

Golden Moments Issue 37
Newsletter of
SOUTHERN GOLDEN RETRIEVER RESCUE
(Registered Charity Number 1098769)
PO Box 112, Cranbrook, Kent. TN17 3RB



Spring is here at last, and life is becoming a little more normal, although of course the dreaded Covid is still with us. I hope you have all managed to keep safe.

Rehoming has become a little easier with the lifting of restrictions, but we still have to take great care to keep everyone safe.

LOVING MEMORY OF BAILEY
Born 11th October 2007

Bailey came to us at the age of 7 months in 2008. Sadly her life came to an end on Friday 17th December 2021, after 14 really happy years together.

She spent most of her life with us in the New Forest and then on Exmoor. She absolutely loved the streams and the woodland and heathland in the New Forest and then the rivers and the moorland on Exmoor. She was always on the go and lived life to the full. We recently moved to the Quantocks, also close to the coast. She was 13 when we made this final move but she kept her usual cheerful self even though she was not as active. Unfortunately arthritis was taking its toll and she also had to have three toes removed from her front feet at separate times but she remained her usual happy self and tried to carry on the best she could but her walks gradually got shorter and shorter. Then one day her back legs gave way and she couldn't even stand let alone walk. So we had to make the most difficult decision of our lives and had to let her go.





Bailey was the sweetest and most loveable dog and she gave us so much joy. We miss her so much.

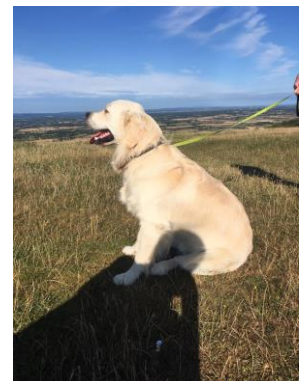
Our home and lives are very empty without her but we can say that she had a wonderful life with us and enjoyed herself to the full. Over the years we walked miles with her and she practically lived in the streams and rivers – she loved to swim. She also loved the beaches and the sea.

We will never forget her. All our love, Sally and Tony xxxxx

Buddy

Buddy came into our lives on 25th January 2020, fulfilling our wish for another golden retriever, 27 years after the passing of our beloved Jason! That was a long time to be without a dog, but life had been busy with work and other commitments, and it wouldn't have been fair to have one through that time. We knew Goldens were special, and we wanted to share our lives again with one of these special dogs, now that we were semi-retired. We'd registered with the SGRR before Christmas and had hoped we might rescue an older retriever. The phone call came, and we had the opportunity to adopt Buddy, who was nine months old and needing a new home. We said 'Yes'. His previous owner was struggling with family problems and reluctantly had to let him go.

He settled in quickly and is such a lovely boy. At first, we gave him the freedom of our bungalow, allowing him to be near us in the bedroom. But that proved difficult as he got us up several times a night to go out. We spoke to a trainer about this, and she suggested we shut him in one room to make him feel safe. This worked, his night barking stopped, and to this day he has slept through the night. Mornings find him fast asleep on his back with his legs in the air.



We thrived on the morning walks in the fields and woods around our home, with a bouncy golden trotting ahead on his lead. Before Buddy, our daily walks had been restricted to half an hour. Now, we walked for an hour and felt fitter. We worked on recall, and now most of the time he comes back. One particular incident makes me smile. Buddy disappeared into the next field, and we began to worry. He reappeared a few minutes later carrying my hat, which had blown off my head without me realising! Further on, I turned to see him sitting beside something on the grass - my glove! he definitely lives up to the retriever name.

We took him to some training sessions before lockdown began, and he is now so good at sitting, lying down, and coming to the whistle. What a joy he was during those difficult months of isolation from family and friends. Our daily walk with him kept our spirits high, and we and he enjoyed games of 'fetch the ball'. I noticed during these weeks that he sat with his legs splayed more than normal, so I mentioned this to the vet. She arranged for him to be x-rayed, and this confirmed that his hip bones didn't sit well in their sockets. That was not what we wanted to hear, but at least we now know not to walk him too far. We hope he won't need hip replacement surgery later on.

He loves to swim in streams, the river and the sea, but is afraid of his paddling pool, and will only put his nose in! His favourite TV programme is 'Dogs behaving very badly', and he sits between us on the sofa watching Graham Hall put the naughty dogs through their paces.

He is now 2 years old and we feel so lucky to still have him with us, as he nearly died in the Autumn of 2020 with kidney failure. He had a lot of upset stomachs and had to have an operation to remove some

pampas grass from his stomach, which blocked his intestine. After that, he went down hill and his kidneys failed. We were distraught, and I had many people praying for his recovery. The vet rang to say she may have to put him to sleep if he didn't respond very quickly. The next day, he made a miraculous recovery and his kidneys started to function again, much to our relief and the vet's astonishment. I believe in the power of prayer, and to this day, his kidneys are now back to normal.



He is such a lovely boy, with a gentle nature, who likes to sit between us on the sofa each night. We take him to "paws in the pool" at the Ardingly showground each month, where he joyfully swims and retrieves toys, and to a special place on the Ashdown forest with other retrievers, to swim in the many ponds.

Buddy keeps us on our toes and has a lot of energy, but we feel blessed to have this lovely golden who has stolen our hearts. The words on a plaque given to us by a friend in America, say it all. "You can't buy love, but you can rescue it."

Tigerlily and the Brown Tornado by Noel Clark

The two eight month old pups had been playing well together, but the 'play fighting' was getting too sharp so I stepped in. Immediately Lilly exploded into a raging ball of snarling. Arthur scarpered, Rachel and me did our 'footballers wall', standing tall in front of Lilly, hands out of the way, look a foot above her eye line and control your breathing. Lilly snarled and snapped and lunged threateningly for about a minute and then the rage subsided. It was the first time we had seen the behaviour which had led to this 8 month old being handed to rescue. When it stopped the house seemed eerily quiet as the other dogs looked on in shock. "We could call her Tigerlily I suggested" - Rachel gave a withering look.

Rachel had been talking to a family in Surrey about a 'worrisome' puppy for some time, they eventually decided to rehome her through another charity, they were expecting a baby. The home they chose was an 'expert' former goldie owner who 'knew all about the breed'. His adult daughter was bitten on the second day over a stolen item and three days later he gave her a rawhide chew for being good and was rewarded himself by being pinned in the lounge for two hours. The next day they rang Rachel. We thought long and hard before taking her on, as we had three dogs of our own and another 'aggressive' dog knocking on the door. Rachel finally agreed to let her come rather than allow her to be destroyed on the basis that I handled the biting and she would find the home, but that under no circumstances was she staying!

By the time Lilly arrived we had taken in Arthur, ostensibly an 'aggression' case. Arthur was actually a huge brown exceptionally boisterous bad-mannered pup with no malice but a completely irrepressible urge to play. Lilly on the other hand was a jumpy nervous little dog that wouldn't come forward and hung her head when approached. They lived together in the utility and initially weren't allowed further into the house. They took a day or two to get used to each other then became good pals, playing for hours. If you could prescribe a cure to balance Lilly's nervous snappy disposition it would be called Arthur. The energy they expended playing and the bite inhibition they practised was exactly what Arthur needed, Lilly was quick to tell him off if he became too boisterous and he took her nervous snaps as encouragement to play more.



We explored the 'triggers' that caused their anti-social behaviour. Arthur had a 'trigger word', it was of course "No!". On hearing it he stood five feet tall all teeth and claws grabbing at your hands. If you turned away or folded your arms, he nipped at your clothing and whatever was underneath pulling you

round and your arms back into play. Lilly was resource guarding, mostly over food, a habit she had learned early on and had extended to other things. We saw five explosions and aggressive displays of decreasing severity from her in the first week and a further five incidents of challenging behaviour in the next month, during which time she became far more relaxed. In the months that followed she pretty much didn't put a foot wrong at all. We keep a simple diary for all the foster dogs.

Searching very carefully, Rachel found the right 'adult only' home for Lilly with two other mature dogs. We spent hours with them talking through the 'quiet' regime we felt was needed. We handed Lilly over saying 'ring any time, if you have any concerns'. They rang the next morning: '*we had a party to welcome her, and she wouldn't let my daughter's boyfriend into the kitchen*'. Two weeks later their old golden retriever died, following which there was another guarding incident. I went to visit. Their instincts on how to manage her seemed good but two weeks later another incident occurred over a toy. This time Lilly went into a rage and challenged the husband of the family. It came to nothing, but it seemed an escalation of behaviour we did not want continued and we all agreed she would return to us.



Arthur had gone to a wonderful new home by this time - much missed by Rachel. Lilly has settled down and become a very calm, well behaved even devoted individual. We have not tried to rehome her again. She recently passed her gold test on the second attempt and seemed very proud of her new rosette - but not in the least bit protective of it! No longer a tigerlilly, perhaps a water lilly but to us she is now just our Lilly.

Percy

I adopted Percy almost four years ago when he was just six. I was his fourth owner, poor boy! I have written about him before in the Newsletter but, as he will be ten soon,, here is an update. Looking back at earlier photos, I can see that his coat is longer and a bit more unruly than it used to be, although I brush him most days to try to prevent my vacuum cleaner clogging up with his fine hair. I seem to spend more time unblocking it than actually vacuuming. I'm wondering whether I need a Henry type cleaner made in Somerset which seem to be favoured by tradespeople! However, he looks and has kept very well, with only an itchy ear on one occasion to report. At just under 40kg, the vet usually refers to the need for a more defined waistline when he goes for his annual vaccination! We have had some lovely daily walks on fields and woodland close by and particularly enjoyed the training class we went to on a Thursday morning.

He achieved his Bronze and Silver KC Awards and it is a disappointment that we haven't been able to go on to the Gold Award. He was quite a character at the class. When an exercise was being explained, "at the end of the hall left about turn, at the centre line, halt and leave your dogs" etc, Percy would sink to the ground with a loud sigh/groan as if to say "this is all far too much"!

Unfortunately, apart from the pandemic, I have not been so well and Percy now goes out in the mornings with a lovely dog walking lady whom I had met on our walks. Although I have missed sharing the morning walks, I think it has been good for him, he seems to enjoy going out with his doggy pals. I have noticed that he now greets other dogs, whereas before he tended to ignore them. My sister and I were amazed when he paddled around the edge of a pond we came across on one of our walks when I was staying with her. He was always so averse to getting his paws wet before but now readily goes in the stream with the other dogs for a drink! The photo is of Percy and a female Spinola who seem to have formed a bond. The two Spinolas belong to the dogwalker and are always on the walks.



Percy definitely has a mind of his own and still gets into the occasional scrape. He has a very good memory and sense of smell (he would make an excellent sniffer dog), and, if he remembers something of interest, he can without warning suddenly about turn and head off in the opposite direction. I say without warning, but he sometimes gives you a naughty glance, as if to say "I know this isn't allowed, but I'm going anyway". Any amount of whistling and calling only causes him to increase his gait, a faster and faster trot. This is a shame because it means we have to be very careful about letting him off the lead when we are near roads which he could cross in his quest. Other exploits include squeezing himself through holes in the chestnut fencing/hedge, made by foxes and made larger by Percy, into my neighbours' garden so that constant fence repairs are needed!

I'm so pleased to have been given the chance to give him a home. He has enriched my life and is a very lovely dog with an appealing look which seems to say "butter wouldn't melt in my mouth, please give me a treat"!

Pat and Percy

Hugo and Dusty Year 3

The boys are now three years old and happier than ever. Their days start with the adventure of a run and a swim around Bewl Water Reservoir, giving us the joy of spectating their antics whilst enjoying the peace and beauty safely within this lovely natural environment.

They have lost none of their adventurous and playful spirit, with Hugo leaping acrobatically several feet into the air each time to catch his ball, whilst Dusty runs like the wind to intercept any surfacing moles, or even less likely, rabbits from the burrows beneath. Not that he ever does but he lives the dream.

Now at last it seems that Spring has arrived, and our walks are more about enjoying the fresh air and sunshine with them, rather than avoiding slipping over in the mud, and cleaning them endlessly.



Old lady Hazel, our 15-year-old Staffie Cross, loves to try to keep up with them, and it's great that they still stop and wait for her, and then play fight together until she rolls out of the action, and proceeds along more cautiously!

This off-lead time is so important not just for their health and for great regular playful contact with other dogs, but for our health too, so that our arms get some rest from the strain of being pulled from their sockets by what seem like a couple of racing carhorses when they are harnessed!

Another great development is how they have recently come to accept our old ginger cat Benny, who although used to Golden Retrievers in his life in France, wasn't prepared for this boisterous pair of new kids on the block, and has had to live on the top floor of our house, with his own patio, cat-flap and draw bridge for access! Then one day a few months ago, it all changed, and he came downstairs for a treat of yoghurt, which all four of them enjoyed in the kitchen side by side, and you would think they had all been lifelong friends.....

We are so lucky to have found Hugo through Pam and the SGRR, and magically that Dusty appeared in our lives at the same time. Born only 3 weeks apart they are just like brothers, although with quite different characters, they certainly have the same energy.

The integration finally of all these lovely animals so happily into our pack has been a joy, so that we all now live happily and peacefully together – that is until someone calls round and the play fighting and showing-off starts up again.....

Fun Day

We are delighted that the Fun Day is going ahead this year and hope to see many of you there on 29th May. It will be at a different venue – **Larkfield Village Hall, New Hythe Lane, Aylesford, Kent. ME20 6PU**

Yvonne Bennett

It is with great sadness that I have to report the death in February of Yvonne Bennett, whom many of you will remember, following complications after an operation.

Yvonne and her husband Gordon had their first Golden Retriever, Linsun Loretta, in 1973. They showed and bred with some success under the affix “Goronne” and Yvonne also judged. They were Founder Members of The Southern Golden Retriever Society in 1977 and when the Welfare & Rescue Scheme (later to become the charity Southern Golden Retriever Rescue) was formed Yvonne became involved, originally helping Brenda Lowe with home visiting etc. and eventually taking on her own area in mid-Kent. Over the years they helped very many dogs find loving homes but in 2018 they felt they should retire due to health problems.



Some of you will remember Yvonne at the wonderful “cuddly toys” stall she and Gordon ran at the Fun Days, where they raised money for Rescue. They continued to run this until Covid caused it to be cancelled in 2020.

In recent years Yvonne and Gordon adopted two Rescue dogs themselves, Mandy and Digby, and they both featured in a recent Newsletter. When they both died



eventually they acquired a lovely 7 year old dog named Jackson.

Our thoughts go out to Gordon and our thanks for all he and especially Yvonne did for our lovely breed.

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