

ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE OF FALL RIVER

AGENCY HISTORY

1913 to Present

In October 1913 the Civic Department of the Woman's Club of Fall River decided that the City needed a humane organization. A committee headed by Miss Helen Leighton and Miss Gertrude Baker, who were both ardent animal lovers, was appointed.

After much hard work and the recruitment of eleven members, the charter was granted, and the organization known as the Animal Rescue League of Fall River was incorporated. Meetings were held monthly in the private homes of these members.

Fundraising began in earnest. Methods such as solicitation, publicity, membership drives, and parties (such as a whist party with people dressed up as cards) were used. Donations poured in.

An old barn was purchased at 474 Durfee St. An aging horse, twenty-eight years of age, was donated with blanket and wagon, with the stipulation that he be cared for for the rest of his life. After this horse's demise, two more aged horses were donated until the League was able to purchase its first vehicle during the late 20's. At this time, a Mr. McCarthy was hired at the sum of \$7.00 per week to serve as the League's first Superintendent. The City also appointed him as "dog catcher", although no leash law was in effect at the time.

Most of Mr. McCarthy's work during this period involved working with starved, abused, and broken down work horses. He not only saw to it that they were treated humanely, but also provided shoes and leads to those persons who could not afford them. Every Christmas he provided through donations carrots, hay, grain and apples for most of the horses in the City. This was still being done in the early sixties.

In 1917 Mrs. George W. Dean donated enough money to purchase the property adjoining 474 Durfee St. which was a house and lot. At that time runs were put in and cages added for small animals.

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