



# Classic Bull Terrier Journal

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## A story about a Bull Terrier in the New Zealand Defence Force during World War 2

### Major Major, No. 1 Dog, 2 NZEF, 19 Battalion and Armoured Regiment

Major was a white bull terrier and an Australian by birth. He was given as a pup to Errol Williams, a New Zealand cadet at the Royal Military College, Duntroon, and emigrated to New Zealand with his master in 1938. After war was declared in 1939 Captain Williams was appointed to the Special Force, which was then being formed, and eventually became adjutant of 19 (Infantry) Battalion. Major was a dog of no rank at this stage, but when he too joined the Special Force he was registered as No. 1 New Zealand Dog. He paraded through Wellington with his unit before it left for the Middle East and listened patiently to the good wishes of Prime Minister Michael Joseph Savage at a gathering in Parliament grounds. Captain Williams and Major arrived in Egypt with their unit in February 1940 and trained at Maadi Camp. They were then sent into the Western Desert for the long, hot and dusty business of digging the Baggush Box. Major, still a young dog, eagerly took

part in this work. Major did not serve in the Greek and Crete campaigns because he was at Middle East Officer Cadet Training Unit (OCTU) in Cairo with Captain Williams until the end of June



1941. His time at OCTU was busy. He made the acquaintance of many local dogs and did not escape unscathed. In June 1941 he appears in a photograph with his left ear flopping down. It continued to do so for the rest of his life. Promoted to 2nd lieutenant, the terrier joined Wellington West Coast Company of 19 Battalion, which Williams then commanded. In August 1941 he went with the battalion on exercises to the Canal Zone, relieving the monotony via

a liaison with a naval Pekingese from a British ship. Major followed his company into Libya in November 1941, but after several days of fighting he was sent back behind the lines. During the advance on Ed Duda Captain Williams was killed in action. Major took the death hard and refused to be comforted. In December Major passed into the care of Captain Bill Aitken and returned to Maadi. He was promoted to lieutenant, then to captain before leaving for three months in Syria. When the Germans advanced into Egypt in June 1942 the New Zealand Division was called back and entered the line at El Alamein. In July, after about 10 days fighting, Major was wounded in the thigh by shrapnel. His wound was dressed at the RAP truck, where he was given a field medical card and then evacuated to an Advanced Dressing Station. From there he was invalided back to Maadi camp.

*Continue on Page 2*

Inside this Issue:	
Famous BT	2
BT in WW2	2
Honde Byte	3

The Bull Terrier in the Springbok Rugby Side.

*By John Roodt*

Has got a low centre of gravity, is tenacious, pound for pound very powerful and once it has got hold of the ball does not let loose. We are talking about Heinrich Brussow the find of the rugby season. However we could just as well be describing the Bull Terrier. Well done Hugh Bladen in picking up the similarities between Heinrich Brussow and our beloved Gladiator.

## Famous Bull Terriers

Bull terriers have captured our heart since the 1860's when the breed was first recognized. Loyal bully owners love the combination of distinctive looks and exceptional personality. A few bullies are famous because of the owners like General Patton. Some bullies like Patsy Ann are famous because she was adopted by a whole city and lived to meet the incoming ships but was stone deaf. Several popular books include bull terriers and showcase their unique personality and determination. In more recent years we were entertained by the Budweiser dog, Spuds Mackenzie, and the Target dogs.

The most famous bull terrier owned by General Patton was purchased in March 1944. He was named Willie, short for "William the Conqueror." When General Patton bought Willie, he wrote in his diary, "My bull pup...took to me like a duck to water. He supposedly had his own set of "dog tags" too. Willie was devoted to General Patton and followed him everywhere. After General Patton's death Willie was sent home to the United States, and lived out the rest of his life with the General's wife and daughters. There is a statue of Patton and Willie at the General Patton Memorial Museum. Not everyone was charmed

by Patton and Willie. When Sgt. Bill Maudlin, Stars and Stripes cartoonist, met Gen. Patton in March 1945, he described Willie this way: Beside him, lying in a big chair was Willie, the bull terrier. If ever dog was suited to master this one was. Willie had his beloved boss's expression and lacked only the ribbons and stars. I stood in that door staring into the four meanest eyes I'd ever seen.

In 1903 Richard Harding Davis wrote "The Bar Sinister" that was a rag to riches story about a street wise bull terrier named Kid. Mr. Davis was inspired by a dog called Edgewood Cold Steel. Successful show dog, Edgewood Cold Steel, died June 15, 1906 and the obituary was in the New York Times.

The Incredible Journey by Sheila Burnford has a bull terrier. The tale tells of the magnificent adventure shared by three domestic animals as they travel in the wilderness, searching for their beloved masters. It reveals the suffering and stress of an arduous journey together with the unveering loyalty and courage of the three animals.

Patsy Ann, a deaf bull terrier, and unofficial greeter in Juneau, Alaska.

Patsy Ann showed up sometime in the late 1920's but no one is certain who she once belong too. The town adopted her and raised the money to buy her license with a nice collar. She made her rounds through town until March 30, 1942 when she was found dead in the Union Hall. She was buried under the Alaska Steamship dock but her statue continues to greet ships and tourists.

Spuds Mackenzie's popularity wasn't diminished a drop when some enterprising reporter discovered that the dog who played Spuds in commercials was really a she, a female bull terrier named Honey Tree Evil Eye. Budweiser officials tried to conceal the true gender from the public, even using their coats to shield Spuds from cameras when she had to potty, but eventually word leaked out. Several entities claimed Budweiser was targeting children so Spuds was retired and later died from kidney failure at a ripe old age.

*"Happy Bday to our  
Editor, John Roodt."*

*Date: 23/09/09*

## Continue from page 1

In the meantime, Captain Aitken, 'the keeper of the dog', was taken prisoner. When Major returned to his unit he was attached to Major Tony Everist. In September 1942 the bull terrier was promoted to the rank of major, and in the same month he finished second in the 33 1/3 yards dog paddle at the battalion's swimming sports.

While training as an armoured unit in February 1943, 19 Regiment – as it became – was inspected by Lieutenant-General Bernard Freyberg, commander of the New Zealand Division. Major wore his special jacket with unit colours and emblem. The general

took note of Major's attendance: 'Ah, the old dog. You've been on every parade yet.'

The regiment sailed for Italy at the end of 1943, the old dog now accompanied by his new keeper, Lieutenant Steve Whitton. Major served until his death on 17 December 1944, probably from pneumonia. He was buried with full military honours at Rimini.

Regimental Sergeant Major Dave Rench wrote that 'When we laid Major to rest at Rimini, I think perhaps some of the later members of the unit found it hard to appreciate the deep sentiment shown by the old hands for the old Dog. However, it was not only

as a unit mascot that Major was so affectionately remembered, but as a link with his first fine soldier master, Capt E.W.S. Williams, killed in action 28 November 1941 – a man to whom the 19th owed much, and who we buried on the rocky slopes of Ed Duda in November 1941 – and indeed to many other good men who had followed him as Keeper of the Dog who now shares with two of them a place on the 19th's Roll of Honour.'

No trace of his grave remains, but his exploits live on in the official history of 19 Battalion and Armoured Regiment and in the book. The four-legged major by Graham Spencer.

## Honde byt wanneer hulle nie verstaan (Jul 07 2009 05:21:33:803PM - (SA) )

*Hoe verhinder jy dat jou kind deel van die statistieke word van kinders wat jaarliks deur honde gebyt word? Terésa Coetzee het 'n kenner se raad gaan vra.*

Onlangs is mense weer geskok deur die nuus dat nog 'n kind deur 'n hond aangeval en byna verskeur is. Op Vrydag 19 Junie is die vierjarige Xander van Zyl van Secunda se oor byna afgeskeur, dele van sy kopvel is afgeruk en sy linkerarm gebreek toe vermoedelik 'n Amerikaanse veghond hom aangeval het. Later is berig dat Xander moontlik die gebruik van sy vingers gaan verloor as gevolg van die aanval. Die hond is kort daarna van kant gemaak. Ongelukkig het Xander se verhaal maar net nog 'n gruverhaal geword van kinders wat jaarliks deur aggressiewe honde aangeval word. Tog sê dr. Quixi Sonntag, veearts en dosent in dieregedrag aan die Universiteit van Pretoria se fakulteit veeartsenykunde, dat dit nie net mense is wat ly onder die gevolge van aanvalle deur honde nie – “dikwels word honde ook die slagoffers van verwerping, mishandeling, onnodige straf en soms word hulle selfs van kant gemaak omdat hulle blootgestel is aan omstandighede wat teen hul natuurlike gedrag indruis”. “Dit is net so belangrik om jou kinders van kleins af reg te leer hoe om hulle naby honde te gedra as wat dit is om jou honde van kleins af reg te leer hoe om hulle naby kinders te gedra. “En natuurlik speel die keuse van die hond wat jy as troeteldier kies 'n baie belangrike rol,” sê Sonntag.

Moenie 'n hond kies bloot omdat jy van sy voorkoms hou of omdat 'n onbekende teler jou probeer oortuig van sy ma en pa se sagmoedige temperament nie. Doen jou huiswerk deeglik voordat jy op 'n ras besluit en praat met 'n verskeidenheid telers. Waghondrasse soos boerboele, rottweilers, dobermanns, kettlingbulhonde (bull Mastiffs) en terriërs (veral Amerikaanse veghonde) is meer geneig om aggressief op te tree as honde soos labradors, goue apporteerhonde, patryshonde (pointers) en speurhonde (beagles).

**Leer jou kind reg** Maar hoekom ge-

beur dit dan dat sagmoedige honde óók byt? Volgens Sonntag verstaan honde nie altyd ons menslike gedrag nie en hulle is dikwels “geprogrammeer” om op 'n sekere wyse op te tree. “'n Skreeuende kind wat oor 'n grasperk hardloop, kan op die ingewing van die oomblik soos 'n prooi lyk. “Interessant genoeg byt honde gewoonlik wanneer kinders op hul aktiefste is – smiddae laat en oor naweke. Tog wys statistieke die kans is groter dat kinders deur mense skade berokken sal word as deur 'n gesinshond,” sê Sonntag. Troeteldiere is 'n belangrike faset in kinders se ontwikkeling en navorsing het al herhaaldelik bewys dat kinders wat saam met diere in en om die huis grootword, 'n beter selfbeeld en beter sosiale vaardighede het. Tog is dit jou verantwoordelikheid as ouer om jou kind van baie kleins af te leer om vir alle diere respek te hê.

### Hier volg 'n paar wenke:

1. Jou kind bly te alle tye jou verantwoordelikheid en jy moet onthou dat enige hond kan byt. Moet nooit 'n baba, kleuter of jong kind sonder toesig in die teenwoordigheid van 'n hond laat nie.
2. Leer jou kinders van kleins af dat enige hond 'n potensiele byter kan wees. Laat hulle maar eerder bang wees vir vreemde honde as wat jy later spyt is.
3. Honde hou nie van drukkie en soene nie! Nooit nie. Leer jou kinders dat 'n hond op die bors of aan die kant van sy nek gekrap mag word, maar net wanneer jy by is.
4. Leer jou kind dat hy soos 'n boom moet wees as 'n vreemde hond op hom afstorm – doodstil. Die meeste honde raak nog meer verward as kinders rondhardloop of skree.
5. Maak altyd seker of daar honde is wanneer jou kind by 'n maatjie gaan speel. Dring daarop aan dat die hond van die kinders geskei is indien hy enigsins gevaarlik lyk. Onthou, jou kind se veiligheid is steeds jou verantwoordelikheid, al kuier hy of sy by iemand anders.
6. Wees bewus van jou bure se honde en die omgewing waar jou kinders veral rondbeweeg. Maak seker jou kind terg nooit die diere aan die ander kant van

die heining nie.

7. Leer hoe om honde se lyftaal te interpreteer en leer kinders wanneer 'n hond byvoorbeeld gaap of sy lippe lek, kan dit al die eerste tekens van stres wees – dan het jy tyd om voorkomende aksie te neem.

**Leer jou hond reg** Net soos kinders behoort honde ook van baie kleins af geleer te word wat aanvaarbare gedrag is. Hondjies is gewoonlik die eerste vier maande op hul ontvanklikste om goeie, aanvaarbare gedrag te leer en dis ook wanneer 'n hond se temperament gevorm word. “As 'n hondjie binne die eerste vier maande positief blootgestel word aan kinders van verskillende ouderdomme, sal dit hom gewoonlik in die toekoms help om veiliger met kinders om te gaan,” sê Sonntag. Sy sê ook om aggressiewe gedrag te beheer, kan jy jou klein hondjie gewoon maak aan mense se hande in sy kosbak. Voer hom met jou hand uit sy bak en hou jou hand in die bak as jy sy kos voor hom neersit. Wees konsekwent deur goeie gedrag gereeld te beloon, sodat die hond weet wat van hom verwag word. Moenie ongewenste gedrag straf nie – honde sien dit as aggressie en leer dan juis om aggressief te wees.

Onthou, jou kind se veiligheid rondom troeteldiere bly jou heel eerste verantwoordelikheid. Moenie terugdeins of 'n laat-maar-begaan-houding inslaan nie. Ook mev. Cornel van Zyl, Xander se ma, sê sy verwyd haarself vandag omdat sy haar kind vir daardie paar sekondes onder haar toesig uitgelaat het. “Hulle het die een oomblik nog hier in die huis gespeel en die volgende oomblik het hy oor die straat saam met sy maatjie gestap en is hy gebyt. “Ek was altyd bewus van die hond, maar hy het nooit aggressief gelyk nie. Ons het self twee honde en Xander weet hy moet honde respekteer.

“Tog wens ek ek kan die tyd terugdraai.”

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## Determining the Best Bull Terrier in Show

By John Roodt

What a pleasure it was to follow the World Athletics Championship in Germany on TV recently. If only judging dogs could have been so easy! We saw Ussaine Bolt demolishing his previous world record by running the 100 metre sprint in 9,58 seconds. An absolute incredible achievement. The whole world rejoiced and afterwards no issues were raised. Ussain Bolt was 1st over the line followed by Tyson Gay and Assawa Powell. No argument over 2nd and 3rd place either!

A Best in Show winner at any Bull Terrier show will never ever get such

unamous approval. The reason being that though we have the Standard as a guideline against which Bull Terriers are measured, chances are that no 2 judges ever interpret the 'Standard' the same. The last Supreme Bull Terrier Show here in South Africa is a good example of this. By reading the Judging Critiques put up by the 3 judges it is quite clear they differed substantially on quite a few dogs. None of them were wrong in their judgement though. It however proofs that individuals quite often do not all interpret the "Standard" or see a good dog in the same way.

"Politics" and gossip around our Show Rings are very often because of different interpretations of the "Standard" or a liking for a certain "type" of Bull Terrier. Who said judging Bull Terriers must be as easy as picking your winners at an Athletics Championship? Maybe one day we will find all the judges agreeing on the same winners at a show, but will it be in our life time.....? I am not so sure. Perhaps in Utopia.



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