

Erin News

www.erinhounds.co.uk



Welcome to the 8th edition of Erin News- find out what has been going on behind the scenes as we head towards homing our 325th hound.

Spreading the love

In August, Erin alumni, Rufus, Brodie, Jack & Georgia were invited to visit elderly residents at Astbury Mere Care Home in Congleton. They really cheered up many residents who miss their pets and Jenny, the home's activity coordinator said: "The dogs really brought a smile to our residents' faces and a week later they are still talking about it! We'd love to have you back some time."



Margot "Passes Go"

Rescued from a ditch in Ireland and now with her own adoring youngsters willing to itch the exact tricky spot, lurcher Margot has turned her paw to Monopoly and is giving her new family a run for their money as she speedily buys up London property to convert to homes for her greyhound friends.



Going Global For Greyhounds

Greyhound rescues worldwide are joining forces to support each other and lobby for improved welfare. Let us have a look at how greyhounds fare in countries where you may holiday. Why not let their tourist boards know why you will or will not visit again?

Wales

There is no longer a licensed greyhound racing track in Wales so Greyhound Rescue Wales are

assisting with the rehoming of dogs from both England and Ireland.

England

Approximately 11,000 dogs retire each year from both the Greyhound Board of Great Britain (GBGB) and independent tracks in the UK. The industry – affiliated, Retired Greyhound Trust (RGT) homes about 4000 retired greyhounds and all the independent rehoming organisations together, home

about another 3000, annually. This leaves around 3-4,000 greyhounds unaccounted for on retirement, every year. The RGT homing number has not increased for some time and there is a lot of pressure on the RGT to rehome retiring greyhounds resulting in long waiting lists eg it can take about 6 months for a greyhound especially if black and male (as these are hardest to home) to be taken in for rehoming and that is before the wait for a



suitable adopter even starts. Some trainers are not prepared to wait that long as they want to refill their kennels with new greyhounds, resulting in many retired greyhounds, usually aged only 4, being euthanized especially BAGS (Book makers Afternoon Greyhound Service) greyhounds. (BAGS was formed in 1967 to provide afternoon greyhound meetings as an alternative for betting shop customers when horse racing was cancelled due to adverse weather. Today 18 of the GBGB racecourses hold BAGS races in the morning, afternoon and evenings, throughout the year. They are introducing 20 new fixtures next year, increasing the total BAGS meetings to 2,304. Ed)

Republic of Ireland

Approximately 20,000 greyhounds are bred in the Republic of Ireland every year for the racing industry. Very few are adopted in Ireland and greyhound rescue groups abroad are needed to find them homes, although there has been a very small increase in the number of homings in Ireland over the last few years. An estimated 10,000 of these are young greyhounds which have not been registered, a process that costs money and is required prior to racing on a registered track. These dogs are therefore off radar and "disappear" annually in Ireland. There are concerns over lack of enforcement of the Irish Greyhound Welfare Act (November 2011) as the industry is self- regulated and the Irish Greyhound Board (IGB) and Irish Coursing Club (ICC) are responsible for enforcing the Act. Irish welfare groups describe getting not so much as an acknowledgment when they report serious greyhound neglect cases to the IGB.

Spain

As the UK is trying to cope with the high number of UK and Irish racing dogs needing homes, only small numbers of galgos (Spanish greyhounds) are rehomed in the UK but about 600 galgos have been homed in Europe. Any effort to

enforce animal welfare legislation in Spain is viewed negatively by the authorities with reported cases, as in Ireland, not being followed up or taken seriously. A documentary on the situation for galgos in Spain has been met with hostility by the galgo -owning fraternity. Sadly, a Spanish rescue group has recently taken into their care an abandoned Irish greyhound (identified by the dog's earmarks) as it is not possible to stop the export of Irish/ UK Greyhounds to Spain under EU legislation and this is of great concern. (Erin Hounds also know of a young Irish greyhound sold to a Spaniard who owns and races greyhounds in Ireland. The dog is half- brother to one they have homed but this dog has been sold on and is now in Spain being used to breed more galgos with no assurances for his future).

Holland

Holland rehome Spanish galgos since there is no greyhound racing in Holland itself. Through their contacts in Spain, they know that the abandonment of galgos is on the increase and estimate figures of between 70,000 to 100,000 galgos discarded each year. Along with other European galgo rescues such as Greyhounds in Need, they are working hard on education and awareness activities in Spain to try to change attitudes towards galgos particularly amongst the younger generation.

Italy

Pet Levrieri is an Italian charity dedicated to saving and rehoming sighthounds used for racing and hunting, i.e. greyhounds, lurchers and galgos, which are exploited in Great Britain, Ireland and Spain. See www.petlevrieri.it/en/. At least 18 Irish greyhounds are going to homes in Italy in September.

Belgium

Betting on races is forbidden in Belgium therefore there are no greyhound welfare concerns in this country. However, rescue groups do take in greyhounds from Ireland

Puppy's Progress

You may remember Atlas. She was picked up at barely 5 weeks old at Ballinasloe fair on the opening day, weak, lethargic and lying on the footpath (On the last day of the fair, the Galway SPCA seized 11 pups, all seriously underweight and full of worms, of which 8 died in the vets over



the coming days. Ed). Atlas spent several days in the vets on a drip and was very poorly but she pulled through. She then spent another 10 days at the vets as a guest until she could start her vaccinations, be properly wormed and eat normally. She then went off to a foster home until she was fit enough to start looking for a permanent home. We asked her adopters (who already have two Erin Hounds in their care) to tell us how they fared adopting this saluki- cross puppy and caught up with Suki, as she is now called. Here is what they said:

"As a regular watcher of Erin Hounds' website, there are always so many beautiful dogs desperately looking for a home, each with their own sad history but one morning I went on and saw the most appealing little waif to whom I knew I would love to give a home. I called Corky, my partner and his reply was 'Get on to it, before she goes'. We had had puppies before so I did, and could not believe it when we found out, after vigorous questioning and homechecking, that we could have her. We already had two female greyhounds of different ages, Dee and Millie so knew we were going to have our hands full and oh boy, did we?!



for rehoming. Greyhound Rescue Belgium takes in greyhounds from the Irish Greyhound Board/ Irish retired Greyhound Trust. The capacity to find homes for greyhounds in Belgium is low due to the general public not being aware of greyhound welfare issues, being more aware of the plight of Spanish galgos.

USA

Greyhound racing is declining in the USA and may stop completely within the next 10 to 15 years. However, new concerns are emerging with the movement of dogs from Ireland and the USA to South America for racing, which has major welfare implications. There are also reports that retired greyhounds are being used to breed dogs to hunt wild boar and coyotes. Rehoming of Irish greyhounds and Spanish galgos is possible in the USA but the biggest issue is the cost of transportation and the practicalities of getting dogs from Ireland and Spain to the USA and Canada. For more information see FIG (Flying Irish Greyhounds) on Facebook which was founded in May 2014 to develop a network of volunteer passengers to escort greyhounds to Canada & the United States on flights from Ireland or London.

Asia

The main welfare concerns in Asia are the developing greyhound racing industry in Vietnam and the potential development of the industry in China. Greyhounds are imported mainly from Australia and New Zealand into these countries. Numbers are low but this is growing. There is no animal welfare legislation or welfare initiatives in these countries and there is very little opportunity to find homes for retired greyhounds in Asia. An adoption programme for greyhounds in Macau is being proposed but many of these would probably need to be adopted in Europe and exported out of Macau. The issue has not received widespread attention and therefore the local protection groups are generally unaware of the welfare

issues surrounding greyhound racing. The Animals Asia Foundation are working with ANIMA (Macau), Animals Australia and Grey2K USA on the campaign to close the Canidrome in Macau.

Erin Hounds have witnessed Irish greyhounds being sent to Pakistan for racing. On Facebook you will find Tiwana Greayhounds Club, Pakistan.

Australia and New Zealand

It is estimated that 20,000 greyhounds are killed every year and there are high injury rates due to poor track design and cramped conditions eg in general the requirement for space does not exceed 3 square metres per dog. The industry is completely self-regulated and there is a lack of welfare legislation. Both the use of live bait to train dogs and the use of drugs are widespread. The socialisation of greyhounds is poor and many end up at universities for experimentation and veterinary training or as blood donors. The current capacity to find homes for retired greyhounds in Australia and New Zealand is low with the majority of rescue and homing being done by private, non-industry-related rescue groups which are poorly funded and reliant on volunteers. Greyhounds are required to wear muzzles in Australia, except for some in New South Wales and Victoria which have completed a special training program and are granted an exemption. This hampers their image and therefore their rehoming, as competing with the huge demand for homes for abandoned pet dogs is difficult. A Parliamentary enquiry into greyhound racing has just finished in New South Wales. The enquiry looked into many aspects of greyhound racing, including funding and management of the industry and also welfare. In terms of animal welfare recommendations, the report is very disappointing, providing only a handful of suggestions that, if implemented, will only improve welfare to a limited extent. The majority of the initiatives have to be carried out by the industry, therefore it is uncertain what will come of it.

Suki had an appalling history, being left to die, but it was mainly due to her great fighting spirit that she survived. From day one, she was not going to be told what to do by these two older ladies, Dee and Millie and although she was so small, she tried to stand her ground and it was only after some serious reprimands that she realised she needed to learn respect for her elders.

After a few months, it was off to classes at Cheshire's Dogskool for six weeks and although her attention span was not the greatest, she managed to pass with merit and was so excited to get home and show her rosette to the others but Dee

and Millie just told her not to be so precocious. After Dogskool, Suki seemed to grow up; she gradually started walking nicely on her lead and came to call immediately. Suki

is a dog who appreciates being loved and stroked and she rewards us with faithfulness and gentleness. Although, she loves to race up and down the garden with Dee and is full of fun, she also loves to sit by my chair, with her head on my lap to be stroked.

To anyone reticent about taking on a rescued puppy or very young dog, it can be challenging but the socialisation, house training and special care can be immensely rewarding and we would not hesitate in doing it all over again- we can say that, now we have finally caught up on our sleep! We have the most fabulous, beautiful dog anyone could wish for. Mind you, as I just finish writing this, she is trying to pull Corky's beard out but hey ho that's part of having Suki.



On the positive side, the enquiry was cause for lots of media coverage, highlighting the negative aspects of the greyhound racing industry.

Australia and New Zealand are also exporters of greyhounds to Asia for racing. About 700 greyhounds are exported each year for industry use. Exports to China have increased dramatically in 2013. Exports to Macau decreased in 2013 to around 250. The turnover of the Canidrome racing track in Macau has roughly halved since 2010. Greyhounds Australasia, the industry body for Australia and New Zealand, suspended the issuing of greyhound passports (an industry requirement for exporting greyhounds) for export

to Macau in March 2013. Despite the suspension, exports to Macau have continued. Continued pressure on the Macau Chief Executive to refuse to grant a new lease for the Canidrome racing track, when the present one expires at the end of 2015, is crucial to stop the export of greyhounds from Australia to Macau.

PS

If you have been on holiday abroad and have any spare foreign currency, The Dogs Trust will be happy to receive it along with used stamps: Jenny Thomas 15 Wentworth Ave London N3 1YA (please check correct postage).

Thank You

All at Erin Hounds would like to thank our splendid newer foster carers, Helen, Deborah, Anne and Audrey and Michaela and John who volunteered to undertake the vital task of transporting our dogs to the vets, events and kennels- you help make Erin work for hounds. A big thank you also to Julie who manages to help us out although very busy with European Animal Rescue Support (EARS) helping dogs in Eastern Europe. If anyone can help her vital work as she has done ours, see www.earsuk.eu.

The World Is Not Enough

Did you know?

90,000 puppies are bred annually in the Republic of Ireland (many in puppy farms) for sale as pets both in Ireland and the UK but this figure does NOT include greyhound puppies..... the latest figures from the Irish Coursing Club (ICC), which holds the stud book for the Irish greyhound industry indicates that 2,980 litters were registered last year - approximately 19,668 pups (6.6 pups per litter). Previous registered litter numbers are as follows: 3225 (2012), 3272 (2011), 3000 (2010) and 3819 (2009).

It is easy to falter when faced with such a ludicrous and needless challenge so tales like the one below help us know we are making a difference, albeit statistically insignificant, in the face of outrageous overbreeding:

We enjoyed this message from Martin and Samantha who adopted Katie, a female greyhound and mother of 16!

"Hope all's well with you and Erin Hounds. Just thought I'd update

you on how Katie is getting on and send you a few photos. Katie has very much settled in and seems very happy, as are we. Tia, the cat and her, though not friends, show no animosity towards each other and rub along quietly but separately. We went for a week in Yorkshire at Easter and were able to take Katie to an enclosed woodland just opposite the house every morning and evening. She's still nervous around people and has strange aversions to some street corners, roads and alleyways but is eating well, sleeping lots and has stopped digging up the lawn! Thanks again for fixing us up with Katie (Darjeeling), she's the perfect dog for us.



Starting 'Em Young

This comment from mother, Karen who adopted Issy the greyhound, made us smile "We have just been to meet Natasha's new teacher and classroom assistant as she starts school in September. When they asked her what her hobbies were she said "Walking my greyhound, Issy". Both of the teachers got excited as they both have lurchers! Then Natasha proceeded to tell them what all of Issy's "hobbies" are rather than her own. I think Natasha will get on just fine with them!!"



Syd Whitehouse (1939-2014)

Syd was well known in his local pub, The White Lion in Barthomley for his love of his rescued saluki cross/ Irish wolfhound lurcher called Merv whom he used to bring to the pub so regularly that Merv had a special spot reserved by the fire and his painting graced the wall. Syd was a "one-off" with a warm, smiling face and was very sad to lose Merv age 16, having had him for 7 years. When one of our adopters, another regular, got chatting to Syd about her Erin hound, he decided to contact us to see if he could help another older dog. In February 2012, his

homecheck (and pub check!) completed, he adopted Duffy (Lisduff Tears) who has been surrendered into Meath pound at the age of 9, almost

lifeless, emaciated and riddled with worms. He loved her dearly and she adapted quickly to her change in fortunes (but never ordered Guinness!). Syd was devastated when, about 6 months later, she collapsed and died due to a bleeding liver tumour for which nothing could be done. Syd's love was there again for poor Millie, an elderly female greyhound, who

along with her son and 7 other greyhounds had been surrendered into Dunboyne pound for destruction and who was at that time fostered in Sheffield. I will let Maria and Corky (owners of Erin hound, Dee) take up the story:

"When Syd went into hospital for a hip replacement he was overjoyed when, being local, we said we would look after Millie for him until he had recovered and could have her back. Unfortunately, while he was in for the hip replacement, cancer was diagnosed. He knew there was no way he would ever be able to have Millie back so we looked after her for him from then on. Although his health deteriorated rapidly, he would come to see us in his wheelchair whenever he was able and attend the Erin Events and lead Millie round in his wheelchair. When he went into a nursing home, his first request was "Can my dog visit?" and they agreed. In the earlier stages of his illness, he would be waiting outside, in his wheelchair, with treats for Millie and Dee and he was so proud to show

them off to the other residents. We believe it was this which kept him going against all odds.

Syd wanted Millie to lead the funeral procession. His wish was carried out and she followed his coffin to the altar and sat with us at the back of the church. She stood at the grave as Syd requested and there were no wreaths, just sunflowers. He had 'Another one bites the dust' by Queen played at his funeral and that sums up Syd-fantastic sense of humour, loved and missed by so many and known as a man who really loved his dogs (He was there for not just two lucky Erin hounds but has helped us help more - over £400 was donated to Erin Hounds in his memory, as he requested, Ed).

Thank you too to Susan, one of our adopters, who contacted us recently to let us know she had remembered Erin Hounds when drawing up her will.



Cassie come home

Cassie waited a long time for her perfect home and I am sure became a familiar face on the website. We held fast to our conviction that the perfect home for her was out there somewhere. Now she lives in a fantastic, committed home next to a beautiful lake and fields. Her adopters Mel and Ali tell their story: "Our last hound Dolly, just wandered into our house in

August 2003. I know everyone says their dog is special, but she really was. She became a Pets as Therapy (PAT) dog, helping children overcome their fear of dogs and made a lot of old people very happy on her visits to a local old folks' home. Everyone who knew her loved her very dearly and losing her in November 2013 was one of the hardest times of our lives. Filling the

Dolly-shaped hole we had in our lives was going to be very difficult.

We started looking seriously in February 2014. I won't name any organisations as I know, disregarding our experiences, they all want to do the best by the hounds they need to rehome, but we soon got very disillusioned.



The first rescue organisation took an age to do the home check, by which time the puppy we had been interested in was reserved but even more alarming was a telephone call we received from them some weeks later asking how we were getting on with the dog! At the second rescue, when we visited their kennels to see the 40 or so hounds that were up for rehoming and took a couple of the dogs out for a walk, the kennel staff were not very helpful. The one dog that we went to see particularly was out in foster with one of the kennel hands, but no mention of the fact she wasn't at the kennels was on their website. Half of the dogs weren't available to view because they were being cleaned out, even though we were there at the appropriate viewing time. We offered to foster one of the old boys there who seemed to be really struggling with kennel life, but that was, quite rudely, refused. The third rescue we contacted, again had a young girl there we were interested in but when we enquired, she had been rehomed. However they did say if we handed over €270, they would find us a dog in Ireland they could send over to us but we felt there was no way we could adopt a dog that we had never even met. It just seemed that everywhere we turned, everything was made so difficult for us and that we would never meet that special someone.

I had 'liked' a lot of sighthound rescues on Facebook, so had a lot of posts in my newsfeed from such organisations, one of them was Erin Hounds. I visited their website regularly, to keep up with the hounds up for adoption and Cassie did catch my eye but didn't really

tick all our boxes. With regular visits to the website and still seeing her available, the thought went through our heads that maybe she was the one? We were delighted to hear of the Meet and Greet at Trentham Gardens, and even more so, to hear that Cassie would be there. Even if, when having met her, we decided she wasn't the one, there would still be plenty more hounds to get acquainted with. When the day came and we made the long drive to Trentham, the first dog that we saw in the car park was Cassie and our hearts just melted. We mingled a little but were always drawn back to the beautiful one which was Cassie. We met Sue and Tor, who were only too happy to spend a lot of time talking to us about Cassie's needs, which gave me time to get as many special Cassie hugs in as possible. Because of her high prey drive Sue was more than happy to arrange a time to meet Cassie in her kennel environment, and to take her out on a walk to get better acquainted. We talked to Sue about the adoption on the walk, and she seemed happy, that pending a home visit, we could give the lovely Cassie the home she deserved. We were over the moon at that stage, after all those months of disappointment, at last we had found our 'special one'. With advice from Sue about the home environment she would need, we gladly took on the alterations that were suggested, and just waited for our 'C' day. Advice was duly taken on the kind of collars, leads and the kind of food we should put her on. The excitement was rising as the postie delivered her new bits and pieces, and the local pet store ordered in her

recommended food.

The day finally arrived when Sue and her husband brought along the lovely Cassie and we filled in the adoption papers. We had a busy day, with lots of people visiting to see this hound that they'd heard so much about, then Cassie settled down and had a nice relaxing evening, and a pretty good night's sleep too, all a little overwhelming for her at first. Sue was always in touch, offering sound advice on the very few problems we had and offering supportive leaflets when required. Cassie has done what we thought would have been an impossible task, filling Dolly's paws. She is just as was described on the website, a very special and enchanting girl, and as Sue said, very bewitching. We can't thank all the Erin team enough, for making the adoption process proceed smoothly, but more than that, for giving this special girl a chance of life, and bringing her to us. We thank you all from the bottom of our hearts.



Win Win Situation

In the last edition, we congratulated Rick Green on his amazing lbs for pounds weight loss challenge in aid of Erin Hounds and are pleased to report the final result was £480 gained for 31lbs lost. Massive thank-you to Tracy of Dogs and Dogs & Roses for her donation of £118 from the sale of her lovely charity teatowels.



Events

Dig It Dog Training Club

Sunday 21st September 11am – 4pm at Dubthorn Road, Betchton, Sandbach, CW11 4TA. Come and meet some of our dogs and find out more about rescued greyhounds and lurchers at a Pet Charity Day. There will be a Fun Dog Show, Fly ball and Agility Demonstrations plus other games and stalls. Free entry. £1 per class charge for the Dog Show

Fun Dog Show at the Treacle Market

Sunday 28th September. St Michael's Church, Market Place, Macclesfield SK11 6BA. We will once again be holding our immensely popular Fun Dog Show at the Treacle Market, Macclesfield. Registration from 12 noon, and show starts at 1pm. Classes include Handsomest Dog, Prettiest Bitch, Best Rescue, Best Dressed and more! Entry £1 per class. The market runs from 10am to 3.30pm so why not make a day of it?

Erin Hounds Meet and Greet

Saturday November 15th 11am -3pm.

Come along with your hound to meet other lucky owners and dogs looking for homes. Rescued hounds have their own special way of alleviating loneliness and isolation so come and share tales of how they bring joy to human lives. Refreshments, tombola, gifts etc
Macclesfield community garden centre, West Park, Macclesfield SK10 3BJ
see www.maccgardencentre.co.uk

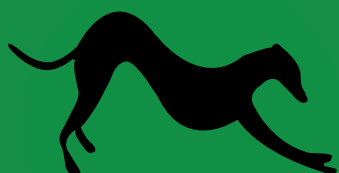
Bridgemere Garden World

Saturday 6th December 11am – 3pm.

Near Nantwich CW5 7QB see www.bridgemere.co.uk. We have been invited back to help the season go with a swing. Our hounds will be sporting festive attire and ready for love. See if you can spot them in the nativity scene or by a Christmas tree!

As ever, the hounds have the final say...

We are not *dumb* animals, just *speechless* that, when there are over 600,000,000 unwanted dogs in the world, people still put the adjective “responsible” in front of “breeder”.



www.erinhounds.co.uk

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