

# The Gambia Horse and Donkey Trust



Fighting Poverty – Feeding Families

Registered Charity No: 1096814

Spring Newsletter 2014



## In this edition:

- Equine news
- An update from our Charity Director
- Exciting volunteer vacancy



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[www.twitter.com/GambiaHDT](http://www.twitter.com/GambiaHDT)



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING AT GHDT

In February, we ran a CPD (Continuing Professional Development) course at our centre in Sambel Kunda. This was attended by 33 Government veterinary assistants. The topics on the course included eyes, colic, gastrointestinal anatomy, dentistry, tendons, fractures, foaling, infectious disease, respiratory problems, infectious cattle diseases and draught animal technology. All agreed that it was a very intense and interesting course.

The training was provided by Dr. Daffeh, until recently the Director of Livestock Services in The Gambia, Louise Cornish of The University of Edinburgh and Paul Smith from a private practice which is part of the XL Group. The fourth lecturer was Professor Ramsay Hovell from The World Association for Transport Animal Welfare and Studies (TAWs) with whom we have a long association. Professor Hovell is well respected in The Gambia and he and his organisation have long provided us with invaluable help and support for which we are very grateful.



There was much lively debate amongst the delegates and there was extensive discussion about how to deal with various cases. The vets from UK and the Gambian delegates learnt a considerable amount from each other. The Livestock Assistants work very hard with limited resources and it is important for them to attend so that they can make use of the knowledge and skills they have learnt helping the farmers they advise.

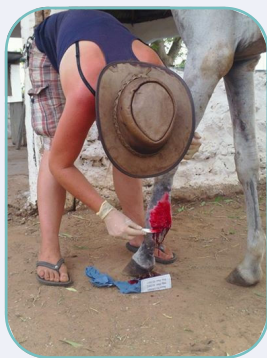
A further one day course was held down near the coast for the more senior staff in the Veterinary Department. In addition to lectures, a demonstration castration was undertaken on a young colt. We are very grateful to everyone who participated in these workshops, both the visiting lecturers and the delegates, for their interest and enthusiasm. We would also like to thank Mariama Hunyadi for allowing us to use her beautiful colt Maxi, for the castration demonstration. Gradually, with your help, we shall be able to provide the Gambian Livestock Assistants with the equine knowledge and equipment that they will need to provide an efficient and effective service to the farming community.

**The Gambia Horse and Donkey Trust**

Brewery Arms Cottage, Stane Street, Ockley Surrey RH5 5TH Tel 01306 627568 Email - [ghdt@gambiahorseanddonkey.org.uk](mailto:ghdt@gambiahorseanddonkey.org.uk)

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# Manky survives against the odds

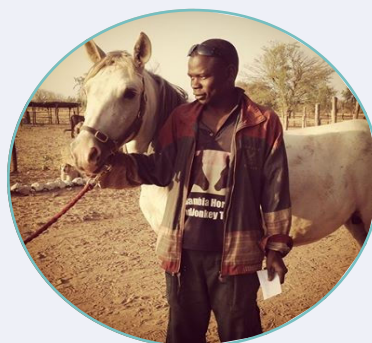


Manky, a grey mare, came to us about a year ago with a very nasty wound on her leg that would not heal. It quickly became apparent that it was a nasty fungal infection called pithiosis which is incredibly difficult to treat and, from most of the papers we have read it usually ends up with the animal being euthanized.

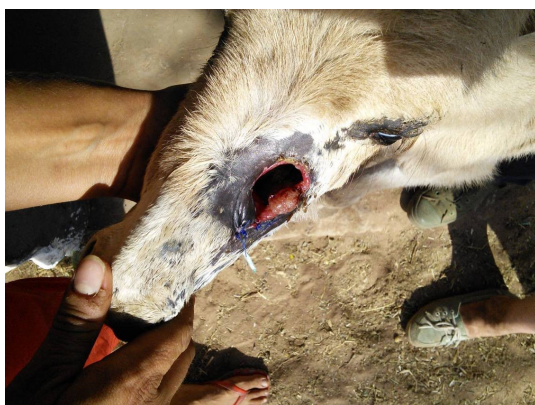
We commenced treatment and every time we thought we were winning, it would break out again, so we just had to keep trying and hoped that it would not get so deep that it would affect her tendons. A number of vets were very pessimistic, but we felt that so long as she was not suffering unduly and remained reasonably sound and pain free, we should keep trying too.

It took a great many bandages, and our sincere thanks go out to all the kind people who donate bandages. This is a typical example of how we use them.

Our perseverance paid off and on the 30<sup>th</sup> March 2014, one year after her arrival, a fully healed Manky went home to some very happy owners. There were many times when we wondered if we were right to continue and her welfare was always our top priority. There were many discussions about her and her progress, but we are delighted at the outcome.



## Baby Bamba heals thanks to innovative idea



Bamba (pictured left) was attacked by a donkey Jack when she was just a couple of days old. The injury broke her upper jaw which became infected. When the owner called the vets to come and see her, her whole face was swollen and she was running a high temperature. Her future was not bright.

The owner agreed to let us hospitalise her providing we gave our word not to euthanize her. This we promised and the vets carried out surgery to remove a shard of necrotic bone from her jaw. This left her with a gap where her food could get stuck and we needed to find a way to block it. One of the volunteer vets, Paul Smith, came up with a brilliant idea of using farrier's putty from Total Foot Protection to put in the gap and to reduce it gradually as the wound granulated over. This worked perfectly and Bamba is now well on the road to recovery.



Bamba now

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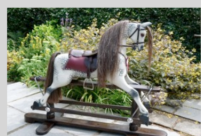


# Fundraising Focus

**Vets with Horsepower**, who are a group of the country's top equine vets, are preparing for their departure from London on the 2nd July. They will be travelling East across Europe to St. Petersburg and then back through Scandinavia delivering Continuing Professional Development lectures en route to raise money for the Gambia Horse and Donkey Trust and Smile Train. We are very grateful to each and every member of the team for their dedication and effort, in particular Professor Derek Knottenbelt, who is the instigator of this international lecture programme. We wish them a smooth and trouble free journey.



Professor Knottenbelt



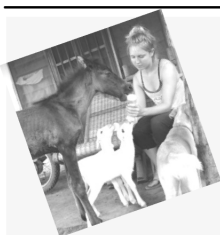
Jolly Rockers

We are very grateful to everyone who raises funds for us in so many different and unique ways from sponsored events, quizzes and dog shows to baking and selling cakes. Debbie Hinton of Jolly Rockers, even gives us a percentage of every rocking donkey she sells. If you would like to help but need inspiration we have a fundraising pack full of ideas for you.

## Our Holistic Approach

We believe that as it is poverty that causes many of the problems that we see, it would make sense to try and reduce poverty to overcome the problems. This is why we get involved in a great many community development projects such as the building of Calum's Road.

The region of The Gambia in which we work is fairly remote and access to health care can be difficult, so Stella, my late sister, established a primary care clinic for the community [www.sambelkundaclinic.org](http://www.sambelkundaclinic.org) and a school sponsorship programme which enables even the poorest child from the community to go to school. This is called Stella's School Scheme [www.ssgambia.co.uk](http://www.ssgambia.co.uk) When the project began there were just 90 children at the school, there are now over 400 and young people are also being sponsored to attend secondary and tertiary education. These two projects are run as individual charities to comply with Charity Commission rules, but we work very closely together. If you have any friends with particular interests in health and education, please do pass on the details of these two small charities which have a big impact on the lives of the community in which we work.



### WANTED!

We are currently seeking a new long term volunteer to join our team in The Gambia in 2014. If you are:

- Qualified to minimum of degree level
- Able to volunteer one year of your time
- Have excellent communication and organisational skills
- Have experience managing people
- 100% dedicated to the cause
- Able to work on own initiative
- Outgoing, enjoy spending time with people and have a good sense of humour

Then please email a copy of your CV and covering letter to

[ghdt@gambiahorseanddonkey.org.uk](mailto:ghdt@gambiahorseanddonkey.org.uk)

**A fantastic opportunity !**

### OUR FUNDS DO REACH THOSE IN NEED

In the light of recent articles in the press discussing the huge salaries being received by some charity CEO's, we wanted to reassure you that we are not one of those charities. Heather Armstrong, our Charity Director, works on an entirely voluntary basis. We currently have only one paid part time member of staff in the UK and the rest of our team are either paid Gambian staff or volunteers. We know that people donate to help the plight of working animals and their owners, so we make sure your money goes straight to them.

Would you like one of our fundraising packs to help you to come up with an exciting fundraising idea, please email [ghdt@gambiahorseanddonkey.org.uk](mailto:ghdt@gambiahorseanddonkey.org.uk). Thank you !

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# An update from Heather Armstrong

It has been a very busy six months here at "Horse and Donkey" with so much going on that it is hard to know where to begin. We have had some outstanding veterinary successes in Manky, Bamba and Issy who are featured in this newsletter, but there are also a lot more that we simply had no room to fit in. There have been a great many orphan foals this year who have run the volunteers and the staff ragged with their regular nightly feed, but much to their credit, all the babies survived and some have been weaned and are preparing to go home. We would like to thank all the volunteers who have helped. You have done a wonderful job with the babies.

As animal lovers, we have been appalled to see the ongoing equine welfare problems in the United Kingdom. There is no excuse for this and people should know better. Much of what we see here in UK is out and out cruelty and we are filled with admiration and respect for the many organisations who work so hard to help the suffering British equines. In The Gambia it is very different, we do of course have big welfare problems but they are largely borne out of poverty, lack of knowledge, a huge disease challenge and lack of resources and although it will take time, we can steadily address these problems by working in close partnership with other organisations and with The Gambian Government who are very supportive of our work.

Since we started the charity we have treated/helped over 60,000 animals and none of this could have been done without the generosity of our wonderful supporters. Our work is filled with ups and downs but one of the big ups is definitely the wonderful people we meet who totally restore our faith in humanity! Thank you all very much and we hope that some of you will be able to visit us in The Gambia in the foreseeable future.

## Standing Order Forms

If you are able to give a regular monthly donation to help with our general running costs, please contact us for a standing order form. You can do this by email ([ghdt@gambiahorseanddonkey.org.uk](mailto:ghdt@gambiahorseanddonkey.org.uk)) or telephone (01306 627568).

Alternatively, please feel free to download the form from our website, on the 'How You Can Help' page.

*Thank You!*



Need a scrap car removing from your drive, for FREE? Simply contact Giveacar at

**[www.giveacar.co.uk](http://www.giveacar.co.uk)**

or on **0207 7364242** to organise your free collection, and your scrap car will be transformed into a cash donation for GHDT!

Follow us on





Request a bag

Book a collection of the phone or via our homepage

**CHARITY ECOSYSTEM**

Donate unwanted clothes, shoes and accessories and you'll make a difference to Gambia Horse and Donkey Trust!

**[www.charity-ecosystem.org](http://www.charity-ecosystem.org)**

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# BEACH HORSE WELFARE

We have been receiving an increasing number of calls and emails from concerned tourists about the plight of the beach riding horses so we feel it is time that we addressed this problem. A number of people already give help to the beach horses and to be fair, the vast majority looked to be in excellent condition when we visited them. We have had meetings with the Department of Tourism and the Veterinary Services Department. Together we would like to work with the beach horse operators to improve the welfare of the animals. Hopefully by doing this more people will use their service. Tourists will also be provided with the phone numbers of people who can help should they see something that gives them cause for concern. You can help by giving your attention and praise to the owners of well cared for animals and report the poor ones to the authorities or to us. Presently it is proving more lucrative to play on the sympathies of kind hearted tourists with having a poor animal on display. Helping to discourage riders who are clearly too heavy for the animal would also be helpful.



## A Regular Gift

is an invaluable way to help us at the Gambia Horse and Donkey Trust. We need to be able to care for sick and injured equines and also our resident horses and donkeys with the knowledge that a donation comes in every month that allows us to plan ahead more effectively. With your help we can continue to forge ahead with future projects such as our proposed new centre and the implementation of pioneering training courses to improve the lives of the working equines in The Gambia.

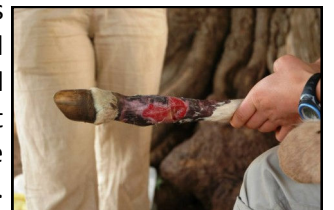


## Little Issy Survives Horrific Leg Injury



Issy is a young orphan donkey who recently came into our care. She arrived with a very serious wound on her hind leg. We think her mother had been bitten in the head by a snake and we were told that she was so traumatised and in so much pain that she had done this to her own foal. The wound was so deep that it went right down to the bone and was very badly infected. Our team of staff in Gambia did a great job of cleaning up the wound and removing all the infected tissue. Issy was put onto antibiotics to treat her for the infection and the wound has been kept carefully covered.

Luckily, due to the very warm climate in Gambia, as long as wounds are cared for correctly they do tend to heal up very quickly and we are very pleased to say that this is the case with little Issy. Thanks to the care provided by our team of staff and volunteers she has made an exceptional recovery despite having only been with us for a short time. Issy spends her time with fellow orphans, Neema, Raf, Storm, Maggie and Monster, she has become best friends with a lamb named Tyrone and the pair go everywhere together. Issy makes the excited high-pitched braying noise when she sees one of her carers coming over with her bowl of milk. Tyrone quite likes to get his fair share of it and nearly knocks the bowl out of their hands if they aren't careful. All the volunteers love going to feed her but are all quite glad she doesn't need night feeds anymore, so they can all get a full night's sleep! We are delighted that she has made a full recovery **and we thank all our supporters in enabling us to treat animals like Issy.**



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# MEET — Saloum Jallow

Saloum Jallow is our most senior member staff and has worked with the charity since 2003. His official title is Donkey Project manager, but he acts in many capacities for the charity, including education and training and advising and assisting the administrative teams.

Saloum is from the Fula tribe, who are traditionally cow herders and he was tending cattle until he was eleven years old when he first went to school. He did well at school and was one of only eleven to be chosen to attend the Veterinary Training School at Abuko. Over the years he underwent more veterinary training until he became Head of Livestock Production and Health at Wassu, a town across the river from the Gambia Horse and Donkey HQ. Initially he worked with us just at weekends but he now works with us fulltime but retains a great interest in agriculture and still works closely with his old colleagues in the Veterinary Department.



Saloum is married to Jankey and he has six children, Fatou, Kumba, Momodou, Samba, Kemo, and most recently Jen who was born in January of this year. In his spare time, he loves reading novels and his great passion in life is to listen to the BBC World Service. He says he will forego his watch or his mobile phone before he gives up his radio.

## In Memory of Satela

We are very saddened to report that Satela, a long time staff member and a very good friend, passed



away after a long illness. Satela was one of the longest serving members of our staff and was a really good general handyman, doing our plumbing and painting etc. and had even helped to build the house we have in Sambel Kunda.

He was always cheerful and very helpful. He had a long association with Heather's family and she will never forget his kindness when he came to her rescue during a very bad storm in The Gambia. He will be greatly missed by many people and our sympathy goes to his family and friends.

## The New Centre

We are reaching exciting times with our new centre, near the coast at Makasutu. The plans are drawn and approved, we have Ian Lowther, a new volunteer, in position to oversee the project and begin the building. We don't have all the funding in yet but we are ready to make a start.

Makasutu is a very special conservation area so we are trying to be as sensitive with our plans and buildings as possible and it may not end up positioned exactly as it is laid out on paper as we need to conserve as many trees as possible!

We are very grateful to Vets With Horsepower and The Elise Pilkington Charitable Trust and the many individuals for helping us with the funding of this project. Inevitably in Africa there have been delays, the latest being major mechanical problems with our truck, but we are definitely on the way and we hope have some pictures for you by the next newsletter in the Autumn.



Ian Lowther

## What Your Donation Could Buy

£2 can buy 1 sack of rice bran to feed the horses and donkeys, £5 can buy wormers to treat three animals

£10 can cover the cost of fuel for one day of our school education programme

£25 can buy hay to feed our equine in-patients, £50 can cover the costs of one day's mobile veterinary clinic

£100 can cover the on going cost of fencing paddocks for our long term residents

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# The Show



Once again the 2013 show was a big success with more horses and donkeys than ever turning up on the day. Every single animal was registered, blood tested and treated if necessary. Our thanks go to Julia and Clair, two myotherapists from Galen Myotherapy who gave a demonstration on show day and to our staff who gave a harnessing demonstration. Many thanks to the 22 volunteers who joined us on this year's trip and to the lovely people who sponsored the prizes. The show is a wonderful way of rewarding those who practice good management and a way to encourage those who may need a little help. It is a practical way to get the word across to the wider audience as well as it is also televised.

Some of our donkey ball members have out grown their donkeys and it was interesting watching our former ace players coaching their younger brothers on their donkeys and the frustrations they went through seeing the donkeys not performing as the ace knew it could! This generation of youngsters will grow up with a much more understanding attitude towards the working animals than previous generations.



Matilda on arrival at the GHDT centre

## Matilda recovers thanks to GHDT

Do you remember little Matilda, the little donkey foal with the nasty skin infection? Our mobile team were stopped by a man on the side of a road who asked for our help for his two week old foal.

Matilda's owner had tried to treat the skin infection with used engine oil but had sadly made things much worse. Under the care of our team, Matilda has flourished and the final picture (right) was taken of her recently at the end of her treatment. She is the sweetest little lady and is very popular with the staff.



## Funding for Staff



As the charity grows, we desperately need to find funding to pay for the services of special people who give so much to help us. Both Anna and Jen gave us two years of their lives working in The Gambia voluntarily.

Nobody can work as a volunteer forever, but if we could find funding to pay them and keep special people who have proven they will go above and beyond the call of duty it would help us a lot. Does anyone have any ideas how we could do this? If so please get in touch.

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# Thank You!

Space prevents us from naming everybody who has helped us but we would like to acknowledge support from the following, Galen Therapy, Jolly Rockers, Redwings, Total Foot Protection, XL Vets, University of Glasgow Veterinary School, Gill Devlin, Sue Ashton, Linda Jones, Anna Pugh, Maizie Portlock, Mrs Sells, Wendy Richards, John & Liz Absalom, Brockham Overseas Aid, David & Sue Hewittson-Brown, Joy Taylor, Kathy and Barbara Sharman, Vicki Miller, Sue Silk, Elise Pilkington Trust, TAWS and Madeleine Lawless. We are very extremely grateful to every single person who has supported us. Every contribution whether financial, a donation of goods or a gift of their time makes a huge difference to us and enables us to continue our work. Thank you all so very much.

Once again, thanks to the generosity of the Bunn family, we shall be at Hickstead for both the Derby Meeting (26th-29th June) and the Longines Royal International Horse Show (29th July-3rd August). Derby Day on the 29th June will be just before Vets with Horsepower depart on their epic fundraising journey from London and some of them will be on our stand to meet people, discuss the journey and their beloved bikes. We look forward to meeting you there.



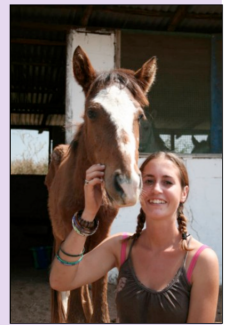
## Welcome !



We would like to extend a very warm welcome to Emma Meadmore who has replaced Anna as my assistant, she is already proving to be a great help and many of you will get to know her through sponsorship and volunteering which she administers. Emma has horses and dogs herself and is already very much a part of the Horse and Donkey team.

## Farewell Anna

A few years ago a young lady answered an advertisement we had put out for a volunteer. The job was for a year but Anna gave us two years, during which she achieved the impossible, gave her all and was a crucial part of enabling the charity to move forward.

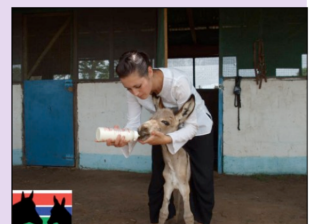


Anna is a tiny person who can turn her hand to anything and who will give any animal in her care her total devotion, both physically and mentally. During her stay with us she made miracles happen and Molly, Phoenix, Rocky and Mr. Tumnus are testament to her superb nursing care.

If that wasn't enough, she saved the lives of 14 people when a boat carrying our mobile clinic crew and several other passengers capsized in a storm. Anna, who is a strong swimmer made sure everyone was safely holding onto the boat and then swam a considerable distance across the river which has both crocodiles and hippos in it, not to mention some snakes and she then ran through the thorn infested bush in her bare feet to seek help. Everyone was saved.

After five years of dedicated service Anna has moved onto a new job working with dogs in Thailand with Soi Dogs. We wish her well in her new adventure but we miss her a lot.

You truly do wear King Solomon's ring Anna,  
thank you so much.



Don't forget that you can give flowers whilst also giving to us at the same time! Simply go to the Charity Flowers website or call them on 0870 5300600 to order your beautiful bouquet today, and don't forget to mention GHDT!

[www.charityflowers.co.uk](http://www.charityflowers.co.uk)

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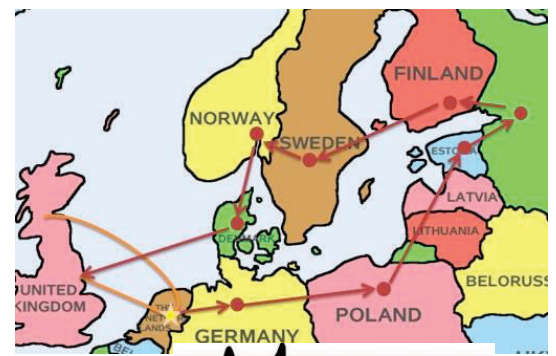
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# VETs with HORSEPOWER

North-European Ride 2014



1

- **2 OBJECTIVES**
- **12 Bikers**
- **2700+ miles**
- **16 days**
- **80 hours of CPD**
- **12 Countries**

We are aiming to raise money to allow cleft palate operations to be performed on children and infants in India under the auspices of **THE SMILE TRAIN.**



Being born with a major abnormality like this condemns the children to a life of derision, cruelty and lost potential.

**THE SMILE TRAIN** is an established charity that provides these operations and so in effect saves the lives of thousands of children worldwide. Help us change the world, one smile at a time!

We would like to 'save' 500 lives if we can .



2



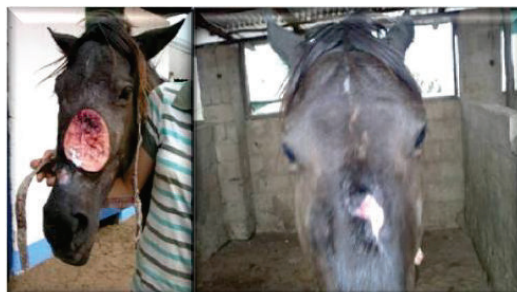
**Gambia Horse & Donkey Trust**

We want to raise funds to build a new urban educational and clinical centre to cater for hardworking urban donkeys and horses.

Gambia has thousands of working horses and donkeys have no access to veterinary care; in spite of their economic significance there is also negligible educational emphasis on the horse or donkey at any level



**THE GAMBIA HORSE AND DONKEY TRUST** has a long history of amazing work in Gambia. A new centre will allow working horses and donkeys to be treated more effectively and will provide education at all levels from children to owners / users and vets.



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[www.facebook.com/VwHPCPD](http://www.facebook.com/VwHPCPD)