

LET ME BE YOUR TEDDY BEAR

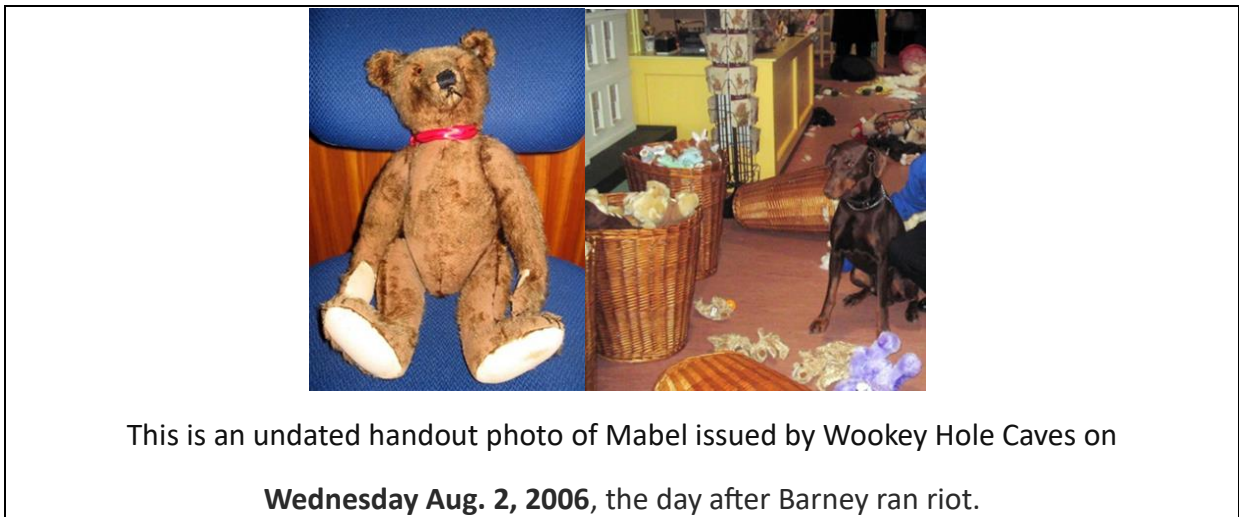


ELVIS THE ANIMAL LOVER

Most kids have their favourite cuddly toy, right? Well, Elvis was no exception; his favourite was a teddy bear named Mabel, made in 1909 by the German manufacturer Steiff. Mabel was purchased at an auction in Memphis Tennessee by an Englishman, Sir Benjamin Slade from Somerset, who then loaned the historical toy to the **Wookey Hole** collection of rare teddy bears for their exhibition.

MABEL LEAVES THE BUILDING

Mabel, valued at \$75,000 was part of a \$900,000 collection of teddy bears and was set to be the centrepiece at the exhibition. On August 1, 2006, the guard dog, a Doberman Pinscher called Barney, for some reason ran riot and ripped Mabel's head off as well as 'injuring' and destroying many of the other bears in the collection.



This is an undated handout photo of Mabel issued by Wookey Hole Caves on **Wednesday Aug. 2, 2006**, the day after Barney ran riot.

Mabel may have 'left the building' but Elvis kept a large collection of stuffed bears given to him or sent to him by his adoring fans in the early years of his career.

'YOU AIN'T NOTHING BUT A HOUND DOG'



Steve Allen show.

'It was the most ridiculous appearance I ever did. I regret ever doing it'

Elvis loved dogs, he had and gave away many puppies throughout his lifetime, too many to name here. Sufficient to say that he liked to give a dog as a gift to the special ladies in his life. He gave his mother Gladys a dog called Sweet Pea to keep her company. He gave Linda a Maltese puppy named Foxhugh and a Toy Poodle named Little Bit. He gave Priscilla a Poodle which she named Honey. Lisa Marie grew up around dogs but Elvis broke his canine tradition with her, giving his daughter a little cat called Puff, even though he himself did not really like cats. Other pets included a Basset Hound named Sherlock, as well as three Great Danes named Brutus, Snoopy and Edmund. Perhaps the most famous dog Elvis owned was a Chow Chow called Get Lo, who travelled almost everywhere with him.

When Elvis moved into Graceland with its 13.8 acres of surrounding land, he allowed many different animals to set up home on the grounds. Gladys had her chickens and ducks, Vernon his pigs and Elvis temporarily kept some donkeys in the then empty swimming pool until the fence around the property had been completed. He had a turkey called Bowtie and for a while he had a few peacocks. However, they so loved pecking and scratching their own reflection in the cars, the paintwork was being continually damaged and the peacocks had to go! Like Elvis' two Wallabies given to him by his Australian fans, the first during the filming of 'Jailhouse Rock', he donated them all to the Memphis Zoo on 12 June, 1957.

He also owned Myna birds, one of which could say, 'Elvis is asleep', 'Elvis isn't here', and 'Elvis! Go to hell' which of course their guardian found totally hilarious! Snakes that happened to venture onto Graceland had a rough time. A maid remembered Elvis firing several rifle shots into a tree after a snake was seen slithering up its trunk.



Wallaby



Bowtie



Get Lo

'TOO MUCH MONKEY BUSINESS'

Elvis acquired his first monkey, a spider monkey called Jayhew back in 1956. We do not know what happened to Jayhew but Elvis' most well-known pet was a chimpanzee monkey that he named Scatter. And Scatter was an absolute menace!

Scatter already had a media presence so felt quite at home in Graceland where he performed all sorts of tricks which Elvis, with his quirky sense of humour found really amusing. But his guests did not always feel the same way! Scatter developed some pretty bad habits! First of all, he had taken a liking to whisky and other liquor and any leftovers in the house would be eagerly consumed 'in a flash'! He also appreciated (in his own way!) the female guests at Graceland. Scatter had one particular odd habit: he loved to pull up girls' dresses! Scatter's behaviour eventually became so out of control that Elvis finally had to banish him to a climate-controlled room in Graceland made especially for him. Scatter reportedly turned very mean, missing his previous freedom around the house. Once, when the maid, Daisy, brought Scatter his food, he ripped the wig off her head. There have been numerous stories about how Scatter was eventually poisoned by one of the maids but as far we know, that has not been confirmed. It is also believed that after this banishment, Scatter died of a broken heart. Elvis loved that crazy monkey!



We know that Elvis took Scatter to his film rehearsals where he was very happy sitting in his master's chair!

TWINKLETOWN FARM – THE CIRCLE G RANCH

Elvis bought the Circle G Ranch in 1967. He bought horses for all his entourage and his wife Priscilla. He particularly wanted a golden palomino for himself. After many early morning shopping sprees, Elvis found a big, beautiful palomino Quarter Horse which he named Rising Sun. He often went out riding with Priscilla, he on Rising Sun and she on Domino, the horse Elvis bought for her. In spite of galloping off unexpectedly with Elvis on his back, Rising Sun became his most loved ride. Following the sale of the ranch, renamed the Circle G, some of the horses were brought back to Graceland. The horse barn was soon named House of the Rising Sun. Fans waited in anticipation for Elvis to gallop down to the music gates on Rising Sun and sign autographs.



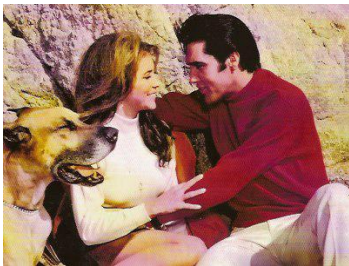
PETS IN THE MOVIES

They did not all make it to the big screen but Baba, Elvis' Collie dog can be seen in the movie *'Paradise Hawaiian Style'* (1966). Check it out here:

https://youtu.be/wX7kOzmrxic?si=GgW_a1tCU5IZTyzL



Probably best remembered is Brutus, the Great Dane. He was cast as Albert in the movie *'Live a Little, Love a Little'* (1968). He was one of two Great Danes living with the Presleys. The other called Snoopy was Lisa Marie's absolute favourite!



Scenes from *'Live a Little, Love a Little'* with Albert



Lisa and Snoopy

DID YOU KNOW?

- When Elvis bought Graceland in 1957, he had a vision of turning the property into a zoo because of all the land surrounding the mansion. That may have accounted for all the animals happy to take up residence there!

- Elvis once had the bright idea of sitting Lisa on her Shetland Pony called Moriah, and allowing her to walk the horse through the house so that Elvis' Grandmother Minnie Mae, who stayed in Gladys' bedroom at the time, could see them. Definitely the sort of mischief that Lisa would have loved, even more so probably when Moriah had an accident on the carpet! Chaos reigned, if you'll excuse the pun! You can check it out here:

<https://youtu.be/rsbOCUliXuM?si=g6mLkeYyD7i0YgHs>

- Elvis' pet cat did not make it to the movie set but he was named Wendell by Elvis, after his co-star Wendell Corey in his movie *'Loving You'*.

- Rising Sun survived until 1986 and was buried at Graceland facing east, into the rising sun.

<https://youtu.be/wnyFBA9TleU?si=QoqPh36GJr5RnyRT>

Anything to add? Let us know in the 'Comments' section below. Just needs a quick scroll! Happy writing Elvis fans!

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