



North Wales kelpie Gogledd Cymru



Elidyr Snip (Jacko)

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Avenpart Hilton

Chairman's corner

Welcome to the first newsletter of the North Wales Kelpie club which was launched at the NSA at Pentrefoelas. We had a very busy day with lots of interest. In June we had a visit from Ken and Mary Mc Crab of Avenpart Stud , Australia , we had a small meeting at Eagles hotel , Llanuwchllyn, in which I was nominated to represent All of Wales on the Workng Kelpie.Club,Australia which I am very honored to accept.. We had a few young dog clinics in the Autumn and will be having more in the spring/ summer. The season finished with a Kelpie dinner at the Farmers Arms , St Asaph with a good crowd.

Emrys.

Ozzy

I wanted to try a different type of sheep dog and fancied giving the Australian kelpie a try. So I went out and bought one off Emyr Winllan, Groes.

Ozzy was introduced to lambs at 12 weeks old with a working Border collie sheep dog. He was instantly exited and enjoyed running around gathering the lambs together showing style and power. At 16 weeks old I put a video on [www,youtube.co.uk](http://www.youtube.co.uk) to show a friend how things where going. '[Kelpie working for the first time](#)'

After the fun part I started giving commands as he was running around the sheep, he picked things up fast and improved every time we went to the field. By the time he was 5 months old he knew his 'come by' and 'away', some mistakes were made but that's all part of the fun. At 6 months old Ozzy started getting bored of gathering and driving 10 lambs so I introduced him to 40 lambs to test him It was a bit of a shock for him at first to see so many lambs but he worked out what to do and took it in his stride learning every time how to work a larger gang, carefully without working too hard, and keeping his distance when flanking.

He is now seven months old and things are going well, the future looks promising and I'm thoroughly enjoying the challenges of teaching a young dog.

Clinics

Anyone who is interested in coming along for a helping hand and advice about training a young dog or some guidance and training of an older. Come along to our clinics in late spring / early summer.

Information about date and venue, will be on our website : www.northwaleskelpie.co.uk

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Characteristics of kelpies

- Versatile
- Stamina
- Power
- Loyal friend

Become a member of your local Kelpie group -

North Wales Kelpie Gogledd Cymru.

Annual membership £10.

For further details contact

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John Dyke

People often stop and stare at the back of my farm truck, it's always the occupants in the rear that draw the attention, occasionally someone will pluck up the courage to and ask. 'So what breed of dogs are they and they are told, 'they're Kelpies' what's a Kelpie, is it like a miniature Doberman? Then I give them its full title. They're Australian working Kelpies. So what do you do with them? I explain I'm a shepherd and these are my working dogs, and occasionally I get the reply, 'no that can't be right proper shepherds use a black and white border collie'.

So what made me go for a sheep herding dog that hailed from half way around the world? A friend had a unregistered kelpie bitch, she was the first one I had seen? She was black and tan with a short coat. She had a lovely temperament ever so friendly. It was her working ability that really fascinated me; she had so much common sense? She didn't need to be commanded constantly, the way she worked was more like having another man on the job, she just knew what to do. Anyway she had a litter of kelpie X collie pups and my friend was kind enough to give me one. That was Meg and she is everything I hoped she would be, just like her mother.

So now the search was on for a registered Australian working kelpie, but how to find out more about them and where to find one that I liked. I knew the type of dog I wanted. Basically it had to be as stylish as a border collie and do everything a collie could do. I needed a dog that had bags of power and stamina, and if it looked good as well so much the better.

I quickly learned there were only a small number of registered kelpies over here (u.k) four years ago around 400 and lot of them had similar blood lines.

I needed to do some research and what better tool for this than the world wide web. The internet is a great leveller and information, on whatever subject is there for everyone. I found details about Australian studs old and new, some sadly no longer in existence, but there bloodlines still going on in the present generations. There were basically two types of working kelpie. 'the yard kelpie', a harder dog with bark and force that would jump up and run along the sheep backs, ideal for shifting big numbers of sheep through the yard and races. Then there was the paddock type dogs that were capable of outrunning for great distance, finding there sheep and herding them back to the boss. Due to the sheep being wild and flighty the dogs needed to be wide casting have style and eye and balance much like our border collie over here and still have power to move up onto there sheep to drive them forward. The second type, the paddock dog was what I wanted. I've always been a sucker for a stylish dog.

From my research I needed to find dogs with lines such as Schorochre, Scanlon, or best of all Rockybar now unfortunately no more. My search brought me to Robert and Margret Davies and the Elydir kelpie stud. They had a very good dog; Shep who was by Scoriochre Cracker



(brilliant). They also had a bitch Letnetti Baghire and she had Pomanda lines, and guess what? 'Rockybar'. Her grandsire was Rockybar Murray 2, and went back to Rockybar Cherry Cheere a famous breeding female.

I had their number so I gave them a ring. To cut a long story short I bought a bitch pup from a different breeding not the Baghira bitch. But I also bought a 7 month dog out of Baghira as soon as I got him home I let him see sheep and I knew from that moment that he was everything that I had hoped for and was the dog for me.

Training Jack began in earnest and one thing I will say it wasn't easy. Jack is now 4 and it is fair to say it took 4 hard years to train him to where he is at the moment. On the positive side. I have learned more from training Jack than I could have training any other dog. There were never quick results. The only way forward was to work with him. The problem with him was you were always working with a dog who thought he was always right. (And if you took time and looked carefully at the situation, he generally was)

My problem was I was dealing with what the group of sheep were doing now, but Jack has the ability to read sheep, and always knew what there next move was before I did and consequently was always one step ahead of me. Once I got my head round this, I adapted my tactics and we progressed with more speed.

Daily, he never fails to impress me with his intelligence and determination. He is not and never will be a easy dog to work, and we've had a few words over the years but one thing we both know, we are still the best of friends.

Elidyr Snip (Jacko)

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I bought my first Kelpie from Gloucestershire. She was a four month old red and tan bitch out of a dog called Elidyr Chip, son of Lyndhurst Shep and a bitch called Jill Roberts. Her mother was called Pullins Zip out of Elidyr Bonzo and Iwrch Myfanwy.

The bitch which I called Nanw settled in very quickly and started trying to work more or less from day one. By the time she was nine months old she was starting to turn into a useful bitch and also a real character

It was about this time that I was offered a litter sister of hers. I had seen her when I bought Nanw and was torn between the two, nearly coming home with the two of them. Anyway I ended up buying Bela aged nine months, she hadn't had any training, was mad keen for sheep and totally uncontrollable. She did eventually calm down after an awful lot of running around some very quiet sheep. Now that I had two of them the training had to step up a gear.

Although I only keep just over a hundred breeding ewes myself, I do a lot of shepherding, gathering open hills and general sheep work on several

farms in my area. This is work that takes me to some of the roughest and highest terrain in Snowdonia, including parts of Snowdon itself. I feel that the Kelpie is ideal for this type of work, being agile enough to get about amongst the rocks and ledges and with enough stamina to run in tall heather for hours at a time and often finishing off the day by working in the pens.

I won't pretend that it's been easy to get to where I am with them today and they are by no means perfect. They are now three years old and I feel that have settled into their work quite well and have become useful members of my gathering gang.

The training has not been easy. I've trained a number of collies with a degree of success, producing general farm dogs and a few good mountain dogs (I'll leave the trialling to those better qualified).

When it came to training the Kelpie sisters I realised that I had a lot to learn and I found that it did need a different approach. The more frustrated and wound up I became the worse they behaved. I lost count of the times I came stomping back to the house after a training session muttering "That's it, they're bloody going".

Gradually we started to un-

derstand each other and I learnt a lot. One thing I learnt was not to bother even trying to kerb their over enthusiasm, just try to channel it into something constructive. One thing I would do differently next time is not to get two of the same age – there's a lot of competition between two sisters and they were constantly trying to outdo each other, often resulting in them cutting corners (literally) just to be the first to get around to the back of a gang of sheep.

They have now reached a stage where I can do all of the type of work I want to do with them and its only now that they are starting to mature. It's definitely been a learning curve and I'm not



Andrew with Nanw, Bela and Hari

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Re print — PROPORTIONS OF THE KELPIE, written in 1966 by J. Bradley , B.Sc and B.M Cooper.

Originally ‘ the official standard describes the general appearance of the kelpie as being ‘That of a lithe, active, alert dog capable of untiring work, showing great suppleness of limb, neither massive nor heavy , free from cloddiness and coarseness , showing great quality , and at the same time free from any suggestion of weediness. It must not approach the greyhound type.



For many generations the kelpie has been bred selectively for the use in the outback regions, where his services are indispensable. The kelpie must be lithe , active and alert. He is, or can be required to cover huge distances in a day at a smart pace and he has to be able to do this for many days in succession. To move a mob of sheep he has to run back and forth , back and forth , from side to side. He has to turn smoothly at the sides, as any awkward movement at this point tends to turn the flank of directions of his master, but also to the first sign of any sheep’s intension to break away. Whilst a good sheepdog often anticipates and prevents trouble, he is, nevertheless, often required to use great burst of speed to overtake and turn back (head) a breaking sheep. To do this he must be lithe and supple enough to be able to turn at speed, active enough to cover the ground however rough it may be, and alert to be quick off the mark.

The picture conveyed by ‘ neither massive nor heavy, free from ‘cloddiness and coarseness’ can best be seen if we compare the draught or cart horse with the good stock or camp draft horse. The draught horse is massive and heavy. His muscles bulge and he is capable of slow, sustained work, pulling a vehicle or implement. He is not expected to put on burst of speed or to turn quickly. On the other hand, the horse must have the speed to head a beast, and is required to turn and change direction quickly effortlessly.

‘Showing great quality’ is very hard to define, but it implies a certain refinement of appearance and bearing. ‘weediness’ implies weak-framed, poorly muscled, small and frail. The kelpie, whilst he must be fairly light boned, must still be strongly put together. ’ It must not approach the greyhound type’ The greyhound has been developed for high speed pursuit of game over open ground, and can be compared to the thoroughbred racehorse. The kelpie should look no more at home coming out of a box at Harold Park (greyhound box) than he should

Between the shafts of a Belgian milk cart. He is a dog designed to work stock , and his official standard continually emphasizes conformation suited to his work. In conclusion it should be emphasized that the

Selecting a Pup to Suit your Conditions

All breeders naturally select brood stock to suit their own particular needs. The majority of dogs in any Stud are naturally used for duties on their owner's property. Conditions vary greatly from one district to another, the dogs being selected for use on plain, undulating, or hilly country, etc. where owners run different breeds and types of sheep. For this reason it is suggested that you contact Breeders who are situated in districts similar to your own, and when doing so you should describe your conditions as fully as possible. This assists the Breeder to offer and select a pup most likely to suit your requirements. You should also enquire whether the Breeder guarantees his dogs and if so under what terms.