

WAGGING TAILS

Issue 24

Spring 2002

NORTHERN ENGLAND FLATCOATED RETRIEVER ASSOCIATION

Patron - Lady Crathorne

President - Mr. G Lancaster

Chairman - Mr. P Forster

Hon Secretary - Mrs. A Forster

Cooks Lane House, Cooks Lane, Bradnop, Leek, Staffs. ST13 7HA.

Tel: 01538 383946. e-mail wimbrel@tiscali.co.uk



Vice Chairman - Mr. D Orme

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

Hon Treasurer - Mrs. E. Whiting, e-mail elaine.whiting@ntlworld.com

Great Gable, 225 Kitson Hill Road, Mirfield, WF14 9DS. Tel: 01924 490741.

Working Secretary - Mrs. D Jury, e-mail dave@car-inspector.freemove.co.uk

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

COMMITTEE

Mrs. B M Adams (Litter Recorder).

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

Mr. R. & Mrs. S Bunting, e-mail bunting.sylvia@talk21.com

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

Mr. S & Mrs. K Jubb, e-mail steve1057@hotmail.com

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

Mrs. V Orme

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

Mrs K Perry, e-mail casanjay@ntlworld.com

12 Silverthorn Way, Wildwood, Stafford, ST17 4PZ. Tel 01785 606627

Mr A & Mrs. J. Ryder, e-mail joycearnold@jaskar.freemove.co.uk

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

Mrs. K Trevor, e-mail trevorsilk@ntlworld.com

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

Miss G Walker, e-mail gillian@phoneandfly.co.uk

22 Angrove Close, Great Ayton, North Yorks. TS9 6LF. Tel 01642 722097

Mrs. S J Wells, e-mail Tdwells@btinternet.com

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

AN OPEN LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

I was shocked to hear today from Audrey Forster of the passing of Bob Kitching. I have known Bob for many years and we have been very good friends, his interest in the Flatcoated Retriever was unlimited and the stock he bred was of the highest quality. When asked to judge the breed you could always depend that his decision would conform to the standard. His work for NEFRA knew no bounds. He was a founder member and right from the start he put all his energy into making the Club what it is today. I can't list all the things he has done for us and for me this is the passing of someone whom I had the greatest respect and we shall miss him

GOD REST YOU BOB AND GIVE YOU PEACE.

George Lancaster

Our Chairman writes

Little did we know at the Inaugural Meeting of NEFRA in 1994 at Harewood when Sandra was elected as Hon. Secretary and Bob was elected onto the Committee that they would both leave us so soon. I am sure it gave them both, in their time, a great deal of pleasure in seeing the Association go from strength to strength to become what it is today. Bob was so keen that we obtain Championship Show status; it is a shame despite strenuous efforts we could not achieve it. We will go on trying and maybe one day Bob we will succeed. A 'jack of all trades', Bob was always there when something had to be done, be it Show Manager or catering at a Working Test. Who can forget trying to work our dogs after the lunch prepared by Bob on our first Working Test at Crathorne. We shall all miss him in a multitude of ways from his work on the Committee to his work at the events that we ran. I am sure that the Officers and Committee will not stint in our efforts to build the Association into one which I am sure Bob would have been proud.

Peter

Thoughts from the Secretary's Table

The start of 2002 has been saddened by the loss of Bob Kitching at the end of February. He was a larger than life character, sometimes living up to his initials 'J R' in his determination to do what he felt was the right thing. He was passionate about NEFRA and dedicated to its success and with Sandra was the driving force behind its inception. He will be greatly missed at the Committee meetings. No one at that first meeting at Harewood could have dreamed of the progress we have made in the past short years. Peter and I went to Holland judging with Bob and Sandra. It was one of our most enjoyable visits abroad but it went wrong from the start! We were going in the Kitching's car with Bob and Sandra sharing the driving. On the way to collect us their car broke down and it was all down hill from there. A replacement car was found but only Bob was allowed to drive, for

insurance reasons, all the way from Yarm via Leek via the Channel Tunnel to the Show right across Holland and all the way back. Despite all the crises we laughed all the way there and back and when they left us and headed for the long trip home they were still laughing.

We have our usual two Shows in 2002. The May Show is at Kirk Deighton on the 5th and the November Cup Show is at Myerscough near Preston on the 17th. The Fun Days this year are at Woodford (an excellent venue) in June and the venue for the September one is to be arranged. This Fun Day was to be held at Crathorne but in view of what has happened we are hopefully moving it to Cumbria, confirmation later. Any additional Events will be notified later. On the working side in addition to the two Working Tests Denise has introduced a Gundog Proficiency Certificate, a Cold Game Test and the new event mentioned in the last issue of Wagging Tails.

Whilst the Officers are to the forefront so many people work for NEFRA and do not get individual recognition so here goes. Space does not permit me to mention them all by name but without their invaluable work NEFRA would not run as smoothly as it does but I feel the need to mention a few. At a Show, Seminar, Fun Day, or Working Event there is always a myriad of back room boys, some not 'official', but who see something needing doing and do it without being asked. Our thanks go to them many of whom we never even knew who they were. Denise and David have many helpers from the Shoots whose only wish is to see the dogs work but nevertheless we thank them most sincerely. Our Junior Members may be thin on the ground but my goodness they are a vital part of the team helping in the kitchen, raffle ticket sellers, message carriers and all the innumerable tasks that crop up. Thank you all. The kitchen, I feel is almost the heart of the Show. Brenda and her team pride themselves on greeting everyone with coffee and bacon butties. They manage to keep up the flow of refreshments throughout the day emerging unscathed if a little stressed at the end. Thank you Brenda and all your helpers. To Val Orme who does a sterling job collating all the Championship Show results for the Presidents Cup Competition (see the results for 2002 in this edition of Wagging Tails). To your Litter Recorder and your Wagging Tails Editor who put in many hours behind the scenes. It is a good job that Brenda as Litter Recorder can talk well as she spends many hours on the phone making sure that the right puppy goes to the right home. Without Kathryn, the editor - no Wagging Tails - what more can I say.

With all good wishes as usual. Hope to see as many of you as possible at our various events.

Regards Audrey

Post Foot and Mouth – a first hand experience

Written as we approached Christmas 2001 - a time to look back and reflect.

As a family with numerous interests, all pursued enthusiastically, we have spent the last ten months thinking 'should we?' 'dare we?', 'what if?'. We feel that we have not 'belonged' for the last ten months, not purely farmers but living in a farming community with cattle of our own. Steve runs his own joinery business from our smallholding and I am a primary school supply teacher. But we were involved; we couldn't read the press, watch the TV and comfortably sympathize.

We run a small herd of Dexter cattle and our priority had to be to keep foot and mouth away - but what about the rest of our lives? The cattle are not our bread and butter but if we were to get foot and mouth, it would affect our incomes as we would be 'impounded' at home. Neither of us have contracts that would keep paying us a wage if we could not continue to work. But money didn't figure here as much as the psychological effect it would have on the children if the cattle had to be destroyed, they are as involved with them as much as we are. We are surrounded by families that do rely on their stock for their living, we have a responsibility to the local environment.

Joe and Luey thoroughly enjoy their Junior Handling and are devoted to their Flatcoats but we had to call a halt to all showing and weekly attendance at our local dog group. Since last February none of our dogs have left the farm until the last few weeks. They didn't understand - they watched us leave in the car and wondered what they had done wrong.

Both children play in an orchestra on a Saturday morning. Should we really be going? They play in a school hall, twenty odd miles away, in the middle of a town. What possible harm could come of it? As long as we thoroughly disinfect our car and change our clothes, we should be okay. But children come from all over North Yorkshire, travelling through the countryside, would they take precautions, even think about it, what if...? We pass the notice - 'You are entering a foot and mouth infected area.', lay-bys are closed off. Joe starts to panic. He accuses me of not caring, dropping my guard, 'behaving like the rest.' A friend rang; on that same route to orchestra, three days later, they were slaughtering cattle in a field on the roadside.

The foot and mouth crept closer, even swimming lessons ten miles away had to be discussed.

Emma, mum of our Flatcoats, will be seven in January. We desperately wanted a second litter of pups from her, a last chance - it passed by. Friends and relatives have kept away, how could we sell a litter of pups? We have lived it seems as isolated as possible. Deliveries left at the end of the lane, endless spraying, changing of clothes, but always thinking 'is it enough?'

At times we thought we were past caring, we came out with silly phrases - 'it might be easier if we get it' - but there was always one of the four of us who made the other three keep going down our precautionary route. As time wore on foot and mouth was no longer the big issue, it was old news. No more reports by the press and media - only the growing list on the DEFRA website of 'victims', only seen by those who searched for it. I became the local joke for insisting a skip lorry went to the local DEFRA disinfectant site before he came on our property, dog classes for everybody else started up again. (Ironically just as foot and mouth struck ten miles away!). The ice has not yet been broken between us, our 'loyalty' to the club questioned (friendship a fatality of the disease?).

Badminton, two miles away, wasn't such a big issue, but the league matches at Harrogate were. Yes, we went. Yes, we felt guilty Yes, we were lucky - we got away with it.

Two weeks ago, Steve brought Sam home, a ten week old Flatcoat pup - new life, new hope?

It is now four months since the last local outbreak, but with winter here have we really 'got away with it?' It returned to Cumbria and Northumberland, what about Yorkshire?

Does life differ post the foot and mouth scare? Our farming policy has had to change slightly; we can no longer hire a bull but have to keep our own. The foot and mouth has gone, it appears, but our no entry sign remains, our mail is still left at the gate and footbaths are still in position. Everybody who does enter drives over disinfectant soaked mats. Perhaps when spring arrives we will relax more.

One of the committee members asked me to put pen to paper when it was all over and write down my thoughts on the foot and mouth as it affected us. After four months I can only just dare to hope that it is all over.

We have survived.

June Tate.

**NORTHERN ENGLAND
FLATCOATED RETRIEVER ASSOCIATION
12TH BREED OPEN SHOW**

**KIRK DEIGHTON SPORTS CENTRE, WETHERBY
SUNDAY 5TH MAY 2002**

Show opens at 9.00am. Judging starts at 10.00am. Bitches not before 12.00 noon

Dogs	Judges	Bitches
Mrs J Baddeley (<i>Lourdace</i>)	Mrs V Orme (<i>Elmstock</i>)	

ENTRIES CLOSE THURSDAY 4TH APRIL 2002 (POSTMARK)

Have you sent off your entry form yet? If not why not? The last show must rate as one of the best the association has held so let's see if we can make this one even better. Schedules were sent out with the AGM Minutes. If you require another schedule and/or entry form please contact Mrs A.R. Forster, Cooks Lane House, Cooks Lane, Bradnop, Leek, ST13 7HA or telephone 01538 383946

Will you be there?

Even if you have not entered have you thought about coming along to support the Judges, your Committee and fellow members of NEFRA? You will be made most welcome but please remember that only entered dogs are allowed within the precincts of the show, so if you bring your dogs with you they will have to remain in your car.

Directions to the Venue

Turn off the A1 to Wetherby. Straight on at the roundabout crossing A58 to Leeds. Keep on the B6164 passing A661 to Harrogate. Take the left fork and the Sports Centre is on the right. **LOOK OUT FOR THE FLATCOAT SIGNS**

A working test for AV Retrievers, organised by the Ladies Charity Shooting Fund, is being held on Sunday 14th July 2002 at Welbeck Abbey, Nottinghamshire, with the kind permission of The Lady Anne Bentinck. All monies raised will be donated to the Breast Cancer Unit, Nottingham City Hospital. There are four classes, puppy, novice, open and veteran at £5 per entry. The event is being sponsored by 'Masters'. For more information please contact Margaret Fox on 01949 860248 or Mandy Watmore on 01522 750465

Interview with George Lancaster

After more than 50 years in the show ring George has decided to hang up his judging badge. As George says "I am not retiring from the dog world but just from judging as I don't want people to say 'look at that silly old man he doesn't know what he is doing'." Hopefully this article and the answers to the questions posed will give you a small insight into the charismatic figure that is so well known in Gundog circles.

George was born during the First World War and has been around dogs all his life as his father was a manager of a Hackney Stud farm and when exercising the horses on the road he had two Dalmatians to run. On leaving school he went into motor engineering and at the outbreak of the Second World War he served in the RASC for the duration as a vehicle mechanic. In 1950 he joined Rolls Royce as an engine tester and remained with the company until he retired in 1981. On leaving he then became Gamekeeper at Crewe Hall where he had been involved as a beater for the previous twenty years.

His very first dog was an Irish Setter, which he rescued from a Police Officer. When he was discharged after the Second World War he purchased his first Golden Retriever, a dog that cost him twelve guineas, not a lot of money you may think but at the time this was three weeks wages! This dog died from kidney problems when he was only four years old. He then purchased a seven-month-old Golden Retriever bitch, Lady Christina, that the breeder insisted was shown. At her first show she won 'Best Gundog other than Cocker'. He also at this point had an affix of Sandcroft which he let lapse. His current affix is Oakmoss, and Halstock Juliet produced his first champion Oakmoss Ambassador. He only breeds a litter when he wants a new dog and has never owned more than two or three dogs at any one time. His wife, Mavis, keeps Sussex Spaniels.

How did you come to have a flatcoat?

I was at a show with one of my Golden Retrievers sitting at a ring next to Mrs Gwen Broadley and a bitch that she was showing put her head on my knee. That bitch was Ch Rungles Witch. I then went to Birmingham National to look at the breed and ordered a puppy from Mrs Lock, that was my first Flatcoated Retriever in the March of 1963, a bitch called Halstock Black Dahlia, for twenty-five pounds, which was again equivalent of three weeks wages. My next bitch was Halstock Juliette, my all time favourite Flatcoat. I worked and showed her obtaining one CC and twelve reserve CC's. She won open bitch at Crufts and the Field Trial Dog/Bitch class. She beat nine champions but failed to get the reserve ticket.

How long have you been judging at dog shows?

I started judging in 1951, starting off with simple matches, moved on to Sanction Shows, followed by Limited Shows. My first Open Show at Ashby de la Zouche, where I judged all the Terriers, Dalmatians, variety classes and also Best in Show! My very first Championship Show judging appointment was twenty-eight years ago. It was the second National Gundog Show (1973) held at Kempton Park Racecourse when I judged Sussex Spaniels. My last Championship Show was the City of Birmingham Show in (2001) when I judged Large Munsterlanders. (George is actually qualified to judge ten different breeds of gundogs!) My first Flatcoated Retriever judging appointment at a Championship Show was the third National Gundog Show when a young whippersnapper called Audrey Forster won the bitch ticket! I have judged abroad, with my favourite being the Scandinavian countries where the standards of exhibits are high.

Do you have a memorable show that springs to mind?

Yes, a Flatcoated Retriever Championship Show when I had fifty-three bitches in Post Graduate! Whenever there are two judges for the breed I always seem to end up with the bitches (*but George has always been one for the ladies!*)

What do you look for when judging Flatcoats?

Shape, the dog has got to look like a Flatcoat. An example of that was when I judged at the City of Birmingham Show there was a bitch, Gemswim Perhaps Love, a super dog that totally looked the part. I could not fault her so she got the Bitch ticket and Best of Breed; the poor handler was totally overawed as it was her bitch's first ticket.

Any memorable quotes that spring to mind?

Yes, two. The first was when I was at Macclesfield Show with Halstock Juliet. Fred Dempster (the judge), a terrier man, came up to me and said 'George you've got a cracking bitch there but you move like a bloody pansy!' The second was at my first ever committee meeting for FCRS held at Dr Nancy Laughton's house. At that time I was a heavy smoker and to be honest overawed by being at this meeting with Brigadiers and the like. Nancy always provided lunch and after lunch she said, 'Have a cigar George.' I was shy then and replied 'No thank you doctor.' She said, 'Go on lad then I can have one!' Nice gesture and it put me as one of them. When my name came up to go on the judging list I was sent out of the room for what seemed like ages. When I went back in, Amelia Jessel said what had taken the time was whether to put me on as an all rounder or a breed specialist. I ended up as breed specialist.

What societies have you been involved with during your career?

I now limit my time to NEFRA, North West Counties Spaniel Club and the Sussex Spaniel Association but I have served as Chairman of the Flatcoated Retriever Society, Chairman of the Sussex Spaniel Association, Chairman of the United Spaniels, Chairman of the Spaniel Council of Europe, Chairman of the Stoke Gundog Society and President of the Potteries Canine Association. I have served on the Kennel Club breed liaison for Flatcoated Retrievers as a delegate. Mavis has also served as an officer with most of these societies as well.

Could you be tempted back into the ring?

I am on the 'Roll of Honour' with the National Gundog Show and if they asked me to judge Best in Show I would consider coming out of retirement

What are your hopes for NEFRA?

I am one of the founding members and have seen it grow over the years. I would say to keep the atmosphere at shows as good as it is at the moment, if the Show is enjoyable then people will come again.

What do you plan to do now?

I will still go to Championship Shows but just to watch. As you know I enjoy cross-stitching, I am currently doing a 'Camargue Horses' sampler.

Any last thoughts?

I have enjoyed the whole world of dogs whether it be show, obedience or field trials and I have made many friends worldwide. I would like to thank everyone for all the pleasure they have given me over the years. All the best for 2002

PRESIDENTS CUP RESULTS 2002

1st	Brooks'	Culmquill Bless em all	81pts
2nd	Colsons'	Ch Windyhollow Nelly Moser	63pts
3rd	Dalziel/Scotts'	Branchalwood Strathybay	51pts
4th	Wintons'	Ch Braidwynn Bonnie Lad	46pts
	Wintons'	Braidwynn Beriet	46pts
6th	Brooks'	Culmquill It's a Lovely Day	43pts
7th	Slacks'	Ch Wizardwood Orlando	37pts
8th	Hutchinsons'	Varingo Victoria With Waverton	32pts
9th	Halls'	Ghilgrange Magic Magician	31pts
10th	Dalziel/Scotts'	Sh Ch Branchalwood Strathfinnan	30pts

Congratulations to you all.

Quantos.

The Flatcoated Retriever should always be a cheerful and willing worker, however he can also present a challenge to novice dog owners. The breed has an innate sense of fun, sometimes to the embarrassment or distress of their owners. Dr. Nancy Laughton characterizes the flatcoat as a canine Peter Pan. A mental image of a flatcoated retriever should include a happy wagging tail, coupled with an attitude of joviality.

Flat-coats should be introduced to training early. Quick to test their limits, the dogs will exploit opportunities for fun should they present themselves. The breed can be somewhat of a paradox. It is extremely intelligent, yet somewhat soft in nature. They respond best to positive training methods and can become shy and fearful if overly harsh methods are used. Puppies should be introduced to the basics of come, sit, stay and down at a young age and until the basics are thoroughly learnt it is not a lot of use going on. Susan Scales likened training dogs to progressing through school, infant, junior, senior and then specialist university courses. Unlike today's education where you progress onwards even if you have not passed the previous grades she advocated staying in one grade until it was completely learnt and obedience to the command was instant and, as Gwen Knight recommends in her book the two most useful words for a Flatcoat to know is its name and the word 'No'. It should also be understood that if a Flatcoat owner expects blind obedience and unfailing precision each and every time a command is given, then a Flatcoat will not be their ideal choice, try a Labrador.

To this end we have trained our pup, who is about 14 weeks old, to come to its name, sit when told and walk on and off a leader in an orderly manner. As a flatcoat feels more 'worthwhile' and expects to be admired when he is carrying something (anything) in his mouth we have encouraged him to retrieve to hand (ours) and present the object in a position easily collected from his mouth.

Now to proceed with the training i.e. going up to junior school. It is time now to introduce a whistle into the proceedings. This should be a pea-less plastic whistle to start with. More exotic ones can be indulged in later, they all make similar noises, the novice will no-doubt lose his whistle, leave it behind or break it in a multitude of ways, so it is easier to start with a simple Turner Richards black plastic pea-less whistle which comes in two or three tones. Remember the one you use and a replacement can be easily acquired, or even borrowed for an afternoon. Older dogs learn their individual whistles like words and it always impresses a crowd at a demonstration when 6 dogs sit in a row and each comes to, what appears to the audience, the same whistle.

Usually one blast on the whistle indicates stop and sit facing your handler. How many times have we seen the flatcoat obey the whistle instantly but sit, behind a tree or facing away from the handler. Remember the dog cannot take a hand signal if it cannot see you. He also knows this. A few short blasts on the whistle usually means come quickly. The faster the return the better and to start with a tit-bit can reward the quicker returns. When you are out walking on the lead a single blast and your feet stopping will soon indicate a halt. If the word sit is used at the same time the pup soon learns to sit 'on the whistle'.

A steady dog is a must. This means he will sit through anything and for any length of time. Start by putting the pup in the sit position with his leader on then move round in front of him. This is where 'eye' contact can be developed. Eye contact is essential for more advanced work because a dog that won't look you in the eye, like a person, is not one you feel happy with and a bond will not develop without a degree of eye contact. Repeat the word sit, or stay and move one step away. Put your foot on the leader if necessary. If the pup stays return and give a lot of fuss. If the pup tries to move replace him on the spot as quickly as possible and try again. This time try raising the flat of your hand towards the pup repeating steadily in a long note looking him directly in the eye. This is usually quite a quick lesson with a pup.

If you have an older more boisterous dog this can be a difficult lesson to teach. In this case try tying the dog to a very firm solid object (a small tree is a good candidate.) Leave enough lead, or rope, for the dog to be able to move slightly ie stand up and move his behind about 2/3ft, then repeat the puppy procedure. When he gets up but cannot get to you, go back and praise him for not reaching you. Replace him on the original spot and try again. He will very quickly realize he cannot get to you and remain seated. When you are confident he is sitting and staying while you move about 3-4yds away leave the leader loose and repeat. When the dog will sit while you back away from him for about 10yds you can start moving to the right and left and eventually circling him completely. Try to keep the dog sitting and not shuffling round with you on his bottom.

All this time we have never called the dog to us. We have always returned to praise him for staying. When we do return we are quiet with our praise and don't encourage him to jump up and leap around, we don't want him anticipating excitement on our return. That can come later when he is more advanced in his training and more mature in his outlook. (Maturity will not come quickly with a Flatcoat!). Still sitting we tempt him further by throwing dummies around and then perhaps tennis balls. Tennis balls are very exciting as they bounce, and the bouncing needs investigating by a nosy flatcoat. The final test comes when you

are training in a group and another less perfect than your pup runs into anything, will he take your dog with him? Or is he really steady? What an achievement when he is sitting calm and steady, off the leader when all around is puppy mayhem.

All this can be taught in a very small area but what about retrieving, after all you have got a retriever and he seems to retrieve everything shouldn't we be working on that side as well? When you go out for a walk, to begin with, if you can find a path which is well defined, let your pup see you drop a puppy dummy on the path. Proceed a small distance and turn your pup round sit it on your left hand side facing the dropped dummy, remove the leader and with your right hand sweep from the dog's nose towards the dummy saying 'back'. Your pup may go back and pick up the dummy, more likely it will gaze enquiringly at the end of your finger. If that's the case walk towards the dummy repeating 'back'. When the dummy is picked return as quickly as possible to your starting point and then take the dummy nicely from the pup. Adjust this exercise until the pup will return with a seen dummy from 50yds. Then vary the test so the pup doesn't see you drop the dummy, drop it into slight herbage at the side of the path, firstly letting the pup see the dummy being dropped then trying to conceal the drop. When your dog will follow your footsteps back just because you have sent him you are well on the way to doing a "blind" retrieve in a test.

Next we will go on to throwing dummies. Never throw many at a time as this encourages 'running in' and dogs getting over-excited, a thing not usually necessary in a flatcoat. Try to encourage calmness; in working, this will try and stop "squeaking" developing, a quiet calm dog is a great asset in the shooting field and out on social occasions.

Denise Jury

Gundog Proficiency Certificate on 23rd January

I went with my young dog 'Mersey' to the above event. Unfortunately out of five dogs we were the only failure. He is only seventeen months and could not settle on the day, we will be back again next year and I have so much confidence in my young dog that in about three months, when he matures more, he will definitely win me some rosettes in working tests this year. Congratulations to the four who gained their certificate. Thanks to the judges, David Bellamy and Steve Crooks, who were very fair and encouraging. Also to David Bellamy for organizing a very enjoyable and educational day.

by Jeff Lewins

NORTHERN ENGLAND FLATCOATED RETRIEVER ASSOCIATION

**FUN DAY ON SUNDAY 2nd JUNE 2002
AT WOODFORD MEMORIAL HALL, WOODFORD, CHESHIRE.**

Our Summer Fun Day will be held at the Woodford Memorial Hall, Woodford, Cheshire. As well as the usual activities, such as training and the scurry, there will be an opportunity to participate in the Kennel Club Good Citizen Bronze Award with your dog. There will be limited spaces for the award so please pre book. There will be a demonstration of the Novice, Intermediate and Senior Working Qualification tests that the association is proposing to run. The annual photo competition will also be viewed and judged. The request from the publishers of our calendar is that all the photographs are of a 'landscape' layout (i.e. longer side along the top and shorter on the sides). Refreshments will be available as well as tea and coffee. We will also be holding a raffle so if you can donate a prize it will be greatly appreciated.

For those of you who have broken collars and leaders (sorry webbing style only) a repair service will be available throughout the day.

The closing date for the photographic competition and the Kennel Club Good Citizen Bronze is Monday 6th May 2002 so you can complete a last minute entry at the Open Show. An application form is enclosed with this issue of Wagging Tails, however if you require a further application form please contact Mrs A Forster, Cooks Lane House, Cooks Lane, Bradnop, Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 7HA.

Directions

From the M56 – Leave at Junction 6 and follow the A538 into Wilmslow. At the traffic lights bear left, at next traffic lights turn right (Station Rd). Follow past station to mini roundabout. Turn left onto A5102 (Adlington Rd). At next roundabout bear right. At next roundabout bear left. Past Deanwater Hotel and venue is on left before the Garden Centre.

From M6 (South) – Leave at Junction 18. Go to centre of Holmes Chapel and turn right for Chelford and Alderley Edge. Bear left into Wilmslow then as above.

From the south – Go to Macclesfield and follow A523 towards Stockport. In Poynton at the traffic lights by the church turn left onto A5149. At mini roundabout bear left onto A5102. Go past British Aerospace. The venue is on the right past the garden centre.

GUNDOG PROFICIENCY CERTIFICATE – JUDGES REPORT

On Wednesday 23 January 2002, I was invited to judge the Flatcoat Working Gundog Certificate day at the Eagle shoot together with Dave Bellamy. Dave had taken a gun in the shoot and very kindly offered me a chance to share this with him. Five dogs and handlers were present including Cerea Seideman who had travelled from Germany to enter the test. The format of the day was a normal driven shooting day shooting Partridge, Pheasant and Woodcock.

For the first drive Dave took the gun and had two of the five dogs with him to test for steadiness and I took the other three where we stood with the other guns and watched a succession of Pheasants dropped around the dogs. All were steady to shot with just a little gentle reassurance from a couple of the handlers which is perfectly acceptable when out picking up with your dog. After the drive all the dogs were asked to pick the shot game and all succeeded, some requiring a little more encouragement than others, but again as the day went on all the dogs were picking their game with more confidence showing that with practice they were all capable of doing the job.

For the second drive Dave swapped his position in the shooting line with myself and we also changed dogs. During the drive I managed to shoot a Woodcock, which I don't think either of the dog handlers were looking forward to. However again using patience and help Gary Ellison's dog picked the Woodcock.

They day continued with Dave and myself swapping the gun and dogs until all the dogs had had five retrieves. The three dogs, which gained the certificate, gave a very good account of themselves and with practice were all capable of entering a proper field trial without being outclassed or embarrassing themselves and this is ultimately where these dogs should be heading towards.

The biggest problems of the day were basically down to the handlers and these could all be cured by the handlers being a little more relaxed and attending training classes with their dogs to iron out the small problems that we all have from time to time when training gundogs of whatever breed. It is imperative that the ability to work is not lost from the breed so please don't be afraid to get out working with your dogs, ask questions of other handlers and judges and above all enjoy working with your dog.

Steve Crookes

From the Working Secretary's Kennel

They, have decided a few words from the Working Secretary's patch of land is now a desired thing, so, as it was asked for here it is.

To start with a quick review of my first year or so. All was running smoothly until WHAM BANG foot and mouth. Everything went into hold until some landowners felt we could be allowed onto their ground and we were off at a gallop. The training day went well, I hope we all learned something!!! The working test could have had more entries, but there were so many other tests on that day/weekend that we had to alter from an Open to Intermediate test because of lack of availability of a panel judge, but I think we all learned a lot about placings, markings and prizes.

So onto our new venture, which will become an established event, the COLD GAME TEST. It was held in sugar beet along the lines of a Field Trial and everyone seemed to learn a great deal about protocol and luck in Field Trials. We were hoping to have further news about our long term NEFRA Retriever Tests but due to ill health this is behind schedule but will get going again after Crufts. Our August Working Test at Yarm is well under way with Steve and Anne Crookes judging. The training day and cold game test are in hand and hopefully we will be holding a NEFRA Gundog Proficiency Certificate earlier in the year for those who missed out in January. So keep you whistles round your neck and your wellies to the fore and best of luck in all working ventures this summer.

Denise

N.E.F.R.A. Working Test -13th April 2002

The tests are to be held at Farnsfield, North Notts and will as usual include Open, Novice and Puppy (for dogs born after January 1st, 2001) Entries will be £5.00 The judges will be Miss Margaret Rowson and Mrs Elaine Whittaker

Hot and cold drinks will be available but please bring your own lunch. There will be a raffle so if you are able to provide a prize then please do so, likewise if you can provide a cake to share this would also be appreciated.

To reduce costs entry forms will only be sent to those who attended last time. Anyone wishing to enter the test who does not receive a form should contact our Working Secretary – Mrs Denise Jury, 103 Williamthorpe Road, North Wingfield, Chesterfield, tel.- 01246 853575. Please note that a SAE would be appreciated

Future Dates for your Diary

T Working Test – 13th April 2002 at Farnsfield, Nottinghamshire
A Open Show – 5th May 2002 at Kirk Deighton, North Yorkshire
Fun Day – 2nd June 2002 at Woodford, Cheshire
Working Test - 10th August 2002 at Yarm, Cleveland
Fun Day – 22nd September 2002 Venue to be arranged
Open Cup Show – 3rd November 2002 at Myerscough, Preston

I Forthcoming Open shows in our area. Schedules for the following
shows can be obtained from the respective secretaries.
L **Loughborough & District Canine Soc** Sunday 26th May, Whitwick,
Leicestershire. Judge Mr G Whiting (Spenbeck), 4 classes
Secretary Fred Ward, tel 01530 243551.
Cheshire County Show Wednesday 19th June,
Judge Liz Geoghegan, 7 classes
Secretary David Christian, tel 01925 653158
E **Boston and District Canine Soc.** Wednesday 5th June, starts 5pm
Newark Showground. Judge R Emblem (Dunctonwood) 4 classes
Secretary Mrs P Duffy 01775 840295

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D The Newsletter sub committee would greatly appreciate your 'Letters
E to the Editor'. These will be included in future newsletters as and
when space is available. Please send them to Mrs. K Trevor at the
address below or e-mail to trevorsilk@ntlworld.com. Items received
from members and included in this newsletter do not necessarily
represent the views of the Association.

R News Letter Sub Committee.
S **Mrs. K Jubb** Thistledown House, 136 Loscoe Denby Lane, Denby Village,
DE5 8PP Tel. 01773 741501
Mr. S 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