
The following letter from Carolyn Langdon to Alicia Keegan was written in response to Alicia's questions about some of the information in Carolyn's earlier letter. In particular, Alicia asked if the dog she referred to as "Sandy" was Sandy of Brunhal, UDT.

June 24, 2002

Dear Alicia,

Beginning at the end—You found Sandy. Danny was Sheltie Glen Shagbark, TD 1957. Both Peg and Nelson (+ wife Jeanette) were ASSA members. Sterlings still are. Peg died of cancer in 1954.

So much must be different! "Cap" Schendell respected only one person—Blanche Saunders. I wish you could get hold of her first edition of "Training You to Train Your Dog". That was our Bible. (No tracking.) If "Cap" and Jim Sharkey are looking down on you people using food, I should hate to hear what they are saying. We trained our dogs to please us, not their appetites. Consider yourself reprimanded by an old-timer! Obedience meant praise or punishment (often scolding). Practice was praise or do it over (don't discourage). A trained dog must have learned more easily.

We had no books or articles on tracking. The "one-session course" was all. It cost \$5 and the trip to the Boston area. Ours was the second class from H.O.T.C. Schendell (with Morgan Brainard's famous golden, "Mike"). George Recor (Irish Setter), Duke Perkins (border collie?), Ted Kuzmik (golden collie), (all of whom had worked with Blanche Saunders and were our trainers) and Connie Lee, tiny little lady with a white standard poodle, were in the first class. Only the poodle got the T.D.!! A couple of years later the Scottie's owner arranged for our class.

We drove up early on a cold spring Sunday, had a lively talk on tracking and the laying of tracks, lined up along a field with our dogs and each had a private time with Sharkey. He laid a track between two stakes some 40 ft. apart, gave our dog his scent from his glove, put the dog's nose to the ground on a thoroughly scuffed spot and urged him out. If the dog caught on, was pronounced capable of tracking. Otherwise the owner was discouraged. The Pom, the Scottie and Tinker were OK'd but not the collie. Sometime we had coffee and practiced. After three to four hours, cold and hungry, we drove home. Hard work, patience, generous praise and encouragement were stressed. And repetition! I think I wrote before that the Pom passed tracking. I was wrong—only the Scottie and Tinker made it.

We looked forward to the weekends 'practicing' together. We did have fun and the dogs loved it. Finding a field was a problem. A friend of Howard's had some unused land near his home. For a change we drove to any likely looking field (often vegetable gardens in summer) and trespassed. Cattle tracks went unnoticed; there were seldom human cross tracks, I expect. No-one told us there should be. We later learned that the Rhode Island people were aware of it.

My pants wearing started in Novice so was confirmed long before tracking but Peg never gave in. I don't see how you could start with an untrained dog. I know practically nothing of today's obedience. Our interest stopped with unbenched shows. They seemed so disorganized. Now is our day!!!

What of your Shelties and tracking? I should hope to read your article.

Sincerely,
Carolyn Langdon

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(all of whom had worked with Blanche Saunders and were
own trainers) and Connie Lee, tiny little lady with a
white stand and paddle, was in the first class.
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