

# Colleen's 2010

## News from the Tamar Valley Donkey Park & Sanctuary



Well it's eeyore from me again this year, they said I did such a good job of the last newsletter that I could do it again, but I think none of the others wanted to do it and I'm so soft! As I told you last year I came over from Eire in 1989 so I have now been here 21 years. So many things have happened in that time that I cannot always bring them to mind. In the last newsletter I told you about some new friends at the park but unfortunately others are no longer with us, I will tell you more later. My people have still not been able to get me a nice new donkey box, but that does not mean I've not been out and about, as I have reluctantly got in a trailer however I do find them so noisy.

## New friends at the Sanctuary

**Princess** a miniature Shetland, who had been in a field on her own for 8 years in Gunnislake and who's owner was leaving the area, was taken in by the sanctuary and has bonded with **Crystal**. She cannot wait for **Crystal** to get back from a show or hacking out to be with her.



**Crystal** a Dartmoor Hill pony now lives at the park. She is being fostered from the Mare and Foal Sanctuary and Bethany rides her. More later.

### **Rocky, Sandy and Tweedle**

The RSPCA asked us to take in these goats who have settled in very well.

**Tweedle** is very clever in opening the gate to the hay and straw store.



**Rocky & Sandy**



**Tweedle**



**Thelma, Donald & Della**

When we said goodbye to **Dave** the duck, **Donald** a muscovy was all on his own and pining, so our people went and got him two friends **Thelma** and **Della**. They layed a large batch of eggs and we now have 11 ducklings!

A few months ago a local resident called us to say some of our chickens were about to get out of the park onto the bottom road. All our chickens were accounted for so these chickens must have been dumped over the wall. They have now become part of the flock and James the cockerel is delighted.

## Jess

**Galaxy** was a rare breed soay sheep who was taken in by the Park during the "foot & mouth" outbreak in 2001, with her daughter **Mars**. They lived in Old David's garden and were fed toast at 10 pm each night before bed. One Sunday in June Old David returned home after work to find **Galaxy** had succumbed to her great age and **Mars** was distraught. The very next day the Park was asked to give a home to a pet sheep named Jess from a local smallholding, where she had had several lambs over a number of years. **Jess's** mothering instincts took over immediately and she and **Mars** are now inseparable.



## Departed friends but not forgotten



### Galaxy

Galaxy as in the story above



**Beano** the miniature Shetland lost most of his sight and then had heart failure. He was very old.

Two of our friendly goats **Bungy&Titch** went to that goat shed in the sky.

**Blossom** the big British Black pig got old age related arthritis & **Dave** the duck

### Bracken

As we told you in the last newsletter went with **Cherry** and **Seth** just over into Devon to be with a young family. He became a fantastic riding pony for their son Rio and they won lots of rosettes.

One morning a few months ago he was found lying down obviously in pain, the vet diagnosed colic and **Bracken** was put to sleep. The vet thought that the likely cause of the colic was a growth in his intestines.



## In memory of Kit

**Kit** was only 23 yrs of age but her start in life was very poor as she was tethered by wire around her ankles to stop her wandering. This had damaged her tendons making her permanently lame and caused the hair to lose its pigment, which explained the white hair just above her ankles. In March she stopped wandering the Park as she always did with **Copper** and **Colleen**. The vet visited and said that as she was in so much pain from her feet despite daily doses of strong medication, for her sake it was the end of the road, so on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2010 we said a very sad goodbye.

Old David thinks that in Donkey Heaven **Bridget** was waiting for her and said  
*"Come on in **Kit** no more pain, now Ill show you around"*



## Credit Crunch

Well last time I told you that I had heard about this thing called the "Credit Crunch" and it was not to do with crunching carrots! Our people have said that this crunch has caused our visitor numbers to drop so we have been very grateful for those that have visited us or adopted us online, by mail or on the phone, thank you all very much. I have recently heard that we now have a charity and can collect something called gift aid, which gets us more money to pay for feed etc. Will tell you more in this newsletter.

## Carrot crunch

Well about a year ago we did stop hearing the crunch of carrots as our people stopped selling carrots for visitors to feed us. This was because **Copper** my old friend, who is now well over 40, has started to lose the swallowing reflex in her throat, like elderly humans do and stands with her tongue hanging out (a bit like Old David Ha-Ha). We had to have the vet out three times in ten days to get carrots out of her and we nearly lost her the last time so carrots were off the menu! They now sell a special Donkey Diet feed pellet, which we all like and **Copper** can eat.

## Donkey Rides

When we opened for the summer season at Easter we had to make the very tough decision to stop donkey rides. The reason was that most of the riding donkeys were getting too old (just like Old David!) and in discussion with the vet it was decided that they should be retired. The young donkeys are not yet ready to give rides and the Irish Boys in particular are still a bit too flighty. Many of our visitors were disappointed but the introduction of "pat a pet" "groom a donkey" and "take a donkey for a walk", has been a great success. **Teddy** has a trick of taking visitors to the bottom of the park for grass and refusing to come back!

## Children of Chernobyl

Once again this summer the Park was pleased to host a free visit for a group of children from the Chernobyl disaster area, and they spent a day with us.

The picture show some of the youngsters with Julia and young Bethany

***Bethany says that she is going to run the sanctuary when her Mum & Dad get "OLD" like Nanna & Poppa!***



## Minty Moo & Crystal

You will remember that last year I told you about **Minty Moo** and how he came to be at the park and why he had to have an eye removed. **Minty Moo** has been so much happier since his painful eye was removed and continued to go to shows winning rosettes and cups with Bethany riding him. A while ago **Minty Moo** was retired and Bethany got **Crystal** a Dartmoor pony on fulltime foster care from the Mare and Foal Sanctuary. **Crystal** has settled into life at the park and does not mind donkeys unlike many horses and ponies. **Crystal** and Bethany have already won lots of rosettes including a "show championship" & "reserve show championship" but **Crystal** has not lost her trick of not wanting to be caught except for food!



## Charity

Our people after a lot of investigation and advice decided we should set up a charity to protect the future for us donkeys and our animal friends. After much paperwork they submitted the application and after only 3 weeks they were given charity status. Into this charity will go all the adoptions, legacies, donations and gift Aid.

The charity name etc as follows.

Name **Tamar Donkey Sanctuary**  
Reg No **1138221**  
Address **Donkey Park**  
**St. Ann's Chapel**  
**Gunnislake**  
**PL18 9HW**  
Tel **01822 834072**  
E-mail **info@tamardonkeysanctuary.org**  
Website **www.tamardonkeysanctuary.org**

## Volunteers

The park has many work experience, day release, community payback, and other volunteers working with us donkeys. They come and do all sorts of work some just with us animals others café experience and maintenance.

## Donkey's out & about

Even though the park is without a nice "donkey box" we have been able to do a few trips out in a borrowed "trailer". **Poppy** and **Lizzy**, who are not as fussy as me regarding transport, went to an "Open Farm Sunday" at Lydford and had a great time. I decide to get in the trailer to go to the Palm Sunday services at Callington and St. Cleer. I did not want to disappoint the many children at the services. One Saturday in the summer I went for the day to the market area of Plymouth and had many admirers

## Around the Park

Lauren's ( ex donkey walker) dad still comes and keeps our trees in shape.

This winter we plan to make some major changes to the layout of the park in preparation for some "quasi legislation" appearing regarding "Farm Parks" and places where the public may be allowed to have contact with animals! We will have all play equipment in the Donkey Drop-In play barn and outside in front of it. All contact with donkeys and our other rescued animals will be north of the play barn

**Note past editions of our Newsletters can be found on our website under the "About Us" tab**  
**Plus latest news on "News Page"**

**20th Year Celebration  
& Treacle's 3rd Birthday  
Much fun was had by all**



# Our Sanctuary & Home

## Some pictures



Well folks that's all for now as my hooves are sore from all the typing! I'll get Old David to run this down to the Post Office now.  
Many thanks for adopting us  
Love from all of us  
**Colleen**



**THE END**