

# Watchdog!

WALLINGFORD DOG TRAINING CLUB November 2011

Yes it finally happened, on October 8th Kevin and Alison tied the knot, cut the cake and walked the dogs - well they are agility folk after all!



Kevin took the plunge on his stag day, he doesn't look too unhappy about it does he?



# Editorial Bit by Mick - The Editor!



Well it seems like ages since I had anything to do with agility, can't really put my finger on it but I suspect I have started to go full circle. When I started competing I was limited to the number of shows etc because I had other things to do, top of the list was coaching Chris' age group at Abingdon Rugby Club. Then agility took over and everything else took second fiddle to that, fitting in other things wasn't easy or, in some cases, a priority! I now find myself in a position where agility is fitted in when I can, and that hasn't been very often this year. It is becoming clear that agility is fast becoming something I used to do rather than do. So I think a proper review is in order for me to decide on the future. After all my agility partner cannot compete as he did for 12 years so runs at shows are limited or non existent. I have decided that we will retire him next year if a UKA show next month goes OK. I would like it to be at our show in an Anysize type of class, so fingers crossed he stays fit enough for that.

Many things have happened, and are happening as I write this, since the last Watchdog. Probably the big event is the match taking place in Dorset this afternoon. Yes the wedding of our own members Kevin and Alison, unfortunately due a fixture clash and other reasons we could not accept the invitation to the evening reception but I would like to wish them both a long and happy marriage.

I won't pontificate about what you should or shouldn't do to enjoy a successful marriage, but I hope that what brought you together keeps you together, a shared interest is a great advantage.

Strange how the little things you do sometimes have major consequences. A quick response by me to a question about dog clubs in this area on the Agility Forum, resulted in a certain young lady joining our club and meeting a certain member, the rest as they say is history, I'm just glad to have been of help!

Of course life is balanced and happy events are counterbalanced by the not so happy ones. As you will read further in we have lost a member and at least two canine companions recently. A happy event sandwiched in between the sad ones was the arrival of a Grand Daughter to a lovely lady, Rosemary Tappin, Lily Rose was born to Graham and Gemma Tappin on Sept. 10th. Congratulations to you all. Apparently she is a lucky omen, from what I read on Facebook she is responsible for Oxford United's improved form!

As the agility season draws to a close, or slows down for the 52 weeks/year competitors, we can look forward to the match against Andover, strange how they usually end as Home wins! Anyway the next one is at Up and Over on December 11th. A good way to have a bit of fun or introduce a new dog to the competition environment, I don't think there is a class for Bryn but I might go along with Fly if I'm not working that day.

With 2011 flying by it'll soon be Christmas and thoughts of the 2012 Wallingford Show will come to mind. I'm not 100% certain about when/if it will be, but be prepared to offer your services when we know for definite and help make it run like the well oiled machine it has become over the years.

Well as Collie owner are oft heard to say, 'that'll do' so Take Care and See You Soon.



# Births, Marriages and Departures.

## Canen This Tig (Stig)

**11/3/2006 – 13/6/2011**

He arrived unexpectedly. I was working on a ring at Vyne when Leah dragged me off look at a puppy that needed rehoming. He was a beautiful 8 week old red merle tricolour BC puppy, we couldn't see any catch so we took him, it was the best decision we made. He was as good as gold when we got him home, not crying once. He came with a lead marked Tig, so we added an 'S' and he became Stig.



Stig grew into a strikingly handsome boy, he was very quick to learn and loved to work. At agility he quickly progressed to G7 and, win or lose, he was a joy to run. He didn't look very quick but the clock proved he was very economical and often won classes by a considerable margin. On a couple of occasions when I was injured Stig got a 2nd place with Jenny Kimber in G6 Jumping and a 1st and 2nd place in G6-7 with Anthony Clarke having never before worked with anyone but me.

Sadly by this time, aged three, he started having the occasional fit. He had a

season at G7 working well and winning a couple of G7 Agility classes despite my handling, but the frequency of fitting increased and after suffering ten fits one weekend he was put on a high dose of Epiphen. This had a serious effect on his ability to work, his judgement and concentration were not good but we hoped to reduce the medication and resume agility.

He was barely 5 years old when I got up for work on a Monday morning, let the dogs out and back in and went for a shower. On coming out of the shower it was a devastating shock and very sad to find Stig lying dead on the kitchen floor. He was a fantastic dog to live and work with and we still miss him, his unending desire to please and his amusing little habits. One that we miss is him playing with a toy in the living room, trying to get the attention of anyone watching TV. He'd pick up a toy, shaking it vigorously before letting it go at full swing. He'd watch where it landed and look back at you, all intent eyes and gorgeous prick ears, snap his teeth with a little 'woof' as if to say 'Well, what do you think of that one?' If he was ignored he would retrieve the toy and try again. Thank You Leah.

Ian.



# Births, Marriages and Departures.

## Chaos - 26.4.96 - 24.9.11

We had to take the sad decision to let Chaos go, we could no longer keep her pain free and she had lost her zest for life. Not that she ever lived up to her name, she was so laid back as to be horizontal, and never really took to agility - far too much like hard work... She did well in the breed ring, gaining her stud book number (at the same show as Charcoal), and had a dabble at Heelwork to Music. She also passed her Gold Good Citizen award. She kept our pack in order, including Tom and I! And there is now a hole.

Despite her hypothyroidism meaning that her coat was somewhat tatty and threadbare for the last few years, it was always her that passing pedestrians commented on - hasn't she got a lovely coat - and we'd look from her to the others and wonder.

I shall always remember her though up on Hadrian's Wall:

Thanks

Sue



## Lily Rose Tappin

If, as I know a number of you are, you use Facebook you may well have seen this post by Graham Tappin, who, according to his post;

*Is so proud of Gem for making this the best day of my life @ 3 15 this morning Gem gave birth to Lily Rose Tappin weighing in at 7 pounds 12oz. Mum and baby both doing so well xx Gem I always believed you could do it never for one minute thought you couldn't, now we hold a bundle of joy and look forward to the rest of our lives :-)* 10/9/11



## The Wedding.

As you will have seen from the front cover, and no doubt heard via the grapevine etc, that Kevin and Alison finally married on October 8th back in Alison's home county of Dorset. A number of members attended during the festivities and from what I hear it was a beautiful occasion. I hear that Alison looked stunning in her dress and Kevin demonstrated that he too scrubs up nicely. I think it's often funny when you see agility friends dressed in their finest when you are so used to seeing them in their 'dogging' attire!

I wish them both every happiness for a long and joyful marriage, and maybe one day the pitter patter of a two legged addition to the family? Mick.



# Births, Marriages and Departures.

## Frank Theobalds

It is with much sadness that we learned of the sudden death of Frank. Having returned from a holiday 'up north', attending a show, and winning rosettes with his beloved Jess, Frank was rushed into hospital where he was diagnosed with a tear in his aorta. This was successfully operated on, but unfortunately he then suffered a stroke leaving him in a coma. He passed away in hospital.

Prior to joining Wallingford, both Frank and Zillah had trained with Rosemary Tappin since 2006 and I remember watching from a distance when they were towards the end of their lesson and running the course set for that week. I would watch Frank trying hard to remember the course, always persevering and never giving up. When Frank was ready they started attending UKA shows before deciding to try out KC shows. Their small garden gave signs of the 'bug' having bitten with the odd bit of equipment being spied! Since starting on the 'agility circuit' Frank had some great successes with Jess and was thoroughly enjoying attending shows and winning rosettes and trophies. His wins meant he had progressed from G1 to G2 at KC shows, as well as moving up the ranks at UKA shows.

Frank joined the club earlier this year, training Jess in the Medium class. His wife, Zillah, brought their collie, Nell (sister of Jess), to join the Foundation class with the latest intake of new dogs in early summer. Both dogs and handlers were doing well in their respective classes. Gill Kimber writes as Frank's trainer, 'I'd just like to say that Frank always listened very attentively and was keen to learn. It's so sad because he was doing very well with Jess'. Others on hearing of his illness wrote, 'we all keep thinking of him - he's such a lovely man'.

Although very quiet and unassuming, Frank would arrive on time at club to make sure he was

setting up the equipment ready for the first class. He was missed when Jess was ill during the summer, but was there to support Zillah (or train Nell himself when Zillah was incapacitated herself earlier in the year). Frank will be much missed.

Our thoughts and sympathy are with Zillah and the rest of the family. Rest in peace Frank.

## Departure of a different kind.

In my Editorial I mentioned the prospects of my retirement from agility. After a lot of thought I have decided that, all being well, Bryn and I will have our last competition run at the Wallingford show, assuming that there is a class for the oldies etc. I am an emotional person, something to do with being Welsh my Mother says! So don't be surprised to see tears.

I will also be standing down as Editor once I have done a show special Watchdog, or before if someone is keen to take over before then. If so I would like to contribute an article about my agility partner and our agility career. I will remain a member of the club, just in case! Also to help at future shows when I can.

## Bit of fun from the last Watchdog.

Did you spot the changes I made to the photograph in the last Watchdog? Well here they are in case you didn't get them all. The red box on the ice cream fridge, the lead around Wendy's shirt, print from the jacket in the middle, the rosette in front of Wendy, the subtle removal of the Thames badge from Virginia's sweatshirt and finally Tatti has stopped panting! Got them?



# Agility Report

The agility year started in earnest over the weekend 26 / 27<sup>th</sup> March with a UKA show - and will be running down during October. There are a few shows over the Winter - but don't forget to give you and your dogs a complete break from agility sometime this winter. Even top athletes have breaks during their training. Most dogs come back with renewed vigour and enthusiasm after a break.

## *KC winning out in 2011.*

A great year for club members to win out at KC shows - and with Wendy & Tatti's win at Chippenham, beats our last best year (2009) with 16 partnerships winning up a grade this year.

Who	Won What	Where	When	Into Grade
Tanya & Dollar	G1-4 combined Agility	Midlands BCC	23 January	4
Wendy & Bambi	G4 Agility	WBSDS	22 April	5
Sophie & Chase	G4 Agility	WBSDS	23 April	5
Tori & Ginger	G1 Agility	Leamington	14 May	2
Jill & Cass	G3 Agility	Wye Valley	4 June	4
Gill & Shade	G3 Jumping, 3 <sup>rd</sup> win	Golden Valley	19th June	4
Wendy & Bambi	G5 Agility	Watford	26 June	6
Aileen & Rockett	G1 Jumping, 3 <sup>rd</sup> win	Bretford	9 July	2
Ruth & Daisy	G2 Agility	Bretford	9 July	3
Paula & Blaze	G3 Agility	Bretford	9 July	4
Dinah & Cinders	G2 Agility	Rugby	16 July	3
Jo & Pip	CG1-2 Agility	Caerphilly	23 July	2
Jill & Cass	G1-4 Agility	Dog Vegas	29 July	5
Kevin & Fell	CG3-5 Agility	Prestbury Park	3 September	6
Aileen & Rockett	G2 Jumping, 3 <sup>rd</sup> win	Burnham	10 September	3
Wendy & Tatti	G3 Medium Agility	Chippenham	1 October	4

### **Successes:**

Wallingford handlers have done amazingly well again this year at UKA and Kennel Club shows - with members entering shows just about every weekend. So many to congratulate, but I'd like to mention Aileen & Rocket - who worked their way up from grade 1 to grade 3 in KC shows - winning sufficient points en-route to have them knocking on the door at the top of the Agility Club Grade 1 league for this area. (They finished a very creditable 2<sup>nd</sup> place - well done.)

### **Juniors:**

Anthony has been training on a Thursday evening and has started to get some good results. Wendy has been trying to get something organised for the next generation who can't make Thursday evenings, and with Jill Lowe's help as a trainer and Carol's field, junior training has been taking place all summer. This has already started to pay off with Gio-Gio and Rory starting to appear on the boasts page.

### **Welcome to new members:**

The new members have settled in and are progressing well. There are some very enthusiastic and promising partnerships - and it's good to see different breeds doing so well.

### **Guest trainer:**

It's great to welcome Jo Fraser as a guest trainer. She will be training groups at the Kitchen end for 2 months. Jo was a member of our club many years ago before leaving to set up her own agility training club. All guest trainers bring new ideas and different training methods. Those of us who

## Agility Report cont.

have been in agility a long time will be able to see which new ideas suit us, and which don't. But we all know that training is the place to try out new handling methods.

**Stay for a cuppa:** The club provides (in the kitchen - which for some reason has remained in darkness for weeks) everything you need for a cuppa. If you arrive before your class - or want to stay on afterwards - do make a cuppa while you chat to other club members and watch others train. You can learn a lot by watching! Use one of the mugs from the 'clean' box - and please return your mug to the other box.

**Reminder:** If you are in the first classes of the evening - don't forget to get to Blewbury by 7.30 to set up. I know everyone wants to catch up with friends, but if everyone really set their minds to it, we could get the equipment set up in 20 minutes - giving an extra 10 minutes training. Then you can have a natter! Also - please remember to keep your dogs on the lead when not training, and be extra careful when arriving or leaving the arena. Dogs are in a high state of excitement at agility, and we don't want any accidents.

### Dates for your diary

**Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December** - get into the festive mood with the agility match against UpAndOver at Catherston Stud. 2pm - 6pm. Please complete an entry form if you'd like to enter.

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December** - last agility training in 2011 - Xmas festivities. Please could everyone come at 7.30pm for the whole evening.

**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> December** - NO agility training. Have a good Christmas everyone.

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> January** - First training session in 2012. As we always do, we'll be rotating class times in the new year - to spread the tasks of putting equipment out and away among all members. Also - **Annual subscriptions are due and membership forms will need to be completed.**

**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> & Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2012** - our club's annual agility show. We need EVERYONE to help out on both days. We make money running the show which keeps our training fees down, helps pay for new equipment, guest trainers and training workshops. So **EVERYONE** benefits and we expect everyone who possibly can to help.

## Junior Agility - by Rory Tidmarsh....

Agility is fun because I like running around with Bronwen. She can be a bit naughty at the start, but she is usually good for me if Mummy hides. My favourite piece of equipment is the weaves because Bronwen won't weave for Mummy and she does for me!

I have been to 2 agility shows and I like staying in the caravan. I almost got a clear round but Bronwen ran around the first jump before she went and jumped everything else.

I like training with Jill because she is nice and friendly and she shows me how to work with Bronwen.

## ....and Gio Gio Botto

Junior agility helps a lot because it makes children do agility in a fun way. Thank You to Jill for teaching me. We can break the courses into bits and we don't have to do courses that are too hard. It makes me happier to do competitions as now I have a better picture of how to do it.

Gio-Gio Botto age 8





# Wallingford Junior Agility.





## Wallingford Junior Agility.

There are a few of us at WDTC that moonlight outside the dog training world by looking after our children. Back in June, Wendy decided enough was enough and we should make attempts to combine the two and entertain both lifeforms at once - hence Wallingford Juniors was formed. I don't know how Wendy did it, but Jill Lowe was bribed/coaxed/arm twisted/ or insanely volunteered to work with both children and dogs, and so, on Monday nights she can be found training/herding the children at Carol's lovely facilities in Longworth.

Training initially started off gently with the children running around the field and guiding a human "dog" around the course. Then we let the real canines out! In the first few weeks, chaos ensued as Bronwen, Tatti, Bonnie and Merlin proved to have stronger apron strings than their human counterparts and kept running back to "mum". With the exception of Tatti, all the dogs are older and probably wiser than their handlers, and a small battle of wills ensued. In fact poor Ana has to work with a dog that is as tall as her! But even as early as the 2<sup>nd</sup> week there was an improvement, as the dogs worked out that many treats were available and the children were far more generous than the parents. Most of the dogs are now working well for the children, and in my case, most observers would agree that Bronwen works better for Rory than she does for me, who remembers Bronwen getting 3 contacts and 12 weaves in one round for me in the last 2 years - let alone a wait???)

Speaking of treats - after 30-40 minutes the kids have to stop for the obligatory snack break of juice, fruit, sausages and various sweet contraband. The trusty show flasks come in useful for the Mum's too. This is a very civilised concept!

Rory and Gio-Gio have truly caught the Agility Bug and have started competing at shows, and training at club during the school holidays, and with Anthony Clarke at "Agility for Juniors". The Junior courses are not easy!!! I must say that Julie and I walked the U12 Jumping Course at Prestbury Park and left congratulating ourselves that we didn't have to run such a tricky course. Rory and Anthony gave it a really good shot and

left the courses with their heads held high and huge smiles. In fact - at the recent club competition night Anthony took 1<sup>st</sup> and Rory 4<sup>th</sup> in Group 1 at the Menage End. Gio-Gio has had some really fantastic results at shows - two firsts in Junior Agility (one with Tatti and one with Poppy), plus two seconds in Jumping, (one with Tatti and one with Poppy). The Juniors even have their own kit available on the Crazydogs web-site and are looking forward to a full season next year.

Our current attendees to the Monday night training sessions are:

Giovanna Botto (Age 8)

Amelia Daines(age 6)???)

Isobel Daines (age 4)

Ana Morgan (age 4)

Jamie and Luke Waggit (Age 3  $\frac{3}{4}$ )

Rory Tidmarsh (age 7  $\frac{3}{4}$ )

& occasionally Jasper Tidmarsh (age 6).

We will soon be splitting the children into two different age groups so that they can work at their appropriate ability level. So if anyone else is interested in joining, please see Wendy. We would like to say many, many thanks to - Jill for her patience with escaping dogs and children, and for inspiring them all.

Carol for the use of her field.

WDTC for paying for the training facilities.

Wendy for organising us,

and last but not least -

The dogs for their unending ability to chase balls and eat treats, and occasionally do what they are told!

Unfortunately I have to end this article with a plea - the little ones are struggling to work with Merlin (deaf) and Bonnie (too large), so if there are any dogs out there that will work with kids and fancy an extra bit of training, we would truly appreciate the loan of a dog or two on a Monday night, or Sunday morning when the light closes in.

Wendy and Jo

*Good to hear the next generation are already up and running, I've always enjoyed watching the youngsters running dogs at shows, especially when they have trained them themselves. Mick*

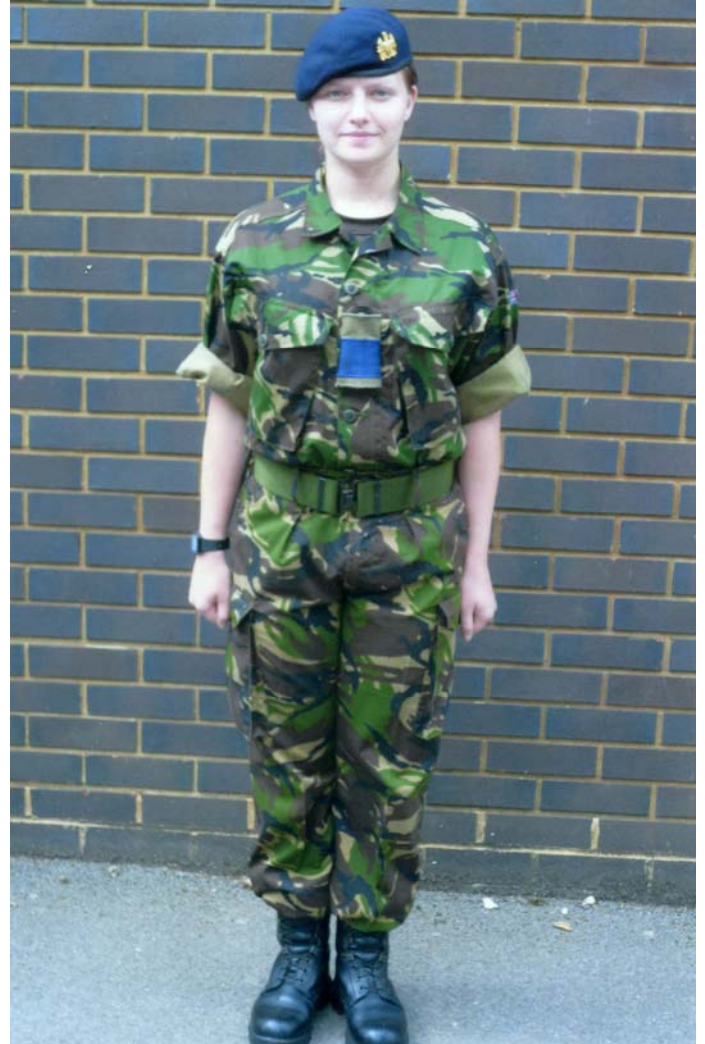
## Whatever Happened to Rosy?

Many of you will recognise our granddaughter Rosy Wilkins, who trained as a Junior at our club with her dog Charlie, a happy go lucky Goldie, who breezed through life without a care in the world - and credit to Rosy's patience and determination - she progressed to compete at shows, giving Maureen & myself many happy memories of the fun they had together.



Agility for Rosy became more serious when her sister Gemma went to University and she inherited Jenny, our Border Collie, who had been so well-trained by Gemma, that thanks to her efforts Jenny & Rosy were soon amongst the Rosettes & trophies, with Rosy still in her early teens.

Rosy, as you can see, has joined the Army and is at present undergoing her basic training before going on to Aldershot for her medical training as a Paramedic.



I like to think that the 'highs' and 'lows' of doing Agility has helped Rosy through her very tough basic training which has been physically energy sapping. She is very proud of the fact that she is the 5<sup>th</sup> fastest in her troop - which has no doubt contributed to her being able to proudly wear her Medical badge on her beret.

I 'm sure we all wish Rosy well in her Career. Pete

*Here, here, well done Rosy I 'm sure everyone in the club wishes you all the best in your chosen career, and your family are very proud of you serving our country. Mick.*



# Flyball

## Flyball news

Yes some of our members still enjoy the sport, but at another club since the demise of Wallingford Knights.

Here is an update from Gill Rhodes.

### Flyball News

Several of the Knights flyball club are still competing in competitions with other teams. Myself (with Bertie), Jose (with Pera), Marie (with Belle) all competed together in the Mad Mutts flyball tournament at Acremead on 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> October 2011. The dogs ran well but with 3 small dogs in the team we couldn't compete with the other teams we were up against. Another ex Knight, Marmite, run by Paul and Lucy, is still competing with the Mad mutts, but couldn't make the last competition.

Pera and Bertie both received their 'Flyball dog Intermediate' certificates in May this year, having gained over 1000 points in flyball. (See photo on the right). We often meet up with Luce who is still running Flicker with The Kennets team and Fred is showing promise. Luce hopes to be competing with Fred in the starters team soon.

We had some very sad news recently, Gill Allen has lost her dog Jade, she had cancer of the spine and she had to have her put to sleep. Jade was a lovely dog as well as being a super fast flyball dog, enabling the Knights to win many competitions. She was much admired by other teams! Since leaving the Knights, Jade ran in the Kennets 'Hotwings' team, where her speed was much admired. Our thoughts are with Gill & Jim at this sad time.

Gill Rhodes



This is a community message from Thames Valley Police update.

The silver Golf that was involved in the theft of dogs from the Letcombe Bassett area of Wantage and also several other thefts and suspicious incidents across the Vale and South Oxfordshire has been found abandoned in Leatherhead in Surrey on Tuesday evening. Forensic examination of the car is taking place and police are following up on information about numerous offences connected to this car.

Occupants of a grey (almost green) Jeep Cherokee have been involved in almost identical suspicious incidents across Berkshire and Oxfordshire over the last two days including when disturbed saying they are looking for their lost dog. They may be connected to the silver Golf. The part index of the Jeep is R658 - please report any sightings immediately to the police on 08458 505 505 or please use 999 if you think a crime is being committed.



## Whatever Happened to Rosy?



This is Rosy's Passing Out Parade, can you spot her in amongst this group of fine young people as they start their careers in The Army? If I remember correctly she is the one between the two Red Caps.



Wendy will have a go at training any dog but I think her skills were pushed to the limit at the Drayton School Demo in the Summer!