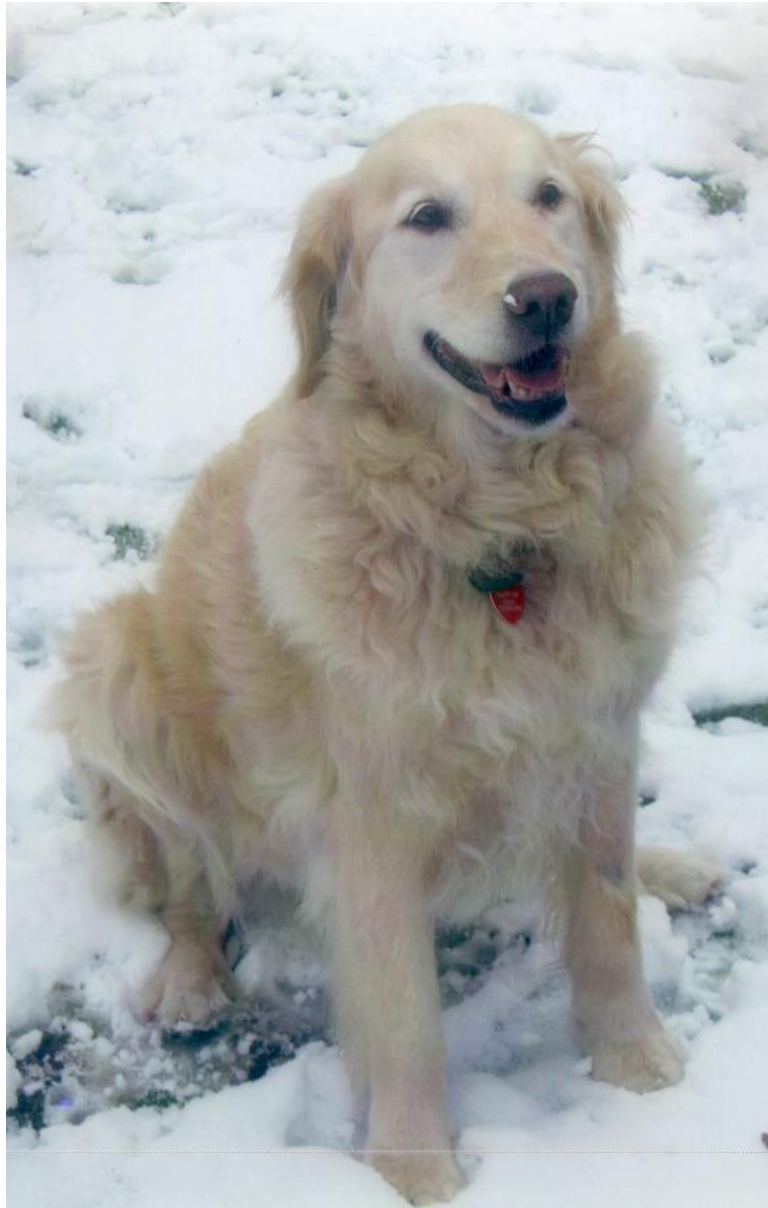


SEASON'S GREETINGS



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 13

We hope you have all had a good summer. At least it wasn't another complete "wash-out" like last year. It was lovely to see so many of you at our two Fun Days. I hope you and your dogs enjoyed them.

Our cover photo this time is of Jenny Shipton's Goldie, which was placed 2nd in our Christmas Time photo competition last year. I think all Golden Retrievers enjoy the snow, but we must remember to remove the balls of ice which form in the bottoms of their pads, as these can become quite painful.

Thank you for all your stories about your lovely dogs, and please keep them coming! We sometimes have to hold them over to a future Newsletter, so please don't be offended if this happens to you!

Have a lovely Christmas, but make sure your dogs are safe with all the decorations, and don't indulge them too much with rich food, or you may upset their tumms, and of course turkey bones should never be given.

News from Barnaby Collins

(This message from Barnaby was held over from the previous Newsletter)

2008 has been a very busy year of great change for me. Until October, life carried on as usual, living with my sister, in a back yard in Maidstone. On 23rd October my dear sister disappeared. I was desolate. She was my lifelong companion, and without a woof she had disappeared. I cried and barked all night, and the only comfort was that I was allowed to sleep on the carpet.

The very next day, in the depth of my despair, 2 ladies arrived at the house. They tried to take me for a walk, but it was a bit of a disaster as I had this stupid contraption on my nose. Despite that, one of the ladies called Jackie, put me in her car and took me away. I began to wonder if the same had happened to my dear sister. There was a third lady with Jackie, very similar, but looking somewhat older. Jackie called her mum.

About an hour after, I was taken from the car, to a place called the vet's. He fiddled about a bit, stuck something sharp in me, then shaved some of the hair off my back legs and shoved something called worming tablets down my throat. I was bundled back in the car and taken to a house on a cliff by the sea, and given a thing to lie on, they called a duvet. It was sublime, but a bit draughty. Jackie went to a cupboard and got out a shiny silver thing she called a bowl – I cowered in the corner when I saw it as it brought back some bad memories. Jackie got a glass bowl, and I was OK with that.



Over the next few days I was fairly quiet, I was so fed up with the pain in my neck that I decided not to bark. I met another dog called Kobi, who lives in the same village with his adoptive parents, Steve and Christine Tuck, and I went to his house. He has an older step-sister, who's not much fun, 'cos she is too old to charge around like us. Kobi had a thing called a bed, and I laid in it and went to sleep. Next thing I knew, Jackie (who I now know as mum) had bought me a king sized bed of my own, so now I have a bed in the kitchen as well as a duvet in the sitting room. I think I'm in Heaven.

This is me on my duvet & throw, and you can probably see that my back legs are no longer bald.



Every day since I went to live with mum and dad, I have had lots of long walks. Sometimes mum and dad take me to the beach. I was frightened at first when all the noisy water crashed into the stones, but little by little I got braver and braver and now I spend so much time swimming that my mum and dad think I am in training to swim the Channel.

When I was out running with Kobi, I realised that when I bark, I no longer get the searing pain in my neck, so now I bark if I want, which, to be honest I no longer do, except when the cats from next door try to come into MY garden.

I chase them, but haven't yet caught one. They had better be careful if I do!

I had a bit of a problem with my food for a while, I didn't really like the flavour, so I sicked it up a few times. Mum and dad didn't take the hint; instead mum took me back to the vet for a check up. Of course, nothing was wrong, so I upped the anti and started to refuse my food. That did the trick as mum and dad bought some different flavoured food, which is much more to my palate.

Being Christmas, we have a Christmas tree. It's great, but mum doesn't like it when I try to eat the fake berries on it. Still it's good fun trying. Between you and me, I have found loads of pressies under the tree with my name on them (those literacy lessons mum sends me to are starting to pay off).

I've also discovered television, I especially like the adverts, as they often have dogs in them. Dad usually sits on the floor with me, and I cuddle up. I like to be stroked and petted for hours on end. When dad stops, I go to mum. Mum's mum (I have to call her Nan) is a frequent visitor, and she's always a soft touch for several hours of stroking.

Life has changed a lot since I moved. I still miss my sister, and I still have flashbacks to my previous life, but on the whole, I think I have landed fairly and squarely on my feet (all 4 of them). I can bark as much as I like (but I try to exercise some restraint), though dad does get a bit cross if I bark in the garden at 6 o'clock in the morning, I have finally got some food that tastes great, and I get lots of lovely walks, swims and cuddles. I also have things called toys, which I hadn't had before. They're all mine and I can take them anywhere I like. They are soft and cuddly, and I love them.

Barnaby.

And from Molly Hopper

(Molly had lived with her brother and been kept outside in a yard for most of her early life)

Molly is a joy and has integrated with this family so well, its hard to imagine she wasn't here from the beginning. When I first saw her, all I could see was a very um.. fat dog and lots of greasy fur, jumping up with her brother at the window on the outside of the house where they were kept. She was indeed, even then extremely friendly and very keen to go out for a walk. So off we went around a nearby park with me being dragged along by a well... tank? Whilst I was standing with my friend trying to make a decision, she promptly jumped into the footwell of the car and wouldn't get out and well, I let her make the decision and she came home with me there and then. After 20mins it was love at first sight for me but poor Molly was sick all the way home and even now doesn't travel very well but we are working on it slowly.



The first photo on her 1st day she looks wet but in fact she wasn't and she just needed a good brush and bath, both of which she seems to enjoy enormously.

After an initial weight loss programme that she successfully completed and which would put all us mere mortal humans to shame she is now a respectable 24-25kgs compared to her 32kgs on arrival. She is now a completely different dog - with lethargy and inability to jump around much long gone. She is now a very bouncy dog running around like a

lunatic most days, well in fact every day actually. She does still hanker for food but of the green variety and spends many happy hours munching on the runner beans in the vegetable patch until I realised that due to her new sleek self she has once again slipped through a gap between gate and fence. I have not managed to repair this hole yet and to be honest the sight of a beautiful dog eating her greens is an excellent example to my 6 year old daughter. So inevitably I finally caught my daughter Meg age 6 and Molly age 4 both eating peas with Megan helpfully shelling them for Molly being that she is younger and as a dog obviously has no thumbs and does make a hash of the pea plants. She adores my daughter and waits for her return from school every day. She found our pond after a few days and taught herself to swim as I believe she may not have done this before and is now a proficient swimmer if a little cautious initially. If there is nothing to swim in she lies in puddles to cool off which I believe is common amongst the Golden Retrievers and always makes us laugh as well as a bit wet!



She is a very friendly dog and meets all other dogs with a friendly sniff and has taught our other slightly older Labrador that other dogs really are "ok" and not to have a grumble at all the time which makes for a more all round peaceful walk. She spends many happy hours lying on her back with legs in the air and head extended and also spends a lot of time reaching for and holding her tail. I believe this is due to watching her mum do her yoga and feels she needs to join in to keep fully mobile. The only downside is that she tends to lie down flat on her back in doorways and rarely moves, often with a toy stuck in her mouth. Fortunately, she does this quietly and moves off in her own time. She also has a habit of singing (well howling more like) when I come back from work, on waking and before her mealtimes but it rarely lasts long and just brings a smile to my face.

To sum it up, Molly has brought many smiles and is the most wonderful companion - you couldn't ask for a better friend...she is wonderful and I and my family consider ourselves very lucky that she found us.

Thank you also to the Golden Retriever Rescue Charity who gave us the opportunity of sharing our lives with a golden, she is a star.

Pelham's Story:

On Friday the 3rd October 2008, we went to Raystede Kennels at Lewes to look at a rescued retriever from Battersea Dogs Home; his name was "Gordon" about 6 years old, with no previous history known. The day was windy but with the advantage that this held off the threatening rain cloud.

Our previous dog (Sheba) was our first Golden Retriever and she had died in July at the age of 14 years. We were determined on two rules of engagement: 1] To rescue another Golden Retriever and 2] To try not to compare any new dog to Sheba.

We were armed with recommendations from both Penny (Lab Line) and our Vet (Mrs Darling at Southbourne), so if we hit it off with "Gordon" we were able to immediately "adopt" him.

Our first meeting with "Gordon" was supervised by Adel (she is a Carer at the Rescue Centre). "Gordon" was in a sorry condition, very skinny (you could clearly see his ribs, he was 5kgs under weight) and his coat over his hind quarters had been shaved because of a skin condition and as a consequence was a dull brown lifeless colour. "Gordon" brought us a tennis ball to play with him, we rolled the tennis ball across the floor, and with encouragement "Gordon" ran after the tennis ball and then immediately rolled onto his back for a tummy rub, he obviously had in abundance those two essential retriever traits, a gentle spirit and a large appetite for affection. We both said "Yes", and asked if "Gordon" could have a bath (2 hours in the back of our car with "Gordon" in his current state would not be good). We waited in the Cafe while this was done.

This gave us time to reflect on what we were committing to and to reconcile our feeling of perhaps, being disloyal to Sheba. We both realised that "Gordon" was not a replacement, but a dog in his own right with his own personality and above all deserving of a good home.

What we could not reconcile to was the name "Gordon"; it did not seem to relate to a Retriever or the dog we were looking at. We left with, for now "Gordon" in the back of our car, and our first question "I wonder how he will travel?", was answered, perfectly without a murmur, being settled and happy and just occasionally sitting-up to look around..

We stopped to eat at the "Swan Hotel" on the A27. "Gordon" happily sat by our outside table, without begging or interruption to our meal.



We travelled on and then addressed the naming of "Gordon". We live in Emsworth (the one-time home of P G Wodehouse), so we tried "Bertie", "Jeeves", "Wooster", finally we settled on "Pelham" the P of P G Wodehouse. The name seemed just to suit the dog, so "Pelham" he has become.

Pelham has now been with us for 7 months. During that time we have learnt a great deal more about him and his idiosyncrasies, like his habit of waking us with a toy, sitting and talking to us, not really knowing how to "play", possessing an in-built clock timed precisely for his walks and his endearing need to greet any visitor by offering a

soft toy as a present on their arrival. Pelham has achieved a Bronze in obedience classes and with his gentle nature captured not only our hearts but the hearts of many in Emsworth.

Bailey's Tale

Hi! My name is Bailey and I am a very pretty (or so I am always being told) female Golden Retriever. I am almost two years old. I live in the New Forest with my new owners, Sally and Tony, and I have lots of stories to tell you about what I get up to!

Firstly, there's the garden. I used to enjoy tearing through the flower beds at great speed but surprise, surprise, I kept getting told off – can't think why, I was having a really good time.

My other speciality is flowerpots. They usually have something in them but I have mastered the technique of running around with the pot in my mouth and giving it a quick flick sideways and up and down. When I do this all the contents fly out and I am then left with an empty pot which I can chew up! I used to practise this party piece quite frequently, but I have noticed recently that the pots are now either too high for me to reach, or they are fenced in. Spoil sports!

After demolishing a young apple tree and trying a similar thing with the pear tree, and after making a big hole in the hedge, I have found other things to do now and have decided to leave the garden alone (more or less). Anyway, my owners put up a little fence all round the flowerbeds. It is only about a foot high and I can easily jump over it (in fact I have done so once or twice just to make a point) but I don't bother much any more.



The New Forest is a very interesting place for walks and I can get up to all kinds of mischief such as racing up and down the streams (they call me the bouncing bomb), swimming in the ponds, jumping about in the fallen leaves, peering down bunny holes etc. etc. There are all sorts of animals I have had to get used to such as ponies, donkeys (they're the ones with the big ears), cows and pigs. The other day, when I was out on a walk, I came across a huge, hairy monster with the biggest horns you have ever seen! Well I barked and I barked, not that I was frightened you understand, but merely to show this monster that I wasn't going to put up with any nonsense, and the fact that I was backing away at the same time was simply a way of giving

it a chance to move off! I heard later that it was one of seven Highland cattle, which have only just been turned out onto our part of the Forest, and they are, I am told, quite docile. So maybe next time I meet them, I won't bark. We'll see.



I love swimming and this has got me into trouble once or twice. Last September they took me to what is called the beach where there was the most enormous "pond" I have ever seen! I was on the lead at first whilst being introduced to the waves. As I appeared to be a bit alarmed by the sea and backed off a bit from it, they thought it would be safe to let me off the lead. Well within seconds of being let off, I plucked up all my courage and leapt into the "pond" and swam, and swam, and swam. The waves were very noisy and I couldn't hear the whistle and the calling, I just swam and swam. I could see them running along the beach – they did a fairly good job keeping up with me!

Eventually I came across some rocks which I couldn't get over. This gave Tony the opportunity to grab me by the collar and drag me out. I found out later I had swum one and a half miles!! I wasn't even tired. Needless to say, I haven't been allowed to go to the beach again. Maybe I will one day!

We went for long walks in the snow during the winter and I did my Bambi act on the frozen streams. Although the water had gone hard, I had great fun breaking it and taking all the bits out and tearing off with them! One morning I came upon several big white men with silly noses and funny hats. I think they were called snowmen. Well I just had to jump up at them to try to get their hats you understand. One I managed to completely demolish!

I go for a walk every morning and then I go to work with Sally in the afternoons. Going to work is not as bad as it sounds. I have two work mates in the office with me, Badger a border collie dog who is about the same age as me, and a small lurcher called Bella. There are large gardens and we all go for a run around soon after we arrive and I have my own bed, next to Sally's desk where I can sleep and enjoy dreaming about all the things that happened in the morning!

We recently went on holiday for a few days, to a place called Exmoor, which is a bit like the Forest. We stayed in a Hotel where they accept well behaved, clean and dry dogs! Well – how unreasonable can you get! Well behaved I might be, at a push, but clean and dry I am not! I did lots of swimming in the rivers and did a fair bit of rolling, but as long as I was well rubbed over afterwards, I managed not to mess our room up.

There are lots of white animals on Exmoor I hadn't seen before, I think they are called sheep. As I have a tendency to chase things, I had to go on the lead sometimes which I wasn't too keen on but I just had to put up with it.

I had a really good time. We went for lots of walks, which sometimes included stopping off somewhere for a cream tea or a pub lunch. Every evening we went to the hotel bar for dinner where I met lots of other dogs. We had a good chat amongst ourselves and told each other about the day's events. You wouldn't believe some of the stories they told!

Well we are back home again now and enjoying lots of walks and lots of gardening (my main job is shredding the prunings). We had some visitors stay for a couple of days and I enjoyed giving them the works.

I am just about to climb into my bed and catch up on a bit of shut eye. All this activity makes me dog tired and in any case, I have to re-charge my batteries ready for tomorrow's big adventure!!

Life with a Runaway

My first Golden was a rescue. Quite a few followed. They were all wonderful dogs and I had few problems over 40 years. Then along came Tilly. A nightmare. It was payback time.

I got Tilly through the Charity in July 2007 at the age of seven. She was to be a companion to Monty, a well behaved border collie who had belonged to a friend who died. I was warned that she was an escape artist (having been tied up in a shed for a great deal of time) and she was a runaway. No problems, I thought, living in a walled garden in a 1,600 acre forest and I had trained my other dogs well enough. Plenty of love, a strict routine, lots of walks (I do three a day.....two long and one short) on a lead to begin with and a few



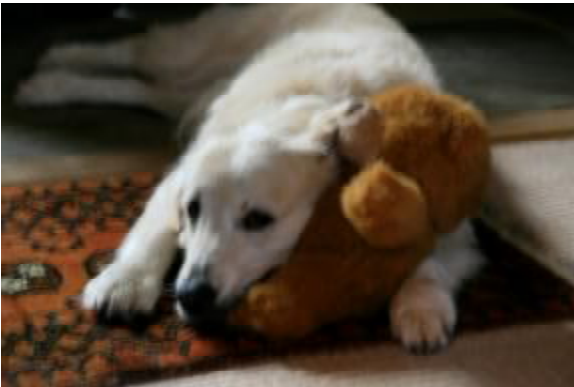
treats would do the trick.

Well I was wrong! I had never met a dog like Tilly before. So eager to do a runner and even leaping over 5ft walls like they were little hurdles. The lead was my only weapon apart from all the barricades, fences, even clothes dryers to stop her getting out of a large garden or even the house. Tiring her out with walks didn't work. I knew what to do but it didn't work with Tilly. The only good thing at the start was that she was good walking on a lead. But I hated it. Monty and I began to suffer, and I was screaming at times to myself with frustration. My retirement was meant to involve gentle walks with my dogs and my camera across the South Downs, along the rivers, the forest and down to the beach. I knew it would take a long time and patience. Any rescue does.



We were beginning to bond. Like all Golden Retrievers she is very loving, but that didn't stop her. The first time I let her off I was with a friend in a "safe as houses" part of the countryside. She was gone for 5 hours! When I went to Norfolk with a friend (an area I know and have taken dogs there before) I decided that since Tilly loved water and she had had such a sad time previously I was going to let her off to have some fun, whatever the consequences. It was a wide beach with no-one else around. She ran off into the distance and into the sea. I thought that was it. Three hours later she came back when I turned my back on her and thought (I am ashamed to say) "to hell with you!"

She went missing so many times and in the end, after nearly a year, I rang the Rescue Charity's Rachel Clark in Kent. I said "That's it, I've had enough. Can you take her back?" When I got to her home Rachel suggested trying a training collar she had (the MasterPlus Pro) which operates, by remote control, a buzzer and squirts of water. Eureka – it worked!!!! I ordered one. I was a changed woman. Tilly was a changed dog.



Suddenly I could walk her without a lead all the time. I started her training all over again. I did the same three walks so she became familiar with the limitations of those walks. She didn't like the water squirting in her face and came running to mum each time I had to use it, and she was rewarded with a treat. I won't say she didn't try and run off, she did, and still does, and there are some walks I still wouldn't do without the lead. But the collar worked. She comes back nine out of ten times. When she doesn't respond to command she gets the buzzer, which usually works. If she still doesn't

respond she gets the squirt, and then she comes rushing back to me. We've bonded more and she needs plenty of affection. At last I am winning the battle.

The last time I took her to a big beach (Camber Sands) she ran off chasing birds into the sea. She didn't have the collar on as it mustn't get too wet. I didn't say "to hell with you", I called and she came running back.

It has been a long and frustrating haul. I still walk watching her all the time. A runaway is always a runaway. But using the collar means she doesn't get far, and she comes back to mum wagging her tail.

Gail Biddlecome

Sad Farewell to Barney



Barney came from a single mum with three young children and four dogs. Needless to say she was finding it impossible to cope, and so decided to part with Barney when he was just under two. He was a very strong dog who needed some training, and went to live with Sylvia and Tony who had had two Golden Retrievers in the past. They had him for 4½ years and gave him plenty of love and some training and he became a wonderful dog, delighting in their two grand-daughters, and his photo with them has been on the Home Page of our Website until recently. Sadly in August he suddenly became ill and was diagnosed with inoperable cancer, and it was decided not to let him suffer. He leaves a huge gap in the lives of Sylvia and Tony.

A New Life for Jimmy

Jimmy's original owners kept him outside in shed, with the use of a very small garden, and that is how he spent the first seven years of his life. He clearly craved affection, and fortunately for him the family decided to move abroad, and not to take him with them. Jimmy now lives in the country with a family with an eight year old son. He enjoys the luxury of living inside the house, and has a large garden to play in. He has lots of lovely long walks, where he has made friends with several other dogs, but his one weakness is the family's chickens! The less said about them the better! Suffice it to say he has to be kept away from them. Jimmy obviously thrives on his new life, and thinks it's doggy heaven.



Microchipping

You may have read in the papers that the government is proposing that all dogs should be microchipped. It is already a legal requirement that dogs should wear a collar and identity tag with the owner's name and address, but it is felt that tags can come off and be lost, and that chipping gives a permanent identification, provided, of course, that the details are kept up to date. It is hoped that this will make it less likely that a dog will be stolen, or end up in a pound if it strays.