



Friends of Guisachan Annual Report, July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018

The Friends of Guisachan has had another successful year building on the accomplishments of the organization since its founding in 2013. This year has been especially important as 2018 marks the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Golden Retriever and the fifth anniversary of the creation of the Friends of Guisachan.

New Activities:

Our most notable accomplishment this year has been the publication of *The Golden Retriever: A Scottish Legacy Commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the Founding of the Breed*. This copyrighted 36-page booklet, written by American, Canadian, English, Scottish and Australian authors, follows the origins of the breed through its migration to other lands and its evolution from being a hunting dog to a dog of many venues and services to mankind. One thousand copies were printed of which there are only approximately 150 left. It is expected that the remaining copies will be sold at the Golden Retriever Club of America National Specialty in October, 2018. In addition to individual sales, bulk sales were made to the Cannich General Store in Scotland, the Yankee Golden Retriever Rescue (for their catalog) the Bird Dog Museum store and the Yankee Golden Retriever Club where it was used as class prizes at their June, 2018 Specialty.

A second significant endeavor was the transfer of the lease and the ownership of the Golden Retriever statue FOG commissioned for placement in Tomich, Scotland on historic Guisachan land to the Golden Retriever Club of Scotland together with a \$10,000 endowment fund.

Thirdly, conversations with the renown Canadian artist, Kathy Hagerman, resulted in her creating three prints, one color and two black and white, commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Golden. The Friends of Guisachan is receiving 40% of her sales for the organization's on-going educational endeavors.

And finally, the President was asked to speak about the 150th Anniversary at the Third Annual New England Golden Jubilee at Dog Mountain in Vermont and the Yankee Golden Retriever Club Specialty in South Beverly, MA.

Continuing Activities:

We have continued to have success with our website on-line store featuring Guisachan tweed items including several new items introduced this year, i.e. a tweed tote bag, a new fashionable scarf and tweed rosettes, all of which have been well received. We have also continued to produce Guisachan stone pendants and paper weights hand painted by Marcia Schlehr and stone collectibles featuring Scottish flowers – heather – and Crocus, Primrose and Cowslip honoring the first litter of Golden puppies. Two UK publications, *Guisachan: A History* by Donald Fraser and *From Yellow to Gold* by Malcolm Morecroft continue to be good sellers for us.

We continued to supply Tomich area hotels with free copies of our previously published *Walking Guide to Historic Guisachan* and expect this to be particularly popular at the Guisachan Gathering in Tomich in July, 2018.

Our very informative website and Facebook page have developed a strong following and have been particularly helpful to people planning a trip to the Guisachan Gathering. The President has been responding to queries ranging from accommodations recommendations to where a young man should plan to propose to his girlfriend while at the gathering!

Our financial status has been strong, due to sales, although we still cannot solicit donations due to our inability to afford the cost of registering as a non-profit in all 50 states and the manpower necessary to file in all states. (The treasurer will be preparing an end-of-the-year financial report.) For the second year, the services of H&R Block were inexpensively retained for filing with the US Internal Revenue Service.

Looking to the Future:

The Board and the officers are due to retire in 2018 and the Chairman and the President have both expressed the need to step down. Discussions are underway regarding individuals who might fill both positions.

Most importantly the time has come to reassess our accomplishments and create a new vision or an expanded vision for the Friends of Guisachan in the years ahead. Given all that the Friends have done to educate the public and Golden fanciers in particular regarding the history of the breed, it is to be hoped that new leadership and new ideas can build on this foundation and further expand the educational goals of the organization.

A Fifth Anniversary Review

2013-2018

The Year 2013 marked the origins of a fledgling organization initially organized around the idea of stabilizing the ruins of the Guisachan Mansion at Tomich, a small village in the Scottish Highlands in order to honor the ancestral home of the Golden Retriever. As the current owner of the ruins had no interest in that idea, a second idea was proposed, i.e. the commissioning of a life-size statue of a Golden to be placed in Tomich, Inverness-shire. It took many months, a great deal of correspondence with lawyers, civil engineers, the Highland Council, the sculpting firm of Eskar UK Bronze, the Fraser family and the financial support of many, but on August 14, 2014, the statue was unveiled. The ceremonies included many local Golden fanciers who together with their Golden and a Scottish piper paraded through the village of Tomich for the ceremonies.

Earlier in 2014, the Friends of Guisachan were given non-profit status by the US Internal Revenue Service. This was also the year the Fraser family gave the Friends permission to commission the weaving of the historic Guisachan Tweed by the Johnston Mills of Elgin, Scotland.

An extensive website was designed and created by Janette Stubelt, a noted designer, featuring many articles on the history of the Golden, the history of the Guisachan Estate, personal accounts of visits to Guisachan, and an on-line store selling hand-made Guisachan tweed wearing apparel, doggie bandanas and other small items. Additional fund raising was accomplished through two on-line auctions.

As part of the Friends' educational mission, a *Walking Guide to Historic Guisachan* was published with photos and text to help visitors to the area identify the village's historic dwellings and learn of their uses in the 1800's.

The Friends of Guisachan began to maintain a sales and informational booth at the National Specialties of the Golden Retriever Club of America, affording the officers and board members the opportunity to educate new and old Golden owners about the history of the breed.

And as a "grande finale" to the organization's fifth year of service, it will be sponsoring a Guisachan Tea at the 150th Anniversary celebration featuring a lecture on Guisachan Life, by noted historian and Board member Marcia Schlehr followed by a competitive quiz on Golden history complete with prizes for the winners. More than 200 people from around the world will be in attendance.