

IN THIS EDITION:

- **From the President**
- **National Training Weekend March 2003**
- **Agility Yard Makeover**
- **Queensland Workshop**
- **Operational Teams**
- **End of an Era.....**
- **Issac's Pile**
- **Vets Corner**
- **What's coming Up**

From The President . . .

March has marked the 10th Anniversary of the certification of our first NZ USAR dog to a NZ Standard. This assessment was held in Palmerston North and the successful team was Rachel Heywood and her dog Gin.

Over the last 10 years the SDA has seen some major changes including the introduction of The National Training Programme, Quality National Assessment Standards and the addition of Victim Recovery Dogs to the group.

The dedicated of the group that first had the vision of where the SDA would go, I think, would be proud of where we are at in 2013. The Canterbury Earthquakes certainly highlighted this.

In addition the contribution of Ian Craig to the development of USAR dogs in New Zealand is also recognised this month with the 10th anniversary of his death, 2 days after assessing at the first evaluation.

Just prior to Christmas the Southern team held a dinner for Graham Joseph. After many years with the SDA he has decided to retire as an Operational Handler.

Graham, on behalf of the SDA we would like to thank you for your contribution to the team, training certainly won't be the same. Included in this newsletter are some of the photos of Graham and his dogs from over the years.

The recently held National Training weekend was very positive, with a number of new handlers and dogs coming through. 2013 is shaping up to be a great year for us all.

Good luck for the up coming training events !!

Tim Drennan

NZ USAR Search Dog Association

President



National Training Weekend

1—3 March 2013

By Carol Ewington

It was a mighty weekend of training with the merging of north and south USAR dog teams for the National Training Weekend 2013.

Ten dog handlers, 15 dogs and four newbie handlers gathered together for what proved to be a weekend filled with challenges and learning for all.

Christchurch hosted the weekend this year due to the variation of training sites available from earthquake damage such as: Red zone housing (land deemed too damaged to be rebuild able in the near future and therefore brought by NZ government off the owners) Assortment rubble piles at quarry's and dumping sites.

Friday 1st March – Day and Night training

This dawned as a cool, drizzly and cloudy - perfect for training. We met at the Woolston Fire Station for a briefing of the weekend training plan. Tim gave a general welcome. Janelle gave a thorough brief of the weekend and what to expect in the red zone. Yellow goodie bags were distributed - the cap with a light in its peak being a very excitable find!

The day was spent amongst some very badly damaged land in Christchurch's red zone. We were split into three teams and were sent off with the brief for each team to create their own training plan at the given properties.

After an hour we regrouped and out of nowhere appeared the **Wheely Good Coffee**.

A mobile coffee van for our morning cuppa; awesome work Janelle in arranging this. All hyped up with coffee and hot chocolates we rotated teams twice more to the next housing areas.



Training involved dogs searching through the houses and outbuildings. The scenarios included empty house searches (no casualties), limited access search (dog could go into the building but handler had to stay outside), on harness and long lead searches (dog not handler!), searching for one or more casualties on property. Two challenging scenarios, one a casualty in a tree house which demonstrated the dogs working the scent cone and the second a casualty up in top of a wardrobe again showing the dogs working the scent and particularly challenging to handlers and dogs. There were various other distractions laid in some houses near where casualties were hidden as an added challenge.

Lunch was delivered courtesy of **Ma & Pa's Bakery**. This was devoured by hungry and hot handlers as the day had soon become warm and sunny. At a debrief of the morning training it was agreed that the wardrobe and tree house scenarios proved a good challenge for handlers, particularly learning how to read their dogs signals, and demonstration of how scent can pool.

The afternoon a scenario was set up in one street with five houses and their properties to be searched for potential casualties.

It was interesting watching the endurance of the dogs and handlers at this stage of the day and a good demonstration of how resting, hydration and energy replenishment needs to be kept up throughout a rescue, especially as the day had warmed up significantly so sufficient hydration was important.

After clearing and securing the training area we all went back to the Woolston Fire Station to have a pizza dinner (**Winnie Bagoes Pizza**) and final debrief of the day.

1930— 2200

Training saw us at a quarry site. There were definite signs of fatigue at this stage, myself not the least. Linda and Tim had set up a fantastic challenge. Firstly as a team we had to unload the trailer load of flood lighting and set it up so the area on the rubble pile to be used was lit.

Then a team was selected to perform a stretcher rescue of a strategically placed casualty – to say this was a challenge is putting it mildly and I would like to thank those of you who experienced in rescue training for guiding my wayward ways! Our casualty was kind enough to state at no time did she feel in danger of being dropped or tipped out!!

A lengthy tunnel crawl was set up with three rescuers sent in only to find a casualty to rescue at the end of the tunnel. The first rescuer had to crawl over the casualty and then with the help of the 2nd rescuer drag/push them out of the tunnel. Much laughter but a safe enough result! Handlers and dogs were sent through this tunnel also Finally some handlers wanted their dogs have a find across the pile in a night time situation.

Some interesting 'dancing' by Janelle had the dogs over to her quick as a shot for their reward. All in all some very challenging training and a rewarding day had by all. Equipment repacked a very tired team of handlers and dogs went home about 10pm.



Lights, camera, ACTION !

Saturday 2nd March

9am we met at the agility yard where there were some bark box exercises for the dogs to get them excited. The dogs were hyped, even pulling me out of the bark box with their toys. Some handlers put their dogs over the agility course.

From there to another quarry where there were two challenging tasks prepared. A perimeter search was set up around one pile and there was praise for how the teams performed the task. The 2nd rubble pile had three hidden casualties – this was a level 6 progress check for the dogs and Donna/Jet went through with flying colours – a magic combination of handler and dog working with fantastic synergy, awesome to watch. All other dogs went very well, with handlers having some challenges technically and went away feeling satisfied they can be refined. The energy and drive of the dogs was incredible considering their efforts the day before. Jenny a Vet Check Tent set up on site and discussed with the handlers what to watch out for with their dogs in a rescue situation.

Lunch back at Woolston Fire Station and then the fitness test assessments – we couldn't wait! Westie & Ralph from the Fire Service demonstrated the course. I found the 90kg dummy drag to be particularly challenging. Brenda gave the days debrief then Jenny gave a presentation regarding deployment of dogs/handlers overseas and vaccination requirements.

Malcolm gave thanks on behalf of the North Island teams for hosting/organising the weekend on their behalf this year. Handlers described their three day weekend as being a very rewarding, challenging, and cathartic. Many helpful tips for refining training and helpful hints to newbie trainers were shared. Praise from Brenda and Linda to dogs and handlers for demonstrating such a high level of skill.

This weekend gave me a true appreciation of the skill, energy and challenges involved training USAR dogs and, I believe, fostered a deeper sense of camaraderie amongst members of the USAR dog team

We regrouped at the **Fox n Ferret** for dinner 7.30pm. The conversation was light and much laughter but by the end of the night the food had slowed most of us down and we were ready for our beds! (Or was that just me!!) It was the 10 year anniversary for USAR Dogs and Janelle arranged for a cake to be brought out to celebrate - a lovely surprise.

Sunday 3rd March

We met 9am at the Owaka site for the final training challenge of the weekend. This was set up on a wood pile that had compacted down over summer to a flat compact surface – great for easy observation of the dogs working the scent. There were three hides built into the pile with one casualty each in two of the hides, and two casualties in the 3rd hide. A very technically challenging course for the dogs but all found the casualties with supreme skill. Brenda was very proud. After completing the search on the pile the dogs went down for some “run-away” fun work to end the day on a high. From there to lunch at **Raeward** before the North Island teams flew home.



Queensland USAR Search Dog Workshop

By Janelle Mackie



On 9 and 10th March 2013, Brenda and Janelle had the opportunity to conduct a K9 USAR workshop in Brisbane on invitation from Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS).

bus, elevator shaft and numerous voids and tunnels. In addition there are numerous other training sites including a ship simulator, minus the water (thank goodness).

The workshop included presentations, discussions and practical sessions and we were proud to present all the processes and tools we have put in place in the last 10 years. After an intense couple of days all those involved have a better understanding of the current level of the attending teams, and individuals hopefully all have some ideas to work on.



The workshop was held at the Queensland Combined Emergency Services Academy at Whyte Island and was attended by 10 handlers and 9 dogs associated with Queensland USAR Taskforce.

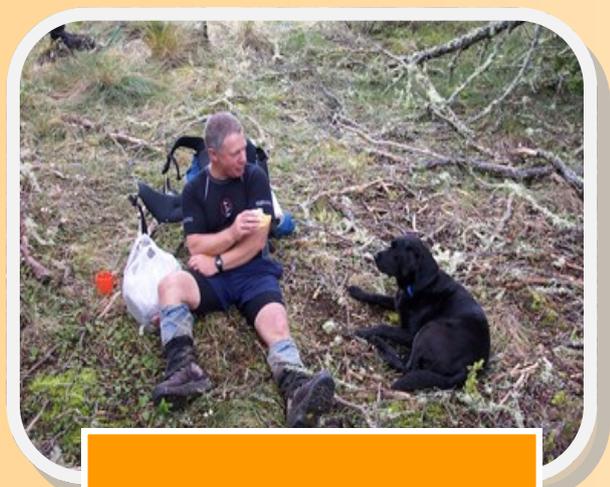
The Academy is an amazing facility with a large rubble pile including a car-park collapse, a

Photos courtesy of Janelle in the brief respite she had from running/hiding/rewarding dogs.

End of an era....thanks Graham Joseph!

At the end of 2012 Graham decided to retire from NZ USAR including USAR Dogs. While we all wish him the very best in his retirement (Tui Billboard anyone – we know how big his new property is) , we can't let him disappear without acknowledging the significant contribution he has made to NZ USAR, search dogs and response teams over the last 15 years.

Graham joined the NZ Red Cross search dog team in 1998 and in 2000 started training his little black Labrador Jesse. In 2001 Jesse and Graham (along with Brenda and Milo) swapped allegiances and joined the RATS (Rescue and Technical Support) Search Dog Team which included Linda and Janelle, and led by Ian Craig who gave Graham the title of honorary "dog-bitch" which we secretly sure he actually quite liked. With the wider RATS team Graham deployed to such events as the South Canterbury snows, and was treasurer of their trust for many years, with a fantastic ability to gain funding for equipment and other activities.



No! you can't have a bite.



In 2002 Graham and Jesse gained operational statuses for Wilderness search work, and they went on to do several wilderness searches throughout the South Island including Pleasant Pt, Greymouth, Dunedin and Nelson. Graham also accompanied other handlers on a number of other searches as "back-up" and his experience in navigation and bush craft was a valuable asset. Graham attended many training camps, exercises and other events and worked tirelessly supporting the organisation of a number of these.

Graham and Jesse became operational for USAR in October in 2003 (after a slight hiccup earlier in the year with the ladder- Jesse really couldn't see the point of climbing the ladder and then coming down again- just easier to stay on the ground).

Cont'd over

Graham was one of the first “official” USAR dog handlers in the country with his appointment to NZ-TF2 after completion of the inaugural support course.

In 2004 Graham was joined by a little black and white character from the Pound whom he called Tala. Tala became operational in 2006 and then operational Advanced in 2008. Tala is a little gem of a search dog and her speed and agility over rubble is a delight to see.



In 2007 Graham’s world was literally turned upside down when he was the innocent victim of a hit and run when riding home on his motorbike one night. That he wasn’t killed is remarkable, but even more remarkable was his recovery back to again getting over the rubble piles behind Tala and in more recent times Rosie, a lovely little brindle girl also from the Pound. This recovery is a really good example of Grahams positive attitude and commitment. If we were doing a school report we would say “quiet achiever”.



Graham has been the Treasurer, or the “money man” for USAR SDA for the last several years and there was a universal sigh of relief when he agreed to stay on in this role for the foreseeable future so we fortunately have not seen the last of him. He has also assured us he is happy to “get lost” on occasion for training events.

The southern training group went out for tea with Graham and Barb just before Xmas and were pleased to present to Graham on behalf of all USAR SDA members a framed canvas print of Tala and him, an engraved dress watch, and some movie vouchers (now that he will have more time on his hands).



We sincerely wish Graham, his wife Barb and wider family including 2 new grandchildren a more relaxing time over the next wee while and again say thanks and job bl**dy well done Mr G.



Welcome to the Committee

Malcolm Percy, representing Northern, is now a member of the MANCOM Committee.

The committee look forward to working with you and achieving much going forward.



The pile that Isaacs built...

New Zealand has its first purpose built rubble pile thanks to the generosity and support of Isaacs, a Canterbury construction company.

For a number of years the Southern training group have had access to concrete piles at the Isaacs site on McLeans Island road, and they are also well known to handlers from throughout New Zealand as they have been used to host many training weekends, and operational assessments.

The first Isaacs pile was a long skinny pile around the back of some piles of dirt and it was only really spotted because you could see it from a particular spot when driving back from a popular dog walking area and we got suspicious that it was a precious pile of concrete....a few phone calls and letters later and we had the required permission. I remember driving up to it for the first time and being sadly very excited – I think the site guys thought we were crazy.

You could be mistaken for thinking the second pile was in fact built for us, as it was almost perfectly 40m x 40m. We actually lost count of how many hides were in it by the end, and not sure I would like to add up the hours

Spent by handlers standing up on the edge of the quarry in all weathers (including when it was covered in snow) watching planes land at the airport, or looking out to the Southern Alps, and of course watching hundreds of hours of search dog work.

The old Isaacs pile #2



The Isaacs guys were very aware of how much we used this pile and they were a bit apologetic the day they rang to say it was going to have to be pushed into the quarry. They asked if there was anything they could do and it was probably with a bit of cheek and hopefulness that the idea of our own pile was raised. This was before the earthquakes, and it is great that the company had social awareness and foresight to say “yes”.

Like the other companies with sites we regularly use Isaacs regularly received thank you's and the odd dozen of beer but they did seem to see this more of a partnership and were genuinely interested in what we were doing.

Isaacs is well known as a construction company in the region, but the name is also well known for a wide range of philanthropic activities including Rainbow Springs a conservation area, and Isaac Theatre Royal- a heritage theatre in the CBD just to name a couple. The generosity of Lady Diane Isaac* and her late husband Neil is incredible, and it seems to be a company trait.

**sadly Lady Diana Isaac passed away the day we were building the first set of hides in this pile for operational assessments...her contribution to USAR search dogs will probably never truly be recognised but will be remembered by us...*

If anything the earthquakes just cemented the idea, that along with a few talks to groups such as the local Quarry Association (which the Isaacs site manager chairs) and we were in planning mode!

The pile was "built" in the middle of 2012 and has far exceeded our expectations, in terms of size and construction with a large number of different, undulating surfaces and hidden pipes and they are still going.

We also love that the location allows for awesome observation spots around the pile. There is apparently a wee bit of discussion going on between the boss and some of the workers about whether to keep adding to this one, or building us another one – we will be happy with either option!

The Southern training group is looking forward to hosting many more training sessions and assessments for themselves and visiting handlers on this site.

The making of "our" pile....





**“It’s
looking
smarter
than ever”**



The Agility Yard Make over

At the beginning of 2013 the southern search dog team started with a working bee down at the agility yard to tidy it up and put some new life into some of the equipment that we have had for a few years now which was starting to look a bit tired and a bit of an eye-sore from the road.

So the old and very well used bark box got a few coats of "forest green", the metro box got a few coats of "bright white". The old dog kennels with the 3 compartments had a "make-over" and was stained a dark brown with some netting nailed in front to excite the "young dogs" by seeing the subject and toy but not being able to get in to them.

The crawl space tunnel and dog house within the pellet pile got a coat of "vibrant blue".

The pellet pile was tidied up and a lot of work weeding and getting rid of the old rotten cotton reels was done on that first morning back.

New reels were brought in from Mike and we made a new look agility sequence.

Throughout March, our Task Force is making us a new see-saw, an A Frame, some more bark boxes and a set of seven directional platforms (that will be much easier to move around the paddock than the heavy pellets we have used to date.)

It's looking smarter than ever and we have all gone on a roster system to try to keep it tidy and weed free, and to help Brenda out more with it.

Many thanks to Brenda and Rex who have done the majority of work (by far), of maintaining this yard over the many years we have used it.....and hope we are able to use it for many more years to come.

Article and pics by Linda Pike

From the National Trainer

Watch this space !

Current Operational Teams - November 2012

Handler	Canine	City	Certification Date	Operational Level	Task Force
Linda Pike	Buk	Christchurch	26 November 2011	Advanced	NZTF-2
Brenda Woolley	Boss	Christchurch	5 May 2012	Advanced	NZTF-2
Brenda Woolley	Easy	Christchurch	14 May 2011	Advanced	NZTF-2
Brenda Woolley	Keepa	Christchurch	14 May 2011	Advanced	NZTF-2
Brenda Woolley	Luna	Christchurch	24 November 2012	VRD certification	NZTF2
Tim Drennan	Boo!	Christchurch	5 May 2012	Advanced	NZTF-2
Tim Drennan	Meg	Christchurch	24 November 2012	VRD Certification	NZTF2
Janelle Mackie	Cairo	Christchurch	14 May 2011	Advanced	NZTF-2
Malcolm Percy	Sarge	Auckland	5 May 2012	Operational	NZTF-3



You tell 'em Graham



VET CORNER

Usually a regular column by
Jenny Waters, USAR Vet Evaluator

We decided to ambush Jenny's "Vet Corner" section of the newsletter this time to give her some thanks for her continuing support and dedication to the Search dog Association dogs and handlers for her role as "our vet".

Jenny has been with us from the very first USAR search dog assessment back in 2002 and hasn't missed one, to date. She is not only at the assessments and the national training weekends as a first response to anything that may happen to the dogs, but to observe the dogs periodically (to pick up any signs of any injury, deterioration – especially in the more mature dogs). The best way for this is to watch them working over the rubble. At national training weekends she will give us some "vet" scenarios for our dogs and we need to explain what and how we would deal to the scenario in the way of irrigation, compression, bandaging etc.

At the last National Training Weekend we put up a "vet tent" so Jenny could have a "one on one" with the handlers, to check over the dogs, and to give advice on any questions the handlers had. She put a couple of the more mature dogs through their paces and was pleased to see they were still "up to it" physically.

Jenny has put in a lot of time over the last few months in sorting out the conditions and paperwork needed for the operational search dogs to be able to be deployed overseas. She has worked closely with the SDA president and Massey and gave us a good power point talk at the last NTW of where they are at with this in terms of diseases, vaccinations, quarantine etc. We were also supplied with (courtesy of BECA) a year's supply of worm and flea treatment. It is crucial for the dogs to be kept up to date with these treatments, particularly if they are deployed overseas.

Jenny now has a database of all of the USAR Search Dogs, their details and photos for her records, and we know that any time we have any vet related issues, that we can call on her and she is able to liaise with our local vet and/or Massey if the need arises, to determine the best course of action.

Thanks again Jenny. We appreciate you heaps.

P.S. You can have your column back for the June edition of PawPrint. Thanks for the loan!



What's Coming Up

13/14 April	Palmerston North Regionals
11/12 May	Operational Assessments –Ch Ch
15 May	MANCOM Meeting
22/23 June	Southern Regional (Southern only)
June	PAWPRINT
17 July	MANCOM Meeting
28 August	AGM
Sept	PAWPRINT

Send us your feedback
or do you have something to share
Email: beattie.rochelle@gmail.com



The NZ USAR Search Dog Association would like to acknowledge the
on going Support of the following.

