



## A Christmas message from the SGRS Chairman, Sue Ashley



*The Coronavirus Pandemic has affected us all and your Society's Executive Committee and I hope all our members and their families are able to STAY SAFE over the Festive Season and into 2021. I am sure that we all are so grateful to have our lovely Golden Retrievers with us. They have been giving us both company and something to focus on in these troubled times.*

### Welcome to the 2020 Christmas Newsletter

All activities with our dogs came to an abrupt halt in mid-March as the Coronavirus took hold and we all went into lockdown. Our own Championship Show and Crufts were the last events the SGRS were involved with and nothing has been organised for group activities for the rest of 2020. However, many of our members have been active in other areas and some of these are covered in this Newsletter. I hope you all can enjoy Christmas

**David Wimsett, Newsletter Editor**

The July issue of the Kennel Club Journal gave its readers details of how to watch extra Crufts TV programmes during the summer lockdown.

And on the front cover is SGRS member Clare Jenner's lovely dog, Henry, on his last trip to Crufts as a member of the SGRS Display Team.

Oh, and Henry is with one of his biggest fans, TV presenter Claire Balding!



### Christmas Raffle

Following the success of the SGRS mid-summer raffle, Jenny Elsey has now planned the Grand Christmas Raffle.

This time there will be 'The Twelve Gifts of Christmas' special hampers to be won, with a wide array of delightful items in each.

Photos of these, together with content details, are on Page 6 of this Newsletter. The full details will also be on the SGRS website and Facebook pages by the time you read this.

If you would like tickets, which are £5 per strip of five, please contact either Jenny Elsey at [jenny.elsey@btinternet.com](mailto:jenny.elsey@btinternet.com) or David Wimsett at [david-wimsett1@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:david-wimsett1@hotmail.co.uk) who will allocate you your numbers and keep a record of them until the draw is made in mid-December. Proceeds raised will be divided equally between MDD and SGR Rescue. **Ed**

### Puppies are not just for Lockdown - or Christmas



I'm sure everyone has read about people getting, or trying to get, puppies, rescue dogs, or any dog at all during this Pandemic. As the SGRS Puppy Co-ordinator, I have received an unprecedented number of telephone calls and emails from people asking about Golden Retriever puppies, but it's been very clear that a good number of those enquiries, often very brief, are made out of sheer desperation to get a puppy for the wrong reasons. Here are just two of them: - 'We are looking for a puppy for Xmas and live in Sittingbourne. I look forward to hearing from you'. Or, 'Could we please have a puppy during lockdown but once the kids go back to school, return it'!!

The answer, which I constantly have to give, is that the SGRS have no puppies available at the moment.

I do give as much advice as I can about getting a puppy from the right breeder and I also direct them to our website to read the do's and don'ts of puppy buying, but unfortunately they are still happy to part with vast amounts of money for pups advertised on the internet and/or bred by people who have NOT done their health checks, or maybe one of the parents has the minimum (usually the sire).

I am also hearing from people when they call me that they are something like 16/17<sup>th</sup> on the list for a puppy! I have to tell them, quite honestly, that they have NO chance of getting one from that particular breeder until they breed again.

What I would ask is that if any members are thinking of breeding and have not already got a full list of waiting people, then get in touch with me so they can go onto the official SGRS Puppy List.

**And please try to tell anyone you hear of, or know, who is trying to find a Golden Puppy to be SENSIBLE AND GO TO AN ASSURED KENNEL CLUB BREEDER, or make contact through official Breed Club Websites in their area.** **Mandy Pett, SGRS Puppy Co-ordinator**

### Medical Detection Dogs on the TV

There has been quite a bit of coverage on ITV and BBC for Medical Detection Dogs during early October while I was preparing this Newsletter - it seemed to be nicely timed to help promote the SGRS Sponsored Walk raising funds for MDD!



Dr Claire Guest was discussing the training of some MDD Dogs to assist in the detection of Coronavirus, and there have been sections on the work Assistance Dogs do for their medically dependent owners. We should all be proud to be supporting the fantastic work this Charity is doing. Our dog Poppy was more than interested. She wanted to join in! **Ed**



## ***The National 'Virtual' Sponsored Walk for MDD***

How different this year's Sponsored Walk was! Meeting as usual at Lullingstone Country Park under Covid-19 restrictions was going to be difficult with so many people and dogs around, so it was decided to hold it 'Virtually'! Walkers could choose where they walked, when they walked, and who they walked with. And with that in mind, all the Golden Retriever Clubs around the UK were also invited to join the SGRS in its effort to raise funds for Medical Detection Dogs.



*Ian and Sue Richardson with Charlie and Jonty in Norfolk.  
The first couple to complete the Walk.*



*Angela Jardine, with Elsa and Mac in Nottinghamshire.*



*Lesley Thomas, in red, with friends and dogs, including her dog Mac at the front, in Ashdown Forest.*

Adverts and sponsorship forms specific to each area were produced and sent to all the Golden Retriever Clubs and Societies in the UK. Those who did the walk took some great photos of themselves, and these and many more can be found on the SGRS Facebook page. The walk took place over, or around, two weekends in early October and at the point this Newsletter went to print I anticipate that those who took part will have raised around £4,250 in sponsorship or donations for Medical Detection Dogs. So well done to everyone who took part and many thanks for your support for such a worthwhile charity.



*Julie Hilton, left, and her dog Poppy take a rest after finishing their walk in Bury St. Edmunds in Suffolk.*



*Lynne Parker-Jones, right, with Molly walk in Cobham Woods. Kent.*



*Your Editor, photo below right, with Honey, joins Rob and Karen Menter for their walk at Lullingstone Country Park, Kent, where the Sponsored Walk for MDD had been held annually for the past six years.*

*Lesley Leyland, left, from the Midland GRC and her dogs Bernie and Portia on their walk through the National Forest.*





## Puppies for Medical Detection Dogs

An enquiry from Jacqui Grint in Barnham Broom, Norwich, Norfolk, for a sponsorship form for the SGRS Sponsored Walk led to a very interesting story. Jacqui's Aunt, Rebecca Hill, donated a dog called Callie to MDD around a year ago - and it's



good to hear that she is progressing really well with her MDD training and they will be placing her into Bio training in the New Year. (And, as if on cue, while writing this article, Callie appeared on ITV's Good Morning show – *photo top right* - in a piece about MDD and training MDD dogs!! A star indeed! Right, back to the story).

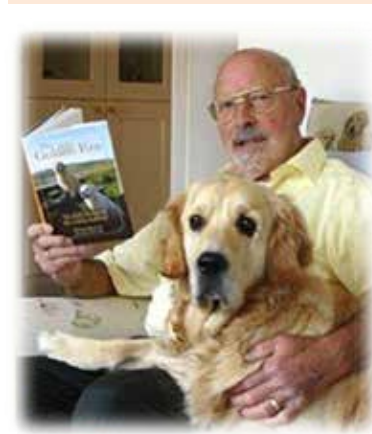
Rebecca (pictured left with husband Sam and Callie) is now considering doing the same again for MDD when one of her other Spaniels, Smidget, (pictured right) hopefully has puppies early next year. Meanwhile, Jacqui has a dog called Sydney, (pictured far right) who is



Callie's sister, and she plans to breed from her eventually and donate one half of the litter to MDD!

Being able to do that is very important to Jacqui and her family as she was diagnosed with Epilepsy last year and knows the valuable assistance MDD Dogs can offer to people with life threatening problems. Jacqui feels that the service offered by MDD is so important and she and her family want to give something back to the Charity. And Jacqui and Sydney will be giving more to the Charity after they have completed their SGRS Sponsored Walk for MDD. **Ed - A fantastic story Jacqui and Rebecca. All at the SGRS wish you well in the future.**

## Malcolm Morecroft's new book review.



"The Golden Era" is Malcolm Morecroft's second book on the history of the golden retriever and is a must-read for all enthusiasts of the breed.

The reader is introduced briefly to powerful characters appearing in "From Yellow to Golden", but now we read of others who promoted the

development of the breed, and whose achievements form an invaluable part of golden retriever history.

The aptly named Tailpiece brings readers into 2020 by means of the author's own observations, reminding us that the work of people connected with these highly intelligent, versatile working dogs and loyal companions goes on apace.

"The Golden Era" would make an excellent gift or a worthwhile addition to a library shelf.

Available in hardback or paperback, the pages of this book sing with the author's love and respect for his subject and turn a factual record into something much more.

Aided by evocative illustrations and a timely humour which would readily be appreciated by many of those whose stories grace its pages, this is a journey not to be missed.

**Review by Mary Jarrett**

Malcolm donates some of the royalties from sales of both of his books to Medical Detection Dogs and if you would like a copy of either, or both, contact Malcolm at [malcolm@toadflax.co.uk](mailto:malcolm@toadflax.co.uk)

## Golden Masks.

Soon after the Covid-19 lockdown kicked in, the wearing of masks became a hot topic. Should we wear them or not? That was the question.



Well, that question was quickly answered with a 'Yes, we will wear them' after all the SGRS Display Team members were sent Golden Retriever masks made by Team Member Alison Henderson! How stylish, how chic, and how trendsetting they look on your Editor and Ann Benefield!

'Seamstress' Alison managed to fashion the Golden Masks in between making and supplying local NHS establishments and keyworkers with all sorts of PPE equipment.

It's a pity the Display Team have been unable to do a performance all masked up, but, who knows, someone might book us to perform a socially distanced Display. Team performance to cheer a few people up? **Ed**

## The Odyssey Journey Continues...

In last year's Christmas Newsletter we covered the presentation of an exceptionally generous donation of £8815 for Medical Detection dogs from a company called Odyssey.

Julia Whiting, an employee of Odyssey and a big supporter of the SGRS and MDD, was delighted to let me know that in its 2020 annual review of charitable donations Odyssey had once again made a donation to MDD. This time a magnificent £5,000!

Don't leave your job, Julia, MDD need you to stay with Odyssey! **Ed**

## **Barbara Taber**



Barbara Taber, who died on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2020 after suffering for a long time with cancer, was a long-time member of The Southern Golden Retriever Society and The Golden Retriever Club.

Her golden retrievers meant everything to her. Barbara bred and showed her lovely, sweet-tempered goldens until she joined the Display Team in 2000 as one of the original eight members. She continued to breed, and over her twenty years with the Team she used five of her own dogs – Sophie, Sally, Merry, Tammy and Dizzie. Three other dogs of her breeding were also in the Display Team.

Karen Menter, another original member and Manager of the Display Team, says that Barbara was always the perfect Team member, attending all training and events without fail. Even when she was poorly she would come to training, sitting at the side wanting to learn the new routine by watching. Karen knew she could always rely on her and her goldens.

The Display Team was her life and Barbara asked the Team - handlers in uniform and dogs – to make a guard of honour for the passage of the hearse at her funeral. She wore her Team uniform for her last journey.

Her remaining two dogs, Dizzie and Charlie, joined us with their new Dad to say goodbye to their Mum. Such a sad occasion.

Always thinking of her dogs, she had found a good home for them with the friend who loved them and had looked after them during her many hospitalisations.

Barbara will be much missed by the entire Display Team and her many friends and neighbours and never be forgotten.

**Jan Cook, a long-time friend and Display Team member**

## **SGRS Display Team**

2020 was set to be as busy a year as any other for the Display Team. However, due to the unforeseen and unprecedented effects that Covid-19 brought with it, all our engagements but one were cancelled.

The “but one” made all the difference and we have very happy memories of the most wonderful Crufts we have ever had. Lockdown came two weeks after Crufts so we were very lucky that it took place.

The day before we set off for Crufts the Kennel Club contacted me to ask if we were prepared to do two additional performances in the Main Arena. We were delighted to, especially as they were two great “slots” – before the Gundog Group, judging on the Friday and before the Best In Show audience on the Sunday. It meant that we had four performances in the Main Arena and four in the Good Citizen Dog Scheme Arena. A very busy Crufts.

This year I had decided that the Team would perform off-lead for the first time in all Arenas and we had been practising with that in mind. The dogs were fine in rehearsals but what would they be like in the vast Main Arena with the TV cameras, loud music and the noise of an audience of six thousand? We were all a little anxious but the dogs didn't let us down and the routine looked and felt so much slicker as we didn't have to bend to pick up leads – we just walked past the dogs and brought them to heel.



The feedback from the Kennel Club was how magnificent we were and that we did them proud!

The roars of appreciation from all the audiences, especially the Best in Show audience, were louder than ever. A very exciting experience.

At the end of the Sunday afternoon performance in the Main Arena we were asked to line up and the announcer told the audience that the Southern Golden Retriever Society had raised more than £50,000 over 8 years for Medical Detection Dogs. A great blast of appreciation filled the Arena. The Society can feel very proud of what they have done.

Thank you to all Team handlers and their wonderful dogs for their hard work learning our new routine which we performed at Crufts. Special thanks go to Team member, Louise Cooke, who is now helping me with the choreography and doing a terrific job, and to Linda and Maurice Sage for giving us the confidence and support to work off lead.

**Karen Menter Team Manager**



## **Thank you for the Music...**

Stewart Weller, The Display Teams' 'Director of Music' since the Team was formed back in 2000, retired from the post at Crufts 2020. In all those 20 years, at all locations and in all weathers, Stewart managed to get the Team moving to the music - sometimes having to use equipment which struggled with Stewart's more up to date technology! The Crufts Committee presented Stewart with an engraved vase and bottle of bubbly to mark the occasion.

**The SGRS, The Display Team Manager, Karen Menter, and all the members of The Display Team wish Stewart a happy retirement.**



## Win £100 for just £12

Too good to be true? No, it is possible if you join the SGRS 100 Club! For just £12 a year you stand a chance of winning £100 in any of the four draws made during any one year. And if you miss out on the top prize, you could still win any of the three other prizes of £50, £30 or £20. If you want to take one of the few 100 Club spaces available, please contact SGRS Treasurer, Valerie Hogg, for the paperwork. And here are the winners from the past three 2020 Draws

**Draw 1** made at Championship Show on 1<sup>st</sup> March: £100: Mr B & Mrs M Ewers, £50: Mr & Mrs V Jones, £30: Mr D Hutchison and £20: Mrs W Webster.

**Draw 2** made at end of May: £100: Mr D & Mrs J Jarrett, £50: Mr HE Robinson, £30: Mr P & Mrs B Mills and £20: Miss C Gould

**Draw 3** made at end of September: £100: Mr N & Mrs H Porter, £50: Mrs C Diomede £30: Mrs J Rush £20: Mr D & Mrs J Wilton.

The final draw for the year will be made at the end of November. Just in time to spend on Christmas!

## 2020 Championship Show



The Society's 41<sup>st</sup> Championship Show held on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2020 was the last event the Society was able to organise with Covid19 ruling out any further Society events for the rest of 2020.

Our Show Secretary, Jan Wilton, had to miss the event after having had operations on both eyes not long before the day. However, her husband, Derek, who had obviously been well briefed beforehand, and with help from Treasurer, Valerie Hogg, managed the day without any problems!

Our Judges, Mrs S. Loach (Putjade) saw 41 dogs, Mrs H. Male (Malenbrook) saw 57 bitches and Ms C. Morgan, who judged the Special Awards Classes, saw a total of 9 bitches and dogs. Best in Show (photo right) was Thornywait Mamma Mia owned by M. C. Loverock and M. Eddies from Wolverhampton.



## Presentation to MDD



At Crufts this year I had the pleasure of presenting Medical Detection Dogs charity CEO, Dr Claire Guest, with two cheques. One for £7,662, which represented the amount raised by the Society in 2019, and the second (shown above) a 'cheque' showing that since the Society began supporting MDD in 2012, you, the members, have helped raise a fantastic £50,000. Well done to everyone who has supported our fund raising events.

**David Wimsett**

## Pat Byrn reckons 'There's Nothing like a nice cuppa!'



I have been Cup Steward for the Southern Golden Retriever Society for almost three years now. In that time I have learnt that the chief qualities you need in the role are:-

- 1) Learn to love polishing and dusting! (It is truly amazing how quickly silver cups tarnish).
- 2) Know how to keep basic records, (no trophy is given out without signing in blood for it!) But most important of all.....
- 3) Have enough space in your garage/house to accommodate the over 80 cups and bronzes awarded at our Championship, Open and Obedience/Agility Shows. If you have these three qualities you too could be a Cup Steward.

Oh, I did forget to mention one more quality; you've got to be fit enough to move the boxes of trophies on the day of the shows! On a slightly less flippant note, it is always a joy to see the winners' faces and meet their beautiful dogs, who pose so professionally for our photographer David Wimsett as they are photographed with their well-earned trophies.

**Pat Byrn, Cup Steward**



## GRAND RAFFLE FOR SGR RESCUE AND MDD THE 12 GIFTS OF CHRISTMAS



### 1. Food/Prosecco Hamper.

Cafetiere, Bag of medium roast coffee, Bag of pasta, Jar of Lloyd Grossman tomato and basil sauce, Box of Jacob's biscuits for cheese, Large tub of Heroes, Box of shortbread, Christmas pudding, Pack of mini rum

truffle cakes, Box of Tetley tea bags, Box of four mini bottles of port and a Bottle of prosecco.

**2. Whisky Hamper.** Bottle of Glenrothes select reserve whisky, Boxed set of two Edinburgh crystal tumblers, Bag of salted peanuts, Bag of dry roasted peanuts, Bag of sea salt and black pepper cashews, Bag of Walkers roast chicken and thyme crisps, Tube of potato crisps.



**3. Spa Pamper Day Hamper.** Box of four Champneys body butters/souffles, Box of Christmas cinnamon and clove tea lights, Glass holly dish, 2 Mini bottles of prosecco, Lindt Linder chocolate Christmas cracker, Dog food bowl, Next teddy, Box of Pedigree mini markies.



### 4. Second Food/Prosecco Hamper.

Red and cream throw, Christmas apron, Box of six Christmas crackers, Box of Family Circle biscuits, Iced Christmas cake bar, Christmas pudding, Large tub of Quality Street, Bag of pasta, Jar of Lloyd Grossman tomato and basil sauce, Jar of piccalilli, Box of Twinings camomile tea, Box of Jacob's biscuits for cheese, Pack of mini rum truffle cakes, Cafetiere, Bag of medium roast coffee, Boxed set of mint chocolates and bottle of marsala, Bottle of prosecco.



### 5. Michael Palin Hamper.

The Michael Palin Collection of six books, Box of Yorkshire tea bags, Golden Retriever mug, Box of Choco Leibniz chocolate and orange biscuits, Pack of Jammie Dodgers.



### 6. Cosy Sofa Afternoon Hamper.

Two Christmas red throws with gold sparkle, Two Christmas reindeer cushions, Bottle of prosecco, Lindt Lindor Christmas chocolate cracker, Christmas candle.



### 7. Gardener's Hamper.

Heritage wooden planter, 2 bags of daffodil bulbs, 1 bag of hyacinth bulbs, Small garden trug, Secateurs and small turbo saw, 2 pairs of gardening gloves, Small plant pot, 2 tubes of hand cream, Tube of White Company body wash Tube of White Company body lotion, Small Wilkinson Sword trowel and fork.



### 8. Picnic Set Hamper.

Folding chair, Cotton Traders insulated picnic bag and bottle bag Thermos mug, Bottle of Sauvignon blanc, Pack of Cadbury's choc chip brunch bars, Pack of Cadbury's raisin brunch bars, Tube of potato crisps, Bag of salted peanuts, Portable dog's water bowl, Bag of Fish 4 Dogs sea jerky.

**9 Dog Hamper.** Slow feeder bowl, Stainless steel treat tin, Box of Pedigree gravy bones, Bag of misfits treats, Tin of AATU angus beef wet food Rosewood owl toy Squeaky cow toy, Bag of Barking Heads beefy bites treats, Small bottles of Scruffy Chops shampoo and conditioner, Small Christmas tuggy, Squeaky beef burger toy.



**10 Dog Hamper B.** Dog throw, Small Rogz dog bowl, Medium Halti Rope and squeak monkey toy, Tray of Forthglade grain free lamb, Portable dog's water bottle, Bag of Pedigree chicken tasty bites, Small tin of Fish 4 Dogs herring and potato, Bag of Fish 4 Dogs redfish and lavender crunchies, Small Christmas tuggy, Squeaky beef burger toy, Small bottles of Scruffy Chops shampoo and conditioner.

**11 Dog Hamper C.** Small Rogz dog bowl, Small bottles of Scruffy Chops shampoo and conditioner, Squeaky cockerel toy, Bag of Fish 4 Dogs salmon cookies, Tin of Chappie, Crinkle dumbbell toy Royal Canin drying cloth, Pack of Pedigree chewy cubes.



### 12 Chocolate Lovers Hamper.

Large tub of Cadbury Roses Christmas tin of cookies, bag of white chocolate coins, Bag of milk chocolate coins, Pack of 4 double decker bars, Pack of 4 flake bars, Pack of Fox's milk chocolate rounds biscuits.



Jenny Elsey has managed to create these twelve wonderful Hamper prizes for the Grand Christmas Raffle. The raffle, which really does deserve your support, is being held to raise funds for two charities - our own **Southern Golden Retriever Rescue** and **Medical Detection Dogs**. Details of how to contact Jenny Elsey, or me, David Wimsett, for tickets is shown on Page 1.

Winners, in the order drawn, will be asked to choose which of the Hampers they would like. First out of the hat gets the choice of one from all twelve. Twelfth out of the hat has no choice!!

Delivery of hampers may be tricky, but we will try to get them to you somehow! Good Luck.



## Kennel Club Good Citizen Award Training

All Kennel Club Bronze, Silver and Gold training lessons ceased at Wrotham in March when Covid-19 lockdown started. All members taking these classes were encouraged to continue training at home, which they did, but a good number of younger doggies missed out on getting the much needed 'social skills' with other dogs and humans. So it was with some relief that classes were restarted, not at our usual venue, Wrotham Village Hall, but in our Chairman's (Sue Ashley) orchard in Offham. Class sizes were carefully controlled and equipment used sanitised regularly. Using a sanitising spray on equipment became part of the lesson to get dogs used to a spray being used close to them!



And 'Social Distancing' was made easier by having handlers and their dogs in lines between the rows of pear trees! The trainers of the Silver and Gold classes were so impressed with the homework all their 'pupils' had done over the past few months that

real tests were set up for the KC Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards.

And when those tests were held, three achieved their Bronze Award (*photo top left*), nine achieved their Silver Award (*photos bottom left, left centre and top centre*), and six achieved their Gold Award, (*photos above and top right*). Sadly, with winter approaching and the use of Wrotham Village Hall still a problem, training outside will come to a halt at the end of October – and then it's back to 'homework' and looking forward to starting training again in the spring.



## Southern Golden Retriever Rescue in lockdown

May I firstly say that despite these difficult times we have received some thoughtful donations and acts of generosity from individual members and we are very grateful. Thank you.

In early March we reduced our rehoming activities to safeguard the volunteers and Trustees and agreed a new set of Working Practices compliant with HM Government guidelines.

Our co-ordinators waited to see if there was to be a surge of families with serious illness seeking help with the temporary care of their Golden Retrievers but thankfully this did not arise.

We have managed to help 10 dogs during the summer and those circumstances are not related to the pandemic

Wearing a face mask and protective gloves and keeping a social distance from an owner when assessing their dog is not easy.

Handing a dog over safely to a new home, again all done in the open air and at a social distance, has its challenges.

Having no use of toilet facilities when out all day transferring a dog takes some planning!

**The buying and selling of dogs as goods and chattels is shocking and upsetting.** There are mixed views about the likely consequences of the extraordinary demand and subsequent acquisition of dogs this year. Will this result in a flood of dogs to be rehomed? Not immediately. I also sense that those who do need to rehome will look to recover their considerable costs by re-selling the dog using the many internet sites available and will not seek the help of a rehoming service such as SGRR.

It may be that the buyers of those dogs, having gained little understanding of the new dog's behaviour and medical history, will turn to us. They may discover that there is a bit of a handful on the settee and 2021 could be a busy time.

I tried to help a gentleman in Stratford, E15 who found that his fourth floor flat was not the right environment for a puppy and he did not want to drive back to the Midlands. We do not buy dogs and he went on to sell the pup for £1800. But he put me in touch with his buyer. They too were not at all prepared for a puppy and the charming chocolate box pup was plunged into another unsatisfactory home. What a great shame.

**Ongoing support.** Many of our owners benefit from veterinary support for their adopted dog funded using our Medical Support Fund and we have seen significant increases in drug costs, seemingly unavoidable due to Covid pressures, on business and supply chains.

I know I speak for the co-ordinators and the Trustees that having the time, the resources and the experience to be able to help people and their Golden Retrievers in times of real need is a special opportunity to do good.

I hope the Society can be proud of our Charity.

**Rachel Clark Trustee and Administrator**



## Update on our MDD dog Francis.

Francis (or as I call him 'Fran') has the biggest character of any dog I know. Like many of us, Fran has both a work and home personality - when he is 'at work' he is alert and professional. However, even though Fran is now four and a half years old, once that jacket comes off and he's back home, you would be met with a giant puppy!

As a trainee counsellor, I have been with distressed/tearful clients. Fran is very perceptive to the mood in the room and will almost always go to that person and lay his head on their lap and look up to them. Although not an emotional support animal, Fran's presence in the therapeutic relationship has been nothing but helpful to clients.

Fran's 'day job' however is to alert me to POTS episodes (Postural tachycardia syndrome). He does this by licking the backs of my hands, forearms, jumping or a bark. Since having Fran, I have been able to live and work from home without supervision, start my Masters Degree and have a baby (now 18 months). I'm not sure any of this would have been feasible before Fran bounded into my life.

It's not all work and no play, however. Fran has been with me to France, Belgium, Germany, Sweden, Norway, and the Netherlands. I'm not sure he saw these trips as holiday. Perhaps more like 'business trips' as he still had to work looking after me!

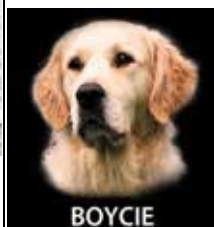
Lastly I would like to give a big thank you to the SGRS for your sponsorship and support of Fran. As you can see, he has made such a difference to my life.

**Best wishes from Michelle and Fran XX**



## Trigger Happy Chairman

At Easter, just at the start of lockdown, I agreed to foster a 6 month old puppy that was proving a bit of a handful for his owners. Within a week, Ray and I decided he should permanently join our pack and be renamed Trigger. Training Trigger has been both great fun and extremely rewarding. On his 1st birthday he attained his KC Silver Award and is nearly ready to commence his gundog work.



BOYCIE

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of May this year I lost my best buddy Boycie, a dog in a million. Together we performed in the SGRS Display Team for 8 years as well as enjoying Gundog, Obedience and Agility.

He gave so many people and dogs support with his steady friendly personality.

After nearly fifty years in the breed I have learned to take the ups and downs of a large Golden family but I do like to believe what one of our members said to me recently –

'Boycie arranged for Trigger before he left you' I think they may be right!



*Trigger in full flight*

**Sue Ashley, GRS Chairman**

## Field Trial Secretary Report.

This is my first year as field trial secretary and not the start I had hoped for! We decided not to hold a trial this year for obvious safety reasons, despite the fact that we had the ground, judges and helpers all arranged. I hope we'll be able to hold events safely in the near future and that members will still be keen to enter next year's trial and continue to enjoy training their dogs in readiness.

We were invited by the hosting Northern Golden Retriever Association to enter a team in the Golden Retriever breed interclub tests but no sooner had we selected a team than it was cancelled. Similarly, the Southern Interclub tests. Well done to those that qualified, thanks for those that tried out for the team and a special thank you to the helpers on the selection day. Next year's GR Interclub is due to be organised by the South Western GRC.



As I said earlier, training can continue within the government guidelines quite easily so, with this in mind, I've asked the team what they've been doing to keep their dogs in top form. Sue Jordan has been having fun breeding a lovely litter of 3 girls and 6 boys out of Inca. Tricia Adams with Archie had a most enjoyable day water training at the beautiful Deerbridge Estate and looks forward to picking up this season.

I've been training Boo once a week in Ashdown Forest with my training buddy Charlotte and her boy Billy, (photo left). We've enjoyed this wide open space right on our doorstep.

I'm intending to continue picking up at my regular shoots in Sussex and Kent as well as taking my dogs on muddy wildfowling trips to Essex.

Whatever you choose to do, enjoy yourselves and please keep safe and we all hope for a better 2021.

**Jon Debmam**

Photographs have been provided by David Wimsett, Rob Menter or by those who have contributed to, or written, articles.

The full 2020 Championship Show results can be found on the Society's Web page – [southerngoldenretriever.com](http://southerngoldenretriever.com)

Watch out for regular E-bulletins, and follow us on our Southern Golden Retriever Society and Southern Golden Retriever Display Team Facebook pages.