

Foreword

Silvana Vogel Tedeschi's book first appeared in Italian. We are absolutely delighted that this wonderful book is now appearing in English and her knowledge will now also be benefitting the many English-speaking friends of this magnificent and friendly dog all over the world who were cut off from a great deal of information by language barriers. For years it has been a considerable problem that significant facts regarding the origin and the development of the Bernese Mountain Dog either have not been available at all, or only in tiny fragments, to friends in other countries who do not speak German. This book meets this deficiency in a comprehensive and exemplary way.

Carefully, based on the actual facts, and accompanied by interesting photos of the foundation dogs, the beginnings of pure breeding are described and the most important events are related, that at the beginning of the 20th century, led to the raw Dürrbach Dog becoming the colourful, harmonious and friendly Bernese Mountain Dog that we love today.

Unique in the literature of this breed is the description of the further development of the breed by reference to the Standard which the Swiss Club for Bernese Mountain Dogs found necessary to revise and make more and more precise several times, from the first Standard of 1907, right up to the current FCI Standard of 2003, all of which were formulated by the Swiss Club (KBS) and intended to be universally valid.

English-speaking friends will now be able to read the translation of the chapter, "Interpreting the Standard" from the book, "Hunde sehen - züchten - erleben, Das Buch vom Berner Sennenhund", which we published together in German in 1992. In detail, with the same words and informative illustrations from this book, it is shown how the Standard is to be interpreted, and how the individual traits should be considered in breeding. For show judges and breeders of Bernese Mountain Dogs all over the world these chapters contain valuable guidelines.

Particular attention is paid to the distinctive features of the temperament, character and behaviour of these former farm dogs showing how their history has molded their character. Richly illustrated chapters follow discussing how a puppy develops mentally and physically and tips on raising and general management, as well as life with the adult Berner today. The last chapter contains information about problems involved in the growth of the skeleton and how these issues can be influenced by careful feeding.

However what makes this book particularly valuable is the inclusion as an appendix, of the first complete translation of Professor Albert Heim's text, "Die Schweizer Sennenhunde", which he published in 1914 on the occasion of the Swiss National Exhibition. This was the first comprehensive description of the 4 different breeds of Sennenhunde, and for years it showed the way for breeders,

and was to be found in every Sennenhund household. Unfortunately it has been out of print for many years. The friends of the Sennenhunde in other countries will be able to study this historical document (translated with great sensibility by Lindy Kunz) for the first time. Margret Bärtschi has written explanatory notes which were necessary to place this text in the right historical perspective and so make it more easy for the reader to understand what Heim believed and wrote in his book and who and what he is referring to.

Silvana Vogel Tedeschi wrote this book with her whole heart and soul. She graduated in linguistics and speaks and writes Italian, German, French and English. She has been sharing her life with Bernese Mountain Dogs since 1987. She and her husband live near Lake Garda in the north of Italy and breed Bernese Mountain Dogs with the kennel name of "Lago di Tenno". She takes her dogs to shows regularly, not only in Italy but also in the neighbouring countries, and is well acquainted with all aspects of breeding and showing. She has shown both males and females to their Champion titles. She visits Switzerland regularly and therefore knows exactly the environment from which the Sennenhunde originated. Because of all the languages she speaks, it is possible for her to remain up to date with many different kinds of specialist literature and research publications, and she is also able to discuss these with the experts in their own languages. She has been Vice-President of the Italian Swiss Sennenhund Club, CIABS (Club Italiano Amatori Bovari Svizzeri) for the last three years, and is their representative in the Berner International Working Group, Berner IWG, which seeks to improve the health and longevity of the Bernese Mountain Dog. In September 2009 she organized the 7th International Health Symposium for Bernese Mountain Dogs in Padenghe sul Garda.

With her book, which was translated in an exemplary way by a great Berner lover, Lindy Kunz who is Australian and lives in Austria, Silvana has created a work that will show the way for many Berner friends in other countries. With its beautiful presentation, the many fabulous colour photographs and the informative drawings taken from the book we published in 1992, it is a joy to take this book in the hand. Exact references of the original sources used will enable interested readers to go into further detail on individual topics. This book renders a long overdue service to the breed and to all the friends of the Bernese Mountain Dog who will be able to read it in English, and we can only hope that it will soon find a wide public.

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