

**SOUTHERN GOLDEN RETRIEVER SOCIETY**

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**SGRS DRAFT MINUTES - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 20th March 2024**

The Southern Golden Retriever Society held its Annual General Meeting on 20th March 2024

EAST MALLING VILLAGE HALL, 14 New Rd, East Malling, Kent,ME19 6DD

The President, Mrs Pounds-Longhurst. welcomed members to the AGM and thanked everyone for attending.

# “Good Evening, Ladies and Gentlemen, Your attendance is much appreciated.

# Firstly, I need to begin on a sad note. As you will be aware from the Newsletter, since our last AGM we have lost our Vice President and Honorary Life Member Barbara Mills, Honorary Life and Founder Members Jennifer Johnson and Gillian Robinson, Ian Ferris another Founder Member and Pat Smith a former Secretary. Would you be upstanding briefly in their memory. Thank you.

# Our Chairman Sue, will no doubt be reporting on the past year of successful events but none more than the Inter Club Working Test. Having been involved when the Society last hosted this event for all 13 UK Golden Retriever Clubs in 2008, I know first-hand just how much planning and work goes into such an occasion. I would therefore like to record my gratitude to Jon Debnam our Field Trial Secretary, our Chairman Sue and the whole team they led that made it such a fabulous success, enjoyed by so many. The Society is also indebted to ground donors for all of its working events.

# I’m sure you would like to join me by showing your appreciation to all the Officers, Committee and helpers here tonight for all their work over the last 12 months and to the Display Team who continue to wow crowds at Crufts and around the country. Thank you again”.

The following Members attended the meeting.

**1]**

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| Mrs S Apps  Sue Ashley  Mr S Bancroft  Mr & Mrs R Battell  Irene Bird  Steve Brace  Jon Debnam  Jenny Elsey  Mr & Mrs D Farnham | Mr & Mrs R Fowler  Mr & Mrs A Hale  Mr & Mrs Harris  Claire Hill  Mollie Hills  Mrs J Hoad  Valerie Hogg  Mr & Mrs D Jarrett  Mrs C Jenner | Martin Leach  William Newman  Mrs W Penfold  N Porter  Sue Pounds-Longhurst  Mr & Mrs M Sage  Stuart Sear  Ros Smith  Mrs A Stallard | David Wimsett  Mr & Mrs Menter  Mr & Mrs Pett  N Webb  Mrs S Wilson  Mr D Wilmshurst  Mr & Mrs Wilton  Ms V Woronecki |

The following Members gave apologies.

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| Eillen Allan-Rossiter  Ray Ashley  Mrs A Benefield  Pat Byrn  Mrs C Carter  Gill Clark  Mrs L Cooke  Mrs C French | Mr & Mrs R Gait  Mrs A Henderson  Miss L Henderson  Mrs S Hunsden  Mrs S Jordan  Mrs S Leach  Alison Libby | Magaret McGookin  Hazel Porter  Mr M Pounds-Longhurst  Tina Pratt  Mrs J Sheppard  Mr&Mrs Richardson  Mrs A Stephenson |

**2] Approval of the 2023 AGM Minutes**

There were no amendments raised and approval of the minutes from the March 2023 AGM were proposed by

Mr J Debnam, seconded by Mr S Brace and unanimously approved.

**3] Matters Arising from the 2023 AGM Minutes** There were no matters arising.

**4] Chairman’s Report from Mrs Ashley**

# “Ladies and Gentlemen, I am pleased to present my Annual Report and review of 2023 with some information relating to 2024. Once again, we used the Doberman Club Showground in Hertfordshire for our 2023 Championship show in May, with Jean Taylor (Olyjen) Judging Bitches and John Taylor (Tannadice) Judging Dogs. The Referee was Sue Hush (Benrowan) whose decision was required on Best in Show.

# Special Awards Classes were judged by Ray McDonald (Roanjora). It was the coldest Mid-May day I can ever remember, thank all that attended to Judge, exhibit, or help for staying so cheerful, we certainly got through quite a lot of soup! We look forward to greeting many of you at the 2024 Championship show which will be held at the same venue on Saturday 4th May.

# Our Open Show, in September, which was judged by **Jenny Clarke (Sunnyoak)**, was held in conjunction with the Richmond Championship Show. Your Committee have decided on a stand-alone Open Show for 2024 which will be held at the Mychett Community Centre in Camberley on Saturday 28th September and our Judge is. Christine Schofield

# After a great deal of turmoil with weather and saturated ground and having to abandon 2 venues we managed to put on a training day in my orchard in April for those that wished to take part. Unfortunately, because of the limited space available, we were not able to have the same type of day that we usually have i.e. training in the morning and a small test in the afternoon. Instead, we had to split the group into real beginners for a morning training session and the more experienced group in the afternoon for their training session.

# I must thank our stalwart trainer James Reavil, who did a magnificent job with his very gifted way of teaching. He even managed to get some sponsorship from Sporting Saint gundog training equipment, who donated a small bag of goodies to all our participants. James Reavil assisted by Ann Gladwin will once again be Trainers/Judges at our Training Day at Yotes Farm, West Peckham in April.

# This year the Southern Area of the FCRS were hosting the joint working test with goldens and Flatcoats, and classes were run for ND/NH, Novice, and Open dogs. judges were Graham Stanley, Kim Jinks and Andy Snow. The tests had been set with the weather in mind and made full use of the shade available. Despite the heat the competitors were blessed with a cooling breeze from across the Medway and plenty of shade. It is our turn to host the June 2nd event this year and we will be offering, Novice Dog Novice Handler and Novice tests. The venue is Parklands at Ewshot in Surrey our thanks, in advance, go to Landowner Suzette Watts

# The third working day is 11th August at Chartwell, for Goldens only, a big thank you to Mrs. Ann Cairnes, our Landowner to allow us to schedule Open, Veteran, Novice, and Special Puppy Tests.

# As our President Sue Pounds-Longhurst has already said we were proud to host the Prestigious Golden Retriever Interclub working test 2023. With teams of 2 Open and 2 Novice working gundogs competing from all 13 of the Golden Retriever clubs in Great Britain. At Randolphs Farm, Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex the Judges were Di Stevens, Robert Worrall, Kim Jinks, James Bailey, Chris Marshall and David Breach. Thanks must go to our generous sponsors Skinners, Acme Whistles, Gamekeeper Goods, JTAC K9, the caterer for the event was “The Paella Pan” who made a couple of delicious big pan traditional Paella, everyone was also treated to Strawberries and Cream.

# A big, big thank you to all the wonderful people who turnout to help with setting up, stewarding, dummy throwing, shooting pistols, catering and the many other jobs that go along with events like these. **Without that help the events would not be able to go ahead.** If anyone would like to contribute by helping at any of the Societies events please speak to the event organiser, or any committee member.

# We held our A.V Retriever Novice Field Trial at Hawstead Farm, Hursley, Winchester with kind permission of Dan Gradidge. Judges were Robert Worrall, Matt Gould, Martin Bagg and Sue Jordan. Mary Hogg was dog steward. The competitors were made up of 10 Labs and 6 Goldens. So good to see an increased entry of Goldens.

# In the same way as the Interclub, many of the helpers are from other Clubs. Many, many thanks.

# All the results for show and working events are on the Society Website.

# The Funday was held at the end of May at Larkfield Village Hall, the surplus will be split between SGR Rescue, The Cinnamon Trust, Hounds for Heroes and Medical Detection Dogs, . Pat Byrn took on the task of Fun Day Manager for May 2023 and did a sterling job with her band of helpers. Unfortunately, we are unable to organize a Funday in 2024.

# Hard work from the Display Team and especially Karen Menter meant that the Team put on fabulous displays at a few events in 2023 and they commenced 2024 with 6 displays at Crufts, Ian Richardson’s Jonty was the star of the Arena, a photographers’ dream, doing Roly Polys and making the audience roar with laughter, what’s more we had our backs to the dogs when it started!!!! That moment of dread!!!

# Once again eye testing sessions with Mr. Mason were held in Sussex and Surrey, which are always sold out as soon as they become available. Thanks to both Hilary Male and Ann Stephenson for the huge admin task this involves. If you want to take advantage of these annual sessions, please contact Hilary or Ann direct.

# During the 2022 the Judges Sub-Committee and especially Hilary Male remained very proactive in encouraging and supporting the judges education process by constantly reviewing and upgrading judges lists and criteria to comply with KC requirements.  A Breed Appreciation Day event was held in the later part of 2023.

# We have continued to nominate judges on our lists, for appointments at our Supported Entry partnership open shows and at other general open shows around the country, so that judges can gain the experience required to progress.

# During 2023 your Committee continued to try and keep Society costs down despite the financial pressures all of us face in our daily lives. It becomes increasingly difficult every year to keep subscription rates unchanged.

# East Malling Village Hall has proved an excellent venue for the Good Citizens and Senior training classes run on behalf of the SGRS. Most Wednesdays we run a KC Puppy Foundation, Bronze, Silver and Gold Class as well as a senior ‘Platinum’ or obedience class for both our new and longer standing members. As 11 dogs achieved their Platinum award at the end of last summer, we will be starting a fortnightly “Palladium” from Wednesday 3rd April to replace the obedience – palladium is one of the few metals more valuable than platinum! Maurice Sage, who we thank for many years obedience training and support, will not be retiring but is going to head the new class with my assistance. Thank you to all the Management Team that make East Malling Training possible. We have the pleasant task of handing out some special Annual Trophies presented to us in memory of Barbara Taber: Brian Harris for perseverance with training Jake to achieve his Platinum award. Julie Hoad for incredible patience with Ralph, through to Gold. Mark Hiseman with Stanley as our most improved new member with a puppy to achieve Bronze

# We need more Members to come onto specific activity sub committees. Your Society normally runs too many events for the Executive Committee members to be able to attend every event. Thank you to all the members of The SGRS Committee for their hard work in the past year.

# Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you and other members for your support and submit my annual report for your acceptance.”

**5] Treasurer’s Report by Ms Hogg**

**Annual Accounts**

# “Good evening everyone

# I am pleased to present to you the Society’s accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023. Firstly, the independent accountant has completed his review of the accounts and there are no changes to make, so the draft version is unchanged.

# I’ll start with the Statement of Financial Activities which shows the overall income and expenditure for 2023 and a surplus for the year of £1,454. This compares with a surplus in 2022 of £7,545 although it should be noted that the 2023 position includes the net cost of the Inter-Club Working Test. The outcome of the Inter-Club Working Test is shown in the penultimate column on the Statement of Financial Activities. As we were expecting a large expense of hosting this event, we set aside £4,000 over the previous two years including a legacy bequest of £2,000. A raffle held at the event raised £400 and this helped reduce the net cost to £2,957 and therefore a balance of £1,043 to return to the General Fund.

# Looking at the other elements of the overall surplus, the position on our General Fund activities in the second column is a surplus of £2,184 which compares with a surplus of £3,060 in 2022. Members’ subscriptions are down just £28 on 2022 and reflect 734 members in 2023. Events and activities (broken down further on the separate schedule headed Analysis of Income & Expenditure by Event) contributed a net surplus of £4,620 towards the General Fund compared with £5,366 in 2022 although the range of events held varied between the two years.

# Management and Administration expenses charged to the General Fund totalled £8,018 and are are up £1,335 on 2022. Meeting costs were previously shown separately but have now been subsumed within Administrative Expenses which also includes the cost of our Zoom Licence, the cost of rosettes awarded to members in place of trophies and new Fuel Allowances introduced in September for Committee Members and others helping at events. Retirement and Other Gifts includes three payments which are made biennially and a one-off contribution to the cost of a skip following the movement of equipment to the new storage shed. The Other Miscellaneous heading includes the purchase of small items of equipment and the write off of various catering supplies used at the different events but not specifically accounted for, together with the vehicle recovery charge for the incident at the Championship Show.

# So overall, as mentioned earlier, we ended the year with a surplus of £2,184 on the General Fund, and after write back of the £1,043 balance from the Inter Club Working Test, there remains a very healthy balance carried forward on the General Fund of £39,460.

# The next column shows the amount raised for our Charity Fund of £859, compared to £3,208 in 2022, of which £274 has been donated to MDD and £195 to each of the other three charities selected at last year’s AGM: Hounds for Heroes, Dogs for Autism and The Cinnamon Trust. All amounts have been paid over to the respective Charities and so the balance carried forward on the Charity Fund is zero. The only other amount handed over to charity during the year was the 50% of the Fun Day proceeds to Rescue which amounted to £780.

# In the next column, the position on the Health Fund reflects the contribution from the 100 Club, which has reduced from £232 in 2022 to £208 due to fewer participants in the 100 Club. We currently have a number of vacancies so if anyone is interested in the chance of winning one of four prizes up to £100 in the four draws that take place each year, for the cost of £12 per year and help raise funds for the Society’s Health Fund then please ask me for details. Including a £5 donation the £213 raised this year, when added to the balance brought forward, gives a total of £11,862 available on the Health Fund.

# The Education Fund received donations of £551 from Eye Testing Sessions and a further £894 from a Breed Appreciation Day held in November. The Education Fund was used to fund seven payments to Supported Entry partners totalling £200 and £90 prize money for the Special Award classes at the Championship Show. The balance carried forward on the Education Fund is £1,913.

# Total funds carried forward on the General, Health and Education Funds total £53,235 and the second statement headed Balance Sheet shows how this total is made up by the Society’s assets and liabilities as at 31 December 2023. There were three additions to Fixed Assets at a cost of £1,213, a storage shed for the Society’s equipment, a roller banner and a new printer for the Show Secretary, all being charged through depreciation over three years commencing in 2023. Items held as stock amount to £2,064 and we have a total of £50,261 in bank and cash balances. Debtors and Prepayments amount to £1,480 and is made up of Training cash held at year end plus amounts paid in advance for Kennel Club event licences, first aid courses, website domain fees, and event venue deposits for future years. Sundry Creditors includes £40 for membership subscriptions received after 1 October and carried forward to 2024, Training fees of £112 also relating to 2024, together with the accrual of £156 for December’s Training Hall hire and £586 in refunds to third parties, all of which have been paid in 2024.

# This completes my report on the Society’s accounts for the year ended 31st December 2023 and I would be more than happy to answer any questions. If there are no questions, I should like to ask for your approval of the Annual Accounts for 2023.

Proposed Mrs R Smith, seconded Mrs M Pett, unanimous.

# Approval of Auditor

# The Society’s regulations require its annual accounts to be subject to an independent examination by a qualified accountant. We made a considerable saving in switching from the firm of accountants used up until 2020 so I would therefore like to again propose using Mr Jack Foster FCA of Chessington, Surrey for the independent examination of the Society’s 2024 accounts.

Proposed Mrs C Hill, seconded Mrs A Stallard, unanimous.

# Annual Review of Subscriptions

# With respect to the annual subscription rates, there is no doubt that things are getting tighter but we believe that with continued careful control of expenditure we can manage without raising subscription rates for 2025. I am therefore proposing no change to the current rates (last increased at the 2009 AGM) of £8 for a single membership and £12 for joint membership.

**6] SOUTHERN GOLDEN RETRIEVER RESCUE (**Registered Charity No. 1098769)

**CHAIRMAN’S ADDRESS FOR 2023 delivered by Mr N Porter**

# The sad passing of Gillian Robinson in August marked the closure of a significant chapter in the history of Southern

# Golden Retriever Rescue. She and her husband Robbie were founder members of the Trust. The current team made

# a promise to Gillian to continue to help the breed she loved so much.

# We took 40 dogs into our care in 2023, (39 in 2022), 26 Males and 14 Females.

# We currently have 270 dogs still active from all our previous rehoming activities and who we keep in touch with.

# There have been many owners who have asked us to rehome their dog but due to the acquired unacceptable behaviour of each dog we decided it was an unreasonable risk for us to rehome. There were several owners’ whose distant location, Scotland to Cornwall also precluded them from any practical assistance, but each were referred to their nearest Golden Retriever Club for support.

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# The areas surrounding London are not supported by a Golden Retriever Club and we are seeing a significant rise in calls from those areas each year. The general increase in dog ownership and Battersea Dog & Cats Home referring more people direct to us are two of the reasons. Our neighbouring Golden Retriever Clubs have needed practical support with rehoming for most of 2023 and we shall continue to respond where possible.

# We have managed to recruit and train three more Co-ordinators and a new Trustee all of whom are quickly providing great help, energy and new ideas of working. We would still benefit from a Co-ordinator located in the Surrey/Sussex area.

# Brian Tinham a new Trustee, has shared his previous Trustee knowledge and provided us with a Safeguarding Policy. None of our volunteers now attend any circumstance alone.

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# Brian Herring keeps watch on our busy Facebook pages and the website. Lynn Ferguson produced a final Newsletter capturing clips from many of the stories from previous years. We have moved into total online updates.

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# The Fun Day, courtesy of Southern Golden Retriever Society, was a great success but tinged with sadness now knowing Gillian was so poorly. The Trustees have some ideas for a smaller get together in the summer solely for our rehomed dogs.

# On the Financial side, the two dogs taken on in December 2023, known as the “Lullingstone strays” have now gone to their forever homes. A fundraiser was started to help with their care and the care of all our other dogs and this raised a significant contribution to our funds. We received substantial donations from both the Northumbria Golden Retriever Club and the Scotland Welfare and Rescue Trust. Most of this income was received after the year end and is therefore not reflected in the 2023 figures.

# The 2023 figures (unaudited) are: -

# Total income: £32,261 (£35,138 in 2022)

# Total expenditure: £42,812 (£45,458 in 2022)

# Excess of expenditure over income £10,551 (£10,320 in 2022)

# Medical Support Fund (“the MSF”) stands at £150,557 (£108,155 in 2022)

# The Medical Support Fund is a provision for future expenditure based on the medical needs of dogs taken into our care with pre-existing medical conditions, costed over the expected life of each dog.

# Funds held with Banks totalled £239,420 (£249,972 in 2022)

# Unrestricted Reserves £88,863 (£141,817 in 2022)

# This is basically the difference between total Funds held with Banks less the MSF.

# The need to raise more funds is now very evident.

# 2023 was certainly a busy year with new people and additional procedures settling into our small charity. Each dog we help has its own special circumstances and requires a carefully thought-out individual plan. The Trustees think we can all be proud that together we helped many families and their dogs through some sad circumstances and on to happier times and we wish to thank all our very hard-working volunteers.

# Help is required in the following areas: -

# Coordinator – Surrey/Sussex area

# Trustee – Secretarial role and Marketing role

# Volunteers – Home checkers/2nd person (safeguarding policy)

# 7] Election of Officers and Committee:

The Chairman, Mrs Ashley reported the outcome.

# All the Committee Officers standing for re-election are returned unopposed. Mrs. Sue Pounds-Longhurst,  Mrs. Carole Carter, Mrs. Ann Stephenson, Ms Valerie Hogg and Mrs. Jan Wilton.

# The nomination for the committee vacancy has been elected,  Mrs Claire Hill was co-opted in 2023 and has been working with the Committee for a few months.

# Sadley standing down, due to family commitments are Mrs Charlotte Love and Mrs Tracey Purvis.

**8] Any Other Business.**

None was raised.

The Chairman thanked members for attending the AGM which closed at 8.38pm.