

## UNDERWOOD

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### Marjorie Underwood

Why Westies? When choosing a purebred dog, I put forth a great amount of effort and time, searching and learning about various breeds. My goal was to choose a breed that was small (a nice armful), sturdy, good bone and substance, would bark as a big dog, would have great attitude about itself, would be a great companion that would enjoy being with other people as well as other dogs, and would present a rather unique appearance. I fell in love with a photo of a Westie head on the cover of a \$1.00 book, *The West Highland White Terrier*.

Breeder of first Westie: Marilyn Finn.

Pet or show? After reading the standard several times (Oh my, how did one understand what those words were describing?), my goal was to find a good breeder. I looked at various litters, walking away with an empty crate and money still in my pocket. Finally, I found a litter of two. The breeder stated that if I wanted a pet, I should choose the little girl, or if I wanted a show dog, then the male would be the better choice. Never having been to a dog show, little girl had just found a new home with us. However, she did end up showing very well. The male never saw the show ring.

Most important mentor: Peg Lambert was always ready to help, to advise and to make very good suggestions. Peg's passion for the Westie was genuine and sincere. We had many good laughs and cries throughout the many, many years. Great memories.

Other mentors: This group included B.G. Frame, Ginny Fredericks, Betty Williams, and Marilyn Finn. Their continual dedication to the Westie breed, to enjoy and to improve the breed, and at the same time to preserve and to continue the unique Westie characteristics will always be an inspiration.

Most memorable moment: Delivering my first home bred Westie litter.

Favorite dog show: Westminster. All of the excitement, the opportunity to observe, to interact with the benched exhibits, to recognize the similarities and differences among the breeds within a specific group, to talk with the exhibitors, to witness the beautiful groups and the spotlight on the BIS winner are all part and parcel of the Westminster experience. Oh yes, we must remember all of those enticing booths.

Who taught you to groom: Peg Lambert, Marilyn Finn, and a lot of observing others at shows.

Who taught you litter evaluation: Peg Lambert.

Favorite, most influential Westie: Bred by me: Ch Marwood's Tiddly Wink. Wink passed on his beautiful head, bone, substance, balance, coat and attitude and

temperament for generations.  
Not bred by me: Ch. Elfinbrook Simon.

Sire who had a strong influence on breed: Ch Mac-Ken-Char's Irish Navigator.

Most memorable Montgomery moment; that was judging Montgomery sweeps in the mid-80s. It was a beautiful, crisp and chilly Pennsylvania morning. The vibrant, brilliantly green, dewy grass was the perfect setting for all of those sparkling, well groomed Westie pups to make their grand entrance into the most exciting Terrier show in the USA. It was a thrilling experience. Judging the Roving in Minnesota and in Northern California stand out as my greatest Roving moments.

Most influential author/artist: John Marvin.

Regional club: WHWTC of Indiana.

Future of Westies: Today's breeders, as well as the breeders of the future will need to study and to understand in depth the history of the breed, the type and conformation and the standard for the breed, and then apply this knowledge to the upcoming breedings and generations. The Westie is a beautiful and delightful breed. Neither presently, nor in the future, can the breed afford to be blindsided by introducing distracting or quirky descriptions into the Westie standard. Hopefully, it will continue to be our wonderful breed in ten to twenty years and longer. Let's cherish and preserve this special breed for many years to come.

Our responsibility as members of the WHWTCA is to be reputable and responsible breeders and exhibitors, to mentor future breeders and exhibitors and to overcome "kennel blindness" wherever and whenever. We are the role models for future breeders.

To the present Westie enthusiast, be considerate and helpful not only to each other but advise and mentor those new to our breed. Your concerns, your attitude and your enthusiasm will encourage the new Westie fanciers to continue their journey in the purebred dog world.

For the newcomer search, search and search until you find a mentor with whom you are comfortable. Learning about the Westie breed doesn't happen overnight nor does it happen quickly. It is a long process. It takes time and patience for a person to learn the standard, how to interpret it and how to apply all of this information. During this process you will begin to realize and to understand what your own goals are for your breeding program. NEVER, NEVER STOP LEARNING and enjoy your experiences with the Westie. It is, indeed, a wonderful and a special breed.