

## Golden Moments Issue 36

*Newsletter of*  
***Southern Golden Retriever Rescue***  
***(Registered Charity Number 1098769)***  
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### **How Things Have Changed**

What a strange and difficult year this has been for us all! One of the most significant changes that we have all experienced in the last decade or more is the development of the internet, with its many uses and benefits. 2020 would undoubtedly have been more isolating without it. However, being able to buy and sell a range of animals using a few lines in an advert which then reaches thousands of people in minutes is one of the less than happy developments. We are certainly seeing fewer people asking for our help to find a new home for their Golden Retriever, but that genie is out of the bottle and we are making sure that we are here, ready to help whatever the consequences of these changes.

### **Fun Day**

I am sorry to report that once again the SGRS have decided not to hold a Fun Day this year. They are planning to hold one on the May Bank Holiday week-end in 2022.

## Buddy

Well, it is just over a year since Buddy came to stay with us, not bad going considering we were only going to foster him for a short time, but when you fall in love .....

He is our 5<sup>th</sup> rescue golden retriever, all of them elderly and three of them overweight. During our time together he has managed to lose a stone in weight and can now jump into the car unaided (back and arms are very grateful). His chicken adventures are over thank goodness and we don't have to take one he has caught back to the neighbours anymore. Now he just cannot be bothered even when he finds one on the doorstep!

Buddy enjoys going to our local woods to meet up with his new friends but best of all is a trip to seaside. There is nothing quite like a gallop across the sand and better still, a wallow in a pool even in freezing January! Of course, if it were not for Covid he would have the treat of going to the pub as well as the beach. The best treat of all though is getting the empty Marmite pot, yummy!



Terry & Sue Howell

## The story of Hugo and Dusty

Another year

Hugo and Dusty are now both two and a half years old, having come to us when they were both aged 11 months. Their individual characters have developed as they have evolved into adult dogs, as has their strength. Walking them with our enduring 14-year-old Staffie-cross Hazel, is both a joy, and a massive workout for each of us! Well, we all know about the fun of sliding through the mud, but with these boys, a surfboard or sledge is really the way to go! Back on the road, we think harnessing them up to a carriage would perhaps be best, except there are no brakes.....aaaaaagh !

At home we are blessed with a magical garden full of a wonderful assortment of beautiful wildlife with birds, foxes and rabbits, all just circulating around us quite happily observed, usually peacefully, by these wonderful pups through the glass doors. Until that is, they are let out and 'The Pack' gamekeepers attempt to see off any creatures feasting around their bird feeders!

Hugo has now thankfully abandoned his attempts to burrow under our fences into our neighbours' gardens, but only after we eventually had to re-construct the entire fence to keep it Fox-friendly but make it Retriever proof, usually working in the dark and the rain!

Yes, they are free spirits, but they do respond much better to commands in the field now, especially rewarded by a treat, and they continue to keep us in awe as we observe their incredible flat-out races with each other across the open meadows. These usually end in a huge flying cannonball of Retriever hair, ears, tails, and feet with



Hazel bowled energetically down the hillside out of the way!

With their first experiences of playing in the snow, these adventures have become even more exciting of course.

And they continue to endlessly entertain around the house with their excitement as for example when they launch themselves after they see the fox or rabbit stroll by the glass doors, or with their mad wrestling matches and furniture hurling in the lounge! And then after the day's endeavours and cleaning the mud off them, and us, finally the evening's relaxation



as we all collapse in a heap and we start to recover with a glass of wine, while they lie on top of us sharing a carrot or several !

When they arrived at Croft Court, we certainly fell in love with them, and we think Hazel did too, and they do show her the utmost respect, always waiting for her to catch-up on the walk, then playfully rolling her over!

We are so grateful they have become such a part of our lives, and so thankful to Pam and Rachel and all their colleagues in SGRR who have helped so many of these wonderful Goldies to have happy and safe homes, and in doing so, made our lives so joyful.

We'll get over the sprains, aches and pains eventually.....!

### **Bear's takeover.....**

We had a goldie many years ago who lived to a good age; we had fostered our daughter's shitzu for about a year and missed her company when she passed over the rainbow bridge suddenly and started thinking about adopting another pet.

Our house felt more than a little quiet and the family had all moved out to do their own thing – so my husband and I discussed taking on another retriever, giving a needy dog a loving home, but they had to fit in with our caravanning holidays and our grandchildren (aged from 6 to 9 years). We contacted the Southern Golden Retriever and filled out the adoption form, had a house check from Pam and Reuben to make sure we were eligible (all ok) and waited for a possible suitable match.

In January of 2019, my husband rang me and said he'd had a phone call from Pam and had discussed with her a puppy of 9 months who needed rehoming - my husband and I said yes excitedly, the photo sent to us of lovely Bear 'sealed the deal' and a meeting was arranged.

We frantically bought the necessary items – a dog bed (which was

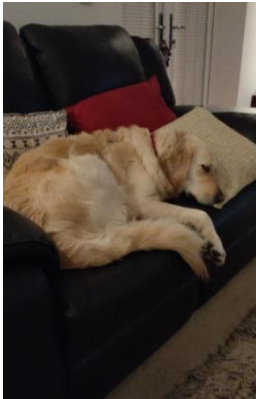




tiny in comparison to the dog!) and a doggy playpen (never used, and sold after a week) biscuits and balls and furry squeaky toys etc etc ..... then the exciting day came.....

We met Pam at the foster carer's house and met this excitable waggy tailed boy who was sooo pleased to see us, said hello, and we fell in love instantly and Bear's takeover began.....

He settled in very well and the family love him. He is the friendliest happiest boy; loves his biscuits and bones and walks by the sea and in the country. He loves his hooman brothers and sisters and he loves the smaller hoomans even more as they give a great game of 'tug' and chase him round the garden! Another favourite pastime is looking for cats and of course squirrels..... out of the front door window and if he has to be left at home, we get a severe telling off on our return and he uses his empty bone as a 'foghorn' and he gives a loud 'mooooooooooooo' very energetically through it on our return. He loves the camping life and is sooo happy when sitting outside the van watching everyone doing what they do and if someone comes his way ..... waggy tails and belly rubs are the order of the day!!



We can't believe our luck to have him as part of our family and when we are out, being asked frequently by people to be allowed to pet him (pre covid obviously) is amazing. He walks so nicely now and is the most well behaved and smiliest of pooches..... he is everyone's friend (apart from the little dog at the end of the garden!).

No lying on beds or chairs was the rule when he arrived but he has just recently decided that at 9.30pm in the evening that it is his time to curl up cosily on the sofa and raises his eyebrows at us to say 'bedtime for me'. Thank you Pam and the Southern Golden Retriever Rescue for letting us take him in ..... Bear is a very much loved boy, our life would not be the same without that furry bundle of joy and

laughter!

### **Angus RIP**

Everybody in the Wandsworth Common area knew and loved Angus and they miss him now that he is gone.

He was loyal, gentle and above all displayed a wonderful temperament with children. Countless are the toddlers who at first flinched when they saw our gentle giant ambling towards them, fluffy tail wagging and one eye on the pushchair in case there was a "snack" to rummage for. He would readily sit or lie down so that they could tentatively touch his flank and then with encouragement move on to stroking an ear or his head. Many childly fears were set aside and new friends made. One even asked to ride him!

He adored it. And we adored him. He could hear the biscuit tin five miles away and could find the only puddle in the Sahara (preferably muddy) He was a great big soft Goldie. Just one look from him and people melted. Big eyes, tongue lolloping, tail wagging furiously and a winning smile on his face.

Angus came to us in January 2010 in the middle of a snow storm and as he passed to what our five-year-old grandson calls Doggy Heaven, a flurry was falling. Full circle and how fitting. He had lived his life to the full.



He "brought up" our two grandsons (the eldest now 17) to love fun and frolics by chasing balls and rushing headlong into streams with the trusting loyalty all Golden Retrievers have in abundance. He was always first to the door to greet them. There was only one thing at which he was useless - retrieving! Throw a toy or a ball and he would go after it and find it, but having done that he felt it was

up to the human to collect it. The exception was a ball thrown into a pond. He would deposit that somewhere on the bank for a repeat performance.

Our friends relish telling the story of my first solo foray with him onto Wimbledon Common, a place he truly loved. All went swimmingly (I choose that word deliberately) until we came to the pond near the A3. Dogs are prohibited from it but Angus could not read the signs, so in he plunged, swimming to his heart's content. It was a lovely day, so after the exercise he felt like a lay down to dry off and enjoy the surroundings - on the island in the middle of the lake. He came back to his new owner in his own good time, no damage done, with a quizzical Goldie look. "Who me? I was just having fun".

He always insisted that when we bought either grandson an ice cream that he would have one too. A vanilla cone was his favourite, usually disappearing in two or three deft flicks of the tongue. Ice cream brain freeze? No problem. His other "treat" was a daily croissant whenever we stopped on our walks for a morning coffee. Or if that happened at the cafe on Wimbledon Common or by the snack van in Richmond Park, he always relished a sausage.

He was our first dog and to the best of our knowledge he was the first Goldie in the area. His popularity made him a trendsetter - now there are lots of Goldies to remind us of him. They are lovely to see, always calm and friendly.

And his celebrity spread much further than our area of SW London. We borrow a friend's house in Dorset and he knew the moment he saw the car being loaded where he was off to. To Hambledon Hill, the highest point in the county from where he would survey his domain. To the marvellous beaches at Studland Bay and to the village where everyone knew and spoilt him. He could hardly get out of the car on arrival before neighbours would come to greet him (not us).



Now he is gone but can never be forgotten. He gave us 11 years of total joy and we hope we repaid that by giving him a loving, safe home. In his last months he slowed notably because of arthritis and found it difficult to stand for long on his front legs although walking was fine. But even in his decline he remained a character...on their website our vet uses pictures of him having acupuncture and laser treatment. Angus, a star to the very end.

Thank you our wonderful Big Boy.

## Mandy and Digby

*Mandy in the rock pool and snow, Digby on the beach and with a towel*



It was a terrific shock to us when we lost both of them unexpectedly in January within two weeks of each other. It's the first time since 1973 that we are without a lovely Golden Retriever. Mandy was just short of 3 years old when she she came to us. We had just lost one of our oldies and were looking for a puppy when we got a rescue call from her owner saying she needed to rehome Mandy as she had two goldies and a 2 year old

child with another on the way and was concerned she was too busy to be able to give her a good life, so no puppy for us then as we adopted Mandy. She was a delightful, typical Golden, perfect nature, lively and chasing her ball to the end. We adopted her in approx 2009 and we lost her in January this year just short of 15 years old. She did not have more than one day's illness in her life but went unexpectedly in a sudden massive fit



Digby was a different situation as you know. He was about seven years old when he arrived in rescue. Apparently he was given away over a Golf Club bar to a member who admired him. This new owner had him for about five years until his then owner died. His son could not cope with him so Digby arrived in Rescue. Digby was a lovely dog but had a number of "issues" as they are called nowadays, so we could not find him a suitable home. As is invariably the case in this situation the rescue officer

concerned did find him a "forever home" he stayed with us.

Digby was terrified of thunderstorms and heavy rain and when this happened we knew we would be up with him all night. He was far more sensitive than he appeared and it really took him a number of years before he was totally confident.

His nature was perfect, he did not have any aggression in him. Even when he was terrified in a full thunderstorm he would never even growl let alone attempt to bite. He would lay totally relaxed if we had to "doctor any of his hurts" and when we had finished he was so grateful he would give you a lick in appreciation of our help.

Unfortunately his rear legs started to go due to some nerve problem about a year ago and in January they went totally and the vets could not help at all. Again he was just short of fifteen years old.



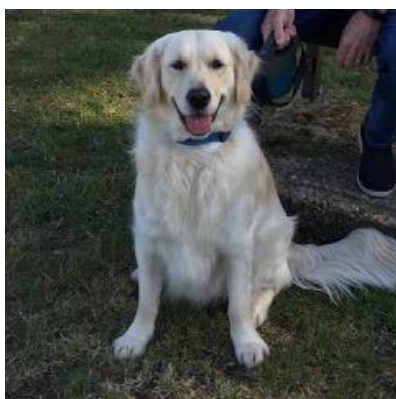
Yvonne and Gordon



## Rosie

After adopting a very challenging dog that had never been socialised but was brilliant indoors I decided to always foster because I travel a lot. Wendy asked if I could foster Rosie: she had come into care and could be a haemophilia carrier for which tests were being carried out.

Rosie had apparently just lost a litter of puppies and my heart went out to her. She was docile, small for a retriever, a tail with no hair and she shed very little hair. Gosh I thought how easy after my other dog. I should have noted her long nose and Wendy saying her hair is thin because she has had puppies. She was carrier free. I adopted her.



Her coat grew thick and glossy, her tail a typical retriever plume. She could be left off the lead in the park and woods and was so good. In turn she was an excellent thief, one day even standing on her back legs and stealing my dinner from the kitchen unit while I got something from the fridge she, I might add, was standing next to me. There were many things like that but she did improve. I put it down to a deprived childhood as they say.

Eight months later things changed. I had to go out, so stroked Rosie, said I won't be long. I woke up in hospital after a nasty car crash. A neighbour had seen it, recognised my car, told his neighbour who rang my friend and she went in to see Rosie and take her out. Wendy was duly informed, whizzed over, collected Rosie, took her home and fostered her with Francis her next door neighbour who I can never thank enough. I was in hospital with major injuries and never thought I could have Rosie back. With Wendy that wasn't going to happen and she used to send me video clips of her. I used to look at them and my determination grew.

Very gradually I began to walk again and came home. An organisation called Borrow my Doggie provided volunteer dog walkers. Rosie came home. It was wonderful to see her and she was so careful and gentle. It was the start of the Covid crisis, everybody was fed up being shut in and not seeing anybody except me: I had Rosie for company. The young adult volunteer walkers were furloughed from work, lived mainly in flats and worked on computers. They loved taking Rosie for walks, she loved it all. They were brilliant.

I began to take Rosie out myself for little walks and gradually it became longer. In hospital I was determined to one day walk to my local shops as I would never drive again. It was wonderful the first time I did this with Rosie by the side of me, her normal well-behaved self. Rosie now is the Rosie she always was underneath. She does challenge my friend's lurcher for a run and keeps up! That nose is every inch a hunter and she never gives it a rest. The park is her speciality, children do drop Smarties and she



will spend ages seeking them out. The other day, in a playing field she found a little gap in the fence and was in a back garden. I was amazed like everyone else to see this dog leaping over fences like a steeplechaser until she found her way out again. Luckily she didn't come to any harm. When it's sunny and I walk through the park and I see her running happily with other dogs, tail wagging I feel very happy and humble because I know what I owe this rescue dog called Rosie.