



# Newsletter June 2014

Registered Charity Number: 1067495

Patrons: David C. Fletcher B. Vet. Med. MRCVS, Maureen S Fletcher, Michael Bingham

## Summer Fayre at Wye Village Hall and Recreation Ground

Let's hope that we will have great weather for this year's summer fayre which is taking place in Wye, one of the prettiest villages in Kent, on Sunday July 27th from midday until 5.00pm.

The fayre, which is our major fundraising event, will have lots of stalls selling interesting things, cream teas, fun for children to include a bouncy castle, children's tombola and much more, but also fun and games for the adults and our four legged friends too with the ever popular "Over the Bales" and "Hide and Seek" which the dogs love. We will also have the dog show with categories such as the waggiest tail, the dog the judge would most like to take home. All breeds of dogs are welcome.



## Foxwood Maclean gives support to Summer Fayre

Kent Estate Agency, Foxwood Maclean, is supporting us at our Summer Fayre on July 27th, at Wye village hall and recreation ground, by providing the estate agency boards advertising the event.

Commenting on its support for the fayre, Foxwood Maclean associate, Adrian Thompson said: "This is what living in Kent means... a great day out for all the family, with traditional fun and games for everyone, in one of our loveliest villages. It is also great to be able to support local charities."

## Out and about

We have been out and about with our stand selling our Sophie Allport China. In April we braved the cold winds to attend the Penshurst point to point, where we took £500! As one of our volunteers commented: "I have never seen so many Labradors in one place!"

In May we had an opportunity to attend the Tonbridge Farmers Market, which was a fantastic day out and raised our profile greatly.

## New products for sale

Following the success of our Sophie Allport China and Kitchenallia, we have extended the range adding stylish cushions and lovely new totes made by Jenny Edden Designs.



We have also introduced the Labrador scarf, made of cashmere, which is proving to be a hit with the girls. Normal recommended retail price is £47.50 but you can buy it from us for £35



### Will you be our Friend?

We would like to have more friends on our Facebook page. So if you haven't done so already, sign up and make friends with us. We are setting ourselves a challenge and want to have 1,000 plus friends by the end of the summer...So come on, get on social media and pass the message on to all those people you know who would like to find out what we are up to.

Search Facebook for Labrador Rescue Kent (LRK)

We have also launched a twitter account, and are getting up to speed with tweeting.

Twitter.com/LabRescueKent

### Lights! Camera! Action!

May was a busy month for TV appearances for LRK representatives.

Our patron Mick Bingham, was interviewed by ITV Meridian News, discussing the amendments to the

Dangerous Dogs Act. Mick highlighted the fact that when a dog is out of control, more often than not it is down to the owner who has not trained or handled the dog well.

An impromptu You Tube appearance was made by Ken Wintzer and his two lovely Labradors, Bert and Ernie, at the Tonbridge Farmers Market. Ken did a great job of encouraging people to visit our stall. Thank you Ken.

### Forthcoming events

Come and see us and support us at the following events:

June 21 22 - Dogs live - Hop Farm, Paddock Wood - meet and greet - giving advice about keeping labs

June 28 Cowden Fete - we will have our stand there so pop by and say hi!

July 27 Summer Fayre - Wye village hall

It might seem like a long way off but we will be having a sponsored walk in October and would like to gather as many of our four legged friends together as possible... could we have the largest gathering of Labradors in Kent? Spread the word.. SUNDAY 5 OCTOBER, 9.30 @BEWL WATER Sponsorship forms will be available after the summer fayre. For further details check out our website and Facebook page.

### Charlie and Harley settle in to City Life

When Lucy, our soppo & adorable little black Labrador, suddenly died in January this year she left a big hole in our lives. I thought maybe it was time to get a puppy & I fancied a yellow boy Labrador. But nothing fell into place & a chain of unlikely searches led me to Maggie - even though we live in Wimbledon!

The result was the arrival of Harley (yellow) & Charlie (chocolate), a pair of four year old Labrador brothers from the same litter, who burst through our front door one very wet day about two weeks later, dragging Maggie & Dave with them. They were

enormous, powerful & seriously bouncy. We wondered what on earth we'd done. We clearly had our work cut out!



The boys were wild to begin with, charging all over the place & getting into everything. They had no idea about traffic so we couldn't let them out the front without a lead. If we did go out on leads they had no idea about how to walk & would suddenly dart into the road to chase a cat pulling me right over. It was scary. We booked a dog trainer to come round and teach us how to educate them. It was fascinating but unfortunately my husband soon developed severe sciatica and that left me on my own trying to teach obedience to two unruly dogs. It was a no-win situation for a while and we'll get back to that training programme when my husband has had his operation.

In the meantime the only way to exercise the boys was clearly to let them loose on Wimbledon Common. To my great relief they have always more or less responded when I call them & they'd always follow me on walks. They were like caged birds set free & used to chase every dog in sight, wanting to

play with them all. Gradually the boys quietened down & became more selective with playmates.

Charlie is a sensible dog who only gets difficult when lead into scrapes by Harley's crazy behaviour. Harley is definitely a sandwich short of a picnic and, if anyone can tell me how to get him to be sensible, I'd love to hear from them. His misdemeanours thus far include stealing leather shoes and leather gloves and hiding them; jumping up on the work surface and hoovering up packets of butter, foil wrapping and all; tearing up toilet paper; ripping up flower pots; relentlessly chasing yappy small dogs; rolling in every puddle - the dirtier the better. But Harley is also the more loving of the two. They both want lots of cuddles & give us lots of wet kisses, but Harley is like an enormous baby & irresistible with it.

One day something truly awful happened: I was walking both dogs alone on the Common when Harley was attacked by a chihuahua that yapped & snapped at him. So Harley, who is ever ready for a game, chased him. The owner screamed that Harley was trying to kill his chihuahua & produced a large stick with which he thrashed Harley. That seemed to spur Harley on into chasing the chihuahua even more. By now I was yelling to the man to stop but he didn't. Charlie then sauntered up to see what was going on & the man started thrashing him too. Suddenly Harley & Charlie walked off - never having touched the chihuahua. The man then picked up a stone & hurled it at me but at the last moment his arm curved down & the stone landed at my feet. I was shaking. The man walked off muttering & huffing. I do think he probably had a mental health problem. When I caught up with the boys they seemed fine despite the hard blows from the stick. But later we saw that Harley had a large puncture wound on top of his head. It healed well in time. The odd thing is that, ever since then, Harley has not got over-excited when he encounters a small yappy dog. I wonder if he learnt something?

After that episode I rang Maggie for help. She put me in touch with Mick who was great. He's given me lots of helpful advice about how dogs think & how to communicate with them on their page. For example he taught me to eat in front of them before handing them their bowls so that they now have to wait patiently. That way they learn that I am the pack leader. It's so funny but it works. I pretend to eat a bit of their kibble till they are sitting quietly & then I

give them their bowls. Now mealtimes are disciplined & not the crazy scenes we used to have.

Harley & Charlie were very overweight when they arrived. Maggie advised us to give them lots of exercise and put them on a light diet. They had been on a high calorie diet for working dogs which was quite inappropriate. We started with James Wellbeloved Adult Light but Harley had a runny tummy and that stopped when we switched to Hills Adult Light. I've no idea why this made a difference. It may be that the runny tummy was in fact due to his nervy temperament & not the food. The first couple of days he had also urinated in the house due to overexcitement.



Over the next three months both boys lost nearly 7 kilos - just over a stone each. The difference is amazing. They streak along instead of wobbling. They look beautiful too. The weight seemed to drop off effortlessly. Of course they were now having lots of walks and we do measure their food very carefully. The vet had initially given them a clean bill of health and now he advises we stick to the light food & keep weighing them regularly, so that's what we do.

I'm unsure what possessed us when we agreed to take a pair of dogs. We said to each other that we could manage because we'd walk one each. But of course Fate had other plans. I'm getting there on my own. I've had to learn strategies for managing.

When we had one dog she (we've only had girls so far) used to look to us for guidance & her needs. But these two look to each other one moment & to us the next. It's rather unpredictable. They're getting the message that I'm the boss but they are absolutely devoted to each other & get much of their emotional needs met by the other.

Harley & Charlie are truly rewarding. They adopted us the moment they walked in. They're great with the grandchildren. They're learning to be guard dogs. They've discovered the joy of chasing tennis balls. Whatever the difficulties we seem to be winning with them & they've brought so much joy.

But, like I said, any advice on teaching Harley to be reasonable will be welcome.

Elisabeth in Wimbledon

### Scooby goes for Gold

November 2011, 2 year-old 'Scooby', the beautiful black Labrador-Retriever arrived and although he was a bit of a 'handful' during the first weeks (very strong and difficult to control when walking), he settled down fairly quickly, thanks to the help and encouragement of the staff at Labrador Rescue Kent. During the period until April 2014, he has passed the Kennel Club 'Good Citizenship' Scheme obedience training tests at Bronze and Silver levels and is currently having a go at the Gold standard.



We walk miles and after being very frightened of the sea at first, he now throws himself into that without any problem and also enjoys 'poking around' in the

water at the local freshwater canal. His enthusiasm for keeping agile and mentally active (that's a coded way of saying that Scooby is a very 'nosey' dog!) has resulted in my signing him up to be trained by an ex-police colleague to learn tracking skills in local woodland and open country areas. Scooby is always exhausted after a training session but seems to thoroughly enjoy what we do together. I said in an earlier article (shortly after he arrived here) that he had already become such a part of the family that I couldn't imagine being without him. Well the bond is even stronger now and I wouldn't have thought that was possible when I first received him. If you take on one of these 'rescue' dogs, don't be put off by early difficulties with lead control etc. They really are worth the effort and you get plenty of support and encouragement from the staff at Labrador Rescue Kent. I value each day with Scooby as a member of the family. I hope he lasts for ages but, even if he doesn't, I know that he (and all of those associated with him) will have had a very happy life experience with him.

Thank you Labrador Rescue Kent for your wonderful work and dedication in giving new lives to these lovely animals. God bless you. Kevin



### Tips for summer travel

If you are taking your dog on the ferry this summer, don't forget its EU pet passport. Your dog will also need to be micro chipped and up to date with its rabies and tapeworm vaccinations.



"Some people get caught out", warns Maggie Hinks, LRK trustee, You must wait 21 days from the date of the rabies vaccination before travelling, "your dog must be micro chipped first otherwise the rabies jab is invalid".

Check with your ferry company if your dog must remain in your vehicle for the crossing or if they have kennels on board For some journeys your dog might be able to stay with you for the journey.

Make sure you are confident that your dog is happy travelling and be sure to have plenty of water in your vehicle in case the weather hots up.

If in doubt seek advice from your vet before travelling.

Remember:

- Micro chip
- Rabies vaccination
- Passport
- Tape worm treatment