

GIANCOLA

COLONIAL

Joan Giancola

1. My decision to purchase a pet for my son, an only child, began with research to find the best breed to suit a young boy and fit into family life. After narrowing it down to three breeds, I began visiting breeders to see examples of each one. My son wanted a Scottie because one lived down the street from us, but after being surrounded by a litter of Westie puppies one afternoon, that changed both our minds! Who could resist those fuzzy white faces and pert personalities? After that, our fate was decided as Westies became a part of our household ever since.
2. I contacted the Louisville Kennel Club for names of Westie breeders, who in turn referred me to Gia Bates of Dayton, Ohio. It was Gia's litter we had visited at the home of Betty Williams when the puppies were being evaluated.
3. We decided on getting one of the puppies deemed as pet quality.
4. Betty Williams of Doon Macduff has been most instrumental in guiding me through the years in regard to breed conformation, breeding issues and ultimately co-ownership. She also helped me learn about the breed by encouraging my involvement with membership in local, regional and national breed clubs.
5. Betty Williams possesses the wisdom, experience and people skills that enable her to work for the best interests of the breed. In addition, she does not allow competition to interfere with friendships.
6. Melinda Lyon of Lair O'Lyon taught me the basics of showmanship and grooming in my early years of showing my first Westie. She dragged me to many shows that first summer and I learned by observation at ringside.
7. As for memorable moments in Westies, three occasions come to mind: my first time to win Winners Dog, BOW for a 5 point major at a regional specialty; watching the same dog take Winners Dog and BOW at Montgomery County that same year; and then in later years, finishing a bitch from Bred By class, winning two regional specialties along the way. Those were thrilling moments as it showed me that breeders from lesser known programs could also accomplish such things!
8. I don't know that I have just one favorite dog show, but I do enjoy the indoor regional specialties the best.
9. Melinda Lyon taught me the basics of stripping, especially how to groom the head. I have gleaned many grooming tips from other breeders and at seminars.

10. Credit for litter evaluation has to go primarily to both Betty Williams and Melinda Lyon.

11. My first show Westie, Ch Colonial Doon Macduff Merlyn, was most influential in my breeding program for producing the straight white coat, dark pigment and broad head in his progeny. His son, Ch Maxamillion II, whom I had the opportunity to co-own and show, was known for his temperament and showmanship, but more importantly, for siring Ch Doon Macduff Duncan Dundee, bred and owned by Betty Williams. Duncan left his mark on the breed with a continuation of the same outstanding qualities of his father and grandfather, by winning more in his career as a special, and producing total get of 20+ champions.

12. Ch Clenfinnan Something Dandy, owned by Betty and Jim Boso, would be my choice for a dominant influence on the breed due to his fluid movement. It was the first time I remember that “reach and drive” became obvious to me.

13. The most memorable Montgomery moment was watching Max take Winners Dog and BOW in 1993.

14. My best impression of the Centennial in 2009 was the entire scope of the weeks’ many activities. I was on Westie overload!

15. The artists impressing me the most have been Mimi Baker and Barbara Hands. As for authors, Ruth Flaherty’s “Westies From Head To Tail” influenced me the most. As a new Westie owner years ago, I appreciated her straightforward informative style, and continue to recommend it to prospective owners today.

16. My favorite collectibles are the Killyglen sculptures from Ireland.

17. I remain active in the WHWTC of Indiana.

18. I see Westies becoming more popular with the public, especially since a Westie is being featured in dog food commercials for Cesars. Popularity can also be attributed to the increased participation of Westies in performance events.

19. Education, education, education is the obligation of every serious Westie person.

20. Moving forward, we need to remember and recognize the original purpose of the breed in our breeding programs, as well as continue the research on health concerns.