



GRF

NEWS

*Designed by Sally E Calder*

**December 2013**

*(the next Newsletter will be published at the end of January 2014)*

***Changing the world  
one greyhound at a time!***

Apologies for there not having been a Newsletter for some time - as many of you will be aware family illness has been, and still is, taking up much of our time. Thank you for all your kind wishes - they have meant a lot to me and Mo. Christmas is, as many of you know only too well, a hard time of year when there is illness in the family. Can I just take this opportunity of saying that our thoughts are with those of you who are dealing with family problems / illness, or if this is your first Christmas without a loved one, be it human or hound.

On a cheerier note, I am delighted to be able to report that Celia & Jimmy have **FINALLY** moved into their new home at Baltree! There are plenty of teething problems for them to deal with, however, they are finally in-situ ☺ We all wish them, and their dogs, health and happiness in their new home. Should you need to contact Celia & Jimmy, you can reach them on their mobile number which is 07826-244765. BT are currently working on connecting their landline and computer.

2013 has certainly been a year of highs and lows for Celia & Jimmy - our wonderful Celia was awarded her well-deserved BEM and then, in August, we re-homed our 700<sup>th</sup> dog! There have also been the difficulties associated with the building of a new house, and hospital stays for both Jimmy & Celia. The Kennels would not exist without these two remarkable, selfless and wonderful human beings, and we wish them well for 2014.

Bootsie had a session, recently, with Cheryl Loney of Edinburgh Dog Photography, who is one of our Calendar sponsors this year, and below is the shot we chose for our own Christmas cards ... Happy Christmas!



***Amanda Wells, who is well known to many of us, recently visited Sri Lanka and volunteered with the Dogstar Foundation. Below, she shares her experience with us.***

“Sri Lanka is home to over 3 million roaming dogs. The end of its 3-decade civil war in 2009 and the devastation of the 2004 tsunami are the background to the animal welfare issues that have a significant impact on human health and wellbeing in Sri Lankan communities. One woman, involved in greyhound rescue in the UK, went to Sri Lanka to do some volunteer work with elephants. After a chance meeting with a Buddhist monk she founded the Dogstar Foundation.

The Dogstar Foundation is transforming animal welfare in Sri Lanka. I have just returned from volunteering at the Dogstar Foundation in Sri Lanka. Dogstar neuter community dogs, vaccinating them against rabies and other diseases and give them a health check to treat any issues they find. Local vets perform the surgery in very basic conditions. You could describe the surgical method as keyhole. Once a female dog has been spayed, the wound is less than an inch and the recovery rate is very quick. The basis of the neutering programme is to catch the dogs in the morning, neuter, then release back to the same spot that they were picked up from later in the afternoon.

It may sound harsh to neuter then release dogs but consider this; we had one older dog who we named Angie. Angie lived on a street corner. The locals fed Angie and looked out for her. She was brought to us after becoming quite ill with an intestine problem. We cared for Angie 24 hours a day as she needed fluids and medication. Soon she was feeling better and began to behave like a caged lion – she hated being indoors, and appeared desperate to get back to her street corner.

We make dogs domesticated to allow them to fit in to our lives. We shape them and train them to be what we want them to be. A street dog behaves more as a dog naturally should. These dogs are ‘community’ dogs and are looked after very well.

Dogstar do re-home puppies, however, adult street dogs have no chance of being adopted into a family home. They are not aggressive and are well cared for in the community. The alternative for these dogs is to place them in a kennel where they would live out the rest of their lives. Unlike our domesticated dogs, this would not be a good option for them.

Another example is Errol, an elderly gent of a dog. Errol was found in May by Dogstar. He had mange and was very frightened of people. He was suffering, but the Dogstar team could not get close enough to treat him. Daily feeding and encouragement led to him learning to trust again. Eventually Errol’s skin was able to be treated. Some months on, Errol now has a full fluffy coat and drops in to the Dogstar base twice a day for food, a snooze and a general nose around to see what’s going on. After he sees there is nothing of interest, Errol trots back out the door again and off to inspect the rest of his patch. I’ve never met a happier dog than Errol!

I was fortunate enough to be involved in Dogstar’s education programme while I was there. The children were all eager to learn and the education programme is designed to be fun. They go into schools and temples to teach children how to approach strange dogs. This reduces the risk of children being bitten and is also a method to teach children about dog care. This is a vital part of Dogstar’s work because dog bites can be fatal in Sri Lanka as people still die of rabies there.

The main difference between Dogstar and many other UK-based dogs-abroad charities is that Dogstar works on the basis that the solution cannot be found by importing these dogs back to the UK where we are already destroying many of our own dogs who don't have a home. The other issue is that to remove a street dog from its environment, and bring it to a country where the climate is different would not be in the best interests of the dog. Instead the emphasis is about assisting Sri Lankans to find their own sustainable solutions to the problem.

I am now organising a charity cycle throughout Sri Lanka next October and am looking for people who want to take part in the adventure of a lifetime. Although I won't be cycling, I will be in Sri Lanka at that time to support the cyclists who will be raising awareness and money for an amazing cause."



**Photos from left to right:**

Dogstar base where the surgery happens; Errol, the roaming community gent; Puppies Shane and Bruce, now re-homed; Roaming dog at a temple; Street dogs in recovery area following neutering.

*More about Errol and the Dogstar Foundation's work in Sri Lanka can be found at their website on <http://www.dogstarfoundation.com/>*

*If you would like to hear more about the volunteer experience at Dogstar, or the cycle challenge, please email me at [amjamwe@btopenworld.com](mailto:amjamwe@btopenworld.com)*

## October Walk in St. Andrews ...

We had a lovely walk, on the West Sands, in St. Andrews on Sunday the 6<sup>th</sup> October. The weather was cold and windy, but otherwise a perfect sunny day for a bracing walk.

It was a great turn-out and, as ever, an opportunity to chat with friends old and new.

Below are some photos from the walk - you will see that we were rather windswept!





The **Lucky Numbers Draw** for October was made after the walk.

59 numbers were sold this month, giving us a prize fund of £118.00 which was split as £70.80 to the hounds and £47.20 to the winner. This month's lucky number was drawn by Celia and was No. 1 belonging to Steve Dowd who, very kindly, donated his winnings to GRF, giving them the full £118.00 this month!

Fiona tells us that October sees the conclusion of 5 years of running the Lucky Numbers Draw. There are still plenty spare numbers and it costs only £2.00, per month, per number to enter with the chance of winning some money and, more importantly, raising a little money to help with the huge monthly bills faced by Jimmy and Celia to look after the hounds, and keep the Kennels running. It's easy to enter - just e-mail Fiona at [grfluckynumber@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:grfluckynumber@yahoo.co.uk), and she'll let you know which numbers are available. You can pay by cash, or standing order directly into the GRF Lucky Number bank account.

This year we have raised £842.40 for the kennels. £561.60 for the winners, and three people donated their winnings to the Kennels, totalling £134.40. This means the hounds received a total of £976.80. With Steve's contribution, this month, our total stands at £1,024.00 ☺

Fiona would like to thank everyone who continues to support the Lucky Number Draw.

Jimmy, Celia and everyone involved with GRF (particularly our hungry hounds!) would like to say a **HUGE** thank-you to Fiona for the work she puts in to make the Draw happen every month.

### **November Walk in Glenrothes ...**

Unfortunately we did not make this walk, and there is nothing on the Forum - given that it was the last walk of this year, I am sure it was greatly enjoyed by everyone who attended. It was certainly another cold and sunny day ....

The **Lucky Numbers Draw** for November was made after the walk.

55 numbers were sold this month, giving us a prize fund of £110.00 which was split as £66.00 to the hounds and £44.00 to the winner. This month's lucky number was drawn by Jimmy and was No. 10 belonging to Jean Gibb, Fiona's Mum, who kindly donated her winnings to GRF, giving them the full £110.00 this month!

Fiona would, once again, like to thank everyone who continues to support the Draw.

***Editor's Note:** Over the past few months, the numbers sold appear to be dropping, albeit slightly ☺ Please, if you can, support Fiona in this money-raising venture .... it is, as has been previously said, only £2.00 per month - I pay by Standing Order each month, so I don't even have to think about it. You might win a few pounds and you will, of course, be helping the homeless hounds. Thank you.*

### **From the Dog House ...**

Due to 'teething problems' mentioned earlier, I have been unable to get details of dogs in, and out, of the Kennels from Jimmy - will provide a full update in the next Newsletter.

### **Can YOU help one of these dogs ...**

**PLEASE** can you find it in your heart to give one of our dogs the forever home they so richly deserve?

#### **April**



**April** arrived at the Kennels with her sisters, May and June, who have since been rehomed. She is a very frightened young lady when she first meets you, however, she melts as she gets to know you. She is only 17 months old, walks well on a lead and is desperately looking for a loving home in time for Christmas.

***Editor's Note:** I have seen April at the Kennels a couple of times now, and she really is the most affectionate little greyhound girl. It would be SO lovely to see her in a new home in time for Christmas - she doesn't like the noise in the Kennels, and needs a loving home to call her own .....*

#### **Bessie**



**Bessie** is a little staffie-greyhound crossbreed. She is dark brindle, and has the most beautiful yellow eyes. She is very young, at only 8 months, but is housetrained. She is, basically, a mischievous puppy who loves life. Bessie is wonderful with people, but is exceptionally strong on a lead. Unless you are strong and fit, do not consider her - for the right person she will make an absolutely fabulous pet.

### **Max**



**Max** is a very slow eater, but gets there eventually - he hates anyone else near his food. He is not keen on strange men, but seems to accept ladies. Max is not too good with non-greyhounds. Once settled he is a perfect gentleman, and is a good walker on a lead. Would make a great pet.

### **Fire**



**Fire** is a big black happy boy, and nothing much bothers him! When on a lead he just saunters along beside you. Fire is very much a dog who loves being with people - he will happily hop into your car, and stay with you all day. He is a nice easy dog to get along with, and would make a wonderful pet.

*As ever, if you would like more information on the dogs featured above, or indeed any of our other dogs in 'Please Choose Me', please contact Jimmy or Celia on their mobile number 07826-244765.*

## Vet's Corner ...

With Christmas just over a week away, here are a few tips to ensure that you, and your dog(s), have a happy and healthy festive period ...

- 1) **Do not** put chocolates on, or under, your Christmas tree, if you have one (see point 2!). Our vets see a large increase in cases of chocolate poisoning, in dogs, over the Christmas period. It doesn't matter how well you wrap them up, or even if they're in a tin, packaging is a great challenge for our greyhound friends!
- 2) Whilst trees, both real and artificial, look wonderful ... think twice before putting one up if you have a greyhound, unless it can be guaranteed to be out of reach of the dog! A tree is a tree is a tree .... as we found out, to our cost, when Bootsie lifted his leg at one whilst out visiting - oops! Fallen pine needles can cause sore pads and, of course, there is the biggest challenge of all - pulling all the baubles off said tree .... !!
- 3) **If you put anti-freeze in your car be extremely careful.** Most anti-freeze has ethylene glycol as its active constituent - this is sweet tasting (apparently) and our pets are, therefore, attracted to it. Be vigilant also when walking your dog, that he/she doesn't lick any from the road. Our own vets, Vetrica, say that ethylene glycol is the most common **fatal** poisoning they see.
- 4) Snow & Ice - beware! Dogs love to play in the snow and there is an increase, at this time of year, in cut paws due to hidden glass. Also take care, yourself, when out walking ... if your dog pulls on his lead, it is easy for you to lose your balance and fall, resulting in sprains and breaks.
- 5) Foot chewing is a common problem that is seen in dogs - at this time of year, the salty grit that the Council spreads on the footpaths, and roads, can really irritate some dogs' feet. This starts them chewing at their paws, and can result in some quite severe injuries.

If your dog is affected by this, it helps to wash them after each walk, to get all the salt and grit out from between their toes. We use 'Paw Wipes', which can be bought from Pets at Home, after every walk.

**HAVE A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS,  
AND REMEMBER .....**

**A DOG IS FOR LIFE,  
NOT JUST FOR CHRISTMAS.**



## ROVER REPORTER

(aka Bootsie from Rosyth!)



EACH MONTH, I AM HOPING TO HEAR HOW ONE OF OUR GRF RE-HOMED GREYHOUNDS IS DOING, IN THEIR FOREVER HOME, BY MEANS OF A SHORT QUESTIONNAIRE. IF YOU WOULD BE INTERESTED IN TAKING PART IN THIS, PLEASE E-MAIL ME FOR A COPY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE, AND RETURN TO ME AT [bobbynetherland@dsl.pipex.com](mailto:bobbynetherland@dsl.pipex.com) ALONG WITH A PHOTO.

I'm Marion Roberts of Upper Largo, Fife, where I live with 4 greyhounds, Kim, Bryn, Foxy and Jock, and one lurcher (Dylan). Bryn, Foxy and Jock are all GRF hounds.

1) **How long have you had Jock?**

Jock came to us early in April 2013, after having surgery at GRF to remove a fibrosarcoma. We weren't sure how long we would have him.

2) **How has having Jock living with you changed your life?**

The biggest compliment I can pay Jock is that he really didn't change my life – he just fitted in seamlessly and seemed to say 'Whatever it takes to stay here with you guys, I'll do it'. I have noticed that my arms are a bit longer, as he simply can't contain his excitement when we're 'going to the beach!!!'

3) **What is the best thing about owning a greyhound?**

You always have a friend (or in my case, several), and a huge welcome home when you've been mean enough to go out and leave them. And your bed is NEVER cold in winter when you're snuggled up with a greyhound or two.

4) **..... and the worst ???**

You quickly learn to guard food items at all times – anything from chicken stock to grapes, pats of butter to defrosting bread still in its wrapper. Safe storage comes naturally after a while, and their urge to steal wears off – eventually.

5) **What 3 words would you use to describe Jock?**

He's just a Fab Beach Boy

6) **What advice would you give to someone, reading this article, who may be thinking of adopting a greyhound?**

Most rescue greyhounds will only have known other greyhounds and the trainers who have looked after them during their racing career, so everything will be very different for them in a home. You will be their new carer and centre of their universe and that is a big commitment. If you get it right, you will have, I believe, the best friend in the world.

7) **Any funny hound stories?**

The most recent one involves foraging. While walking on the old railway line, Mike and I noticed some lovely brambles and sampled a few. The dogs looked interested so we offered them some and they thought they were quite nice. Thereafter, they made a bee-line for the bush and picked their own!



Jock and Foxy heading for The Beach!



Jock, Bryn & Foxy - my 3 GRF hounds

**Note from the Rover Reporter:** *It was lovely to see Jock at the walk in St. Andrews! He is looking amazingly well - must be all the TLC you give him Marion, he is very lucky to have found you.*

## **Other News ...**

### **Kinross Festive Street Market:**

GRF took part in the first ever Kinross Festive Street Market, which was held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November between 4:00pm & 7:00pm.

There were over 40 stalls, and street entertainment consisting of Pipe Bands and Choirs singing Christmas carols. There was also a variety of kids activities, which were held in the Church centre.

Bert, Michele & Nic attended on the day with some GRF dogs and, although it was a bitterly cold evening, it was a great publicity exercise for GRF and, hopefully, a huge success for Kinross!

### **Blizzard Coats:**

Bert has a new batch of blizzard coats available, sizes 26", 28" and 30". They come in Red, Blue, Black, Purple, and Dark Green. The coats are waterproof, with fleece lining, and have Velcro fastening. The coats are priced at £18.00 plus p&p (£3.00 for a single coat). These coats are purchased at no cost to the Kennels, so 100% of the money goes to helping our dogs.

Raincoats are also available, priced at £7.50.

Single fleece, and double fleece, coats are available too ... £8.00 for a single, and £12.50 for a double.

If you have any enquiries about any of the above items, please contact Bert McCurdy at [robert\\_mccurdy@sky.com](mailto:robert_mccurdy@sky.com)

### **2014 Calendars:**

The GRF wall calendars have been selling like hot-cakes! If you are still needing desk, or wall, calendars then please contact Michele via the Forum. Thank you, once again, to all of this year's Sponsors - thanks to them, all proceeds made from calendar sales go directly to help the homeless hounds. As ever, a **BIG** thank-you to Michele & Nic for organising these - the organisation takes an enormous amount of hard work.

### **Rainbow Bridge Calendar:**

Thank you also to George & Morag Petrie who have supplied us with a free, downloadable, Rainbow Bridge calendar ... what a lovely idea ☺



We were very sad to hear that Jimmy & Celia's beloved Flame had died ... this was a huge blow to them so soon after moving into their new home, and our love & thoughts are with them.

Our thoughts go, too, to **everyone** whose dogs have left for the Rainbow Bridge in the past year ... Christmas won't be the same without them, however, I am re-printing a piece that I think is very appropriate (and very emotional - sorry!).

### ***A Dog's Last Will & Testament***

*Before humans die, they write their last will and testament, give their home and all they have to those they leave behind. If, with my paws, I could do the same thing this is what I'd ask ..*

*To a poor and lonely stray I'd give my happy home; my bowl and cosy bed, soft pillow and all my toys; the lap which I loved so much; the hand that stroked my fur; and the sweet voice that spoke my name.*

*I'd will to the sad, scared shelter dog the place I had in my human's loving heart, of which there seemed no bounds.*

*So, when I die, please do not say, "I will never have a pet again, for the loss and pain is more than I can stand."*

*Instead, go find an unloved dog, one whose life has held no joy or hope, and give my place to him.*

*This is the only thing I can give ...*

*The love I left behind.*

*(Author Unknown)*

**and so ....**

We were delighted to hear that Celia & Jimmy have now re-homed Foggy ☺

Foggy will never replace Flame, but Flame would be pleased to know that another dog is getting a chance of a loving home following his death. We all take different lengths of time to grieve for our beloved pet (in truth, they live on in our hearts forever) and, in this, there is no right or wrong. Please, however, if you have lost a dog this year ... do not close your mind to the possibility of re-homing another - we have so many beautiful dogs in need of new homes.

**I couldn't resist sharing this piece, which was posted on the Forum by Mary Miller (Missy & Pancho's Mum) ...**

**A Cold Night Recipe:**

Take 1 double bed;  
Add 2 greyhounds;  
One at feet and one at your back;  
Leave for 7 hours;  
All toasted!

Who needs a hot water bottle ..... let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!

**On the 2<sup>nd</sup> December, Marion posted the following on the Forum ...**

“Santa says he's nervous about visiting GRF this year in case the greyhounds spook his reindeer, so I thought we could help make up for this by visiting the Donations section and giving a wee something to help make Christmas, and 2014, a happy time for the GRF hounds.

I know many of you give your time, which is the ultimate gift, and others will be giving actual presents but if, like me, you don't have much time to spare, do please consider a donation, however small. They all mount up and will be hugely appreciated, especially as 2013 has been a particularly tough year at GRF.”

It is easy to make a donation via PayPal. If you don't have a PayPal account, you can use your debit or credit card, or you can send Celia & Jimmy a cheque (*payable to Greyhound Rescue Fife*) if that is easier. Thank you, on behalf of the GRF residents.

**and a final note for 2013 ...**

On behalf of Jimmy, Celia, everyone involved with GRF and, in particular, all the hounds who have been re-homed, and those who remain in the safety of the Kennels, I would like to say an **ENORMOUS** thank-you to everyone who has supported us this past year. Our Dog Show and Summer Fete were a huge success - thank you to everyone involved in organising those - we are looking forward to seeing you all again in 2014! These, however, are only two of the larger fundraising activities that have taken place throughout the year, so a **BIG** thank-you to each and every one of you who has contributed in some way - to those of you who have re-homed a hound, to those of you who have donated food, bedding, cash and, very importantly, your time - **THANK YOU** - we couldn't do it without you.

All that remains for me to say is ... have a fabulous Christmas, and I hope that 2014 will be a kind one to you!

*Susan Mitchell*  
**Editor**

