



# The Animal Healing Trust

Autumn/Winter Newsletter 2010

**W**ell we have had a few new editions since the last newsletter!!

**F**irst of all in September I was asked to go see a young eventing horse called Ruby who didn't like jumping and therefore her owner wanted to find her somewhere safe to live. Her owner had only had her for a short time, about 12 months, and believed that Ruby had been abused before she had her.

**T**o be honest she looked perfect to me! A stunning 7 year old young mare who seemed very friendly to me in her stable and didn't look like any of the rescues we had taken on previously. I asked if I could take her back to the field but was told that Ruby lived in her stable on the advice of the vet in case she had an injury out in the field. As that was the case I said we would have her asap and I thought she would be our first candidate for a foster home as she was so perfect. How wrong was I!!!!

**R**uby arrived 4 days later, on the Sunday and we thought we would pop her in a field on her own to begin with. We unloaded her and she just stood there in the field, no excitement, no running, no attempt to go make friends with other horses over the fence and no attempt to eat grass! How strange! We knew she was used to living in a stable and wasn't used to being out in a field, and she quickly went over to where some remnant's of hay were and preferred to eat those?!

**A**s the afternoon wore on the temperature started to drop so Kerry and I thought we would pop a coat on Ruby as she had very fine fur and would feel the cold. Wow what a reaction! She flipped out in terror and started racing round the field in sheer panic! Kerry and I just stood there in disbelief!

**W**e tried a few times, very calmly and kindly but she just got more and more upset so in the end we abandoned it

and put the coat over the fence. She then came over to us like she was apologising to us and saying that she just couldn't do it, it was too frightening for her, there was definitely something that had happened to this lovely girl.

**R**ichard and I had another go the following day and we got the same sheer panic and fear so I rang our Natural Horsemanship friend Kelly (who we call Kelly Parelli) she miraculously was free on the Tuesday to come over and help with putting the coat on and we were particularly concerned as it had started raining. Ruby wasn't daft though and she spent most of her time sheltering by the trees and had actually started eating the grass!! (I found this out as I went up in the evening in my pyjamas as I was worried about her!)

**A**s Ruby was on her own us humans spent a lot of time with her, and just hugged her and chatted to her and she seemed to really like this, she also allowed me to give her a Reiki treatment BUT wouldn't let me touch her, which was fine, instead I kept a little distance away and used the healing energy 'hands off' approach. While I was working on Ruby I did feel quite sick and anxious and felt there was something caught round my legs, I carried on working with the energy until all the feelings had gone and I FELT Ruby felt calmer. I then continued to give her Reiki daily even if only for 15 minutes, and this has REALLY helped her with many issues.

**K**elly arrived Tuesday and the rain had temporarily stopped – Kelly was brilliant and did some amazing techniques with Ruby, all Natural Horsemanship skills and after an hour and a quarter Ruby had her coat on and very importantly was mentally happy with it being on, as it was no good the coat being on if she was still scared of it! Just as Kelly finished the heavens opened and the rain came – wow Divine Timing!

**R**uby seemed very happy and proud of her achievement and insisted on walking back with us humans to bask in the

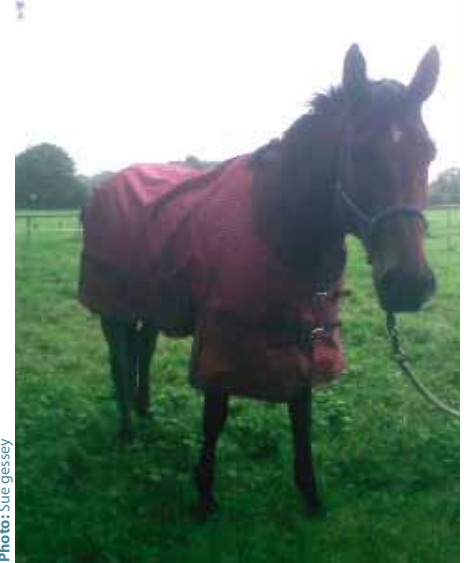


Photo: Sue Gessey

Beautiful and sensitive Ruby with her new coat on!

glory, there were 6 of us and she wanted to walk right in the middle of us, how cute is that!! I really had fallen in love with her, she was such a lovely sensitive girl and I was no longer going to foster her out! And Kelly said she had fallen for her too! Kelly was teaching me Parelli and I asked if we could start working with Ruby next week to see if it would help her and she agreed.

**B**efore Ruby arrived we had already marked the top Left hand side field for the older horses to spend the winter in as the grass was really good. We had moved Westie, Cottie, and Springy into the top right field for a while so we could get on with building them a field shelter for the winter in the other field. Ruby was now in this other field! But John said he didn't mind working round her and it worked out perfectly as it meant that she had company usually all day everyday while John was busy putting up the scaffolding for the new horse house! She quickly fell in love with 'Uncle John' and his wife 'Auntie Jill' how lovely for Ruby!

**K**elly returned and I had my Parelli lesson (Natural Horsemanship) with her and Ruby. Ruby was a natural at it! She was amazing. It is all about working with the horse in partnership and using your energy and your body language to get the horse to work with you. (so no shouting, pulling or



Photo: Sue Gessey

Ruby overseeing Uncle John building the new horse house.

hitting!) I used the gentle rope head collar (which is great as the horse can feel the energy through it) and pointed at which way I wanted Ruby to go and she walked with me! I then didn't say a word, instead I brought my focus and my energy back as if I was going to stop and she stopped! Kelly was quite amazed at how good she was with all the natural techniques & exercises we did and we both praised and congratulated Ruby on what a clever girl she was! She of course loved that!

After a couple of weeks we felt it would be a good idea to pop Ruby in with Billy's herd, horses are herd animals after all and we always encourage them to act as naturally as possible. We opened the gate and one by one all eleven of them came to meet Ruby some more friendly than others! Billy was over straight away to introduce himself but Ruby ran off scared! Alfie (who is Billy's deputy) wasn't impressed with Ruby's rebuff of Billy so he charged at her!

(to tell her off) Crikey I was scared too and poor old Ruby galloped off into the bottom field, a couple of the other girls went over to say 'hello' but Ruby squealed at them and even little Baby Michael went over to be friendly but she must have had enough by this point, as she turned her bottom on him and went to kick him, but his Mommy Faith appeared like lightening from nowhere and shouted really loudly at Ruby and kicked her tiny little legs as high as she possibly could at Ruby and that was that Ruby had had enough of horses, she disliked them and she galloped off to the far side of the field and just stood there looking really sad.

I guess a lot of folk would say to just let them sort it out but I couldn't help feeling that Ruby needed help and really didn't know how to actually be a Horse! Did she even know she was a horse? She seemed to prefer the company of Uncle John, Auntie Jill plus myself and Richard as well as various other humans rather than other horses! What

had happened to this lovely horse to make her so afraid of so many things? Whatever it was she was going to need a lot more TLC, healing, patience and understanding before she could really interact with other horses and do the 'usual' things that the others do. So yes I popped her head collar on and walked her back to her own field and peace was restored in Ruby's world.

While Ruby continued to relax and get used to life with us, we took in Charlie. Charlie was completely different, an elderly chap in his mid twenties who had been a pet for most of his life. He has a deformity of his left front leg which the vets can't do anything about so he just lives with it and as long as he keeps moving he is fine, he had been with his owner for 20 years and she adores him but where his owner kept him the farmer would bring all the cows and horses in from October for the winter period and she thought that now he was so old he may not cope with those conditions anymore, he needs to keep moving!

So Charlie arrived and wow he looks like a smaller version of Billy! Obviously due to his age and condition we were not going to put him with Billy, instead he would go with the older people, Westie, 17 years old and herd leader of Cottie, 30 years old and Springy, 34 years old! His owner said he would be fine to go straight in with them as he loved other horses so we opened the gate and in he went. Bless him he gently strolled over to say Hello to everyone and that was that he settled in as easy as that! He is so lovely!

Over the next week we kept a close eye on Charlie as he seemed a bit fed up and started standing alone a lot. We felt he was missing his old life (which he had known for 20 years) and even grieving so we gave him some Reiki healing and some Bach flower remedies to help with grief and also change. I also ran an Animal Healing course with 3 lovely ladies and we popped up to the farm to practice on the horses and we did some work on Charlie, he stood completely still to receive the healing energy which was lovely and he really benefited from it. Thank you Michelle, Naomi and Maria.



Photo: Sue Gessey

Nattering over the fence. Ruby, Cottie and Westie.



Photo: Sue Gessey

Charlie with his new winter coat on.



Photo: Martin Cheate

Happy new "girl friends" Springy, Ruby and Cottie

We moved Westie's herd into the middle field, next to Ruby so that she could get to know them over the fence which may be a little less intimidating for her. John and Darryn had now finished the horse house and it was huge! Too huge for just Ruby to use, the bad weather was coming and we needed the older horses to have access to it. SO we decided to see if Ruby would like a small pony friend to begin with to keep her company? We allowed little Cottie (30 years old and very gentle) to go into Ruby's field to see how they got on. Success!!!! Ruby liked her! In fact it was really interesting to watch as Ruby started copying what Cottie was doing. Cottie ate grass, Ruby ate grass, Cottie walked towards the horse shelter, Ruby walked towards the horse shelter, Cottie ate more grass, Ruby ate more grass etc etc it was comical to watch, she had a new little pony friend and she wanted to be like her, how lovely!!! Bless little Cottie for helping Ruby. And of course we asked Cottie to explain to Ruby that Westie, Springy and Charlie were friendly horses

and that soon they would all be living together happily!!!!.....and this was to be sooner than we humans had expected as the horses always have an interesting way of making things happen.....

I went to work one morning in Kings Norton and Richard went to Warwick. I was coming home from Kings Norton and saw Richard driving in the direction of the farm???? I turned round and followed him and when we both got there he told me he had had a phone call to say that some of the horses had escaped!!!! We raced in, Ruby was still in the top field, Westie and his gang in the middle, went down the bottom to where the eleven live and boy we walked into the field and there were only 3 horses!!!! YES 3 HORSES!!!! Just herd leaders Billy and Daisy with gentle Miracle! Oh my goodness me how awful, so many things flashed through my mind of what could have happened to them or where were they? Richard started calling their names out and all of a sudden we could see heads bobbing along on top of undergrowth in the field next door!

How had they got in there? There was electric fencing? And how were they going to get back in? Billy, Daisy, and Miracle went running over hotly pursued by Me and Rich. Bailey was the first back followed by Bobby and all the other horses and ponies, we counted them phew all eleven back! We then went and fetched them all buckets of food and put them out to keep them occupied. We saw there was a huge gap in the bottom field where there wasn't any fencing but there had always been bushes instead, with the autumn all the leaves had fallen off the bushes, and they seemed to have withered away which left about a 12 foot gap where they could escape again! Yikes!

We would have to move them into the middle field for safety until we could repair the field which meant moving Westie's herd into the top field where Ruby and Cottie were! We grabbed the head collars and popped one on Westie, I went up to Ruby and explained the situation and told her that she would be perfectly safe and that no harm would come to her and we opened



Photo: Martin Cheate

Billy and the escape artists.



Illy-Anne herd leader of the French Four.

the gate and in came the Westie, Springy and Charlie. There seemed a little protest from Ruby, a little whinny to ask the others to keep away but nothing like before so we left them while we moved the naughty escape artists! Phew all safe. A couple of days later Richard and Steve (thanks Steve) used some large gates to block the hole and the naughty eleven could move back, naughty horses! It was a great opportunity though for Ruby to merge with Westie's herd and even though she was clingy with Cottie for the first few days she has since befriended Springy and Charlie too and we actually think she has fallen in love with Westie!! And he has with her, they have become quite inseparable and we feel a spring wedding is on the cards! Bless them all.

Well we thought that would be it, you know plenty to do, fundraising events to plan and organise, hay deliveries to take, 16 horses to feed daily not to mention mountains of buckets to wash!! Here is a good time to thank Kim, Darryn, John and Jill as well as Pam for regularly doing many chores, feeding, washing up and building horses houses! THANK YOU!! Xxx As well as Naomi for helping with the admin and Martin too for helping with this newsletter!

In November I was emailed by a lovely lady offering me a couple of horse coats – obviously I said “yes thank you pop them down” and when she did she had the most remarkable story to tell of 4 french horses ..... A lady in France had 4 horses, she was an English lady with family in the UK,

she was getting older and didn't feel she could look after the horses anymore and didn't want them to be sold in France for fear of someone eating them!! So she paid a lady to transport her beloved pets, in a large lorry, all the way from France via Ferry to the UK. Only when they arrived in the UK something went a little wrong as they were meant to go to a place in Gloucester and instead arrived in a small livery yard not far from Clent! The owner told the livery yard lady her story and asked if they could stay with her for a few days while something was sorted. This was agreed. Unfortunately the horses could then not be transported to Gloucester and instead they were all up for new homes. I was asked if we could take the oldest one, a pony called Madeleine, who was in her late 20's as no one wanted her so I said yes as she could go with Westie's herd. Richard and I

went to meet the horses and wow I had never seen a herd like it, talk about close, goodness me they even stood in a line to greet us! There was herd leader Illy-anne a very tall (17 hands) thoroughbred mare, stunning and quite regal, aged 12 to 15, then little white pony called Dune, about 12 hands, and 12 years old, she was really cute and inquisitive, then a cheeky looking black welsh cobb called Dodger (great name for him) then finally little elderly pony Madeleine who we then were told was mother to Dune! We were also told that they had been together for 12 years!!! WOW. I went into the field, slipped the head rope on Illy-Anne and started walking round with her, I wish we had had a camcorder with us because they all lined up in a vertical line and started walking behind me and Illy-Anne, all together in perfect harmony, it was amazing! Rich and I spoke to the livery yard owner and said we really didn't feel it would be right splitting this lovely family up and that they needed somewhere where they could carry on living together, and she agreed.....so a couple of weeks later after the consent of the owners daughter in London the 'Four Frenchies' as we affectionately call them arrived in Wythall! The lorry driver said he too had not met horses like this, they had all loaded very easily and none of them had moved the whole journey! They then all went into the middle field and started eating a huge bale of hay we had bought them! We popped their coats on but was quite concerned at



L to R; the French Connection, Madeleine, Dune and Dodger



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