

Lines from Linda



GOOD BREEDING... IT'S IN THE GENES MARI-BETH O'NEILL

the O'Neill family served as AKC delegates. Charles, Marie (Bryn Mawr) and Mari-Beth (American Manchester Terrier Club).

Responsibility and hard work must be household mottos in the O'Neill family.

Mari-Beth was literally raised participating in the sport of pure-bred dogs. Dobermans were the family's original breed and many

Born into the family of Charles and Marie O'Neill, Mari-Beth O'Neill certainly has the pedigree to be a success in her new position as the American Kennel Club's Director of Judging Applications.

As the daughter of Charles "Chuck" and Marie O'Neill, Mari-Beth has some big shoes to fill...

From 1971-1988 Charles A. T. O'Neill was the AKC delegate representing the Doberman Pinscher Club of America. Also in 1971, he was elected to serve on the Board of Directors of the American Kennel Club.

Executive Vice President of the American Kennel Club was the title of Chuck O'Neill from 1978 through 1988 when he retired. In addition, he was the show chairman

of the AKC's Centennial Show held in Philadelphia in 1984.

At one time three members of

Mari-Beth O'Neill showing Ch. Charmaron's Cheddar of Toy to Best of Variety from the Veterans class, 1983 National Specialty. Judge: Frank Sabella



weekends were spent on the road campaigning Ch. Ebonaire's

By Linda Ayers Turner Knorr



Young Mari-Beth training her Doberman

Touchdown han-

dled by Johnny Davis in the south and J. Monroe Stebbins in the north. In the early sixties, many shows were benched and Mari-Beth was frequently seen taking naps amongst her Dobes.

She longed to show the dogs, but Dobermans were too large, so when Mari-Beth was old enough for Juniors, the family started looking at smaller breeds. Several were considered; however, prerequisites were that Mari-Beth would be able to pick up the dog and carry it if necessary. They were also searching for a breed with no hair requiring extensive grooming.

In 1966, well-known Doberman breeder and friend, Marge Kilburn suggested Manchester Terriers. Her assistant, Rodney Herner, was a breeder and happened to have two female puppies available. The O'Neills went to visit Rod and see the puppies. Both were very nice and thought to be show quality. Mari-Beth selected a favorite, but Rod was concerned about the puppy going oversize. Since she was predominantly going to be shown in Junior Showmanship, it didn't really matter. Renreh Lorelei of Charmaron (Charmaron a prefix

standing for Charles and Marie O'Neill) had found a new home!

"Lori" made her debut at six months, winning the Variety over specials at the Baltimore show in November, more important, this qualified her to be eligible to enter Westminster. Shown by J. Monroe Stebbins the following weekend, she again was awarded BOV both days at Philadelphia and Camden for Majors under Percy Roberts and Edith Nash Hellerman.

Lori's first year at Westminster was February 1967, still at the old Garden. Alva Rosenberg judged, and one of the specials entered was Ch. Dunmere Demiter, the top winning Toy Manchester of that time. Mr. Rosenberg awarded Lori BOV.

Mari-Beth was thrilled! The Toy Group Tuesday afternoon was being judged by Mr. William Kendrick. The nine month old puppy came home with a Group Four and a start to a big show career.

Lori Literally stopped growing at about eight months and her weight at maturity was 10 1/2 pounds.

That summer Mari-Beth celebrated her tenth birthday and was eligible to compete in Juniors. Lori had finished in the spring and had several other Group placements. In the old days, Juniors were judged by handlers whenever a ring was available. Young handlers needed to win one Novice Class to be eligible to compete in Open, and five Open wins to compete at Westminster. The first time Mari-Beth showed in Juniors was at Lackawanna Kennel Club. Steve Shaw judged and she won the Novice Class, making her eligible for the Open Class where she also

Charles and Marie O'Neill celebrating Mari-Beth's first New Year's Eve - notice Popular Dogs magazine beside Chuck



placed. That year she missed qualifying for Westminster by one win.

The following Westminster, in 1968, was the last year at the old Garden. Steb was showing Lori in



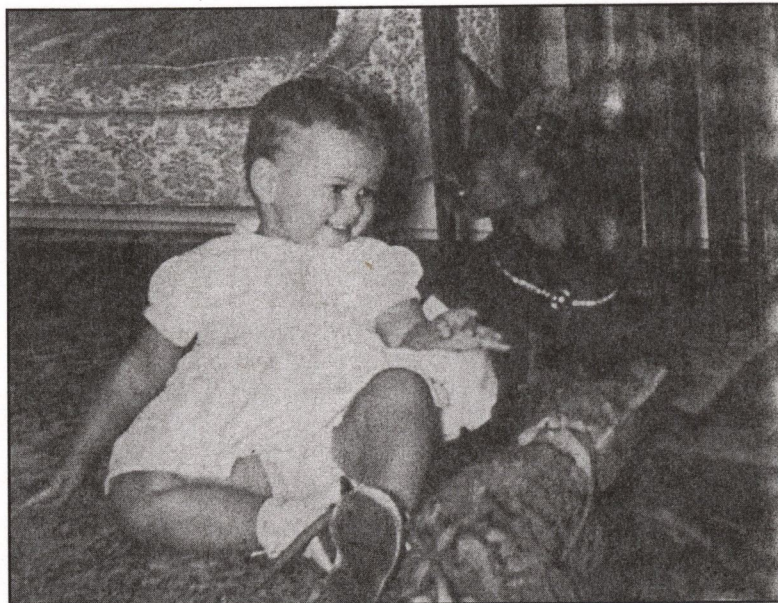
Ch. Renreh Lorelei of Charmaron wins the Toy Group at Mispillion Kennel club, August 24, 1968 under judge Melbourne Downing

One. Second was the Toy Poodle, Ch. Mentmarte Marlaine shown by Richard Bauer. Marlane was the number one Toy in 1968 and Lori was number three.

The 1969 Westminster was at the New Garden. The O'Neills arrived in New York Saturday and went off for a day of sightseeing. Sunday they woke up to a snowstorm which lasted all day. Sunday evening they were having snowball fights in the middle of Seventh Avenue. Breed judging was Monday and the new Garden was quite different. The Groups were all judged Tuesday, starting in the afternoon. Anna Katherine

the Variety, and Mari-Beth was showing her in Juniors and as a Brace with Ch. Renreh Melissa. Mrs. Virginia Sivori judged the Toy Group and awarded the Manchester-First, which meant they were the next class to compete in the old Garden. Jim Clark went Best Brace in Show with the Whippets. Richard Bauer and

Jimmy Mitchell were showing the German Wirehairs and won the Sporting Group Brace.



That summer, Steb was not going to shows where the family planned to enter Lori. She had won two bests in June and one in July, becoming the top winning Toy Manchester. So Mari-Beth showed her at Mispillion Kennel Club under Melbourne Downing. Lori won Group

Ch. Pamelot's Believe It Or Not placing in the Group at Santa Barbara, 1984

Nicholas judged the Toy Group. Lori won. An Italian Greyhound shown by Mike Shea was second. It is amazing how lives intertwine. Mike and Mari-Beth are both working for the American Kennel Club now. After the Group, Lori and Mari-Beth still had to compete in Juniors. They had already gone second in the Toy Brace Group. That was twenty five years ago. Louis Murr judged Best in Show which was won by a Skye Terrier owned, bred and handled by Walter Goodman, who is doing Best in Show in 1994 - a twenty fifth anniversary!





Mari-Beth and AKC President Bob Maxwell, Montgomery County 1993

When Steb was attending other shows, Mari-Beth showed Lori throughout the remainder of her career winning many Groups, Specialties, and even a Best in Show in Canada. Lori is the predecessor of the Charmaron Manchesters of which there are many champions and, at last count, ten Group winners with the Charmaron prefix.

The young Miss O'Neill continued to show actively in Juniors qualifying for the Garden every year except the first, handling Manchesters, Dobermans and a Beagle co-owned with Steb.

Ch. Charmaron's Cheddar of Toy, bred by Mari-Beth is still the top producing sire of all time in the Toy variety, producing thirty six champions, including having sired Ch. Pamelot's Believe It Or Not, the top winning male with five Best in Show wins.

Mari-Beth always had a desire to be a professional handler. She worked for Steb at large shows and later became an assistant to Terry Lazarro Hundt for almost ten years. Charles and Marie always empha-

Mari-Beth assisting AKC Field Rep Anne Savory with program for Judges' Institute

sized that Mari-Beth had to finish school and have a career. Teaching was always the other profession Mari-Beth wanted to pursue.

Susan, Mari-Beth's sister, got a Whippet bitch from Peggy Hodge of Highlight Whippets. While in college, Mari-Beth worked for Peggy at the kennel and they



Mari-Beth with mother Marie and sister Susan, Montgomery County 1993;

co-owned and handled dogs. One of them, Ch. Highlight's Cafe Au Lait, won the Eastern Regional at Huntingdon Valley. Additionally,

brother Todd got an Irish Wolfhound from Sam Ewing. Mari-Beth often helped Sam show his class dogs.



Mari-Beth receives the prestigious "P.P." (Perfect Person) award from the students of the AKC Judges Institute, 1993; in the lineup are (l. to r.) Dr. Ted Kjellstrom, Kim Meredith, Rosalind McEnroe-Geittmann, Jim White, Pete Derano and Valerie Johnson

After graduating from Ursinus College, Mari-Beth moved to Long Island and taught for a year in a South Jersey High School. Following that was more time spent as an educator at the Lawrence Country Day School for ten years, teaching fourth and fifth grades and coaching field hockey. During those years at Lawrence, Mari-Beth was Terry Hundt's assistant.

A decision about her long-term future was made and graduate school was the answer. She received a Masters Degree in reading.

Mari-Beth also decided she would apply to become a dog show judge. It was during that same period Mari-Beth was elected to become the AKC delegate for the American Manchester Terrier Club.

Approval to judge Manchesters, Dobermans, Whippets, Scottish Deerhounds and Irish Wolfhounds came quickly. Mari-Beth really enjoyed judging! Her first assignment was Montgomery County followed by many other big shows. Initially, she did not accept any assignments in the northeast as she knew all the Dobermans being

shown. She made the exception for Montgomery County as these could only be standards which she never bred.

In the spring of 1990, the school where the young dog show judge taught merged with another school. At first she was pleased to be kept as part of the faculty. When it became apparent that there was a complete change in the curriculum, Mari-Beth was not comfortable and desired a change. She inquired about a position as a field rep as several were retiring, but all of the positions had been filled.

At the Somerset Hills Show, Michael Suave informed her that a position had just opened in judges education and suggested that she speak with Terry Stacy immediately. She did, and started October 20, 1990 as the Associate Director of Judging Research and Development. Her most rewarding project has been being involved with the development and coordination of the highly successful AKC Judges Institutes. Being able



Mari-Beth O'Neill addresses the students at the Judges Institute in Pomona, California, 1993

to utilize her professional teaching skills and applying them to developing curriculum and activities for judging was a dream job for a young girl with Mari-Beth's incredible background. Not everyone can make their avocation their vocation!

In March of 1993, Mari-Beth was appointed Director of Judging Applications. This is a challenging position as this is one of the areas where the American Kennel Club is most scrutinized.

Someday perhaps Charles and Marie O'Neill will be proud to know they sired the first female executive officer of our American Kennel Club. After all - Mari-Beth has good breeding - it's in the genes.....

Linda Ayers Turner Knorr