

Our First Siberian

In 1993 Roger and I had been given a wedding gift where we could choose to travel anywhere in the world. We decided to do something different and as we had always wanted to experience a "white Christmas" we chose to visit the USA where Roger first spent two weeks at the University of Washington, Seattle and from there it was a hop-skip-and-jump to Alaska and a week of dog-sledding in the wilds. We fell in love with the huskies and decided to return to South Africa with our very own Siberian. At the time we knew nothing about breeders, puppy mills, or the Siberian breed, but we did own a border collie X that we had had for 8 years. We bought a newspaper, looked in the classifieds, and after a frantic search we found a lovely red puppy. Tokosha arrived home with us on 1 January 1994 to a hot summer's day, only 4 months old.

It was soon after our return that we decided to take her to puppy training school and realised that we had a "dog that was different". We were approached by a whippet breeder (who has become part of the family) who suggested that we show her as she was AKC registered. That was the start of Denalibelay Siberians.

Denalibelay

When in Alaska we stayed in the Denali National Park not far from the craggy Tokosha Mountains. It just seemed appropriate that we name our new pet after the mountains that are in the McKinley Range - also known as Denali. Both Roger and I love mountaineering and decided to combine the two words "Denali" and "belay" which is a term used when rock climbing. So the birth of Denalibelay Siberians.

We acquired our second import from the USA in February 1996. Tokosha and Blackie (the border collie) were great friends but she was way too energetic for him and spent her time chasing the cats. I had no interest in breeding and had Tokosha spayed. At the time, I hated the idea of having to find good homes for my puppies. Traleika, named after a glacier on Mount McKinley (Denali), was just what Tokosha needed. A good playmate. After limited showing Traleika told us in no uncertain terms that this was not his favourite past-time. We decided that his happiness is more important to us than winning the ribbons. My desire to show was still so intense that I had to get another dog!

Tanana - named after the Tanana River in Alaska - arrived in March 1999. She loved the show ring and is a delight to handle. Her favourite Handler is a young Junior Handler from Cape Town. After winning numerous puppy groups, we decided to do our first breeding.

We kept a bitch puppy (Ch Denalibelay Alpine Ascent) from Tanana. She is our first Champion.

On our 9th wedding anniversary Kossok's Jackanapes Jubilee (Jack) arrived at Denalibelay.

December 25th 2002 brought a wonderful surprise. Two beautiful puppies from Kontoki. Thank you Tom and Marlene.

In the few short years since owning this wonderful breed we have learnt much, and know that there is more to learn both from our mentors and our dogs. Our kennel will remain small so that all of the dogs can have our undivided attention.

Denalibelay Siberians
Breeding For Keeping