

**LEE**

**LOCHINMAR**

**Marcella Lee**

When I first laid eyes on the jaunty full-of-himself Westie trotting around the ring with veteran handler Doug McClain in 1965, I knew I had found the breed for me. I had shown Shelties for several years, with a fair degree of success, and was attracted to their beauty and elegance. But I never cared for their temperament. I found them too yappy, too insecure, and too hyper for me.

The Westie, on the other hand, had the world by the tail, loved everybody, loved to challenge other dogs, loved being the center of attention. To me Westies were happy but not hyper. The Westie head and expression alone enchanted me.

I set about finding out where I could get one just like Doug's dog. Not that easy, I found out. This dog was priceless, the last remaining show dog bred and owned by May Pacey of England. Her world-renown Wolvey Kennel was being dispersed (I believe she had already passed away). This young stud was English Ch. Wolvey Pickwick, and the lucky new owner was Mrs. Mary Fisher of Chicago. I contacted Mrs. Fisher and several months later was able to purchase a female puppy sired by Pickwick, who by now was making a name for himself under the sure guidance of Doug, winning several Bests in Show along the way.

They say you should always try to get the best possible bitch you can afford when starting out in a new breed. I believe I accomplished that. I named her Mar-El's Lochinmar Lorna Doone—Cookie for short. I knew nothing about stripping and grooming a Westie, and there was no one else in the Minneapolis area who showed or groomed Westies. I would send Cookie out to a show with a friend of mine who showed German Shorthaired Pointers. He would win with her, but he would come back shaking his head in puzzlement, saying that she looked different from any of the other Westies in the ring. Of course the reason for that was that neither one of us had a clue as to how to prepare a Westie for the ring, other than giving her a good bath the night before. It speaks volumes for her inherent quality that she was able to win and to finish her championship without benefit of any knowledgeable preparation.

This was my introduction to the wonderful world of Westies. I had a steep learning curve to master, with no one in the vicinity to mentor me or help me along. But for the past 45 years I have been, and always will be, a passionate lover of the breed. I never had a large kennel, preferring instead to enjoy my dogs as house pets, and coincidentally putting a lie to the notion that a house pet does not make a good showman. Nonsense! A good Westie is at home in any environment.

I usually finished one Westie per year, and usually had one litter each year. To say that I enjoy raising puppies is an understatement. Nothing is more beautiful or satisfying to

behold than a litter of four or five little white “porkers” contentedly nursing at the amply flowing milk bar. Likewise, nothing is more gratifying than sending one of those little porkers out into the world with their new owners, to be loved and cherished throughout their lives.

One of the highlights of my show career with the Lochinmar Westies was having one of my own homebreds take Winners Bitch at the Montgomery County show under the legendary Anne Rogers Clark in 1995. I am told by onlookers that I jumped at least a foot off the ground when Annie pointed at my Annie –Lochinmar’s Annie Laurie—as the winner over at least 50 other bitches. What a thrill. There have been other shows just as thrilling, but Montgomery County is something special, as anyone who has been there knows.

For the past twenty-five years, the friendship I struck up with Maureen Murphy of Whitebriar Kennels in New Zealand has been an incredibly rich and rewarding experience. Not only is Maureen a wonderful person, combining a sharp intellect with a delightful sense of humor, but she has perhaps unwittingly served as the perfect mentor for me. I have learned so much from her. And I have been lucky to be on the receiving end of several excellent bitches that she has been willing to export to me over the years.

This is not to say that there are not many fine stud dogs in the U.S. Since I do not keep stud dogs, I have used several of them over the years. There are many first-class Westie breeders whose friendship and help I have always valued as a result of these connections.

This history, written in 2012, is a brief survey of my many years with the breed I still love dearly. My knees complain when I get down on the floor with a litter of Westie puppies, and I have a hard time keeping up with my four-legged friends in the show ring. But the love is still there. The concept of working as a team, whether we’re in the ring or in the whelping box, leaves me with many precious memories.

After all the years I have spent with Westies, I can still say with certainty that the breed is in good hands. The Westies of today may look a bit different largely because grooming styles have changed over time, but they are as sound and typey as the great ones of the past. We have stood on some strong shoulders—breeders of sincere conviction whose dedication to the perky little white dogs has never wavered. Long may the breed thrive and grow in quality and perfection and adherence to the standard.