

# Tamar

# Donkey Sanctuary

At the Tamar Valley Donkey Park

**Newsletter February 2013**

Charity No 1138221

**A BIG HELLO from all the donkeys at the Tamar Donkey Sanctuary here in Cornwall and once more it's your on the spot reporter **Sasha** bringing you the news.**

You will see to the right a picture of me with the local MP Mrs Sherryl Murray who visited the park in the summer to find out more about us and if there was any way she could help our sanctuary.

Mrs Murray spent a few hours here not only making a fuss of us donkeys, but also talking to our people and visitors to the park. Mrs Murray was most impressed with us and what the park offers the local community, as well as to the tourists all year round.



Well its been raining for what seems like forever and that's why this newsletter is late because my helpers have had their hands full defending the park from floodwater. You will say "but the Donkey Park is on a hill" which is true, but all the water from the main road above us that floods frequently, passes down our park on its way to the river Tamar. Since the play-barn was flooded in October 2011 our people have had to make some more changes to drainage to stop it happening again. All the rain has made our paddocks very muddy and we have had to spend much more time in the donkey house eating hay.

Brenda our donkey box has been out and about with **Poppy** who took over offsite duties in the middle of the year from **Colleen** who is now much too old (and grumpy) to travel, she just likes hanging around with her best mate **Grizelda**. **Colleen's** last outing was to the Queen's Jubilee Celebrations in Tavistock. **Poppy** has been to all the usual nativities, Dickensian evening, fetes and processions. We all wait excitedly for her to come back and tell us what she has been up to, but she says she is not so keen to go into noisy churches with loud organs and singing.



We would like to thank you all for supporting us during these difficult times we keep hearing old **David** talking about. I cannot repeat what I hear him say about who got us in this financial mess and what he would do!

Our charity hopes this year to gear up its fundraising and the use of Gift Aid, as the cost of keeping and feeding us donkeys and our other furry friends is going up and up. Also with our charity in place and with a charity number, solicitors and their clients are happier to arrange legacies in favour of our sanctuary.



Over the last year we have had **Jemima** a Shetland pony join us, she has settled in very well with **MiniMoo**, **Lilly** and **Princess** our other three miniature Shetlands. **Lulu** a Dartmoor pony and **Harvey** a goat have been re-homed with us from Churchtown in Cornwall.

**Harvey** will do "high fives" if you hold your hand up he will head butt it. **Piper** an elderly pony who lost all his companions where he lived came to live with us.



If you have visited us in the last few months you will find that we no longer have straw on the floor of our donkey house. This came about after our people had discussions with our vet and farrier and it was decided that "sea sand" would be much better for our hooves. We love it as we like rolling in it just after we have been groomed.



Some of you when you visit may be worried when entering our car park that we have hundreds of children on site. This is because you see 4 or 5 coaches parked, they park here in the daytime and overnight during term time, as they are used by a Devon coach company to transport students to college and home again. By parking at the Donkey Park they are saving fuel and pollution in not having to drive back to their headquarters on the edge of Dartmoor morning and night. It also means that our sanctuary gets a donation towards our hay and straw, which is very helpful. This is also our way of helping to offset our donkey "methane" output as we had been threatened with "corks".



I am writing this in freezing cold weather, we just caught the snow that came down on the 18/19<sup>th</sup> January and it has been cold ever since. So on top of all the flooding we have had down our park from land above we have now had snow and severe frosts. Our people just don't know when it will be before the paddocks will be usable again and what they will have to do to get them fit for us and at what cost in money. See the pictures of our ponies having their feeds in the snow and the road passed our park when one of the school coaches tried to go and collect students for Callington College but then the college closed for the day.



**Annie** our "dogsheep" breaks all the rules and goes wherever she likes! She is now 14 years old so I expect you would say you "*cannot teach an old dogsheep new tricks*". Returning visitors always look out for her or ask where she is, normally in the office eating shredded paper or sleeping in the doorway. Our other sheep are all doing well with **Beetroot** wandering as she pleases. **Mars, Jess** and **Maisie** still live in Old David and Julia's garden; we say, "to save Old **David** mowing the grass".

We know that our people have lots of ideas to make changes to our park to attract more visitors but its all down to money and I keep hearing them say we are living in "funny times".



**All this writing I must have a rest before I do the next half! Hope you have enjoyed it so far.**

All us donkeys have been keeping well and having our dental checks, vaccinations and worming to keep us in tiptop condition. The only sad times we had was in January last year were when **Busy Lizzy** became poorly and after a couple of days following many vet visits day and night, she was taken with her mother **Poppy** up to the big donkey sanctuary in Sidmouth, where it was confirmed she had a twisted gut which unfortunately is inoperable in donkeys due to the very poor success rate. **Busy Lizzy** was put to sleep and **Poppy** left with her for a time to say goodbye and then Tamsin brought **Poppy** back in Brenda the donkey box. **Poppy** has taken her loss very well and as mentioned earlier is now our roving ambassador. We also said a sad goodbye to **Georgina**.



**Georgina**  
**Busy Lizzy**                      **Children of Chernobyl**  
**2012 visit**

Recently our little donkey **Treacle** was adopted and the person who adopted him and his friends set up a **Facebook** page, so you can follow **Treacle The Donkey** on Facebook.

Well the rain finally stopped 2 weeks ago and now the ground is drying out slowly. We are so happy to be able to be out in the open air munching hay until the grass starts to grow again. At half term we were pleased to have many of our old friends visit us again and support our sanctuary.



Since our last newsletter we have been joined by **Sally** working as our animal care person, that's her on top of the pile of sea sand checking it! **Caroline** who was our animal care person went to join our vets as a veterinary nurse something she always wanted to do.

On the digger is **Derek** a friend from down the road who has lots of "boys toys" so he comes to help us out in his spare time, which our people are very grateful for.

Some of last summer's visitors will remember a chick that liked a lot of fuss and would jump on anyone's lap to be stroked. Well he has grown up to be a most handsome cockerel and loves to sit on **Bengy** the goats back.

Last summer the park bought a second hand muck trailer so that the local farmer could take the muck away and use it on his land. You will see that **Colleen** and **Grizelda** like to check out what is being disposed of.



**Jacko & Co waiting for rain to stop**

Just thought you would like to know that our people **Tamsin** and **Julia** are much better and I heard them say the other day that on **Tamsin's** two-year check up there was no sign of any more cancer. **Julia** has most of her sight back but it is a little distorted and she has had to get used to living with it, but as she says better than no sight at all. Old **David** had a total knee replacement in March 2012, which went very well so that 6 months later he was climbing a 20' ladder to clear out the gutters!

All us residents at the sanctuary are looking forward to Easter when the park will be open daily for the summer season and hope we get lots of visitors to feed us "donkey diet" (replacement for carrots) and make a fuss of us.

Thank you once again for all your support.

**From**

**Annie** (dog-sheep), **Beamish**, **Billy Bean**, **Colleen**, **Connie**, **Crackers**, **Declan**, **Desmond**, **Gemma**, **Grizelda**, **Happy**, **Jacko**, **Joyce**, **Kiltie**, **Mary**, **Paddy**, **Pebbles**, **Percy**, **Poppy**, **Punda**, **Ringo**, **Roy**, **Sasha**, **Seamus**, **Snubs**, **Teddy**, **Treacle** and all the other animals.



**Just checking play equipment**



**Old David on 4 legs like us donkeys**



**Poppy** hopes to see you when she is out and about during the summer. Here **Poppy** is returning to Brenda the donkey box with **Bethany** along Callington Fore St, after the Callington Christmas Fair .

### **A note from the editor.**

I do hope you have enjoyed reading **Sasha's** report on our work here at the Tamar Donkey Sanctuary.

We are looking forward hopefully to a better year than last so we can keep all the donkeys and their friends in the manner to which they have become accustomed.

Do visit our website news page for the latest information and follow us on Facebook.

We have enclosed a re-adoption form for those whose adoptions have expired and wish to re-new.

Regards  
David (old)



**I love Teddy**

**I love this ice lolly**



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