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Seeing Eye Dogs – A Brief History

By Jacob Deam

You have no doubt seen a blind person being lead across a busy intersection by a Seeing Eye dog.

These functional companions have been used to help handicapped people become independent for years. Nobody knows exactly when the concept of a Seeing Eye dog came into existence but it has been suggested that dogs have been used in such a capacity in various cultures for a very long time. It is known, however, that there was no formal guide dog program in existence until after the First World War.

Why German Shepherds?

Many people have probably wondered why guide dogs and Seeing Eye dogs are so often German Shepherds. There are two reasons. First, the German Shepherd has a strong sense of loyalty to its owner, giving it natural protective tendencies. Having a very protective dog as a companion is an obvious asset for someone who may otherwise be easily attacked by someone with bad intentions. The second reason is far simpler; the first guide dogs for the blind and visually impaired were trained in Germany to provided assistance for those blinded in the war.

After the end of World War I, Germany was in a state of financial depression. Many private businesses failed and the Potsdam, Germany school that trained the guide dogs for the blind was one of them.

The Seeing Eye was born

An American woman named Dorothy Eustis had heard about the program and decided it was a very worthwhile endeavor. Because she owned a company that was training German Shepherds as working dogs, she decided she might try to train guide dogs for the blind. She did not start this right away, however. In fact she was still considering the possibilities when she wrote a story for The Saturday Evening Post about the potential for guide dogs for the blind.

A Nashville man named Morris Frank had heard the story and decided to get in touch with Ms. Eustis and ask her to train a dog for him. She did and Mr. Frank became known as the first blind person to use a guide dog.

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As part of an arrangement he'd made with Ms. Eustis, Mr. Frank started training guide dogs in the United States. The foundation that Mr. Frank started was named "The Seeing Eye" and the dogs that were used were dubbed Seeing Eye dogs.

Today guide dogs are trained to assist people with many different disabilities. There are Hearing Ear dogs to assist the deaf and other dogs that assist the physically disabled. All of the people who have benefited from the use of a guide dog, however, owe their thanks to Mr. Morris Frank of Nashville, Tennessee.

Jacob Deam absolutely loves dogs, and blogs about dog topics frequently at

<http://www.sitheelstay.com>

Dog Fighting History

By Matthew Seigneur

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Dog Fighting History

Using dogs in fighting has been around for hundreds maybe thousands of years. The Romans, Greeks, Spanish and French used dogs for fighting.

Fighting between all kinds of animals have always been a very popular event. As far back as can be recalled dogs called gladiator were bred for the sole purpose of dog fighting.

The British began breeding the bulldog for the sole reason of dog on dog combat, but they were not the first; since this event has been around since the day of the Roman Empire. The dogs that the British used are commonly known today as the American Pit Bull Terrier.

The bulldog is well known for being used to manage unruly bulls, and by hunters for helping them in catching and holding wild boars or other big game.

Since, the bull dog was so popular for these types of activities the sport of bullbaiting became very popular. Bullbaiting was where bulldogs and other larger animals were pitted together.

Animals such as horses, bears, lions, and yes even men were put together for the sole purpose of fighting. This bullbaiting sport was eventually outlawed, so the public turned to dog fighting. Dog Fighting was economically better for the owners of the fighters, because they did not need as much room for the fighting area, and they only had to feed two dogs; instead of one dog and a larger animal. Also, with just dogs fighting it would be easier to hold these fights in secret if the need arose.

To acquire a smaller dog with increased agility and more stamina and fighting ability the bulldog was bred with game hunting terriers. As this breeding increased so did the aggression in these dogs.

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Dog fighting breeders especially searched for dogs with the gaming and aggressive behavior, as their goal was to refine the best canine gladiator in the bulldog.

Dog fighting was seen through out the 1800's into the 1900's and still does continue today. But, it is illegal in most of the 50 states in America and most European Countries.

<http://www.dog-pictures.co.uk/dog-care-articles/dog-fighting-history.shtml>

<http://www.dog-pictures.co.uk/> A dog lovers website with plenty of dog breed information and pictures.
<http://www.dog-pictures.co.uk/dog-supplements/> provides dog supplements and dog health care information.



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