

## **GOLDEN MOMENTS ISSUE 16**

*Newsletter of*

### **SOUTHERN GOLDEN RETRIEVER RESCUE**

Registered Charity Number 1098769  
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Our picture here is of Bella, a 14½ year old senior citizen whose owner sadly had to give her up in order to move in with her mother who has dementia. Bella is a lovely dog and has settled in straight away with her new owners, as can be seen by this photo taken a few days after she moved in. It just proves that these “oldies” can still give a lot of pleasure and have a good life.

It’s certainly a good job that goldens like the snow. Once again they had the chance to frolic in it. Is this going to be a regular occurrence, I wonder? We didn’t have the long hot summer we expected, which was probably a good thing for the dogs. Keeping them warm is always easier than keeping them cool. If it does get very hot it’s better to walk them earlier or later in the day, when the sun isn’t so strong, and of course never leave them in the car, which becomes like an oven in an incredibly short time. Every year we read of dogs dying in cars when their callous owners have left them. What the poor things must suffer doesn’t bear thinking about.

2010 was another busy year for Rescue, with 94 dogs being signed over to us, and once again many of them were elderly or in need of veterinary attention. It’s wonderful to know that so many of you are willing to give these animals a loving home. What would we do without you?

As usual the Fun Days were a great success. The Kent one was bright but with a cold wind, and we had a lovely number of dogs and owners in the Parade. The Hampshire event was dry but cool, and again the Parade brought many a lump to the throat. We thank the Southern Golden Retriever Society and Farlington Dog Training Club for their contributions to our finances. We look forward to seeing many of you at this year’s Fun Days – the Kent one is on 5<sup>th</sup> June and the Hampshire one on 11<sup>th</sup> September.

We hope you all have a wonderful summer with your dogs.

## Angus Emler

It's seven months since Angus came into our lives – and how he has changed them!

We had never had a dog before – a profusion of cats, but I always thought a dog would tie us down. The resistance became firmer once I stopped full-time work, I just didn't want not to be able to take off on a whim. Then, in autumn 2009 we visited some friends who had just acquired a golden puppy for their daughters. I knew instantly that everything was about to change.

Jackie and I started researching and, naively, thought it would be ideal to look for a year-old dog, fully trained with no problems - but also non-existent. Breeders were helpful and advice was abundant but we were getting nowhere until we were guided to Southern Golden Retriever Rescue. Did we want a rescue dog? They all came with “baggage”, didn't they? Would we be able to cope? Would it be fair on the dog? Could we wait several months to be matched? We had only just begun to consider these questions when the phone went. It was Myra Corpes. A two-year old needed a new home as his owners had separated.

Gulp! Er..yes. When? Next weekend, came the reply. Five days later Myra rang our doorbell, Angus walked in. A quick sniff round the garden, a snack and then he snuggled down in the kitchen where we had made a bed for him. It was as though he was saying: “This will do fine, thanks”. We have never looked back.



The first weeks were anxious, not because Angus was problematic, far from it. He has the most benign character. The problem was that he had to have surgery. We took him to our crazy (but brilliant) Irish vet, who took one look and diagnosed that one of Angus's testicles had not dropped, a problem that could be fatal. How other vets had not spotted this remains a mystery. We left it a month so that Angus really felt at home with us before he had the operation. How forlorn he looked as we carried him on a blanket from the car to his bed. And how frustrated he must have been

having to wear a head cone for three weeks! At least he didn't have to go out too often in the late February snow.

He recovered rapidly and now “The Hound”, as I sometimes pompously call him, is fully fit and a real ladies man. His stunning colouring draws admiring comments from all other dog owners, especially female. He's also a gentle giant – his greatest friend is our seven-year-old grandson, apart from a Cairn terrier called Monty. Whenever these two see each other, they become frenzied with excitement and then gambol all over the place, seemingly without tiring.

Angus loves the great outdoors and is an expert “puddle hunter”; he can sniff them out at hundreds of yards. Within seconds our Golden becomes a “Blackie”, but he happily goes under the hose when he gets home. Water is a great temptation to him and when he spots wildlife he becomes Kevin the Teenager. “What have I done now, it's not fair! Why can't I play with the ducks and swans?” But he does come back --- eventually.

His greatest party trick is to show children how not to eat ice cream. One day our grandson had eyes too big for his stomach, and had a double cornet. He ate most of it and was about to put the remains in a bin. Angus wasn't having that – or rather he was! It was hoovered. So now whenever we stop for a coffee on Wimbledon Common, he has a vanilla cone. Two licks and it is gone. Why

he doesn't get an ice cream headache is a mystery. But we have to tell all watching children to hold their own cornets out of reach and not to follow Angus's example.

He is a true retriever. He will suddenly dash into undergrowth and emerge triumphant with a trophy, more often than not a tennis ball. That caused fun recently as Jackie is a very keen tennis player and so takes Angus to her club quite often. He has his own grassed terrace on which to sit and behaves himself very well, at least until recently. He had been chasing balls on Wimbledon Common with our daughter in the morning. All great fun. And in the afternoon, she went to play at the tennis club. She served. Cue Angus. He bounded on court and snaffled the ball. Well, she had played with him in the morning. What had changed now? When he assumed his "What me? What's wrong? look, nobody took offence. In fact, he is well on the way to becoming the club mascot.

I said our lives had changed. And how much they have. I look forward to going down in the morning to make the tea and be greeted by a wagging tail. I love to watch him running free, tail wagging horizontally as he gambols about, and I love the way he snuggles up at my feet in the evening. But most of all I love the effect he is having on me.

I'm happier and more content and Jackie is like a dog with two tails (sorry, but a good description). I thought walking a dog would be a chore. Not a bit of it. Despite having a knee replacement 18 months ago I was happy donning my wellies in the snow and giving him a run: now in summer it's even more enjoyable to take Angus out. In fact, when I had my own medical check recently, the GP said: "Good. You've lost weight. Got a dog or something?"

Thanks Angus. The gentle giant has shown me what I stupidly missed for so many years.

### **Kobi Tuck**



This is an update on Kobi. He has now been with us for nearly three years. This year has been a particularly challenging one for the three of us. In April, we had Misty, a bitch retriever we had had from a pup put to sleep. Her arthritis became too much for her. She was 14. Kobi never really appreciated her. So we made a decision not to replace her. Only two weeks after Misty was put to sleep, Kobi became lame. He races everywhere, so it was no surprise. However, an x-ray showed that he had hip dysplasia. In order to avoid

arthritis, we were advised to have Kobi's right hip replaced. The operation was a success, but confining Kobi for four weeks was impossible. We did succeed, and in June, we set off for a grand tour of Italy with Kobi, our car and caravan. So he has been round Florence, walked up Vesuvius, walked round Herculaneum, Paestum, Capri and Assisi. We spent August on our boat on the Costa Brava and he has fallen in again, but flatly refuses to swim voluntarily. We have discovered that he is very unpredictable in the company of other dogs. We have had him castrated, but it has made no difference. So we have to be constantly on our guard. His only friend is Barnaby

belonging to Dr and Mrs Collins. He runs with a one year old goldie, who was rescued by very good friends of ours who have just moved to the Costa Brava.

He will be 6 years old in March and he goes everywhere with us. We look forward to many more years together.

Thank you very much for Kobi.

Christine, Stephen and Kobi Tuck.

### Lucy's Happy Ending

Lucy was a three year old bitch whose owners contacted Rescue because she was being aggressive and they had young foster children in the house. Apparently she had bitten two of these. The owners had sought the advice of a behaviourist who felt that Lucy was probably too great a risk to re-home, but might be worth a chance.

We (not knowing about the first behaviourist) sent someone to assess Lucy. The report came back that she was terribly nervous and very frightened of everything. (The initial report made no mention that she was nervous). Not only had she bitten the children, this behaviourist felt that it would take a very long time to re-train her and that it might be too traumatic for her even to try.

We felt, however, that because Lucy's aggression was caused by her fear, she deserved a chance so took her in to try to regain her confidence. The family had teenage children of their own, including a 13 year old son who had HDAD, several foster children and several Chihuahuas. This noisy and



chaotic household was a nightmare for Lucy. It turned out that one of the bites had been to a child waving a biscuit around, and the other was when a child fell off a sofa on top of her. When only six months old her owners decided she needed her claws cut so took her to a pet shop where four people held her down while her claws were cut, and after that she would not allow her feet to be touched. In foster care she growled and snarled when anyone was near her food bowl, and ran away and shook the rest of time. It was several days before she even spent a penny. It was obviously going to be a case of

“one step at a time”, and very slowly she stopped growling over her food bowl, and eventually allowed it to be held while she ate. She stopped running away and shaking, and allowed herself to be stroked and after a few weeks she could be groomed, and her feet picked up, but no attempt was made to cut her claws. She was taken to exercise in enclosed woodland, and came back when called.

After about six weeks it was decided that Lucy had made such great strides it was time to look for a home for her. As luck would have it one co-ordinator had a home with two very sympathetic men who had had a difficult bitch before, and had shown great patience with her. We told them the full story about Lucy and showed them both behaviourists' reports, which did worry them initially but we explained that they were made while Lucy was still in her original home. We told them they would have to take things very gradually and they were willing to give Lucy a chance. Before she went to them she was taken to the Vet to have her claws clipped, but stayed in the back of the car being cuddled while the nurse cut her claws, and she allowed this to be done without a fuss.

Thankfully Lucy settled down straight away with them, and is now a happy dog, as can be seen from this photo which was taken only a few days after she arrived in her new home.

### Hector's Story

*(Lynda and Paul Simmonds write "We wanted to say how much we enjoyed Hector's company, although unfortunately we only had him for 2½ years as we had to have him put to sleep at Christmas. My husband was, and still is, devastated by his loss".)*

Hello, my name is Hector. I had a good home in the past which I had to leave when my Mum became too old and ill to look after me, so I was taken into care while a new home was found for me. One day I was given a bath and a trim and brushed until I looked wonderful. Some new people came with another dog and I played with them and showed off my retrieving and obedience skills. That day I went home with them. I didn't like being in the car much, but I was very well behaved.



It was all very unsettling for a while, but I gradually got used to my new home and having a doggy "brother" Harvey. We have our own beds and toys, but sometimes Harvey takes my toys. I don't mind – I have lots – and anyway he can't carry them around as long as I can! Sometimes Harvey and I swap beds, but his is smaller than mine so I stick out over the sides.

Like most of us I like to retrieve things – anything – Dad's tools, socks, slacks, underwear, blankets, anything soft really. Then one day I went too far and secretly ate a pair of Dad's socks and they got stuck in my tummy. My new Mum and Dad were very worried, and took me to the vet. They took pictures of my tummy to find out what was the problem, but I knew! Mrs Smith, my vet, told Dad I would have to stay and have an operation. I was very scared but Dad gave me a big cuddle and said that I would be fine. After a long time sitting with me Mrs Smith said Dad should go home and she would ring him as soon as she had finished the operation.

When I woke up the next day I felt very funny and noticed that I had a shaved tummy and nose. Not only had they taken away the stolen socks, I also had had a wart taken off my nose. It was strange not to see that lump all the time! After a while Dad came to see me and he got on the floor

with me and gave me a cuddle and said I would be fine. I just wanted to go home but I had to stay a bit longer and Dad came to see me every day.

When I got home I realized how much I had missed my “brother” Harvey and we played, and I had lots of visitors who brought me new toys, which I loved, but I still did try to open cupboards and drawers to steal things!

I love helping Mum put things away so I can check out the contents of all the cupboards, and I really like washing day as it gives me a great opportunity to retrieve anything – but I do have to give it all back.

When I got over my operation I was allowed to go on all my old walks. The ones I love most are the ones where I can chase rabbits, roll in muddy puddles or go in the sea, but I don’t like rough waves. I do like to check out all the flower beds in the garden, because you never know what you might find – and once I found a frog!

I have a very happy home now, and I would like to say a big thank-you to Auntie Pat and Uncle Peter for finding me a lovely new home.

### Bea and Lucy

Last December we lost our dear friend Bess (*see Issue14*), so in February this year we asked if there was another dog needing a home. Well, we got two girls within a week. We only wanted one but as they had always been together we decided to have them both, and what a lovely time we have had with them.



Lucy is nearly 12 (she is a lovely blonde) and Bea is 7 years old (she is a real golden colour). They both have lovely natures and are so friendly to other dogs and people. They love the walks by the sea and canal, but do not like the water, even though they have both fallen in the canal.

Four weeks after they adopted us Les was very ill in hospital and was away nearly four months, but the “girls” kept me going. Yvonne and Gordon were very supportive, with emails arriving every other day,

and offers to foster the “girls” for a while, but I kept them as they kept me going. So I thank you all for my lovely “girls”, and send best wishes to all dog owners.

Joan Anderson

## **Farewell Shandy**

*(Shandy's "biography" appeared in Issue 14)*

I am writing to let you know that Shandy went to sleep at 1.30 pm on Thursday last (*February*). The vet arrived early afternoon



I had managed to help him get out to his favourite spot in the garden and I stayed with him until the vet arrived. I think he knew what was going to happen but I sat with him with his head in my hands, stroking him while he drifted off. He went very quickly and the Vet said that that reinforced the fact that I had made the right decision as he had had another major stroke and lost the use of his back legs.

I have buried him in the front garden at his favourite spot, and he is wrapped in his favourite blanket surrounded by all his toys. Hopefully he has been re-united with Peter, his previous owner.

It has been devastating for me but I would not have missed any minute of my time with him. It was a privilege and an absolute pleasure even though there were challenges along the way.

Thank you so much for letting me have him in his twilight years. I would do it all again, and thank you for being there when I needed support.

Stephanie Allen

## **Looking to the Future**

Several of the Rescue Co-ordinators are now in their 70s, and mindful that no-one is immortal we feel it would be a good idea to start training a few people for the future. It's not something that suits everyone, as it can be stressful at times. You need to have time (not with a full time commitment), be a good listener, be patient and tactful, and sometimes able to bite your tongue! Being a Rescue Co-ordinator can be frustrating and occasionally distressing, but also very rewarding, particularly when you find a super home for a dog which has had a rotten time. It can be very busy at times, but there are also periods when nothing much happens.

Expenses may be claimed for petrol, telephone and postage, and a computer is useful but not essential. The present Co-ordinators all had to learn as they went along. Most of them have been doing it for many years, and they would love to be able to impart their knowledge to ensure the future of Rescue.

If you think you might like to be involved, please contact your local Co-ordinator or Gillian Robinson on 01580 752210.

### Lola my diary to date.....

Hello, my name is LOLA I am just about 10 months old, my first home was with Zoe and Jason a loving young couple who taught me good manners and gave me a great home near the woods in the country, where I enjoyed walks, playing and exploring. Unfortunately Zoe and Jason's time demanding jobs meant I had to spend many hours alone, so after a while they decided it was best to talk to SGRR to find me a new home, with a family who could provide the company I needed.

So, on the 28<sup>th</sup> January I met Marian and Charles, a retired couple from a coastal town in East Kent. I learned later they had, two months earlier, sadly lost their fourth Golden Retriever Jodie who was only 10 years old, as a result of cancer. When I met Charles he was on his knees offering me a biscuit and cuddle, Marian also, what a greeting, I forgot my manners and offered kisses all round. After a quick good-bye to Zoe it was off to the coast and a new home. Not so keen on the car journey of two hours, but there was plenty of room in the estate so I got my head down and slept most of the way.

Arriving on the coast and my new home, my first sense was one of smell, quite different, the salt air quite refreshing This encouraged me to explore the house and the garden, feel the past presence of my kind, lots of smells and pictures of Abbie, Bessie, Lucie, and Jodie. The garden was great, large expanse of grass, borders with flower beds, plants and trees well fenced, places to hide, but I can hear my neighbour Neil and his trained sniffer dogs, so not alone, love looking at the Koi and other fish in the pond, "I'll be in there if the net is left off".



My first night was fine, head down in the kitchen, in my own bed, with a selection of my toys old and new, also a hide chew. Marian woke me at 7 am, straight outside to have a pee and you know what.....Marian called me into the hall and I took in my mouth the newspaper and raced up to find Charles still in bed. He just happened to have half a biscuit which I accepted, well worth me doing this most days, and I do.

Daily, Marian either walks me down to the sandy beach or the large park nearby. I have learned to sit at the edge of the pavement and am learning about traffic. I have made many friends to run and play with, especially Bailey, a great big Golden Retriever dog who lives in the next road.

I still think of my old family, but Marian and Charles are progressing well and adjusting to my ways.

Lots of love Lola

## Toby's New Coat

*(Toby had suffered from a terrible skin condition for some time, which was neglected by his previous owners. He also had testicular cancer and his owners wanted him out. He was fostered by a helper who bathed him three times a week and then a home was found for him with the Norman family who were willing to continue the treatment)*



In early Feb. 2010 when walking my Mums dog on Kenley Common, I met Brigitte (4 Paws) who works closely with Goldie Rescue. "Ah" she said "Just the person I was thinking of. I have a lovely dog in my care called Toby who is in need of some love, come up and see what you think". So that afternoon Derek and I arrived at Brigitte's to be met by Toby who was then 21 kilos, little hair, a beautiful face and a waggy tail. It was love at first sight.

There was no doubt in our decision to offer Toby a place in our hearts and home. Our only reservation was Hamish, who we were looking after for my mum at that time, as he was not very good at letting any dog come indoors. So we decided to walk them the next day together then take them home. To our surprise Hamish did not bat an eyelid!!! He accepted Toby as if he knew he needed a new loving home. They are still firm friends and greet each other when they meet.

As the weeks passed Toby's trust in us grew and he is now confident enough to roll right on his back and be made a fuss of. Toby has been part of our lives for nearly a year now and as you can see from the photos looks GREAT.

A lot of the credit has to be given to Brigitte and her team for the time they spent bathing and grooming 3 times a week to get him looking so fine.

We would like to say a BIG THANK YOU to Pat for entrusting TOBY into our care and long may he be with us. He has been through so much and asks for so little but gives so much.



Derek, Sadie and Barry Norman

## Absent Friends

During 2010 sadly several dogs which we have re-homed over the years have died. We pay tribute to them all, and to their owners who gave them so much love and care, and the following poem by Rudyard Kipling seems to sum things up very well.

### *The Power of the Dog*

There is sorrow enough in the natural way  
from men and women to fill our day;  
But when we are certain of sorrow in store,  
why do we always arrange for more?  
Brothers and sisters I bid you beware  
of giving your hearts to a dog to tear.

Buy a pup and your money will buy  
love unflinching that cannot lie -  
Perfect passion and worship fed  
by a kick in the ribs or a pat on the head.  
Nevertheless it is hardly fair  
to risk your heart for a dog to tear.

When the fourteen years which nature permits  
are closing in asthma, or tumour, or fits,  
And the vet's unspoken prescription runs  
to lethal chambers, or loaded guns,  
Then you will find – it's your own affair but –  
you've given your heart to a dog to tear.

When the body that lived at your single will,  
when the whimper of welcome is stilled (how still!)  
When the spirit that answered your every mood  
is gone – wherever it goes – for good,  
You will discover how much you care  
and will give your heart to a dog to tear.

We've sorrow enough in the natural way  
when it comes to burying Christian clay,  
Our loves are not given, but only lent,  
at compound interest of cent per cent.  
Though it is not always the case I believe,  
that the longer we've kept 'em the more do we grieve;  
For when debts are payable, right or wrong,  
a short time loan is as bad as a long -  
So why in – Heaven (before we are there)  
should we give our hearts to a dog to tear?