



# Italian Greyhound Rescue Charity

## Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2005 Issue 1

[www.italiangreyhoundrescuecharity.org.uk](http://www.italiangreyhoundrescuecharity.org.uk)

### WELCOME TO ALL OUR FRIENDS

First of all on behalf of the Trustees I would like to say a **BIG** thank you to all our "Friends" for so generously supporting the Charity. We hope you find our first Newsletter of interest. (Enclosed is a "Friends" Renewal Form which we hope you will complete to continue your valuable support of the Charity.) I would like to take this opportunity of introducing our Patron and Trustees.

**Katie Boyle** (Patron) has a unique place in the history of television in this country as one of its brightest and most beautiful stars. Her credits are legion. She has appeared in countless television shows, though she is possibly still most fondly remembered as the multi-lingual presenter of the Eurovision Song Contest.

Katie has long been the shoulder the nation has turned to when faced with a problem, being a world-famous agony aunt. She loves dogs as much as she loves helping people and is now drawing on her doggie experience to help with pet problems through the magazine "Dog's Today".

Katie's tireless work for animal charities is legendary. She has been a supporter of PRO Dogs, as well as helping the Animal Health Trust, Last Chance and The National Canine Defence League. She has a close involvement with the Dogs Home in Battersea and compiled a book "Battersea Tails" for them. She has been a member of the committee of management of the Dogs Home for approaching 30 years. Needless to say, all her own dogs are rescued which have included two Italian Greyhounds, Bambi and Tottie.

In 2002 Katie was awarded the Charity Supporter of the Year award at the Golden Bone Awards for her support of all causes canine. She continues her support for charities whenever she can and we are delighted to have a true Italian as our Patron.

**Helen Lister** (Chairman and Fundraiser) acquired her first Italian Greyhound thirty-one years ago and her love affair with the breed is as strong today as it was then. She bred and owned, Ch Florita Favolosa whose star studded career spanned 9 years. She is the current holder of the breed's Challenge Certificate record and was Crufts Reserve Toy group winner in 1998 whilst in her ninth year. Helen has had many successes in the show ring with her Italians and was Best of Breed at Crufts with Favolosa's Grandson in 2003. She is a member of the Kennel Club, an Honorary Life Member of the Italian Greyhound Club and is an active Committee Member of The United Kingdom Toy Dog Society.

In 1997 there was a need for a rescue organisation to take care of the needs of Italian Greyhounds who through no fault of their own needed a new home. With this in mind, Helen, as Chairman of the Italian Greyhound Club, was instrumental in establishing a Rescue & Welfare for the breed. She also undertook the fundraising responsibility for the rescue which helped to establish a sound financial base on which to operate. In June 2004 Helen became one of the founder Trustees for a registered Charity for the breed, ensuring that an efficiently run rescue will always be on hand for those Italian Greyhounds in need. The scope of the Rescue Charity was broadened to include research into health problems to enable Italian Greyhounds to live not only a long and happy life but a healthy one too.

**Dr Russell Hodges** (Secretary) has been involved with Italian Greyhounds for the past eight years, although he has been involved with dogs all his life. Currently he has eight Italian Greyhounds at home. He has been successfully exhibiting Italian Greyhounds for the past seven years. He is committed to the health and welfare of the breed and was delighted to be involved with the Italian Greyhound Rescue Charity. His other dog interests include being Secretary of Birmingham Toy Dog Society.

**Stuart Dunham** (Treasurer) did not realise when he retired that soon he would be sharing his life with a beautiful, intelligent and gentle little creature who would be a loving and devoted companion. Benson is a handsome golden fawn Italian Greyhound and came into his life aged two and a half years old. Stuart is a life long dog lover and had previously owned Skye Terriers but now he knows Italian Greyhounds are something special. He was delighted to be invited to become a Trustee of Italian Greyhound Rescue. It is beyond his comprehension that any one can ill-treat these sensitive little souls.

**Shirley Penrose-Hansell** (Rescue Co-ordinator) dreamed from the age of eight that one day she would own an Italian Greyhound. It was in the late 1970's she decided that the time was right and "Trina" was her first beloved Italian Greyhound. Part of her name, like Shirley's and husband Neville, is enshrined in her Kennel Club Affix "Shirnevina". Shirley bred six puppies in the Eighties, loved them so much, she kept them all!! Boy Blue and Heidi went on to be Best of Breed at Crufts in 1989 and 1993 and William joined them as the third Champion of the six puppies. Breeding and selling Italian Greyhounds is not for Shirley, she says she could never part with them. Since 1990 Shirley has always had a "special needs" Italian Greyhound to live with her family. From 1997 she has been involved with re-homing Italian Greyhounds and is delighted to have found super homes for sixty of them during this time. Their re-homing has been achieved with the support of a caring team, the many Friends of rescue and the generosity of those families offering a loving home to a rescue Italian Greyhound. (Shirley can be contacted on 0161 428 0142)

**Pam Heap** (Trustee) bought her first Italian Greyhound in 1959 of NOWAYS breeding and has owned them ever since. She bred and exhibited on a very small scale but all show exhibits were entered in the KC Stud Book and what was believed to have been the first Junior Warrant in Italian Greyhounds was won by CHANDREY PALESTRA at 13 months in 1968. She also bred and exhibited for ten years in Canada in the 1980's with 3 Champions and 3 C.D.'s (Companion Dog) in Obedience.

Pam has been a Championship Show judge for thirty years. She currently cares for Sapphire taken from Rescue in June 1999 aged eight and a half years and Willow from Whippet Rescue in December 2001 aged four years.

**Tom Mather** (Trustee) has been involved with the Canine World since early childhood. Owning several different breeds of dog but his first love is the Japanese Chin, having bred or handled nine Champions in this breed. He is also the co-author of "The Complete Japanese Chin", published in 1997. Tom now judges many breeds of dog both at home and overseas. His speciality being toy breeds and for many years has had a great affection for Italian Greyhounds. He is a member of the Kennel Club, plays an active part on the Crufts Committee and is also Secretary of the United Kingdom Toy Dog Society. In his professional life Tom works for the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association.

## **A Word from our Chairman on Fundraising**

The first year for the Charity has been an active one on the fundraising front, for without funds we cannot be there to help any Italian Greyhound who needs our services.

Last November we held a Silent Auction at an all breed Dog Show in Lancashire. It went extremely well and I would like to thank all our Friends who kindly donated a multitude of items, which created eager bidding amongst the competitors and spectators. Thanks must be given to Tena Ross, a Friend who kindly devised a "Dog Breed Anagram Quiz" which proved very popular and received a large number of entries. The winner Mrs A Wells of Bodmin, Cornwall received a prize of £25 in Gift Vouchers. A very enjoyable Quiz Night was held on a summer evening in August. Among those taking part were other breed enthusiasts who happily supported our work for Italian Greyhounds.

Although our events have so far taken place in the north of the Country we are eager to spread our wings and would welcome any suggestions from Friends in other areas who may be able to hold an event of their own. We plan to have an 'Italian' Garden Party in the summer of next year, so any suggestions of where we could hold one are welcomed as would any other ideas to raise funds. There are a number of specially commissioned items on sale through the Charity, details of these are included on the separate flyer. Another Friend regularly supplies the Charity with Fleece Italian Greyhound vests which are sold to raise funds. Used postage stamps are still being collected, sorted and sold to add to our funds. They can be any used stamps from the UK or anywhere in the World and they need to be left on enough paper so that the serrated edges of the stamps are not damaged. Please send your used stamps to: Italian Greyhound Rescue Stamp Appeal, c/o 15 Edmund Road, Hastings, E. Sussex TN35 5JY

## **Update from Our Rescue Co-ordinator**

The team has been busy this year, writes Shirley Penrose-Hansell, re-homing a number of Italian Greyhound rescues. The first rescue of the year came into our care in January, his owner wanted him to have a home with a garden. So a new home and family were soon celebrating his arrival.

Although the number of re-homed Italian Greyhounds has always been low compared to many other breeds, there is a need for the Rescue Charity to be there for those in need. Since 1997 I have re-homed sixty rescues, so they do get into difficulties on a regular basis. Some occur because of a change in family circumstances, but the majority who end up in rescue, have been inappropriately homed by their breeders in the first place. This was the case for another of this years casualties, who had been homed by her breeder to a home where there were six larger adult dogs and a litter of puppies, all of whom, to quote the owners words, "used the Italian Greyhound like a rag doll". Her life was one of being a rag doll or locked away in a bedroom. She was advertised for sale to her third home, and was still only six months old. We arranged for her re-homing where she now enjoys life on her own with her special Mum, who loves her dearly and regularly reports on her antics.

Italian Greyhounds do not shed their coats to the extent of many other breeds, so are often the breed of choice for those with allergies. However, they can still cause problems to the sensitive, as was the case for another of the little ones to be re-homed recently. From the lovely photographs received of him he does not appear to cause a problem for his new owner, whose brother has two Italian Greyhounds who regularly visit the new arrival.

The Charity is fortunate to have so many kind, caring families on the waiting list offering to adopt an Italian Greyhound. We are most grateful to them, and thank all our Friends who offer assistance with fostering, home checking, transportation of rescues and fund raising, all vital for our continued successful re-homing of Italian Greyhounds in need.

In future Newsletters we would like to feature items of interest from Friends about their Italian Greyhounds. Please send contributions to Stuart Dunham, 44A Lancaster Road, Pendleton, Salford, Greater Manchester M6 8AW.

A website advertising Italian Greyhound puppies for sale was brought to the attention of the Charity. The Trustees were very concerned and decided to investigate the matter. Below is the text of a letter from our Secretary, Dr Hodges and the reply he received from the RSPCA.

**Letter from Secretary to RSPCA Horsham dated 6<sup>th</sup> June 2005**

Dear Sirs

**Re: RSPCA Feature on [www.epupz.co.uk](http://www.epupz.co.uk)**

I am writing to convey to you concerns raised at a recent meeting of our trustees regarding a feature the RSPCA has appearing on the [www.epupz.co.uk](http://www.epupz.co.uk) website.

Our attention was recently drawn to an advertisement for Italian Greyhound puppies on this website, from a breeder in Sweden charging grossly inflated prices for her puppies. In fact, enquiries showed that including shipping costs etc. she was asking the equivalent of £2300 per puppy. Enquiries also showed that this breeder showed no concern whatsoever regarding the suitability of prospective purchasers to own this very specialised breed, asking no questions at all. She was seemingly willing to sell to anyone willing to pay her price and would ship anywhere in the world. This is not a practice of which the Italian Greyhound Rescue Charity approves and we are sure that the RSPCA would have similar reservations.

Below the aforementioned advertisement appeared a feature from the RSPCA advising purchasers to avoid purchasing puppies from commercial "outlets" or puppy mills. We considered that it appeared that the RSPCA was endorsing advertisements on this website, whether or not it was your intention to do so.

Most responsible and caring breeders of Italian Greyhounds do not usually need to advertise their puppies. Ours is a relatively rare breed and reputable breeders have a long waiting list of suitable homes for their puppies. It has been our experience over a number of years that has shown that many puppies purchased as a result of replying to an advertisement often end up in unsuitable homes and consequently find themselves requiring help from rescue.

We would strongly encourage the RSPCA to reconsider its feature on the "epupz" site – at least to make it clear that your feature does not guarantee the credentials of other advertisers.

Many thanks for your attention to this issue.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Russell DJ Hodges BDS (U. Lond.)  
Secretary/Trustee  
Italian Greyhound Rescue Charity

**Reply from Website Editor RSPCA Horsham dated 4<sup>th</sup> July 2005**

Dear Dr Hodges

Thank you for your letter received on 14 June in which you raised concerns about [epupz.co.uk](http://epupz.co.uk). I was not aware of this website or of the fact that they were reproducing RSPCA content, so thank you for bringing this to our attention.

After reviewing the use of the content on [epupz.co.uk](http://epupz.co.uk) and consulting with a member of our legal department I have contacted [epupz.co.uk](http://epupz.co.uk) and requested that they include a disclaimer on every instance of the statement to read: "The RSPCA does not accept liability for the content contained on [epupz.co.uk](http://epupz.co.uk) and the inclusion of this RSPCA sourced content does not constitute an endorsement of any advertisement on [epupz.co.uk](http://epupz.co.uk)."

I have also requested that they include a warning to read: "Warning: Make sure you don't unwittingly support the cruel practice of puppy farming – the mass breeding of puppies for profit, often with little regard for animal welfare" and "If you are concerned about the welfare of puppies or believe a breeder is operating an unlicensed puppy farm please call the RSPCA's 24-hour cruelty and advice line on 0870 55 55 999."

It is difficult to regulate on the Internet – undoubtedly certain postings on [epupz.co.uk](http://epupz.co.uk) may present animal welfare concerns but hopefully our message may get through to some visitors and make them think and behave responsibly when purchasing an animal.

Yours sincerely

Laura Donaldson

Website editor RSPCA

## Luigi (A Special Rescue) - Forward by Shirley

The following story is about Luigi, a very special Italian Greyhound rescue. It began with a telephone call one evening from a police station. An Officer said that they had an Italian Greyhound who had been left there. This was on one of the coldest nights of winter, the little dog was in a very poor condition and in an outside pen with only a concrete floor, they did not think that he would be alive in the morning.

I received the call at 7 p.m. the police station closed at 9 p.m., but thanks to the generosity of a Friend of Rescue Luigi spent the night in comfort. He was indeed very malnourished, scared, and had enteritis. The next day he was seen by a Vet who said he was approximately nine months old. His enteritis was treated and he was fostered until he was well enough to be homed with a very special family.

That special family were Kay and Richard. They have shown total devotion to Luigi trying to address his unpredictable behaviour and establishing trust between dog and man again. Luigi turned out to be the most problematic Italian Greyhound of the sixty I have re-homed through rescue; a real challenge. His background is mostly unknown, but we do know that he had at least three homes in the first nine months of his life. Not a good start for any dog, but especially not for a sensitive breed like Italian Greyhounds. With the love of his family and the assistance of an animal behaviourist, this little dog has regained his trust in people and his abnormal aggression for all other dogs is now manageable.

We write Luigi's story, because taking on a rescue requires a lot of commitment. It covers a span from a challenging rescue like Luigi, to the little Italian Greyhound who is the perfect companion. We love and support them all and are most grateful to the many families, like Kay and Richard, who have invested so much time and patience into ensuring that their rescue is a much loved and well adjusted Italian Greyhound again.

## A Letter from Richard for the Newsletter

Luigi, (pictured right) came to us in sunny Devon in mid January 2001. Initially a timid and quiet little boy, found badly malnourished and close to death during freezing winter time. After this very frightened little bag of skin and bones found his feet, he turned into a snarling monster.



My wife and I were in our late fifties living in fairly isolated country surroundings but near to the sea, so perfect dog territory. We considered ourselves very doggy and greyhound knowledgeable and with one of us always at home should be ideal to rescue an Italian Greyhound. The motto on the Coat of Arms for the Pearly Kings and Queens in London is "One never knows". This sums up perfectly our Luigi experience and with the benefit of hindsight, it was clear that we had taken on an animal who was very nervous and frightened of everything, becoming a monster probably out of what he considered self preservation. He would be set off by an act of picking up a newspaper or a cable (me being an electrician). We concluded he had been hit by the items that set him off. After being bitten for the umpteenth time we found that sending him to the sin bin for an hour (a basket in an other room) was effective. He had experienced humans who hurt him physically and some how we had to win his trust, assuring him that these humans would never hurt him.

I was told off for releasing him from the sin bin prison after ten minutes, unable to stand the sad little face that said sorry I won't bite again, honest, well not until the next time anyway. He will, I am sure, never become the trustworthy placid anyone stroke me animal that most other normal people have. What we do have though, is an Italian Greyhound who no longer acts like fingers are his favourite fast food. Who is very loving, affectionate and when danger lurks, which might be a tiny dog half his size, will rush to us for protection.

My neighbour has a wonderful and very exotic "Bengal" cat. This is a monster of a cat in its own right, who having been brought up with three Dalmatians, thinks she is a dog. She chases and terrorizes other dogs and cats. Yes, you have guessed it, Luigi decided she was the friend for him. She will accompany Luigi on walks, and both love playing together, chasing each other up and down the dusty track that leads to our house. They clearly have not read the Greyhound versus Cats handbook and he risks losing his membership to the Greyhound Union.

It goes without saying I am a dog lover, but it has taken the dog with all the problems to really become the animal who has won all my affection and who can twist me around his little paws. ©



*As you can see Benson is getting into a festive mood and is looking forward to opening his Christmas stocking.*

*On behalf of Our Patron and Trustees I would like to wish all our Friends and their IG companions a very Merry Christmas and a healthy, happy and prosperous New Year.*