



**THE  
HARTBEAT  
CHRISTMAS 2016**

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Well I've finally got round to it – writing my newsletter! Something I used to really enjoy doing and next year I promise I will be on the case again. What a year we have had! I do genuinely like to keep you all informed on what goes on at Hollytrees and what a busy time it has been. You all know the fact that we always try and help anything that is put before us.

Our year starts with the winter casualties like the smaller hedgehogs that come out hungry and we've got the perfect cure for them. We work alongside various organisations such as Social Services, District Nurses, Health Workers and our own Chemist Health Centres where loads and I MEAN loads of first class stuff is not only wasted but as you all know we are governed by THE USE BEFORE/BEST BEFORE DATES and other sales gimmicks. This includes bandages, ———— elastic bandages, sticky plasters, really expensive foam type dressings, creams, tapes even surgical instruments and even HIGHLY CONCENTRATED food and drinks like Fortisip which all the animals enjoy and WOW does it work on building them up!



Then we all really enjoy the baby bird season; a really rewarding time. We get the trust of these creatures, which I know perhaps we should let nature take its course, but we really do have a good record of success cases! Some get to us too late, but we've got some superb gear especially our BRINSEA HOSPITAL CAGE donated by members Mick and Irene, so useful and effective. Thanks to you good people who never let our animals and birds down because you are all genuine and although we can't always be out there I am proud to say we do our very, very best to meet our rescue animal needs. We are also lucky to have some good genuine members of staff we've still got Tracy, Wendy, Adam

and our new part timer Tammy – they are a superb team and always love and help the poor critters in our care. Some are mad and boisterous, others are so, so nervous and abused that they need a totally different approach, the team can read and act accordingly.

Can I also mention our team of volunteers and students from Solihull College, Morton Morrell College, Pershore College etc. - some of these students even come back as volunteers once they have completed their studies, very heart-warming to see that kind of enthusiasm towards animal care amongst the younger generation. One I must mention in particular is Sophie who is always there when needed, thank you mate! And of course your mom and dad who get you to us come rain or shine.

A bit of good news is that we are going to do a bit of spending in 2017, watch this space!

We've just had some professional help from Rob, Steve and Jan on constructing a base to build a wood log cabin which will accommodate baby animals, birds (which will have aviaries on the side) and in the winter will serve as a place for puppies which we don't get so many of now. They are all on the Internet; Pre-loved, Gumtree etc. we seem to get them when the Irresponsible new owners can't cope with them.

But we've got our team that sort them out; Alan, Pauline, Isabelle and June, just to name a few.

I must say a lot is planned for 2017 a lot that we need to update, improve and redesign.



I was horrified to work out that Iris and Les Elliot died 31 years ago!! Wow I can't believe it. But what a lot we have achieved and I still think they are with us and I know they often guide me in things we do bless them. We hope you like the Christmas card done with the help of David who sorts all our printing out. I've had a bit of a wobbly year but I have got through it with help of my family, our superb team, fantastic volunteers, genuine people like David and of course YOU; all of whom are happy to help with whatever they can. I must say how both Ann and I have experienced terrible back problems for several weeks now and everyone I talk to has experienced the same; I feel it is either a country wide virus or germ warfare! Anyway, 2017 is going to be 200% better so I've been told and I'm not going to argue! This year has been so busy with our wildlife birds as well as mammals and I may have mentioned before we've got a great team here that tackle all sorts in many different circumstances.

Continued

From high risk situations on our very busy motorways, feral cats in all sorts of predicaments, owners passing away, dogs facing death row through no fault of their own and most of all these situations always occur when most of the authorities are off duty – evenings or weekends. When there is no help at all for these creatures. But as I've mentioned earlier we do our utmost to help and be fair to all the creatures, as well as the owners, and indeed the people who are trying to sort their particular situation out. We've just got over Diwali Festival and Bonfire Night which always lasts a month before and up to and after Christmas and New Year.



Well as you may know I have this irresistible urge to check that wonderful website – Dogslost UK – a team of volunteers who with the guidance of Jayne Hayes freely and physically go out and help search, poster, set up feed stations and even use tracker dogs that establish if the lost animal is in fact still around.

It's such a traumatic time for dog and owner. I usually get a call from Jayne, Phoebe or Claire, all volunteers, who monitor the poor creatures that either won't be caught by their owners, due to fear, as well as the poor souls that haven't got caring owners.

These will have been dumped possibly because of illness and unable to afford vet fees **(which is another sore point with us at Hollytrees)** or the dogs have uncaring owners that just don't want them back! Some people go racing, fishing, shooting, golfing etc. well we go Dog Catching and believe me we are GOOD at it and most important the animals are always so grateful as indeed are the owners, if they have one. Even the people whom the animals befriend are so grateful when they are caught. Then we get the animal back to Hollytrees and all get stuck in to proving and convincing that NERVOUS WRECK that NOT all humans are really that bad. We haven't failed as of yet. Our policy is that there is a home to suit the animal and once again we have a good team that do all the right things to get than animal on the road to recovery and a family of its own.



I've had a job sorting out the Christmas card but each picture represents what we do. Even the police are grateful to have us on call. One Monday morning in September we were inundated with pleas of help, Radio WM, various members of the police, even the dog warden office, call after call to ask for help in catching a STRAY SHEEP, which was causing chaos in and around the city centre.

The police thought they had it trapped in the wholesale markets in Digbeth, but it proved an escape artist. I had an idea of where it had come from and one thing I made very clear before I agreed to help was that there was NO WAY I, or anyone at Hollytrees, was going to help an animal only for it to end up in a SLAUGHTERHOUSE.

The police woman I was in contact with said she couldn't guarantee that we could save it, you can guess what my answer was! Not 5 minutes later we had the go ahead, by which time the female sheep was heading up Bradford Street at 25mph, after wrecking the markets. Two police cars and a council refuse cart were in pursuit and several members of the public. She turned right into Moseley Rd, two circuits around HIGHGATE PARK, there was NO STOPPING her. We then stopped all the traffic and ended with her going into a recently new built cul-de-sac directly opposite HIGHGATE PARK. We were assured it was a dead end so Ann, Tracy and myself got out the 50meter nets that I use for deer etc. on the motorways, that needed holding up, as with all cases even the firemen helped us, but at the other end of the cul-de-sac one of the police officers had rugby tackled her and managed to hold on! By this time all her hooves were bleeding badly and had worn down to the quicks. Anyway she has 100% recovered and is enjoying life in our CORNER FIELD along with 2 goats, 4 Shetlands, 2 other ponies and has really settled in.

The picture on the Christmas card bottom left is two baby hedgehogs found when a garden shed had to be demolished over in Great Barr. We've had loads of youngsters this year some way too young to survive winter, but we have a superb team of volunteers that keep them throughout the winter.

Middle bottom is one of several baby Tawny Owls brought in after being found abandoned, and being mobbed by magpies etc. We keep all these sort of birds COMPLETELY wild and nature then takes over. Incidentally last years card had the HOBBY FALCON which if you recall had a cleanly broken wing. That was one of the very best rescues. Amicus Vets, who are superb with wildlife x-rayed it to find the break, we had to winter it in one of our big aviaries to keep it safe. It was found in Kingsbury Water Park, in May we took it back for release and away it went. We let it go where there were loads of Dragonflies, swallows etc. and warm enough for it to survive. The reason we had to winter it was due to the fact that they MIGRATE the same as their food migrates to AFRICA etc. It was a MODEL PATIENT, that's what HOLLYTREES IS ALL ABOUT.

Now top left is a couple of our own rescue dogs.

The GSD called CASEY who was the victim of a marriage split, she was a typical GSD, so protective of the family's home and 3 children and God help anyone who tried to say different. She was weeks in the kennels waiting for the right family but then got KENNEL POSSESSIVE and up to the house she came as ANN and I truly love and understand GERMAN SHEPHERDS.

In her last home she loved everyone but the man just that little bit more. Football was her weakness she loved a family game of football. In fact the man called in to

Hollytrees with his 2 sons some 4 years after The Big Split he never dreamt she would still be here! Neither could he believe we had taken her on as one of our pets. Even I couldn't believe how she reacted and yes, she remembered all 3 members of her last home 4 YEARS ON. Well the tears flowed from everyone and they spent a lovely 2 hours playing football and I thought what the hell are we going to do when they go, no way could they have her back, how is she going to react? Well as good as gold we came up to the office and we all sat down and sure enough she sat by me and when they got up to go she still sat by me. I was over the moon what a memory she and indeed all dogs have.

They've visited us a couple of times since and she's more than happy to play but is also keen to stay with us. She's pictured with STAR another rescue of ours from STOW GYPSY FAIR. She was bald and raw with fox mange which affects them mentally as well as physically. Yes another one that I sneaked in to the Dedicoat Kennels, breaking my own rules.



In the December 2015 edition of The Heartbeat, I mentioned that I was looking to acquire a new Hospital Cage/Recovery Unit. We get such a large number of animals come in that need the warmth and security of a recovery unit in order to survive, especially the young birds and other baby animals. Although we have two fantastic hospital cages that have been in near constant use for years now I decided a larger one was needed to cope with the amount we see.

Well, totally unexpectedly, some of our fantastic supporters sent in donations stating they wanted it to go specifically towards our new recovery unit! One of our longstanding members even went so far as to contact Brinsea who are well known for making brilliant incubators and recovery units, and told them about us. They were very interested in what we get up to and had a Advance Brooder/Recovery Unit on its way to us before we knew it.



## Advance Brooder/Recovery Unit



Now on a very, very SAD note I need to let you know of the loss of a very good friend of Hollytrees. A lady who gave up every Wednesday to groom any of our rescues, I've known her for nearly 40years! Yes sadly it's JOSIE HALL, we do miss her. Even her having a moan, she's suffered over the last 4 years bless her. Our thoughts and thanks also go to GORDAN, Josie's husband. Keep going mate.



Then we've lost another fantastic friend in CHRISTINE BUTLER. Yes Dave's good lady wife. She always helped Dave with the printing and even though she suffered with MS she always had time for a smile and nothing was TOO much for her, and indeed David, to do. They saved us— THOUSANDS OF POUNDS in printing etc. Another good sort taken from us. Remember we are still here David, thinking of you.



Wow this is another good friend, young Mick Kelly, husband of Pauline who has also been golden to us and the animals at Hollytrees. Mick sadly developed Dementia which is a terrible strain on the family and friends. WHY MICK?? He only helped people, he didn't hurt anyone, he worshipped animals and indeed the work we do. Pauline had one or two of our GOLDEN OLDIES DOGS especially Westies and if she couldn't have them with her at home she would come and walk them 2 or 3 times a week to give our rescues something to look forward to.

*Some of the animals at Hollytrees*



*Well it's time to call it a day and once again I apologise for the lack of newsletters, but I have started to delegate and have help from Annice and Sue B. I thank you all for any donations sent to us throughout 2016.*

*You all know who you are. Thank you. I've had a little bit of criticism with the fact that I like to personally thank individuals for donations; if you prefer me not to spend on stamps etc. please let me know.*

*You are all in our thoughts and we all wish everyone who knows us a very, very Happy Christmas and an even better New Year.*

*THANK YOU from  
Ray, Ann, family and everyone who helps the Hollytrees wheels to turn.*

**Merry  
Christmas**