

Basset Griffon Vendéen (Petit)

20 / 3 / 2020

THERE CAN BE FEW who are unaware of the gravity of the rising COVID-19 pandemic. The news covers little else as we receive daily updates on what is happening in other countries and our own Government takes steps to contain the situation here in the UK. Decisions needed to be made about our own Club events and, with the health and safety of our members foremost, we have cancelled both our AGM and Open Show, also the day that was to have been held at the Animal Health Trust. I am reproducing here what has been sent out to all members and put on the Club website:

Dear Club Members

As you will all be aware, advice on the situation regarding COVID-19 has been changing daily and the risk level to the UK has now been raised to high. With the health and safety of our Club members paramount, the Committee has been guided by the Government's stance on minimising unnecessary travel, maintaining social distancing and the need for vulnerable people to self-isolate. In so doing, along with other Clubs and Canine Societies, this week we took the decision to postpone or cancel events that had been lined up for you over the coming weeks:

The Annual General Meeting, which should have taken place at Roade on 4 April – postponed. To be rescheduled when possible. The agenda remains in place as it is, with no new business or nominations added. It will be available from me when I give a minimum of 14 days' notice of the new date, time and venue to all members.

The Open Show, also to have taken place on 4 April at Roade – cancelled but consideration will be given to rescheduling later in the year. Other than for those of you who have kindly said to keep their entry fee for Club funds, refunds for the 4 April show will be made.

The Day at the Animal Health Trust on 23 April – postponed and will be reorganised when the situation allows.

Yesterday the Kennel Club issued a letter to Club Secretaries endorsing Government advice. They recommended that Clubs and Societies should cancel forthcoming events over the next three months, ie until the end of June. With this in mind, it is likely I will also be deferring the 11 June Celebration Lunch at the Kennel Club. If so, I will notify those of you who had booked to attend.

I will also notify everyone in due course when the situation regarding our Scottish Open Show at Border Union on 21 June becomes clear.

Updates will be on the Club website www.bgvclub.co.uk.

We are now facing the most profound changes to our daily lives that the majority of us have ever experienced. Curtailment for the time being of our BGV Club events play only a small part, so thank you all for your patience and understanding – and stay safe.

Linda Skerritt
Secretary

We have to go back to as far as 2001 when the foot and mouth outbreak caused the cessation of all canine outdoor activities for a considerable time. I judged PBGVs at WKC that year – my first CC appointment - and, from an entry of 48, I awarded DCC to a young Afterglow Woody Woodpecker and BOB to Ch Willowbrae Amazing Grace with Afterglow. I remember having to drive through a great trough of disinfectant to get into the showground.

Now we must all take precautions to avoid contracting this virus. One of our Club members, Michael Walshe, who had intended to be at our open show with his GBGV has written to me. He and Mr Baggins are currently stuck in Slovakia because all the borders between Slovakia and the UK are shut. Slovakia has declared a State of Emergency. He wrote "Mr Baggins and I are often the only folk to be seen in the street during our evening walks, if through the City. It's weird! We must be masked to do any shopping, take a bus, etc, and have to be masked for social reasons whenever out at all. Folk here are taking the Government's measures and recommendations very seriously.

I went to a dear old friend's funeral (not C-19) yesterday, out in the country. Everyone was masked, including the priest; the service was held in the open air, which allows fifty attendees. We crowded that limit, I think. Had the service been in Church, there could have been only nine attendees plus the priest.

Bratislava City is poised to close its perimeter to non-residents. Upon my return yesterday I was asked to prove my residency there and to justify having gone out of the City at a Police check-point. There was hardly a queue for cars, which illustrates how well-behaved are the citizens! Lorries were backed up for over seven kilometres. To actually close the perimeter would be harsh as well as difficult. With schools, all entertainments and playgrounds shut, city parents are struggling with bored children, cannot go to work, feel it to be unsafe even to go out with the children and so do need to escape to the country (either the traditional family "chata" or at least a day in the woods). But the Government is desperate to contain the spread, so we all understand the temptation to cordon off the city, which is the epicentre of the small foothold the virus has here".

We must all place our hobby in perspective at the moment. The crisis will pass and things will gradually get back to normal, including our own BGV Club events. Meantime, look after yourselves and stay healthy.

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