

# Friends of JR Whippet Rescue

# NEWSLETTER



No. 103

Autumn / Winter 2025

**Miniature racehorses**  
Why racing folk love whippets

**The diary of a rehomed whippet**  
Frankie's first weeks in his new home!

**A celebration of Willow**  
Whippet racing for Alabama Rot Research

**Going the extra mile(s)**  
A glimpse in to the life of a JR volunteer

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## Friends of JR Whippet Rescue Suggested Annual Donation

Seniors (over 60-covers two)	£5.00
Individual	£10.00
Family/Joint	£15.00
Overseas (Sterling Cheque from UK bank only)	£15.00
10 Years (individual)	£80.00
10 Years (joint/family)	£100.00
10 Years (overseas- single)	£100.00

Cover photo of JRWR volunteer Elaine Jenkinson's Ringo.

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# Chair of Trustees Report

**2025 is continuing to be an extremely busy year!**

The number of relinquished whippets continues to grow, behavioural issues, ongoing medical problems but also, very sadly, some awful welfare challenges. I could not wish for any more from the amazing JR team I am so lucky to be surrounded by. This loyal team, whether employees or volunteers, could not care more or work harder in order to ensure every relinquished whippet is treated in the way they deserve.

I have been contacted by several Friends of JR concerned about how they can ensure that their own whippets are rehomed by us after their death. We now have a process to make sure this can happen! There is a 'button' on the main page of our website <https://whippetrescue.org.uk/whippets-in-wills/> where you can find details. If, however, technology is not for you, please ring me and I will talk you through and help with the paperwork.

The new format newsletter continues to be welcomed, and the number of pages seems to be increasing in every edition! Regrettably JR has not historically established an archive of back copies, so this is something of a plea. If anyone has any back copies that they would like to donate to our prospective archive please get in touch, we would be thrilled.

As always much happens behind the scenes at JR. Over the last eighteen months the Trustees have been working with our Accountant and Solicitor to ensure JR is operating within the legalities of the Charities Commission and HMRC. The good news is that we are! JR does though, have to make a change to its charity status - we are currently a registered charity and are about to finalise the transfer over to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. JR Whippet Rescue will still be our name, but will be JR Whippet Rescue CIO, we will have a new Charities Commission number and a new bank account number although our current bank account will remain in operation for a while. We will be in touch with all Friends in the New Year to confirm what is happening, details will be on the website and if anyone is worried about legacies in wills, again please contact us.

I and the JRWR team would like to thank you all for your continued support and to wish you all a Happy and Healthy Christmas and New Year.

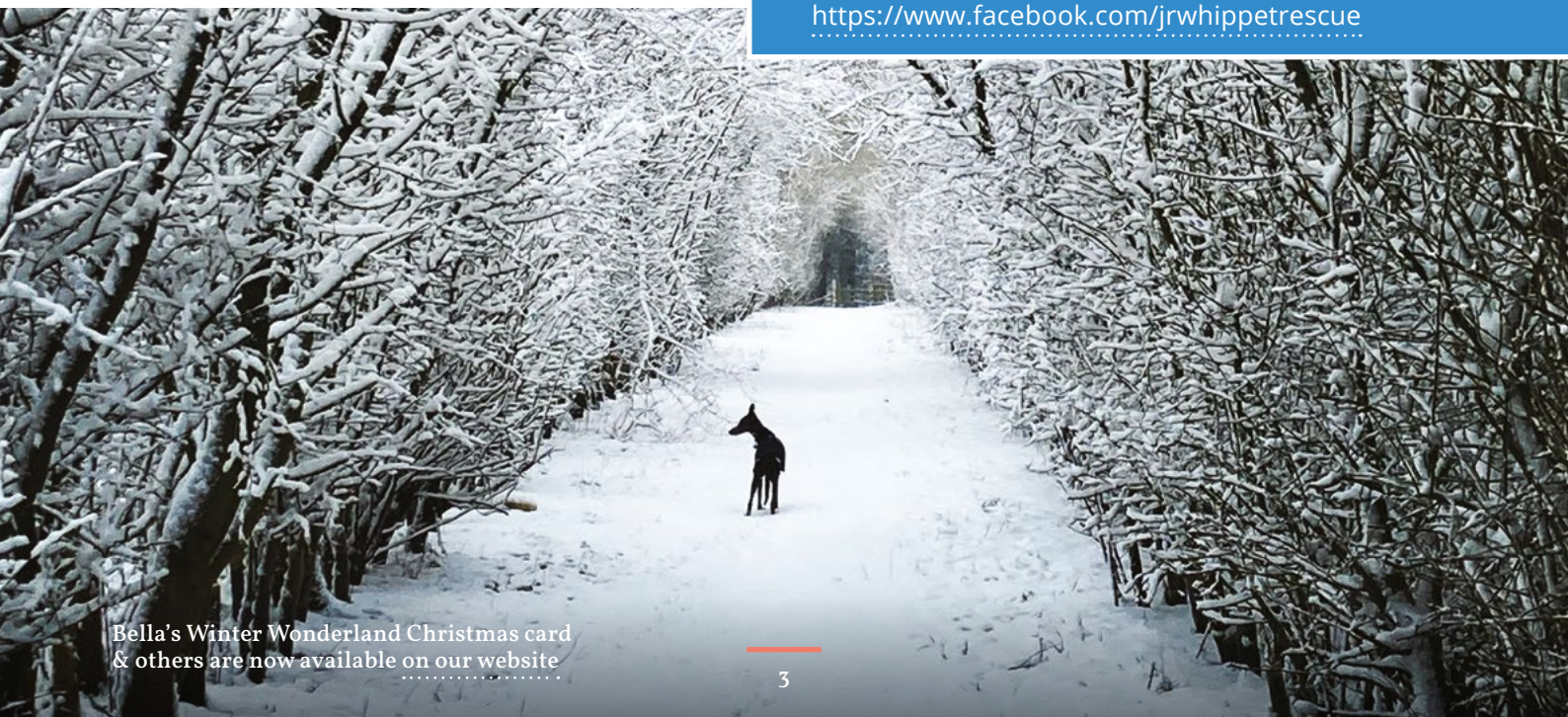
**Kate Bent**, Chair of Trustees

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Join us in the JR Whippet Rescue  
Facebook group



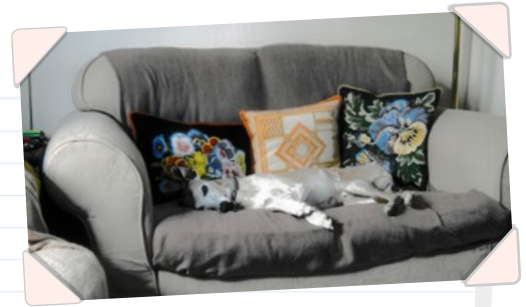
<https://www.facebook.com/jrwhippetrescue>



Bella's Winter Wonderland Christmas card  
& others are now available on our website

# Diary of a rehomed whippet

Frankie the whippet tells us about the first six weeks in his new home.



## Week 1

### Monday 12th May 2025

Hello! My name is Frankie and I arrived at my new home at 9.15 am complete with my own two beds and cuddle blanket plus an extra set of bedding. I also brought two coats and three collars and leads, two of which I had won in a past life. Best of all, the lovely lady who had been looking after me sent a special batch of my favourite toast squares. Quite a celebrity, don't you think? Anyway, although I have lived for all of my 10 years in a lovely place with my own paddocks to run free in, my new Mum's garden is not too bad, and I spent all day exploring it. Next door lives a little Jack Russell called Peanut and we said hello through the fence. There are also 15 chickens and a cockerel.

Unfortunately, I fell in the pond and had to be bathed, but that wasn't too bad. Mum says she hopes I haven't frightened the frogs away. Met a nice lady called Auntie Jane who is Mum's sister. We had to take her to the garage to collect her car.

### Tuesday

More time in the garden and a nice walk in a place called The Wild Garden where there are a lot of ducks - they are very funny but very friendly as people feed them a lot. Met a little dog as we were going through the gate and I had a lunge and a growl but he (or she) ignored me. Later we went for a walk in the field at the end of our garden which leads to a little wood. I'm still on the lead until Mum is sure of my recall but I don't mind too much because I get lots of cuddles.

Forgot to say yesterday that I have also got two beds that belonged to two of Mum's previous Whippets so I'm a four bed Whippet plus I've been on Mum's bed as well!

### Wednesday

Another busy day. Had to go and get registered at the new vets. They were all very nice to me in reception and I had a meeting with one of the vets just to be introduced, which was good. "Another lovely whippet," she said. Apparently they have looked after all my predecessors for more than 30 years. Imagine! Met another Auntie called Hazel who was also at the vets collecting some pills for her dog who is a Hungarian Vizsla. I'm not sure whether I will like him.

Had a walk around the village today and saw a few other dogs, and this morning in the field met a very nice man with two little dogs even older than me, one is 15 and the other 13. I barked at them but they ignored me. The man was very sensible and just kept them on their leads while he was talking so I would not be upset.

### Thursday

I was a good boy while Mum went shopping. She was gone for two hours but I was quite happy lying in front of the Rayburn and gave her a nice welcome home. This evening she went to something called the Theatre so Auntie Jane came and sat with me as she thought it would be too long for me on my own. But I'm very good on my own - even if I say so myself.

### Friday

Today was very different. I went to work with Mum and first of all we called at the estate office and met another Jane, and Amy. Then Philip turned up and introduced himself - he keeps things working on the estate and mends things so I'm told. Then Jack arrived, he also helps to keep everything in good order. Later on I met Sharon who also works in the office and Tracey who works with Mum in the house. They all thought I was lovely. Well I could have told them that!

It has been quite a busy day. After Mum finished work we went through the woods to a place called a cricket pitch where I will be able to have some good runs when I'm off the lead.

## **Saturday**

I'm getting into a nice routine now and after a cuddle on Mum's bed it was breakfast and then another new walk, with lots of interesting smells of deer, rabbits, pheasants and partridge. No gardening because Mum was on duty somewhere called a museum. Didn't sound very exciting to me! Things looked up when Auntie Jane came to supper and then she and Mum spent time doing something called a jigsaw puzzle.

So to bed and I haven't decided which one it will be tonight.

## **Sunday**

Another busy day in the garden but also a lot of just sitting in the sunshine as well. A different walk this evening.

## *Week 2*

### **Monday, 19th May**

I've been here a week now and realise it is my forever home not just a holiday. This afternoon we had to visit a garage on the way home from work to check a warning light but it was all OK. Then another of Mum's favourite walks. I had a good bark at the noises coming across the garden from some small humans. I thought they were being strangled but it was alright - they were only playing. Their grandmother lives next door and they were visiting. I have never had anything to do with children so did not understand.

### **Tuesday**

On our walk today I wanted to go in the Churchyard but Mum spotted two muntjac in there so it was a no go. Although I did not see them myself I knew they were there so was not best pleased to be steered away from such an interesting place.

### **Wednesday**

Yet another new walk today. I'm really getting a lot of new smells.

## *Week 3*

### **Monday, 26th May**

Oh dear - I had a bad tummy so got Mum up at 5am to let me in the garden - then again at 6.30 but have recovered now. She thinks I have been eating cat's poo because they use our garden as their toilet, but I aim to get them trained to stay on their side of the fence.

### **Friday**

We visited a friend of Mum's this afternoon who has a little Jack Russell girl called Treacle. We had a very nice time in her garden until she sat on her owner's lap when she barked and growled at me to keep away. I think she was guarding him but I was very confused and surprised because I usually get on very well with the "ladies".



## *Week 4*

### **Wednesday, 4th June**

More new friends to visit today. They used to have two labradors but no longer. In their kitchen a cake was sitting on the worktop. It was very tempting and I almost got it but Mum was watching. Spoil sport!

### **Friday**

Met the resident dogs at work today, and saw some horses. The dogs are girls, one a small black Whippet and the other a small rough coated Lurcher. I think they thought I was very handsome.

### **Saturday**

A very strange creature came into the conservatory tonight - its called a frog. I could not catch it and neither could Mum so we had to leave it there at bedtime with a big bowl of water. I don't know what we will do tomorrow.

### **Sunday**

A long drive to visit some of Mum's relatives today where I met another little Jack Russell called Honey. We had a great time doing zoomies round the lawn. I have to admit for a fairly short legged little dog she was really fast. On our walk met a little dachshund (male) and I didn't lunge or growl at him. Wasn't that good of me?

## *Week 5*

### **Monday, 9th June**

That frog was in again but we managed to get him out fairly quickly. I tried to catch him but he jumps a lot and is very fast so left it to Mum to sort out.

### **Wednesday**

Vets today for a blood test. She was very nice but I was glad Mum was there to take me home. I have to have these check ups for a little problem I have had for a while.

## *Week 6*

### **Tuesday, 17th June**

I found my way into the fruit cage and was helping myself to raspberries when Mum found me. She has fixed the hole I made but later gave me some blueberries to try. I do love fruit.

### **Wednesday**

A very exciting time today. One of the chickens from next door was in the garden when I went out first thing. I caught it and carried it down the garden and then with much shouting from Mum brought it indoors and deposited it on the landing. It was very frightened I think but revived and Mum returned it to its friends over the fence, but I was in the "dog house" for at least half an hour. However, the lady next door gave Mum two dozen eggs so she obviously thought I was very clever! Humans are so strange!

### **Friday**

Tried the blackcurrants today and also some gooseberries but they are on very prickly bushes so it is not easy.

As the man on the radio issued an amber warning about the heat I did not go to work today so Auntie Jane came to see me at lunchtime and sat with me for about an hour. Am I spoilt or what?

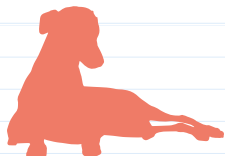
### **Saturday**

Mum was gardening all day long apart from my walks then Auntie Jane came this evening and they played something called Scrabble in the garden until it was almost dark. I sat and watched (when I wasn't sleeping) but had to investigate when one of them dropped some tiles. Auntie Jane thought I might eat one. What a cheek! I'm not stupid!

So that is my first six weeks here in my new home. I will continue writing my diary so if you are interested maybe you will be able to read some more.

So it's goodbye for now

*Take care, love Frankie.*



# Memories of Lynn Chapman

**Mary Blakeman recalls JRWR stalwart Lynn Chapman, who ran the charity's stall at various events across the country for many years.**

It was in the early 1990s when I got to know Lynn. I had been attending many Whippet Club shows since 1972 as a spectator. After Lynn took over the running of the JRWR stall we would chat while I made my purchases, and suddenly I was recruited! I never regretted it for one moment and enjoyed many busy happy times over the years, until Lynn retired in 2015.

In the early years at Crufts the rescue just had a stall near the breed ring and the stock was transported in our two cars. The night before Crufts, after finishing work, I would go down to Lynn's home to load up the merchandise. In the morning, after too short a time sleeping, with three or four whippets sharing my bed, it was up at 4am to set off for the NEC. I found the journey quite hair-raising as, unlike me, Lynn was a fast driver. I was terrified of losing sight of her car so just had to keep up! At times I would go back to Lynn's to unload but usually there was no need as sales were always brisk.

In later years when JRWR had a trade stand for all four days at Crufts and Lynn had moved to Wales, a large van was needed and came with two, or sometimes three, stalwart helpers. How many of you will remember the dreaded black bags full of collars, leads, tee shirts and blankets? Sometimes when unpacking it was a lucky dip if labels came off in transit, but it was Lynn's system and she understood it. All I know is that it must have involved a huge amount of time and effort from Lynn. Through it all she was cheerful and full of enthusiasm for any new stock to sell.

The Whippet Club of Wales was always a happy time, both at their shows at the Drill Hall, Chepstow and at Llantrisant near Cardiff, and whippet racing at Moreton-in-Marsh was great fun even when it was raining! The Whippet Fun Day at Grazeley was more relaxed and a whole lot of different people came along – Lynn was very good at giving help and advice about whippets but also amazing at remembering names, including those of overseas visitors to the stall.

In the early days of running the stall Lynn was still showing her lovely Ishkoodah whippets, and sometimes judging, but she trusted her helpers to look after things in her absence.

I believe it is due to Lynn that the JRWR stall has gone from strength to strength. She was certainly a character and someone not easily forgotten, and I am sure she is remembered with affection by many.

PS I hope you met up with all your beloved whippets over the Rainbow Bridge Lynn.



# ♡ Happily Homed

A summary of the last six months from JR's rehoming co-ordinators Lisa and Katie.



As always we would like to thank our volunteers, foster carers, transporters, supporters and followers for their continued help and support. We couldn't do what we do for Whippets without you all.

♡ Lisa & Katie x

## APRIL



It's been such a busy month with many whippets needing our help, some emergency intakes, and challenging times. A total of 12 lucky whippets went to their wonderful new homes, and as you can see they are all settling in very well.

## MAY



We are so incredibly busy behind the scenes that the months are just flying by! During May, nine beautiful whippets went to their fabulous new homes, and as you can see they are all settling in well.

## JUNE

June has been another incredibly busy month for us. At the moment, we are receiving calls and emails most days about whippets in need of help. It's truly overwhelming, and we are doing the best we can and helping as fast as we can.

We have a number of whippets looking for their forever homes at the moment. Most of them have complex temperaments that require understanding, but in the right homes, they will be amazing pets. We have also seen an influx in pairs of whippets being surrendered. For now though, we celebrate the 14 lucky Whippets that headed to their forever homes this month, as you can see, they are all settling in very well.

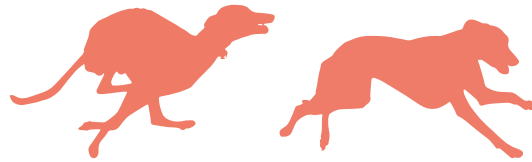


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## JULY

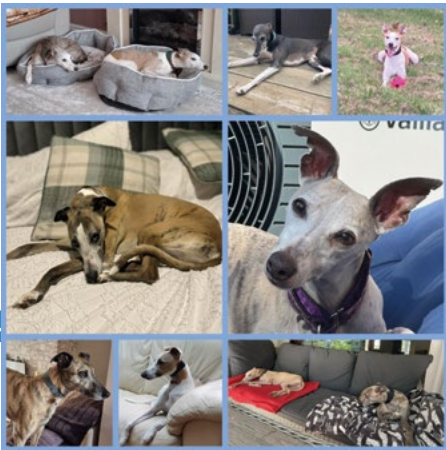


July was another incredibly busy month. Multiple whippets came into our care, and nine left us for their new homes. They are all settling in well, as you can see from the photos



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## AUGUST

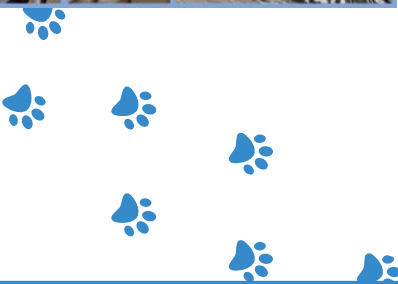


It's been another busy month, and during August 10 lucky Whippets headed off to their new homes, and as you can see, they are all settling in very well.

We actually saw a slight decrease in dogs being surrendered during August, which gave us some breathing space and time to organise current residents moving to their new homes. We already have plans in place for 4 Whippets to move to their lovely new homes in the coming days.

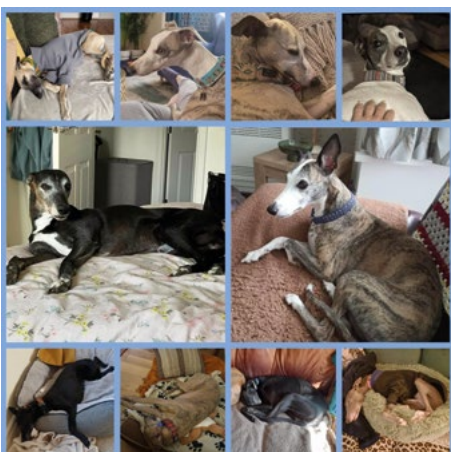
Now the holidays are coming to an end, we are starting to see the number of Whippets needing our help rise again, so as we head into autumn, things are looking to be very busy.

So much goes on behind the scenes with rescue, and even when we are quiet on social media, there is still lots happening. From speaking to potential adopters, arranging homechecks, transport runs, emergency collections, keeping up with paperwork etc, the days are never quiet.



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## SEPTEMBER



Another busy month has come to an end, and during September 10 lucky whippets went off to their lovely new homes. As you can see they are all settling in very well

Over the last few weeks, we have seen a huge increase in the amount of whippets needing our help. At the moment we are seeing a flurry of very young whippets needing to come into our care.

As a team we are working as fast as we can to help as many whippets as possible. Please be patient and bear with us while we navigate our way through these unprecedented busy times. Thank you for your continued support and understanding.

# A celebration of Willow

For the second year running, JRWR was one of the sponsors at a whippet race day which was raising funds for research in to Alabama Rot.

The event was organised by Shaun Reynolds, whose whippet Willow died after a brave fight against the disease in early 2024. Since then he has been on a mission to raise awareness of Alabama Rot and to raise funds for research in to the condition, which is fatal in 90 per cent of cases.

Vets currently know very little about the disease, also known as CRGV (cutaneous and renal glomerular vasculopathy), which usually starts with skin lesions, and leads on to kidney failure. It is thought to be related to bacteria or a toxin picked up in wet or muddy autumn conditions.

The 2025 Celebration of Willow race day was held at Lambourn Sports Club in September. Despite some fairly inclement weather, attendees enjoyed a six-race card (five run by whippers and one a mixed-breed and human relay!). A food truck, a lively bar, live music and a bouncy castle were also on offer.

The JR Whippet Rescue Sprint was won impressively by Pearl's A Singer, owned by Lisa King, who raced clear of the field and put the race to bed very quickly.

The event was well supported by whippet and greyhound lovers, as well as Lambourn's large horse racing community. The final race, the Coppice Racing Willow Memorial Derby, was won for the second year running by jockey Charlie Bishop's whippet Rupert. However this year Charlie couldn't be present as he rode Zavateri to victory in the Group 1 National Stakes at The Curragh in Ireland just half an hour before Rupert's triumph, with his girlfriend Davina left in charge of handling duties for an impressive across the card double!

JR chair of trustees Kate Bent was on hand to raise awareness about the charity and whippet rehoming, distributing flyers and newsletters, while newsletter editor George Sell presented the trophy to Pearl's a Singer and her connections.



Pearl's a Singer leads the field in the JR Whippet Rescue Sprint



Organiser Shaun Reynolds with his whippet Winston

Shaun, a Lambourn local, told JRWR: *"The support of JR is a massive help and very much appreciated. There's no one on the payroll at the Alabama Rot Research Fund, so every single penny goes to research. It was great to see JR handing out flyers and building awareness of the whippet breed in general - you don't need me to tell you, they're the best breed, along with greyhounds."*

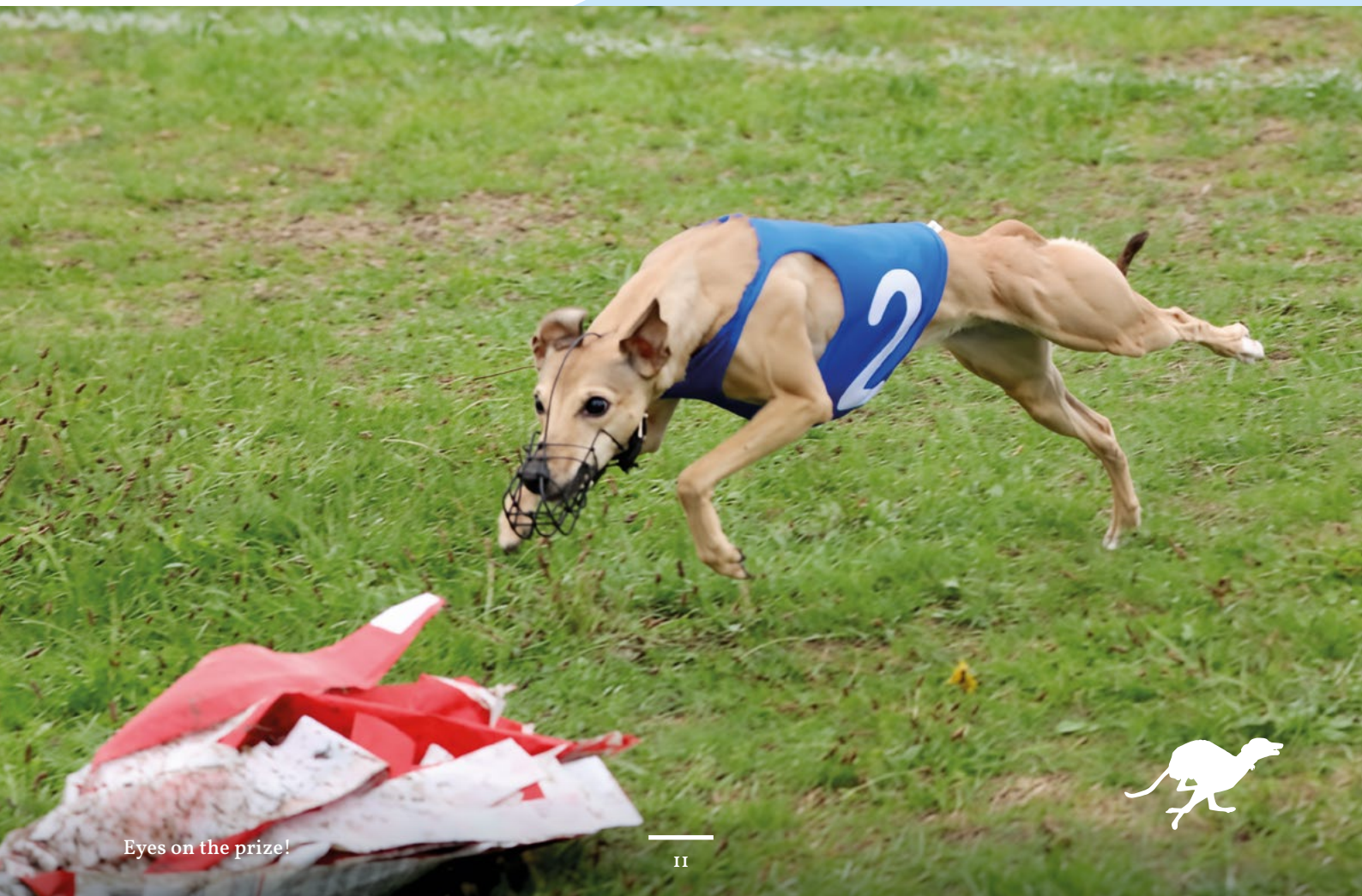
*"We've had more people getting whippets in Lambourn over the years, I think there must well over a dozen locally now. And six of the 331 cases officially recorded in the UK have been from Lambourn. So there's a lot of awareness here but generally speaking, it's still a disease which not many people know about. We know that it's a good idea to clean your dog's feet and underside if they've been out in muddy conditions, and especially if they have cuts or other wounds. But other than that we really know very little so the research we are helping to fund is really important,"* he adds.

To date Shaun's efforts have raised more than £17,500 for Alabama Rot Research. The Celebration of Willow race day will be back next year.

Alabama Rot Research Fund: [www.arrf.co.uk](http://www.arrf.co.uk)



Jockey Charlie Bishop's whippet Rupert (right) on his way to victory



# Annette Skelley

**Vanna Leathart remembers her mother Annette Skelley - breeder, shower and rehomer of whippets, and a former editor of the the JRWR newsletter.**

Annette got her first whippet in 1954 when she was working in a polo stable. After a riding accident, she wasn't sure if she would be able to work with horses again. A friend gave her a whippet puppy to cheer her up. He was a blue dog called Trespassers William. Her mother, Joan Standring, showed dachshunds, so naturally Annette wanted to show her whippet.

However, he had a second class registration as his dam was unregistered. In order to show him, she had to ask a Championship Show judge to look him over and state that he was a whippet. She took him to Dorrie Anderson, who agreed that he was indeed a whippet, albeit not a very good show specimen, and offered her a puppy from her next litter, so Billy was soon joined by Tweseldown Mimosa and then Sticklepath Jennifer.

Mimosa's first litter, by Ch Bellavista Barry produced Ch Blik's Ringmore Bardolph, and a repeat mating in 1960 US & Mex Ch Ringmore Finisterre. Annette always said she would have loved to keep Finisterre, but at 20 inches, he was far too big for the UK show ring in those days.



She continued with his litter brother Ringmore Faroe, who preferred racing to the show ring. In 1963 she married Don Skelley and three years later, my appearance put showing on hold for a few years. The family moved to the West of Scotland in 1968, and my brother was born a couple of years later, further curtailing her ability to travel to shows. Soon after moving to Scotland, Annette joined the committee of the Whippet Club of Scotland, and remained in various roles including a stint as Secretary until, on her retirement as Secretary in 2005, the club made her an Honorary Vice-President. She also served for many years on the Committee of Clydebank and District Canine Society.

In 1972 Silver Mink from Blik, joined the Ringmore kennel. Travelling to shows was difficult due to family commitments, but Silver Mink was rarely unplaced when she was shown, and produced among others, Malaysian Champion Ringmore Oriental Silver.

In 1981, Mary Lowe's Ch Ringmore Riff Raff was born. Annette joked that she could breed champions for other people, but never kept them for herself. Then she mated Riff Raff's litter sister to Ch Martinsell Wild and Lonely, and finally produced her own champion, Ch Ringmore Thief of Time JW. He was extra special, being the only blue and white male to gain his title in the UK.



Annette became involved with JR Whippet Rescue through her friendship with Joanna Russell. Initially she managed a rescue stall which she took to the Whippet Club of Scotland shows in the early 1980s. I remember manning this stand at many shows. On one occasion at a Championship Show, one of the whippeting old guard, Linda Smithers came to have a rummage. She was elderly and very deaf by then. We had some children's clothing with whippet heads on them, including (I have no idea why!) a pair of pants. Linda picked them up and asked what they were. I told her. *"Eh? Speak up child!"* I rephrased, and repeated myself several times, and finally said loudly *"Knickers, Mrs Smithers!"* The whole hall fell silent. You can imagine the embarrassment my 15 year-old self felt! This wasn't helped by Mum and her friends. For months afterwards, if anyone said *"What did you say?"* or *"Could you repeat that?"*, they all chorused *"Knickers, Mrs Smithers!"*

Annette also transported rescues and eventually became Area Representative for Scotland. I heard frequent mutterings about people not understanding the size of the area. Once, when asked to do a home check in Stromness, she had to carefully explain that it was about an eight hour drive before she got on the ferry.

*"What ferry?"*

*"You do realise Stromness is on Orkney?"*

*"Oh, is that a long way?"*

As time went on a network of informal helpers grew up, which meant that other areas were covered – although I don't believe any were in a position to pop over to Stromness easily to do a home check!

It was lucky that a close friend, Melanie Uytman, lived in the same village and owned a boarding kennel. This meant that rescues were well looked after if they needed to be kennelled for a short time. Not every kennel understands whippets the way Melanie does! Eventually Melanie took over as Area Representative and managed that role ably for many years.

The Friends and Newsletter was a wonderful initiative set up by Judith Faringdon. In 1995, Mum took over as Friends Co-ordinator and Newsletter Editor. She continued to hold this post until her death in 2019, when Dot Graham took over. She made many friends of her own doing this, and loved hearing about their whippets and their adventures. The Newsletter developed and changed format over the years, but Mum believed the most important part was always the section of letters and stories from the Friends themselves, sharing their experiences as owners of rescued whippets.

In later years, she lived with her last four whippets, including her beloved Finnish import, Infamous Cornelius of Ringmore, bred by Anna Suojärvi. She had to rely on others to handle her dogs for her, but still enjoyed attending shows immensely.



# Miniature race horses

There is a definite affinity between horsey people, particularly racing folk, and whippets. At any racing gathering you'll be unlucky not to spot a whippet out two. George Sell talks to a range of racing figures about why they love whippets.



Colin Brown and Desert Orchid

## Colin Brown, ex-jump jockey

Former jump jockey Colin Brown is best known for his association with the legendary Desert Orchid, who he rode 42 times, notching up 17 wins. As well as piloting 'Dessie', he rode more than 400 winners and took part in the Grand National seven times. He was stable jockey for Dessie's trainer David Elsworth. Colin still works in racing, as a hospitality host, speaker and tipster.

Colin and his wife Nicole's first whippet was called Rosemary. He says: "She was so beautiful and so obedient and so much fun that we thought Rosemary was just the best. We'd always had Jack Russells, but Rosemary was so sweet, she just went anywhere with us, and from then on we thought whippets are the dogs for us."

"Now, we've got three whippets - Stan, who is very special, and has done very well at lure coursing. He's so lovely, and he's dedicated to Nicole. I can take him for walks, but basically he is just in love with his mum, but he's such a wonderful dog."

"Then we got Sid, who's Stan's cousin. He's also been very good at lure coursing. He went off to the World Championships in Finland, and finished fourth. He's a funny little character. He's quite a small dog, but he's got a mind in his own. He knows exactly where he wants to go and what he wants to do. Stan's the boss, but if Stan moves out of a bed, Sid is straight in there! Sid's a lovely character. He's a great dog."



Dessie sees a long one with Colin aboard

“And then we’ve got another one called Erik, who’s my dog. He just loves me for some reason, and he follows me everywhere. He has his eye on me, and every time I move out of the room, he’s following me. They’re all great dogs. They just curl up in little bundles underneath a duvet or a sheepskin, and you don’t even know they’re there.”

Colin says whippets have always been around in the racing scene. “Back in the day, David Elsworth always had two or three whippets. He used to just click his fingers and they’d jump in the Land Rover up to the gallops. They’d run around up there chasing each other, occasionally putting up the odd hare. They were just great fun.”

“I think racing people like the athleticism of them. They’re a bit like a mini racehorse, aren’t they, really? They almost look like a flat racehorse. Certainly, they sort of go up to the stifle, and they’re just, you know, you can take them anywhere. They can be a little bit naughty but on the whole, they’re just nicely behaved. And if you’ve got to pop a whippet in a car on the way back from the races with a couple of friends, people don’t mind sitting on either side of a whippet. They’re very clean and tidy little dogs, and they’re just great fun. I think it’s the speed and the presence of them racing people love.”



Colin with (left to right) Sid, Stan and Erik



Colin and ‘naughty’ Erik



Colin in Sweden with Sid, Stan and Rosemary

## Jamie Snowden, National Hunt trainer

Lambourn-based trainer Jamie Snowden has trained more than 450 winners, including Cheltenham Festival victories, and numerous Graded and Listed contests. He is based at the famous Folly House yard, which he shares with his wife Lucy, their three children Lettie, Harry and Arthur, around 70 race horses - and a whippet called Monkey.

His entry in to the world of whippets happened by chance. Jamie says: "I used to have two German shorthaired pointers, and both mum and daughter died within six months of each other, and I was distraught. Lucy, my wife, went off to Devon, to go and go buy a terrier we'd organised, but she came back with a whippet instead. There was one looking for a home, and she fell in love with him and brought him back up to Folly House."



Monkey has fitted in well with family life and is great with kids



Jamie Snowden and family after Ga Law won the 2022 Paddy Power Gold Cup at Cheltenham



Two of the Snowden children with their ponies and Monkey the whippet

"He settled in brilliantly. He's just the kindest dog in the world. He really is. He's lovely. he gets on well with all the all the kids, he's great around all the horses. He's an absolute delight to have. He spends time out in the yard, but he also spends a lot of time by the Aga. He's one of those amazing dogs that obviously needs plenty of exercise - we take him out and he runs and runs and runs - but when he comes back in, he's fast asleep by the Aga. So he's he's a very easy dog to have around."

"I think horsey people like whippets for several reasons. They're so friendly, they get on with other animals, and the fact that they take a bit of exercise. Obviously, we're all quite fit individuals and like getting out and walking. So the nice thing is, they can then come in and have a good sleep, so they probably fit in with with the lifestyle of people with horses quite well."



Charlie aboard Zavateri, winning the Vintage Stakes at Goodwood

## Charlie Bishop, flat jockey

Flat jockey Charlie Bishop has just had a great season, in part due to the success of a chestnut colt called Zavateri. Trained by Eve Johnson-Houghton, Zavateri won his first four starts in increasingly tougher races, culminating in a victory in the Group 1 Irish National Stakes at The Curragh.

Charlie and his partner Davina had been together several years when they decided to get a puppy. Charlie says: "Some family friends of mine bred a litter of whippets. So we went to see them, you know what it's like, you're never going to come back without one. There were two dogs in the litter that were quite similar, but Rupert fell asleep on my lap, with the hiccups. So we thought he might be the easy one to look after."

"And he is extremely easy. He has a good walk in the morning and likes to sleep all day until he has to go out for a walk in the evening. He's no hassle at all. Although we went out for a walk yesterday morning when it was raining and and he pulled back on his lead and looked up as if to say 'are you taking the Mickey?'"

"I guess horsey people like them because they're just so easy and they adapt to everyone's lifestyle. Rupert spends a lot of time in the car, and also spends a bit of time on his own, at home. He's very happy to as long as he's had his walk and his biscuits, he's pretty happy to sleep and work around you. There are similarities with horses in that once they have their hour of attention and exercise every day, they're very happy to spend the next sort of 22 or 23 hours just chilling out."

So will the inevitable second whippet be following any time soon? "We have thought about this. The only thing is with our kind of busy schedule, with racing, one dog is very easy to offload on to someone to look after, whereas, if you had two, you feel like you're asking a bit more of a favour. So for the time being, we have one, but yeah, we certainly will get another one at some point."



Charlie Bishop with partner Davina and Rupert the whippet

## Camilla Poulton, dual-purpose trainer

Camilla Poulton trains a string of flat horses and jumpers from her base at Telscombe in the Sussex Downs.

Whippets came in to her life unexpectedly when her daughter Eliza brought a puppy home. "We were looking after it for someone with no intention of keeping it, but it wasn't long before we realised he was here for life!"

"That was the start of it," she says. "He's called Bullet and he's still going strong at the age of 14. We've bred three litters using him and kept a pup from each one so we've got quite a pack here now. They're our little hot water bottles!"

Camilla's whippets earn their keep by actually taking an active role in training horses! "They're great around the horses and great around the yard. And we do actually use them to help work the horses. They'll go along beside us at 30 miles an hour. The horses love it, you know, galloping upside the whippets, it's quite funny. We train on the Downs, and sometimes we'll take one horse off on its own for some work, to keep it sweet, and take the labrador and the whippet out with us, and the whippet ends up galloping alongside. It's crazy but they love it, and horses love it as well."

"I think horses and whippets go together well, they have a mutual respect. And the whippets are great to have around the yard. So we feed at 10:30 at night, and three of the whippets always come with me. If there's a rat about, they'll find it. And they're just great company. If they've been outside and running around everywhere, they'll just come in and they go sleep, for a solid 12 hours! Then in the morning if it's raining and you open the door for them to pee, they're like 'no, thank you, I'll hold it!'"

"We always say whippets aren't like other dogs. They're whippets. You know, they have this privilege. They jump up on the sofa and we just let them. None of the other dogs were allowed on the sofas, but they seemed to get around the house rules pretty quickly!"

"One of our whippets Polly, she's tiny, more like the size of an Italian greyhound. We thought she'd grow, but she didn't. She still looks like a puppy now, but she's the toughest little soul you ever imagined. Everyone just thinks whippets are these little things that shake but they are tough little dogs. I just love having them around. They're real characters."



Camilla Poulton with one of her charges

# Remembering Paola

**Tony Marra remembers his sister Paola Marra, the remarkable founder of iheartwhippets and a tireless fundraiser for dog charities.**

My sister, Paola Marra established iheartwhippets in 2012 as 'a fun way to celebrate the quirkiness of the breed and to raise money for various dog rescue charities'. Her online auctions and other fundraising activities raised more than £113,000 while creating a wonderful community of dog lovers, artists, makers and designers. Helping dogs in need and supporting artists provided her with a tremendous amount of joy. She had a wicked sense of humour and kept people entertained with fun and often cheeky Facebook posts.



Butch

Pets were always a part of Paola's life. Butch was our first family dog, a mutt who smiled so hard it made him sneeze. After she moved from Canada to London, her first pets were cats, Scooter and Mickey. But it was a print of 'Mario' by photographer Philip Gatward that made her fall in love and adopt her first sighthounds, Freida and Biscuit. They came into her life in 2012 through The Cinnamon Trust. They were meant to be fosters but after their owner, Emma sadly passed away, Paola decided to adopt 'the girls'. She said they are the reason she got hooked and became the 'crazy whippet lady' after adopting Luigi, Stanley (another foster fail), Pippa and Dusty. Coco and Bella joined the crew in 2014.

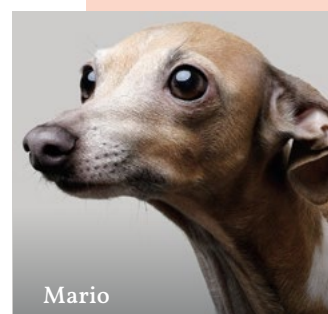
On July 29th, 2012, Paola's first iheartwhippets event was at the Suffolk Dog Day at the Helmingham Hall Gardens. The event raised £307.59 for Scruples Whippet Rescue and launched her incredible fundraising and advocacy journey. A month later, the iheartwhippets logo was launched and in February of 2013, she had her first online auction featuring many of her new artist and maker friends' works. She wrote, "*sourcing unique and bespoke items is one of my favourite aspects of organising an auction*".

Always spreading word about dogs in need of adoption, Paola made her first post about JR Whippet Rescue in 2013 writing, "*Diva and Roxy need a home!*". She was a passionate advocate for dogs in need, with a soft spot for the elderly as highlighted by her founding the Senior Sighthound Project. In these early days, she supported Kim's Home for Elderly and Abused Sighthounds, Greyhound Gap and Italian Greyhound Rescue (where she got Pippa, Dusty and Luigi) as well.

In December of 2014, the iheartwhippet HQ moved from Suffolk to Cornwall.



Freida and Biscuit



Mario

On August 3rd, 2015, Paola launched iheartwhippets Fundraising, Daycare and Home Boarding by posting, "I run iheartwhippets to raise money for various sighthound rescues... well, I've decided to start doing daycare and home boarding too! If you have a pointy face, need someone experienced to take care of them and are in or visiting Cornwall, then I'm your woman". Some people drove their dogs long distances to have Paola care for them. It was a gorgeous piece of land ideal for a herd of whippets, beautifully captured by the photography of Mark James.

In 2017, Paola was diagnosed with breast cancer and underwent treatment. During this time she needed to step back from much of her fundraising efforts. In 2019, she moved back to London when Hampstead Heath and Kenwood Estate became her second home. She loved walking the dogs there, always striking up conversations with other dog walkers. She wasn't shy! Many refer to her route as 'Paola's Path'...down from the parking lot, past the dairy and along The West Meadow.

Sadly in 2020, she was diagnosed with colon cancer. She had various surgeries and treatments over the next three years until there was nothing her medical team could do for her except try to manage her pain.

On November 24th, 2023 Paola posted, "Cancer companions. I can honestly say that if it weren't for my dogs during my bowel cancer treatment (a lot of which happened during the pandemic) I don't think I would still be here. I was completely isolated (no partner, kids or family here - though a friend Mark helped me hugely) so my dogs were my only source of comfort and connection - plus when I was able, they got me out of the house and into nature, which for me is very important. Sadly, since treatment for my bowel cancer started, I've lost three beautiful souls: Coco, Bella and Luigi (and Pippa & Dusty before that, during my breast cancer treatment). Stanley is the last man standing and has become my best sofa snuggle buddy on days when I feel like shit. He's a Netflix and chill kinda guy but is equally happy having a slow sniff around the Heath or a pub lunch with friends. He's a perfect dog partner."



On March 20th, 2024 we lost her.

Lisa Cartwright from Greyhound Gap wrote, *"Through Paola's darkest days during her illness she still always managed to have fun, find fun and make fun and often a little bit of mischief".*

Stanley lives with Mark James now and is having a wonderful retirement in Cornwall. It gave Paola comfort to know he would be well cared for and loved.

In August of 2024, I met Christine Chau and Fernanda McQuillan at Paola's memorial. They approached me about doing another auction. It had been on my mind as well, as I wanted to do something special with some of Paola's beautiful sighthound art. We decided to go for it as a way to show our love for her. We chose to support JR Whippet Rescue, Greyhound Gap and Kim's Home, as they all meant so much to her.

It was during this last auction that I began to understand her impact. People shared how they felt about Paola. Many commented that although they never met her, they felt like they knew her...and to know Paola was to love her. And she loved her friends right back! They were her iheartwhippets family and through compassion and love, they built the community together with her.

I am grateful that so many of you were a part of Paola's life.  
Thank you xx



# Going the extra mile(s)

**Cy Bridgman gives an insight in to the challenging but rewarding world of being a volunteer with JR Whippet Rescue.**

Volunteering for JR Whippet Rescue is both rewarding and fulfilling – though my partner might say it's more like a part-time job with no clocking off. It usually begins with my phone lighting up with a voice note from Lisa Samson (JR homing co-ordinator). No need to listen straight away – I already know what's coming. A whippet needs help. Somewhere, probably not nearby. And just like that, the wheels begin turning. This familiar notification has become a running joke in our household. It's usually followed by a sigh from my very understanding partner and the standard questions: *"Where are you going this time?", "What time will you be back?"*, and the classic: *"Don't wake me up when you get home."*

Much of my time is spent travelling the length and breadth of the country, collecting whippets from difficult situations. Every trip is different – and almost always ends in a heated disagreement with the sat nav, which seems to think "shortcut" means single-track road with no passing places and a flock of sheep for company. Sometimes it's a long motorway drive to collect a nervous dog from a home where circumstances have sadly changed. Other times, it's a precisely timed handover in a motorway services car park. No two trips are the same, but each is driven by a shared purpose: to rescue, rehabilitate, and rehome whippets in need.

Equally important – though often with fewer arguments with the sat nav – is the work I do conducting home checks for prospective adopters. These visits are about more than just measuring fences or counting dog beds, they're a chance to get a feel for the heart of the home. Whippets are sensitive and affectionate, so it's vital to find families who truly understand their quirks – like the belief that a space on every sofa is theirs by divine right.

Of course, rescue work is not without its emotional challenges. Recently, I've been reminded of this after picking up two dogs who were painfully thin, with the older one clearly having some health issues. These two dogs really pulled at my heart in ways words can't fully explain. But having weekly updates from Diane (foster carer) really makes me smile and restores my faith in humanity. It makes every mile travelled, and every hour sat on a motorway worthwhile. I'm proud to be a small part of the JR Whippet Rescue team. It's a network built on compassion, commitment, and a deep love for this gentle, elegant breed. For every whippet that finds their forever home, there's a story of dedication behind the scenes and I'm honoured to play a part in that journey.



# The story of Peggy



**Peggy's journey to JR began on Tuesday 22nd April after we received a call to help a six-month old puppy who had broken her leg a few weeks previously. This is her story.**

We got straight on the phone to our lovely volunteer Cy, who didn't hesitate to jump in his car to start the six-hour round trip to collect her.

Once Peggy was safely with Cy, it became clear that she needed to see a vet as soon as possible. Lisa met Cy on route and drove her directly to the vet to be checked. While the wheels were turning to ensure Peggy received the care she desperately needed, Katie was busy obtaining any veterinary history and more details to assist us with getting Peggy the best treatment.

We knew Peggy had suffered an injury to her front leg, but nothing could prepare us for quite how bad it was. X-rays showed that the break to her leg had been very serious and sadly it had been left without much-needed surgery. Peggy arrived wearing a very tatty, soiled, and chewed bandage, so once we got her to the vets, she received the initial treatment she needed to make her comfortable and a fresh bandage was applied. Because several weeks had passed since the injury first occurred, her leg had already started the healing process. Sadly though, it was setting into the wrong position and was also twisted. In turn this was causing secondary problems in her elbow joint. Over the next few weeks Peggy remained in foster care with Lisa and she had regular vet checks and bandage changes.

Being the remarkable girl Peggy is, she still tried to live life to the full. Once the bone was stable and the bandage had been removed, she enjoyed walks and short zoomies in safe areas, but the injury had sadly left her with a permanent limp and deformity to the limb. Although she was quite happy in the moment, leaving the leg without specialist treatment would cause severe long-term damage.

Further discussions were had with the vets and amputation was also discussed, but as Peggy is so young, and having such a zest for life, we really wanted to try and save her leg, so we were put in touch with the lovely team at Debenham Veterinary Practice where we met with orthopaedic surgeon Ben Garland to discuss our options.

After consultations with Ben and long conversations with the JR Team, we opted for surgery with 3D printed guides, and although this was the slightly more expensive option, it would give Peggy the best chance of leading a long, happy and normal life once recovered. She had further x-rays and CT scans in preparation for surgery and the 3D guides were made for her specific needs.



Fresh bandage!



Peggy, before and after surgery

Peggy's surgery was performed in August, and we are thrilled to say that the procedure went extremely well. To our amazement, she was walking soundly from the moment she left the vet's! But then the hard work began to keep her as quiet as possible for six weeks to allow her to heal and give her the best chance of a successful recovery, much easier said than done with a young energetic whippet puppy!

Lots of enrichment was the order of the day to keep Peggy entertained while she was on strict crate rest, and overall, she is being a very well-behaved patient! Her controlled exercise is now starting to increase, and her rehabilitation is going very well.

Unfortunately, her injured leg wasn't the only thing Peggy had to overcome. When she arrived with us back in April, she was a completely broken soul, she hadn't been house trained and had no experience of life. Slowly but surely, she has learnt how to be a happy, content and much-loved whippet. She has such an amazing attitude to life and has come an incredibly long way since the day we collected her, and we hope that she will soon be able to start making up for the puppyhood she missed out on and live a fulfilled life full of adventures and mischief.



We would like to thank the incredible veterinary teams at the Independent Animal Clinic and Debenham Veterinary Practice, particularly Ben Garland, for their amazing care and kindness to help Peggy. We appreciate you all so much.

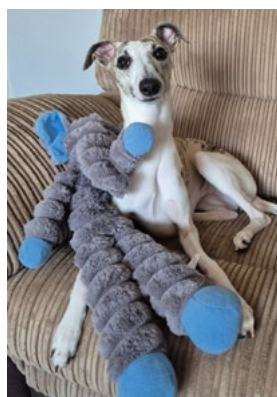
Peggy is just one of the hundreds of whippets we help each year, and your kind generosity and support enables us to continue to be there for more whippets in need. Thank you.



Peggy with Ben Garland



Peggy in her favourite chair



# Remembering Gay Robertson



**Catriona Ryan remembers Gay Robertson of the the hugely successful Moonlake line of multi-purpose whippets.**

My cousin Gay Robertson, who died in April at the age of 86, was a remarkable person who led an equally remarkable life. She is probably most widely known today as a notable breeder of whippets, where her aim was always to produce beautiful, fit-for-function dogs, which excelled both in the field and in the show-ring.

However, this represented only part of a rich and varied life, which also encompassed the worlds of advertising, TV entertainment and cinema. She was born in 1938, the only child of her parents' second marriage. As such, age-wise she very much fell between two generations of her family, which meant that she had a fairly solitary childhood. At the age of 10 she was (in her words) "dumped" in France, where she went to school while boarding with a French family in Paris.

She quickly became fluent in French, and developed a lifelong love of French literature and culture, which manifested itself in later life in an extensive collection of French books...and a bidet in every bathroom! On leaving school, she spent a further couple of years in Italy, where the families she stayed with were so extremely rich that she always said afterwards that she thought they might have Mafia connections!

It was here that she learned to drive – in an Alfa Romeo on the estate of one of her host families. This experience, together with that of being whisked along precipitous coast roads by a succession of Italian boyfriends, left her with a certain disdain for the rules of the road which could make driving with her in later life an 'interesting' experience!

She also added Italian to her list of languages, which was to stand her in very good stead later on. On returning to the UK, she got a job in an advertising agency, and subsequently moved to the BBC, where she worked in the Light Entertainment section.

It was around this time that she acquired her first whippet – a dog puppy whose owners were going to have him put to sleep because he was unsuitable for the purpose for which they had bought him... not exactly responsible pet owners! Their loss, however, was definitely Gay's gain – because this dog (Madishan Moonlake, or Luke to his friends) became one of the fastest dogs of his generation. He quickly gained his racing title, and was almost unbeatable on the coursing field – after winning the Nicholl Cup (the premier competition for coursing whippets) three years in a row, Gay was allowed to keep the trophy, and presented a new one (the Moonlake Cup) in its stead.

*Two of the stake winners: Miss G Robertson with Madisham Moonlake and Mrs A Locke with Madisham Moonshine.*



**Where it all started - Gay (left) with her first whippet Madishan Moonlake after a successful day's coursing**

Luke's exploits fired in Gay a determination to breed her own line of whippet stars. With her customary commitment, she set herself to learn as much as possible about the breed, its history and the currently successful showing and working lines. As a result, her knowledge – backed up by a huge collection of breed records, books, videos etc – became truly encyclopaedic, and resulted in a long line of successful dogs, which continues to this day.

Her Moonlake affix became known for producing dogs who could more than hold their own in the ring and in the field. This was the more remarkable because Gay's work commitments initially meant that she was spending quite lengthy spells abroad. She temporarily left the BBC to work in Italy, where she was in charge of publicity on various film sets – this entailed spreading the word about the film on location and organising the launch party when it came out. She worked with several well-known directors – most notably Luchino Visconti (“horrid man – thought he was Mussolini”) on the film *Death In Venice*, starring Dirk Bogarde.

Eventually, however, Gay came back to the UK and returned to work at the BBC – this time, selecting arthouse movies for screening on BBC2. This meant that, apart from relatively short trips abroad to attend the larger film festivals, she had more time to develop her breeding programme at home. Her pack grew larger and larger, until at one point she had 17 dogs living in the house with her, and juggling their needs with her work commitments proved quite a challenge!

When she retired from the BBC, she bought a large house in the Cotswolds, where the principal attraction was the 18 acres of land that came with it – perfect for breeding, rearing and exercising dogs. For a time she also took up greyhound coursing, with great success, but only bred one litter, partly because the whippets made it clear that they were not prepared to share their house with greyhounds, and partly because coursing was banned soon afterwards.

However, the rise of the sport of lure-coursing means that dogs' fitness for function can still be tested in the field, and the Moonlake line continued to flourish. Gay started going to meetings in mainland Europe, and it was at one of these that she hatched a plan to mate one of her bitches to a German dog who was also competing there. When the time came, winter storms were raging across Europe – but undaunted, Gay drove through the blizzards to southern Germany and the bitch was successfully mated. The effort proved well worth it though, as the two pups that Gay kept did very well in the ring and on the field, while their sister (who was the fastest of all of them) became a lurecoursing champion and produced some very fast puppies of her own – in fact, two of them were part of the first UK team to go to the European lure coursing Championships, where they acquitted themselves with distinction.



With Fickle (Moonlake Mazda) at a Sporting Whippet Club lure coursing meeting



Lure coursing in Rono, Netherlands, last autumn - Gay's last trip abroad



In Estonia for a lure coursing event, 2019



At Crufts with Frank (Moonlake My Way), 2019 (for more about Frank, see page 4)



At Buckingham Palace

Despite all this success, Gay was possibly unique among breeders in seeing all her swans as geese until they proved otherwise. I lost count of the number of times that she would say that X was very slow – only for X to come out and sweep the opposition away! Success meant a great deal to her, but she never took it for granted, and was always thrilled when one of her dogs did well. Two years ago, her heart dog Frank (Moonlake My Way) gave her one of her happiest moments when he crowned a glittering career by gaining his lurecoursing title at the ripe old age of eight. His half-sister Flirty (M. Medium Blonde), from the final litter that Gay bred, also gained her title at about the same time.

Gay's personality was quite a complex one. Her childhood meant that her qualities of self-reliance and resourcefulness were well-developed, and she had little patience with those who didn't share them. She was uncomfortable around children, who in turn could find her rather intimidating. She could also be quite abrasive, didn't suffer fools gladly, and was not afraid to speak her mind when she felt it necessary.

However, she was as ruthlessly honest in berating herself when she thought she deserved it (which

was quite often), and her dry sense of humour and fund of racy stories from her past made her very good company. She enjoyed the good things in life, and would never buy anything she considered of inferior quality, whether this be food, clothes, hotel rooms etc. She was lucky in that she could afford to indulge herself in this respect – but was also quite careful with money, to the extent of panicking when the fuel bills came in, and economising when she could.

She loved reading, and had a huge collection of books, from little collections of cartoons in the cloakroom, through pony books from her youth, to biographies, dog books (of course!), science fiction and (her favourite) spy fiction, where the more complex the plot the better she liked it. She was also a fluent writer herself – a quality put to good use when she was co-opted onto the editorial board of the Kennel Gazette a few years ago.

Her goal was always to do any task she undertook in the best way it could be done, and she spared herself no effort to achieve this. She kept going right to the end – monitoring TV coverage from Crufts and writing about it from her hospital bed. She was one of my best friends, and I miss her a lot – RIP Gay.



# Stallholder's 2025 Autumn Report

Dear JRWR Friends

It's that time of year for this year's Christmas card launch and 2026 Calendars, but first a look back on the past 6 months.

For me I have indeed had the privilege of meeting my faithful and some new customers at the Shows I have attended with the Stall. I was thrilled to be able to attend the Three Counties Show at Malvern, very kindly invited by Helen Wayman and will be returning next Summer.

Hound Show at Stafford was a very wet affair but still did very well and the customers were brave and found us on a very soggy exterior.

Again, had a very busy day at The Whippet Club Show in Benson, with a super takings and donations from the late Carol Neal who chose the JRWR as her Charity for donations in her memory.

So back to this year's Christmas cards and calendars. We have three cards as you will see in the newsletter and three calendars. Lisa Samson from the relinquishing and rehoming team along with Lewis Daniels from The Midland Whippet Club have produced our very own JRWR Calendar. I would be grateful if you were to purchase one of them, they are only £6.00 - excellent value.

Please call me if you need any guidance on any of the items it is never a problem, it is my job!

We hope to be at Crufts 2026, unfortunately due to a new layout we will not be in the usual spot as the past 25 years, but hopefully we will be there and I will post on the Facebook page nearer the time. Love to put a face to the name and say hello.

Now to my many thank Qs, to the army of knitters who make the blankets, jackets and snoods, Brenda Atkins, Rosalie and Linda Hammet, Vicki Chapman, Libbie Foster, Mary Blakeman (a God send on the stall), Margaret Golby for her vigilance, and all those who donate items for us to sell.

Hope you have a blessed Christmas and Happy New Year see you in 2026!

*Rose Hutton*

JRWR Shop



<https://shop.whippetrescue.org.uk>

If viewing this digitally, click/tap to see the items on the website

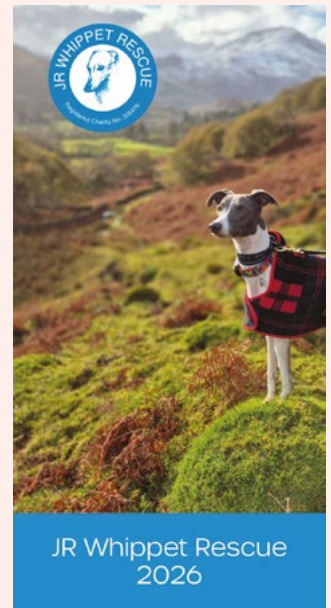


Christmas cards

New for 2025 - £1.00 each or 10 for £4.50



"Whippetoboggan" returns for 2025!



New - JR Whippet Rescue calendar

£6.00



The Whippet calendar

£11.00



Roll Call calendar

£11.00



# A house in the country

**In the latest of a series of articles, JR patron Lilah Wainman recalls the challenges of rehoming dogs before the internet age, and the perils of living on a flood plain with 15 whippets.**

We left London - and sadly the many friends we had made at Battersea Dogs Home - in 1989, and moved to a house in Worcestershire, where my mother Dorrit McKay (The first patron of JRWR) came to join us with her very elderly whippets, as it had space for her with some wild acres which all the dogs appreciated.

The 1990s were a very busy period for the rescue in my part of the UK - hardly a week passed without a relinquished whippet needing to come and stay. Then started the long series of telephone calls, no email in those days, to make arrangements, it was always a great relief when I picked up a whippet or it was safely delivered to its new home.

As many people will know this often meant keeping the whippet for some time, with visits to the vet in Malvern, special diets and care. Once the whippet had reached a satisfactory state, both mentally and physically, I could begin finding a suitable new home. Linda Jones our rehoming officer was always very helpful with this task.

I would like to mention a few of the people who were of great help to me during the 1990s. The late John Isles and his wife who used to bring all the rescues to me from the Birmingham and the surrounding area; Penny Gilmore from Alfrick who used drop everything to help look after the dogs; along with my mother if I had to go out for more

than a short time, despite having four rescues of her own; Wendy Smith, the lady who came to clean us up every week who was so good with the dogs and especially after our flood; and Pam Humphries, who also helped out if I had to go away.

To write about all the whippets that came through the doors of Hopton Court would fill a dozen newsletters. To mention just a few:

Tiffany appeared on a racecourse in Wales, very bedraggled and wet, too afraid to let anyone catch her. Barry Jones spent many hours visiting the race course with his own dog daily, gradually winning Tiffany's trust. When she was eventually caught, she went to temporary foster nearby with Carol Birch, and then on to me where she was found a wonderful home with Sue Lewis, and was great company for her other rescue Thea.

Pippa was a fawn two-year old who was found tied to a car in Tesco's carpark. The rather startled owner of the car, took her to the police station and after seven days, no one claimed her so she ended up with me. Pippa was a large bouncy whippet needing a lot of love and training. She was found a lovely home near Oxford and her owners brought her along to the JRWR stall at a Whippet Club show for people to see how well she looked and her newly honed perfect set of manners.



Wilber (see photo) came to me from the Canine Defence League, now The Dogs Trust, as a stray from their Evesham kennels. He was about eight years old and had been there sometime, suffering from severe kennel depression, and was very thin. He became a different dog and cheered up tremendously once he had met my whippets, in spite of having heart issues, he became full of energy, gained weight and went to live in Wales and was a great companion to Prince, another of my rescues.

Billy was a two-year old fawn dog. His owner did not want to keep him as his leg had been damaged in an accident, he had a lot of psychological problems, but after a lot of care he was able to settle with a super family in Malvern.

One of my last rescues came via the late Patricia Fraser from the Animal Welfare Trust kennels in Birmingham. Duke was a one-year old brindle and white boy who had been much loved by his owner who sadly, unexpectedly died. He was very shy and bewildered but after a while came out of his shell. He found a new home in Gloucester and on the first night was confident enough to claim their bed as his preferred sleeping place!

During my last full year in the house, Worcestershire had terrible floods and our ground floor was under water, well over the tops of my wellington boots. Grannie was over 90 years old by then, and with at least 15 dogs we had to set up camp together upstairs. Some of them were rescues who ended up in various bedrooms in the pitch dark as all our torches had run out of

batteries. It was so cold both humans and whippets all had coats on! The water subsided the following morning and with wonderful Wendy's help we took all the dogs outside to a tiny patch of dry grass to relieve themselves, they were all bursting but we had no accidents in the night!



*Wilber on arrival from the Canine Defence League, March 1994*

In 1999 I moved to Herefordshire, but that's another story for another newsletter.

So many people were wonderfully kind in helping JRWR, without them, I would have found my work for the rescue impossible,

**Lilah (Bond Gunning) Wainman**



# Patricia Fraser 1942-2025



Born in north London in September 1942, Patricia was the daughter of West End actors Alec and Guinevere Fraser. Her sister Jill was artistic director of Berkshire's Watermill theatre from 1981 until her death in 2006.

In spite of this solid theatrical background, her life took a very different direction, as it was totally devoted to the care of animals, particularly dogs – and especially whippets.

Patricia was the National Animal Welfare Trust's first employee when it was established in 1972, and over the next 30 years she set up its rescue and support groups across the country. Much of the job was to ensure that the charity remained in the public eye so her family background made it easy to find famous names for fund raising events.

In 1981 the AWT acquired the Watford Centre kennels where for several years she and a team of two worked from a small caravan. In 1986 the acquisition of an adjoining two-acre field in Watford opened up the charity to larger animals.

As executive director and secretary, and concurrent with her work at the Watford centre, Patricia was the force and expertise behind setting up further branches in Somerset in 1991 and Cornwall in 1997. In 2001 Trindledown Farm in Berkshire opened, with the first purpose-built home for elderly pets.

After retirement from the NAWT in June 2003 she continued her work with animal welfare charities, becoming a director of the Home for Unwanted and Lost Animals [HULA] between October 2001 and October 2010 - and of course, there were her strong links with JR Whippet Rescue, which continued until her recent death.

Throughout her adult life Patricia always had at least three whippets, her first love, hence her strong connection with JRWR, and from our early days when we had very limited resources and helpers, she provided temporary kennels for us at the AWT centres. In addition she was available for fostering, home checking, transporting, helping on our stalls at Crufts and other venues; most valuable was her knowledge of so many rescue related issues with expert advice freely given.

As a trustee from 1985 for 15 years, her presence at any meeting was invaluable. Unfortunately ill health limited her mobility in recent years and she will be missed by a few old friends, but particularly by her beloved whippets and lurcher – Pip, Abbie and Hattie.

**Judith Farrington**



# Useful contacts:

## Donations Link -

<https://whippetrescue.org.uk/donate/>

**Cheque Donations/Gift Aid Form** – Mrs Sally Ashwell (Finance Manager) – Woodcroft, Tibberton, Gloucester, GL19 3AQ:

[financial@whippetrescue.org.uk](mailto:financial@whippetrescue.org.uk)

## Merchandise sales/second hand equipment –

Mrs Rose Hutton (Shop Manager) – 54, Austcliffe Road, Cookley, Nr Kidderminster, Worcs. DY10 3UP

[shop@whippetrescue.org.uk](mailto:shop@whippetrescue.org.uk)

**Meridian Stamps** – JR Whippet Rescue Stamps, c/o Meridian Stamps, 9 Quarry Court, Pitstone Green Business Park, Pitstone, Bucks, LU7 9GW

**Just Giving** – [www.justgiving.com](http://www.justgiving.com)

**Give as you live** – [www.giveasyoulive.com](http://www.giveasyoulive.com)



JR Whippet Rescue would like to thank all the kind people who bequeath legacies; and everyone who kindly gave donations in memory of loved ones.

**THANK YOU**



# Editorial



**Used Stamps:** Thank you to all who collect and send their stamps off for our ongoing appeal. Please cut or tear the used stamps from the envelopes, leaving half a centimetre of paper around separated into British and Overseas, and send to: JR Whippet Rescue Stamps, 9 Quarry Court, Pitstone Green Business Park, Pitstone, Buckingham, LU7 9GW.

**Gift Aid:** Thank you to all our Friends of JRWR, your support is vital to us. Gift Aid, if you are a UK tax payer, helps us even further. If you haven't signed up for Gift Aid and would like to, let us know and we will send you a form.

**Subscriptions:** Can be paid by cheque, made payable to JR Whippet Rescue, and posted to Sally. Direct Debit and BACS can also be used, our bank details are Barclays Bank, account name is JR Whippet Rescue, sort code: 20-06-72, account number: 60877050.

**Privacy Notice:** If you would like to see a copy of our Privacy Notice please contact Mrs Vanna Leathart, 1 Jasmine Cottages, Highworth Road, South Marston, Wiltshire, SN3 4SB or email [vanna.leathart@btinternet.com](mailto:vanna.leathart@btinternet.com).

Any queries or correspondence concerning subscriptions to the newsletter should be sent to Mrs Sally Ashwell, Woodcroft, Tibberton, Gloucester, GL19 3AQ or email [financial@whippetrescue.org.uk](mailto:financial@whippetrescue.org.uk).

**How you receive your newsletter:** We are very happy to continue posting hard copies of the newsletter to our members if preferred, however sending a soft copy of the newsletter via email obviously saves us precious funds. If you would like to switch to email delivery please contact Sally as above.

**Copy Date:** The last date for receiving items for the Spring/Summer newsletter will be Monday 30th March 2026. Any letters, photos or articles you would like included, please post to Mrs Kate Bent, 35 Roman Way, Lechlade, Gloucestershire, GL7 3BS or emailed to [friends@whippetrescue.org.uk](mailto:friends@whippetrescue.org.uk)



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We would like to thank Snootiful Hound for their incredible support and generosity, helping us to ensure the whippets have the essentials they need when going to their new homes