

THE CLAN CHAT

Your quarterly Newsletter from Clan Canines



Welcome to The Clan Chat!

THE HISTORY OF OUR CLAN...



By Tammie Kirk

I am writing this having just returned from IMPACT 2019 - a 3 day workshop hosted by best selling author, dog trainer and pet business coach, Dominic Hodgson. As you all know, Dom has been my mentor since setting up Clan Canines back in 2017 and this is the third of his annual events that I've attended. I'm feeling extremely proud as I won his 'Action Taker of The Year' award and was also runner up for 'Marketer of the Year'. Dom coaches hundreds of amazing dog professionals all over the UK (and beyond!) so it was a real honour to be recognised!

It has been a crazy journey over the last couple of years but I have never been happier or loved what I do more than I currently do. You may not know, but I have a long and varied career history - having worked since I was 14 years old. Some of the highs (and lows!) and have been as a picture framer, a photo developer, a checkout assistant, a bouncer, a pharmaceutical pill polisher (yes, that's really a thing!), a croupier, a bar manager for Wetherspoons, a casino Hospitality Manager for Gala and finally a restaurant manager for many big businesses such as Marks & Spencer, The Treehouse Restaurant in the Alnwick Garden, the Sage Concert Hall and finally in Nando's. These jobs have taken me all over the UK and I have lived in many places, including Castle Douglas, Leeds, Swindon, Richmond, Normanton, Newcastle and Edinburgh. In addition to all of this I also have a degree in PR and business so it's fair to say that I'm not afraid to try new things! It was all worth it though as every job and every place brought me a step closer to where I am now.

The spark that lit the Clan Canine's fire for me, was when I had a really terrible day in the restaurant one day - that day had followed on from a month or so of pretty bad days. I suddenly realised that I simply got very little joy from the job anymore. I got great results and had a fabulous team, but the actual work itself just wasn't rewarding for me. I was discussing it with a friend and colleague when she asked me what I'd spend my days doing if money wasn't an object. This was a question that I'd never considered before but I immediately knew the answer - I'd spend most my time outdoors with lots of dogs. I'd grown up with dogs (see page 3) and I loved being in their company. Once that seed was planted, it started growing roots!

I immediately signed up to Borrow My Doggy, where I met Tweedie, Blanche and Murphy (who are the dogs on my logo). I also met Wallace and another handsome dog also called Murphy. These 5 dogs were my original clan members and they collectively helped me realise my dream. I started working extremely hard for a year and half, building up the business part time whilst still working at Nandos until finally, last January, I went F/T with Clan Canines. I honestly have never looked back. I love what I do so much - every time a new dog joins our Clan my heart expands a little bit more.

I have big plans for the future and can't wait to start expanding the business this year. I've been working hard in the background, creating a 3 month training plan and putting in all the ground work to ensure whoever I employ will get the best training possible. I'm so glad that you are all part of my journey and part of our wonderful Clan!

Tammie x

Welcome to another edition of the Clan Chat, your quarterly newsletter produced by Clan Canines - Edinburgh's award-winning premium dog adventure & boarding service.

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HOW TO KEEP YOUR DOGS SAFE THIS EASTER

If you're anything like me, you probably love Easter, stuffing your face with chocolate eggs and hot cross buns - is there anything better?! Sadly for our dogs though, Easter can be a dangerous time. Chocolate, currants, sultanas and raisins are sadly all toxic to our best friends (although that does mean all the more for you!!). Here are some of the secret dangers that could affect your dog;

Easter Eggs

Chocolate contains a chemical called 'theobromine', which is toxic to dogs. Even very small amounts of chocolate can lead to fits, convulsions, hyperexcitability and heart problems. Make sure you hide your deluxe Green & Black Easter Egg as dark chocolate contains the highest levels of theobromine. You should contact your vet immediately if your dog manages to scoff any more than 20mg/kg of theobromine (around 3.5g of dark chocolate or 14g of milk chocolate). White chocolate is the least dangerous as it does not contain enough theobromine to cause toxicity but can cause a risk of pancreatitis as it can be quite fatty.

Hot Cross Buns

Hot cross buns with lashings of butter are very delicious but they contain dried fruit, such as currants, sultanas and raisins – and all of which are toxic to dogs. Even the smallest amounts of these dried fruits can lead to severe kidney failure which can be fatal so please keep these far away from your dog. Experts don't know exactly why these dried fruits (and also grapes) are so toxic to some dogs. Interestingly, some dogs have ingested large quantities of them and have been perfectly fine, whilst others, including larger breed dogs, have sadly died after eating just a couple of raisins so it's really important to keep your hot cross buns far away from your pup.

Spring Time Bulbs

Spring is amazing - the sun starts making an appearance and many of us start getting into the garden more to test our green thumbs. I love gardening and grow my own vegetables every year so Spring really is one of my favourite seasons. However, many spring bulbs and flowers are very toxic to dogs (and cats), and it's important to take great care. Daffodils are poisonous to dogs, whether they eat the bulbs, the flowers or even if they drink water from a vase with daffodils in. Symptoms can include an upset stomach, vomiting, tiredness, fits and disorientation.

Tulips can also irritate your dog's gastrointestinal tract and mouth. Often, symptoms will include drooling, sickness and diarrhoea. In serious cases, heart problems and difficulty breathing can also occur.

Have a lovely time this Easter but remember keep your dogs safe from these hidden dangers (a great way to do this is to donate all those dangerous eggs and hot cross buns to your favourite dog walker who will be happy to keep your dog safe by disposing of them for you!!)



YOUR YOUNG DOG AND HIS SKELETON

BY JANIS NEILSON, HAPPY HOUND CANINE MASSAGE

Hello Clan Canines! I am Janis Neilson of Happy Hound Canine Massage in Edinburgh. I am a Clinical Canine Massage Therapist and a member of the Canine Massage Guild. I rehabilitate soft tissue injuries and support orthopaedic conditions, treating the whole body in a safe, non-invasive, drug free way which can reduce or resolve many issues, including associated aggression if pain related.

This article is about your dog's skeleton.

The skeleton has seven main functions; support, protection, muscle attachment, mineral reservoir, haemopoiesis (red blood cell manufacture), shape and movement. The axial skeleton (skull, spine and ribs) is there to provide a frame for the body, with the movement of the animal being made possible via the joints in the appendicular skeleton (the limbs). Muscles work in pairs and attach to the bones at various points and provide movement by pulling on the bones so there is always one to pull in each direction giving a range of movements. The hard nature of the bones provides protection for the more vulnerable soft organs in the cavities of the framework, for example the brain and sense organs are kept safe within the skull and the ribs provide protection to the lungs and heart amongst others.

During foetal development of the mammalian skeletal system, bone tissue is created. For long bones, types of bone such as the leg bones shown in the first xray picture, there is first a cartilage 'model'.

Gradually this cartilage is converted to bone. To allow the bone to continue to grow until maturity, a narrow line of cartilage, known as the growth plate, remains until the animal achieves its final size when this last part will also be turned into bone. The growth plate is then categorised as sealed although the time this happens is different for each type of bone.

It is important to understand this to fully realise the importance of rest periods and not over walking, over exercising, over strenuous playing with your new puppy. Puppies and young dogs by their nature may keep returning for more and more 'fun' however they are still developing and you can see by the xrays pictures shown here how far the cartilage still has to convert to bone. The xrays are both of German shepherds, the first at only a few weeks, the second at around 8 months and you can see how the bones have lengthened and the joints formed, even the vertebrae of the tail have lengthened.

Janis

In compliance with the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 veterinary consent is always required before any treatment can be undertaken and I will only provide treatment where such treatment is perceived to be beneficial.

(youngest xray) http://www.schraderhausk9.com/Hip_Elbow_What_to_consider.htm

(older xray) <https://www.germanshepherds.com/forum/health-issues/681586-hip-dysplasia-not-8-month-old-gsd.html>



RESPECT THE LEAD

BY RIVER MCDONALD

EDINBURGH DOG BEHAVIOUR



I have to go to a party next weekend and I'm not overly keen. Don't get me wrong, I love all the people who I know will be going, but I just find it hard being "trapped" in a place where I need to watch all my Ps & Qs. It makes me a little anxious. But you know what, whenever I feel that way I just remind myself no one is forcing me to go, and I can leave at any time.

As I behaviourist, I work with many dogs that have "reactivity" issues around other dogs. This means that life has taught them they need to use high level, energy expensive behaviours such as barking, growling, snapping or even biting, to deal with the presence or approach of unfamiliar dogs. This is not because these dogs are mean or intend to do harm, they are simply using the most effective behaviours (in their experience) to diffuse an unpleasant situation as quickly as possible.

The vast majority of these dogs experience high levels of anxiety when approached by another dog, however unlike in my party analogy, when these dogs are on lead, they can't simply leave. Being approached by an unfamiliar dog is not just stressful and psychologically damaging for them, it is extremely stressful for the human on the other end of the lead too.

Sadly a lot of dog owners do not understand this as their dog fortunately does not suffer from anxiety around other dogs. All too often, this is the scenario I encounter whilst out with my dogs in Edinburgh:

- 1) Person with on lead dogs spots off lead dog and makes evasive manoeuvres.
- 2) Person with off lead dog either does absolutely nothing (sometimes they haven't even noticed what their dog is doing, they are on the phone, or jogging, or deep in conversation with a companion) OR they shout the dreaded words "it's okay, s/he's friendly!".
- 3) Off lead dog approaches on lead dog (on lead dog and their human are usually showing signs of stress at this point – the dog may be tongue flicking, lip smacking, showing the white of their eyes or even frozen still, or they may have started growling or barking, the human is probably still trying to evade the off lead dog, or may be trying to calm their dog with kind words and treats. They may have called out to the other dog owner with a polite "could you please call your dog away".
- 4) Person with off lead dog does nothing, or they offer a last-minute recall that has zero effect as their dog is already a matter of feet away from the on-lead dog and their attention is 100% focused on them.
- 5) Off lead dog reaches on lead dog causing stress and potentially triggering "reactive" behaviours such as barking and lunging which by this point are the ONLY way the on-lead dog can ensure the off-lead dog stays out of their space.

Sadly, I am also witnessing more and more of these scenarios that end in the owner of the off-lead dog berating the owner of the on-lead dog. This is just plain unacceptable behaviour. Not only are they completely in the wrong for allowing their dog to approach in the first place (in Scotland we thankfully have the Control of Dogs (Scotland) Act 2010 which requires you to both keep your dog under control and to not let it cause "reasonable apprehension"), they are then making a stressful situation even worse by hanging around, shouting and creating even more negative associations for the poor on lead dog that was already pretty convinced that scenarios involving unfamiliar dogs are Bad (yes, with a capital B!).

It saddens me that some people appear to think that they know better than someone who owns/ walks an on-lead dog. However, I do feel strongly that, on the whole in Edinburgh, our community shows respect and kindness to one another, so it shouldn't be too much of a stretch to extend this etiquette to on lead dogs as well. So please, if you see an on-lead dog, call your dog away in plenty of time and either keep them away or put them on lead to ensure they can't approach without consent. You then have time to ask whether the on lead dog is friendly and would like to say hello, and whether the answer is yes or no I can guarantee you will have made another person and their dog very happy! Spread the word and let's do better for dogs!



Tammie + River with the Clan

TEACH YOUR DOG HOW TO SETTLE

BY SUZANNE GOULD



Hello I am Suzanne and have recently launched my Practically Perfect Dog Training Classes in Leith. I have always had dog's in my life and I currently own two Old English Sheepdogs Erick and Ally.

I firmly believe that dog training should be fun and you should think of the training as though they are games to teach and play with your dog.

One of the many things that I get asked about is how to their dog to settle on their bed either when visiting a cafe or in the home while the humans are eating their food. I thought I'd share my wee guide with you.

You need your dog, their bed or blanket and lots of good pea-sized treats. Move their bed and place it in front of you, when your dog steps on the bed say 'Good' and throw a treat to the side of the bed. (We want them to get off the bed).

Wait for your dog to go back to the bed and step on it, it will happen don't worry Repeat as before. Repeat this for upto 10 times in one go.

Once your dog is going to their bed easily you can begin to wait a little longer before saying 'Good' and throwing the treat. Eventually you can ask for a sit or down, say 'Good' when they do it and feed them the treat while they stay on their bed.

Keep practice sessions short and sweet, don't do too much at once and remember training takes time so be consistent.

I teach this and walking without pulling, Give me the toy, Nose boops and leave it games plus lots more in my puppy and beginners classes. Go to www.edinburghholisticdogs.co.uk for more information.

THE DOGS WHO STARTED IT ALL...

I'd love for you to meet the two dogs who began my obsession with all things dog...

Fanta was a Golden Labrador. He was big & strong and very protective over his family (he had been known to chase the postman down the street on occasions!!) Sadly we lost Fanta when I was just 4 but I still remember him clearly.

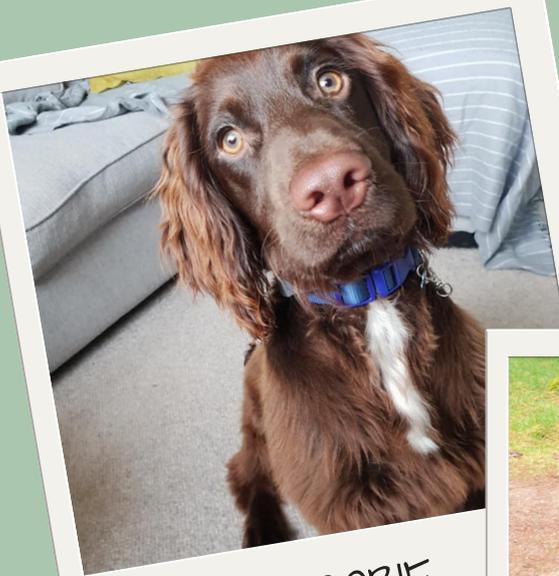
Then there was Bonnie. Bonnie was that 'once in a lifetime' dog. She was so special, so patient and so loving. Our birthday's were 2 days apart and we grew up together. Her parents and grandparents were all Crufts champions but to us she was just our family pet. I used to take her for walks every night with my Dad (the end theme tune to Neighbours was her cue and she would go nuts as soon as it started because she knew it was time for walkies!) Bonnie lived to the grand old age of 14 and a half and was definitely the reason I'm now so crazy about dogs!



Tammie x



Meet our newest clan recruits...



SCOOBIE



RAMSEY



TOOTSIE



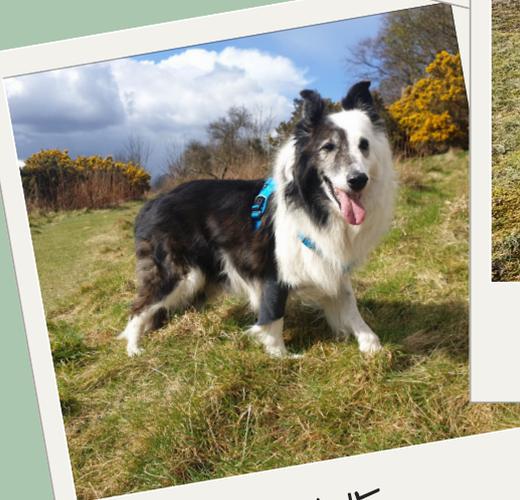
BULLET



JABBERS



LEO



MILLIE



BLU