



Issue 6

NEWSLETTER

February 2017

NEW YEAR - NEW CHALLENGES

Almost two months into 2017 and already it has been an extremely busy time. Apologies for the late delivery; as you will read, our hands have been full.

WARNING - this newsletter contains some disturbing images. It is important to show you what has been happening to our beloved swans and some people may be upset. Please do not read further if this is the case.

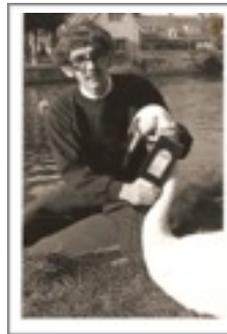
This first issue of 2017 issue includes:

- Welcome Albert Honey, our new Trustee
- A Deadly Spate of Shootings
- Prince; the latest adventure
- Back to the Wild
- Fundraising
- Newsflash: Brexit and Swans?
- And Finally

If you have any stories that you would like to share and have printed in our next newsletter, please feel free to send them in.

Enjoy!
The Editor

ALBERT HONEY MBE



We welcome Albert Honey, MBE to our charity as a Trustee. Albert has a wealth of experience with swans; we are fortunate to have him on board as we begin the next phase of our expansion. Here he is in his own words.

For the love of Swans

Swans have featured in my life, having hand reared, rescued and treated them with the assistance of many Veterinary Surgeons.

I remember having come back from R.S.P.C.A training in 1971. I was passed a message from the Chief Inspector to attend the Thames in Abingdon On Thames, Oxfordshire where a Swan was trailing fishing line.

Not having had time to even collect all my equipment I had to make do with what I had on the van, and the Swan trailing line with lead weights was caught with the aid of a small animal grasper.

I have featured alongside Swans in various TV appearances; carrying a Swan through a gate on the tow path 11 times before a BBC TV crew was able to get the right shot for a half hour programme called Goosey Gander; filmed for 10 days of rescue, treatment etc.

I also featured in the programme 'Country Ways In The Vale Of White Horse' with the Swans I was treating from their injuries in my large garden. Subsequently a book was produced by the TVS programme.

I am often referred to as 'the Swan Man' rather than by name. Swans have always been my first love, and a dear lady living in Didcot knitted a jumper for me which featured Swans on the front, a jumper kept to this day some 35 years later.

I have worked with Doctor Scott (Sir Peter Scott's daughter) and Doctor (now Professor) Chris Perrins, throughout the years.

I look forward to working with Swan Support.

Albert Honey MBE

A DEADLY SPATE OF SHOOTINGS

On the 24th January we were called to Barry Avenue in Windsor - responding to a report of four injured swans. It transpired that all four of them had been shot through the eye.

Five days later we returned to the same spot to rescue another 8 birds, that had been targeted with an airgun and a catapult, resulting in injuries to the head and neck.

The staff at Alma vets were incredible in their treatment of these animals.



They spent the whole day caring for them:



X-rays to establish the extent of the injuries followed by a regime of painkillers, antibiotics and intravenous fluids.

By the evening, the birds had been stabilised and returned to Swan Support where they continue to be rehabilitated. Two of the birds were put to sleep due to the severity of their injuries. Over half of them have lost sight in one eye and some may still require surgery to remove pellets. Their recuperation will be long, but with the dedication of our volunteers, it is hoped that they will all eventually recover and be released.

Wendy has been working closely with Windsor police to seek out those responsible. We ask the Public to be on the look out for any unusual behaviour. Please do not put yourself in danger, but do report any suspicious activity. We are determined to end these senseless acts.

If you want to support their care, please visit our website and use the 'DONATE' button.

PRINCE - THE LATEST ADVENTURE

Prince, a regular of ours, has been in the centre again. Having survived a dog attack in October 2015 and numerous tackling incidents since then, he came back to us in November with a case of lead poisoning. We had gone to detackle him and had noticed that he wasn't his usual self. Thinking it was due to the line and hook, we released him and decided to keep an eye on him. The next day after further observation, it was clear he was not well - struggling to swim, a kink in his neck and no appetite. He was brought in to the treatment centre for tests that showed he had lead poisoning. He responded to treatment and has now gone back - in full health - to his home where he has taken up terrorising the other waterfowl with his usual gusto.

Lead poisoning is on the wane since lead weights in fishing were banned. However, swans do still pick up discarded weights from time to time so it is worth keeping an eye open.

BACK TO THE WILD

Starting in November, it is time to release the cygnets, rescued over the summer.

Some of them have been in the centre since they were only a few weeks old so have no real memory of the wide open spaces of the river. In preparation for release, they are gradually habituated to being

among adult swans and learn to run the gauntlet of pecks. Then on a warm sunny day, a group of them will be released together.



Stephen and Sally releasing at a Berkshire location.

Sending them out in groups helps them to adjust to their new territory. As the wraps are removed and the feet released, the cygnets take their first tentative steps into the water. With a shake of their wings, they are off, skittering across the water as they explore their new sense of freedom.

Note: It's important to pick a stretch of river where there is an established flock, and not a breeding pair who would immediately attack the birds

FUNDRAISING

We were very fortunate last year to receive much support from members of the public and various organisations.

We send special thanks to The Windsor Ice Rink. In September they had an open day and collected over £400 for the swans. In the lead up to Christmas, those visiting Santa Claus at the rink, made a donation - and we gratefully received another £500. We appreciate their ongoing support.

The Waterman's Arms in Eton has also been a stalwart supporter and once again hosted a Quiz evening. It was a roaring success, with much laughter and over £1300 was raised. Many thanks to Gillian and Nick as well all who joined in and contributed to a fun event.

Watch out for upcoming events on Social Media.

NEWSFLASH

Wendy made it into the New York Times, as part of an article on Swan Upping dated 5th January. What is fascinating is that the article came as a result of a journalist's curiosity about Post Brexit England. I never thought I would write Brexit in a Swan Newsletter. Well worth reading. You can find it at:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/05/magazine/in-search-of-post-brex-it-england-and-swans>



Wendy Hermon
Operations Director and Founder
Swan Support
Queen Mother Reservoir
Horton Road
Datchet
SL3 9HN

AND FINALLY

We have bold plans to expand and extend our capabilities this year and look forward to being at the forefront not just of rescue and rehabilitation, but education about our Swans.

All donations, however small, are greatly appreciated and will help to support the dream we have for our Charity. You can make a difference today by texting a donation to 70070 of between £1-10 using the code:

FC0040 £(amount)

Or by sending in a cheque.

Thank you in advance.

The Editor

Follow us on twitter: @swan_support

Like us on Facebook: Swan Support

Website: www.swansupport.org.uk

Email: info@swansupport.org.uk

For any swan rescue call:

07968 868172 or

07572 450967
