

**WILD CAMEL PROTECTION FOUNDATION**  
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**Hon. Life Patron:** Dr. Jane Goodall D.B.E.

**Patrons:**

The Marchioness of Bute, Lady Chichester, Lady Grant, Professor Yuan Guoying, Peter Hall, Jane McMorland Hunter of Hafton, Gerald Kidd, Damon de Laszlo, Lulu Lytle, Colin McIntosh, Professor David Munro, The Dowager Marchioness of Reading.

**November 2012 - Newsletter Number 29**

**Dear Wild Camel Supporter,**

**CAMEL FUND-RAISING RACE DAY IN KENT**

September 22<sup>nd</sup> was fine and sunny but the forecast for Sunday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> – the day of the WCPF camel race day – was dire. And so it proved. The rain bucketed down but a huge number of people braved the weather and gave us support. They had their money's worth with Mongolians wrestling in traditional wrestling costume in the pouring rain and Mongolians in national dress playing their evocative musical instruments. A message came through that Joseph and his Amazing Camels were stuck on the M25 with their racing pigs and camels. The rain continued but what spirit the punters showed. Braving all they patronized the stalls, the superb raffle run by Patron Lulu Lytle, the WCPF tent, had a go at the coconut shy and the plate smashing managed by thoroughly drenched members Pam and Paul Dunn and the book stall run by members Anne Evans and Diana St John and a huge thank you to Patron Jane McMorland Hunter collecting in the torrential rain entrance fees for the car park. And then, only 15 minutes late, Joseph and Rebecca Fossett and their racing menagerie rolled in. As they did so a minor miracle occurred. For the first time that day the rain stopped and the sky brightened.

The pigs came out first, a bit sleepy but still in racing mood. As usual the Tamworth's won and the punters got around the betting laws of the land by betting on colours – not a pig.

When the camel box was opened there was much protesting from a very grumpy piebald camel called Safari. He certainly had had quite enough of the M25 and the rest of England's saturated road system. Joseph gave the camels time to find their racing legs but Safari continued to complain vociferously. At last they were lined up to race. Appropriately dressed, volunteer jockeys, recruited from the local hunt, turned up to mount their steeds. But Safari continued to bellow and refused to get up. Ready, steady, go and they were off. As soon as Safari, who had been sitting down with his back to the whole proceedings, sensed his companions were down the track he got up like a shot, whirled round and set off after them at a gallop. He overtook them all and won the race – and the next two. Never misjudge a camel! The Master of

the Hunt, Robert Pascall sat his mount like a professional cameleer and so did Francis Beech who followed on Safari in the next race. The fact she was dressed like someone out of the Sultan's harem may have helped to spur Safari on.

Journalist and keep wild camel supporter, Matthew Parris had made a great effort to fit the day in before haring off to the Liberal Party Conference in Brighton and he judged the children's poster competition, which had produced very good entries. He was assisted by Christopher Neve and Charlotte Molesworth, two local art experts and Camilla Pascall who organized the posters. Matthew duly gave prizes to the winners and to the best dressed camel jockey.

A huge amount of thanks goes to the local Ashford Valley Hunt who provided all kinds of assistance. To Joseph and Rebecca for coming all the way from Warwickshire on a filthy day, to all the Mongolians who provided such delightful entertainment, to the Patrons and other volunteers including my daughters, Hetta and Emily and assorted family who manned stalls and the car park and to the spectators who turned out in their droves and made the day – in spite of the weather – a great success. Much needed funds for winter hay for the Mongolian captive wild camel breeding centre was raised. **There are pictures of the day on our website - [www.wildcamels.com](http://www.wildcamels.com)**

### [CAMEL FUND -RAISING DAY IN KENYA](#)

Amanda Perrett, Trustee (the daughter of our late trustee, Jasper Evans) also organized a camel day for the WCPF in Kenya. Here is her account:

“Abdi is our mini camel who gives rides to the children. He was an orphan so didn't grow out very well, and spent his life carrying children clinging to his neck whenever he could find a willing customer, of which there are usually plenty. He has at least grown up enough now to have his own saddle! He is a very proud fellow with a big smile on his face, and spent the entire day with no less than 4 children on his back going back and forth all day. Poor chap must have been exhausted. They tried to teach him to play polo, but he thought it a very silly game and flatly refused. He knows where his vocation is!

Husband John organised a 10 km camel race, but this has been vetoed for next time. Most people seemed to want to ride their own camels this year, but didn't enjoy the long, uncomfortable bounce! And the non-riders wanted to be able to spectate, so it'll be back to just track races, which was the original idea. John's right hand man won the long race and big prize, having entered off his own bat, so the camel trainers were all a bit sulky about a mere manual labourer winning! Our son, Josh, and team mate Barbara - the main trainer, two favourites of the crowd, disgraced themselves this year as Josh was no longer fit enough to keep up with his camel, allowing his sister Roisin, just a girl, to beat him!

The camel calf race fell a bit flat this year. The crowd got so excited they all surged onto the track which put the calves off, slowing down the headlong pelt back to mum, til they'd managed to by-pass them. As most of the security team was behind them getting them into position the line was short staffed keeping the spectators behind lines. In contrast the tricamethon worked really well with 7 teams competing, amongst which was a British Army competitor who did all three sections on his

own. Only one of the borrowed bikes worked so most of the teams had to run with the bike, or try to fix it first, with one guy using his feet as the pedals much to everyone's amusement. Made for exciting spectating! We only had one game of camel polo this year, which was played by our neighbour's tourist team, vs the management. As most of the management were expert polo players I don't think they thought much of camel polo. Mind you, the camels probably think the same!

We probably had a turn out of around 4,000 this year by lunchtime, it was heaving. If we could only fence the place and charge entrance fees we might have made a bit of money, but then it could equally have put people off coming! The sponsors all said it had been a very good day for them too, and want to come again next year, so perhaps they'll pass on the good news which may help it develop into a camel field day. So, basically, I think I should say it was very successful as far as everyone was concerned. Yet again the rain did the right thing and chased everyone home when the time was right, and thankfully we had no spills or unexpected thrills, and a very happy, harmonious multi-ethnic crowd."

**A huge THANK YOU to John and Amanda for organising this day. I think a tricamethon sounds a great idea (run, bicycle and ride a camel) and one we may well consider next year - if Safari and the Fossetts agree!**

**JANUARY 27TH 2013**

### **GOLDEN JOURNEY – LEGENDS OF THE SILK ROAD**

Patron Lady Chichester has undertaken a mammoth task. She has written a script embracing a history of the Silk Road and which at intervals features the wild camel. She has managed to persuade Nadia Fall a director at the National Theatre to direct with assistance from Danny Wyler who has long been associated with productions at the Royal Opera House and Dame Harriet Walter, the well-known actress will be the narrator. June Chichester's own camel, Therese, together with Therese's newly acquired neutered, boy-friend, Temujin will appear on the stage at the end (with me). This ambitious project has been undertaken solely to raise funds for the WCPF and the Linbury Theatre, the venue, which is part of the Royal Opera House.

The date is Sunday, January the 27th January 2013 and fuller details are enclosed with this Newsletter. Tickets are £75 for a reception and the performance and £250 for the reception and performance plus a magnificent Chinese dinner.

June Chichester is also looking for sponsors for various items connected with the evening and can be contacted at [mail@jchich.co.uk](mailto:mail@jchich.co.uk) if any member would be willing to undertake sponsorship. It would be wonderful to see as many members at the performance who feel they can give their support. This is a huge initiative by Lady Chichester and the WCPF Trustees are extremely grateful. The Linbury Theatre holds 250 (possibly a few more) and the success of the evening will be huge boost to the WCPF's finances and ability to expand both the breeding centre in Mongolia and the current educational awareness-raising campaign in both China and Mongolia.

**PLEASE BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW on the enclosed form.**

## JANE McMORLAND HUNTER

I am delighted to report that yet again Patron Jane is running to raise money for the wild camels. This time it is the Edinburgh Coast Run on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> of May. Do support Jane at [janemcmorlandhunter@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:janemcmorlandhunter@yahoo.co.uk). She raises a tremendous amount for us each year and maybe our Scottish supporters would like to gather at the event to cheer her on! Why not bring the pipes!

Jane works for Slightly Foxed ([www.foxedquarterly.com](http://www.foxedquarterly.com)) the Real Readers Quarterly, a delightful literary quarterly magazine, and WCPF supporter, at their bookshop at 23 Gloucester Rd., London SW7 4TE. They have a collecting box for the wild camels in their bookshop.

## EDUCATION - AWARENESS-RAISING PROGRAMMES

Unfortunately, we were not successful in our application to Prince Albert's Fund for additional funding for our education programme for adults and children living in proximity to the wild camel reserves in China and Mongolia. We do have \$10,000 from the [Mohammed bin Zayed Trust](#) and I have written with the Chinese National Nature Reserve management staff material for four DVD's and booklets which the Reserve Head office in China is now costing to print and produce locally. These materials will go into Chinese, Mongolian, Kazakh and Uighur as well as English. The more funding we obtain, the greater the impact will be in both China and Mongolia. Given these countries are now doing well economically we are keen to encourage locals stewardship and support for the wild camels through in-country education remembering that is also very important as development, especially mining, is rampant in both countries and has a negative impact on the wild camel habitat.

## MY VISIT to CHINA and MONGOLIA OCTOBER 2012

Shortly after the camel race day I visited Mongolia and China for three weeks. I travelled to the Hunter Hall Wild Camel Breeding Centre in Mongolia and found the captive wild camels to be in excellent condition. The whole area had been cleaned of droppings, the fence had been repaired, a new building for accommodation and meetings had been well constructed and the whole area looked to be under sound management. This is a tribute to Mijjidorj, the former director of Gobi Specially Protected Area "A" which is adjacent to the Centre and his successor Gotov. The new management structure is clearly a vast improvement on the old.

I approached the Ministry of Nature to gain approval for the release of two young male camels into the Gobi before the mating season in December and Gotov is following up on this. In China I had discussions with Yuan Lei and the staff at the Lop Nur Wild Camel National Nature Reserve about the educational programme, which they fully support. As I have said, we are now waiting for costings for the educational materials.

In Beijing I met the Chinese Director of the Remote Sensing Unit of the Chinese Academy of Sciences who has offered to collar and fund the wild camel release programme in Mongolia. He has already collared and successfully released nine camels in the Chinese Lop Nur Wild Camel National Nature Reserve and his generous proposal is fully in accord with the Letter of Intent, signed by both Chinese

and Mongolian environment vice Ministers in 2000 at a workshop in Beijing organised by the WCPF. I put the proposal to the Mongolian Ministry of Nature and we are waiting to hear their decision. Please see fuller details of my visit on our website <[www.wildcamels.com](http://www.wildcamels.com)>

## LECTURES

The lecture I was due to give in New York on the Swedish Explorer Sven Hedin was postponed. I have a full programme of lectures to schools and colleges in England and Scotland during November. If any member knows of any suitable lecture audiences who might be interested in a talk please let me know. The wider the message gets out, the better.

## ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

You're annual subscription is used entirely for funding the Mongolian Breeding Centre Budget. So please remember to renew your annual membership and if you haven't, please send £20.00 (or its equivalent in foreign currency). You can pay by going direct to the website [www.wildcamels.com](http://www.wildcamels.com) using Paypal. If you are paying in US dollars or Euros you can also transfer funds direct into the WCPF's Euro or US dollar accounts. **Please email us for the WCPF bank and transfer details.** Many members pay by **setting up a standing order** with their bank to pay direct to the WCPF account. This keeps costs down.

## SPONSORING A YOUNG WILD CAMEL

If you are sponsoring a young wild camel at the breeding centre please remember to send your annual payment, which was due **1st March 2012**. **And please let me know if you want a picture of your camel.**

## URGENT REQUEST FOR WINTER HAY

**We still require \$5,000 for the cost of the winter hay at the Breeding Centre. Every £/ Euro/\$ helps feed a wild camel during the long Mongolian winter and spring months.**

Very best wishes and renewed thanks for your great support for our on-going work – the protection and conservation of the critically endangered wild camel from extinction. It is with your help and generous support that we are able to achieve so much.

John Hare  
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