

AKC Gazette
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IN the Christmas Number of our GAZETTE, I think it is a very suitable time to review the formation of the Bulldog Club of America. As you probably now know, 1940 is our fiftieth anniversary, and when a club has carried on for 50 years, I think the history of the formation is very appropriate, and so I give you below the history of the parent club of the bulldog world. Here it is:

"To many of our readers it may be of interest to know the prime object of this very important and influential specialty club, the purposes held in view by the originators and the origin and growth of the club.

"We may briefly say that the plan of organization was primarily suggested by H.D. Kendall, of Lowell, Mass., and the club is the result and outcome of a determination on the part of the several gentlemen interested especially in this breed of dog, who were present at the bench show of the New England Kennel Club at Boston, in the spring of 1890, to join themselves together for the purpose of encouraging the thoughtful and careful breeding of the old English bulldog in America, to perpetuate the purity of the strain, to improve the quality of the native stock, and to remove the unjust prejudice that existed in the public mind against a most admirable and deserving breed of dog.

"Contrary to general opinion, these gentlemen were actuated with the conviction that the pure-bred old English bulldog was one of the most docile, affectionate and companionable of dogs; far from being a vicious brute, as generally supposed by the uninformed and ignorant, and that his special merits were his perfect adaptability to the confinements of city life, his quiet and dignified demeanor, his companionable nature, and not the least of his just claims to favor to be his ancient and aristocratic lineage, easily traceable back many generations, the purity of his race being sustained for many hundreds of years.

"Therefore, they at once went about the task set before them and they have, by several years of persistent effort, succeeded in advancing the bulldog to the highest point in public estimation, and in establishing a most progressive and successful specialty club.

"Responding to the call of Mr. Kendall, which was given at the New York show early in the year of 1890, F. F. Dole, F. Sheffield Porter, H. D. Kendall, John Coles, T. R. Varick, John Barnard, and J. H. Matthews assembled together in a small room in one corner of Mechanics Hall Building upon the afternoon of the first day of the Boston show, April 1, 1890, and thereupon proceeded to formulate a policy and course of action whereby they might attain the end in view.

"Trenor L. Park was not able to personally attend, but his ideas and wishes were voiced by a member who was present.

"The first proposition, i.e., to combine the interests of the fanciers of the bulldog with that of the bull terrier men was voted down, and the Bulldog Club of America was then launched upon its independent career.

"John E. Thayer was elected president; Trenor L. Park, vice-president; and Charles D. Cugle, secretary-treasurer; these gentlemen, together with Messrs. Kendall, Porter, Matthews, and E. A. Woodward, constituted an executive committee to officially conduct the affairs of the club. A committee was appointed to draft a constitution and by-laws for the proper and effective organization and conduct of the new-born association, and after a brief discussion the members departed. In due time the Bulldog Club applied for membership to The American Kennel Club, was admitted, and thereupon selected Mr. Matthews as delegate.

"A list of five gentlemen was made and publicly announced, and these gentlemen were declared competent to act as official judges. They were Messrs. C. D. Cugle, J. F. Thayer, E. Sheffield Porter, William Mariner and James Mortimer.

"From the very start, the influx of new members was astonishing, and at the end of the first fiscal year 30 members were enrolled; and upon February 24-27, 1891, the club made a successful exhibit at New York, in connection with the regular Westminster Kennel Club show. This scheme has been followed each year in succession, and the annual show of the Club has become a regular fixture.

"The success of this plan and the influence of the club has been evidenced by the great increase in entries in bulldog classes at New York. Previous to 1891, 19 exhibits was the maximum; in 1891, and the seven years thereafter, the exhibits (exclusive of duplicate entries) were 41, 39, 48, 50, 46, 57, 68 and 78,

"Simultaneous with the first incoming of members, fresh inspiration and new interest was added by the donations of specials by members of the club. Trenor L. Park presented the Grand Trophy; E. Sheffield Porter the Porter Cup; Robert B. Sawyer, the Sawyer Cup; and Mr. Matthews the Puppy Bowl. The design of the Club Medal suggested by Mr. Matthews and perfected and elaborated by J. R. Farrel, was approved and the dies were promptly made and medals coined. Shortly thereafter, Dr. N. Rowe, proprietor of the American Field, and a bulldog enthusiast, presented to the club that elegant trophy known as the American Field Cup.

"Within 12 months the club found itself to be a lusty and vigorous youngster, well endowed with cash and worldly goods, looking backward upon a short but eventful career; and glancing into a future promising much and forbidding nothing, full of the spirit of enterprise and looking for new fields of usefulness and opportunities to progress along the lines of legitimate endeavor.

"The standard as laid down by the English Bulldog Club prevailed at the beginning, but as the form of expression and arrangement was not as forceful, concise and convenient as possible, Mr. Matthews compiled a new standard and presented the subject to the club members at their second annual meeting for consideration. Although the changes were all quite immaterial, the matter was looked upon with disfavor, and the suggestion to depart from the orthodoxy of Old England was discountenanced.

"Not until 1896 was this subject again brought forward with any success. The Executive Committee held several special meetings, carefully weighing this important matter in all its aspects and bearings, and after a careful revision of the scale of points and other minor details, a favorable report was handed to the members, and the new standard was thereupon formally declared operative.

"The original constitution and by-laws held unchanged until the year 1893, when a committee of three, Messrs. W. F. Hobbie, Renshaw Mason-Jones, and J. H. Matthews effected a revision and thorough re-arrangement, and the Rules and Regulations for the Constitution and Government of the Bulldog Club of America were endorsed by the members without dissent.

"These rules prevail to the present time, one amendment only having been suggested and acted upon (1899), whereby the coining and issuing of bronze medals is authorized for general distribution and the scope of plan and field of usefulness is enlarged.

"They resemble similar organizations to a great extent, so that it is only necessary to give here a few particulars which intending members should know. The club year begins October 1. The initiation fee is \$5, and must be paid within ten days after notification that application for membership has been favorably acted upon. The annual dues are \$10, which must be paid in advance upon election and every first of October succeeding. Further particulars regarding trophy awards and other information covered very completely by -the well arranged rules, may be procured in pamphlet form from the Secretary."

I will continue the history of the Bulldog Club of America in my article next month.

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