

**The AYLESTONE BULLDOGUE**  
**ASSOCIATION**  
**NEWSLETTER- Volume 4 – ISSUE 6**  
**NEWSLETTER 30**  
**CHRISTMAS**

COMMITTEE: President: *James Clarke*  
Secretary: *Jenny Byrne*, Scottish Secretary: *Matthew Coull*,  
Technical Director: *Gareth Norman*  
Webmaster: *James Bhatt*, Public Relations: *Gita Bhatt*, Treasurer: *Calvin Clarke*  
Committee Members: *Vi Byrne, Pearl Swann, Joanne Smart*  
Telephone: 0116 2442313 (England), 07745204994 (Scotland).  
Web: [www.aylestonebulldog.com](http://www.aylestonebulldog.com)

---

**Newsletter: Volume 4, Issue 6 , Number 30, Christmas 2013**  
**A very happy Christmas to everyone and a happy New Year. Best wishes to those who have celebrated Hannukah, Guru Nanak's Birthday, or Bodhi Day. Happy Yule, Happy Winter Solstice, good wishes for Uppellyaa and a wonderful Twelfth Night!**



**Editorial**

Just a few seasonal warnings! Don't forget that dried fruit can be poisonous to dogs, and this includes fruit cake, especially Christmas cake which is jam-packed with dried fruit of allsorts, including raisins, which are the most dangerous.

Puppies in the house at Christmas can be delightful, but they are small people who can easily be trodden on and also forgotten about. The best place for puppies (and kittens) is in a quiet room safe from possibly merry guests and the noise of crackers, carols and parties. This way they will have a happy Christmas and so will you.

**Committee News 1**

The webmaster is STILL working on the website. Eventually we will have it interactive again so photos can be uploaded and we can even (possibly!) have an interactive stud list.

Meanwhile Gareth Norman's wife had the most dreadful thing happen. She was walking to a friend's house one evening when she was hit by a car, thrown onto the bonnet, breaking the windscreen, and then thrown thirty feet into the air over a garden fence. Amazingly she only hurt her should, ankle and leg, and is recovering at home, frustrated, of course, by only being semi-mobile. We wish her well for Christmas and the New Year.

## **Committee News 2: Beware of Imitations**

It has been brought to the committee's attention that people are registering dogs as Aylestones without reference to the Association. They are producing their own pedigrees. The only genuine Aylestone is one with an Aylestone pedigree – from the Aylestone Bulldog Association. That pedigree will be guaranteed correct as the Association holds the pedigrees for all registered Aylestone pups. Any other pedigree is not an Aylestone Bulldog. Beware imitations!

## **Rockhill Bulldogs Project**

The Rockhill project is going well. There are now dog and bitch pups from five lines to provide a healthy basis to go forward to produce a black or blue bulldog (flowering blue or black with white is also allowed) with a blue tongue. It's going well.

## **Health and Behaviour**

### **1. House-training pups**

We have heard disturbing advice on house-training pups by withholding water at night to prevent them having accidents. This not only will not prevent the puppy weeing during the night, it could cause cystitis which would have the opposite effect, and is dangerous as it is very easy to dehydrate a puppy, and dehydration can kill. If you hear or are given this advice tell people how wrong and dangerous it is for a puppy – or any dog – to be left without water for any length of time.

### **2. Christmas Food**



None of this or this for dogs! They will prefer their usual dinner (actually, they won't, but it's better for them – this stuff makes them very ill indeed!).



## **New Pup News**

Mandy Connor has pups with Lily the Brindled Beauty of Aylestone and Bam Bam's Peak in Dorian. The puppies have been homed.

## Matings

Bright White Zinnia has been mated with C-Jay Cassidy. Madame Medusa has been mated with C-Jay Cassidy. Mandy Connor is expecting to have pups from Forever Amber Girl.



## Tails of the Canine Unexpected

### Fish and Chips for Ben

Ben was his name. A terrier, a black and tan Lakeland, in fact. His full name was Admiral Benbow the Escapologist and with good reason. Not only was he very fond of water but self-liberation was for him an art. It fell on a November night, the 5<sup>th</sup> as it happened, that Ben had sneaked out of the utility room door and into the garden, not heeding the slam of the door shutting behind him. He was off to investigate a hole he had found earlier in the day. He was reluctant to go back indoors so interesting was this hole and so he was outside when dusk fell. Vince and Maggie, his owners, knew that they had shut Ben in the utility room with his supper (laced with a calming solution from the vet) and so they set off for the neighbour's bonfire party in happy ignorance of Ben and the hole, having left the TV on loud to cover any bangs. Night fell swiftly as Ben scabbled at that hole. The smell of gunpowder filled the air. Fireworks! Ben was not afraid of fireworks, but usually, along with the cat, he was indoors with the TV and supper. But tonight he was outside, wide awake and BANG! Ben nearly jumped out of his skin. A rocket burnt splendid above his head and then the stick fell right at his feet. He looked around. Where were Vince and Maggie, where was the dratted mog? He ran back to the house but, of course, the door was shut. His supper and his bed and the TV were inside and he was outside with the BANGS! And they kept on and on. What to do? The hole beckoned – maybe the bangs would disappear once he was out of the garden. He bolted. Next door was a large car park, with a lorry just near Ben's own fence. The lorry was open and its dark interior promised safety from the incessant bangs (this was a good bonfire night!) and the bright lights. So Ben jumped in and fell asleep.

In the morning Vince went into the utility room and found no Ben. He at once realised that the little dog must have slipped out into the garden without anyone noticing. He went out and called. And called. And called.

No patter of feet.

'I don't know where Ben's got to,' Vince told Maggie. 'I thought he was in last night. I'll swear I locked him in the utility room.'

'That door catch is loose, you know. He might've got out.'

'Well, he's not in the garden.'

'He'll come home when he's hungry,' Maggie said comfortably.

'If the dog warden doesn't pick him up first,' Vince muttered. 'Twenty-five quid that'll be! Blasted dog.'

'Best report him missing, then,' Maggie pointed out.

But the dog warden had not seen Ben, nor the RSPCA nor the Dog Trust. Ben was definitely missing. Vince and Maggie put up posters but after three weeks, as Christmas approached, they began to give up hope of ever seeing Admiral Benbow again. How could a little dog survive alone in a maze of motorways and A roads? They waited, hopeless, for news that he was dead.

And then one night Maggie dreamed. She saw Ben in a big white room, a school or hospital she thought. She could not be sure of the place – but in the dream Ben was alive and well.

She told Vince about the dream but he only said it was her subconscious making sense of Ben's disappearance. But she dreamed again the next night, at first the same white room and then a long road. Ben was trotting along it with a determined look on his face. Vince repeated his remarks about Maggie's subconscious but she continued to dream as Christmas approached. Each night she saw Ben trotting along a road, sometimes a country road, sometimes a city. Once he was outside an ornate building with bright coloured windows and someone gave him some food – and he ate and ran on at once. And then the night before Christmas Eve she had a very specific dream. Ben was on Welford Road, in Leicester, outside Grimsby Fish and Chip shop. He was looking for food and someone dropped him a bit of fish (a very generous person considering the price of fish and chips these days!). He ate the fish while the donor took a video on his mobile of him doing so – and then he trotted off. On waking Maggie told Vince the substance of the dream.

'Maggie, it's your imagination. Ben is not coming home – we know that now. He's probably been run over somewhere. He got out and was frightened by the fireworks. There's nothing to be done. If he'd been in Leicester the RSPCA have got a description and he'd have been picked up by now. Come on, there's still the turkey to stuff.'

'It won't be the same without Ben. Look, even Shah's upset.'

'Huh! More likely looking forward to getting all the scraps!' Vince laughed.

Much later they were preparing to go to the midnight service at St. Cuthbert's. They intended to take a short cut across the car park next

door and across the Great Central Way, so at 10.30 they set off. A darker shadow moved in the shadowy moonlight of the car park and ran towards them. Shah, out for a night time adventure, arched his back and hissed.

'Ben!' cried Maggie joyfully. And Admiral Benbow the Escapologist ran to her.

'I knew you were trying to come home. You've been travelling for days! I dreamt it!'

'Don't be silly, Maggie!' But Vince was overjoyed.

'No, it's true. He was on Welford Road last night!'

'It was only a dream. He's been lost out in the Meadows, that's all.'

Vince and Maggie swiftly took Ben home (Shah followed, hoping for some grub) and fed him before resuming their walk to St. Cuthbert's. They sang 'Oh come all ye faithful', especially the line ending 'happy morning' with greater fervour than usual and Christmas Day was most happy, family and friends sharing in the joy of Ben's return. Only Shah seemed a bit miffed – he had to share the scraps after all.

Maggie remained convinced she had dreamt of Ben's journey but Vince continued to say it was mere coincidence, the subconscious working to make sense of events.

And then on Boxing Day the grandchildren were surfing YouTube for the most visited Christmas video. And they found it.

'Look, Gran! Come and see this clever dog knapping some fish and chips! It looks just like your Ben!'

Maggie came and looked.

'Vince,' she called. 'I did dream it – look, the proof.'

There on YouTube, on the video with the most Christmas Day hits, was Ben eating fish outside Grimsby Fish and Chip shop on Welford Road, Leicester – the video was dated 23/12.



### **The Watcher at the Manger**

There were beasts in their stalls,  
Ox and donkey, cows with calf,  
And above, angels singing out their hearts.  
He was a child for all the world  
And all the world was watching.  
Me? I am the innkeeper's very own hound.  
I hid quietly in the hay

And watched – meanwhile the cat  
Studiously ignored the mouse  
Chewing at the manger's foot –  
Hoping no-one would notice  
A little dog, as shepherds knelt  
With lambs about them,  
And kings were imminent  
In long procession,  
Beneath a blazing star.



**Meet the Aylestones**  
**News of Princess Snowflake and Brosza's Boy**

We have just heard that Princess Snowflake, a daughter of Lady Yaw Paw, is now eleven years old. She was born in 2002. Many happy returns to her!

Brosza's Boy has now retired to a pet home and his place has been taken by his son, Captain Morgan.

**Endpiece**

A very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year to everyone! Don't forget, newsletters come by email. For delivery courtesy of Royal Mail phone 0116 2442313 – neither camel post nor reindeer post is currently available!

**A good read for Christmas (or any time!)**

Don't forget, the President's autobiography, The Ratscape Chronicles, The Autobiographical Ramblings of an Outcast, is on sale at Amazon, in colour and black and white editions. It's funny, it's sad, it's dramatic – you will be surprised at the end! It's a good read – Jenny knows, she edited it, wrote some of the poems and did the illustrations.

