



Master's Report, Winter/Spring 2009

New Year's Day at Church Farm School was a fine start to 2009, with hounds scoring good long runs to marks despite fresh distractions in the bitter cold. At **Hallman's** on January 4th, the pack worked the whole property, holing rabbit after rabbit, and ran a final one to ground on the way in. At the **Mohrs'** on the 11th in arctic cold hounds ran our first rabbit to ground into Cadwalader's, holed the second in the back hedgerows, and finished up with a non-stop 20 minutes on two rabbits from top to bottom of Silberman's hill cover, putting all to ground. **Church Farm** on the 18th was a rabbit marathon in frigid winds with good runs to ground on three cottontail. Our Hunt Breakfast at America Bar and Grill was great. The 25th at **Stonewall Golf Club**, a new meet, again in bitter winds, was a great day. We had good hunts in the wood strips between fairways as hounds got up lots of rabbits to keep the field moving. The Heths' hot tailgate tea was a lifesaver.

February 8th at **Allerton Farm** was a very good day. Hounds ignored deer and fox as they began with a good run above the woods down to Bedwell's and back, then across the briar hell in the power line cut to an accounting. Three more good runs gave the field views as hounds drove rabbits from top to bottom of the hills to end the day. The potluck at Lydia Willitts Bartholomew's was great fun, including a video of the Scardeen hunting in Ireland. The 15th at **Marsh Creek** was warm and clear. Hounds got up a rabbit at once and put it to ground, then another in the crossover hedgerow and ran it to ground in the woods. They found another, and hounds put that rabbit to ground after two circuits of the woods, and got one more out in front of the field beside the trail and to ground to end the day. Arctic winds returned the 22nd at **Cheslen Preserve**. Hounds got up two rabbits on the hillside banks for two good runs to ground, one down to the Brandywine and back.

March started with a bang at **Christiansen's** on the 1st with runs on three rabbits which all ran into forbidden ground, then in the woods strip across the road we got a great circling run up to the gas line cut and back, putting it to ground above the pond. Then the chase was on. In the long hedgerow line below the pastures we had team tag rabbits for the next half hour, accounting for two, and after a final run to ground near Nina's fence, packed up to end the day. The Rosato's tea was super. At the **Moore's' Great Marsh Farm** on the 8th, hounds ran their first rabbit to ground along the farm road, and the second on the left side woods which they ran to ground in a big brush pile. They then worked the upper hedge line where Quarry forced a rabbit out. The pack ran it to the right hand woods to Conestoga Road and back to ground. We finished with runs on two more in the Fox Hill woods and went back to the Moores' to a fine tea given by the Greens and Valerie McCormick.

The next weekend was super—a Beagle and Basset Ball and two days hunting with hounds of nine different packs! Saturday afternoon the 14th at **Reiff Farm** Betsy Park and Jeep Cochran hunted a pack of Sandanona Hare Hounds, the Calf Pasture, the Old Chatham Beagles and the Skycastle. After a scattered start, hounds got up their first rabbit, and the fun began. A rabbit blew out to the right and into a wide briar strip. Rabbits started coming out everywhere. Betsy took the pack across to the next field to the hedgerow border to a view. They ran it to the barn to a mark, then drew across to the next field to the big stream covert, where they found and ran it across to the next fence line and back to the stream to an accounting to end the day. The ball at Radnor Hunt Saturday night was super, with over 150 people from the foot packs and area foxhunts. Our silent auction and ball profits made over \$12,000 for Institute Farm, NBC headquarters. Sunday morning the 15th I hunted a pack of Ardrossan, Fairview, Old Chatham and West Dublin Beagles, and our Skycastle French Hounds at **Church Farm School**. We started at the hedgerow cover behind the barns and quickly got a rabbit going and to ground, with fresh ones popping up all over. This was the pattern for the morning. Hounds ran several for good runs to marks on both sides of Church Farm Lane. It was great fun, with plenty of views for the big field. the mixed pack worked very well together and showed super sport. The breakfast afterward at Radnor Hunt was great. Everyone asked when we would have the next Beagle & Basset hunting weekend.

The 22nd at **Bedwell's** was windy and bone dry. Our first rabbit ran the inside of Cindy's center hedgerow and got to ground in deep multiflora. The pack drew the woods edge where they put a rabbit to ground. The power line briar strips gave us two good runs. I then lifted hounds over to the top hedgerow where we had a nice hunt on our final rabbit to ground to end the day. Our **Closing Meet** at Harold and



Hounds turning tight with their cottontail at Marsh Creek, February 15, 2009.

Cynthia Hallman's on the 29th was a rabbit marathon and very hot. We started with a nice run from the first hedgerow out into the left field briar strip to Thayer's and back to ground, then ran another to ground the length of the hedgerow almost to Beth's. We crossed over to Theurkauf's and the fun began. Hounds drove one to ground near the road past Thayer's from the corner, then another three in succession up and down the woods strip between Thayer's and Richie's to marks to end the day. Hounds and staff were cooked after this hot, very hard-working finish to our 60th season. The tea at Chris Peebles' was a real celebration.

The **Spring Basset Pack Trials** at Aldie, 16-19 April, were really fun despite tough scenting conditions. There were 13 packs competing,



The 3 couple pack with Nick Booth, Jim Scharnberg and Laura Booth.

and over 90 people in attendance, a record. The grounds were saturated from heavy rains, but we got a three day window of clear weather. We had a long draw to our first find in the 3 couple, getting up a rabbit in the upper back. Hounds ran it across to the lefthand woods and down to the bottom to a loss where three other packs had run. We drew up left and found again.



The 5 couple pack with Laura Booth, Jim Scharnberg and Sally Roberts.



The Skycastle 3 Couple in cry on their Lees Plate winning hunt in the Enclosure.

Hounds ran it across to the the right hand woods area where they were picked up running. It was good for a 4th place and the 50% hunting/50% presentation Lees Plate. In the 5 couple, we had a solid hunt, covering the stream sides and "graveyard" and the right hand hillsides below the Merry Meadow to no avail. The judges said afterward that they were praying we'd find as the pack worked so thoroughly and never gave up, and would have placed high if we found. They awarded us the five couple 50/50 Ashland Plate. Hounds and staff got high marks both days. Sally Roberts and Laura and Nick Booth did a super job, and were praised for their help in recovering rioting hounds for another pack.

Bye day training hunts Wednesdays and Saturdays have been very helpful in getting the young entry and other young hounds steady. Soon we'll be starting the "T" litter hunting in ones and twos with older hounds. Everyone is welcome to join us on bye days. Call Jim Scharnberg or Gillian Wiedorn for directions and times if you'd like to join us Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays for hound exercise and hunting through the summer, and then the season through, in addition to the regular Sunday meets.

Our 60th season went very well indeed, with three locations added, and we will be exploring others this summer. We can always use new meet locations north of Route 30, as more of our old ones in Pickering's country get developed each year. Please call if you know any locations. We are very privileged to hunt so many beautiful properties here in Chester County. **We owe our sport to our wonderful landowners.**



In Remembrance—Frank Hastings (Terry) Griffin III, MFH

Terry Griffin, longtime senior master of Radnor Hunt, president of the Bryn Mawr Hound Show and Pennsylvania district director of the MFHA, died of heart failure on December 31, 2008. Over the past twenty years he revived Radnor as a vigorous fox hunt and gained much new territory, acquiring the old Brandywine and Vicmead countries.

We will always be in his debt for his relentless efforts in rewriting the dog law legislation to prevent the attempts by the animal rights groups to close down hunting and sporting kennels in this state. His work on amendments, and meetings with legislators, community groups, the Governor's and the Department of Agriculture's committees were vital to achieve fair legislation and protect decent, law abiding sportsmen and hobby breeders in Pennsylvania from attack by extremists who have no real connection with animal welfare. Terry is truly irreplaceable.