

ACE ADVENTURE: PET DETECTION

By **DONNA CARTON**

MISSING your moggy? Has the dog disappeared? You need Robert Kenny – Pet Detective.

The Irishman runs Europe's only agency investigating lost animals, and he is kept extremely busy.

There is no shortage of clients wanting the services of the ace animal sleuth who works night and day rescuing our four-legged friends.

And Robert has a few animal pals who are also investigators.

Labrador Pepsi is a fully-trained "detective dog" who can pick up and follow the scent of a missing animal.

And Jack Russell Sandy is a "cat detective" taught to sniff out trapped felines.

Sandy, who was rescued from a pound as a pup, is halfway through her apprenticeship but has already recovered 37 frightened moggies.

Robert said: "Seventy per cent of the work is done by the detective, the rest by the dogs."

"We also use DNA forensic equipment which helps us establish if a pet has



**Sleuth sniffs
out the truth
when animals
go missing..**

been injured on a road. We use a hair from the animal that is on something in the home for our analysis and then take samples from the road and nearby.

"Pepsi gets her scent from the missing animal's bedding and can pick up a trail very quickly.

"Randy has no contact with any dog other than Pepsi and is trained to pick up the scent of cats."

On the case.. Robert Robert is a cert-

ified Animal Response Technician and Pet Detective recognised by the Missing Pet Partnership. He was coached in Michigan, USA, and completed a series of courses before sitting exams in September.

His Happytails agency is now a roaring success and he and his team travel all over Ireland and the UK in a bid to reunite distressed owners with lost pets.

He added: "It's an extremely rewarding job. People see their pets as a much-loved member of the family and they really get upset when one goes missing."

"I have a 70 per cent success rate. I love to reunite owner and pet but often when I can't, I can at least provide

answers as to what happened." And like doctors on call, his agency works 24 hours.

When the Sunday Mirror caught up with Robert, he was on his third job of the day, despite having gone to the rescue of a cat trapped on the Luas line in Dublin in the early hours.

He revealed: "We are on the go all the time. I have four detectives and the dogs and we are always busy. Last week I was in Holland and Scotland."

The sleuth couldn't find a job he loved, then four years ago a chance encounter with a golden retriever in Santa Barbara, California, changed his life.

He said: "I was out walking and saw the dog stranded by an incoming tide on a peninsula. I instinctively went to the dog's rescue and a few hours later found his owner."

"He told me people pay pet detectives in the US when their pet goes missing and that sparked something in me."

"I researched it and decided to do all the courses and get qualified and now I do something I love to do."

It costs between €120 to €300 for the Happytails search, but the good news is the major pet insurance companies in Ireland and the UK cover the costs of the hunt.

And because business is so good, Robert has now set up a training academy for budding pet detectives.

He said: "I already have trainees from across Ireland and Europe and a few people from Brazil and Dubai have applied for the next course."