

# ***WAGGING TAILS***

Issue 4

Spring 1997

## **NORTHERN ENGLAND FLATCOATED RETRIEVER ASSOCIATION**

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## Crufts 1997

Although one might say from a judging point of view it is just another Championship Show, the very honour of judging at Crufts gave me additional butterflies as the great day approached. Judging started at 9.00am so to avoid the morning traffic we left our overnight stop early and were soon looking for the Judges and Officials car park. Following a few directions from a very efficient traffic controller, the car park, which was conveniently located near the entrance to the venue, was found quite easily and we walked in past a row of eager spectators waiting to be admitted. Having picked up the judging book, a smart badge and button hole, we were then able to relax with a very acceptable cup of coffee.

The ring proved to be very suitable. It was covered in a smart green carpet and was of an appropriate size with plenty of room for the dogs to move.

I had a very good entry of dogs from which my C.C. winner was Mr. & Mrs. R D Orme's SH. CH. ELMSTOCK WILDTHYME, Res. C.C. was Mrs. B Phillip's CH. EXCLYST WATCHMAN and my best dog puppy was Mrs. E C Geoghegan's HIGHTOWN RAMBLER. Later, in conjunction with Denise Jury, our best of breed was the dog as was the best puppy in breed.

The evening found us sitting watching a display of Gundog work, heeling to music and a police dog display in the main ring. The group judging followed and I was delighted that the Flatcoat was in the last eight.

So concluded a very enjoyable day.

**Mr. P E Forster**

What a lovely group of people have Flatcoats. The dogs are easy to judge (physically) and the owners are so friendly. Every person who stewards for them says how helpful everyone is and I want to thank everyone for their concern about my feet and shoes. I do assure you, I wouldn't have chosen such shoes if they hadn't been comfortable. It is said at home that if I can't do it in high heels, I don't do it.

Now onto more important things, the dogs. During the lunch break, my steward asked about the major faults in Flatcoats. After reflecting, no bad mouths, few high tails, not many showing too much lumber or too much weediness, all in all a fair bunch of dogs to look at standing, but what about movement? In general it was not good, especially in the younger classes - perhaps it gets better with age? No! Because my placed dogs in all classes had fair to good movement and in some cases superb movement. So what is bad movement, loose shoulders, pinning so badly that the front feet cross, cow hocks, crabbing, etc., or is it the inability to move in a set straight line. Is this "fault" lack of practice on the handler's part or lack of "oneness" with the dog. Do the handlers not understand that in "to the corner and back" the back means to me, back to me not to a point 4 yards either side of me. I therefore spent a lot of time - in my high heels - moving sideways in an effort to line up with the dogs.

In the end, I loved judging the bitches and hope I gave everyone enough time to do their bitch justice. Some of the older classes were so full of quality animals that it was very sobering to have to actually place them in order. It's at times like this that the Continental system comes into its own with written comments on all dogs and all dogs given a quality grading. The 1<sup>st</sup> quality comes back into the ring for placing, whereas with us, after 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, everyone is much the same and forgotten.

**Mrs. D Jury**



### How We Got Into Flatcoats - David and Debbie White

As a fitting tribute to my first flatcoat - Abbey - who is now nearly 9 years old, I wanted my affix to include her name, hence "WHITEABBEY", our surname and her.

Abbey has taught me so much - I've learned to show a little with her, she's had a first at Crufts under our very own president Mr. George Lancaster, she has a Reserve C.C., winner of the Drum Goblet in 1990 and numerous other show wins. As our gundog trainer told me - she was bred to work in the field (I wasn't) - but I've learnt a lot with her help and continue to work my other flatcoats.

Abbey had only one litter (she didn't like it) - a litter of 12! - from which I couldn't part with 3!! Dale (he's my other chap), Rosie (mother of my little Ellie-puppy) and Kelly, Rosie was 'chosen' to be the mother of our second litter from which there were 7 puppies and I kept Ellie-puppy who is now 19 months old and doing so well, following in her grandsires pawsteps - she has achieved her Junior Warrant and has won this year's Drum Goblet and also has numerous other show wins. She now is excited about learning to work in the field.

Our other flatcoat 'Tam' was bought in 1990 and is now nearly 7. What can I say about her. She's had her turn at Crufts but "loves" to work. She idolizes Dave and is like his shadow - she is a lovely person.

I have only had two litters but hope to breed from Ellie when she is about 3 and of course that will be with the intention of adding a new baby to our family.

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### **PRESIDENT'S CUP**

The Association will be awarding an annual Trophy based on points gained at Championship Shows. The trophy, to be called the "President's Cup", will be presented at the AGM and awarded to the member whose dog or bitch has gained the most points over the previous year.

It is proposed to award points on the following basis:

1 <sup>st</sup> place in a Class	- 3 points	2 <sup>nd</sup> place in a class	- 2 points
C.C. winner	- 2 points	Reserve C.C. winner	- 1 point
Best of Breed	- 3 points	Best Puppy in Breed	- 1 point

To qualify for the award, a member must be fully paid by 30<sup>th</sup> April.



Mr. George Lancaster, the President of our Association, has owned, worked, shown and judged Flatcoats for many years. He has a wealth of knowledge and many tales to tell. He was asked to write an article for Wagging Tails about three Flatcoats that he has owned and loved.

### Flatcoats I have Owned

Mr. George Lancaster

We have a con artist in our newsletter editor in that she waited until I had had a very enjoyable day at the Association's 1<sup>st</sup> show, been presented with an engraved goblet, which I will treasure as long as I live, and just enjoyed a very good evening meal, feeling in a nice relaxed mood when Kath approached me asking would I please do an article for the newsletter about my favourite Flatcoats. How could I say no, so here it is.

One was Halstock Juliette, that was a long time ago, but she was really something special. She won very well for me at shows, winning one C.C. and about 12 reserve C.C.s, she was always the bridesmaid, never the bride, but she had that special something that you cannot describe. She was also a wonderful working dog and even won a 2<sup>nd</sup> in a novice Field Trial. But her life was as a shooting dog, she did retrieve that live in my memory and always will. In her first litter she produced Sh. Ch. Oakmoss Ambassador who, like his mum, was a superb show dog, who wouldn't show for me but for Mavis he gave his all, he was outstanding and did a lot of winning. Unfortunately, he was gun shy so we couldn't use him for work. This was a dog we couldn't sell, he was still with us at seven months old (total panic today if puppies are not sold at sixteen weeks). We found him a home but we had him back as the person who had him was going to have him castrated, and he was, by this time, beginning to look something like and it would have been a shame if she had gone ahead. We let her have a bitch who would fit into her lifestyle better and so he came "home". He lived with us until he was 16 and was so kind to puppies, they cuddled up to him when he was asleep under the sideboard, he never grumbled or grouched. He was supposed to have thrown hip displastic puppies according to someone who had one of his offspring (we were not the breeders) but this was his only litter and his grandson was Ch. Phineas Fynn. I leave you to draw your own conclusions. The third is a very difficult choice between Yonday Wagtail and her daughter Oakmoss Sea Pigeon. Both won reserve C.C.s at shows but all they lived for was a day's work in the field, either beating or picking up. I will always remember when I was keepering, going on another shoot for a day's shooting, walking across a field with these two, one on each side, my gun under my arm and the keeper of that shoot saying he wished he had had his camera, it looked just how a keeper's dogs should be.

No matter what you write about your favourite dogs, everyone you own, or should I say who owns you, have a special place in your heart, and one thing I must say, what would life have been without them?, and through them all the good friends we have made. Thank you all, dogs and people, for the pleasure you have given me over the years and may your own dogs give you as much pleasure.



## **CANINE HYDROTHERAPY (or how to swim your Flat coated Retriever)**

Swimming for dogs in a controlled environment has many benefits. The advantage of using hydrotherapy pools is that the environment is controlled and clean. There is no risk of polluted water or the common summer problem of poisonous blue-green algae that many areas of water suffer from. The pool that we use is designed for use by horses and therefore has to be approved by The Jockey Club. There are no dangerous currents to risk dogs that are not strong swimmers. The pool has a gradual slope for entry into the water and is circular in shape with a central island. Some pools do not have a slope therefore the dogs have to be lowered over the side into the water which would be almost impossible with an adult male Flatcoated Retriever who is excited at the prospect of swimming.

The pool owner we visit is very experienced at swimming dogs and likes them to be swum on a snug fitting fixed collar with a long line attached. This is so that if the dog panics and stops swimming, they can be retrieved from the water. The handler therefore walks the dog round the pool. Initial swims usually need two handlers. The number of circuits a dog swims is gradually increased over many visits depending on the dog's fitness and physical ability. Circuits are swum both clockwise and anti-clockwise so that muscles on both sides of the dog are worked equally.

Physical benefits can result from regular swimming. Exercise without applying pressure to the joints allows muscle tone to improve with reduced stress. Many dogs with joint problems and arthritis get relief from pain with regular swimming sessions. by reducing pain quality of life greatly improves. The pool where our dogs swim has many dogs with hip dysplasia as clients. By maintaining good muscle tone through swimming lameness often reduces and, along with that, the dogs lead happier longer lives. Any dog with a physical problem should only commence hydrotherapy following veterinary advice.

Many show dogs are being swum that have no physical problems. Some owners claim that swimming helps correct movement and keeps feet tight. Swimming also helps maintain the dog in hard condition. One particular Labrador uses swimming as part of "a calorie controlled diet". Racing greyhounds are frequently swum as part of their fitness programmes.

Flatcoated Retrievers, as we all know, love the water and are natural swimmers. sometimes in water we do not want them to go in. All those that go to the pool that we know become very excited at the beginning of each session. Even dogs that start this type of swimming later in life take to it like the proverbial "ducks to water". Of course, this type of swimming can also help with doing a retrieve from the water although there are not many ducks swimming in the pool so perhaps a dummy may be beneficial!

To find your nearest pool, we suggest that you ask your veterinary surgeon or, if they do not know of one, it may be worth contacting The Jockey Club for a list of approved pools.

**By Kath Trevor, Jane Hedges & with the help of 2 loving Flatcoated Retrievers.**



### Photographic Competition and Fun Day

This year's Photographic Competition will be held in conjunction with one of our Fun Days. The Competition will be judged on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> July at the Fun Day to be held that day at Sandhills Farm, Crathorne, Yarm. Rosettes will be awarded for 1<sup>st</sup> place in each class. Two overall winners will be chosen to be used on this year's Christmas/greeting cards.

Can the Eskmill dogs do it again and make it three years in succession on the Christmas Card, or will they be "pipped at the post"?

Please write your name, address and class number to be entered lightly on the back of your photograph (a sticking label can be used to prevent marking the front) and enclose a stamped address envelope if you require them returned by post.

The classes are:

**Class 1** Puppy (under 12 months)

**Class 3** Head Study

**Class 5** Active (Dog on the move)

**Class 7** Most Appealing

**Class 2** Adult

**Class 4** Brace or Group

**Class 6** Take a Break (Dog at rest)

**Class 8** Most Amusing

Why not enter the Photographic Competition and come to the Fun Day as well.

The Fun Day will be run on our tried and tested basis, with events for everyone to participate in. As always the theme for the day will be Have A Go And Enjoy Yourself. Costs will be £3.00 per person (including lunch), £1.50 for children under 12 and £1.00 per dog (all events included). Any donations of Raffle or Tombola prizes would be greatly appreciated. Application form for Fund Day is opposite.

**CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRIES FOR THE ABOVE IS 1<sup>st</sup> July 1997**

### 100/200 CLUB

It has been suggested by your Committee that we start a 100/200 Club during 1997. To make this a viable proposition we would need certain minimum interest.

It is suggested that draws be made monthly, annually for non winners during the year plus an annual "bumper" draw with a top prize of £100/£200 (as well as smaller prizes).

The yearly subscription would be £12 payable in advance. Before launching this new project, your Committee would appreciate some idea of how many members might be interested. If you are interested, please complete the slip opposite and return it to me as soon as possible. Thank you.

**Audrey Forster**

### Photographic Competition Entry Form

Name: .....

Address: .....

Number of Entries ..... @ 50 pence per entry .....

### FUN DAY - Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> July - Sandhills Farm, Crathorne, Yarm

Name: .....

Address: .....

..... Adults @ £3.00 each, ..... Children @ £1.50 each, ..... Dogs @ £1.00 each

**Total enclosed for photographic competition and/or fun day £**

Please send Entry Form, Photographs, SAE and cheque (made payable to NEFRA) to The Honorary Secretary, Mrs. S Kitching, Sandhills Farm, Crathorne, Yarm, Cleveland TS15 0AD

### NORTHERN ENGLAND FLATCOATED RETRIEVR ASSOCIATION 100/200 CLUB

I would be interested in joining the above proposed Club.

Name: .....

Address: .....

How many numbers required @ £12.00 P.A.

**Please return to: Mrs. A Forster** Cooks Lane House, Cooks Lane, Bradnop, Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 7HA Tel: 01538 383946



## Seminar and Teach-in

What a super day! I think that those four words sum it up in a nutshell.

When we, as a committee, were planning the events for this year, the Seminar was the one that most of us wanted to put on, but we wondered how much interest there would be from you, the members. We thought that it might appeal to a few so we decided that, if only to cater for the few, we would organise it. The proviso was applied that, if take up for places was less than 12, it would have to be cancelled. It never crossed our minds that we would have to put an upper limit on numbers. Within a week or so of the newsletter going out we had 30 applications and they kept on coming in. There was over 50 by the day of the Seminar.

The venue was clearly sign posted from the motorway and, being only a few miles from the M1, it was fairly easy access for all. There was coffee and biscuits on arrival and just time for a quick chat before we began the first session.

This was taken by Audrey Forster, who with the help of diagrams on an overhead projector and Bridie, a very amenable Flatcoat, explained all the points of the breed standard. How often have you heard it said that a dog was "snipey", lacked brisket, was short in the upper arm? All these points and many more were explained by Audrey in "down to earth" plain English. This also led on to movement and how the correct construction and good movement are usually complementary to each other.

During lunch, we were given the opportunity of looking at some super old books or purchasing some of the Association's merchandise as well as just chatting to friends.

The first session of the afternoon was taken by Peter Forster and was on hip dysplasia and the X-raying of hips. The hip scoring system now actually means something as Peter went through each point on the Hip Scoring form and with the help of X-rays showed us exactly where the Norberg Angle, etc. are situated and how a score is taken on each point. A short question and answer session followed.

After a short break for coffee, we were asked to split into small groups for the "hands on" session. We were then given the opportunity of going over a number of Flatcoats. We were asked to write a short critique on each one. At the end of the session, each of the dogs in turn was brought to the front and gone over by an experienced judge. A "volunteer" was then asked for, to read out their critique, followed by the experienced judge giving theirs. It was quite remarkable how most of the "novice judges" had picked out a dog's faults and attributes. This again led into a short question and answer session.

Time had finally beaten us and the seminar was brought to a close with the comments from the floor "Please can we do another one".

The committee would like to thank all who attended for making it such a good day. Your comments would be appreciated as to what you would like including in future Seminars.



## WORKING TEST DETAILS

An entry form is enclosed for the Association's 2<sup>nd</sup> working test which will be held on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> August 1997.

Once again, Lord and Lady Crathorne have given permission for us to use their beautiful estate for this event. All details are on the entry form.

If you can't enter a dog, why not come along and watch, spectators will be welcome.

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## GUNDOG TRAINING DAY, Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April 1997

RE. *W.*

*352283*

Mrs. Cherry Wood will again be holding a Gundog Training Day at a ground near Holmfirth. The training will start at 11a.m. and a small charge will be made to cover expenses. You will need to take your own packed lunch.

To book a place or for more details and directions to the venue, please ring  
Mrs. Cherry Wood on 01484 866218

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## NORTH WEST TRAINING DAYS

*last Sunday each month*

Training continues to be a success in this area. Training days take place one Sunday per month with a Guest Trainer each day. Everyone who goes says what a good training session it is. For further details, please contact:

Mrs. E Geoghegan, 209 Hesketh Lane, Tarleton, Nr Preston, Lancashire PR4 6AT  
Tel: 01772 812709

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## ASSOCIATION'S ITEMS FOR SALE

Badges	£2.50	Ring Clips	£3.00
Car Stickers	£1.25	Pack of 5 blank cards	£3.20

Available at all our events or by post (p & p charge - 50p cards - 25p other items)  
Please send orders with cheques made payable to NEFRA to:

Mrs. E Whiting, Great Gable, 225 Kitson Hill Road, Mirfield, West Yorkshire  
WF14 9DS Tel: 01924 490741



# T A I L E N D E R S

## Future Dates for your Diary

Fun Day, Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> July - details included with this issue.  
Working Test, Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> August 1997 - Entry Form enclosed.  
Fun Day, Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September 1997 - Cheshire area.  
Dinner Dance, Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> October 1997 at the Old Golf House Hotel,  
Outlane, Huddersfield

### Didn't They Do Well.

Congratulations to **Toby**, known to most as Elmstock Wild Thyme, and his family, Val and Dennis Orme, for the Best of Breed at Crufts this year. Toby was a credit to the Flatcoat breed. He looked a picture, moved like a dream and kept his lovely happy temperament all through the day. He was short listed to the final eight when representing the breed in the Gundog Group. Well Done Toby.

Congratulations also to Liz Geoghegan and the latest addition to the family Hightown Rambler, for their Best Puppy in Breed at Crufts. Though a very long day for one so young he still showed like a trooper. Could this be another "star" in the making?

### Note from the Secretary

Are you breeding a litter this year? If so, do let me know. I have many enquires from people interested in buying a Flatcoat and will always pass on details of any litters available. It is, however, up to the breeder to check the suitability of the purchaser.

Many thanks to Mr. Dakin for his donation to the Association for the help we gave in selling his last litter.

**Sandra Kitching**

The Newsletter sub committee would greatly appreciate your "Letters to the Editor". These will be included in future newsletters as and when space is available.

Items received from members and included in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of the Association.

### News Letter Sub Committee.

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