

# Burrowings

THE FEBRUARY 2011 NEWSLETTER FROM BUNNY BURROWS

# BunnyBurrows

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1090006

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I have always enjoyed and looked forward to Christmas and New Year so much that John and I had two trips to Lapland for a day to see Father Christmas and enjoy the atmosphere. This year however I was dreading the festive season not having John to share it with. So, sadly I am pleased it is behind me. I have to say my friends and furies helped me through and were all there to help. Thanks!

Talking of Christmas, a huge thank you to so many of you sending much appreciated donations this year. I know for so many that times are hard and riches are few. Also, the cards and gifts sent to me and the furies; how kind you all are.

Last year we rehomed 100 guinea pigs and 69 rabbits; many neutered by our vets

and paid for by Bunny Burrows. Although not as many as previous years but I feel quite proud due to the sad circumstances that we did so much. Already this year we have rehomed and taken in so many furies. It is quite worrying the vast amount of calls that we receive about people wanting to part with their pets. I was concerned 2011 would be a bad year and it surely has started giving great concern. There are as many as 11 rabbits a day looking for a home and I just can't help in a way that would make a difference. So often the public buy rabbits and guinea pigs thinking they are cheap pets that take no looking after.

Since the last newsletter we have had a coffee morning in Northallerton in December and we wondered if we would get there with the bad weather but we did and had plenty customers. The atmosphere was good and was a successful fundraiser.

More permanent residents have joined Bunny Burrows. Such special addi-

# NEWS FROM GWEN ... continued

## WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENING AT THE BURROW ?

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tions are Little Jimmy, an English cross breed boy, so small and so cute but has problems. His hips are fused and he hops with back legs together, he looks a bit like Charlie Chapman but oh so lovely! He lives with Mordacai and Rachel. In the past couple of weeks another special boy arrived, he had been dumped in a cardboard box at the P.D.S.A. in Sunderland. He is an agouti Dwarf Lop named Arkwright and is blind but so clever and very brave. He also lives in this group with Jimmy. They are so good together and so happy. We have also a big addition of guinea pigs with all sorts of issues from head

tilts, paralysis and blindness but all are happy, warm and well fed. They all now have a quality of life.

As I said in the last newsletter, as long as I am able and have the support, Bunny Burrows will continue. So, lets all make a note on the calendar to meet at Richmond Market Hall, Sunday March 27<sup>th</sup> for the Hot X Bunny Day. It is the opportunity for us to exchange photos, notes, experience and most of all, have a hug and remember how much John used to love the day. Lots of rabbits and guinea pigs will be there, a few different stalls and of

course the Tombola and refreshments.

I look forward to seeing friends, old and new. Thanks once again for your continued support, whether it be financial, hands on or messages of goodwill. Hope 2011 is a peaceful year for one and all and the best of health.



*Gwen*

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## HANDY TIP

### BUBBLE WRAP

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Often we are asked to provide the vet with a sample of urine from our rabbit or guinea pig. This is not an easy task is it?

One of Bunny Burrow's foster Mums, Judy, came up with a brilliant idea. Stand the animal on bubble wrap. The wee collects between the bubbles and that makes it easy to syringe up.

Good Eh?

The simple ideas are always the best.

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## NOTE FROM THE EDITOR and PRINTER

### BETTER KNOWN AS KAZ

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Thank you to everyone who contributed to this months newsletter. If you would like to submit an article for our May 2011 newsletter would you please e-mail them to me by April 17th 2011.

Could you please send photos as JPEGs and your wording in a text document.

I will not be sending reminders out as I don't want to pressurise folk. Looking forward to being pleasantly surprised by all your e-mails.

Send them to: [furryhollow@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:furryhollow@yahoo.co.uk)

# MOUNTAIN OR MOLEHILL ?

BY KAZ



A definition of a molehill (or mole-hill or mole mound) is a conical mound of loose soil raised by small burrowing mammals, including moles but also similar animals such as mole-rats, marsupial moles and roles. They are often the only sign to indicate the presence of the animal.

The mole hills are waste material from digging or repairing burrows and are usually found where the animal is establishing new burrows or where existing ones are damaged (for example, by the weight of grazing livestock). If moles burrow beneath the roots of trees or shrubs, the roots support the tunnel and molehills are less common. The hills have an important benefit to soil by aerating and tilling it, adding to its fertility. However, they may cause damage to gardens and areas of grass and represent a minor safety hazard. A noble victim was William 3<sup>rd</sup> of England who died in 1702 from pneumonia. This was a complication arising from a broken collarbone after he fell from his horse when it tripped on a molehill.

The mole is known, in English, as a 'mouldywarp.' The 'mold' part of the word means soil and the 'warp' part is a descendant of the old Nordic word for 'throw'

hence, 'one who throws soil' or 'dirt tosser.' The males are called boars and females, sows. A group of moles is known as a labour.

Moles are the majority of the members of the mammal family known as Talpidae. The family Talpidae includes moles, shrew moles, desmans and other forms of insectivorous animals.

Although moles burrow, some species like the desmans are aquatic or semi-aquatic. They have cylindrical bodies covered in fur and generally their ears are not visible. They have small or covered eyes and can probably still tell night from day, although they are otherwise blind. The eyes of moles and some burrowing rodents are quite basic in size and in some cases are covered by skin and fur. Darwin's suggestion that the state of the eyes may be due to gradual reduction from disuse is no longer accepted by modern biologists and has been replaced by 'natural selection and random generic variation' are the primary drivers.

Their diet primarily consists of earthworms and other small invertebrates (animals without a backbone) found in the soil and also a variety of nuts. Because their saliva contains a toxin that can paralyze earthworms, moles are able to store their still living prey for later consumption. They construct special underground larders for this purpose and researchers have discovered larders with over 1000 earthworms

in them.

The star-nosed mole can detect, catch and eat food faster than the human eye can follow, even though the animal is virtually blind. This type of mole sports a crown of fleshy tendrils around its snout. From the moment that it touches insect lava with its proboscis (the elongated appendage from its head); it takes just 230 milliseconds to check that it is edible and eat it up.

This is the fastest known reaction time in the animal kingdom, taking less than half the 650 milliseconds that a human driver needs to brake for a red light.



This star-nosed mole lives in constant darkness and uses its array of 22 nasal appendages in the same way that a blind person uses a stick. The main difference is the speed which the appendage probe the ground. They can examine 13 targets every second. They also benefit from well adapted teeth, which are smaller than those of other moles and are formed like tweezers. Most predators take times ranging from minutes to seconds to handle their prey. The only things that come even close are some species of fish. This

# MOUNTAIN OR MOLEHILL ... continued

BY KAZ

research was carried out at a university in Nashville, Tennessee.

Moles are found in most parts of North America, Asia, Europe, although there are no moles in Ireland.

During the last ice age, most

parts of Ireland were covered, as was Britain and as the ice moved, animals from the south moved northwards. They moved through continental Europe. They got to Britain but they didn't get into Ireland because the sea levels rose too quickly.

DIY retailer, B and Q in Ireland, obviously hadn't done any research since the last ice age before they stocked their shelves with sonic mole repellers in 2008!

## RECIPE FOR FEBRUARY

BY JOHN TALBOT



### WINTER VEGGIE SOUP

1 Tbsp of Olive oil.  
2 Medium sized carrots, chopped.  
1 Medium sized yellow onion, chopped.  
1 Celery stalk, chopped.  
2 Small red potatoes, diced.

½ Small red bell pepper, seeded and chopped.  
4oz. Green beans, ends trimmed and cut into 1 inch pieces.  
1 Large garlic clove, minced.  
6 Cups vegetable stock.  
15.5 oz. Can white beans, drained and rinsed.  
½ Cup green peas.  
Salt and black pepper, to taste.

2 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley.

Place the oil in a saucepan and add the onion and celery. Cook until softened, stirring occasionally while you assemble the remaining ingredients. Add the potatoes, the carrots, bell pepper, green beans, garlic and stock to the pan. Cover and cook on low heat for 45 minutes (till the vegetables are soft).

About 30 minutes before serving, add the beans and peas and season with the salt and pepper. Just before serving, stir in the parsley and taste to adjust the seasonings.  
Makes 4 to 6 servings.



## UNWANTED GIFTS

### TO FILL OUR TOMBOLA STALL

Bunny Burrows is always grateful when readers donate their unwanted gifts as they are used as prizes on the Tombola Stall. This stall is always a 'good little money spinner' and is so popular wherever it is set up.



Our next Tombola event is on  
HOT X BUNNY DAY 10

More details of this event at the end of the newsletter.



# TALES FROM THE DALES

## FROM A CARAVAN IN WEARDALE

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### SOOTIE HAS HIS FIRST BIRTHDAY.



Well it seems that my SOOTS is a bit of a celebratory and I would like to thank all the kind people who inquire about his welfare.

After saving him from starvation last Autumn when he was just a tiny tot he has grown and put on weight and become a wonderful and beautiful cat.

I chose a birthday for him as I just picked him up in the garden and didn't know his true birthday. He had a cake topped with his very favourite cheese sensations. He got a lovely card made by me with his name on it and a picture of a sleek black cat on it.

He had his booster from the vet to add to his protection a few weeks ago. He refrained from biting and spitting this time but did refuse point blank to leave his carrier and amid peals of laughter from the vet and myself we had to resort to the screwdriver and dismantled the carrier around him. He gave such a look of disgust as he got his inevitable injection. The vet said what a beautiful cat he has become, I had to agree of course .

We have had many trials and tribu-

lations along the way; like the day Sootie came home with a present. A most adorable baby rabbit was brought into the caravan and dumped at my feet. Oh no, I cried, that's terrible of you Soots what have you done? Sootie just looked on. I blinked back tears, poor little mite I said. I looked closely at the baby, no sign of injury but probably dead, it was very still. I told Sootie I did not want this type of behaviour and no more hurting the other animals on the park. I went to sadly dispose of the evidence. Suddenly the baby rabbit blinked and headed off for the kitchen. Oh he's alive, he's alive. I tried to get the rabbit to the door at the same time keeping Soots well away. The baby rabbit bounded out of the door and ran under the caravan. Sootie ran after the rabbit and I ran after Sootie scolding him. A carry on film would have looked something like this I think. The baby rabbit dashed off to safety I am pleased to say and I hoped it was no worse for its ordeal. Sootie has a daily lecture on the way we do things and hunting other animals is not on the cards. Are you listening Sootie?

Sootie was missing for a whole day and I had been searching everywhere I could think of. I was afraid he had crept into a hut on the park and maybe got locked in by some unsuspecting caravan owner; who had by now gone home. I went into my bedroom to get my coat on and as I looked in the wardrobe mirror I saw two big golden eyes looking back at me. I spun around and there on the bed peer-

ing out from a pile of soft toys was Sootie. I guess that's where he had been all day as I had dashed around calling his name. I had searched the bedroom earlier but just not seen him. I took this photo of him just as I had found him. Reminded me of the film E.T. Am I the only person who cried my eyes out during that film and hoped I would find another adorable extra terrestrial of my own one day?

Yes Sootie is happy and healthy and leading a good life. He comes and goes and is always full of curiosity and fun. He plays out all day and curls up with me at night. He does not like it when it rains and refuses to go out at all. He lies on the kitchen floor waiting to be dried and rubbed with his towel whenever he comes home. Yes even when it's sunny! Very funny.

He walks along side me as I walk down the road to the dustbin. He looks at the bin liner and knows where I am going. People say to me, oh I saw you taking your cat for a walk last night. Oh no I say, Sootie was just helping to take the rubbish to the bin.

There is no doubt in my mind that Sootie loves me a lot and shows it every day in his displays of affection and I love Sootie very much. He's my little pal who keeps me company and makes me laugh every day. We didn't do so bad really when we found each other, he was so wild and didn't like humans and then there was me; sorry but I didn't like cats .

# TALES FROM THE DALES ... continued

## FROM A CARAVAN IN WEARDALE

I guess we were lucky to find each other. It doesn't matter if you share your life and home with a rabbit, cat, dog or hamster, you will receive much more back from them than you could possibly dream of. Thank you for your kind enquiries and may Sootie and I wish you all a very happy

year in 2011 and keep on caring for these precious little animals.

TALES FROM THE DALES .XXX

## NATURE'S HARVEST

BY JOHN TALBOT

Bunny treats from a pet shop can be very expensive. Not that we begrudge spending out on our beloved pets. A thought worth considering is growing some ani-



**BIG JACK**

mal friendly plants.

For a number of years now we have been growing french marigolds, calendula and cornflowers. If the seeds are sown in the Spring, you should enjoy a lovely display of orange, blue and yellow blooms throughout the summer. They can be sown in flower beds or even large containers.

How to harvest – when the plants are established, choose a dry day and cut off some of the blooms leaving a 3" or 4" stem on each. Mix cornflowers, calendula and marigolds in small bunches of 6 to 8 flowers and tie around the stems with soft string.

Put a string line inside a shed or garage and hang the bunches over. Allow to dry for about 3 – 4 weeks and store in a cardboard box or other container (not airtight).

During the winter months the bunnies will almost certainly love these tasty treats which also retain a nice flowery aroma.

Don't forget also, that you can feed the blooms straight from



**BARNEY**

the plant. It is important to fence off the area where you grow these flowers. If not, then they will not last long enough to be harvested.

There are a number of other flowers that are suitable for animal consumption, but always check first. Obvious ones to avoid are dahlia, foxglove, lu-

pins, bluebells and all plants that grow from a bulb or tuber.

Another free meal can be made from stinging nettles. Early in the season choose nettles that have not gone to seed and check that butterflies have not laid eggs on the underside of the leaves. (thick protective gloves are advised). Cut the stems just above ground level and lay the leaves still on the stems, onto a flat surface or on some wire netting to dry. Turn every day or so and cover or bring inside when raining.

In about 7 – 10 days the leaves should be dry and crisp. Store in a cardboard box or similar and feed to the bunnies in the winter.

Although they look black and uninteresting, they are usually



**HONEY**

# SPONSOR A PET

## AND HELP BUNNY BURROWS

Sponsoring a pet is a super way of helping Bunny Burrows. Sponsorship lasts for one year and costs £20, the equivalent of only 39p a day.

You will receive an A5 sponsor certificate card with a colour photo, an Easter card, Christmas card and a little update from your chosen pet.

Take a look at the long term residents who will never be rehomed because of on-going health problems.

If you are interested please let us have your name, address and who you would like to sponsor.

Please send your details with a cheque to

Bunny Burrows  
68 Whitefields Drive  
Richmond  
North Yorkshire  
DL10 7DL

GIFT AID is tax relief on money donated to UK Charities, please tell us if you will allow us to claim this back from your £20.

Thank you.



NAOMI



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PRECIOUS & MERCURY



WILF



MELODY, HARMONY & PAVROTI



DOTTY, DOLLY & GRAINGER

# GEORGE'S JOURNAL

BY LYNNE HILL

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Sadly, George died on December 27th, he is buried in Lynne's garden next to his friend Vini. His two girls, Porsha and Baby Blitzen miss him so much.

Goodbye George x.

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## HARD LIFE

### FROM A CARAVAN IN WEARDALE

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The winter returned with a vengeance in early December, in the dales.

The snow accumulated rapidly, giving neither the wild animals or myself time to prepare.

I was soon struggling and the birds and wildlife were struggling too.

We were soon locked in by the ice and the depth of the snow. I shared everything I had with them but it was a drop in the ocean with so many little creatures desperate for food.

My salad and vegetables were shared each day with the rabbits that found my feeding place and I bet they were never offered such a weird assortment of food before. It is a good job I always keep a full larder, stocked with a block of margarine, lard and an assortment of flour. I baked scones, put a little extra fat in, sugar in and dried fruit. Crumbling them up, I scattered them out in the garden and the rabbits came along with birds, the squirrels and every other creature you could think of. After dark the rats and mice and a weasel. All came for a few scraps of food.

I rationed it out as well as I could, not knowing how long the snow would last and not knowing when I would be able to leave the park to get proper supplies for us all. After a few days I had no water as my pipes on the caravan had frozen up but I melted the snow in pans so that was fine. I kept melting the water in the birdbath and in a tray on the ground so the animals could all get a drink. They had boiled rice, chick peas soaked and cooked first and pasta. Everything in my larder to be honest.

On the sixth day, when I was getting worried about keeping going, a very large snowplough appeared and cleared a road for about three quarters of a mile for me to get out.

I am afraid I clapped and cheered very loudly to the amusement of the driver who asked politely, was I mad? I said no but very relieved to be able to get food for the animals. He said I'm sorry love but you are definitely quite mad being up here in a caravan under 4ft of snow and in temperatures of -15. I said now you put it like that, yes I'm as mad as a hatter.



The snowplough led the way and I followed him off the park to the main road. It was snowing again and I was worried I wouldn't get back there with new supplies. My Sootie was sitting on my bed waiting for his next supply of cheesy biscuits, so I had to get back.

My return to the park a couple of hours later was almost triumphant. I had loads of bread for everyone, big sack of

rabbit food, tons of bird seed, peanuts, fat balls, Sootie's cheesy biscuits and food. And guess what, FISH AND CHIPS for me. The thought of another homemade scone with chicken paste was too horrible to contemplate.

Did we all eat well that afternoon? You bet we did. We all had a banquet. The bird feeders were full and visited many, many times. The rabbits sat outside in a huddle, all 9 regulars.

They were scoffing away and filling up their empty little tummies, then the squirrels came and joined in the feast. I kept all the food going until the thaw came. The birds and animals came every day and never scampered off when I went out to the feeders. One of the staff from the park passed by one day and said, "It's like Doctor Doolittle up here."

Very sadly I knew I would have to leave for the rest of the Winter. It almost broke my heart to go. I filled up the bird feeders and emptied the big sack of rabbit food out on the hillside and around the garden where they came every day. I hope it lasted a while.

As I left the park I looked around and saw the frozen remains of the dear little animals who never found my food over the past two weeks.

Please try not to forget the wildlife who struggle to survive each year in terrible weather conditions; they endure terrible starvation in the event of prolonged snow. They have a very hard life.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy 2011 and thank you so much for reading my articles.

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# GREEK SQUEAKS

BY BRIONY ISAACS

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Contrary to popular opinion, pigs can fly! (Although admittedly with a little help from Olympic Airways). When I emigrated to Rhodes 4 years ago it was essential that the rabbits and guinea pigs I'd rescued in England came too. Over a period of 5 years I'd rescued a number of small critters and 19 pigs and 2 bunnies and embarked on a new life in Greece. Several well loved and cared for piggies had come to me from a breeder, whose changed circumstances meant he could no longer keep them; others had less fortunate backgrounds. Four piggies and a bunny came from Bunny Burrows; others were picked up from a variety of places and in a range of mistreated states.

Getting my 'kids' to Rhodes was an interesting affair, Animal Airlines were invaluable for making arrangements although enquiries into importing them to Greece only seemed to raise the question, 'What's a guinea pig?' Of course I had already sourced a vet, a vendor of dry food, hay and a newspaper printer with misprints and returns he was only too happy to part with and yes, they do sell guinea pigs here ... but that's only the beginning of some tragic tales.

Guinea pigs and indeed rabbits here (as pets, not dinner) are a relatively new concept. Just as tortoises and parrots in England began as exotic pets with their needs not fully understood and therefore not properly catered for, the same is sadly all too

common here for our small furry friends. While there are good reputable pet shops, most are not.

The first misconception is that because guinea pigs start eating solid food when they are born they must be weaned and are therefore often removed from their mothers and happily sold from pet shops at only 2 to 3 days old! Secondly, few realise a guinea pig needs vitamin C and therefore only provide them with dry rabbit food. Food like Gerty Guinea is available but is expensive and regarded as a luxury. People don't think of veggies as part of their required diet! Hay, likewise, purchased in very small quantities from pet shops is also expensive and not regarded as a necessity. Although bales can be bought cheaply from farm supply outlets, many would not consider buying 'pet' products there. Finally, housing is a massive problem, as almost all are kept outside in all weathers and while cold here is not so much of a problem as England, the Summer temperatures can be fatal.

I have many stories to tell of rescue cases over my 4 years living here and some great successes that I would like to tell you about. In the meantime, I continue to take care of 28 piggies and 11 buns and try to educate those I can. With the help of the vet, some pet shops have been persuaded to give their guinea pig veggies, not to keep them in glass tanks with snakes as

neighbours or kept in cages with rabbits. There's still a long way to go and my next mission is to have an information leaflet translated into Greek, with the aim of having it distributed to pet shops and handed out to customers. I can only hope that with time these lovable little critters get the love, attention and quality of life they deserve.

## HOPS STORY

The passing of one of my guinea pigs is always sad. I, however, choose to look upon such a loss as an opportunity to provide a home to another in need of love and care. As much as I would like to rescue them all, my space and time are not infinite!

So, when Rocket, a nine year old female Sheltie sadly died I went on a search for another. I located a group of small piggies in a pet shop not renowned for its care and attention of guineas and while sexing them I discovered 'Hops' a very small male pig with a very nasty injury. His back right leg was at an impossible angle, the bone poking through the skin and giving off a rather putrid smell. Horrified, I enquired as to his fate and was shrugged at and informed he'd make good snake food ... unless I wanted to take him. So, of course, home he came accompanied by his brother and a trip to the vets was hastily arranged.

I feared the worst as the vet examined him. We had no idea how long his leg had been bro-

# GREEK SQUEAKS ... continued

BY BRIONY ISAACS

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## HOPS and OATS

ken, the foot was dead and the surrounding tissue badly infected. The vet however, a compassionate and optimistic man felt amputation was worth a try and after a few days of antibiotics to help stem the infection, he went in for his operation.

Thankfully the skill of the vet paid off and the amputation was a complete success. For a week the site was healing well but then disaster struck. Residual infection caused a massive patch of skin around the amputation area and up as far as his chest to blis-

ter and crack. A huge hole opened, the tissue clearly infected. Extremely worried I sought the advice of Gwen at bunny Burrows and the Cambridge Cavy Trust hospital and returned Hops to the vets. Unfortunately, the range of antibiotics available here in Greece is limited and those recommended couldn't be found. He was kept on Baytril and the ever patient vet found a substitute cream that could be applied instead. The dead skin had to be cleaned and cut away and the Laesidine cream applied twice daily; a job I undertook delicately morning and evening.

Two weeks on and I am delighted that all the time and effort was worth it. The wound is completely healed! Touch wood Hops has now recovered, coping remarkably with only three limbs.

He chases his brother, Oats, around his adapted paddling pool; he's not able to go in the outside run just yet as the grass and soil may aggravate the new skin. His hair is growing back beautifully on the wound site and he's now a very handsome long haired Satin. He's a happy chap who loves tunnelling into piles of fresh hay, munching on grass, sweetcorn, carrots and melon ... and squeaking loudly when his food bowl is empty!

This to me just goes to show that even the worst cases deserve our hope and medical treatment and with a lot of love and a little care they can go on to enjoy their little piggy lives to the full!

*Briony.*

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## DID YOU KNOW?

BY KAZ

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Charles Macintosh invented the waterproof coat, the Mackintosh in 1823.

A house fly lives only 14 days.

A giraffe can clean its ears with its 20 inch tongue.

Fish and insects do not have eyelids, their eyes are protected by a hardened lens.

The oldest person on record is Methuselah who was 969 years old.

Alexander Graham Bell (inventor of the telephone) never phoned his wife or mother because they were deaf.

Maria Ann Smith introduced the Granny Smith apple in 1838.

The length from your wrist to your elbow is the same as the length of your foot.

Pepsi-Cola was invented by Caleb Bradham in 1890 as 'Brad's Drink' as a digestive aid and energy booster. It was renamed Pepsi-Cola in 1898.

Your mouth produces 1 litre of saliva a day.

Fifty five per cent of people yawn within five minutes of seeing someone else yawn.

The white part of your fingernail is called the lunula