

# friends

Better Together



fitzpatrickreferrals

SPRING 2016



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our contact details

Professor Noel Fitzpatrick  
with patient Buddy  
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**VET  
FESTIVAL  
2016**

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## Welcome to the spring edition of the Friends newsletter!

**Thank you for your support over the last 10 years in trying to provide all of the options to every animal and in trying always to do the right thing.**

It is increasingly challenging as the years go by and more choices become available to listen to the needs of our clients and also to guide them through all of the options with the animal's welfare interests at the core of all of our decisions. That is why this newsletter celebrates your team, the wonderful nurses and support staff at Fitzpatrick Referrals without whom I could achieve nothing, and also the families who trust us implicitly to act as if each patient were our own dog or cat.

That is also why I started the **VET Festival**, where we would all learn together from world leaders about all of the new options available in a convivial and inspiring environment. I hope the next generation of veterinary education will be dynamic, interactive and fun. I also hope to integrate the message of One Medicine because it seems silly to me that we would spend the next 100 years like we have the last, moving on a separate path to human medicine whilst animals have provided human medicine with most of their drugs and implants.

It is my sincere hope that we will push forward together for the greater good, integrating new techniques and new technologies with compassion and with morally well-founded decision-making.

When we signed up to be veterinary surgeons and nurses, we were genuinely optimistic that we could make a real difference to all animals and it is my personal commitment with Fitzpatrick Referrals, the VET Festival and with the charity that I have founded, the Humanimal Trust, to continue this journey. Both **VetFest™ Live** on Fri 3rd June and **ONE LIVE** on Sat 4th June are in support of The Humanimal Trust and I believe these will be wonderful opportunities to reach out to other colleagues and to your friends, family and clients to give them nights to remember. I sincerely believe that the future of veterinary medicine depends on a genuine partnership of purpose with human medicine and I think our clients do too. There is no question that they would like to have all of the options for their companion animals. It is our moral responsibility and to move forward and to provide these options.

*Noel*



**For more information and to book last minute tickets, please visit [www.vetfestival.co.uk](http://www.vetfestival.co.uk)**



*Sir Christopher Evans OBE, one of Europe's most influential and successful medical science entrepreneurs, who will deliver the keynote speech at VET Festival.*

**"I'm delighted I can help Professor Noel Fitzpatrick make his VET Festival as exciting as possible this year and progress further his vision of ONE MEDICINE - bringing the human and veterinary medical worlds closer still for the common good."**



## The Secret to a Successful Practice

KNOWN AS 'AMERICA'S PET ADVOCATE', ERNIE HAS DEDICATED HIS LONG AND ILLUSTRIOUS CAREER TO IMPROVING VETERINARY MEDICAL STANDARDS AND PROMOTING HEALTHIER HABITS FOR PETS AND PEOPLE. HE IS A RECOGNISED LEADER IN THE FIELDS OF PET NUTRITION AND WEIGHT LOSS, DIAGNOSTIC TEST PROTOCOLS AND EVOLVING PET TECHNOLOGIES AND IS A PASSIONATE PROMOTER OF SENIOR PET CARE AND OF ADVANCING VETERINARY PRACTICE STANDARDS AND STAFF TRAINING.



By Dr Ernie Ward

**At the VET Festival, Ernie will address common in-practice issues, such as conflict, motivation, morality over money and raising diagnostic standards. Speaking about his overall aim for the sessions, Ernie says,**

*"I hope to teach delegates how to better cope with daily stress, provide higher standards of care and recharge their enthusiasm! Working in a practice is emotionally draining and financially challenging. It's too easy to become disconnected. I hope that by sharing my passion and love for veterinary practice, I will remind everyone why we do what we do and why it's important so that it will become more enjoyable and rewarding," he adds.*

**In 'Refuelling the Energy Slump: Principle Centre Motivation' Ernie will share his top eight energy injections to restore motivation in any practice.**

He says, "Motivating people requires a lot of energy! Encouraging a team to have positive attitudes, creativity and to deliver exceptional client service and patient care demands constant input and focus from practice leaders. These days not everyone can do it. The stress of daily practice life takes its toll and the result is often emotional burnout."

When employees and veterinarians are emotionally spent they provide poor service, aren't focused on patient care and ultimately damage the reputation of the practice and its revenues. Practice leaders need to understand the connection between staff morale and success – an energised, motivated and emotionally strong team will outperform a less enthusiastic competitor every time.

He adds, "If we want sustainable growth and happiness, we must be guided by our core principles and beliefs – those we use to navigate life's challenges and that remind us why we work hard. The real test is if you can survive the trials and tribulations of practice life with your core beliefs intact, I believe we can!"

The old adage 'Misery Loves Company' is too true for many veterinarians and support staff and in '5 Steps to Cure Conflict Before it Kills You', Ernie will provide practical advice on how to deal with negative issues in the workplace.

He says, "Sour team morale, sagging revenue, and complaints from clients and co-workers create tense workplaces. Despite doing better economically, many veterinary teams lose enthusiasm and team members. Team morale, energy and harmony can be directly influenced and every practice should have a strategy for creating this excitement and excellence to ward off conflict. I'll be sharing mine with delegates to hopefully inspire them to formulate their own."

In '5 Physical Exam Hacks to Improve Diagnostic Accuracy and Communication Effectiveness' Ernie will be challenging the importance placed on 'high-tech' in the physical examination. He explains, "The physical exam is the foundation of veterinary medicine and is perhaps the most important service we provide but it's becoming a lost art as high-tech replaces touch, feel, and talk."

"My goal with this presentation is to reveal why the physical examination is more important than ever and equip delegates with five 'hacks' to improve and enhance their expertise and compliance," he adds.

Ernie will also tackle veterinarian's on-going battle of morality over money. In 'Blurred Lines – Doing Good While Doing Well' he aims to help veterinarians find the 'peace' between profit and charity

"Why do we veterinarians have an agonising association with money?" he asks, "It's a struggle we often ignore within our profession as it's very difficult to draw a line between profit and compassion. But why shouldn't we be able to do good for animal welfare whilst doing well financially?"

"I believe the answers may be both simpler and more complicated than most of us think so in this session I plan to review how we got into this mess originally, and I'm pointing my finger at Dr. James Herriott!"



**Dr Ernie Ward DVM CVFT, Founder of Seaside Animal Care USA, will be lecturing on both Friday 3rd and Saturday 4th June at the VET Festival.**





Annie Leete  
and Brinkley



Never a sad face - Brinkley  
during his treatment

## CASE STUDY by client Annie Leete

# BRINKLEY'S STORY

Following a routine visit to our local vet, Nicola Hoad at Mildmay Veterinary Hospital in Winchester, I got the results of a fine needle aspirate test for what we all thought was a cyst on Brinkley's chest. To hear it was a mast cell tumour was a shock, so I asked for Brinkley to be referred to Fitzpatrick Referrals Oncology and Soft Tissue

A couple of days later, we had our first appointment and our journey began. We had a lovely greeting from Claire on reception and Brinkley did his usual excited to see you, spinning around and singing thing. We met with Dr Kelvin Kow, Senior Consultant in Medical Oncology, who told me that mast cell tumours are very common, and surgically removing them was the best treatment.

Brinkley had an ultrasound scan and other tests including checking his lymph nodes, his liver and his spleen. The bad news was that we had to deal with three mast cell tumours, rather than just the one. After a very tense day of surgery, I got the call from Senior Surgeon, Dr Laurent Findji, to say that it had gone well. I picked Brinkley up a couple of days later and was given some pain relief and told to keep him quiet for two weeks when the stitches were scheduled to be removed.

One Sunday evening, I rushed Brinkley back to Fitzpatrick Referrals when suddenly his leg wound started discharging fluid. I found out this was

*Surgery day came a week later and I got the call to say that it had gone well. I picked him up the next day and we were both beside ourselves with excitement to see each other!*

actually common with major surgery, especially in such a high impact area. It did mean however that because the wound was not healing properly, there was a greater risk of infection. I had the option of the wound being

dressed and taking him back first thing in the morning to Surgical Resident Dr Padraig Egan, or leave him overnight in a sterile environment. As much as I hated leaving him, I chose the latter option to reduce the risk of infection. Padraig called me first thing on Monday and explained that this was a seroma, partly as a result of one of the lymph nodes behind Brinkley's knee being removed due to its proximity with the mast cell tumour and that he would need compression bandages being re-dressed every few hours. Brinkley was sent home three days later with a big pile of large dressings to keep the wound as clean as possible.

We hit the two week milestone post-surgery and I took him back to Fitzpatrick Referrals to review next steps. While the wounds on his chest and back were healing very well, the one on his leg was still open and the seroma fluid was still flowing, stopping the wound from healing properly. Padraig put four staples into the wound. By the end of the week, the wound had healed. The staples had done the trick. Three weeks after surgery, I took Brinkley back to have his stitches and staples removed. Kelvin explained the pathology results. While the incisions were much larger than the visible tumours, Laurent had got good margins meaning that the tissue left was clean and free of cancer; and the tumours were low grade which was good news. There were some suspect cells from the lymph node that was removed, so Kelvin recommended that we do a course of chemotherapy as well.

A check up and ultrasound was scheduled for the end of February, but paranoid Mummy kicked in when I found a tiny lump on his front leg. Kelvin told me to bring him in straight away to test it with a fine needle aspirate. He gave me the devastating news that it was in fact another mast cell tumour. Surgery day came a week later and I got the call to say that it had gone well.

I picked him up the next day and we were both beside ourselves with excitement to see each other! The two week milestone arrived and Kelvin removed the stitches.

So, what happens next? Just after I got my boy back after a tough autumn and winter, I found another lump. Kelvin tested it and had the unenviable task of telling me that it was yet another mast cell tumour. Given that we did not discover more lumps while Brinkley was going through chemo, we have decided to remove this latest tumour and then get him on to oral chemotherapy.

It is now a week since surgery and he's doing as well as we could have hoped! If there are any lessons I have learnt and can share with vets and owners alike, are that these tumours are SO deceptive. A fine-needle aspirate is key to determining whether there is a problem or not.

**Not only has Brinkley had world class medical care, we have both been shown so much love and kindness from absolutely everyone and I really do feel like Brinkley and I have become part of the Fitz Family. Brinkley has loved every single one of his visits, no matter what was done to him, which says it all really.**





*"It has been a real pleasure getting to know Annie and Brinkley these past few months. We always look forward to Brinkley's appointments as he is always so happy, exuberant and well mannered. Mast cell tumours are typically straight forward to treat, however patients with metastatic and/or multiple mast cell tumours can be a challenge with each patient requiring customised treatment protocols. We are all pulling for Annie and Brinkley and wish them both the best."*

Dr Kelvin Kow



*"Brinkley is a lovely dog and we often see a lot of him running around in circles dancing and is always happy! I was very worried after they aspirated the lump and realised it was a mast cell tumour when the results came back. I am incredibly pleased with the service at Fitzpatrick Referrals and they have done a brilliant job in managing Brinkley's condition. I wish all the best for Brinkley and Annie."*

Nicola Hoad,  
Mildmay Veterinary  
Centre





# Research shows cross-breeding can reduce risk of Chiari-like malformation

Our Chief of Neurology, Dr Clare Rusbridge, and her research team worked together with an experienced breeder from the Netherlands to improve head shape in toy dogs by cross-breeding. This new research indicates it is possible to prevent Chiari-like malformation and should be used in new breeding guidelines scientists say.

Cooperating with an experienced breeder in the Netherlands, Clare and her team examined how the skull and brain of toy dogs change when a Brussels Griffon with Chiari-like malformation is crossed with an Australian Terrier. The succeeding hybrid puppy is then back crossed to a Brussels Griffon to give some of the features of the Brussels Griffon, but keeping the longer skull of the Australian Terrier.

The study, which took four years to complete, analysed MRI scans in a family of 29 dogs. They measured 5 traits which were significant for Chiari-like malformation to see how they changed generation by generation.

Results show it is in fact possible to breed a dog with the external features of a short-nosed Brussels Griffon and therefore reduce the risk of Chiari-like malformation, a debilitating condition found in toy dogs which also affect 1 in 1,280 humans. Dr Rusbridge's team is collaborating with geneticists at Montreal University to look for genes involved in the condition.

Penny Knowler, Clare's research assistant at the University of Surrey, said *"This project is underpinned by the genetics studies that we are doing with our collaborators at Montreal University, Canada. We are investigating Chiari-like malformation in the dog model with a view to helping human sufferers of Chiari-like malformation and Syringomyelia."*

Clare is widely recognised for her work on Chiari-like malformation and Syringomyelia and received a PhD from Utrecht University for her thesis back in 2007.

*"This is a true collaboration with breeders and researchers working together and using their expertise to improve the health of dogs. Our study investigated how the characteristics of this disease is inherited in the family. Such knowledge could help in tackling this debilitating disease in toy dog breeds. We hope our research will develop more sophisticated ways of screening and improve breeding guidelines by creating robust breeding values."*

#### BELOW:

2nd generation backcross offspring with purebred Griffon sire



#### TOP:

Dr Clare Rusbridge, Chief of Neurology at Fitzpatrick Referrals

Chiari-like malformation alters the flow of cerebrospinal fluid between the skull and spinal column resulting in a collection of fluid pockets within the spinal cord, descriptively known as Syringomyelia. Chiari-like malformation, a condition characterised by a mismatch in skull and brain size (brain too big and skull too small) is the most common cause of Syringomyelia in dogs.

#### BELOW:

Penny Knowler, Research Assistant at University of Surrey



# IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Taking time to get to know more about the people behind the referral!

**NAME:** Roger Holden | Age: 47  
**TRAINING:** University of Edinburgh  
**FIRST JOB:** Rogerson & Partners in Kelso, Scotland  
**CURRENT JOB:** Joint Venture Partner at Companion Care in Farnham, Surrey

## WHY ARE YOU A VET?

My family recall that while staying on my grandfather's farm as a young child, I saw the vet visit his herd of beef cows. I was overheard saying I wanted to be a vet when I was older. My mother did her best to keep me on the right path.

## BEST PART OF YOUR JOB?

Every day being utterly different.

## THREE WORDS THAT DESCRIBE YOU?

I would always ask someone else that, it's not for me to assume!

## WHO IS YOUR HERO?

Sir Robin Knox-Johnston, a sailor who became the first person to sail single handed and non-stop around the world.

## MOST UNUSUAL ANIMAL YOU TREATED?

Skunks.

## YOUR PASSION?

My Rachel and my sons.

## WHAT KEEPS YOU AWAKE AT NIGHT?

I do lie awake sometimes mulling over cases, but my time at sea trained me to take sleep when I could so usually I drop off quickly.

## IF YOU COULD BE GRANTED A WISH, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

I could become a more considerate citizen of the planet I share.

## WHAT WORDS WOULD INSPIRE A CHILD TO BECOME A VET?

An amazing profession to join and so many varied opportunities for a career path. And just as important is the special role we have in caring for animals and their owners.

## WHAT DOG BREED WOULD YOU BE?

I have been compared to a Labrador in the past but I am creaking now...

## WHAT WOULD YOU BE IF NOT A VET?

I worked at sea for three years on tall ships, so a sailor.

## WHERE IS YOUR HAPPY PLACE?

Somewhere outdoors.

## DO YOU NEED TO LOVE ANIMALS TO BE A GREAT VET?

I am sure that it is technically possible to be a great vet without loving animals.

## YOUR DREAM DESTINATION?

West Loch Tarbert in Jura, in the autumn when the stags roar.



We want to hear from you!

Would you like to share some of your thoughts or experiences working in the profession and with Fitzpatrick Referrals or contribute to our newsletter?

**Please get in touch with Sarah on**

SarahC@fitzpatrickreferrals.co.uk



## We're going digital

Our move to digital means Friends is now available online. All you have to do is sign up via our website

[fitzpatrickreferrals.co.uk/friends-newsletter/](https://fitzpatrickreferrals.co.uk/friends-newsletter/)

Don't worry if you prefer a good old-fashioned printed version! Our printed edition will still be made readily available.



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# Fitz & Pieces

## Partners in Care

We were delighted to hold our first Partners in Care lecture of 2016 on the 26th April with Professor Stuart Carmichael on 'Osteoarthritis: A systematic approach to chronic OA.'

Next up, we have "Not the same old settings - getting that perfect x-ray" by Head of Imaging, Eli Jovanovik and Surgical Resident, Dr Pdraig Egan on Tues 14th June.

On Tues 5th July, we have Senior Surgeon in Neurology, Dr Colin Driver, lecturing on 'Common mistakes in the neuro exam'. To find out more about the 2016 schedule: please contact Sarah on SarahC@fitzpatrickreferrals.co.uk

## FITZ FORUM FOR WORLD CANCER DAY



On the 4th February, Fitzpatrick Referrals hosted a live online forum inviting all animal owners and lovers to submit any cancer related questions to two world authorities in veterinary oncology, Professor Nick Bacon and Dr Kelvin Kow of Fitzpatrick Referrals Oncology and Soft Tissue, for World Cancer Day.

It was a great success with Nick and Kelvin answering your questions live for a total hour to over 240 people engaging online with questions from all over the globe including San Diego and Australia. If you are interested in reading what happened on the Fitz Forum, the Q&A's are still available on [www.fitzpatrickreferrals.co.uk/fitzforum](http://www.fitzpatrickreferrals.co.uk/fitzforum) Watch this space for any upcoming Fitz Forums in the near future!



## FITZPATRICK LEARNING ACADEMY

### 2016 re-launch of the Fitzpatrick Learning Academy

Over the past few years, the FLA has been involved in sought-after nursing CPD and a series of lectures that exposed our valued referring vets to Professor Nick Bacon and Dr Kelvin Kow of our new Oncology & Soft Tissue hospital for the first time.

**It is time for a new start!** The FLA has worked to develop partnerships and attract a world-class faculty of speakers and organisers to deliver sets of practical courses at affordable rates. Working primarily from a dedicated and purpose-designed skills lab within the new Oncology & Soft Tissue hospital in Guildford, the re-launched FLA will formalise its delivery of CPD to something that is practical and beneficial to vets in practice. The FLA has benefited from formal partnerships with Storz, Ethicon and Eickemeyer who have shown their commitment and belief in the type of CPD that the FLA is offering. A number of practical courses are already being constructed covering minimally invasive surgery, surgical oncology, orthopaedics and neurology. An advanced stream is also being assembled and will be offered soon. Our key aim is to create a new paradigm in practical training of surgically related subjects. We hope that you will find them to be of interest and of benefit.

For further information, please visit [www.fitzpatricklearning.com](http://www.fitzpatricklearning.com) or contact Ray Girotti on 01483 668114 or [rayg@fitzpatricklearning.com](mailto:rayg@fitzpatricklearning.com).



## ONE LIVE MUSIC FESTIVAL

On Saturday 4th June, ONE LIVE returns to Surrey for the only music concert for One Medicine - raising awareness of why it is vital to advance human and animal medicine. With an all new line up for 2016, Starsailor are set to perform alongside Reef, The Feeling and Scouting for Girls in the beautiful grounds of Loseley Park, Guildford.

Visit [www.onelifefestival.co.uk](http://www.onelifefestival.co.uk)

## INAUGURAL FORWARD SYMPOSIUM

Three world leaders in agility, working and performance dogs were brought together at an innovative event unique to the working dog calendar. On 31st January, Dr Chris Zink, Professor Noel Fitzpatrick and Natasha Wise provided world-class expertise covering high end, specialist veterinary medicine and surgery and the rehabilitation necessary to bring working dogs back to competition condition. It was a truly fantastic day as delegates agreed it was the most exciting event of its kind ever held in the UK!



## OUR REHAB TEAM VISITS BATTERSEA

On 22nd February, our Head of Rehabilitation Fiona Doubleday visited Battersea Dogs & Cats Home to present a lecture on 'Care and Rehabilitation of the Orthopaedic and Neurological Patient' for Vet Central CPD. Fiona presented practical demonstrations to a group of Veterinary Surgeons and Veterinary Nurses to highlight the benefits of rehabilitation in the healing process.

## IN AN EMERGENCY

To discuss a case or for any urgent or emergency referrals, please call us

For Orthopaedic and Neurological emergencies  
**TEL 01483 423761**

For Oncological and Soft Tissue emergencies  
**TEL 01483 668100**

For opening times and more information visit [www.fitzpatrickreferrals.co.uk](http://www.fitzpatrickreferrals.co.uk)



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# World-Class Veterinary Medicine, Hope and Healing