

AT ONE OF THE FINAL EVENTS OF THE YEAR, a great Christmas present for team Erylan was a BIS at Carluke & DCS open show. Top honours went to Foote & McAulay's Ir Ch Erylan Hebe La Fille Jeune IR Jun Ch, handled as usual by Erin. Breed and group judge was Paul Galholm (Gazenorth) and BIS Judge Michelle Fort (Shulune).

I hope you can find time over the Christmas/New Year break for totting up the number of points your show dogs have gained over the past year. Claim forms for the Club's annual club Points trophies can be found on www.bgvclub.co.uk/membership-voice-lod. And, of course, remember that annual subscriptions now fall due for 2020. These can be sent to our Membership Secretary, Martin Bishop, 1 Longship Way, Maldon, Essex CM9 6UG. Alternatively for bank transfer details contact Martin on 07779 300761 or vendeen48@gmail.com. I'm afraid this is the time of year for all paying out as your annual payment for the Limited Odds Draw is due, also payment if you wish to remain on the Breeders Directory for 2020. The former payment goes to Geraldine Dodd, 28 Leaf Road, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU5 5JH, the latter to me at Sharnden, Fourth Avenue, Stanford-le-Hope SS17 8HN. If you pay everything by bank transfer, don't forget to give a reference on the payment so that our Treasurer, Colin Makey, won't be left scratching his head trying to work out what the payment is for, and let the respective people know – Martin, Geraldine and me.

Sylvia Probert's funeral takes place on 27 December and will be for immediate family only, due to the size of the chapel. If anyone wishes to mark her passing, please send donations to Rowcroft Hospice in Torquay, who supported her whilst she was in her residential home. They will be gratefully received. Details are: Freepost RTKK-UJRJ-XBKS, In Memory, Rowcroft Hospice, Avenue Road Torquay, TQ2 5LS.



Cheques sent to them directly will need to include your name and address and Sylvia's name, as the person you are donating in memory of, so they can thank you personally.

On yet another sad note, this week I learned of the passing on 5 November of Nickie Hunt's husband Bruce. He was 99. Bruce had remained in touch regularly to let me know how Nickie was and now their son, John, has let me know that his mother, who was our President until 2013, is still living at home where she has 24hr care.

Another person I want to mention is someone not generally known in BGV circles. She is Anne Thornewell (Wellthornes Borzois), a good friend of Jan and Martin Bishop and other Essex BGV owners. Every winter Anne goes to Australia and this year has been no exception. She may have escaped the gloomy English winter but walked right into an area of New South Wales stricken by the bush fires. Last week she had re-packed her bags ready to evacuate because, as you can see from this photo, fires were getting dangerously close with them choking the area. The family continued to water everything down but, even with water bomb helicopters and fire engines all around, it got to the stage where there was only one road out. The temperature rose to 38 degrees and, by last Friday, a decision was made that if the fire reached a certain point they would leave to a nearby evacuation point near Bathurst. However Christmas Day dawned and thankfully things had eased slightly thanks to the unstinting work of the fire crews.

Thoughts are with all dog owners in these stricken areas where they so desperately need rain to remove the fear of losing their properties and animals.

But here, in a rather rainy and gloomy UK, we are nearly at the end of 2019. At least we can now look forward to the days soon getting slightly longer and it only remains for me to wish you good health, happiness and good luck for 2020.

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