

Tamar Donkey Sanctuary

At The Tamar Valley Donkey Park

Newsletter October 2018

Charity No 1138221

Well it's **Sasha** here again it's been some time since I have given a report on what's been happening here at the **Tamar Donkey Sanctuary**. I'm coming up to 20 now and been here 19 years how time flies! **Old D** and I got together for me to dictate this newsletter to him; you may notice from our picture together he's progressed to a biro from a quill pen!



Betsy



Dotty

Since the last newsletter our people have taken into their care 7 donkeys and 1 Mule. **Dotty**, **Saffy** and **Betsy** had been on a smallholding in Bere Alston for a number of years through different owners, when the last ones decided they did not want to take them on so our people were asked to take them in. **Jack**, **Jill** and their daughter **Gabby** came from a local couple who due to age and frailty found them too much to look after. There was a bad case of neglect of ponies, horses and a mule locally. A national charity took care of the horses and ponies and our people were asked if they would take in the Mule. **Sweetie** the mule has settled in very well after her sad experience she is so soft and gentle, a hit with our visitors and us donkeys. **Lenny** a donkey foal was left with a local lady when she was taking delivery of a pony. The lorry driver had tried to sell her **Lenny** and when she refused he just drove off leaving her holding on to **Lenny**, so he came here to live with us.



Saffy



Jack



Jill



Gabby



Sweetie

As a sanctuary all our residents are looked after for the rest of their lives. Some of the oldest residents have passed away in the last 2 years, in particular visitors favourites **Teddy**, **Grizelda** and **Percy**. **Cherry** the pony who our people remember meeting when they visited the park before they took it over in 1999 and she was not a young pony then, passed away from extreme old age (at least 35). Goats **Rocky**, **Sparky** and **Bella** are all missed. Two of the sheep that lived in **Old D's** garden passed on, **Minty** (Grey faced Dartmoor) who had only been here a couple of years but was very old and developed bad joints. **Old D** misses **Mars** (Soay) who would demand a titbit by standing outside the front door baring until he gave in as he always did!



Lenny meets Santa



Grizelda

We try to give all our animals the best we can while they are with us and always miss their very different characters when they are gone, this includes many not mentioned like rabbits, guinea pigs, chickens and ducks.

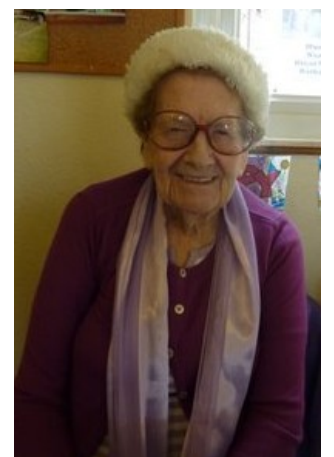


Teddy



Percy

We were all very sad at the passing in June 2017 of Julia's mother Rennie at 98³/₄, many of our regular supporters may remember her back in the early 2000's as she would arrive after church on a Sunday and sit and have lunch in the corner of the cafe and then help with the washing-up or serve in the shop. Her help in the early days of taking over the Donkey Park was much appreciated.



Two new paddocks were constructed near the car park and old fencing replaced. **Old D** gets a low when he reads on "social" media comments like "*needs new fences*" unfortunately us donkeys can make a new fence age very quickly (wood is very good for sharpening the teeth!). Four new benches have been put in the top of the park so visitors can sit and watch us donkeys and goats. **Hovis** and **Loaf** love using them at the end of the day when the visitors have gone. Three lorry loads of gravel has been laid in the car park and on the main drive to level them.



As reported in our last newsletter our park is quite open and from time to time vandalism has happened at night, with another episode in July, which is very depressing for our people, us donkeys do eeyore to try to frighten them away but it does not always work.

The stand alone Cafe was closed and **Old D & Tony** built a new kitchen into the Donkey Drop-In play barn to save costs after the dramatic fall in visitors "weekdays" during term time known as the "Gove effect" not allowing children time off in term time. This hit the tourism industry and all attractions have had to remodel to take into account this effect. The old Cafe has become a staff restroom and feed storage area. Having all catering in the Play Barn has turned out to be a good move.



Cherry

New Goats **Tinkerbelle** known as **Tinks** lived with ponies, when her partner passed away she came to us. **Tinks** spends nearly all her time in and around the Donkey House and sleeps under the hayracks so gets covered with hay as the donkeys eat. **Bambi, Hovis & Loaf** were family pets but due to a fire at their property they had to be kept locked in a shed which was not ideal long term. They have settled in with us with no problem as they just love humans.



Minty

Mars was 18 yrs



Tinkerbelle



Bambi



Loaf & Hovis

relaxing after a long day with visitors



Again our people invited as their guests a large group of children from Chernobyl who had a wonderful afternoon visiting the donkeys and playing in the Donkey Drop-In. As usual before leaving they gave a gift to **Julia** and **Old D**, this year a Belarus doll and they must have known that **Old D** likes chocolate!



In November 2016 we heard that familiar "scream" of Julia's just like when she broke her ankle in 2014, this time she slipped on some sheep poo on Old D's and her driveway breaking her leg in three places so it was blues and two's again. We did not see her for about 4 months before she could hobble around again. Tamsin and Old D now hold their breaths when she is walking on uneven ground!

Family update: **Tamsin** is now 7 years cancer free but still suffers the after effects of the intensive treatment. This summer she had more surgery to help with the side effect of treatment. **Julia** and **Old D** are ageing (both were 75 in April) and still working, **Old D** says he just keeps taking the tablets! He also suggests we get a "Michelin Man" suit for **Julia** in case she falls again. **Bethany** had her long locks cut off on her 16th birthday, to donate to the Little Princesses Trust for wigs for children.



15" hair donated

Ouch!

Social media means nothing to us donkeys but we hear from our people that it is the way forward and that leaflets are dying out. They keep taking pictures of us doing funny things to post. **Old D** has difficulty keeping up with this new technology so relies on granddaughter **Bethany** (16) to sort him out! So follow us on Facebook.



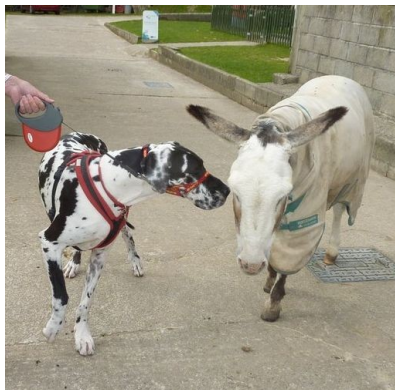
Us donkeys keep seeing bags of stuff taken into the Drop-In which is not food for us! We found out that it is indirectly food for us, as it's donations to the charity shop which has taken off since starting from a handful of books. All the monies put into the buckets for items bought goes toward the 10 large bales of hay that we eat our way through every 3-4 weeks and they tell us it's gone up £10 a bale (£30 to £40) due to the hot summer we have had. One designer clothes shop in Tavistock closed down and donated all their remaining stock to our charity shop. We are very grateful to everyone who donates items.

We are not "out & about" as much as we used to, not only are us donkeys ageing but **Old D** is also and he finds **Ruby** the box without power steering a bit of a strain. Also most of us have never been in a box so are very reluctant to load and if we refused after an event it's a long long walk home!

Jacko went out with **Bethany** & **Old D** to Pentillie Castle to meet the audience arriving for a performance of Dr Doolittle. **Jacko** did not know what to make of an Alpaca at first!



Children parties continue to be popular and **Tony** and **Old D** built 3 party paddocks in the play barn to host them.



Our people have been doing all they can to get extra visitors with special winter promotions. What disheartens them is the very quiet term time weekdays when it's mainly a few mature visitors and their dogs, **Daphne** the donkey loves dogs and walks around with them.

A "donation" button has been added to our home page at

www.donkeypark.com and links directly to our Totalgiving page. They do not charge any fees so our sanctuary gets your full donation.



Purchases can still be done via:

www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/tamardonkey/ and then the on-line stores give a donation to our sanctuary.



CHILDRENS BIRTHDAY PARTIES

The Donkey Park is the ideal place for parties whatever the weather with it's big all weather play barn

Hot and cold menus with a minimum number of just six children

Pick up a leaflet at entrance or go to www.donkeypark.com and click on button

This year **Old D** and **Julia** went to see **Bethany's** "Prom" night arrivals and several of our cafe and animal care girls were also attending. It was so lovely seeing them all dressed up rather than in an apron or in their wet weather gear picking "poo"!



Pink Party Bus

More of our young ladies were there but camera shy!



Lauren
Josie Molly



Bethany & Gypsy

It's really is nice for us to see some of the girls and boys that have worked for us as teenagers and then gone on to greater things. Some come back to visit with partners and children while others pop up on social media from other parts of the world. This year we have several moving up to 6th form and others off to Cheltenham, Bath & Bristol Universities. We do hope that working for us has helped set them for the future.

A rare family outing to our local to celebrate Tamsin and David's 25th Wedding Anniversary



Bethany's first appearance in a newsletter in 2004
Above now a 16yr old confident rider and musician



Boys heading back to park from winter grazing



New Kitchen



Jacko



Copper & Lilly



Jack & Lenny



Daphne never misses anything



Bethany & Teddy when younger

The Tamar Valley Donkey Park & Sanctuary (Charity No 1138221)

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TAMAR DONKEY SANCTUARY

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Old David's Garden & Paddock

Our 2 sheep live here

Jess a black Zwartbles and about 14 years of age

Skye Texel sheep 5 years old

Animal House

The night time accommodation for most of the wandering goats so is often empty during the day.

Small Animal Corner

Here you will find our Rabbits and Guinea Pigs

Donkey House & Yard

The number of donkeys here will depend on the weather.

In the yard Donkey Grooming & take a donkey for a walk

Guinea pig cuddling inside stable (see board for times)

Car Park Paddock

Used for Donkeys or ponies depending on season and weather

Donkey Drop-In

- *Entrance
- *Donkey Bazaar Gift Shop
- ***Holly's** Cafe & Coffee Bar
- *Charity Shop
- *Indoor Soft Play
- *Toilets

Through access to out-door play area and woods



Original Graphic by Jenni Ball

Top Field

This is where you find most of our donkeys

Boys Field

In this paddock you will find our stallion **Jacko** along with **Desmond & Treacle** his sons. Also **Billy Bean** who came to the park in 2002 with his friend Crackers. During the winter the 4 of them graze Sylvia's Meadow just over the wall a SSSI site owned by Cornwall Wildlife

Shetland Paddocks

Are the main paddocks for our ponies

Leat (ponds)

Part of a watering system from Kit Hill down to Cotehele.

Fills up with water in heavy rain and then drains underground The system has not been complete for many years due to development changes in the area.

Pigs

Charlie and **Percy** have moved here from Plymouth. They had been purchased, as "micro" pigs by a family who soon found out they were too much to look after.

They ended up living in a garage and on some decking which was far from ideal.

They have now joined **Daisy** a Kune Kune pig in the woods

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Wash your hands after touching the animals & before eating

Children **must** be supervised at all times

Please only eat picnics in the eating areas provided

Donkey Drop-In & out door play area

Tamar Donkey Sanctuary

St. Ann's Chapel Gunnislake

Cornwall PL18 9HW

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