

Mary Hardy Awards

Mary Hardy was the Club's Patron for a number of years until her death in 1999. She had been involved with the Club in a number of ways for many years. Mary was a loyal and hardworking committee member and her kindness and graciousness were known and appreciated by all.

To honour her memory, the Club decided to introduce the Mary Hardy Awards for people whose contribution to Smooth Collies or to dogs in general is outstanding. Nominations for an award should be made in writing to the secretary. The awards are announced during the AGM in March of each year.

The first Mary Hardy Award was presented in 1999 to Mrs Ada Bishop (Laund) whose life has been dedicated to Collies. Daughter of W.W. Stansfield one of the great Collie legends of the early 20th century, Mrs Bishop has accumulated a huge knowledge and expertise about the Rough and Smooth Collie which she is willing to share with those who genuinely wish to learn. Mrs Bishop is currently the President for the Smooth Collie Club of Great Britain and takes an active interest in the Club's activities.

The second Mary Hardy Award was also presented in 1999. This was received by Mrs Iris Combe at the club's championship show in September 1999

Mrs Combe's literary achievements, particularly her book about Collies, and her lifetime involvement with pastoral breeds were recognised through this prestigious award. (photo below of Mrs Combes by Alopex)



The third Mary Hardy Award was presented in May 2000 to Janice Cook of the Foxbell Smooth Collie kennels in Australia. Janice was instrumental in introducing

the Smooth Collie to Australia when she imported the first two Smooths in 1975. These were a dog and a bitch from the Foxearth and Cotsbelle kennels.

Janice promoted the breed tirelessly in Australia where Smooths had not been seen since the 1920's. More imports and inter variety matings helped establish the breed and encouraged more people to get involved in breeding and exhibiting.

As well as winning the prestigious Mary Hardy Award, Janice was fortunate to win Best In Show at the first Smooth Collie Association of Australasia championship show solely for Smooth Collies in 1998 under UK judge Pat Lister - surely two telling indictments of her commitment and enthusiasm for the breed.

At the Annual General Meeting held in March 2004, two more Mary Hardy Awards were presented. These were given to Jean Tuck and Brenda Kennedy in recognition of outstanding service to the breed. Jean and Brenda were instrumental in undertaking research and collecting photographs or other images of Champion and other Smooth Collies. This work led in 2003 to the publication of the landmark limited edition book 'Smooth Collie Champions 1884 to 2002'.

At the AGM held in March 2005, two Mary Hardy Awards were presented to two ladies who have made significant but very different contributions to the breed. The first was awarded to Jane Howells (nee Birtwistle) whose paintings of Smooth Collies have been generously given to Best Veteran winners and as awards for other special occasions for many years. Jane has freely shared her remarkable talent with us and her paintings are keenly sought after and have led to large entries of Veteran Smooths at our open show, thus contributing to the quality of competition and demonstrating the attributes of our breed to a large audience. Jane is pictured below (left) presenting one of her portraits to Birgit Hayward, a winner in previous years.

The second award made in 2005 was presented to Birgit Hayward in recognition of her work in previous years in establishing the Smooth Collie in Scandinavia through selective imports made whilst she was still living in Sweden. The impact of these imports and the breeding programme which followed has enabled today's UK Smooth Collie population to benefit from the reintroduction of bloodlines which have enhanced our small gene pool. Recent imports from Sweden and Finland are directly related to Birgit's initial imports and have undoubtedly made a positive impact on the quality of UK Smooth Collies.

In 2006, a Mary Hardy Award was presented to Trevor and Birgit Hayward of the Foxearth Smooth Collies. The award was made in recognition of their outstanding service to the Smooth Collie for more than 30 years. During this time, their breeding programme has enabled the breed to establish itself in this country and abroad. The Foxearth Smooth Collies have strengthened the breed by judicious use of British and foreign bloodlines and have made a major contribution to the

present day health of the breed.

In 2008 two Mary Hardy Awards were presented. The first was to Joan Day and Florin (Sharidon Polly Flinders) for their remarkable exploits in the obedience field, representing Scotland in fierce competitions, including Crufts. Having reached a very high standard in this exacting sport, Joan and Florin are fantastic ambassadors for our wonderful breed.

The second award in 2008 was presented to Isobel and Tony Griffiths (Alopex). It was their research, hard work and professionalism that began the SCOTY contest over 20 years ago. For many years they ran the contest themselves - a tremendous piece of planning and implementation. The SCOTY contest was originally conceived to encourage members to attend the Annual General Meeting held after a fine lunch following the contest. This target is easily achieved every year when over 50 members attend what is the highlight of the Smooth Collie year.

In 2011 the award was presented to the Sewell family (Penny, Peter and Julie) for all their hard work on behalf of the Club at Discover Dogs and providing such an impressive exhibition of the breed.



Discover Dogs - Smooth Collie stand at Crufts 2013 that won the Best Pastoral award for the the third year running thanks to the hard work by Penny, Peter and Julie Sewell.