



**DANCES WITH DOGS CLUB, QUEENSLAND
PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR 2010
PRESENTED AT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 6 MARCH 2011**

1. Introduction

I am pleased to provide this report on the operation of the Dances with Dogs Club, Queensland (DWDQ), in its second year. It has again been a busy and exciting year, in which the Club has conducted a number of training activities as well as competitions. Overall, the standard of performance achieved by members has been high, with improvement being very obvious in many dogs.

I have been blessed by a very supportive Committee and the success of this sport in Queensland is due in very large part to the highly co-operative and supportive approach of the Club's membership as a whole.

The Club's financial year now runs from 1 January to 31 December, though in 2010 it ran from the date of the Annual General Meeting (27 March 2010) through to 31 December.

2. Activities and Achievements

DWDQ and its members have been very active during 2010. Activities conducted and achievements of the Club and its members include:

- Conduct of Committee/general meetings
- Affiliation and incorporation
- Financial situation
- Insurance
- APRA licence
- Conduct of competitions
- Titles awarded
- Training activities
- Guidelines for Competitors
- Club Protocols
- Photography and videotaping of competitions
- Survey of members
- Contribution to judges training program
- Promotion of Dances with Dogs.

Each of these is addressed in further detail below.

2.1 Conduct of meetings

The Annual General Meeting was held on 27 March 2010. At that meeting, the following office bearers were elected:

President: Gay Westmore
Vice-President: Maree Rablin
Secretary: Sharon Clark
Treasurer: Karen Moore
Committee: Ann Bulke (Competition Secretary and Trophy Officer)
Val Bulte (Assistant Competition Secretary)
Pam Kettle
Eddie Kirkman (Equipment Officer)
Robyn Kirkman (Publicity Officer)
Barbara Murfet
Wendy Russell
Robyn Thomas.

Subsequently, Karen Moore resigned as Treasurer and Debby Lamprecht was appointed as Treasurer in her stead. Karen remained on the Committee.

DWDQ has held six Committee meetings, held in each of February, March, May, July, September and October 2010. Each of these has been widely attended by members, not only by the elected Committee members. Between meetings a number of matters have been dealt with by the Committee via email.

2.2 Membership

The number of financial members of DWDQ continues to grow and membership numbers are expected to continue to grow as awareness of and interest in the sport grows. At the date of the Annual General Meeting for 2011, membership stands at 53.

Newsletters have been circulated to members by email, though they are now being posted to the website, with a notice regarding their availability being circulated to members by email. The business papers for and minutes of each Committee meeting have been circulated to all members by email. Matters arising out of the meetings as well as information about competitions and other more general information have also been communicated to members by email.

2.3 Affiliation and incorporation

The Club has maintained its status as an affiliated Club of Dogs Queensland. At the meeting on 18 September 2010, it was agreed to seek incorporation as an association in Queensland under the *Associations Incorporation Act 1981*. Some delay has occurred due to technicalities regarding the model constitution for incorporated Clubs and members will be asked to reaffirm the decision to seek incorporation, so that the application can now be progressed.

2.4 Financial situation

The Club has maintained a sound financial position and its closing balance as at 31 December 2010 was \$9,371.93. This included income for the workshop to be conducted by Kath Hardman and Karen Sykes in April 2011. In addition to membership fees, income has been generated through raffles, and the production and sale of training and/or performance equipment (eg canes, boxes) and merchandise (eg caps, T shirts).

The Club selected and purchased a number of T shirts bearing the Club logo; these have been sold to members and there are currently (as at 1 March 2011) 34 still held in stock.; we also have 12 caps and 74 stickers on hand as at 1 March 2011.

Further fund-raising activities will be necessary in 2011 to maintain the current positive financial position and, in particular, to sustain the cost of running DWD competitions which, in 2010, exceeded entry fee income by approximately \$690.

The Club has been generously supported by a number of people and organisations. VIP Petfoods has continued to provide extremely generous support for the Club, particularly through the provision of prizes for our competitions, but also through allowing use of their grounds for our October competition. AnnSwitch Canines has also continued to provide support, including the award of trophies at the Brisbane Royal and to those who completed titles with their dogs during 2010. Many other members have made financial contributions and/or simply incurred expenses on behalf of the Club without claiming reimbursement. I thank them for their commitment and generosity.

Vet Products Direct provided a \$100 gift voucher and Plush Puppy provided a \$50 gift voucher for raffles at two of our competitions. Coral Pethers has also donated a rug which will be raffled early in 2011.

2.5 Insurance

It has been ascertained that it is not necessary for the Club to take out insurance, independently of the insurance cover provided through Dogs Queensland.

2.6 APRA licence

The Club has maintained its APRA licence for 2010/11.

2.7 Conduct of competitions

The Club conducted competitions in each of May, June, July, October and November. We are also grateful to the Toowoomba Dog Obedience Club (in February and August – the latter being for the Gold Coast AH&I Society) and Pine Rivers Dog Obedience Club (in March), both of which also conducted DWD competitions. Many members also attended the double header competition conducted by the Grafton Dog Obedience Club in September.

At the February meeting, it was agreed to introduce a *Rookie class*, designed to enable members at any level to work with their dog in the competition environment, using motivators in the ring if desired. This has proven very popular, and gives new competitors or existing competitors with new dogs or performing at a higher level the opportunity to develop their own and their dog's confidence in the competition environment.

Consideration of the future conduct of 'training competitions' has been initiated.

2.8 Titles awarded

During 2010, members and their dogs achieved 76 titles, viz

Division	Starter	Novice	Intermediate	Advanced	Champion
Freestyle	21	11	7	3	1
Heelwork to Music	12	11	6	4	

There are now several competitors in the Advanced level in both Freestyle and Heelwork to Music and the last competition of the year saw the awarding of Queensland's first Dances With Dogs Freestyle Championship title to Maree Field and her Border Collie Mutley. Subsequently Angie Burke and her Malinois Inka have achieved their Championship titles in both Freestyle and Heelwork to Music.

It was also unanimously agreed that Coral Pethers and her German Shepherd, Kasha, whose initial performances had gained the support of the then CCC(Q) for the sport of Dances with Dogs, be recognised in the Hall of Fame on the Club website.

2.9 Training activities

During 2010 the Club conducted a beginners' training program consisting of approximately 2 hour sessions conducted on four Sundays in May, at the Dogs Queensland grounds at Durack. There were 10 registrants for this program, some being existing competitors and others people new to the sport. Sharon Clark did an excellent job as 'chief instructor', and was ably assisted by Ann Bulke, Gay Westmore, Pam Kettle and Robyn Kirkman. Sharon has subsequently been invited by Redlands Dog Obedience Club to conduct a beginners training program, and other obedience clubs have also expressed interest in a similar program.

A number of informal local networks and mentoring arrangements were also established and assisted members in developing choreography and training their dogs in focus, drive and DWD/HTM moves and positions.

In April 2010, the Club took advantage of the presence in Queensland of Richard Curtis, a highly successful UK trainer and competitor, to conduct a training session on motivation and drive. This session was held at Durack on a mid-week evening and attracted an attendance of approximately 120 people from a variety of canine disciplines, with very positive feedback being received from participants.

An indoor practice session, prior to the Brisbane Royal, was conducted at the RSPCA training facility at Springwood, providing an invaluable training opportunity for participants. A practice session was also held in February at the Mt Gravatt showgrounds, in preparation for the March competition.

In September, Karen Moore presented an excellent workshop on movement, appropriately entitled *Poetry in Motion*, which was greatly appreciated by and beneficial to participants. Members also participated in other training activities with a variety of instructors/trainers. Then in January 2011 we had another excellent workshop, *Move your Feet to the Beat*, presented by Maree Rablin, and ably assisted by her daughter Renee and one of Renee's young dance pupils, Poppy.

In February, Coral Pethers conducted an excellent workshop on the DWD rules and their interpretation which will greatly benefit competitors.

A great deal of preparation has been undertaken for a weekend workshop to be conducted in April 2011 by Kath Hardman and Karen Sykes, very successful competitors and trainers from the United Kingdom. Kath and Karen will be conducting workshops in Brisbane (at Dayboro), Sydney and Melbourne, with the three states sharing travel-related costs. Currently there are 36 registrants for the Brisbane workshop.

2.10 Development of *Guidelines for Competitors*

Members contributed to the development of a suite of *Guidelines for Competitors*, designed particularly to assist those new not only to DWD but also Dogs Queensland endorsed events. These have been circulated to members and placed on the Club website.

2.11 Development of Club protocols

It was also considered desirable to develop a statement of Club protocols to facilitate a shared understanding of expectations and responsibilities of members when performing Club roles and/or participating in Club activities. Again, these have been circulated to members by email and placed on the website.

2.12 Contribution to judges training program

At the request of Coral Pethers, convenor of the judges training program in Queensland, individual members have contributed to the DWD judges training program by providing demonstration performances as 'live' exhibits for judges' training sessions. Participation by members in these sessions not only assists in the judges' training program but also provides invaluable experience and feedback to competitors.

2.13 Photography and videotaping of competitions

Following agreement regarding the desirability of capturing images from competitions, Daniel Rodgers was invited to take still photographs at Club competitions.

Protocols were also agreed upon for the taking and distribution/sale of videos from competitions. These arrangements are to be reviewed in 2011.

2.14 Promotion of Dances with Dogs

The Club is keen to promote awareness of Dances with Dogs, and members have participated in a number of demonstrations, including –

Creek Rd Presbyterian Church
Guide Dogs for the Blind (on two occasions, at Carseldine and Petrie respectively)
Manly West State School
West Highland Terrier National
Samoyed National
Dayboro Show Society
Nambour Pet Expo

Our thanks to those members who volunteered their time to participate in these demonstrations.

Gay Westmore was asked to perform with her Golden Retriever, Gemma, before Best in Show at the Brisbane Royal and Angela Burke and her Malinois Inka performed at the 2010 Dog of the Year Competition.

DWD competitions have also been very well received by the general public, particularly at the Brisbane Royal.

2.15 Survey of members

After approximately eighteen months of operation, the Club surveyed its members regarding their satisfaction with and/or expectations regarding a number of aspects of the Club and its operation. The results were compiled and circulated to members, and the Committee took action to implement some changes arising from the feedback received.

3. Acknowledgements

Members are very grateful for the support that the discipline and DWDQ have received during our second year of operation. Particular thanks are due to –

Dogs Queensland

Barbara Murfet as chair of the National DWD Committee and Dogs Queensland Councillor

Coral Pethers as Queensland representative on the National DWD Committee and convenor of the DWD judges training program

Our judges who have given so generously of their time to make our competitions the success they have been

Royal National Association, Queensland

Caboolture Dog Obedience Club, Redlands Dog Obedience Club and VIP Petfoods for free use of their grounds for competition purposes

Daniel Rodgers for his photography at our competitions.

I would also like to express my thanks to our Committee members and so many of our members and sometimes their friends, who have contributed to successful running of competitions in their own special way. I would particularly like to acknowledge the work of Sharon Clark as Secretary, Karen Moore and Debby Lamprecht as Treasurer, Ann Bulke as Competition Secretary and Val Bulte her assistant, Robyn Kirkman as Publicity Officer and Eddie Kirkman as equipment officer, all of which are very demanding in terms of time commitment.

I would also like to thank Barbara Murfet and Coral Pethers for their personal support and mentoring and Barbara for her representations to the CCCQ on behalf of our Club.

I wish the Club every success in the year ahead and look forward to its continued growth and development into the future. This sport has been established in Queensland with a reputation for the camaraderie, mutual support and co-operation between members, both in competitions and in general interactions and activities. I urge all members to maintain that approach and to continue to welcome and encourage each other and new participants in our sport.

Gay Westmore,
President, DWDQ

6 March 2011.