
LINES FROM LINDA

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, SVEND JENSEN

MAN WITH THE RIGHT STUFF

BY LINDA AYERS TURNER KNORR



Activist, entertainer, and singer Bob Marley once wrote, *"The greatness of a man is not in how much wealth he acquires, but in his integrity and his ability to affect those around him positively."* These idyllic words could not be more true about iconic Svend Jensen of La Canada in Southern California, who believes success without integrity means nothing.

The definition of a Right Stuff Award recipient is a person who has made a difference for the good of their breed and the purebred dog community, just as the Quarter Century Group of Collie Club of America did in 2019 when honoring Svend Jensen; just as we, too, honor him nearing his June 1923 birthday, along with AKC acknowledging and paying tribute to him in 2020 for 50 years of licensed judging. Svend has a supreme gift of having the right stuff, always at the right time. He accomplishes a lot by giving back to who, and what, he thinks is important and deserving.

There is something very private about those we call "the Greatest Generation" who were involved in saving the world during World War II. They don't toot their own horns, nor do they brag about themselves or what they have contributed to society. Such is typical of



Svend and Joyce Jensen, enjoying their beloved Collies and their beautiful California weather.

LINES FROM LINDA: HAPPY BIRTHDAY, SVEND JENSEN



A very young Svend Jensen saw King Christian the 10th of Denmark almost daily as he took his horses for a ride through Copenhagen.



1960 - Judge Dorothy Long puts Svend Jensen's 'Stormy' to another of his BOB wins at San Diego Collie Club with Svend handling, as always.

Danish-born Svend Jensen. Svend was born in June of 1923 in Copenhagen, Denmark, and became an active young man. He grew up living very close to the Christiansborg Palace, home of King Christian the 10th of Denmark. Young Svend walked past the royal palace on his way to school every day. Occasionally, he made small talk with King Christian as the king came through the palace gates every morning on a beautiful horse to take a jaunt around Copenhagen without any security. Can you imagine that being allowed in today's world?

King Christian's favorite pastime was equestrian riding, which became a hobby and a large part of Svend's life as well. You see, it was a different world in those days, especially in Denmark. There was not much danger to be worried about because Danish citizens were reliable people, known for their peaceful nature, integrity, bravery, honesty, work ethic, and high morals. Security for the king was not necessary in the 1920s, as you can see in the photo of the boy riding a bicycle next to the handsome king's steed. That boy could have very well been young Svend Jensen making small talk with the king.

In 1940, when Svend was 17 years old, the entire world changed, including the occupation of Denmark by Germany. It was not what the Nazis did to Denmark, but rather what the Danish people and Danish royalty did to the Nazis that any Dane would be proud of. It is a historical fact that Nazis had major difficulties in Denmark. Since Denmark had a small army, the king chose to sink all German ships in the harbor. The king was very smart. Hitler agreed to only allowing a German superior force to occupy Denmark because he thought the Danish were his Aryan brothers. Later, when the Danish found out that the Nazis were starting to

round up the Jewish people of Denmark, Danes of all ages fought back. The king bombed munition installations and railways, and the Danish people mounted an unprecedented underground network of adults and young men to help protect and advise their Jewish friends to go into hiding. Danes hid Jews in their homes, in churches, on farms, and in fishing boats to Sweden. This may not seem heroic to many today, but when you understand how many of the Jewish population in Denmark were saved by the Danish people, it is astounding! As a whole, Danish citizens, such as young Svend Jensen and his father, risked their own lives by having the right stuff when the world needed it the most. Sadly, Svend's father later passed away to a German bullet.

After World War II, Svend was sent to sunny Southern California by a very successful Danish import business that he represented. He was a terrific soccer player who, one afternoon following a game, met and later married the love of his life, a stunningly beautiful young lady whose name changed to Joyce Jensen, and whose mother, like Svend, was also born in Copenhagen. Svend soon became the owner of the large, successful Danish import business that originally sent him to the United States.

Svend became involved in the sport of dogs and Collies in 1956 when he attended the Collie Club of America National Specialty Show held in Santa Monica, California. Soon he attended a Los Angeles all-breed show where he met Helene Carpenter of Lewellen Collies. Svend encouraged Helene to do a tri-color to tri-color Collie breeding by asking the Carpenters to please use their own stud dog, Ch. Lewellen Cali-Collaire, the most beautiful Collie Svend had ever seen. He promised Helene that he would purchase the entire litter if there were any problems

“Svend Jensen has never claimed to be a breeder of Collies on any level. With very little or no ego, he simply had the right stuff when he felt it more important to do for the Collie than the Collie does for him.”

selling a complete tri-color litter, so Helene Carpenter did the tri- to tri-color breeding and had no issues with the litter. Svend purchased his first Collie from that litter, a tri-color puppy dog that he and Joyce named “Stormy” that flew to his championship and became the great Ch. Lewellen Watch My Line CD, show dog extraordinaire and winner of notable Best of Breed awards, sire of five champions, and strictly handled by Svend.

Well accomplished Collie breeder, owner, and handler, Terrie Parker, of Cinderella Collies, wrote the following note to Svend on his 90th birthday: *“You so kindly allowed a 12-year-old girl to breed her sable bitch, ‘Cindy’, to your beautiful Ch. Stormy. Ch. Cinderella’s Stormy Knight was the result and beginning of Cinderella Collies,”* another right stuff good deed on the part of Svend Jensen... at the right time.

Svend Jensen has never claimed to be a breeder of Collies on any level. With very little or no ego, he simply had the right stuff when he felt it more important to do for the Collie than the Collie does for him. Longtime Collie breeder and judge, Dr. Bill Brokken, once wrote about Svend, *“Although he used to refer to himself as stating, ‘I’m not a breeder...’ it wasn’t long before it was clear that he evaluated Collies in a manner of a breeder... and it wasn’t long before he owned/bred many Collies that any serious breeder would covet as their own. It wasn’t long after Svend’s success with Watch My Line (Stormy) that he used his business skills and experience to contribute to the Collie Club of America by editing the 1963 CCA Yearbook and was elected CCA treasurer from ’65 to ’66, a job that required constant attention, accounting skills, lots of the right stuff and a background of running a large corporation without the help of today’s technology and computers.”*



1986 – L to R: Ten past Collie Club of America Presidents: Ralph Morrison, Chip Atkins, John Lindeman, Svend Jensen, Ed Myers, Milt Walker, Hal Sunstrom, Ted Paul, Bill Brokken, and John Honig.



1990 – Judge Svend Jensen awards Ch. Incandescent Limited Edition BOB at the Northern California Specialty show with Janine Walker Keith handling.



1999 – Svend Jensen, handling his Ch. Shoreham Absolutely Valley-Hi (Sandy), wins Best of Breed under judge Roy L. Ayers, Jr. at the Southern California Collie Club Specialty.

LINES FROM LINDA: HAPPY BIRTHDAY, SVEND JENSEN



Svend created one of the most pivotal moments in Collie history at the CCA National Specialty when he awarded BOB to Smooth Collie, Ch. Black Hawk of Kasan, over the rough BOV winner, finally making the BOB judging a real competition that would pay it forward for the breed. Les Canavan handling.

His Treasurer's report in the 1966 Yearbook is impeccable. In 1967, he was elected President of Collie Club of America by the membership. Little did anyone know in 1956 about Svend's future right stuff contributions to the purebred dog world and the Collie Club of America, and that he would, while judging the CCA, establish much-needed Collie history for decades to come. Svend, becoming CCA President in 1967, was acknowledged in the 1966 CCA Yearbook by five Southern California Collie Clubs lending him their full support! In the '67 CCA Yearbook, Svend Jensen wrote strictly about his favorite subject, the Collie, not politics nor himself, stating, *"The love, loyalty, and understanding our Collies give to us to paraphrase Lincoln, with affect for all breeds and malice toward none, the Collie is the noblest of animals upon this earth. And it is indeed my honor and pleasure to be counted among you who so ardently contribute to the conditions that make it so."*

Svend has also worn many other hats since 1956. For years he held various executive offices in the prestigious Pasadena Kennel Club, including President. And, both Svend and Joyce were longtime members of a Southern California horse show organization. Following "Stormy's" career in the ring,



2013 - Svend enjoyed his 90th birthday retirement celebration from judging and his last BOB and BOS winners at San Gabriel Valley Club.



Always having the right stuff, Svend inviting his longtime pal and judge, Howard Dullnig, into his 90th birthday photo that was taken during Svend's celebration and final judging, March 2013.

LINES FROM LINDA: HAPPY BIRTHDAY, SVEND JENSEN



Three beloved Presidents of the Collie Club of America celebrating and sharing memories of the years they judged one of their favorites, the San Diego Collie Club; Svend Jensen, Sally and Bob Futh. Photo courtesy of Randy Smith.



I too found Svend's Ch. Shoreham Absolutely Valley-Hi (Sandy) to be the top dog at the Southern California Collie Club National Specialty show. Linda Ayers Turner Knorr and Svend Jensen.



April 1986 - CCA president Svend Jensen judged Smooth Dogs at CCA Centennial (110th) National Show placing Carol Coleman's Blue Merle WD to finish, and RD to a pretty Sable 6-9 Puppy, shown by Janine Walker Keith.

Svend became a very popular AKC judge, due to his knowledge of the breed, honesty, dignity, and charm, judging the CCA twice. In 1986, Svend judged at the 100th CCA Centennial Anniversary show near Chicago along with nine other past and present CCA Presidents: Ralph Morrison, Chip Atkins, John Lindeman, Ed Myers, Milt Walker, Hal Sunstrom, Ted Paul, Bill Brokken, and John Honig, who were all assigned different classes to judge at the Centennial Specialty Show. Svend was assigned to judge smooth-coated Collie males.

Svend may be best-known for a keen decision he made while judging the 1970 CCA in Worcester, which may be the most pivotal moment in Collie history, when he awarded Best of Breed to a Smooth Collie for the first time in CCA history, finally making the judging of Best of Breed at specialties a true competition between the two Collie varieties, Rough and Smooth, at all future specialty shows. Without a doubt, Svend Jensen brought the Smooth Collie variety "out of the dark" and into the limelight, advancing Smooth Collies to the same pinnacle as the popular rough-coated variety. The Smooth BOV dog that Svend chose that day for BOB over the BOV Rough dog was Ch. Black Hawk of Kasan, owned by Sandy Tuttle and handled by the now late and great, Les Canavan, who is missed immensely. For this, Svend Jensen is owed an enormous amount of gratitude.

So, the next time a Smooth Collie wins a specialty Best of Breed award, please say under your breath, "Thank you, Svend Jensen!" As former CCA president, longtime judge and Collie breeder, Sally Futh stated, *"Svend Jensen was brave enough in 1970 to put a Smooth Collie Best of Breed at CCA because Svend was ahead of his time."* As his close friend and my collaborator for this article, Janine Walker Keith, said, *"Svend Jensen always has the right stuff, at the right time, and the world is a better place for it."*

Svend, we at SHOWSIGHT wish you a very HAPPY BIRTHDAY! ■