

MAY

Charles May

1. Why Westies?

I was working for the State Department at the American Embassy in Stockholm in 1955 and saw someone with a cute, white dog and since my Swedish was primitive I couldn't learn the name of the breed. I described it to a Swedish co-worker who called the Swedish Kennel Club, and between them they decided it must be a Westie.

2. From whom did you obtain your first Westie?

A lady in Stockholm bred Westies; she also had a perfume shop. She brought two male puppies from two litters to the shop, and I picked the rambunctious one which she had named "Dox Jocke." "I called him "Spook."

3. Was this Westie purchased as a pet or show dog?

I purchased him as a pet, knowing nothing about purebred show dogs at the time.

4. Who was your most important mentor and why?

That would have to have been Margaret Barr, because of her friendliness and love of the breed. Her Westies were all showy - fun and unafraid of strangers (people or dogs). Margaret just brought all her Westie friends together and shared her great knowledge of the breed.

5. What do you remember most about this mentor?

Margaret has always been most memorable for her love of the breed, enthusiasm and ethics.

6. Who were some of the other mentors that influenced you? How did they do so?

We met John McLeod at our first show, in 1958. He told us about the parent club, and may have even sponsored us. I have a note he sent us after the show enclosing the club's membership application and complimenting us on Spook and our "good old terrier spirit".

A Mr. and Mrs. Green, in San Jose, had a Westie kennel - Wuhl, I think the name was. I remember one they were showing then - in 1958 - named White Wuhl. Their handler, Paul Foerster, gave us an invaluable lesson on ring manners, which we never forgot.

We met professional handlers Charlie and Helen Wunderling through Margaret Barr, and they taught us how to groom our Westies. Spook never looked professionally groomed when I prepped him, but it didn't seem to stop his winning.

We became friends with Lena Kardos, a handler from Southern California. She had a Scottie kennel, but also showed Westies. She would take Spook away from my husband

when she didn't have anything to do, and show him just for fun. Although Spook was great in conformation with a beautiful gait, he was not particularly showy, and she just had a way of perking him up and turning him into a real show-off. (He was a lover, not a fighter.) Once, a judge even kissed him on top of his head.

Through Lena, we met Marge Blue of Klintiloch kennels in Arizona, and got our little Klintiloch Milli-Chip to keep Spook company at home and at shows. We never bred them, leaving those matters to the professionals. When she came in heat we boarded her at the vet; but Spook became such a pest without her - moaning, crying, not eating - that we brought her home and from then on, boarded him instead.

7. To date, what has been your most important/ memorable moment in Westies?

There were two that particularly stand out:

(a) Bea Marvin was judging Westies in Santa Barbara, and kept Spook with her in the ring after he placed first in his class, and as subsequent classes came in, she would move one or two close to him for comparison. We'd never seen anything like that. Also that weekend at the two shows, Ventura and Santa Barbara, Spook finished his championship with 9 points.

(b) Placing second in the group at Golden Gate was our other "golden moment."

8. What is your favorite dog show? Why?

We always liked Golden Gate in San Francisco because it was benched and close to home in San Jose. Santa Barbara was a close second because of the beautiful surroundings.

9. If you groom your own dogs, who taught you to do so?

I guess I jumped the gun and answered the preceding question in #6 above.

10. If you are or were a breeder, who taught you to evaluate litters and young stock?

This question is not applicable to us, although I think we could have evaluated youngsters as time went on.

11. When you look back, which of your Westies would you consider your favorite or most influential? Why? Which Westie not owned by you did you consider a favorite or most influential?

We don't have children, so this is like trying to pick a favorite child.

12. Also looking back, which sire, in your opinion, had a strong influence on the breed?

Like #10, this question is not applicable to us.

13. What was your most memorable Montgomery County moment? Roving moment?

We never attended these events, so could not answer.

14. If you attended the Centennial in 2009, what were your greatest experiences from it?

We did not attend the Centennial.

15. What Westie author/artist influenced you the most?

No reply

16. Do you have a favorite Westie collectible(s)?

This is a ceramic piece made and donated by Amanda Preston to one of the shows for Best of Winners. We fell in love with it when we saw it, and then Spook won it.

17. Are you or were you active in any regional Westie Clubs? Which one(s)?

We are no longer active in regional club activities.

18. What do you think the future holds for the breed? Where would you like to see Westies in 10/20 years?

No reply

19. How best can WHWTCA members assure the future well-being of the breed.

I would hope that Westie enthusiasts would be as friendly and helpful to newcomers as those in the past were to us. It made all the difference in the world

20. What advice can you impart to present and future Westie enthusiasts?

No reply