



RADCLIFFE DONKEY SANCTUARY



NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2008 DONKEY DIARY

We are into January and our very elderly (42) female donkey Mable is giving up on life, she no longer enjoys food so we are trying to tempt her with special treats but we are fighting a losing battle even though we keep trying we know we won't win and we will have to make the heartbreaking decision, it never gets any easier.

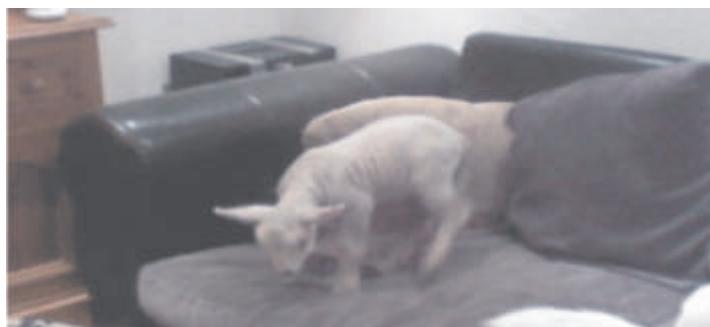
18th January Mable put to sleep in her stable it was very peaceful but we will really miss her as she had so much character. Lots of tears today.



31st January 6.30am in the morning our neighbour came shouting at the gate not to let the donkey's out. WHY NOT? We were informed the milk lorry was in our field. NO OUR GATES ARE SHUT! What gates? the milk lorry had crashed through our gates, ripped them off the hinges then smashed through our post and rail fencing leaving a mass of smashed milk bottles all over the field. We are so grateful this happened when the donkeys were safely tucked up in their stables and not out in the field as we dread to think what could of happened.

2nd February One of the local farmers informed us he had a triplet lamb on her deathbed and he could not cope with the hassle of bottle feeding her. Yes we agreed to see if we could save her life. Bottle feeding an

orphaned lamb is very time consuming, just like looking after a new born baby. One of our volunteers had never done it before so to our relief she readily agreed to take this poor little thing home with her, not knowing what she was letting herself in for. The next few days were touch and go but after that it was nice to see MOLLY (the lamb) thriving although our volunteer was looking worse for wear as Molly needed to be fed every 3 hours. One day we saw the volunteer proudly walking down the drive with little Molly wearing a hand knitted baby's cardigan and walking to heel on a dog harness and lead, this made us smile and every morning we were greeted with the same sight although the outfits varied according to the weather. The funniest sight was when I called at her house one evening and found Molly and her 2 dogs cuddled up on the leather sofa watching the television. Molly continued to thrive and was gradually taught how to be a sheep, she is happily grazing in the fields but I think she misses the home comforts of a sofa. The bond between them both will always be there but she has adapted and will remain at the sanctuary for the rest of her life.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

www.radcliffedonkeys.com

3rd March Bazoo Quintus a 4 year old Poitou stallion donkey arrived, we are his last hope as he has severe behavioural problems putting 2 people in hospital before he came to us, well we are always up for a challenge but didn't realise how mixed up this poor donkey was or how much veterinary treatment he needed. 8 months on he has cost us over £4000.00 and still needs a further 2 operations to get him back to full health. He cannot be trusted with the public yet but Tracy and Sarah have made remarkable progress with him, being bottled fed he has no fear or respect for humans so he had to be handled very differently from other donkeys and we found if we treated him like a naughty teenager and didn't respond to his bad behaviour it worked. He was trying to get a reaction by being bad but we only responded when he was being good. Nori and Mark our marvellous vets (Rase Veterinary practice in Market Rasen) prefer it if they come to us to treat him as when we take him to the surgery he acts like a proper thug and not the well trained race horses they are used to. I think they have a soft spot for him really although they never admit it. We will keep you posted with his progress but we will never give up on him although we desperately need help with his veterinary treatment and would be so grateful to anyone who could help.



16th March Teddy & Noddy did their annual appearance at Hogsthorpe and Chapel Palm Sunday parades. They had a lovely time and everyone enjoyed the fact they went into the church and stayed for the service.

4th April The swallows arrive back to the stables to remake their nests, it is amazing to think they travel all those miles but still know where to come back to.

2nd June A white van arrived and delivered a large cardboard box which we very wrongly assumed was bric a brac. The box contained 3 very large white ducks, yes very alive but why here they don't even eeyore. The van drove off and standing there in shock we had to decide what to do with them. The first job was to name them, that was quite easy Donald Daffy & Orvill the next job which

was not so easy was what to do with them, they were prey to a fox at night so as it was summer we had stables to spare. Yes 3 ducks loved the luxury of a full size stable to sleep in at night, this accommodation was temporary and something better sorted for winter.



3rd June Josephine was not well this morning and refused her breakfast which was a shock as she has always loved her food and her mood was very off. We called the vet who did a thorough examination and confirmed serious problems with her teeth, she had always seen the dentist every 6 months but age was getting the better of her teeth and there was nothing he was able to do as they don't supply dentures for donkeys. As she was very old she lacked the grinding motion and had been managing quite happily on special donkey soup for the past few years but she was in serious pain and the vet recommended an operation to remove all the troublesome roots. She had blood tests to confirm she was OK to operate on as this was her only chance and they came back positive.

4th June Bazoo & Josephine loaded up into the horsebox for a 9am appointment at the vets for their operations

5th June Unfortunately Josephine didn't make it through the operation which was a shock. We always thought she would live forever, she was such a stropky old donkey but lovely when she wanted attention (another heartbreak) why do we bother having these animals that cause us so much grief? At least we gave her the chance and there was nothing else we could do. We had to break it to her daughter Dolly Daydream. Bazoo arrived back with us a little swollen but OK



6th June We went out to buy the ducks a paddling pool and managed to get quite a nice one for £10.00 we blew it up and the ducks were horrified. We lifted them into it everyday but it just wasn't going to work (PLAN B REQUIRED)

12th June Rocky the Shetland pony arrived He is a 23 year old who has been retired from Cleethorpes beach, he used to do the 5 mile beach ride but his very caring owner thought it too much for him in his twilight years. How nice to have a caring owner of beach animals. He has so much attitude he makes us laugh, although elderly he has plenty of spirit we wonder how small children managed to stay on the 5 mile ride. After 5 minutes of arriving it was like he had lived at the sanctuary forever and hopefully he will be here for plenty of years to come



ROCKY

15th June Bazoo not well vet called

19th June Plan B in operation for the ducks we are digging a duck pond. The young group of donkeys were all watching, being nosy, then we heard a strange sound. All you have to do is look at their faces to know something is wrong. We all kept digging but I knew something wasn't right so went to investigate. I got to the top of the field and saw Little Boris's head sticking out the ground Why is Boris laying like that? OH DEAR all that is visible of Boris is his head his whole body had fallen down a large drain. Assistance arrived within seconds and us girls went for the Fire Brigade but the macho boys went for slings to lift him out Thank God it worked and Little Boris came out the drain with a few minor scratches. The drain is fenced off even though it had a cover on you can never trust donkey's not to get into mischief

4th July Bazoo had to have a second operation

7th July Bazoo very poorly vets out again

8th July Bazoo back to the vets

11th September talk at West Keal WI we were dreading it as the last one we did the ladies never looked up from their knitting until we were finished, we swore we would never do one again but this time it was very good and the ladies were very interested. It could of gone very wrong as a volunteer did the directions to the village hall and had me driving up a dirt track that looked like it was heading to heaven it was that steep. We arrived safely and had a good time

12th September One of our volunteers Eileen is still in touch with an RSPCA inspector who had found a donkey being very badly treated in a horse sale in Birmingham. She was put in a pen for sale with several horses from the same dealer who were kicking and biting her very badly. The inspectors wife stepped in and bought her so she desperately needed a new safe home



GOOD GIRL

16th September We arranged for Eileen and her husband Roger another volunteer at the Sanctuary to go with Steve and the horse box to collect this poor donkey. She arrived several hours later with no name poor thing but settled in here, we have Naughty Noddy to thank for the welcome as he loves everyone and makes sure they are his friend. It is bad luck to rename a donkey or change it's name so you have to get to know them and they tell you their name. Two days later she told us her name was Good Girl

19th September A visitor told us about an owner who needed help, the pony she had owned for 23 years was pining after losing her best friend and field companion. Her owner had done everything for her and she was very well looked after but very miserable itching herself and standing in her shelter all day lonely so we were asked to help.



DINA

25th September We went to fetch DINA the pony and arrived at the field she had lived in for 23 years. Her owner was obviously very sad but the little pony walked straight into the horse box and we brought her back to the sanctuary. She was so excited to see the donkeys, ponies and horse's she didn't stop chattering for a few days. Her skin has healed and she is so happy, her owner gets to visit whenever she likes and has contributed a field shelter to the sanctuary which we desperately needed, in fact two more would be great.

26th September we were told of an Andalusian stallion donkey in this country that needed a good home (a boyfriend for Dona Pepa would be nice)



1st October Zac de Silva arrived a lovely 14.2h stallion donkey his feet were in very poor condition but apart from that he was lovely and very well behaved too polite and well behaved to live at the sanctuary. Roll on next spring and let's see if he fancies Dona Pepa at the moment he seems obsessed with the wheelbarrow. Although we are a sanctuary and don't breed it would be lovely to help protect this breed of donkey and see if Dona Pepa would like a baby, we will keep you posted with the progress. If not he can keep the wheel barrow

21st October The vet came to do Good Girl's micro chip, passport and blood tests, to check Bazoo and blood test a few others. While he was here I asked him out of curiosity to blood test our eldest resident Teddy which he did. Teddy's blood results came back great for a donkey of 42 so we had high hopes of him lasting years

28th October Teddy was still laid down in his stable in the morning so we set about getting a few strong people to pick him up, Teddy has always been able to lay down and get up on his own so this was very out of character. When we picked him up his front leg was left dangling and we knew it was broken. The vet came straight away and confirmed he had broken his shoulder, being very old (NO ANCIENT) 42 years of age his brittle bones must of given way when he laid down to sleep. This was a total shock as his blood tests were so good but we had no option but to put him to sleep. We always thought he would live forever. He was on his death bed when he came to us 14 years ago so we must of done something right. He really will be sadly missed as he was always under your feet and greeted all visitors that came to the sanctuary



19th November Vets back again to Bazoo as he keeps bloating and getting colic, thorough examination cameras down his throat, tests and swabs done plus examinations from the other end which we won't go into. POOR BOY waiting for the results We won't give up on him as he deserves a lovely life after such a sad start with his mother dying

22nd November The early snow began to fall so the residents were tucked up in bed early lovely and cosy

23rd November Still snowing heavily and a couple of inches on the floor but the donkeys couldn't wait to get out in the fields and gallop round playing and rolling like children



Not quite donkey news but we have adopted a feral cat FUDGE from the cats protection league which has made his home in the stables. Don't feral cats keep their distance? He wants cuddles and fuss all the time and won't leave us alone but he is very happy and we have been pleased to have given him a nice new home.

STOP PRESS - On Saturday 6th December we collected 2 Shetland Ponies - Tinkerbelle and Katie. Watch the Website for more information.



Please keep up with the other sanctuary news at www.radcliffedonkeys.com including the arrival and operation of **"DENNIS the DONKEY BUS"** and opening times for next year

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