

The Cream Always Rises To The Top

BY LINDA AYERS TURNER KNORR



TOP TOY 2000

Ch. Charing Cross Ragtime Cowboy

Remember the good old days when the milkman left cold bottles of milk on the doorsteps of your home? Your mother would peel the cap off the curved glass container and pour off the fresh cream for the family's breakfast coffee. My mother told me "the cream always rises to the top. It's the most special, the very best part." Well, she was right!

ShowSight is delighted to honor the dog world's cream of the crop . . . the most special, the very best. For seven unique issues, one devoted to each group, we will pay tribute to the number one dog of the year 2000 featuring each winner's, breeder, owner and handler. We are delighted this month to kick off this series with the team behind the Top Toy of 2000 — Ch. Charing Cross Ragtime Cowboy.



HANDLER:
LUKE EHRLICH



OWNER:
BARBARA
FINANGER



OWNER:
GILBERT KAHN

With a proud, arrogant appearance and incredible style, **Ch. Charing Cross Ragtime Cowboy**, adorned with a long flowing coat moved effortlessly into the top spot for the Toy Group. The happy Shih Tzu was bred and is owned by one of our sport's most intriguing personalities, Mr. Gilbert Kahn. Contributing to every area of the game, Kahn exemplifies what being special and the very best means. Completing "Joey's" team are his co-breeder the marvelous Barbara Finanger and the handler who presented him with such class, Luke Ehricht.

Conversing with Gilbert Kahn is a joy! His life is filled to capacity with his diversified worthwhile interests. The accomplishments of his extraordinary family are chronicled in the pages of American history.

Years ago my parents Roy and Hazel Ayers told me about their Florida dog judging friend after visiting his fabulous Miami home. Mother was charmed by this great gentleman, his gracious spirit and his willingness to put himself out for his friends. Many dog fanciers agree that to experience Gilbert Kahn's warm friendship and splendid hospitality is a treasure. **Not boastful of himself, Gilbert lives his family tradition of giving of himself to enrich the lives of others.**

In the 1880's Moses Annenberg, Gilbert Kahn's grandfather fled Prussia to escape the persecution of his people. Selling newspapers on the streets of Chicago, the penniless immigrant embarked on a journey that would lead him to the top of an enormous publishing empire and one of America's largest family fortunes. Moses and Sadie Annenberg had eight children, seven lovely girls and one son. Janet, the third of their daughters was Gilbert's mother. Richard Nixon's ambassador to Great Britain, Sir Walter Annenberg was their son.

In 1936 Janet Annenberg's husband Stanley Kahn flew to Paris to negotiate the purchase of the Philadelphia Inquirer.

In New York Gilbert Kahn the son born to Janet Annenberg and L. Stanley Kahn grew up to take an active part in his family's publishing business (The Philadelphia Inquirer, TV Guide, Seventeen Magazine, American Bandstand, etc. etc. etc.) which was later sold to Rupert Murdoch.

In 1997, *American Benefactor* magazine called Gilbert's uncle, Walter Annenberg, "the most beneficent philanthropist in the history of the world." Their figures put him ahead of Standard Oil's John D. Rockefeller, the nation's first billionaire whose personal lifetime philanthropy totaled 520 million or 7.3 billion in current dollars and Steelman Andrew Carnegie's gifts of 350 million or 5.7 billion today.

Now dividing his time between his homes in Coral Gables, Florida, New York City, and Newport, Rhode Island and with the support of his late mother's foundation, the Janet Annenberg Hooker Charitable Trust, our dog world friend devotes much of his time and energies to his communities' cultural lives. He is a major contributor to the Florida Philharmonic, a member of the Metropolitan Opera's Golden Horseshoe and managing director of that company. Kahn's recent projects include funding the March 1998 premiere of Robert Wilson's production of Richard Wagner's *Lohengrin* at the Met and a one million dollar gift to Miami's Performing Arts Center.

Enjoying a long relationship with the Florida Grand Opera, Kahn has served on its Board and Executive Committee for many years. In association with Mr. John J. Noffo Kahn, he



GILBERT S. KAHN — First judging assignment May 1, 1977. giving BOB to Ch. Winemaker's Sho Bizz. Bred/owned/handled by Fay Wine.



Ch. Ranella Johnny B. Goode (R) and Ch. Gaystock Rose Anglo. Owned and handled by Gilbert S. Kahn and Jorge N. Sanchez. Rosie has just gone BOB and Jolly WD at the September 1977 JCCA National Specialty under Judge Ramona VanCourt Jones.

Ch. Charing Cross Ching El Chang Son of Ch. Chang of Kandui. Gilbert S. Kahn's first litter. Dam: English Import Juling Miss-Chief Rom. Top Winning Shih Tzu Male for two years. Born September 19, 1971.





Chacombe Nina, called Charlotte. cavalier King Charles Spaniel bred in the UK by Diana Schillizi. Much loved house pet of Gilbert S. Kahn and John J. Noffo Kahn.



Gilbert S. Kahn — giving BIS to Yorkshire Terrier Ch. Natlee's Howard Huge. Inverness KC. Owned by Natalie Roberts Berger and handled by Glenette Cass.

sponsored this season's new production of Leos Janacek's opera *Katya Kabanova*. This marks their third consecutive year of sponsoring Florida Grand Opera productions, following *Macbeth* and *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*.

Spending summers at his Newport, Rhode Island estate, **Fairholme**, he is presently a trustee of the Preservation Society of Newport County and the Newport Art Museum. Their new education facility was recently named in his honor.

In Washington, D. C., Gilbert serves with his aunt, The Honorable Leonore Annenberg, on the Board of Friends of Art and Preservation in Embassies. They raised eight million dollars in private donations and art contributors to refurbish the public rooms of our American embassies in two dozen capitals. As a member of the Board of the National Museum of Natural History, he was very instrumental in creating the Smithsonian's Janet Annenberg Hooker Hall of Geology, Gems, and Minerals, which opened in September 1997. Beyond one gift of five million dollars toward building the new hall, some of the finest jewels in the National Gem Collection include Gilbert's mother's spectacular yellow starburst diamonds.

An avid collector of the dog paintings from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Gilbert is presently the Board Chairman of The American Kennel Club's Dog Museum in St. Louis, Missouri.

His great love for dogs and cats has resulted in many contributions to animal causes especially as Chairman of the Animal Welfare Society of South Florida. He is presently a delegate to the American Kennel Club representing the Japanese Chin Club of America and one of only a few American members of the Kennel Club in England. The Gilbert S. Kahn Deanship at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine is another of his philanthropic gifts.

Recently as Gilbert was preparing to leave Florida to attend five performances of opera in New York I pressed him to reminisce.

Share with us your entry into the sport of purebred dogs.

"I bought a Norwich Terrier bitch (Dame Elaine of High Rising) at the 1952 Westminster show. She was never shown, but I bred her in association with Betty Green, her co-breeder, and got a bitch, Charing Cross Chatelaine, my first with the registered kennel name. I called her "Bandanna" and she was shown a few times but got terribly car sick so I gave that up and bred her. In her third litter she had a male I called Charing Cross Baccio. He was sold as a gift for Jock and Betsy Whitney and when Mr. Whitney became the American Ambassador to Great Britain they took the dog with them. He proved not to be very good as a house pet and was eventually given to the famous Lakeland and Norwich Kennel, Whinlatter. Bred to a champion bitch of theirs he produced a champion in each litter and became the top stud dog for two years. Some of his descendants were later imported back to the United States by Joan Read. Dame Elaine and her daughter lived to the grand ages of 16 _ and 17 respectively.

In 1966 I bought a winter home in Miami and after

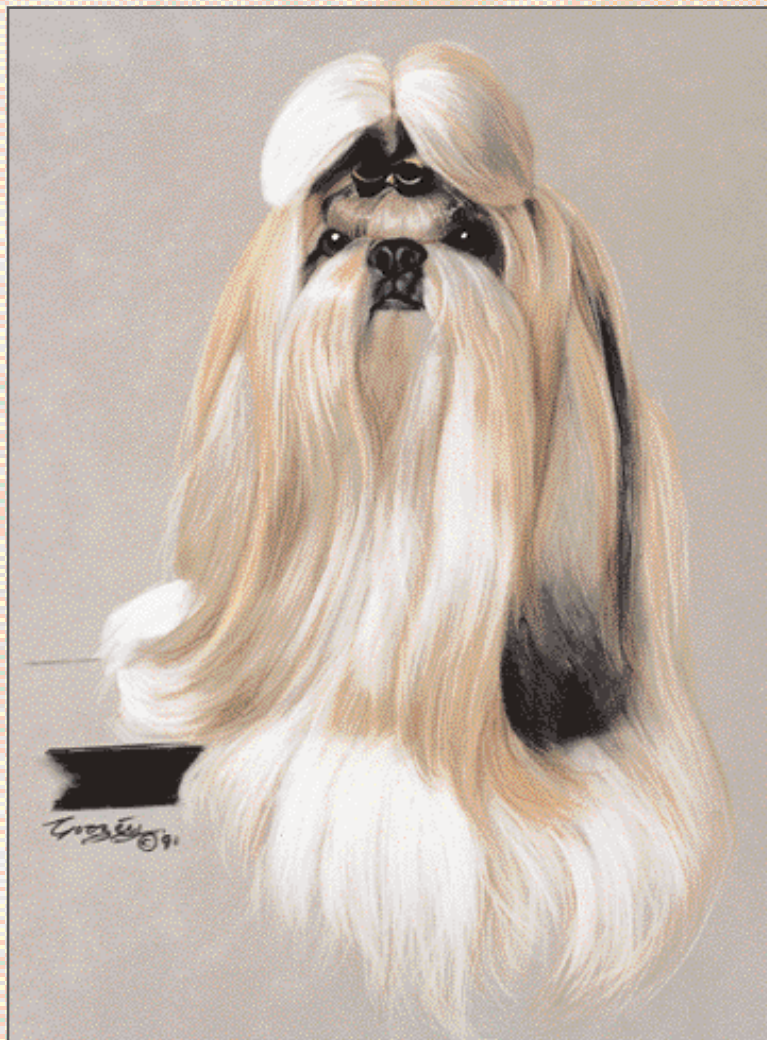
two years decided to move there permanently. There was no Norwich activity. I fell in love with a Shih Tzu puppy in the window of a pet shop in New York. "Chin Chin" was twelve weeks old and had been brought in from England. She had what proved later to be a great pedigree. Unfortunately she had an infection which made her sterile, but she was the beginning of my Shih Tzu involvement. I contacted people in England and my partner, Jorge Sanchez and I went to Crufts in 1970. We bought a male and two females and were on our way.

On a trip the following year to Crufts we met a breeder of Brussels Griffon. I bought a bitch for myself and a bitch for a local friend. This lady had Japanese Chins as well as the English Griffon breeder had them as well. I did not continue with the Griffons, but asked the English breeder to be on the lookout for a good Chin bitch. She sent me Gaystock Rose Aglo. The next year I bought a male Chin in England and these two dogs were my foundation stock. Rosie was WB, BOW, BOB at the 1977 Chin National and Jolly (Ranella Johnny B. Goode) was WD. The next day the both finished their titles.

Later on I also bought a Long Coat Chihuahua, Ch. Mikal of Evergreen Grove from Liz Johnson in Minnesota. He was a wonderful dog and in 1991 he went BIS at the Chihuahua National. I imported a lovely male, Charing Cross Blue Hugh, who had a few nice wins in big competition at the Louisville Cluster. I gave up on the Chihuahuas to concentrate again on the Shih Tzu with the move to Minnesota.

Jorge Sanches died of cancer in 1987. A friend suggested I call Barbara Finanger as she was just finishing a special and was free. I had an outstanding puppy that needed a handler and that was BIAS-BISS Ch. Dragonwyck of Charing Cross. He had a great career and was a multiple group winner and also won a number of specialty shows.

In 1989 I met John Noffo. We decided to sell the big house and move to an apartment. I also inherited a house in Newport, Rhode Island and wanted spend more time up North. Barbara, who had moved to Miami to run my kennel returned to Minneapolis and I remodeled her basement into a state of the art kennel. She brought all the dogs there and *that is where she is today. I do miss the everyday involvement, but I keep in constant touch with the operation of the kennel and try to get up there a few times a year. However, I am traveling a lot and with my house in Newport and an apartment in New York I am constantly on the go. John and I decided to have only one dog at home and he wanted a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel. We bought one from Diani Schilizzi of Chacombe Kennels in England and "Charlotte" who is now nine years old is a wonderful companion. She doesn't like other dogs and*



Pastel Portrait of Ch. Dragonwyck of Charing Cross.



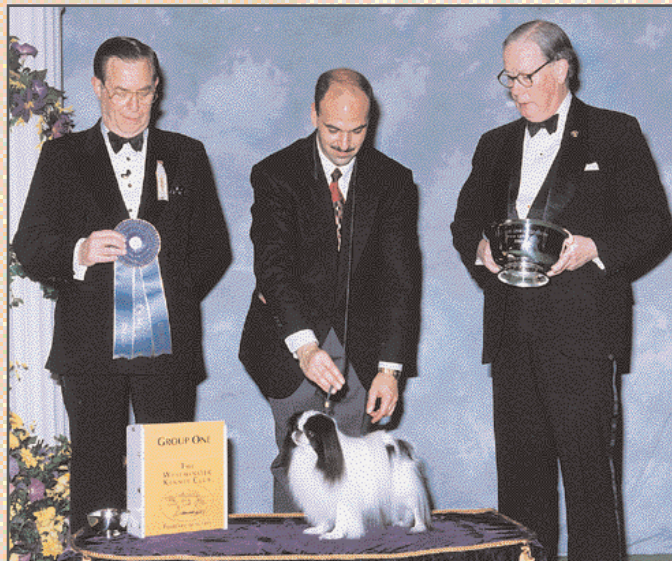
Ch. Chang of Kandau. First Shih Tzu of Gilbert S. Kahn bought in England — January 1970. All Lhakang breeding.



Gilbert S. Kahn and Ch. Dragonwyck of Charing Cross.



Gilbert Kahn entertaining Hazel and Roy Ayers at his Miami home.



Gilbert S. Kahn giving the Group to Japanese Chin Ch. Briarhill Rock and Roll. Bred by Gereldine Craddock and owned by Diane Meyer. February 1997, Westminster Kennel Club.

is a good traveler so all is well. I have bought a Cavalier bitch, Rattlebridge Ashley Anne, and plan on breeding her next year. John didn't want to breed "Charlotte" so she was spayed."

When did you become an AKC Judge and what is on your agenda for upcoming assignments?

"I had my first judging for points in May of 1977. Eight years later I finally was given the entire toy group. In those days you needed three assignments before reapplying and after Jupiter-Tequesta Dog Club in Florida, with an entry of eight, I next judged fifty-two at Santa Barbara and finally forty-eight at the Westbury Kennel Club. After that I did quite a bit of judging and was invited to judge the Birmingham City show in England in 1978. I also judged that year in Sweden and Australia. Since then I have judged in Scotland, South Africa, Finland, Austria, Canada and Czechoslovakia. This year I am supposed to be judging Japanese Chin at Crufts and the Utility Group at Bath in England. At this time one can only hope the foot and mouth epidemic will abate. I then go to Finland to judge Shih Tzu and Japanese Chins the end of August and then to Australia in October to judge at Sunbury Kennel Club and Shih Tzu Specialty in Sydney. This will be the third time I shall have judged the Shih Tzu Club of New South Wales Specialty Show. I then fly to Japan to do a Shih Tzu Specialty in Tokyo, my second judging in that country.

I do all the toys and Norwich, Norfolk and Scottish Terriers as well as Manchesters, Lhasa Apso, Bulldogs, Tibetan Terriers, Tibetan Spaniels and Poodles. Arthur Marsh wanted me to finish the non-sporting group, but I just felt if I did I would be asked to judge a lot more and I really didn't want to tie myself up so much. I

have not been judging too much in the last few years because of the specializing of "Joey". I have a few assignments in 2002 and 2003. One is the dog classes at the 2003 Cavalier National and the Cavalier and ETS classes at the Bucks County Show in 2002."

Surrounded by the best, "Joey's" co-breeder is Barbara Finanger. She thrives on running Gilbert Kahn's state of the art kennel. The first floor of her 5,000 square foot home is devoted entirely to the Charing Cross canines.

Barbara, take us back to where it all began for you. When did you become associated with Gilbert Kahn and his Charing Cross Kennels?

"My journey with dogs started at a very young age. I am the oldest and only girl of four children. A blessing and a curse all at once. I was very shy as a child. My Father was a firm man but fair man, and fighting the war in Korea. My Mother and I lived with my Grandparents, and they spoiled me rotten. I was constantly bringing home some sort of kitten, bunny, dog, mice, you name it. My Mother would help me fix them, and then we would find homes or release them back to the wild. When my Dad came home he ran the house, and wasn't happy at all with my animal endeavors. But he occasionally gave in, and helped me patch up my latest friend. I drove him crazy until one day at the age of thirteen he finally gave into my constant whining and pleading, and bought me my first purebred dog, a little mini-poodle. Her name was Linda, and when I married after high school, she was part of the package. She lived to be thirteen years old. By then I had a family of my own, and when she died my family grieved with me. I am pretty sure my love for animals and working with the dogs in particular has helped me to overcome my shy nature.

First I was a homemaker, wife and mother in my twenties through my early thirties. You might say I was a late bloomer. I took dancing lessons (tap, ballet and jazz) while my children were in their classes. Growing up I never had the opportunity to do these things, so I decided to see what I had missed. I love to dance. It's another form of expression. I think it was the start of spreading my wings. I was never groomed for, or apprenticed with another dog person or kennel. I just have a drive to have, and be with animals. My husband encouraged me to get involved further with the dogs. He chose the Shih Tzu. Our first was an adorable little solid gold, black masked male named Howie. He was my learner dog. I went to fun matches to see what it was all about and I was hooked. Howie was cut down, and so I had to grow him out. I put nine points on him with one major but never finished him. My husband traveled a lot, and I was looking for a social outlet to have some fun. I went to classes religiously and met some very nice people. I told my husband it was either dog shows or an affair. At this time he's probably wishing it had been an affair.



Ch. Charing Cross U-Chin-O'Neill. Bred and owned by Gilbert S. Kahn. Handled by Barbara Finanger. Judge Ray Swidersky.



Ch. Dragonwyck of Charing Cross. Owned by Gilbert S. Kahn and handled by Barbara Finanger. Dragonwyck was a multiple BIS and Specialty Show Winner.



Ch. Charing Cross Hari Chin Ford winning the Group under Elaine Rigden, handled by Barbara Finanger.



Ch. Mikal of Evergreen Grove. Owned by Gilbert S. Kahn. Handled by Barbara Finanger. Winning BIS at the Chihuahua Club of America National Specialty October 1991 under Maxine Beam.

We are still married, and my husband Steve is self-employed as a Manufacturers Representative in consumer electronics. He is also a part time deputy sheriff and has been involved with our community schools in the DARE program. I have two children. A son, Scott, 34 who lives with his wife Cheryl in Sioux Fall, SD and runs our distributor business there. Our daughter, Tracy, 32 works with me at the kennel and without her help could not do the things I have in the last eight years, such as traveling. She is very good with whelping, caring and nurturing each dog. She is Mr. Kahn's web master. She and she alone has designed and entered everything that is put on our Charing Cross web site www.charingcross.org. It has been a great way for Mr. Kahn to be a part of the operation while being far away. She, however, has no desire to be a part of showing dogs.

Mr. Kahn called me in November of 1989, and asked if I could become his new handler. His previous handler Kathy Hiritzo was leaving handling and getting married. A friend of Gilbert's, Ms. Elaine Meltzer, had told him about me, what a nice job I did and how well I took care of the dogs, so he called. As it worked out, my previous special was about to retire, so I was very happy to make myself available. Little did I know what a wonderful journey it would be, or how it would become a part of canine history.

Mr. Kahn has been kind enough over the years to add my name to our bitches so I can show from the bred by exhibitor class. I feel this is such an important class. I am so proud to present something I feel is worthy. It really makes me mad when people just seem to throw whatever in the bred by class because they ran out of places to enter. I do feel there are to many mediocre dogs being shown. **Purebred does not mean well bred.**

I have been in dogs for approximately twenty years. I have bred some of my own champions, and shown for many others before handling exclusively for Mr. Kahn. I feel I have a very good eye for a dog, and have often thought about judging, but my shyness still rears it's ugly head, keeping me from making that leap. People asked me when I told them I was only going to show for Gilbert Kahn if I was sure I wanted to do that. I don't regret for one minute making that decision. Not only is he the most wonderful person in the world to work for, he is so ethical and is a great role model. His dogs want for nothing. Mr. Kahn has added my name along with his own as owner of the registered name Charing Cross, assuring its longevity. At Charing Cross, we are very devoted to the dogs' health and well being, and also to the wonderful person who makes it all possible, Mr. Gilbert Kahn.

In the 70's Canadian Luke Ehricht was introduced to Gilbert Kahn when Kahn was attending dog shows across the

border. Luke was only fifteen years old and busy grooming dogs.

Having shown some of the best Shih Tzus in the breeds' history, since that time Ehricht's professional career in dogs has soared. Luke is recognized throughout both countries for his expertise.

He is married to the former Diane Kijowski who shares the kennel name, Jolei, with her mother Arlys Kijowski.

The exciting career of "Joey" marks the first association of Luke Ehricht as a professional handler for Gilbert Kahn and what an exciting beginning this has been.

As he was preparing to take "Joey's" son to the shows in Perry, Georgia, Luke took a moment to answer a few questions.

Did you do anything special for "Joey"?

"Joey" was a very demanding dog like a willful child. He was almost always in control outside of the ring. He doesn't understand the word "No". I have taken him to many restaurants in his Sherpa bag because leaving him in the hotel alone was never an option. He wouldn't even let you keep him confined in a hotel room. He felt that was his room and I was sharing it with him.

In the ring you exude confidence. Do you worry about what others think of you?

You have to be confident as your attitude reflects through your dog. I hope people look in the ring and think "What a Great Team".

If you were teaching a class of today's young Junior Handlers what is the most important piece of advice you would give them?

When traveling it is important to make the dog shine not yourself. A good handler will become part of the dog, with the focus always being the dog.

Excluding yourself, of course, name the greatest handler of all time

There have been so many I would be remiss to single one out. I think that handling has changed so much over the years. There seems to be so many people who hang a shingle proclaiming their abilities but like in most things the cream usually rises to the top.

My most memorable moment was?

Of "Joey's" career has been winning the two Breeds and two Group 1st's at Westminster. So much emphasis and prestige surrounds this show and it is an owner's, breeder's, and handler's dream to succeed there. It's probably the only show of the year that I stress myself out over (and the people around me)

Do you set priorities and goals or let the chips fall where they may?

I really don't set goals. That way you are never disappointed. Of course, like everyone else you hope to



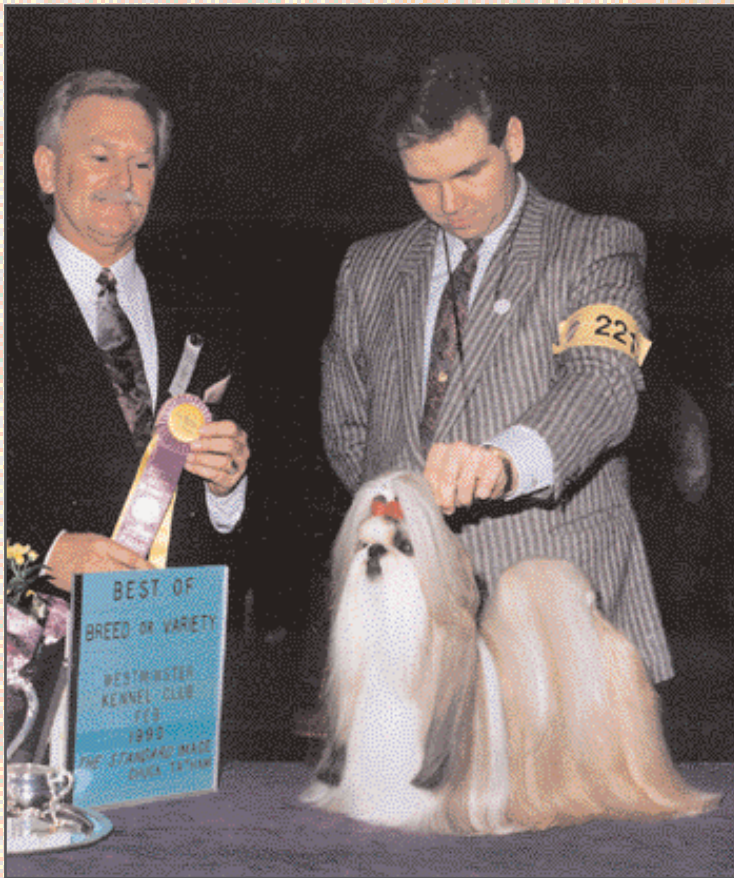
Am. Can. Ch. Shente's Brandy Alexander. Breeder-owner Margaret Brown.



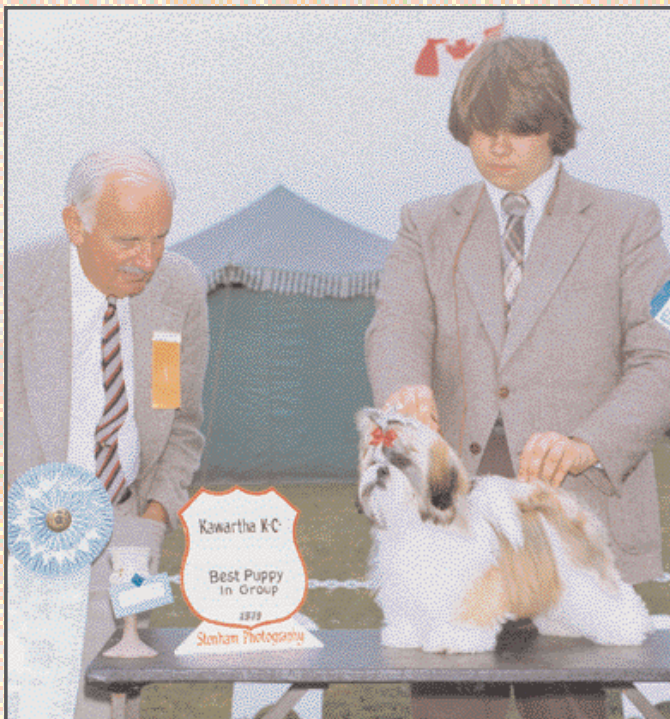
Ch. Biljon Blue Bisbee of Knollcrest. Owner Penny-Belle Scorer. Breeder Milliam Ferrara. Judge Jane Forsyth.



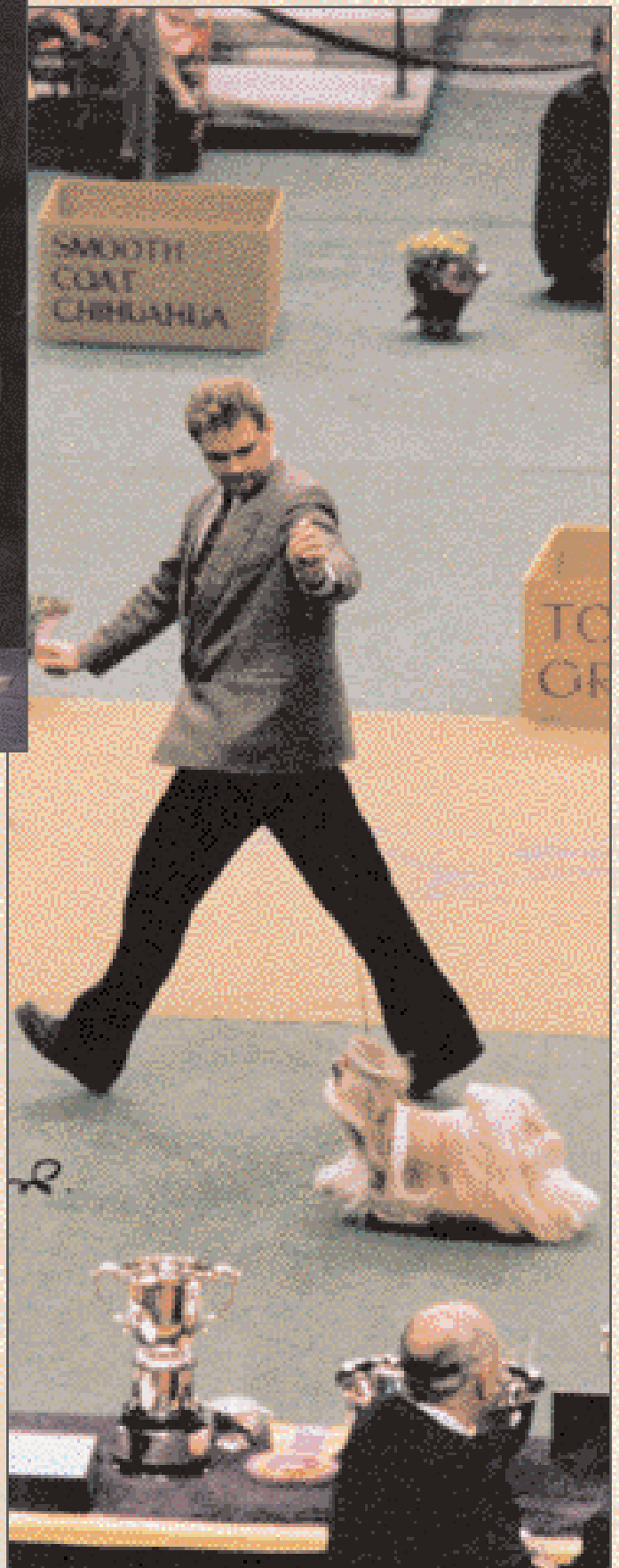
Am. Can. Ch. Shente's Brandy Alexander. Sire: Ch. Afshi's Gunther. Dam: Sharn's Rising Star. Breeder, Margaret Brown. Owner: Luke Ehricht and Margaret Brown. Judge, Gilbert Kahn.



Ch. Shente's Brandy Alexander. (Ch. Afshi's Gunther x Shrn's Rising Star). Breeder, Margaret Brown. Owners, Luke Ehricht and Margaret Brown. Judge, Norman Patton.



Ch. Shente's Brandy Alexander. (Ch. Afshi's Gunther x Shrn's Rising Star). Judge: Wally Bowden. Age in photo 7 months. Pictured winning Best Puppy In Group at his first show. Handler: Luke Ehricht.



Group Ring Westminster K.C. 1990. "Brandy" 11 years old.



Am. Can. Ch. Innisfrees Keep It Kosher. Owners: Rod & Donna Heartz. Judge Tom Stevenson.



Ch. Charing Cross Ragtime Cowboy. The Westminster Kennel Club, February 12, 2001. Group 1. Judge: Mrs. Helen Lee James. Owner: Gilbert S. Kahn.

win at the shows you attend but to obsess about final statistics and ratings takes the enjoyment out of it and adds a lot of stress.

Who is your greatest cheerleader?

My wife Diane. She handles as well and has been involved with breeding Shih Tzus for twenty-seven years. She is my greatest support. I could never do all the traveling without her. We do attend many shows together but when I fly she has to take over our whole operation. "Joey" and I could never have achieved our records without her.

Another source of pride for owner Gilbert Kahn is Ch. Fort Merrill Great Gatsby, the fabulous Basset Hound handled by Brian Martin, bred by and co-owned with Joan Urban. In "Gatsby" was the Number Two Dog All Breeds and the Number One Hound. The whole world was captivated when the little dog won their hearts on television at Westminster.

The proud presence of Gilbert Kahn is a welcome sight at any event. Our sport is blessed to have such an individual who has given of himself from all levels in every area of the game. From his beginning forty-nine years ago as a novice young man just attending his first dog show at The Westminster Kennel in hopes of purchasing a pet. . . . as an exhibitor handling his own dogs. . . . an AKC judge. . . . a worker and tireless leader of so many of our organizations. . . . and the assembler of the TOP TOY TEAM FOR 2000, he inspires us!

Now retired **Ch. Charing Cross Ragtime Cowboy's** career has been highlighted by 295 Group 1st and 83 Best In Show wins in addition to 15 Best in Specialties including 2 National Specialty Shows.

Pictured below: Following in his father's footsteps, "Joey's" son Ch. Hallmark Jolei Raggedy Andy already has a string of Best in Show wins this year. Congratulations to "Joey", Gilbert Kahn, Barbara Finanger, and Luke Ehricht. It looks like another cream colored toy is rising to the top!

