The Park was bought

by the Creelmans of

Arcadia Amusements

and the McClintocks

of Kiddieland. It was

and dolphins were

being considered.

reported a shark pool

An electric motorbike



Due to open Easter weekend, a rabies scare across the UK delayed the opening of the Safari park until late

A baby male Indian elephant arrived in seven years old, and April from Delhi via the Liverpool ferry.

with 16 foot high A heated elephant house had been built specially for him, and a female elephant arrived two weeks later.

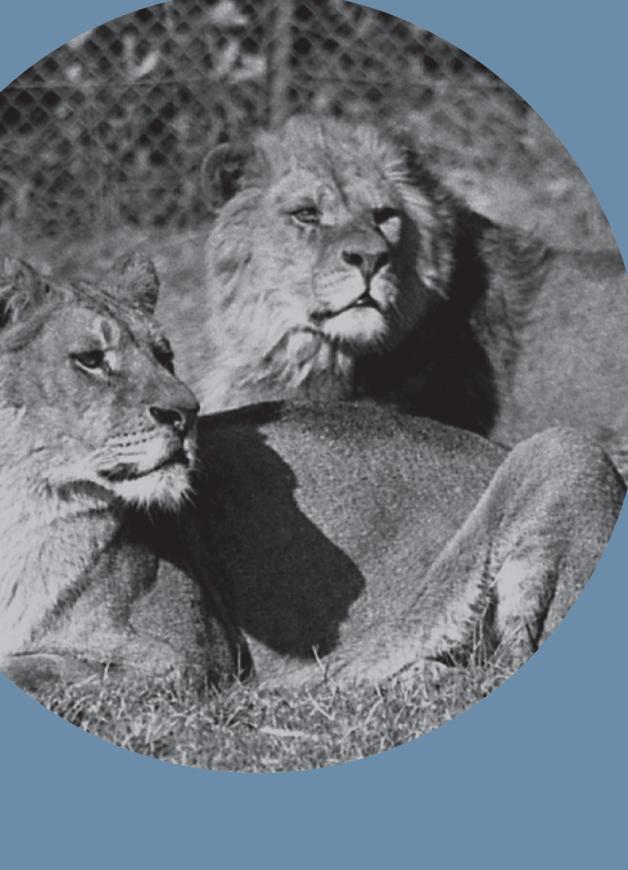
Belfast Telegraph readers were asked to send in suggestions for the elephants' names. The names chosen were Tusker and Stamper.



Twenty two African lions were out of quarantine by August and

roaming around their enclosures. The lions were aged from one to

o prides, as one pride of black-maned lions came from Chad Valley in central Africa and the other pride of wny lions came from Natal in South Africa.



30 baboons escaped for two hours during a storm in January. Strong winds blew the roof off their housing, and Coco the baboon climbed up their 40

had three enclosures They were separated



foot enclosure, with the others following.

Night security spotted them wandering around the park, and called the vet in to tranquilise them. Luckily this wasn't required, and they were peacefully and safely rounded Jup.



Largy Primary School visit

An escaped

The puma cub was

in a different cage

because the mother

new cubs. When staff

opened the cage to

clean it, the puma

ran out. The police,

local farmers and park

staff mounted a search

to find it still hiding

inside the park.

had given birth to

The Park added a miniature steam railway which did a round trip of the amusement centre and zoo.



The number of visitors had increased since the puma made news previous year, and there headlines in April. were queues at opening time over the 12th of July weekend.

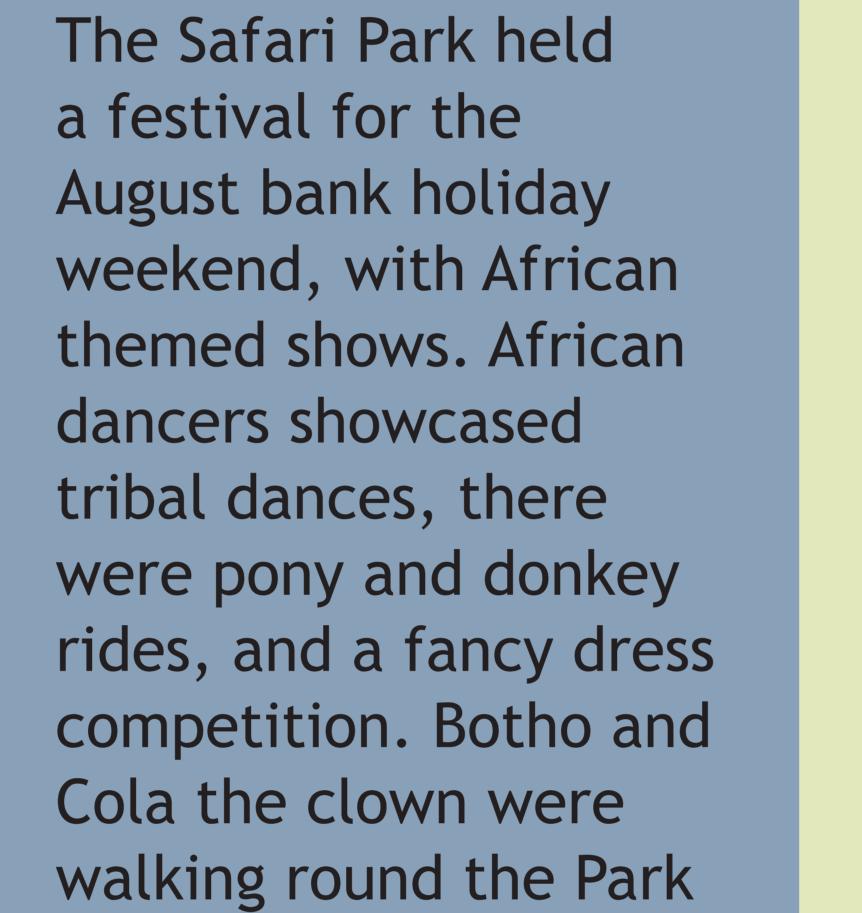
A gigantic fibreglass slide was imported from the USA. 2 new additions

were born, a monkey and a donkey. 4 llamas and a selection of goats and deer had been introduced to the Park.

There were plans for a covered dome where chimpanzee tea parties could be held.



a festival for the August bank holiday dancers showcased



entertaining children

with tricks.

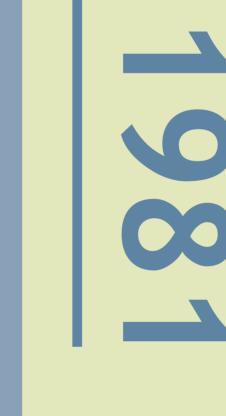
Two female tigers from Blackpool Zoo and a male from Belfast Zoo arrived in 1978, with another female due from Blackpool later.

In addition to the animal attractions the Park held music events, with local names like Plug and Cuddles, Dave Glover, and Gary Paul and comedy from Marjorie Rea.



A trapeze act was announced for a week in August. Leone and Tarniya spent a week at the Park, using an 80 foot high mast for their acrobatics.

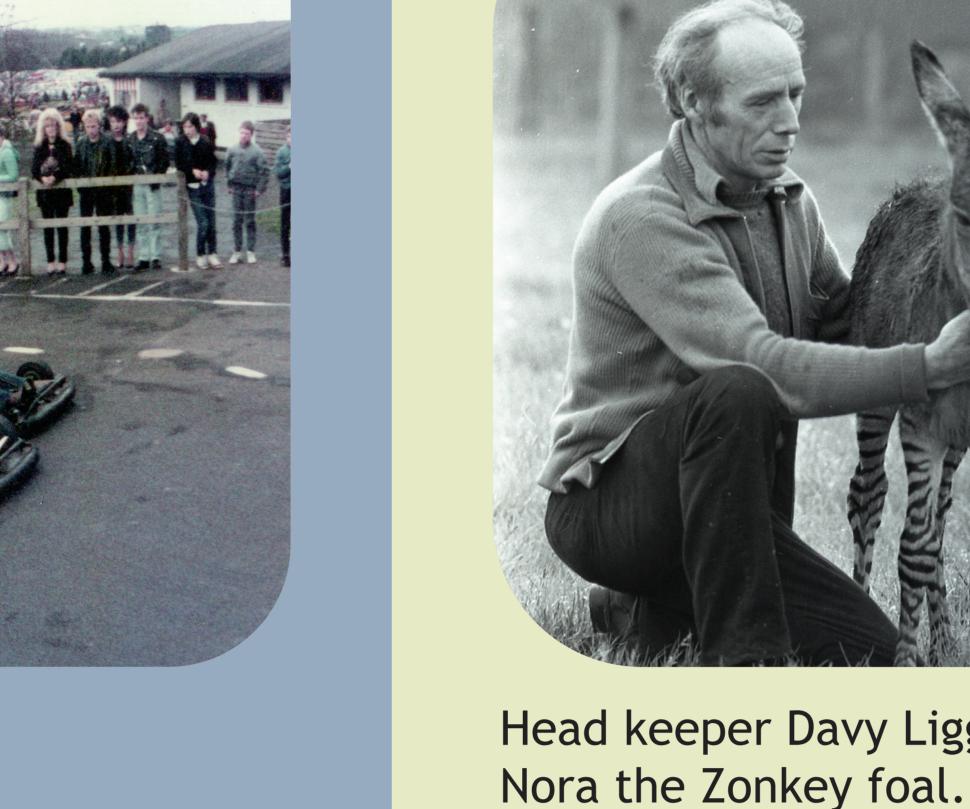
Leone commented, 'The reception here has been marvellous were added. and we would come back any time.' Coleraine Chronicle, 23/08/1980





The first llama bred

in captivity in Ireland was born in June. At the end of the season the Park was put up for sale.

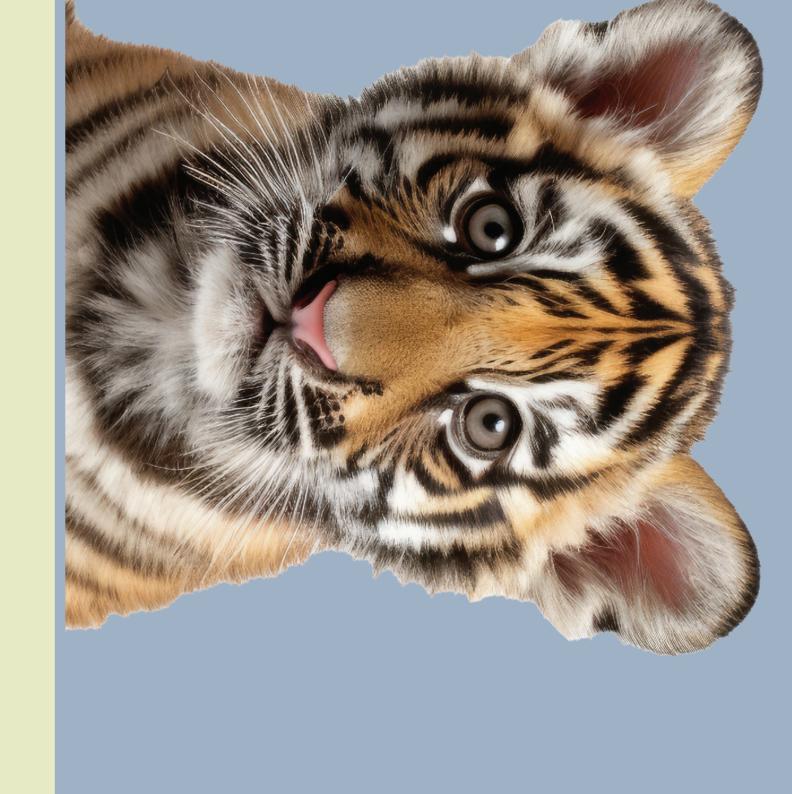


In May 1984 Europe's only Zonkey foal was born. Named Nora, she had a donkey mum and a zebra dad.

circuit and go kart track



The Park was again put up for sale in August and was bought by brothers Trevor and Christopher Duncan from Kells, and Samuel Gaston from Cloughmills. They immediately invested £30,000 in the Park and renamed it Safari Wonderland, with an improved amusement area.

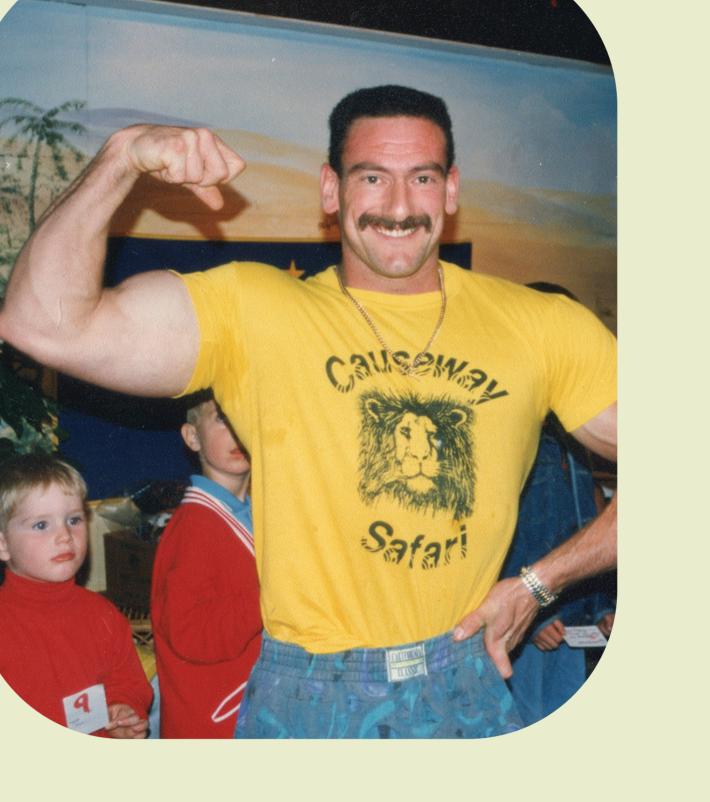


In the summer **5** Siberian tigers were moved to an

open paddock.



By Summer the Park was up for sale again. Entrance fees were now £2 per adult and £1 per child.



The Safari Park celebrated its 21st birthday. New owners Roy Sawyers and cousin Gerry Neill added a mini cinema, café and bar and flower shop.

telethon was filmed at the Safari Park, with two lions being lifted by Ireland's King of the strongmen, along with a limbo dance competition and frisbee throwing championship. Cubs Fiona and Kyra were flown to London to film a commercial in August.

In July, a charity

Management was working on new open environments for the animals to fit with modern animal welfare fees had risen to £3 per person.



In August, a 15 year old staff member was attacked by lions as he closed a gate to the lion enclosure. He was rescued by head keeper Davy Liggett and taken to hospital

where he spent 10 days

after undergoing throat

surgery. The park employed a safety expert on site and spent £60,000 on improvements.

The Safari Park was experiencing serious financial difficulties due standards and entrance to animal escapes and political unrest. Visitor numbers had fallen from

120,000 per year to

around 50,000 per year.



Owner Jim Garvin put

in March. The USPCA

and Larne Hospital

relocated there.

Enterprise Ulster built Pete and Freddie the the park into liquidation chimps a new enclosure in January 1998, so they stepped in and created an animal sanctuary on the Safari Park site, with than locked in a barn. Luckily they showed Coleraine Animal Shelter no signs of wanting to escape.

most of the safari animals by April 1998, and improve conditions.

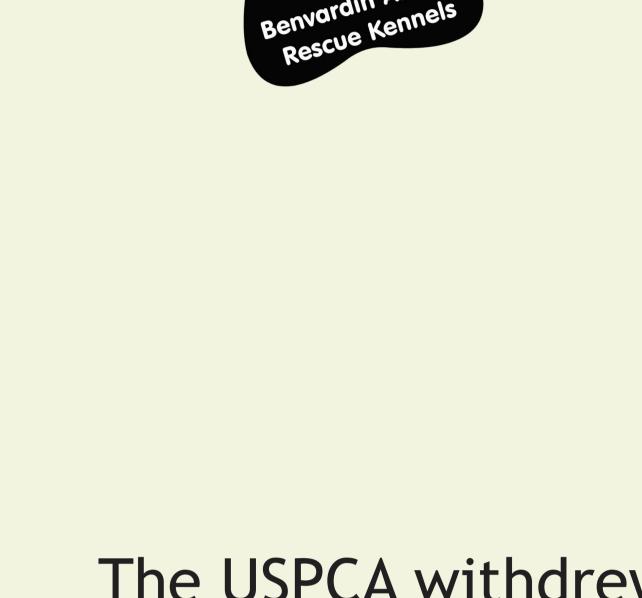
However, it was difficult

to rehome the safari animals as there was a worldwide surplus of zoo animals due to the closure of many older zoo sites, and as lions live in prides they couldn't be split up or introduced to new prides. Local USPCA branches reported concerns about the expense and knowledge required to sustain the Safari Park site and the exotic animals.



could be outside, rather (BARK).

They proposed to rehome It was reported that the Dangerous Wild Animals Act was to be introduced to Northern Ireland in 1999, as a result the USPCA were expecting more wild animals to be surrendered to them. It was already costing £1,000 a week to feed 5 tigers, a lion, puma, and leopard.



The USPCA withdrew from the site over the cost. It is now Benvardin Animal Rescue Kennels

