

RSPCA West Gwynedd

❖ BRANCH NEWSLETTER ❖

Issue 6

May 2002

Special points of interest:

- New Shop opened in Bangor.
- Branch cattery success.
- Local schools give support.
- Statistics show another busy year for Branch.

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Branch shop opens in Bangor

2001 was an exciting year for West Gwynedd Branch, with the opening of a second Branch shop, this time in Bangor. West Gwynedd's first shop was opened at Penygroes in August 1999 and continues to flourish under the care of Freda, Bet and Auntie Bet.

A temporary shop was opened in the High Street, Bangor in June 2001, on a short let, pending permanent letting or sale of the property. Located at a prime position, close to Woolworth and Boots, this shop proved hugely successful over the summer months, raising an amazing £900 during the first week. Unfortunately, in September, we were told that the premises were being let permanently at a high rent and we were obliged to seek alternative, cheaper accommodation.

So, in October, having been given a fresh coat of paint and a "spring clean" by a small gang of Branch volunteers, the new Bangor shop was opened at **115 High Street**, previously the Celt Model shop at Kyffin Square.

The shop is wholly run by voluntary

staff and the Branch is indebted to Shirley and Helena, who manage between them, with occasional help from a few others to man the shop 5 days a week (see page 4 for opening hours). A wide variety of goods is sold including clothes, books, ornaments and bric-a-brac and, more recently RSPCA new goods such as badges, biros and small soft toys. The shop is proving popular with both locals and students, many of whom have become regulars, returning often, in search of bargains.

If you can help in either shop or have goods to donate, please call in or phone

Shirley (Bangor shop) on

07762 353307

or

Freda (Penygroes shop) on

01758 750356.

School Club makes its mark

An RSPCA Club is held at Friars Comprehensive School, Bangor every week for Years 7 & 8 (ages 11 - 13 years). Under the supervision of Branch Chair Hilary Pritchard, pupils work towards receiving an Animal Action Certificate by completing 5 tasks out of a choice of 15. Examples include keeping an animal diary, making a birthday card using an animal design and researching cruelty-free cosmetics. The group also designs posters to put up around the school - neutering your cat, animal welfare etc,

and members write letters to MPs. During the group meetings there are many anecdotes about the pupils' animals and the antics they get up to. The members manned a stall with RSPCA goods and pupils' donated goods at the Friars School Christmas Fair and raised £50. During the last week of the summer term 2001 a competition was held between the school houses to invent a poster on dogs left in hot cars. Many impressive and colourful designs were produced showing great talent - and concern for the animals.

Branch fostering cattery

Before 1999, West Gwynedd Branch had no facility in which to hold cats for rehoming. All requests for rehoming had to be directed to the RSPCA Animal Centre at Bryn y Maen, Colwyn Bay. Unfortunately, Bryn y Maen is often full and with a long waiting list, despite having had a new wing added to the cattery. However much a facility expands, the numbers of unwanted cats and kittens by far exceed the spaces available.

Luckily, in 1999, the Branch was approached by Clive and Shirley Evans at Rhoshirwaun with the offer of fostering cats in an outbuilding at their home. 2 pens were erected within the building and soon the first "guests" arrived and were rehomed.

The Branch was then offered an unit of 3 pens, originally being used by another cat charity in the area. A series of tragic personal events had led to the pens being left unused and the Branch gladly accepted the offer of adopting the facility, together with an adjoining garden shed. In February 2000, 2 Branch volunteers and a small group of friends carefully dismantled the pens and shed. Then arose the problem of transporting the rather large sections to Clive and Shirley's, some 30 miles away. Eventually, resourceful as ever, Freda Holme, Branch Secretary, persuaded her local coal merchant with his flat-backed lorry to transport the lot. This was done free of charge and the Branch was very grateful for the

support and safe delivery of the pens and shed.

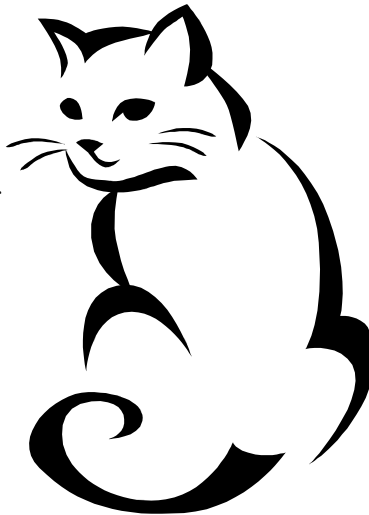
By now, it was May, and there was some concern that the pens had deteriorated in the interim between dismantling and arriving at their destination. However, all was well, and together with Clive and Shirley, 3 Branch volunteers re-erected the pens and shed. They were then painted and weather-proofed.

The pens are very well designed, with dual-level, plastic-clad sleeping quarters and a sizeable run each, allowing an airy but secure and covered exercising area. Prospective adopters may visit by prior arrangement with Clive or Shirley. All cats are health-checked and neutered if old enough. Any cat too young to neuter when rehomed

is neutered at a later date, at the expense of West Gwynedd Branch. Home check procedures are in place to ensure suitability of adoptions. No charge is made but donations are always welcome towards the purchase of food and upkeep of the pens.

In 2001, a total of 70 cats were successfully rehomed, mostly locally. Should you wish to give a cat a good home please contact Shirley on

07813 742836.



Caernarfon schools help Branch

During the last week of Christmas term 2001, Ysgol Syr Huw Owen, Caernarfon held appeals in both upper and lower schools to raise awareness of animal welfare issues. Organized by committee member Sue Roberts, a teacher at the school, the pupils responded generously to the appeal, bringing in tins and packets of cat and dog food. The dog food was donated to Bryn y Maen Animal Centre, Colwyn Bay and the cat food was delivered to Clive and Shirley, who foster cats for West Gwynedd Branch (see above).

In conjunction with the appeal, competitions

were held to design posters promoting animal awareness at Christmas time. Prizes of £15, £10 and £5 were presented to the winners in both schools. Again the response was good, with an excellent standard of entries.

Glyn Evans, a Year 7 pupil, was so inspired by the appeal, that he held his own fund-raising event by singing solo in the lower school. He raised £42.63 which was donated to West Gwynedd Branch.

In recognition of his initiative, he was presented with a Certificate of Merit by the Branch.

Focus on: Freda Holme – West Gwynedd Branch's Honorary Secretary

“Is that Freda ?” the caller asks, as if they’ve known her for years, even though they’ve probably never met. Out of all the people associated with West Gwynedd Branch, Freda must be the most well known. From Regional HQ, the Inspectorate, Bryn y Maen Animal Centre, local veterinary practices and people phoning up for help with their animals, all know Freda as being their first point of call.

Freda first became associated with the Branch in 1994, when she and her late husband, Norman, adopted Sheba, a German Shepherd, from Bryn y Maen. During the rehoming visit they were asked if they would be interested in helping the Branch with its activities..... and the rest as they say, is history.

At first Freda agreed to be the Branch Rehoming Co-ordinator, before, in 1995, agreeing to be Branch Secretary and chief almoner, little knowing probably how busy her RSPCA life would become. Recently, I asked Freda if the events of one of her days could be recorded

- 07.15** Get up for breakfast and feed Sheba and Toby, both adopted dogs and the two adopted cats, Boots and Panda.
- 08.00** Sort out donated goods to take to the Penygroes Branch Shop. It’s Freda’s day at the shop today and having collected donated goods over the weekend, they must be sorted out into what will/will not sell, clean/not so clean, before being loaded into the car.
- 08.45** The phone starts ringing, with people wanting advice or financial help with their veterinary bills. Vouchers must be completed ready for posting on the way to the shop.
- 09.15** Phone veterinary surgeries to authorise vouchers for animals needing immediate attention.
- 09.30** Leave for the shop having switched on the telephone answering machine.
- 10.00** Arrive at Penygroes shop, unload the car and have a cup of coffee! Bet, Auntie Bet or Avril may be in to help, but know that the shop is in good hands today. The day is spent sorting out goods, “whizzing-out” damaged clothes, serving, discussing any problems people have with their animals, arranging to collect donated goods. Some regulars may just call in for a chat

– the shop is a friendly sort of place!

- 16.00** Close the shop before driving to collect an unowned cat needing rehoming. Luckily, Clive and Shirley have a free pen at the Branch’s rehoming facility and have agreed to take this one in. He’s a big tabby and white neutered tom which has taken some catching but is a nice natured cat who should soon find a new loving home.

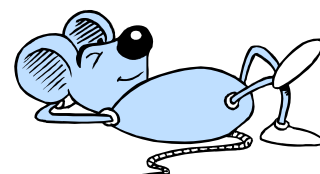
17.00 Pop in at home to see to the animals and have a bite to eat before driving the 20 miles to Clive and Shirley’s. The cat is soon settled into his nice clean pen and Freda has a cuppa before setting off for home again.

18.30 Arrive home, the answering machine is flashing.

There are calls from people wanting financial help with neutering and treatment of pets, someone wants to adopt a kitten, someone else wants to have some older cats rehomed, Regional HQ has phoned redirecting some requests they’ve had from people living in the Branch area. There is also some mail from National HQ which must be discussed with the Branch Chair and Treasurer and some vet bills to be checked before forwarding to the Treasurer.

- 19.00** Reply to messages left on answering machine. Phone Hilary (Chair) and Alun (Treasurer) to discuss correspondence and to catch up with news from around the Branch.
- 20.00** At last, time to sit down for some quality time with the animals and to relax. The phone still rings occasionally but is back on the answering machine. A quick listen to the message will tell if the message is urgent, and if not, it will be attended to tomorrow.

NOT A BAD DAY’S WORK FOR A VOLUNTEER.



Multi-tasking Freda

RSPCA WEST GWYNEDD BRANCH

Shops at: 115 High Street, Bangor
Open 10:00 - 16:00 except Wednesday & Sunday
Tel: 07762 353307
44 Snowdon Street, Penygroes
Open 10:00 - 16:00 Monday - Friday

Phone: 01758 750356 (Freda)
01248 671304 (Alun)
01248 353383 (Hilary)
Email: RSPCA.West.Gwynedd@care4free.net



**West Gwynedd Branch
Reg Charity 226126**

We do what we can to help

*We're on the Web!
www.RSPCA.West.Gwynedd.care4free.net*

Branch Statistics for 2001

Animals given veterinary treatment funded by Branch voucher

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
148	188	3	5	344

Animals neutered by Branch voucher

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
100	340	4	-	444

Animals re-homed by Branch

Dogs	Cats	Rabbits	Other	Total
2	75	-	-	77

Total spent on vet bills: £22,812.60

If you can give some time to help RSPCA West Gwynedd Branch in ANY way, check out our website for a full calendar of events, or contact us by e-mail, or phone any of the numbers given on this page and elsewhere.

Popular names for popular pets

A survey conducted by MORI for the RSPCA throughout England & Wales during July 2001 showed that dogs are still the nation's favourite animal. One in three people said dogs were their favourite compared with one in five who preferred cats.

The top ten most popular dog names and five of the top ten favourite cat names are common to humans. About 1 in 30 dogs is named Ben and 1 in 50 cats is called Charlie. The top ten names for dogs are Ben, Max, Bonnie, Sam, Jack, Toby, Ellie, Meg, Poppy and Rosie. For cats, the top ten are Tigger/Tiger, Charlie, Misty, Harriet, Tom, Smokey, Poppy, Sam, Sootie and Blackie.

Some less common names that have come to the Branch's attention include :

Dogs

Butch – a **female** Jack Russell, Hamish – a West Highland Terrier, Blaidd – Welsh for wolf, Fourstar – because next door's dog is called Diesel.

Cats

Mush Mash – a child's mis-pronunciation of moustache, Ussy – the child could not say pussy, Oliver – constantly begging for more, Tiger Tyson – always fighting with the owner's dog (and winning!), Honey Bee – a striped cat, Domino – white with black spots, Zebedee – a bouncy cat, Sana – Welsh for socks, Monkey – quite a handful, Cocaine, Heroin and Snot – we didn't like to ask!



Yes, we know this is a Scottie not a Westie