



Phil: A rock'n'roll legend

Pal Philo is missed says Brian

By RICHIE TAYLOR

ORIGINAL Thin Lizzy drummer Brian Downey still misses his old pal Phil Lynott, but playing the old songs 25 years later helps him to cope with the loss. Dubliner Brian is back in a new version of the group, which also features a couple of former members of the hit band. They will tour Ireland and the UK this February, a few weeks after the 25th anniversary of Lynott's tragic death. The pair first met in primary school in Crumlin in Dublin and Phil made a huge impression on Brian, who was two years younger than him.

Legend

"He was a bit of a legend in school. I remember the teachers used to send him around with a box to collect money for the 'Black Babies.' If you didn't put a penny in the box he'd give you a dirty look and tell you that you'd better have the money next week."

"Lizzy struggled for years in London before getting a few breaks. The first was getting a hit with Whiskey In The Jar and then getting guitarists Scott Gorham and Brian Robertson to join after Eric Bell left."

Now, just 25 years after Lynott passed away Brian is back with a new version of Thin Lizzy. The line-up features Scott Gorham, Northern Irish singer Ricky Warwick, keyboard player Darren Wharton, who played in the final Lizzy line-up, guitarist Vivian Campbell, on loan from Def Leppard, and Marco Mendoza on bass.

"It's just a pity Phil is not around. It's dreadful. His mother Philomena is a great woman. I was at her 80th birthday party last week and she looked fantastic. I got up with the house band and played a few songs for her. It was a great night."

Thin Lizzy will play Belfast's Waterfront Hall on 16th February and Dublin's Olympia Theatre on 17th February, 2011.

FUNDAY WORLD

A FOUR-FOOT barracuda flew through the air and bit a woman canoeist, according to coastguards in Florida, USA. The fish knocked the woman out of her kayak and left her with a chest wound.

Vicious thugs abuse horses leaving them to die slowly

By GERALDINE COMISKEY

THEY were glamorous symbols of the boom years - beauty and the beast rolled into one.

And for their owners, they were living proof that the Celtic Tiger was in fact a horse.

But, instead of being festooned with rosettes and fussed over by dotting children, they are ridden to death, starved, riddled with worms - or tortured.

For hundreds of horses, the recession means a horrible death as they are abandoned or sold to teenage thugs.

The number of horses picked up by the Dublin Society for the Prevention of the Cruelty to Animals has rocketed from just 26 in 2008 to 112 so far this year.

And half of them have to be put down because they are in so much pain.

The rising level of cruelty has shocked staff at the animal shelter in Rathfarnham, in south Dublin, where 26 horses were being held this week.



LEFT TO DIE: A hog tied horse in Dublin

Two of their three inspectors are now dealing with horses fulltime, to cope with the flood of reports. They've been getting 20 calls a day since April - up from six calls a day earlier this year.

This week I met some of the lucky ones who will go to good homes. The group of eight horses and ponies, including a mare and her foal, were rescued by the Ulster SPCA, who are expected to prosecute the owners. "They asked us to take them because they haven't the space and expertise in dealing with horses," DSPCA Education Officer Miriam Lee explained.

She warned me that the horses might kick as they were "terrified of people" when they first arrived.

Knife

But clearly a few weeks of loving care has helped them forget their ordeal and within minutes they were behaving like typical noney nags. They followed me around the yard and inspected snapper Liam O'Connor's camera.

But it's their trusting nature that makes horses easy prey for thugs, DSPCA boss Jimmy Cahill pointed out.

"A horse will let you beat it - it won't run away or whimper, the way a dog would. It will stand in a field, dying. They may be in great pain, suffering from terrible injuries, but you can ride them until they drop dead."

The sickening cases of cruelty currently being investigated by the DSPCA, and the gardai, include a two-year-old pony whose throat was slit with a Stanley knife. The skewbald colt was found in Ongar, Co Meath last month.

Miriam believes said the person who slit a horse's throat was a "sadist".

"This wasn't a starter crime. The person who did this would have built up to this level of cruelty."

"He'll rape and torture a woman



NEW FRIENDS. Geraldine nuzzles up to rescued horses at the RSPCA centre in Rathfarnham, Dublin



REIN OF TERROR

because animal cruelty is linked to sex abuse.

"I do a bit of work in prisons, and a lot of violent offenders will admit that they started out abusing animals when they were children."

In one disgusting attack reported to the DSPCA, a mare's entrails were cut out of her tummy. She had to be put down shortly after the inspector found her at Bohernabreena, on the outskirts of the city, last June.

Meanwhile, a dead foal was found in the Dublin mountains, tied to a metal barrier at the entrance to a forest trail. He had been pulled by a truck and his hind legs stretched until his hips broke away from his spine.

Staff

named another horse Dolphin because he was found in the canal at Tyrconnell Road in Inchicore, West Dublin. Thugs had ridden him into the icy water. His hypothermia was so severe that he had to be put down.

Another horse's face was full of scars - he had been hit repeatedly with a pick-axe handle.

One horse had been galloped on the kerb until his legs snapped. And many had been literally ridden to death in cruel "relay races" involving gangs of riders.

The deliberate cases of cruelty are the hardest to stomach even for experienced DSPCA inspectors such as Liam Kinsella.

"Just when you think you're numbed to it, you see something worse," he said. Miriam points out that some of the

suffering is caused by kids who don't realise they are being cruel.

"Kids think it's OK to buy a horse and put it in the front garden. They don't realise that a horse needs to have its hooves treated by a farrier, it needs to go to the vet, it has to be fed properly and given shelter."

Cracked

One example of neglect was a horse with its spleen poking out of an open wound in its tummy. The spleen had ruptured because the horse was malnourished after grazing on a toxic dump at Dunsink on Dublin's northside.

Nearby, a pony was found with its hide hanging off - because it had been left out in the weather with no shelter.

Another died of poisoning after being left in a field full of ragwort and buttercups.

And a dead piebald pony, found with its legs tied together near Glendalough, Co Wicklow last week, may have been left to die because its owner would not

PROBLEM: The RSPCA's Jimmy Cahill