AISPA
Anglo-Italian Society for the Protection of Animals
ANNUAL REPORT
June 2012 - May 2013

The Anglo-Italian Society for the Protection of Animals

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Anglo-Italian Society for the Protection of Animals

The Anglo-Italian Society for the Protection of Animals (AISPA) is a British-based charity that raises funds worldwide to help animal welfare projects in Italy.

Our voluntary veterinary representatives in Italy work closely with these projects offering advice and support. They also liaise with local authorities and government agencies, to try and bring about lasting improvements in animal welfare.

AISPA:

- Provides financial help to animal shelters
- Funds a mobile spay clinic programme
- Funds stray sterilization programmes
- Sponsors veterinary training
- Funds medicines and surgical equipment
- Supports education and training programmes
- Donates rescue vehicles

Our aim is to reduce stray populations and improve conditions for many domestic and wild animals. We are only able to do this because of the generous support of those who care about animals and birds.

AISPA – Working in Italy providing care and protection

Secretary's Report

Dear Supporters

Thanks to you and your generous support AISPA now assists over thirty sanctuaries and projects all over Italy.

We are extremely grateful to our voluntary representatives in Italy Dr Malcolm Holliday, Dr Dorothea Friz and Dr Maira Sgueglia who offer their experience and guidance to both the Society and to the animal welfare organisations that we support.

When I visit sanctuaries in Italy I am always humbled by the volunteer's huge commitment and energy to improve the lives of animals. I visited a number of existing and new projects during the year and as ever I was impressed by the achievements being made, often under adverse conditions.

This year we have again promoted our sterilization initiative as one of our biggest challenges in Italy is reducing the stray population. Many of you kindly donated towards spay and neuter events and we matched it. This initiative has worked extremely well and you can read more about it on page 6. All of the projects in the Annual Appeal have been funded in full. These groups send their very grateful thanks. If any of you get a chance to visit some of these sanctuaries, please do as visits offer a morale boost to the volunteers and an opportunity for them to show you what they have achieved.

We would like to thank all those of you who have taken out Standing Order Instructions which helps us to plan more easily for the future and to those of you who added Gift Aid to your donations.

Angela Revel-Chion

Lia Dequel

Sadly, during the year we have lost two people very closely associated with AISPA. Angela Revel-Chion founder of Nata Libera and one of AISPA's representatives in Italy passed away on 7th February 2013. I am sure we will all remember the selfless way in which Angela worked to improve animal welfare and the work she did on AISPA's behalf. Lia Dequel, one of the founders of the Torre Argentina Cat Sanctuary in Rome passed away on 3rd July 2013. She was a very special person, practical, energetic and totally dedicated to the cause of animal welfare in Rome. We shall miss them both.

I thank you again for all your generous support and letters of encouragement and I hope you enjoy reading the following reports detailing progress made during the last year.

Should you wish to learn about the origins of the Society, please visit our website.

With very best wishes

Susan Dale

Susan Dale
Secretary

Fundraising Events

Lega pro Animale supporter Martin Ball helped raise funds for Dr Dorothea Friz's spay and neuter centre 'Lega pro Animale', near Naples. This was hosted by AISPA's Just Giving page.

Martin has helped Lega pro Animale re-home dogs during his time in Naples. He raised £697 for Lega pro Animale which AISPA was pleased to match and send to Dorothea.

Martin writes:

On November 18th I took part in the annual Mount Vesuvius 10km Race and couldn't believe how many generous people sponsored me! This process was made so much easier by creating a Just Giving page via AISPA, who provide funding for Lega pro Animale.

The main objective of this centre is to reduce the major problem of stray dogs and cats in Southern Italy. They regularly organize spay and neuter events in various communities. Thank you so much for your support!

AISPA supporters Julie and Steve Beanlands helped raise funds for Dr Dorothea Friz's spay and neuter centre 'Lega pro Animale', near Naples. This was hosted by AISPA's Just Giving page.

Julie raised £1,260 for Lega pro Animale which AISPA was pleased to match and send to Dorothea.

Julie writes:

I want to say a big thank you to everyone who made a donation to my charity fundraising endeavor for Lega pro Animale. Can you believe that my husband Steve and I actually accomplished the 46 mile Pathfinder March! We watched Marines and Regiment guys falling along the wayside but we just kept going. The last 7 miles were an absolute killer and I ended up singing out loud hymns and any song I could think of just to take my mind off the pain! The one thing that gave me the determination to complete the march was knowing that so many people had been so kind in donating.

We couldn't have done it without my Mum and Dad. Mum looked after our animals for the day and Dad followed us about and met us at every checkpoint with words of encouragement and food and drink and dry clothing. We also had excellent support of over 80 volunteers who were spread around the check points and along the routes. There were marvellous Physios who worked miracles on my back and Steve's knees at the half way point. There were people helping out with blisters and it was so well organised. The weather stayed dry for the entire 15 hours we were walking and it just started to rain as we climbed into the car at the finish. Thank you again!

Fundraising Events

AISPA supporter Cynthia Foot helped raise funds for the AISPA supported dog sanctuary in Palermo, Lega Nazionale per la Difesa del Cane

Cynthia has generously raised money for AISPA in the past with dog walking, this year she ran a Jubilee Dog Show in Ovingdean Village. The show was part of the villages' general celebrations which included a street party and a Punch and Judy show for the children.

Following a contribution to the village costs, Cynthia was able to pass on £70 for the Palermo dog shelter.

AISPA supporter Andrea Hunt helps raise funds for Dr Dorothea Friz's spay and neuter centre 'Lega pro Animale', near Naples. This was hosted by AISPA's Just Giving page.

Andrea is always keen to participate in an annual run or activity and raise funds at the same time. She managed to raise £770 for Lega pro Animale which AISPA was pleased to match and send to Dorothea.

Andrea writes:

As you know I like to do a little annual fundraiser for Lega pro Animale. This time I took part in the Newcastle Fun Run on 6th October 2012, which I ran without my dog Asia. She has been my faithful training partner but I think it would have been too much for her on the day, as she is now in her senior years. She was a happy spectator on the day and woofed at me over the finish line!
Many thanks for your support!

Lega pro Animale supporter Sergio Ransford helped raise funds for Dr Dorothea Friz's spay and neuter centre 'Lega pro Animale', near Naples.

Long time AISPA supporter Sergio raised £1,200 for Lega pro Animale which AISPA was pleased to match and send to Dorothea.

Sergio writes:

I and my fellow participants in the 'Pirelli Ferrari Hillclimb Championship' have collaborated in raising this sum. I undertook to commemorate 25 years of the championship by doing a small painting of their cars. Each driver bought a picture of their car! My wife and I have always cared for animals, so we were delighted to be able to pass this donation on to AISPA and LPA.

We would like to thank Andrea, Cynthia, Julie, Steve, Martin and Sergio for their valuable support which is very much appreciated by us and our friends in Italy. The projects concerned were able to enjoy AISPA's matched funding initiative.

It's really easy for you to raise money for us by creating an online fundraising page on Just Giving. It takes just a few minutes and you can collect donations for any sponsored event. Just go to: www.justgiving.com/aispa or go to our website and click "Raise funds for us"

If you have any questions, or need any help, contact Andy at the AISPA office on 01743 232559 or email info@aispa.org.uk

Matched Funding Sterilization Initiative 2013

We announced in last year's Annual Report that AISPA wanted to develop further spay and neuter initiatives. Following the success in 2012, we decided to carry the 'matched funding' initiative forward into 2013, asking you once again to donate a minimum of £250 that we would in turn match and send to the respective sanctuary or project of your choice. This initiative does not affect our normal annual funding to any organisation.

Our supported sanctuaries have been able to carry out more spay and neuter programmes this year as a direct result of your support. Typically a "Spay Day" event costs around 1,000 Euros but smaller scale work is also carried out and supported by this initiative.

You may recall that last year, there were two principal beneficiaries of this initiative; Lega pro Animale and Torre Argentina. This year, we encouraged all our supported sanctuaries to get in touch with their own members, friends and family, so that they too could finance greater spay and neuter activity in their communities. We are delighted to report that our matched funding towards their fundraising has resulted in a significant uplift in the volume of spay and neuter work that they were able to carry out.

One of our biggest challenges in Italy is reducing the stray population and we thank all our supporters who generously helped this initiative.

LEGACIES

AISPA IS COMMITTED TO IMPROVING ANIMAL WELFARE IN ITALY

Legacies make a major contribution towards AISPA's ability to support animal welfare projects across Italy. If you would consider making AISPA a beneficiary in your will, we would be most grateful.

The following supporters kindly remembered us in their Will:

Mrs Marjorie Burwell
Dorothy Constance Collins
Mrs Esme Anne Maxfield Cotter
Christine Colyer
Dr K G Crush
Dr Rosemary Gilston James
Miss Dorothy Nicholson
Miss Rosemary Hildegarde Syfret

LEGACIES ARE IMPORTANT TO US THANK YOU

AISPA
Anglo-Italian Society for the Protection of Animals

News from Italy…

CASTEL VOLTURNO

Lega pro Animale and Fondazione Mondo Animale Onlus
Dr Dorothea Friz

Dorothea Friz is AISPA's representative in Southern Italy. She runs a spay and neuter centre near Naples, argues with politicians about enforcing animal welfare laws and appears on a TV show called Pet Hospital (SKY Channel 902). They have about 60 dogs, and 50 cats available for adoption. There are also rescued goats, rabbits, ducks, and four buffaloes too!

Lega pro Animale has also become a place where many vets and vet students gather to receive training particularly on spay and neuter management. Dorothea thinks that running a clinic and shelter isn't enough. "A stray problem is really an educational problem," she says. Therefore, she has also opened a sister organization called Fondazione Mondo Animale, which teaches children in schools about the problem of strays and the importance of spay and neuter. She regularly organises conferences and seminars to highlight and improve animal welfare and protection.

Dorothea is also responsible for developing AISPA's mobile clinic and earlier this year attended 'Animal Care Expo 2013'.

Dorothea writes:

The largest animal protection organization in the world, the HSUS (Humane Society of the United States) started the first Animal Care Expo 22 years ago. This time it took place in Nashville, Tennessee. From 8th to 12th May over 2,000 participants from all over the United States and about 300 from over 40 countries around the world came together.

There were workshops for all kinds of issues like kennel management, fundraising, public relations, adoptions, school teaching programmes, co-operation with the media etc. Vets take advantage of the offer to learn especially about the health situation in various kennels. A huge exhibition informed us about everything new on the market for pet shops, kennels, vet clinics and more.

In some of the states of America during the last few years the euthanasia rate of unwanted pets has decreased drastically. This was only possible through massive spay/neuter campaigns. A very good example is the state of New Hampshire. Owners of dogs and cats were offered to have their pets spayed & neutered at their vet's for only $10. The difference was paid to the vets by the government. This project is working so well, that the local shelters have 'spare capacity'. They offer help to other states accepting dogs and cats from them for re-homing in New Hampshire.

In other states gigantic mobile veterinary clinics (see above picture) are taken to areas where there are insufficient vets to carry out the volume of neuter work required.

Maybe America provides an example to the countries around the Mediterranean and those in Eastern Europe on how to reduce or eventually resolve the stray problem through preventative measures?

Following our Annual Appeal Dorothea would like to thank all of you who so generously contributed to her new X-ray machine. She is absolutely delighted as the photographs show.

If you wish to specifically support Dorothea's work, this can be most effectively done through AISPA, as we are able to pass on the extra benefit of your Gift Aid.

CASTIGLIONE DEL LAGO

Dr Maira Sgueglia

Dr Maira Sgueglia became one of AISPA's voluntary representatives in 2010 and works alongside Dr Malcolm Holliday and Dr Dorothea Friz. She runs her own veterinary practice in Castiglione Del Lago, near Perugia.

Maira writes:

I work in my own private practice, with small companion animals. Apart from routine work I have always been very interested in animal welfare; since I started working I have been doing some "extra" activities. For example, here in the country there are many wild animals such as hedgehogs, foxes, and many species of birds; sometimes people find an injured animal and call me because they don't know what to do. In these cases I offer help until the forest rangers come to collect and look after the animal.

When people find abandoned kittens, I help to find a home for them. Unfortunately, in this part of Italy (or I may say in Italy in general) not all the people are interested in neutering or spaying their own pet, especially cats. In the past few years I have been trying to talk with pet owners and make them more sensitive about this matter. I was very pleased when AISPA offered to support my spay and neuter work on the strays in this area. I work alone and I have to do the operations in my spare time but I also have some extraordinary volunteers that help me with work in the local colonies. Since starting my work with AISPA in 2010, I have neutered and spayed more than 250 strays.

COMO

Associazione Cavalli Del Bisbino Onlus

This group was formed in 2009 and brought to AISPA's attention by Executive Committee member Catherine Pugsley. It is led by their President and vet Dr Mariachiara Lietti, who together with a group of volunteers, care for a herd of local wild horses and mules. In the summer the herd roam free on the mountains and in winter they are brought down and cared for.

Dr Mariachiara Lietti tells their story:

In the severe winter of 2008-2009 when the mountains were covered with over a metre of snow, two groups of Haflinger horses descended into the villages of Sagno (Switzerland) and Rovenna (Italy) in a desperate search for food. Their owner, who had a pasture on top of the Bisbino, had died several years before and the horses had survived on the mountain, braving all kinds of difficulties.

The descent to the villages caused many complaints and there was the looming risk that the beautiful animals would be taken into captivity, or even killed. They were tame

animals and certainly did not constitute a risk to the population. Numerous associations and sensitive Swiss and Italian citizens then joined forces to save the horses and find practical solutions to guarantee their survival and avoid conflicts with the villages.

In the winter of 2009 they were gathered and kept in a large enclosure just below Bisbino, and in May 2010 they were moved to the Italian side of Monte Generoso, where there are vast and plentiful pastures. Since then the 25 Bisbino horses have belonged to an association that bears their name and we are lucky to have more than 200 members and volunteers.

The town of Lanzo d'Intelvi has provided a large plot of land for free, where the horses spend the winter months and are looked after and fed by volunteers. In the spring, the horses are taken to the high pastures and remain there until late autumn.

AISPA has been delighted to help this association and has sent regular funding since it was brought to our attention. To learn more about the horses from Bisbino visit www.cavallidelbisbino.ch

FLORENCE

Cani di Carla Onlus

AISPA has been pleased to assist this small shelter by funding food and medical care for the dogs.

Ann Ross a volunteer, writes:

This has been a memorable year for the dog shelter, run by Carla Americi, as it had to move from its original site in Scandicci to its new home in Ugnano, a little village nearby. This was because of an eviction order from the local council who needed the land for an urban planning project.

As you can imagine this entailed a lot of planning and building new structures to house the dogs comfortably and give them space to run around in. It also required a large amount of money. But one of the greatest worries was how the dogs themselves would adapt to their new surroundings as most of them were quite old. The actual move took place in October 2012 and luckily things went fairly smoothly as even the old-timers seem happy with their new quarters.

Susan Dale and Dr Dorothea Friz were delighted to visit the new shelter this year. This group has done a fantastic job in creating a small kennel with very happy and well cared for dogs.

MONTECATINI TERME

Cats Onlus

Carolyn Martin, a volunteer at Cats Onlus, contacted AISPA in spring 2011, seeking our support for their spay and neuter project in the Val di Nievole area of Tuscany.

Carolyn writes:

The phone calls come in daily, it is always an emergency that someone wants solved IMMEDIATELY, if you suggest "this evening", "after work" or heaven forbid "tomorrow", then more often than not, they have a reason that it is not convenient for them. The feeling is that they equate us with the emergency services, where a call brings help within minutes.

The phone calls normally go to our two best known cat ladies and often to both, just so the caller can be sure of being heard.

The emergency may be an injured animal but often it is a situation that has become untenable, a cat who has arrived on their door step, had kittens, and who in turn now has kittens and the person realises that they have a "problem", for which they want an instant answer.

A real emergency pops up every now and then, such as a judicial confiscation of animals and the cat ladies are called to capture the cats being sequestrated, often in the most difficult and unpleasant of situations, as in a recent case where 26 cats had to be captured in a house. The house had no lights, shuttered windows, no ventilation and a very little hygiene, and all of this was at very short notice. The cat lady was magnificent in her ability to coax, trap, net as well as grab and hold, with resulting serious cuts, scratches and bites, requiring antibiotic treatment.

Blitzes in out of the way places seem to be our speciality. We are hugely satisfied when we succeed or on the day that we know the last cat has been caught and sterilized. Most colonies seems to have one cat, who sometimes comes or doesn't, is not very hungry, or who is extremely skittish and at the slightest movement of a passing person or car will be seen only as a streak as she heads for the hills. It is rare that we can clear a whole colony in one clean sweep, although it has happened, more often that not we return again and again, just for the very last one. By that time we are known to one and all and have become a feature of the local landscape!

The colony that formed at the hospital is an ongoing saga, with the mother cat keeping her kittens safely on the roof covering the long corridor joining the old and new parts of the hospital. The cat ladies had to go onto the hospital roof, to the amazement and puzzlement of those in the outpatient eye clinic with their patches and fuzzy vision obviously causing them to doubt what they were seeing!

This year has been a particular year for the abandonment of adult cats or the request for them to be re-homed, most often due to economic difficulties or the death of their owners. Kittens are generally easy to place but this year there have been very few requests and an increase in the number of litters being abandoned. However on a positive note, we have managed to sterilize 400 cats in the past year.

AISPA is delighted to welcome the Cats Onlus team to this year's AGM on the 27th November, where they will talk more about their work and activities.

PALERMO, SICILY

Lega Nazionale per la Difesa del Cane

This group is led by Elena La Porta who took over the running of this sanctuary in 1989. They care for approximately 200 dogs with very few volunteers to help clean, feed, treat and exercise them. Sadly, the city government of Palermo has never committed itself to support the shelter in an effective way. Therefore, they rely heavily on their supporters and AISPA.

AISPA sponsors their vet Dr Di Nieri and has helped fund building and renovation work over the last three years. The photographs below show the huge improvements that have been made and this work will continue for the next couple of years.

Elena would like to thank AISPA supporters for all their generous help and in particular Cynthia Foote and the residents of Ovingdean near Brighton, together with Lucille Ciana from Massachusetts, USA.

AISPA representative Dr Dorothea Friz and Susan Dale visited the shelter in September 2012 and were impressed by the progress being made.

Before

After

ROME

The Torre Argentina Cat Sanctuary

AISPA has been a leading supporter of this unique sanctuary since 1994. Torre Argentina continues to assist approximately 45 colonies around Rome with sterilizations and food. The sanctuary is located in the historic centre of the city and is one of the few in Italy that benefits from international tourism. You are most welcome to visit if you are in Rome, please contact them in advance so that you can be met and given a special tour of the sanctuary. (Tel/fax number: 0039 06 454 25240 or email torreargentina@tiscali.it).

We are grateful to Andy De Paoli, a longstanding volunteer, for the following report:

We are braving a veritable tempest and, as Claudius says in Hamlet, "When sorrows come, they come not single spies, but in battalions". At the helm, to maintain the metaphor, Silvia has had to steer a difficult course.

This has been a most trying period for the sanctuary: the construction of the new tram line above us, the failing economy and the threats by the national archaeological authorities.

Piazza di Torre Argentina is a busy hub of Rome's transport system, and the final stop of the number 8 tram. The city administration decided that the tram line should be extended to Piazza Venezia, less than 500 metres away. After a couple of years of uncertainty construction work finally began. We do not know what future impact this will have on the number of visitors to Torre Argentina when a greater portion of the area around the grounds will be restricted to pedestrians and car traffic will be redirected to other streets.

Construction work and the cordoning off part of the street may have contributed to a drop in the number of visitors coming to the area, but certainly not nearly as much as the other two problems: the failing economy and the threats from authorities. There is little to say about the former as its impact is visible to everyone, the latter is not as simple.

The sanctuary had enjoyed the tacit benign tolerance of local authorities, including Rome's archaeological department and past mayors, over the two decades of its existence, as its fame grew worldwide.

The National Archaeological Department complained that we had invaded the temple, that the tables with the donation items and our presence wounded the dignity of the sacred area. They forced us to keep a low profile which has compounded the losses due to economic uncertainty.

The archaeological department does not have the authority to evict us directly but must report us to competent authorities. So they sent the police as well as health and safety officials in the hope they would uncover sufficient illegality to enforce an eviction. Fortunately nothing was found except possibly the low ceilings and lack of adequate

ventilation, and no immediate action was taken. In fact the law enforcement officials even expressed recognition of the importance of the work we do for the cats, contributing towards a positive image of the city for the many tourists and visitors that come to Rome.

Some politicians, both part of the present government and the opposition, began to speak out in our defence. Even the mayor has stepped in. The local authorities proposed a compromise: to formulate a plan, with our co-operation, that would allow us to stay in at least a portion of the grounds. Contradictory claims were made that we should move to the east end of the sacred area, beneath the Torre del Papito (the tower that overlooks the grounds). We can only wait and see whether the newly elected politicians will have the necessary clout and political savvy to deal with the problem and find a solution.

Under these conditions we try to continue working as we always have. We do still need and count on the support of our many benefactors to keep going. Despite the setbacks we managed to reach our goal of 3,000 sterilizations, 3,013 to be exact. Hopefully we will be able to top our past records in the coming year. Happily we placed 125 cats in new homes.

It is with great sadness to report that Lia passed away on 3rd July. She was one of the founders of the Cat Shelter at Torre Argentina. She was a very special person: energetic, a great sense of humour and lover of life and the arts. It is a great loss for the cause in favour of strays and abandoned animals. It is also a great loss for all of us who worked alongside her for the last two decades and were her family.

It is important for our benefactors to know that our strength and will to continue is due to their generosity and support. In particular, organizations such as AISPA underline the importance of our activity far beyond the national borders. We thank everyone and assure all that we wish to go on to greater success.

VENICE

The Anglo-Venetian Group for the Protection of Stray Animals (DINGO)

This association lead by Lidia Pellegrini care for about 550 stray cats. Approximately 400 are in colonies around the city and the inhabited islands and 150 are at their shelter at Malamocco on the Lido.

British author and supporter Robin Saikia visited the shelter and 'adopted at a distance' a Venetian cat!

Robin Saikia writes:

Every time I visit Venice I call in at the famous Dingo cat sanctuary on the Lido which I have admired and supported for many years. The cattery is housed in a small farmhouse at the end of a lane in Malamocco, a pretty fishing village on the Venice Lido. The cats in and around the office in the farmhouse are clearly very happy with their lot and not in the least upset by visitors, whom they greet with affection, curiosity, indifference or disdain. Alice is a prim, stern-looking little schoolmistress of a cat who sits aloft on a

bookcase. Eric is a vast, indolent, orange potentate who loves to be brushed and stroked. Further away in the compound, in the quarantine huts and convalescence wards, you will find unfortunates like Alberto, who lost his tail in a car accident on the Lido and the ancient but quarrelsome Dándolo, who is slowly but surely recovering from a terrible fight.

It was a blazing hot day in August when I visited and many of the cats were huddled contentedly in the shade beneath beach umbrellas strategically planted throughout the enclosures. Every day, Venetians bring in unwanted, sick or stray cats. As well as carrying out continuous spay and neuter work, Dingo does its best to find homes for the cats, though it is not always easy.

Inky is a sweet little black kitten, pretty much assured of a home once he has a clean bill of health. Malamocchino, however, is a rather forbidding old cat and is probably going to stay at Dingo for the rest of his life. Though he is enormously affectionate, he has a war-torn face that many would find quite off-putting, with only one eye, one snaggled and protruding tooth and decidedly ragged ears, the legacy of bitter territorial ambushes in the alleys and colonnades of his venetian youth. We took to one another instantly and I have 'adopted him at a distance' for a small annual fee.

As I said farewell to my new friends, I reflected that it seems appropriate that the Lido should once again be the refuge of exiles, for that was what it was at the very beginning of Venice's history. The ten-mile-long sandbank now known as the Lido (from the Latin litus, meaning 'shore') was the site of the very first settlement of refugees from the Italian mainland, driven here first by Attila the Hun and later by Charlemagne. The cats, like the early Venetians, landed here on nothing but a wing and a prayer. Now, they are thriving and fighting back. Long may it last!

Edited extract, reproduced by kind permission of the author

More News from Italy…

AREZZO – Rifugio Per Gatti 'Cinni'

AISPA has sent donations to help with the general running costs

FAENZA – Ente Nazionale Protezione Animali

AISPA sent a donation for their sterilization programme

FANO – Il Graffio

AISPA assisted them with their sterilization campaign and food

FLORENCE – Marta and Guido Cecchi

AISPA helps support ten cat colonies in and around the city of Florence

MARSALA – Salvatore Fiorino and Maria Cristina Sciacca – New Project

AISPA has funded a sterilization initiative

MONTAIONE – Italian Horse Protection Association

AISPA has funded medical supplies and veterinary assistance

More News from Italy…

PISA - Gatti Mammoni – New Project

AISPA has funded medical supplies and food

ROME – Verano Cemetery Cats – Association Animal Welfare

AISPA has funded their sterilization programme

SASSARI – Lega Italiana dei Diritti dell'Animale

AISPA funds their vet and an extra member of staff who grooms and exercises the dogs

Birds LIPU

David Lingard runs the UK branch of LIPU – Lega Italiana Protezione Uccelli. They are the Italian equivalent of our RSPB and the leading nature conservation organisation in Italy.

David kindly sent us this report:

The month of May to me is about the return of migrant birds to this country and the pleasure of witnessing them bring a new generation into our skies. Our swallows arrived last week, the house martins are due any day now and we have a pair of warblers, Blackcaps, nesting in the garden.

It's also the time of year when I take a deep breath and look back over the past twelve months so I can report to you what LIPU and its branch in this country, LIPU-UK, has been up to.

Italy has not been immune from some of the economic woes of Europe and over recent years we have seen, with dismal inevitability, cuts applied to the parts of the national budget which are seen to be of "secondary importance". The operating budget of the National Parks has been slashed to 10% of its former level and this sort of national policy increases the importance of NGOs, Non-Governmental Organisations, such as AISPA and LIPU if the natural environment is not to suffer a fatal decline.

LIPU is now very well established and is already looking forward to its 50th birthday in a couple of year's time and in the last year has had a change of Director General with the departure of Elena D'Andrea who has been with LIPU for over twenty years. Her place has been taken by Danilo Selvaggi who has had the daunting task over the years of lobbying parliament on behalf of the bird life of Italy. Danilo has shown dedication and commitment of the highest order and we wish him well in his new post.

In this country LIPU-UK has had a very successful year and, with your considerable help, has funded another set of projects aimed at improving life for birds. We have always supported the teams of courageous volunteers who counter the threat of poaching whether it is with the shotgun or the trap and we will never let up until the problem is defeated.

Another success has been the annual monitoring of the passage of migrant birds through Sicily, a vital stopping point between Cape Bon in Tunisia and the mainland of Italy. A very important data set has been compiled which fits well with other European research and the project has, over the years, also warned the volunteers at the Messina camp of the approach of the birds. Working together these teams have saved large numbers of migrating hawks, harriers and storks from the poachers of Calabria.

We have recently purchased, for LIPU, a modest building in Puglia (picture above) which will serve as a visitor centre and, perhaps, a ringing station near the important wetlands of the Margherita di Savoia salt pans. This will also increase the LIPU presence in this area.

Looking ahead we have committed ourselves to an ambitious programme of support in the coming year. We need to raise €71,000 to support seven LIPU projects, some familiar and others for the first time. In this fundraising we have already had a generous donation from AISPA and we in LIPU-UK are truly grateful for the partnership we enjoy with AISPA - long may it continue - thank you all.

Jan Hunt reflects on her work at an Italian refuge…

Many years ago I helped out, for a short time, at a dog rescue shelter in Tuscany. It was autumn. Each morning ribbons of mist were threaded through the cypress trees, the air smelling of wood smoke, and of the coffee that lured me along from my pensione to the local bar. I couldn't start my day without a warm cornetto and cappuccino.

Then I'd set off down the winding road towards the sanctuary that was located just below the old town where the flat, yellow stubble fields were dotted with farmhouses. One such complex was owned by Maria, an elderly countess with a passion for animals, who'd turned it into a shelter which was now home to - on average - a hundred and fifty dogs.

I love Italy. I love dogs. I should have been happy, and in many ways I was. But it was also heartbreaking, and not just because these were animals that no-one wanted: abandoned, lost, ex hunting dogs, puppies galore. Most of the dogs – despite being badly treated – craved human contact. They'd push each other aside to get my attention, press their bodies against the mesh fencing so I could poke my fingers through and tickle them; when they moved away their fur would be patterned with squares. Sad, yes. But at least they were safe.

But as the days passed I grew increasingly concerned about the way the shelter was being run.

It was when her husband died that Maria decided to devote herself to rescuing strays. Though once wealthy, her funds were running low. Still she'd managed to convert a barn into indoor accommodation for emergencies. Then she'd erected half a dozen runs, furnished them with some kennels to provide at least the minimum of shelter. There was no plan as to which dog went where. To be fair, there wasn't time. New dogs were arriving every day, tied up outside the gate, or dropped off by someone from the commune. Once checked for obvious health issues, a dog would be put into whichever run had space. Big dogs would intimidate small or weaker ones, especially at feeding time. Bitches on heat would find themselves being harassed by a pack of suitors. Inevitably the excited males would fight; occasionally one died.

The subject of sterilization came up frequently. To me, this was a priority but to Maria, it was cruel and unnatural. She also said it was expensive forgetting the vast sums she was already spending at the vets, as well as feeding the puppies that inevitably kept arriving.

Certainly she needed someone to help sort her finances. As her funds dwindled she'd sell something – an antique clock, jewellery – but that couldn't go on. She needed physical help with the day to day running of the place too.

But most of all she needed to completely re-evaluate what she was doing, to make a detailed and realistic plan of action. Sadly – and as with many animal rescuers in her situation – people called her una eccentrica. In return she was suspicious of the locals, refusing any offers of help. She became increasingly isolated, used to managing on her own, determined and yet exhausted.

It was the little white dog who inadvertently brought my stay to an end. Though I tried to make sure he got at least something to eat each day, it wasn't easy. He was so nervous about approaching me that – even when I sneaked over to him and held food out – he would hang back, wanting to come and get it but just not brave enough. And of course, someone bolder would snatch it from me. I could see he was getting thinner. But when one morning I found him dead I was shocked. I'm sure he starved to death, but he shouldn't have, not in a shelter, not in a place where he should have been safe.

Maria simply shrugged, shook her head. I'm sure she felt as bad as I did. She was doing her best, and who was I to judge her? Yet if only she'd accepted help from professionals – people who could advise her on how to make the shelter run more efficiently for her sake AND for the sake of the dogs - she could have done so much more.

What brought all this back was something said at AISPA's 2012 AGM. Though AISPA already supports many shelters around Italy, it's always keen to hear of other rescue groups that would benefit from a helping hand, especially in the rural south where animal welfare is often non-existent. But not everyone is accepted as an AISPA project. Those lucky enough to get funding must agree to have regular visits from a representative, to provide details of any work carried out and of their finances. Most important of all, they must incorporate a regular and effective sterilization programme.

So all those who donate so generously to AISPA can be confident that their money won't be wasted, as sadly it would have been at Maria's shelter. Which is good to know.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2012

THE ANGLO-ITALIAN SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANIMALS (COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

The Society's Annual General Meeting was held on Wednesday, 28th November, at The Royal Over-Seas League, London SW1. William Richards took the Chair.

Apologies for absence were received from: Dr John Knight, Mr Eduard Fuller, Mrs Barbara Milne, Mrs Elizabeth Dale, H. E. Signor Alain Giorgio Maria Economides, Ms Cunningham, Mrs Hannah Graber, Mrs Nancy Cremer, Mrs Katie Ashall, Mrs Thelma Brown, Mrs L Withers, Katie Boyle, Prince Jonathan Doria Pamphilj, Barbara Ball, Mrs Molga Savalaggio, Angela Humphery and Lyn Newton.

The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting, already circulated in the Annual Report, were approved by the members and signed by the Chairman.

Elizabeth Dale, Eduard Fuller, Gervase Hulbert and Alison Richards who retired by rotation were re-elected to the Executive Committee.

The Annual Report and Accounts for 2011 were adopted.

MHA MacIntyre Hudson were appointed as Auditors and approval was given for their remuneration to be fixed by the Executive Committee.

Dr Malcolm Holliday of Rifugio per Gatti 'Cinni' and an AISPA representative in Italy gave an audio visual presentation about his work and other sanctuaries in Italy.

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION:
Charity Name: The Anglo-Italian Society for the Protection of Animals
Charity Reg. No.: 208530
Company Number: 00335703

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

The following served on the Executive Committee during 2012:

W.F. Richards M.A. (Chairman)
C.R.B. Salimbeni M.A. (Treasurer)
Dr. P. Credland B.Sc. Ph.D. F.R.E.S.
E. Fuller
Dr. J.A. Knight B.Vet.Med. M.R.C.V.S.
Mrs. A. Richards
Mrs. E. Dale
Mrs. K.E. Ulvert B.A. (resigned 13th June 2012)
E.G.C. Hulbert O.B.E.
Mrs C. Pugsley
A Norman-Butler
M. Pampanini M.A. Vet MB M.R.C.V.S.

PRINCIPAL OFFICE :
30-34 New Bridge Street
London EC4V 6BJ

BANKERS :
C. Hoare & Co.
37 Fleet Street
London EC4P 4DQ

CAF Bank Limited
25 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hill
West Malling ME19 4JQ

Scottish Widows
67 Morrison Street
Edinburgh EH3 8YJ

AUDITORS :
MHA MacIntyre Hudson LLP
30-34 New Bridge Street
London EC4V 6BJ

INVESTMENT MANAGERS :
J.M. Finn & Co.
Knapton Court
Turret Lane
Off Lower Brook Street
Ipswich IP4 1AP

SOLICITORS :
A. Lutley
Springfield
Rookery Hill
Ashtead KT21 1HY

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

THE ANGLO-ITALIAN SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANIMALS ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2012

The charity trustees have given consideration to the major risks to which the charity is exposed and satisfied themselves that a system or procedures are established in order to manage these risks.

Summary Financial Statement – Statement of Directors and Trustees

The summary financial statements are not the full annual report and financial statements but a summary of information derived from both the charity's Statement of Financial Activities and the Balance Sheet for the year ended 31 December 2012. The summary financial statements contain additional information derived from the Trustees' report, but that information is not the full text of that report.

Risk has been considered with regard to the Charity Commission's guidelines set out in their publication CC26.

The full annual report and financial statements, from which the summary financial statements are derived, were approved by the trustees on 20th March 2013 and copies have been filed with the Charity Commission and with the Registrar of Companies.

The independent auditors have issued an unmodified report on the full financial statements and on the consistency of the Trustees' Report with those financial statements. The statement in the independent auditors' report, under section 496 of the Companies Act 2006, was unmodified. The full independent auditors' report contained no statement under sections 498(2)(a) and (b) or 498(3) of the Companies Act 2006.

The full annual report and financial statements are available free of charge from the Company Secretary, at the head office of the charity.

William Richards M.A.
Chairman
Date: 20th March 2013

Independent Auditor's Statement to the Trustees of The Anglo-Italian Society for the Protection of Animals

We have examined the summarised financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2012 as set out overleaf.

Respective responsibilities of the directors and auditors

The trustees are responsible for preparing the summarised financial statements in accordance with applicable United Kingdom law and the recommendations of the Charities SORP.

Our responsibility is to report to you our opinion on the consistency of the summarised financial statements with the full annual financial statements and the Trustees' Annual Report.

We also read other information contained in the summarised annual report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the summarised financial statements.

We conducted our work in accordance with Bulletin 2008/3 issued by the Auditing Practices Board.

Opinion

In our opinion the summarised financial statements are consistent with the full annual financial statements and the Trustees' Annual Report of The Anglo-Italian Society for the Protection of Animals for the year ended 31 December 2012.

Graeme Young FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and behalf of
MHA MacIntyre Hudson
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditor

New Bridge Street House
30-34 New Bridge Street
London EC4V 6BJ

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

THE ANGLO-ITALIAN SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANIMALS
SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2012

Income	2012 £	2011 £
Voluntary Income:		
Donations, subscriptions and Gift Aid Income	96,754	76,182
Legacies	51,628	149,984
Investment Income:		
Income resources from listed investments	75,715	68,443
Bank deposit interest	4,124	3,966
Total Income for the Year	228,221	298,575
Expenditure	£	£
Costs of Generating Funds	64,060	70,271
Charitable Activities:		
Grants payable	308,970	272,210
Support costs	29,617	29,788
Governance Costs	41,179	40,991
Total Resources Expended	443,826	413,260
Net Outgoing Resources	(215,605)	(114,685)
Gain/(Loss) on investment assets	165,347	(15,832)
Net Movements in Funds	(50,258)	(130,517)

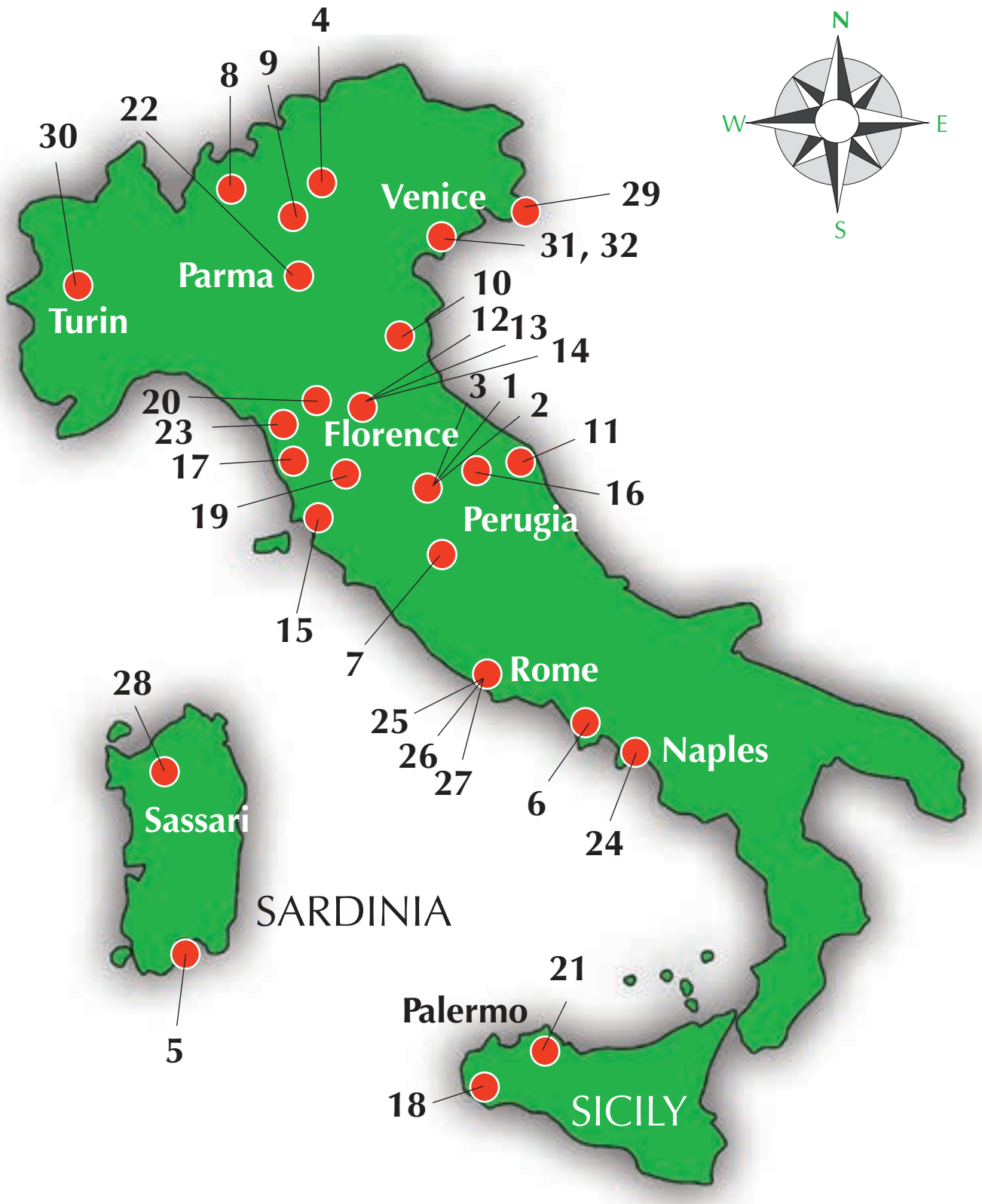
LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

THE ANGLO-ITALIAN SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANIMALS
SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2012

Statement of Net Assets	2012 £	2011 £
Fixed Assets:		
Tangible assets	315	408
Investments at market value	2,380,368	2,410,801
	2,380,683	2,411,209
Current Assets		
Other debtors	5,779	4,792
Cash at bank and in hand	354,805	375,344
	360,584	380,136
Creditors - Due within one year	(8,538)	(8,358)
Net Current Assets	352,046	371,778
Net Assets as at 31 December 2012	2,732,729	2,782,987
Represented By:	£	£
Accumulated Funds	2,732,729	2,782,987
Total	2,732,729	2,782,987

ANIMAL WELFARE SANCTUARIES AND PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY AISPA

1. AREZZO – Rifugio Per Gatti 'Cinni'
2. AREZZO – Refuge la Speranza
3. AREZZO – Scudi di Pan – New Project
4. BRESCIA - Telefono Difesa Animali
5. CAGLIARI – Maria Antonietta Pilloni
6. CASTEL VOLTURNO – Dr. Dorothea Friz, Lega pro Animale
7. CASTIGLIONE DEL LAGO – Dr Maira Sgueglia
8. COMO – Associazione Cavalli del Bisbino ONLUS
9. CREMONA Associazione Protezione Animali
10. FAENZA – Ente Nazionale Protezione Animali
11. FANO – Il Graffio
12. FLORENCE – Marta & Guido Cecchi
13. FLORENCE - Careggi Cat Colony
14. FLORENCE – Cani di Carla
15. FOLLONICA – Associazione 'Gli aMici di Mariella'
16. LERCHI – Canile di Lerchi
17. LIVORNO/CECINA – Associazione Mici Felici
18. MARSALA – Salvatore Fiorino and Maria Cristina Sciacca – New Project
19. MONTAIONE – Italian Horse Protection Association
20. MONTECATINI TERME – Cats Onlus
21. PALERMO – Lega Nazionale per la Difesa del Cane
22. PARMA – LIPU – Lega Italiana Protezione Uccelli
23. PISA - Gatti Mammoni – New Project
24. POZZUOLI – The Fido and Neighbourhood Association
25. ROME - The Torre Argentina Sanctuary
26. ROME – Verano Cemetery Cats – Association Animal Welfare
27. ROME – Rifugio Parrelli – Lega Antivivisezionista Italiana
28. SASSARI – Lega Italiana dei Diritti dell'Animale
29. TRIESTE - Associazione Il Gattile
30. TURIN – Nata Libera
31. VENICE – The Anglo-Venetian Group for the Protection of Stray Animals (DINGO)
32. VENICE – Associazione Veneta Zoofila



Front cover photograph - Stray Dog, Naples Harbour
Back cover photograph - Bisbino Horses

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Find us on facebook.

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