

Betty 2001-2012

Our Administrator, Grace, pays homage to a great Home dog who died in mid-January.

"I picked up Betty near Sapana Plaza in Margao in 2001 when she was about 8 weeks old. She was hiding between the parked cars and crying. I think she must have been abandoned sometime before I found her; she was utterly miserable and unhappy, and could not understand what was happening to her.

"I took her to our Sonsoddo shelter where we gave her lots of love and attention, and when I thought she was ready we tried hard to get her adopted. Of course the first thing going against her was that she was a female pup. Then, her spots and long face did not seem attractive to others. She eventually went for adoption three times but she would cry so much in her new home, she would be returned to us. We have a policy that if adoption fails three times, we don't try anymore unless we find a match made in heaven.

"And so, Betty stayed... and stayed... Over time she grew in self-confidence, and eventually she became our top dog, matron, warden, and general disciplinarian of the Shelter and friend to the newly-arrived puppies. She always sat beside their large playpen keeping an eye on them. I think she was a very happy dog in charge of a small place and had found her niche. In her latter years she was not as militant and became something of a Grande Dame, enjoying daily grooming beneath the newly installed fans.

"A little while after we moved to Curchorem, Snowy, our three-legged dog, and a bit of a Diva herself, became Betty's lieutenant. She trained her well, and now Snowy is in charge in the back. I still miss Betty terribly and continue to look around for her to greet when I arrive at the Shelter.



Betty and Snowy having an early-morning wrestle and chat
"The Shelter will not be the same without her" Dr Natasha



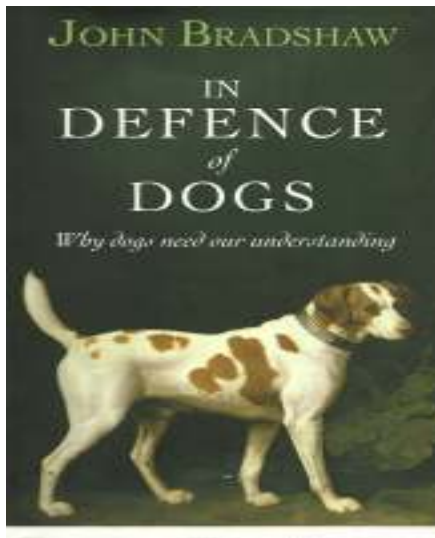
A resigned Betty watches one of our goats scoff her breakfast.
"Betty was kind to all" Dr Jayram

We asked on our Facebook page for a sponsor for a memorial plaque for her, and were immediately contacted by Jennifer Powell, who told us about her own grief at the death of her dog, Spencer a couple of weeks earlier. She and her partner offered to fund the plaque for Betty, in memory of Spencer. We were all moved that you choose to celebrate his life in this way. Thank you both, for your kindness and empathy.



Betty's plaque is sponsored in memory of Spencer, above, 1998 - 2012 (Photo of plaque in next Update).

NDTV came to film our work for their *Heavy Petting* programme. You can watch it here at:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6BJ3rvrawbE>



Just before Christmas I bought a copy of John Bradshaw's *In Defence of Dogs*. It had stayed at the top of the bestsellers' lists in the UK for many weeks. What a discovery! Author John Bradshaw is a biologist who founded and directs the Anthrozoology Institute at Bristol University, and he has studied the behaviour of domestic dogs and their owners for over twenty-five years.

He starts from the premise that *the whole point of having dogs as pets was for them to become friends, not slaves*. He takes to task the methods of 'old-school' trainers, lamenting that they continue to dominate the media with their punishment-based, confrontational style of training, which probably makes for better TV. He also challenges today's 'celebrity' trainers, and gives examples of where their 'training' methods are just plain wrong, if not altogether daft. Along the way he comprehensively thrashes received wisdom that dogs are direct descendents of the wolf family.

The book is in two halves; the first setting out why a dog's nature is completely different to what was the belief two decades ago. In the second he takes us inside the dog's mind and, with great insight, turns everything we have always believed to be the 'right' way to treat our pets completely on its head.

In a series of informed, gentle chapters Peter Bradshaw convinces us that our relationship with our dogs should be based on friendship. It's wonderful. And very moving.

Last word must go to the superb drawings throughout by Alan Peter which beautifully integrate with the narrative.

Editor
clodagh@gawt.org

Gimme shelter!

If you live in south Goa we are constantly looking for committed Foster Parents who will provide temporary care for cats, kittens, dogs and puppies in their own homes. Some need as little as two weeks of care, while others may need care for up to three months. We will advise and support you until they are ready for adoption into a permanent home. If you would like to give a small, needy animal the gift of time, love and nurturing, why not join our Foster Roster. For full details email us at: curchorem@gawt.org putting 'Foster Care' into subject line.



Volunteer Wendy Dansie who has fostered many kittens and puppies over the years for us, offering unusual shelter and warmth to a tiny kitten picked up on the way to an Anti-Rabies Camp recently.

Meet Raj, our youngest volunteer



Just eleven, Raj comes to Camp with us every Sunday morning to look after the puppies and kittens who are looking for their 'forever' families. He feeds and comforts them, and walks the puppies around to tire them out when they get over-excited with the crowds. This little kitten is the one sleeping inside Wendy's vest, above.

Gabbu



When Radhika Warkhakar was visiting Chandor with a friend earlier this month (5th Feb) “we noticed a beautiful owl standing against the wall of the famous Menezes Braganza Heritage Home right across from Chandor Church. I could tell instantly that it had been injured as one of its wings was sticking out.

“My first thought was that if it stayed there it would be attacked by dogs or just die in the heat as it couldn’t move at all. I felt that I had to somehow get it to the Shelter at Curchorem , just 15 minutes away. A quick call to our Administrator, Grace, set the rescue in progress. As it was Sunday, we were short of transport staff and so Roshan our shelter boy came on a pilot (motorcycle taxi) with a plastic basket, and he was able to catch the owl quite easily.



“We heard one of the many onlookers say something like *Gubda*, which means *owl* in Marathi, and I decided to name our owl Gabbu

“Our Vet Dr Niceta immediately examined Gabbu. She found a multiple fracture of the bone in the wing. Rather than add to Gabbu’s distress, she decided to plaster it the following day if possible. On Monday , visiting Vet Carla Rinaldi joined Dr Niceta to examine the owl again. We were all hoping for a small miracle but, sadly, they concluded that the nature of the fractures was such that it would be very difficult to heal and this beautiful wild bird would not be able to fly again. Both were of the opinion that under the circumstances, it would be best to euthanize him. We all did the best that we could but sometimes ‘the best’ means we just have to let them move on. RIP Gabbu”.

Meet Becky Dyball

In November last year Becky raised funds for us by doing a 350K sponsored cycle through Cuba over five days. Right now she is in Goa helping with the strays on the Beach around her Hotel, and has also spent time with the Veterinary Mobile Clinic. She’s back in the UK now, and has just let us have a cheque for £1200+



We are so thankful to you Becky, for all your hard work on our behalf over the past few years. We look forward to working together with you in the UK over the next couple of years, as we try to raise funds here for specific projects at the Shelter

MEET KURKAR : One of our Home dogs

Once upon a time Kurkar was a happy beach dog, near Palolem. Then he was picked up by Frank, a visitor, and brought to us for kennelling, as he had ‘decided’ to take him home to Europe. Kurkar would stay with us for a few weeks while all the paperwork was being completed. Before this could happen, Frank was relocated, and he now found it impossible to follow through the adoption process. He promised to stay in touch and send money to cover the dog’s costs. Meantime Kukur, who had grown up free as a bird on the beach, deciding his own fate and planning his own day everyday, was locked up in a cage (a small room), and walked only twice a day on schedule. Serious depression set in, so we wrote to Frank and insisted that a decision be made about him. He then backed out of the arrangement completely. By then Kukur had been away from the beach too long and had lost his place in the pack... once this happens, the other dogs might attack him if he comes back.



Kurkar with Gracie, our Shelter Coordinator

Kukur has now lived with us for the past five years. Initially we kept him with the other Home dogs, but he just wasn’t happy. In the end we let him loose to roam in the offices and at the front, and over time he created his own territory. Initially, He showed up at the shelter every morning at the same time that Gracie arrived. He stayed in her office or outside in the reception area, meeting and greeting all-comers. But when we closed, he just vanished. Where did he spend his nights? We went looking for him many times. We were worried about him. We tried to follow him. It was a mystery.

Then one morning he came back with a wound on his back. To treat it properly, we had to put him in a cage. About three days later, the worried Caretaker from the local temple, about half a kilometre away, came to see if we had picked up one of ‘his’ dogs which was missing.

Guess who... Kukur!. Mystery solved!

Today Kurkar still leads his double life, days spent with us, evenings with his temple Caretaker. He is a happy dog now, but he was already happy in his previous life on the beach. We don't blame Frank for falling in love with him. But for us, it remains a perennial question about our moral obligations to our stray dogs, and to know when and if it is right to alter the course of a dog's life often to satisfy our own needs. What do you think?

Kurkar is one of around 10 home dogs who now live with us for one reason or another. They have a huge compound at the back of the Shelter where they play happily. But their upkeep is very costly, and is a constant drain on our financial and staff resources. Each one costs us around Rs/ 6000 (around £75) each year to feed, vaccinate, treat and generally keep healthy and happy. We have to take that from our fundraising income, which is intended to cover our primary programmes (anti-rabies vaccinations, neutering of strays, caring for sick and injured animals, and our education program). We know these are hard times, but even a small donation will help us to meet these costs. If you can, click on www.gawt.org/donations



Kurkar and best friend Chutki share a meal.

100+ Club Draw Winners

Month	First Rs.750	Second Rs.500	Third Rs.300
November 2011	Jenny Smith	Eric Rea	Charles Morris
December 2011	C. Newall	Teresa Webb	Linda Mac
January 2012	Kevin Kibble	A. Hughes	Wendy Dansie
February 2012	Pete&Jean Holsey	Candy Grocott	Eileen Nichol

For further information go to www.gawt.org and click on Friends of GAWT