

FORTY YEARS ON

GEOFF FULLER looks back on his years of fund raising for the Home



MY involvement with the Home started in the 1970s helping my wife and friends in their fund raising efforts for the Friends of the Bath Cats and Dogs Home. The Home was in need of redevelopment. Vets bills were rising and a number of small charities that took in old and sick animals which helped the Home were in great need of help.

We concentrated on three methods:

1. A good quality bric-a-brac stall at the Xmas Bazaar at the Pavilion and at the Open Day at the Home.
2. A very large Tombola at the Xmas Bazaar; the Open Day and more recently at the Spring Fayre.
3. Events such as a Free Lunch / Clothes Sale at the Claverton Village Hall; lunches at home etc.

The Xmas Bazaar was the most successful. The Pavilion is a very large space. The Friends filled all four walls, the centre and the entrance area. John Hobhouse's toys from his business filled one long wall; below the stage was Mrs Hurler's collection and the rest by individual stallholders. Other volunteers manned the catering area with delightful snacks and hot and cold drinks – a real money-spinner.

However, the use of the Pavilion came to an end when the Council decided that we must use their caterers and other costs rose. Fortunately the meeting room at the redeveloped Home was just available but it was a much smaller area.

Separately, I was invited to join the Committee. We met in John Hobhouse's office, his home and at the meeting room at Green Park Station. By the turn of the century we had enough funds to start the redevelopment of the Home, an amazing achievement! By this time I was Vice Chairman and with Martin Ewart-James we held talks with the chosen architects, agreed the plans for the building and started the process of obtaining a contractor. By the time I became Chairman in 2001 the buildings were well underway. They were completed in 2003 and were well used by the time my Chairmanship ended in 2006.



Photo left: The old Reception building now used for small animals. Above: Geoff with rescue cat Daisy.

Looking back ten or more years I am surprised that so many working and retired people were able to give so much time and donate so many gifts to make these events successful.

It has been a wonderful time to be associated with the redevelopment of the Home and I now await its completion with the second half of the new cattery.