



The English Springer Spaniel Club Centenary Celebrations 1921 - 2021

by Lesley Field and Yvonne Billows

AS 2021 began, the next twelve months were all set to be a year of great celebration for the English Springer Spaniel Club, as the Club was 100 years old, and five 'birthday' events had been scheduled throughout the entire year.

Plans to mark 'One Hundred Years of ESSC in 2021' would include two Championship Shows, an Open Show and two Field Trials (Open and Novice Stakes).

Of course, they had not reckoned on the Pandemic still being around and throwing a spanner in the works. This continued to keep them all on edge throughout the year with the words 'will we be able to' always on the tip of their tongues and wondering if they would be able to face head on all the challenges that might come their way!

As it happened, they managed to successfully put in motion all their plans in the space of three months at the back end of the year. Firstly, and thanks to the facilitation of Birmingham National Show enabling them to use their venue at Stafford, the ESSC was able to hold the first of their events which was the main 'party' - the Breed Championship Show on 23rd September 2021 at the Margaret Everton Pavilion.

Next, and due to the drive and determination of the ESSC Officers and Committee, they managed to get the second Centenary Breed Championship Show underway at Tomlinson's Canine Centre ten and half weeks later, on 5th December 2021, coupled with the Open Show which ran alongside it.

Then just eight days later, on 13th December, the ESSC Field Trial section ran an amazingly successful 16 Dog Open Field Trial in Cheshire and the following week on December 20th ran another triumphant day with a 16 Dog Novice Trial at the same venue.

An incredible 13 weeks

So, in the space of an incredible 13 weeks, at the end of an unbelievable year, with some amazing work done to obtain remarkable sponsorship, and being given memorable gifts both in monetary terms and goods, and of course the hours and hours of personal time given by the Officials and Committee, the English Springer Spaniel Club had managed to deliver five events of which they are extremely proud. A testament to the effectiveness and longevity of the Parent Club of the Breed.

The late Mrs Pam Wadsworth, who passed in December 2020, herself an Honorary Life Member of the ESSC, had not only donated a number of trophies to be awarded outright at the Centenary events, but also, for the past twenty years, provided Members with commemorative Welsh slate ESSC Coasters which have now become quite a collector's item. All these souvenirs went a long way to adding to the magic of these events.

Each of these occasions deserves their own report to provide a lasting record and are described later in this article.

But first, let us look at how the English Springer Spaniel Club 'came to be'.

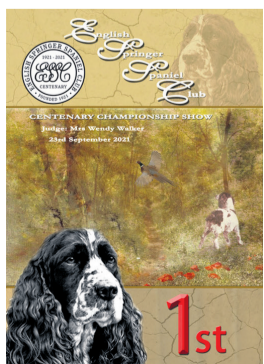
It was not until 1902 that the Kennel Club recognised the name English Springer Spaniel as a Breed in its own right. Up until that time we learnt about its origins and development through literature and art. We know that spaniels at this point in their history showed variability in size and shape and so we should not be surprised to see when looking at works by artists, such as Stubbs, that spaniels were depicted as a diverse group.

The growing popularity of the working ability of spaniels towards the turn of the 19th century led to the formation of the Spaniel Club in 1885, and registered with The Kennel Club June 2nd, 1891, when Breed Standards were drawn up for the distinct types of spaniels.

In 1917, there were just 28 English Springer Spaniels registered with the Kennel Club, however, such was their popularity that just four years later, in 1921, this had risen to 394. That same year, The English Springer Spaniel Club was founded following a meeting at Crufts Dog Show.

An application for Registration of Title costing One Guinea (21 shillings) was made to The Kennel Club on April 1st 1921. This was advertised in The Kennel Gazette and agreed at a Kennel Club Board Meeting in May 1921.

The first Secretary to take office was Mr William Humphrey (Horsford) at a time



First prize card

when the Committee were described as "enthusiastic show and field trial owners" and the ESSC is glad to say this continues to remain the case to this day.

Dorothy Morland Hooper (Ranscombe) was one of the original ESSC Committee members who went on to hold the principal position of Field Trial Secretary well into the 1960s. Traditionally, the Field Trial Secretary has played a pivotal and inclusive role in the ESSC, with past alumni being the late Mr F J (Joe) Robinson, along with his dear wife Betty (both also being ESSC Past Presidents), and this continues right up to present time with Mr Roy Proctor as ESSC Field Trial Secretary and also Chairman of the Club. Committees understandably come and go but, thankfully, those who have served the Club, for however long, do so with commitment, warmth, generosity, enthusiasm, and unquestioning dedication to the Breed.

- Honorary Secretaries of The English Springer Spaniel Club 1921 - 2021
- 1921: Mr William Humphrey
 - 1926: Rev. J.T. Phillips
 - 1927: Mr G.A. Taylor
 - 1928: Major Harry Jones
 - 1930: Dr C. Nash
 - 1933: Mr R. Kelland
 - 1948: Major & Mrs W. Travers*
 - 1953: Mrs. I.B. Hampton*
 - 1979: Mrs C. Muirhead*
 - 1982: Mrs J. Wood
 - 1985: Mrs P. Harris
 - 1989: Mr Jeremy Wise
 - 1991: Mr A. Emeney
 - 2002: Mrs Y. R. Billows
 - 2013: Mrs A.M. Mitchell
 - 2015: Mrs K.L. Holt (present ESSC Secretary)
- *Note of historical interest: until around the 1980s, the ladies holding the post of Hon Secretary would have used their husband's initials

Inevitably, with the popularity of the Breed expanding, and ESS Kennel Club registrations reaching a pinnacle in 2005, there are now (2021) eight UK English Springer Spaniel Breed Clubs: The English Springer Spaniel Club, The English Springer Spaniel Club of Scotland, (50th Anniversary 2021) The English Springer Spaniel Club of Wales, The Lancashire and Cheshire English Springer Spaniel Club, The Midland English Springer Spaniel Society (75th Anniversary 2021), The Northern English Springer Spaniel Society, The South Western English Springer Spaniel Club and The Southern English Springer Spaniel Society (75th Anniversary 2021), all of whom together are immensely proud of their united efforts to serve their members and to work harmoniously and inclusively on all aspects of the Breed including a focus on breed health and welfare www.englishspringerhealth.org.uk

There are numerous Kennels, past and present, to thank, many of which had a direct affiliation to the Parent Club. To celebrate those kennels which have contributed to the enhancement of the Breed, the English Springer Spaniel Club decided that, as part of its Centenary celebrations, they would commission a unique commemorative wall hanging embroidered with the names of over 385 kennel affixes, all of



which have produced a Champion whether in the field of work or in the Show ring.

A huge debt of gratitude



Sept 23 2021 Championship Show - The dogs: CC and RBIS Topliss' Sh Ch Beresford Night Train RCC Smith's Sh Ch Melverley Top Geezer BPD Calvert's Calvdale Scaramouche Jones Veteran and BV Ainsley's Ziphill Thunderflash

September 23rd 2021 Margaret Everton Pavilion, Bingley Hall, Stafford



Sept 23 2021 Championship Show - ESSC Secretary Kath Holt awarding Lewis Nicklin the Bitch CC Trophy



Sept 23 2021 Championship Show - Ray Smith being presented with the Reserve DCC Trophy by Judith Hancock



Sept 23 2021 Championship Show - Georgia Brown being presented with the Reserve BCC Trophy by ESSC Secretary Kath Holt



Sept 23 2021 Championship Show - President Mrs Y Billows making presentation to Judge Wendy Walker



Sept 23 2021 Championship Show - BIS Ainsley & Nicklin's Daenery's Winds of Winter, RBIS Topliss' Sh Ch Beresford Night Train

goes to the English Springer Spaniel Foundation (USA) www.englishspringerfoundation.org for their generous donation which significantly contributed to the funds necessary for the commission. It was with considerable pride that the embroidered wall hanging was exhibited for the very first time at the December 2021 Breed Championship Show.



Sept 23 2021 Championship Show - Judith Hancock presenting Trudy Topliss with the Dog CC Trophy



Sept 23 2021 Championship Show - The bitches: BCC and BIS Ainsley and Nicklin's Daenery's Winds of Winter Res CC Wildsmith & Brown's Trimere Tickle Me Fancy, Veteran Cokell's Carlyquinn Mama Mia ShCM BPB and BPIS Calvert's Calvdale Flutter Judge Wendy Walker

September 23rd 2021 Margaret Everton Pavilion, Bingley Hall, Stafford

The Committee worked tirelessly to get the Margaret Everton Pavilion at Stafford decorated, trophies displayed, and as befits all good parties, special well-filled goody bags with commemorative ESSC water bottles, pens, coasters and dog treats prepared for exhibitors and guests to take home. We knew there would be much to organise, but we could never have anticipated the impact that the Covid 19 Pandemic was to have.

In the true traditions of the ESSC, there was something for everyone to create personal and long-lasting memories. The atmosphere from the outset was one of anticipation and enjoyment (particularly seeing so many of us had been 'locked down' for so long) and the Club saw to it that no-one went hungry or thirsty. The Buffet table heaved with all manner of tasty delights, provided by on-site Caterer Jenkinsons, served by our Chairman, Roy Proctor, suitably attired in fetching apron, mask and plastic gloves, and ably assisted by Jennie Tracz.

The décor of the hall reflected the nostalgia of the day, whilst also creating a celebratory mood, a raffle piled high with an array of prizes to suit all tastes, plus a £100 Amazon Voucher, a choice bottle of fine-aged Whisky and a 12-month supply of dog food made certain that no-one, including the dogs, left empty-handed. There was a continuous supply of tea and coffee to accompany the delicious slice of Centenary cake, ceremoniously cut by Judith Hancock.



Judith Hancock (Hawkhill) in 1961 - the ESS names left to right as in the picture are: Sh Ch Onyx of Stubham; Ch Hawkhill Brave; Hawkhill Nebuchadnezzar and Ch Floravon Silver Star

Our President Yvonne Billows welcomed everyone, including 'special guests' Judith Hancock (Hawkhill), Frances and Bob Jackson (Mompesson), Alex and Ann Geddes (Debanza),

Ann Corbett (Trimere) Nicola Calvert (Calvdale & NESSC Sec) Ray Smith (Melverly). Of course, particularly in such unique trying times, a glass was raised to those who were unable to attend and much missed such as Francie Nelson (Fanfare and the ESS Foundation), Graham Rogers (Chaignmarsh), Isabel Jenkins, June Froggatt (Moorcliff), Jan Wood (Ardencote), Jenny Miller (Feorlig), Jean Pattenden (Berina), Joan Emenev (Avoya), Margaret Backhouse (Majeba & MESSS President), Kerry Simpson (ESSC of Scotland Sec), Graham Osborne (Beaters & SESSS Chairman), Kay and Colin Woodward (Wadson & MESSS), Louise Scott (Goldcliffe & Breed Health Co-ordinator), Helen Merry (Tingville & L&CESSC), Michael Guest (SWESSC Chairman), Gareth Lawler (Rogfolly & ESSC of Wales), Bob Nicholson (Lochindorb) and Colin Muirhead (Shipden) - represented on the day by his daughter Kate and son in law Michael Keeley, who earlier in the day had judged the Birmingham National entry.

Commemorative rosettes and specially designed prize cards along with the most generously sponsored prize money of over £2,000 were on offer for all Class winners and top awards. Six specially engraved individual pieces in marble, resin, cast and bronze memorabilia to be won outright, magnanimously donated by the late Pam Wadsworth and ESSC Honorary Life Member Judith Hancock were awarded to principal winners. We are sure that Judith will not mind us mentioning that, having first judged the ESSC Championship Show in 1965, her being with us at the Centenary Show some fifty-six years later certainly helped enhance the day's festivities.

Attendees were also invited to have a bit of fun using their brain power by taking part in three free to enter different quizzes. One quiz about a Potted History of the ESSC and the other two focusing on the Cleavehill and Hawkhill Kennels - with the bonus, if required, of checking your answers with the Hawkhill doyen (Judith Hancock) herself. Successful entrants receiving a cash prize were Diane Conrad and Pam Smith

Our judge for the day was Wendy Walker (Dexbenella). She performed her duties with efficiency and aplomb, and we know that from an entry of 77, she was delighted with all her winners on the day.

Best in Show and Bitch CC: Ainsley and Nicklin's Daenery Winds of Winter
Reserve BIS and Dog CC: Topliss' Sh Ch Beresford Night Train

Best Puppy in Show: Calvert's Calvdale Flutter
Best Veteran in Show: Ainsley's Ziphill Thunderflash

Winners on the day at the Championship Show were

Best in Show & Dog CC: Walker's Sh Ch Dexbenella Atticus Finch
Reserve BIS & Bitch CC: Corbett's Sh Ch Trimere Taylor Swift
Best Puppy in Show: Calvert's Calvdale Flutter
Best Veteran in Show: Terry Richardson's Chirishym Chara
Best Black & White: Eyeington's Sh Ch Meadowdale Daisydale Lightning Bolt

Open Show winners were
Best in Show: Corbett's Sh Ch Trimere Taylor Swift
Reserve Best in Show: Casey & Jayes' Sandylands Xpress Delivery
Best Puppy in Show; Calvert's Calvdale Scaramouche Jones
Best Veteran in Show: Tracz's Melverly Desert Strike over Acregate JW ShCM
Best Black & White: Chandler's Sh Ch Elazlan Right of Reply

Monday 13th & Monday 20th December 2021 Checkley Wood Shoot, Cheshire



December 2021 ESSC Novice Trial Judges Steve Black and Dave Anderson - comparing notes to decide on the winning dog and the placings of the other dogs



ESSC FT Secretary Roy Proctor and Open Field Trial Judges Jeremy Organ and Steve Bolton

The ESSC is immensely proud of its close association with the working side of this multi-talented Breed, so a warm welcome greeted the competitors at the ESSC Centenary Field Trial Open and Novice Stakes on December 13th and 20th respectively. Our esteemed and respected Judges for the Open Stake were Steve Bolton (A Panel) and Jeremy Organ (A Panel) with Dave Anderson (A Panel) and Steve Black (NP) taking up duties at the Novice Stake.

Sincere thanks go to Checkley Wood Shoot, Ivor and Nick Beavis, for hosting these prestigious trials and to both Chief Steward Roy Proctor and Steward of the Beat Nick Beavis for their valuable contribution on both days.

All competitors were delighted with their gifts of commemorative lanyards, coasters, and pens. The friendly, but competitive, atmosphere in both stakes is reflective of the historical importance of these special two days in the ESSC calendar and completed the Centenary year celebrations in perfect style, just as those ESSC Founder members would have wished.

Despite the dismal rainy weather for the Open Trial, the dog work that followed was outstanding with game coming to hand well. The Judges reported that they had a tough time sorting the final placings. They commented that they could not recall a Trial of that standard for some time.

It was indeed a pleasure to receive copious congratulatory telephone calls and correspondence thanking the Club for such a memorable and pleasurable day.

The winner of the Open Stake was Mr J Semmens ESS bitch Kilhopemoss Skylark with his owner being awarded both specially engraved trophies donated by the late Pam Wadsworth, which included the trophy for Best Retrieve

Awards were as follows:
First Mr J Semmens 'ESS bitch Kilhopemoss Skylark

Second Mr B Watkins' ESS bitch Laysan Lilly
Third Mr S Blackwell's ESS Dog Helsway Hoodlum

Fourth Miss S Higgins' ESS bitch Keenshot Sarabi

Certificates of Merit were awarded to:
Mr K Richardson's ESS bitch FT Ch



December Championship Show - Best Black & White in the photo booth

Willowsaul Whizz
Mr J Bailey's ESS Dog Churchview Cortinio
Mr S Black's ESS Bitch Helmsway Helbeck of Amblecheck
Mr A Rubery-Jones' ESS Dog Burrington Ben

The Novice Trial was blessed with more inclement conditions, with a mild 10 degrees and minimal wind. Once again, the dog work was good with the Judges observing that the winning dog was outstanding.

Consequently, as well as the winner's trophy, he was also awarded 'Best Hunting Dog' and 'Best Retrieve', so received all three trophies on offer. The Winner's trophy and Best Retrieve trophy were donated by the late Pam Wadsworth and the Best Hunting dog trophy was given in memory of the late Harry Hardwicke.

As the dogs which finished second to fourth had little to separate them, the Judges felt confident that they would soon go on to win. Game came to hand very well with sometimes multiple flushes and excellent retrieves.

Awards were as follows:
First Mr L Cooper's ESS Dog Heathcroft Declan of Breckmarsh

Second Mr M Ashman's ESS Dog River Ash
Third Mr S Bolton's ESS Dog Dashbrook Typhoon

Fourth Mr M Harry's ESS Bitch Merebrook Kiwi of Breweryfield

Certificates of Merit were awarded to:
Mr J South's ESS Bitch Bankbrae Renown
Mr N Davies' ESS Bitch Cresett Vera

The future

If indeed the future is shaped by the actions of what we do now, then we can reliably say the Breed remains in safe hands and long may it continue to be so.

Sunday December 5th 2021 Tomlinson's Canine Centre, Markfield, Leicestershire



December Open Show - Judge Simon Whincup with his BIS line-up left to right are: BIS; RBIS; Best Black & White; BPIS; Best Veteran



December Championship Show - Judge John Thirlwell with his BIS line-up left to right are: BIS; RBIS; BV; BPIS; Best Black & White

It did not seem too long before the ESSC's second Championship and annual Open Show got underway at Tomlinson's Canine Centre, Leicestershire. Judges for the day were John Thirlwell (Ferndel), with an entry of 64 for the Championship Show, and Simon Whincup (Partisky), with an entry of 47 for the Open Show. Both Shows ran concurrently and even though this was a first for the ESSC, the exhibitors embraced the style of the event.

Keeping to the same agenda for our Centenary celebrations, the ESSC Committee, along with

its loyal helpers and supporters, worked hard to make sure that the hall reflected all things ESSC. Considerable admiration was expressed about the unveiling of the ESSC commemorative wall hangings. The focus once again was to ensure that everyone experienced an enjoyable and memorable day with every opportunity to reap rewards by way of generous prize money, luscious Birthday cake and raffle delights. An additional attraction was an opportunity for exhibitors to take photographs in front of a dedicated photo area set up in Club colours.

The English Springer Spaniel Club is immensely proud of the achievements of its Committee and contributions of its Members against all Pandemic odds in getting the Club's Centenary party started and completed, so that tribute can be paid not only to the Breed itself, but also to the breeders who have gone before, for the legacy of guardianship they set in motion.

A well-known dog show Judge once commented that "when we decide to become involved with any breed, our aim should be to improve it, or at least leave it in no worse state than that in which we found it"

We leave the last word to the Spaniel itself as, without it, none of the celebrations would have meant as much as they did.

In the words of Gervase Markham (1621) "of a courageous and fierce mettall, evermore loving and desiring toyle, when toyle seems most yrksome and wearie...for it is the perfectest character of the most perfectest Spaniel, ever to be fearefull and loving to him that is his Master and keeper"



Sept 23 2021 Championship Show - Nicola Calvert being presented with the Best Puppy in Show Trophy by ESSC Secretary Kath Holt

September Championship Show



Trophy for Bitch CC



Trophy for Dog CC



Trophy given for Best Veteran



Dec ESSC Open FT - Competitors for the Open Trial waiting to be called in by the Judges for their second run



Trophy given to Best Puppy



Trophy given to each of the Reserve CC winners



Lee Cooper winner of the ESSC Nov FT being presented with his award by the Shoot Owner Ivor Beavis



Sept 23 2021 Championship Show - Special guests Frances Jackson (Mompesson) and Judith Hancock (Hawkhill)



Sept 23 2021 Championship Show - Judith Hancock cutting the 100 year ESSC Anniversary Cake



Sept Champ Show special guests Judith Hancock (Hawkhill) and Alex Geddes (Debanza)

**Thanks to the following for helping with photographs
Susan Aston, Yvonne Billows, Paul Drinkall, Kath Holt, Michael Keely,
Jenny Tracz, Shirley Watson, Paul Woodcock*



Field Trial Prize Card