

A to Z of breeds: Irish Terrier

Meet the Breeder: Ann Bradley (Montelle)

Please tell us about the origin of your kennel name, and what year you registered it

It was in the 60's that my application to the KC was made. Even then it was rare to have a first choice accepted, after several attempts I made the name up from a chocolate box selection. Those who know me will not be surprised at that!

How did your involvement with the breed begin and were there other breeds beforehand?

An Irish Terrier came into my life when, as a school girl, my parents decided I was old enough to be responsible for a dog. We fell in love with the breed after meeting one on holiday. Finding a breeder with a puppy available proved a challenge but eventually were put in touch with Norah Woodfield (Pathfinder). So it was that Robin arrived by rail in a tea chest, quite usual in those days. Little did we know how this little puppy was to change our lives. He came unregistered although he had a stunning pedigree which at that time meant little to us! We registered him Robin of Rozel, the name of our house.

When Robin was a year old a school friend who had a Poodle suggested we took our dogs to a dog show and my parents agreed. There were no classes for Irish so we entered AV Special Beginners, what we did not know was that Robin should have been stripped. As it happened he had a very hard, almost single, coat so with the regular brushing I had been doing his coat was not too long. Judging was the late Leo Wilson an all-round judge of great renown, seeing what he considered a decent dog under the coat awarded a VHC, well that was it...I wanted more.

On attending a second show we met an exhibitor with an Irish who had trained at Pathfinder and was shown how the head should be trimmed. From then on we kept in touch and I was introduced to my first breed club show where we were to meet Norah Woodfield in person, we hit it off straight away and she was keen to encourage my enthusiasm. It was arranged with my parents for me to stay at Pathfinders for a few days to learn more about grooming and the breed.

What were your ethics when you began and what did you do to learn about the breed?

There was never any question what direction my career would go, following various apprenticeships I built up my own grooming business for all breeds which is where my Poodle interest developed. With my life in dogs well established my parents and I invested in a boarding kennel and was then I was able to fulfil my interest in Irish Terriers.

What lines did you start with when breeding and are they still in your lines today?

Before breeding my first litter of Irish I had enjoyed showing Robin and had two poodle litters. I bought my first Irish Terrier from a breeder who did not show, she had a Pathfinders bitch and a dog from Miss Simpsons Merrey kennel. I had pick of litter who I named Paddy's Girl of Montelle and showed with some success gaining my first RCC. It was from her daughters that my first 3 Champions came and even to this day my pedigrees go back to Susan.

At what age do you like to choose a show puppy and why that age? Also, what do you look for?

Choosing an IT puppy for show is rarely easy as they seem to change by the week. I have only once picked my show puppy at 5 weeks, Ch Montelle M'i Lady. Generally one can begin to sort them out at 8 weeks but better to wait till 12 weeks unless you have the luxury of leaving it till 16 weeks. The principles have to be attitude, outline, tail set and carriage.

How do you choose a stud dog for a bitch, do you look at his pedigree, his type or something else? Can it happen that a well

thought over combination doesn't work and you don't get what you expected?

In choosing a stud the priority is that he excels where the bitch has failings. Character is important and he must be of sound construction. Pedigree is important too and it is helpful to have knowledge of the dogs and breeding lines. I have bred three Champions from sound dogs never shown but with the right breeding, one was Montelle Carry On. I used this dog to Ch Aran of Paddy Mack an outstanding bitch from Ireland by Ch Robinhood of Eperons, from which came Ch Montelle Gambelin Miller behind Famous Star. Of course breeding can be unpredictable but never be shy to outcross from time to time or put off because a dog is not on your doorstep.

Name three of the best dogs you have bred.

A tough call from around 30 Champions. One of course has to be Ch Montelle Famous Star, this dog appealed to breed specialists and allrounders, his conformation was outstanding with no exaggeration and was the perfect show dog, his total of 25 CCs puts him in the position of reserve top winning IT. His granddaughter Ch Montelle M'i Lady has to be mentioned having won the prestigious KC Junior Warrant competition and a Crufts BOB winner. For my 3rd have chosen Ch Montelle Star Return the dam of Famous Star.

Who were your mentors?

In the earlier days of my breeding and showing I was always appreciative of being able to talk to experienced breeders and would like to say most Irish Terrier folk are most welcoming and ready to help. To single out these would be Norah Woodfield who took me under her wing right at the beginning. Then Paddy Carrol, always so kind and helpful and bred some super dogs. Ireland came through with some really typical Irish and from these it would be Tommy Watterson who owned Ch Imperial Major and Ch Robinhood of Esperons dogs that played a significant part in my breeding.

What kennels present and past do you admire, and why?

When it comes to kennels who breed consistently true to type for me the stand out one has to be Hans and Karina Gruttner of the Emsmuehle Irish. There have been several from the past including Pathfinder, Breezy and Paddy Carroll with the Carolmac's.

When did you become involved with judging? Can you name your first show and can you recall the entry number and your winners?

My first judging appointment came in 1973 when I judged Miniature and Toy Poodles, however it was in 1978 that my first appointment for Irish came at The Southern Irish Terrier Society limit show with 23 dogs entered. In 1982 it was at WELKS where I had my first CC appointment, my CC dog and BOB was Ch Bens Heir Ben with the bitch CC to Jackmo Pollyanna who shortly after gained her title.

What are the three most exciting judging appointments you have done, globally, that you can say has ticked a box for you in your bucket list. Who were your winners from the show?

Judging has taken me to a number of exciting destinations, one of which was at the Danish Terrier Club and was a wonderful experience. The show was similar to a UK Open show and my judging covered 15 breeds all the specials and BIS. Amongst these were Irish Terriers where my BOB was Kilkenney's Bjorg a daughter of an Emsmuehle dog. My best veteran was quite an emotional moment, born in 2004 she was by M Famous Star and had his look and was pleased

to put her through to RBVIS.

Another occasion was to judge the Irish at the World show in 1985 held in Amsterdam. There my Ch dog winner was Ch Ganjo of Bens Heir exported to Germany and bred in Ireland but unable to confirm BOB.

Another momentous occasion was to judge at the Uppsala County Kennel Club in Sweden where I judged Poodles and on the same weekend judged Irish in Stockholm. To judge is always a privilege and no more so than at Crufts where I have judged on 6 occasions.

Name three of the best dogs you have judged over your career that you hold in high regard for the example of the breed.

A tough call. However I would like to mention Ch Teltown Mick who I awarded BOB when judging at Crufts 1990, he was the sire of Ch Carolmac Pearley Boy who played a significant role in my breeding. Another who I used in my breeding and awarded the CC at Crufts 2015 was Ch Uomo Mondano von der Emsmuehle. Then completing the three has to be Ch Robinhood of Esperons bred in Ireland by the talented breeder Billy McGill. This dog was so typical but came up against Ballinruan Beau on his occasional visits over the water. He had two CCs and was my pleasure to award a 3rd from veteran class when I judged at the Ulster ITC.

If you could go back in time and have the opportunity to judge a specific dog that you didn't get the chance to, who would that be and why?

To have the opportunity to judge a specific dog back in time would have to be Ch Redneval Ballinruan Beau which I believe was very correct on the move.

How do you feel the breed has changed from when you started. Have they improved or got more varied over time?

When looking in general across all breeds movement does appear to an issue, that is not to say there are not some outstanding moving dogs to be seen in top competition.

When I came into the breed there were many more breeders, especially in Ireland. Classes were generally well filled, the dogs being pretty full on with a lot of serious sparring going on. Times have changed in this respect which has to be for the better as emphasis needs to be on temperament to fit into today's needs in the family home.

Tell us about your absolute highlight in dogs?

It has to be my first appointment to judge the Terrier group which was at the Windsor Ch show, as this reflected a cornerstone in my judging which I take very seriously and do enjoy, the only downside is that you cannot make everyone happy!

Aside from dogs, what other hobbies do you enjoy doing?

Throughout my life dogs have always been at the forefront but in the background has been my love of music. During my school days I would enjoy singing in the school choir and on one occasion took a solo part. When the opportunity arrives I have joined local singing groups, however caring for the dogs and dog shows generally puts a stop to that!

Finally how would you like to be remembered?

How to be remembered would be fitting to say, waste not want not!



Robin of Rozel in the early 60's at an exhibition show



Ch Montelle Famous Star (Gavin)



Kilkenney's Bjorg



Ch Montelle M'i Lady JW Sh Cm winning KC Junior Warrant competition



Ch Aran of Paddy Mack (Crufts BOB winner)



Ch Uomo Mondano von der Emsmuehle Crufts dog CC 2015