



Barrking Times



Autumn 2011 Issue 31

Telephone 01261 815373

www.barrk.co.uk

BARRK Celebrates 15 years of Re-homing Dogs

By Liz McKenzie, Secretary and a founder member of BARRK



The founder members of BARRK in May 1996 (Gordon & Liz McKenzie; Nancy & Hugh Clarkson; Dorothy & Hamish McCloud)

It is now 15 years since Dorothy (sadly passed away), Nancy and myself got together to form a dog charity that we hoped would better serve the needs of dog lovers. We all got to know one another through volunteering at the now closed Grampian Dog Sanctuary. Together with our husbands (whether they liked it or not) we set up Barrk on 21st May 1996. *(more on page2)*

Barrk's Annual Raffle



It's that time of year again when Barrk is holding its annual raffle.

As you may be aware (see over) it takes a vast amount of money to keep Barrk running so every ticket sold ensures that we are able to continue the work we do. We have enclosed a couple of books for you, should you require more please call the above number.

Registered Charity in Scotland No: SCO24873



After the initial euphoria we realised that this was no easy task when you have no kennels, no source of income and most importantly no dogs to re-home. Initially we had to set up a charity and draft a constitution, one of the key items was the priority of dog welfare and that no-one would receive a salary if they served as a committee member

Six months later, we opened a charity shop in Banff; this we hoped would provide an income. But, we now had rent to pay on a shop and nothing to sell in it! Fortunately we got some local press coverage(see pic) and very soon people started to donate, our initial worry of not having enough goods to sell soon became a distant memory. The Barrk Shop is a successful, well established part of our charity and that is down to the dedicated and hardworking volunteers who run the shop.

We also increased the volunteers on the committee to assist with the anticipated workload.

We were now ready to help our four legged friends who needed us. A part of the charity shop was set aside to form an office to take calls. We waited, and waited, and waited. After four days we were beginning to get a bit anxious, but we need not have worried, on the Thursday morning the first call came, we had our first dog a black Labrador (Samson); by the Saturday we had six dogs looking for a new home. The phone has never stopped ringing since.

At that time we didn't have any kennels so we operated a system whereby the owner kept the dog until a suitable new owner could be found. We did this by carrying out a home check and if suitable matching with the dog. We quickly realised that taking a register of dogs and new homes was never going to be straightforward as there were so many complications. Foster homes were identified where the dog could be placed until a new home was found. We soon came to understand that for most people giving up their dog for adoption was very upsetting with all sorts of complex and distressing factors. It was important for Barrk to allay any fears they had about giving their beloved dog into our care, of course, we have had our share of situations where people are happy to be rid of a 'problem'.

As word of our work spread we got busier and busier and as the shop was doing well, it was decided that we could now afford to rent some kennel space at commercial boarding kennels, this would allow us to manage the varying needs and amount of dogs we had looking for new homes. We still do not have kennels of our own but we find the systems we have in place with commercial boarding kennels works well for us.

As the charity developed we wanted the message of responsible dog ownership therefore we set up a neutering programme for all dogs that come into our care. Initially we received help from the National Canine Defence League (now The Dogs Trust) who visited us to award us with an annual grant of £5,000! To this day we operate a successful neutering programme with even more funding coming in from other organisations.

To raise awareness of Barrk and the work we do, we have regularly attended major community events, we also have collection boxes in numerous locations, several individual groups organise and raise funds for Barrk. All this makes a massive contribution to help run Barrk where kennel fees, vet bills and running costs are normally no less than £40,000 per year.

So there it is, 15 years on and over 1500 dogs re-homed we are all still BARRKING (about dogs)!

Canine charity group sets up Banff shop

A NEW charity shop has opened in Banff to raise money to help the area's unwanted or abandoned dogs.

Banff and Aberdeenshire Rescue and Rehoming Kennels (BARRK) need cash to finance plans to convert an old building or property in Banffshire into kennels for homeless dogs. Organisers say the only major dog sanctuary between Aberdeen and Inverness cannot cope with demand, and reckon a Banffshire kennel is badly needed.

The shop, in Carmelite Street, will sell assorted items donated by members of the public.

BARRK president Elizabeth MacKenzie said local people have already been very supportive of the group, but added: "Any donations of clothing, books or money will be greatly appreciated".

The shop will be open from 10am to 4pm every day except Wednesday and Sunday.

As well as the shop, the group will be using stalls at local events such as the Banff Fun Day on July 29 to raise funds and heighten awareness of its work.



Liz MacKenzie (left) with the shop's first customer Mary Purnell (centre) and volunteer worker Moira Keenan.





Charity Auction

Friday 2 December 2011

Station Hotel, Portsoy

from 7pm



Anne Doble who runs Articulate Keepsakes from her home in Portknockie is holding a charity auction in aid of two local charities one of which is Barrk in honour of Elsie her adopted Westie. Anne produces keepsakes such as trinket boxes, name plates and magnetic tiles.

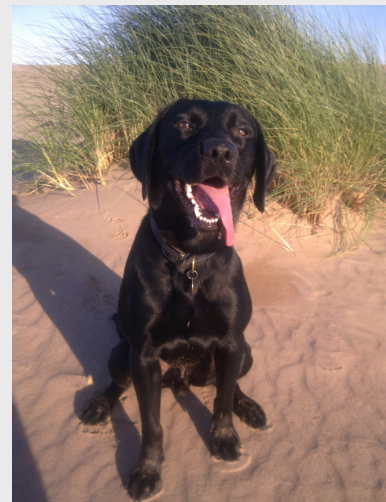
Anne has asked other artists how they could interpret a thistle using materials such as wood, ceramics, crystal, drawings etc. All the items will be auctioned off so there is an opportunity to get a piece of original artwork in aid of a fantastic cause.

The auction is free to attend; Aberdeen and Northern Marts are providing an auctioneer and the Fochabers Fiddlers are providing the entertainment.

Further information is available on facebook at Artinkulate's Charity Thistle Challenge or visit Anne's website at www.artinkulate.co.uk.

Alfie

We've had Alfie for almost three months now and he's settling in brilliantly as part of the family. We had some barking issues at night for the first couple of weeks but he's much happier now and only starts whining at 6 when he hears our alarm going off and he's desperate for a pee! Lie-in's are a thing of the past but we both really enjoy our early morning walks before work when there is no one around but us and lots of sleepy rabbits to chase. He loves going to the beach and trying to catch seagulls, he'll even swim after them if they try and escape into the water. He's great friends with our brother's Labradoodle and they even go to training classes together. So far we've mastered sit, down, stay, chase your tail and a bit of recall (providing I'm the most exciting thing around!) we can also now walk with a loose lead and no pulling, took time and patience but we got there. Once we've finished the introductory block we'll go on to do our good citizen and then hopefully some agility or flyball. Alfie loves coming everywhere with us and we've even been camping, he loved cosying in beside us in the tent and we appreciated the extra warmth (Lossiemouth in July isn't as warm as you'd think). Thank you so much for letting us adopt him, he's come so far from his very bouncy days in the kennels and we couldn't imagine life without him.



Laura, Terry and Alfie.





Special Thanks

After many years of giving their time and hard work to enable Barrk to be the successful dog charity that it has become. The following volunteers have decided that the time has come to hang up their 'dog leads'.

We have to say a huge thank you to Margaret and Ken Crowther for their amazing dedication and commitment to B.A.R.R.K. over the last ten years, they were extremely active within the charity from doing home visits, moving dogs around, manning the telephone and not least their fantastic fundraising, which over the course of time has raised thousands of pounds for B.A.R.R.K. We wish them well in their retirement.

Isobelle Ritchie is retiring from the shop after 15 years, she was one of our first volunteers and has been an absolute rock in the shop, helping us relocate three times in the space of 15 years, and helping along with all the other shop volunteers in delivering the message about responsible dog ownership.

And finally, thanks go to the Portgordon Raft Race organizers and participants for raising in excess of £700 for BARRK!

Barrk would like to thank the following for their support.

Banff Pet Shop
7 Low Street
Banff. 01261 815420

Brumley Brae Kennels,
Brumleybrae, Elgin. 01343
544411

Deveron Veterinary Surgeons
30 Balmellie Street, Turriff.
01888 563217
1 Mill Steet, Macduff. 01261
832666

Ebrie Lodge Pet Hotel
Maud, Peterhead. 0800 195
7694

Fochabers Veterinary Surgery
George Street, Fochabers.
01343 820898

It's A Dog's Life
Roddach Cottage West, Main St,
Cummington. 01343 831420

Miller & Swann
123 South Street, Elgin. 01343
542255

Mintlaw Veterinary Group
3 Ivy Court, Mintlaw. 01771
624001

Seafield Veterinary Group
10 High Street, Buckie. 01542
835207

TOFFS Canine Beautician
Unit 2, Main Road, Mosstodloch.
01343 823823

Barrk Guide to Re-homing

To celebrate our 15th Anniversary we would like to put together a booklet to give to future owners insight into the issues there may be when they adopt a dog. You may at times have wished you had known a bit more about adopting a dog. This could be about marking territory, dog stress or anything else. **But we need your help!**

We'd love to hear your stories and how you resolved it to enable future owners to learn from your knowledge.

Dog re-homing updates

Since the last issue of the Barrking Time we have re-homed 37 dogs, *May 13; June 4; July 9; August 11.*

