

Poodles Revisited

I hope I don't forget anyone, or upset anyone, but a lot of those mentioned are sadly no longer around.

I first became "Poodleized" in the early 1980s when I was having my English Cockers trimmed by John Edwards. I rapidly was taught to "show bath" the Miniatures by John, and Phillip Warburton. I organized all my lectures at University to be between Tuesday and Thursday so Fridays and Mondays were clear to accommodate dog shows. My choice of subject was somewhat dependent on this requirement!

Active in Poodles at the time were John and Phillip of course, Rev John and Mrs Gwen Drayton, who will forget the legendary "Shah?" - Ch Jondolyn Shah of Montfleuri - with many, many BIS wins to his credit, Denise Cameron with the Toy "Sara" Ch Bonheur La Divine Zara, who lived on top of the freezer in the kitchen. Denise imported Ch Lochranza Hell's Fire who proved to be so influential in Miniatures during the '80s. Also in this time frame John and Phillip imported Ch Black Delinquent of Idadoun for themselves and Ch Beritas Bianco (despite being black) for Roslyn Thomas. Both bitches produced well for Marsden and Marechal respectively.

Troy Tanner moved from Perth and Troymere became a force to be reckoned with in Toys and then Miniatures. Richard Bird was around then and he was an iridologist. He had a discomfiting habit of standing close in front of you, peering into your eyes and then diagnosing whatever ailment he saw lurking in your irises. This was fine as long as you knew him, but "first timers" found it a little off putting. Perhaps the most colourful of all these characters was Babette Cashman of Toytown Toy Poodles. Babette was most certainly a "character" in every sense of the word, She led a jet setting life style, but had had a tragic life behind the scenes, with the loss of two children. She was flamboyant, generous, funny, gracious, and a real friend to those who managed to get close to her. I well remember going to a show in Coffs Harbour where Babette stayed at the same motel. She appeared on the Sunday morning with one eye perfectly made up and the other completely bare. We were never quite sure if it was a fashion statement or if she had just been distracted half way through the make up ritual and forgot to do the second one, Anyway no-one was game to say anything to her and so she went to the show just like that.

People come and people go, but Troy teamed up with Lex Henery from Tasmania and they have also gone from strength to strength successfully expanding into Standards as well.

No jottings about Poodles would be complete without a comment on Phillip. Phillip Warburton was from Adelaide and came across to Sydney just as I was starting to show in 1981. He had a Cocker Spaniel from Jean Gillies in New Zealand, called Ch Maragown Marxedes. Bim, as he was known to his friends, was a top winning star of the early '80s and between him and John's Ch Greenglen Blue Joker, accounted for just about all the Cocker Spaniel CCs for several years. My first Cocker Ch Fairlane Blue Haven had a string of Res CCs to one or the other of them, and they, on at least one occasion, won Best in Group and Runner Up Best in Group to each other. John had already enjoyed great success with a Toy Poodle "Ozzie" Ch Barsbrae Outward Bound co-owned with Pearl Darley, and made the switch to Miniatures very easily when Lorraine Young came up to Sydney from Melbourne.

The first Champion was Jeunesse Justa Joie (or Justa Joey as the Queenslanders were wont to call her). Joy had the longest ears - perhaps even longer than Shah's!! and then into the ring came Bianco, just out of quarantine and with no ears at all. -A new fashion was necessary and quickly!

Phillip had a Miniature from Bridgitte Lukacs, Ch Proudair Gosh By Golly Wow, and Golly stayed at 78 Northwood Rd, much to my parents' horror, while Phillip was on the cargo ship bringing a contingent home from the UK. Bridgitte had his brother "Jumbo" - the biggest in the litter, but still under the measure - who Erica took to Melbourne Royal one year for Bridgitte. Phillip decided Jumbo's ears were uneven and promptly trimmed them, first the one and then the other and again and again until they were considerably shorter and Erica was having a heart attack. Fortunately he went back to Bridgitte wrapped and she was none the wiser until his next bath. I think this was the same trip when Erica was sitting in the Cameron's front room and a truck came through the wall.

Those were the days when air travel was cheap - especially if you could fly on a student pass as I could - and we managed to go to all the interstate Royals, Melbourne, Adelaide and Brisbane, and we were so lucky to be able to do this, as we got to see all the new imports and up and coming puppies from all around.

Another larger than life figure is Bob Curtis. Who could possibly give the Poodle lecture other than Uncle Bob? Remember guys, the tail should be "thick at the root", never thin and weedy! Bob has been "Mr Poodle" for so long now and I believe he has the honour of judging Standards at Westminster next year. And of course Bob as always backed up by Peter Xiradis.

Judy McMahon and Greg Ross have been responsible for the wonderful "Poodles in Australia" books, which are such marvelous records of all three varieties. Such dedication to the breed is now almost impossible to find.

My love affair with Standards began when my friend Hazel Baldwin acquired one and I helped her show her and then her daughter. However it was truly love at first sight when I walked into John's shop one morning and he was scissoring Ch Leander Luck of the Draw, out of quarantine the day before from the UK. Leigh had been brought in by John and Ilona Cowdroy, and they bred a litter from her almost straight away by her half brother James, owned by Hilda McKenzie and Wayne Burton. John and Ilona decided that the Standard did not really fit in with the Shepherds and I was so lucky to be able to purchase Leigh with the help of Hazel and Babette. She was not only the most wonderful person but produced exceptionally well. Her daughter Blanche had a litter for Marsden and for Marechal, and was eventually the dam of many Champions under both prefixes.

Margaret Emery and Barbara Holton had Ch Prowler of Leander another half brother to Leigh and the sire of her second litter. One of these puppies went back to Wendy Streatfield in the UK. Margaret and Barbara and I imported Ch Show Stopper of Leander, Casey, and he was the sire of the third litter. A dog puppy from this litter had to be rescued from his home at around 12 months of age and went to live with Erica. This was Ch Marechal Different Druma, Bruno, (despite being white), and he was the beginning of Erica's Standard Poodle journey.

Nola Westren has just "always been there". Nola has been part and parcel of Poodles as long as I can remember and has contributed nonstop. She has imported from all over the world and has basically pioneered the red colour in Toys and now Miniatures.

At that time we used to go and stay with Iris Silk in Queensland, and Iris is now back in Standards with a Marechal bitch. So many of the old faces are gone, so it is nice to see one coming back. Too many more to mention, Ann, Ellen, Tony, Lyn, Kim, the list goes on and on.

EDWINA THOMAS (Australia/South Africa)



Babette Cashman



John Edwards with Ch Jeunesse Justa Joie



Frank Sabella judging, 1st Gloria Rhodes, 2nd C Doriean and 3rd Denise Cameron with Ch Bonheur La Divine Zara (sorry other winners unidentified)



Ch Leander Luck Of The Draw (imp UK)



Phillip Warburton and John Edwards, BIS at Brisbane Royal with Ch Proudair Gosh By Golly

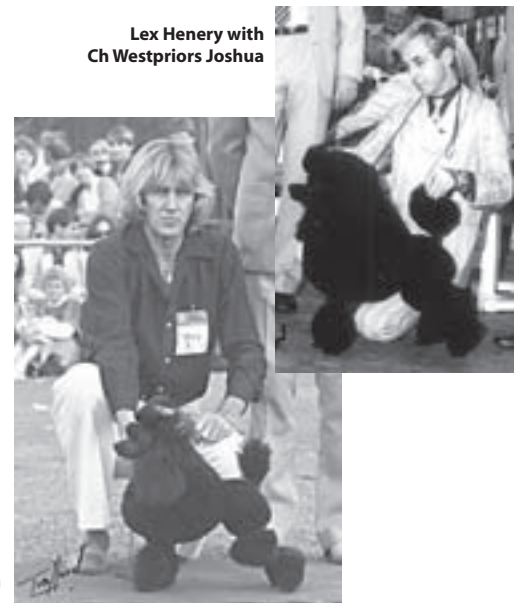
Ch Beritas Bianco (imp UK)



Denise Cameron with Eng/Aust Ch Lochranza Hellsfire (imp UK)



Nola Westren at the First National



Lex Henery with Ch Westpriors Joshua

Troy Tanner with Ch Troymere The Way We Were