

SEASON'S GREETINGS



Barney in the snow

*With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year
From the Trustees and Co-ordinators
of
SOUTHERN GOLDEN RETRIEVER RESCUE
(Registered Charity Number 1098769)
PO Box 112, Cranbrook, Kent. TN17 3RB*

Golden Moments Issue 33



I hope you and your dogs had a good summer. It only seems yesterday that I was writing the editorial for the last Newsletter! It's obviously true that time passes more quickly as you get older!

This year's SGRS Fun Day was again held at Horton Kirby and South Darenth Village Hall. It was nowhere near as hot as last year but the rain held off and a good time was had by all. 31 proud owners paraded their dogs round the ring and many entered some of the fun classes as well. The Holly Trophy for the oldest Rescue dog present went to 15 year old Charlie, owned by Ruth and Sid Farmer. Sadly, Charlie had to be put to sleep a few weeks later, so it was especially good to have him with us that day.

There was a new trophy awarded this year in memory of John Richardson who, with his wife Eileen, covered the West Sussex area for many years, and who sadly died at the end of 2018. This was for Best Rescue dog or bitch and was awarded to Bella, owned by Karen. We had hoped Eileen would be able to come and present the Trophy but sadly in the end she was unable to travel down from her home in Norfolk. She definitely hopes to join us next year.

We said goodbye to another Co-ordinator this year. Wendy Mercer started way back in 1987, originally helping the late Hilary Gibbs but then taking over the Portsmouth and surrounding areas herself. It has been a very busy area over the years and I can't imagine how many dogs Wendy has found homes for in that time. In addition she has raised a considerable amount for our funds by running the Farlington Fun Day with her dog training club, which also held some Exemption/Companion Animal shows for our benefit. Our thanks go to her for all she has done.



Once again we wish you and your dogs a very Happy Christmas and a healthy 2019

KARA – Written January 2019

A very timid and underweight little girl came into our lives in December 2017. She was beautiful but you could feel every bone in her body. Weighing only 22 kilos she was a tall dog but very young and so pitiful. Apparently having had a litter of puppies at 10 months old, she had had much of her youth taken away from her. She loved our other two much older Golden girls and started to go on walks sticking like glue to my heels and too weak to walk much longer than 15 minutes at a time and too little confidence to leave us. To our horror we discovered that this dear dog had come into Rescue pregnant again on only her second season and by the time we realised we only had a couple of weeks to get ready for the arrival of the puppies. The kitchen was cleared and a whelping box went up in the corner. Our main concern was would she make it? Undernourished already, vastly underweight and with very little confidence she didn't have a lot going for her but on 31st January 2018 with the help at one stage of our wonderful vet Chris, she gave birth to 8 beautiful puppies, 4 girls and 4 boys.



Kara was a wonderful mum to her babies. They flourished with her giving them everything she had to give but she struggled as they were taking all of their nourishment from her. We fed her as much good quality food as was safe but there is only so much even a Golden can eat. Very worried that she wouldn't make it, we started to wean the puppies as early as possible and she began to gain some strength. In the beginning she didn't much like the older

girls in our household going near her babies but as time went on and she got a bit fed up with her pups at her all the time and was grateful and accepting of the "Aunties" in the household prepared to play with her brood. It was great for both her and the puppies being near us all the time as her confidence grew so rapidly being near the hub of the house. The puppies became really confident being well handled by us and having the other two dogs around as well meant they were very well rounded. They had heard all of the household noises and were absolutely beautiful. At 8 weeks old they were microchipped and vaccinated and were ready to go to their new homes. We had a puppy party



when they were 8 months old and all had a great time and we are fortunate enough to be in touch with all of the babies now coming up to their first birthdays.

Our beautiful girl Kara has flourished, is now up to weight, has been spayed and is enjoying long walks in the countryside. She is fit and well thankfully; comes to call, loves other dogs and people, eats well and is a very good girl.... Well most of the time! She did once steal the fruit out of the fruit bowl when I was out and I have to make sure the area she is left in is Kara proof but she is getting better by the day. She is a really loving girl and likes nothing better than a cuddle and is great with the horses we meet on the common just walking past them quietly. It has been a wonderful and rewarding experience seeing this timid little girl, so poorly when she arrived flourish and grow in confidence to the dog she has become today.

On a serious note, I would urge anyone to be really diligent and think hard about letting a bitch get pregnant as a "wouldn't it be nice to let her have a litter" does not take into account all of the hard work and very early mornings that are involved, not to mention the extra food, hard work and health of the dog. Kara made it through her ordeal but I feel sure not every dog does. We are blessed to have her.

Barney Coker

After nine precious years with us, we have had to say goodbye to our beloved Barney. He was 14 ½.

Thanks to Yvonne and Gillian, he came to us at the age of 5 ½, when we were bereft following the death of Katie, our previous Golden, then 16 ½. - and as they all do, he filled rapidly that dreadful void in our lives, which sadly is now back once more.

Although not oversized he was certainly the largest of the four Golden who had enriched our lives from 1980 (and the third from SGRR) and we looked upon him as our "gentle giant".

Nothing seemed to upset him or concern him and other dogs, cats, even squirrels and pigeons in the garden were all treated with a degree of passing interest before returning to whatever he had been doing at that time. Laid back would be a good description! There had been a strong bond between him and my wife Ann, and when she became ill, ultimately having to spend a lot of time in bed, he would be around all the time, quietly, and would sleep beside her ..to the day that she passed away. Since then he had been the greatest of companions and support to me, even though, in always wanting to stay close, life could be difficult with a large Golden sprawled across the kitchen floor, normally in the narrowest part!



But that saddest of days came when we had to accept the inevitable and let him go, peacefully on a warm sunny morning out in the garden, having enjoyed some of his favourite liver treats, brought for him by the nurse who came with our vet that day.

Sleep easy, dear old chap, we all miss you so much.

Michael

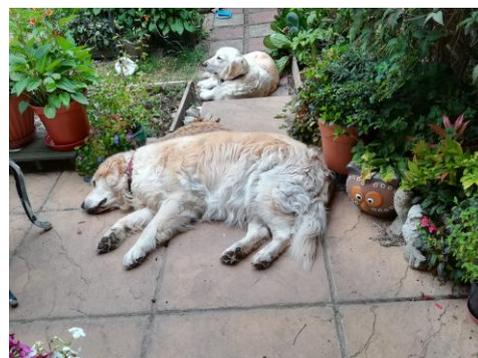
Mollie and Milly

Life has been varied and busy since the last article with plenty to tell you so here we go.

First though is a bit of advice for anyone adopting a dog. Although it's a new beginning please don't be tempted to change the animal's name. In our case it was changed and recall disappeared as the dog was confused. We changed back to her original name and things are much better. Now that Milly has settled in, she has started to come to work where possible. This means a ride in the van which is good fun with Mollie on the seat and Milly sitting on the floor looking out of the window. Their favourite customer is Grace where they can get up to mischief. There's a nice park nearby for their walk. There's always plenty of squirrels to chase in the garden with various treats available. Doris, Grace's neighbour, comes in for afternoon tea so the girls meet and greet.

Christmas was exciting with plenty of wrapping paper to be shredded. They did well for gifts especially as most of them were food. Our morning walk sees us visit a couple of nice shops. One sells hot meat sandwiches and the other pies. We're known by the owners of these shops but as yet haven't been given any free samples. The garden at home is always fun and both like digging.

They both like the same spot so it turns into a crater to be filled in (we then have to start again). Any digging required leave it to the girls!



In April we went to the New Forest for the weekend and this was Milly's second holiday with us - plenty of new walks and places to explore staying in a nice pub which is really dog friendly. Visited Exbury Gardens and had a ride on the miniature railway. 2 adults and 2 retrievers was a bit snug in the carriage. The girls had to have some doggie ice cream which they thoroughly enjoyed.

At home, Milly has been trying to catch flies, moths and bees which when successful she has eaten. They both enjoy their walks together with long grass, bushes and rabbit holes needing investigation. Milly excelled herself at 2.30 one morning. She wanted to go to the

garden and returned with something and disappeared upstairs. It turns out the gift was a frog, still alive, but Milly was pleased with her offering. Took 30 minutes to catch the frog and return it to the garden. Made no difference to Mollie as she slept through the whole episode.

Pete, Jayne, Mollie & Milly

Hugo & Co

We were so excited when Pam told us that Hugo was looking for a new home. His picture showed us what a beautiful dog we were about to meet, and Pam came to see us to tell us all about him.

He was only 11 months old and it's always sad to hear the story about why such a beautiful creature needs to find a new home, but we discovered that there was no lack of love, just lack of enough time for his owner to look after him properly due to work commitments.

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And so we came to learn more about him. It became evident that he had been experiencing some tummy problems, and we had to wait while the Southern Golden Retriever Charity's Rachel had him checked over at the vets, then looked after him for a week or so and put him on a good diet. This is where our first meeting took place. He was beautiful, and his tummy problems had disappeared. It was hard though, after that first meeting, to leave him, but at least we knew he would soon be with us.

Pam and Rachel were great, though, making sure he was in perfect condition to come to us, and indeed that we were in perfect condition to look after him!

Then something really strange happened.....



A few days before we were due to collect Hugo, we received an alert from an online search engine that another Golden Retriever needed rehoming urgently, from a private owner - another sad story of a big young dog being too much for a small house and very young children.

We were astonished at the photos of Dusty. He was the same age as Hugo and virtually identical. We were sure they must be brothers. He came home with us where he was soon to be joined by Hugo who, whilst not actually his brother as there were a few months between them in age, was undoubtedly his soulmate.

As they met and dashed around the garden together it was clear that they were meant to be together. They then met our lovely old Staffy-cross Hazel, who immediately adopted them with a huge smile, and has since found a heart-warming rejuvenation as they all play happily together.

We have been Golden Retriever addicts for many years, but they never cease to amaze and overjoy us, no more so than now. The only problem we have now is keeping up with them!

So thank you Pam for thinking of us and thank you and Rachel for your expert help and care.

Please keep up the good work. Now, if you have any more looking for a home.....

James's story

James is a seven year old 'Golden' dog who we recently rehomed through SGRS Rescue. He joins our family with our other rescue 'Golden' Pippa in our home in Kent. James has been with us for one month, he settled in very quickly and is a joy.

James was born in France one of a litter of seven. He was bought by a Belgium couple who at that time lived in the south of France where he stayed for one year. Work then meant the family having to move to Singapore. James went with them, having to spend time in quarantine in Singapore. During his time in quarantine the family visited him daily. The family had a 'live-in' helper in Singapore whose duties included helping looking after James. James was very well cared for and a loved member of the family.

During last summer the family had to relocate again this time to New York and they were to live in a flat in Manhattan; this would not be suitable for James. The family considered several options but when they bought James the breeder said if at any time they were unable to look after him they should bring him back. So at the end of August this year, after numerous phone calls between owner and breeder, James was flown back to Belgium with his owner then driven into France back to his breeder who had been busy finding a new home for James. Through contacts SGRR was contacted - James spent a few days with his breeder whilst arrangements were made and he was then driven back to the UK and so the story ends.



Often we hear of dogs having miserable life's prior to rehoming or sad stories of their owners dying or becoming infirm. This is not one of those I am glad to say. It is an example of responsible owner and breeder working together to get the best possible outcome for their dog.

Martin Leach - October 2019

What would you do?

Let me set the scene. No foster dogs at home and we have been busy this year, a beautiful autumn morning, lets go on a new walk.

We printed the details of the walk from www.Kentramblers.org.uk. This is a really good site for mid Kent dog owners and walkers. We know the area well and agreed our lunch spot, at the end of the walk and not far from the car.

Arriving at the pub after a super walk I chose a table in their courtyard area away from the road and other visitors and settled down with our three dogs. Noel collected us each a glass of good local beer and the menus. Lilly and Cosmo were eating windfall fruit close to the table, "don't eat that" was my unenforceable weak command and they continued. They have been eating berries and haws recently and I was not concerned. However I glanced at the ground again and studied what they were actually eating and slowly drama dawned. I looked up at the huge tree that we had settled under and realised it was a yew tree and the dogs were nibbling their way through the fleshy berries.

We instantly moved the dogs away and carried on with our lunch plans, me constantly muttering how careless I had been.

I spoke to our vet practice and was of course advised to take the dogs in for emergency "possible poisoning" procedures. Darcy had definitely not eaten any which was some relief.

The flesh of the yew berry is not poisonous but the seed, if cracked, can be lethal.

Noel and I spent over an hour in a vet's consult room collecting the vomit from Cosmo and Lilly as the emetic injections did their job. Careful examination did confirm that they had both eaten the berries. I could not determine if there were any cracked seeds. The drug used does eventually make the dogs drowsy and we left them both sleeping in the care of the vet so that they could each have 5 doses of activated charcoal syringed by mouth every two hours.

I am very pleased to say that this episode will now enter our archives of "do you remember when...?". I collected both companions from the vet, happy as ever and none the worse. Could we have taken a chance and done nothing?

What would YEW have done?

Rachel Clark

A "wise after the event" co-ordinator!

2019 Fun Day Rescue Parade

