

## **LRKC Chairman's Report: AGM 17 March 2018**

Firstly, I want to raise a toast on the 60<sup>th</sup> birthday of the LRKC – this is the 60<sup>th</sup> AGM and we have reached a diamond milestone as a club. I salute all the members, previous chairmen, secretaries, treasurers and committees for keeping the LRKC the premier club for the breed in South Africa. Together we have built and continue to build a legacy of Labrador Retrievers in this country and the club to support them!

### **SHOWS**

Shows during 2017 were marked by good number of entries, very positive remarks by judges about quality of entries and the LRKC was one of the few specialist breed clubs with sponsorship for all of our shows. For this we thank our sponsor, WUMA! They were very generous during 2017 sponsoring all our shows and we are extremely glad that they had agreed to continue their sponsorship of food prizes, not only for all of LRKC shows, but also for the Field Trials during 2018!

The **SUMMER OPEN SHOW Open Show**, was held on 4 February 2017, judged Mr Roy Clarke. The Best Puppy in Show and also Junior Best in Show was Mrs Jane Pott's Caignair Bijjou, Senior Best in Show was Mrs Jane Pott's Ch Flight of Fancy at Caignair, who was also the overall Best in Show with the Reserve Best Senior, Mrs Annemarie van Heerden's Ch Sea-Birds Nobody's Business, also the overall Reserve BIS on the day.

The **WINTER OPEN SHOW** was held on 24 June 2017 judged by All-Breeds judge Mrs Gael Morrison. Best Puppy and also Best Junior in Show was Mr Dwayne Malcolm's Caignair Bold Gryphon and Best Senior as well as Best in Show was Mrs Thania Rowan's Ch Casimiro Sykstus of Rowania with Mr Dwayne Malcolm's Ch Caignair Switch Blade Reserve BIS.

**THE 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW on 16 September 2017** was set up by the committee to be a special event and the words of esteemed judge for this occasion, Mrs Rose-Marie Cabion, made us feel that we had achieved just that. To quote Mrs Cabion: "...My congratulations must go to the hard working committee for one of the best run championship shows I have been privileged to judge. There was such attention to detail, the wonderful trophy table, beautiful flower arrangements, attractively decorated visitors' tent with a terrific array of food and drinks. A happy atmosphere prevailed. I was presented with so many lovely Labradors, so much quality, in fact it was a feast of beautiful Labradors and I was spoiled for choice." Indeed kind words from an authority in the breed and it made us feel that, if the 50<sup>th</sup> Championship Show was some measure to go by, then over the years Labrador breeders in South Africa and us as a club, must have done something right.

With an entry of 29 dogs and 42 bitches the Dog CC was won by Mr and Mrs Nicholson's Berrakaw Golden Zhunan, with RCC going to Mrs Jane Pott's Caignair Black Hawk, who also won Best Puppy in Show, handled by his very proud real

owner, Mr Kevin Pott. The Bitch CC went to Mrs Jorisna Bonthuys' Shork's Woodlark of Inkwa and RCC to Ms Genevieve Alberts' Craignair Sweet Caroline of Lethanwood. In the final line-up was also the Champion Dog, Mrs Thania Rowan's Ch Casimiro Sykstus of Rowania and the Champion Bitch, Mrs Jane Pott's Ch Craignair Picture Perfect, who then went on to win BIS and the CC bitch, Mrs Jorinsa Bonthuys' Shork's Woodlark of Inkwa, winning RBIS.

At the time of the 50<sup>th</sup> Championship Show, the committee also launched the new Club logo, although strictly speaking it is not completely new. From the discussion of examples and new designs we had considered since 2013, it was high time to make a final decision and we think that the old logo in a new format with the wording chosen was just right. We had received many members' approval and had no complaints. It certainly worked well on the memorabilia manufactured for sale such as the stainless steel cups and number clips. I predict that these will become sought after items in years to come. Any creative ideas for use of the club logo will be very welcome.

## **FIELD TRIALS**

The **47<sup>th</sup> Annual Field Trials**, once again held over the last weekend in April, on 27<sup>th</sup> till the 30<sup>th</sup>, was staged as usual at the Val Farms. The 2017 trials also saw a return to the Val Sports Club as base and we were glad to find a much improved facility. Anybody having been involved in the planning and running of a 4-day Field Trial event will know how much work and cost this takes, therefore I want to once again thank everybody who worked very hard and contributed very generously to make this a success. To the officials - Judges, Field Trial Managers, Guns and Throwers – once again thank you very much. Thank you for managing entries, Angelique and Francois van Rooyen, Gerhard and Mercia van Tonder for managing Game, Tony Wynne for FT Database and printing certificates, I compiled the FT Catalogue and ran the Bar with the help of Gerhard, Jane Pott and several others who jumped in to help carry, drag around the stock and serve our ever thirsty customers! To our main sponsor, MSD Animal Health, we appreciate your continued support of our sport. We were also spoiled with two food prize sponsors, Afgri (for Jock) and Lionel's Choice. To add to this several members donated generously towards sponsorship of raffle prizes, gifts, placement of adverts and I would like to acknowledge the following: Inqaba Biotech, Mike Hunt, Snowpine Kennels, TFS Holdings, Kevin & Jane Pott, Francois van Rooyen and Adamasdor Labradors.

The Puppy Stake was won by Jill Daley and Baci, Junior Stake by Sharon van Rensburg and Jonty, Maiden Stake by Francois van Rooyen and KC, Novice by Brenda Anderson and Muchi and Open Stake by David Kloeck and Tusk.

## **WEBSITE:**

Continues to be a source of information to club members, announcing and reporting events and a true reflection of what happens in the club. The website continues to be a significant source of revenue for the club through members' advertising of litters

for sale and the breeder listing. I still wish we can improve on quality and professionalism of the website, but until we can afford or get a more able person to run it for free, you are stuck with me for "doing the website."

## **PUBLICATIONS:**

### **LRKC Bulletin**

The Club Secretary, Genevieve Alberts, produced three electronic *LRKC Bulletins* during the course of 2017 – these remain available for download from the website. Members are encouraged to continuously send material for these publications as well as our Yearbook, *Lab Lines*.

### **Lab Lines 2017**

I am sure you will all agree with me that Genevieve once again produced a magnificent, interesting and stylish Lab Lines 2017. In just more than 100 pages it once again reflected our club activities and was also full of very relevant and interesting articles and reports! Thanks to all members who contributed with written accounts, photographs and articles of interest.

### **WODAC 2017:**

The LRKC also participated in the KUSA Gundog Stall at the WODAC 2017 to promote both the breed and the club. Although we were certainly noticed, sadly, we cannot claim any significant interest in club membership following the event. This is an observation shared by many other specialist clubs. It seems we still need to discover how to raise interest in specialist dog breeding, dog shows and field trials – it is however general opinion that besides the exposure our breed may get at such an event, it hold no value for the club.

## **MEMBERSHIP:**

Our current membership database reflects 137 listed members of which 26 are Honorary Life Members. Of the 111 ordinary members in 2017 we received payment for around 85 memberships and to date for 2018 only 59 members are fully paid up.

On the website we currently have 39 members listed on the Breeders Listing that were also paid up during 2017. Of these only 19 have to date paid for their listing for 2018.

These numbers are indeed worrying, especially considering that we want to continue to afford running events such as the Field Trials on the scale and level we presently do, or to get an overseas judge for our Championship Show.

The obvious reason for this could be the economic status in this country, but we see the same trend in other parts of the world, although their buffer is much thicker than ours. Whatever the reason, if our membership numbers and the funds members contribute to show and field trial entries and donations to the club do not match the ever rising costs, we may be forced to scale down on our Trials, Shows and

Yearbook. We should really think hard about a strategy to find ways to draw more and also active members into the club.

I suggested last year that we set ourselves the goal to grow our membership by 50% over the next two years. I want to once again set this as a priority goal and ask all members to help the next committee to achieve this goal.

### **MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:**

I was once again glad to be part of this committee – we had developed a wonderful working relationship over the last few years and we are proud of our achievements once again during 2017. Thank you to each and every person on this committee for your hard work, your support to me as chairman, for just taking the responsibility and running with it and make us all enjoy being part of this club. We were however sad to see our Secretary, Genevieve Alberts resign at the end of 2017. She had done a fantastic job in this club – her enthusiasm for the breed and the club was contagious and she will be missed as a committee member moving forward. We are also saying goodbye today to Francois and Angelique van Rooyen as committee members. Their valuable work in Field Trials were so much appreciated. And so must I thank each member of the rest of the committee who stuck it out until the end of term and are still available to continue - thank you very much Thania Rowan (our membership secretary), Gerhard van Tonder, Mercia van Tonder, Dwayne Malcolm (our very able treasurer), Alan Kloeck and Jane Pott (our President and also hard working committee member).

### **My last thoughts:**

I will conclude with the same thought as last year – that we always ask ourselves whether we are serving the interest of Labrador Retrievers when we work our dogs, show our dogs, judge dog events or breed and sell dogs.

We want to breed the best in Labrador type and working ability, but also set ourselves goals as breeders to reduce the incidence of hip- and elbow dysplasia, eliminating PRA and EIC, testing for every possible hereditary condition currently available. This is the correct and ethical thing to do to ensure that every puppy that sees the light under our hands is perfect – for ourselves, for our peers and most of all for the new owners. But I am beginning to think that in the process of doing so, we are setting standards that make it just not possible for the ordinary man to own a well-bred dog, be a breeder or to show or work his or her dogs. Breeding the correct type is always paramount and breeders over many years had kept to this, arguably to some extent at least, but added to this, over the years science offered us more and more tests, and I want to emphasise **with the aim to help us also breed perfectly healthy dogs**. So if we have all these good intentions and wonderful scientific tools, why we are becoming an endangered species - where is it all getting lost?

Thank you all,

Renier Jansen van Vuuren  
**LRKC Chairman**