

BULLETIN 54 – August 2005

Dear Members and Friends

August already – probably nearer September when you receive this – hope you and your dogs are enjoying the summer! Unfortunately I am still unable to get about much but hopefully my legs will soon get stronger! I am so grateful to Nick for all he does – not just for the Trust but for me! Matty, I am happy to say, is her own sweet self and her tumour very slow growing. We hope to have her with us for quite a while yet. Hard to believe that she is nearly 11 – and we have been at Machrihanish for over 10 years. May I thank all of you for letters, cards, 'phone calls etc, it is so good to keep in touch.

PRESENTATION AWARDS LUNCHEON – I am determined to be at this annual popular event, which will again take place at the Kaim Park Hotel, Bathgate on 20th November 2005 at 1.15pm and at which we shall present our annual awards. We hope that you will be able to come along. A lunch application form is enclosed which please complete and return to Nick. The price of the lunch (starter, main course and coffee) is £12.00.

The main object of the lunch is to make our annual awards and this year a new award will be made, of a lovely copper salver most kindly donated by Ms T Yangchen Llamo of Lockerbie. It will be awarded to the organiser whose Sponsored Walk raises the most money for the Trust. Hopefully this new award will bring out a spirit of friendly competition!

The other awards comprise:

THE IAIN WHYTE MEMORIAL AWARD to a person or organisation whose help has contributed substantially to the benefit of the Trust during the year or over a period of years.

THE SPENCER AWARD FOR THERAPET OF THE YEAR - application form enclosed and we look forward to receiving lots of nominations. An application form is enclosed, which please complete and send in to Nick by **30 September**. This is always a difficult award for the Trustees who judge each application individually and give marks out of ten.

THE DR MORRIS ANDREW & DANIEL THE SPANIEL MEMORIAL AWARD is a tribute to one of our much loved and missed Trustees, donated by his family. This is made to the **THERAPET ORGANISER OF THE YEAR**. and the recipient is decided by the Administrator with approval of the Trustees.

THE ANNUAL JOINT MEETING OF AREA & THERAPET

REPRESENTATIVES AND TRUSTEES took place in The Salutation Hotel in Perth on 23rd July. This is an invaluable meeting as it enables our Representatives from all over Scotland to meet, get to know each other and the Trustees, and review and discuss all aspects of the work of the Trust. Unfortunately I was not fit enough to attend this year but the following report from Nick will give you a flavour of the day:-

“Immediately after the initial introductory remarks the meeting was interrupted by the hotel fire alarm going off and we had to evacuate the building for about half an hour. After our return I gave a brief talk on the objectives of the Trust, how it is structured and financed. This part of the meeting finished with a discussion on the need for Disclosures and on the Trust’s policy in connection with them. **Norma Murray** (Therapet Organiser of the Year 2004) then gave an excellent presentation on how she became involved, firstly as a Therapet Volunteer and then as an Area Representative. She described how she organises the volunteers in her area, how she approaches nursing homes, hospitals and other institutions with a view to them agreeing to have Therapets visit. Her talk led to a wide ranging discussion on the Therapet Scheme and I am sure that we all learned a lot from each others experiences. It was agreed that a new leaflet on the Therapet Scheme should be prepared which would provide relevant information about the scheme for consideration by the institutions we hope to visit. In the last of the morning sessions Trustee **Allan Sim** provided us with an update on the proposed legislation in Scotland on Animal Welfare and how the Trust had taken a very active part in the consultation process that had been initiated by the Scottish Executive. (Allan together with co-Trustee George Leslie had done a great deal of work studying the consultation document and preparing submissions.) **George Leslie** started the afternoon with a talk on Therapet Health and Veterinary Related Matters. This was a most informative session at the end of which it was agreed that the Therapet Health protocol should be amended in some respects. Trustee **James Macdonald** then led a session on how the Trust’s School Visiting and educational programme is organised and how Volunteers wishing to participate in this aspect of the Trust’s work may get involved. The last session of the day was a general discussion covering very many aspects of the work of the Trust. All in all a very useful, informative and enjoyable day was had by all.”

“STEPPING OUT FOR SCOTLAND” – our annual sponsored two to three mile walk which is not only very enjoyable for those taking part but has become our main fundraiser. The walks are generally organised by our Area Representatives but in recent years a number of Therapet Volunteers have very kindly become involved. And this year we now have the award to the organiser whose walk raises the most money!

A sponsorship form is enclosed – loads more here if you need them, or you could perhaps photocopy. You will see there is a space for those unable to walk but who would nevertheless like to make a donation – Nick will be walking Machrihanish beach with Matty but this year it will need to be done in short sessions, bless her!

Each walker receives a lovely tartan rosette and every dog some goodies. Badges for all children taking part. Top fundraiser at each walkpoint is awarded a bumper size really super-duper rosette which is really worth having. Some Clubs prefer to do a “Sponsored Down”, or you might like to do a solo walk if there is no walk planned in your area? All contributions, believe me, most welcome, no matter how small.

So far the walk dates decided upon are:

Forfar Loch - organiser: NORMA MURRAY.
Sunday 11th September 1.30pm for 2.00 pm Tel . 01241-828451,

Queens Park, Glasgow - organiser: JAMES MACDONALD
Sunday 2nd October 1.30 pm for 2.00 pm Tel. 0141-632-4893

Details of further walks will be available here at the Office, if you ring Nick (01586-810123) and on the Trust's website – a sponsored walk is always a good day out, in the best of company for the best of causes!! Please also contact Nick if you would like to do a solo walk. Or organise one? All things necessary for each walk will come direct to you from the office.

SAD DEPARTURES

As always some much loved dogs are no longer with us and we send heartfelt sympathies to members and friends who are bereft without them:-

Peter Hamilton-Gray's Golden Retriever JANE
Miss M D Bode's Terrier Cross SPARKY
Mr & Mrs James Wilson's Labrador Collie Cross SOPHIE
Jean Dobie's Westie TILLY
Margaret Lawrence's Bichon ANNA
Harry Burn's GSD Collie Cross LOGAN
Christine Watt's Greyhound MOWGLI
Mary Gray's Cavalier King Charles CODY

and all who now have to try to get by without their best friends. Even after living good and happy lives it is such a big hole when they leave us.

COMPANION DOG SHOW

I was really sad to be at home when our annual show at Queens Park, Glasgow took place on the first Sunday in June. However, from many reports I have received it went very well as always. This is due to the meticulous planning by the Committee of Management and the very hard work put in by the Committee Members and other friends on the day. In particular the time and effort put in by Show Secretary/Manager **John Stead** was immense, not to mention his wife Mick who conjured up marvels on the hospitality front. Talking of which.....

In past years we have had to hire a marquee in which to feed guests and helpers. John Stead has had to collect it on the Friday before the show and return it on the Monday, all adding to time and costs. However last year **Mr Ian Prentice** raised £500 by selling second hand books at dog shows all over Scotland and he donated the money to the Trust in memory of Trustee Father Jim Peat. The money was allocated to purchase a new and much more manageable marquee, initially called the Jim Peat Tent but quickly renamed the Jim Peat Pavilion!!!! It was a great success and will be a lasting memorial for Jim who did so much for the Trust.

This year the pedigree dogs were judged by Mr Joe McDade, who is manager of the Scottish SPCA Welfare Home at Milton, Dumbarton and a keen dog shower. By all accounts he did a very professional job and his best in show was Mrs N Dyer with her German Spitz "ZENA". After the completion of the pedigree classes there was an exciting demonstration of FLYBALL given by members of the **Kirkintilloch Dog Training Club**. This was followed by a well filled **THERAPET PARADE** giving the general public a chance to see a good number of Therapets who, with their owners, bring so much happiness to so many people who no longer have regular contact with a pet. Finally in the main ring were the fun classes judged by Patron **Rosemary Long, Mick Stead and Trustee and Vet George Leslie**, who had to contend with the largest class of the day, the Dog in Best condition.

Separately, in four other rings, the Road Safety Obedience Competition took place and we are extremely grateful to all the judges and stewards who give of their time each year to officiate at our show which allows the public to see the benefits of well trained dogs. Also going all day in another ring were agility demonstrations organised by members of the Kirkintilloch Dog Training Club with their dogs. Visitors to the show were able to try their own dogs round the agility course and this proved to be a great attraction. We do so appreciate the time given and the effort made by the members of the Kirkintilloch Club.

We also thank Patron Rosemary Long for spending the whole day at the show and for presenting the trophies to all the winners. She also drew out the winning tickets in our Annual Grand Prize Draw which is one of our main fundraising events of the year. Tickets are sold throughout Scotland, and beyond. There was a total of twelve prizes and winners came from as far afield as Dumfries, Aberdeen, Kintyre, Edinburgh, Glasgow.

Finally very many thanks to so many of you who kindly sent donations towards rosettes and towards the running of the show. It is an expensive function but we believe it is an important event as it helps us promote the work of the Trust and the Therapet Scheme.

All in all it was a successful and enjoyable day – I shall certainly not miss it next year!

THERAPET NEWS - The Therapet Scheme continues to flourish and there is a steady stream of new volunteers coming forward to join in this very worthwhile service. A big welcome to all of you who have joined recently, I do hope that you and your Therapets are enjoying your visiting. Our Representatives up and down the country carry out wonderful work assessing potential Therapets and helping new volunteers get started once their Therapets have been registered. We do thank them most sincerely for their dedication to the Scheme and for everything else that they do in furthering the objectives of the Trust and organising fund raising events.

As previously mentioned the **THERAPET HEALTH PROTOCOL** has been amended and a copy is enclosed. It is designed as a commonsense approach and of course it is important that you consult your Vet and explain that your dog is a Therapet.

We have been very conscious of the long delays that have been experienced between new volunteers sending in their applications and the eventual registration of their Therapets. It has been very frustrating for them and it has saddened us that the process has been taking so long. This has been entirely due to the length of time that it has been taking to obtain Disclosures from Disclosure Scotland via the Central Registered Body in Scotland. In some cases this process alone has taken up to ten to twelve weeks. Until now the policy has been to await receipt of the Disclosure before proceeding with the registration of the new volunteer as a member and their dog as a Therapet. However it has now been decided that we will proceed with the processes as soon as we receive a fully completed Disclosure application form in respect of the volunteer. The registration is conditional upon us eventually receiving a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure from Disclosure Scotland. In the most unlikely event of an unsatisfactory Disclosure being received we will cancel the Therapet registration and refund all fees. Hopefully the delays which a number of you have had to experience will not happen again.

Now to some news.....

Firstly a Therapet in the making! **Susan Ross** tells me that she has a new puppy which she hopes will qualify as a Therapet when she is a year old. If she does she will be the fifth generation from the same family to become a Therapet! Susan's Meg has recently completed five years as a Therapet and has received her Father Jim Peat memorial Medal. Which reminds me - if your Therapet has completed five or more years of service and you have not yet applied for your medal please drop Nick a note.

Eileen Lawson's Cavalier King Charles Spaniel "Poppy" became a Therapet in March 2004 and Eileen writes:-

"Just thought you would like to know of Poppy's activities since she joined the Therapet Scheme. Poppy visits ex-offenders whom I work with in their own homes. Many of them would like a dog of their own but are not in a position to be able to do this for various reasons so they thoroughly enjoy a visit from Poppy.

Poppy and I also visit the Females Unit at HM Prison, Craiginches, in Aberdeen where Poppy enjoys a lot of cuddles, the prison officers also seem to enjoy her visits! Poppy gets a lot of comments about being a "bit small" for a sniffer dog (she is quite a petite Cavalier!). The women are not allowed to touch the sniffer dogs so enjoy being able to handle Poppy.

Poppy is a special dog in another way in that she was involved in a road accident nearly two years ago and sustained multiple fractures to three legs and paws, also a dislocated shoulder. With the help of my vet Poppy is fully recovered and can jump on beds and settees again with the greatest of ease!

Poppy is thoroughly enjoying her new career as a Therapet and is ideally suited to it. Recently one ex-offender paid Poppy a tribute, he was asked by another worker to list "people" he could trust and Poppy was listed as "someone" he could trust in his life. I was quite moved by this evidence of Poppy's importance in peoples' lives."

The value of animals as therapy in mental health is becoming increasingly recognised in Scotland. **The State Hospital in Carstairs** is particularly go ahead in this respect with all types of animals and birds and of course a Therapet! Rehabilitation Instructor, **Aileen Galt**, wrote in the Hospital's Animals as Therapy in Mental Health Newsletter in February this year:-

“Our visiting dog, A Westie called Harvey belonging to a member of staff, was registered last year as a Therapet. He continues to be a valuable addition to our Centre. A couple examples of his usefulness: a female patient who was reluctant to leave the ward walked Harvey once a week around the grounds for almost a year. She talked to Harvey and told everyone she met about him. She never refused to take him out, and no matter what mood she was in, her face always lit up when she saw him. Ward staff told us she was more motivated when she returned to the ward after taking Harvey out. This patient has now left hospital.

Another patient from the male admission ward paid several visits to the Centre on days when Harvey does not come in. Even when directly spoken to he never replied, and took no interest in anything other than his coffee cup. One day Harvey came in on a different day, and it so happened that this patient saw him. Immediately he smiled for the first time, and a member of staff managed to engage him in conversation about the dog, quickly followed by a discussion about football. Now he is more sociable when he comes to the Centre, and more involved in activities.”

It is not just in the State Hospital in Carstairs where Therapets visit. For example in Aberdeen **Bruce McKenzie** and “Scamp” visit the Blair Unit at the Royal Cornhill Hospital, Aberdeen and in Glasgow **James Macdonald** and “Bonnie” visit Leverndale Hospital. This is a really worthwhile aspect of Therapet work

Talking of the Royal Cornhill reminds me of a lovely article that Golden Retriever “**Jake**” had published in the Old Age Psychiatry News Brief in May. Jake is owned by **Lesley Good** and joined the Aberdeen team of Therapets last year. Jake describes how he and Lesley became involved in the Therapet Scheme and recounts his first visit to the Royal Cornhill:-

“...one Friday morning Mum put a swanky yellow jacket on me and I thought to myself – “Well sorry, but I don't think this is going to keep me very dry if it is raining”. Out we went into the car and Mum said to me that I was going to start working today. The car started and away we went. Now, I'm lying in the back of the car thinking to myself that nobody ever mentioned to me that I'd have to work when I joined the family. But hey! I do as I'm told so I guess I'd no choice. We arrived at the hospital and Sarah was at the door to take us in. Now I have to say it was a bit scary. People passing pushing big trolleys of food, wheelchairs and worse than that, I was taken into a lift and if you've never seen things like that before you must admit it makes your knees knock. We went into wards and met lots of people and boy did they make a fuss of me. Cuddling me, stroking me and telling me how wonderful I was (staff included). We went out walks with some of the patients and then into the café where I lay down and had a nice snooze after all the excitement.

After my work was finished I was taken back to the car and Mum said that I'd get an extra special walk for being such a good boy. Though I say it myself I was rather a good boy! When I got home and lay on my bed dozing and thinking about my morning's work I thought to myself "Well that wasn't so bad after all". Two months later I'm even better at my job and I look forward to Friday mornings with Mum and meeting my new friends and being petted and cuddled and then having my nice extra special walk after. I know now when my little yellow jacket goes on what I have got to do and I'm glad Mum and I started doing this. I see lots of people smiling when they see us and if Mum and I can make people happy then we're happy. (I think she thinks that it's her everyone is smiling at, but I know it's not!)"

Thank you Jake, you've said it all! Yes, it must have been a bit intimidating for you at first and Therapet visiting can be stressful. It is for this reason that our Therapets must be a least one year old before they start their work so that they are sufficiently mature to cope with an environment which is very different from that in which they have grown up. Equally we have a rule that rescued or re-homed dogs must have been with their new owners for at least six months to give time for the bond between owner and dog to develop and to ensure that the temperament of the dog is suitable for Therapet work.

16 year old **Robin Turnbull** from Edinburgh applied to participate in the Therapet Scheme with his Golden Retriever "Sarah" as a "service" for his Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award. He writes:-

"I am finding the Therapet scheme extremely rewarding and satisfying. The impact of the visits is startling as you can really see that the patients gain a great deal of joy from it (one lady even tried to give me money!) and most of them are eager to at least pet her. Sarah has done brilliantly so far by being very friendly, docile and tolerant especially during the hot days!

This week I will be going back to school so hopefully I can still find time to go every week, I could maybe go during a free block or something because this year my afternoons will be very busy."

Well done Robin and Sarah!

A lot of our news is from the north east this time. Some months ago we received a call from the editor of "Community News" which is a free publication in the Inverurie area of Aberdeenshire. She wanted to do a feature on the Therapet Scheme and asked if there was a Therapet visiting in the area. I put her in touch with **Sheila Lynch** and Therapet "**Daisy**" who is a Cocker Spaniel. This resulted in the editor going on a visit with Sheila and Daisy to the Grove Nursing Home in Kenmay and subsequently an excellent article appeared in Community News. Also at the home were pictures of "Molly" who is owned by **Catherine Hambly** and they visit Grove House on Wednesdays

THERAPET OF THE YEAR 2005 - This award allows the trust to recognise the wonderful work carried out by our Therapets – not just by the winner but by all the Therapets whether nominated or not. We are able to gain valuable publicity for the Scheme at the time the award is made. The Scheme is a success story and we wish to build and develop it so that as many people as possible can benefit from the Scheme. Therefore please arrange for your Therapet to be nominated by sending in the form, together with, if you wish, one photograph and one press cutting, if you have one.

MEMBERSHIP - A renewal notice was issued with the February Bulletin and a reminder was issued in April to members who had not so far paid. As always the response has been marvellous and we do appreciate the many additional donations that have been received. We are not issuing a further reminder but if you have not paid so far please pop a cheque in the post to Nick. The fees remain at £4.00 single, £6.50 joint and £2.00 Senior Citizen. From the Trust's insurance point of view it is important that all Therapet volunteers have their membership up-to-date.

TRUSTEES - The Trust is fortunate to have a strong Board of Trustees. The Trustees have a wealth of experience and expertise in their own occupations as well as in the world of dogs. The Trustees are happy to be available to Members and their contact details are:-

Mr George Leslie
01560 600246
MACTALLA1@aol.com

Mr James Macdonald
0141 632 4893
James@bramlynn.freeserve.co.uk

Mrs Rita Percival
0141 779 3092

Mr Allan Sim
0131 317 7377
allansim@blueyonder.co.uk

Mr John Stead
01436 675381
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LITERATURE, POSTERS AND OTHER PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL – we have a good range of leaflets including Membership, My Therapet, Children & Dogs. Pets not Pests and Notes for Therapet Visitors. There are posters for the Therapet Scheme, explaining the Aims of the Trust and the Children and Dogs Film. There are also posters which are primarily aimed at Responsible Dog Ownership. We also have a new supply of our “We care for dogs and dogs care for use” car stickers and soon an up-to-date Therapet car sticker will be available. If you have changed your car or if your existing stickers are looking tired please ask Nick for replacements.

FILMS – we have two films, now available in video and DVD and both priced at £7.50 plus £1.00 for post and packing, if applicable. They are the acclaimed “**Children & Dogs**” educational film and a film on the “**Therapet Scheme**” which features lovely Patron Lesley Fitz-Simons.

THERAPET GOODS – we have the following goods available for purchase:-

Therapet Coats*	£10.00	Therapet Lead Flashes*	£ 2.75
Therapet T-Shirts	£ 7.50	Therapet Sweat Shirts	£13.50
Therapet Polo Shirts	£11.00	* Available for Registered Therapets only	

With very best wishes
Yours sincerely

Chair of Trustees

