



Flatcoat News

Flatcoated Retriever Society – Surrey and London Area

Jill's jottings

We have been very busy since the last newsletter and most things have gone very well. We have a full programme of events for the rest of the year.

However I am extremely disappointed with the response to the request for help at the picnic both on set up day and picnic day. In spite of including the request for help on all the information and entry forms I had no volunteers at all.

This put a very heavy burden on our few regular helpers, most of whom are of pension age (one or two of us seriously so!) and/or were recovering from various health problems.

The erection of the big tent, which we need in case of bad weather, requires at least 8 strong men. Panic!! David Ashcroft worked a miracle and mustered a team of volunteers from Selborne to come and do the job and take the tent down afterwards. We owe them a very big thank you.

This will not happen again so more helpers needed on set up day next year. Our regular helpers had to cope with a very long day to complete the rest of the preparations and ended the day very tired indeed. The following morning the same team arrived to get the finishing touches done and to man the competitions, all of which need two people in attendance all day.

We did not have enough helpers to do this and as a result the water retrieve had to be abandoned. These helpers paid the full fee for the picnic but were unable to run any of their dogs or have a break as they were determined to spend their day ensuring everyone else had a good time.

It took most of us several days to recover. Surely it is not too much to ask people to chip in and help even if only for half an hour during the day to enable these helpers to have a bit of fun too. If help is not forthcoming next year it will put the future of the picnic in serious jeopardy. Sorry to be such a misery but if you enjoy and value the picnic do something to help!!

Jill

CHILDREN'S DAY

Mogador
Saturday 24th September
2.00pm

No fee but please let Jill know how many children you will bring by Saturday 10th September.

This is an afternoon designed to teach the children how to look after and handle their dogs using dogs provided by members of our group.

Make the most of it this year as it may be the last for a while. The number of children attending the group training and activities has reduced alarmingly and if this continues it will not be feasible to organise the day. Time was when we had a strong junior group who came to training each week but this is no longer the case. Unfortunately they have grown up as children do and we have no new ones to replace them.

The day will inevitably be a little different from previous years but we hope to give the children an enjoyable time.

TRAINING DATES

SEPTEMBER

Saturday 10th Blackheath

Saturday 17th BBQ at the Witterings

Saturday 24th Mogador, Children's Day

OCTOBER

Saturday 1st Thursley walk, and just a reminder Discover Dogs is at the Excel on 22nd - 23rd.

Walk in the Surrey Hills

Saturday, 18th June

Well done, Scilla. Thank you for devising, trialling and leading the walk on the day at Wotton. Wellies were a "must" as the going was extremely soft - Flatcoat heaven! 8 Flatcoats plus handlers completed the walk - 2 Golden's took the short route back to the pub. Our dogs, thoughtfully, tried to shed accumulated mud from their coats by taking a swim in a pool at Friday Street (see photo). The circular walk took, overall, 1.5 hours at a comfortable pace. Upon our return to the pub we were joined by other members of the group for much needed refreshment and plenty of animated conversation – a day to remember!

From Mark and Diana Butcher.

DIPS INTO THE ARCHIVES

EXTRACTS FROM OUR FIRST NEWSLETTER DATED 8th OCTOBER 1993

Having been asked by the Flatcoated Retriever Society Committee to be the representative for the Surrey Area Jill invited as many members as possible to an informal meeting at her home on Saturday October 2nd 1993 in order to meet you all and to discuss what activities or talks you would like her to organise. She had already received requests for training sessions, talks on diet and health and a trimming demonstration among others.

THE RESULT OF THE MEETING

In spite of the torrential rain which made travelling very hazardous twenty five people crowded into Jill's sitting room to decide what activities would be welcome. She explained we had to be self supporting financially and so it was decided to charge a fee of £1 per person at all meetings unless we had to hire a hall when the fee would be adjusted accordingly. It was overwhelmingly agreed that our next meeting would be in November at Alison Brown's house to discuss feeding regimes and to help with any problems. It was also agreed that our first training session would be on Saturday 29th October and would be open to dogs and puppies of all ages starting with basic obedience and in time progress to ring craft and gundog work for anyone interested. Future plans included a picnic at Cotterells Farm and a trimming demonstration in time for Crufts.

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We have since met every weekend apart from bank holidays and a short period over Christmas apart from a very few cancellations due to matters beyond our control. Some members who attended the first meeting are still coming to meetings in 2016!

HOME FOR JESS

Jess is the Flatcoat who was in urgent need of a home a few weeks ago. You will all have seen the stop news that was sent out and you will no doubt be pleased to know that she has found a lovely home with Nigel and Carrole Bentley who have been members of the Surrey Area group almost from the beginning.

Some of you will remember how Nigel and Carrole fitted a trailer to their mountain bike on order that Sheba could accompany them on their walks when she could no longer do the distance under her own steam. Jess now has two Flatcoats boys aged 6 and almost 10 for company and has settled in well with her new family. She could not have found a better home. Thank you all for your response to her call for help.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

BARBEQUE

**Saturday September 17th at West Wittering
Start from 10.30 and continuing through
the day.**

Fee £8.50 children 16 years and under free

Don't forget to have correct parking money ready
£8.00 for the day

Those who have been to the bbq before will know what a super day this is and will have no need for persuasion to come again. For those who have not been before please note that this may be the last we do in the present form so hurry up and let Jill know if you are coming as soon as possible but no later than Sept 8th please. Pay on the day or pay in advance if you see Jill.

This is a great day out for the dogs children and all those grown ups of any age. It is worth going even if only to watch all the dogs in the sea having fun together, Just under thirty of them last year and not a grumble all day says a lot for our lovely breed. The food provided by the Oates family is great too. As 'they' say... Don't delay, book today'

The parking fee seems a lot but this is a lovely privately owned beach and the money goes towards the upkeep to make it safe and pleasant for all to enjoy.

THURSLEY WALK

**Meet at the Three Horseshoes Thursley
on Saturday 1st October at 10 am**

Mike is guiding the popular walk over Thursley Common again this year. It is not suitable for puppies under a year old but if there are enough people with puppies a shorter walk could be arranged for them starting at 11.am. If you do not wish to do the walk why not join us for lunch at the pub at 12.30? The fee for the walk is just £3, the same as our weekly training sessions, You order and pay for your own lunch at the pub.

Please let Jill know if you wish to come so that she can warn the pub of the number expected. Entries by 17th October. (You can bring them to the BBQ if you are coming there) Pay on the day.

CHRISTMAS LUNCH 2016

**The Three Horseshoes, Thursley
Sat December 5th
12 noon for 12.30**

I do not yet have the menu and cost but please let Jill know if you would like to come. She will then forward you the details as soon as she has them in order that you can choose your menu or decide it will not be for you. No commitment at this stage but Jill needs to know likely numbers. It is always a lovely meal and a good start to the Christmas season.

NEW YEAR PARTY

**2.30 on Sunday 8th January at
Thursley Village Hall**

Fee £5 plus a small plate of food towards the tea. Children aged 16 and under free. Entries by 31st December please.

This party is just a silly time for the dogs with lots of games for them to play. It's also a good opportunity for us all catch up on the news since we last met.

Please see separate entry forms.

**PLEASE RETURN TO JILL BY THE CLOSING DATE
IF YOU ARE COMING**

What is a Flatcoat for?

So what is a Flatcoated Retriever for? Picking-up birds on a shoot and bringing them back to you; collecting dummies on a working test and hopefully getting more points than the Labradors and the Goldies; being a placid PAT Dog and making friends at care homes but most of all making us smile and be happy.

That's what Medoc did for twelve years.

Pentonfin Medoc was one of six pups born to our Merlot on 1st May 2004 and although not our first Flatcoat, she was my first Flatcoat having been a Golden Retriever fan for years. Many training sessions brought success in the working tests and an early move from Novice Dog/Novice Handler to Novice - my that was a big and frightening jump.

With husband Richard and Merlot's guidance, Medoc and I started picking-up on a shoot where all the pickers-up had Flatcoats – what a wonderful sight that was.

Medoc became a registered PAT Dog in March 2005 taking over from Chablis, our Golden Retriever, when she had her TPLOs (Totally Pointless Leg Operations?).

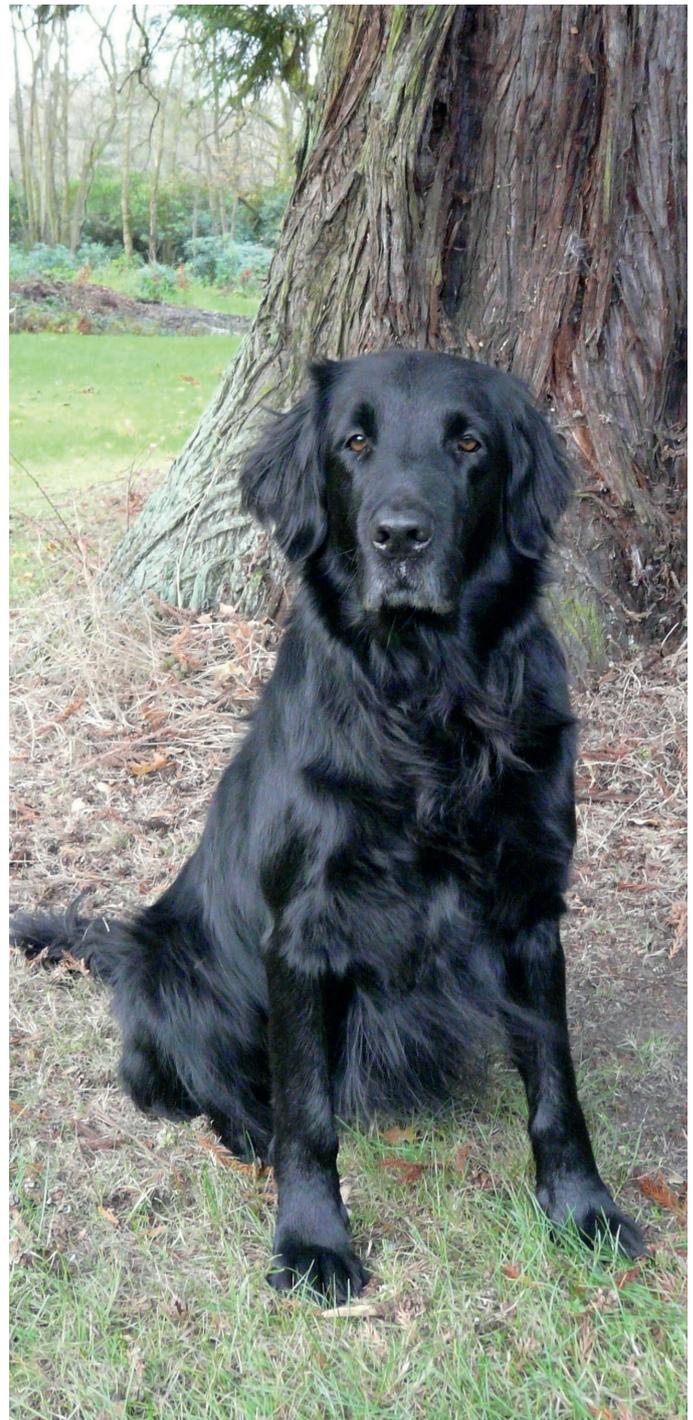
Medoc enjoyed the limelight, particularly when going along on talks about the Charity - she would settle on her mat but as soon as the applause came at the end she knew it was biscuit time. Her love of food was well known to all her PAT friends.

When Medoc was three years old she had her own litter of 10 puppies of which 9 were boys and just one was a little girl that we kept – Syrah who sadly died, before her mother, in January this year when she was only eight.

We all retired from the shooting world but Medoc still much enjoyed retrieving dummies although stop whistles became a thing of the past when she went completely deaf. However, all the hand-signal training came in use then – shame she ignored them all before, when she could hear!

All our dogs are special to us but being part of our first litter and my first working gundog made Medoc even more so. Memories are here for ever even if they fade somewhat like the photographs of old but Medoc will stay in my heart for ever.

Much loved by both of us – Patricia Bland & Richard Pendrill – Pentonfin Flatcoats



Pentonfin Medoc
1 May 2004 - 11 July 2016

Summer picnic

17th July 2016

Once again the 3rd Sunday in July dawned. Picnic Day!

It really didn't seem a year since we last had our annual picnic. After so many weeks of rain and cold we were blessed with a beautiful day. One that was not too hot for either the dogs or us humans to be able to enjoy the fun and laughter.

We had our usual agility - with a twist, scurry, land retrieve and the amazing maze keeping people occupied until 3 o'clock. Then it was 'all together' for the mass waggy tail. The Flatcoats were given a run for their money with other breeds putting in a great show. Then came the mass sit stay. May be it was that by then the dogs were a little tired after all the fun of the day but you were all so good. Note to the organisers - more distractions next year!

Then the mad dash - uphill - which is always very enthusiastically enjoyed by both dog and owner. Judging by all the noise and excitement this year was no exception. Unfortunately we could not run our water retrieve this year due to lack of man power, but the bay in the bend of the river was a great spot for general fun and cooling off. The day ended of course with our usual spit roast. Many thanks to Matthew who always cheerfully supplies us with this treat at the end of the day.

Many people returned home having won trophies and rosettes. More importantly though we hope you all returned home having spent a very happy fun day with your dogs. Hopefully we will be able to do it all again next July.

Our sincere thanks go to David and his band of helpers who set up the marquee without whom it would not have materialised. We hope to see you all again next year. Tell your friends too. The events are geared for all dog abilities and we especially love to see our 'purely pet' dogs enjoying such fun. We are already in discussion as to next year's fun and games and look forward to seeing you all then. Put the 3rd Sunday in July your diaries now. Without you all the hard work and preparation would be in vain.

Jan Backhouse

Picnic winners

The Picnic went well again and the weather was kind to us once more. David Ashcroft had built another super maze which was very popular. All the competitions were hotly contested and everyone seemed to have had a good day put. The dogs all seemed to be having a great time.

The main prize winners were Best Flatcoat Jenny McCarter's Brodie

Best of the Rest Pat Hulme

Veteran Tanya Beard

Puppy Ellie Erhardt

Child Imogen Brant

Sorry, I do not have all the dog's names to hand.

Rannoch



New recruits

Welcome to Bramble, bred by David Ashcroft, who has joined the Bulley family and has already been awarded a second prize at her local show and attended our training group meeting.

Good luck to them all for the future.

Thank you David for sending details of Bramble's move to our area and informing the Bulley family of our existence!

It is such a help when we know of new flatcoats in our area. I wish other breeders would follow your example.



This year we invited The Southern Flatcoated Retriever Club to a fun gundog match to run in parallel with the picnic. This report was sent by Rannoch McCarter who took part in the match as a team member for Surrey.

FUN GUNDOG MATCH at the AGT

It was apparently suggested that perhaps it would be interesting if we held an interclub competition at the Annual Picnic. Each team was to consist of 6 dogs to include at least three Flatcoats. After a bit of persuasion Inger very kindly agreed to not only judge the competition but also to set our different tests. It was meant to be a fun event, which it was, but some of the opposition seemed to take it rather seriously! The competition was based on a gundog working test and was really quite straightforward although some of us dogs thought otherwise and decided to do our own thing! Inger was very fair to us all and tried to offer much needed help and advice to those of us with wayward owners. At the end we were all presented with a rosette and of course being the perfect hosts we let the two visiting teams come first and second!!! In retrospect it was not a good idea to hold the competition on the same day as the picnic as it took several of our handlers away from helping with the other events, but perhaps next time one of the other clubs could host the event on their ground. Hopefully we all enjoyed ourselves, I certainly did, and very many thanks to Inger and her assistants for all their hard work and although we didn't win we were definitely the best team!

Rannoch

Flatcoated Retriever Society – Surrey and London Area

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