

The Gambia Horse and Donkey Trust

Fighting Poverty – Feeding Families

Registered Charity No: 1096814

Autumn Newsletter 2016



Inspirational March in The Gambia to celebrate World Animal Day 2016

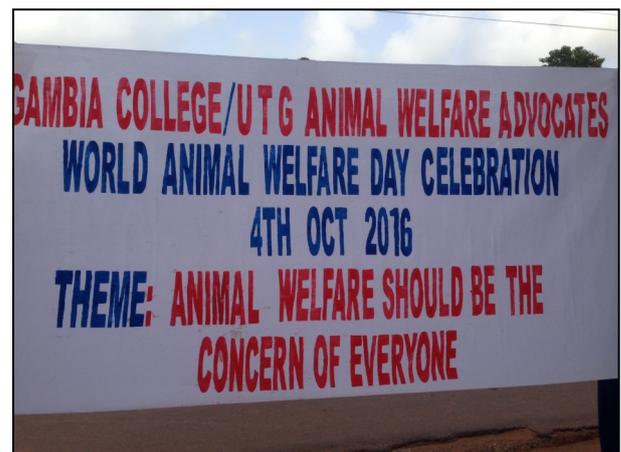
What an incredible year it has been! It has been extremely busy, but very productive and for a small charity, we have achieved so much thanks to our very dedicated staff and to you, our very generous supporters.

***Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path
and leave a trail.***

We are reminded of this quote when we think of The Gambia College/ University of The Gambia Animal Advocates Team who have been so busy. This team of students who were formed after they attended a joint workshop that we held with a German charity called WTG in January and as far as we know, are the first Gambian led Animal Advocates ever. They are a group of truly inspiring young people and in addition to their advocacy work visiting schools, they organised a fantastic programme to celebrate World Animal Day on October the 4th.

Quite apart from their academic work, many of these students also have jobs to fund themselves through their education so their extra efforts to help animals are particularly to be applauded. A march with a banner led by a Scout band to the regional Governor's office was followed by a seminar with talks, questions and answers and a small amateur dramatic production to emphasise their message. Relevant stakeholders such as the Wildlife Department, Department of Livestock Services and the Livestock Owners Association were invited as well as school students and we were overwhelmed by the interest and the contribution made by the audience.

The students are now discussing extending their organisation to more open membership as there was so much interest. I felt uplifted by the day and very optimistic for the future of this country after meeting so many enthusiastic and caring people. This group has our utmost respect.



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Another first at GHDT

Thanks to our collaboration with the German charity WTG, this year's semester is the first time the University of The Gambia and the Gambia college will have animal welfare education introduced into the curriculum. Dr. Daffeh has been funded by WTG to develop the curriculum and it seems to have been well received.

Our new centre at Makasutu, which is nearing completion, will become a resource for the students to learn more and have access to hands on practical experience under the guidance of Dr. Daffeh and his colleagues Dr. Demba Jallow and Dr. Abdou Ceesay. This will enable us to gradually help the University and College to build veterinary capacity in The Gambia and we are very proud to be able to help, so that animals and their owners all over the country will eventually have access to the veterinary support that they require.



Dr Kebba Daffeh



We are pleased to welcome some qualified vets onto our staff, Dr Demba Jallow and Dr. Abdou Ceesay began working for us in May and have been busy carrying out an impact assessment of the work we have done so far and a baseline survey of the new area we shall be working in so that we can see if after a few years our work is having an impact and if so, which aspects of our work are having the most impact. They will also be setting up the new mobile clinics in strategic areas around the Capital and providing training for the students when they visit the centre.

We hope to share our resources with students from overseas. We were recently able to extend the objectives of our charity to include other animals including wildlife and we now have a wildlife expert on our staff so we hope to welcome not only veterinary students, but also those involved with wildlife and conservation studies. We would like to welcome Alpha Jallow who was a previous Director of Wildlife onto our staff. He has a wealth of knowledge to share with conservation, ecology and wildlife students, so we welcome enquiries from students of these subjects.

Pictured left, Dr Demba Jallow and Dr Abdou Ceesay

Can you help us Please?



We found that having an annual show was a vital tool in providing information for working animal owners and for spreading the animal welfare message to the public and we would like to hold a show the day following the opening of our new centre in January if this is possible.

With the building of the new centre we have been faced with a great many costs so if anyone would be willing to sponsor a class at the show we would be very grateful. It costs £75 to cover the prize money and rosettes for the first six places and it would get us off to such a good start in our new area. We firmly believe in working together with the people we want to help and holding shows provides encouragement, fun and education



for both the owners of the animals and the general public.

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Epizootic Lymphangitis



We were pleased to welcome Claire Scantlebury (pictured here working in the field) from the University of Liverpool during the summer. Claire had come out to carry out some research into a nasty fungal disease which affects horses and donkeys in Africa. She wanted to see if the type we have is the same as that found in other countries in order to find a universal treatment for it.

Claire and our GHDT team worked hard all over the country collecting samples of pus and blood (delightful!) and treating the victims of this dreadful disease.

Fortunately, Gambian animals seem to respond well to the treatment and we received excellent reports from some delighted owners after Claire had left. There is much to be learned from Claire's valuable work and we hope to continue to work with her in the future for the benefit of our Gambian animals. We have found that when organisations are able to collaborate so much more can be achieved.



September 28th 2016 was WORLD RABIES DAY and we are pleased to say that we joined together with a number of other Gambian organisations to celebrate the event and together we are supporting a month long rabies vaccination campaign throughout the country.



The bulk of the work will be carried out by the Department of Livestock Services, but we are pleased to be able to make a contribution, both financially and with staff and equipment.

Meanwhile our little beach dogs (these were dogs who had been abandoned but now know where they can get food when times are tough) have been vaccinated already and enjoy taking advantage of some home comforts before heading off down to the beach to chat to tourists.

Elvis and Jan, two very intelligent and sensitive donkeys



Jan the donkey

In our last newsletter we featured Elvis and Jan, two very intelligent donkeys who came to us because of their apparent bad behaviour. Here is an update. When we were called to Elvis we thought he may have rabies because he was apparently attacking people. He turned out to be a donkey who had come to the end of his fuse when being used and abused by children and he had decided to retaliate. Jan's story was similar, his disabled partner of nine years had moved to live near the coast and had left Jan behind.

We are not sure whether his new handlers abused him or whether he just missed his "man" badly, but his behaviour also deteriorated. Both of them have redeemed themselves at GHDT but are quick to slip if they are bored or feel unloved. We tried to rehome Jan with another family who had lost their beloved donkey, but his tolerance of children is not good and though he got on well with the father of the family, he had to be returned as he was badly behaved with the children. It looks as if they will be living and working with us to the end of their days !

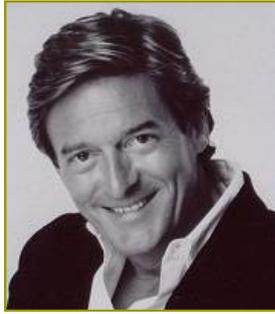


Elvis the donkey

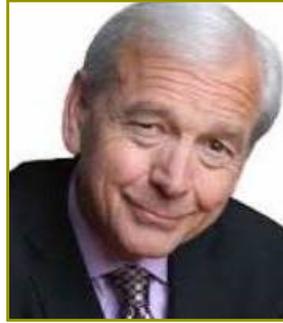
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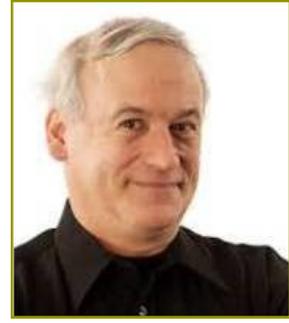
New Patrons and Supporters for The Gambia Horse and Donkey Trust



Nigel Havers



John Humphrys



Robert Munsch

We are absolutely delighted to announce that three very well known and well respected people have endorsed our work and agreed to be our patron and supporters.

Nigel Havers has very kindly agreed to be our Patron and said, "It is a privilege to be able to call myself a patron of this charity which from its very grass roots literally saves lives and benefits both human and animal lives in such a holistic way. The rest of the world take note! Nigel Havers." We are very grateful to him for his patronage.

John Humphrys has also endorsed and supports our work, and we are extremely proud that he approves of our approach of "helping people to help themselves" . It means a great deal to us to have such support.

Canadian children's author, Robert Munsch, has also endorsed and supported our work, donating a signed copy of one of his books for a fundraiser.

Sometimes little things bring a lot of pleasure!



One of our long time supporters, Tini Cox, is a member of a knitting group. She and her friends made up several beautiful bags of brightly knitted goods for babies. On Heather Armstrong's recent trip to The Gambia she managed to squeeze one of the bags into her suitcase and when she reached Sambel she was told of a lady who had delivered a baby recently who would really appreciate the goods.

In each package was a little knitted teddy bear. When Heather saw the lady she had a little toddler with her and he seemed a bit bewildered by the new arrival in the family, so Heather took it upon herself to give him the little teddy bear. I think his smile say it all, it really brightened Heather's day!



Lima

Goodbye to two dear friends

Sadly, this year we had to say goodbye to two of our oldest canine friends, Lima reached the grand old age of almost 14. She was a sweet and gentle soul and dear old Nelson who was also a teenager. They were much loved companions and such lovely characters. They are greatly missed.



Nelson

Animal welfare : The Human Element



Dr Daffeh

The Gambia Horse and Donkey Trust were privileged to attend “ **The First International Conference on Human Behaviour Change For Animal Welfare** “ in Dorking, Surrey. This was a three day conference exploring the importance of understanding how human behaviour change happens and how that understanding can be applied to benefit animals. This was organised by Suzanne Rogers and her colleagues of the *Change For Animals Foundation* and we had three days of the most interesting and inspirational talks by incredible people from all over the world. It was wonderful to know that there are some truly amazing people out there working so hard for animal welfare. We were inspired and encouraged and it was an honour to meet some of them. More details of the conference and some of the talks can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/HBCAW/>

We were delighted to be represented there by Dr. Kebba Daffeh and Anna Sallet, who was one of our fantastic admin volunteers and who gave excellent presentations in poster and verbal form. They did us proud. You can see Anna’s talk by following this link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GTnHIDfncZ8> Our sincere thanks go to Anna and Dr. Daffeh.

“When working with others focus on similarities not difference, closeness not distance” Manoj Gautam.

This was a quote from one of the inspirational speakers who had achieved so much for animals. We identified with this as we feel that we achieve far more by working “with” people. Trying to understand their reasons for doing things the way they do and then working *together* to find a better way rather than dictating what we think is best.

These talks gave great hope with the impressive results that were reported. We learnt of incredibly inspiring projects, new ideas and we made new connections that will all improve the way we work. We would like to give thanks to Suzanne Rogers and her team for their initiative and efforts. It was a huge success!



Anna Sallet

POINTS OF LIGHT AWARD—5th July 2016

Congratulations to our Charity Director, Heather Armstrong, as her work was recognised by our last Prime Minister, David Cameron, who gave Heather a Points of Light award.

David Cameron said:

“Heather has worked tirelessly to support farmers and their families across The Gambia. Thanks to her dedication The Gambia Horse and Donkey Trust is ensuring working animals stay fit and strong and are able to make a real difference to local communities.”



The team at GHDT

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In memory of Phoenix and Horace

Recently we have very sadly lost two of the great characters at The Gambia Horse and Donkey Trust, Phoenix and Horace. Phoenix was brought to the Gambia Horse and Donkey Trust suffering from severe burns. These were sustained when Phoenix was caught in a stable fire.

Phoenix was tethered inside so he was unable to escape and the flames were too big for his owners to be able to enter this stable to reach him. Fortunately after a few minutes his rope burnt through enabling him to escape, and he galloped out into the bush. Luckily he was caught and brought to GHDT for treatment.

The smoke and heat had seriously damaged his eyes and for two weeks he was blind, but thankfully after this time he regained his sight. The burn injuries were sustained over most of his body and head, and it took some time for the full extent of his injuries to be realised.

After huge amounts of intensive care, provided by volunteer Anna Sallet and our wonderful team of Gambian staff, Phoenix began to improve.

Phoenix stayed at GHDT for many years and was a real joy to be around and an expert at melting the hearts of all who met him! Eventually he began to suffer weekly bouts of colic and we do not have the expertise or the facilities and finance to possibly operate to find out what was wrong. We felt his welfare was severely compromised and the very sad decision was made to put him to sleep.



Phoenix



Horace chatting up the girls



When Horace arrived at our centre no-one could believe the condition he was in. He was emaciated, his ears were broken and drooping, he was very battle scarred, part of his tail was missing, his teeth were in appalling condition, one leg had been broken and had set on its own with some deformity and he was a very old, sad and shut down fellow. We think he must have been quite a feisty character in his youth to have encountered so much and yet survived, taking care of himself as best he could. The first droppings he produced on his arrival were full of plastic bags which reflected the fragile living he had eked out in the town where he was found.

We felt that this brave old chap deserved a chance to have a quality retirement. Far from being aggressive as we were first told, he adored attention, fuss and food and though he took time to put on weight, he enjoyed life pottering around with constant access to quality food and care for the first time in his life. Despite his age, he had a passion for the ladies! Sadly after two years with us, old age, a very hard life and lack of teeth took their toll and the decision was taken to put him to sleep to prevent him from suffering. He had so much character, joining the staff for his daily cups of attaya (green tea) He was much loved and admired and it was our privilege to give him care in his last two years. He gave us much joy in return. His larger than life personality is sorely missed on the yard. RIP

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The Makasutu Training centre and Derek Knottenbelt

Veterinary Hospital

The new centre at Makasutu is now approaching completion and will be officially opened in January. We have so many people to thank for enabling this project to come to fruition and I hope after reading this newsletter that you will begin to appreciate the positive impact that it is already having.

Although we are not yet officially open, we already have two inpatients, Josh (pictured below) who was found apparently abandoned and quite poorly on the central reservation of a highway, he has become a real pet and loves his new environment. More recently, he was joined by a jenny who has been badly injured so is having her wounds treated by volunteer vet Malcolm McGrath who had been volunteering his services as a building assistant and fencer at Makasutu. Thankfully she is making good progress.

Those of you who have experienced the dubious plumbing at Sambel Kunda will be delighted to hear that we have very smart bathrooms at Makasutu thanks to **Kohler Mira Ltd** who were generous enough to donate all the sanitary ware for four bathrooms! Russell Harris, an employee of **Kohler Mira** and a wonderful supporter of the charity, even came out to fit the bathrooms for us.

We would like to give **Ros and Russell Harris** a very big thank you for bringing the bathroom equipment down to Surrey and for all the help and support that they give us. It truly is amazing to see what can be achieved when kind and enthusiastic people get together and make things happen.

We are extremely grateful to everyone who helps us in whatever way they can, whether it is help with the packing, donations of equipment or donations of money. It is all helping to make a very real impact on animal welfare in The Gambia. As we approach completion of the new centre, our specific thanks go to the people who enabled it to happen.

Lawrence Williams and Linda English who provided the land on which the centre is built, Vets with Horsepower and all who sponsored them, The Jean Sainsbury Animal Welfare Trust, The Elise Pilkington Trust, the late Dr. John Raeside and his family and friends and the wonderful members of the 333 Club who so generously undertook to raise £333 towards the building of the centre. We must also thank BCF Technology for the wonderful donation of a digital X-Ray machine, Kruuse for donations of bandaging, sutures, gloves and other equipment and Burtons Veterinary Equipment, for the amazing donation of an endoscope, special thanks to Cheryl Stear of Burtons who has given us so much support over the years.



It has been a real challenge to get the building completed, but it would not have been done without the dedication of our general manager, Langbaba Ceesay, who has literally worked day and night to ensure that it all happened, So big thanks to him for having the perseverance and sheer energy. It would not have happened without you!

Langbaba Ceesay



Russell giving Josh some sympathy.

The 333 Club

Although we have now raised enough money to complete the building and furnishing of the new centre, we have been more than a little shocked at the quotes we have received for installing solar power. This centre will be a teaching facility and we need power for the X-ray, lighting, microscopes, and other equipment. The quote we have is £16,000 so we are asking supporters if they could undertake to raise £333 from a coffee morning, muffy day, cake sale or other fundraising event. We only need 48 people to do this so if you cannot organise a fundraiser perhaps you can support one? Every little helps!

333 Club Members who helped to build the centre: David Marsden, Linda Jones, Sue Silk in memory of Michael Silk and in memory of Marjorie M Smith, June Waring, Sue Ashton, Hart voor Gambia, Janis Gilbert, Christine Bushell, Alison Bruce, Ruby Grimshaw, Edna Orbell (In memory of Fleur), Barbara Tinto, Lizzie Balls, Dolly Langton, Nick and Christine Ffoulkes – Jones, Margaret Brockie, Louise Cornish, Clyde Veterinary Group, Indoor Driving South West, Melanthe, Kathy Sharman, Barbara Sharman, and Mrs Jill Tyler in memory of Major Wilfred Tyler RCT the East Anglia Trail Riders Association, Jane Talbot Smith, Blissland Harness Makers, Judy Scrine, Chloe Stone, Ali Newton, Wendy Richards, Sue Stage Anne Braren, Jackie Hallett, Barbara Emery, Hannah Ellis, Jamie Gartside, Neu Schuule, Bridge House Quadrille Team, Red Rose Carriage Club, the late Dr. John Raeside, Kelly Mercer and Vivian Hawkes, Deben Valley Equine Veterinary Clinic, Mavis Wakefield Muir, (Ben Muir, granny extraordinaire!) and Jim Spiers. **We hope you will visit this lovely centre that you played a major part in creating!**

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CHRISTMAS AT GHDT



This year we again have a great selection of cards to purchase including a new one designed by one of our supporters with our own Horace leading the sleigh. Please see our website www.gambiahorseanddonkey.org.uk/christmas or telephone 01306 627568 if you would like to order some.



ANIMAL SPONSORSHIP



Josh inside the house !

If you would like to give a unique gift this Christmas please consider sponsoring one of the long term residents in our care. The cost is just £2 per month.

Josh was picked up on the central reservation of a dual carriageway and was very sick. He recuperated in our charity director's garden and proved to be a bit of a character by coming into the house and admiring himself in the mirror. He has now been moved to our new centre and is the first patient there. In due course when he has fully recovered, he will earn his keep either as a project donkey or as a relief donkey whilst a sick or injured donkey recovers.

If you would like to sponsor him or any other of our horses and donkeys such as Jan or Elvis just download our Animal Sponsorship Form at www.gambiahorseanddonkey.org.uk/sponsor simply print it off and fill in your details. Don't forget to indicate which animal you would like to sponsor and also whether you would like to receive information and updates about your chosen animal by post or via email. By choosing to receive updates by email you will help us to reduce the amount of paper we are using and you will also help us to keep our administration costs to a minimum, meaning that more money is available for helping the animals in our care.



Need a scrap car removing from your drive, for FREE? Simply contact Giveacar at www.giveacar.co.uk or on 0207 7364242 to organise your free collection, and your scrap car will be transformed into a cash donation for GHDT!

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