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This information also appears on general Pom site - www.pomkins.com

Why do we call the breed a Pomeranian?

The name Pomeranian came into general use by the 1760s in England but at the time was a general term and included breeds now separately classified – all 5 sizes of German Spitz (inc. the Keeshond) plus the Italian Volpino. In Germany one of many regional names for the Wolfshund (Wolf dog) or Spitz dog was 'Der Pommer' – signifying the type found in Pomerania (NE Germany). This name was anglicised to Pomeranian.

Other old regional names for Spitz dogs in Germany translate into English as the Bear Spitz, the Lion Spitz, the Wolf Spitz and the Great (Gross) Spitz. Smaller Spitz also existed such as the Fox Spitz and later the Mannheimer Zwerg- Spitz.

This type was also called - in France the Lou Lou, Chien de Pomeranie or Lulu - in Holland the Wolfshond before the name was changed in 1780s to Keeshond - in Italy the Volpino, Lupino, Cane de Quirinale, Florentine Spitz and Italian Spitz.

However, it was the name Pomeranian that captured the imagination of Georgian England and the rest is history!

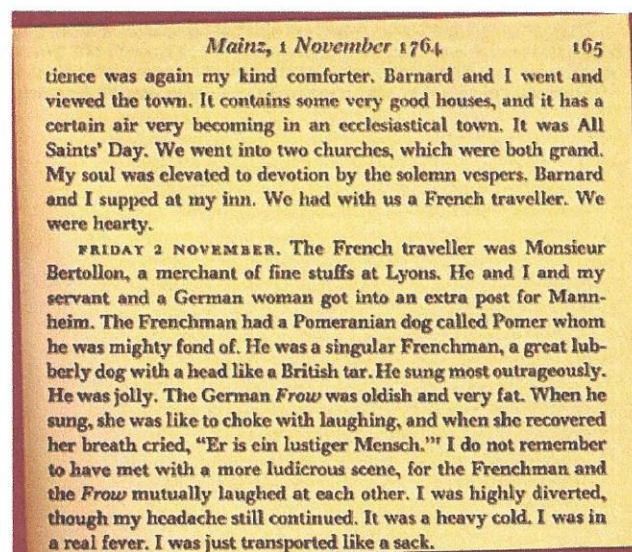
It's worth mentioning the Germans did not officially use the definition Pomeranian until 1974! As of 1994 the FCI Standard defined the Pomeranian/Zwergspitz as the smallest size of German Spitz (Deutscher Spitz). Zwerg means dwarf. In Holland all 5 sizes (of German Spitz) are known as Keeshond a modern Pom is a dwarf Keeshond.

What was the first known reference in British literature to a Pomeranian dog?

James Boswell and Pomer a Pomeranian dog - Mainz and Mannheim November 2nd 1764 First known reference in British literature to a Pomeranian dog.

Boswell on the Grand Tour of Germany and Switzerland Edited by Frederick a. Pottle, Yale Edition, published by McGraw Hill Book Co. Inc. 1953 extract scanned from my own personal collection of Boswell's diaries.

I was delighted to debut this fresh information about Poms in an article about Pom History I wrote in July 2008 commissioned by the American Pomeranian Club's 'Pomeranian Review' and published March 2009 in the 50th Anniversary Edition of the Pomeranian Review. It is equally gratifying to learn this information along with documentation about the intentional breeding of a Pom female with a semi-tamed Wolf in London in 1765 has now entered main stream Pom information and has recently been cited on Wikipedia!



What is the origin or early history of the breed?

The FCI and German breed historians attribute the origin of the German Spitz (including the Pomeranian and Keeshond) to 'stone age Peat Dogs (Torfhund) – Canis familiaris palustris Ruthimeyer – and the later Lake Dweller's Pfahlbau Spitz'. The FCI and German historians consider the German Spitz to be the oldest breed of dog in Central Europe from which other breeds have been produced. This theory is substantiated by archaeological discoveries in Switzerland and throughout Germany. The German Spitz is considered to be the national breed of Germany.