



A Second Chance

Photos & story by Thomas Lee

In 2010, 42,834 dogs were admitted to humane societies across Canada. Out of those admitted, approximately 22,000 were adopted, 14,000 were returned to their owner, and the remaining 6,000 were either euthanized or died in the shelter.

The Quinte Humane Society, located in Belleville Ont. is generally home to 40 or more dogs at any given time. The people who work and volunteer at these shelters develop a bond with these dogs. Dedicating your life to animals is something Deb Mumby knows all about.

Growing up in England, Mumby always wanted to work with animals. At the age of 15, she looked into becoming a veterinarian. However she decided not to pursue it because of the immense schooling. Mumby went to school and became a hairdresser for several years.

After she and her family took a vacation to Canada, they made the decision to immigrate and relocated to the outskirts of Belleville. It was then she decided to go back to school to become a veterinary assistant. After graduating, Mumby found a job in her field, however, it was not what she expected and in her words she "hated it".

Mumby's world was about to change once again. She was diagnosed with a brain tumour and rushed into the hospital for testing.

After a short time, she was taken into surgery to have the tumour removed. Although the surgery was successful, during the procedure the doctor nicked a nerve, which affected the right side of her face. This made the right side of her face lose most of its muscle control and she lost the ability to taste.

After over two years of intense recovery and unable to return to her previous job as a veterinary assistant, Mumby thought it was time for a change. As soon as she was well enough, she applied to several humane societies. The day she applied to the Quinte Humane Society in they called her immediately. She went in the very next day for an interview and by the time she arrived home, they called to tell her she got the job.

"A lot of people think this is a sad place, but it's not. It's a happy place because these animals get a second chance," Mumby said while she was cleaning the animal kennels.

She went back to a kennel holding a German Shepherd. The sign on the cage warned not to look directly into the dog's eyes. She opened the kennel, walked in and started to play with the dog.

She relayed that when this dog arrived a few weeks earlier, no one could touch or even look at the dog without it becoming aggressive. She worked hard with the dog and after a few days, they built a connection with each other and she could easily touch and play with the dog while it remained calm.

"Deb has deep feelings for her dogs," said Jennifer Nicholls, a co-worker of Mumby's. "It's obvious how much she cares for the dogs and she always takes time for an extra cuddle or to give them treats during the day. Due to the effort she puts in with some of the more troubled dogs, I truly feel she's saved lives just by doing that."



(Above) Deb bundles a dead cat up in a blanket before taking it to the back room. The cat was brought in by animal control after being found on the road.

(Top picture) Deb shoots a de-wormer vaccine into a dog's mouth. Her hands cut up and bloody from getting scratched by the dogs as she tried to give them their shots.

(Right) One of the new beagles gets excited to be served food by Deb.

(Far right) Deb cleans up one of the dog kennels at the Quinte Humane Society in Belleville, Ont.

(Below) Deb applies an eye cleaner to a dog's eyes to keep them from becoming infected. The dog was having a lot of trouble opening his eyes and the cleaner helps him open them.

