
After 80 years, the area's oldest veterinary practice and oldest animal charity is still going strong

IN 1930 THE STORY BEGINS

The needs of the animals of people unable to afford treatment by veterinary surgeons in private practice had until late 1930 been served by the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA) by means of a van (pictured below). In September 1930, however, its help was withdrawn from Worthing. The PDSA believed it was needed "...urgently in other areas, really poor places..." and so would not be servicing Worthing any more.

But one of the committee members of the PDSA, Miss H M Anthony, was not going to let the pets of Worthing down.

On 8 November, she wrote to The Worthing Herald stating: "We will have our own Dispensary in Worthing." The Worthing and West Sussex Dispensary for Sick Animals of the Poor duly opened on Monday 17 November 1930, probably at 9.30 a.m., an event reported in the Herald. The Herald acknowledged the help of a Mr W G Penny in securing the Dispensary's rented premises at 39 Liverpool Road, behind Potter Bailey's grocery in Chapel Road. (See "The charity's premises" below for more on these.) The charity was established under the presidency of Major J S Courtauld, MP, the patronage of the then Mayor and Mayoress, Coun and Mrs H F Carmichael, and the chairmanship of Captain W D Douglas-Jones.

So it was that Miss Anthony, then resident at "Chiem" in Durrington, later reported at premises of the same name in Mill Lane, High Salvington (1944) and later still at Foxley Lane, High Salvington (c 1952), became our founder. Actually named Hester Maud, she is invariably in

our cuttings and correspondence referred to, and she always signed herself, by the initials H M; she was to serve the charity for many years, and later to have the clinic premises named in her memory.

The Worthing Gazette wrote in praise of the charity - only three weeks after the Dispensary had opened and no fewer than 300 animals had been treated! Fund-raising activities were already underway. The Herald reported on the efforts of the boys of Homefield School Hobbies Club, who raised £10 10s. for the Dispensary.

The Dispensary was open Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 9.30-1, 2.30-4.30 and 6-7.30. In a newspaper clipping of those early days, the first Dispenser and Superintendent, Mr F T Edmunds, who was also formerly attached to the PDSA and the Animals' Hospital London, described a case that illustrates beautifully what Worthing Animal Clinic is about: "As an example of our work I will tell you of a little girl of eight who came to me crying because her rabbit would not eat and she felt sure it was going to die. I found it was practically exhausted. The front teeth were badly overgrown and curling round the bottom jaw causing the animal great pain. The teeth were clipped and restored to their normal condition and the rabbit and the girl went away, the rabbit looking less sorry for himself and the little girl all smiles!"



The PDSA van which had served the town prior to the foundation of The Worthing and West Sussex Dispensary for Sick Animals of the Poor



The newspaper clippings in the charity's first scrap book from the 1930s paint a detailed picture of the age. They tell of genteel times, of fund-raising garden fetes opened by the members of the nobility, among them the Countess Winterton, Lady Leconfield and the Duchess of Norfolk. Other events included dances with prominent West-End bands at the Warnes Hotel, and the West Sussex Players put on a performance of 'Ann' at the Worthing Pier Pavilion.

At the 1932 Annual General Meeting the Treasurer, Mrs Edith Hamilton of 17 Windsor Road, reported a balance in hand of £199-8s-6d, income for the year being £655-9s-9d. The largest item of expenditure was salaries at £262-10s-4d. By comparison, our total income for 2009 was £226,708, including veterinary fees of over £142,000; the costs of running

1930 - 1939: THE BURGEONING YEARS

OUR HISTORY

The newspapers were full of admiration for Worthing Animals Dispensary, to which the original name had by now been thankfully shortened!



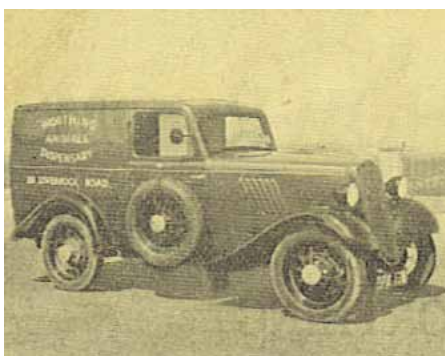
the clinic were £195,510, including staff and locum costs, still our biggest area of spending, of £100,898.)

The success of the Dispensary and other charitable undertakings of its kind seems to have caught the local and national veterinary fraternity by surprise. Press cuttings from 1932 show them at pains to point out that in a genuine hardship case a veterinary surgeon would anyway always have provided free treatment. Two local vets, a Mr Kelly (41 High Street) and a Mr Turney (214 Dominion Road and 10a Railway Approach), announced such a service in the Herald. Letters from the RSPCA and the Southern Counties Division of the National Veterinary Medical Association emphasised that only vets could provide qualified assistance, cautioning against unqualified sources and unorthodox treatments. (The Dispensary and the earlier local PDSA service had not had a vet in regular attendance.) A later contribution from the NVMA explained that, while free treatment for the animals of the genuinely poor had always been available from vets, it was only the recent relaxation of a ban on advertising, in the wake of the growth of charitable facilities, that had enabled this to become wider knowledge. Other cuttings were less genteel, one reporting the charity's then Chairman's reproach to the veterinary profession that "... he did not think it was quite the right spirit for them now to try to decry societies which had been doing the work for many years" (a reference to the non-qualified staff of the time).

The newspapers were full of admiration for Worthing Animals Dispensary, to which the original name had by now thankfully been shortened. Satisfied pet owners wrote letters of commendation to the newspaper editors. Mr C R Johns, Secretary of the National Canine Defence League (8 Clifford St, London, W1) declared the Dispensary 'a flourishing infant'. The number of animals treated annually had increased by 1936 to 4,670.

The Dispensary was also concerned with other aspects of animal welfare. Newspaper clippings from 1936 show Miss Anthony campaigning for better facilities for dog walking in the town. "Dog owners with time and money to spare can take their dogs for runs on the Downs, but people who live at the other end of town find the facilities more and more restricted." she remarked.

The Superintendent of the Dispensary saw many unusual cases in his time. One favourite was the story of the 'Tom' cat who in 1937 gave birth to five kittens. The Herald tells the tale of the bewildered cat owner who brought the pet to Mr Edmunds, asking him what could have caused this remarkable occurrence!



The Dispensary appears to have had its own transport throughout the 1930s and 40s and beyond. In 1946, the Gazette reported how much the ambulance had been used during the blitz to save not only animals but human beings. One of the drivers of the war years was a Mrs V Roberts, a pre-war supporter who was later to become a committee member; the Chairman's Report for 1991/92 stated that

"...a link with the clinic's early days had been broken with her death."



Left: Van outside the Dispensary, 1932. The gentleman in white is believed to be Mr Edmunds, referred to above, the Dispensary's first Dispenser. (See also "The charity's premises" below.) Above: Ford van BPX 176, bought from Searles in 1936



The then Superintendent, Mr D G Crouch, proudly presents the charity's new ambulance, BCD 25, opposite the Dispensary in 1939. Note the telephone number!

There can be no doubt that the charity was an invaluable part of the community

and yet, in 1938, an article was published in the Gazette announcing that the Dispensary may have to close unless it could increase its income. These fears were later refuted as rumours. However, the charity had clearly fallen on hard times. When the Annual Meeting was held in April 1939, a written appeal was displayed appealing for more funding. Nonetheless, Worthing Animals Dispensary managed to get through its financial struggles but, in September 1939, like the rest of the country it had many new challenges on its hands.....

People were needed to work with the ambulance and to perform first aid on injured animals.

1939-1945: THE WAR YEARS

Several months before the Second World War broke out, in April 1939 the Dispensary was already planning for how war would affect animals. Mr Crouch, said: "What will happen to animals in time of war is unthinkable. I have approached officials in the town regarding this matter and I hope within the next two or three months we shall have a scheme where people will be trained to carry on ARP work for animals in Worthing." Mr Crouch appealed for volunteers for the work. People were needed to work with the ambulance and to perform first aid on injured animals.

It was largely through the efforts of Mr Crouch that Worthing became the first town in the British Isles to run an Animal Air Raid Precautions Volunteer Corps scheme.

Originally a volunteer branch of Worthing Animals Dispensary, the Animals ARP Volunteer Corps later became part of the town's ARP system as a whole. After successful appeals for volunteers, the local service established a dozen first aid and reporting centres in and beyond Worthing, rendering assistance to animals injured, frightened or lost in air raids. The Herald of 27 September 1940 reported the rescue of 27 cats, 14 dogs and 6 cages of budgerigars and canaries. Mr Crouch pleaded that their work in reuniting rescued animals with their owners would be made significantly easier if owners fitted their pets with identity discs, supplied free by the National ARP for Animals Committee, to which the local scheme was affiliated. Volunteers were given a course of anti-gas lectures, and the general public as a whole were asked to visit the Dispensary, where a gas proof kennel was on view (pictured below). In an emergency, a

dog could be hermetically sealed in and would have breathed through a filter, similar to a gas mask. The official badges of NARPAC volunteers and the Animal Guard, precise distinction unknown, are shown below (from their appearance on eBay in January 2006).



Above: NARPAC badge; Top Right: a variant, Animal Guard; Right: Gas-proof kennel. These pictures and the related narrative



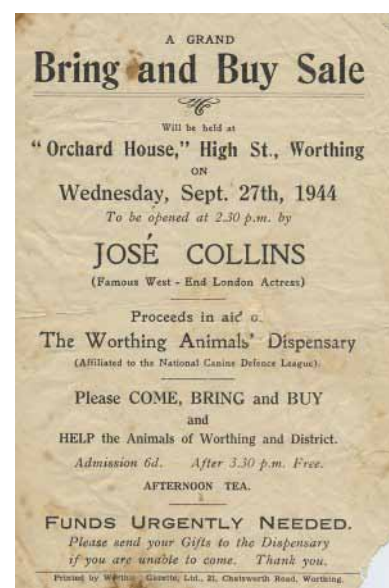
have generated a number of enquiries from interested visitors to this website.

Fortunately, the kennels were not needed. Instead, the main problem for pet owners during wartime was how, with the shortage of meat, were they going to feed their pets? Worthing Animals Dispensary organised a system of rationing, with horse flesh at 9d / lb and dried liver at 4d / lb. A photo in the scrap book shows that 200 people queued regularly at the Dispensary to buy meat for their dogs. Mr Crouch had very stern words for people who claimed that their animals would not eat certain meats: "Horse flesh might become very scarce and it is no good to anyone saying that their animal will not eat this or that and will only eat the best meat," he said, "They must eat what is available. If dog owners continue to make a fuss about the shortage of food for their dogs, then I should not be surprised if eventually the government issued an order for the destruction of all domestic animals." Quite how much of the pet food thus made available found its way into the digestive systems of the intended recipients, as opposed to those of humans, knowingly or otherwise, is not known.

Surprisingly, during the early War years, finances actually began to improve for the Dispensary. Salvington Mill was the venue of many fetes held to raise funds for the charity in the 1930s, its owner being Captain W D Douglas Jones, the charity's Chairman. In 1940 the Honorary Treasurer for the charity, still Mrs Hamilton, announced in the Gazette that the charity had just experienced "a wonderful year". The cost of everything had gone up, Mrs Hamilton admitted, but people had rallied round and the charity was now in credit.

Yet in December 1942 Worthing Animals Dispensary was in debt again. To clear the overdraft, they held a charity ball at the Assembly Hall. These balls were always a success for the Dispensary. The local journalists buzzed with praise, and the proceeds raised must have gone a long way to help the charity through the War.

Throughout the War years and financial trouble, Worthing Animals Dispensary carried on its good work. The commendations continued to roll in, and in 1944 the Gazette featured an article in which the Mayor and Mayoress spoke very highly of the charity's work. They were especially interested in the humane 'cat catcher', a neat trap that was used to round up stray cats. Stray cats were



With the War over, pets were popular again

a tricky problem and, according to the Herald of 13 May 1949 the Dispensary's Annual Report for 1948 "deprecated '... the feeding of neighbours' cats' under the pretence that they were underfed. Cats enticed in this way are often sadly missed by their owners, and through no fault of their own may end up as strays."

Although cats and dogs made up, as now, the largest percentage of the patients, there were a few more unusual cases.

In 1942, The Worthing Gazette covered the story of a wallaby being brought in by a returning overseas unit. One other such unit brought in their Regiment's mascot - a pet monkey!

The Bring and Buy Sale advertised on the poster above records, interestingly, our long-term affiliation at that time to the National Canine Defence League; presumably the PDSA, a more obvious affiliate, was still out of favour! (Its withdrawal from the town had caused some acrimony, resulting eventually in a financial settlement.) The sale was by no means an isolated event, another poster of the war years publicising a Garden Fete. But such documents also reveal small details fascinating to budding historians of the charity and the customs of the time: our then President was a Major J S Courtauld, MP, while our Patronage consisted of some 20 worthy personages including the Mayor and Mayoress of Worthing, a Mrs Lloyd Goring (there is now a Lloyd Goring Close in Angmering) and numerous clinicians and bearers of military rank. Today we have a sole Patron, no President and no active involvement by our local MPs, while few of the population have ever held, let alone presently sport, a service rank.

The annual report for 1944/45 recorded with some sadness the departure after six years of the wartime Dispenser and

Superintendent, Mr Crouch, remarking on his excellent work during air raids.

Miss Anthony was still active at this time, serving as Secretary (and probably doing much else besides, as seasoned charity trustees/committee members will appreciate; she certainly seemed to be adept at volunteering several other Anthony's, presumably relatives, for fund-raising duties). She resigned as Secretary, unable to continue, at the June 1944 AGM, but in recognition of her many years of devoted service was made a Founder Committee Member with full voting power. She continued in that role and as Appeals Secretary.

The charity's founder, Miss H M Anthony. This is our only known picture of her. It was taken at a fund-raising event in June 1936



opened the sale, applauded the efforts of the Dispensary throughout the war and added that they deserved all possible help.

In 1945 there were plans to build a new animal hospital for Worthing, "far in advance of present day hospitals... as a model for other towns which want to keep abreast of modern animal surgery." Mrs Marguerite Doe Ravenscroft, who had spent her childhood in Worthing before leaving for California, gave £6,000 in memory of her parents to help build it. Presumably in accordance with wartime regulations, the money had been left in the care of the Chancellor of the Exchequer (!) until the cessation of hostilities, one of the conditions being that, if possible, two or three horse stalls be provided for emergency cases, no doubt in recognition of the work done and suffering endured by horses in time of war. Once more the charity's whole mission was beautifully captured, this time in a single line in Mrs Ravenscroft's donation letter: "The whole object is to help as many animals of the poor as possible." The hospital was not to be, possibly through lack of building permits, but the Ravenscroft Fund lives on today as a source of income to help with repairs, and can still be seen in the charity's accounts; as requested by our benefactor, there is a plate in memory of Sanborn and Ellanor Doe, Mrs Ravenscroft's parents, at the clinic's front entrance.

The 1954 annual report included a beautiful poem, again illustrating what the charity is about and does so well:

AFTER THE WAR

With the War over, pets were popular again and the Chairman of Worthing Animals Dispensary, at another bring-and-buy sale held in Orchard House, claimed that people were now "clamouring for pets". The Mayoress, Mrs H W Shalders, who

Dear People, I'm sending this letter to say
I'm now a loved pet, tho' once was a stray.
I'm only a cat, and once was unwanted,
I've no education but still quite undaunted,
I've asked my dear mistress to write just to my
How happy I am to be here today
When thrown in a cart and left there to die,
A nice little girl who was then passing by,
Said 'Kitty, how sad, I would take you with me.'
But my poor leg was broken, and my eyes couldn't see,
So fetching a basket she vainly contrived,
To pick me up gently and put me inside
But my leg hurt me badly, and I mewed out with pain,
So she covered me warmly and ran off again,
I soon heard the sound of a van coming near,
I covered down lower so tortured with fear,
But out from the van came a nice kind friend,
Who drove to the Dispensary my troubles to end,
My leg was soon healed and my eyes quite well,
They found me a home which was certainly well,
So please help them here as much as you can,
For they really deserve it.

With love from A. FAN.

OUR HISTORY

a proposal to resume the provision of an ambulance was considered in 1973 but was deemed unnecessary

The 1960 accounts entry of a small profit on the disposal of a "Motor Ambulance" appears to have been the end of the road as far as having our own transport was concerned; a proposal to resume the provision of an ambulance was considered in 1973 but was deemed unnecessary as by then the "Animal Rescue Ambulance", possibly WADARS's, was well established.

Miss Anthony retired from active participation in 1960. She died towards the end of 1964 but it was not until the annual report of April 1970 that she is first referred to as "the late". Her last known home, "Quainton", 6 Foxley Lane, High Salvington ("Tel. Swandean 224"), appears to have been sold to a Mrs Godfrey, and is now home to a computer modelling consultancy.

But Worthing Animals Dispensary itself continued in earnest. Miss Anthony was succeeded by Miss E L Burge. From time to time local business people were kind enough to help the charity with fund-raising. A Mr Murray used to put on annual film shows, while a Miss Pickard ran a dancing school and put on a show annually for many years, donating part of the proceeds to the charity. (The 1970 accounts show receipts from Miss Pickard's Pantomime that year of £70 12s 0d; the year's expenses included salaries of £1,155 14s 1d, accountancy fees of £16 0s 0d (down £1 on 1969) and bank charges of £1 0s 0d. There was an overall deficit for the year of £322 4s 3d.)

The Dispensary had from 1945 been attended three days a week by the charity's first veterinary surgeon, Mrs K M Chapman, MRCVS. One of the first female qualifiers at the Royal Veterinary College in Camden Town, as a young vet she had succeeded Mr Crouch. Like Miss Anthony she was to serve the charity for many years, finally retiring in 1992 after 47 years service. Her salary had been increased to £36 per week in March 1974. She was for a period assisted full-time by Miss D M Allard, who is also recorded as the charity's Secretary and lived in the flat above the surgery. Miss Allard left in January 1971 and died in 1973, being succeeded by Mrs Wickens. Mrs Chapman was later assisted by Leslie Glover, who served until about 1993.



Miss Allard (Assistant/Secretary), Mrs Chapman (Veterinary Surgeon) and friends

On 1 January 1975 the charity's name was changed to Worthing Animal Clinic, to avoid confusion, particularly among those leaving legacies, with the PDSA; indeed for many years the Annual Report included a reminder of the charity's correct name, and it is known that at least one legacy, possibly many, went to another charity in error. The name change coincided with a realisation that the clinic needed to be run as a business: the committee minutes of 13 January 1975 note this and the adoption of a cash book to record monies coming in and going out! Some two years later the committee minutes recorded the view that a new Treasurer was needed, "...someone with a business mind, rather

than an animal lover". The difficulties in balancing the books are evident from the 1977 AGM minutes, which record that the year's small surplus was only the second since 1961. Perhaps this was hardly surprising, since there were few set charges and no eligibility criteria, most clients self-certifying that they could not afford a private vet's fees and being invited to make whatever donation they felt appropriate.

Increased demand led in 1992 to the recruitment of an additional veterinary assistant. That year saw the clinic's workload doubling to 60-80 animals per week

from 1991 levels, the financial report featuring a corresponding increase in fee income over the previous year. This was in the wake of a recession and resulting redundancies, greater awareness of the clinic among local vets in private practice and the introduction of stricter eligibility criteria by the PDSA, who ran clinics in Portslade and Brighton. Not for the first, or last, time were the PDSA's policies influencing developments for us.

The charity's annual reports of the 1980s and '90s record occasional legacies being received, often being used to update the clinic's facilities or provide new equipment. The largest recorded was one of £125,000 in 1992.

WORTHING ANIMALS' DISPENSARY
30 NEWLAND ROAD, WORTHING

Presents
A Film Show
by Mr. W. S. C. MURRAY

Some Sussex Birds

AT
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH HALL
RICHMOND ROAD, WORTHING

ON
MONDAY, 27th APRIL, 1970 at 3 p.m.

Proceeded by
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
at 2.30 p.m.

TEAS SERVED ADMISSION FREE
COLLECTION FOR DISPENSARY FUNDS

THE CHARITY'S PREMISES

The pictures of the van in 1932 and the ambulance in 1939 are particularly significant. Most importantly, they identify the location of the original Dispensary, towards the top of Liverpool

The Dispensary moved to its own, current, premises in Newland Road in early 1961.

Road on the right going north, behind what is now Santander. Stand between Addiscombe Cottage, a small 2-storey building just east of Shopmobility at the top of the car park, and 18 Liverpool Gardens, the large building at the top of the road, immediately behind the ambulance in the 1939 picture, and look east towards Chapel Road. Between Adecco and Property Weekly you will see what remained in 2005 of the scene in the 1932 picture: one of the Dispensary's two buildings is still standing, boarded up and in disrepair, the backs and roofs of the Chapel Road shops easily identifiable with the 1932 picture.



Above: In the foreground boarded up is what remained in 2005 of the original Dispensary in Liverpool Road, behind what had by 2010 become Santander. The Abbey National staff of the time politely enquired what our photographer was doing taking pictures of the back entrance to their bank. Compare the chimneys and windows behind with those of Potter Bailey and others in the 1932 picture, shown again alongside for ease of comparison

Secondly, connoisseurs will rejoice in seeing how little our telephone number from the very beginning (“Tel 2248 (Day)”) according to a 1930 letterhead, and confirmed on the ambulance) has

changed (or, like the charity itself, has not only survived but has been built on!); “2330 (Night)” was less fortunate.



Below: A 1932 map shows the Dispensary's location. Building numbers in Liverpool Road corresponded to those in Chapel Road (running north-south to the east) so the Dispensary, at 39 Liverpool Road, can be readily found a short distance at 2 o'clock from the map's centre

The Dispensary moved to its own, current, premises in Newland Road in early 1961. The building had been acquired on 10 October 1960 for £2,500 from Mortimer's Dairies (picture, below left); the committee of the time seems to have driven a commendably hard bargain, since the asking price was £3,000 (see agents' particulars, further below). The 1961/62 annual report records that the new premises “...after temporary alterations and part redecoration have proved to be most satisfactory for our purpose.” The accounts recorded additions of £700 14s 0d prior to occupation.



Left: the Dispensary's then new premises in Newland Road in 1961, its earlier use by a dairy being discernible. Right: the surgery and dispensary areas.

The new premises were modernised and re-roofed in 1963. Both further roof repairs in 1979/80 and improvements in 1983 to the consulting, operating

and waiting rooms drew heavily on the Ravenscroft Fund. The cost of the repairs was discounted by the builders, Messrs Hickie and Lewis, by some £900 on account of good weather reducing their costs, and our charity status. The Ravenscroft Fund was also drawn on in 1991 and '92 to contribute to the costs, some £8,500, of refurbishing the long-disused flat over the clinic for use by the new vet, Miss Janet Scotchford. (Consideration had been given from time to time to letting the flat, but the idea had been discarded for various reasons, including a possible detrimental effect on the value of the property and noise from tenants disturbing the vet while operating. A resident member of staff would soon be a requirement when animals were kept in overnight; this arrangement continues today.) After several alterations and improvements over the years, the clinic premises now stand in the accounts at a cost of £41,615. There were extensive internal and external decorations in 2008-09.

In 1998 the clinic received a new operating table through the good offices of the Jean Sainsbury Animal Welfare Trust

1993 - THE NEWSLETTER REVIVED: FURTHER INCREASED DEMAND, BUT FALTERING SUPPORT

Reviving an idea first tried in 1976, the charity resumed publication of a newsletter in the summer of 1993. The first such edition appealed for new members, on whom the charity significantly depended for fund-raising support. To try to revive such support, regular quarterly editions would be sent to all members, aimed at keeping them up to date with goings on at the clinic and giving advice on common veterinary conditions. The second edition included a delightfully detailed piece entitled Anal Glands. This was in return for an increased annual subscription, from £2, of £5, where it remains today. Early issues reported little support for, or help with, fund-raising efforts, leading to increasing concern for the charity's finances.



Later in 1993 there was a further increase in workload, following the closure of the PDSA's facility at Portslade. At this time the clinic only opened for consultations three days a week, although on other weekdays its work carried on behind the scenes. Such was the level of activity that the vet became concerned at the increasing difficulty in devoting sufficient time and attention to each patient. To focus resources on the most needy cases, new clients were henceforth restricted to those on state benefits, criteria the PDSA had also recently been forced to adopt for the same reason. Not long afterwards, the range of qualifying benefits was reduced to those which in the main were means-tested, although widows and state retirement pensioners remained routinely eligible. Meanwhile, in line with RCVS guidelines that charitable veterinary clinics should only treat animals from within a 30-minute travelling radius, a geographical qualification was introduced.

The overload was made worse by the lack of X-ray equipment, necessitating the transport of vet, nurse and animals to another surgery to use its facilities.

(This had been the case from the early days, as well as an absence of inoculations.) In order to deal with these inefficiencies and restrictions, the decision was taken in 1994 that the clinic would have its own X-ray equipment. A further improvement was to split the single large kennel/treatment/operating room into two, to provide an aseptic operating room. Apart from the obvious benefits to patients, this enabled the clinic to become an approved training centre for veterinary nurses; as a result the clinic's then nurse, Alison Schreiner, was able to pursue her studies, qualifying in 1997. Her course fees had been paid by a fund at Brinsbury College to help employer charities. Meanwhile late in 1995 came the death of the charity's Chairman for

some 18 years, Miss Elsie Luck, who had served in that capacity from 1977.

An item in the Herald dated 10 October 1997 reported that regulars at JB's Bar in Worthing raised over £1,100 for the charity from a variety of sponsored events and a raffle, local youngsters also taking part. The pub's manager, Sean Allen, told the Herald that the clinic was singled out for support because "...you can actually see the money being put to good use."

In 1998 the clinic received a new operating table through the good offices of the Jean Sainsbury Animal Welfare Trust, a friendly driver being persuaded to collect it from near Liverpool. In another instance of human kindness, an unknown photocopier maintainer from Arundel repaired and serviced the clinic's copier in 1999 to the tune of work ordinarily costing over £200, and logged it without charge as his good deed for the day. Such kindnesses and good fortune illustrate that, whatever difficulties we may have with local fund-raising, it is always important for the clinic not only to carry on its excellent work but also to keep it in the eyes of the public and in particular potential donors.

A NEW MILLENNIUM - AND IMPROVING FORTUNES

Around the turn of the Millennium was a period of mixed fortunes for the charity. An attempt to overhaul office practices in the light of continuing high workload and deteriorating finances resulted in the resignations of the vet, the nurse and a receptionist, while an employment dispute with a disaffected former member of staff affected morale and created a distraction

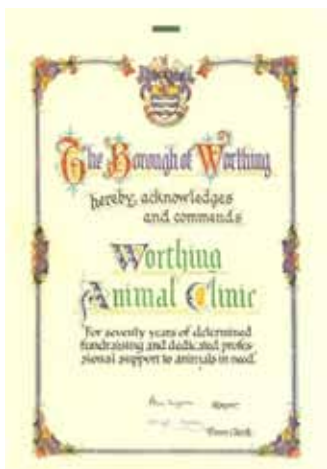
The post of Secretary became vacant in early 2004 and, apart from short periods remained so until 2010.

from the proper uses of time, money and energies. High staff turnover led to the extended use of expensive locum staff. This, together with falling fund-raising activity and considerable sums spent in legal fees defending the charity in the employment dispute, further damaged finances. There were significant financial deficits every year from 1997 (when the annual Worthing street collection raised only £190, against £336 a year earlier) to 2001, including one of over £32,000. The clinic's profile slipped and for a time it was not well known locally, making fund-raising and other support even more difficult to come by.

Nonetheless the charity was able modestly to celebrate its 70th anniversary in 2000. In 2001 it received a Worthing New Year's Honour for "70 years of determined fund-raising and dedicated professional support to animals in need."

Later that year an It's a Knock-Out competition organised by supporter Judi Walker raised funds for the clinic and PAWS Animal Sanctuary at Findon. In February 2002 vet Anneliese Tranter persuaded a friendly practice in Surrey to hand over its recently replaced blood analysis equipment to the clinic for a knock-down price, enabling a wider range of tests to be carried out on-site and reported on within a much shorter time scale, all at significantly less cost than by using an external laboratory as previously. Later in 2002 and again in 2003 a local pet ambulance operator organised sponsored dog walks for the charity in Homefield Park.

The committee was rekindling the charity's fund-raising and publicity. Regrettably the Spring 2001 Chairman's Report, delivered by Treasurer and Vice-Chairman Carol Millington-Pratt while Chairman Guy Freeland, himself a vet, was away helping to fight the worst UK foot and mouth epidemic in



The charity's 2001 Worthing New Year's Honour for determined fund-raising and dedicated support to animals in need

living memory, reported the loss of three Committee members, as well as the vet and the bookkeeper. But the most significant loss came later when Mrs Millington-Pratt herself, a hard-working Fund-Raiser as well as attending to her Treasurer's duties, moved to Ireland. She and her husband Duncan were elected the charity's first honorary life members in recognition of their contribution. But a lean, focussed committee had of necessity by now emerged. After considerable sustained effort, in 2004 the charity held 20 fund-raising events. Although not matched by a commensurate increase in donations, its profile and support base had improved dramatically. In 2002 and 2003, the charity received over £200,000 in legacies, after several disappointing years in that regard. Sadly, as the level of activity built up, membership of the committee fell, from eight in 2000 to four in early 2005 where it has remained or thereabouts for most of the time since. The post of Secretary became vacant in early 2004 and, apart from short periods remained so until 2010. There was also no Treasurer for a year in 2008-09

OUR 75TH ANNIVERSARY AND BEYOND

Worthing Animal Clinic is now firmly back in the public view. Despite difficulties recruiting and retaining committee members, we have continued our fund-raising and publicity efforts, albeit not always on the scale we would like. Above all, the committee frequently hears pet owners' and others' praise for the clinic's excellent work. Encouraged, we celebrated our 75th anniversary on 17 November 2005. The events running up to this significant milestone included the planting of a floral logo in Beach House Park and an exhibition of local children's animal art and veterinary memorabilia at Worthing Museum.



Top: the charity's 75th anniversary logo, in cartoonised floral form, at Beach House Park soon after planting. Bottom: the exhibition of veterinary memorabilia at Worthing Museum, with some of the entries to the picture competition

On the anniversary itself, there was a ceremony to name the clinic's premises Anthony House in memory of our founder, and a tree planting by the Mayor of Worthing, Coun Nick John. Among those present were Katharine Chapman, MRCVS, still active and living in Sussex, and Leslie Glover. The day's events made the front page of the Advertiser for 23 November; these, together with appeals on the local radio, generated a number of

OUR HISTORY

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offers of help from budding volunteers, although sadly none were to come to lasting fruition. There was also a special anniversary broadcast on 107.7 Splash fm by our vet, Anneliese Tranter, and the publication of a hard copy version of our history as written up to that point.

We had the benefit of being one of Coun John's Mayoral Charities for 2005/06, gaining us further publicity and funds. His determined fund-raising efforts on behalf of the clinic and his other selected charities were well-supported: our staff, supporters and/or Committee members were conspicuous at all the events. After he left office, Coun John visited the clinic in August 2006 to present the charity with a cheque for £4,400, our share of the



17 November 2005, Beach House Park, Worthing. The Mayor of Worthing, Coun Nick John, plants the tree commemorating the 75th anniversary of the charity's foundation. Left to right: Anneliese Tranter (vet) with Molly, Leslie Glover (former surgery assistant), Katharine Chapman (the charity's vet, 1945-92), Noleen Costello (veterinary nurse), Guy Freeland (Chairman), The Mayor, Sue Blunden (Clinic Reception, with T J Stringer, on leave from helping Andy in the clinic office), Sandra Spiller (supporter), Coun Geraldine Lissenburg (Patron), Major Darrell Thomas (Salvation Army, deputising as Mayor's Chaplain). Picture: Robert Naunton. After the tree planting, the Mayor names the clinic in memory of our Founder



Top: August 2006 - Ex-Mayor Nick John has just presented a cheque for £4,400 to committee member Joe Kirk. Also shown: a young supporter, whose mother and grandmother had recently raised over £500 for the charity via a raffle at Legal and General to fund new blood pressure monitoring equipment, and then Patron Geraldine Lissenburg. Bottom: May 2008 - Nick John succeeds Geraldine Lissenburg as Patron on her retirement after 11 years

proceeds of his fund-raising on behalf of his Mayoral Charities. Staff, supporters and Committee members were on hand to greet him. The money was used to buy an electrocardiograph machine, blood pressure monitor and improved theatre lighting for the clinic. Nick John became Patron at the May 2008 Open evening at the clinic, on Geraldine Lissenburg's retirement after 11 years valued support for the charity.

We continue to keep the charity in the public eye as much as possible, to encourage volunteers, donations and legacies. In 2006 we were actively involved in a charity Swimathon, Worthing Day for Animals, the Mayor's Ball, another art competition at Worthing Museum featuring an "Animals" category sponsored by the charity, and the annual WCVS Christmas Charity Market. In December that year, Chairman Guy Freeland, himself a vet, returned to one of the schools involved in the two recent

art competitions, Durrington First, to give a lively presentation on a vet's work; this included a demonstration clinical examination of T J Stringer, once more on leave from helping his owner Andy in the clinic office.

The charity's publicity machine widely distributes our newsletters, annual reports and other material to keep supporters, actual and potential, informed about us. One group to receive such mailings is the local funeral directors. This has resulted in a number of donations in memory of deceased and opportunities to mount a window display at the premises of Jordan and Cook Funeral Directors at the corner of High Street and Elm Road. We much appreciate such help from local businesses.

June 2006 marked the start of a difficult year for the charity. Anneliese Tranter, our vet of 5 years, departed for pastures new. Finding a suitable replacement proved unexpectedly difficult, with the result that for a year we had no permanent vet and had to rely on locums, with significant



Chairman Guy Freeland describes the work of a vet to a fascinated young audience, then demonstrates one of the basic diagnostic techniques on T J Stringer - taking a pulse additional costs, disruption and lack of continuity. Eventually, David Thomas joined us from Dorset, settled in well and proved a tremendous asset to the charity. His contributions to our Annual Reports

The economic crisis of 2008 onwards took its toll.

were to be a grim reminder of the sad and serious side to the clinic's work, recording how many animals are brought in later in the course of a condition, unneutered and/or unvaccinated than he had experienced in private practice, the implications for animal health and welfare of the kitten and puppy trade and how many animals find themselves being "re-homed" when veterinary bills loom.

Noleen Costello, our nurse for over 10 years, left in 2010 to study Italian.

The committee's work in support of the clinic is ongoing. At the WCVS Christmas Market in 2008, supporter Sandra Spiller received an award for her



The first display at Jordan and Cook

many years' fund-raising work for us. Also in 2008 Chairman Joe Kirk gave a live interview with DJ John Radford on Splash fm. A possibility arose in 2009 to acquire the adjacent premises at 28 Newland Road and expand the clinic, but was thwarted by the high probability of unsustainable ongoing financial deficits resulting. Fund-raising initiatives in 2007 to 2010 included quizzes at Macmillan's Bar, a sponsored Edinburgh run by a young local vet, an auction at Worthing's Rose and Crown of the personal effects of the late Judi Walker (see 2001 It's a Knock-Out, above), being a participant and beneficiary of the 2009 Broadwater Carnival, and an art auction for our benefit at the Dome Gallery. The quality of the newsletter today is a far cry above that of the first, thanks to the work of

editor Stephen Christian and the generous support of a local design house.

The economic crisis of 2008 onwards took its toll. As disposable incomes felt the squeeze, in common with private practices our workload and fee income were hit. However, with the benefit of a diversified investment portfolio our investment income held up well, despite falls in interest rates, and continued to provide a valuable financial lifeline to help maintain our activities. Two years of good legacy income in 2009 and 2010 after several years' efforts to improve it bode well for our future finances.

Our patients now receive the benefits of a clinic with staff, equipment and facilities as good as any available locally.

New equipment acquired since 2008 includes enlarged in-patient kennels, an X-ray processor, improved operating theatre lighting, an ophthalmoscope and an orthopaedic drill. We were the only local animal charity to take part in National Pet Month in 2010, offering an additional subsidy on vaccinations.

Approaching, in late 2010, the 50th anniversary of our acquiring the Newland Road premises and the 80th of our formation, we remain committed to developing the clinic's facilities and staff and keeping up to date with equipment and veterinary care methods. With your help, we can continue Miss Anthony's vision: to provide a kindly and helpful service to all animals in need.

“THE WHOLE OBJECT IS TO HELP AS MANY ANIMALS OF THE POOR AS POSSIBLE”.

Mrs Marguerite Doe Ravenscroft, on giving the charity £6,000 in 1944

We record our thanks to Salvington Mill archivist Roger Ashton, our accounts examiner John Till and, in particular, our former legal adviser Robert Naunton for recollections and material enabling us to fill in many of the previous gaps in our recorded history. Also invaluable have been the newsletters since the first edition back in 1993, some editions benefiting from the technical support of the clinic's Administrator, Andy Stringer.

Please contact the clinic if you have any news cuttings or other sources with information about the charity's past, or if you have any information concerning Miss Anthony or her relatives.

Hard copies of the charity's history, as written for the 75th anniversary, are available from the clinic. This website version is kept up to date as information becomes available, both old and new, providing a living and real time history of one of Worthing's oldest charities.