

# THE ART OF LIVING & LOVING

Story of Clementien Pauws of the cheeselands



*“Pure, unselfish Love towards all living beings, considered as embodiments of the Divine, with no expectation of reward, is true Love.”*

*... Sri Sathya Sai Baba*

Far from our country from the land of milk, butter and cheese, Holand; a girl grew up learning philosophy, who never knew that one day she would be the crusader and Mother Theresa for animals in a remote town of Puttaparthi in India, the divine pilgrimage center for millions of people across the globe, the land of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

After the early retirement of her husband, the couple came to Puttaparthi to settle down for good seeking peace and divinity. But somewhere the purpose of her life was around the corner waiting for Clementien Pauws to take up the responsibility for a larger cause.

Her journey started humbly in 1995 reacting to the poor conditions and illnesses of stray animals of the area,





particularly dogs and donkeys. Clementien then began collecting injured and sick animals and took them into her home, which became the first clinic.

Animals received treatment, food and sanctuary from the harsh environment of the streets. Clementien adapted her previous experience with equines and her qualifications in equine training, health care and management to deal with smaller breeds.

With the help and support of Sai devotees from the U.K. and other countries, the "Animal Rescue Project, Puttaparthi" clinic was opened in Puttaparthi on 23rd August 1998. It was established as a branch of CUPA Bangalore.

Nearly after three decades Clementien heads the Karuna foundation as the President along with like minded

individuals and devotees of Sri Sathya Sai Baba who supported her efforts.

Narendra Reddy, an animal lover, teacher and local farmer, takes care of the wild life rescue operations.

Mrs. Romula D'Silva and her husband who purchased a 5 acre plot of land near Puttaparthi is now used for the wild life sanctuary. Mrs. Romula also takes care of the Ahimsa organic shop in the busy lanes of Puttaparthi.

This shop is a recently introduced pocket to help raise funds through sale of organic food products for the Karuna foundation.

Clementien recalls her younger days during our conversation and says, "In childhood my friends had a farm and I was moved towards cattle and I also had a dog at home, so in general I was an animal lover.

Between 18 and 23 years of my age I was working in a stable training, cleaning and taking care of horses.

All through I had a better connection with animals than people.

Later I got busy with my studies in Amsterdam, then I met my husband and I was 40 years when I had my son and I was nearing 50 when we came to India.

☛ *Clementien heads the Karuna foundation as the President along with like minded individuals and devotees of Sri Sathya Sai Baba* ☛

Just before we came to India, this was the time when my husband retired and was getting his pension, I was not very happy with the way of life in Holand.

We decided to come here as we already knew Bhagwan Satya Sai Baba. I had the least idea about stray dogs and cows of this place then." Clementien not only stood as the

☛ *We found animals living in peace and harmony with the eco system within the shelters enjoying their freedom* ☛





ambassador for all animals in the region but also has inspired many Indians and foreigners living in the town to take up animal rescue and welfare.

Team from Paws visited Clementien Pauws and her shelters that are spread over like heaven on earth for animals. We found animals living in peace and harmony with the eco system within the shelters enjoying their freedom of moving around freely mixing with several species of animals; cows, buffaloes, camels, horses, donkeys, monkeys, cats, dogs the list of joy in endless.

For every great movement it starts small with just one sparkle of brilliance that initiates an endless force to keep us going on the path we believe, a similar incident occurred in Clementien's life when her son brought a small puppy which had maggots in the neck. She recalls the incident saying, "I used to take this puppy to the local vet and he recovered but after one year he died of rabies. The facilities were not good enough to fight emergencies back then in Puttaparthi for animals. I used to see a lot of dogs and cows run over or hit badly by vehicles and bitches giving litter on the roads and many used to get infected with rabies and so on.

This was when an organization came forward from the United Kingdom to support us to take up a sustainable activity for sheltering animals. We initially took the help of an existing organization in Bengaluru for proper accountability and management. After two years we formed the Karuna Society.

Clementien's main occupation is taking care of the Shelter home for injured and

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rescued cattle from the slaughterhouses, Supervising the Wild Life Sanctuary for deers, bears, handicapped monkeys and the reptiles and lastly spending most of her time at the organic farm spread over several acres tucked away in the hills on the outskirts of Puttaparthi.

Philosophy to animal rescue to organic farming has perhaps taught her the art of living. The close association with animals over long years has transformed a cheese loving person into a strong vegan. She walks miles without showing weariness and works from 3.00 A.M. in the morning cooking peanut butter and other organic food products like spirulina, distilled cow urine and more; that are in turn sold across the counter at the Ahimsa Organic shop to raise funds for the society. Turning seventy years old Clementien has no signs of tiresomeness, it is definitely the art of loving life forms that has transformed her into an energetic, pleasant and peace loving human being who in turn is spreading love of humanity to every animal in that region.

Does it matter to which country, race or domain we belong as long as we are considerate and compassionate to fellow living beings? Clementien says, "The constant contact with animals over a prolonged period of time brought about a slow change and I have been thinking a lot these days. Though I am not into animal activism and their rights much, I realized that it is natural to be free and no one should be locked up be it outside or inside of a shelter.

I even find it difficult if working bulls are tied up. Here at our farm all animals live in peace and harmony free to move. My personal relationship with animals has grown and that's what makes me happy."

When asked about the sustenance of the entire activity Clementien says, " It is tough, initially we had some support coming from abroad but now it survives purely from the farm product sale. So we have come up with Ahimsa Organic to support the activities am fully occupied in organic farming". Clementien walked us around the farm spread over several acres tucked away in the hills surrounding the town of Puttaparthi. Letuce, spinach, spirulina, peanut butter, and a list of specialities including the distillery plant of cow urine. The distilled urine is tapped from a boiler

“ The facilities were not good enough to fight emergencies back then in Puttaparthi for animals. ”



and sold at the store in the town. A lot of tourists, foreigners, old and young alike visit the store to pick up the farm products and also savour a glass of the spirulina drink for health.

Born in Holand and travelled all around the world, Clementien is Indian in every sense today, following the true path of the traditional Indian values of humanity, spirituality and the school of Sanathana Dharma. She is vegan, helps animals and lives the life of a farmer in a land that always promoted agriculture as its core strength.

Clementien travelled a long way across the globe to reach this lap of her life to live in peace and promote the message of peace and ahimsa. ■

*His house is in the village though;  
He will not see me stopping here  
To watch his woods fill up with snow.*

*My little horse must think it queer  
To stop without a farmhouse near  
Between the woods and frozen lake  
The darkest evening of the year.*

*He gives his harness bells a shake  
To ask if there is some mistake.  
The only other sound's the sweep  
Of easy wind and downy flake.*

*The woods are lovely, dark and deep,  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.*

*...Robert Frost*



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