

WAGGING TAILS

Issue 16

Spring 2000

NORTHERN ENGLAND FLATCOATED RETRIEVER ASSOCIATION Officers and Committee Members

Patron - Lady Crathorne

President - Mr. G Lancaster

Chairman - Mr. P Forster

Honorary Secretary - Mrs. A Forster

Cooks Lane House, Cooks Lane, Bradnop, Leek, Staffordshire ST13 7HA

Tel: 01538 383946



Honorary Treasurer - Mrs. E. Whiting

Vice-Chairman - Mr. G. Whiting

Great Gable, 225 Kitson Hill Road, Mirfield, West Yorkshire WF14 9DS

Tel: 01924 490741

COMMITTEE

Mrs. B M Adams (Litter Recorder)

30 Yewdale Road, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG2 8NE Tel: 01423 885471

Mr. R. Bunting & Mrs. S Bunting

Kind Care Boarding Kennels, Bothalhaugh, Morpeth, NE61 8AQ Tel: 01670 513963

Mrs. E Geoghegan (Hon. Working Secretary)

209 Hesketh Lane, Tarleton, Nr Preston, Lancashire PR4 6AT Tel: 01772 812709

Mr. S Jubb & Mrs. K Jubb

Thistledown House, 136 Loscoe Denby Lane, Denby Village, DE5 8PP Tel: 01773 741501

Mrs. D Jury

103 Williamthorpe Road, North Wingfield, Chesterfield, S42 5NX Tel: 01246 853575

Mr. J R Kitching

Clowbeck Boarding Kennels, Sandhills Farm, Crathorne, Yarm, Cleveland TS15 0AD Tel:
01642 780362

Mr. D Orme & Mrs. V Orme

3 Ivy Road, Poynton, Stockport, Cheshire SK12 1PE Tel: 01625 874826

Mrs. J. Ryder

Tunstead Milton Farm, Tunstead Milton, Whaley Bridge, SK12 7ER Tel: 01663 734159

Mrs. K Trevor

120 Cross Street, Arnold, Nottingham NG5 7BY Tel. 01159 939134

Mrs. S J Wells

Ravensdale, 2 Albert Road, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5HT Tel: 01625 522537

**MINUTES OF FIFTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD AT THE OLD GOLF HOUSE HOTEL, OUTLANE, near HUDDERSFIELD
ON SUNDAY 5TH MARCH 2000**

Present: Mr. G. Lancaster (President), Mr. P. Forster (Chairman), Mr. G. Whiting (Vice Chairman), Mrs. A. Forster (Secretary) Mrs. E. Whiting (Treasurer) and 32 members

1 PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

The President, Mr. G. Lancaster, welcomed those attending and congratulated the Association on another successful year, again showing a profit. He attributed this to the magnificent atmosphere at the events held and thanked the members for making this such a happy, friendly Association.

2 CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

The chairman reiterated the president's remarks regarding the success of the last year and thanked the secretary, treasurer and all the committee for their hard work and dedication. He also reminded the meeting that NEFRA was only as good as the members and thanked them for supporting the events.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from 24 members.

4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th March 1999 had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Acceptance of the minutes as a true and correct record of the meeting was then proposed by Mr T. Hargreaves, seconded Mr. R. Allen. All in favour.

5 MATTERS ARISING

Mrs. A. Forster stated (regarding point 18 of the minutes) that the suggestion of the Tickled Trout as an alternative venue had been looked into but dismissed due to the very high cost of hiring a room.

Mr. D. Orme reported that it had not been possible to get any positive response from BASC regarding affiliation and it was suggested that we should approach the Countryside Alliance as an alternative.

6 SECRETARY'S REPORT

Another AGM has come around, the years seem to pass so quickly with events coming thick and fast. When one event is over it is time to start preparing for the next one.

During 1999, we had our usual two Shows in May and November and our two Working Tests in March and August. We also had Fundays and Seminars and our first Clicker Training Day. All were well attended and judging by the comeback seem to have been much appreciated. You can always improve, however, and we constantly strive to do so.

In 2000 we are having a Fun Weekend in June with a lot of things happening so try to support us. Another new idea for 2000 is a Millennium Draw. We also hope to have our own nominated charity - Dogs for the Disabled.

If you have any ideas please let me or any member of the Committee know and we will try to incorporate them into the Programme. May I thank you on my behalf and that of the Committee for your continued support.

7 TREASURER'S REPORT

Mrs. Whiting stated that it had been another good year financially without almost every event showing a surplus. Running through the accounts briefly, subscriptions had increased with membership topping 500 during the year. Working tests surpluses were as shown. There was a slight loss on the November show with the hall cost increasing; however if the profit on the sales were taken into account even this event showed a surplus. Mrs. Whiting at this point expressed her thanks to Mrs Wells for taking over the running of the sales. Due to the fact that committee meetings were held away from committee member's homes now, there was an additional cost of a little under £100 for each of 4 meetings in the accounts.

The balance sheet showed a healthy bank balance, with over £6,000 on deposit. Under amounts held, there was the donation re the late Miss S. Heaps which would go for a cup assuming that the Association receives championship show status. The profit on the sale of calendars had now been handed over the Dogs for the Disabled, along with extra money collected in the current year, a total of £350 had been paid over to date. The auditor had waived his fee this year and requested it be donated to the charity instead.

Looking at next year's costs, it was anticipated that committee meeting costs would again be around £400, the room hire and notice for the AGM would cost around £310, newsletters £600, honoraria £400 and general expenses £450, making a total of £1,960. Against this it is anticipated that something in the region of £2,000 will be received in subscriptions. In view of this and the anticipated surpluses on most events, it was felt that there was no reason to consider any increase in the level of subscriptions at this point.

Queries on the accounts were invited from the floor, none were forthcoming.

8 ADOPTION OF THE ACCOUNTS

The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Mrs. H. Wilson and seconded by Mrs C. Wood and carried unanimously

9 APPOINTMENT OF AN AUDITOR

It was proposed by Mrs M. Lancaster and seconded by Mrs. L. Geoghegan that, being willing to act, Mr. Andrew Pollock, Chartered Accountant of Manchester be again asked to act. All in favour.

10 WORKING TEST REPORT (from Mrs. E. Geoghegan)

We held two Working Tests in 1999, the first at St Helens in March and the second at Crathorne in August. The entries for the March test were 10 Puppies, 19 in Novice and 7 in Open. They were won respectively by Terry Sparkes with Gorgeous Lady of Churchwood, Audrey Williams with Gaewill Sunshine and Val Orme with Hartshead Blaisden Ebony of Elmstock. The Crathorne test drew a magnificent entry of 22 Puppies, 23 in Novice and 10 in Open. Winners, again respectively, were Jeff Lewins with Torwood Mannerly, Aldo Harkin with Fenstorn Lucky Dip and Steve Burns with Field Maple.

In addition, two training mornings were held in the Lancashire area which attracted a good turnout. I am currently trying to fit some more dates into a rather full schedule of Flatcoat events to hold some further training mornings. Those who attended previous sessions will be notified. I must sincerely thank the trainers who gave up their time to give the trainees the benefit of their experience and also to Ann Thornton who kindly let us use her farm for the sessions.

Two tests will be held in 2000, the first at St. Helens in March. The second will be held at a super new venue which has been offered to us at Weston Park. Hopefully once again these will prove to be enjoyable and rewarding for the entrants and novice handlers will be encouraged to continue and advance their dog's training. The members provide a wonderful atmosphere at the tests. Whilst everyone is competitive, this does not spill over into bad sportsmanship. We are really encouraged that newcomers to the sport are dipping their toes in the water and hope this will continue. We are also trying to obtain a suitable ground to hold another full day training day. When finalised, details will appear in Wagging Tails.

11 HONORARIA

In view of the increase agreed at last year's AGM, all officials felt the no further increase was necessary. It was proposed by Mrs. E. Whiting and seconded by Mr. P. Forster that the honoraria should remain at the same level as last year. All in favour.

12 ELECTION OF TREASURER

Mrs. E. Whiting was elected unopposed for a further 3 year term.

13 ELECTION OF WORKING SECRETARY

Mrs. E. Geoghegan was nominated by Mrs. C. Wood and seconded by Mr. S. Burns to stand for election as working secretary. There were no other nominations.

All being in favour, Mrs. Geoghegan was duly elected as working secretary for the next three years.

14 ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE

Mrs. B. Adams, Mr. D. Orme, Mrs. K. Trevor and Mrs. D. White were willing to stand for re-election. There were two further nominations - Mr. R. Bunting (Proposed by Mrs. J. R. Kitching seconded by Mrs. E. M. Whiting) and Mrs. J. Ryder (Proposed by Mrs. K. Jubb, seconded by Mr. S. Jubb). Unfortunately, neither the proposer nor the seconder of Mrs. Ryder has been able to attend the meeting and therefore Mrs. E. A. Brook stood as proposer to Mrs. Ryder and Mrs. E. Geoghegan seconded the nomination.

Both new candidates for the committee were asked to say a few words.

Mrs. J. Ryder came from a dog background. She and her husband Arnold had had Golden Retrievers for many years and had been showing them for 20 years. She got her first flatcoat in 1991 and now owned two as well as one in partnership with her daughter. Her first interest was showing but Arnold also had an interest in training the dogs. She is on the committee of the Macclesfield Ringcraft Society as well as the Goyt Valley Gundog Association. She was show manager for the latter last year as well as previously being chief steward. She works as a Primary School Head and is used to committees and working parties and appreciates the important role of a committee member and the hard work involved.

Mr. R. Bunting had been involved with dogs for many years with his father being involved in setting up a rescue scheme in Belfast. Reg had come to the UK in 1961 to begin nursing training and moved to the North East in 1977 where he married Sylvia. Both were very involved in the showing and breeding of cocker spaniels. In 1990 they got their first Flatcoat and he fell in love with the breed. They now have 5 Flatcoat 'pals'. He and Sylvia run a large boarding kennels and cattery and he considers himself very lucky to be doing a job he loves. He has acted as steward and safety officer at the Association's Open shows in the past and, even if not successful today, will be happy to do any job the Association wants him to.

Tellers were then chosen from the floor and the Chairman explained that, as Mrs. Geoghegan had been elected as Working Secretary there were in fact 5 vacancies on the committee but each member present should only vote for 4 candidates, as this was the number of vacancies shown in the notice of the meeting.

After the first vote there was a three way tie for the third committee place between Mrs. B. Adams, Mrs. J. Ryder and Mrs. D. White. A further vote was taken with the members voting for just one of the three.

As a result of the voting, Mr. R. Bunting, Mr. D. Orme, Mrs. J. Ryder and Mrs. K. Trevor were elected to the committee for 3 years and Mrs. B. Adams was elected to the committee for 2 years. The Chairman thanked Mrs. D. White for all her hard work in the past and hoped to see her at future events.

15 PRESENTATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S CUP

Mrs. V. Orme said that there had been an interesting 'race' for the Cup this year, most of the year between 2 dogs with 2 more coming good at the end of the year. She announced the three top placed dogs in reverse order. These were in second equal place, with 54 points, Colson's Windyhollows Tumbling Ted and Winton's Ch. Braidwyn Bonnie Lad but in first place with 60 points Colson's Windyhollows Nelly Moser.

Miss Colson received the Cup and congratulations from the President.

16 DRAW FOR MEMBER PRESENT AT THE MEETING

A draw was held from the entire membership list. To collect the prize money, the member had to be present at the meeting. The first member drawn was W. R. Telford, second Mrs. T. Roberts and third Mrs. E. Reed. None of these being present the prize money next year will be £80 for 1st prize, £20 for 2nd prize and £10 for third prize. If there are no winners after the 1st prize money reaches £100, the money will be donated to charity.

17 PROPOSITION

It was proposed by Mrs. A. Forster and seconded by Mrs. E. Whiting that the Association had a nominated charity and that this be Dogs for the Disabled.

A video had been shown before the meeting and would be shown again at lunch time and there had been an impressive demonstration of a Flatcoat helping a man come down steps at the recent seminar. The Millennium calendar had been sold in aid of this charity and already from this a cheque for £350 had been presented. The total cost of training a dog was in the region of £2,500 and this could be collected and donated over a period of several years. It was hoped that the Association could eventually reach this target to sponsor a dog.

Mrs. A. Brook asked how the donations would be controlled and if it would have to be a minimum amount each year. Mrs. Forster explained that there was no minimum amount or fixed commitment and it was the intention if the proposal was passed to raise the money with specific items such as the sale of calendars and the forthcoming Millennium Raffle.

A vote was then taken with all in favour and no abstentions.

Mrs. Forster then added that 5 raffle tickets would be sent out with each Wagging Tails. More would be available on request. Prizes included a dog run, a week's boarding, perfume, a colour TV, a doll's house, a NEFRA decanter and many more. Donations of further prizes would be appreciated and Mr. Donnelly donated a shooting lesson.

In addition, Mrs. Forster had received from Ann Sparkes a letter stating that she intended to do a charity walk in the summer and would like the proceeds to go to this charity on behalf of the Association. Sponsorship forms would be available at various events.

18 PROPOSITION

It was proposed by Mr. G. Lancaster and seconded by Mr. G. Whiting that the acceptable colours for Flatcoated Retrievers be Black and Liver.

This was an ongoing problem as the Kennel Club are registering yellow puppies. They had no option but to do this as all puppies from registered stock have the right to be registered by the KC. The Kennel Club however put nothing on the document to show that yellow is not a colour which corresponds to the Breed Standard.

Letters on the matter had been received by the Secretary from Mrs. J. Mason and Mrs. C. Murray and these were read out to the meeting. Amongst other comments it was pointed out that the stud dog owner had equal responsibility to advise and be advised of the possibility of producing yellow puppies as, because of genes carried, these could easily be the product of two black parents. It was suggested that there be an addition to the Association's Code of Ethics on the matter of yellow puppies but it was pointed out that this would have to come via a proposition to a future AGM.

After some discussion it was decided that the original proposition did not really say enough and an amended proposition was put to the meeting, viz.

All registered yellow Flatcoated Retrievers documents are endorsed as 'Not a Registered Colour'.

Mr. G. Lancaster and Mr. G. Whiting withdrew the original proposition and the amended proposition was voted on and was carried unanimously.

19 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

19.1 Mrs. C. Wood was pleased with the Association's newly nominated charity but suggested that as a mark of appreciation the committee considered donating some of the profits from Working Tests to the Gamekeepers' Association.

19.2 The matter of the venue of the AGM was brought up by Mrs. J. Donnelly who pointed out that she had a journey of 3 1/2 hours to the current venue. She thought that it could be the distance needed to be travelled that was keeping some members away. Mrs. Whiting thought that it was important to have a venue that was close to the motorway network as well as being reasonably priced. Mr. Kitching thought that it would be a good idea to move the venue around the area to allow more people to attend. Ideas for venues were always welcomed from members and should be passed onto the secretary, bearing in mind that the cost of the room for the current venue was only £50. Mr. R. Allen suggested that the cost of Travel Lodge meeting rooms was reasonable and this possibility would be looked into. Another possibility suggested by Mr. T. Hargreaves was a venue as Ashcroft.

20 TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

It was decided that the next Annual General Meeting should be held on Sunday, 4th March 2001 commencing at 11.00. The venue would have to be notified at a later date.

The meeting closed at 12.45 and a vote of thanks from the floor was offered to the Officials and Committee for all their hard work.

PRESIDENT'S CUP

For the third year, the Association has presented this cup from the results collated by Mrs. Val Orme. Only dogs belonging to the Association's members were eligible and the points were awarded for the following placings at Championship Shows as follows:

- 3 points for a first place, 2 points for a second place
- 1 point for best puppy
- 1 point for R.C.C., 2 points for C.C., 3 points for Best of Breed

Hopefully, this gives all dogs an equal chance and as the results show top honours this year went to a younger dog.

The recipient of the President's Cup is the Colson family's WINDYHOLLOWS NELLY MOSER. The full results are as follows:

1 st Windyhollows Nelly Moser	60 points
2 nd = Ch. Braidwynn Bonny Lad	54 points
2 nd = Windyhollows Tumbling Ted	54 points
4 th Casblaidh Dublin Whiskey of Withybed	52 points
5 th Vbos Lady from Louisiana	38 points
6 th Ghilgrange Magic Magician	37 points
7 th Clowbeck What a Cracker	36 points
8 th Eskmill Nemesis	35 points
9 th Sh. Ch. Gayplume Fine Fashion of Dravidian	32 points
10 th Pajanbeck Prince of Thieves	28 points

There follows what we hope will be the first in a series of tips on clicker training written for us by Sally Collins. Elsewhere in this Newsletter you will find Dennis Orme's report on how he found his first training session.

WELCOME TO THE CLICKER CLASS

A dog's behaviour is determined by consequences, in other words, if the dog finds the consequences of an action rewarding, then that behaviour is likely to be repeated. For example, the dog that happens to pick up her dish after a meal, you find this appealing and put tea in the dish, chances are that next mealtime she will pick up her dish again. Dogs are clever and clicker training enables you to work with your dog to achieve desired behaviours.

What is clicker training? Clicker training is a science based technique of training behaviours with positive reinforcement (food in most cases) and a marker signal, the sound of a clicker. You pick a desirable behaviour and "CLICK" it as it happens. The click tells the dog exactly what it did to earn the reward. The reward needs to be something that really motivates your dog to try and try again.

What clicker training isn't It isn't a gimmicky fad, it was developed in the 1940's by students of B. F. Skinner with dogs. In the 1950's it was adapted for marine mammal training where it is a great success. Karen Pryor, a marine biologist working with dolphins in the 1960's, came into contact with this way of training and 'saw the light'. (It isn't religious either). She wrote a best selling book in 1984 "Don't Shoot the Dog" that clearly outlines using positive reinforcement to change behaviour in pets, children, even other people.

Dogs need information and feedback to improve their skills The CLICK gives the information to the dog that what he is doing at that precise moment is right and will earn a reward.

The CLICK is faster than verbal praise, it also works well from a distance (it would be impractical to toss a dog a treat as it cleared a jump, or if we used 'good boy' as a praise, it takes time and the dog could connect the good boy with being on the ground rather than clearing the jump).

Remember, dogs learn without language, we use speech all the time, we talk to each other, we listen to music, the radio, the television, and our dogs are bombarded with this almost constant noise as well. We then expect our dogs to pick out odd words we fire at them, and for them to understand what we require of them. The "CLICK" sound of a clicker is unlike most everyday sounds and is therefore a brilliant marker signal that helps the dog to learn how to learn.

The clicker is a **training aid**, you will not need it all the time, once your dog understands what you want, you can put that exercise on a cue (command).

Let's have a go, shaping your first behaviour Put about 20 small, appealing treats in a dish out of the dog's reach, but easy for you to get at. Take the clicker and **click** it using two fingers on the metal lip to start with, immediately give a **treat**. After a few times of doing this your dog will start to look at you for the **click and treat**, instantly **click and treat** this behaviour. Use all 20 treats or more until your dog connects the click with the treat. The praise (the **click**) becomes a predictor of a reward (the **treat**).

When offered a favourite treat, most dogs will sit expectantly and wait for the treat. After a few seconds your dog is likely to fidget in some way. He may turn his head, back up, speak or lift a paw. (For this first session, the behaviour you pick is not important). If your dog picked his foot up for his first click, wait a few seconds, he'll do it again. **Click and treat**.

Continue this process and watch how his behaviour changes. If you continue to **click and treat** each time he holds his paw up, the behaviour will become stronger. Now try waiting a second before you click. Try to get a longer or higher paw lift before you **click and treat**.

Once you have a clearly definable behaviour going, start saying "paw", just as your dog is going to do it, **click and treat**, very quickly you will be able to leave the clicker for this exercise and just have it done on a cue.

Learning to use positive reinforcement to shape behaviours is fun, enjoy yourself, you might make the odd mistake but it doesn't matter, you won't upset your dog and it isn't as stressful on you as the more traditional methods of training.

FURTHER READING:

Don't Shoot the Dog - Karen Pryor - Bantam Books - Revised edition 1999 £ 8.99.

This is the book to read, a good background read, Karen's book is clear, entertaining and explains behavioural training methods well. There is now an added section on clicker training.

Go Click - Elizabeth Kershaw - Pet Behaviour Centre - 1998 £ 3.25. An excellent introduction to clicker training, a 'have a go' book. (Available from NEFRA).

Ain't Misbehavin' - David Appleby - Bath Press - 1997 £ 10.99. This book uses kind methods of dog training combined with a good understanding of what makes a dog tick. David Appleby uses the clicker to solve problems such as dominance, aggression, pulling and many more.

The Good Behaviour Guide - David Appleby - Pet Behaviour Centre - £2.50. A booklet providing advice to help owners develop and maintain their dog's good temperament and social behaviour.

The Culture Clash - Jean Donaldson - £ 14.95. Appreciate the true strengths and abilities of your dogs, a new way of understanding the relationship between humans and dogs.

Lads before the Wind - Karen Pryor - Sunshine Books - £ 11.50. This diary of a dolphin trainer has been used by dog trainers for the behavioural training techniques that Karen Pryor developed.

Books available from: Crosskeys - Telephone 0208 590 3604 for catalogue.

Pet Behaviour - Telephone 01386 750615 for book list

ALPHA - Telephone 01753 859004 for book list

These are just a selection of the many books available, there are also videos and web sites devoted to clicker training.

THOUGHTS FROM THE SECRETARY'S TABLE

We have received a lovely letter of thanks from a recently joined member who had a problem with her young Flatcoat. In true NEFRA fashion, when members heard of the problem, help and advice flowed in from all directions and I am delighted to say that the problem is well on the way to being solved. The reason I mention this (with the lady's permission) is that support for people less experienced than ourselves, a welcome for new members, the willingness to lend a hand, to give of your time and to enthusiastically to support all our events, to me is what NEFRA is all about and long may it continue to be so.

At the AGM in March, we adopted Dogs for the Disabled as our designated charity and we have now presented them with a cheque for £350 from the profit on the sales of the Millennium Calendar. The Calendars were a great success and we hope to produce one for 2001 so keep your cameras clicking as we want lots of entries to choose from.

We have had a change of committee after the AGM. Mrs. Joyce Ryder and Mr. Reg Bunting join us and we offer them a warm welcome. There is always a down side and we bid farewell to Mrs. Debbie White and thank her for all her hard work. Debbie says that she will continue to be involved in NEFRA events and hopefully Joseph will become our youngest Junior Member in due time.

Thank you again for all your support. With kind regards.....Audrey

From Anne Sparkes: As some of you will be aware, NEFRA have decided to raise funds for Dogs for the Disabled. I would like you all to help me swell their funds by sponsoring me. In July this year I am taking part in the White Peak Walk, a "challenging 26 mile walk" starting and finishing at Monyash in the Peak District. If I know you are all behind me - in thought at least - I'll do my utmost to complete. Sally Collins and Audrey Forster will have sponsor forms - so beware if they approach you! Alternatively, you can ring me on 01332 676066. Thank you in advance.

From Mrs. Gill Huddleston: I would be interested to swap experiences with other Flatcoat owners who may also have dogs with kidney stones. Sunny, our flatcoat, suffered with this ailment last October for the second time in his life. As a puppy of 3 months and now a 6 ½ year old dog, they formed again. Following a major operation, 3 weeks of intensive nursing and 3 months to total recovery, he is now fully recovered and as bouncy as ever. The vet sent his 'stones' to the States for analysis and he is now on a 'diet for life' to maintain his pH levels as neutral as possible and avoid new stones forming.

As a first time owner and inexperienced in such matters, we were lucky we noticed the change in his whole demeanour from happy dog to slow, quiet one in time to do something about it and the support we received from the vet and other flatcoat owners was invaluable. If any other members have had similar experiences and have advice for us on diet, etc. or wishes to contact us about this illness we are on 01773 602777.

OUR FIRST CLICKER CLASS from Denis Orme

Well, we had bought the tickets and I was told I was going and, having negotiated 27 sets of speed cameras between Macclesfield and Leek (I haven't received a letter from the police so I must have got that bit right), we arrived. The usual N.E.F.R.A. warm welcome of free coffee and biscuits greeted us - as did twenty plus wagging tails - isn't it a shame the world doesn't have the same disposition as our breed.

Val had decided to take our 4 month old puppy and I was told to "sit" at the back and observe. I must admit I did not have much conviction but it was something new so I sat with an open mind.

Sally Collins did her presentation and plan for the day, and then proceeded to explain the motivational methods used in clicker training. Books and clickers were available at very reasonable cost and free treats provided for anyone requiring them. The demonstration started and Sally explained the methods she was using and how this system is used by "Dogs for the Disabled". By now I was becoming fascinated watching the dog being clicked and then rewarded with a treat for what it was doing naturally and wanting to repeat it. The motivational methods were now quite interesting to watch and obviously Sally knew her subject.

Then it was time for audience participation and to put into practice what we had seen. Sally had obviously put herself across very well and the simple tasks she asked people to do went very well. Everyone (including dogs) appeared to be enjoying themselves. Before we knew it, lunch was being served. Thanks here to Audrey and family for a superb spread enjoyed by all. Everyone now fed and dogs exercised it was time for part two. This consisted of a short introduction by Sally. Then she dropped the bombshell - "Find a space for yourself and prepare a short demonstration to give us using the methods you have learnt!"

Everyone found their own space and started practising - owners clicking and dogs' tails wagging. I was watching Val prepare her ingredients: one 4 month old puppy, one clicker, a handful of treats and A CARDBOARD BOX! After 30 minutes it was time for the demonstration and for me to be amazed. Val drew the short straw and went first. At this point I was expecting total embarrassment, after all our dog is a young flat coated retriever puppy who can't even stand still when she eats. But..... Amazeant!..... Puppy standing still!... 'Click'...puppy steps in box!..... 'Click'..... puppy steps out!..... 'Click'..... Repeat exercise..... audience applauds..... and I sit with open mouth!

I then saw dogs press keys on a child's piano, jump through hoops, touch a post with their nose, plus many more feats. Sally praised everyone for their demonstrations and threw the floor open for questions, of which there were many.

My opinion of the day was that it was superb. This isn't the answer to all problems and training needs, but it is another method you can use. Well done Sally for an enjoyable and informative day..... PS I can't make it work on Val.

A FEW WORDS FROM YOUR JUDGES - OPEN SHOW 6th MAY 2000

Mrs. Pat White: I have had dogs ever since I can remember, but I had Labradors from 1958, and then in 1978 I had my first Flatcoat, and have never wanted to change to another breed. She was from the Ryshot line and I used her mainly for Obedience, she did go into the breed ring but decided she did not like it!

I became a member of the FCR Society in 1979 and my family of Flatcoats gradually increased. At the end of 1984 I had my second Flatcoat, Belsud Brown Siskin, Rhea, who became my foundation bitch. It was at this time I started entering the Breed Ring with her. Although she was never highly placed, she did very well and taught me a lot.

Rhea had two litters and I kept a bitch from each of these. From the first was Kysheemy Brown Chestnut. He is jointly owned by my daughter and myself and has done very well in his time. Rhea died very recently at the age of fifteen and two months.

Her younger daughter Kysheemy Elentari Star, Lara, had a litter in 1993 and again I kept a puppy, Kysheemy Lady Elenya and, in turn, she had a litter last year and I have at last got another "brown thing" who is giving me much pleasure.

I first started judging the Breed early in 1992, I say this because in the 70's and 80's I used to judge Open Obedience, but I must confess that my main love is showing, judging and, when possible, working my dogs. I enjoy going to the Shows and meeting the people and their dogs.

Miss Julie Condron: I owned my first Flatcoat in 1978, a bitch puppy out of the great Ch Puhfuh Phineas Finn. She was unfortunately put to sleep at six months with severe hip dysplasia. Her replacement produced for me a reserve CC winner and the dam of a Champion. I have since owned two Eskmill bred Flatcoats but you could say I've seen a whole lot more - every litter born there since 1984 - thanks Jenny for the opportunity. Also sharing my life have been Hovawarts - described by the late Harry Glover "as the general appearance of a Flatcoated Retriever" and within the last six years a Chesapeake Bay Retriever bitch - Corrie - and within the last six months an eight month old Hovawart bitch - Sybil.

I've had the pleasure and honour of handling and showing four Flatcoat Champions - all owned by inhabitants of Cumbria! Hugh & Jenny Donnelly's Ch Eskmill Explorer and Ch Springburn Dreamer of Eskmill; Vivien Stucke's Ch Darillens Vagabond King at Pennyfells and special thanks to Pauline MacLean who allowed Gunner - Sh Ch Shargleam Final Touch - to live with me and my dogs for 12 months prior to him joining her in Holland.

My first judging appointment was Hovawarts at National Working Breeds Ch Show in July 1990 where I became the first British breeder to judge the breed at a Championship Show. My first Flatcoat judging followed in October, my latest being Windsor Gundog in 1998. I have judged Hovawarts at Crufts and a Club Show. I have attended various judging seminars, the first being held by the Flatcoated Retriever Society in 1989. I have stewarded at Championship and Open show level and I was Lancashire's Representative for FCRS from 1992-1998.

I would like to thank the Officers and Committee of NEFRA for inviting me to judge the bitches at the Millennium Show - it is a great honour.

SEMINAR - 20th FEBRUARY 2000..... From Mrs. Anne Sparkes

What a lovely day we all had at this seminar. As is the norm for NEFRA, there was a warm welcome. We had four of the most open minded, entertaining vets lecturing.

Firstly, Mr. Malcolm Ness spoke on orthopaedics, covering mainly Hip Disasia. To someone like myself who has only heard of HD, Mr Ness explained very clearly how HD develops, and finally how he - as the last in the line - actually operates. An interesting point he made was that in his opinion some dogs which have HD are born with good hips, it is only us as owners and handlers that cause the problems. His talk was complimented by slides showing X-rays and drawings we could all understand.

Mr Ness was followed by Megan Kearney, a 'normal' vet who compliments her work with homeopathic/herbal treatments. She came over from Australia and for five years studied homeopathy for both animals and humans. A very knowledgeable lady, she cultivates an allotment and produces a lot of her own lotions, washes and ointments. We all scribbled away taking lots of notes! Again slides showed us the individual plants used - ones we all see regularly (even if we don't know their botanical names!)

After lunch, Dogs for the Disabled - ably assisted by Josh. Josh is a 5 year old Flatcoated Retriever whose owner states "I would probably be in a wheelchair by now if it wasn't for Josh". It costs £2,500 to train a dog for a disabled person and a similar amount per year after as the original trainer keeps in contact and if necessary trains for extra requirements. I witnessed the dog coming downstairs. Josh Stood and allowed Chris to put his full weight on Josh's shoulders to enable Chris to come down step by step. The most difficult part of training Josh? - to walk slowly and we all knew exactly what he meant!

We then had Mr. Chris Hewison enlighten us - again ably assisted by his faithful friend Josh (and Caroline) - on first aid for dogs, together with a comprehensive and useful handout. To make a simple and effective stretcher - turn the sleeves of your coat inside out, fasten the coat up (sleeves inside), insert long sticks/branches down the sleeves and hey presto a stretcher. Mr. Hewison covered a whole range of useful first aid tips.

Unfortunately, by the time Peter Forster came to the front we were well behind schedule and this only allowed him time to demonstrate acupuncture on Tilly, a most patient patient! Never a flinch when Peter inserted needles down the length of Tilly's back and because she wasn't ready to give the needles back to Peter, she happily went home with some of them still in her - Sally collected them later!

A very relaxed day was had by all, finalised by delightful tea and cakes!! Thank you to NEFRA for organising this informative and educational day. Everyone gained something from it.

TO ALL ASPIRING WORKING DOG HANDLERS..... From Mrs. C. Wood

Are you looking for inspiration, well read on. I would like to bring to your attention the successes of Malcolm Peacock and his flatcoat Wheatmill Gideon. Since 1995 he has won eight firsts, one second, three thirds, three fourths and six certificates of merit in working and cold game tests; all but two of these in any variety clubs. This includes the Top Dog in the United Retriever's Inter Club competition in 1999, dropping only 5 points out of 200. Can anyone top that! Not many Labradors have!

Wheatmill Gideon like Sue Rogers' Wheatmill Dipper share the same dam, is this the magic ingredient? Or is it because they trained together and with other retriever breeds under the guidance of any variety clubs like the Dukeries and North Midland U.R.C. Malcolm and Sue, like myself, believe that this is the best way forward as these A.V. clubs have a long history of experience (and they are not all anti Flatcoat).

Although the standard is improving, there is still a lot of catching up to do. When going to Flatcoat tests I have come to the conclusion that many dogs and handlers suffer from three basic problems:

- Many Flatcoats are a lost cause before their first birthday as they, and not their owners, are the dominant ones and the longer they are allowed to think this the harder it becomes to convince them otherwise.
- Negative and inexperienced handling is a problem that many have. Going up to a judge having already decided you will fail is not very helpful to the flatcoat's reputation, so please work a little harder at improving the skills of you and your dog.
- The question of breeding is a complex subject and not for the likes of me to comment on.

So please love your dogs but remember who is boss and let Malcolm's achievements be an inspiration to us all to aim a little higher and help improve the flatcoat's reputation in the gundog world. For further encouragement I intend making an award for the Flatcoat gaining most points - be it puppy, novice or open - at the training class test of the North Midlands U.R.C. held every Autumn for dogs having attended three or more training classes during the current year.

WORKING TEST RESULTS - St Helen's - 18th March 2000

Puppy Test:

1st Miss M. White's Weinbridge Argo, 2nd Mr. S. Burns' Blackthorn of Hardybank, 3rd Mrs. J. Eggington's Pajanbeck Prince of Thieves, 4th Mrs. M. Ward's Parsifal Picture

Open Test:

1st Mrs. P. Robertson's Heatherbank Chief of Waperrsmoss, 2nd Miss N. Colson's Windyhollows My Prayer, 3rd Mr. P. Forster's Wizardwood Tawny Tamarind, 4th Miss N. Colson's Brave Bassanio of Windyhollows

Novice:

1st Mrs. C. Wood's Soft Breeze, 2nd Miss N. Colson's Brave Bassanio of Windyhollows, 3rd Mr. P. Eggington's Windyhollows Skylark to Pajanbeck, 4th Mrs. P. Colson's Windyhollows My Prayer, COM. Mr. B. Jones' Tornado Tom of Benvellyn

Letter from Josh - the Flatcoat from Dogs for the Disabled

Dear Mum & Dad, Just a short note to let you know how I am settling into my new home after finishing my training last month.

I have a very kind man to look after, he has something wrong with his spine and legs so I am relied on to keep him safe when he is walking, both at home and when we go out into town.

My day usually begins at about 7.30 a.m., a good breakfast and half an hour to gather my thoughts ready for work. 8.00a.m. and my charge, Mr. Smith, needs to have his walking stick and slippers, plus me, to keep him balanced as he goes for his shower and shave. When the shower stops, that's my cue to fetch his clothes, he isn't able to bend over so I have to bring each item and put it into his hand. When Mr. Smith is dressed we go downstairs, me making sure that I keep very close to his side as he needs to lean on me. Once into the dining room, I fetch the letters and newspaper from the hall and have a rest while Mr. S has his breakfast and reads the post.

Some days we have to go into town and, yes you've guessed it, I help Mr. Smith onto and off the bus. He gives me lots of praise as I'm doing my work and it's a real pleasure being with him. In town we have plenty of stops at coffee shops, Mr. S can't walk very far before he needs a rest. I am welcomed everywhere we go and you would both be proud of your son, head held high, wearing my yellow harness and "handle" - just the same as the guide dogs except for the colour - as I stride through the crowds in town making sure that no-one bumps into Mr. S.

Most evenings when we have had dinner, I stretch out on my own magnificent sheepskin rug next to Mr. S. Sometimes we watch TV (I bring the remote to Mr. S.) or he may want to write so I am sent to the desk to fetch his writing case.

No two days are ever the same and I am enjoying everything from bringing the telephone to emptying the washing machine; best of all, Mr. S and me are really good friends and enjoy being together.

Thank you both very much for sending me to the 'Dogs for the Disabled' training school. It was hard work for me at the time but really worthwhile now, hopefully Mr. S will be bringing me to visit you quite soon, so au revoir for now.....

..... Your loving son, Josh

MILLENNIUM RAFFLE IN AID OF DOGS FOR THE DISABLED

You will find enclosed with this copy of Wagging Tails. Your help would be appreciated in raising money for the above charity by selling these to your friends and neighbours. Please fill in names and telephone numbers on the ticket stubs and return with a cheque made payable to "NEFRA" to Mrs. E. Whiting at the address shown. More tickets will be sent on request - please ring 01924-490741.

There are many additional prizes as well as those listed and the draw will take place at the Millennium weekend, the results be published in Wagging Tails.

Thank you for your help in advance.

T A I L E N D E R S

Future Dates for your Diary

Open Show - Saturday, 6th May - to be held at Woodford, near Wilmslow

Funday- Sunday 11th June - to be held at Salmesbury near Preston (details and entry form enclosed).

Working Test - Saturday 12th August - to be held at Weston Park (entry form enclosed).

Eye Testing 8th October - to be held at Ecclestone - details in next Wagging Tails.

Seminar - Requirements of a Dog Show Judge - to be held at Billsborrow near Preston, speaker Mrs. Freda Marshall

Open Show - Sunday 5th November - to be held at Normanton.

Forthcoming Open Shows in our area

Anyone wishing us to advertise their show should send full details as soon as possible and bear in mind that this newsletter is only published on a quarterly basis. Schedules for the following shows can be obtained from the respective secretaries:

- Edwinstowe & District Canine Society (held at Newark) - Sunday 28th May - Judge Mrs. J. Egginton (Pajanbeck) - 4 classes - Sec: Mrs E King Tel: 01246 476059
- North Riding Gundog Club (held at Richmond, Yorkshire) - Judge Miss V. Egginton - 4 classes - Sec: Mrs. J. Knight Tel: 01677 450548
- Ripon & District Canine Society (held at Ripon) - Sunday 4th June - Judge Mrs. P. Appleyard (Uskelf) - 3 classes - Sec: Mrs. N. Calvert Tel: 01609 772861
- Harrogate & District Canine Society (held at Ripon) - Saturday 1st July - Judge Mr. G. Roberts (Hartshead) - 3 classes - Sec: Mrs. N. Calvert Tel: 01609 772861

Crossword Error - Yes, as you all spotted, there was a clue missed out of the crossword sent out with the last issue of Wagging Tails. Entries will be accepted with any word entered for the missing clue or left blank if you prefer.

The Newsletter sub committee would greatly appreciate your "Letters to the Editor" or tips for the above section. These will be included in future newsletters as and when space is available. Please send them to Mrs. E. Whiting at the address below.

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

News Letter Sub Committee.

Mrs. K Jubb Thistledown House, 136 Loscoe Denby Lane, Denby Village, DE5 8PP Tel. 01773 741501

Mrs. D. Jury 103 Williamthorpe Road, North Wingfield, Chesterfield, S42 5NX Tel: 01246 853575

Mrs. K Trevor 120 Cross Street, Arnold, Nottingham. NG5 7BY Tel. 01159 939134

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