

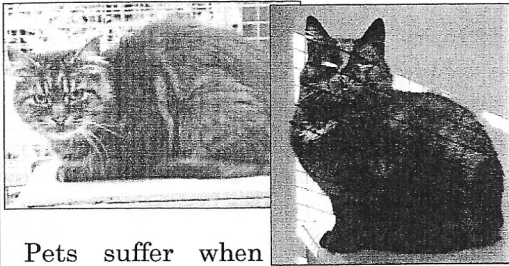
Talk about a 'dog's life', I'd rather be a cat any day!

Thank you again!!"



...and a Happy New Year^{9*}





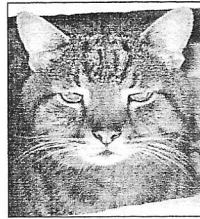
Pets suffer when marriages break-up. **Biggles & Ebony** found themselves in this situation. Longing for security this loving twosome will bring happiness to your home.

These two 5 year old cats have been here longer than any others, possibly because they are shy and take time to get to know people. With people they know they are friendly and sociable and enjoy being stroked.

Go on, give them the break they need.

We're on the web

www.hollyhedge.org.uk



Pollux

This 17 year old gentleman became stressed when babies arrived in his home. His unhappy behaviour was misunderstood. To curl up on a warm lap, knowing he is loved, would make him purr with contentment.



Harry

A 6 yr old retired greyhound. Since travelling from Ireland he has spent many months in kennels waiting to be chosen. Sweet natured, he loves to have walks and then to curl up on a warm duvet.



Jess is a 9 year old Labrador X—so sad in kennels since losing her devoted owner who died. Her special wish would be to be in a home for Christmas, curled up by the fire.



Toby

Yet another abandoned cat left to fend for himself in an uncaring world. Desperate for the love denied him so far he pleads for home comforts and stability.

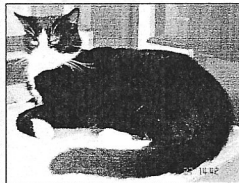
We're all longing to be chosen, we want to be happy endings too

Irene is a German Shepherd X about 1 year old.

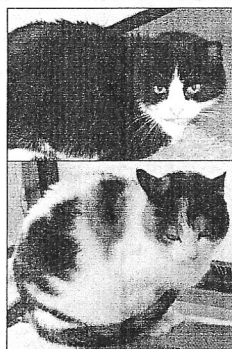


A large bouncy girl full of energy, she will suit a family with the time to train her

and with experience of large dogs.



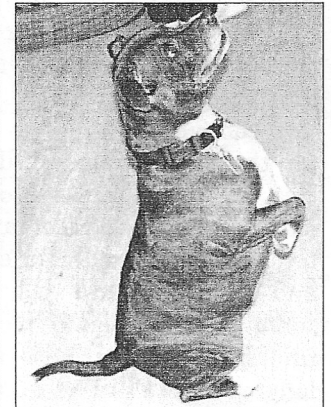
When **Bootsie & Sooty's** owners could no longer afford their upkeep they had to go. Offer them a home and their love and affection will be priceless.



Bootsie & Tamsy, 16 & 12 years old. Their world fell apart when their owner went into hospital. The best present these needy cats could wish for would be a loving home.



Kaz is a 9 year old German Shepherd. Active & affectionate she enjoys walks and ball games. She needs a stable home as an only pet. Good natured around children she is keeping her paws crossed that she will soon be chosen.



Zoe, playful and affectionate, this 5 year old Staffie is just begging to be chosen.

How could you resist this buxom beauty who longs for a happy ending.