

Quaker Concern for Animals



NEWSLETTER – Spring 2007

To say that we love God and at the same time exercise cruelty towards the least creature is a contradiction in itself

John Woolman (1720 – 1772)

www.quaker-animals.org.uk

HOW TO JOIN QUAKER CONCERN FOR ANIMALS

Please complete the following form and send to:
Judith Treanor, Treasurer,
38, St. Peter's Mount, Exeter, Devon. EX4 2JD.

I wish to become a member of QCA. I enclose my yearly subscription of £10, or £5 (concessionary)

I wish to pay by Standing Order

I wish to make a donation of.....

NAME:.....

ADDRESS:.....

.....

.....

Telephone number, if available:

Email address, if available:

Meeting attended, if appropriate:

Please make cheques payable to **Quaker Concern for Animals.**



COMMITTEE OF QUAKER CONCERN FOR ANIMALS - 2006

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**I want to realise identity with all life,
even with such things as crawl upon earth.**

GANDHI

Sprouts

*When we picked our first sprouts for supper,
somebody said: Soak them in salt water for the bugs.
So I left them for an hour in a covered pan.*

*Later, when I lifted the lid, the sprouts had become
bobbing islands in an ocean,
on which the dwellers had gathered, survivors of the flood.*

*There were slugs, worms, and baby wood lice
balanced on the backs of bigger wood lice.*

It was a community in crisis.

*And what could I do,
gawping over the rim of that world, but become
God?*

From her first collection 'Imagining the Full Hundred' (Gwasg Pantycelyn Press, Caernarfon) by Fiona Owen, of Holyhead Meeting.

QUAKER ANIMAL GROUP INVITED TO JOIN EU TRADE DEBATE

British Quakers concerned about the treatment of animals in world trade have been invited to take part in regular discussions with the European Commissioner for External Trade, Peter Mandelson, and his staff. The aim of the meetings is to develop a good working relationship between all groups with an interest in the trade policy field.

The invitation to join the group follows a nationwide petition organised by the Norwich and Lynn Kinship Group last year. It called upon the EU to bring pressure to bear on the World Trade Organisation to ensure proper consideration is given to the welfare of animals reared for food. At present, European attempts to raise standards are being thwarted by their WTO obligation to accept imports from less enlightened member countries. Two Quakers from Wymondham Meeting, where the Kinship initiative originated, went to Brussels at the invitation of the EU External Trade Directorate. It followed delivery of the petition to Jose Barroso, the President of the European Commission, and a copy to Peter Mandelson.

Mike Purton, who wrote the petition, and Valerie Macfarlane, who co-ordinated it, were accompanied by Adolfo Sansolini, Trade Policy Advisor to the RSPCA, WSPA, CIWF and the Eurogroup for Animal Welfare.

The group were met by Peter Mandelson's Head of Section for Services, Agricultural Trade and Sustainable Development, and two of his colleagues. After they had developed their case, they were invited to join the Civil Society Dialogue, which seeks to ensure that all perspectives on EU trade policy can be heard.

Following the meeting, Mike Purton said: “This is the best outcome we could have hoped for. It offers British Quakers who care about the treatment of animals a real voice on the international stage.”

Mike Purton, Wymondham Recognised Meeting.

Thank you, Mike and Valerie, for all your work on this important initiative. QCA hopes that it can be taken forward with endorsement from interested Meetings. If anybody would like to give Mike their support, please contact him via the clerk.

DONATIONS

During 2006, Quaker Concern for Animals donated funds to twenty-three British-based and eight overseas animal protection organisations. We also, as usual, supported the Phone Line, run by Joan Court, and this work was the subject of a comprehensive article in the January 07 issue of Lifescape magazine, which we recommend as a good read and a mine of information on ethical issues. See www.lifescapemag.com

Beneficiaries of QCA funds are:

Advocates for Animals (Scotland)

Animal Aid

Animal Cruelty Investigation Group

Animal Respect in Norfolk - in lieu of flowers at Molly Stacey's funeral

Battery Hens Welfare Trust, Devon

BETA in Lebanon – a generous donation also earmarked by a supporter of QCA.

Bright Eyes in Spain - from a member

Brooke Hospital for Equines

BUAV

Cancer Quest

Cinnamon Trust

Cefn-yr-Erw Primate Sanctuary, Wales – for Tom and Lola, the adopted baboons

Dr. Hadwen Trust – via The Universal Kinship Fund

Europeans for Medical Progress – donation for talk at AGM 06

Farm Animal Welfare Network

Fight Against Animal Cruelty in Europe (FAACE)

Hillside Animal Sanctuary

IACA/KAPS - Korean Dogs

JBF Animal Welfare in India - via a member

Leicester Animal Aid

MONA UK- chimps in Spain

PETA Bearskin Campaign

SPEAK

Street Dogs of Nepal

Thornberry Animal Sanctuary, Yorkshire

Tower Hill Stables, Essex

Visakha sanctuary in India - via a member

VIVA! - donation for talk at AGM 06

Details follow of those groups which may be less familiar to readers:

HARNESS DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

This is a recently-formed organisation which aims to create a better understanding of the manufacture and use of harness systems used by draught animals worldwide.

Many of us support The Brooke Hospital for Horses and Donkeys, appalled by the lack of knowledge of many in developing countries, who depend for their livings on the use of equines.

A Friend in Birkenhead Meeting, who gave QCA a generous donation earmarked for this purpose, drew the clerk's attention to the excellent work of Terry Davis of Craven Arms, Shropshire, in helping to alleviate this disturbing lack of awareness – a neglect which means that the equines, sometimes severely injured by makeshift harnesses, are forced to live miserable lives, often without veterinary attention.

Terry's group has 30 years expertise in harness manufacture in Britain and is already involved in animal welfare projects in Central America and Africa. They are able to advise and instruct local people, thus finding very practical solutions to a problem which impacts seriously on a huge number of animals worldwide.

We are happy to contribute to Terry's work and, specifically, his request for funds to attend the 5th. International Colloquium on Working Equines in Ethiopia in October 06, a conference under the auspices of The Donkey Sanctuary. At this Colloquium, there was great interest expressed in the Hands-On harness and the Ethiopian Agricultural Research Organisation would like to field test them. Terry has also received other requests for advice from Tanzania and Nepal.

For more information, please contact Terry Davis at harnessaid@yahoo.co.uk

ST. MUNGO'S – to feed the dog companions of homeless guests at Christmas. Quaker Housing Trust, which usually runs a shelter at this time and for which we fund the food for the dogs, was unfortunately unable to do so this year.

ORNEKKOY dog and cat sanctuary, Izmir, Turkey.

Evrin Ursavas, a Ph.D. student from Izmir, Turkey, told us that Ornekkoy animal shelter was in desperate need of help. In October 06 she wrote:

“This shelter is being run by 2 or 3 volunteers, trying to help some 500 dogs and 300 cats. We do not know the exact number, there are so many deaths, births and newcomers. Celal Uner, a retired officer, has been helping these animals for the past 9 years. He makes all the food, does the cleaning and so on. The shelter needs money and he cannot afford everything. We asked for help from the council. After many years, the government agreed to provide spaghetti. The rest of the expenditure is our own responsibility. The amount of money the volunteers can put together is about 250 euros a month. For a population of 800, this amount is close to nothing. We cannot do regular vaccinations or sterilizations. Only a few animals get veterinary help, when they are injured, sick or hit by a car. That is why death rates are very high. We already owe the vet 500 euros. Mr. Uner buys some of the medicines and does the injections himself.

We can buy 280 kg of chicken bone each month to mix with spaghetti and bread, which costs 112 euro and lasts for 12 days. For the rest of the month, they only eat spaghetti and bread.

We can buy 60 kg. milk each month for the babies, costing about 50 euros/month. Most of the babies have no mothers and the milk we can afford is not enough. Chicken bone, milk and medicine costs add up to 232 euros. The remaining 18 euros we give to the veterinary surgeon.

Winter is coming. The cats and the babies will die again from the cold and rain. We have a 50 m2 roofed area and the rest is open.

If we had at least 1000 euro/month income we could do more for them. Unfortunately, Turkish society generally does not value animals. The government simply kills them. So we need help from you and this is urgent. Food, medicine, money, adoption...

Please contact me on this mail address. Evrim Ursavas Guldogan eursavas@hotmail.com



The vet and his patient.

SEALALERT SOUTH AFRICA - Baby Seal Rehab. Centre under Construction

Francois Hugo, of Seal Alert-South Africa - www.sealalertsouthafrica.net - struggled for seven years alone in the wild, doing a thousand rescues of seals a year.

Friends will recall – in the last Newsletter – that it was thanks to the efforts of Francois and Seal Alert in South Africa, that the DeBeers Diamond Corporation stated that they opposed the killing of the South African fur seals in Namibia and they would help to convince the government of Namibia to end sealing.

The good news is that Seal Alert-SA Seal Centre is now under construction. They already have 4 baby seals awaiting their new head-quarters, and by the end of December they should have the first of three sea-water pools complete. The 2.5 m. wide by 5 m. pools will be continuously pumped with seawater from below. Pups will have a mini-island to crawl out on, recover and grow. The room is filled with natural sunlight and plenty of fresh air and they plan to have one pool for babies, one for weanlings and one for older, larger seals.

Two of the babies already rescued are very weak and still have their umbilical cords attached, the other two are less than ten days old. In addition they have two weanlings (11 month old) from Namibia sharing the existing facilities, with the babies. Another 12 weanlings are in the wild, being rehabbed on the rafts, in addition, two sub-adults. By the end of December, they expect to have a baby seal colony of about 20 babies, from at least seven different colonies.

Equipped with catamaran, Jetskis, a 4x4 and two seal beachbuggies, wetsuits, drysuits, camera, Francois is ready to respond and equipped to deal with almost any seal rescue situation, involving any age group of seal.

They have zero funding, so appeal for whatever help anyone can offer - they need a portable water-pump, pool-filter, generator, roller-shutter door, deep-freezer and funding for additional construction of the other two pools. Their basic funding requirements are about R40 000 and they have about R13 000.

Oceana, the largest fishing company in South Africa, has kindly made the premises available for free.

The Shellfish

*What the hell
Good is a shell?
Except fresh on a plate
Prepared to be ate!
An oyster in a bed*

*Would be better off dead.
What part has a clam
In the Over-all Plan?
Such rubbish cast up by the tide
Is just fit to be fried.*

Mavis Timms, from her series *The Modern Child's Guide to our Dumb Friends*.

Julie Roxburgh, of The Shellfish Network – www.shellfishnetwork.org – when speaking of the public lack of interest in their campaign against the boiling alive of crustaceans, made the following moving statement:

We will fight on, explaining how fragile and complex are the nervous systems of these creatures, how wonderful are their eyes, and how each one is a little life, important to itself and to its maker.

MEMBERS' NEWS

A FALLEN SPARROW

All but one of my cats are geriatric, but Katie, who was found two years ago, wandering down a main road, was lucky to be noticed by an animal rights friend who realised she had mislaid her human family. So she came to me, as I run the Phone Line which responds to such calls. Katie is a very beautiful creature, but young and addicted to hunting. I'm still looking for the field mouse last seen behind the washing machine – escaped via the ventilator?

Katie brought in a little sparrow one day; we retrieved her, dried her off and put her in a box to recover from shock. Later, since she seemed so active and ready to fly, I took her into the garden and she promptly flew off next door. Later, I found her crouched under a car. I kneeled down to retrieve her, but a large paw got there first: "Mine!"

Once more, the sparrow was dried off and put to revive. "No more liberation", I told her and rang an RSPCA friend who rescues birds and has an aviary.

Happily, after a few weeks, the sparrow was fit to fly off, quite uninjured, praise be.

Katie continues to find my behaviour strange, but purrs her forgiveness, growling to herself: "My woman Joan is very odd, but she's a good provider and may not need the mice and birds I bring her."

Joan Court.

MORE NEWS FROM CAMBRIDGE: A slaughterhouse was investigated by the RSPCA after two pigs were boiled alive. The abattoir in Cambridge Road, Linton, is run by Dalehead Foods, which claims to be the largest independent pork processor in the UK.

The RSPCA investigated cruelty claims after a member of staff at the abattoir, who asked to remain anonymous, contacted the Quaker Concern for Animals Phone Line, run by Joan Court in Cambridge, informing her that two pigs had been put into a tank of scalding water while still alive.

A spokesman for Dalehead Foods confirmed pigs had been put into the water tank without being properly slaughtered on two occasions, once last week and in another incident in May, and said the member of staff involved had now been sacked.

He said: "In May, Dalehead Foods was obliged to suspend and retrain an employee who had not followed mandatory procedures at its site at Linton, Cambridgeshire.

"Following the report of a further breach this month by the same employee, Dalehead Foods invoked disciplinary proceedings, the outcome of which was the termination of the employee's contract. Further investigation confirmed that these incidents are isolated."

The company was established in 1969, employs 1,600 people, has annual sales of more than £200 million and is part of a group which operates more than 250 farms, mostly in East Anglia, with more than 25,000 breeding sows.

The company's spokesman added: "Dalehead Foods is committed to the highest standards of animal welfare. The Linton site operates to the RSPCA Freedom Foods standard, in addition to being independently audited by a number of other factory accreditation bodies. "The procedures in place exceed minimum statutory requirements."

A spokeswoman for the RSPCA confirmed a complaint had been lodged and said an inspector would be visiting the abattoir.

QCA Note: as this establishment is one of the RSPCA "Freedom Foods" accredited establishments, we thought it even more important that they should take this matter extremely seriously.

The deplorable incident was covered very thoroughly by the Cambridge Evening News, for which we thanked the reporter and editor. We wrote to the council asking them to investigate and take action themselves.

We now know that the RSPCA took no action, concluding that Dalehead investigated and acted correctly.

To mark International Animal Rights Day, on December 11 06, Joan Court and colleagues held a vigil outside the abattoir. The response of both Dalehead and the RSPCA would serve to make one think that these were a couple of isolated incidents, dealt with properly and now consigned to the past. Is it not more likely that such infringements of abattoir regulations take place more often than we know? There is not always a whistleblower around willing to report them.

SELF PORTRAIT WITH BADGES

Friend Michael Grundy is another of our members who paints. Between November 06 and January 07, his self portrait wearing badges, one of which says "Love animals, don't eat them", was exhibited in the Open Exhibition at Derby Art Gallery. Well done on making such a public statement, Michael.

"The existence of God is not what Darwin's evolutionary theory challenges. What it challenges is the supposed godliness of Man – the conviction that we above all other life forms are spiritually elevated, divinely favoured, possessed of an immaterial and immortal essence... That's where Darwin runs afoul of Christianity, Judaism, Islam and probably most other religions on the planet."

From The Kiwi's Egg: Charles Darwin and Natural Selection by David Quammen.

HOME NEWS

THE OXFORD CENTRE FOR ANIMAL ETHICS

This centre, whose director is the Rev. Professor Andrew Linzey of Oxford University, was launched in November 06 and seeks to put an ethical concern for animals on to the intellectual agenda, helping to inform public debate.

The centre is named after the late Catalan philosopher Jose Ferrater Mora, who spoke out against bullfighting.

It is significant that Andrew said: “We cannot change the world for animals without changing our ideas about them” – a thought to which QCA would most certainly subscribe. The Rev. Dr. Keith Ward, Emeritus Professor of Divinity also at Oxford, posited as long ago as 1982 that a God of love would not create any being whose whole destiny was to suffer pain.

We will follow the work of the centre with great interest. See www.oxfordanimaletics.com

VERO – Voice for Ethical Research at Oxford.

This is a new group of Oxford University members, established to oppose the University’s construction of a new animal research laboratory and to campaign instead for a more ethically responsible approach to biomedical research at Oxford. Membership comprises past graduates in a broad range of disciplines from Classics to Experimental Psychology, as well as current fellows, lecturers and other employees and academics with links to the University. Whilst emphatically in favour of medical progress, they believe that the ethical principles underpinning it should be agreed by society as a whole, based on an open and informed public debate.

VERO is committed to peaceful, lawful campaigning and to defending the tradition of intellectual freedom which has allowed enlightened, humane thought to flourish at Oxford through the ages.

VERO is concerned that efforts to further the cause of humane alternatives have been undermined by an unhelpful polarisation of the issue of animal research, to the exclusion of any objective discussion of the real issues. They feel it is time to call a halt to this confrontational approach and advocate working together to replace the old-established animal model – whether maintained by the power of vested interests or institutional inertia - with humane alternatives that are appropriate to a more ethically aware and scientifically advanced age. An important step in this process is to persuade Oxford University – as one of the leading academic institutions of this country - to abandon its current plans for continuing animal research in favour of becoming a centre of excellence for humane research.

See www.vero.org.uk

A NEW POLITICAL PARTY - ANIMALS COUNT

According to a report sent by Green Party friends, some 170 people attended the launch of Animals Count at the Christmas Without Cruelty Fayre in London on December 2 06. Jasmijn de Boo, previously of the Dutch Party for the Animals, chaired the proceedings and introduced the party, with the two prospective candidates.

It would appear that what this new party advocates is already Green Party policy, but Animals Count believes there is room for both.

Animals Count will be focusing on Wales and the 2007 Welsh Assembly elections in particular and Scotland will come later.

THE NEGLECTED VICTIMS OF ANCIENT GRAZING RIGHTS

Earlier this year, if a walker in the New Forest had not noticed a mare lying, badly injured, she might have taken two weeks to die.

This is no isolated incident. Every week and every season, animals die horrific deaths from road accidents and the ingestion of natural poisons such as acorns and ragwort, because commoners in National Parks such as the New Forest, Dartmoor and Exmoor, are allowed to put out cattle, ponies and other animals to fend for themselves. The Hampshire authority web site describes the practice this:

“Rights of Common of Pasture are attributed to land. It permits depasturing of “commonable” animals on 45,000 acres of Open Forest. Commonable animals are ponies, horned cattle and donkeys. Goats are barred from the Open Forest. By historic practice, chicken and geese may wander in the Forest, but this is not a Common Right.

Those depasturing animals must comply with Verderers’ Bye-Laws:

- payments to Agisters, receipt of which is recognised by tail marking (cutting) for ponies, and ear tags for cattle;
- all stock must be branded to identify the owner (usually near-side saddle area in ponies and the off-side in cattle);
- disease control regulations must be complied with and vicious or mischievous animals must not be depastured;
- stallions over 2 years old must be approved by the Verderers, they must be registered New Forest ponies and they must be moved on every 4th year to avoid in-breeding.

About 5,000 commonable animals are turned out. The ratio of ponies to cattle is 3:2. Around 130 stallions are turned out in the breeding season. About 500 Commoners use the Right. There is no limit to the number of animals that may be depastured. “

Despite these regulations, the right means that animals wander at will, their reproduction is unrestricted, with the result that mares, foals and stallions surplus to requirements end up in the markets, many to be sold for meat.

In the New Forest alone, over the last fifty years, there have probably been some 8000 appalling deaths. In the New Forest, it is deplorable to find that the practice is subsidised by taxpayers’ money.

Whatever English Nature and the Countryside Agency claim, the practice is totally unnecessary. It may be a picturesque sight for the many tourists to the area, but the reality is not so pleasant.

If you care enough to help these animals suffering under outdated laws of the 17th. and 19th. centuries, please write to Ben Bradshaw at DEFRA, Nobel House, 17, Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR. Request an end to such rights and ask for animals to be kept in safe enclosures, with full time resident wardens, and ownership made the responsibility of an animal welfare trust.

Philip Davis, Green Party member in Hampshire.

A GREAT DAY FOR WILDLIFE - WILD BIRD IMPORTS ARE BANNED

On January 11 07, a decision was taken by EU animal health experts to end permanently the commercial importation of wild birds into the European Union for the “pet” trade. Under the new rules, which form part of a strategy to combat avian influenza, only imports of captive-bred birds will be permitted.

The Animal Protection Agency (APA), which campaigns against the trade in wild animals as “pets”, expressed its delight. Director, Elaine Toland said:

“This far-reaching measure is long overdue. As well as removing a very serious and unnecessary threat to human health, this ban has secured vital protection to wild bird populations the world over. It means another huge blow to a barbaric and wasteful trade that was driving many bird species rapidly towards extinction.”

The European Union was by far the largest importer of wild birds. According to **CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species)** figures, in the last ten years the European Union imported an average of 1.7 million birds per year, which accounted for 87 per cent of the recorded global trade. Hundreds of organisations all over the world had called for the permanent ban on EU wild bird imports – amongst these, was Quaker Concern for Animals

APA acknowledged the central role of the RSPB in securing the support of the UK Government for a permanent ban. In Tony Blair’s letter to the Society, he acknowledged that the “catching and transportation of wild birds causes unacceptable levels of suffering to the birds and can have a damaging impact on their wild populations.”

The wild bird trade in the UK was notorious as having fuelled large-scale bird markets, which last October the Government proposed to ban in forthcoming legislation. At least one of these markets was due to be held in the midst of the avian flu panic and our telephone conversation at that time with DEFRA officials revealed a disturbing complacency on their part.

Animal Protection Agency. www.apa.org.uk

Suzy Manigian used to work for The Tasmanian Conservation Trust, whose work QCA has supported. This is her reply to news of the EU ban, a campaign they, in return, endorsed:

Dear Marian and Quaker Concern for Animals,

Thank you so much for forwarding that message about the wild bird import ban! That’s fantastic!

I have moved from Tasmania to the Blue Mountains, west of Sydney, and the trees here are filled with parrots, cockatoos, cockatiels, rosellas, currawongs and all their tribes.

They have such busy politics and such lovely social lives, that the thought of them cooped in cages is unthinkable.

The day I arrived, I was pegging clothes out on the line when a lovely big vermilion and green parrot came and sat in the tree the clothes line is tied to and chatted to me, until I twigged that the gist of the oration was about food, then it accepted cashew nuts from my hand. It was a wild bird, but I guess it cadges food up and down this street.

It’s nice to be away from the casual destruction and wanton demolition of Tasmania, to be reminded that, for the most part, that behaviour is not representative.

Suzy Manigian.

DISCUSSION AND DEBATE

THE CASE FOR JUSTICE

Over the course of a few years, I helped the Spanish group Rights for Animals (now Equanimal) with translations and copy editing. I admire the founders of this group, because they are always ready to question their philosophy and campaigning methods and their reaction to reports of any new issue is always thoughtful. They constantly have in mind the message their actions give out, especially to the general, unaware public. On their T shirts, an animal is featured—a farmed animal usually, or a fish – not the cuddly kittens and puppies guaranteed to elicit instant sympathy - with the message “Justice for All”.

Geoffrey Thomas wrote an interesting article in our last issue appealing for a compassionate approach, particularly in scientific discovery. Compassion is part of the Christian and other faiths’ message and I see it as something like the “charity” of the Authorised Version of the Bible. “The greatest of these is charity”.

But if we think back to a campaign with which animal liberation is now often compared, that which brought about the abolition of slavery, though many philanthropists – as this word implies – were inspired by love and compassion towards their fellow man, there must have been those who saw this evil quite clearly as an act of injustice. To withhold human and civil rights from other human beings, on the basis of the colour of their skin, is unjust and unjustifiable. In a vain attempt to justify this treatment and to continue to exploit them for their own benefit, slave owners categorised black people as different, not as intellectually developed, unable to enjoy the fruits of freedom as they did, living in a natural state which they could scorn and attempt to change. Slaves were chattels, legally owned, legally bought and sold.

Some slave owners – of which some were Quakers - out of enlightened self-interest, or genuinely more compassionate than the rest, tried to care for “their” slaves and even “gave” them their freedom. However, to change materially this cruel and unacceptable state of affairs required the adoption of a completely different viewpoint. In fact, it needed an acceptance of the concept that to enslave another person, to deprive him or her of basic rights, is indefensible, if not in law, in natural justice.

Is it not an affront against justice to treat our fellow species also as though they were unworthy of the right to life, liberty and freedom from cruel treatment and were unable to benefit from what we enjoy by right? Voiceless as the majority of African slaves, sometimes captured in the wild, separated from their families, bought and sold, bred and confined in degrading and deplorable conditions, fed a diet of rubbish, experimented upon if that is considered desirable for their human “masters”, beaten and tormented - non human animals are completely at our disposal. Almost all of these practices are indeed enshrined in law and this goes unquestioned by the vast majority. The ultimate affront is that most people consider it completely acceptable to slaughter and eat other species and rather outlandish that some of us think it unjust.

Campaigners active in animal welfare and animal rights feel deep compassion for these vulnerable sentient beings, who have had the “misfortune” to be born other- than- human animals. But is compassion enough? Would it not be fairer to assert that these creatures, as our neighbours on this fragile planet, have a claim on us and that, our hearts touched by their terrible plight, we owe them more than a duty of care, bestowed in a spirit of charity?

We owe them justice, pure and simple.

~ Marian Hussenbux.

EVENT REPORTS

3rd. INTERFAITH CELEBRATION OF THE ANIMALS – A LANDMARK EVENT ON SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 10th 2006

Golders Green Unitarian Church in London was the setting for the service in which followers of the Brahma Samaj, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and Unitarian Universalist religions joined in a celebration of our fellow species, supported by the Director of the RSPCA and speakers from The Doctor Hadwen Trust.

This was again organised under the auspices of the World Congress of Faiths, of which Feargus O'Connor, minister of the Unitarians and QCA committee member, is secretary. Quaker Concern for Animals co-sponsored the event, at which we saw the launch of The Interreligious Fellowship for Animals and The Universal Kinship Fund; the latter will be administered by The Doctor Hadwen Trust and will support their valuable ethical research in the field of human medicine.

Jackie Ballard, DG of the RSPCA, lit a candle for the world's animals and we also remembered Molly Stacey, our life member of QCA, who had died the day previously, Edna, a Unitarian friend, and those animal companions whom we have lost. A candle was lit for Rabbi Professor Dan Cohn-Sherbok, who was unable to give our address because of illness.

There was a recurrent theme throughout our service. We all, in some way or another, spoke of "kinship" and "fellowship", of "the web of life", of man's overweening domination of a world not created by us and our sadness at the cavalier lack of respect accorded to creatures other-than-the-human, who do not speak our languages and whose own voices the majority refuses to hear.

The address, given by Feargus, explored the theme of emotion in other animals. We are generally open to the idea that the non-human primates share much of our make up and may react in ways we do, but there is also well-documented evidence that many other species reveal depths of emotion, hitherto considered the province of humans. Elephants may not have the power of human speech, but they have been known to shed tears at loss and ill treatment. Yet these facts are conveniently ignored, because if they were accepted, we would have to do something about it.

We hope to redress the balance in some way with our Interreligious Fellowship for Animals. This may be an innovation in this country. We aim to show that there are followers of all faiths, from all backgrounds, who feel strongly that our fellow species are due our compassion and respect and that a united, spiritual voice should be raised in their defence. We feel that this is long overdue.

FUR, FIN, FEATHERS, FLESH AND FELLOWSHIP - THE UNITARIANS IN YORK

On November 12 2006, for the first time, their Service in Celebration and Remembrance of Animals at the York Unitarian Chapel in Saint Saviourgate, was an interfaith occasion.

Nine faiths and spiritual paths were represented: Baha'i, Buddhist, Catholic, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Pagan, Quaker and Unitarian.

This lovely and light Unitarian chapel, dating back to 1692, is the oldest non-conformist place of worship in York. The minister, Margaret Kirk and organisers, Rowena Field and Adrian

Lovett, made us very welcome and there were some forty-three members of the congregation, of which one was a hamster (asleep), two were a hen and a cockerel (awake, clucking and crowing during the musical interludes) and four were quiet canine worshippers.

The Buddhist reader, Lorenza Cangiano, is the York Bear Support Group coordinator and a collection was made for the **Animals Asia Foundation**, for their work in rescuing Moon Bears from bile-extraction farms.

Candles were lit for all the faiths, for animals we have loved and lost and messages were placed on the remembrance board.

We were very happy to participate in an important and social occasion and hope that this is just the first of many. QCA pursues a committed interfaith policy, and we are especially happy to work with our Unitarian friends to develop this.

CHRISTIANITY AND ANIMAL WELFARE

The Centre for Religion and the Biosciences of Chester University organised a day conference on September 23rd. 06 on the subject of Christianity and Animal Welfare. Please note that the following report was made from scribbled notes and is not guaranteed to be complete!

Some twenty-five participants – among them our Friend Peter McCready of Chester Meeting, whom I was happy to meet - had the opportunity to hear the philosophers **Mary Midgeley** of Newcastle and Stephen Clark of Liverpool University, Lisa Goddard, biochemist, now involved in doctoral research in Theology at the department of Theology and Religious Studies in Chester and Margaret Atkins of Trinity and Leeds, a classicist with an interest in animal ethics.

Mary Midgeley has a wonderful breadth of knowledge. *In Changing Visions of the Earth*, her exposition of early understanding of the earth and the heavens, in which the earth is simultaneously worshipped as a generous mother and despised and feared as the antithesis of the ethereal heavens, illustrated well how we have come to the point today where we generally consider other beings as of little significance, available for whatever uses we can devise.

Mary was the only speaker to use the word “kinship” – this in relation to Darwin, who wanted to break down the barrier between humans and other animals, in contrast to the view of his contemporaries that this barrier was a defence against chaos. Mary mentioned the link humans make between animals and sin – they appear to embody human vices – thus, people may be “swine”, rapists are “animals”, et al. The study of animal behaviour and the discovery of the continental drift, which made the earth more intelligible, went some way to demolishing these pernicious errors. Thus, though it is unfortunately common to hear rats referred to as “vermin”, observation of their behaviour proves that they can be loving parents – even if many do not want to accept this.

Stephen Clark’s address was *How Alien are (Other) Animals?* He examined the question of how much we know of what animals feel, as this is crucial to, for example, the vivisector’s argument. But how much do we know of the feelings of our fellow human animals? And are we not part of the primate/mammalian genera, which date back millions of years? Would it not be likely that there is a convergence of feeling and of suffering?

But, if we can say we have doubts about how much other creatures are able to feel, it assuages our guilt and we can carry on more easily with whatever we are doing to them. Stephen made the point that experimentalists all require proof that an animal is suffering, but are reluctant

(or unable?) to give an example of what proof would satisfy them. If a creature cowers, refuses to eat, vocalises in some way, why is this not a reasonable indication of suffering?

The power of speech is seen as something key in our attitude to other creatures. In the thinking of Descartes, in lacking words, (other) animals lack thoughts and therefore feelings. But a human infant, learning to speak, may not be capable of thought either; does it therefore lack the capacity to feel? Apes can be taught a form of sign language. This is viewed as merely adding a little more to the animal's behaviour; no further conclusion is drawn from this skill. Stephen concluded with the thought that animals are not just "animals" – they are social beings, bound by ethical restraints, even if they do not reason about these. They can be self-aware, responsible and forward-looking. We are all "experiments in living."

After Stephen's address, there were questions and comments, the most interesting of which was "Why did farmers weep at the destruction of their flocks in the Foot and Mouth epidemic?" A member of the audience, keen to defend the ways of farmers, said that the animal's life was devalued by being destroyed by DEFRA slaughter men. To which Stephen replied that such a thought only indicated that the animal was considered to be a useful product, without intrinsic value.

Margaret Atkins, in her *Three Ways to Love an Animal*, described three stereotypes: Libby – animal liberationist, Connie – conservationist and Aggie – farmer.

Libby argues that (other) animals are like us, should have the right to fulfil their basic needs and not be mistreated, but, unlike us, they don't have moral responsibility.

Connie cares about all living creatures, but as populations, not as individuals. All living beings are independently good and she combats the destruction of variety, balance and order.

Aggie has the ambivalent attitude that cares for, yet uses and often kills, other animals. Her dealings with them are the most intimate, as it is her way of life.

Margaret compared this use to a musician's use of an instrument (but did not explain how this is really valid, as an instrument has no feelings and is not going to be deprived of its life).

Margaret found example of these three stereotypes in Christianity. The "Libbies" are St. Francis, Philip Neri, many Celtic saints – even before them, the hermit saints - St. Jerome and the lion - also displayed compassion for other creatures. One hundred years before St. Francis, the English St. Godric displayed the same concern. In Egypt, St. Macarius returned the sight to a blind hyena, mirroring the Gospel stories.

The Connie is represented in the catechisms. And according to Genesis, each creature is not merely useful, but "good." They are a reflection of God's goodness. Augustine's disagreement with the Manichees whom he had previously supported, illustrates this concept. The Manichees saw the force of evil in the world and such creatures as fleas and maggots embodied this. To Augustine – and this became fundamental to western Christian tradition – everything is good inasmuch as it is proper to its own nature.

For Aggie, the Good Shepherd lays down his life for his sheep and the Old Testament also has several references to shepherds.

For the question session, the panel was joined by a lecturer from Durham University. The first questioner asked if our attitude to other animals springs from how we see ourselves. The answers picked up the issue that if we see ourselves as more than animals, this will impact on our treatment of them, that we describe animals in terms to prove the rationality of humans, that the GAIA theory would stress the lesser importance of humans (less than our

own estimation) and that we make up the rules to suit ourselves and are reluctant to consider we might be wrong.

Medical and veterinary ethics were compared. It is a significant fact that the animal is not the client and that vets must consider the interests of the “owner”, rather than the patient. Whilst the veterinary professional body stresses that the animal’s interest is paramount, is this really the case?

I asked about Universal Kinship. If we espoused this view, would our treatment of other animals be more ethical? Three speakers took this to refer to other primates, mentioning the current ban on experimenting on the great apes and how chimpanzees were 98% like us. The professor of the centre mentioned feminist theology and the “otherness” of beings, which came nearer to my concern. The Durham lecturer referred to the Good Samaritan, which does



connect with my question. My concern in this query was not that we should only feel kinship with creatures which are obviously very like us, but that we should recognise the kinship of those who may be, on the face of it, very unlike us, except in their capacity to suffer.

~The previous three reports
by **Marian Hussenbux.**

Three hoglets

“First it was necessary to civilize man in relation to man. Now it is necessary to civilize man in relation to nature and the animals.” Victor Hugo (1802-1885)

A MEETING
For R V Bailey

*Like figures in knotted oaks, I dismiss
the face in swirling waters.*

*A watcher stills me and disbelief resolves:
whiskers, webbed toes, a rudder-tail stalling the current.*

*Stealth-gazers all,
this otter’s long out-sensed us.*

*Ahead of your greyhound stare,
it dissolves into a pulse of silver bubbles*

*leaving only doubt
in your working nostrils.*

~ **By Chris Kinsey 2006**

Sunny – God’s answer to my prayers.

By Tracy Gwillim, of the Christian Vegetarian Association UK. www.cvauk.org.uk

In August 2005, my world imploded. My lovely mum died of cancer; we were extremely close and I was her full time carer. This devastating event set off a string of horrible life changes that plunged me into severe depression.

In the space of only a few short weeks, I lost my mum, my job as her carer, my best friend and her family and our oldest dog died. I went from being a happy, positive person to one that I didn’t even recognise when I looked in the mirror. One of the worst things was the guilt I felt at having a mental illness; it crippled me and I became increasingly suicidal.

I prayed daily that God would help lift me out of the black, lonely hole I found myself in. Mum and I had collected a small Noah’s ark of rescue animals and although my dad was there to help me, one of my biggest fears was that I wouldn’t be able to care for them long term. So an idea that kept forcing its way into the front of my mind seemed crazy, yet I couldn’t leave it.

One day while Don, my dad, and I were walking our two toy poodles, I said that I was thinking of getting a puppy. Strangely, although taken aback, Don wasn’t completely against the idea. I told Don that I had seen a local lady occasionally advertising a litter. He agreed we would keep an eye out for her and would maybe think about it seriously in the autumn. I expect he thought the likelihood of seeing the lady advertising puppies locally was remote enough to buy him some time!

A couple of weeks later we were in Petersfield and by chance I scanned the notice board in the nearby pet shop; there it was, black toy poodle puppies, ten minutes up the road from where we lived. 3 days later we were sitting in Catherine’s lounge trying to choose a puppy from 4 adorable little bundles of fluff. I finally chose the one I felt would fit in with all our other animals (my heart is really with rescue dogs, but having house rabbits and parrots, we had to have a puppy). I told Catherine we were going to call him Sunny.

Even planning to bring him home helped me. I knew I would have to take him to puppy classes to socialise him and as going out and having to mix with people was really difficult for me, I would have to face my fears. Sunny arrived three weeks later on a beautiful day in July, 2 days before my birthday. He brought hope and laughter back into our house. Suddenly, after a year of Don having to take our animals to the vet, I could take him there for his injections. I actually phoned up myself to enroll him in the puppy party and then at puppy classes!

We enjoyed the classes so much that I started taking Scooter, my mum’s poodle, too. Sue, who runs the classes, is so kind and has really encouraged me. Sunny graduated at the top of the puppy class and everyone falls in love with him. He is the sweetest, kindest puppy you could ever wish for, with a wicked sense of humour and a sharp, intelligent brain. Being around doggie people has helped me realise that this is where I feel the most comfortable, so I decided to enroll on a home course and study to become a canine massage therapist.

I still struggle with my mental health, but Sunny’s wonderful way of making me laugh and look forward is God’s answer to my prayers. He is six and a half pounds of God’s love, not just in my life, but in the lives of Don and our other two little lads, Scooter and Pippin. Pippin, who is a dog with severe phobias, adores his little brother and finds extra courage to face his demons when Sunny is around. Scooter loves to mother Sunny and play games of tag in the garden and when we let them off lead.

Sunny must have been born around the day I told Don I was thinking of getting a puppy. I know he was God-given and one of the main reasons for my recovery so far. All animals are part of God's plan, and if we treat them well and embrace their unconditional love, they can help us to heal and make us whole again.

~ Thank you, Tracy, for this hopeful story. We hold you all in the Light.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Crimes against apes

Vinita Bharadwaj, Staff Writer on Gulf News, wrote a very comprehensive article in November 06 on a chimpanzee cartel which thrives on the back of demand from private zoos and leading hotels. This deplorable activity occurs in spite of stiff international regulations. **Jason Mier**, the chimpanzee rescuer in Kenya, whose important work we covered in our Spring 06 Newsletter and which also appeared in Lifescape Magazine, was involved in this latest investigation, which began in January 2005. A crate of five chimpanzees arrived in Kenya's Sweetwaters Chimpanzee Sanctuary after it was confiscated at Nairobi airport. The crate originally carried six chimpanzees - out of which one died - and four monkeys. Jason was concerned that such a large shipment of primates was even put together and he then undertook what he describes as an alarming investigation. The crate began its air travel from Kano in Nigeria and was heading to Cairo via Khartoum. However, on arrival in the Egyptian capital, it was refused entry and ordered to return to Lagos on a flight via Nairobi, where it was finally confiscated and directed to the sanctuary in Kenya. "It was pretty shocking to see the chimps, as the babies arrived packed in this crate and were all stressed and dehydrated without food or water for days. We've also heard that there were two gorillas in the crate but don't know that for sure and have no idea what happened to them," he told Weekend Review when he stopped over for a few hours in Dubai recently. This disturbing story involves not only the Nigerian and Egyptian authorities, but also reveals the inertia of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and the apathy of the airlines involved. For more information, Jason Mier can be contacted at: kamman@africaonline.co.ke

WORLD ANIMAL DAY IN CHINA

On October 4, members of the Chinese animal protection society **CAPA** met at the Chongqing Road New China Bookstore.

They had originally planned to hold the activity at the Asian Peaceful Rich Park shopping center entrance, but the market owner came out and told them to leave.

They had to go unsuccessfully to one place after another until finally they arrived in front of the Wisdom Buddhist Monastery (Changchun's biggest temple). They had not expected to receive the temple master's support, but not only were they allowed to set up in front of the gate, the master also sent out Buddhist literature to them.

The CAPA members had printed 1,000 circulars to hand out. Many old people earnestly read the circular, but what grieved the members was that some young people rejected both the circulars and the members, and those who maltreat animals are mostly young people.

<http://www.oipa.org/news/abandonment/china.htm>

Showing a dog next to the tagline “**Fight Rabies Effectively and Humanely**” and listing specific recommendations for establishing a long-term rabies-control programme, a new poster designed by **PETA Asia-Pacific** will begin circulating throughout China. PETA Asia-Pacific has printed its first batch of 5,000 copies of the compelling poster, paid for with proceeds from the sale of Hong Kong actor Jackie Chan’s “Have a Heart” greeting card. The greeting card was decorated by him in support of PETA Asia-Pacific’s humane rabies-control program and was recently auctioned on eBay. The launch and distribution of this poster goes along with PETA strategy to work with the Chinese government and Chinese animal protection groups in order to end dog culls. The posters will be distributed through the **Chinese Companion Animal Protection Network (CCAPN)**—a coalition of some 30 organizations across China—as well as various government bodies. The first batch of posters was given out at a conference in Beijing that PETA Asia-Pacific helped to sponsor.

In late August, PETA Asia-Pacific Director Jason Baker and staff member Coco Yu met with authorities from Jinning and Nanjing to discuss alternatives to the dog culls. PETA and CCAPN’s four-point rabies-control program includes the following steps:

- Educate the public not to approach animals who are sick or acting strangely
- Require any person wishing to have a dog to provide proof of rabies vaccination and sterilization annually—sterilization will eventually end the problem of strays and facilitate control of the existing vaccinated population
- Begin post-exposure treatment immediately after someone is bitten
- Comply with international humane standards for euthanasia if animals are to be destroyed

Jason Baker said: “*We are encouraged by the openness of the Chinese government and the Chinese people to consider alternatives to dog culls,*” says Baker.

This sounded hopeful, but the following, reported in *The Seattle Times*, among other newspapers, is not positive – except in the sense that animal guardians in China are prepared to stand up to the authorities and try to protect their companions:

Some five hundred demonstrators staged a noisy protest at the entrance to Beijing Zoo on November 11 06, against police killings of dogs and new limits on pet ownership.

The new restrictions limit households to one dog and ban larger breeds. Police in recent days have gone through the city, seizing unregistered dogs and beating some of them to death in front of their guardians, witnesses said. Many people now only dare to take their dogs out at night.

Complaints about vicious dogs, barking and excrement-covered sidewalks prompted Beijing to impose height limits in 1995, banning dogs taller than 14 inches from the city centre. Other cities have taken similar measures.

State-run newspapers reported that 326 people died from rabies in October, making it the leading cause of death among infectious diseases.

In some cases, protesters said, dog owners have been given as little as one week’s notice to get rid of their large dogs, or move to outlying districts. Protesters said the measures are not only inhumane, but wrongly place the burden of punishment on the dogs, not the owners.

Update: During the week of December 20 06, it was reported in the South China Morning Post that the Chinese president, Hu Jintao, ordered the killing of dogs to be stopped, having taken notice of the strong opposition of the dogs’ guardians.

The president received 60,000 written complaints from the guardians. It was said that Hu was displeased by the campaign, which also received very wide coverage in the foreign press.

Ironically, 2006 was the Year of the Dog in the Chinese calendar.

*QCA Note: We greatly admire the sterling efforts being made in China to protect animals and sent the following letter to **CatsZone**, which had mediated and organised press coverage in a neighbourhood dispute involving stray cats:*

Dear Jia Meng and all friends in CatsZone,

Quaker Concern for Animals in Britain has been informed about the local community conflict over the stray cats in WuLing Garden Apartments, Hangzhou.

Our organization, which is linked to The Religious Society of Friends (Britain), supports the work and thinking of CatsZone and CCAPN on the subject of the humane control of stray cats. We consider that we all have a responsibility to be compassionate and respectful towards all sentient beings, both human and non-human animals, and we send our good wishes to all the residents of WuLing Garden Apartments. We hope that a humane programme of desexing will be implemented and the cats appreciated for the wonderful beings they are. They are, like us, God's creatures too. We hold you all in the Light.

In friendship,

The committee and members of Quaker Concern for Animals, Britain.



Successful breeding of pandas at Chengdu Panda Research Centre, China.

Photo by kind permission of Louise Davies.

BRAZIL

The bill that would ban animal experimentation in the City of Rio de Janeiro was initially presented by **Claudio Cavalcanti** on June 15th. 2005 and finally approved on March 21st. 2006.

On April 14th. 2006, however, Cesar Maia, the City Mayor, vetoed it.

This means that the bill will have to be discussed again by the city councillors. If they vote to

reject the veto, the law will be considered approved, and vivisection will no longer be legal in Rio.

Equanimal in Spain, to whom we are grateful for this news, makes the point that there are still reasons to be cautious. The fact that the prohibition would apply in just one city would inevitably mean that experiments will be carried out in other places. However, they believe that this case is something worth celebrating. It is important to note that the law will not just slightly improve the conditions in which nonhumans are experimented upon, but will forbid it altogether. We should not forget that even if the prohibition would apply to only one city, it is a big city. Rio de Janeiro has over 5 million inhabitants, more than the population of the whole of Scotland.

Secondly: probably more important than the prohibitions themselves, is the advance in public education they will imply. The introduction of all these pieces of legislation has boosted the debate on the issues. It has been a tremendous promotion of the animal rights view and has served to promote the case for vegetarianism. Cavalcanti is a vegetarian himself, as he explains on the official website of his campaign. Something to applaud is that when defending the law at the City Council meeting on June 06, Cavalcanti commented on the existing parallel between sexism, racism and speciesism, recalling that, when equal rights were claimed for women and non-caucasians, many people considered it absurd, just as today the fight for the rights of nonhumans is often dismissed.

There is more good news. State elections have just taken place in Brazil. Cavalcanti has been elected MP for the State of Rio de Janeiro. The city of Rio de Janeiro is the capital of the state of Rio de Janeiro, whose expanse is bigger than the Netherlands and whose population is more than 15 million. So he will now be furthering the interests of nonhuman animals not just in the city, but in the whole state of Rio.

We hope that this good news may be motivating, not just for those in Brazil, but also for those who work against speciesism in other parts of the world.

~ **Oscar Horta, Equanimal. www.equanimal.org**

THE NETHERLANDS

A victory for the animals

On Wednesday, November 22, 2006, the **Partij voor De Dieren - the Party for the Animals** - gained 2 parliamentary seats in the 150-member legislature of the Netherlands in the Dutch general elections.

This makes the Netherlands the first country in the world in which a party for animal welfare is elected into a representative body of the people.

Party leader, Marianne Thieme, said: "We are thrilled with such a wonderful result of our campaign. Finally, we can start realizing our party's highest priority, namely ending all animal suffering. We want a constitutional amendment, guaranteeing animals the right to freedom from pain, fear and stress caused by humans. Let's begin with easing the suffering of the hundreds of millions of cows, pigs and chickens stuck in factory farming." Thieme feels success in the Netherlands could help the movement elsewhere. One of the party's purposes is to be an inspiration for other countries and animal rights activists.

A growing number of Dutch people are wondering why it should be that economic interests prevail over ethical considerations when it comes to animal welfare and the interests of nature

and the environment. The Party for the Animals expresses this concern that so many Dutch share, said Esther Ouwehand, number two on the party list.

The party and views of party leader Marianne Thieme received a great deal of media attention. After law school and a brief corporate career, she decided to enter politics as an advocate for all animals and founded the Party for the Animals. A large number of well known Dutch authors have joined the Party for the Animals and 20 of the party's 30 candidates are opinion leaders in the Netherlands. A number of business people contributed large sums of money, allowing for a fully -fledged political campaign.

Quaker Concern for Animals contacted the Party before the elections, wishing them success and we are delighted to send our congratulations now, together with Feargus O'Connor, our committee member, on behalf of **The World Congress of Faiths**.

SPAIN – Catalunya.

The votes cast for PACMA in the Catalan Parliament elections were unfortunately not sufficient to gain them a seat: 13,158 = 0,45% of the total votes cast.

But a great step forward has been taken in the struggle for the rights of animals, using both traditional means such as radio, the press, meetings and stalls, together with TV and the internet. PACMA had to appeal against the non-showing of their campaign programme on TV2, which alleged problems with broadcasting it during the slot in which children's programmes are shown. However, this is, in fact, the very same time at which TVE screens bullfights (contravening the directives of the EU on the protection of children) and programmes on hunting. Media coverage leapt the borders into Spain and the protest at the Olot bullring, where campaigners dressed as bulls to cast votes for PACMA, was filmed, among others, by Korean TV.

The cost of the campaign was 15.000 euros, collected from campaigners and Catalan sympathisers, other Spanish groups and PACMA funds.

PACMA will continue to advocate the rights of animals in the next local elections, putting up candidates in key towns in the animal struggle, such as Tordesillas, Camarles and Amposta, among others.

ANIMALS AL PARLAMENT! – ANIMALS INTO PARLIAMENT!

<http://www.pacma.net>

The following explains why **PACMA** is working hard on the political front:

Thousands of blood fiestas, protected by legislation that permits bullfighting in Spain, in which bulls, calves, pigs, donkeys, chickens, ducks, pigeons, and other creatures are tormented in various bizarrely cruel ways, to celebrate certain local traditions, often in honour of the saints, have again taken place in Spanish villages this year.

In support of the excellent Spanish campaigning groups, which are springing up all over the country, we have made formal protests to many local authorities and to central government ministers about these. It is a particularly worrying trend that, judging by eyewitness reports and by video evidence, young people appear to be more involved than ever.

It is difficult to imagine how such cruel entertainment could be justified in any rational way, except by an appeal to the so-called sacredness of tradition. The latest example of such an event at the time of writing was the leading of a blindfolded donkey into the arena, to face an angry bull, and the sound of the spectators alone was sickening. This spectacle, at Navalunga,

north of Madrid, came to the notice of El Refugio del Burrito, linked to the Donkey Sanctuary here, and will hopefully be the subject of legal action.

In Tordesillas, Castilla y Leon, the Toro de la Vega fiesta subjects a chosen bull, bought at taxpayers' expense – this year named Rompesuenos (Dreambreaker) – to the religious frenzy of men who hurl lances at him until he collapses and dies. Later in the month, a similar event takes place in Algemesi, Valencia. This time, it is a group of young bulls which are tormented to death. It was once the privilege of “mozos” – lads, to inflict this suffering; now the “mozos” – ladettes – are in on this deplorable cruelty.

We sent our good wishes to the campaigners against these fiestas; in Tordesillas, some eight hundred people met to stand up for Rompesuenos the Sunday before his death. Seventy-seven Spanish animal welfare groups supported this protest, four state organisations, including the Spanish Young Greens and the Green parties of Madrid and La Rioja. QCA was one of the international groups in support, joining organisations from eight countries in making representations to the town council, the government of Castilla y Leon and the national government.

A small plane overflowed the town, on the Sunday and at the actual slaughter, with a banner describing it as “human shame”.

QCA also asked **Pastor James Thompson, the Animals' Padre**, to send a formal address, as encouragement to the campaigners and to remind the religious that there is still a Papal Edict in force which bans, under pain of excommunication, bullfights and similar spectacles.

He began: *“In the name of Christ the Good Shepherd as well as that of St Francis of Assisi, a patron saint of Catholicism, blessings upon the animal rights activists of Spain. God and goodness are on your side.”*

He continued: *“That the church hierarchy of Spain should now allow it [such blood fiestas] – indeed, encourage it – is, surely, an affront to all decency. It is nothing less than a wilful way of playing down the cardinal virtues for exercising compassion and care towards more vulnerable life than one's own. ...By such barbaric and grotesque traditions as bull fighting the Catholic Church in Spain is not only sinning against helpless animals over which we are called of God to exercise a caring guardianship and stewardship, but it is also corrupting young and pliable minds. I mean that instead of following the example of saints such as Francis of Assisi, they are now being brainwashed, via the corrida, to believe that exploiting forms of life weaker than ones own is expected everyday behaviour for the church's faithful.”*

Rev. Fr. James Thompson .www.animalpadre.org

The Spanish campaigners are, not surprisingly, inundated with the work generated by such cruel spectacles and they are now asking that potential visitors make a stand and refuse to give tacit support to these cruel spectacles, by staying away from Spain. We have therefore taken a

La Tortura



NO es Arte ni Cultura

committee decision, for the first time, to ask our members to reflect prayerfully on this serious matter and consider supporting the campaigners by choosing other holiday destinations. We are joined in this request by Catholic Concern for Animals and the Christian Vegetarian Association UK.

Iris Gallegos at www.brighteyes.dk writes:

“We ask you to stop holidaying in Spain and to tell the Spanish Tourist Board why you have taken the decision... Let us boycott Spain until a proper national legislation is passed, the criminal code is modified to become a real tool against these crimes and the SEPRONA (the branch of the police which deals with this crime) is given more funding and personnel.”

We are also asked to avoid the following products and services, which, in diverse ways, give support to the bullfight:

El Corte Ingles – department stores

Halcon Viajes - package holidays

The Iberia airline

Trip hotels

Cruzcampo beer

Coca Cola, Pepsi and Red Bull

Siemens and Fujitsu

Citroen, Mercedes Benz and Toyota.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.pacma.net/index.php?idiom=eng>

CANADIAN SEAL SLAUGHTER

This is an issue which has been a source of anguish for some forty years, but there is some progress. Last year alone:

- The European Parliament issued a written declaration calling for a ban on the import, export and sale of harp and hooded seal products.
- The Italian Parliament temporarily suspended the import of sealskins and seal derived products. A legislative proposal to prohibit the commerce in seal products has also been announced.
- The German Parliament voted unanimously on a motion to ban the import of seal products. The motion calls on the government to work towards an EU-wide ban and to institute a temporary ban in Germany until a European ban is passed.
- Mexico banned the import and export of all marine mammals (including seals) and their derived products.

STREET DOGS OF NEPAL

One day in Feb. 2006, whilst on holiday in Nepal, **Bernie Wright from Ireland, founder of Ireland Dog Rescue Center**, very concerned about the conditions of the dogs at Swoyambhu Monkey Temple in Kathmandu, approached the para-vet, Rai Dhanraj, offering her help, and Rai promised to make himself responsible for these street dogs' medical treatment and accommodation with money left with him by Bernie. Rai was then able to start treating the dogs. After one month, he sent out photos of improvement in their conditions. He has set up the site www.streetdogsofnepal.com.

Rai sees it as an important duty to look after these helpless dogs, not on a short-term basis, but as long-term management. The aim to establish a Dog Rescue Center is an ambitious plan. Where there are serious types of patient needs, accommodation for lengthy treatment, and in order to reduce the number of street dogs, they spay and neuter. They intend to take good care of the mother street dogs, as well as their puppies and will seek out those interested in adopting them.

It might seem that their contribution is small, compared with the thousands of street dogs roaming around the local area, in the city, temples, monasteries & along the footpaths, but it is important for them to look after these innocent dogs who are living in poor conditions and to keep clean their historic and beautiful city. Rai finishes his report by saying:

“I thought that our effort is not enough to solve this problem, so please come to join with us to solve this problem of helpless street dogs and we shall treat these street dogs like our own family member.”

All of the dogs at the Stupa/Temple have now received medication for itching, wounds and infections. The monks are able to help to prepare food regularly, thanks to the money they have received from this appeal.

Hopefully, the long term plan to get a kennelling block built will be realised at some stage. This would enable dogs to be neutered/spayed and held until suitable for homing. Many thanks to everyone who donated. Our Irish Post Office account is Street Dogs Of Nepal, no. 2668035457. You may keep track of progress on our website: www.streetdogsofnepal.com

**Bernie Wright,
Dog Rescue Ireland.
PO Box 4734.
Dublin.1.**

Update from Kathmandu.

Of the 55 street dogs in terrible condition and about 30 of their puppies, 35 are now treated and 12 puppies have been adopted. Food, vitamins and medicines for 20 dogs and 14 puppies are provided daily. Their health conditions are improving day to day, but 15 of the sickest dogs and their 7 puppies are waiting to be cared for near the stupa. Some may be pregnant.

DOG DAYS

Rai writes: “On October 20th 2006, we celebrated **Dog Day**, because according to Hindu mythology, Lord Shiva’s next reincarnation is Lord Bhairabh. People worship Lord Bhairabh for the blessings of protection for their homes. They believe that the dog is also the next reincarnation of Lord Bhairabh, who protects their home and makes it secure, in the form of dogs.

Early in the morning, we cooked food and added vitamins for the dogs and then we went to the stupa (temple) around 8:30am. Our cook called: “Puppy”, “Brownie”, “Tshering” and all those dogs and puppies rushed to our side in a second. We gathered all those dogs which are undergoing treatment and we started to worship them one by one by putting some tikas (coloured powder which are use during the festival) on their foreheads and garlands (made up of marigold flowers stitched on a thread) on their necks and prayed to get blessings from them. Then we provided them food to eat. We noticed that a few dogs seemed

uncomfortable with garlands and tried to tear them off. Perhaps these dogs are celebrating their days for the first time. Most dogs seemed to be very happy wearing those colourful garlands and tikas. Many of the visitors and tourists seemed to be enjoying it too, watching the dogs and taking pictures of them. What we felt was that all those street dogs were acting as domesticated ones, not as they had been six months before.

Our vet Dr. B.Acharya, our cook and his wife and son, helped us to make this all possible.

I hope we will continue to celebrate the Dog Festival every year.”



Offering garland to worst dog

“ANIMALS ARE ALSO CITIZENS OF ISRAEL”

The following article appeared in November 06 on **Ynet**, the internet edition of **Yediot Acharonot**, Israel’s largest newspaper. The article describes a pro-animal lobby formed in the Knesset by **Hakol Chai**, the Israeli sister charity of **Concern for Helping Animals in Israel (CHAI)**. The purpose of the lobby is to promote pro-animal legislation.

The first bill to be introduced is a law that will provide for animals in disasters. Readers will remember that we were all extremely concerned about the plight of animals in Lebanon and Israel during the 2006 conflict and sent funds to help them. Amongst other groups, CHAI/Hakol Chai had also been active in rescuing and rehoming animals during the disengagement from the West Bank and Gaza. Improving conditions in the municipal pounds, another issue of concern promoted by Hakol Chai/CHAI over the years, is also being discussed.

Animals “are also citizens of Israel, and they also deserve representatives who will speak for them,” announced MK (Member of Knesset) Yoel Hasson, who inaugurated the first animals’ lobby in the history of the Hebrew parliament. The lobby, led by Hasson, was initiated by **Hakol Chai**, and among its members are MKs Dov Hanin, Moshe Cahalon, Michael Malkior and Kolet Avital.

The first meeting of the lobby was attended by dozens of representatives of societies acting for the protection of animals in Israel, alongside Hasson, Hanin and representatives of the Environment Ministry and Agriculture Ministry. The subject was the sad condition of dozens of municipal and authority quarantine facilities in Israel, run without regulated supervision. Most of them lack basic conditions for pet animals. In summer, they are subject to terrible heat, and in winter to freezing cold and the cages are overcrowded with dogs and cats.

“There are quarantine facilities in Israel. But one has to improve the conditions in them. In addition to the harsh physical conditions, they also lack humanity. Many of the people working there do not act out of love and compassion for the animals. One of the ways to

change the situation is to expand the connection between the volunteer organizations and the enclosures, and to allow them to operate there freely,” said Yoel.

“The establishment of the lobby is an essential move,” says Adv. Yadin Elam, the director of Hakol Chai. “Until today, animal protection did not receive its proper expression in the Knesset, and it amounted to the random activity of some MKs who care. But this is an important issue, relevant to large parts of the population, not only pet owners, but everyone who believes that animals should be treated with dignity and compassion, and that their treatment should be changed... We received horrible descriptions of the conditions of the enclosures. In some of them, puppies are kept in freezing nights on cold concrete. Dogs are stolen by felons and find themselves in cruel battles. In many of them, dogs are doomed to live in crowded cages until their death. In some of the facilities, the conditions are shameful and disgraceful, but the caring staff is loyal, as for example in the Dimona quarantine facility. In some of the facilities, the conditions are relatively good, but the staff is not qualified to take care of animals, and is indifferent to their suffering. Only in a few quarantine facilities, such as the dog kennel in Rishon Lezion, whose municipal veterinarian, Yonathan Even Zur, is supported by the mayor, physical conditions are excellent and the staff is caring and professional.”

Yoel said: “When I entered the Knesset, I was certain that it deals with this issue, but I was surprised to find out that there is no group in it that takes care of their well being. The new lobby will try to change this situation. Maybe in addition to dealing with the condition of the quarantine facilities, one of the first tasks will be to change the name of the ‘Law Against Cruelty Towards Animals’ to ‘Animals’ Rights.’ Indeed, this is a semantic change, but it expresses our commitment to protect them.”

Thanks to CHAI for this information. www.chai-online.org.

SPIRITUAL PERSEPECTIVES

THE DEAN OF NEWCASTLE, NEW SOUTH WALES, SPEAKS OUT FOR ANIMALS

The annual **Thanksgiving for Creation** service was held in Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle, on Sunday, 8th October, 2006. The Address was given by the Dean of Newcastle, The Very Rev'd Graeme R. Lawrence OAM.

The position of leadership the Dean holds in the Anglican Church in Australia makes his remarks all the more valuable to those of us fighting the animals' cause.

A number of people involved in local animal and environmental groups took a part in the service, and **Mark Pearson, Executive Director of Animal Liberation NSW**, read the parable of The Good Samaritan from St. Luke's Gospel. This was the theme of the Dean's Address. Through this simple story, in which the Samaritan, not as respectable as the other passersby, belonging to a different ethnic group, is the only one to care for a person in need, Jesus leaves us in no doubt as to how to be a good neighbour to another in trouble.

Central to the teaching of Jesus is the attitude to look around at life and say, **“I can”**, and the whole history of the Church shows us men and women whose hearts and minds had been warmed by God's love and who set out to share that warmth with others.

If Jesus and his followers lived in challenging times, so do we. We live in a world where war is ever with us. Violence is a daily occurrence. Poverty and disease are a staple diet in the lives of millions. Add to these problems, environmental concerns, the treatment of human beings (think of Guantanamo Bay), and think of the treatment of animals. We need to be

deeply concerned for them, particularly for animals caught up in our economic system – the live sheep exports, the factory farmed pigs, the battery hens. We need to be willing to care for this part of God’s creation as well as keeping a focus on poverty and the needs of people. Faced with the suffering of other beings, we can choose to be helpless, to be too busy, to simply ignore, or we can help, in a spirit of love of the whole created order born out of thanksgiving for life – life which has been nurtured by love for God and one another.

~ **Thank you to our friend Olga Parkes of ASWA, Australia.**

A CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF MOLLY STACEY

- a life member of Quaker Concern for Animals.

Molly died on September 9 06, aged 75, from cancer and the side effects of invasive treatment. For the last two years, she had been desperately ill, cared for at home by her devoted daughter, raging because she could not get to demos, but never idle, she continued to make beautiful artistic goods to sell at her local charity and for the Quaker Concern for Animals stalls. She knitted the scarves to wear at demos and on the Sea Shepherd ship, Farley Mowat. She wrote angry letters about animal abuse to the local press and to government officials, particularly about the hunting of wild animals, which grieved her deeply.

Molly was a loving, passionate, creative person, who attracted devoted friends to whom she gave unstinting love and support. Her companion animals were with her during her last years, and in the final weeks, a refugee hen appeared in the garden, an escapee from an allotment, who had been given a death sentence because she had stopped laying. On the day of Molly’s funeral, a friend took the hen home as a companion to his solitary bird – Molly’s hen is now happy and laying eggs.

Molly and her daughter believed the hen was a messenger from the spirit world, a symbol of all the sentient life to which Molly had given her life.

Mystic, animal rights activist, lovely Molly, may your spirit and love stay with us as we try to battle on without you.

Joan Court. Animal Rights, Cambridge.

**Quaker Concern for Animals Annual General Meeting will be held
on Saturday 19 May 2007
at Friends’ House, Euston Road, London.**

**The Interreligious Fellowship for Animals (IRFA) will be hosting a
conference entitled
Living Adventurously: Spiritual Perspectives on our Kinship with all
Sentient Beings
on Saturday 16 June 2007
at Friends’ House. Speakers will represent seven faiths.
Please contact the clerk for more information.**