

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 17

Our cover picture this time is of Woody Grinstead, who sadly died towards the end of last year, as did his devoted owner Gill. Gill adopted him when he was only 7 months old, and he proved something of a challenge! His main problem was that he didn't feel comfortable around other dogs, especially other Golden Retrievers, but Gill devised all sorts of things to keep his mind active, and gave him a wonderful life. Gill was a great supporter of Rescue, and also a great photographer so Woody has appeared more than once in our Newsletters. We shall miss them both.

It has been a strange year for Rescue. We thought we would be inundated with dogs needing a new home, but in fact there have been long periods when we have had none. It will be interesting to see the final figure at the end of the year.

As always the two Fun Days were very successful. Despite the persistent drizzle at the Kent one we had more dogs and owners in the Parade than ever before, and everyone seemed happy to stay on getting wet! We were more fortunate with the weather down in Hampshire, and again we had a good turnout. Our thanks go as usual to the Southern Golden Retriever Society for a share of the proceeds of

their day, and to Farlington Dog Training Club for holding the day for our benefit. We are very lucky to have so much support.

It seems the forecast is for yet another hard winter. Will we have a white Christmas I wonder? No doubt the dogs will enjoy any snow that comes our way, but do make sure their feet don't get too full of ice balls. Christmas can be quite a stressful time for dogs so make sure they don't get over-excited, and of course keep them away from baubles and fairy lights, and go easy on the extra rich food (for the dogs, that is!)

We hope you all have a happy time.

Update on Louis

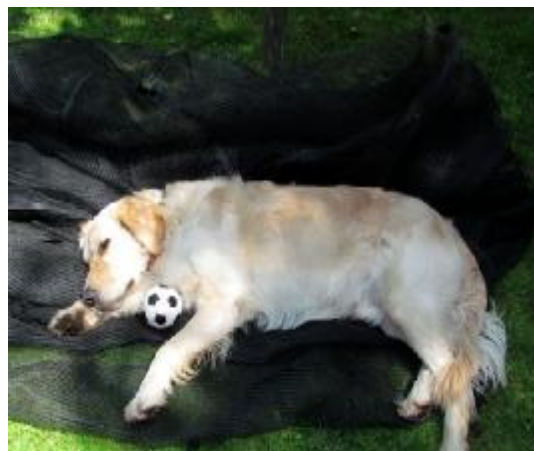


Louis is lovely. Although not being socialised at an early age I am extremely proud of him. He is playful and happy and a delight to have around. We have got over many of the issues he had in the early days and he has come along in "leaps and bounds" and has been on his first foreign holiday. He coped well with life aboard a ferry for 24 hours including staying in the cabin on his own whilst we went off to get food etc. The only problem was that he was not able to do his business because the dog walking area was painted blue and it just looked like he was at home. He was not the only dog with this issue; other dog owners were complaining of the same phenomena. So, on his

behalf, I have contacted the ferry company and suggested that maybe they should paint it green and put a couple of artificial trees and shrubs. I doubt that they will act upon it but it needed to be said. Whilst on holiday he managed to conquer his fear of stairs and he now negotiates them like a true professional. He also, reluctantly, leaves the pussy cats alone and can even manage composure when confronted by chickens. He can just about put his paws in a stream if it is shallow and the water is not running very fast but backs off if it gets deep. The next challenge is teaching him to swim.

Louis has been quite poorly with an infection just below his left ear and he has been milking it for all it's worth! In the end I gave in to him and, for the past three nights, we have both been sleeping on the sofa. I felt sorry for him because they put a "lamp shade" round his head and he just sat looking into space and whimpering. He is making a good recovery so I think he will be on his own tonight.

Louis is now a wonderfully sociable dog who loves people and can get on with other dogs easily. He still cannot resist chasing the birds but that is just part of what makes him Louis.



Isabel

Barney

(Written in April)

Tomorrow is a sad date in our calendar, marking as it does a year since we lost our dear old Katie, still as they all are, very much in our hearts.

This however also prompts us to send you another email about our equally dear Barney who has filled so well the space in our lives since he came to us last June. It doesn't seem anything like that long, but he is very much one of the family and continues to get his paws more and more "under the table" as the months pass! He remains an absolute dear and it becomes almost embarrassing to have many complimentary remarks made about him by other dog owners when we are out!

He remains the friendliest dog to humans and other dogs alike – it really tickles us to hear the pleased little noises he makes when he sees and goes up to another dog. But last week he was most affronted, for the very first time his approach was greeted with a bit of a bark, but Barney more or less shrugged his shoulders and turned away, letting the other dog, a large black poodle, just get on with his bad humour.

As regards his diet and the grass/earth eating, matters now seem to be pretty well under control. We are quite sure that he has a rice intolerance and now that we have established that and made sure that it is excluded from his diet, problems with his tummy and thus his toilets are pretty well a thing of the past, we are happy to say. What he is now eating is a tin and a half of Denes Chicken and Tripe daily plus three Bonios (even Wholegrain biscuits had a reaction!). Also we are adding a portion of cooked broccoli to each meal and the overall combination has not only solved his toilet issues but also has ended the earth eating – although he still loves his daily munch of grass in the garden – not touching any when we are out however.



We thought you might like a few recent photos of Barney – these were taken a couple of weeks back when our lucky 17 year old granddaughter brought over, for us to see, the second hand car which her doting parents had bought for her. Barney thought it was great and to our surprise promptly jumped into the passenger well – with the results you can see!! Quite a hilarious episode especially when he did not want to get out!

Take care and our kindest wishes to you and families (two and four legged!).

Ann & Michael – and with love from Barney xxx

Pet Friendly Care Homes

Many people are very concerned that if they have to go into a care home later in life they will not be able to take their beloved pets with them. The Cinnamon Trust, besides taking in dogs whose owners have died, publishes a book on "Pet Friendly Care Homes". It costs £3.50 and can be obtained from the Cinnamon Trust, telephone number 01736 757900, Email: admin@cinnamon.org.uk. Their website is well worth a visit and is www.cinnamon.org.uk

Our Golden Oldie

(This poem was written by Harry aged 13 and Kirstie aged 16 Shipton for their appearance in the Parade of Rescue Dogs at the Kent Fun Day in June)



We know you will forgive us/if our pace is rather slow.
She used to bounce and frolic, but that was long ago.
She joined us quite some ago, just when we can't remember.
She settled down and fitted in, she's now a family member.
She loved to play and run with us, we're very pleased with that.
But now she spends more time in bed and shares it with the cat.
She really loves the garden, goes out there every day,
and sometimes find the energy to chase a fox away.
In 3 days she has a birthday, 15 years we're told.
We find it rather sad to say she's started getting old.
When she first joined us way back then, we chose to call her
"Goldie".
Now quite sadly years have passed, she's now our "Golden Oldie".
You may quite well have noticed – our stance displays some pride.
For we get enormous pleasure having Goldie by our side."

Freddie's Progress

Nearly five years ago we had to have our beloved Golden Retriever "Murphy" put to sleep when he became very ill. We were all absolutely devastated as he was such a character, and it affected his pal "Harry" (another Golden) terribly – he was just nine when Murphy died. For weeks Harry just didn't want to eat and only took a few morsel of food from our hands, but eventually he picked up a bit. He was still very lonely so we made the decision to apply to Southern Golden Retriever Rescue to find him a new friend.

After a few months, we were asked to go down to Dover to see Freddie, a two year old who'd had a rather unsettled life. He'd been passed from pillar to post on an estate where the original owners worked all day, so couldn't give him much attention. I think another family had him for a while but the same situation arose, so Rescue fostered him until a more settled situation could be found for him. We took Harry with us and after a long drive (from Hertford) they were introduced and we took them for a walk together, and both seemed happy enough so the decision was made to take Freddie on.

Freddie was very anxious on the journey back and was sick in the car – we had heard that he wasn't too keen on being in cars. This problem hung on for quite a while as I think he thought every time he was put in a car he was being passed on to someone else, but as our daily "walkies" meant driving a shortish distance to a dog-friendly environment, he just had to get used to it! Fortunately, as he became more relaxed and secure the sickness problem all but disappeared.



Once the two boys got used to each other, they became great pals and the ageing Harry seemed to have a new lease of life. He got used to Freddie pouncing on him like a cat and suffered his mischief with unfailing good humour.

One of our problems with Freddie has been his separation anxiety. We have never left him for long periods but even if we pop out for an hour or so, he barks when we leave and on returning we would often find he had chewed up some rug or carpet. This has now improved a lot in that he doesn't destroy things but even with Harry around, he still hates us to go out.

The other issue we've had is his relentless barking at the front where he loves to sit and watch the world go by. Unfortunately, although we live in a cul-de-sac, there is still enough activity in the road to set him off. The postman is a very trying problem as Freddie doesn't just bark, he goes absolutely berserk, and I really don't know what would happen if I opened the door. He's much the same if anyone comes up our drive, but if he recognises them he's just excited. If not I just say very calmly "it's OK Freddie they are friends" and on opening the door he treats them to a lovely "doggy" welcome. We have taken a lot of advice on the more aggressive barking and have tried all the usual methods that behaviourists recommend, but to date no real success.

Apart from this Freddie is, believe it or not, absolutely adorable and extremely well-behaved in every other way. His favourite party piece is to lie on his back and kick/jerk all four legs up in the air at the same time with great enthusiasm. It's really funny to watch. His other favourite prank is to race me to my side of the bed and jump on once David is already tucked up on his side. He knows he has to get off and lie down on his own bed in our room, but I think he just has a wicked sense of humour and does it to "wind me up" – the scallywag!

Well, Harry is over 14 now and not up to much playing with Freddie, but he still tolerates Freddie pouncing on him – just about. I don't think we'll have Harry much longer as he has testicular cancer and dementia too, so I don't know how Freddie will react when he loses his pal. Same as us I suspect!

However long we have left with Harry we'll be eternally grateful to Freddie (and Retriever Rescue of course) for rejuvenating his life and being such a good pal for him. Freddie will be seven in October and we hope to have many more years of fun, love and companionship with him.

Jan and David Carter

Message from Cassie



Hello, I'm Cassie and I am 7 years old. I have been living with the Pearces since I adopted them 4½ years ago. After being collected I was put in the back of a car, but I immediately jumped over and curled up on the back seat until we got to my new home. I was bought a few new things I could call my own, including some tennis balls and squeaky toys, 3 bowls for biscuits, water and food stuff, a collar and lead. Now I have a box full of "acquired" balls I've found during my daily walks, which I really enjoy. I get brushed and groomed to keep my fur nice and me looking smart. My love for dirty water has got me in a little trouble, but I'm soon clean again.

It's good to have a human family to look after, and a nice garden to guard. I know they love me and I love them too. The picture is me resting after my garden duties. I am allowed to have the run of the house and I can sleep anywhere I flop.

Well done all you other "Goldens" for adopting a human family. They are a great responsibility.

Bye for now, Cassie

Going the Extra Mile

We are particularly appreciative of the care and support given to several Goldens with special needs by their new owners. The following three stories, which many of you may relate to, are from just one of our co-ordinators.

Max



Max was 4 years old when he first met John. He had been living with a family but unfortunately he had developed epilepsy and his fits were upsetting the children a great deal so we were asked to help find him a good home.

John has been able to offer Max a quieter life; I know that John found it very difficult to cope with Max's fits in the early weeks but I admire his loyalty to the problem and of course to Max and now they provide each other with great companionship and John has a good under-

standing of the epilepsy; Max has responded well to a slight change in medication. Max enjoys a normal, active life, going almost everywhere with John and I hope that he goes on to have a long and happy life with his very special owner John.

Jack



I patiently waited for a particular home that could accommodate Jack's individual needs; aged about 11 years he was not going to change much from being particularly bad mannered with other dogs and not having much strength in his back legs, caused by the cauda equina syndrome, and he did not take too kindly to being left on his own. Whilst with us he had a vestibular attack which made him very poorly for a little while but he made a very good recovery from that episode and I continued to seek a good home for him. For all his grumpy attitude to other dogs he was a jolly chap and I knew he was worthy of a home of his own. Geraldine and Brian are the most amazing couple. They have, over the years, adopted all sorts of waifs and

strays and Jack presented nothing that could not be coped with. They together carried him upstairs at night and back down in the mornings, as Jack would bark if left down on his own, they gave him several short walks during the day in their local woods which he loved and they came to an arrangement with the local dog population and other visiting canine members of their family " not to bother Jack"! Jack loved their grandchildren who nick-named him Teddy Jack and Geraldine and Brian were constantly amused by Jack's antics.

One sunny day in August Jack suddenly had an added complication and was unable to walk at all, not managing to reach his food bowl, a very clear sign to Geraldine that this was a serious matter. Through detailed and helpful discussions with our vet. sadly we all had to make the difficult but kind decision to have Jack put to sleep. Although unable to walk, he lay very comfortably with Geraldine, who was strong and compassionate.

I can honestly say that Jack had the best ten weeks of his life, leaving this world knowing love and companionship of a unique quality. Thank you Geraldine and Brian, it has been my privilege to know you.

Simba

Simba was over 10 years old when we were contacted to offer him a home. His family were emigrating to Australia and did not feel that it was fair to take him too. We were told that he did not like the car, had a very sensitive tummy & diet and did not like walking much!

We have a four year old daughter Emily, and it was very important to find a good family dog. As soon as we saw him we knew he was the dog for us. He was laid back, gentle and quiet and very, very handsome!

A few days later he came to live with us. He had to get used to our two cats and we could not believe how well Simba fitted in. It was as if he had always been here. He now happily goes out in our car, eats normal dog food and loves his long, steady walks.

Emily has entered him into local dog shows where he often wins Best Veteran and Best Rescue and Emily is very proud of him.



I decided to contact the Pet As Therapy charity and after all the temperament assessments carried out by a Pets As Therapy Assessor Simba passed with flying colours and was able to be registered as a P.A.T. dog. We regularly visit a local residential home where they all love him, saying hello to Simba long before saying "hi to me". We also visit Emily's school where some of the children read to Simba. These are children that need a little extra help, it's called the READ2DOGS programme and has some very good results with reluctant readers. All the children in the school know and love Simba. He is a truly wonderful dog.

Simba has had a variety of illnesses whilst with us, some of them very serious indeed but thanks to the wonderful care of the veterinary surgery in Meopham and the tremendous support of your charity financially he has recovered on each occasion. Thank you all very much. We look forward to more precious time together with our lovely, wonderful Simba who is now 13 years old.

Debby, Trevor and Emily McGill

Farewell to Charlie

(24 January 2005 – 5 September 2011)



After losing our old Golden Jasper after 13 years we contacted Southern Golden Retriever Rescue and were lucky to be put in touch with the owners of Charlie and went to meet him and eventually collected him from them. When we first met him we truly wondered whether he was a large Golden Retriever or a very fat Labrador. We initially thought this was due to perhaps a little over feeding and lack of exercise. Once home with us he settled in well and gradually lost some weight, which started at 45 kgs and was eventually reduced to 35 kgs, but only when our vet enquired whether he had been tested for thyroid problems.

This was done and low and behold that is what he had. Once on medication his weight dropped really well and he became a different dog, full of life and eager for all his walks through our local fields, woods and loved the beach. He was a dream on the lead, never pulling, and a real attraction to all who met him, lapping up the attention. His colour and very curly coat always caught people's eye. We once took him into Battle and it took an age to walk the High Street as everyone wanted to stop and talk to such a handsome boy.

He still had some issues though, and one was when he was eating his dinner, becoming grumpy if anyone was near him. Gradually, and with some sensitive training, he would eat his dinner happily with family around. He was always very good with other dogs in the fields, and as he became more comfortable with his weight loss he enjoyed the playtime, especially when our daughter introduced him to their Doberman puppy Monty. He was very gentle with him, and once Monty grew to the giant he now is they became good friends and we know that Monty must miss him when he comes to our home.

Almost two years ago another new addition came into the family with our granddaughter. She is now a toddler and Charlie was always gentle, loving and patient when she was around him. She would sit on his bed with him and cover him with kisses and cuddles and he just lapped it up! He enjoyed his walks, especially when he could get into the mud or the pond, always emerging looking like a black and white minstrel, with his beautiful cream coat and very black half body and legs, almost like a comedy act, but he never minded the hosing down in the summer and loved the warm wash in winter.

The only time he barked was when birds settled in the garden, in our trees or on the phone wire, and they would quickly vanish with a Charlie attack and all would be quiet again. He was always our companion in the garden, and would always try and lie exactly where you wanted to mow. He most likely just wanted to be close. He really was our shadow, especially my wife's and followed her everywhere, in and out and like most retrievers always settling down in the doorway so you had to step over him and talk to him, truly a lovely family dog who will be sadly missed.

We only had our lovely Charlie for four years but he was a great companion to us both. His untimely death was both sudden and very unexpected. At such a young age we truly didn't expect it especially as my wife had only taken him to the vet to get his kennel cough vaccination. When the vet did his usual check over he found a lump in his stomach. Various tests were done and an ultrasound booked, which found things to be much worse than we thought, and he went straight into an emergency operation. Unfortunately things were so bad the kindest thing was to say goodbye. It was a dreadful time, and only other dog owners can truly understand the gaping hole in our life and home now. He has joined our other two Golden Retrievers in the back garden so he is still close to us. A home is never a home without a dog but in time we are sure there will be the patter of four little feet again, but we both need time to grieve and get over our loss. He was a real character and will be greatly missed.

What a lot of mess, What a Commitment, What a lot of love.

Dave and Kathy Appleton

Beware Lungworm

Lungworm is a fairly new and serious threat to our dogs, and is spread by intermediate hosts such as slugs, snail and frogs. In infected dogs adult lungworms live in the pulmonary (lung) arteries and right ventricle of the heart, where they lay eggs, which hatch into larvae, which in turn migrate into the airways of the lungs. Symptoms include coughing, reluctance to exercise, weight loss, fits, diarrhoea and clotting problems. This can prove fatal, so if your dog is suffering from any of these problems consult your Vet who can prescribe suitable treatment.