

WEISS, SEYMOUR

GLENGIDGE

Seymour N. Weiss

As most people know by this time, I married into Westies. Before that I was actively involved in Kerry Blue and Dandie Dinmont Terriers, achieving a good measure of success in both breeds. So my beginnings in Westies date to 1971 when I met and later married Helene Andrews. I became the co-owner of the four Highlanders Helene owned at the time and we did finish one of these.

I never really concentrated on one mentor in Westies or the other breeds in which I was active. I think there is a great deal to be learned everywhere in dogs and you can pick and choose the path you will follow. If I had to name a most important mentor, it would have to be the Mistress of Mac-Ken-Char, the late Joanne Glodek. I didn't always agree with Joanne, but she was instrumental in the success of the Glengidge prefix. We owe a lot to this canny dog person that continues to stand us in excellent stead. I also learned valuable lessons from Tom and Billye Ward who bred our foundation matron, Ch. Donnybrook's Eve, although, as with Joanne Glodek, I didn't always agree with them. Another mentor who was very helpful was Bill Ferrara and his late partner, John Price. Just prior to getting into Westies, I became John Marvin's editor when I was at Howell Book House and learned a great deal about the breed from that perspective. Suffice it to say I learned many things from many Westie people most of which still works for me today.

I would have to say that our most important, and memorable moment in Westies is when we retired the Wishing Well Trophy for Best in Sweepstakes at the national.

My favorite dog show is Montgomery County and I have gone every year since 1961. I love MCKC because this is where you can see the best dogs from everywhere and if you keep your eyes and mind open it is possible to bring what you have learned to your breeding program to assure shining moments in the years ahead.

I do groom my own dogs and will be the first to admit that I am by no means even close to the best at the art. On the other hand, I'm not too bad. As with learning about Westies, I learned about grooming by taking a little from here and a little from there, a little from my pre-Westie experiences and trying them out on my own dogs. I carried on with what worked for me and discarded what didn't. I am still learning; someone is always coming up with a new grooming tool or product. If you want to keep up with the competition you have to try everything.

All those mentioned above helped us grade our puppies and young ones. We also flew by the seat of our pants many times. Did we make mistakes? Of course, but we also learned from them to do better later on. And we did.

My favorite Westie is an elderly gentleman most of you know. "Ricky" (Ch. Glengidge Watch Out World) enjoyed a wonderful show career and produced some very nice offspring. Ricky and I share a birthday and a simpatico I have never experienced with any of the wonderful dogs I have owned. Life has not always been good to him, but he maintains his full, loving heart although I wish he was a little more conscious of his house manners! Our other headliner, "Sari" (Ch. Glengidge Golden Charm) was a multiple Group winner that opened the gates for other Westie bitch specials. There were

other big winning bitches before her, but it seems that Sari, in the talented hands of the late Lanny Hirstein, opened many doors for her Westie sisters. That's nice.

I have had many favorites and thought of many dogs as influential. "Gregory" (Ch. Mac-Ken-Char's Irish Navigator) stands out particularly. He was a wonderful show dog and the breed's greatest sire. When Gregory honored our home by staying here during Westminster, he also showed what a total gentleman he was. Gregory, unforgettable, means the same thing. It should also be remembered that Gregory was owner handled throughout his show career. You all know how easy that is for a terrier.

I would be remiss not to mention Ch. Elfinbrook Simon, BIS at Westminster 1962, and I'm proud to say I was there when it happened. Simon's Westminster Best rocketed Westies to the fame they still enjoy today. Cesar had nothing to do with it. And there was "Andy" (Ch. Ardenrun Andsome of Purston). The BB winner at the 1976 Specialty and BIS at Montgomery the same year, he simply took one's breath away.

Gregory was the breed's top sire by a wide margin, but let it never be forgotten that every one of Gregory's champion offspring also had a mother.

My most memorable Montgomery County moment came in 1983 when the glorious array of champions paraded into the ring. I just happened to be judging that day, and there were many rumors flying around for the months leading up to the Specialty questioning my competence to handle such an important event as I had only been judging for five years up to then. But the good people of the Westie fancy trusted me and when the champions were called, the ring filled with glorious dogs from end to end. After viewing the class as a whole, I couldn't help myself and, true to my Hungarian roots, was reduced to tears. Thank heaven for my crusty steward, the late Sylvia Landsman, who slapped me around enough to get me back to the task at hand. On that day I sent Ch. Kenwood's Measure For Measure to the Group. Later, "Billy" would figure prominently into our breeding program.

My greatest memory from the Rovings we have attended was in 1992 (or 93) when our Sari was Best of Opposite Sex under Dora lee Wilson.

There was no one experience at the Centennial that stands out in my mind, but the combination of them all makes me grateful that I was able to take part. It was one of the most spectacular events I have ever been part of. Truly a once in a lifetime happening.

John T. Marvin had the greatest influence on my Westie thinking/ writing. For artists I have always been a great admirer of Sir Edwin Landseer, but of more recent vintage my favorites are the sculptures of the late Tom Drexler, the oils of Mimi Baker and Debby Borgo. There are many talented individuals creating beautiful artwork that features Westies. We should all be grateful for that. I know I am.

We probably have too many Westie collectibles by half. If I had to pick a favorite it would be a one of a kind Tom Drexler sculpture of a Westie and a Dandie Dinmont facing off. Tom made it just for us and I treasure it greatly.

We were charter members of the WHWTC of Northern New Jersey and have recently rejoined that club. We were also members of the WHWTC of Greater New York for a time. Helene and I both served terms as President.

I really can't venture a prediction on what the future holds for Westies. In the next decade or two I would hope the population of truly outstanding winners and producers grows exponentially. We don't seem to have that in Westies in 2011; to get there we need to focus in ramping up the quality of the overall breed population and put personal

interests aside.

The Westie fancy has always been a breeding fancy and we must all be sure to breed to the Standard rather than attempt to tweak the Standard to better suit our dogs.

Fanciers of newer vintage and those who have yet to take up Westies should strive to remain true to the breed's purpose and the Standard. Do that and the breed will remain strong and viable even after we have left the scene.