

HISTORY OF THE CAPITAL KEESHOND CLUB

by Jane West, founding member



Capital Keeshond Club was organized in Oct. 1957 with a membership of 13 seniors and 3 juniors. James and Mary MacMartin, Lois and Bill McNamara and Ronald and Jane West were instrumental in forming the club. We met at the MacMartins residence in Potomac, MD and selected the officers which were James MacMartin President, Jane West Vice President. Lois McNamara, Secretary and Treasurer, David Carey, Mary MacMartin and Ronald West board members.

The big problem arose when we chose to name the club Capital Keeshond Club, how do we spell Capital with an a or o, after a call to a grammar teacher and a lawyer friend we decided with an a. People still asks us why the spelling, this explains it. Mrs. John Anderson, President of National Capital all breed show, gave us a helping hand. She asked us to help with a Sanction Match they were having, we jumped at the idea., gave us some knowledge how to get started.

Mrs. Whitney Peterson also came to our rescue helping us with our Constitution and By-Laws which helped us with AKC. It wasn't too long after that we held our first Sanction Match. Our membership had grown to 23 members. We elected to get a News Letter out and get a bit of publicity so Yours Truly, Jane West was asked to be the editor. I believe it was only the second News Letter of any Kees Club ever sent out to all the clubs. Our first letter made quite a hit, we received letters, telegrams and phone calls from many of the clubs of congratulations. We were on the map!

We supported the Keeshond entry at National Capital early in 1960. We had the largest Kees entry of any club, 58, and what a sight. We benched all the Kees together (this was a benched show) with blue and silver bunting, our colors, as a back drop on the benches. Needless to say, the Washington Post gave us plenty of publicity the next day in the paper. Mr. Foley, the clubs Supt, even came over and congratulated our club for making a big splash.

Our next big paper making news was our Specialty when Mrs. Alfred McCormack gave us a cocktail party the night before for all Kees exhibitors in honor of her Ch. Keeshaven Clown Dog and her friend The Honorable Chief Douglas of the Supreme Court. Justice Douglas and Clown Dog greeted us as we entered the room at the Sheraton Park Hotel with a hand and paw shake. What a sight and such fun. When you see Roy Holloway judging at one of our shows today ask him about this as he was a handler at that time for the Clown Dog and I believe he won BOB with him the next day. Again we made the news.

Another great moment for our club. Lois McNamara and Mrs. Carl Gettig were showing at the Maryland Kennel Club Show in Baltimore, MD and met Mr. Carl Hinderer who brought the first Keeshond to this country. Mr. Hinderer emigrated to Baltimore and imported his 4 pedigreed Wolfsspitz from Stutigart, Germany when he learned the breed was not recognized by AKC. Mr. Hinderer had correspondence and many trips to AKC which took him 4 years to acquire the name Keeshonden and finally the breed recognition with AKC. How lucky our club was to meet this gentleman, we made him a life time member of our club.

Capital Keeshond Club was the host to two Keeshond Club National Specialties which put us all to work. We are still a very strong club with lots of fun members. All clubs go thru some dry spells and we have had our share, but again we are some wonderful events and some great working members.



At the time I wrote this history recap, our present officers were: Donna Stekli, President; Debra Brandes, Vice President; Lem Burnett, Treasurer; Carol Harrigan, Recording Secretary; Terry Broderick Corresponding Secretary. Board Members: Esther Stalker, Jane West and Natalie Gilbert.