

## KASHA'S STORY

I would like to tell you about our German Shepherd Dog Kasha. Kasha has done her breed proud by being instrumental in the development of a completely new sport here in Australia.

TC Jaimon Kashmere 'A''Z' UD was bred in Tasmania by Monica Stewart in 1998. Kasha joined us, Coral Pethers and Trevor Telford, in Toowoomba, Queensland and quickly became a wonderful member of our family. Kasha was a very keen and intelligent worker and by the time she was six years old had achieved her Utility Dog Title in Obedience and her Tracking Champion Title. She was also part of the Toowoomba Dog Obedience Club Display Team, the Australian Veterinary Association Pet People Education Program going into schools, and the Toowoomba City Council School Animal Care Education Program. Like many of her breed she was not ready to sit back and just enjoy life. Kasha was constantly under my feet wanting to do things.



Having seen a video of Mary Ray doing a dances with dogs routine at Crufts I thought “what great fun”. So began Kasha’s and my life as a dancing duo. We started off doing it just for the experience of learning something new that we could do together. Kasha was a natural and took to it like a ‘duck to water’. It was not long before we were performing as part of displays around Toowoomba.

It was a great honour to perform at the GSD National in Brisbane in 2005. This was the first time such a sport had been show cased at a dog event. In 2006, during the celebrations for the Toowoomba Dog Obedience Club’s 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the President of the Canine Control Council, Qld witnessed the performance by Kasha to the tune of the ‘Pink Panther’. The concept totally blew him away and from then on Mr Vickers has been a very active supporter of ‘Dances With Dogs’. It was not long before we were organising displays at the Brisbane Royal Show and at the 2008 ‘Ekka’ conducted a full demonstration trial in the dog pavilion. Dances With Dogs has been a part of the Brisbane Royal every year since.

There were a group of people in Dogs NSW who had been working and conducting demonstration competitions as well and with their support and the backing of the CCCQ, a rule book and submission was presented to the annual ANKC conference in October, 2008. The result of which is that ‘Dances With Dogs’ is now a fully accredited sport within the ANKC. Competitions commenced in 2009 all around Australia.

‘Dances With Dogs’ is a very important and well supported dog activity around the world, in USA, UK, and Europe. There were people and dogs in Australia, some to a very high standard, who had been experimenting with dancing with their dogs, however, without the wonderful PR that Kasha demonstrated to the general public and the dog community, this fun and visually exciting dog sport would not yet be an official part of the dog world here in Australia.

Kasha has now left us, at nearly twelve, and rejoined the friends that have been such a wonderful part of our lives. Still, almost right up to the day she died, put on a piece of ‘her’ music and she was up, the body and head would lift proudly, and she was ready to go. While most of the breeds now performing are the mid size breeds like border collies, Kasha, from the first time she stepped out had the audience enthralled – a great ambassador of her breed and Dances With Dogs!