

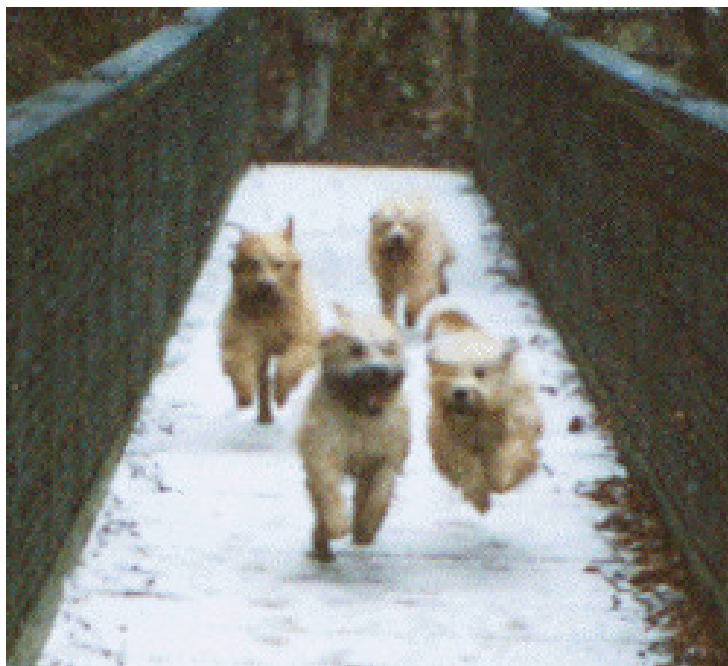


(Founded 2003)

WHEATEN HEALTH INITIATIVE

Newsletter 15

January 2008



Happy New Year

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*To provide a platform for the reception and transmission of
information about the health and well-being of the
Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier*

*"Predetermine the objectives you want to accomplish.
Think big, act big, and set out to accomplish big results"*
Mark Victor Hansen

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EDITORIAL

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Where do I begin? So much has happened since Newsletter 14, published in April 2007, when the exciting news of the pANCA Project was first announced. From the first session in June at Weedon Bec, to the final venue at Highworth on the 11th November, the WHI Steering Group have worked hard to achieve success for this research project. The pANCA research team at the Royal Veterinary College ideally required 200 dogs to be tested for the project and the final number reached an acceptable 186. We are indebted to the Kennel Club Charitable Trust who donated £600 to the cause, thus enabling us to fund our commitment to the project without having to use too much from money donated by our friends and supporters.

The Steering Group could never have envisaged the commitment that was needed to be involved with this project, however this has enabled the work of Wheaten Health Initiative to be spread much farther afield by putting us in touch with many more Wheaten owners and their lovely dogs. The feedback received after each session has been particularly uplifting and helped morale tremendously when the going got tough at times. Thank you everyone for making the project worthwhile by joining the Steering Group and the team from the RVC, at possibly the most relaxed sessions ever held for the future of our breed. A special note of thanks must go to those breeders who actively contacted their puppy owners to attend, but it was a shame that some of the more well-known breeders did not choose to set a positive example by participating with their dogs.

Our dear Kaber took part at the Highworth session on the 11th November, he was the oldest at 14½, which just goes to prove that at any age you can give something back to the breed. I am so very glad he was fit, well and able to participate then as sadly we had to say goodbye to him on the 12th December. He was the sweetest, most wonderful Wheaten anyone could wish for and he has left a great legacy in his progeny but a huge gap in our lives. He will be missed so much by my family.

You should all, by now, have received your results. If you haven't, or have any questions to ask on this project, please do not hesitate to contact one of the Steering Group, we are always willing to help.

The official 'Wheaten Health Initiative' Website is : www.wheatenhealthinitiative.com

My very best wishes to you all for 2008.

At a meeting of the Steering Group on the 1st December, a draw was held for the signed copy of the book 'Murphy The Messy Mutt' by Laura Rogers, a story about a Wheaten and donated by Carole Barnes-Davies. The names of all participants in the pANCA Project were put into a BIG hat and the draw was conducted by someone independent of WHI. The book went to 'Spuddy's' owners, Emma and Steve Brewer, and arrived in time for Christmas. Emma phoned to say how surprised and delighted they both were!

Time now to sit back and relax?? I don't think so somehow especially when I reflect on how much WHI has achieved in just under five years.

With the major part of the pANCA Project behind us we can now resume normal timing of Newsletters. At a recent meeting of the Steering Group, it was agreed that your opinions were sought as to whether you wish to receive future Newsletters from WHI by post, in this format. My personal preference is for these to be posted, at least that way they reach everyone, whereas email addresses can be subject to change. However, the Newsletter will always be available to download from our Website. Your views and thoughts are important to us and a form is enclosed for this purpose. Ideas on fund raising as well are always welcome. If there are any issues you would like to see included in future Newsletters, please let me know. Thank you.

If you have not received a copy of the 'pANCA Special Newsletter' sent out in July, please contact me and I will send a copy to you.

I have completed a Grooming Booklet for Wheatens which could be very useful to include in puppy packs and as a guide for those owners having problems with the coats. Please contact me for details.

It has just been noted that our previous Website address has been taken over by another party with nothing whatsoever to do with Wheatens. Please try not to hit our previous address.



Barbara

The following message was sent for publication in the Club's Christmas Bulletin.
Unfortunately this was omitted. **Barbara**

The Panca Research Project in Soft-Coated Wheaten Terriers

Dr Karin Allenspach of the Royal Veterinary College and the Steering Group of 'Wheaten Health Initiative', would like to thank everyone who participated in this Research Project which we hope will establish whether there is a link between pANCA results and the later development of protein-losing disease in Soft-Coated Wheaten Terriers.

The pANCA Project

The run up to this ground breaking Project

In August 2005 the Steering Group approached Dr. Cathryn Mellersh BSc PhD, Senior Canine Geneticist at the Animal Health Trust, who agreed to do a seminar. Dr. Karin Allenspach, med.Vet. FVH, DECVIM-CA MRCVS, who had recently started lecturing at the RVC's Queen Mother Hospital in Hertfordshire, was recommended to us as a possible speaker. Prior to this appointment, Dr. Allenspach had worked in other countries, including the United States, where she was involved with Dr. Shelly Vaden's team at the University of Pennsylvania. We were very pleased to welcome both Dr. Mellersh and Dr. Allenspach as speakers at the WHI Genetic Seminar 'Towards a Better Future' in November.

During the seminar Dr. Allenspach talked about pANCA (*pronounced pee-anka*) which she had encountered in her work in Switzerland and said that she thought it may be useful to carry out further research to see if it could help in the early detection of protein-losing diseases in Wheatens. (*Apparently it is currently used in human medicine for conditions such as Crohn's disease.*) This was a very exciting prospect and the WHI Steering Group continued to communicate with Dr. Allenspach, offering to help in any way to make this research project a reality.

At an informal discussion following the AGM in March 2006, Lynn Carter, on behalf of WHI, identified an area of work that could be carried out by the group in co-operation with the SCWT Club of GB. On the 9th May 2006 a letter was sent to the Club Secretary, with copies to all committee members, following the suggestion made at the AGM for the use of the late Ralph and Eunice Steele's bequest. It was mentioned that this suggested project would be compatible with the spirit in which the bequest was made, as it could benefit all Wheatens. At the time an offer was made on behalf of the WHI steering group, indicating that we were willing to organise this project on behalf of the Club; this would offer real and tangible proof to the membership of the SCWT Club of GB, of our joint commitment to serving the best interests of the breed. It was conveyed that WHI felt sure the Committee would feel, as we did, that it should be dealt with expediently, however, we were aware that the committee would not be in a position to commit the funds from the bequest until suggestions were put before the members at the 2007 AGM. It was felt a solution could be found, enabling the project to proceed immediately, if the committee decided to make existing club funds available. The Committee declined to commit any funds to this project.

The Steering Group had further talks with Dr. Allenspach during the months that followed and in February 2007 we were thrilled to hear that the project was finally to go ahead. A second attempt was made by WHI to encourage the Club of GB to be involved with the project and the Committee responded positively. Judy Creswick attended as their representative at a meeting held on the 4th April, between Dr. Allenspach and colleagues, with Lynn Carter and Carole Barnes-Davies from WHI.

Diary of Events

The pilot session was held on the 3rd June 2007 at Weedon Bec, Northamptonshire when 30 dogs participated. As this was an entirely new venture for everyone, numbers were limited, mainly to see how many dogs it was possible to include in one session and Steering Group members' put their Wheatens forward as some of the 'guinea pigs'!

The second took place at Watlington, Oxfordshire on the 1st July, hosted by the SCWT Club of GB. The session was held during the morning before the usual fun day commenced and samples were taken from 36 dogs. The Vet team, WHI Steering Group and Judy Creswick, were easily identifiable by their pANCA T-shirts printed and provided by Lynn Carter. Jane Charleton, SCWT Club of GB Committee Chairperson, provided a splendid lunch. Thank you Jane.

On the 24th July, WHI were pleased to announce that the 'Kennel Club Charitable Trust' had confirmed a grant of £600 specifically to assist in covering the costs involved with the pANCA Research Programme. Our Treasurer, Malcolm Jeffries, received the cheque on behalf of WHI. The Steering Group was delighted that the Trustees had readily recognised that the pANCA Research Project was worthy of consideration for financial assistance from the fund and felt that receiving funding from such an eminent source really underlined the importance of this research. In providing this grant, Mike Townsend, Chairman of the Trustees said: "*The Trustees would appreciate a report on the results of this research project and will arrange for the details to be published in the Kennel Gazette.*" Dr. Allenspach has informed WHI that she will have a report ready for publication in the KC Gazette by the end of February 2008, by which time all the data from the project will be analysed and she will be able to outline the next steps for further investigation of the pANCA test in the breed.

The grant was used to finance suitable venues for Dr. Allenspach's RVC Research Team to conduct the testing sessions necessary to obtain the blood samples needed for this project. It also enabled WHI to provide essential marketing and advertising to promote the project as widely as possible, together with mail shots to our supporters and others whose names were obtained from recent show catalogues. Acknowledgment is also given to the Committee of the SCWT Club of GB for their support of this grant application.

The third session was held at Weedon Bec again on the 5th August, when a total of 48 dogs attended to give samples.

For the session to be held at Hasland, Derbyshire, on the 23rd September, Barbara Penney had already sent a mail shot before Judy very kindly stepped in and said she would do one from the Club Members' list for this and the following session on the 11th November. Unfortunately we were not given a list of those contacted for the 11th November and some were obviously duplicated. Please accept our apologies if you were notified twice.

Highworth, Wiltshire, was the venue for the final session on the 11th November. A total of 186 dogs was reached, enough, Dr. Allenspach said, to make the Project viable and together with Dr. Barbara Wieland they will produce a scientific report of the findings in due course.

Dr. Allenspach will also be re-testing some of those in the younger age groups and following up a random sample of dogs longitudinally over the next one to two years. She hopes that all those who have taken part in the project will continue to monitor and inform her of any changes in their dog's health throughout their lifetime.

We could not have achieved this without the goodwill and support of so many people, particularly the owners of companion Wheatens who came along to testing sessions simply for the love of their dogs and were also pleased to find out about the kind of information and help that 'Wheaten Health Initiative' can provide.

There has been much discussion from many quarters since the arrival of results for the people who have participated in this project so far. It is wonderful that so many wish to share the news of their results openly. However, we do need to remember that this is still, very much, a RESEARCH project. It is recommended that we should continue to view our dog's health status in exactly the same way as we did before testing, whether positive or negative.

What will my test results tell me?

All participants should have received a copy of the following letter from Dr. Allenspach, however, so that everything is easy for you to access, it is printed below.



The Royal Veterinary College SCWT pANCA Research Project

WHAT WILL MY TEST RESULTS TELL ME?

Thank you for participating in this **Research Project** which we hope will establish whether there is a link between pANCA results and the later development of protein-losing disease in Soft-Coated Wheaten Terriers.

Your results will be sent to you directly from the Royal Veterinary College in approximately 8 weeks. There is no need for concern if they haven't arrived by then but if you have still heard nothing by 12 weeks after testing, please feel free to contact the Project Co-ordinator, Carole Barnes-Davies: 01245 231434 who will check for you whether they have been sent out.

The report will inform you of your dog's Albumin level (Albumin is a protein produced by the liver) and also whether your dog has tested positive or negative for pANCA. You will also receive advice about whether further action is needed (such as the need to re-test your dog at a future time).

Whatever your pANCA result is, you and your vet should continue to follow recommended protocols to monitor your dog's health on a regular basis, such as annually submitting blood and urine samples to the Animal Health Trust, to be screened following the Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier Health Profile.

A negative pANCA result is really encouraging, however, it should not, at this stage, be regarded as a guarantee that your dog could not develop protein-losing disease.

A positive test result does not mean anything in particular YET – because we do not know which dogs will go on to develop protein-losing disease.

More important than a positive result is probably the albumin level. If this is normal, then there is no need for concern at this point.

We will offer to re-test all dogs with positive results for pANCA in a few months time. If the result is still positive at that time, we will advise both you and your vet on the best way to monitor your dog closely and make recommendations for preventative treatment options.

It is much too early in the research to make any decisions regarding which dogs should not be bred – if the project produces a definitive result within the next 1-2 years, then appropriate recommendations may be made by the Breed Club.

What Next?

We will be following about 20-25 pANCA negative dogs up longitudinally, i.e. over the next 1-2 years and testing them every 6 months to see if they stay negative.

It will, however, be very important to get all participating owners (whether their dog was negative or positive) to report to us if their dog ever develops protein losing enteropathy or nephropathy, so we will ultimately be able to match their pANCA test results with the disease.

Karin Allenspach, Dr.med.vet. FVH Dipl ECVIM-CA MRCVS
European Specialist for Small Animal Internal Medicine
Lecturer Royal Veterinary College

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Allenspach'.

Stop Press / Breaking News :

We have just heard from Dr. Allenspach that she is eager to begin the next stage of the pANCA Research Project and needs a number of dogs who have tested negative for pANCA to take part in a longitudinal study, which will entail re-testing at intervals. Testing will continue to be free. If you are willing to participate in this vital work **please** contact any member of the WHI Steering Group, or Dr. Allenspach directly, at the RVC.

Acknowledgments

First of all thanks must go to the team from the Royal Veterinary College who were so wonderful with the dogs and their owners. We will miss you.

A special acknowledgement to all those breeders who gave their support by not only bringing their own dogs, but by doing their own mail shots and phone calls to encourage their puppy owners to participate. One breeder who thought it may not be possible to get the dogs to the session due to her car breaking down some distance from a pre-arranged meeting point with another breeder, found that it was possible after all as her contact drove the extra way, a round trip of 350 miles, to collect the dogs and then take them back again. What a hero! Thanks to everyone who came along to help in the kitchen, you were all very much appreciated.

Thanks also to Judy Creswick, Secretary of the SCWT Club of GB who attended two testing sessions to help.

Zoe Carter appears to have a gift in being able to calm nervous Wheatens and owners alike and at the request of the RVC team, Zoe attended every session to help with the dogs. Thank you so much Zoe, your help was invaluable

Maria Rigby was most welcome at two of our sessions with her Aloe Vera products, adding a little extra to the day for those participating. Thank you Maria, we hope to see you at our other events in the future.

The 'Scroll of Thanks', listing those who have participated and agreed to be publicly listed in order to demonstrate their support for the Project, are posted on our website www.wheatenhealthinitiative.com

If any of you have any questions on this project, please do not hesitate to contact the Steering Group, someone is always available to help.

Statistics:



Ian Carter (*left*) was Chief Weighmaster, lifting and holding the dogs for weighing prior to the blood sample being taken. A calculation was made of the average weight of dogs at the Hasland session, this was 19.2 kgs, made up of 24 dogs over 4, and 12 under 4. No mean feat when trying to balance on the scales while holding a wriggling, hairy dog. Thank you Ian

To date 186 dogs have been tested -
114 female : 72 male.
63 were under four years of age : 123 were four years and over.
3 had blood sent via their own vet
3 were actually tested at the Royal Veterinary College

Barbara Penney's Kaber (*right*) was the oldest to participate at almost 14½ years, superseding Jo and Graham Dowdy's Denzil who attended the first session when he was 13 years and 4 months. The youngest was Joy and Mike Robin's Lacey (*left*) who, at 18 months, was officially below the required age limit, but as she was attending with her canine family Dr. Allenspach decided to include her in the study. Thank you Lacey, you too have made history!



'Daisy's Dog Deli', the Bakery dedicated to dogs, donated some wonderful biscuits baked specially for some of the testing sessions. These were really appreciated as a thank you present by the dogs after they had given their sample! Log on to see the great assortment of wholesome, natural,

healthy food treats available from a Wheaten owning cook, on www.daisysdogdeli.co.uk



None of this would have been possible without the extraordinary support from the ordinary Wheaten owner who realised the importance of looking to the future for the breed.

We have been fortunate to meet new friends and welcome back loyal supporters who have been with us since the formation of WHI. It is a wonderful tribute to the owners that a testing session can be turned into a social event with people comparing notes regarding their Wheaten's traits. We have all learnt something from each other which shows the importance of communication. There was much chatter, laughter and a fair bit of barking, woo-wooing and whirling!!

This just goes to prove what can be achieved when people decide to take the initiative rather than being complacent and thinking that "someone else can do it and I'll just reap the benefits!"

Thank you for giving something back to the breed that willingly gives us unconditional love. You have made all the hard work worthwhile.

*"I am only one; but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something.
I will not refuse to do the something I can do"*

Helen Keller

Dedicated to all those who took part in this Project

Treasurer's Report

Since the beginning of June, the majority of our financial effort has been to ensure adequate funding for the venues and other necessary facilities for the pANCA research project. At an early stage we realised the importance of providing a welcoming and comfortable atmosphere for all owners and their dogs who arrived at the testing sessions. Free refreshments and light snacks were available at each venue, as were 'after test' treats for the dogs (*although the most delicious ones were donated by Lisa Gosling of 'Daisy's Dog Deli'*). Each participant received a 'Certificate of Participation'. Feedback and donations proved that we did achieve our objective. Thank you.

To assist our effort a grant was applied for and a cheque for £600 was received from the Kennel Club Charitable Trust which greatly assisted our funding of the project. Four of the five venues were arranged and funded by WHI.

The hire of the halls, together with costs for stationery, printing and refreshments, totalled £1032.64

The KCCF grant and other related donations amounted to £901.97

Our Health and Education Fund now stands at £2156.15 and the Genetic Research Fund at £1893.00

A very BIG THANK YOU to you all.

Toni Vincent in the USA, deserves a special mention. Toni sent a considerable donation saying *"I did a little money collecting for you having lost a 3 year old Wheaten to PLN/PLE and a 15 year old just three weeks prior with heart disease and cancer"*. This donation was sent in memory of Odie and Minnie. That you should think of us at such a sad part of your life Toni is a wonderful gesture. Our heartfelt thanks.

Sincere thanks to Phil Martin, owner of Tinker, living in the USA, who also sent a very generous donation. You can read of his experiences in Post Box on Page 17.

We will be very happy to include names in our newsletters of those of you who have so kindly given donations, but your permission would be appreciated before doing so.

pANCA



Wheaten Day South : July



Weedon Bec : August



Even GT wore a PANCA T-Shirt



Left to right :

Standing – Lynn Carter, Malcolm Jeffries, Sandra Jeffries, Barbara Penney, Ian Carter, Carole Barnes-Davies, Karen Francis & Jan Thackray
Seated – Carolina Mancho-Alonso, Dr.med.vet.PhD, Dr. Karin Allenspach, Dr. Barbara Wieland, Zoe Carter with GT, and on the floor, Indie

Weedon Bec : August



Hasland : September



Highworth -: November



The WHI Steering Group - How we arrived here

For those of you who are not familiar with 'Wheaten Health Initiative', this is an independent group, founded in February 2003 by a group of owners and breeders who believe that the health and well-being of the Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier is of the utmost importance. With the involvement of worldwide ancestry within the breed, we consider that there should be easy access for all to health developments and testing in other countries. We want to develop an open approach to sharing information, both here in the UK and with breeders and owners around the world. Following is an insight into 'how we arrived here'.

Carole Barnes-Davies (*Caidantes*) Founder Member

I officially met my first pedigree Wheaten and her puppies in the mid 70s. Having just lost a Wheaten "look-a-like" (and "sound-a-like", I later discovered!), I was hoping to add one to my family but it was not to be and I had to wait... the longest wait ever... but eventually in 1989 Tess came into our lives. My life changed when I was encouraged to 'show'. Much the same as everyone else, I never thought I would breed and certainly never intended to have more than one or two Wheatens... I have had five in the house, sometimes six, at one time! With two cats as well, we have some hair-raising and hilarious memories!



It has been both very rewarding and very traumatic, at times. I have bred 11 litters, which have included three Champions.

From my second litter, two died from renal failure at four years old and one was euthanased at 16 months old after an unprovoked attack on my young daughter.

I care passionately about the health and well being of my dogs and when mammary cancer struck our Megan at 9 years old it provoked a serious rethink about their diet. Since then all of our dogs have been raw fed and not routinely vaccinated. Megan finally left us at the good age of 13½. I currently have two Wheatens, Gwyneth who is 9, Bronwen 7 and a Lakeland Terrier, Harry, 9 months.

I served on the committee of the SCWT Club of GB from 2001 until 2003 and as an Area Representative.

Early in 2003, after some consideration among some like-minded friends, an inaugural meeting of WHI was arranged. We have come a long way since then! Along with the other Founder members, I am both honoured and proud of our achievements in the last five years.

Having had a young bitch of my breeding diagnosed with PLE in 2003, shortly after that first meeting, my commitment to the health of this breed has never wavered. After nearly 20 years "in the breed" and even more with them in my heart, I doubt it will ever go away.

Lynn & Ian Carter (*Chloeanco*) Founder Members



Wheatens stole our hearts in 1991 when we had our first Wheaten, Holly. (*Ian just wanted a hairy mutt!*) Holly's arrival set in motion an unstoppable chain of events that changed the course of our lives.

We had no intention of showing – we show! We had no intention of breeding a litter – we have bred six litters to date! We were only going to be a single dog household – we currently have three!



The first dog we bred and kept, Pebbles, was to be the catalyst that propelled us into the sphere of Wheaten Health. She died in 1999 but is still the driving force behind all our efforts. (*SCWT GB Bulletin No 113, Spring 1999*). The loss of a dog in any circumstances is very hard but particularly so when the death is at a young age. Pebbles was just under 6 years.

In a bid to understand more about how sound breeding decisions could be made, in Autumn 2000 I (*Lynn*) made the journey to the SCWTCA Health Seminar in Montgomery, USA, where two of the speakers were George A. Padgett DVM, a Geneticist, and Dr. Meryl P. Littman, VMD, DACVIM. At that point our education in health issues really began.

We firmly believe that each owner, whether they breed from their Wheaten or not, carries a collective responsibility for the future welfare of the breed as well as the dog they own.

This responsibility can only be shouldered by those equipped with the latest information on health matters and the support of fellow owners and breeders, all working together in a spirit of honest and open co-operation for the good of the Breed.

It was with this end in mind we were honoured to be among the founder members of the Wheaten Health Initiative.

Over the years, as a result of our experiences, we have radically altered the way in which we care for our dogs. Our girls are treated with homoeopathic remedies wherever possible, including alternative methods of vaccination and we also feed a raw diet as close as possible to that which a dog would naturally eat in the wild.

We are always happy to discuss these issues, believing as we do, that no truly free choice can be made unless one is armed with objective information from a wide variety of sources.

Karen Francis (Sawheaten)

I was never a dog lover due to an unfortunate encounter as a child, however all that changed in 1997 when we discovered the unique breed that is the Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier. Following research and having visited an Area Representative (*an invaluable scheme that tries to ensure that owners know the responsibility that they are undertaking*) we were privileged to be entrusted with Abby. Sadly she was taken from us at 6 years 9 months after having been diagnosed with PLN, it left me with a determination to try and make a difference.



I think that it is essential to consistently monitor the health of your dog, early detection is vital and to be open and honest if you find that you have a problem. By communicating we can help each other, no one should feel alone. I received help and support from WHI and it was a natural step for me to join them early in 2005 as we obviously shared common goals.

For me the pANCA Research project has been hard work, sometimes frustrating, wondering if we would achieve the numbers required but always rewarding, my way of giving something back to the breed and hopefully safeguarding the health of future generations.

My family currently live with three Wheatens, Eddy 8½, Faye 5½ and Halle 2½ and all have taken part in the Project. However another Wheaten may not be out of the question!!

Malcolm Jeffries (Sanzerena)

Treasurer & Founder Member



Our first Wheaten, Olly, was born in June 1994 and at approximately 18 months old he was diagnosed with Rage syndrome at the Animal Health Trust and confirmed by Behaviourist, David Appleby. He was sadly put to sleep in January 1997.

I joined the committee, as Treasurer, of the SCWT Club of GB in 1998 and served a 4 year term. I have been Treasurer for WHI since its foundation in 2003.

At present we are owned by three Wheatens, Ch Frontline Silver Darling at Sanzerena, Tara, d.o.b. 16.03.96, Starcadia Chloe at Syzygy, Chloe, (co-owned with Jo & Graham Dowdy), d.o.b 30.07.98 and Sanzerena Atlantic Special, Ruffle, d.o.b. 21.01.05. Ruffle's litter made history as this was the first AI Wheaten litter to be born in the UK.

Barbara Penney (Willsbridge)

Founder Member

I first discovered Soft-Coated Wheaten Terriers early in 1982 and after waiting 8 months, my first Wheaten, Caillie, came to stay in November. Only 89 Wheatens were registered that year and Caillie's breeder suggested we entered some shows to meet up with other Wheaten owners. This was achieved with great success in both directions. Sadly we lost her at 9 and the post mortem still poses unanswered questions!



My initiation into Wheatendom was not with the prospect of breeding, but 5 years on we introduced Polly who did become our 'Willsbridge' foundation bitch and was also successful in the show ring. She had two large litters from which we kept Bessie in 1990 and Kaber in 1993. Polly lived until she was 14¼, and as mentioned in my editorial, her son Kaber reached 14½, what a bonus! We have since added a daughter and son of Kaber's to our family, Ruby in 1999 and Karrick in 2002, plus Ruby's daughter, Blousey-Brown, who will be 4 in April. It would appear that we are a very 'normal' Wheaten family as not many owners seem able to only have one!!!

I served on the Committee of the Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier Club of GB for 12 years from 1990 to 2002, during this time I was Education Officer and spent 10 years compiling and editing the club Bulletin, a very time consuming but extremely enjoyable task. In this position I was able to include up to date information on health issues and a wide range of useful topics, plus all the wonderful Wheaten tales and antics received from members which I know all Wheaten owners can identify with! I also became an Area Representative when this scheme was set up, following a suggestion made by Jan Thackray at the Club AGM in 1988, until 2003.

In May of 2003, I attended the SCWT Club of America's Health Conference at Keystone, Colorado, USA, with Sandra Jeffries and Maria Rigby, where we had the unique opportunity to interact with the key researchers involved in the SCWT Health Programme, two of those being Dr. Shelly Vaden DVM, DACVIM and Dr. Meryl Littman VMD, DACVIM who came to the UK to speak at the SCWT Club of GB Seminar earlier this year.

Health is a very important part of dog ownership and the formation of a group such as WHI had been considered by some before its inception in February 2003. I am extremely proud to be a founder member, able to offer help and assistance to all Wheaten owners when necessary.

I have now enjoyed 25 years with this wonderful breed. My slogan is, and always has been
'You are never alone with a Wheaten and never on your own with a problem'.

Jan Thackray (Acetrips) Founder Member

My family is now approaching 25 years of Wheaten companionship, my current Wheaten, Driscoll, (Acetrips China Doll) is 9 years old and she is a total poppet. I have had so much pleasure from my dogs as well as some sad times.



I enjoyed a very successful period in the show ring in the mid to late 1980s with Ch. Clondaw Shea the Banshee and Ch. Plumhollow Calico Casey of Acetrips. Prior to this, McVitie, my first Wheaten, was diagnosed with renal failure in 1986; this was suspected (*though never confirmed*) to be Renal Dysplasia. He died later that year at 3½ years old. Consequently the health of the breed became important to me and when I was elected to the Committee of the Club of GB in 1989 I became Assistant Health Secretary to our late President, Betty Burgess, who was then the Health Secretary; I subsequently took over the role when she relinquished it, a position I held until my resignation from the Committee in 1998 because of family and work commitments. However, I continued to serve on a newly formed Health Sub-Committee until it was disbanded. I am also the founder and first editor of the SCWT Club of GB Year Book.

I am proud to be a founder of Wheaten Health Initiative and of our achievements in such a short period of time.

Lynne Witheyman

I spent two years looking for my ideal dog, searching through many dog books, until Oscar, my first Wheaten, arrived in 1997. Oscar was bought as a pet and although I tried showing him he wasn't impressed and in 2000 Chino, my second Wheaten joined the family and appeared in the show ring on numerous occasions.



I joined the WHI Steering Group early in 2005 and became a member of the Kennel Club the same year.

Unfortunately during the last two years I have experienced major health problems and have had to take a back seat for a while. Fortunately treatment is now at an end and I look forward to returning to 'normal' life in 2008.

(We wish you good luck in the future Lynne and look forward to welcoming you back to the fold. Ed.)

Kate & Sarah Watkins

Kate and Sarah decided to come on board in April 2007, but unfortunately, since then they have been unable to take an active role in WHI activities due to personal commitments. We hope things improve for both of them soon and look forward to their company and participation shortly.

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A special mention must be made for **Sandra Jeffries (Sanzerena)**. Sandra was one of the original founder members, now retired, who came out of retirement to give her services to the pANCA Project. She has currently been helping WHI with this Project, being responsible for printing the pedigrees and assisting Dr. Barbara Wieland with other paperwork. Dr. Wieland, DrMedVet PhD, is a Lecturer in Veterinary Epidemiology and Co-course Director MSc Control of Infectious Diseases in Animals.

Sandra has visited the USA on three occasions and attended health lectures regarding the hereditary diseases that can affect our breed.

In 1997 she purchased a Pedigree Database with donations collected from grooming Wheatens, which she donated to, and operated for, the SCWT Club of GB. She was eventually co-opted onto the Health Committee of the SCWT Club of GB, during which time she was responsible for inputting information to this database from the many existing files of health notes, thus collating important information. Following the formation of WHI in 2003, this database, together with all the health information, was returned to the Club.

Sandra still continues to add pedigrees to her own database which now includes over 31,000 Wheatens.

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Our sincere thanks to the following founder members who helped so much in the setting up of WHI, Steve & Barbara Bradford, Ann-Marie Grant and Maria Rigby. You will always be appreciated guys.

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## POST BOX

Phil Martin in New Jersey, USA, contacted WHI via the website in 2007. He was extremely worried about his Wheaten who had a high level of protein in his urine. Members of the Steering Group gave him all the information and encouragement they could, plus contact details. The following message has just been received :

16<sup>th</sup> January 2008

Tinker is doing very well. The protein that appeared in his urinalysis was a fluke. He had been on mostly chicken with a little rice for over a week due to the pet food recalls in this country as I had no confidence in any prepared food, wet or dry. I then took him to a play group on a hot Saturday afternoon where he was constantly going to the water bowls and urinating every few minutes. He didn't feel like playing and laid down too often. Normally he's the most gregarious, fun-loving one in the bunch. His favorite trick is to get the herding dogs to chase him and then lose them by running through the trees. One time Tinker ran through an old man's legs!!!

I quickly took Tinker to the Vet to see what could be wrong. They did urinalysis in the office which showed that one protein count was "off the charts". They wanted to do another, more sophisticated analysis, at a laboratory, but that couldn't happen until the Monday. I took a new sample back to the Vet and had to wait for the results.

That's when, in a panic to find information, I found Wheaten Health Initiative. I searched the internet all night. I knew that there had to be others in this situation. I knew there had to be others who love their treasured terriers as much as I do. Tinker has come to me at the perfect time in life. I've gone back to university and soon graduate school. My father passed away shortly before I got him. Tinker is great company to my mother as he stays with her while I'm at class or the library. He has kept her active and walking, and he's so beautiful and outgoing that everyone they pass on the sidewalk stops to say hello. His favorite trip is when Mom walks him to the Post Office. They have an arrangement in which he'll walk like a gentleman if she will stand outside the doors for a few minutes so he can watch people come and go. Of course they all pet him and tell him how cute he is, too!

The information from the WHI website, and the encouraging e-mails from its members were the only way I got through the agonizing wait for the test results. I put Tinker on my neighbors' prayer lists, lit candles, and thought as many good thoughts as I could manage. Finally, Tuesday afternoon the Vet called to say that all was good and the kidneys are functioning like they should.

You can't imagine the relief. I hugged my little dog tightly as tears of joy streamed down my face. He kissed them away with a look that said "You didn't think I was sick, did you?"

Three subsequent urinalysis tests have all brought the same negative results for kidney problems. I gave the WHI pack to the Vet to be included in his medical records. They were most appreciative of the in depth information and have shared it with all the veterinarians on staff. I cannot thank WHI enough for making a terrifying ordeal bearable.

Tinker is now in a Rally obedience class. He is of course the class clown and wants to "cut up" as often as possible, but we'll manage. His third birthday will be May 7.

Best regards,  
Phil Martin & Tinker.

*What a wonderful outcome Phil, I am so glad we were able to help . . . . and for Tinker, we wish him a very Happy Third Birthday in May, with many more happy years to act the clown. Ed.*

## NEWS

### Dog Blood Donors

The new, online dog blood donor service [www.DogBloodDonors.com](http://www.DogBloodDonors.com) launched in October 2006, has already been given its first seal of approval by vets. More than 100 practices in the UK have now registered as users. This website which is **free to owners and vets**,

aims to bring dog blood donors to the attention of vets, so that lives can be saved. Please consider [registering](#) your dog as a donor and making him or her available when you are contacted.

### ClickNow 'Dogs Trust'

By using the ClickNow websearch facility, supporters of DogsTrust have raised £35,000. To help raise even more visit DogsTrust ClickNow page and add it to your favourites for easy access.

### Canine Bowen Technique

The Canine Bowen Technique, or Bowen4Dogs, is described as a non invasive, light touch hands-on technique that initiates natural healing processes by using a gentle method of soft tissue manipulation, although it is stressed that the bony structure of the animal is never manipulated, nor are the muscles or soft tissue massaged. Enter **Bowen4Dogs** on Google to access full details.

### Dr. Jeff Sampson honoured by charity

The annual Blue Cross Welfare Award has been presented to Dr. Jeff Sampson Bsc.Dphil, Genetics Co-ordinator and head of the Kennel Club's Health and Information Department.

Dr. Sampson was chosen by the pet charity to receive the award in recognition of his work improving the health and well being of future generations of dogs. Thanks to Dr. Sampson's work, many inherited diseases in dogs – which were life threatening only decades ago, can now be controlled.

### Congratulations to Philippa Rodale who was made a Member of the British Empire in the New Year's Honours List

Philippa Rodale of the Weatherbury Clinic at Puddletown, Dorset, is a qualified vet who has additional training and qualifications in the use of homoeopathic medicine. She was a most interesting speaker at the WHI birthday celebrations in February 2007, when she explained the basis of homoeopathy before looking at how it could help throughout a dog's life from conception to birth. Philippa has also managed to get the local authority in her area to accept vaccination by homoeopathic nosodes, as well as by the traditional methods, in boarding kennels.

### Sultana danger . . . . again!

German Short-Haired Pointer Breed Notes, Dog World 7<sup>th</sup> Dec.2007, had another warning on the dangers of Sultanas. An owner arrived home to find an empty bag of sultanas on the floor. The dogs appeared fine but later in the day one started vomiting which lead to dehydration, with subsequent blood tests showing that the bitch had kidney failure and liver damage, resulting in death. The owner was shocked that such a seemingly harmless product could have such devastating effects, being so toxic to dogs as to cause total shutdown of organs. Her vet has calculated that for a 23kg dog, only about six ounces of sultanas/raisins is a lethal dose.

### The Blue Cross

The **All About Pets** range of nearly 80 leaflets gives expert pet advice and support for owners to keep their animals healthy and happy. The leaflets are easy to read, illustrated, and are a trustworthy source written by experienced members of Blue Cross staff. Visit the dedicated **All About Pets** website to browse the range and download leaflets for free. [http://www.allaboutpets.org.uk/web/site/aap\\_FactsheetList.asp?mainpet\\_type=2](http://www.allaboutpets.org.uk/web/site/aap_FactsheetList.asp?mainpet_type=2)

### Train with no pain

If you are finding it hard to keep your dog under control, don't panic. A website is offering an online course to train your dog from your own home in just four weeks.

Train Your Dog Online is run by Sarah Whitehead. She believes her methods will be effective for all ages and breeds, and that they are suitable for both dog novices and experienced owners of all ages.

She said "Old fashioned training methods are long-gone. No more shouting, dragging the dog round a hall or yanking it on a choke chain. Today's methods are kind, gentle and fast – you'll be amazed at what your dog can achieve in just four weeks".

Find out more at: [www.trainyourdogonline.co.uk](http://www.trainyourdogonline.co.uk)

### Vet your pet

A new website called Vet Help Direct has been set up to help you decide if your pet really does need to make the trip. Run by qualified vets, this interactive website takes you through step-by-step questions to work out whether or not your pet needs medical help and, if it does, how quickly it needs to be treated. It works a bit like an online encyclopedia and should save you time and worry. Visit [www.vethelpdirect.com](http://www.vethelpdirect.com) for information.

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## NEWS FROM THE USA

The article in our WHI pANCA Special on the UK Project is featured in the latest SCWTCA 'Wheaten Health News' edited by Cecily Skinner. This, and much more of interest to all Wheatens owners, can be accessed on [www.scwtca.org](http://www.scwtca.org)

### Canine Phenome Project

The Canine Phenome is a project of the Animal Molecular Genetics Laboratory, University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine, headed by Dr. Gary Johnson and the Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier is one of only a handful of breeds they have agreed to study. The Wheaten participation is a collaborative effort of the SCWTCA, President Betty Chapman; the SCWTCA Endowment, Chair Carol Carlson and the SCWT Genetic Research Fund, Chair Jackie Gottlieb. For Wheaten owners this is an opportunity to store DNA for future use by researchers interested in finding the genetic cause of PLE, PLN, RD, Addison's or other diseases. See Website [www.scwtca.org](http://www.scwtca.org) for full information.

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## TIPS & HINTS

### Collars and dogs

I never leave collars on my dogs when at home. I know if there are children or tradesmen about with the possibility of leaving doors/gates open, a collar is a safeguard, but Alaskan Malamute Breed Notes recently reported two dogs playing a rough and tumble game suddenly started screaming and fighting, the lower jaw of one had caught in the collar, the buckle of which had wedged between her teeth. The other dog had meanwhile turned blue and was motionless where the collar

was throttling her. Luckily both dogs survived after oxygen therapy at the vets. **Ed.**

### Lost Dogs

Breed notes for other Breeds in the Dog Press always make interesting and informative reading. Italian Greyhound notes gave advice on the subject of lost dogs. If you do lose a dog try contacting someone in your area who has scent hounds, they will often bring out their dogs and try tracking yours, thus giving more experience to their own. Obviously the sooner you can do this the better as the fresher the scent the more chance of it working and the hound finding your dog.

### What a good idea!

Anyone who goes out for a walk with an unusual breed of dog will have found that people stop you and ask what breed it is. There is always a chance that some you meet will result in them becoming interested in the breed and perhaps even wanting to own one. What a good idea to have a small card with you giving contact details where people can find out more information.

### Up in smoke

It was reported in the Dog press recently, that an owner, on tidying the garage, found an elderly soft crate that was definitely past its best. As she had a bonfire of leaves burning slowly at the time, she placed the crate on the top. Suddenly, with a whoosh of flame, it was gone! The owner said it was quite horrific, both with the speed that it ignited from only a comparatively warm bonfire and how quickly the whole thing was gone. It did not even smoulder or melt to start with but disappeared in a moment. It is therefore advisable to question whether it is flameproof before purchase. It would also be advisable to check this with the makers or suppliers of any already in your possession.

### Emergency care plans for pets

The PDSA has produced an 'emergency card' designed to alert people that there are dogs or cats in the carrier's home.

The card can be put in a purse or wallet and will bear the name of a friend or neighbour who can be contacted if anything prevents the owner getting home.

One in three homes are now single occupancy, so this is becoming a real issue with animal owners.

To request a free PDSA emergency card, please email [legacies@pdsa.org.uk](mailto:legacies@pdsa.org.uk)

### Fun Time

Log on to <http://www.parade.com/features/pet-quiz/dog-quiz.html> and check out your Wheaten's IQ.

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*Always remember to forget the things that made you sad  
But never forget to remember the things that made you glad*

# Best wishes to you all for 2008

## The Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier HEALTH HANDBOOK

Soft-Coated Wheaten Terriers are generally healthy and robust dogs, but they do have genetic predispositions to certain diseases and owners need to be aware of these.

This handbook, which covers hereditary diseases, genetics and incorporating our previous publication 'Medical Terms', will help you to understand these known hereditary diseases.

Other medical conditions which, as far as we are aware, are not hereditary but have occasionally been known to affect the SCWT, are also included.

*This booklet is obtainable for a minimum donation of £5.50 from Barbara Penney, address on Page 3*

## Health Services available specifically for the Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier at the ANIMAL HEALTH TRUST

This booklet gives full information for SCWT owners and their vets. The Blood and Urine Testing at the Animal Health Trust has been designed for the specific profile of tests required for Wheatens.

**DNA Storage** is free of charge at the AHT. If you do not already have a sample of your dog's blood stored at the AHT, your vet can take a little more at the next Blood and Urine test and that sample can then be sent for storage at the AHT. The necessary forms are included in this booklet.

*Editor's note: WHI would like to make it clear that any test undertaken at the AHT is completely confidential between the AHT, the owner of the dog being tested, and their vet. WHI do not receive any printouts of these results. Owners should be able to obtain a copy of their dog's results from their vet on request.*

*This booklet is obtainable for a minimum donation of £2.50 from Barbara Penney, address on Page 3*

## WatchDog\*(UK) – CANINE HEALTH TRACKER

The **WatchDog\*(UK)** Health Tracker is a customised version of a system first developed in the United States by Anna Marzolino and Janet Petros, with the help of Dr. Wendy Beers DVM and Prof. Meryl Littman VMD, DACVM.

The Health Tracker uses a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to compare your dog's test results against a predetermined range set by the laboratory. This means that trends in test results can be easily and continuously monitored and used as an aid to assist early detection of health problems.

Some of the Excel spreadsheet operations have been automated to make them as user friendly as possible.

Other features available on the WatchDog\*(UK) Health Tracker are as follows:

- The format reflects the AHT tests which have been specifically profiled for the Wheaten Terrier
- Automatic highlighting of high and low results against the laboratory reference range
- Comment boxes provide a glossary of medical test terminology and descriptions, which can be printed as part of the test results
- 'One touch buttons' give automated page previews

This particular version is designed specifically for use with the Animal Health Trust testing protocol, but this can be adjusted to display the formats for different laboratories. Please contact Malcolm if your own laboratory format is required.

You will need to have Microsoft Excel on your computer. Full technical support is available.

*Obtainable for a minimum donation of £5 from Malcolm Jeffries, 01246 554742 [malcalone@aol.com](mailto:malcalone@aol.com)*

*Please make all cheques payable to 'Wheaten Health Initiative'*



*Designed & Produced by Barbara Penney for Wheaten Health Initiative © 2008*