

# THE SAMOYED QUARTERLY

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# Samoyed people

The Samoyed Quarterly  
Talks with  
**Robert and Constance Gaskin**  
**BOB MARDON**  
Grimsby, Ontario, Canada

## Part II

*This interview was conducted at the home of Bob and Connie Gaskin in July 2002 by Lynne Robertson.*

*Have you used inbreeding, linebreeding, or outcrossing, and how and when should each be used?*

Bob: Mostly linebreeding. Connie does the pedigree planning and pores over the pedigrees. When we go to specialties, she looks at dogs and makes notes, and has a very good handle on that. We linebreed, mostly, although we have done an inbreeding.

Connie: That was a father to daughter.

Bob: I am of the philosophy, and I think most other breeders are too, that most of breeding is test-breeding anyway. Let's face it, in the hundreds of years that this breed has been around, there are a few litters that we have had where we can take it from A to B and carry on. We are the caretakers of the genetic pool, so we have not done too bad a job. I will suggest that we have to do an outcross, and she will come up with what we are looking for in the strengths and weaknesses. In other words, we will say we have come this far with this particular thing, like good backs, but we need more fronts, or we have lost the type in the head, she will come up with this sort of thing.

Connie: Not from Chaena, the heads were nice from Chaena.

Bob: But overall, I have to give credit to Connie.

Connie: Yes, and if anything bad hap-

pened, I got that credit, too! (laughter)

Bob: We have done mostly linebreeding. The other thing we have done in tandem with this is because we have sort of had two ranges in size and type of dog, and we sell our dogs both in Canada and the United States and we know in the States they like a little bigger dog, we will have that variation. Some of our litters will be consistent in size and type, but some are bigger.

Connie: Our standards varied, the standard here and in the U.S. were different. There was about an inch variation. Females in Canada used to be 18 to 20 inches tall, and are now 19 to 21 inches, males 21 to 23 1/2 inches.

Bob: Eleven of the fourteen standards for the Samoyeds were the same, and Canada and England were different. Then Canada decided we had better get on with the other eleven, so we changed ours. We are the same as far as height now as the other eleven breed standards.

*Do you think the standard is pretty good now?*

Connie: Yes, I think so.

Bob: Yes.

*Is there anything about it you would change?*

Connie: No. One of the things I want to clarify is that we did this inbreeding, we tried an inbreeding. A friend of mine who is also a breeder said we should do a test breeding. That way we could find out if there was anything wrong or whatever. I bred Chaena to his daughter, and I was worried the whole time that the bitch was pregnant. I thought I was going to get two-headed puppies or something. (laughter) She had the puppies, and gee whiz, the puppies all looked normal. The heads were where they should be, no two heads. Bob had to deliver a calf with two heads one time. Anyway, they were normal, and they were fine. But I never want to do another father-daughter breeding.

Bob: We have done that. Going back to the standard, there was one thing that came to my mind. Along with our breeding program and the genetic screening testing done with our breed stock, we have also used grading.

Connie: As far as measurements, that is.

Bob: Yes, and this is measuring looking at static structure in relation to the skeleton of the dogs. We have had some graders around here; fortunate-

ly, we have been close by and they have been able to measure our dogs as puppies, and then measure the adults. When we did change our standard here in Canada through the national club, we were able to get them to incorporate some of these measurements.

Connie: Not everybody has followed through on that.

Bob: No, but we have been able to use what we call a static stick chart. We use grading to confirm what we feel with what we see with our eyes. We have had these dogs measured and graded, so we can get equal bone lengths and things like that. We've had that, and I would like to see more of that done in other standards.

Connie: There are only a few people who do measurements consistently. Casey Gardiner of the School of Canine Science was the one who initially started this. She wrote a great book on this subject, *Dogs: a Hobby or a Profession*. And Betty McHugh of Nepachee Kennels has been much involved, and wrote some articles in *The Samoyed Quarterly* on grading.

Bob: Not only here, but in the United States they have done measurements at the National Specialties. In fact, we had Mardee Ward Fanning, who did a measurement on one of the dogs from our breeding. I would like to see it more. The reason I say that is that having been exposed to both farm animals and companion animals when I was practicing veterinary medicine, I saw such advances made in farm animals with their testing. Mind you, the financial rewards are higher, if you get a hen that will lay an egg a day rather than one every other day. That is money in the pocket. So I know the goals are different, and the rewards are different, but I would like to see more tools such as grading and measurements eventually worked into the standards. Either as part of the



Connie and Bob with Chaena and puppy Aziza. Photo by Valley KC.



*BISS Int/Can/Am Ch. Dancingbear Color Me Bad (Chaena's son). Owners, Fred and Ruth Stoll.*

illustrated standards, or the breed standards. I think it will help the breeders. To me, that is one of the things that is important. We got into this discussion a couple of weeks ago. One of the things it takes time to acquire, you can sit ringside and watch 400 Samoyeds, but is your eye trained to see what you are actually seeing? I mentioned this to Connie; I said I would like to grab half the ringside judges and tell them to touch a dog standing on a table. I just want them to point to me where the point of the elbow is, where the shoulder is, where all these skeletal points in the structure that are hidden under that fur are located. If the eye is that good, they should be able to have almost x-ray vision and tell where each is. Connie has that ability.

Connie: Don't praise me that much! (laughter)

Bob: You do have that ability. You can have people who see things that they don't even recognize.

Connie: None of us see our

dogs the way others do.

Bob: I agree sometimes you see what you want to see. But I think things like that would help the breeders. It is not a criticism, I am just saying we need more tools. They are there, if we would use them. We could use, in striving for perfection, more tools.

*Who or what has influenced your breeding the most?*

Connie: Above all we were trying for a healthy dog. I got in touch with Lynette Hansen of Polar Mist kennels. She is Lynette Blue now. When I got in touch with her, she asked what type of dog I was looking for. I told her I wanted a bitch so I could exhibit her, do conformation and obedience. I wanted to breed her, show her, and do a bunch of things with her. I wanted a dog that had good pigment, good coat, temperament and everything. She said, "You don't want much!" (laughter) I know not every dog comes with everything perfect, and I spend half my time looking for a good plastic surgeon. (laughter)

When I find a good one, I will use him myself. But every dog we have had, they all have their own personalities that we enjoy. We get heartbroken when we lose each dog. Half the time we enjoy them, and the rest of the time I am pulling my hair out.

Bob: The thing is, the '50s, '60s and '70s were the golden years for the Samoyed in Canada. Over those ten-year periods in each of those decades, you had close to 5,000 Samoyeds registered. There were unbelievable numbers; the breed just exploded. So when Connie came on the scene, she got into it halfway through this great explosion. There was a variety of breeders and activities going on. She belonged initially to the Canadian Samoyed Club, Inc. which was one of four or five national clubs that blossomed in the '50s and '60s and then died. Some died because of numbers, and with some it was a matter of the more breeders you get, and the more dogs you get, the more diversity of opinions. Everybody wants to start their own lit-

tle kingdoms, one over here and one over there, and never the twain shall meet.

Connie: Sounds like religion, doesn't it? (laughter)

Bob: I know that the dog she was looking for was different from the English type; not the heavy-coated type.

Connie: I wanted an in-between dog, not a dog that has so much hair that it has to be groomed all the time.

Bob: That was one of her goals, to get a little bigger Sammy with the different coat. She liked the short ears rather than the large ears. Those are some of the characteristics we liked and tried to put together as to type. You would call it a bear-type head versus the wolf-type head, and we were looking for a little larger Sammy.

Connie: I wanted a little bit of both.

Bob: Some of the old-time breeders, like Kempsters of Snow-Towne kennels and some of the others, were influencing you as you came into the breed. They were some of the established



Cheryl, Howard, Knox, Ashley Brook, and Paige with Treshka and pups, February 2000.



"Where's the snow? We're ready!" Chaena, Riya, and Kuska, October 1989.

breeders. As far as the type of dog, that is. I think that is what happens today, you have breeders who are in the game for four or five years and right away, they have decided the type they are going to pull out of that standard and breed towards. That is kind of the direction that we went and have tried to go.

Connie: I don't think any one person has influenced me. The Kempsters were closer to Hamilton. There were the Hensley's of Gleadamara kennels, and the Cozens of Samoyedena kennels. Most of these early Canadian breeders are no longer with us.

Bob: As an aside, we have been asked on two occasions to write on the history of the breed in Canada for the 1995 edition of *The Samoyed* and the 1997 edition of *The New Samoyed* by Robert H. and Dolly Ward and Mardee Ward Fanning.

How many dogs do you keep now?

Connie: We have four, and I co-own a few.

Bob: She has gone to the "no males on the premises" rule.

Connie: At this time, that

is. We don't have the facilities right now. I can have six here, but there are bylaws in the town as far as barking and things like that. Besides, if I have six here, then they could say someone else can't have six there.

What is the most you have ever had?

Bob: In the late '60s and early '70s, Connie had seven and one-half acres. So she had around eleven dogs.

Connie: Eleven dogs, six cats. We had a barn, and the dogs just had a great old time running around the fields and things. They stayed on our premises, though.

Bob: She had the space and facilities to warrant a kennel of that size. But here we don't.

Connie: I think the most we have had here was seven or eight.

Bob: In the last four or five years, we have co-owned males but they have been off premises. We have access to them, and we find it much easier if they are off the premises.

Connie: We co-own a female in Toronto, and we co-owned Shadow in Nova Scotia.

The females, when they come into season, the hormones kick in and males howl.

Bob: We try to conform to the noise bylaws and still maintain our dogs.

How did you come up with your kennel name?

Connie: I tried a bunch of kennel names, and in Canada, it has to be approved by the Canadian Kennel Club. There are no duplications; you register your kennel name, and if it gets approved they publish the name. Of course, you pay for the kennel name, as well. I tried a variety of names. Because I lived in the country, I thought Green Acres and all of those sorts of things would be nice. Well, I couldn't have that. In fact, after that a TV program came on called *Green Acres*, with Eva Gabor. Then there were other names I had tried, but I got rejected for all these names. I tried this one, thinking nobody would have it. Certain names you can't use; anything to do with royalty or things like that you can't use. I had Bobby, Marlene and Donnie, so I used the beginning of each. Bobmar-

don is the result. It is the names of my kids, and of course, Bob is in there, too. It was one I had picked. I wish I had probably shortened it a little bit, just used a few letters like Bomado. You could work out something like that as long as it got approved by the Canadian Kennel Club. It would have been okay. But when you are working with the longer names, you get kind of choosy about names and things. There are some breeders out there now who are using shorter kennel names, and it is so much easier to work with when you are registering a dog. You can give it a nice, fancy name.

Do you name your litters by any scheme?

Connie: Every once in a while. I think one litter I used car names on. Prince Valiant and so on. People can call the dog anything they want except it still has the kennel name. With another one I did a few years ago, it was all liquors.

Bob: Every once in a while we go on a theme jag. Just to elaborate more on what Connie said, in Canada in the registered purebred dog game, it comes

under federal legislation, the Animal Pedigree Act. It says that the Canadian Kennel Club is the sole registering body for purebred dogs in Canada. So if you are going to advertise a purebred, you must be a member of the club and you must register the dog with the CKC. As a breeder, you pay for the

registration and provide the purebred registered certificate. It is a little variation of what it is like in the United States.

Connie: In the United States, the breeders just give the new owners the paperwork and tell them to fill it out and register the dogs. In Canada, we could get penalized and lose our privi-

leges with the Canadian Kennel Club if we didn't do it.

Bob: As a result, we have to submit the names of the puppies, as the breeder. So you get into naming these puppies, and you sometimes use a theme.

Connie: We didn't do the alphabet route much. I tried; when Zoe had her litter, one

was Toby. That was his call name, but his registered name is Bobmardon's Quite A Venture. That was because she had a great time with the stud dog. (laughter) It had a sort of romantic theme.

Bob: Make sure you tell them that Toby is a male, not a female. That was our last cham-



*Bob and Kayla, Ch. Polar Mist Kayla At Bobmardon Can/Am CD.*



Can. Ch. Kipmetna's Kalista Kodi, one of Chaena's 26 Canadian champions.

pion.

Connie: I know they follow that A, B, C method in Europe. Some will do flowers or something; we got Iris from Judi and Blair Elford of the Vanderbilt kennel here in Ontario. He wanted me to get my health straightened out first and all that. I felt I had to be busy with something. We got this puppy, Iris, and she has made me laugh so much since we got her. I was so pleased with her. Her regis-

tered name is Vanderbilt's Iris Bobmardon.

Bob: We asked Judi why she named her Iris, because it is a flower.

Connie: Yes, and she said it was because she was wearing the purple collar and it reminded her of the flower. Judi said we could change her name if we wanted to, but we don't. Every once in a while Sota's name slips in. Bob will say, "I let Sota out," when Sota has been gone

for a while. He means Iris.

Bob: Trying to find a graceful exit from those slips; I guess you don't, though.

*Do you feel you have established a distinguishable line, and what do you think others are looking for when they think of your line?*

Connie: If you are looking at everyday people, when they come here, they say that our dogs are a little excitable when somebody comes in. Then after a while they just go and lie

down. They want to greet people just like we do. We have to tell them that people are coming to see the two-legged people, not the four-legged ones! (laughter) People say our dogs are so nice. They handle kids very well, and the kids love being with them because they don't just lie there like statues. They are friendly, and they accept all the attention. That is what a lot of people say.

Bob: It reinforces the fact that we know we have the tem-

perament we want. In fact, this spring we had people coming in wondering if we had a puppy, and they just wanted a "Sammy fix," I guess, because they brought their two kids in. They had phoned us ahead of time, and we told them to come on down to see our dogs. They had three kids, and the youngest was two and one-half or three. We had a baby gate up, and when they went to leave, they had to pry the child from the gate. She wouldn't leave the dogs. She didn't want to go. So obviously the temperament is there.

We will have one or two friends who have similar lines to evaluate our puppies at around seven weeks of age. Particularly if we have one or two that might be show home possibilities. They will go over them for us; we will choose before they come over which ones we think have the qualities and then they will go over them. A lot of the times, they are "in sync" with us. That is because they are also familiar with those lines.

Connie: Or they may ask us to come down and have a look at their litters of puppies. We let them know what we think. That has happened, where we have gone, too.

Bob: To go outside to

someone else's lines, there can be a variation so we don't stick our necks out there. We don't have that background knowledge of those puppies' lines. Somebody could have a different type, and that is fair game, too.

*Let's talk about the type of dog that you like. Describe your interpretation of the perfect Sammy.*

Connie: Above all, white! It can have some biscuit, though, but I prefer all white.

Bob: From nose to tail, we both like the black points. We like the correct almond-shape in the eye with the black eye rim, definitely. We like the dark lip line, and lots of dark pigment in the mouth. We have what I call midnight mouths, because when you open them you see a lot of dark pigment. The head, for me, has to be the bear-head, with the shorter ear.

Connie: Now, the one we sent to France, the people over there thought it had too much neck. They are not used to the neck.

Bob: Yes, but I like a little substance to the bone in the front. I like the leg coat on them. Both Connie and I agree on that; we like a leg coat. If it is a female, of course you want the length of body.

Connie: We like a little

extra leg coat, because every dog comes with leg coat, but we like a little extra to it.

Bob: When it comes to height, we are always on the high end of the standard. In other words, if it 23 or 23 3/4 as a male, it doesn't worry me. I like that in size. In the back assembly, I like to see the V when it gaits. It has to have that structure to do that. Of course, I like the tail over nicely. That is my ideal, anyway. When the dog is moving, it is single-tracking.

Connie: I will have to ditto that.

*What especially do you like about the tail?*

Bob: I like to see it go over the back nicely, not too lowset.

*What about the front and the feet?*

Bob: The trimming of the feet is important. What they do in some shows is sculpting.

Connie: We all trim feet.

Bob: Yes, you can trim feet, but don't end up with cat's-paw feet by trimming. Don't sculpt the body at all. You can pull out a type, still stay in the standard, and pull out a type that you are happy with. We have that flexibility. You will see that if you go to a show.

Connie: There are some lines that carry lots of leg coat.

Iris has a nice tail, too.

*What about the topline?*

Connie: I like a nice topline.

You can see pictures in magazines, and you may see a dog moving, and they talk about the extension and things like that. But you can also see where they may be a little bit higher in the rear. When Chaena moved, his topline just stayed basically the same. It was so nice. I have seen quite a few dogs like that. When I look at some pictures, and some breeders say these are nice pictures of the dog moving, yet it kind of slopes at the back end or something. Some people may criticize what I have to say, and say that I don't know what I am talking about, but it is almost as if the dog is uneven. You know, when models are taught to walk, they are taught to have a glass of water on their heads and not spill it. With a dog, you should be able to do that, put something there, and they should still be able to move gracefully around the ring. Some will say well, do you want pretty or do you want a working dog? You don't want a working dog that is sloppy, moving from side to side. You notice it, so you kind of watch that.

I am one to watch the movement, like Bob said. I zero in more on rears first. As I sit



Bob and Connie Gaskin and the flyball team.

there, if people ask me what I think of their dog's head, I don't know. I didn't see its head because I was so busy studying the rear!

Sometimes I tell them, "That dog should get his hips x-rayed!" Well, maybe it is still a young dog. And I am not perfect; I make mistakes. Maybe the dog will get its hips x-rayed and it will be clear. My goal is to put a healthy dog out there. We all have the same goal. We want to make people happy with our breed. I don't want people to experience what I had experienced due to not doing all this hip x-raying and eye checking. Like we do nowadays, you know. My goal is still there. A lot of times, Bob will say I have to get past that. Well, you can't. When I saw people hurt, the tears and the sadness - it was like the puppy we had to put down at six months of age. It couldn't even get up, it was so bad. It is so sad. I told my son she was only six months old, and asked him if he wanted her to suffer like that. She was having such a hard time.

Then years later, I went and bought a male, and he was a few years old. I got him from another well-known kennel. I had him at a show, and we were all standing around the ring talking about the dog. The other people were telling me they thought there was something wrong with the dog, and I should get his hips x-rayed. So I made an appointment and took the dog in a couple of days later to have him x-rayed. The plates were sent to OVC and he was a grade four, which is bad. When he ran around our farm, he kind of ran in a trot, but I didn't really pay that much attention. I wasn't looking for lameness or anything. When he ran at a full gallop, he would run with his back two hocks together touching. He would use them sort of as a brace, with one against the other.

Come winter, he was really bad going through the snow. So I told the kids we had to put the dog down because he was getting older and it was getting harder for him. They weren't doing all these fancy operations like they do now. If it meant getting the kids a pair of shoes rather than doing an operation on the dog, I know that doesn't say much good for me, but the



*Now we're really moving! December 1983.*

kids would have got the shoes. The dog would have been bypassed as far as surgery goes. That is how times were, back then. You only had one income coming in, so it makes it kind of hard. At seven years old, we ended up having him put down. The kids thought I was terrible when I had that done. I don't even like to think about that. But if you saw this dog move, you might say he was doing okay. He was using that sort of like two crutches together, but I just couldn't see it.

Bob: There were early struggles.

Connie: That is why I am so fussy today as far as breeding this one to this one. It is upsetting. I don't want to see people hurt. Whether it is just a pet

that they want or if they want a show dog, as far as I am concerned, they are all great to me. Only some of them don't make it into the ring. Some of them are strictly neutered or spayed and they are in the backyards. I often think one or another might have made a great show dog, but unfortunately, you can't twist everybody's arms. You can't pay for all these shows, either, just to get a title on a dog. The important thing is that the dog hasn't bitten any neighborhood kids and taken off in all different directions.

*What advice would you have for novices just starting out in the breed?*

Bob: I would tell them to stop, look and listen.

Connie: When somebody gets a puppy from us, we give

them a lot of advice.

Bob: Yes, and when I say stop, look and listen, I would say as they are going into it they are already converted. Stop at some point of the day, take some time and read about the breed. Get knowledge about the breed. Before they get to the know-it-all stage, stop and read. There is a tremendous wealth of information at libraries, in books and magazines and on the internet. Use part of every day while you are in it, and never stop that. Continue to read about the breed. Look is the next thing. Go to specialties, go to shows, look at other Samoyeds whether they are your type or not. There is something you can learn from them. It goes back, and it

sounds like a theme I have, but start training your eye.

Go up to a dog, if you see a dog you like in the ring, afterward go up to the dog's owner and ask if you can put your hands on the dog. Feel it, so you can see what it is that you saw.

Then finally, listen. Listen to what people say on both sides. One of the critiques that you may hear is the fault-finding time and time again. Day after day, people are coming up to you after sitting ringside, and they will fault your dog. They are talking about faults, but I don't like to go that way. Find out why the judge is liking that dog. What are the positives about that dog? Then you can pick them up. It is easy to tell you the faults; ask the breeder. The breeder will say, "Oh, I am trying to do ..." this or that, or improve this. That is good.

Listen to all kinds of breeders, not necessarily in your breed. You can learn from other breeders in other breeds, too. Those are the three things I would say, stop, look and listen.

Connie: We give our puppy people a lot of information. We give them so much, but what they are concerned with is getting that puppy home and being with it. So they never pick up the envelope with all the data about house training, crate training, and all that. Then in a couple of days, I will phone them and ask how the nights are, and how everything is going with the puppy. They sometimes say they are having this problem or that, and I ask them if they



Bobmardon's Aardik Nikki at ten weeks old in 1992.

looked at the information I gave them, but they haven't. We make copies of all this and that, and we give them a thick envelope full of stuff, but they never look at it!

Bob: But at least they have it at home; they can read it

when they run into it.

*Let's talk a little bit about mating and whelping.*

Connie: Well, I have rarely used a thermometer on a dog to determine her temperature. I know my dogs, and I know when a dog is not feeling right. When they are going to whelp, I can just watch them and tell. We will go to the store and get some yogurt and cottage cheese; so we are prepared in advance should we run into some kind of a problem. We are all ready; towels and blankets are all clean and things like that.

Bob: We whelp them at home, so the rec room becomes the whelping room.

Connie: We sleep down there days before. We stay with the dog.

Bob: There is a difference between science and experience, and experience usually wins out. I can say when the gestation



One of the 44 litters we have had since 1964.

period is, and when the dog will whelp. Like from the 59th to 63rd day. Connie will chuckle under her breath, and ask if I want to put a date down. Being scientific, I will say, okay, July 26th, give or take a day or two. She will pick the 27th, and say it is just because I am always wrong. It's a numbers game we play.

Connie: That's not so! (laughter)

Bob: Sure enough, the dog whelps on Connie's date. One of the things is that the preparations are made. You get things ready, and 24 hours ahead of time you have everything ready. We don't use a thermometer. There is a temperature drop. But you can see physical signs that are easy to pick up when the appetite drops off; they usually stop eating about 24 hours in advance. Also restlessness, starting to nest a bit in the whelping box, if you have had it down a day or two. They circle around. The dog will clean out its bowels, sometimes throw up. They won't eat for five or six hours ahead of time. You will see some trembling a little bit, the muscle masses beginning to shake a little bit. Then you are really into the early labor stages. Of course, subsequently, you will have the contractions.

Connie: We went over to visit a Retriever friend when her dog was due to have her puppies. I had a look at the dog, and Bob looked at it. The dog was not doing too much. She was a yellow Lab, and when I looked at her, she wasn't going through any chills or anything like that. I told my friend that I didn't think she was ready, but she said that day was her due date. I told her not to go anywhere or leave the dog alone if she felt uncomfortable about it. I don't like to leave my bitches alone.

She stayed at home, and I had told her to call us through the night if she needed to. We were only a few blocks away. We went there the next day and saw the dog, and she was starting to make a few trips outside, and while she was in the house she was starting to throw up. She wanted a drink and they gave her a drink of water, and not too long after she threw up. That is normal, that is what I go by. I watch them; I don't put them out in the kennel at all or



Connie and Chaena, BIS BISS Can/Am Ch. Orenopac's Chaena Can/Am CD at eleven years old.

stick them somewhere if nobody is around to watch them. We put the TV on low and sit there and watch the dog.

Bob: During whelping, as the puppies arrive, what we do is towel them off, weigh them to get their birth weight, and then put them back with the mother. Over the duration of the whelping, we record the time and weight of each one, so we have some idea of length of time between deliveries of each puppy. In some litters puppies will come every half-hour; other

litters will deliver three puppies and then have an hour of rest. There may be uterine exhaustion, possibly. We have seen puppies delivered over seven or eight hours, and then there is a four-hour span and the next morning there is another puppy alive and well. There is no set time frame from our experience. But that is the kind of hands-on thing you learn, and as Connie says, we are down there for two to three days afterward.

Connie: I usually sleep down there for about three days

after puppies are born.

Bob: We figure that is the critical time, that 72 hours afterward. You have to see that they are nursing, that they are getting colostrum, that there is no mastitis and the mother is fine, and there are no problems with the puppies. That is pretty well the routine in whelping for us.

Do you supplement very young puppies?

Connie: Not always. It just depends on how many puppies are in the litter. Some females have ten puppies. We have had

eight and have lost all eight. With Ziza, we worked our buns off to save her. She was the only surviving puppy in the litter. That is Ch. Bobmardon's Splendid Survivor Can/Am CD. I wanted to give her an unusual call name, and we had some friends who were from Egypt. She asked us over for coffee, and we brought Ziza with us. She must have been about ten weeks of age at the time. I wanted to call her One And Only, but another breeder had used that and of course, the kennel club won't allow that. I asked my friend to think of something different. Her sister was there with them on vacation at the time. I had told them I wanted something that meant the puppy was the only one that had survived, so they suggested Aziza. It means splendid survivor. We drop the "A" when calling her.

Anyway, we had to supplement her as a pup because the mother was having a problem,

and we had lost the other puppies in the litter to fading puppy syndrome.

Bob: It was the one and only time we have run into fading puppy syndrome. It doesn't occur that frequently, so it is hard to pinpoint what the cause was. We kind of suspect it was a massive infection through the umbilical cord; you lose them in twelve to sixteen hours. They just turn purple and then they are gone. The other thing we have noticed, some people ask why we weigh them. We have kept records of birth weights, and we don't like to get a birth weight of over twelve to fourteen ounces.

Connie: We have had some that were around sixteen, though.

Bob: Yes, we have had sixteen to eighteen, but I feel that the size of a puppy that big is going to lead you to some problems whelping. So we have tried to stay within that, because you

are still going to get that puppy through the birth canal, but at eighteen ounces, you are going to have some trouble. More than likely, you are going to end up with a cesarean section. That has been our experience; someone with a larger female may not have that.

Connie: We have had some at sixteen ounces who only had four puppies.

Bob: It may have something to do with litter numbers or size. If we get seven or eight, sometimes we will supplement if there are only five nipples that are functioning, for instance. Then we give a supplement to bring the puppies along, but it is not for a long period of time. We start into the weaning process at about four weeks, in our particular situation.

Connie is a great believer in yogurt and cottage cheese to the nursing female, because of the lactobacillus in there. It seems to work, I don't argue that at all.

It stands to reason, it certainly has been an aid. It is one of the bugs in the intestines of a dog that helps as far as nutrition.

Do you wean the puppies yourselves, then?

Bob: Yes, we start them at around four weeks. We give them a mixture of a weaning formula, and Connie introduces that once a day. Then we increase that to a couple of feedings a day.

Connie: If there is diarrhea or anything in the puppies, then you can tell what you have introduced in the food, if it is agreeing with them or it isn't.

Bob: It is not often you will see that. Most of the time, the way she introduces it over slow, step-at-a-time processes, there is no problem.

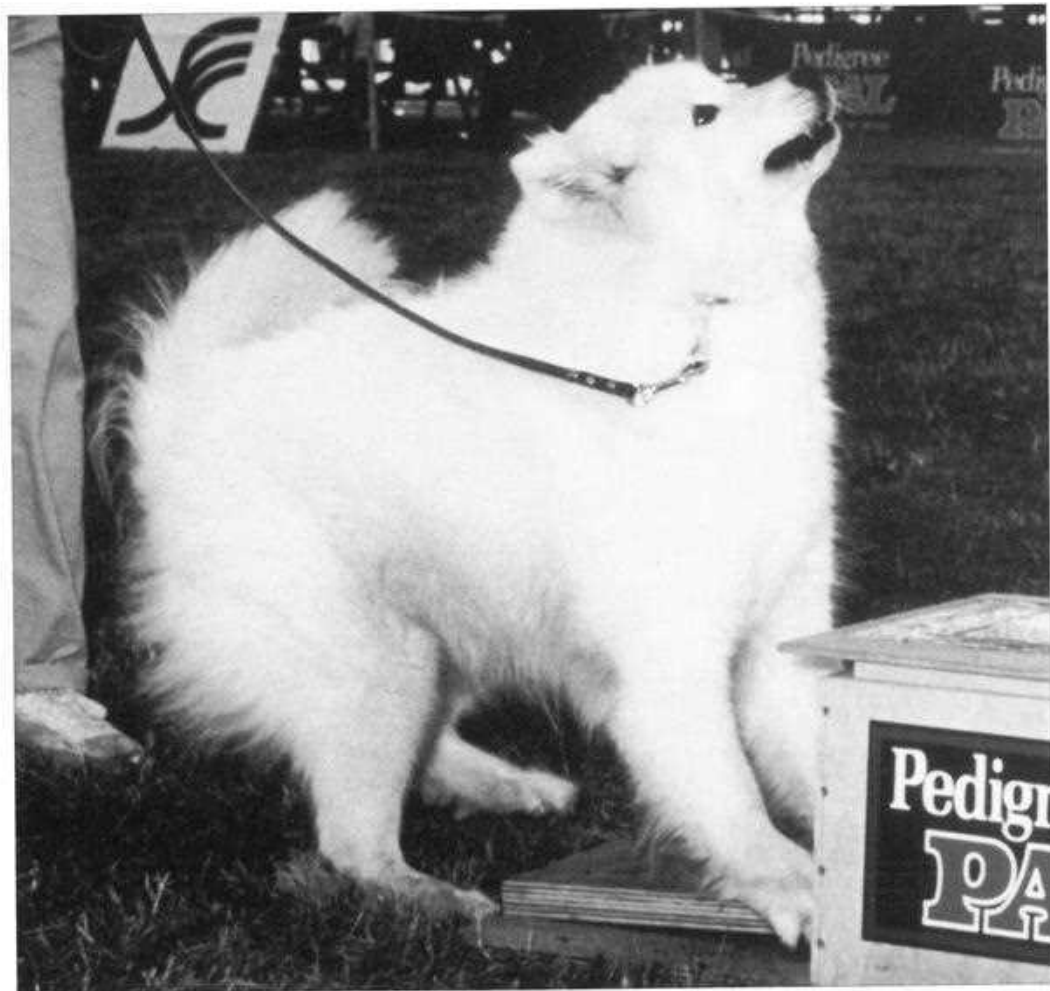
Connie: Another breeder and myself started that years ago. I called her up and told her I didn't know why my puppies had diarrhea. This was a particular litter. I didn't know if it was the heat, it was too hot at that time of year, or what. You can't very well stick a plug in there and say, "No, you can't be born at this time; it's too hot!" You can't move them from one room to another room. You don't want to have all these fans and air-conditioning on and other things. So we thought of all these things, and then we realized it was the food that the dogs were on.

We started off a brand of canned dog food, because we thought it would be great for puppies. There was a problem with diarrhea, and another breeder had the same problem. So it was a good thing I had somebody else to talk to, because I was experimenting with stuff. Once I stopped that, I went to another brand of food, and the puppies seemed to do well on that.

Bob: You were limited back then, but now we have a lot of different things. Here in Canada we have the Canadian Veterinary Association seal of approval on dog foods. They have to stamp it on the package.

Connie: I used to feed Purina Puppy Chow to puppies, and I kept wondering what I was doing wrong. This was years and years ago.

Anyway, I no longer feed Purina. Whatever works for other people, that is fine. But it didn't work for me.



Connie and Aziza at the Paris World Dog Show.



"Jubie."

Bob: That is the message, if you have a feeding formula and a weaning formula of a particular food and it is working for you, don't listen to anybody else; stick with it. If you have a

problem, then you can look at alternatives. A couple of months ago I was looking at the puppy mortality rate over a period of time. In other words, if in the last ten years you have had

eight litters, and you have averaged one puppy every other litter born dead or stillborn, then you want to look at that statistic and relate it to something as to cause.

We had a span there where I realized, because it tied in with birth weight, that we were losing a puppy in a litter every so often. I realized all of the sudden that when we had these, the

birth weights had gone from twelve to eighteen ounces. The eighteen-ounce puppies were the ones we were losing. As soon as we got birth weight down, we didn't lose a puppy. These are factors, you have to take the data you get from your kennel and use it to help you analyze not only what has happened in the past, but to help you in your breeding and whelping programs. That kind of data inputs to help you avoid problems.

Connie: Above all, you need to speak to other breeders to find out what they are doing. Some breeders don't want to share too much information with you, other breeders want to help.

When I got my first dog, the lady I got my dog from, when I had gone to pick up the puppy she was telling me that she had been tested for cancer. About nine months after, she passed away, so I had nobody to go to, nobody to ask about certain things. This was before I met Bob, and I didn't want to be one of those people who were always running to the veterinarian. "Oh, my dog coughed - what is wrong with it?" (laughter) After a while, you can be a pain or a thorn in somebody's side.

Nowadays, I don't foresee people running into these problems, because years ago, a lot of

the breeders weren't that close. Now everybody has a telephone and the information is shared more. When we start weaning the puppies away from the mother, we don't take them away right away.

Bob: It takes ten to fourteen days, and never before six weeks of age.

Connie: I think the last weeks before they leave the mother, they get a couple of sucks in there. It is like a pacifier to the babies. When we got Iris, I asked Judi what she was feeding. We haven't had any problems with her.

Bob: We followed the pattern she was used to.

Connie: She is still on that food, Royal Canin. The other dogs are on Iams.

Bob: We have been on Iams for years.

Connie: I will know when they change something or put something different in it. I called them up in Ohio once and told them they were changing something, because we got a new bag and never modified anything whatsoever. We were feeding our dogs the same thing, but our dogs were showing some signs of looseness in stools. This was not one dog; I had six dogs at that time and they were all showing the same thing. I wanted truthfulness; I can change brands just like that!

We stick with the stuff that works.

Bob: Although we feed Iams, we have another food that we know our dogs will tolerate because we have fed it. That is why we do it. Every once in a while we will go back to the next brand as a backup.

Connie: If we have to run out and get a different brand, we know what works with our dogs. Pedigree is not too bad, but the other food is Nutro Max. I know we had talked about Purina, Technical and Pedigree dry foods, but we thought it best not to get into that subject. Every dog is different.

Bob: Every once in a while we throw some canned food in with their dry food. But we don't do that in the summer months.

Connie: A lot of people give too much meat to their dogs in the summertime.

Bob: This is my philosophy on commercial dog foods: look at the protein. If you are at 23, 22, 20 or less, okay. But if you are on these high-protein, 26 or 28, you are going to be in trouble. The three things to look at are the protein, carbohydrates and fats. If you are at 26 or 28, don't touch it. Just feed it; don't add anything to it because it is super. It is right up there where it should be.

But if you are down here at 21 or 22, in the winter months or when you are working your dogs, doing something with them, and you want to supplement, we add canned food to move it up. Our experience has been in the summertime, we are not going to do too much with these northern dogs in the heat of the summer. So we keep the protein low and we don't run into skin conditions. That has been our experience.

Connie: A fellow came to us from the Ottawa area, wanting a puppy. He told us he had a Sammy before, and who he got the dog from. He told us the dog had a terrible skin condition, and was always having loss of hair and things. It had hot spots and so on, which is eczema. He didn't go back to that breeder to get another puppy because of the skin problems. Not that I am saying you always go back when you get one from somebody else; maybe she didn't have any puppies at the time. Anyway, this guy said the skin condition never cleared up, and I asked him what he was feeding the dog.

To make a long story short, he was feeding it dry food and giving it meat. He said the dog just loved the meat, so he fed the same amount year-round. I told him with this puppy, she gets no meat in the summertime. When we say to feed the puppy three times a day, they don't modify the volume or whatever, and the next thing we know, the puppy is ten pounds overweight. Here it will be nine months old and they are still feeding it three times a day! So I have spoken to this guy since then, the dog is now five years old, and he doesn't have any skin problems whatsoever. He is not feeding any meat in the summertime. He gives a certain amount of meat in the wintertime along with her dry food, but in the summer she doesn't get meat. We haven't had, as yet, any skin problems. Maybe it is because of our philosophy of not over-feeding it.

Bob: It is a combination of factors, that is for sure. Not only is it dietary, but you have to put the brush to them, too. You have to maintain some grooming on a routine basis so the skin is stimulated. There are other factors involved there, too. There is the old food-aller-



Ch. Bobmardon's Splendid Survivor Can/Am CD, FBD.



*BIS Can/Am Ch. Bobmarton Quasar O'er Ladakha, "Erik."*

gy thing there, too; you can get certain allergies to foods. Once you get the allergens out of there, you can get away from that.

Connie: Solid Gold is good, and Iams. I haven't heard any complaints about Solid Gold. Pedigree gave our dogs gas terribly. When you have company and your dog passes gas, everybody is looking at each other. It is embarrassing! (laughter)

*When you are preparing for shows, how much do you groom, and what are your favorite grooming products and tools?*

Connie: We bathe them, and we use Bright White shampoo, but there are new brands out now that other breeders say are just as good.

Bob: I was the "go-fer" for years, until I got conned into grabbing a leash and going in the ring. Connie didn't think it was a bright move until afterwards; then she realized she did the eight hours of prep work and I did the two minutes of glory work. (laughter) She does most of the show prep. I helped bathe them.

Connie: When I encouraged him to start handling the dogs, he and I would help each other. I have found that we would bathe the dog together, which was really good. We would blow-dry them and groom them. When I was handling the dog, I would brush the dog all up and take it into the ring and show it.

The next day, it was his turn to show the dog. I would get the dog and wait, but he wouldn't be doing anything. So I would get the brush and start brushing the dog, and he would take the dog in the ring. There's something wrong with this picture.

Bob: She does what she calls a dry shampoo, if there has been a little dirt or something, she will do around the feet. She puts on a little bit of powder and brushes that out, just to get the dirt out.

Connie: I use cornstarch. That is about it. I do a few final touches.

Bob: She does most of that. I didn't get into the handling until about the early 1980s.

Shortly after I started going in the ring, I went to handling classes. I decided to do that so I could learn something. Then we heard about the Tar Heel Circuit in Raleigh, North Carolina. It is a six- or seven-hour drive down, so we grabbed two dogs and put our trailer, our little camper, on the back of the van, and we went. This was seven shows at one site. Our game plan was that Connie would show one day, I would show the next, and so on. The first day, Connie went in the ring and there were 34 Sammies in there. We were trying to get Chaena's American championship. Lo and behold if she didn't take the Breed from the Open Dog class! We got out the wine and cheese and called our American friends over and had a big party. We thought, "Isn't that nice!"

The next day, I went in the ring and got dumped! Frances Powers' dog won. Betty Arnold was handling her. So we had a big party; even if you lose, you have a big party. You always get the wine and cheese out afterward.

We are competitive in the ring, but social beings outside the ring. So the third day, Connie handled the dog, and won the Breed. Everybody was asking if he had enough points by then, and Connie said, "Don't worry; Bob is taking him in tomorrow." I took him in the next day and got dumped!

Betty Arnold came over to Connie and told her she was taking her husband for a half an hour, because the dog was too good a dog to have him on the end of the lead.

Connie: She just said she wanted to show you a few pointers.

Bob: Thank heavens for Betty! She took me out for half an hour, and put me under intensive handler training. In the back of a program, there are blank pages, so I was taking notes and writing down what to do. Thank you, Betty. She was just a princess; she gave me lots of pointers.

Connie: The days that I was handling the dog, I would come in and I would have different outfits on. When he was handling the dog, he was wearing more casual clothes. Michael Zolo has handled at the Madison Square Gardens at



*Bobmardon Manshe's Sno' Bird, our first Best Puppy in Show in 1987. Co-owned with Bobbi Jo Sears. Judge: Skip Stanbridge.*

Westminster, and he looked at me and said, "You are not going to have your husband handling the dogs, are you?" I said yes, and he said "Oh, you should handle the dogs." I told him Bob was going to handle the dogs, that we both did it to have fun with the dogs, and that Bob had to learn sometime. Even though it was costing us money! (laughter) But Bob went in there, and with the help of Betty Arnold telling him certain things, I think he got a third place.

Bob: I still got dumped. (laughter) But in the handling end, she was light-years ahead of me in the preparation and things like that. She was a big help.

*What about the obedience work you have done?*

Bob: Connie has been in obedience for years, and we have always enjoyed it. When we moved to Toronto from Hamilton, that is when we cut down on our number of dogs. In fact, we were down to one dog, and Connie wanted to do some obedience work with the dog. These friends of ours suggested we join Swansea Dog Obedience Club. So we joined the club and got involved in it.

Connie: I was training this dog in obedience, and every time we went to an obedience trial, like most partners that aren't involved in anything, or if they are one of them isn't really too happy about it, but he would always say, "Okay, you're out of the ring, you are finished for the day." He would be packing everything up getting ready to go. You know, I was tense because I had to take the dog into obedience and everything. You want to relax afterward and do a little bit of socializing. Bob was ready to go!

There was another dog who belonged to somebody else, and I told Bob that dog needed some training. The people weren't really training it, so we asked if we could have the dog at our place for a while to train it. Then they could go away for a vacation or something and not have to worry about the dog. He said okay, so I had Bear in the ring for training, and Bob had Kayla. The two of us were working together, and that started him on the obedience.

Bob: The interest drops off. It was an eight-week training



*BIS Can/Am Ch. Bobmardon Quasar O'er Ladakha, "Erik."*

period; you hit the wall for a while.

Connie: He didn't feel like going, nothing was happening with the dog.

Bob: The dog wasn't getting it, but she said I should stick with it. I stuck to it and that was the first dog I really took in. She was a class down, a nice, easy-going dog, just what I needed.

Connie: When he did the recall, she would come right away. You think she is going to knock you over when she comes, because she would come so quickly, but then she would sit.

Bob: When she went to

swing and sit beside me, she did the kangaroo thing, jumping. Everybody laughed. So we got into the obedience and started doing that, and from the obedience we got involved in the club activities. With Connie's expertise they asked her to be a trainer, so she started to train. I got involved in the administrative side as treasurer, and then I became president for a couple of terms.

Connie: Before that, we started doing flyball. Then we started doing some agility, and the A-frame came out. We were starting to go up ramps and things like that, and Ziza just loved it.

Bob: We did get involved in obedience, but this club, rather than get solely involved in pure obedience, wanted to get in other things. I was on the executive committee at the time, and flyball was starting to become an activity for dogs that were obedience trained, and agility was starting to become big.

My opinion was that when you get a dog and you are asking it to do something, and it is responding so that you are a team, that is obedience. The broad definition. I don't care whether it is a set of exercises or whether it is in an obedience ring, a flyball competition, herd-

ing, you name it, the dog is being obedient to your commands. So let's open up this club and the definitions and have these activities come in. So we got them in. We started to do flyball, and we headed down to Michigan to compete. We became members of the North American Flyball Association in the late '80s, and the rest is history.

Connie: When they sent his certificate, they misspelled Ziza's name as Zsa Zsa.

Bob: Yes, they had to send me another one. But she did compete, and she got her FBD which means Flyball Dog. She was the first Samoyed in North America to get that. For a number of years we have done that, and we have had six of our Sammys run through Swansea. There are six or eight Swansea trophies over there, and we got CDs on about six of them. Some of them we didn't finish, but we have been in obedience to that level and enjoyed it. To top it all off, the Swansea Dog Obedience Club made us life members in June of this year.

Connie: Getting back to the agility part, the dog learned how to go through the tire and the tunnel and everything, so then Herb Williams and Fred Petty decided they were going to put on a Superdog show. You had to do the marching drill, all this parade work and everything.

Bob: Some background to that is that the Superdog thing was an entertainment act. Herb Williams asked clubs from around the region to donate dogs to help put on this extravaganza which consisted of dogs and handlers. He asked clubs to participate in a variety of events. One was marching to music with your dog doing various patterns, drill patterns where you down your dog, walk away, come back and this sort of thing. It was set to music. There were also flyball demonstrations, and then early agility courses.

The idea of agility was much like Grand Prix jumping in horses, where you go over a variety of obstacles. These obstacles were similar to what is used in agility today, tunnels, A-frames, etc. There was a start and finish, and 22 to 26 of these jumps depending on the configuration of where we were set up. We did these demos across Canada, and local dogs would participate,

too. Dogs from each Province would participate with the core team that went. We did demonstrations in Saskatoon, Edmonton, Toronto, and Moncton. We were part of that early demo team.

Connie: In Ontario, when they were putting on some of these demos, first they started off kind of small at the Ontario Science Center, just to show people who were going to the Science Center how these dogs perform. From that, then they started going to Sunnybrook Farms. The hunters were there, and they were doing the jumps, the same jumps the dogs were doing. The dogs had to compete, too. Each horse and rider had a dog.

Bob: It eventually evolved so that you paired a rider and a horse with a dog and a handler. They would be a team. The horse would go around its course of Grand Prix jumping in so much time, and the dog and handler would go around. Their combined times would go against the next group. So they combined horse jumping and dog jumping, and they still do some of that today. It is done at the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto, for instance. It is a real crowd-pleaser; they are cheering on the dog as well as the horse. As a spin-off, one of the things we did in obedience too, in the 1985 National Specialty in the States we took a team down. We did team obedience, that is where you have four. It has been done before, but this was the first time we Canadians have done it. We four went down with our dogs and did team obedience at the obedience trial there. In 1995 at the SCA National Specialty in La Croix, we put on a flyball demonstration.

Connie: Going back to the obedience story, we didn't fare too well. Everything was going well until the recall, but we had two dogs there called Kayla. It was a big mistake. When one Kayla was called, they both came. I wanted to finish that story.

Bob: That is right, I forgot about that. Anyway, at the La Croix show, the National Specialty committee asked us to put on a flyball demonstration of just Sammys. So I got a bunch of us together here and did some rehearsing, and we named the

team "Snow Motion." We got shirts printed. Most all of the dogs were entered in the agility competition that was going on at that specialty. We put on a demo, and had a great time. I think that was the first time flyball was demonstrated as a team sport at a specialty.

What about the dog dancing you were talking about?

Bob: We had friends from Germany visit us back in the early '90s, and she liked the male that we had. They were going up to Algonquin Park for vacation because they loved the wilderness. They were sitting here watching some of our television, and one of the programs they were watching was dog dancing, which was founded in the United States. They had seen this demonstrated and it had stuck in their minds. It is dancing to choreographed music with your dogs. There are certain moves to it that are mandatory, much like the figure skating. There are basic moves that have to be done, and they are scored.

We didn't hear anything more about it, and we sent a puppy over to her. They were pleased and they had a great time with the puppy as it was growing up. Bobmardon's Silver Shayna was her name. She took this dog to dog dancing classes, and she started really getting into it. She used it as a

demo dog, and she has now got one of her other dogs doing it. She is demonstrating with her Bobmardon dog in Switzerland, France and Germany. Dog-dancing! Now that we are hooked up on the internet, and she is hooked up with a website and the whole bit, she has been sending us information on this.

As an aside to that, there is a sledding part. In 1996 we sent a puppy to Germany, to Weiss's Whiteline kennels. Her registered name is Bobmardon's Roxy at Whiteline. She is Treshka's sister. She has been sledding for some time, and in March of 2001 - the German club of Northern dogs has a program in place since 1995 where you can grade your sled dogs to a competition. It is called LP One, LP Two, and LP Three. An LP Two, which is what the dog we sent over was, is a dog that has done 400 kilometers in a racing year of middle-distance running. To qualify you have to have that. So they put this team of five Sammys together, one of which was our breeding. That was Roxy. I think he has a couple of dogs there that he got from Colorado, too. Roxy was the wheel dog, and they tried out for this LP Three title. The LP Three involves taking 320 pounds over twenty kilometers across rivers, under bridges, past horse riders and wildlife. They have to do that on this



Chaena, SCA Veteran Dog winner at 1989, 1990 and 1991 National Specialties.

road through the country, and the ascent all the time is going up for twenty kilometers. Part of the weight that they are carrying is the evaluator, who watches for hardiness, strength, perseverance, reaction to obstacles, to see if they freak out and take off the trail. The second day they do another twenty kilometers of the same thing. Anyway, this team passed. The first Samoyed team in seven years to win it. Siberians have won it before, and one other breed I can't remember. A total of sixteen dogs over seven years have won it. This was the first team of five Sammys to win it. That is not bad. So our dogs can sled.

Connie: They are versatile; they can dance, they can sled, flyball and other things.

Bob: A member of the Swansea club worked for a magazine, and he asked if we would like one of our dogs to be in an ad for fur coats. That's why they wanted a Sammy. We took Chaena and Meka (Polar Mist Meka at Bobmardon).

Connie: I asked Judy how long it was going to take, because Chaena was going to get very bored. She suggested we take another dog along to use as a model, when they were checking the lighting or whatever. Meka would sit there, and then we would take Meka away and put Chaena there. The assistant photographer said that Meka looked so good, he wanted to use both of them to make the picture look even better. So that was what we did.

How old are you both?

Connie: 39! (laughter) I'm 69.

Bob: We are seniors. I'm 74.

What have you both done for a living?

Connie: I am a jack-of-all-trades, but master of none. When I was a young kid, I worked on tobacco farms, though I don't smoke. I went to work at Sears as a retail clerk, cashier for a while. And I was working in the food industry. I have come to the realization, when I worked at Sears for nine years, you had to get dressed up with the nylons on and everything, and you have to look terrific. It doesn't matter if you are working as a stockman. So I thought that was not good, because you get snagged if you walk by anything in the store,



Ch. Whitecliff's Britta Karu (Ch. Orenopac's Chaena CD x Ch. Whitecliff's Sarmik's Bala Karu), one of Chaena's eight American champions.

and you get runs. Behind counters you can snag your clothes, so you have to go and buy a new pair of nylons right away.

So I decided to go to work in the food industry, and they provided everything. I had to cut up chickens for the Colonel. That was Colonel Sanders, you know. I did that for quite a while, and I had a uniform. I had to work on this bandsaw. I ended up having tennis elbow, so I went to another job.

Then when we moved to Toronto, I got a job at Burnett Yarns. You can get up in the morning, brush your hair and put on a t-shirt or sweater and a pair of jeans. You are ready to go to work. I worked at Burnett Yarns, and this was where they

were selling wool and patterns, crocheting stuff and all those things for craft working. I worked there for a while, and then we moved.

Bob: We started to get more dogs, and that was it.

How long have you been here?

Bob: We've been living in Grimsby fourteen years. It is just 30 minutes from the U.S. border.

Connie: And in the fourteen years, it is unbelievable; they have put a street through here, and townhouses behind us. If you are just driving along you would think we had a high-rise attached to our house. We took a picture from across the road, and you would swear our house is attached to the building

behind us.

Bob: We moved here in 1987. When I left private practice and went to work for the government, we moved around a bit. I started to work on the administrative side. Then I had some health problems, and had heart bypass surgery in 1983. I came through that fine, but the position I was in, with 160 veterinarians and 350 technicians at 150 work sites. I was responsible for the meat inspection program for all of Ontario, so you know that the hamburger you ate was good. I stayed in that position for eight years, but it was pretty high stress. I got out of that; demoted myself, probably the first time ever for public service. I went down to a staff

of one and myself, and moved to Grimsby.

At the time, in 1983, they said I would get ten to fifteen years out of the bypass, and in 1993 I did have some heart problems again. So I decided I better retire and take the golden handshake and leave. Connie kept me going. In 1998 I had my second bypass, and came through great again. Our activities with dogs fluctuated as the health conditions did.

*Is there anything else we haven't covered?*

Bob: I think the only thing we haven't mentioned was our 1995 trip to Europe with Zoe. Fred and Ruth Stoll of Dancingbear Kennels of Wisconsin, who we know quite well, had flown us out the year before when they were going to Europe with Chaena's son, Ch. Dancingbear Color Me Bad (Mikey). He is an international champion, and he did well the year he went over. They wanted to know if we wanted to go to the world dog show, that was going to be in Belgium in 1995. We said we hadn't planned on it, but they wanted us to go. They said we would have a great time. This was in the fall. So in January we decided to go, and to lay out our spring litter so that by the end of May we could fly to Europe and go to the dog show. We started



Can. Ch. Bobmardon's Kisba Zoe winning BOB and Group 1st at DCNH Dog Show in Duren, Germany.

the preparation in January, put the entry form in and started all this back and forth stuff of getting new visas ready.



Can. Ch. Bobmardon's Kisba Zoe winning BOB and Group 1st at DCNH Dog Show in Duren, Germany.

In the meantime, these breeder friends of the Stolls asked if they had any puppies, and they referred them to us. We were due to have some about that time. They had friends in Germany who wanted a puppy from Canada. We ended up taking a puppy over, and Zoe over. We had Zoe entered in the World Dog Show in Brussels, in the specialty show in Germany, and in the show in Paris. So we arrived, and we won the dog show in Germany. She took the Best of Breed and the Group 1st, and she beat Mikey that day, which was a big surprise. Mikey had won at the World Dog Show and we didn't. These are massive shows; 3,400 dogs in 67 rings. What a sight! Fantastic shows. So that is the story about Europe.

Also, in Europe you are allowed to bring your dogs into the restaurant. We were out one night at a 100-year-old pub in Germany, a beautiful place, and there were Pekingese and Sammys and everything. When we were in Brussels, these friends who are from Belgium, which is a very expensive place, had gotten us a motel near the

show site. Fred Stoll and these friends were staying at the big Radisson, which is a five-star hotel downtown. They invited us down for supper, so we went down to this private room in a beautiful hotel, eight or ten of us, with private servers, and all these Sammys all around the table. They never moved; they were beautiful. Every dog behaved perfectly.

Connie: I'm sure there will be many things we have missed, but I want to say thanks to the many breeders, the Kempsters, Grubers, Stohls, Thatchers, Lisa and Paul English, Barb Van Loon, Bobbie Jo Sears, Monika and Andreas Beck, Heidi and Harry Weiss, and all our puppy buyers who have helped our kennel over the years, and allowed our Sams to demonstrate the versatility of this breed. The people, buyers and breeders, who we have met and the friendships made in nearly 40 years in the breed is one of the greatest benefits of this hobby.

*Thank you so much for meeting and talking with me today.*

Bob: Thank you for coming. \*