

BULLETIN No. 51 – August 2004

Dear Members and Friends:

As I make a start on this bulletin it is more than midway through July – and hardly possible that the summer is getting near to its end without ever having really begun! We have been relatively lucky here in that we have not had a lot of rain but even so it has hardly been sunbathing weather!! As ever there is so much to tell you that it is difficult to know where to start. So many wonderful letters and reports - I wish I had space to include them in full but am afraid I am only able in most cases to edit them down. It does the heart good to read them.

NEW TRUSTEE: We are delighted to welcome aboard a new Trustee of whom I am sure many of you will have heard. This is **ALLAN SIM**, and I could almost write a book about him as we go back a very long way indeed. For some 25 years or so Alan was Secretary-General of the Scottish Kennel Club and therefore his knowledge of all things canine is quite outstanding. Allan has always been a particular friend to the Trust and we have enjoyed the privilege of a stand at S.K.C. Championship Shows in Edinburgh ever since we began. To cut a long story as short as I can, at the end of last year Allan resigned from S.K.C., which was a shock to everyone. However, their loss was very much our gain as he has since agreed to become a Trustee and we just cannot believe our luck! Allan has experience in so many fields, which will be of inestimable value to us. He is a practising Chartered Accountant, which will be so useful to Nick, and he was S.K.C. representative at the Cross-Party group on Animal Welfare in the Scottish Parliament and is therefore able to join Trustee **GEORGE LESLIE** who represents the Trust on this group. Not to mention his knowledge of all aspects of the dog world plus valuable contacts in many areas. Allan was able to join us for our

AREA REPRESENTATIVES & TRUSTEES MEETING at Perth in July and he gave a good run-through of the proposed Animal Welfare legislation from the point of view of the Trust and details of the submission it recently made. This is a sizeable document so it is not really possible to give details in this bulletin, but you may be sure the interests of all caring dog people are well looked after and if you would like a full copy Nick would be happy to send you one on request. This is, of course, completely separate and different from that currently being discussed at Westminster.

The meeting was well attended and, as last year, was enjoyable and great to meet and get to know new reps face to face. A lot of items were discussed and new ideas put forward, particularly on the Therapet programme and all the additional work involved in disclosures. It is sad that this is necessary but there is nothing we can do but continue as best and as fast as the scheme allows. This does make Nick's job even harder in terms of time but he is coping well accompanied by the occasional flick of the whip!!!

Thanks to George Leslie the Trust has now produced a new **PROTOCOL** which has been issued to all Therapet volunteers. This details what is necessary in order to safeguard the interests and health of all concerned - patients, visitors and dogs with particular reference to the current worries about MRSA.

During the meeting we screened our very first video "Therapets" which was made for us by a good friend about 12 years ago. Trust Patron **LESLEY FITZ-SIMONS** took part in it as commentator and it was a joy to look back at some of our volunteers from that time! And the dogs, alas, now no longer with us. I am always amazed at how good and heart-warming this video is – it also includes school visits and sadly we are down to just the one copy which we guard with our lives!! The meeting agreed unanimously that it would be great to have copies for each area etc. and so we are going to do our best to get some reproduced bringing one or two details up to date.

"CHILDREN & DOGS" - whilst on the subject of videos we have good news in that we have now produced this in DVD form also, which many schools may prefer. The normal format is still available and we have new stocks of this too with one or two improvements made in presentation. We have decided the cost for both should be £7.50 and have plans to circularise all Primary Schools in Scotland shortly with details and offers of visits where available.

It is vital that school visits should follow a set pattern and our Schools expert – **JAMES MACDONALD** – would, I am sure, be happy to fill you in on this. The first thing to emphasise is, of course, any dog visiting a school must be totally bombproof, i.e. must be able to withstand any amount of patting and often quite a lot of noise as the children can be – usually are - most enthusiastic!! A very different situation from visiting a quiet ward or home for elderly residents. You can contact James on 0141-632-4893. I used to do a lot of school visiting and must say I found it very rewarding as well as being good fun! The Trust still believes that education of the young into responsible and caring pet ownership forms a most important part of its work. Children are the dog-owners of the future. All this was discussed at the meeting and I think we could have gone on for at least another couple of hours!

Most appreciative thanks to all who came, and to the reps for their untiring efforts on ensuring the success of Therapet visits, plus the various fundraising events and the hundred and one other things you do.

A postscript here from Nick before leaving the subject of schools – if you decide you would like to have a try at this and have not already obtained a Disclosure, it will be necessary for this to be done. Schools are particularly insistent on this for obvious reasons. Contact Nick here at the office for details.

And now some important dates for your diaries:

"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 mainly organised by our area reps and 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 (five miles long!) with Matty and she is always grateful for some support. (So is he!!)

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 only two walk dates finalised:

Forfar Loch - organiser: NORMA MURRAY.
29th August at 2 pm Tel . 01241-828451, and

Queens Park, Glasgow - organiser: JAMES MACDONALD
19th September at 2 pm Tel. 0141-632-4893

Details of further walks will be available here at the Office if you ring Nick (01586-810123) – it is always a good day out in the best of company for the best of causes!! Or again, contact him 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.

PRESENTATIONS LUNCH: For those who attended last year you will remember what a success it was at the new venue and so this year we shall again hold the event at **KAIM PARK HOTEL**, Bathgate on 7th November at 1.15 pm at a special price of £10 (starter, main course and coffee) and a form is enclosed for you to fill in if you are able to manage along, which we do hope you will. They could not have made us more welcome last year and the food was really yummy! As always the main object of the exercise is to present the annual awards, which are:

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. Never easy for the Trustees who judge each application individually and give marks out of ten; They feel all the applicants deserve to win, as indeed they do ...

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.

FATHER JIM PEAT MEMORIAL MEDALS: Those who have qualified and received one of these special award medals are absolutely thrilled with them. I know dear Father Jim would beam with pleasure over these – if your dog has been visiting regularly as a Therapet for five years or more then you are entitled to apply for one. The Trustees have now decided that they would like to offer medals to volunteers whose dogs are, sadly, no longer with us, but were active Therapet visitors for five years or more. If you would like to claim a medal please write to the office. There are also very attractive certificates of appreciation for Therapet service of three years so once again do not hesitate to write in for one if your dog qualifies.

SAD DEPARTURES: Before paying tribute to those dear dogs who are no longer with us, I feel I must make a very special mention of two ladies who died suddenly and whose loss is considerably felt. **MYRA McGLASHAN** was always ready to lend a hand when anything canine – or human – needed it and our own James Macdonald was absolutely devastated as she had always been a first-class helper, especially with the walks, active in rescue and was for a long time trainer at Glasgow Dog Training Club. Myra, sadly, took a massive stroke whilst shopping in her local supermarket and died straightaway. It was only some hours later that anyone thought to look in her car in the car park where her dearly loved dog, Anna, was waiting for her to come back. A very good friend took Anna and now has her permanently. Hard to find words but all who knew Myra will never forget her.

Right from the very beginning **JAYE MITCHELL** was a most enthusiastic member – in fact she was the first to join us - Member No. 1! Jaye had a lot of contacts in the entertainment world and helped us get celebrity guests for our events. She had probably the longest legs ever and always took part in the Best Six Legs class at our shows, along with her adored Border Collie. Nick always called her “Lovely Legs”!! Sadly she died of a heart attack. Happy memories Jaye!

I wish I had space to tell you more about the dogs who have left us, so many this time I can only list them with deepest, deepest sympathies and grateful thanks for all the Therapet work they carried out. However, I must mention Susan Ross’s Border Collie SPOT – you will remember he was the eldest of her three wonderful dogs, father of Therapet of the Year 2000 (GLEN) and grandfather of MEG. Spot was given a happy retirement by Susan after a very active and award-winning career as a working sheepdog. Susan says “I take some comfort from the pleasure this special old dog gave to so many people. His change of career at the age of 10 was quite remarkable and he visited up to a couple of days before he died. Thank goodness he left so many offspring behind.”

Maureen Hill’s GSD MR TAGGART
Anne McFarlane’s Miniature Poodle MUNGO
Marion Steele’s Golden, HOLLY
Audrey Pringle’s Lab/Retriever DOLLAR
Anne O’Hara’s Collie, FLY
Ida Guthrie’s Cav. K.C. Spaniel PRINCE
Christine Watt’s Rottweiler RITZ

Anne Celia Johnson's Pekingese SHANTEE and PEKOE
Douglas & Irene Ruthven's GSD GEMMA
David Chalmers' Golden Retriever CINDY
Mr & Mrs Edgar's GYPSY
Jean Ramsay's Golden Retriever MIJ
Miss H, Pratt's Staffie SHERA
Eileen Goodbrand's Chihuahua CLAIRE
Sheila Wills' Irish Setter RUFUS

Sleep warm. Never, never, forgotten.

THERAPET NEWS: And where to start?!!! With some really great news –

Mr JAMES FERNIE's whippet-collie cross “Jetta” is a Hearing Dog for the Deaf as well as being a Therapet visitor and recently received a major award for life saving at the Hearing Dog of the Year Competition 2004, bless her. Jetta was nominated for this award by Elspeth McPheat, Unit Manager of St Margaret's Church of Scotland Home:

“Jetta has been visiting the unit for the last year and over this time has proved to be a great asset to residents who look forward to her visits. On 23rd February she was in the Unit visiting her friends and went ahead into the activity lounge where she came upon one of the residents lying on the floor. As is her training she licked the lady's face twice then came to alert Jim her owner who went with staff to assist the resident. It was very impressive to see her in action, her training was extended to help this lady in need and we feel she was acting over and beyond the call of duty. She is a real Heroine to us!”

And to us too! A few more details of Jetta from her very proud owner:

“Before Jetta entered my life I was a virtual recluse because of the difficulty in holding a conversation with people who were unwilling to obey the rules for deaf conversation. In addition, my wife's blindness gave extra problems, plus the fact that she had a palsied lip so that I could not lip read.

With Jetta's arrival things dramatically changed almost immediately. People talked to me about the dog and I found myself responding to complete strangers, while Jetta's habit of greeting people whose looks she liked meant that I met and discovered people who are now friends. Jetta's outgoing nature means that, when we are fund-raising with Margaret Arthur (Hearing Dogs for the Deaf), she draws well-wishers to her because of her cheerful appearance and apparent grin!

Now that I am living alone the house is not empty because Jetta is there and, while she is far from obtrusive, I am always in her sights – so many people tell me that her eyes never leave me. In fact, at my wife's funeral, when my neighbour led Jetta aside to allow me to greet the many people who had attended the service, he reported that Jetta would not turn away from me, so intent was she that I would have no opportunity of leaving her alone.

I am not afraid to say that, without Jetta, I would not be alive today.”

Mr Fernie has written a lot more about Jetta and her wonderful capacity for helping him and others – I wish I had room for it all. I must say I found it very moving and am not at all surprised that she gained this highly prestigious award. Well done Jetta.

Another highly delighted and proud and very long-term visitor is **LIZ CRAIK**, herself a Superintendent Physiotherapist at Gartnavel General, Glasgow, where she takes her two dogs Therapetting. Liz sent me a newspaper cutting and the great news that Bearded Collie cross “Millie” was part of the winning team in the Junior National Agility Competition at Crufts this year! Liz says they completed the course with six clear runs and no penalty points – the first time this has happened at Crufts so it was a really big achievement. “It was great to watch and I am really, really proud of Millie” she said. No wonder! What a clever girl!

JEAN DOBIE’S “Tilly” is now eleven years old and has been a Therapet pretty well all her life! Jean says:

“She has a lovely gentle nature, loves to be played with and still thinks she is a puppy – I wish I had some of her energy! I am a Manager at St Ronans Home and Tilly comes to work with me every day and sometimes nights when I am sleeping in. One of our residents takes her for a walk round the grounds and this has given her a purpose in life. I often watch them from the window – sometimes the lady stops for a rest on one of the benches and I can see her speaking to Tilly who has her head on one side listening to her and often wags her tail in response. Not only has Tilly been a Therapet for my elderly residents, she has been a Therapet for me too!”

I do know what you mean, Jean, “Matty” is the last Boxer in our lives and is our own little Therapet. (Little!?) This might be a good moment to mention

MY BOOK! “Sprigs of Holly” - which was published earlier this year and I have been knocked out by all the lovely letters and reviews it has received. I am not “plugging” it – but since the net proceeds are to go to Trust funds perhaps it might be a good thing to tell you about it. Price £7 plus £1 p&p. It tells the story of Holly who started it all for me and what happened to Nick and I as a result Sad and funny by turns.

A lovely note from **AGNES ADAMS** of Kilmarnock about her adored “Bonny” who is fifteen now and visited for nine years at Howard House and Gracelands.. Agnes herself is now 83 years old and they are picked up by special van from Torrance Lodge every week for two-hourly visits! That must be a record. Agnes says “God Bless to everyone and it is a wonderful thing to do”. It certainly is, and God Bless you two too!

A nice quote from “Lady” via her mum, **IRENE LLOYD WIDE**, at Kinzean, Kincardineshire:

“Well, once again I celebrated another birthday on 6th March. I am now 10 years old but as we all know, canine and human, old age doesn’t come without a few problems but having a nice vet – one of the best – certainly helps. My enlarged heart and heart murmur are kept in check with tablets which my mum gives me wrapped up in ham and I suppose my creaky legs will keep going for a long time if I don’t sit on damp grass etc. (...I do know the feeling, Lady, not that I sit on damp grass!) Well everyone, four-legged and two, have a wonderful summer in the sun but I would ask all people who own and love their dog, remember heat can kill we canines and not all of us are lucky enough to be thought of as highly as others.”

Lady is no longer able to visit but wears her Therapet lead flash and coat and advertises the scheme very well! .

Another even older “Lady” belongs to **DOROTHY SHARKEY**. **Lady** is now 16 and still enjoying life although no longer able to visit. I had a letter from Dorothy recently about Lady and also made some interesting other points which I feel are worth passing on. She says:

“I have been busy clearing up after our neighbour’s new dog. I don’t mind much but feel some of the adverse publicity about dog mess has made some owners afraid to clean up for fear of catching disease. It would be better if authorities and newspapers emphasised hygienic ways to clean up. Long handled poop-scoops would be ideal. I have noticed that litter collectors in our park leave dog mess behind as they have no equipment to deal with it. I know the mess should not be left in the first place but that also applies to the tons of plastic bags, fast food containers and broken glass which are routinely cleared up. We don’t hear much about the dangers of other litter but I had to have a glass chip cut out of my hand after falling on ice last year and it was an extremely painful experience. I shall be interested to see if the new laws on fouling are applied uniformly.”

LOUISE and DANIELLE STEEN continue to visit Ward 14 at St John’s Hospital in Livingston every week where “Snoopy” has built himself up quite a fan club. Louise says:

“We used to only be allowed into the day room but are now allowed to visit two of the bays which can involve up to 16 ladies plus staff. For this we had special permission and never go into any area where there are acute patients. There have been two ladies who were terrified of dogs and through Snoopy visiting overcame their fear and became his biggest fans. Danielle took photographs with their permission and bought some frames with her own money to give them so they could show their families that they had a new friend and were delighted to pat and cuddle him! Danielle has taken some digital photographs and is making a collage for the

patients and staff. She is at the awkward teenage stage but loves taking Snoopy to visit and blethers away with the patients and if I have the nerve to go without her, which is not very often, they all ask for her and give her a huge welcome when she comes back. In a nutshell they are a pair of superstars and a great advert for Therapets!”

MARY MACKENZIE of Peebles sent a most wonderful letter, actually written by her now retired Therapet, Westie “Dileas”. He describes in great detail his past efforts in the places he visited and I only wish I could copy it out in full. One day I shall write a special book with these stories being given the space they deserve. Meantime I am reduced to simply giving an extract or two:

“Being a Therapet was quite hard work and required various tactics on my part. For the Monday afternoon with the 20 or so people who are called “disabled” I was kept beside my mistress and I got used to all the noises - such as singing, triangles, drum, castanets, things to blow and shake. A lot were afraid of a dog. I’m quite small and friendly, so I learned to look at them, wag my tail, look pleased when they gave me a sort of hurried pat and one or two took years of just sitting quietly beside them before they seemed at ease. We also put on plays and dressed up, so sometimes I was taken by my lead to help in some of the games. The lady who ran the group always welcomed me; just occasionally I barked or kind of sang, and she just laughed. The other place I visited was in another town and was a Home for Old People. This was a bit tiring because I had to be lifted up so that the ladies could pat me. The men met in a sort of glass place and smoked a lot, they were cheerful with me. One of the ladies kept a canary in a passageway and we used to stop and talk to it! I still try to be welcoming when we meet friends, or sometimes I go and chat in my own way to strangers, because I have done all sort of interesting things in my life.”

I’m sure you have, Dileas. A very happy retirement to you!

“Cassie”, the Pekingese, belongs to **RAYMOND TATE** of Paisley and is now well into her second year of visiting Hillview Nursing Home and continues to be the No.1 friend to many of the residents who can’t wait for her fortnightly visits. Raymond says:

“We received a pleasant surprise one day last October. On entering the largest of the downstairs lounges the matron brought out a birthday cake with one candle from the kitchen. We thought it was for one of the residents’ birthdays but it was to celebrate Cassie’s 10th birthday and the first anniversary of her visits to Hillview! She was presented with a certificate and many photographs were taken of her with her friends! These now hang as two picture displays, one on each floor of the Home.

In February of this year Cassie began visiting Ward 10 of Dykebar Psychiatric Hospital. She was immediately accepted by the patients and to see the joy on their faces was something to behold! One of the ladies does not speak

at all and makes very exaggerated movements but she understands everything you say to her and she just beams when Cassie visits. It is very hard to take Cassie away from her. As Dykebar is a Trust-run hospital regular reports have to be sent to the management re Cassie's visits and I'm pleased to say that the staff have highlighted the positive effect she has had on the patients, like all Therapets, and they regard her as part of the team now!"

For a change, the other side of the coin – a wonderful letter from Liz and Linda, Care workers at The Harlaw Centre, Inverurie, which was sent to Fiona Henderson about Therapet visitors **MARIA STOREY** and Border Collie "Rosie" (plus a super photograph). They say:

"We feel we must write to say thank you for including us in the Therapet scheme. It is working extremely well. The staff have noticed some remarkable changes in some of the group and others are completely fascinated by Rosie's special tricks such as getting a biscuit out of a plastic bottle!! We know that Maria is a very busy person and we do appreciate that she makes time to visit us every week no matter what the weather is like. We feel that the changes she and Rosie have made in people's lives are of great importance and should be recognised."

And so say all of us. There is, of course, a great way in which this can be done as well as for many others equally deserving, and that is to send a nomination for the "Therapet of the Year" award! The enclosed form tells you all about how this can be done.

As you will no doubt remember, FIONA HENDERSON was obliged to resign recently due to poor health and some of you have been asking after her - I am glad to say that despite feeling far from well sometimes, she is continuing to take Toby on visits whenever she can which are enjoyed as much as ever although he is getting on a bit now!

GREAT PUBLICITY - We are once again indebted to two very special people and their equally special Therapets – ANNE MACDONALD with "Eilidh" the English Springer Spaniel who were the first to be allowed into Glasgow's Hospital for Sick Children and of course JAMES MACDONALD (no relation!!) and his gorgeous Old English Sheepdogs. "Bonnie" and "Echo". They were all given terrific publicity during National Pet Week in June by "Glasgow Evening Times" with no less than four pages devoted to them. Well done both, and very special thanks as always for all you do.

My thanks also for printing my article on Therapets in SCAS (Society for Companion Animal Studies) Journal – quite a long one which is already receiving interest from readers. SCAS has members throughout the world, largely of professional medical people who have a special interest in animal related therapy.

I could carry on for pages and pages about all the tremendous efforts of our Therapet visitors but I must now call a halt and make room for other news – please forgive me

if I have not included your particular letter but believe me, they are all very much appreciated. Please keep sending them in!

OUR COMPANION DOG SHOW – last but definitely not least on the agenda!

This took place on 6th June and was one of the best I can remember, if not in terms of attendance which was a little down (due to some info being wrongly printed by “The Daily Record”) but most certainly a very happy occasion with lovely weather and lots of good friends there. Special thanks to the Committee for all the arrangements which went without a hitch, led as always by Show Manager JOHN STEAD and to all who came along to take part. THE THERAPET PARADE was as popular and well attended as ever and it is always so good to be able to meet volunteers and dogs face to face. Long-distance travellers too, coming from the Fort William, Aberdeen and Borders areas as well as a lovely contingent of reasonably local ones. Patrons LESLEY FITZ SIMONS (plus daughter Marnie who is now quite a young lady!) and ROSEMARY LONG handed out the goodies and rosettes etc. to the participants plus a Certificate for each as the show took place during Volunteers Week.

Awarding the trophies for the Pedigree Classes we were honoured to have the Lord Provost’s representative, BAILIE DORNAN, present and with him was a good friend of the Trust whom we had not seen for some years – NANCY MACLAREN! We were all so pleased to meet again. Nancy is very well-known indeed in the Obedience world and I shall always remember the first time we met – this was at the very beginning of the anti-dog feeling, way back somewhere in the mid-seventies – when Brenda Whitelaw (now Brenda Day) and I attended a meeting organised by that great lady, Joanna Mason. Nancy’s team gave a wonderful display of obedience to music – (Et Viva Espana!!!) - we shall never forget it. That was really the start of all the work we tried to do for dogs. Nancy had a lovely time meeting a lot of old friends at the Show and awarded the Road Safety Obedience Trophies. Anyway, getting back to the awards, Pedigree Judge AGNES WILSON made a super job of the classes and found her Best in Show in --- a Boxer would you believe, which being my own breed I was very happy to see! This was a gorgeous brindle and white boy called “Buzz” (Walkon Playing the Fool) owned and handled by Ms C. THOMPSON This young lady then took him into the Junior Handling Class which they promptly won and she went home proudly with no less than four trophies!

CHRISTINE WATT, a member of the Committee and a fantastic helper, brought along a new demo team called DAFT! All the way from Fife. Daft they most certainly were not, they did a very clever and at times funny routine which kept us all entertained and got a great reception. DAFT stands for “Display and Fun Training Team” of which Christine herself and her dog are members. Most grateful thanks, I hope we shall have the pleasure of your company again! Haste ye back.

Demonstrations of Agility were given through the day by KIRKINTILLOCH & DISTRICT DOG TRAINING CLUB, excellent as usual. SUSAN ROSS judged Junior Handling and Best Cross-bred, with our two lovely lady patrons doing the Novelties and George Leslie’s Vet assistant, ROSS ALLEN going over the Best Veteran and Dog in Best Condition.

We were all whacked by the end of the day but agreed it had been one of our best shows thanks to our wonderful helpers. I must thank all of you who sold, bought tickets, or donated prizes for our Draw, which raised the fantastic net total of £598. Here are the winners:

Radio Cassette & CD Player £50 (Fifty Pounds)	Sheila Donaldson, Friockheim, Angus Mrs. P. Fullerton, Aberdeen
Crystal Bowl	J. Robertson, Largs
Cuddly Toy	J.M.E. Macdonald, Neilston
Rucksack	C. Connal; Pitlochry
Painting of Greyhound	Meg McCann, Dalmellington, Ayrshire
Author-signed book	J. Cowie, Glasgow G15
Relaxation CD	Brian Moncur c/o Jean Connor
Haddows voucher	B. McMenemy, Stonehaven
Marks & Spencer voucher	Bob Davidson, Motherwell
Oddbins voucher	J. Garrett, Ayr
Boots voucher	Mrs E. Sproat, Dumfries
W.H. Smith voucher	Kelsey, Inverness.

Well spread over Scotland too! Our thanks to all who donated in any way to the Show, we have not as yet got the final result but this always appears in the Annual Report & Accounts.

BAD STROKE FOR DOGS. A recent report from the Dog Trust (formerly the National Canine Defence League) claims that nearly 10,000 stray dogs were destroyed by local authorities in the UK last year – although the number is falling. The Trust points out the figures mean an average of one dog per hour is being put to sleep because their owners cannot be traced or new homes found for them. This survey, researched by NOP World, shows there were over 105,000 stray dogs collected by local authorities last year – one stray dog for every 557 people in the UK. In Scotland there was a drop of 34% in stray dogs passed over to the local authorities and a 6% decrease in dogs being put down. So at least we would seem to be on the right side, not enough but at least figures are decreasing up here.

The Dog Trust's CLARISSA BALDWIN said "These figures are disturbing because of the sheer numbers of stray dogs being needlessly killed each year. On a more positive note we have seen a 5% decrease in the number of strays and also a 2% decrease in the number of destructions over the last 12 months. This proves that the stray dog problem is solvable and we are calling on the nation's dog owners to help us achieve this aim sooner rather than later."

We can only echo her feelings. Incidentally, many congratulations to Clarissa on being awarded the OBE for her services to dogs, very well deserved!

The Dog Trust runs 15 re-homing centres in the UK, one of which is in West Calder and plans are afoot to set up a second Scottish centre in Glasgow, which is good news indeed. When the West Calder centre was opened some ten or so years ago, I was invited along to the opening ceremony which was performed by H.M. The Queen.

No companions were permitted, or dogs, which meant Nick had to remain in the car park with (at that time) young Boxer puppy “Leo” of whom much has been written! It was a lovely ceremony, and Nick told me that when the Queen re-emerged she caught sight of Leo prancing around (on his lead of course) and admired him! So after all he got into the picture, which was always par for the course! We do miss him so much – this is the nearest I can get to the feature you all seemed to enjoy – “Leo’s Log”! However, “Matty” is no slouch and manages to get up to her own bits of mischief. Believe it or not she is nearly ten now.

Sad news from **CHRISTINE DUNCAN**, a member of the Committee of Management ever since we started, and who has resigned as she is no longer able to travel to meetings at night. However, it is not goodbye as she will continue to work at the Show and in other ways! Many thanks for all those years on the Committee, Christine.

HOLIDAYS: We are, of course, right in the middle of the holiday season now and there are quite a few people on our beach when the sun shines. We still have the windmills – 15 of them – on one side of our beautiful bay and from all our front windows there is no way we can avoid looking at them. This is the bay which the famous Scottish artist, William McTaggart (actually he lived in this very house at one time) featured in many of his wonderful paintings and I can just imagine him spinning away like a top in his grave!!!! I understand we are to get another seven....

SUB RENEWAL: The Treasurer has asked me to say we shall not be sending out any reminders with this bulletin but if you have not renewed this year we do hope you will continue to remain with us! If a Standing Order would help, he would be happy to forward one to you on request.

Time to finish – enjoy the rest of the summer and give hugs to the dogs! As I write it is now 7th August and the sun has started to shine at last! Makes such a difference.

Yours sincerely

Marjorie Henley Price
Chair of Trustees

DON'T FORGET !!!

Stepping Out for Scotland – page 2
Presentations Lunch 7th November – page 3
Nominations for Therapet of the Year – page 3
My Book! – page 6
Your sub – if not already paid.

