



Safe Haven  
for Donkeys

Summer 2024

# NEWSLETTER



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**Find us on the internet:**



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## Dear Friends,

Every time we write, we seem to have so much to tell you about the wonderful work our teams in the Middle East are doing and this time is no exception.

As well as our sanctuary in Israel, our three mobile clinic teams in the West Bank and rescue centre in the West Bank village of Arrana, we also of course have our new mobile clinic team in the El Saf brick kilns of Egypt, which is so busy that we are now looking into recruiting a second team – you will read more about this in this newsletter.

However, we are very proud to say that we have introduced a brand new project just a few weeks ago – at long last, we have set up a small first aid mobile clinic in Gaza. With all that is going on, we are truly honoured to be able to help some of the donkeys, mules and horses affected by this terrible conflict.

Back in the UK, summer is now upon us and let us hope that perhaps it will be a little drier than last year, although perhaps not as hot as the few years before that. Running fundraising stalls is no fun in extreme weather, be it hot, cold or torrential rain! If you would like to run a stall at your local summer fair or fete, do get in touch as we can supply you with Safe Haven leaflets, collection boxes etc.

In the meantime, thank you for your support. You are as much a part of the Safe Haven family as our UK staff or our Israel, West Bank, Egypt or Gaza teams and we are so very fortunate to have you all.

Warmest regards,



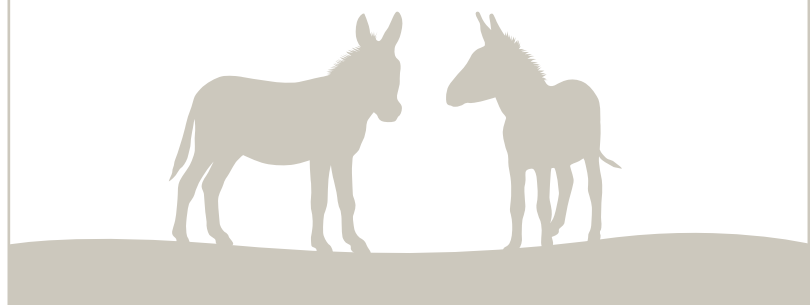
Melanie



Fiona



Wendy



# Visit to Israel

Dr Anna Harrison, our volunteer veterinary advisor writes...



After a 3am start to the day at Heathrow with CEO, Andy, it was with some trepidation that I touched down at the airport in Israel – in a country at war. The immigration officer looked at me so sternly and asked the reason for my visit. If in doubt, be honest I thought, so I said I was going to be working at a donkey sanctuary. Her face broke into a broad smile and she said she liked donkeys – I was in!

We finally arrived at the sanctuary in the failing light of dusk and received the usual warm greeting by the donkeys in the main paddock which doubles up as the front garden to the little wooden cabins that we stay in. The weather has been unusually cold in Israel and our very cautious donkeys had not moulted their winter woollies so it was a particularly shaggy but gorgeous mob that welcomed us. And that was it for the first day – an early night was called for.

Which was a shame because we clearly missed out! These were the donkeys at dawn – spark out, shambolically dressed and generally looking like the morning after the night before! It must have been quite a party! And we slept right through it!

I'm pleased to say they were none the worse for wear once breakfast was served and another donkey day began.



Burnie is so happy being out with the herd and it was his weekly bath day during our visit. Moussa and Ali are so gentle with him and his fragile skin, the legacy of terrible cruelty. As he gets a lovely massage his head drops and his ears relax – enjoying every moment. He looked absolutely pristine with his clean rug on and I wondered how long it would take before he rolled in the sand. I can tell you it was within milliseconds of being let back out into the paddock. No self-respecting donkey wants to look immaculate!

Dominic is looking like a very grown up donkey now and so far from the terrified and painful young colt we rescued. One of his little quirks is his preference for shared drinking. There are several drinkers in the shaded area of the paddock and each designed for one donkey but Dominic feels the need to join a buddy.

If you've been following the lives of our little white donkeys, Nader and Be'eri, you will know that they have been living in the special care unit to keep a close eye on them as they would need to be gelded before joining the main herd. This has now been done and the team agreed it was time for them to leave their safe cocoon for life in the main paddock. This was quite an emotional moment to for the team – a bit like your child's first day at school. And so it was that one sunny morning we lead Hope and the boys to their new life of freedom. They looked very happy to be out and Be'eri showed off his impressive bucking skills. Andy and I were so touched that Hope brought the boys down to our cabins to see us on their first evening of freedom. I couldn't resist giving them a personal pile of straw! The next day, however, was just a happy sea of donkeys and we could not pick them out – result!. It would be wonderful if Hope would rekindle her bond with Yalon but time will tell. The boys will hopefully find new friends and enjoy the space and freedom of being with the main herd where they can play, run, sleep under

the stars and grow up in safety surrounded by the love that is all pervading in this very special place. I was in a country at war but all I could feel was the unique peace that comes in the company of donkeys.



**Dominic**



**Nader and Be'eri**

# News from Gaza



In our last newsletter, we told you how, with the help of our team in Egypt, we were hoping to get a consignment of animal food into Gaza for a small charity called Sulala which is helping animals there. It took months and we were beginning to give up hope but we were delighted in the spring to finally succeed, the first consignment of aid for animals that had made it into Gaza since the war started in October.

However, as you will all have seen on the news, the situation in Gaza is dire, with donkeys and horses caught up in the conflict, animals which are more vital than ever to a population which is struggling to access basic necessities including food, water and fuel for vehicles.

We felt that just sending in food was not enough and we were desperate to set up a small mobile first aid clinic

**As far as we know, there are no other equine charities operating on the ground in Gaza at this time, which makes our team a critical resource and this vital work is only happening thanks to you. We are so deeply grateful to everyone who responded to our emergency appeal last month – at the time of writing, an amazing £61,000 has been raised for donkeys, mules and horses in desperate need!**

to start bringing practical help to the animals but with it being impossible for our existing teams to cross the border, we were not sure how we were going to achieve this.

Step forward Dr Saif, a professor at the university in Gaza and a contact of Bader, our Director of Operations in Israel. Dr Saif was able to recruit a small team consisting of Dr Sulamman, a highly experienced veterinary technician who trained in Gaza, assisted by Mohammed, a vet assistant and Jyhad, a farrier.

Our newest mobile clinic team is providing first aid to animals who have been injured by the war, or through living in the awful conditions currently experienced in Gaza. This includes injuries from pulling heavy carts, wounds caused by shards from explosions, or diseases.



# Dr Rakan's Palestinian donkey stories



**I would like to tell you a special story about one of the donkeys we rescued in the West Bank – my memory will never forget that donkey.**

In March 2023, I received a phone call from a local person in a village called Asira about a neglected donkey who was so skinny, laying in the heat of the sun, unable to stand with so many wounds, injuries and lacerations to his body.

I drove to the village that same day, asked around the villagers and searched around for the donkey. Finally, I found him and then his owner arrived, who was old, gentle and a simple person.



The poor man was old, alone and could not walk without the help of a wooden stick. He explained to me that his donkey had been with him for the past few years, helping him in his work and he was riding him every day around the village.

Unfortunately, the owner was now old and sick and he was no longer able to take care of his donkey. He had been relying on poor quality hay to feed him for a long time as he couldn't afford to buy him anything better.

I checked his vital signs – he was very dehydrated with a poor body score, weak and stiffened muscles and a wide area of lacerations due to laying on the ground for such a long time.

His prognosis was so poor but I knew I would do all I could to help him, especially as the donkey was eating food, drinking water and tried to stand up on his own several times. To be honest, his plight touched my heart and it affected my decision to do my best and help him.

It was an urgent situation for me; we carried out him of the strong heat of the sun and transported him to the nearest olive tree so that he would be in its shade.

I then gave him an intensive treatment of fluid therapy (to fix his dehydration), a strong pain killer, broad



spectrum antibiotics and multiple medications of vitamins and supplements to support his muscles and to improve the nerve impulses that reach the muscular system. I had to re-activate the functions of his nervous and muscular system again.

We lifted him under his body, helped him to stand up and balanced him for a few minutes until he could stand by himself. I washed his lacerations and injuries with antiseptic solution and dried them gently as I could feel his pain every time I touched his wounds. I then used a special cream to cover the area.

We needed to continue the treatment for a few days but we knew that the owner would not be able to treat him alone.

Luckily, a friend of mine called Osama who lived in Asira wanted to help and we were able to convince the owner to let that donkey go so that we could keep him and take care of him forever.

I gave Osama all the necessary medication to continue the treatment and I called several times a week to make sure that the donkey was recovering.

The donkey stayed with Osama for several months until he was well enough to be transported to our clinic in the city of Nablus. There, he was in quarantine for a month and he received his vaccinations and was dewormed.

In the spring, Blondie (named at the request of one of our wonderful supporters) was transported with all his donkey friends from Nablus to our new rescue centre in the village of Arrana and what a life he is living! He is enjoying the freedom to run in the wide open space, as much food as he needs and the company of other donkeys and our dedicated staff. Of course, I visit Arrana regularly to make sure all the donkeys there are fit and healthy.



**It is only thanks to your generous support that we are able to run our Arrana rescue centre, clinic in Nablus and three mobile clinics covering the whole of the West Bank. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.**



# News from Egypt

## Dr Shabaan, our veterinary surgeon in Egypt writes...

It is now over a year since our project in the El Saf brick kilns of Egypt began. During that time, we have treated thousands of donkeys and mules. We very often see wounds due to poorly-fitting harness equipment, split and broken hooves and colic due to poor diet.

Our team is working hard in the kilns every day and I do feel that we are having an impact. We are seeing less and less injuries caused by deliberate cruelty and handlers are willingly attending education sessions to try and learn more about the best way of looking after donkeys. Owners are buying better food and building larger rest areas for the donkeys to try and reduce wounds caused by donkeys biting one another due to overcrowding.

There are around 150 brick kilns in the El Saf region and one team cannot cover them all so we are shortly hoping to recruit a second mobile clinic team – there will be an update in the next newsletter.

We were delighted recently to welcome the charity's CEO Andy for another visit from the UK, along with harnessing expert Chris Garrett. Chris had many suggestions about improving harnessing and reducing loads in order to make donkeys' lives easier and we hope that brick kiln owners and donkey handlers will work with us to make these improvement.

Of course, our dream is that one day, donkeys will no longer be used in the brick kilns and together with a university professor of engineering from the USA, Safe Haven has set up a small working group to explore ways of making this happen.

In the meantime, we will continue our work; treating the animals and, equally importantly, educating and supporting those who work with them in order to bring about changes in animals welfare.

**Thank you to all Safe Haven for Donkeys supporters for your kind donations towards this project – you are making donkeys' lives better every day.**



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# Adopt a donkey

**Adopt a donkey today and we will send you an adoption certificate, record card and photo of your chosen friend, complete with a small cuddly donkey to remind you of your new friend**

Adoption is from just £36 a year (or £3 a month) and you can adopt for yourself or a friend – donkey adoptions make the ideal gift for birthdays, anniversaries or any other special occasion.

Your gift will help pay for the food and medical care of your chosen donkey, as well as support all the donkeys we help at the sanctuary, Nablus clinic and our mobile clinic. Below are just three of our donkeys – but you can choose from our wider donkey family by visiting our website at [www.safehaven4donkeys.org/adopt](http://www.safehaven4donkeys.org/adopt).

We care for around 200 donkeys at our sanctuary in Israel and rescue centre in Arrana. We will update you with news about a selection of our donkeys in every newsletter but sadly we're not currently able to send individual updates.

*Thank you for your support.*

\* Cuddly donkey UK only due to Customs restrictions – many apologies



Name: **Dominic**  
Age: **4 years**  
Rescued: **July 2022**

**Dominic** was being beaten by a gang of youths when a kind man rescued him and took him to safety. Although Dominic was very thin when he came to our Israel sanctuary and had ulcers in his mouth and a wound at the base of his tail, he soon recovered under the gentle care of Moussa and Ali.



Name: **Dusty**  
Age: **11 years**  
Rescued: **October 2013**

**Dusty**, was only about 4 weeks old when he was found wandering the streets of the Palestinian city of Qalqilya, calling for his mother. He was brought back to our sanctuary in Israel where he had to be bottle fed but is of course now a healthy donkey who has a home for life with us.



Name: **Pen**  
Age: **almost 3 years**  
Born: **August 2021**

**Pen**, named after Pen Farthing the founder of Nowzad which rescued so many animals from Afghanistan, was born at our clinic in the Palestinian city of Nablus on 29th August 2021. He is now living safely at our rescue centre in Arrana.

**Adopt a donkey today by visiting [www.safehaven4donkeys.org/adopt](http://www.safehaven4donkeys.org/adopt) or give us a call on 01444 470136 or 01444 470132 and give a donkey the love and care they deserve.**

# Ways you can help...

*giftaid it*

## Gift Aid

The Gift Aid scheme allows charities to reclaim tax on donations received from supporters who have paid sufficient income or capital gains tax during the year to cover the amount we would be reclaiming from HMRC. If you are a taxpayer and have not already completed a Gift Aid declaration, please complete the form with this newsletter so we can reclaim even more to help the donkeys!

If you would like more information on the Gift Aid scheme before signing up, just call Wendy on 01444 470136.

Remember, if you are no longer a tax payer, please let Wendy know.



## Standing orders/direct debits

We already have over 1,000 supporters who give to us regularly and these payments are vital in helping us to plan for the future of the charity. If you can spare a regular amount each month, quarter or even year, please visit [www.safehaven4donkeys.org/fundraising/how-you-can-help/](http://www.safehaven4donkeys.org/fundraising/how-you-can-help/) or call 01444 470136. You can now also set up a regular gift via your credit/debit card or Paypal by visiting the donate page on our website.



## Recycle

Donate your used postage stamps, stamp collections, postcards, first day covers, old or foreign coins/bank notes, pre 1940s maps, watches, medals or badges. Simply send direct to Stamps N All, 32 Eastbury Avenue, Plymouth, PL5 2NB (please do not send donations or items for the donkeys to this address and please note that the company is unable to acknowledge receipt of packages due to volume of work).



## Easy Fundraising

Did you know that whenever you buy anything online – from your weekly shop to your annual holiday – you could be raising free donations with Easy Fundraising? Simply go to [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) to sign up, choose us as your favourite cause and get shopping!



## Ebay

Sell an item via popular online bidding site Ebay and you can donate the profit (or a percentage) towards our work.



## Home Collection Boxes

Ask us for one of our home collection boxes. Collect up all your loose change for the donkeys! Just call Melanie on 01444 470132 or e-mail [melanie@safehaven4donkeys.org](mailto:melanie@safehaven4donkeys.org)



## Thinking of making your Will?

Gifts in Wills are vital in helping to secure the future of the donkeys at our sanctuary. If you are thinking of leaving Safe Haven a legacy after you have taken care of your loved ones, why not ask us for a copy of our will writing worksheet to help you plan what to include before visiting your solicitor.

Just call Wendy on **01444 470136**  
or e-mail [wendy@safehaven4donkeys.org](mailto:wendy@safehaven4donkeys.org)

### Free Will

If you are having difficulty getting out to see a solicitor, we are now partnered with Bequeathed, who offer free Wills and valuable advice. Their simple and convenient service allows you to make the right Will for you in the way that best suits you – online, face to face or over the phone. You will be asked if you would like to leave a legacy to Safe Haven for Donkeys in the Holy Land but there is absolutely no obligation to do so.

To find out more:  
visit [www.bequeathed.org/p/safehaven4donkeys](http://www.bequeathed.org/p/safehaven4donkeys)  
or call **020 8191 0587**.

### DATA PROTECTION & PRIVACY

In carrying out our day to day activities Safe Haven for Donkeys in the Holy Land processes and stores personal information relating to our supporters and we are therefore required to adhere to the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation and other relevant Acts and Regulations. We take our responsibilities very seriously and we ensure the personal information we obtain is held, used, transferred and otherwise processed in accordance with that Regulation and all other applicable data protection laws and regulations including, but not limited to, the Privacy and Electronic Communication Regulations.

Personal information we might collect includes your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, date of birth, whether you are a tax payer (for Gift Aid purposes), bank account details if you set up a regular payment, donations you have made or events in which you have participated. On occasion, we may need to look up your telephone number in the phone book to contact you regarding a donation you have made – we would then store this data in our database in case it is needed for the same purpose in the future.

We collect this data for purposes including the processing of any donation made by you, to provide you with any products or information you have requested or for internal record keeping/accounting/administration. Having supported us, under the “legitimate interest” condition for processing data we believe that you would like to receive our quarterly newsletter and occasional additional appeals or updates on our work and so we will also use your details for this purpose.

If you use your credit or debit card to donate to us, buy something or pay online or over the phone, we will ensure that this is done securely and in accordance with the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard. All card details and validation codes are securely destroyed once the payment or donation has been processed. Other information will be held as long as is reasonably necessary to allow us to continue to communicate with you or to comply with relevant legislation. For example, the HMRC require Gift Aid declarations to be retained indefinitely.

We will not sell, share or swap your information with any third parties unless required to do so for legal reasons (for example to the police). We do send the names and addresses of our supporters to the printers who produce our quarterly newsletter. They also comply with the General Data Protection Regulation and use your details solely for the purpose of mailing the newsletter. They do not retain the data or use it for any other purpose.

It is your choice on the type of communications and information you receive about our charity and the ways in which you can get involved. You can change your mind at any time by contacting us by post, e-mail or phone using the contact details on page two of this newsletter. If you have a complaint about how your data is processed, please contact us in the first instance. If we cannot resolve the situation, you have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner’s Office. You also have the right to request copies of any data held about you and to request rectification of any inaccuracies.

# Thank you

We are grateful to each and every one of you for your support as without you there would be no Safe Haven. We would especially like to thank:



**Our Patron Peter Egan and the film maker Andrew Telling of Orange Planet Pictures** who made such a moving film “Broken – The Brick Kiln Donkeys of Egypt” about our work in the El Saf brick kilns. We are delighted to say that earlier in the year, the film won the “Group” category in Geographical Magazine’s Better World Video Awards and we hope that it will continue to raise awareness of the suffering of the donkeys in the kilns and our attempts to create a better world for them. To watch the film, go to YouTube and search for “Broken – The Brick Kiln Donkeys of Egypt”.



**Margaret Jennings** for raising £450 from the sale of plants.



**Our Trustee Anton Ratnayake** an accomplished artist who recently held an art exhibition in London, raising a wonderful £4,000. Thanks also to Anton’s fellow artists and all who contributed.



**Janet Parsons** and friends who raised £800 from Christmas stalls.

**The Woolpack pub** in Burgess Hill, West Sussex for allowing us to hold another quiz night – £531 was raised. The next quiz will be on Thursday 3rd October so make a note in your diary now!