

6.0 Summary

Although another one thousand pages would be required to really do the title of this book justice, it is hoped that Golden Retriever enthusiasts will have found its contents informative and rewarding. Hopefully too – our younger readers, being our Breed custodians of the future, will seek out other books on the Golden Retriever in order to learn more about the history of our wonderful Breed.

When interviewing breeders, a number of questions were posed in regard to Golden Retrievers at the end of the first decade of the 21st Century. These findings are summarized below.

At present, there is definite concern in some countries regarding a definite trend towards longer bodies, shorter legs and over angulated hindquarters. Opinions on heads vary, breeders feeling they are becoming too strong in some countries and too weak in others. As expected, the response to the question on colour was mixed. Perhaps a more appropriate question should have been “Do you believe that a number of Golden Retrievers being shown at present are outside the acceptable range?” It appears, over time, wavy coats have given way to the flatter coat. To the question regarding trimming, the response by breeders as to whether they considered many Golden Retrievers in the ring were being over trimmed was an overwhelming “Yes”.

Many breeders feel that movement on the current dogs needs attention. In relation to breeding practices, most breeders believe that inbreeding should be approached with the greatest caution.

Without exception, the unique temperament of our Golden Retriever is the feature of greatest importance to breeders. In an article entitled, Taming The Wild, fox researcher Anna Kukekova of Cornell University, gave the following description of the only population of domesticated foxes in the world, in the March 2011 edition of National Geographic Magazine. *“They remind me of Golden Retrievers, who are basically not aware that there are good people and bad people, people that they have met before and those they haven’t.”* Without doubt, our Golden Retrievers have become famous right around the world for their extraordinary temperament, and our conscientious breeders can take credit for guarding this virtue so vehemently.

When asked to give advice to a newcomer into the wonderful world of Golden Retrievers, responses included the following :-Watch, listen, go slowly, be


patient, research, study bloodlines, see as many Golden Retrievers as possible, find a mentor, study the Standard, don’t breed until you know the Golden well, respect others and always respect the Breed.

However, as one flicks through its pages, it is obvious that there has been a great change in our Golden Retriever from Lord Harcourt’s time. The late Mrs Sawtell described it in her book Golden Memories of a lifetime in Dogs this way.

“When I look back on the breed as I remember it in 1938 when I obtained my first Golden Retriever it could really be said that Golden Retrievers were “Golden”. It seems to me that, not only with regard to colour, they have altered out of all recognition. What was an athlete, vigorous, sporting type of dog has far too often become a heavy, sluggish animal, often overdone in bone structure”.

Perhaps the reason for the change is that, these days, the hugely popular Golden Retriever is so versatile in a myriad of activities, not specifically as a working dog in the field. Breeders, almost without exception, feel that the divide between the show dog and the working Gundog is not going to go away any time soon. Does that mean that we, as breeders of the show dog, are comfortable in the knowledge that the Golden Retriever of today, is a far cry from what the people who developed the Breed and its Standard, for the specific purpose of working in the field, would have wanted all those years ago? Perhaps it was a mistake to take the weight guideline out of the English Breed Standard in the 1990s? There is no doubt there has been a genetic drift towards the paler Golden in some of those countries which go by the English Standard. Should consideration be also given to Population Genetics? This would depend on whether breeders consider the colour range a Breed characteristic. Whilst much can be learned from what has gone before, it is crucial for the breed to always look forward.

Whilst being ever mindful of the Breed’s Standard and the Golden’s natural working ability together with being able to maintain what we all know our Golden Retrievers to be: the gentle, the kind, the intelligent and uniquely beautiful breed, with a temperament of which will never be surpassed.

A photograph of a man and a woman walking away from the camera on a beach at sunset. They are accompanied by two large, fluffy dogs. The sky is a mix of soft pinks, oranges, and blues, and the wet sand reflects the colors. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

*“If you have made one life breathe easier because you have lived,
that is to have succeeded.”*

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Roll of Honour

<i>Mr A Aldwych</i>	<i>Miss J Gill</i>	<i>Mr R Odell</i>
<i>Mr D Allan</i>	<i>Mrs E Gosteyn</i>	<i>Dr Mark & Mrs Rachel</i>
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<i>Mr and Mrs G Barron</i>	<i>Mr & Mrs W E Hickmott</i>	<i>Mrs D Philpott</i>
<i>Mr W D Barwise</i>	<i>Mrs H Hinks</i>	<i>Mr A Pickering</i>
<i>Mrs L Beckwith</i>	<i>Lorna Countess Howe</i>	<i>Mrs L Pilkington</i>
<i>Mrs V Birkin</i>	<i>Mrs S Howells</i>	<i>Mr L Pitbie</i>
<i>Mr Reinhard Bischoff</i>	<i>5th Earl of Ilchester</i>	<i>Mrs R K Pope</i>
<i>Messrs Boalt</i>	<i>6th Earl of Ilchester</i>	<i>Mr & Mrs Price-Harding</i>
<i>Mr R Bolton</i>	<i>Wing Commander Iles</i>	<i>Mr M Ramsey</i>
<i>Mr & Mrs R Bradbury</i>	<i>Mr H L Jenner</i>	<i>Mrs W Reed</i>
<i>Mrs A E Bridgford</i>	<i>Ms P Johnson</i>	<i>Mrs V Reid</i>
<i>Mr & Mrs C Bright</i>	<i>Col & Mrs N G Johnson</i>	<i>Mr E F Rivinus</i>
<i>Mrs I Broomhall</i>	<i>Mr V E Johnson</i>	<i>Mr D Robertson MP</i>
<i>Mr R Brown</i>	<i>Mr A Kewish</i>	<i>Miss L Ross</i>
<i>Mr N Bruce Ashby</i>	<i>Mr & Mrs R L Kirk</i>	<i>Mrs Satterthwaite</i>
<i>Mrs J Candsell</i>	<i>Dr I Kraft</i>	<i>Mrs W H Sawtell</i>
<i>Lt Col Hon D Carnegie</i>	<i>Mrs L Layton</i>	<i>Mr & Mrs J Shanks</i>
<i>Mrs W M Charlesworth</i>	<i>Miss E Lobegeiger</i>	<i>Mr & Mrs H Smith</i>
<i>Mr H B Christian</i>	<i>Lord Harcourt</i>	<i>Mr Spencer</i>
<i>Mr & Mrs J Collins</i>	<i>First Lord Tweedmouth</i>	<i>Mrs J Stephens</i>
<i>Mrs J D Cottingham</i>	<i>Mr C Lowe</i>	<i>Mrs E Stonex</i>
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<i>Mr C Dawkings</i>	<i>Mrs S Magoffin</i>	<i>Mr M Taylor</i>
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<i>Earl of Portsmouth</i>	<i>Mr F Martlew</i>	<i>Mrs M Timson</i>
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<i>Mrs G H Flynn Jnr</i>	<i>Mr W F Mitchell</i>	<i>Major H Wentworth-Smith</i>
<i>Mrs E L Ford</i>	<i>Mrs Z Morgan</i>	<i>Dr Malcolm Willis</i>
<i>Mr B Foster</i>	<i>Dr Alan Morris</i>	<i>Mr D Woodcock</i>
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<i>Mr Sam & Mrs Betty Gay</i>	<i>Rev E N Needham Davies</i>	