



HISTORY OF SGV

A small group of vets including Vic Perry from Bristol were the founder members of the SGV, which was founded in 1965 and affiliated to the BVA in 1966 as a non-territorial division. Its aims and objects were very similar to those of the society today, promoting knowledge of the racing greyhound and trying to enhance the status of veterinary surgeons working on the tracks. The list of members in the founding years included Vic Perry, E J Heather, J K Biddis, David Poulter, Brian Cartland, and Ian Denley. Bruce Prole assures me that he was a founder member, and my name crops up in '66 apologising for absence.

Meetings were usually held in Oxford, which presumably was a convenient venue for the Bristol vets (alas there are no longer tracks in Bristol). Like many similar organisations, the efforts of a few individuals were responsible for keeping the society active. I note that my fellow alumnus Brian Fenton was treasurer for a time, he lived in Streatly and was at the Reading track. Sadly in the late '80's the Society went into suspended animation due partly to lack of interest, and also I am sure to the difficulty of attending meetings during a practitioner's long and busy working week. When I was track vet at Hendon (the site is now beneath Brent Cross Shopping Centre) we had two meetings a week of eight races, and a trial session on Tuesday afternoons.

Now most tracks hold meetings of twelve races four to five times a week, plus a trials session. With racing seven days a week, morning noon and night, a track vet can face a busy schedule; hence reluctance to spend days off attending professional meetings.

It was at the BSAVA in 1966 that the Society was reformed following a meeting at the BVA of interested persons the previous autumn. The original Society of Greyhound Veterinarians having become defunct and had not met for many years. David Poulter became the first President of the new body with John Speer as Honorary Secretary and Alison McInnes as Vice-President with a large representative committee. Bill Steele later took over as Honorary Secretary. We have currently around 80 members, retaining our place on the BVA Council despite our small size. The Society's representatives regularly attend BVA Council meetings, BVA Welfare Committee meetings, IGF and those of other welfare organizations.

Activities since reforming have included the very successful educational meeting with the British Greyhound Racing Board at Monmore Stadium in 1997 which was well attended. Then in 1998 we held our first very successful Academic Day at the University of Herts. This meeting attracted very high-powered professional attendance, and the Society will be putting on further meetings as well as those of

more general interest. A further Academic Day was planned for October 1999 with a varied and interesting range of topics, but was cancelled due to lack of interest. In November 2000 the Society held a very successful meeting at Nottingham which extended over 2 days.

The committee meets regularly and discussions, amongst other matters, have included residues in dope testing, track construction and maintenance, inspection of training kennels, contract of employment, continuity of employment and facilities for veterinary surgeons at tracks, and it is pleasing to note that the NGRC has published in the Greyhound Calendar recommendations for facilities for veterinary surgeons working at greyhound stadia after consultation with the Society.

Include the oestrus control study, and the presence of the Society's representatives at many welfare and charitable meetings and it becomes obvious that our Society has an influential voice in greyhound racing as a whole. We are forging links with Members of both Houses of Parliament. The greyhound industry is facing a busy and turbulent future, and the President and the committee are proud to observe that the Society has an important role in this future.