

Norwegian Elkhound Notes 25th May 2024

“Obituary

Gill Bingham - Steldawn

It is with a very heavy heart that I am compelled to publicly report the death of one of my dearest and closest friends. Gillie was a respected exhibitor and judge of dogs in general but her forever love was the Norwegian Elkhound. She passed away peaceful at the Russell Court Care Home in Dudley on Sunday the 19th May after suffering many years with MS. Gillie was a once in a lifetime friend, who came to me many years ago in the early 70's, to widen her knowledge and experience of the Norwegian Elkhound, she was always eager to learn and passed all of this knowledge onto everyone who wanted to know.

We became very close friends and shared many happy adventures together whilst showing the dogs. Her interest wasn't just with the Norwegian Elkhound, she was very successful in the breeding and exhibiting of her Akita's and Shiba Inu's. She bred some very beautiful dogs over the years, two of which stood out to me. I thought the best of the best, was Ch. Steldawn Crackerjack and Ch Steldawn Wiseguy they were real showstoppers, and for me, had everything. She judged the breed at home and abroad and was very well respected for her opinion.

In her youth Gillie had worked with horses so when able, she would come over and help prepare mine for the showing, her plaits were always better than mine. Her handling and presentation were perfection; she was a real natural and got the best out of both horses and dogs.

We shared so many wonderful times at the shows and I miss her dreadfully. We were all very close, Robert Greaves (Whittimere), Barbara Stokes (Kestos) and myself. There are many hilarious stories untold but one very significant one, was the time we were invited down to London to the Contest Of Champions, along with another one of our friends, Joy Harburn (Torden). Ch Rothenborg Christian had qualified for his place there and Gillie was handling him for me as usual. It was a wonderful evening, not a drop of booze was consumed by Gill as she was driving but we were drunk on the joy and laughter of the occasion. I remember vividly going round a roundabout several times, because we'd lost our way and then being stopped by the police and breathalysed. After hearing our story and witnessing the annoyance from Christian in the back, they laughingly let us go on our way. There were so many adventures when we were younger, and before this dreadfully disease consumed her body. She was so strong and so determined to try and carry on.

On visiting her at the cottage and then inevitably the Care Home, we would reminisce about times past, and I would update her on the progress of our lovely dogs in the ring at the time. I felt that this was the only way to keep her in touch with the life that she so loved and missed.

You are at peace now Gillie and free from pain.

Miss you so much

Jill C “

Gill Bingham's niece Carla has announced the date of her funeral. It will take place on Tuesday the 11th of June at 2.10pm, Stourbridge Crematorium and the wake will be nearby at the Gigmill pub,. She asks, "if you are planning to attend please could you let me know as we are trying to work out the numbers to cater for thanks so much, I am grateful for all your heartfelt messages at this difficult time xx - Carla Jane Art ". If you plan on attending, you can find Carla's email at the bottom of the main page on her art website.

I knew Gill since she started with dogs as Gill Worrall. A wonderful strong, brave lady who bred the most beautiful dogs with Barbara and Jill, her dear friends. I admired her immensely for the way she coped with the most inhumane illness; having to move from the home she adored and give up the dogs she loved so much. Her Steldawn's started with Elkhounds; she tried breeding Akitas but gave up then continued with Shibas. (For an excellent explanation of her dogs please read Vanessa's report in the Our Dogs' breed notes this week. May 24th issue.) Gill was always ready to help anyone, to give advice and had that rare ability to cheer up anyone she spoke to. Famed here and abroad for her Bingham's Bomb and her friendliness; even though she wasn't able to be actively involved in dogs for several years, she never lost her interest. She loved being in partnership with Jill and was really looking forward to helping to plan the Elkhound day later this year. It was her suggestion and support that led to me getting the beautiful Crufts Group winner Ch Kestos Quickstep to live with us in her older years. She and her beautiful Steldawns will be lovingly remembered by so many people. Rest peacefully now Gill. Your fight is over. We will never forget you.

This weekend of course, apart from the FA Cup Final, is Bath Ch Show where David Cavill has drawn an entry of 41. I don't think I've ever seen us listed as 5th in the ring with 134 dogs in 4 other breeds before us. Judging was incredibly late. There were 37 Basset Fauve's, 13 BGV Grand and 59 BGV Petit, all with different judges, then 25 Salukis for Mr Cavill before we could start. One would have thought a spare ring could have been found before 4pm.

Dog Challenge Certificate and Best of Breed was Graythor Augustus at Rothenborg (Mrs J E & Mrs G Cowper & Bingham). Gill would have been over the moon as this CC gave him his title. It's actually his 5th CC but he needed that extra one when over 12 months old.

Reserve Dog Challenge Certificate went to a new name (to me) from Junior with Seasara Iceman (Mrs T & Mr P Jolley).

Bitch Challenge Certificate was won by Grasilva Treble's Going (Miss B C Gray) and Reserve Bitch Challenge Certificate was Am Ch Kamgaard Klementina (Imp Usa) (Ms S & Ms M Simmonds & Mott).

Best Puppy was Barbelka Dauntless Spirit (ai) (Ms B M Barganska).

Best Veteran was won by Ch Grasilva Little Rock avec Gilkarro JW (Ms K H & Mrs H Tress) and Best Special Beginner went to Cealdstan Artistic Mystic (ai) (Miss K Cockbill).

The results finally appeared just before 6pm. Jill just managed to get into the Group as Dachshunds were being judged. Puppy Group was later so Barbara Barganska managed to get into the Group where her puppy, Barbelka Dauntless Spirit won Puppy Group 4 under Mr S J Parsons. Well done.

Advertising for the Annual 'Spitz in the Park' has just started. It will take place over the weekend of July 19th – 21st, at Bretford Village Hall CV23 0JZ. Open to all Spitz breeds, it's a

great fun weekend with a fun dog show, games and quizzes and usually a meal. More details later.

Diana Hudson (norderhove@gmail.com).