

HOLLY HEDGE Newsletter

SUMMER 2007 ISSUE



Providing shelter from harm and the promise of a brighter future

Murphy aged approx. 18 months

Murphy (on right of picture) was brought in to Holly Hedge on a Sunday afternoon in October. He was found straying by someone visiting the garden centre in Leigh Court at Abbots Leigh. No one seemed to know where he came from so he turned up on our doorstep with a very worried member of the public who could see there was something wrong, as the poor dog couldn't walk properly.

He was underweight, badly matted and full of fleas. When staff examined him they were appalled by what they saw. His private parts were very sore and swollen and it was obvious that he was in a great deal of pain. He couldn't even urinate properly. It was quite apparent the callous, barbaric perpetrator had attempted to castrate him using some kind of ring leaving the wound very badly infected.

A visit to Vale vets confirmed that someone had used a lambing ring, which must have caused the poor animal excruciating pain. Through publicity we found out who had performed the atrocity and informed the RSPCA. Unfortunately these people wanted to remain anonymous through fear of reprisal. The RSPCA did their best to get the evidence needed to go to trial but it was not forthcoming. Poor Murphy had to stay at the vets overnight after they performed surgery to correct the previous mutilation. He had to wear a head collar for 2 weeks as all he wanted to do was pull his stitches out.

Thanks to the article in the Evening Post, who also took a lovely photo of him, we received several offers of homes from kind people who read of Murphy's suffering. We chose a country home and new owners who knew all about collie's needs and would take him to agility classes when he had fully recovered from his painful ordeal. Through all his suffering he still loved humans and now he had the rest of his life to look forward to, with people who care and only want the very best for him.



Dear Holly Hedge

I had a very stressful evening yesterday, I couldn't decide whether to sleep on my new Daddy's lap or on my new bed or hang out on the floor!

I've only done two 'wees' and two 'poos' on the carpet but my new Mummy didn't mind, although she did tell me I was a naughty boy when I got on the bed when I'd only just come in from the wet field!

I met one of Lucy's (that's my canine sister) friends in the field this morning and we had a lovely time playing ball and running around.

I've had a rest this evening on Lucy's blanket on the sofa and one of the cats joined me. I have a new name now Mummy and Daddy are calling me Handsome Harvey.

I will come to see you soon.

Thank you for looking after me.

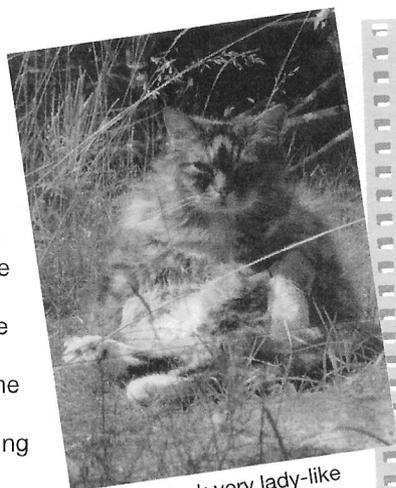
Love and Licks

Harvey (was Murphy)



Katie

Katie was found on bonfire night curled up in a shed trying to hide away from the loud bangs as fireworks exploded everywhere, lighting up the sky. The poor little cat was terrified but luckily she sought shelter where she wouldn't be shooed away (as is often the case with strays). In spite of calls to charities, and taking her to the vet to see if she was micro-chipped, (which she wasn't) no owner came forward so Katie, as we named her, came to Holly Hedge. Her rescuers couldn't keep her as they lived on a very busy road and she would insist on crossing it. As Katie wasn't in too bad a condition apart from her ears being very dirty, a few bald patches where ticks had to be removed, and matted hair shaved off, we were surprised no-one claimed her, especially as she was so friendly. Our vet estimated she was approximately 6 years old. Not only was Katie very affectionate but extremely beautiful too. It was two months before she was chosen by a couple who would enjoy grooming her lovely long hair. Katie need never dread being lost and alone on bonfire night again now she has found the love and security of her very own safe haven.



I may not look very lady-like but my Mum and Dad think I'm their Princess!

Just a letter to let you know how KATIE is getting on.

She has settled in very well and has started to show us her character. She loves having her long coat brushed and her tummy tickled. She sleeps everywhere, interrupted only by demands for attention and more brushing and then back to a more serious snooze. Her favourite napping position is on her back with her feet in the air!

Thank you for our beautiful cat.

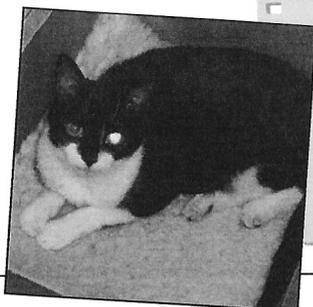
Regards
Gavin and Helen

Jessie

Jess thought she had found a home for life when a kind gentleman took her in as a stray 11 years ago. When he passed away, Jess found herself homeless again at 12 years old.

A neighbour contacted Holly Hedge and we took her in as a matter of urgency. She was a friendly little cat but very stressed at all the upheaval at her time of life and was obviously missing her owner.

It was apparent the poor little thing had cystitis, also her mouth was very sore and she had quite a few teeth missing. On being examined by our vet, it was discovered she had a heart murmur and also needed her remaining teeth extracted, as they were so rotten. Our hearts went out to this forlorn old girl. She was put on medication for her heart and cystitis, and her food had to be mashed up so she could eat it properly. We gave Jess as much TLC and love as we possibly could but a real home was what this frail old soul needed. She waited 7 months before some lovely people saw an appealing advert for her and wanted to take her home to be part of their family. Jess hasn't looked back and now she's looking younger than ever, happily settled and very content.



Hello to everyone at Holly Hedge!

I thought you would just like to know how I am settling in at my new home, and I've sent a few pics of me helping around the house, and relaxing in my favourite room. As you can see I've just helped mum finish a basket of ironing then penned this letter. I can't wait to be able to venture out into the garden when the sun comes out.

Thank -you to you all for helping me for the last seven months, I know I am a much-loved pet in my very own family once again.

Love Jessie xxx

P.S. I've got two 'brothers' -Todd and Dennis - and I think they are beginning to love me too!! They let me sit with them on the big sofa now.

ATTENTION! We need your help!

We are desperately trying to raise funds for our new kennel block and we have an active group of fundraisers (Friends of Holly Hedge) who meet approximately every 6 weeks. They are all very friendly and don't bite!! We need more volunteers to help at events, which have been organised throughout the year. These include things like supermarket collections, fetes, sponsored dog walk, quizzes, street collections, plus lots more. If you cannot attend the meetings but would just like to help out now and again that's fine as well - but there is a plus side to the meetings they are held in a pub, which does very nice food and our meetings are normally on a Sunday evening.

If you have had a dog or cat from Holly Hedge and would like to make life more comfortable for those still waiting to be chosen, please consider sparing a few hours of your time to help those less fortunate than your pet.

If you are interested please either contact the Sanctuary on 01275 474719 or Gerry on 0117 9695332.





PIXIE'S STORY

This story is about a little dog called Pixie who really touched my heart and made me shed a few tears.

I was asked to assess Pixie - approximately 12 years old - who was to come into Holly Hedge. I was told she was partially deaf and blind - at the time I thought how sad this was. On arrival I tried to ascertain as much information as possible from her current owner. The story went as follows:

Pixie had spent the first 5 years of her life in her first home and was then passed on to another home (we do not know the reason why). However, she lived happily in her second home for approximately 7 years and then one of the children developed an allergic reaction to her, so she was passed on via the Internet! She then went to live with a young couple for 3 months, who then split up. The young lady moved back to Bristol, but did return to her previous home some 3 weeks later to find that Pixie had been badly neglected - it appears her ex-partner took his frustration out on Pixie. Pixie was brought to Bristol and was given to the young lady's father to look after. This gentleman was very sensible and knew that he could not look after Pixie properly as he left home at 5.30am and did not return until 5.30pm sometimes later, so she was being left for over 12 hours a day on her own.

On first meeting Pixie I saw a lovely little dog, which obviously was a little shy and confused. At first I thought she was showing her teeth, but it transpired that Pixie actually smiles, (not that I felt she had a lot to smile about). Nevertheless she gave me a nice welcome and was quite happy to take titbits from me. It was difficult to assess the extent of her eyesight, but her eyes looked as if they had cataracts in both. On throwing a piece of cheese she managed to find it quite quickly - but this was probably through smell. She had a wart above her eye, but this didn't seem to be bothering her. Her nails were extremely long, obviously through lack of exercise, and she must have been in discomfort. I asked if any veterinary treatment had been sought for Pixie in the last 3 months, but she had not been seen by a vet during this

time. So in fact at 12 years old, partially deaf and blind Pixie was looking for her 5th home through no fault of hers. I really worried about what was going to happen to Pixie, and didn't sleep well that night.

I rang Holly Hedge the next morning to relay the information but I knew finding Pixie a new home would be very difficult. Two days later I received a phone call to say that a new home had possibly been found. This was a lady called Joy Whittle, whose daughter already had two Holly Hedge dogs. Joy was at home all day so it sounded perfect. I spoke to Joy and asked her if she would like to meet Pixie and it was agreed that I would go and collect Pixie and take her to visit. I collected Pixie, but had to call into the Sanctuary first as Pixie did not own a lead! Poor Pixie she cried all the way to the Sanctuary - it was pitiful to hear. When I arrived at Holly Hedge it was decided to quickly check her over. A quick look in her mouth revealed that she probably needed some teeth removed, her nails cut, and it was felt she could also have a urine infection.

I then took her to meet Joy, as it was felt she had been put through enough for one day. On arriving at Joy's house Pixie walked into the house, almost as if she had been there before. Joy has a wonderful large garden which Pixie immediately started to explore, she trotted around the garden looking at the flower beds, into the greenhouse and then proceeded to roll and roll and roll with her legs kicking in the air, she had made herself at home within the hour. By the time I left Joy's house I am convinced Pixie looked 2 years younger! I could see Joy and Pixie were made for each other.

On Tuesday it was agreed that Pixie would have an appointment at Holly Hedge to see the Vet. As was first thought Pixie needed to have several teeth removed, she had her nails cut, which obviously made her a lot more comfortable, the little wart on her eye was nothing to worry about, and she had some antibiotics for a urine infection. The following week Pixie had her infected teeth removed and she recovered well.

Pixie has now been with Joy for almost 8 months and I understand from her daughter Julie that Pixie is now thoroughly spoilt. Joy cooks her fresh chicken, and she enjoys her cheese every day - it seems that both Joy and Pixie now have a new lease of life.

If only our 'golden oldies' could have such a lovely home in their twilight years, it would be wonderful.

Since adopting Pixie, Joy has now become involved with fundraising and she knits beautiful scarves for us to sell at craft fairs.

Over the last three years that I have been home- checking for Holly Hedge this is probably the most rewarding thing I have done.

If anyone reading this story feels that they may have a little spare time and would like to make a difference please give the sanctuary a call as we need help with all sorts of things.

**Geraldine Watkins -
Fund-Raising Co-ordinator**

Just a few lines to let you know how things are going at No. 10 as it's 6 months that I have been in residence. As you know I'm rather hard of hearing and I could do with some magic glasses. I do tend to bump into things. Things were a bit up and down at first as you know I can't resist a good bark at the other dogs (size no problem - the bigger the better) and of course my waterworks aren't what they used to be. However we go at regular times by the clock and this works quite well. Sometimes I cough a bit - this gets me lots of attention and a lot of sympathy.

At night I reside in my night basket in the kitchen - during the day I have a basket in the lounge and a duvet for stretching out (very important for us Senior Girls). If Joy is upstairs the bathroom mat is very comfortable and warm. The stairs I find difficult so I have a rest halfway up and down.

I am looking forward to the Spring so I can spend more time in the garden.

Wishing you all the best from Pixie Whittle x

P.S The foods not bad either.



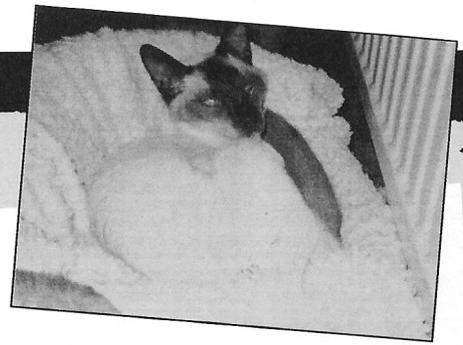
Tao – age approx.

14 years

A lady rang Holly Hedge very concerned about an elderly Chocolate Point Siamese cat that had been hanging around her garden for at least five weeks. She said he was so thin, all his bones were showing and he didn't look at all well, so we got him in immediately. What a state he was in - emaciated, dehydrated and with a distended stomach plus he badly needed a dental. Tao as we named him was taken straight to the Vet. He was kept in and put on a drip, also blood tests were taken which showed he had high thyroid levels.

In spite of his problems Tao was such a friendly boy and purred loudly for everyone. He really appreciated a cuddle and revelled in the attention he had been deprived of when he was homeless. It wasn't all plain sailing with this dear old soldier, he suffered from irritable bowel syndrome and was finding it difficult to eat, as his teeth were so bad. It was very much touch and go at first. He eventually gained enough weight to be able to cope with an anaesthetic so he could have a dental. He had a blood test to see if his liver and kidneys were functioning and the results were OK, so off he went to Vale Vets where he had five rotten teeth extracted and the rest scaled and polished.

It was obvious Tao felt happier and more comfortable and began to enjoy his food and gain weight. His carers had put everything into making life better for him, but Tao needed so much individual attention. His age put most people off adopting him, despite our offer of paying age-related vet bills. At long last after 4 months and another pleading advert, Sue and Brian came to meet Tao. It was his lucky day when their hearts went out to him.



I think that it must have been fate that Brian and I were to adopt Tao, an elderly chocolate point Siamese cat that had been wandering the streets and found to be in an appalling state only to be rescued by Holly Hedge.

We only have the Bristol Evening Post on one day in the week, and it was on one such day in January of this year that Brian read out the advertisement placed by Holly Hedge, asking for a quiet loving home in which Tao could spend his twilight years. We have had Siamese cats for the last 25 years, but always one at a time; our present boy Kai, also a chocolate point is very friendly and loves other cats, so we didn't foresee any problems with Kai should Tao come to live with us. We phoned Holly Hedge to show our interest and made arrangements to visit the sanctuary. We were informed of Tao's health condition i.e. thyroid and stomach problems both of which were found upon his rescue, having been found in a starving condition. We agreed to give him a home subject to the routine 'home check'.

On 3rd February we collected Tao from the Sanctuary, having made preparation for him, by buying him a new basket and special diet food. The first week proved quite problematic. He settled in quite well and he was very clean but obviously all was not well with his health condition.

Now nearly two months on, Tao has put on some weight and has settled in and appears to be enjoying life. He is now getting on well with our other Siamese, Kai, and having had fortnightly health checks, Mark, our vet, is so pleased with his progress he has now changed these checks to monthly.

Tao has proved to be a real delight and appears to have taken a particular liking to Brian, just as if he knows it was his suggestion to give him a new home. Tao spends most of the time asleep, quite happy in his basket, although in the afternoons, he does move into the back bedroom where the sun is!

Due to his health problems we realistically do not know how long Tao will be with us. But hopefully it will be for a number of years as he is now loved, safe, secure and seems to very content with his 'retirement home' where he can spend his twilight years undisturbed.

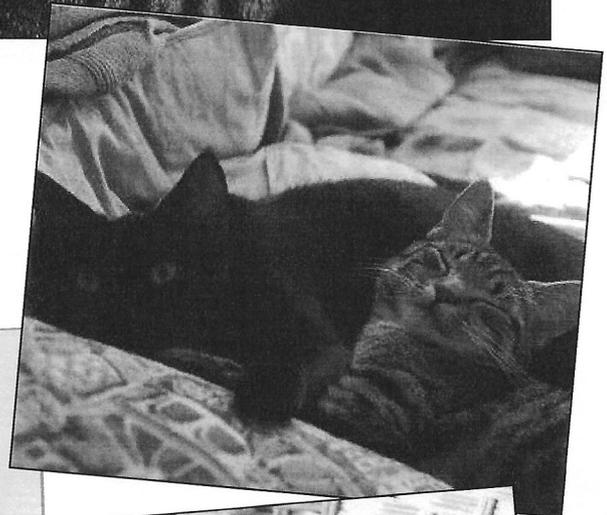
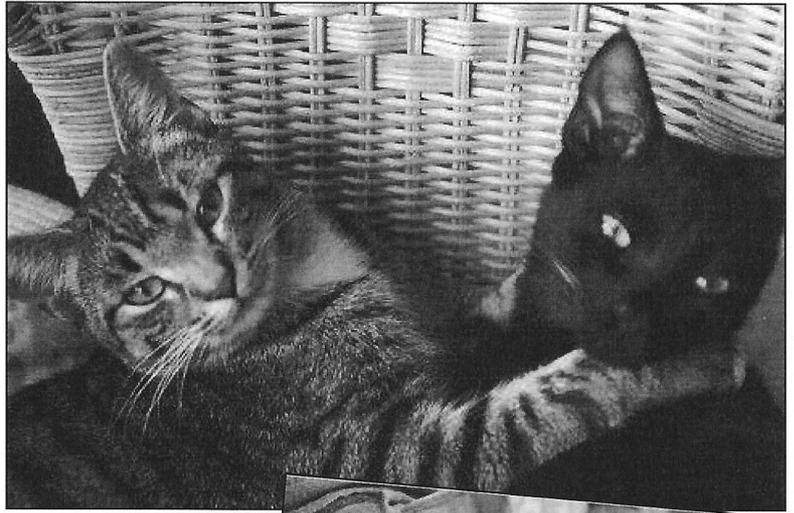
We can't start to imagine what Tao had endured whilst on the streets and can't praise Holly Hedge enough for rescuing him.



Boomer (9 months) and Marina (11 months)

These bosom buddies were just two of 14 cats rescued from a multi-cat household. None of them was neutered and several of the youngsters were reaching an age where they too could reproduce. Considering there were so many it has to be said they were all well fed, clean and in good condition—just not neutered, mores the pity, and none of them had names! All the cats were such a close knit little family and adored each other so much it was heartbreaking to have to split them up, but of course we had no choice and took advice from their owner as to which ones we should pair up. It would be too cruel to rehome any of them as only pets as they were so used to being part of their own little family community. They depended more on each other than human beings. They all went to new homes, neutered and in pairs.

Boomer and Marina were re-homed 2 months later and are still as close as ever. Now getting lots of human attention, they are happily settled and doted upon.



We picked up 'Boomer' and 'Marina' from Holly Hedge last September. They were still very small timid kittens when they came to live with us. We renamed them Balloo and Bagheera and they really live up to their names, although their appearance doesn't match the Disney characters from the Jungle Book.

Balloo, the black male, was very nervous at the beginning and it required a lot of patience to gain his trust and make him feel safe. His nervousness was clearly evident in his toilet activities, which were not always placed in the cat litter tray. Now Balloo has developed into a much more confident little cat. Toileting is not a problem any more and he has started to use the garden. Bagheera takes everything in her stride. She is curious and she loves climbing. She is a very pristine and beautiful cat. Her favourite place is to sit on Mike's lap.

They've both got lovely characters and they love each other dearly. They love being outside and exploring the neighbouring gardens. Bagheera loves to climb trees, the higher the better. Balloo has started defending his territory against other cats. We are not sure whether he is always successful, but he is very determined and goes out again and again. They love playing with strings, cardboard boxes, sticks etc. and after a period of running around the living room, they love to cuddle up on the sofa. Usually in the morning, they chase each other around the house and if the backdoor is open, they run in and out as well.

They are two lovely cats and we love them dearly. They give us joy and laughter every day.

We also wanted to say a big Thank You to everyone at Holly Hedge. We felt very supported and feel you really make sure that the animals find a nice home.

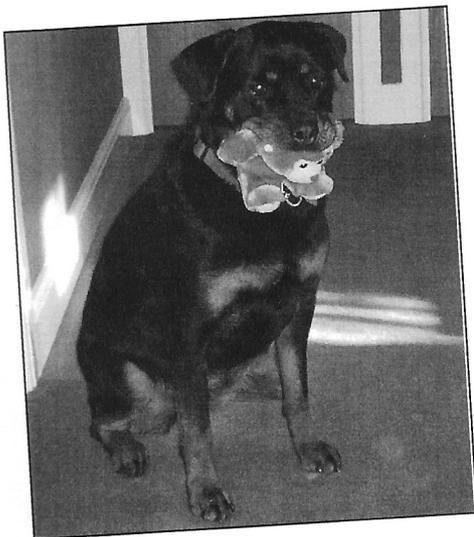
Best regards
Birgit and Mike

Mabel's Story

We have had Rottweiler's for just over 20 years, having had to have our previous Rotti "Holly" put to sleep on Boxing Day 2003. We went almost 2 months without a dog, but the house just felt so empty so at the end of January 2003 we started to look for another dog. We did the rounds of all the local Rescue Centres in and around Bristol, but nothing really caught our eye, then one Sunday afternoon driving up the M5 to Bristol I suggested to Colin that we pop into Holly Hedge Animal Sanctuary, which is in Barrow Gurney on the outskirts of Bristol.

We both just burst into tears

We went into Holly Hedge with an open mind about what sort of dog we were looking for but just three kennels in we saw a 2-year-old Rotti bitch who had been there for almost 5 months. We stood outside her kennel and we both just burst into tears, she was so much like our previous Rotti. We took her out for a walk in the woods at which point it was apparent that she was a lovely dog but was completely clueless about



what was expected of her; however, one thing was for sure she loved people.

Having had two previous Rotti's we thought this was something we could sort out. We filled in all the paperwork to adopt Mabel. Our home check passed and we picked her up one week later. That was when the fun began!

She had seen very little of what life is about

It transpired that Mabel had come from a marriage split, with her going to live with the husband who was out to work all day and worked long hours, so she was left on her own for long periods. However, her owner did recognise that he didn't have time for her and signed her over to Holly Hedge to be found a new home. Mabel was actually re-homed after a couple of months, but only stayed in her new home for a day as her new owners felt she was uncontrollable. We felt this would not be a problem for us due to our previous experience - however, we didn't realise what was to come!

This dog was 2 years old and had seen very little of what life is about. Mabel was a fully grown Rotti who adored people, but got so excited that her teeth would pierce our skin - to her this was just playful mouthing - to us this really hurt!

The trip home in the car was terrible, she was like a caged animal, she threw herself at the sides of the car, how she didn't injure herself we don't know. All vehicles coming toward her sent her into a frenzy. We got home and decided that we had to have a plan of action. Over the weeks that followed we discovered all sorts of things about this confused dog. She was worried by all sorts of things, we could not walk down the road with her as she would lunge at cars, bikes, buses basically anything that moved. She was concerned by other dogs and would lunge and bark at them. She did not sleep well and would wake at 4.00 in the morning and would not settle again. She would rip all her bedding. After 2 weeks I sat on the end of my bed and cried, and said to Colin she would have to go back, she was just too much. I will never forget his words "there is a lovely dog in there waiting to get out, but she needs help".

We then sought advice from a local dog trainer, (Jeannette Crossman) explaining all the problems we had with Mabel.



She helped us understand what was going on in Mabel's mind. Jeannette has been dealing with rescue dogs for years and was of the opinion that Mabel had never been socialised with other dogs as a puppy, hence her reason for barking and lunging, she did not know how to interact with her own kind. Jeannette felt also she had probably not been in a car previously or possibly had been involved in a car accident, hence her aggression towards traffic coming towards her.

Intimidating

Mabel also had a bad habit in trying to get her back legs in her mouth, whilst making this loud growling noise, which did sound very intimidating, but again Jeannette felt this was due to the hours she had spent on her own and when she got bored this was what she did. Mabel was also very noise sensitive outside, and Jeannette was of the opinion that she had probably spent quite a lot of time living outside, possibly tied up. Mabel had another problem in that she would not let anyone touch her feet - something had obviously happened previously, but her feet were a definite "no" as far as she was concerned. The plan of action began and we had about 3 one-to-one sessions with Jeannette.

Colin was told that he would have to be trained before Mabel's training began. Mabel needed a "leader" to show her what was right and wrong. This was done on a treat and reward basis, and Mabel learnt quickly. Colin and Mabel walked up and down the High Street, with Jeannette walking behind giving instruction. They encountered buses, bikes, dogs everything that Mabel reacted to.

Basically Mabel had to confront her fears with Colin taking charge



of the situation. After 3 one-to-one sessions and lots of practice between sessions things were starting to improve, but were still far from right and there was still a very long way to go.

It was time for Colin and Mabel to actually join Dog Training Club. At first Mabel appeared aggressive towards other dogs in the class but Jeannette actually runs a class specifically for "Rescue Dogs" which luckily only had three dogs in it. Colin and Mabel stayed in that class for the next 4 months by which time we could really see an improvement in

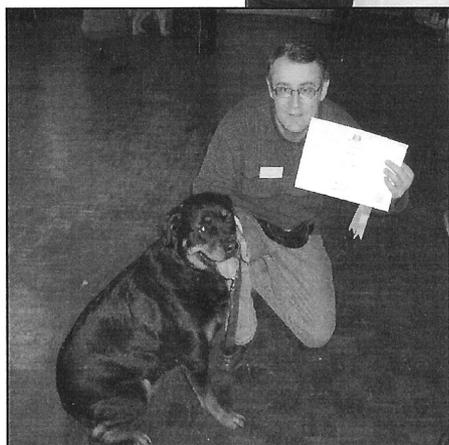
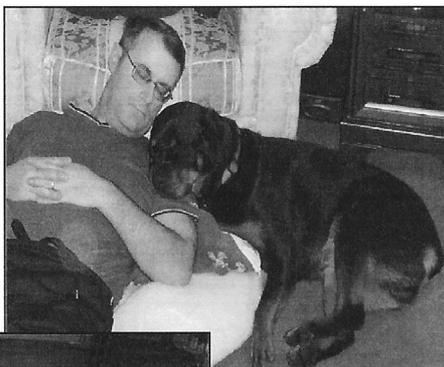
her. We had still not overcome the car problem, we tried all sorts of different things and eventually found that by putting a board in front of the dog guard so she could not see the traffic coming towards her made her

less fearful - after a couple of months we were able to remove this as she was now much calmer. So everything was at last moving in the right direction.

Paws for thought

The problem with her feet was still an issue and night after night Colin would sit and teach her to "give paw" for the smallest piece of cheese I have ever seen, he would insist on running his fingers through her paw for at least a minute before letting her

have the cheese. Within a fortnight we could touch the front feet, but not the back. However as the months passed this did happen, and now she will let us do anything to her.



By this time we had had Mabel 6 months and she was doing so well that she moved into the Bronze Award Class at dog training (something I thought would never happen), and from thereon

in everything changed.

Mabel saw Colin and myself as her "Leaders", she quickly accepted that we would not let anything happen to her, she totally trusted us and was so willing to please and learn.

In February 2005 Mabel took her Bronze Award with The Kennel Club Good Citizen Dog Scheme, and passed with flying colours. In August 2005 she took her Silver Award and in March 2006 passed her Gold Award. To pass her Gold Award, one of the many exercises

was that she had to sit in a room full of dogs off lead and not move for 10 minutes with Colin out of sight (this was the longest 10 minutes of my life), but she did it and we were so proud of her.

Mabel is our third Rotti and she has now been with us 3 years. They have all been lovely dogs, but there is something special about her. We have never had such a happy dog, her little stump wags from the time she wakes in the morning to last thing at night when she settles down by the side of our bed in her basket. Sometimes we catch her just watching us and you can see the love in her eyes.

Born to be Free

Ironically part of Mabel's prefix in her Kennel Club name is "Born to be Free" - we feel she is now free to enjoy life to the full. She loves her walks and meeting other dogs is the highlight of her day. She still has her moments of insecurity when meeting new dogs for the first time, but these are quickly overcome.

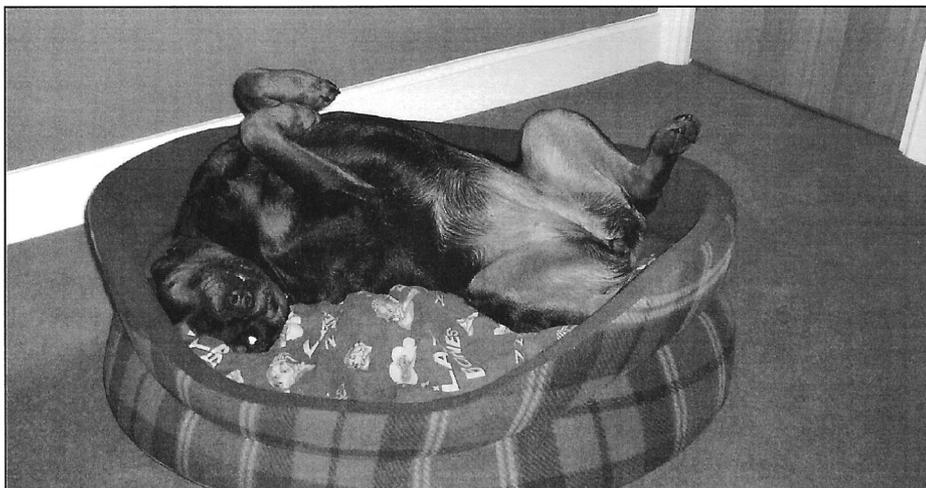
A big thank you to Holly Hedge as they have a non destruction policy and never put a healthy animal to sleep whatever problems they may have, otherwise Mabel may not have been so lucky in finding a new home.

A huge thank you also to Jeannette who without her support, guidance and indeed patience we could not have turned Mabel around.

So to everyone who is thinking of taking a rescue dog, please remember what can be achieved with patience and love. There are no short cuts and it can take a while to sort things out, but once they are the rewards are immense.

Having adopted Mabel we are both now involved with Holly Hedge helping other dogs and cats by doing all sorts of fundraising, home checks, assessing dogs to come in and anything else that needs doing. We cannot tell you how rewarding this is, and we cannot thank Holly Hedge enough for allowing us to have such a wonderful dog.

Geraldine & Colin Watkins



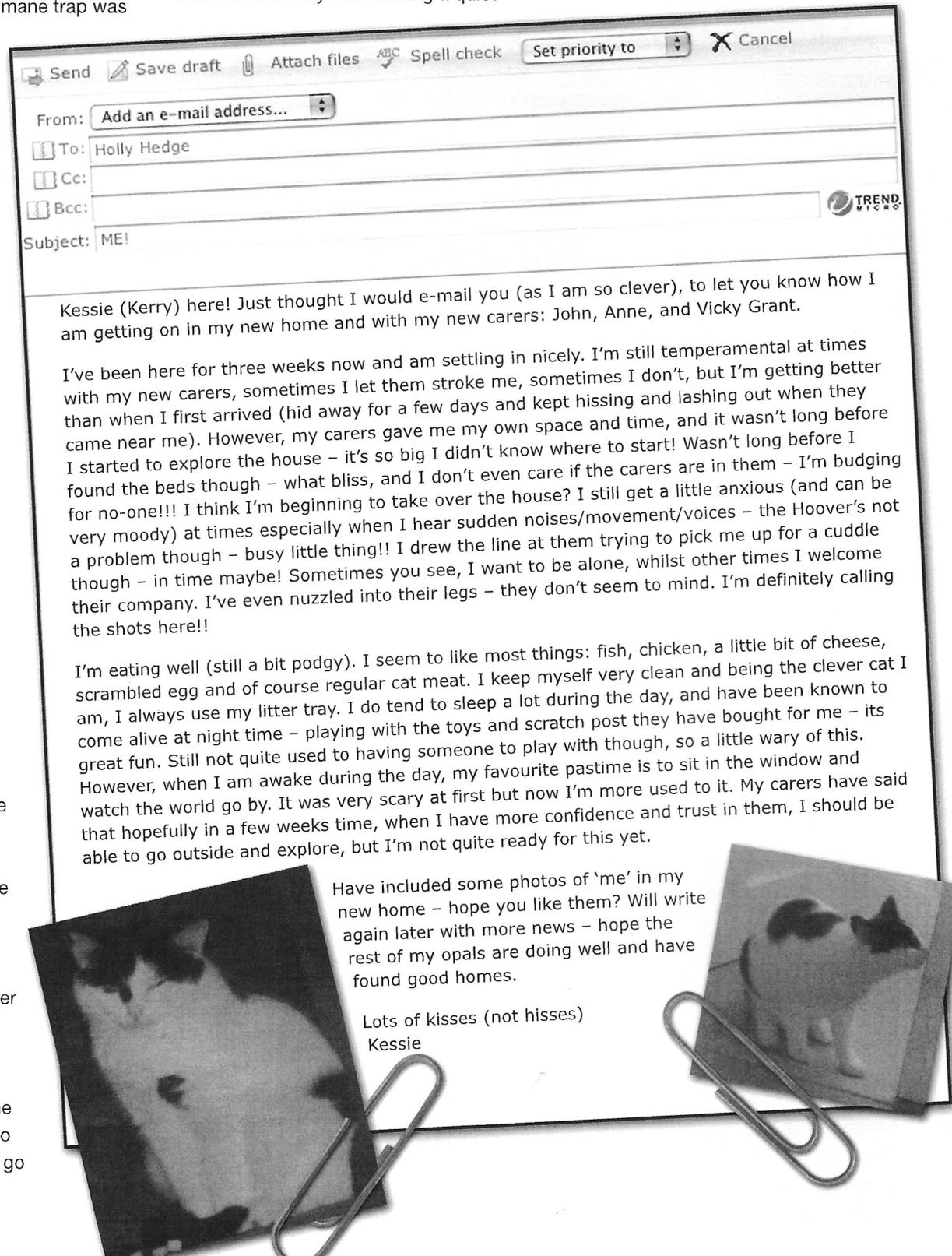
Kerry

The office had a phone call from a member of staff at Barrow Hospital regarding a very timid stray cat who had produced kittens in a barn in the hospital grounds. It transpired all her babies had died and patients and staff were worried that she needed medical attention. As the poor little cat was petrified of people, a humane trap was set and Kerry (as we named her) was caught and brought into Holly Hedge.

She was full of milk (not to mention ticks) and had no faith in humans at all. Kerry was more frightened than aggressive and couldn't understand that we only wanted to help her. She had lost her babies and now she had lost her freedom. Kerry was traumatized, what more could be taken from her? Staff sat with Kerry and very slowly gained a modicum of trust. When her milk dried up she was spayed. Our vet estimated she was approximately 2 years old. We will never know how she ended up in the barn at Barrow Hospital and Kerry can't tell us, but we knew somewhere along the line human beings had let her and her babies down. Holly Hedge staff and volunteer cat cuddlers gave Kerry as much care and attention as possible to instill confidence and she was beginning to learn to trust. But we could only go

so far, more individual attention, time and all the comforts of home was what was needed to give her the confidence to be able to trust in humans wholeheartedly. 7 months on (December 2006) the wait was worth it when Anne Grant and her family read Kerry's story on the website and wanted to give her the loving home she needed. It wasn't exactly love at first sight for Kerry, but a bit of hissing and spitting didn't put them off. As they were having a quiet

Christmas and knowing the wonderful home she was going to, the Grants adopted Kerry on 22 December 2006. It was the best Christmas present anyone could have given her. Thank goodness there are such caring people who don't want the perfect pet. Kerry has a few words to say about her new life...



Holly Hedge Sponsored Dog Walk

Sunday 23 September 2007, ASHTON COURT ESTATE

10.30am – 4.00pm

All proceeds towards the new 'Kennel Block' project.

Update from the Fun Day & Novelty Dog Show



Pictures of Flame and Monty (mother and son). Both received rosettes at the Fun Day



Clare showing Monty

What can we say, it was an absolutely fantastic day. The weather could not have been better, not too hot and more importantly it didn't rain. It was lovely to see so many of our former dogs with their new owners – we cannot tell you how rewarding this was for us at Holly Hedge. The Dog Show was a great attraction and in one class there were 63 dogs! However, "JP" from STAR Radio was not fazed and did a great job judging the show. We would like to say a big "thank you" to John as he actually travelled from Northampton on the day, and he has also been giving Holly Hedge "air time" in the morning with updates on the Fun Day.

The Line Dancing Dogs and the Agility Dog Display were great and received lots of applause – these dogs must train for hours.

We would also like to thank Bristol Water who provided us with a water bowser – which proved invaluable, and also to Wincanton for providing a refrigerated van. Both were given "free of charge". Ceva Newsfast also supplied a trailer, which we were able to use as a stage, and again they were kind enough to supply this free.

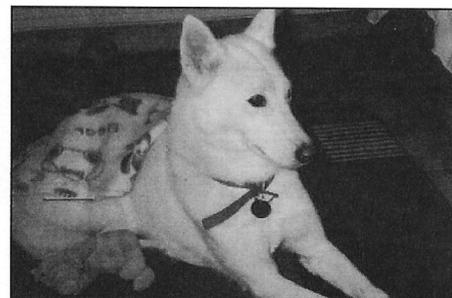
Monies are still coming in towards the day, but we have already raised in excess of £7,500, and this sum will go towards our new kennel block appeal – the cost of this project is estimated at £250,000!

A big thank you to everyone who worked so hard to make the day a great success – as you can imagine hours and hours of manpower went on behind the scenes to make this happen, but didn't we do well!

A big thank you to Yate & Chipping Sodbury Flyer for the advertising leading up to the event.



J.P. judging Dog Show



Kim, a Siberian Husky aged 3

Kim came to Holly Hedge because she couldn't pull a sledge with the other dogs she was kennelled with, due to only having three legs. Her original owner rehomed Kim after her back leg was amputated when she was just 6 months old due to the socket not being properly formed, in spite of an operation to try to rectify the problem. As her owner used the dogs to pull sledges, Kim was unable to keep up the pace so was rehomed to a couple. Unfortunately the relationship ended and poor Kim was returned to her previous owner so Holly Hedge was her next port of call.

Kim was such a sweet girl and her disability didn't seem to bother her at all. She was quite a live wire and loved her playtimes, running after the ball and playing with some of our other rescued dogs in the large grass compounds. Lots of people admired her but were put off by the fact she only had three legs plus one eye was brown and the other blue. When Jane and Adam came to us looking for another dog, they found Kim irresistible and chose her for her wonderful nature and fun loving disposition.

Kim - update from her new owners

Kim settled in nicely when she was adopted from Holly Hedge - it took her a while to get her to come back to us when let off her lead but now she's as good as gold. She runs 3 to 9 miles every day and loves it even though she has only three legs. Everybody comments on what a lovely dog she is. Kim likes to sit on the sofa and when we are out she sneaks onto the bed. She is such a loving girl and we wouldn't be without her.

Connor aged 12 says "Kim is a lovely dog and all my friends love her too, she's so friendly"



Pearl, age 12-14

Pearl came in as a stray in a pitiful state. She weighed 2 kilograms and looked like she didn't have any of her nine lives left. It was obvious there was also something medically wrong with her as she was so lethargic.

On being examined by our vet, a grade 4 heart murmur was detected, and the few teeth she had left were rotten and needing removing. A blood test showed she had hyperthyroidism so she was put on medication for her heart and thyroid. Pearl didn't pick up as we had hoped although she was always purring and loved her cuddles. She was fed little and often 6 times daily but gained very little weight. Her food was well mashed as after her dental she had no teeth left. She appeared to have lost her spirit and caused us a great deal of concern. It was 'panic stations' when her breathing became laboured and we took her to Vale Vets as an emergency. She was anaesthetised and her chest was x-rayed. It transpired that Pearl's heart was an odd shape and there was a mass in the front part of her chest - the prognosis didn't look good. We wondered if it would be kinder to put her to sleep? We talked to the vet who said she could be given steroids in the hope of shrinking the mass but if this didn't improve the quality of her life then it was time to let her go.

Luckily this courageous little cat rallied around against all the odds but as much as her carers were doing their very best for her, a real home of her own was what she so badly needed. Her dearest wish was granted when Hannah, who wanted to give this little old lady the best of everything, for whatever time she had left, chose her. We were overjoyed. The last thing any of us at Holly Hedge want is for any animal to end its days in a kennel or cattery situation. However much they are cared for, the oldies in particular need all the individual attention possible.

It's now 8 months on and Pearl is still enjoying a good quality of life with all the home comforts and lots of love.

Thank you Hannah for taking on one of our most 'needy' rescues knowing she may not live for very long - she may yet prove us wrong - we are so grateful to you.

Dear Holly Hedge,

This is a brief write up on how Pearl the Cat is getting on:

When I first saw Pearl, I thought she was beautiful, although elderly, and then I was told that she may only have weeks left to live....8 months on and she's the most spoilt cat alive!

Since looking after Pearl, she has put on weight; in fact you might say that she's a little "pody".

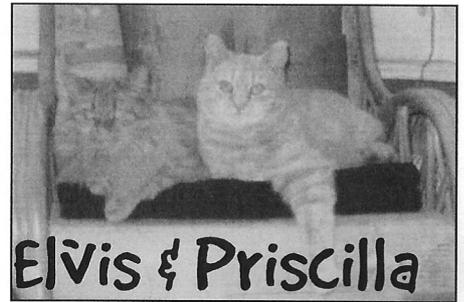
Her coat is shiny and healthy and she is one happy pussycat! She has recently discovered catnip and is in love with it, it's so lovely to see her happy.

Pearl is maybe about 13 yrs old but has the life and energy of a kitten! And, for the first time since living with me, she sneakily brought in a bird the other day (which was quickly rescued), but she looked so proud as she sat at my feet. It was very funny.

Over all, Pearl is a completely different cat that loves to be around people and has her favourite little hiding places for quiet naps. I love her very much.

Kind regards,

Hannah



Elvis & Priscilla guaranteed to 'Rock your world!'

These adorable siblings were 'evicted' from the family home when the first baby came along. They were moved to a property-building site that was being refurbished. After the second baby arrived apparently there was no time to see to the cats' needs so they came to Holly Hedge. Both were sweet friendly little souls who thrived on the attention they had missed out on. Just two weeks later they were chosen to start a new life and were welcomed as part of the family.

Hello, all at Holly Hedge

Remember us? As you can see, we didn't take us long to get our paws under the table. Here we are relaxing in the conservatory. I think you'll agree we make a lovely addition to the soft furnishings.

Our new adoptive parents decided to name us Amber and Fudge, as they did not feel that Elvis and Priscilla quite suited our characters. But being cats, we don't answer to either name, so that'll teach 'em!

Priscilla/Amber: 'It's nice here. My favourite trick is head butting the bedroom door open in the middle of the night and taking up residence at the end of the bed. It's where I belong. I have a nice chat with the family, before they go out to work, and chase anything that looks like a snake - shoe laces, tights, dressing gown belts, anything will do.'

Elvis/Fudge: 'I love the garden. I ignore the catnip they bought me specially and prefer to chew on the ornamental grasses. I like sneaking up on the family from behind so they fall over me, and as I'm the same colour as the carpet, the curtains and many other things in the house, I manage to do this quite often. But they always forgive me because I am so cuddly.'

Thank you for looking after us both last Christmas. We send our best regards to all the helpers, and to the current residents at Holly Hedge and hope that they all find a new home soon.

Love from Priscilla/Amber and
Elvis/Fudge xxx



Paddy, Springer spaniel aged 18 months

This lovely boy came to us, as his owners had no time for him. He was kept in a kennel with a run in the garden and had never been allowed inside the house. On the usual routine admission health check the first thing that had to be done was to de-flea him as he had a fair few unwelcome visitors. He also had a deformed front leg and needed his teeth scaled and polished. His jaw was undershot but this made him look all the more appealing, like he was smiling at everyone. Paddy was also fed four times a day, as he needed to gain weight. Three weeks later and looking good he was chosen to go home with Rupert, an English Springer adopted from Holly Hedge 5 months previously, and his family.

Paddy's life had turned a corner for the better. For the first time he could enjoy all the home comforts he had never known, have another dog to play with and a family that really cared. Now he really does have something to smile about!



Dear Everyone

Hello, Paddy here! Do you remember me? I left in July last year and joined my 'brother' Rupert in a very happy place! That's me in the picture on the left - smiling at you! We both have a great time with our new Mum and Dad and sister. Dad said I had to send you this card to let you know I'd been to see that nice Rosie Best.

Anyway, bye for now - best wishes, waggy tail and licks from Rupert and me!

Paddy

Sophie aged 15 years

Sophie's original owners emigrated and left her in the care of a friend promising to pay for any vet treatment she would need in her twilight years. Unfortunately the owner wasn't true to her word, and as Sophie had a recent history of medical problems, the friend decided she couldn't keep her. So in to Holly Hedge she came.

We were told she was 10 years old at the time, but in fact she was 15 years according to her medical records. Poor Sophie had been treated for eye problems, vomiting, inflamed pharynx and an abscess due to a possible snakebite, which had to be drained, and an allergy.

It was hard to believe her original owner didn't honour vet bills as promised as she had sought treatment for her previously. It was down to Holly Hedge now to do the right thing for this bewildered old girl. It was obvious Sophie still had eye problems (her eyelashes were growing inwards) so the vet put her on medication to soothe them - if this didn't work she would need an operation. It was apparent she wasn't in the best of health and on top of this she badly needed a dental. Blood tests were taken and it was found she also had hyperthyroidism and her kidney parameters were up. We really didn't know what to do for the best. Would it be unkind of us to put her through such extensive medical treatment at her age? We decided to see how she responded to her thyroid medication and go from there. It was hit and miss to begin with but once she stabilised she perked up and we could see this little cat really didn't want to give up on life.

As realistically we weren't sure how much time Sophie had left, we were so desperate for her to be out of Holly Hedge and into a lovely home where she would be pampered and possibly become strong enough for her eyes to be operated on and her teeth sorted out. We were overjoyed when a few weeks later Heike and Shane came along and wanted to take her home. Having lost their old cat and still grieving, it was so courageous of them to choose another elderly cat knowing she may not be around for too long. Once in her new home, Sophie really came into her own and soon became strong enough for her eyes and teeth too to be sorted out.

Thank you, Heike and Shane for making one of our 'Golden Oldies' very happy. She even has a few things to say herself...

Hello Holly Hedge

It is very difficult not to write a novel about Sophie because she is such a wonderful and special cat.

She has made our family complete after we had to cope with the loss of our Tiggie. When we saw her at Holly Hedge she looked very sad and frail but in a few hours after coming home with us, she completely transformed. She is a great explorer outside the house and very curious about everything in the house. She came to us about 15 months ago and due to her age she has several health problems but she copes so well with everything. Thanks to Holly Hedge she had an eye operation last September, which has greatly improved the quality of her life. A very special thing about her is how she deals with taking medication, as cats normally do not like taking tablets and shred their servants to bits.

Sophie is very territorial and despite her age she does keep all the other cats at bay and stands her ground. She is a true warrior princess.

We do think that Sophie deserves a good retirement and to have happiness in her twilight years and Holly Hedge has made this possible as you cared for her when she did not have a home. You pay for her operation and her medication and allow for her to be happy and safe again. Thank you very much.

Heike and Shane

And now a few words from Sophie...



Hello,

My name is Sophie - I am an 'elderly' (ha!) cat aged around 15; and I lived at Holly hedge until April 2006.

Then I adopted (or was adopted by, or so they like to think) Shane and Heike. The people at Holly Hedge told them I was a quiet and sedate cat who liked to sleep on people's laps - ha! What do they know?!

Here I am on 'cat patrol' on the wall of our garden, keeping my new territory free from other cats. I have been known to chase them right through next doors' garden!

But I take my medicine nicely for Shane and Heike, and I know they like their cuddles. But me - quiet and sedate - you must be joking!

Sophie



We wait happy endings too

Lots of adorable cats and dogs patiently waiting for caring, loving homes.



Bruce
(Staffie—3 years)

Bruce is desperate for a chance to prove what a lovely boy he is. He is very unhappy in kennels but we have found him to be very good-natured and affectionate, always ready for a game and eager to please.



Rocky
(Rottfi—8 years)

Gentle Rocky is one big softie!! He came to Holly Hedge because his owners were moving. Rocky has an excellent temperament and is very well-behaved especially on walks. He will need owners who have had experience of large breed dogs and could give him the time and affection he so misses. In return Rocky will give unconditional love and loyalty.



Buster (GSD—7 years)

Buster came to Holly Hedge with Sheba after their owner passed away. They are both fun-loving, affectionate and love lots of fuss and attention. Buster is very close

to Sheba and would dearly love to be re-homed with her, but separating them would reluctantly be considered. However, they will need experienced German Shepherd owners. Please help us to keep this loving pair together.



Sheba (German Shepherd—7 years)

Sheba came to Holly Hedge with Buster after their owner passed away. They are both fun-loving, affectionate and love lots

of fuss and attention. Sheba is very close to Buster and would dearly love to be re-homed with him, but separating them would reluctantly be considered. However they will need experienced German Shepherd owners. Please help us to keep this loving pair together. If you would like to meet them, you won't be disappointed.



Steffi
(Crossbreed—10 years)

This friendly, loving little dog is looking for a new home and would certainly be a welcome addition to any family. She is well-behaved and loves everyone especially if you will play with her. Why don't you come in to meet Steffi – you won't be disappointed as she will give you such a warm welcome!



Honey (Mastiff cross American Bulldog—11 months)

This lovely girl is looking for a very special home with someone who is experienced with bigger dogs. Her ideal home would be where she would have plenty of attention and playtimes and time for long walks. If you think you can offer this beautiful dog all this in a loving home environment, she would be so pleased to see you!



Lola & Chopper
(Labrador cross German Shepherd—9 months)

Lola and Chopper have not had a good start in life as they were never taken outside their back garden! As a result they are scared of the outside world and now need a new owner with the time and patience to re-build their confidence. Despite this they are both good-natured and love playing ball games. Please spare a thought for these lovely dogs and come into say hello to them!



Madeleine
(Female—5 years)

Madeleine has only three legs but can still get around with no trouble. She is a very loving cat who is looking for a new home with someone who has the time to groom her and a lap she can sit on. She is pining and becoming very stressed in a cattery situation, so please offer this unhappy girl a new start and make the sadness go away.

We're on the web!
www.hollyhedge.org.uk



Rufus (Male—9 years)

Rufus felt he was not getting enough love and attention at home so tried to move in with neighbours but was rejected. No longer wanted at home, he ended up at Holly Hedge. How anyone could turn their back on such an affectionate lovable cat, is beyond our comprehension. A lap to sit on and to feel wanted is all he longs for. Come and see him and make his day.



Paws and Squirrel

These two beautiful cats were brought to Holly Hedge after their family split up. Naturally they are a little nervous of their new environment but they are very affectionate and love to be groomed. If you can offer Paws and Squirrel the chance of a fresh start, please come in to say 'hello' to them'.

Thanks

Grateful thanks yet again to **Tania Taber**, Graphic Designer, for not only designing the Newsletter, but also our new leaflets which we all think are brilliant and look so professional. Although Tania has now moved to France, she is dedicated to helping Holly Hedge and we can't praise her enough.

Thanks to **everyone involved** with the Sanctuary for all their time given so willingly to help our rescues. **Staff** and **volunteers** give their all and we can't begin to tell you how much you are appreciated.

Thanks to **Axa Sun Life Challenge** for doing a brilliant job on our overgrown garden and painting the exterior Cattery walls. It certainly has made a difference. Thanks again.

We are indebted to all the wonderful people who take on our 'Golden Oldies' and give them the chance to end their days comfortably and with dignity in their own homes.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for giving them happy endings.

2007 A.G.M.

This will be held at **Long Ashton Village Hall, Keedwell Hill, Long Ashton, Bristol** at 7.30 p.m. on **Thursday 15 November 2007.**

