

# MID-ANTRIM ANIMAL SANCTUARY



Mid-Antrim Animal Sanctuary  
"Hurtletoot", Greystone Road, Antrim  
Telephone: 01849 463993

## NEWSLETTER No. 1 - APRIL 1997

It has been a challenging first year for the Mid-Antrim Animal Sanctuary since we first opened our doors on April 22nd 1996, ensuring a safe haven for the unwanted and endangered animals of the area. Thrown in at the deep end, we were forced to sink or swim, but through perseverance, determination and some frantic doggy-paddling, new skills have been learnt, fund-raising targets have been met and, overcoming all the odds, we have succeeded in more than just keeping our heads above water.

They say "Never work with children or animals", but here at the Mid-Antrim Animal Sanctuary we manage to do both. Faced with the task of raising £40,000.00 in order to keep afloat, we have found that the best way to keep people interested in our work is to keep them involved. The past year, then, has seen the sanctuary evolve into a focal point around which the entire community has rallied. Though we have only one paid employee, we have been overwhelmed with helping hands thanks to, amongst others, two regular N.V.Q students and the input of the Prince's Trust, who have worked hard to improve the animal-housing facilities here at the sanctuary. We are indebted to the help of those around us, yet most of our volunteers would agree that working with the animals has brought its own benefits and it has been encouraging for us to watch the children of Muckamore House School or the young offenders, placed here by the Probation Board, reap the rehabilitative and therapeutic rewards that caring for the animals brings.

Though the sanctuary has undoubtedly been successful in meeting community needs, the needs and welfare of the animals have, from conception, been our first priority and it is here that our greatest success lies. Throughout our first year we have opened our doors and our hearts to more than 800 animals, ranging from rejected reptiles and bizarre bats to more conventional cats and dogs. At times even meeting the most basic needs of the animals has been a struggle but, committed to a policy of animal protection, we have attempted to counter ill health and maltreatment with balanced diets, vaccinations and, most importantly, love.

We aim to rehouse all our residents, and have, over the last year, experienced a success-rate which has surpassed all our expectations, as animals came from all over the Province to find new homes even in such far-flung places as London or the Isle of Man.

Alongside our idealism though, comes a realism which has led us to establish an adoption policy which means all our animals are ensured of security and well-being, even after they have passed on from our care. Each new owner is carefully selected before adoption, given advice on caring for their pet and required to have the animal both neutered and inoculated whilst we use a system of checks to follow-up on any rehousing and thereby guarantee the continued happiness of the animal in their new home.

The individual stories have been heartwarming:



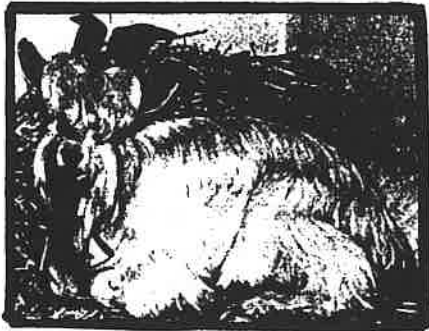
BANDIT AND POPPY

When their owner died, Jack Russells Bandit and Poppy were forgotten until they were found by accident and brought to us at the Mid-Antrim Animal Sanctuary. Tied up and neglected Bandit had relied on his daughter, Poppy to keep him alive with the rabbits and rodents she caught and fed to him. After being nursed back to health and happiness we were reluctant to separate them, and after much searching finally managed to find them a new home where they could live happily on together.

Another of our dogs, Cindy, is a heroine in her own small way, having saved the lives of six Labrador puppies who came to us when they were only four days old. When their own mother, Sandy, ran out of milk due to neglect, Cindy adopted the puppies as her own and became a type of surrogate mother to them, ensuring their survival. All puppies have now been happily rehoused.



CINDY AND PUPPIES



SPIKE THE GOAT

The stories are too numerous to mention, from Hamish the Cairn Terrier, who was rescued from being put down, to Spike, the goat, who has achieved an almost legendary status here with us. Puppies, kittens, goats, lizards and hamsters, all have found welcome, love and new homes here at the Mid-Antrim Animal Sanctuary. Indeed, one of the highlights of the past year has been our Open Day, in September, when we were delighted to see many of our previous residents, glowing with health and happiness, come to visit with their new families.

As we go to print we are again looking forward to meeting up with all those animals we have helped, as another Open Day is planned for 28 June (11am-5pm). All our supporters are given a hearty welcome. Before then, however, there is our Spring Coffee Morning where we hope to meet as many supporters as possible.

As we have mentioned, we have been inundated with much-needed support from the surrounding community, however, as our reputation spreads, so the demands on our time and resources are increasing. We are grateful for the many donations of food, blankets and money we have received, and whilst many groups and individuals are doing a sterling job in raising funds, raising shelters or raising awareness, it seems that for each need we succeed in meeting, several others grow in its place. As our community of animals here expands we are faced with mounting expenses and vet's bills, yet at the same time, with an increased population of animals, administrative demands are eating into the time we could spend on raising more funds. At the end of our first year the biggest challenges we face are in organising sustained community support, encouraging donations by direct debit and inspiring others to take on the mantle of Fundraisers, so that our time and energies may be devoted to the unending task of actually running the sanctuary.

As we look to the future and the challenges of the year ahead we would like to take time to thank everyone whose help and support has enabled us to maintain the vital work of the sanctuary. Though it is impossible to mention everyone we recognise the hard work of all involved, at the sanctuary, in The Charity Shop or at the many fund-raising events we have held. Moreover our thanks go out to all the members whose donations and subscriptions have helped pay for food, shelter and important medications. It has been, as we said, a challenging year, but turning towards the year ahead we can face the oncoming challenges with confidence thanks to the continued help and encouragement of all our supporters.

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FOR INFORMATION REGARDING:

Membership ♦ Voluntary Work ♦ Donations ♦ Direct Debit ♦ Legacy ♦ Covenant  
Help With Fundraising ♦ Policies and Statements ♦ Forthcoming Events

*Please contact Margaret on 01849 463993*

**CHARITY NO XR 12834**

# MID ANTRIM ANIMAL SANCTUARY NEWSLETTER

"Hurtletoot", Greystone Road, Antrim. Tel: 01849 463993

Charity No.: XR 12834

ISSUE No. 1

## THE MID ANTRIM ANIMAL SANCTUARY

opened for the first time on Monday April 22nd 1996 in direct response to the closure of the USPCA Shelter at the same premises on Sunday April 21st 1996 at midnight. The USPCA Board of Directors decision to close down was simple, the Shelter was not financially viable and was closed as part of an overall efficiency plan. The local Antrim Committee of the USPCA with other concerned individuals were convinced that closure of the Shelter, (established by them in 1973) would seriously damage the overall contribution to Animal Welfare which the Shelter was able to help generate in the area. After discussion with representatives of the Board of the USPCA, it was agreed that the local Antrim Committee could continue independently of the USPCA. From this, the Mid Antrim Animal Sanctuary was established.

## IS THE FUTURE UNCERTAIN?

The question asked at the time - how would the Sanctuary survive and succeed without council or USPCA support? The establishment of the Sanctuary brought with it no guarantee of success, it was but a temporary breathing space. Not only had those involved seen the opportunity of maintaining the Sanctuary they also had vision and hope which would make substantial changes for the betterment of the Animals in their care.

## HOW HIGH ARE OUR STANDARDS?

Simply - 'Commitment to Care' - standards are set high and adhered to. The commitment has already been made Policy for however long we can continue.

## PROTECTION OF ANIMALS

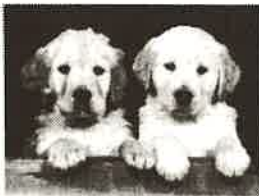
Examination of our 'Adoption Procedure Form' will confirm how rigidly tight our standards have been set to protect the animals. Only in the remotest of circumstances will animals be 'put to sleep'. Rather they will be kept at the Sanctuary until suitable adoption can be arranged and even then our responsibility will not end.

## HOW WILL WE SUCCEED?

In partnership with you - it's really that simple. Our open policy of communication and partnership with you as a member, supporter or simply an interested member of the public. We are no more than trustees of the Sanctuary buildings, to enable a wider humanitarian concern to flourish, already cherished by many people who are for a variety of reasons unable to become actively involved themselves. 'Commitment to Care' allows everyone an opportunity to become involved and support the Sanctuary by becoming a 'Commitment to Care' member. This involves pledging an affordable amount each week/month to the Sanctuary.

## PROJECTED COSTS

Projected expenditure continues to rise and could be in the region of around £56,000 (1997/98). This amount will cover food, heat, lighting, vet fees etc. The Mid Antrim Animal Sanctuary will survive ONLY if genuine partnership between you and the Sanctuary is formed.



## LONG TERM RESIDENTS

**Rodi and Sooty** - both have been with the Sanctuary for over a year. Being large dogs they will need a loving and caring home with a large garden. They may not look the most beautiful dogs in the world but beauty is only skin deep as they have lovely natures and are loved by those who work in the Sanctuary.

**Darkie and Tara** - Darkie has been with us for a long time, he was joined by Tara when she was admitted to the Sanctuary as a tiny puppy. They are totally inseparable and will need to be homed together. A loving happy home perhaps in the country where there will be lots of long walks.

Many other wonderful dogs and cats reside at the Sanctuary who require loving and caring homes - please come and see them . . . you might like to adopt one.



## CATS AND KITTENS

Many beautiful cats come into the Sanctuary - some injured, some pregnant, some strays, most unwanted. All are in need of kind and loving homes where they will find security and love. Could you open your heart to one?

## NEUTERING YOUR CAT

is probably the kindest thing you can do for it. Neutering saves many unwanted kittens, as in many cases their future is doomed. Neutering can be carried out by your Veterinary Surgeon from six months of age for both male and female. Your cat should be booked into the surgery and no food should be given from around 5pm the previous evening due to the cat having a general anaesthetic. You will probably be able to pick up your cat later in the day after the operation. Your Vet will discuss the after care and the removal of stitches in the female cat. After a couple of days your cat should be back to normal.

## URGENT!! URGENT!!

An urgent home is required for a black male neutered cat, fully vaccinated. Midnight is a semi wild cat who may never adapt to home comforts as he likes his freedom. At the moment he is not the slightest bit impressed with us humans, due to his visits to the vet. Ideally a farm environment would suit him best. He will require shelter and regular food and clean water each day. Left to do his 'own thing' will keep him happy although with time and much patience he may enjoy human companionship. Can you help or do you know anyone who could?



## SANCTUARY MANAGERESS

Margaret Wade lovingly known as Maggie. The only paid member of staff. Maggie worked for the USPCA for some years and is a well known face in the province. Her love and respect of all animals ensure the love and kindness the animals receive when they are admitted to the Sanctuary. Under her guidance many children learn a lot about animals with 'hands on' experience.

## ALSO IN RESIDENCE

### 4 FEMALE RATS

(to be homed in pairs)



Rats make wonderful pets - they are clean and intelligent - like human companionship and are more suitable for children than smaller mammals. They must never be kept isolated.

If you intend having any animal please buy a book and read about it first. You will have fun learning just exactly what your chosen animal's needs will be - THIS IS VERY VERY IMPORTANT.

We hope to bring you a newsletter on a regular basis at a nominal fee. If you have any items, ie stories, poetry, news or even general comments Sheelagh would love to hear from you - 01846 612745 after 6 pm.

## AT LAST!!!

### Rodi - has been homed

to a very loving and caring home. The lovely lady who adopted him fell in love with him at first sight, although we think it was mutual!! He has been back to visit us and he looks wonderful and is now a very happy dog. Rodi comes to visit us quite often and everyone is very happy to see him. all of us at the Sanctuary wish him a long and happy life.

## JOYCE'S JAMS ...

for those of you who have not yet tried these beautiful jams and marmalades all I can say is that you don't know what you are missing!



## CHRISTMAS CARDS ..

We hope to have on sale soon our own Christmas Cards this year. Please help us to continue our work by purchasing these lovely cards. Enquiries to Margaret or any member of the Committee.

## WANTED URGENTLY

We require to have on hand a list of people, preferably those with fields around them, to take on board any semi-wild cats brought to us. We will have the cat neutered and vaccinated. We only ask that you provide food, water and a comfy place to sleep. These cats get extremely stressed at the Sanctuary and can get very ill if caged for long periods. Give Margaret a ring if you or someone you know can help.

## FOSTER CARERS REQUIRED

We require kind and loving foster carers for puppies and kittens. The little animals get a much better start in life when sharing a home environment and are not so prone to illness. Also from time to time we get orphaned baby animals and we desperately need to have on hand people who would be willing to hand rear them. If you feel you would like to assist us in this, please contact Margaret at the Sanctuary.

It can be funny sometimes . . . these two lady volunteers - no names mentioned went to rescue a dog whose owner had died. The dog although being fed by neighbours was spending his time crossing busy roads and everyone was very worried by this. The two ladies concerned got no reply to their quest in trying to find the dog as all the neighbourhood seemed to be out!! After about an hour they discovered that the friendly little dog who was 'guarding' the nearby cottage was the very dog they were looking for!! He had tried to follow them and they had chased him back. Their excuse was that everyone had told them, the dog to be rescued, was not friendly and could not be caught. Raja happily got into the car and is now looking for someone to give him a permanent home.

## OBITUARY

This issue is dedicated to Bidy, a sweet little Jack Russell who sadly is no longer with us. Bidy at the age of 12 came to the Sanctuary when her owner went into care. She was adopted by a loving and caring family who loved her to bits. Soon she had a little Jack Russell puppy as a companion. Unfortunately Bidy took ill with cancer and despite all attempts to save her life, she was gently put to sleep by the Vet. Bidy is very much missed as she was such a little character. The nicest thing is that Bidy passed in peace knowing that she had been greatly loved by all who knew her. Sleep softly little Bidy.

Little Black Baby, Tuesday and Thursday . . . three little orphaned kittens from different litters. Little Thursday only lived a few days. Black Baby and Tuesday reached almost five weeks, despite all the loving care they received they too sadly died. They were also beautiful and were much loved - sleep softly little ones.

## OPEN DAY . . .

was very successful and raised over **£3,000**. The weather was not as good as we expected but the rain stayed away for most of the day. The dog show was well attended and our little 3 legged dog . . . won 1st prize in his class when he came to the Open Day with his new 'Mum'. The highlight of the day arranged by Angus Moore our Appeals Organiser was the presentation of beautiful framed certificates by the Mayor of Antrim Paddy Marks to our very kind and generous business sponsors who have been wonderful in their constant support. The certificates were supplied by Antrim Printers and the wine and cheese reception supplied by Stewarts, all donated free of charge. Many thanks once again



to all those wonderful people who helped Angus. Spike the goat came along to meet all his old friends, he looked wonderful and of course made himself right at home. His adopted 'dad' also brought along two of his pet lambs. Many of our adopted dogs came along and it was great seeing how happy and how much they were loved. All in all Open Day was a great success this year and we are now looking forward to next year in making it even better! Grateful thanks go to everyone who helped make



the day such a success and to all those who shared the day with us. Almost £4000 was raised for the welfare of the animals.



## BUILDING FUND . .



to date the fund stands at just over £1000 - still a long way to go but we will make it. We will keep you informed of progress as we go along.

Look out for our next issue in 1998 - keep your stories coming. . . .