

The German Shepherd Dog



The German Shepherd

where it all began

by Jane Dalzell

If you are anything like me you will look at the picture of the very first German Shepherd dog and then you will look at the picture of the German Shepherd we have now and you think ... Huh!!! ... How did that happen? – There must be a piece of the puzzle missing - that piece of the puzzle is Klodo.

It all began in 1891 – The Phylax Society of Germany was formed. The purpose of the Phylax Society was to standardise dog breeds in Germany. After only three years the society was disbanded, due to internal conflicts of its members. Some members wanted to breed dogs for their looks while others were more interested in breeding for the traits and workability of the dogs. The Phylax Society didn't

achieve their aims but they did succeed in raising the interest of others to breed dogs to a specific standard. One of

those people was Max Von Stephanitz an ex-member of the failed Phylax Society. Max was an ex-cavalry officer and had also studied at the Berlin Veterinary College. Max was a huge believer in breeding dogs for working.

It was 1899 and Von Stephanitz was at a dog show in Karlsruhe in Western Germany where he saw a dog that was of medium size, coloured yellow and grey and had an almost wolf-like appearance. This dog



Horand von Grafrath

captured von Stephanitz's attention like no other. He was amazed by its intelligence, strength and loyalty and he was a working shepherd. It was Von Stephanitz's idea to form and standardize the perfect working dog and what he saw before him was the starting point. He purchased the dog and re-named him Horand von Grafrath. Von Stephanitz then formed the Society for the German Shepherd Dog and Horand was the very first German Shepherd Dog to be added to the breed register.

Von Stephanitz then began work on standardising the breed and bred Horand with other bitches of similar type, he also used Horand's brother, Luchs. Stephanitz inbred heavily to consolidate the bloodline and then added unrelated bloodlines from shepherding origins.



Heathcote Cool Chick

strength loyalty ~ Utility is the true criterion of beauty

Von Stephanitz realised with the modernisation and industrialisation of Germany it may result in a downturn for the need of shepherding working dogs and so he looked for other opportunities for the breed. He found another purpose and that was of service to the military and police and rescue, he worked with the authorities to introduce the German Shepherd for these roles. Around 1910 there were about 500 police stations in Germany who were equipped with trained police dogs. During the First and Second World Wars the dogs were used as ammunition, message, first aid supply carriers, mine detectors, sentinals and guard work to name but a few. American Soldiers were so taken with the bravery and loyalty of the dogs that they captured some and took them home with them after the war ended, which also helped raise the popularity of the dog in countries other than Germany. Popular shows such as Rin Tin Tin and Strongheart during the 1920's also helped.

Back in Germany they were holding a German Shepherd dog show each year to judge the very best of the best male and female who would then be awarded the title of Seiger and Seigerin. Of course after being judged the best of the best many dog breeders would want to breed their bitches to this now, very influential sire - of the year, therefore there was of great importance as to what dog was selected as those bloodlines of that dog had a great impact on the breed.

In 1925 Stephanitz was becoming worried that the direction of his beloved creation was taking a wrong turn. He was concerned about the height and box type shape of the dog. At that year's Seiger show he was a judge and he selected a dog by the name of Klodo as the Seiger for that year. Klodo was of a different look than all his



Klodo Von Boxberg

Seiger predecessors, he had a longer body, was a bit shorter than his competition and had that far reaching gait that we all know and love in our German Shepherds. This marked the change in the appearance of the German Shepherd but not the traits which remain the same – Intelligent, good temperament, courageous, versatile, devoted and loyal. Von Stephanitz discouraged breeding for beauty and instead focused on 'purpose' in line with the well known quote

"Utility is the true criterion of beauty."

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Interview with a Police Dog Handler

Interviewed by Jane Dalzell and Danielle Fisher

Written by Jane Dalzell

When we hear the name German Shepherd Dog – more often than not we think Police Dog, and I was delighted to be given the opportunity to interview a Police Dog Handler – Constable Craig Moore from the Christchurch Police Dog Section.

Craig has been a member of the NZ Police since 2007. Having never worked with dogs before, he hadn't even thought about joining the dog section. After seeing the Police dogs and their handlers in action, his interest in this area of policing was ignited.

After two years of being a Probationary Constable in the General Duties section, Craig decided to develop his career by becoming more involved with the Police Dog Section. This involved helping out on training days and eventually fostering two Police puppies from eight weeks to six months old at which time the pups go to their handlers.

At the end of 2012, Craig became a Police Dog Handler and was partnered with his first dog. Training together took approximately 10 months which included intensive training in Canterbury District under the watchful eye of Sergeant Yates and Sergeant Sim, and three three-week block courses at the Police Dog Training Centre in Trentham. One of the first stages of training a Police dog is obedience, which is a very important part of the overall control of the dog. This training includes heelwork, distance control, retrieve, sit stays, down stays and also helps develop the all-important bond between the handler and the dog. Your dog has to like you in order for you to be able to get the best out of them. During the training other skills such as tracking, bite work, building searches and article searches are developed.

Craig worked with two dogs before the operational dog he has now. He said that they were both good dogs but they didn't quite make the grade. His first dog was named Ida and in Ida's case, they almost got to the end of the training before it was realised that while she had great ability in tracking and obedience, she did not have aptitude in her man-work (where the dog is trained to grab onto the offender). Ida is now an Operational NZ Army dog. Craig's next dog was Kilo. Unfortunately early on in the training it became clear

that Kilo had a fear of shiny floors. If they went into a building with a shiny floor Kilo would 'freeze'. Craig now has Police dog Oz, who he got at five and a half months of age. They graduated when Oz was 18 months old and they have been operational since.

Police dogs do not have to be naturally aggressive and a good Police dog would be happy just to sit with its handler and the general public. Once it is given the command to work it is like the flick of a switch and it turns to action mode. The really good Police dogs adapt quickly to situations. They can be visiting schools and having children pat them one minute and then the next minute they may be apprehending an offender. The dogs know when you are in uniform that it is time to work. They train for specific situations and training scenarios are maintained as realistic as possible.

The best thing about being a Police Dog Handler Craig said was "working with my best mate, he's awesome; it's the best job in the Police ... so good in fact that I would do it for free but my wife said we need money to pay the bills." He says it's pretty cool when an offender runs off and he and Oz are able to track and find them. This he explains is because – "you've trained that dog from knowing pretty much nothing to the operational standard that it is now – It's very rewarding".

The way Craig has been taught to look at it is – 'Okay, they've gone, so if we find them, we have achieved everything'. It is this achievement that gives a huge sense of satisfaction and success. The dog loves the chase and the hunt. Afterwards they get their reward which may be playing a game with his favourite toy or giving the bark response as his treat (the bark response is when the offender has been caught and is sitting defeated and the dog is allowed to bark at them.)

The job is not all about work with the Police dog, they are police officers as well, so if they are not doing a dog job then they are backing up their colleagues and that works both ways as sometimes they will need help in setting up cordons to track an offender – for instance if someone has run from a burglary, all the available units will come into the area and take a cordon and attempt to get the

loyal brave strong confident alert obedient courageous

offender to go to ground. The dog unit will come to the scene and try and track the offender and hopefully he or she is within that cordon or if they get sightings then they can move the cordon and force the offender to hunker down and be found by the tracking dog. It's not just a 'win' for the dog and handler, it's a win for everyone involved in that situation. Just this last weekend, there was a person that was stopped by a traffic unit, he was processed for breath testing, he was required to go back to the police station and as they were walking to the police car he ran off. Craig and Oz were called in to find him, they located a track and ended up tracking through residential properties and into a school, they tracked around the school and Oz located the driver hiding up a tree, but he wouldn't come down out of the tree for Craig. Maybe Oz and his bark response had something to do with that – so Craig had to call in help to get the offender down. They write tickets too, so don't think that just because they are in a police dog van that they won't stop you and write you up a plain old speeding ticket – it's all part of the job.

Graduation has been Craig's favourite moment so far although another favourite moment has been competing at the National Police Dog and Detector Dog Championships recently. As rookie handlers Craig and Oz did ok and placed a respectable 4th overall out of the whole country, Craig's line partner Senior Constable Gary Donnelly, who is considered Christchurch's most experienced dog handler, and Police dog Blaze came 2nd – he was pipped at the post by Whakatane's Senior Constable Dave Robison and Police dog Isaac.

To compete at the National Police Dog trials is no easy task and involves a series of competitions – Canterbury holds a district trial and tests are in obedience, tracking, man-work, article search and building search. A police incident is set up where they have to respond to the incident in accordance with Police best practice; as they would do at an actual job. An example of an incident might be dealing with victims or tracking an offender and having to decide the best way to handle that situation – just because they have a dog at their disposal doesn't mean that they use the dog for every job, it is up to the officer to discern what the best approach is. The best tool and first course of action is verbal communication, which is paramount and all officers know this.

All the operational Police handlers in Canterbury competed and Craig was placed 1st. The top three winners then went to the South Island champs, this time Craig was placed 3rd and the top three from there go to the Nationals in Wellington.

The top 12 handlers from all districts in New Zealand compete and are scored for each discipline over three days. Day one involved agility, some obedience and the sit stay, down stays. Day two morning was tracking on a three hour old grass paddock track, there may or may not be some articles on the track which the dog has to do a 'down' beside. Then there is the criminal work/man work, different scenarios are set up and the dog has to apprehend an offender, they have to choose when or when not to deploy the dog. If they send the dog, at any given time the steward may tell them to recall the dog back – so in mid-flight, when the dog has pinned its ears right back and is focused on the target they are told to call it back, the ideal is one command and the dog return to them and to the heel position – if more commands are needed, they lose marks. A building search was done too, a scenario was set up that burglars had burgled the building, they would have to go in and locate them and have the dog to do a bark response – sometimes easier said than done. On the final day there was a police incident, an incident was set up and they have to go in and figure out the best course of action to take.

Things don't always turn out so well, Police dogs are animals and sometimes they have a mind of their own. The Sergeant may turn up to see your training and ask to see a specific task which you know full well your dog can do and lo and behold they won't do it. They can end up making you look like a fool but then anyone who has a dog knows that all too well and it's good to know that even the best can do that too. All Police dog teams are constantly training and being checked and validated. Each operational handler has to do a certain amount of training with the Sergeant so that they can confirm that the standards required are being maintained. Each year they have to be validated by another sergeant from a different district to say that they are up to operational standards. This is to ensure that the high standards of the New Zealand Police Dog Sections are maintained.

Craig's top tip for handling any dog is consistency – there is no one set way to train a dog. If the way you train the dog gets the result then that's fine. The main method within the Police is positive reinforcement, Craig said that's the way he learnt things when he started out with obedience classes with the South Island German Shepherd League club. What he learnt there was a good grounding for him and helped make up his mind to become a Police Dog Handler.



The South Island turns German Shepherd League 50 years old

by Rose Frame – Founding Member

Relaxing with a picnic lunch at the Ashburton All breeds show in February 1965 a group of German Shepherd enthusiasts considered starting a club for their breed – they were Mrs Pears (Rhodes) of Alcace Kennels, Mrs Julie Topp of Pinehaven Kennels, the late Mr Vernon Taylor and Mrs Idris Taylor of Vernis Kennels and Rose Grant (Frame) of Shamrock Kennels.

About the same time four German Shepherd owners were watching a soccer match, at the break whilst having a bit of a chat they discovered they too were of the same mind set. They were the same Mr Vernon Taylor, Mr Frazer Aitken, Mr Kenneth Ferri and Miss Ferri.

In May 1965 a notice arrived from Mr Aitken calling a meeting on June 3rd at 7:00pm at the Christchurch Public Library with the intention of forming a German Shepherd Dog Club. Mr Aitken's energetic ground work came in the form of contacting Mr Norman Brown (now deceased) a representative for Canterbury Kennel Association, who was prepared to help those elected start the new venture. Mr Brown contacted the South Island Welsh Corgi League for their constitution which was sound in policy with the thought that it would be a good start for the incoming committee. He also explained the intricacies of NZKC rules. Mr Aitken also brought to the evening Mr Leonard Harvey – a Christchurch businessman (now deceased), who before coming to New Zealand had previously been a police dog handler working with the English 'Brittas Kennel' dogs brought into Rhodesia, southern Africa in the late 1950s. Mr Harvey was prepared to stand for president if the incoming committee so wished as Mr Aitken could not accept nomination due to his imminent departure overseas. Mr Aitken had to cajole and persist to encourage a few to take office. Eventually all places on committee were filled. Lastly they accepted the offer from the Welsh Corgi League to use their constitution (slightly amended to reflect the German Shepherd Dog) and they became the South Island German Shepherd League (Inc).

Shortly after we became established Mrs Ilene Morganty (now deceased) became our Southern representative in Dunedin, encouraging membership, training also travel to Canterbury ribbon parades, later shows and Obedience. Members reciprocated by sharing trips, accommodation, even for members' children too to enable them to travel south.

Established breeders and Obedience members from the North Island were wonderful. I attended the 1965 National show and came home with "loads of cash" – not one of the North Islanders refused my plea to join the South Island German Shepherd League. Travelling over on the ferry I put the money under my pillow. Seasick and overtired I overslept, a friend called "wake up quick and get your dog off the top deck". I ran and got my dog and then suddenly remembered the money, I rushed back to the cabin only to find the bed already stripped, I found the porter and I couldn't believe it but his wife was a friend of mine – he handed over the cash – crisis averted.

The League's first Championship show was on Easter Sunday 2nd April 1972 at Canterbury Canine Obedience Club on Lincoln Road – the Judge was Mr Duckworth of Townsville Australia.

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| <i>Founding Members</i> | |
| Patron | Mr Aitken |
| President | Mr Lenard Harvey (now deceased) |
| Vice President | Mrs Goldy Morrison, Von Freude Kennels |
| Secretary/Treasurer | Miss Lillian Wadel, after a month was taken over by Mr Leslie Coles (now deceased) Von Arronberg Kennels |
| Committee | Mrs Sue Pears (Rhodes), Mrs Rose Grant (Frame), Mr D Morrison, Lynda Morrison, on Freude Kennels, Mr D Kilpatrick, Mr R Steward, Mr Kenneth Ferri (now deceased) Miss Ferri |

In the 1960s Mr Frazer Aitken Convener of the inaugural meeting June 3rd 1965 was given a gift, he was able to choose from a group of All Breeds China dogs – he chose the German Shepherd. The China German Shepherd was used in 1966 as the model for the casting in Bronze of two German Shepherds – a bitch and a dog to act as the centrepiece for the beautiful founders trophy.



50 years old ~ a huge thanks to our members past & present

Each year at the November show this trophy is awarded to the Best in Show – the trophy now too valuable to be given out is awarded, but stays in custody of the current president. On the 7th November 2015 it will again be presented at the South Island German Shepherd Leagues 46th Championship show.

For those who are interested The South Island German Shepherd League offers training for:

- puppies right through to adults
- domestic and competitive Obedience
- fun and competitive Agility
- fun and competitive Breed showing.

A huge thanks to our members past and present and also a big thank you to everyone who has and continues to support our Club.



Breed showing



Obedience competitions



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Victor & Guide Dog Willow

Interviewed and written by Stacey Dalzell



The German Shepherd breed is often perceived as being the type of dog associated with police dog handling or search and rescue dogs due to their loyalty, intelligence and general trainability. However, they are the same abilities, nature and skills mentioned above that make a German Shepherd an ideal guide dog for those with vision impairment. While public perception tends to associate guide dogs as being a Labrador or Golden Retriever, it is also common knowledge that other breeds are just as capable of being a guide dog including Poodles, Dobermans and other cross-breeds. While the use of such breeds may not be common in New Zealand, for Vic Sinclair there was no question in his mind, he wanted a German Shepherd as his guide dog.

Vic's current dog Willow is a German Shepherd. She is strong willed, fast and intelligent. Vic believes that Willow's temperament is similar to his own and this allows them to be well matched. Certainly, it was these traits and then some that allowed for Victor to quickly establish a bond with Willow and build upon her Guide Dog Service training to match what he required. Prior to Willow, Vic had another German Shepherd guide dog

Zoe. Zoe had reached the end of her working life and Vic requested that he be able to

have another German Shepherd. The Guide Dog Service were very accommodating in making this happen for Vic, as breed preference is generally not taken into account when matching dogs to their owners. At the time of receiving Willow she had been trained by The Guide Dog Service. This included placement as a puppy with a volunteer where she was socialised and introduced to different situations she would face as a working dog. At around a year old she was returned to The Guide Dog Service. Here she was given intensive training and her personality and temperament traits were assessed together with her health and guiding ability. As she met the required criteria, she was then able to enter her working life with Victor.

It is part of the process that The Guide Dog Service provides a trainer to assist the handler and their dog work together. At this point it was found that there were some aspects to which Vic and Willow did not quite match. Vic says that The Guide Dog Service do a wonderful job in training the puppies and provide a fantastic service in doing so. However, for him he needed more from Willow and to be able to achieve this he needed to provide the further training himself. At this point it was about getting Willow to understand Vic, build upon their bond and train Willow to understand his personal preferences and idiosyncrasies. Of course, there were a few accidents during Vic's

Willow ~ strong willed, fast and intelligent

training, but thankfully nothing too serious. Vic advises that within 7 days of The Guide Dog Services trainer leaving, he had Willow trained up to his standard.

In order to bring Willow up to his required standard Vic set to build a bond with her. Questioning Vic on how he achieved this in such a short time, he advised that it was all about showing Willow love, kindness and discipline. He also attributes his success to the idea that Willow needed to become part of the family unit and his wife was also involved in the training process. Vic also proceeded to build a chain of command to make sure that she remained a working dog. To this day, Willow remains attentive and focused to Vic's requirements. She is not even vaguely distracted by other dogs or people. He then set to establish various commands for which Willow was to respond too, guide dogs are trained to specific words to respond to their handler's command. At the time that Vic received Willow Vic estimates that Willow had a command vocabulary of around 40 – 50 words. This has now been extended to about 80 – 100 different commands including being required to lift her feet and wipe them before entering the house.

This is the type of work the creator of the German Shepherd – Max Von Stephanitz knew his beloved German Shepherd was capable of and the traits and workability that Willow shows are what he desired for them.

Take this trouble for me: Make sure my shepherd dog remains a working dog, for I have struggled all my life long for that aim.


Max Von Stephanitz



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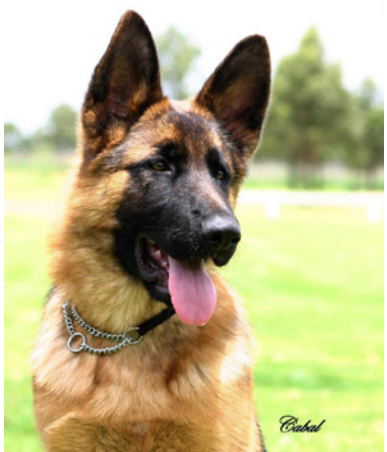






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German Shepherd on Trial

by Karen Wilson

"Wow what a buzz! The most emotional, full-on, fun weekend I have ever had with my dog".

SATURDAY 21 MARCH 2015

We had our first attempt at Utility Dog at Whiterock, Loburn, Canterbury and for me, to just get to this day had been a long journey. I was so excited! I knew Zeba had a good understanding of every exercise required at the first level of Working Trials, Utility Dog but putting it all together on the day, under competition pressure was another matter. The atmosphere at the trial was warm and friendly, but everyone also knew the seriousness of the tasks at hand.

The Track

First up was the track draw. I drew track three for Zeba and myself. Her track was to be run at 8:55am, which would be 30 minutes since the track layer had walked the track. I don't know how many times I checked the time waiting for our turn. I could hear the praise the first dog received on finding the article at the end of track one. Same deal with track two. Now it was our turn.

Out of courtesy I asked the judge if I could take my ball to reward Zeba at the finish, and also asked the track layer what direction they entered the paddock from to the starting peg (this is the only information you are given).

I felt quite calm. I walked into the paddock, harnessed Zeba and we were all set to start. About three metres from the peg I gave her the tracking command and off she went to the peg which indicates the start of the track. Zeba now had to determine which direction the track layer had walked. With her nose down she searched around, then stood and barked. I took a breath and recalled her. This time we were off.

She steadily pulled me to the first corner where it took her a few casts of checking to convince me we were headed in the right direction, towards a huge prickly in the paddock. As a track layer I thought to myself that would be a good marker and sure enough, after the prickly Zeba searched for the track, again indicating we had reached the second corner. She turned 90 degrees (corner two of three) and we were off again, down into a gully part of the paddock.

For a moment I was worried we were going in the wrong direction but I put this thought aside and remembered the training we had

done. I focused on Zeba and said to myself to trust her and let her go. Again she stopped and searched for the track. We changed direction on corner three. Fifty metres along this leg there was the article we had been tracking, a piece of cloth 15cm square. What excitement and relief, our first ever competition track completed!

The Seek-Back

The next exercise was the seek-back and it was the last exercise for which we had trained. It involves walking out about 10 paces, dropping an article and continuing another 40 paces, a 90 degree turn and continuing another 40 to 50 paces, stop, turn around and the dog has to track back to the article and retrieve it back to the handler.

It took Zeba a few moments to calm down after the excitement of completing the track. Our heeling away from the judge was not the best. We walked past a few clumps of wool (the remains of a sheep), got the steward's call for a right turn and continued another 40 steps until we got the call to halt. I set Zeba up but I gave her the wrong verbal command and consequently she took off like a rocket, nose in the air, not tracking at all. I knew she had three minutes to retrieve the article so she zoomed towards the judge, scented the article, picked it up and flew back to me. Yay! Two exercises completed and

passed so we were still in the game after the tracking phase.

Control Phase

This consists of a heel-work pattern, send-away jumps and a 10 minute handler out-of-sight down stay.

Long Jump

The length is four times the height of the dog at the shoulder (maximum 2700mm).

Scale Jump

Over a wooden scale jump, three times height of the dog at the shoulder (maximum 1800mm).

Clear Jump

Retrieve handler's wooden or synthetic dumb-bell, over a clear jump approximately twice the height of the dog at the shoulder.

In trials, the jumps are available to practice and warm-up with. Zeba flew over these in her usual exuberant style but at the long jump, she was distracted by a log in the



Effortless, determined, qualified, hooked

distance and wanted to investigate it. I called her back and thought nothing more of it.

With her warm-up completed and send-away markers shown to the handlers, in this case a big piece of wood, I felt confident that Zeba could do this exercise.

Now for the real thing – it was our turn. With the heel work completed satisfactorily (the most commonly failed exercise in trials) was the send-away, a distance of between 36–54 metres.

Standing at the peg the piece of wood looked miles away, but that wouldn't be a problem for Zeba. She flew out to the exact spot. Excellent! Another exercise completed.

The Jumps

Now to the jumps and probably Zeba's best exercise. We can do this! We were still alive at our very first trial.

Clear Jump

I threw the dumb-bell perfectly and Zeba retrieved it flawlessly.

"Only two more jumps to go".

Scale Wall

Effortless for Zeba.

Long Jump

I set her up for the long jump. She's keen. I send her and she's off like a rocket but she's looking at the log in the distance. She thinks it's a send-away. She flies straight past the long jump! (Silly me.) Nevermind, I know you have two attempts so I set her up again and this time I ran alongside her. As she gets close to the jump I say, 'Hup' (as you do). The judge said well done, you got her over but unfortunately it's a fail because you gave an extra command.

On a second attempt, the exercise needs to be executed perfectly to gain 50 percent of the mark.

Well, that's one steep learning curve! I wasn't that upset but I could've used some bad language that's for sure.

There's a saying in working trial circles – they're not called 'trials' for nothing so I have learnt the hard way, that it's a team job – Zeba and myself, we both have to put it together on the day. No other competitors were safe either, so the stay was a relaxed affair and of course because there was no qualification riding on this last exercise, all the dogs completed it successfully.

We won the best track sash, 194/200 so all was not lost. My little dog had tried so hard.

"Tomorrow is a brand new day".

SUNDAY 22 MARCH 2015

Sunday came and I'd kept all the good feelings from the day before, remembering all the things to help my dog out and thinking today we can do it!

The Track

Again we started with the track and Zeba steamed around it, only losing one mark.

The Seek-Back

Today it was text-book perfect. I gave her the correct command and she scored 30/30 for the exercise.

Heel Work

I think Zeba was smiling at me as much as I smiled at her as we performed this exercise. The memory of it will remain with me forever as we truly worked in sync, again, perfect marks.

Send-Away

In a different direction today, it looked so much harder as all the tips of the dry grass prevented the handler seeing the marker and therefore directing Zeba. She flew out but it was hard for me to see where she was in relation to the marker. I called "down" too early but luckily she was sure her toy was out there somewhere and kept running. It took two extra commands in this exercise to get her to go down but by this time she had past the marker so we were safe.

"Another exercise passed".

The Jumps

Zeba didn't quite clear the clear jump, just tipping it with a toe so one point deducted. She leapt over the scale and flew over the long jump perfectly. So now just the dreaded 10 minute, out-of-sight stay left to complete. We are still live as they say.

I went through my set-up routine, set her in her down stay and chilled out. I did a big yawn and left her for what seemed the longest 10 minutes ever!

As the steward said "Exercise finished", the judge said, "Congratulations, we have a new UDX qualified dog."

I took Zeba away to play ball and hide the tears of sheer relief and joy. I'm so proud; she qualified on 344/350 points at our very first trial.

Working trials is hard to explain, it's like no other dog sport. It's a qualification, not a competition. Everyone is so supportive and willing their fellow trialists to succeed. They are a small group of people with their dogs in the middle of nowhere. Thank goodness for the generosity of farmers so we can have our sport. Working trials involves hours of training and miles of travelling to find suitable venues, but today it made it all worthwhile and like so many who try this sport – I am hooked!



Enya Von Heisenberg CGCB RN UDX (Zeba)

March 2015

Stories from

The German Shepherd Rescue Trust

Angel and her Babies

by Denise of The German Shepherd Rescue Trust

Imagine giving birth on a chain.

Imagine your first born too far away to get to because you are on a chain.

That is what we found when we attended a property on a Sunday when we were told a German Shepherd was in need of help. On arrival we found her chained to a porch standing in a dirt area strewn with faeces.

Angel had already given birth to one puppy and it was half stuck under a kennel that had no floor, its little head was outside the kennel and the body inside, any pressure on top of the kennel would have decapitated the new-born. Angel could not get to it as her chain was not long enough. We picked the puppy up and it was icy cold. The property owner said they did not have a towel; fortunately we had one in our vehicle. Angel was in distress and the puppy close to death.

Thankfully the owners were agreeable to signing Angel over to GSD Rescue so we could get her the care needed, once we had this we rushed to the vet. Her first born was wrapped in the towel and we were rubbing it to get the warmth and circulation going through his little body.

We felt that we needed a siren as the traffic was really bad on the southern motorway. Going off the off ramps and back onto the on ramps to miss the build-up of traffic gained us some time.

We had phoned ahead to the emergency vet explaining the situation and they were waiting for us when we finally got there. On arrival we discovered Angel had had puppy number two in the back of the ute. Another was born at the vet clinic while the staff were working on the ailing puppy, giving it fluids and a heat pad.



We felt we needed a siren

With a bit of a waiting time after puppy number three, we took Angel back to a safe house and waited for the rest of the puppies. Four and five did not take long to come, puppy six needed assistance as its little head was stuck and three hours later puppy number seven was born but despite all efforts he did not make it.

It was a long but rewarding day.

At the medical check one week later the vet was very pleased with their progress. Angel had her first vaccination and we also found out that the hard bony lump we discovered and the slightly wonky leg is consistent with an untreated fracture. This will be x-rayed to confirm when we have her spayed at a later date.

Later when we did the x-ray we found that Angel had previously had a broken leg, with which she had had a plate inserted. The hard bony lump was calcification over the plating.

Her birthing would have been so difficult on a chain due to the limited movement of her back leg.

Zoe (adoption #851)

by Cornelia Reithman

- Adopted September 2010
- Aged 7 ½ years old (born April 2003)

When I met Zoe, she was being looked after by a French student who was on a study visa which was due to expire in two months' time. She had only had Zoe for about three months as Zoe's previous owner had gone to Europe on his OE. In less than ½ a year, I became Zoe's third owner and she was quite anxious.

Her Vet Records give us some insight to her history

At two years old she was described as a lean hyper dog. At three years – she barks a lot. At five years old she was at the vet with an infection from a bark collar – “three deep wounds” (I was surprised when I stroked her neck to discover that I could still feel the scars). At six years old Zoe was spayed, she was described as generally naughty, worse than previously and she had shown aggression towards her owner – when taking a toy. At the follow up after being spayed, she was very vocal and excitable. In May 2010, she went to her new owner (French student) and the comment in the Vet records was that she whines a lot.

Zoe bonded with me very quickly and became my shadow. Every time I moved, she moved. She is better now that she is more settled and she is my most loyal companion.

Zoe, initially was not the best with other dogs. However, she started going to training every week, initially through the German Shepherd Trust and Auckland Provincial German Shepherd Club and then began going to Dog HQ Dog Daycare two days a week. In time we were confident to include her in the Murawai Pack Days, when a group of around 10 GSDs and their owners would tramp through the forest and sand-dunes. We are very appreciative of all the understanding and support from all these caring people which has benefited Zoe and I greatly.

We have come a long way in the last 4½ years and Zoe's achievements include:



- 2011 Dog HQ Christmas function – Most improved prize
- Auckland Provincial German Shepherd Dog League Inc (Sunday Obedience training) – Most improved Trophy
- The German Shepherd Rescue Trust Family Fun Day 2013 – Most improved Rescue Dog & Owner

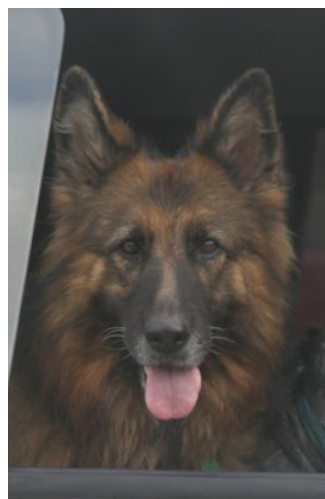
We have had our challenges, but it has been very rewarding. I have learned so much from her.

Zoe's story is only one of over 1100 German Shepherds rescued and re-homed over the last 11 years.

This wouldn't be possible without the German Shepherd Trust 'family' and all their help and support, especially one very dedicated person – Denise. Denise just gives, gives, gives, she always has time and I don't know how she does it in addition to her normal full time job. She loves all the dogs like they are her own, sharing the pride in their achievements, joy in their happiness and sadness when any of her 1100 'children' crosses the rainbow bridge.

One is not enough

by Anneke Wolterbeek



My first GSD in NZ was a long coat that I adopted from the German Shepherd Rescue Trust in Auckland. The neighbours had complained that her former owner had her caged for all her 7+ years of life and was neglecting her in food and exercise. The Trust got him to give up the dog; they bathed her and combed three winter coats off her. I called her Thera. No one knew whether she had been spayed or not. I took her that first weekend to the German Shepherd training club in Auckland. As soon as I got there, all the male GSDs present were instantly very interested

in her as it turns out she was in heat from all the turbulence in her life. I had her spayed immediately and took her to obedience training. I also soon realised that she did not know how to play at all, nor probably had ever been with other dogs. I took her to the neighbours who had a young Labrador, who was eager to play with Thera. Unfortunately, poor Thera had no clue what to do with this other dog and looked at me for help. It took Thera a while before she realised how much fun it was to play with another dog, even at 7+ years of age! Then Thera wanted to go over to play all the time!

The neighbours told me of a doggie day care which they took their dog to once a week, and maybe I could do that too, on the same day so Thera would have a playmate she knew. So I did, and very soon, Thera knew which day of the week Friday was, as she couldn't even eat her breakfast in her excitement to get to doggie day care as soon as possible. I felt bad that she didn't have a fulltime playmate so I went looking for a companion for Thera – that is when I found my next GSD.

I had called the police dog kennels, as I had heard that they sometimes have dogs that need retirement or do not quite make the police dog training grade. They told me of a 12 month old GSD who had been offered to them, who was not assertive enough for their training. I called about this fellow who turned out to be a pedigree, meant for stud, but his testicles had not come down in time. So the breeder had him neutered and sold him to a fellow in Te Atatu, who bought him for his daughter and named him 'Sue' (this man was a Johnny Cash fan it appears). But his daughter went off to college and the man did not want to care for the dog. That is when I got him. I promptly changed his name to a much more manly name, Thor (for the Deity of Thunder). Thor and my girl Thera took one look at each other, and began running around and playing happily.

I began a dog walking group, who met up about once every three to four weeks, each time at a different place for about an hour's walk and we always ended with tea and coffee somewhere together. Around Auckland, there are lots of parks, and walks through bush and beach which is great. From what I hear this dog walking group is still going.

I moved down to the Wairarapa for work. About 2.5 years later Thera suddenly began to fall down (faint). In taking her for vet examinations, it turned out that she had advanced pancreatic cancer. I had to put her down and have to say that I still miss that dearest dog of mine!

I was going to just keep Thor and devote more time to his Search and Rescue training and to him, as he was young enough still to teach and he is a very determined dog. But when Thera died, Thor (and I) became very depressed. Thor would go to the usual spots where Thera used to lie, and sniff them, I think hoping to smell that she had recently been there. For days and days, Thor refused to eat or play. I couldn't stand it, and when I heard from a colleague (who is also a GSD fan) about a GSD one year old bitch who needed rehoming, I adopted this girl immediately as a companion to Thor. I renamed her Gisa, after the very first GSD my parents had in Germany. (Throughout the years, we have always honoured that very first GSD, by having a GSD bitch called Gisa).

Gisa came to me, just as Thor did, without any obedience training at all. In fact, Gisa had been allowed to jump all over the furniture and had no concept of what fences were for, nor cats or birds. So, just as I did with Thor, I immediately enrolled Gisa in dog obedience and good citizen training, followed by agility training.

And it is Gisa who is now a Canine Pet Therapy dog,



Life as a Therapy Dog



Canine Friends is a national organisation of volunteers who share the company of well-behaved dogs with hospital patients, residents of hospices and resthomes and students in schools. This year we are celebrating our 25th anniversary.

We would like to share the stories of three of our German Shepherds. Chicano was one of the original Canine Friends and belonged to Barbara Lang, who is a long-time Canine Friend member who still visits and is on the committee. Jo and Steve Fox rehomed Niko who is a long-haired German Shepherd Dog through The German Shepherd Rescue Trust when he was 14 months old. He had come from a loving home that made the hard decision to have him rehomed properly due to family illness. Niko came from the South Island and became a North Island dog. Tixi Jipo Mi (Tixi) was bred in the Czech Republic and lived in Singapore with Amanda Richardson before coming to New Zealand in December 2009.

Here are a few of our stories.

NIKO

by Jo and Steve Fox

Niko has been a Canine Friend since he was two years old. Niko's first visit was at Summerset Village, Taradale, Napier, in the hospital care wing. The occupational therapist was a little overwhelmed with his 42 kg size, but soon became confident of Niko's behaviour by the way he was with the residents and how the residents warmed to him, despite his size. During Niko's first visit, he visited a resident who was in bed. Niko was stroked and patted by the resident who was so happy to see him. It was near the end of an hour-long visit and I think he felt a bit tired as he was just about to jump up onto the bed with her when I stopped him. Niko immediately turned round and looked at me as if to say "No! Why not? I want to lay on the bed with her and have cuddles". His look was priceless.

Another of the residents he visited was a bed bound elderly lady. Niko went up to her bed and she held out her hand and patted him. He was very gentle. This resident is unable to talk, but the look on her face and her smile on seeing and touching him was so exciting. This resident has a letter board where she spells out words she wants to say and on this visit she spelt out "ride him"! It was so funny.

On another visit, family were with a resident and they wanted Niko to come in to the room to visit their family member. The family took photos of their family member with Niko, and the photos with Niko makes for some happy memories for them.

Niko is well known by the staff, and when they know he is in the building, they happen to be doing something nearby, just so as to see him and give him hugs. Niko makes visits to Summerset about once every three weeks and loves his job.

Volunteering for this job with Niko is rewarding – seeing the smiles on the residents' faces and hearing the residents make comments about his size, his long coat and his big white teeth.



protection comfort patience happiness

(Tixi) TIXI JIPO-MI

by Amanda Richardson

We were very active members of the German Shepherd Dog Club of Singapore. As the club's Pet Therapy representatives, we visited a centre for the intellectually handicapped on a monthly basis. We would be inside a security area amongst the patients. It was trying for any dog as one never knew what to expect. However, Tixi was a highly trained obedience competition dog confident and calm. She would accept having her tail or ears pulled, being hit and being led around and around or at other times just lying quietly flat out on the floor whilst a patient stroked her as she gave this person comfort.

When we arrived in Queenstown we started off just on our own visiting the hospital and subsequently joined Canine Friends. We were asked to visit patients in the hospital itself. The hospital beds were high but Tixi would on a command stand at the side of the bed near to the patient. Instinctively she would then put her head on the sheet near to the patient's hand, then she would gently lick the patient's hand completely of her own volition. The reward for us, in the case of a patient who could not speak or move, was the flickering of the patient's eyelids.

We now visit a home for the elderly in Queenstown. We have done different exercises with the residents: asking a resident to throw Tixi's dumbbell (which is quite large!) and then Tixi would retrieve it, and return to sit in front of the resident who would then take it. This was both a form of mental stimulation for the patient and exercising the patient's arm muscles. Or Tixi would be sat at some distance from the resident who would then call the dog to him, command the dog to sit and give a reward. This gave the resident a sense of responsibility. With some residents I would ask the person to hold Tixi's leash and 'look after Tixi for me' whilst I went and spoke to someone at the end of the room (always surreptitiously watching them); this again gave a sense of responsibility, of possessing a dog and of receiving love from the dog. Tixi would remain calmly on a 'down' for as long as she was told to.

The German Shepherd Dog's innate instincts to please, to sense frailty in others and hence to protect and comfort make the breed extremely well suited for Pet Therapy.

Amanda Richardson owner and trainer of Tixi Jipo-Mi who is now 12 years old and continues to enjoy bringing some happiness to others.

