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Finally, we strongly recommend that you join the Belgian Shepherd Dog Club of Qld Inc and through the club, make contact with other Belgian Shepherd Dog fanciers and breeders, who will be only too happy to assist and advise.

The club offers its member breeders complimentary membership to each puppy buyer for the remainder of the club's financial year. Ask your breeder to sign you up, consider it a 'try before you buy' promotion, and if you like our goals, newsletters and Fun days, you are welcome to pay the membership fee to become a fully-fledged member with full voting rights.

Forward any inquiries to:
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From then to now

Dogs Queensland Exclusive

Written by Lynda Trotter

The Belgian Shepherd Dog has come a long way as a breed since I obtained my first Groenendael in 1980. Firstly we no longer use the English Standard, as we did then. This standard contained things such as 'wary of strangers' (which people all too often translated as 'timid') as well as not having any methodology for assessing missing teeth. We now have the FCI standard which helps us to maintain breed type in keeping with the country of origin.

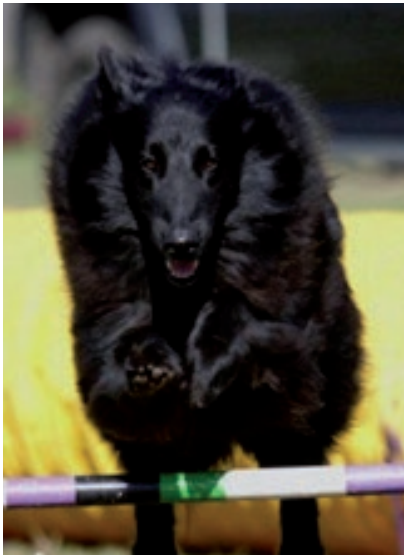
Over the years I have been what could be considered a 'fringe dweller' when it comes to performance activities in BelgiansShepherd Dogs. My main focus is breeding and exhibiting, but I have always had an interest in maintaining the ability of the breed to do what it was originally designed to do, herd and/or guard.

Whether the task was to guard and herd sheep (all varieties) guard the flaxen fields (predominantly the Laekenois) or to a smaller degree as Police Dogs (predominantly the Malinois). I have trained and trailed in both Obedience and basic Herding. I have also trained at BH level for a short time in Schutzhund and imported dogs with IPO titles.

Dogs I have owned have successfully competed at Obedience and Agility, and dogs that I have bred have achieved success in Agility, Obedience, Herding, Tracking, Dances with Dogs, Rally O, Endurance and many other and varied performance sports. I can honestly say that the temperament of the Belgian Shepherd Dog is much better today than it was when I first came into the breed.

That is not to say that there were no sound dogs back then, but there are more breeders now, more Belgian Shepherd Dogs registered and many, many more breeders and owners out there participating in various activities with their dogs. The fact that there are many more examples of the breed involved in performance activities is not only due to the fact that there are more options available to us, but also because the word is getting out about this breed.

No longer is the Belgian Shepherd Dog a 'well-kept secret', known only to a chosen few. More and more people are actively searching for Belgian Shepherd Dog litters with parents that have a proven drive and ability for their next Agility/Obedience/Dances with Dogs/ Tracking/Rally O/Delta Dog/IPO or Endurance dog. They are also highly sought after here and around the world as search and rescue dogs. We have examples as assistance dogs and also success as seeing eye dogs. As breeders, it is our role to maintain all aspects of the standard. The functional ability, temperament and conformity to type.



I am happy to say I am seeing this more and more. While much is said about the disadvantages of the internet and social media today, the most positive aspects of these tools is that we can keep abreast of what is happening overseas, who is winning, what lines are producing consistently both type and temperament and also helping us to find breeders and lines which are in keeping with our own ideology of the breed.

Ideally, breeders should be aiming to breed Belgian Shepherd Dogs that 'can do it all'. This is not beyond the realms of possibility when you look at dogs such as INT CH AUT CH HUN CH SVK Bergerac Faust IPO I AD JD GD (IMP HUN) (Groenendael) owned by Lynda Trotter and Ashley Hoffman, and the amazing Tri Ch (FS) (T) HTM Ch Belgenbeau Be Zed Arinya CD RN ADX JDX JDM GD SP (Malinois) owned by Sarah Trembath in Victoria. In Australia, the range of titles and achievements attained is astounding.

These include but are not limited to:

- Herding
- Schutzhund/IPO
- Obedience
- Agility
- Rally O
- Dancing with Dogs
- Tracking
- Delta Dogs
- Pets for Therapy
- Assistance Dogs
- Seeing Eye Dogs
- Hearing Dogs
- War Dogs
- Police Dogs
- Security Dogs
- Customs Dogs
- Corrective Service K9s

I would like to make particular mention of Mia. Mia's owner suffers from a number of debilitating health issues. As a result of her medication, she has also developed irregular seizures. She bought Mia from me as a puppy, and has personally completed all of the training required to have Mia qualify as an official licenced Assistance Dog.

The relationship between dog and owner has become so close, that Mia is also now alerting her of impending seizures, which gives her owner the ability to ensure she is somewhere safe until the seizure passes.

The future for this breed is exciting! However with popularity also comes the increasing number of dogs our clubs are seeing coming through rescue. This seems to be the case particularly with regard to the working line Malinois who have been 'discovered' in the past 10 years. The number of working line kennels increasing from two or three to fifteen plus. You also have the dogs released to the public by the RAAF. Breeders and buyers alike must put a lot of thought and consideration into whether these dogs are going to the right homes.

Belgian Shepherd Dogs are first and foremost a working dog and there for suit best an active home where the dog is part of the family. Often a Belgian Shepherd Dog that is considered 'over the top' or hyperactive in one home, goes on to become an Obedience star with a calm and biddable character in another. This is because a bored Belgian Shepherd Dog can become a destructive dog. The breed does have a natural affinity with children and will often gravitate towards them.

As a breeder, I love to see the amazing things people have achieved with their Belgian Shepherd Dogs, both in organised activities and at home. I also get immense pleasure when families who got their first dog from me years ago, have now returned for their second, and third Belgian Shepherd Dog family member. This is definitely a breed that once you have lived with one, all other breeds pale in comparison.