

Socelelex

Newsletter Winter 2009



**Happy Christmas and a
Happy New Year
from everyone at Socelelex!**

A Brief History of Socelex

Maria Hennessy loved animals and as a child, dreamt of running away to join a circus. After Maria found a job at a circus, her dream soon became a nightmare as she discovered that the elephants were being grossly mistreated.



After leaving the circus, Maria hitchhiked to Nepal & India with her son Shane to monitor the treatment of elephants and then to Japan to tend sick circus elephants before hiring a Jumbo jet to fly them to a safari park in Argentina. In Afghanistan, she persuaded army guards to let her into a compound to help an injured elephant. It was thus that Maria founded Socelex (the Society Against Elephant Exploitation).

Maria found that other animals needed her help and Socelex expanded to include any animal that needed care. Maria learnt a great deal about animal medicine and nursed many of the animals herself but Maria had cancer and sadly died in August 1996. Her brother John and son Shane, together with a small team of helpers were left to carry on her work.

In 1996, Diane Allen visited Socelex through her voluntary work with the Cat Protection League and fell in love the place. She had many years experience fund-raising for the cats and turned her skills to help the Socelex animals.



Diane helped out with the daily duties involved in running an animal sanctuary as well as producing the newsletters. Latterly, her mobility was impaired with osteoarthritis but she carried on working.

Diane was diagnosed with cancer in 2006. She tried to help out where she could but the hospital visits and chemotherapy made this increasingly harder. Diane died on May 16th 2007. Maria & Diane are greatly missed at Socelex, their good works have helped many animals and that work continues in their memory today.

Well 2009 is all but over, it seems to have shot by. I can barely remember the summer as it seems to have been raining all the time!

We've seen huge mushrooms in the fields at Socelex (see photo). I think we've all got wet feet at the sanctuary, humans and animals alike. At least it's been mild though, by mid-November last year, we had already had snow so there's something to be thankful for. Hopefully, this mild weather will last until May. As soon as the clocks go back, I start looking forward to the spring and seeing the bulbs coming out. Spring, is the nicest time of year at Socelex.



Bertie the Hedgehog

A very large hedgehog was brought to the sanctuary in need of care and attention. On inspection, we thought he might be quite a old hedgehog as he was in a very bad state; covered in ticks and fleas, a sure sign that he was not taking good care of himself. We fed him up and got a lot of the ticks off him before taking him to our vets for treatment. At the moment, he's recovering well. He should be ready for the wild again anytime soon, weather permitting.



Plonker the Cat

Plonker the cat (on the front cover) came by his name as he always seems to be doing the wrong thing, like Del Boy's brother from 'Only Fools and Horses'. He rubs around your feet telling you he wants food until you can't ignore him. When you've filled a dish with a tin of food and put it down near him, he (gently) bites your finger. It's just his odd way of saying 'thank you'. He's got his wires crossed somehow. This isn't really very surprising though as he had a rough time before he got here. We think he was dumped next door, so his bad attitude is understandable. When he was found, he had a nasty cut on his ear and it took a time to get him to the vet. However, he's fine now and eats like a horse. He answers his name and follows us around the sanctuary like a dog, he's really very affectionate in his own way. It's nice to have him around for company.

Kim

Kim's story started at Socelex ten years ago, on a sunny summer's day. We had been to the corn stores to get bedding straw for the animals and a trailer we were using was left outside the gate while we put the straw away. That done, the two volunteers went out to get the trailer and came back in to say that there were a lot of puppies left in the trailer. I went out not believing that someone could have silently dumped animals that quietly without us hearing anything. There was a litter of seven pups all huddled up in the left-over straw, they looked fit and well, 3 to 4 weeks old.



They were brought in and given food; they did not know what it was, it was obvious they were not weaned. The girls set about feeding them with milk, all the pups had good appetites. It wasn't long before they were on solids and putting on a lot of weight. Tracy and Jennifer were with them all the time. Tracy got very attached to Kim, she asked her Mum and Dad if she could take him home, 'Yes' was the answer. So Kim went to live with the family and Mire, their other dog. Mum and Dad thought it would be nice for Mire to have a friend to play with, they were both female and so should get on well. With their two cats, Dave and Pepsi, they were all part of the family. The dogs would go on holidays and days out, long walks down by the canal. Playing with a Frisbee in the garden kept them fit, you could see the excitement on their faces, tails wagging as if they were clockwork. They both loved going out in the car as they did a lot. If they were left home for some reason, the way they greeted you on your return was something to see, visitors and family alike. You just had to make a fuss of them. Kim would stand in front of you till you gave her head a rub. She had a Taz soft toy she would often shake in front of you to say hello. The two dogs happily shared the toys and their rather large bed by the telly. Mire would have just as soon as sat and watched it but Kim would get in first roughing up the bed and then plomping it down saying 'I'm here'.

Unfortunately, Kim got ill, just off colour, not eating as much as normal. She seemed to have lost her sparkle. She was taken to the vet who did tests to see what the problem was. First of all, it was thought to be a virus but after a few days the news came that it was a tumour. It was inoperable, stomach cancer. Kim passed away so quick it took everyone by surprise. She had never been ill before. She's missed by everybody that ever knew her. Kim was very special. Goodbye Kim.

Bric-a-Brac, Clothes etc.

As we no longer have spare storage space at the sanctuary, we regret that we can no longer take in or collect clothing or general bric-a-brac etc. However, you are welcome to take them to the Inter-Aid shop at 58 Crwys Road, Cardiff. We would like to take the opportunity of thanking Christine of Inter-Aid for her support.

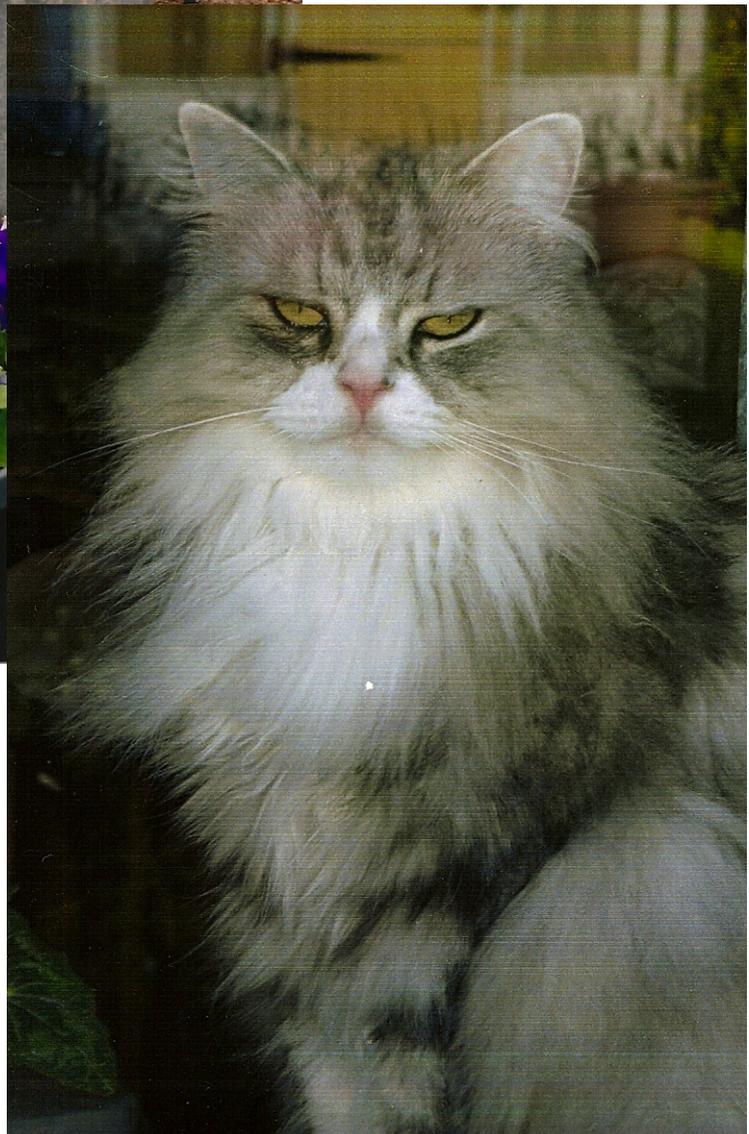
Still Needed

We DO however, still need pet food and blankets and can collect those, but please bear with us as we are not always able to collect straight away.

Update: Billy & Nia (by John Allen)

Billy is now 9 years old, Nia is 8, both are in very good health. Billy & Nia haven't liked the weather this year at all, one minute it's hot, the next it's cold, wet and windy. Nia goes into the garage through the cat flap in the rainy, windy weather until I call her in for meals. Billy seems to be in and out through the cat flap every 5 minutes. When he's

indoors, Billy lets you know if he wants patting by lifting up one of his front legs and paws the air until you do.



Socelelex

Date: _____

Membership No.: _____

Checklist / Membership / Donation Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code: _____

Tel. No.: _____

Please tick in box or underline as appropriate:

- I want to collect 1 tin / or more of pet food a week and have it collected /
can deliver approximately every 3 months
(Please include your phone number)
- Please send me information about legacies
- Membership @ £5 per year
- Donation

If sending a cheque, please make it out to 'Socelelex' and quote your membership number on the back. Thank you.

Please return to:

Socelelex Animal Sanctuary
Temple Cloud Farm
Crumlin
Gwent NP11 3BD
Telephone No.: 01495 211 401

Office Use:

Your Stories

We would love to hear from any Socelex supporters who have taken in any animals from the sanctuary over the years. It would be great if we could include your animal update stories in future newsletters.

The address for your stories is on the enclosed checklist, or you could e-mail them to: Socelex@googlemail.com



At Socelex, the work goes on. We are looking forward to Christmas and the New Year.

Best wishes to all supporters and friends from all at Socelex.