



# Newsletter

May 2016



Registered Charity No: 284424  
Friends of Bath Cats & Dogs Home, The Avenue, Claverton Down BA2 7AZ  
[www.friendsofbcdh.org](http://www.friendsofbcdh.org)

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## Chairman's Report

Dear *Friends*,

It is my sad duty to inform you of the loss of another of our long-serving and valuable *Friends*, namely Mrs. Myrtle Hurlle who, for many years, was our lynchpin in the Frome area and will be a great loss to us and the Home.

With a quarter of the year already behind us, we once again have the regular annual inserts including the notices for the AGM and the forms for the 1000 club. I do hope that you will all participate in the 1000 club as it brings in much needed funding.

The Christmas event was well attended and we had several new options to try to prise money from our supporters including the usual raffle, 'Jam & Jewellery', soft toys and the new bottle stall run by our Vice-Chairman Nick Burgess. This was very successful following on from a similar success at the Open Day.

The Trustees have been working hard to increase membership and, with the help of our new dedicated stand, we can now recruit at various venues and have already had some success at Morrison's London Road, Bath. The current Trustees are working productively together and the addition of Sammy Humphries as Secretary and Judith Burgess as Membership Secretary has made a significant difference to the smooth-running of the Charity.

We will be delighted to see you at any of our forthcoming events and our grateful thanks to you all for your continued support.

**Robin Eastman**

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**Front cover** *Richtofen is a five-year-old indoor cat who is in search of a quiet and loving home. He is a cheeky cat who enjoys a head bob and loves cuddles. If you are interested in Richtofen, please call or come into the Home to meet him.*

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## Membership Matters!!

The Friends of BCDH would be nothing without its members. Members raise the money that pays for vet bills, kennels, catteries and everything else we do. Members run the charity and make the decisions about how money will be spent. Membership subscriptions are the back-bone of the funds that we use.

We have just started a membership drive. The most effective way to get new members is by personal contact with an existing member. The Trustees, volunteers and our Membership Secretary, Judith Burgess, will be going out and about with our new flag and desk emblazoned with the *Friends'* logo and we hope to encourage the people we meet to join us. But we do need our members to do their bit.

See page 7 for more details.

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## MYRTLE HURLE 1924–2016

It is with great sadness that we mourn the passing of our dear *Friend* Myrtle Hurle who passed away on 25 February 2016 after a valiant fight against cancer.

Over the last forty years Myrtle was the lynchpin of the *Friends'* and BCDH's operations in the Frome area where Myrtle, along with her husband Ken, spent her entire life. Together, they gave freely of their time and dedicated themselves to raising thousands of pounds for BCDH. Myrtle regularly ran temporary pop-up shops in Frome as well as a regular stall at the Cheese and Grain. She also organized annual stalls for the festivals and fetes held at Mells, Nunney and Beckington. With her bric-a-brac stall, she was also a major contributor to the Christmas Bazaar which used to be held at the Pavilion in Bath and at numerous BCDH Open Days. Together with a dedicated team, Myrtle also ran the street collections in Frome, a yearly door-to-door collection and regular supermarket collections on behalf of the *Friends* and BCDH.

To say Myrtle was a 'gem' would be an understatement as she was one of those rare people who would do anything to help anyone. A passionate animal lover

*The Myrtle Hurle Cattery.*



she spent her life raising funds for animal welfare and was instrumental in running a voucher scheme, in conjunction with BCDH, to help the less well-off to neuter their animals in the belief that prevention was better than cure.

Myrtle had a particular soft spot for cats, especially elderly cats, which she would adopt to ensure that they had comfort, love and security in their final years. It was in recognition of this love of animals and of her outstanding work for BCDH that in 2014, the *Friends* named its new cattery after her. The *Myrtle Hurle Cattery* now stands as a lasting tribute to the memory of a remarkable lady and tireless supporter of the *Friends* and BCDH.

Those who knew her, or whose life she touched, will feel a great loss.



## Volunteering for the Animals

So many people give their time and energy to help raise awareness of the work of BCDH and to raise funds for the animals in the Home's care. Below we tell the stories of two such volunteers and highlight the very different ways in which people can offer their time and talents for the benefit of BCDH.

Bob and Bella are regularly seen on the streets of Bath with a collecting tin raising much needed funds while Barbara Cheney donates her time and publishing expertise to lay out and produce the *Friends'* bi-annual newsletter.

If you feel you have some free time (even only an hour or two) or some skills you could offer the *Friends*, please contact us. We would love to hear from you. See back page of this newsletter for contact details.

### Bob and Bella – what a team!!

Bob and nine-year old Bella have been together for about four years and in that time, they have become an inseparable team. The two of them can regularly be seen fundraising on the streets of Bath for BCDH. Bella, of course, steals the show and attracts a lot of admiring attention so that their fundraising bucket frequently tops £200–£300. Indeed, in the course of 2015, Bob and Bella raised a staggering £6000 for BCDH. Well, who could resist throwing coins in a BCDH bucket when such a sweet-natured dog with melting eyes is asking you? Bella is a particular favourite with children and she patiently and good-heartedly accepts all their petting, rolls over for a tummy tickle and then waits expectantly for a treat!

In recognition of the sterling work Bob and Bella do for BCDH, Bob has been nominated for the *Pet Plan Volunteer of the Year* award. The *Friends* are delighted to join in congratulating Bob on being put



*Bob and Bella collecting for BCDH in Southgate, Bath.*

forward for such an impressive award and wish him and Bella all good luck on Awards Day.



## Help from a discerning dog called Busta

Ever since I was introduced to art at the age of two and a half I have loved it. Once I was lucky enough to visit a public art gallery: in Penzance I saw the massive paintings done by Sandra Blow RA. That was a great day for me: I just lay down and admired them, while the gallery attendant sat and admired me (I'm that handsome!). My owner, Barbara Cheney, explained to me about the paintings – she knows because she's an artist. She sketches in her little black book on our walks below Beckford's Tower and at home, and paints at her studio in Bath (sometimes I go with her in case my opinion is needed).

I spent time in a dogs' home when I was young, which was truly frustrating as I knew I had lots to give. Since I came to

live with Barbara over a decade ago I have offered her support and taken her on wonderful walks. She in turn offers her support to others, including BCDH. Because she works full-time and spends every weekend painting she doesn't like to commit to being on a committee. Instead she uses her skills to create this newsletter with the Editor (who, incidentally, we first met on one of our walks many years ago). And every two months we deliver 30kg of dog food to Claverton Down and unwanted clothes and other stuff to be sold to raise funds for BCDH. It's not as much as she would like to do, but as one TV advert says, 'Every little helps...'

(Coincidentally, when we were much younger, I used to often meet with beautiful Bella and have fond memories of running through [human] waist-high fields of buttercups with her....)

## Murphy and Luther

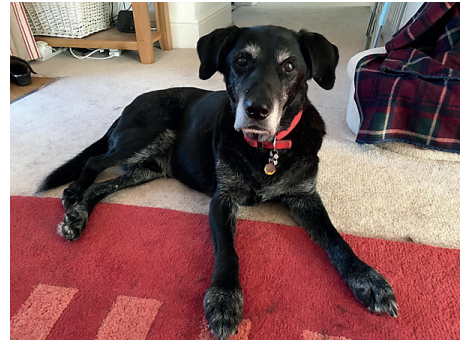
Losing a much-loved companion animal is always heart-breaking. There is, we hope, some comfort in knowing that we have given them a good life and a loving home. Here we celebrate the lives of Murphy and Luther whose caring owners Cairney and Neil Duncanson (Murphy) and Zac and Louise Nicholson (Luther) pay tribute to their very special dogs. Read their full stories on [www.friendsofbcdh.org](http://www.friendsofbcdh.org)

### Murphy

We collected Murphy from the BCDH on 4 June 2000 little appreciating how much we were blessed on that day. Keifer, as he was known, had been tied up to a post in Wales and then abandoned. Although 18–24 months old he weighed less than 20kgs. I cuddled him throughout our journey home. Later whilst eating our lunch he sat in front of us; clearly exhausted, he quite literally fell asleep sitting up and only woke as he fell over.

Bella, an earlier BDCH rehome, set up teaching Murphy the best tricks and games which included chasing after (and even better – finding) tennis balls. Later Murphy improvised and replaced tennis balls with pine cones. He had a knack of smelling them out hundreds of metres away. He regularly came with me to my allotment and I wonder how many beds are now sprouting pine trees. He never gave up dropping a pine cone at my feet waiting for it to be thrown for him to chase. This game could last for hours. He never tired. I also discovered that Murphy loved fresh peas. One year I had gathered my pea crop, laid it on the path, only to discover that Murphy had enjoyed a feast! He never lost his love of fresh peas and continued to help me with the harvest right through to this summer.

After Bella passed away in early 2007 Murphy became subdued, much quieter



and introverted; we sought another friend sooner than expected. Mosto was a much more challenging dog who had been very badly abused; but Murphy remained gentle throughout and slowly Mosto learned not to fear.

Although abandoned as a young dog Murphy was obedient and well-behaved although we never taught him. There wasn't an ounce of malice in him. Children and adults-alike loved to stroke him – his fur was so smooth and his ears were like soft velvet. Loving and trusting throughout his life he particularly liked to have his head and ears rubbed; always wagging his tail – even when visiting the vet. We often said Murphy was the dog to clone – he was one of a kind, a truly beautiful spirit.

He was much loved and will be very sorely missed. We were so fortunate to share our lives with him for more than fifteen years.

## Luther

We were lucky enough to adopt Luther five years ago after being completely seduced by his loving charms, whilst walking him and playing in the paddock at BCDH. The rainy day we took him home, he jumped straight into the back of our Ka, filling the back seat without a backward look to Tom, one of his handlers. After putting so much love and energy into looking after Luther and building him up, we felt for Tom and the others. Not sure of his background, he came to us underweight (32kg) and slept contorted in a tight cat-like ball with everything folded in. He settled in immediately though, his coat filled out, he found his feet and voice and was instantly part of the family. His weight soon increased (47kg) to a good, stable level and before long he was outstretched on his own leather sofa, or rolling on his back, head back and all four paws in the air! Being a big lad, we made sure he had two walks a day, in the park, around town and further afield, but he just loved coming home to a relaxed environment. He was elderly(ish) so didn't need very long walks, loved company and slept most of the day. He was a really handsome boy and usually we wouldn't go a week without getting comments

from strangers out walking, on how good looking he was. We had glorious days out and campervan holidays to Northumberland and the Lake District as well as the beach down in Dorset and Cornwall. There, Luther would dig in the sand and play in the surf which he adored. Driving back to Bath, he would simply sleep all the way; we loved his reaction on returning home, he would dash in, his face lit up in the knowledge he was back to his own bed.

Luther fell ill quite suddenly and collapsed while in the garden with us one Saturday afternoon. After the vet's immediate diagnosis, it was clear we had no choice. Luther was not in pain, was very peaceful and did not suffer. He was a loving part of our family, with a soft, caring nature and we miss him dearly every day. Rest easy Luther, we'll never forget you.



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## Please ask a friend to become a *Friend*

The subscription is only £12 per year (just over 3p per day!). We don't offer free cuddly toys but members have the invaluable satisfaction of knowing they are making a contribution towards the health, care and rehoming of neglected, unwanted and abandoned animals. We keep in touch with our members via the website and our newsletter and we welcome input from them. Members can meet the Trustees at fundraising events and are welcome to become Trustees themselves. Judith Burgess would be happy to hear from anyone with any questions about the work of the *Friends* or about membership. Contact her at [membership.friendsbcdh@gmail.com](mailto:membership.friendsbcdh@gmail.com). Please help us to grow. The Home needs the *Friends* and we need you!!

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# FRIENDS OF BATH CATS AND DOGS HOME

The Avenue, Claverton Down, Bath BA2 7AZ  
Registered Charity No: 284424

## ELECTION OF TRUSTEES 22 JUNE 2016

The following people have put themselves forward for election as Trustees for 2016–7. All have served on the Executive Committee for the past year and are eligible for re-election.



### **Robin Eastman – Chairman 2015–6**

I am a retired aircraft structural designer, formerly with Airbus UK for thirty years, a senior Union staff representative for twenty five years and also Branch Chairman. I have varied interests and hold Committee positions for several organisations. Aside from my work with the *Friends* of BCDH, I am currently the Chairman and Treasurer of the *Bristol Channel Federation of Sea Anglers* and the *Brunel Sea Angling Club* as well as Chairman of *Marshfield Horticultural Society* and a trustee of the *Hobhouse Trust*, founded by John Hobhouse who was instrumental in forming BCDH.

My wife Elaine and I have been involved with BCDH in varying capacities for over thirty years; firstly as dog walkers and then organising the agility training with our daughter Denise. For many years I also helped co-ordinate and run supermarket collections for both the *Friends* and BCDH with first-class help from a dedicated group of helpers. Elaine, who, for several years, co-ran the shop at BCDH with our former membership secretary Anne Meddick, is fully supportive of all my committee work. Between us, we have three rescue dogs: Grace, a greyhound; Danny, a lurcher; and Bejii, a ‘Heinz’ variety.

My vision is to see a fully integrated fundraising organisation working for the betterment of BCDH and able to provide sustainable funding into the future. I feel honoured to have been elected Chairman of Trustees since 2011.



### **Nicholas Burgess – Vice Chairman 2015–6**

I am a Chartered Structural Engineer and, with my wife Judith, and two daughters, Sarah and Ellie, have been involved at BCDH and with the *Friends* since the year 2000. This has included adopting three cats and one dog, a hamster, several guinea pigs and rabbits and numerous birds. As a family we have fostered over 100 kittens, socialising them ready for re-homing. For several years I have donned a red suit in December and attended fairs and carol concerts at BCDH.

I strongly believe that the Home is not just the buildings but the Trustees, the army of staff and volunteers, as well as the *Friends*, all working together with one aim - the welfare of unwanted, abandoned and neglected animals. Anything the *Friends* can do to make life better for all involved at the Home will benefit these animals.





### **Cary Bush – Treasurer 2015–6**

After qualifying as a Chartered Accountant in Bristol, I joined American Express where I principally worked in the Asia Pacific Australia Region, firstly as an internal Auditor, followed by roles as the Financial Controller in both markets and the Region. My last role was as the Chief Financial Officer in Japan, before moving to New York for nine months. My wife and I subsequently owned a hotel which we sold just before the market collapsed, and I now work for a small attraction one day a week as their bookkeeper and accountant, where I have successfully introduced monthly financial reporting, forecasts and budgets, allowing the owner a greater awareness of his business. I am also the National Treasurer for the English Petanque Association, as well as

holding a similar role for my local club in Bath. Joining the *Friends* of BCDH in 2014, I am slowly getting acquainted with the processes which has taken a lot longer than expected.



### **Sammy Humphries – Secretary 2015–6**

I was born in Bath (some sixty one years ago!) and have spent most of those sixty one years living here. I now call Batheaston my home. I have worked for local independent professional firms as a PA or secretary for many years and presently work part-time for a surveyor. I am a keen supporter of BCDH and the *Friends* and have been for as long as I can remember, re-homing many lovely companions (dogs, cats, rabbits) and attending as many of the events as I can manage.

I look forward to a long association with the *Friends*.



### **Louise Atkins**

For the last two years, since 2014, it has been a pleasure to serve on the *Friends* Executive and Fundraising Committees, as well as actively help organise and assist at *Friends*' fundraising events.

I have always loved animals and have a keen interest in BCDH as my cat was adopted from there many years ago. I have been volunteering at BCDH since 2013 and can be found most weekends on the Helpdesk, cat-cuddling and helping out at events.

I am well qualified in Administration with several business-related qualifications. In my spare time I enjoy socialising, aquacise, reading, cinema, craft and taking city breaks abroad.



### **Claire Crew**

I have loved animals all of my life: when I received my first pay packet the only thing I wanted to buy was a puppy. Obviously, I know better now and would never have anything but a rescue dog. My first introduction to BCDH was in 1976 when I lived in Frome. I very much wanted to get involved in helping unwanted and neglected

animals in the area and got in touch with Myrtle Hurle who, sadly, passed away earlier this year. I hope that I helped her quite a lot as I volunteered in the Frome charity shop, assisted with Flag Days and house-to-house collections and, for a short period of time, did home checks in the Frome area for potential dog adopters. I used to attend the Open Days with my husband and can remember so clearly reading the heart-wrenching pleas for a home that a member of staff had put on the pens of the dogs needing homes.

I have adopted four older dogs from BCDH, all of whom have brought me so much pleasure and enhanced my life. I have been involved in walking dogs at BCDH and helping out on Open Days since 2001. More recently I have been helping Lynda Pearce with the refreshments on Sunday mornings.

Not long ago I bought a T shirt which says “Life’s better with a Dog” – as far as I’m concerned, never were truer words written.



### **Katrina Hurley**

As well as serving on the *Friends’* Executive and Fundraising committees since 2006, I have also fundraised for the NSPCC for forty years and belong to the Swainswick and Box committees. I have worked at the Royal United Hospital since 1990 where I am employed by the NHS as a phlebotomist. Before having children I trained in dental nursing, then helped my husband run his business. During all this activity I have always had dogs at home, plus cows and horses. I care passionately about the welfare of all animals and am actively involved with the *Friends* in raising funds to help the animals at BCDH.



### **Lesleyann Kendrick**

I am now retired, having spent many years working for Social Services as an Administrator for child abuse and mental health services. Prior to that I was a nurse at the Royal United Hospital. My interests include interior design, theatre, cinema, travelling and, of course, eating out.

Since 2000 I have been actively involved with volunteer work for BCDH, mainly dog walking. I have rescued three dogs over the last ten years and currently have two. I also walk and bring home several times a week a German Shepherd called Kayne. I supply special food

for him (including fresh fish) on a regular basis. However, because of his dominance and temperament towards one of my dogs it has not been possible to keep him, although I am working on it!

I became a Trustee on the *Friends’* Committee in 2014 and enjoy getting actively involved in raising money for the animals. In particular, I like to organise a clothes sale a couple of times a year with all proceeds going to the Home.



### **Dennis Long**

Having spent twenty four years in the Armed Forces, serving all over the world, I returned to civilian life as a catering manager with British Rail and other various companies for ten years. I am married with two children, both of whom are involved with BCDH. Kirsty works full-time as a Team Leader at the Home, whilst Rachel is a dog walker and animal care volunteer. Although not active in front-of-house with the Home, my wife helps behind the scenes, mending coats for the Home's dogs. She also got her company to take on BCDH as a charity and fundraise for them.

I have been at the Home for around eleven years now as a volunteer dog walker, and have been involved in fundraising for around eight years, doing all sorts of things, eg Walk Walk, Bath Half Marathon, an abseil and collection days in Bath. I have also run the BBQ on Open Day for several years now. As a family we have adopted and rescued many animals over the years, mainly from BCDH, and at present we have three dogs, five rabbits, five guinea pigs and two hamsters.



### **Lynda Pearce**

Most of my working life has been spent in Devon, where I worked for Devon Social Services with children and young adults. I have always had a keen interest in animal welfare and in 1999 became a volunteer at BCDH as a dog walker, something I still enjoy doing today. For several years I have had a close connection with an animal welfare group in Wales, and have brought many homeless dogs and puppies to Bath to be adopted.

I am actively involved in all the *Friends* fundraising activities and run a monthly Sunday coffee morning for visitors and volunteers. I no longer have my own dog but am completely smitten with my rescue cat, Suzy, whom I was going to foster for a few weeks but who is still with me four years later!



### **Barbara White**

I have been a *Friend* of BCDH since the early 1980s, during which time I have adopted three of the Home's dogs. I have also been a volunteer dog-walker. I retired from my job in education in 2011 to become a writer and my biography of Fanny Murray, Bath's famous courtesan, was published in 2014. I am now working on a third book. Since my retirement, I have also become a trustee on the *Friends'* Fundraising and Executive Committees. We all share a common interest in wishing to alleviate animal suffering and in helping the Home to fund its vital work in caring for unwanted animals. As a result, our committee work is both rewarding and fun! Trustees are also involved in the various fundraising events we organize – everything from plant and designer clothes sales to summer garden

parties and Christmas fayres. We all enjoy this social aspect of being a Trustee and the opportunity it gives us to meet our many *Friends*.

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## Dates For Your Diary for 2016

In addition to our usual refreshment stand at BCDH on the first and third Sunday of every month, when we offer delicious cakes and coffees to visitors, we have some special events for the year, so please make a note in your diary.

**Sunday 5 June 2016 (12–4pm)** After last year's successful event, the *Friends* will be hosting another afternoon of cream teas as well as a sale of plants and garden paraphernalia. Please do come and support us (and perhaps bake us some cakes or donate some suitable items?) and wish us a bright sunny summer's day for the event!!

**Wednesday 22 June 2016** The *Friends* AGM 2016 will be held at BCDH on Wednesday 22 June at 7pm with light refreshments available from 6.30pm. We do hope you will be able to attend as this is your opportunity to have your voice heard, make suggestions and raise issues. This is also your opportunity to elect the *Friends'* Trustees for 2016/17. If you are interested in standing as a committee

member we would be delighted to hear from you. Please contact our Chairman, Robin Eastman at [friends@bathcatsanddogshome.co.uk](mailto:friends@bathcatsanddogshome.co.uk) before the end of May 2016.

**29 August 2016** BCDH will be holding its major fundraising event of the year with its annual Fun Day. The *Friends* will have a stall with some items for sale. This is the perfect time to renew memberships or to entice friends, family and neighbours to join the *Friends* and help us raise much needed funds. As an extra incentive, if you introduce someone who subsequently joins the *Friends* you will receive a voucher, redeemable at a *Friends* event, for a cup of tea/coffee and a piece of cake!

**27 November 2016** The *Friends* will hold a Christmas coffee morning with festive food and an opportunity to pick up some Christmas gifts. As usual, there will be a raffle with super prizes and Santa will be on hand to receive your gifts of food for the animals.

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## Contact Details

**Friends of BCDH, The Avenue,  
Claverton Down, Bath BA2 7AZ**

**[www.friendsofbcdh.org](http://www.friendsofbcdh.org)  
[friends@bathcatsanddogshome.co.uk](mailto:friends@bathcatsanddogshome.co.uk)**

**Chairman** Robin Eastman  
[theeastmans139@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:theeastmans139@tiscali.co.uk)

**Vice Chairman** Nick Burgess  
[moggymanor@talktalk.net](mailto:moggymanor@talktalk.net)

**Secretary** Sammy Humphries  
[sammyhumphries12@gmail.com](mailto:sammyhumphries12@gmail.com)

**Treasurer** Cary Bush  
[cary@carybush.co.uk](mailto:cary@carybush.co.uk)

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## Trustees

Robin Eastman (Chairman)  
Nick Burgess (Vice Chairman)  
Cary Bush (Treasurer)  
Sammy Humphreys (Secretary)  
Louise Atkins  
Claire Crew  
Katrina Hurley  
Lesleyanne Kendrick  
Dennis Long  
Lynda Pearce  
Barbara White