

# *SEASON'S GREETINGS*



*Sam De Laurey says "Wasn't I supposed to open these?"*

*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 19**

Another year is drawing to a close, and although our numbers have been slightly down on most years we have been busier than last year. One of our more unusual cases was that of two dogs bred in England but living with their English owner who was teaching in Germany. Unfortunately her marriage had broken up and she had to move to a flat which did not accept dogs, but wanted them to be homed in this country rather than Germany. As she was quite prepared to bring them over here we agreed to take them on, but it took a little while to find a home willing to take two dogs. The right family eventually materialised and they have fitted in beautifully.

We must be due for a milder winter this year, so perhaps we shan't have to worry about ice balls in feet! The dangers of Christmas goodies and decorations never goes away, however, so do remember to keep an eye on your dogs!

The two Fun Days were again successful, despite the Kent one being on the Jubilee week-end, so the weather wasn't very good, but we had a reasonable turn-out and only a light shower of rain. The elements were much kinder for the Hampshire event, organised for us by Farlington Dog Training Club, and our thanks go to them, and to the Southern Golden Retriever Society for their contribution to our funds.

Huge thanks also go to Marion and Adrian Palmer who have had several dogs from us over the years. During this time they have been holding boot and garage sales for our funds, and have so far raised over £8,000.

We congratulate those owners of Rescue dogs who are now in the Southern Golden Retriever Society Display Team.

We wish you all a happy Christmas.

### **Benji Coppin**

You may have read in the last edition of our Newsletter that a little under-weight bundle of fluff was adopted by me/Joan on 9 November last year. My beloved Ben was 14 when he died at the end of October and I thought I could never get over him. Gillian and Pat knew of my devastation and Gillian phoned 4 days later to talk about adopting a little rescued puppy called Reg. This had been Ben's name when I rescued him. Could he be up there orchestrating this amazing coincidence knowing how I would miss him so much and this little chap could keep me company?

When I first went to meet Benji I too shed a tear to see that he was so under-sized and under-developed and yet so dear and happy to meet me. I took him home and he was quite happy in the car on quite a long journey and excited to see his new domain. That first night he slept through without so much as a murmur and he devoured the first of his 5 feeds of the day with relish. Our only problem was that each meal just created havoc with this poor chap's tummy and my favourite Vet was enlisted to sort this bundle of fun and make him well. At 3 months Benji was 4 kilos.

After tests we found the problem was more than two fold having campylobacter and coxidia as well as the usual worms. Various medications were prescribed, such that I had to have a spreadsheet drawn up so as to get each feed and each pill at the right time throughout the day. We also had to have extra special food at extra high prices but it was so worth every penny to get him well. From November until March we had so many different pills and potions, some of which my vet was reluctant to give him and I had to sign a disclaimer for them.

In spite of all this, Benji thrived on love and play and appeared to have no idea that he was so poorly. We were called “frequent flyers” by the nurses at the Vets and each visit was an excitement to see how much weight he had put on. Although he is a real fighter, I could not have got through it without constant support on the phone and in person by Pat Marchant and e-mails from Gillian and Rachel. I really did think we were not going to make it several times.



On Boxing Day, our worst nightmares came at once, Benji ate a whole box of dark chocolates that were “hidden out of sight”! We rushed to the emergency vet who took the usual steps to eject all of this and more from his already sore tummy. I thought, I have managed to get him this far, I am definitely not letting him go over a box of chocolates. Again, he was unaware that he was not well and after all that treatment off we went for a walk through the countryside with his little friend Bella and her Mum who actually bought the chocolates!

It was not until March that we got the “All Clear” and how we celebrated. Everyone I know got an email or a phone call. People were so kind and caring and wanted to know.

This little bundle of fluff was growing fast now and we cheered when he managed 20 kilos. I could no longer lift him onto my lap and he now knew he could do what he liked with me. Off to training we went!

We were delighted to meet other puppies and Benji thought all his Christmases had come at once, playtime for a whole hour. This was sadly not to be as The Trainers had other ideas. We have persevered and were given special treatment because he had been a slow developer. I believe this is a ruse Benji uses to his own benefit.

Most people are surprised at what a bright little chap and how well behaved he is. I have to say I am amazed that he will fetch the ball – my beloved Ben would never do that. If you threw it – you picked it up! Benji delights in chasing and fetching. But he has followed in Ben’s footsteps and swims in the lakes or any water he comes across and a puddle will do to wallow in if nothing else is available.

We are now a bouncing but slim 25 kilos. We steal sausage rolls or any fair game from the kitchen work top if Joan is stupid enough to leave them out. I am afraid it is I who need the training not Benji. I am far too slow and he knows it.

My eternal thanks to Retriever Rescue. Where would the Goldies be without them and where would I be without them all.

Joan Coppin and Benji 2012

## Who was Barney?

2003 - 2012

Barney came to us when he was just 18 months old. He was rescued from a block of flats in Woolwich where he was kept on a balcony. We went with Rachel (Clarke) to visit him, on first sight we knew he was the boy for us and it was obvious that he felt the same. He soon licked us into shape and changed our lives forever. To know Barney was to love him.

He had an uncanny way of knowing when my daughters, or Brian, my husband, were coming home long before their cars could be seen. He would always give a very enthusiastic welcome to all. But with Brian, he would pick up his slippers and exercise Brian by running round and round the lounge, kitchen and hallway before eventually giving them back!



Barney soon became an expert gardener, deheading flowers (as they bloomed), picking runner beans (for his own enjoyment and without damaging the plants), picking blackberries (again for his own enjoyment and without sustaining any injuries or thorns), he picked strawberries as they ripened (never when they were green/) and was an expert 'apple scrumper' with the apple tree in the back garden.

Barney loved his walks over the fields, where he would dash off and come back periodically to make sure I was still following him.

Barney was a master at keeping the birds from the garden and was quite put out if a glider or plane dared to pass overhead! Barney loved nothing more than joining you on our garden swing, where he would jump up beside you for a nuzzle, scratch and tickle. If you got up from the swing before Barney had finished you would receive rather an indignant look from him!

One of Barney's greatest pleasures, other than his daily apple, was going on his holidays to the New Forest with us in our caravan. He would get so excited when he saw us packing to go. Just like a child he couldn't sit still, eager for us to hurry - so we could get on our way. Barney loved the beach and the sea, and occasionally the odd piece of seaweed! But if the sea was rough or noisy Barney would be nervous - so quite a few trips to the beach were swiftly changed to quiet walks in the woods.

Life without Barney. Nothing is the same, nor seems as enjoyable. The house is quiet and empty. The garden is such a lonely place, where even now I still think I see him charging in and out of the trees at the end of our garden.

Barney was 8 and would have been 9 on 27<sup>th</sup> August. He left our lives on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> April after an illness of just 3 weeks. We were not prepared for him dying. When the vet advised that the tumour

was inoperable we had to face the inevitable, but we still hoped for a miracle. But just two days later the vet said we had no alternative but to let him go. We were both with him and I held him in my arms for the last time.

Barney was our third Retriever, so we have been here before, but it doesn't make it any easier. We had Barney for 6 years and don't regret a single day of it, not even with the pain of losing him. He was our beautiful boy and we are thankful that he shared our lives for those wonderful years.

Margaret & Brian Amner

### Jack

Our dear Jack came to us in October 2005 when he was nearly 6 years old. Jack was a very timid and nervous dog which we put down to earlier treatment and a little bullying from other dogs at his former home. It took nearly six months before he barked, but he soon realized he was now in a different environment, a former Goldie's home, and he then came out of his shell and bonded with us, but even then he took some time before he understood what toys were for, and how to play with them.



Regular country and woodland walks where there was plenty of wildlife scent soon relaxed him and he certainly showed us his love and affection. He became an excellent guard dog in the home, making up for his earlier period of not barking.

Our early morning routine always started off with a romp and demand to have his tummy tickled in his big doughnut bed, upon which Jack would then show his appreciation by sitting up, putting his nose in the air and giving a long loud wolf howl. This wolf howl was also the greeting I received whenever I came home after being away for any short spell. Jack showed his love and affection in many ways.

In November 2011 the Vet diagnosed problems which necessitated major surgery. Jack recovered and bounced back to his former self, but in February 2012 his health once again deteriorated and after a long gallant battle we knew the time had come to call our very compassionate Vet, and Jack was put peacefully to rest in my arms on his own territory. Jack was in his thirteenth year, and is now at rest with our other Goldies among the daffodils in our country garden.

Thank you Southern Golden Retriever Rescue for a friend who left his mark and will never be forgotten.

Sheila and John Gould

## Facial Swelling

We have been told about a golden retriever bitch whose face swelled up, and her owners assumed she had been stung. The Vet gave her a steroid injection but this didn't seem to help and within 48 hours her whole head had swollen up and she couldn't see out of her eyes. She was rushed back to the Vet and on opening her mouth (which had been done on the first visit) they put pressure on her gum and a load of poison squirted out! It was an abscess on her tooth which had affected her whole head! The tooth was removed and a drain put in, and she was given very strong antibiotics.

It goes to show that our initial assumptions are not always correct!

## A Summary of Events by Barney, formerly Keano

I am a golden retriever and in March 2011 I was called Keano. Towards the end of the month a lady came to my home and talked to my mistress about me and my behaviour with her two young children. Two days later my mistress took me to the new lady's house and, after a short while, my mistress left and I have not seen her since that day.

This new house was great; the lady and her friend had 3 lovely Goldies who were about to come into season. I, an entire boy of 3¾ years, thought my luck had changed and I was in heaven. Read on and see how it all changed! Suddenly there was a knock on the front door and an old man and his wife came in. They looked at me and talked to me but I was not interested – there were more interesting things beyond the back door. The old couple did some paperwork and then my new lead was attached to my collar.



I was lead outside to their Volvo estate car and, as they tried to put me in the luggage area, I managed to slip my collar and was away. Over the fence into the next door's front garden and over the wall into the road, I gave the old man a good run around before returning to the house with the 3 young ladies. Bad mistake! I was caught and the lead was attached to my harness and, following a certain amount of resistance, I was loaded into the car. During this exercise I managed to slip my harness, both it and the

collar had been fitted too loosely. I managed to get out of the luggage area on to the back seat and was joined by the old lady, who cuddled me and tried to make friends with me on the journey to their house. I was not interested and made my feelings known by serenading them, interspersed with growls and barking, all the way home. I don't like travelling in cars! After about 30 minutes we arrived at this big house and I was taken into a large back garden. This was scary and for many days I only walked around it when my master and his wife accompanied me.

In the kitchen there was a large basket with a bed in it waiting for me. Again I was not interested and found a nice spot on the floor. After a few days they removed the basket and put the bedding on the floor in the corner. I had to sleep in the kitchen on my own at night and didn't like that so I made my feelings known! Worse was to happen to me! The old lady made a telephone call and next day I was put in the car for a short journey. I protested loudly on my journey to the Vet; I had never been to a

Vet before and wondered what was going to happen to me. Tracey is a nice lady and she ran her hands over my body checking my joints, ears, mouth and other parts. I was given an injection and pronounced fit and in good order. A week later I saw her again and, after a short sleep, woke to find that I had been “chipped and snipped” and was wearing a lampshade hood. This made it difficult to settle down and there was no way that I was going to sleep with that contraption on me. My protests ended at midnight when my mistress came down stairs, made up a bed on the settee for herself and settled me on my bed beside her. In the morning I heard her telling her husband that she had had a bad night but at least I was quieter. Another two nights were spent in the sitting room and, after a visit to Tracey, the hood was removed and I could move around more freely.

At this time my master and mistress decided that they did not like my name, Keano, they were not football fans, and I was renamed Barney. I was not consulted but it's OK with me – what's in a name anyway.

Life then began to settle into a regular pattern, two meals a day, walks around the garden and into the village. However I was still sleeping in the corner of the kitchen on my own, with the baby gate closed. One night I created a rumpus and my master came down to see what was going on. He settled me down and went up to bed, however he failed to lock the baby gate and I, by gripping the handle in my mouth, managed to open it and find my way up to their bedroom. I found myself a nice place on the floor next to my mistress and fell asleep. Bedrooms are for sleeping in, kitchens are for cooking and eating in! Since then I have had a bed in the corner of the bedroom and quiet reigns.

My walks in the country have gradually increased but I developed a rash on my belly and between my back legs. Another visit to see Tracey followed and I was put on a course of pills. My condition improved but did not go away. Back to Tracey and, after further examination, it was decided to clean out my glands and pack them with antibiotics. One week later Tracey said that things were better but a course of steroids should finish it off. I like visiting Tracey because I know which drawer has the treats in it. All you have to do is sit in front of it and look poorly and she will give some. More recently I have had a problem with my left ear and today it is my right ear that is hot and inflamed. I am off to see the Vet shortly for more eardrops.

Since being here I have developed a routine of patrolling the perimeter of the garden to deter intruders, squirrels, pheasants etc. One of the first things I did was to successfully apprehend the 5 pheasants roaming in the garden – 3 in the freezer, 1 cooked and eaten and the other was badly damaged and so went in the bin.

Each day after breakfast I am “forced” to walk round the field behind the house, 30 minutes if walked quickly. Depending on my luck I may be able to chase a pheasant or two but my master has told me that I missed two deer the other day, which came out of the hedge in front of us and ran across the field to a copse. I also missed a hare last week. I find tasty pigs nuts dropped by the crows most days. When walking on the lead I like to greet people and other dogs but my master/mistress try to stop me. Usually I get a good telling off. I still do not like the car; I jump in but they always shut the rear door and I feel trapped. I make a lot of noise but it doesn't get me anywhere!

To summarise, after 7 months I get two meals a day, my water bowl is changed regularly, a walk most days, a basket with blankets in both the kitchen and the bedroom, a visit to the Vet if I have a health problem, total freedom in both the house and garden and two old fogies at my beck and call 24/7. I suppose life could be worse. Alfie, a goldie re-homed by Sarah, their daughter, tells me that I have fallen on my feet, like him, and not to rock the boat.

It's a dog's life and long may it continue!!!

Barney, December 2011

(This poem was sent in by Janet and David Carter)

### If It Should Be

If it should be that I grow frail and weak  
And pain should keep me from my sleep  
Then you must do what must be done  
For this last battle can't be won

You will be sad – I understand  
Don't let grief then stay your hand  
For this day, more than all the rest  
Your love and friendship stand the test

We've had so many happy years  
What is to come can have no fears  
You'd not want me to suffer, so  
When the time comes please let me go

Take me where my needs they'll tend  
Only stay with me until the end  
And hold me firm and speak to me  
Until my eyes no longer see

I know in time you too will see  
It is a kindness you do to me  
Although my tail its last has waived  
From pain and suffering I've been saved

Don't grieve that it should be you  
Who has to decide this thing to do  
We've been so close, we two these years  
Don't let your heart hold any tears

Anon

### Lucy (born 14<sup>th</sup> Feb 2007, died 29<sup>th</sup> July 2012)

It is with the deepest sadness that we write to update all the readers of 'Golden Moments' that Lucy II (who had featured in Golden Moments edition 16) passed away, aged just 5 and a half on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> July 2012 whilst out having a run. Lucy had a very tough start to her life – living with a family, who whilst well-meaning were probably not best suited to Lucy (& vice versa of course). Rehoming Lucy to us meant now we had the opportunity to give her the patient, quiet, caring and loving, life-long home she deserved. Now, in writing this please let me get this off my chest straight away: in my view Lucy didn't deserve to pass away so early in her life - she was only 5 and a half (Lucy was born on Valentine's day 2007). To die unexpectedly and so young is not fair, not fair for Lucy, as she had so much life yet to experience and enjoy, and if I might be selfish for a moment, not fair for us either. Sharing just over a year and a half of a dog's life simply isn't long enough. I yearn for Lucy to be back with us... oh how I now understand the heartache of other dog owners who have written of their loss in earlier editions of Golden Memories. How I wish now I had written an update on Lucy's progress for an earlier edition and had shared with you all the joy she brought us and the news of how happy and how contented a dog she had become.

Lucy came to live with us on 9<sup>th</sup> Oct 2010. We loved her from the first day we met her.

I can remember clearly just how strong, powerful and self confident Lucy *appeared* to be on the first day we met her, at Gills in Kent. She bounded out of the kennel-run where she had previously been cowering and ran straight towards us, jumping up at us in turn and nearly knocking me to the ground. I was astonished by her strength for such a tiny 3 and a half year old! In joining our little family in Oct 2010, Lucy provided me with the best incentive for recovery I can imagine. You see, only eight weeks before coming to join us I had had to have major back surgery. But the hope of having Lucy made me think about things other than my pain. My partner, seeing the bundle of apparently uncontrollable 'fur & mischievous fun' was however very worried that I wasn't well enough for us to take on Lucy. But having seen her at Gill's that worry soon changed as it was, for us both, love at



first sight when we met her. For the next few days however we were now anxious that Gill might say that she thought I wasn't well enough for us to take and cope with Lucy. But after much persuasion on our part (& I think some help from Pat too) Gill agreed and the following weekend (9<sup>th</sup> Oct) we headed out to pick up our new 'baby girl'. Never did we think on that cold day in Oct that only one a half years later we would have the terrible shock and distress of seeing Lucy II have a massive heart attack whilst out walking. The vet has since confirmed to us that Lucy would not have experienced much pain as it was so quick. But for us both the pain was, and continues, to be unending. When will the pain of loss stop? Lucy was here for such a short time and now Lucy is not.

But back to our little story: So, in Oct 2010 Lucy was home with us – and home to stay.

Now, of course, we kept her name as 'Lucy', although we amended it slightly to become 'Lucy II' as we had previously had a rescue Golden Lab/Ret (via the RSPCA) who was also called Lucy. On settling into her new home (day 1) she had decided she felt comfortable in our 'family room' and that this room was her 'safe space'. She was however happy for us both to join her and was happy for us to sit on the floor (not an easy task for me at that time!) – but when it came to bed-time however on that first night she seemed very uneasy with us both disappearing and heading upstairs to bed and her being left alone. So having heard much crying from Lucy downstairs I came down and slept on the floor in the family room. A very uncomfortable night but a very rewarding one. Early during the night Lucy moved from the far side of the room and come over to my side of the room and lay down quite contentedly beside me. A loving bond can indeed be made on day one! So Lucy II began her new life with us and quickly learned who was 'the boss' and who was a 'soft touch' in her new home. Yes, we had much to learn – as did Lucy. But we soon learned what a softy she was and how loving and loyal she really was. We were told her previous 'family' history before we first met Lucy, this in itself didn't put us off, far from it, we actually felt we had to offer Lucy the opportunity to have a loving life-long home to enjoy. She deserved that. As every dog does.

But, as I say, *we* had lots to learn.

Now Lucy had her 'likes' and her 'dislikes', but generally speaking she was a very well behaved dog once she had settled into her new home. As it turned out we learned to accomodate her 'dislikes' and found ourselves adjusting to come to accept 'her' ways, rather than the other way round. (Who's teaching who?). There was nothing major, little things – for example we were advised that she 'begged' at the table and so we decided to erect a 'baby gate'. This we thought would allow Lucy to see us eating and for her to know that she wasn't left out of the experience as she would 'eat' after us. We were confident that such a tiny dog wouldn't be able to jump over the baby gate, but little did we know that Lucy was in fact a skilled 'limbo dancer' and that by the second evening she had learned how to limbo under the baby gate. So we thought we would adjust the gate height further downwards, only then to discover that 'little Lucy' could actually jump much higher than we thought. On the fourth day the baby gate was taken down. Yes, she had taught us who was 'boss'.

Several other similar experiences during our first month resulted in my calling Pat (at SGRR) for guidance. With Pat's advice we engaged a well known behaviour trainer. He provided interesting advice and insights into why we were 'doing the wrong thing' and that "it wasn't the dog that needed re-training". Well we decided to put his book on the back of a shelf in the library and just 'to get on with it'. You see Lucy was not a bad dog at all. Yes, she lacked some training, but come on, so did we!

Lucy was actually a very loving dog, she relished 'cuddles time', and was intelligent enough to understand that when I had to go back into hospital for yet more major surgery on my back (in Jan 2012) she was now to 'be even more gentle' with me. We changed our 'walking plans' when I came home again from hospital. How she loved her 'main walk' with Simon at 6am and for the time being, how she accomodated three little walks with me during the day. But oh how she waited patiently for

Simon to come home... she listened for every car, jumping up onto my lap for cuddles just to be able to see out onto the drive to see if Simon's car was there knowing that as soon as he came home she could enjoy another walk and run with him. As I recovered slowly during this spring, Lucy learned to come up and sleep beside my bed during the day. This was a habit that continued even now that I had fully recovered. By now you will understand who was really the 'real boss' in our little family, but we were happy with that... and more importantly so was Lucy! Lucy made lots of dog friends locally where we walked and always so enjoyed her runs. She wasn't exactly 'engaging' with other dogs though. She was extremely curious when she could see them in the distance, but when closer she did the normal doggy things... showing interest and sniffing the other dog for a little while before she was off for another run. Similar patterns of behaviour developed with other people/dog owners – she showed initially great interest, but this lasted no more than a minute or two before she was off for a run (unless they were known to be 'biscuit-givers' when she would hang around until she got her biscuit and then she was off once again). Yes, we thought she was a bit of a tart! So fickle (no offence meant). Now, as I have said already, Lucy was tiny, really tiny. She would regularly be mistaken for a puppy/young dog – and people always seemed surprised when we would say, no she is 5 and a half ("really, she is"! ). But even despite, or was it because of, her size Lucy was protective of us. She was so loving to us both, supportive to Simon and not too demanding to me as she seemed understanding of my walking limitations. Not only did Lucy love her walks but also her time spent cuddling you – and I can almost still feel the last cuddle she gave me. Lucy's passing, from a massive heart attack on Sunday whilst out with Simon, was the worst day of our lives. The reality of Lucy's passing at such an unbelievably young age is so hard to accept. She had never been poorly, or shown any signs of illness at all. Indeed the vet had said only recently (when she had her last injections) just how well Lucy was. We try to draw some comfort from thinking that for the last third of Lucy II's life she had fun, she ran, she learned to 'speak', she could be curious and nosey wherever she wanted. She was a contented dog and for that she gave back so much: she was soooo loving to us both. It's so hard to come to terms with the silence, indeed the quietness is so loud. Then there is the extra space left on the floor where Lucy II should be lying now... (Here I am a 'forty something' chap, who cannot see the keyboard to type anymore, because of tears flooding down my face again).



...Lucy was a beautiful dog to look at and to live with. Yes, we were so fortunate to have been given the opportunity to share a part of our lives with Lucy II, albeit for an all too short period of time. We know that Lucy has left us a rich pool of wonderful memories and happy times shared together. Everyone who ever met Lucy loved Lucy, everyone. For us both I can say we will miss Lucy, forever.

Anthony & Simon x

## Molly



Our world fell apart when last year we lost our beloved Harvey. Luckily it was only 2 weeks until we heard about Molly from Rachel in Kent.

Molly had a rough start being homed and then given up so went to rescue, and the rest is history. We picked up our bundle of fluff from Rachel and we bonded straight away. She was a little submissive but when we got her home she settled in very well. She eventually mastered

Harvey's dog flap and in the end it was a great game going in and out. We have had a wonderful 1st year with Molly. She is full of bounce and has a lovely loyal nature as retrievers are well known for. The home is complete again and all the excess fur and dirty paws are all well worth it! As you can see she is a lovely dog and full of fun. Thank you Rachel for rescuing her and letting us give her a loving home.



Margaret & Graham Taylor.

## Looking for a Treasurer

Our Charity's Treasurer feels that age is catching up with him (he has been our Treasurer since 1979) and so we are looking for someone to take over from him in the next year or two. Robbie will be on hand to give help and advice if needed.

The Trustees feel that someone who has been involved with Rescue, either as a helper or having had a Rescue Dog, would give a broader outlook to the position.

He or she doesn't have to be an accountant but needs to be good with figures and to be computer literate. He or she will also have to become a Trustee of the Charity. As well as all the usual tasks of a Treasurer, such as keeping and presenting accounts, he/she will need to work closely with the Co-ordinators, authorise small sums to be spent on rescue dogs and, together with the other Trustees, decide whether larger amounts may be spent. He or she will be responsible for banking all money that comes in and paying all authorised veterinary expenses incurred by rescue owners and any other necessary bills.

If you feel you could assist our Charity in this way please get in touch with our Chairman, Mrs Anne Hodgson on 01403 731221 or email [anne.rikita@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:anne.rikita@tiscali.co.uk)