

WAGGING TAILS

Issue 22

Autumn 2001

NORTHERN ENGLAND FLATCOATED RETRIEVER ASSOCIATION Officers and Committee Members

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 davidmarktay@hotmail.com



Hon Treasurer - Mrs. E. Whiting

Vice-Chairman - Mr. G. Whiting

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

Tel: 01924 521383. E mail elaine.whiting@ntlworld.com

COMMITTEE

Mrs. B M Adams (Litter Recorder).

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

Mr. R. Bunting & Mrs. S Bunting. E mail bunting.sylvia@talk21.com

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

Mr. S Jubb & Mrs. K Jubb. E mail steve1057@hotmail.com

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

Mrs. D Jury (Working Secretary). E mail dave@car-inspector.freemove.co.uk

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

Mr. J R Kitching.

Clowbeck Kennels, Sandhills Farm, Crathorne, 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. 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

Mrs. S J Wells. E mail Tdwells@btinternet.com

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

Thoughts from the Secretary's Table

Well, here we are in the thick of it again. Events are coming thick and fast with a Cold Game Test (a new feature for us), Fun day, seminar and our Cup Show in quick succession. Entries are coming in well but we always need more. We have an overseas judge at the show, so a bumper entry please. If any of you are doubtful whether you or your dog could cope with the cold Game test, ring and have a chat with Denise or any Committee Member. There are still some places available.

The programme for 2002 is in place with something for almost every month. The working side is expanding under our Working Secretary with the scope of proposed events becoming much wider. Denise has found some excellent venues, but any ideas you may have for others, especially on the West, would be looked at with a view to adding them to our list. Remember to sound out the idea with the owners first. I would also like to hear about any ideas for the programmes for Fun Days and Seminar. Ring me with them, no suggestions discounted, and may be they will develop into a huge success.

Let's all have a bumper Autumn, look for details in this Wagging Tails.

Kind regards to you all Audrey

NORTHERN ENGLAND FLATCOATED RETRIEVER ASSOCIATION

CODE OF ETHICS

This code has been put forward by your Association in conjunction with the Codes of Ethics produced by the Flatcoated Retriever Society, the Flatcoated Retriever Club of Scotland and The Kennel Club. The aim is to help Flatcoat owners to maintain the high standard of breeding and care that has made the present day Flatcoat.

1. Flatcoat owners should make every endeavour to breed from stock of the highest standard, which conform as closely as possible to the Breed Standard and have no serious faults which would preclude them from showing and/or working. All owners with stock used for breeding should take advantage of various KC/BVA schemes.

2 Stud dog owners must satisfy themselves as to the suitability of the bitches' breeding and the conditions under which the litter(s) would be reared.

3 Bitch owners should not, except in exceptional circumstances, e.g. on Veterinary advice, breed from bitches under two and a half years of age and have no more than two litters from any bitch at intervals of at least one year. No bitch should be bred from over 8 years old and The Kennel Club will not, except in exceptional circumstances, register the progeny of a bitch of this age.

4 Stud dog and bitch owners should note that following an accepted proposition at the 2001 A.G.M. 'Yellows and Non Standard colours should not be bred from.

5 Breeders/owners shall at all times be extremely careful when advertising and selling Flatcoats.

6 Members shall not knowingly sell Flatcoats to commercial dealers, retailers or laboratories. When exporting, all sellers of puppies should ensure the suitability of the new owners and the environment for a Flatcoat. The ethics of the Country with regards to dogs should also be taken into account.

7 The breeder of the puppies shall provide a copy of the pedigree, proof of registration, a satisfactory diet sheet, a complete health record and details of worming at the time of sale and advise on the appropriate dates/times of inoculations.

8 Owners should be aware that the happiness and well being of their dog is paramount.

9 Owners should ensure that their own conduct in public places is of a nature that will enhance the reputation of Flatcoat owners and their dogs.

10 In order to prevent commercialization of the breed, it is considered unacceptable to breed more than two litters from any one household, and one on breeding terms, in any twelve-month period.

Leader of the Peck

by Adrienne Hesketh

There it was again! Another crash from the other room - well you had just left two Flatcoats together alone, you fool, what did you expect? Curiosity and simple fear finally got the better of me and I decided I needed to investigate.

The sight that greeted me I could never have guessed at. There all in a neat row looking up with that 'It wasn't me Mum' expression only children and Flatcoats can do to a fine art were Marnie Flatcoat, to her right Kara Flatcoat and sitting proudly between them, wearing the 'I have told them they are naughty, Mum' was Dudley our BUDGIE!

In true 'Question of Sport' style what happened next?

Was it (a) The budgie was eaten by two dogs much bigger than him?

(b) The budgie was licked by two dogs, of the lickiest breed ever invented?

No! The budgie chased Marnie Flatcoat around the room pecking at her feet as she ran. She eventually took refuge on the sofa and the relentless chase continued and the by now not so waggy tail got it. The eventual scene of two grown up Flatcoats hiding behind the armchair while the leader of the 'peck' sorry pack strutted his stuff around the room will stay with me forever. My final thought being - where is the camcorder when you really need it? To date I still own two Flatcoats and one budgie although I have noticed some spotted handkerchiefs by the door packed with bones, leads and squeaky toys poking out... Better go and do a role call if you will excuse me.

LIVE GAME TRAINING DAYS 2001 - 2002

Two training days have been arranged for the following season

26th October 2001 and 11th January 2002

For those who have not come before, these days are not competitive and are designed to assist dog and handlers who have had some experience of warm game and who may be thinking of entering Field Trials

They are both driven shoot days at Alrewas, Staffordshire and as numbers are restricted please contact me as soon as possible to reserve a place

Francesca Prentice, Springwell Cottage, The Green, Combe, Witney, Oxon, OX29 8NT, tel no 01993 898740

NORTHERN ENGLAND FLATCOATED RETRIEVER ASSOCIATION

WORKING TEST REPORT - SUNDAY 5th AUGUST 2001

Held at Inkersal Manor Shoot, Farnsfield, Notts by kind permission of Mr Trevor Bossons shoot organiser. Owing, we hope, to the very short notice for the working test, the lack of preparation by most dogs owing to Foot and Mouth, and that U.R.C. were holding tests on the same day, the entry was not large. Four entries in puppy, seventeen in novice and seven in intermediate.

Anne Sparkes writes:

I was delighted at being asked to judge NEFRA's working test on 5th August along with Paul Eggington, the trouble is they make you feel so welcome, I'll want to go back and do it again!

Not a lot of puppies entered, but what I saw was extremely pleasing and it was encouraging to see such untamed enthusiasm ready to be harnessed. Paul judged all but one test in the intermediate and that was a long mark over uneven ground, which the majority of dogs had difficulty with. The novice test started with a four-dog walk up in bracken; some dogs were on whistle and some were not. The remaining tests gave similar results. I, like the rest of you, love our Flatcoats and only want the best for them, so please try your hardest to achieve success in your training and don't be afraid to train with other breeds. Take a little knowledge from everyone, then gel it together making it relevant for you and your dog. It's not an easy job but success can be yours.

NEFRA, thank you for giving me the opportunity to judge our lovely breed and good luck to every one in your training.

Paul Eggington writes;

What a wonderful venue for the Working Test, all the terrain you could want. Intermediate Test

Test 1 consisted of a four-dog walk up in small trees and bracken into a light breeze, which should have helped the dogs, but as the first dogs started, all started to go wrong. Dogs who normally would complete this exercise easily seemed to stand still.

Test 2 was similar to test 1 but only three dogs in line, with cross retrievers to gun shot. This again proved very difficult for all dogs. The varying heights of cover made marking sometimes very difficult.

Test 3 appeared difficult being a medium length blind up a bank and into woodland. This was a perfect example of a retrieve Flatcoats should excel at. This is how it proved to be with all dogs completing this exercise with ease and showing how they could work.

Test 4, judged by myself and Anne Sparkes my co-judge, proved to be very interesting, with gunshot and a dummy thrown into water. The dogs then had to walk to heel to the water's edge before being sent for the retrieve. This test was completed with varying degrees of success.

Novice Test.

Test 1 was in the same terrain as the intermediate that morning, both Anne and I had two dogs each and started with a walk up with a single marked retrieve to gunshot with one dog running under each judge alternatively. For some reason the novice had a better time with better results than the intermediates. Most dogs completed this exercise well with some nice work done.

Test 3 was a long marked retrieve over some long grass, where the dummy fell onto a grassy plain. The problem here seemed to be dogs were having a lot of problems marking the dummy. The dogs that did mark the fall went straight to it but a large proportion had to be handled, as they had not accurately marked the fall.

Anne and I again judged test 4. This was a water test where a shot was fired and dummy thrown. This time the dogs were sent from some way from the waters edge, which lead to some unsteadiness in some dogs.

May I finish by saying what a pleasure it was to judge the dogs and co-judge with Anne Sparkes.

Denise Jury (Working Secretary) writes;

I would like to make some comments on the day and results.

Firstly the lack of First prize in the novice and intermediate. If a dog has not been given any marks i.e. scored a '0' in any test it is very unlikely to get an award. People after getting a '0' will go on running their dogs to get practice but most know they will not be in the awards even if all other scores are '10's'. If the dog with the highest marks i.e. the 'winner' got a '0' a First prize will not be given. If the dog with the second highest marks scored in all tests he will be second, but if this second dog did not come up to the judges standard (in their opinion) for a second place it will not be awarded. There is no advantage for a novice dog that is not up to open standard being awarded first place, because a first place in novice eliminates a dog from further novice tests. It can therefore only enter in the future in open and intermediate tests. If any of you have watched an open A.V. Retriever test the standard is very high leading onto open F. T. and Retriever Field Trial Ch.'s

After watching a few A.V. tests you will see what Anne (one of the judges) means when she says Flatcoats have a lot of potential but need to be 'on the whistle'. If you do not understand this or are having difficulty (and everybody does, it all depends on the dog and they are all different) please contact a member of the working committee. They may not be able to help you but they will know a person who can.

The Awards (cups, platters etc) had been donated to the dog getting first place in the named test. As there was no first place, for the reasons already given, the platter and cup were not awarded. In A.V. tests there is often a prize for the highest placed Flatcoat, Golden or Lab in the awards. Then if you got second and there was no first awarded you would get the trophy. Occasionally there is a trophy for the highest placed Flatcoat whether in the awards or not. It all depends on the wording the donator of the trophy put on it. Just be careful, if you are going to donate a trophy, how you word to whom it is to be awarded.

On finishing please remember we have a very small gene pool of Flatcoats, only 1,400 pups registered last year compared with 32,000 Labradors so we need to keep breeding for bidability. Our dogs have to work for us, we have so few we cannot discard them as the labs are discarded for some minor fault and relegated to couch potatoes. Also to keep the multi purpose tag to the breed you are looking, in a dog for conformation (for the show ring) trainability (for all types of working, field, obedience, flyball, agility etc) health (all breeds have their problems, Flatcoats seem to have fewer than most but they have to be watched.) It isn't easy with a numerically small breed, but keep on trying. With more effort on the human part it can be done.

Results.

Puppy.	1st	Castlerock Aria Force	Mrs D. Brooks.
	2nd	Torwood Part & Parcel	Mr & Mrs J. Lewins.
	3rd	Castlerock Hayeswater.	Miss S. Keeling.
Novice.	1st	Not awarded.	
	2nd	Torwood Manerly.	Mr & Mrs J. Lewins.
	3rd	Blackflight Henrietta	Mr & Mrs J. Ellison.
Intermediate.	1st	Not Awarded.	
	2nd	Wienbridge Argo.	Miss M. White.
	3rd	Ch. Steeplehouse Chipper.	Mrs R. Townsend.

**An interview with Kim Adams,
Best Game Keeper winner at Crufts 2001**

Hands up all who knew there were special classes for Gamekeepers, their dogs, their employers' dogs and workers dogs at Crufts? Yes, all those who've been in Gundogs and work them will have perhaps heard that bone-fide gamekeepers could enter their dogs at Crufts without qualifying in the breed classes. The classes used to potter along but in the 1990's B.A.S.C. took over the running of the classes and since then they have gone from strength to strength. This year the individual dogs, judged by John Stubbs, the keeper for Windsor Home Park, numbered ninety three, individual dogs and over twenty eight teams giving well over two hundred dogs entered.

Around the rings in Hall 4 there was a huge crowd of people especially interested in shooting and that side of Gundogs. Out of all these dogs a fourteen month old Flatcoat, who had come second in her breed class went Best Gamekeepers retriever and then in the late afternoon in the big ring was judged 'Best in Show, Gamekeepers Ring' and Bess (Lyneholme Hazel at Suskim) handled by David Bellamy took the Prestigious 'Northesk Memorial Trophy', a truly wonderful silver cup. Bess was shown by David because as Crufts had been moved due to foot and mouth Kim could not spare the time away from the shoot, being a full time single handed keeper he had birds (partridge and pheasants) already hatched that couldn't be left.

Kim had had a run up to this high honour when in 1999 with "Suskim Mini" he had won the Retriever Classes and then gone on to Res. B.I.S. Gamekeepers Classes. Mini was sired by Indego Jim at Lathkill whilst Bess was sired by Kim's other working and stud dog Heronsflight Moss' Design on Hasweth.

Kim had always wanted to be a gamekeeper as he had spent a lot of time in his youth with his uncle who was a keeper, so at fifteen he was employed as a 'boy' on the local estate for two years then progressed to being under keeper for a year. When the estate was broken up for death duties Kim moved around and took various jobs including woodman and vermin control, but eventually settled as a head keeper. Throughout his life he has always had dogs, mainly spaniels until in 1987 he acquired Belbrook Bess of Cleersprings when her owner went abroad.

Bess was such a good worker Kim approached Denise Jury to use Dark Delight Henry Boy from Torwood at stud, and so came into contact with David Bellamy. A friendship developed and through this Kim acquired Heronsflight Moss' Design on Hasweth, 'Desmond' who at 10 years old is still working, although he it with

one eye, (another story) and still siring super pups, is the real foundation of Kim's love of Flatcoats.

It is difficult to know where to start with a keeper's year but perhaps February/March time is the best time. The main shooting is over and the hare shoots are proceeding, the dogs are being used to help catch hen birds to pen them up with selected cocks at a ratio of 6:1 so that eggs can be collected in the spring and put into incubators to be hatched for next years shooting. The newly hatched birds are kept in sheds until they are two weeks old, then moved to sun parlours until six weeks (indoor and outdoor pens) then into pens in wooded areas around the shoot. From these they are released but still fed in the pens to encourage them to stay in the home area. This is a time for intense vermin control. A fox kills all and takes no prisoners, rats and raptors all take their toll of young defenceless poults, so vigilance is necessary and working at night becomes a way of life.

During this time Kim liaises with farmers and game crops have been planted to feed and shelter adult birds later in the year. This will encourage the birds to stay on the owners ground and not seek better pastures elsewhere. Birds fly in set patterns and woodland has to be cultivated to encourage them. Undergrowth is regulated and 'rides' cut through heavy woods to facilitate access for vehicles to service the pheasants with food and water.

During the spring Kim and the 'Boss' decide the number of days shooting that will be required and the number of birds required each day. This number tells them how many poults need to be put on the ground; surplus birds will be sold to other estates. During the summer the shoot dates are fixed and Kim then sets about organising beaters, pickers up, bird collectors and transport, to ensure everyone is where they are meant to be at the right time. Afterwards shot birds have to be sold.

By the middle of January the shooting year is drawing to an end and finishes with a flurry of activity with the landowner wanting extra days, the tenant farmers, the beaters and local keepers having a days shooting to show goodwill. In February after the pheasant days have finished a couple of hare drives may be held if numbers deem necessary and then the job of catching up the pheasants begins again to start the round of laying, rearing and shooting.

Denise Jury

NEFRA Items for sale

The foot and mouth crisis has severely curtailed our social events and activities, not to mention our fundraising, so for all you shopaholics out there here are the items we have available for sale. Please send your order together with a cheque made payable to the Northern England Flatcoated Retriever Association to Mrs S.J. Wells, Ravensdale, 2 Albert Road, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5HT. **Why not place your order in time to collect from the Open Show on Sunday 4th November?**

		Cost	P & P
Sweatshirts	Printed (S & M)	£15.50	£2.00
	Printed (L & XL)	£16.00	£2.00
Sweatshirts	Embroidered	£17.00	£2.00
Polo Shirts		£15.00	£1.00
Ties	Green, blue, maroon	£10.00	50p
Metal Club badges		£ 2.50	30p
Ring Clips		£ 3.20	50p
Car Stickers		£ 1.25	30p
Pens		50p	20p
Flatcoat Cards (no message)	Pack of 6	£ 3.20	£ 1.00
	Pack of 4	£ 2.40	£ 1.00
Training Equipment			
Dummies (1lb)		£ 3.00	£ 1.60
Puppy		£ 2.00	50p
Dummies			
Rope Leads	Green or Black	£ 4.50	50p
Leather Slip Leads		£ 8.50	50p
Whistles		£ 2.50	30p
Lanyards		£ 1.00	30p

Did you know that NEFRA has produced its own 'How to raise your new puppy' booklet full of useful tips and ideas for new (and not so new) owners of Flatcoat puppies. Ideal for giving to a new owner when they collect their puppy from you. Available from Mrs S.J. Wells, Ravensdale, 2 Albert Road, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5HT at a cost of £1.00 plus 30p p&p per booklet.

NORTHERN ENGLAND FLATCOATED RETRIEVER ASSOCIATION

**FUN DAY ON SUNDAY 7th OCTOBER 2001
AT WOODFORD MEMORIAL HALL, WOODFORD, CHESHIRE.**

Our Autumn 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 Agility demonstration with the opportunity for you to have a go under supervised conditions. Hopefully, duty commitments allowing, Pc Doug Marshall and Police 'Dog Connor' will join us, a Flatcoat drugs dog, and they will give a demonstration of their skills. 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.

It is not too late to come, as the closing date for the Fun Day is Wednesday 3rd October 2001. Please contact Mrs A Forster, Crooks Lane, Bradnop, Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 7HA for an application form.

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.

Stop Press - NEFRA Calendar 2002

(Limited edition 300 only)

Available at the forthcoming events for the small amount of £5.50

Also new card designs suitable for use as notelets or Christmas cards for the cost of 12 for £4.50 in the larger size or 12 for £2.50 in the smaller size

NORTHERN ENGLAND
FLATCOATED RETRIEVER ASSOCIATION
11TH BREED OPEN SHOW

THE SPEEDWELL ROOMS, STAVELEY,
CHESTERFIELD, DERBYS

SUNDAY 4TH NOVEMBER 2001

Dogs	Judges	Bitches
Mrs L Galdermans (Holland)		Miss S Pingree (Heatheridge)

ENTIES CLOSE THURSDAY 4TH OCTOBER 2001 (POSTMARK)

Have you sent off your entry form yet? If not why not? Let's make this the best open show to date. Schedules were sent out with the last issue of Wagging Tails. 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

Only dogs entered for competition are allowed within the precincts of the Show

BREED SPECIFIC SEMINAR ON SATURDAY 20TH OCTOBER 2001
KIRK DEIGHTON, NORTH YORKSHIRE

We are holding a Breed Specific Seminar on Saturday 20th October 2001 at Kirk Deighton, North Yorkshire. This event is open to non-members as well as members of NEFRA and will be run in accordance with the Kennel Club Codes of Best Practice.

A light lunch, as well as tea and coffee, is included in the cost of the seminar. We will also be holding a raffle so if you can donate a prize it will be greatly appreciated.

It is not too late to apply, as the closing date for the Seminar is Friday 12th October 2001. Please contact Mrs A Forster, Crooks Lane, Bradnop, Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 7HA for an application form.

Meet the Judges

As I am sure you are aware our 11th Breed Open Show takes place at the Speedwell Rooms, Staveley, near Chesterfield on Sunday 4th November 2001 with Mrs L Galdermans (Holland) judging the Dogs and Miss S Pingree (Heatheridge) judging the Bitches. They have been asked to write a short resume about themselves so that you can find out all about them.

Mrs L Galdermans (Holland) writes;

I got my first Flatcoat when I was aged 17, as a present from my parents after passing my high school exam in the summer of 1969 and I immediately fell in love with this wonderful breed. I wanted a breed to work with and a Flatcoat wants to work, oh yes (most of the time anyway, you know)!! My first Flatcoat was the male Heronsflight Trust bred by Joan Mason. Those first years I spent several summer holidays on the Mason's farm in Ilmington. Joan took me to shows, working tests, game-fairs and to see litters and I learned a tremendous lot from her. A few years after Trust the young adult bitch Heronsflight Jinx came to Holland. She became the foundation bitch for my later 'Swallowsflight' kennel. Again after some years the later very famous male Heronsflight Pan's Pledge followed. All 3 of them became well known Champions; especially Pan's Pledge was a real ambassador for the breed and winner of lots of BIS in different countries. I bred my first Flatcoat litter in 1974 and I still breed regularly nowadays. During the later years I introduced some other lines into my foundation lines; Torwood, Wizardwood, Breamist and Riversflight dogs were imported. Most of the British dogs became Dutch Champion. Until now I have bred myself 33 Dutch Champions. I love to show my dogs but also work them on dummy and cold game working tests.

Miss S Pingree (Heatheridge) writes;

I have been successful showing Flatcoated Retrievers for seventeen years and made up two Show Champions. My first Champion won fourteen CC's, seven RCC's, and his Junior Warrant. He won the Gundog group at W.K.C and also RBIS at Merseyside Gundog Championship Show. My second Champion has four CC's and two RCC's and well as Junior Warrant. I have had Junior Warrants with five of my dogs. I enjoy showing and judging this lovely breed. Due to time constraints I do not work my dogs.

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.

PAWS AND FEET ON THE LINE

by Shirley Payne

'Why have a gun-dog if you are not going to shoot over her?' Someone once asked me. Well, the answer to that is that my first, rescue dog, Sam Snuff, was half border collie and half flatcoated retriever. The two breeds have so many characteristics in common - except that the border collie has a strong sense of responsibility and the flatcoated retriever is an outrageous extrovert ... Along with all the other admirable characteristics, it was the sense of mischief, which I wanted to repeat. I collected Allegro Molto (Ally, for short) last May, and since then my cup runneth over - she is very molto!

I want her to have a busy and enjoyable life, doing things which suit her personality and her abilities, so, we are willing to have a go at anything which does not seem dangerous to her health, her safety or her confidence. To that end, we joined a weekend course at the Derbyshire Canine Centre (Sheila Bailey) called Heelwork and Dancing to Music, offered by Ann Clayton (and Alfie). Ally finds close heelwork both restrictive and boring and not suited to her personality - surprise! Neither do I want a dog sitting in front of me with its nose up my jumper, or leaning on my hip with its neck at an excruciating angle, so competition heelwork will never be for us. This was decidedly an activity of a different ilk! I had referred to it to my friends as a course on line dancing for dogs. I did not guess how near the mark that facetious description was!

On day one - with Ally as usual plunging to be friendly with everything on two or four or six legs - Ann tried to teach us some basic movements. How to get our dog to make a wide circle or a tight circle round us, how to do a twirl by our side, how to do an inward turn thus changing direction and working side. Many dogs, including Ally, found working on the right side uncomfortable and new, and so had to get used to the idea. Later in the day, some music was introduced so that we could walk and turn etc. to a steady beat (here Ann did use some line dancing music). It has to be said, that the dogs were quicker to learn than the handlers - especially THIS handler. Yes, like many of the others, I have two left feet. Unlike them however, I do not KNOW which feet are left and which are right.... I had this problem when I started country dancing - many a time I found myself ending up in a different set from the one I began the dance in!

By the second half of the afternoon Ally was showing signs of being tired, so I did not work her. We both settled down to watch and I have to say I have never in my life seen so many mystified dogs!

By day two, Ally and I were rested, and performed the first sequence spot-on. As did all the other dogs. Of course the secret lies in the handler knowing where to go next and signalling positively and confidently and in good time to the dog. Day two went on with teaching sidestepping, walking backwards, rollovers and tips on how to begin teaching jumping. Unfortunately the ground outside was too wet to begin jumps and the ground in the training school too hard. But we learnt how to start the process. Finally Ann made up a sequence to finish off with. My dog, with a good rest in the middle, had a really enjoyable day - lots of tail wagging and silly grins and sighs of relief when her human grasped what she herself knew all along!

So what's different from close heelwork? The dog can work in an independent way, learning to work sometimes at a distance. There is a lot of teamwork and laughter involved (sure-fire for Ally!) and you - and the dog - can be very creative in putting together your sequence. As Ann pointed out, you are only limited by the dog's abilities, your abilities and - especially - your imagination! So I went away imagining sequences - for example - for a wheelchair handler and a lively dog; for a lively young handler and a mature dog, and so on. The title for the one I shall design for Ally and me is 'Dog runs rings round human'. All I have to do is find the music - we can do all the rest! We had a good time - all the humans and all the dogs - even I enjoyed day two even if Ally and I did fall a bit short of Torvill and Dean.

Want to know more? Go to www.learningaboutdogs.co.uk/musi or enquire at Paws n Music, P0Box 13, Chipping Camden, Glos. GL556VJX. Tel no 01386 438781

NORTHERN ENGLAND FLATCOATED RETRIEVER ASSOCIATION COLD GAME TEST - FUR OR FEATHERS ON SUNDAY 23rd SEPTEMBER AT FARNSFIELD, NOTTS

The Cold Game test will be run on F.T. lines and will be for NEFRA members Flatcoats only. The cost will be £15 per dog. Coffee and Tea will be supplied. Please bring your own food for lunch and a cake to share for tea. There will be a raffle so please donate a prize if you can. Spectators are welcome.

If you are interested in attending the Cold Game Test and require further details please contact Mrs D Jury, 103 Williamthorpe Road, North Wingfield, Chesterfield, S42 5NX or tel 01246 853575 as there will be a limited number of places available.

Future Dates for your Diary

T Cold Game Test - 23rd September at Farnsfield, Notts
A Fun Day - 7th October at Woodford, Cheshire further details to follow
Seminar - 20th October at Kirk Deighton 10am start
Live Game Training Day - 26th October at Alrewas, Staffordshire
Open Show - Sunday 4th November - at Staveley, Chesterfield
Live Game Training Day - 11th January 2002 at Alrewas, Staffordshire

Forthcoming Open shows in our area

I Schedules for the following shows can be obtained from the respective secretaries.

L Gundog Breeds Association of Scotland Champ Show - Saturday 10th November Mr J R Kitching (Clowbeck) (16 classes)
Sec. Mrs M.C.S. Cowe, Tel 01383727942
Derby Kennel Assoc - Saturday 20th October - Mrs Debbie Emblen
Sec. Mrs I M Potter, Tel 01332 736183
Lincoln Canine Soc. - Sunday 7th October - Mr J Tidmarsh (4 classes)
Sec. Mrs A Deane, Tel 01522 788485

E Achievements

N Congratulations to the following members and their dogs on gaining their third CC - Sh Ch Wizardwood Orlando and Mr and Mrs Slack, Ch Windyhollows
Nelly Moser and Mr, Mrs and Miss Colson, Ch Riversflight Marling to Pajanbeck and Mr and Mrs Eggington

D 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. 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