

## How did we get to this point?

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### A trip down Memory Lane!

How many of our members remember **the "good old days"** of pre 1976? What is the significance of Dec. 24 1976 to us "oldies"??

**For us, it was not D Day, but GSD DAY!** What a wonderful Christmas present, to have the Government ban on the importation of entire German Shepherd Dogs lifted! We were finally able to own, train, show and breed the dog of our dreams, the German Shepherd Dog!

Yes, dear new member, you guessed it: Prior to that date, there was a **complete ban on unsterilized German Shepherds** in this State!

Let's delve a little into our History of the GSDA of WA (Inc)

The first imports into Australia were recorded between 1923 and 1929. No records are available to substantiate stories that before this time a couple of these so called Alsatian Wolf Hounds had entered Western Australia.

At the 40th Convention of the Graziers' Federal Council of Australia, held in Adelaide on the 20th - 22nd of June 1927, it was passed unanimously that:  
The Commonwealth Authorities be requested to **prohibit the importation or breeding of Alsatian Dogs.**

This quickly became Commonwealth law, but searching through dusty records of old newspaper clippings, one last mention of our beloved breed before in State after State the GSD came under the knife, with breeding permitted in some areas, a total ban in others.

An excerpt from THE FANCIER: Kennel Club's Annual Show:  
The fourteenth Annual Show of the W.A. Kennel Club was held in Goldsworthy's Hall, Catherine St. Subiaco, yesterday. (1927, the exact date was not mentioned)

The Secretary, Mr.J.Williams, said: **"The display of various breeds was excellent"**, and that the quality of animals entered for the show was far superior to that of previous years. Entries were exceptionally large in the Fox Terrier, Alsatian, Airedale, Collie, Bulldog, Cocker Spaniel, Pomeranian and Pekinese section.

**The Alsatian was well represented in W.A.** as the controversy raged on.

**From THE WEST AUSTRALIAN 5/6/1928:**

"Country people may well live in dread of these wolfish animals ever taking to the bush like the Dingo"

Or in another letter: "It has also been said that the Alsatian has been known to worry human beings. What breed of dogs has not worried human beings?"

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**In 1929, the Federal Government imposed the infamous BAN.**

**In some areas the GSD was totally prohibited.** In others they had to be desexed and muzzled. Harsh draconian laws swept the land for the GSD. In some states, breeding and exhibiting still flourished. Luckily there were enough German Shepherd Dogs in Australia for the dedicated breeders in the Eastern States to keep the breed growing strong. There were problems, of course, as without any new blood, we ended up with a strongly inbred strain. The dark years of the ban shroud the breed in mystery, records lost, and early dogs simply forgotten.

**In W.A., the new "Alsatian Dog Act" came into force in 1962**

All GSDs had to be desexed, but at least we were permitted to import from the Eastern States, and own them, registered with the Agricultural Protection Board!

**Our Club records take us back into the early sixties.**

Initially, the G.S.D.A. of W.A. imported sterilized German Shepherd Puppies and club officials checked that the property of the prospective new owner was adequately fenced. It is a little known fact that in those early years, GSD pedigree papers were transferred into the name of the German Shepherd Dog Association. The owners of the pups could then apply to have the pup transferred into their name. The GSDA of WA could approve or disapprove applications to purchase a GSD!

**The GSDA of WA sent letters to owners of dogs who had been found out in the street unaccompanied!**

We take up the tale again when **Roy Davis**, yes, we know him well, **was elected President in 1969**. In the records, it is found, that at the 1969 meeting, the Canine Association Secretary, Mr. Cobb, was in attendance as a guest to discuss GSDA and Canine Association matters. Shortly after that, the CAWA granted permission for the GSDA of WA to conduct Obedience Trials for all A & B Class Registered Dogs. (B class was for de-sexed and non-pedigreed dogs) **Peter Newell's dog Kyser was the first GSD in W.A. to gain his CD title!** Peter was our Head Trainer.

In the year 1970, we had a membership of 388, and the GSDA of WA raised funds and **donated \$1,200.00 to the Guide Dog Association!**

Fred Haymes, GSDA of WA Importation Officer, was awarded Life Membership, which he was to lose many years later when he lost his Canine Membership for making disparaging comments at a dog show!

**The Agricultural Protection Board, APB, sent an officer out to meet every plane** that brought in either birds or GSDs! Some years before THE BAN was lifted, a certain Rick Richardson was employed by the APB as the expert on Exotic Birds and German Shepherd Dogs.

He was on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, to check birds and German Shepherds - eventually that's how he met me - some exotic bird I turned out to be!

**1971 enter Barry and Carol O'Rourke**, who with SIMBA, joined the Demonstration Team. Colin Vagg's Sheena was one of the great stars of that era. Colin is our Club Historian and holds the records.

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Barry became a licensed importer of German Shepherd Dogs.  
Mid '71, yours truly joined the club.

One of the highlights of that year was the Inter Club Competition where the GSDA was represented by the following:

**Utility:** Roy Davis and DUKE CDX  
**Open:** Hans Frankenstein & SHEBA CDX  
Lyall Fairley & TROY CDX  
**Novice:** Dot Parry & Karl  
Carol O'Rourke & Simba

At a GSDA of WA Graduation that year, 17 out of 54 dogs failed the Stand For Examination! We had temperament problems in those days with all those years of inbreeding, no new blood, no imports.

We had one training ground, Joel Terrace, and an average of around 70 dogs in training every Sunday.  
The Club conducted 3 Obedience Trials per year,

**In 1971, 8 GSDs gained their C.D. title.**

### **Parading Around The Ring!**

**Around 1972** we were hopeful of the CAWA granting permission for **the GSDs to be exhibited**, although sterilized, at sanctioned shows, thanks to Barry O'Rourke's tireless efforts and negotiations with the Canine Association and the RAS. Breed Affairs Committee nominations showed that Peter Newell moved that Barry O'Rourke be elected onto the Committee to hold the position of show - coordinator. Some years later, his wife, **Carol, was to become the West Coast Challenge Show co-ordinator**, a position she still holds today with only a small break while Carol was studying to become a Conformation Judge!

**Carol and Simba gained their CDX, Barry and Kaiser Boom Boom Boom their CD.** (Boom, boom, boom??? Barry reckoned Obedience Training was easy and he was going to get his title in three trials, boom, boom, boom, and guess what? THEY DID IT!)

**1972 saw the first GSD Parade** with Mrs. Mel French adjudicating and Paul Wilkes, now an All Breeds Judge of many years' standing, was one of the Stewards!  
Best Exhibit: Barry O'Rourke's Kaiser, Best Opposite: H.Eisbjerg's Sheba  
There is a faded photo floating around somewhere of my boy as Best Veteran: Honey Gross' Rex of Selby. The Dobermann Club's Ann Beck won a prize with her imported Jugoland bitch!

**On the National Scene, the GSDA sent congratulations to Bratar Kennels** for L.C.Donald's success with **Aust.CH. Horand Prince Huzzar** on winning the Royal Sydney, Adelaide, Melbourne and Brisbane as well as **winning the first GSDCA NATIONAL SHOW!**

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**My 9 year old Rex gained his CD** - we had quite a few challenges to meet on the way. **Bred by me in Victoria**, loved and **trained in Germany**, **brought home to Australia**, his natural sweet disposition suffered greatly when he had to live ON LEAD whenever off the property and was constantly harassed by little darlings jumping fences to snap at his heels or go for his throat!

While we were in Germany, my grandfather and aunt couldn't understand why I would not protection train him like any other GSD. **Schutzhund training for my Rex?** Not likely, we wanted to come HOME to Australia, and here, Schutzhund training is not sanctioned. Worse, the **GSD had to live muzzled** when walked in many towns, **even STERILIZED** in some, **and shot on sight** in others! If a GSD ever nipped anyone, then any whisper of Schutzhund, and it would be his death warrant. No thank you.

I went to watch, we did obedience, I assisted my grandfather in his training, but my Rex? Only Obedience and Tracking. My ego was pretty big, I loved the sport, but the laws of my land, **Australia, did not recognize Schutzhund** work and I would not jeopardize my dog's future in his homeland.

The GSDA of WA initially had Fred Haymes and Jack Conrick, both to become Life Members later on, as importers. Next came Barry O'Rourke, and the three of them made many a trip to the airport and to the Agricultural Department to have their puppies tattooed by non-other than our Rick, today still tattooing! There was only one importer outside the GSDA and most of "his puppies" also came to **training at the club. Schutzhund training was only occasionally mentioned**, and I always persuaded the interested parties that this type of work is definitely NOT in the best interest of the breed in Australia at present.

**We wanted THE BAN lifted**, softly does it! The Federal Ban went '73

**1974 saw O'Rourke's and Dot Parry's Eng. Ch Kingsmans Witchcraft win the National**, and a few years down the track, Barry and Carol purchased another English import that was to become a pillar of the breed, and today still found in many pedigrees all over this beautiful country of ours, **CH. Volscain Jester**. It is his daughter, the **lovely CH. Duval Royal Velvet** who "made" Landrina and Tashrodan kennels, and we all applauded the success of Victorian Judge and Breed Surveyor,

**Mrs. Anita Pettenhofer whose Hagenstolz kennel still produces "the goods"**, with stock carrying **the National and Main Breed Show winning W.A. bred bitch, Ch. Landrina Majic Melody B.S.CI.IA Ex Sel.**

Scratch an Iccara dog and you will most likely find Duval Royal Velvet or at least her sire, Jester, in their blood! Zollern, Scardeburgh, Ameliaberg, Lashadas, Tobareny, to name but a few, breed with lines that still carry that dash of "English glamour" as we called it before we went to the source - Germany - for type, temperament and enhanced trainability.

**On the obedience side**, we saw another inter club competition with Novice class being won by a Mrs.Hovey's Poodle,  
2nd: D.Martin, GSD,  
3rd R.Earnshaw GSD

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Open: 1st Fred Cottier & his GSD Honey CD

2nd: Honey Gross & my Rex of Selby CD,

3rd: D.Levitzke's Silky Terrier X cross! What a Victory when that tiny one got its CDX thanks to Rick taking the time to teach the Broad Jump using a bit of psychology instead of brute force on a Silky Terrier!

Rex never did join the "200 Club", but he came pretty close one day with a score of 199 from a Judge who later told me he didn't think any dog could possible score 200. He couldn't remember where my dog lost his one point. I didn't argue as I was far too polite, besides, it would have been pointless! (sic)

**1974 also saw an Obedience Judges' course** with 20 applicants 5 of which qualified: Mrs.Honey Gross, Mr. Fred Cottier, Mrs E and Mr. A. Robshaw, Poodle owners and Instructors with Perth Training, and Martin Pitt who worked a Great Dane, also an Instructor with the Perth Training and Obedience Dog Club.

**Mr. Syd Beeton of the GSDCA visited Perth**, animated discussions were held with Syd, the Breed Affairs and Executive Committee.

Guess what? Barry O'Rourke, member of the Social Committee and of course, the Breed Affairs Committee, was listed as a Trainer that year!

Having worked on the trials committee for some time, **I now took charge of trials**. My globetrotting Rex had to be put down, and I continued my work in the **Demonstration Team** with Tobarro Dingalara, who not only worked in the Demo Team for 6 years, but also made GSDA history by becoming **the first Australian Obedience Champion of our breed in Western Australia**. 18 years before him, one other dog had attained that title. Link Sullivan's Labrador Retriever.

**With König, the drought had broken**, and we took with us a string of other GSDs who over the years, attained this illustrious title.

Eventually a Dobermann, a Border Collie, and two Kelpie crosses also qualified, but were called **WOCA, Westralian Obedience Champion Associate!** What's in a name??

Somehow we never got round to presenting König's photo for the Hall of Fame. He won many trials, worked very methodical perhaps living up to his Aboriginal name, Dingalara, which we were told means - tortoise, slow and steady! He always worked with great precision, but loved to ham it up for the crowds on occasion! He gained many scores **that today would have received the "Excellent" medallion and is immortalized in David O'Reilly's book "Savage Shadow"** where a chapter features him on **the Cordering Cougar case**.

**At the 1975 National Show and Trial in Nuriootpa**, S.A. the W.A. dogs fared extremely well. Novice Bitch was judged by Mr.Riley Wing, (N.T.)

Jan Stewart & Witherstein Vivonne in 3rd place. 172

5th with a NQ score, was John Knowler with Jaguar Maxiene, 163

Open B Dogs: judged by Mr.Garry Dillan (Vic)

1st: Bill Mclsaac & Jaguar Condor CD 192

5th: Peter Harris & Triola Prince CD 170

Open B Bitches: 4th: Bill Mclsaac & Jaguar Jedda CD and in 6th place was Pat Ottobrino & Sheba Marbrae, both NQ.

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### **In the team's event, WA ran a proud 3rd.**

We had already started a Training Ground in Port Hedland and now Roy Davis went up to Tom Price to start another. In Perth, we held Graduations alternatively for Pexton and Joel Terrace.

1976, the number of GSD importers in W.A. swelled from 4, (With 3 in the Association, one outsider) to 7. Honey Gross-Richardson, Robert Franzen and David Jones became A.P.B. Licensed importers.

**Victoria had commenced their Breed Survey Scheme**, N.S.W. and S.A. had adopted it in principle, W.A. was very much in favour - we were looking forward to the **lifting of THE BAN!**

**The foundation bitch of Parourke Kennels**, Parry and O'Rourke's Eng & Aust. Ch.Kingsmens Witchcraft, imported in whelp to Supreme Champion Ramacon Swashbuckler, (UK) living in the East of course, had already produced the vivacious and very glamorous little bitch Parourke Mystical. We could just see her parading with the Demo Team!

In anticipation of the **lifting of THE BAN, in W.A.**, we had lobbied our favourite politicians, were supported strongly by the Club Patrons **the Hon. Mr. Jim Clarko and Vice Patron, the Mayor of Gosnells Mr. A.A. Mills**, and there was hope on the horizon. Thousands of petitions had been signed, all lived in hope. The GSDA of WA had worked out a list of Recommended Breeding Practices, a Code of Ethics.

**We looked at our training**, knowing that soon, a more dominant dog would strut his stuff at Joel Terrace and all over W.A., **a dog with hormones and attitude!**

**Our Obedience results: 44 CD titles, 12 CDX, 2 UD and 5 ET!!!**  
**YES!! The Endurance Test had arrived.**

The inaugural qualifiers: John Fenner's Viscount Rebel UD  
Honey Gross' Tobarro Dingalara UD,  
Rick Richardson's Stronway Galant CD,  
John Knowler's Jaguar Maxine CD and  
Jan Steward's Witherstein Vivonne CD

**Obedience was great. There were also 10 Parades for GSDs**, 1976 was a busy year! Slowly more and more rumours spread about an unsterilized bitch here, an entire dog there. The law required these animals to be either put down or else immediately sent out of the State.

For years, Rick had found the odd dog or bitch, entire and totally against Government Law, in the suburbs. Some people had come across with their pets by car and had not been picked up at the Nullabor, Norseman or Northam Check Points. Occasionally a Vet would ring Rick to report that an entire GSD had been brought in for vaccinations or sterilization.

It was **AGAINST THE LAW to sterilize a GSD in Western Australia**. The poor dog had to be destroyed, or shipped out in order to be desexed!

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Rick would see the Veterinarians. Sometimes, a bitch had to be opened up in order to see whether or not she was desexed according to regulations.

If she wasn't??? **The "Green Dream" or deportation loomed.** There were cases, where, as Rick watched the surgical procedure, the knife must have slipped. The bitch was now desexed, all's OK, stitch up again and live happily ever after! God bless these understanding gentlemen who now signed the certificate that enabled the GSD to remain in W.A.!!! So it went over the years.

Does anyone remember the late Mr. Max Patullo? Dear Max came over with his van full of German Shepherds, among them his little Gwamp Felicity, who later, much later, gained her UD and ah yes, **Aust. Ch. Vindobonas Heiko, imp. NZ** also ended up with Max, but this was still to come. **Max would park his van where ever he felt safe for the night.** Safe with his "kennel" of German Shepherd Dogs and bitches, waiting for the BAN to be lifted! Rick would keep a benevolent eye on the proceedings - "blast that elusive Max " he would grumble at the APB officers, and tell me also, when he got home after inspecting a few GSDs or a shipment of exotic birds, it seems that " he disappeared again!"

I remember how upset Rick was one day, when he came home from an afternoon at a vet's hoping that a reported entire bitch had been sterilized after all. There she was, open for inspection and when Rick asked whether he could prepare documentation to say that the Vet had found the little thing desexed after all, the vet rose to his full imposing height of 5 foot 6 inches and asked icily:

" Misterr Rrrichardson, arrre ye arskin me to be disssshonest?"

No, said Rick, just human!

**The bitch was stitched up, sent home with a deportation permit to S.A.** where Rick had a vet lined up to sterilize her and send her back to WA to her anxious owners who, until they had been reported by a friendly neighbour, had no idea they were breaking the law when they had brought their pet over from over East a couple of years earlier. **You win some, you lose some!**

A few years earlier on, Rick was not given permission, by the APB, to join the GSDA of WA, but later, he trained his first wife's bitch Sheena at Joel Terrace. I remember Rick and Sheena training in Class One. "Leave your dogs" I instructed the class. All except one went to the end of their leads. Rick strode away and stood facing Sheena from 10m away. **"Very clever, Mr. Richardson"** I was supposed to have said **"but we don't do it that way!"** Poor Rick. Spent his life in the Army, enjoyed life as a professional sports man, trained dogs to the nth degree and was now told, by me, to keep his dog on lead?

Rick worked with the system! Like many of us, he felt the restrictions placed upon dog owners hurting his ego, however, the law was the law! Off lead comes later in GSDA training. **Protection work was OUT in W.A.,** German Shepherds were kept as family pets.

When a team of GSDA of WA members was engaged by the R.A.S. to patrol the Show Grounds at Royal Show Time, **the dogs had to be muzzled** so that the public would not be afraid of these security dogs! Muzzled!!

Our well behaved, beautifully trained, much loved family pets!

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### **Finally it was GSD DAY! The 24th of November 1976!**

We were able to bring our dogs across the border unsterilized!

**Kingsmans' Witchcraft came home, Mystical came in officially** too. Some were so determined to throw off the yoke of suppression that even tattooing was no longer "in." It was another 5 years before the GSDA of WA started tattooing the puppies under the GSDCA Scheme.

With the BAN lifted, **the number of GSDs increased dramatically**. Another two German breeds became VERY popular, the **Dobermann and the Rottweiler**. With these three powerful breeds and their following of work oriented enthusiastic owners, came the **serious upsurge of Schutzhund training in W.A.**

Suddenly obedience was no longer good enough. The German imports all had their training titles of course, and in the Eastern States, we had several Schutzhund Clubs before the two in W.A. started up.

**We had worked very hard to promote obedience**. We worked extremely hard to promote our beautiful breed, the German Shepherd Dog. **We had demos, hospital visits, Nursery and Kindergarten days** where our dogs proved that this breed is gentle and trustworthy, that their teeth were merely for catching balls and sticks and delicately nibbling fleas - bite?? Not our GSDs. We were successful in promoting the peaceful image and tractable disposition of the easily trained German Shepherd Dog.

The ban was lifted. Our dogs no longer had to be desexed. They no longer HAD to be on lead at all times. The threat of muzzling laws was ever upon us, but on the whole we were happy in being **able to own, breed, train and show our wonderful German Shepherd Dogs**.

Now we were actually told by newcomers, **men and women who had not had to fight our battles and who had not lived through the frustration of having their SHOW DOGS DESEXED when they came to W.A.**, that "**Canine Obedience kills the dog's sparkle!**" These folks were "newbies" who with perhaps 2 or 3 years of dog ownership behind them, had enjoyed a couple of American books on Schutzhund training and fallen in love with the sport. Who wouldn't? It's a great sport! However, at a time when we had only just been permitted to import and breed the G.S.D. our aim was "**Breed Improvement**", we dreamed of **X Ray Schemes to combat HD, of Breed Surveying to help us attain the desired type and temperament**. Now we were told by new dog owners who did not have years of successful obedience training under their belts, that a real dog MUST have Schutzhund training. That Obedience ruins the dogs, any dog can track, protection work is REAL training." **Give me strength!**

We have seen some of these enthusiastic Schutzhundlers' dogs in action. At the ET, in those early years, I saw some fail because the "Obedience work kills them" YES!! Go for the arm they can, but heel?? Too boring! It was the owners' methods that killed the sparkle, poor dogs!



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Here I must confess that I never did take these experts seriously.

**They enjoyed the adrenalin rush of protection work.** So did their dogs. They lacked the skill to enhance their dogs' natural obedience. They dampened their dogs' enthusiasm for obedience work because they lacked the handling skills to make obedience work enjoyable for their dogs.

There are thousands of men and women taking part in Obedience, Agility and tracking with their dogs. There is a handful who is actively engaged in man work. They do not want to give up their adrenalin rush. **They want their thrills.** If only they knew that working their dog in the obedience ring, in Agility or Tracking can make you go weak at the knees, make the blood roar in your ears and be as scary as bungee jumping!

Now if you're "into" Schutzhund, consider REAL competitive obedience, it's GREAT! There are many dedicated German Shepherd Dog owners in our midst who used to train their dogs for protection.

There are some, who are involved in Security Work.

They need to have their dogs protection trained. Out of respect for the GSDA of WA and the many members who fought for the lifting of the ban, they refrain from Schutzhund training as a sport.

For them, it is enough to know that the dogs are operational, and we thank them. For competition purposes, and if you have a good dog, you LOVE to compete, these guys show off their dogs in - - - have you guessed it? Obedience, Agility, Tracking!!!

**These dedicated members, respecting the views of their Government** which is still not pro-dog, their Kennel Control, which does not support Schutzhund, and their Clubs, which through necessity have **to abstain from any participation in Schutzhund training**, these skilled dog handlers and lovers of the breed, make the sacrifice of not indulging their passion for protection work. - - -

**All over Australia**, the German Shepherd Dog owners, trainers, breeders, work on breed improvement. We submit our dogs to stringent tests, we are willing to make many sacrifices for the good of the breed.

We are the guardians of the breed.

We cannot participate in a sport that **would give the anti-dog brigade the ammunition** to bring back draconian laws of muzzling, permanent leash control and heaven forbid sterilisation.

**For years, we have requested that our members do not participate in Schutzhund work.** We even have the Presidents of W.As two Schutzhund Clubs, one with just over ten and one with just under twenty members, very, very keen dog lovers who ARE skilled in training and experienced in working with **German Shepherds, Dobermanns and Rottweilers**, as members of our Association.

We have had training demonstrations of protection work, obedience and tracking by these valued members and keen Schutzhund exponents on our very own Club grounds, and liked what we saw.

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**WE do not need to be converted.** We would also love to become involved in this great sport, but as it would be politically very, very unwise, we cannot and we will not. Therefore I have asked these gentlemen when they joined us, to please remember that we do not embrace Schutzhund training, **and they have assured me that they will not indulge in this sport while with the GSDA of WA.** This they promised to honour.

Did you know that in Victoria, laws are being formulated which make the owning of imported dogs rather difficult if they have a Schutzhund title?

**THEY MAY BE DECLARED DANGEROUS DOGS!** This means they must live in an escape proof kennel (Cage). They must be muzzled when off their property. They must always be on lead.

Did you know that a **declared Dangerous Dog** cannot be kept in the house, as a family pet??

Sitting in a car, a **Dangerous Dog should be muzzled as cars can be opened by strangers.**

In N.S.W. the **Dangerous Dogs have to wear a RED COLLAR** and lead to show that they are dangerous.

Our well trained **Schutzhund dogs are dangerous dogs???? NO WAY!!** However, in order to protect our breed, we must be circumspect.

**Egos and Ethics affect our training, PLEASE WORK WITH US!!**

The adrenalin rush is very addictive, and it's harder to give up than smoking or a cold beer, but please do not destroy what the GSDCA and its Member Clubs have built up over the years" just for a change", a SchH thrill!

Please bear in mind that **every GSD owner has the responsibility of caring for the breed.**

Be ethical. Please don't play around with training that is not meant for us at this point in time.

In the GSDA of WA, you find our **custodians of the breed.** We are actively involved now as then, **in training, in showing and breeding,** in helping ordinary pet owners to learn how to enjoy their lovely dogs to the utmost with Happy Training!

Come and join us, bring your wonderful German Shepherd Dog for training classes in Obedience, for Agility, for Tracking or for the exciting Conformation Shows!

There are enjoyable sessions ahead of you, there are tremendous competitions and as for the thrill of winning - well, **you've "gotta be in it to win it!"**

**Happy Training.**

Honey Gross-Richardson