



Discover Dogs

10th - 11th November,
Earls Court, London

An essential date for dog lovers of any age! The AHT will be hosting a stand at the exhibition, where you will be able to meet staff and past patients, so do make sure you pop over and say hello!
www.discover-dogs.org.uk

HRH To Open New Laboratories

14th November

After a major fundraising drive and 12 months' worth of refurbishment, the AHT is thrilled to have wonderful newly refurbished laboratories. On November 14th, HRH Princess Royal will be coming along to the grand opening of the £1.1million project. Funds were raised by members of the Princess Royal's Industry Committee and other grant-giving bodies.

The Princess Royal who opened the original laboratories in 1969, has taken a great interest in the refurbishment programme and is very supportive of the Trust's endeavors.

Golf Day Raises Nearly A Quarter of a Million



September saw one of our most successful fundraising events ever, in the form of the Tenth Jackson's Golf Day on Jersey. Thanks to the tireless work of Mrs Bunny Roberts, and the very generous sponsorship of Tom Scott, both long time supporters of the Trust, a fantastic contribution was raised towards the Trust's laboratory refurbishment project which is due to be opened in mid-November.

The event was held at the Royal Jersey Golf Club, and was attended by the Trust's President, HRH The Princess Royal. The day began with a huge golf tournament, with over 20 corporate

Supreme Cat Show

17th November,
NEC Birmingham

The Supreme Cat Show, run by the Governing Council of the Cat Fancy, is the world's largest cat show and known as the feline equivalent of Crufts. The AHT will have a stand at the show this year, where you can come over and meet our team. The show holds classes unique to the event with top prizes and titles that can only be won there, so it's definitely a must for any cat fanciers!

KBIS British Dressage National Convention

24th - 25th November,
Addington Manor Equestrian Centre

AHT Equine will be hosting a stand at the dressage convention this year, showcasing our clinical and research activities in support of equestrianism. Come and meet the experts and take part in our prize draw.

Roll Up, Roll Up! Christmas in Newmarket

5th December, Newmarket

On 5th December, the AHT will be hosting a stand for a late-night shopping treat on the High Street. Here you'll be able to pick up a range of exciting Christmas gifts, including jigsaw puzzles and soft toys for the kids, tea towels and fridge magnets for the grown ups and a whole range of exciting gifts for your favourite four-legged friends! We'll be there from 6 pm until 9pm so make sure you don't miss out!

teams and was followed by a prize giving ceremony, dinner and charity auction.

For 70 years, this event has been organised by Chairman of the Channel Islands branch of the AHT, Bunny Roberts, and both she and Tom Scott are delighted to be making a significant contribution to the make-over of the laboratories.

Chief Executive of the AHT, Peter Webbon, said he was thrilled. "I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Tom, Bunny and the Channel Islands Committee" he said. "The funds raised at the Jersey Golf Day will enable us to complete the laboratory refurbishment and that's very good news for our scientists and for the veterinary profession as a whole."

Bunny Roberts commented that she was "delighted to have so much support from the equine and financial services sectors and my special thanks must go to our President HRH The Princess Royal for attending our Tenth Anniversary event. This event has become a crucial part of the fundraising programme for the Animal Health Trust which does such significant work for our companion animals."



Help the AHT raise more money for **FREE!**
visit
www.clicknow.org.uk/AnimalHealthTrust

AHT Launches Scheme To Monitor Fatal Horse Disease



The typical appearance of horses suffering from EGS

First recognised in the UK almost 100 years ago, equine grass sickness (EGS) is an often fatal disease in horses. The condition affects parts of the nervous system which control involuntary functions, such as breathing, digestion, salivation and heart-rate.

It is still unclear what exactly causes EGS. Studies are currently researching the role of the soil-borne bacterium Clostridium botulinum in the disease, as it is possible that a related toxin could damage the nervous system if it gets into the gastrointestinal tract. If a link can be proved, then prevention of this invariably fatal disease by vaccination may be possible in the same way that tetanus has been very effectively controlled with a simple vaccine (a so-called 'toxoid').

The disease has a mortality rate of over 90%, and it is estimated to cause around 200 fatalities a year in the UK. It is currently not notifiable so people have no requirement to report any cases. This makes it impossible to monitor properly. However, thanks to recent funding from The Horse Trust, the AHT has set up the first ever nationwide surveillance scheme for EGS.

This scheme should enable us to identify trends in occurrence of the disease over time and in different areas, and to quantify the real welfare impact. This valuable information can then be used for future EGS vaccine development and will allow the benefits of vaccination to be rapidly and accurately assessed.

This scheme is absolutely dependent on you, so if you are a horse owner or vet, and know of any cases of EGS, or would like to learn more visit the official website www.equinegrasssickness.co.uk or contact Claire Wylie at the AHT (claire.wylie@aht.org.uk).

Animal Health Trust news



Issue 63 - Winter 2007

Gala Fun Day



Raises Cash and Smiles

The grounds of the Lanwades Park, near Newmarket were swarming with people smiling and dogs wagging their tails as the AHT held its Second Gala Open Day to open its doors and raise funds for our vital work in improving the health and welfare of companion animals.

Sunny skies attracted over 1,000 people, who turned up to enjoy the events of the day, which began with a three mile sponsored dog walk. There were displays from the Essex Dog Display Team and Elaine Hill with her sheepdogs. Due to current restrictions on the movement of livestock, Elaine couldn't bring her usual sheep to take part in the demonstration - so instead used a herd of ducks, causing much hilarity among the watching crowd.

Topping the bill was the dog show, for which there were over 100 entries who were examined in every possible way by three experienced show judges: Pauline Buxton, Kathy Frawley and Kay Randall.

The highlight of the show was a class for ex-Trust patients, which was won by rescue dog Tuftie, who was referred to the Trust in February this year. The 5-year-old bichon frise was adopted by John Lowery from the Many Tears Rescue Centre in Wales. The charity knew little Tuftie had cataracts, so wanted to find her a home near the AHT, where she could receive surgery for her problem. Many Tears paid to have Tuftie's first operation, and she underwent a procedure by expert ophthalmologist Jane Sansom to restore the sight in her right eye.

Then, later in the year, after lots of fundraising and help from the Animal Health Trust's Deserving Cases Fund, Tuftie came back in to have a repeat procedure on her other eye. Thanks to the ophthalmology team's expertise and specialist treatment, Tuftie, who had been totally blind just six months earlier, had now had her sight fully restored.

Photography Preview at Jockey Club Rooms



The auction prize - Frankie Dettori on Authorized

On 9th October, the Racing Group of Cambridge-based law firm Mills & Reeve hosted a drinks reception at the Jockey Club Rooms in Newmarket to preview a new horseracing exhibition by photographer Amanda Lockhart.

Not only were there beautiful, black and white shots of horses, jockeys and racing on show, but also a framed photograph of Frankie Dettori winning this year's Derby on Authorized, signed by the jockey himself. This was sold by silent auction, with all proceeds to the AHT, to help with our continued work for health and welfare of dogs, cats and horses.

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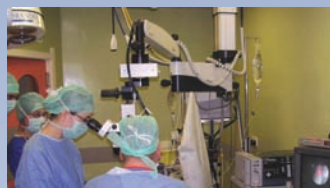


Mr. Lowery receives Tuftie's reward

Elaine Hill's collie gets to grips with the ducks

2 Appeals Update

Breakthrough Dawns For Glaucoma Treatment



The AHT's ophthalmology team perform emergency surgery using the new equipment

Here at the Animal Health Trust, our ophthalmology department is well-known for its expertise, highly-qualified team, and validation of new equipment long before any other veterinary establishment. They work everyday treating eye disease and, where possible, retaining or restoring the animals' sight.

One of the most serious eye conditions for dogs is glaucoma, for which there is no real long term solution. Now, however, thanks to pioneering new laser equipment, we may have the answer.

Glaucoma affects hundreds of dogs across a range of breeds every year. Not only is it terribly painful, but will, in a short space of time, cause blindness. It can affect one or both eyes, and is the result of a build up of pressure in the eye.

At the AHT, our team of specialists frequently deals with cases of glaucoma. Head of the department is Jane Sansom, who has been treating the disease for years and tried everything – drops, medication and surgery – none of which offer long term success.

Earlier this year, Jane came across a piece of equipment officially titled endoscopic cyclophotocoagulation (ECP), a popular cure for glaucoma in humans. It involves an incredibly fine endoscopic laser being inserted inside the eye, which then burns away the fluid producing areas and reduces eye pressure.

If successful in raising the funds to buy the equipment, the Trust will be the first place outside America to use it to treat dogs with glaucoma.

In June this year, Consultant Ophthalmologist at the Western Eye Hospital, Philip Bloom, came to the Trust to assist in performing the procedure on four dogs with glaucoma. All were successful.

One dog treated was 13-year-old Jack Russell, Polly, who had been coming to the Trust for five years with various eye problems, culminating in the removal of one eye. She then contracted glaucoma in her remaining eye, for which she received several methods of treatment, none to great avail. Polly a perfect candidate for the laser treatment, and owner Mrs. Bond says the terrier is now like a new dog.

"The treatment has been marvelous. Polly's like a puppy again," she said. "She's got her sparkle back. This procedure means she's not in any pain and still has some sight remaining. I can't thank everyone enough for all they've done!"

Philip Bloom said he thought it was a fantastic piece of equipment and could make a massive difference to the lives of dogs with glaucoma.

If the AHT had its own laser equipment, we could offer hundreds of dogs treatment which would not only relieve them of the pain of eye disease, but could also help them retain their sight.

We are therefore launching a Christmas appeal to raise £50,000 to invest in this incredible equipment.

Mrs. Bond, owner of Polly, said, "If the Trust can raise the funds for this equipment it will change the lives of so many dogs and will be absolutely brilliant!"

If you want to help raise funds for this appeal, please contact the Fundraising Team, on 01638 555 648 or email fundraising@aht.org.uk

Equine Centre Celebrates 10th Anniversary



Alfie the horse in the Trust's MRI scanner

On November 11th this year, the Animal Health Trust's Equine Centre will be celebrating its 10th Anniversary. The Centre, which specialises in diagnostic imaging, oncology, orthopaedics and ophthalmology, has developed into an internationally renowned centre of excellence.

One of the Centre's main roles is the validation of new technology and the establishment of a knowledge database which can be shared with the veterinary profession as a whole. This role was enhanced considerably when the Centre recently became the only facility in the world with both a high field and a standing MRI scanner available for clinical use.

A wealth of valuable information is obtained by comparing images obtained from different systems. The Centre for Equine Studies can make comparisons between MRI, nuclear scintigraphy, digital radiography and ultrasound!

However, technology in these areas progresses very rapidly and, in order to remain at the cutting edge of scientific discovery, the Trust needs to replace some of its imaging equipment. A special appeal has been launched for this purpose, details of which can be found on our website.

3 You And The Trust

Elle Gets A Bee In Her Bonnet!



Elle's dog Zeb dons the bonnet

Elle wearing hers too

A British Munsterlander enthusiast has recently managed to raise a fantastic £600 for the AHT thanks to having a bee in her bonnet!

Elle Banks, from Lincolnshire, is a Munsterlander owner who recognises the importance of the Trust's work towards identifying the causes of hereditary cataracts. Unfortunately this breed is particularly susceptible to the condition.

Elle's own dog Zeb, is nearly 10 years old and has tested clear of the condition all his life, yet has sired two affected pups. The AHT set up a scheme 18 months ago for Munsterlander owners to get their dogs tested, but so far only 100 animals have been through the screening.

"I happened to say on my blog that I had a bee in my bonnet about DNA testing and it turned into a dare!" said Elle, who ended up flaunting a lime green bonnet with a bee attached for the day at a dog show in Birmingham. "It was for a great cause, and I have made a fool of myself for a lot less in life!"

Retriever Club Raises Money For Cancer Appeal



On the 21st July this year, the Golden Retriever Club (GRC) presented us with a fantastic cheque for £2,000 to put towards our radiotherapy appeal, which is looking into the genetic make up of dogs with cancer. Representing the Animal Health Trust at the presentation was Christine Gird, of the AHT's Fundraising Team, pictured here with GRC chairman Sue Almey and Secretary Clive Donahue.

Members of the GRC came to visit the Trust earlier in the year, when they were given guided tours of the whole premises, and talks and presentations focusing on cancer in dogs. It's a staggering figure, but it's been shown that 1 in 4 dogs will contract cancer at some stage in their life, and the most common form in Golden Retrievers is mast cell tumours. The GRC members were given a lecture by the AHT's Head of Oncology, Sue Murphy, who explained the aims of cancer treatment at the AHT: to increase length of life where possible and, most importantly, to improve quality of life. The Trust's oncology unit, together with other on-site facilities, represents one of only a few comprehensive cancer therapy groups in the UK.

New Treatment For Horses With Cancer



Iridium-192 wires in place to treat the disease

The AHT is pleased to announce that, as from August this year, radiotherapy using Iridium-192 wires has been available in our Equine Centre to help with the treatment of horses with cancer.

Iridium-192 has a high success rate for equine skin tumours, which do not respond to other types of treatment. It is a form of radiation and particularly suits treatment of tumours where surgery would be unsuitable or where recurrence is a major problem, including sarcomas, the most common form of equine cancer.

Although unlikely to spread to other parts of the body, sarcoids can be invasive and particularly recurrent, and, as well as looking unpleasant, they can become painful to the affected horses.

Horses receiving iridium therapy will typically be at the clinic for 7 – 10 days, when wires will be placed under local anesthetic and radiation will be monitored. After treatment is complete, the wires are removed and the tumour will reduce in size over the next few months, offering a long term solution to a problem which other methods have failed to cure.

Kim's Cataract Cure



Like many Border Collies, eight-year-old Kim loves to work, but earlier this year, she began getting problems with her sight which could have forced her to stop.

Kim was bought by current owner Kath Barratt when she was three years old and part trained. After further training and working sheep, Kim and Kath did their first trial together. It turned out to be the first of many – Kim loved the trials and progressed well, winning three trophies for her work.

When collies are working, they think of nothing else but that, so when one day Kim took a break to drink from a puddle in the middle of a trial, she knew something was up. Her local vet confirmed Kath's thoughts, that Kim was diabetic, and she was put on medication to control her sugar levels and allow her to keep working.

However, two months down the line, Kath noticed her dog's eyesight failing and cataracts began to develop. She was referred to the AHT in June, and two months after successful surgery, she was back at work and ready to return to trials!

"Being able to resume the job she loves and was bred and trained to do is fantastic," said Kath. "I shall be forever grateful for the skills and kindness of the team at the Animal Health Trust."



Andy Sparkes

Rachel Murray

Clinic Restructuring at the AHT

The Animal Health Trust was sorry to say goodbye to Director of Clinical Services, Hugh Edgar, at the end of October. Hugh had been at the Trust for nine years, and left to go to a job in the pharmaceutical industry.

However, we're pleased to have appointed two new heads of our clinics, Andy Sparkes, in Small Animals and Rachel Murray in Equine. Andy came to the Trust in 2000 as Head of the Feline Unit, where his role was to establish a referral service in feline internal medicine and to help develop feline clinical research. This subsequently led to the development of the Internal Medicine Unit within the clinic, encompassing both canine and feline internal medicine referrals.

Rachel first joined the AHT 10 years ago as a senior clinician and PhD student. She then went on to become Orthopaedic Research Coordinator and was in charge of the equine clinical and MRI research. "CES is made up of a great team who have built an international reputation for both clinical excellence and important clinically-related research. I am looking forward to building on this sound base and the challenge of establishing wider recognition for the unique and important role that AHT equine can play in the future of the veterinary profession and health and wellbeing of horses."