

Reasons for my resignation as Committee Member of “The Deerhound Club” Betina Adams Ardneish Deerhounds.

I noticed a very thin bitch and even thinner pups on a website and thought they looked very Deerhound like. I thought mother looked pure Deerhound and puppies likely 7/8th Deerhound I was very concerned as the puppies and mother looked in such bad condition, I had real concerns as to what type of home she would have been sold to. Out of courtesy I informed the Deerhound Club Committee by e-mail. I received the reply that ‘although the Committee wished they could rescue them all, I should contact a Greyhound Rescue.



I then decided that the Greyhound rescues had more than enough to do and as a Deerhound owner I would be more than embarrassed to contact such an organization when I know the workload they have. As a matter of courtesy I informed the Committee that I was going to pursue this matter as is my right as an individual, not in my capacity as a committee member. I did not involve the committee further, nor request their assistance financially or help to find them homes.

I made a comment on my private Facebook wall about the Dam and puppies and posted the photo's showing the poor condition, I stated that I would like to try and rescue them. I was overwhelmed by the support from so many friends around the world and from other breed clubs. Donations started to come in and I asked a fellow Deerhounder, to help by taking control of the financial side. He has kept a tally of who has donated what, what's been spent on travel, dog food, etc. Independently of me. Within a short time we raised £1200 to buy the mother and puppies and transport them back from a very rural part of Co Donegal, Ireland. I spoke to the seller on a number of occasions and tried to arrange a variety of transport methods to get this family back to Worcestershire. The seller did inform me that he believed the bitch was a deerhound and that the sire was also a deerhound but there were "No Papers". I told him from the photo's that the puppies looked more 7/8th Deerhound This did not matter to me or the group they needed help and we were prepared to give this with or without Kennel Club paperwork.

One of the methods of transport I tried was to get the regular Greyhound transport to collect them and this was arranged however I had a phone call from the driver early hours who said the dogs were 'too bare' (meaning too thin) and he wouldn't risk them on the journey and for these men to say that they were in this condition confirmed what I had thought. There exact words to me were "Betina Forget them", I was now very concerned about their futures, and condition. Thanks to the kindness of the terrier folk, a kind and wonderful person volunteered to drive over via ferry, collect the dogs and bring them back. I was planning to go myself but had committed myself as my role of committee member to steward at the Club Limited Show; I met them all on the motorway in the small hours. The poor things were bags of skin and bone, very timid and full of worms.

I have since managed to get them treated, settled in and they started to put on weight and come out of their shells. I posted 3 small video clips on my Private Facebook wall daily, their supporters fell in love with them as did, and noticed the daily improvement in their condition and personalities. It was truly remarkable how such a wonderful group supported them financially and emotionally and also supported me for that I will always be indebted to them a wonderful group of dog lovers. I am happy to say Mother and puppies are now in wonderful homes, Kirin the last girl puppy now has the most amazing life with an incredible person who so fell in love with her that they paid a huge financial cost to fly her to Norway, to have a life there that some hounds can only dream off. KC papers did not matter to this incredibly kind person she simply fell in love with Kirin through our private face book group and had watched the daily video clips and updates that I put on from the very beginning. Shelby is in a wonderful home locally thanks to the kindness of an Irish Wolfhound Exhibitor for finding me this amazing home. Finn is happy with Danny a rescue Gt Dane again thanks to the kindness of another IW exhibitor who found me this lovely home. Mother Erin is living with my good friends in the Midlands so I will see them often, except of course Kirin in Norway but we share updates still as a group and hope to have a re union next year when they will be one year old. I also hope to visit Bergen to see Kirin and her amazing owner. During the months that I have had these hounds I have referred to them, on my private Face book page, as 'my Donegal Deerhounds' and " Donegal Deerhound Wairns" both as a term of endearment, partly because "Donegal Deerhounds" rhymes its sweet and they were incredibly "Dear"

to the people who have helped to rescue them raise the funds, send me dog food, toys its all been heartening humanity at its best.

I need to confirm that at no time had I ever stated, on Face book, or other media, that the rescues were full Scottish Deerhounds. From the very beginning we knew they had no papers, however some 10 days after arrival a microchip was found on mother ,and Breeder was contacted she is KC registered, I have also communicated with the owner of the father who is not registered, he confirmed Father is a Deerhound for 4 generations and IW was introduced in the 5th generation on the Father's side so the puppies are 7/8th Deerhound 1/8th Irish wolfhound as I had thought, and I was vindicated in my initial view that mother looked pure Deerhound but I never once said she was until I found her microchip and now have her papers.

I attended the Deerhound Club Committee meeting on 6th Oct. I felt obliged to attend, even though the previous two meeting's I had attended were far from pleasant for me. I half expected some of what was to come, but nothing could have prepared me for the vitriolic reception I received, even before the official meeting started.

I was verbally set upon within minutes of walking into the room I did not even have a chance, to take my jacket off, nor had the Chairperson officially opened the meeting. I was given no warning, even though the rest of the committee had been made aware of what was going to happen. They had been on the phones the night before and some travelled up together, they all knew what was about to take place they were ready!. I was informed that 2 anonymous complaints had been made to the committee that I had brought the club into disrepute by calling my rescued hounds 'Donegal Deerhounds' / Donegal Dearhound wairns" on my PRIVATE Face book wall. Due to the actions of 2 Deerhound people who had copied this from my private Face book wall. I asked for a copy of the complaint but that was refused. I asked for a copy of the supposed Face book post that caused the offence this also was refused, I asked that this be put in the Club minutes on more than one occasion I was refused each time.

I informed the committee that my act of rescuing these hounds was a private matter and none of their business. I reminded them that they wanted nothing to do with the rescue, and suggested that I pass it off to a Greyhound Rescue. During the rescue I had not referred to the hounds as Scottish Deerhounds, nor had I sought any further assistance from The Deerhound Club after their initial response of 'Contact a Greyhound Rescue'. I had, as a matter of courtesy, informed them that I would go ahead with the rescue independently, and I failed to see how this then affected the Deerhound Club and my standing within the club or the Committee. I was told that as I was a committee member it was their affair and I had brought the club into "Disrepute" I was to remove any mention of "Donegal Deerhounds' from my Private Face book pages. When I refused I was informed that I was going to be suspended. This despite their knowledge that their so-called Confidentiality Agreement that I had to sign within half an hour of being voted onto the committee, was not in line with Kennel Club policy the Committee do not have the power to suspend or fire members (this was written into this contract that they could), only members can do that. (I pointed this out in meeting number 2 having confirmed that the committee do not have these powers with the KC beforehand. They refused to put this in the

minutes on a number of occasions, they refused to give me a copy of the complaint, they refused to give me a copy of the supposed offensive comments on my Private Face book Page (my page is not a public page). I asked why I had not been warned about this? A member said they knew me and if they had phoned me I likely would not have turned up!, well they obviously do not know me at all!.

I informed the committee that I called the hounds the Donegal Deerhounds as a term of endearment, they were rescued from Co Donegal, were very Dear to me and those that had donated funds for their rescue. I was told I had brought the club into disrepute by calling these 'Lurchers' 'Donegal Deerhounds'. I was extremely shocked, hurt humiliated knowing they all knew what I was about to walk into, they knew who the anonymous complainers' were, a paid non committee member who writes the minutes was also present. I was so shocked at this behavior and attitude towards me and my rescue hounds and the wonderful people from around the globe, who had supported them financially emotionally, and I responded that they should not look down their noses at 'The Lurcher' because without The Lurcher, we would not have today's Deerhounds. The Landseer Wardle prints they so drooled over were in fact 'Lurcher/Longdogss and that they should take time to read Scopes, Cupples and Capt. Graham's Archives where it clearly states that the crossings of the breeds and that the 'Lurchers' I had rescued were more entitled to call themselves the Deerhounds of the 19th century than today's Deerhounds and that we owe the "Lurcher" a debt of gratitude and should not be so arrogant and disgusted by them. That true uniformity of Type did not begin until the formation of the Kennel Club, the writing of the Breed Standard and the advent of the Victorian passion for pedigree breeding, in dogs and other animals, along with the advent of Dog Shows.

I said this because I was so stunned hurt beyond belief . The copy that had been taken from my private Face book wall (which they refused to give me) had links to Captain Grahams archives and links to the Scopes and Cupples books. Along with pictures of Wardle/Landseer/ paintings clearly showing Scottish Deerhounds before the formation of the Kennel club and writing of "The Breed Standard", I had provided these to allow readers to make up their own minds as to the origins of the original Deerhound but its there in black and white, along with old photo's in Captain Grahams archives and Darwin's letter saying to McNeill that the Scotch Deerhound was a "Mongrel" it's all there documented. I said this because I was SO hurt. How could they use these beautiful hounds as a tool to continue their personal attacks upon me which had been continuous since it being announced I had been voted onto the committee, and back to the abusive answer phone message left on my phone by an ex committee member that I complained about last Christmas the same group of "friends" had banded together because I dare complain about their colleague.

I believe that anonymous complaints give the complainer the cloak of anonymity and therefore no accountability for their actions. A reputable Dog Club would have treated this anonymous complaint with the contempt that it deserves, they would not of allowed anonymous complaints to be put forward, but this Committee found within the complaint, further ammunition that have been seeking since I was first elected by club members to the Committee. Every Committee member sat quietly whilst allowing this tirade to continue, unabated, at me. None of them had the courage to speak up about the treatment I was getting, being shouted down at every turn, not being allowed to adequately

put forward my case, and not entering this into the meeting minutes, or being given copies of the complaints or facebook offensive post.

At this point I had enough of their behavior and said not to bother suspending me as I was leaving. I broke down and asked a committee member that I had respected to come outside with me for a cigarette. I tried to compromise even though I was so stunned. I did try to stick the day out and continue to work for the benefit of the Deerhound Club members and the breed as a whole.

In the afternoon the subject of show critiques and their collection was raised. My proposal, which I had proved worked efficiently was cost effective had helped save club members money, was quashed, purely on political grounds. They did not even bother to look at the data I had provided proving without a shadow of doubt this was the most efficient, the most cost effective way the quickest way of obtaining critiques that members so look forward to, it did not go to vote it was a NO. They did not want upset an ex committee member, who was part of the group of "friends".

I went outside I was still so shaken from what had happened to me in the morning, I watched a video clip on my phone of my beautiful rescues I broke down I could not understand why anyone would want to inflict this vicious attack upon me and them so beautiful but so thin and so in need of help. And thought I am tired of being their victim, this has been non stop since last Christmas, because I complained about an abusive answer phone message left on my machine by a person who was then a committee member which included bad language, when I had 5 poorly hounds and had lived at the vets for days on end, The ex committee member had accused me of something I had not done. The only way to take back the control and to protect myself from anymore of this appalling behavior was to leave, to have no further contact with people who behave like this.

I returned to the room and quietly and calmly said I was leaving as they would not allow me to contribute to the Deerhound Club and that they had allowed a personal vendetta against me to exist since last Christmas and that I had been warned before standing for committee that I was extremely disliked (this was by a committee member) I told all the committee that they should be thoroughly ashamed of themselves for their behavior. I said 'Shame on you on all of you. To allow this bullying behavior to go on as long as it has, not one of you has offered any support the last time I experienced such behavior was in the playground when I attended a London inner-city school.' (NB 2 members were absent at this meeting but not the first 2 meetings) One member also phoned to apologise that they had been so cowardly as to not speak up (I really did appreciate that phone call).

I returned home to care for my own dogs and my rescue hounds. I was devastated but sought solace from the beautiful rescue mum and puppies along with my supporters.

I then spoke with the Kennel Club for advice and was going to just try and put all of this behind me, walk away with some dignity, however some 10 days later I had a phone call, from a senior member of the committee saying a letter was in the post, also saying that 2 committee members now wished to remove me from the Club Judging list because I had said that the Deerhound of the 19th century were Lurchers and my rescue puppies were of a similar breeding to the documented crossings of the Deerhound PRE formation of the Kennel Club and writing of the "Breed Standard" they did not feel I

judged to the Current Breed Standard, and that I may have to sign something saying that I agree to judge to the Breed Standard, I was shattered that they could come back with more after what they had already put me through. (I need to confirm that my resignation was not due to the committee, simply saying NO, to the system I had been using to obtain show critiques it was because of the above, and the behavior towards me that started within half an hour of it being announced at the Breed Show), I have many other examples but I do not want to have to relive those. I also have evidence in the form of recordings which I have chosen not to use at this time. I received the letter some 10 days after the Oct 06 meeting. This letter stunned me another twist of the knife accusing me of breaking Rule 2 and saying it was "Perverse" of me to extol the virtues of dogs that existed over 150 years ago, Perverse to use their word as the Deerhound Club had a picture on the front page of the official website of a Deerhound on a very old postcard which clearly showed the collie cross so in effect a "Lurcher" also the Glengarry hound pictured on the front page of the Illustrated Breed Standard with its tail bolt upright caused by the Foxhound crossing is also in effect a "Lurcher" so they themselves are "Guilty" of the same offence they accuse me off. Perverse Indeed. For me it is very important that I understand and educate myself to the origins of the "Scottish Deerhound" prior to the formation of the Kennel Club, this does not stop me judging to a Kennel Club Breed Standard, its perverse to think I would not be capable of doing that and my previous Championship Show entries also confirms its "Perverse" of them to demand such.

I apologise for the length of this, I did not want to have to re live my experience but as the club have made an official announcement of my resignation on the club website and in the Newsletter (Of which I have not had a copy). Its easier for me to write it down to share it with you this way than to have to verbally re live this with members who wish to know the reasons why. As I am now getting phone calls and Christmas cards from concerned members who do not know why I had to resign. Rumors abound, also at the LKA, I was thought to be handing out "flyers" as a committee member was asking others to come to me to try and get one, none of this was true I had no "flyers".

I know I am not faultless but I did not deserve to be put through this terrible experience and to use these beautiful rescues, as a tool to continue a personal vendetta against me by a group of "Friends" is not acceptable.

My comfort lies with my rescues seeing them in their wonderful new homes, the amazing support of a group of true dog loving people from around the globe this is were I will focus my memories now and I would do it all again in a heartbeat, its been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. But the experience of the Oct 06 committee meeting, along with the other meetings were I asked on numerous occasions for them to leave their personal feelings of animosity towards me outside of the room, sadly they were unable to do this. This has shattered any confidence I had with the officers and members of that Deerhound Club Committee and I will never understand there motivations to use these beautiful hounds as a way to hurt me personally, it was cowardly and morally very wrong from what should be a dog loving community. I am sorry to the members who voted for me, I was so humbled and had wanted to do a good job, but it was made impossible for me. Was it worth a committee place for me Yes, without question the rescues had to come first.



Shelby now in her new home with her IW friend Cuda (thanks to a wonderful IW owner).



Kirin now settled with her new owner in Norway.



Mum Erin now settled into her new home thanks to very good friends of mine.

Dear Finn Below in his new home with Danny the rescue Gt Dane eternally indebted to another breed club for finding me this wonderful home.



Was it all worth it? Yes without question I would do it all again in a heartbeat! Was it worth a place on the Club committee I have to ask you to make that decision, but for me Yes.

For further pictures and video clips (In process of updating) please visit
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/111388585@N07/>

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