

A Blast From The Past

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Mrs. Milton Fox
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It is most appropriate that during these AKC historical months that there be included now a short history of the Australian Terrier Club of the Greater Chicago area.

The Club was first named Lacomac, formerly the Australian Terrier Club of Illinois. It was founded at the International Kennel Club Show of April, 1962.

Mrs. Milton Fox was present and hoped to arouse interest in the parent club and the breed. She suggested that the people at the show form the nucleus of an organization whereby people could meet in pursuit of their common interest in the breed. The idea was eagerly adopted and the club was formed.

At first the people were just pet owners wanting to learn more about the breed, and planned to have social gatherings. Pressure to have the club sanctioned was not planned.

Those interested in breeding and showing conducted the first fun match in 1963. Mrs. Josephine Zitko was the judge. There was an entry of 20 class dogs, with two specials. In the following years the judges were Mrs. Eunice Clark, Mrs. Florise Hogan, and Marie Rathman. The first match was held at the home of one of the south side members. The second was held there also, in 1964. In 1965 a match was held in Harvard, IL, at Thornoaks Farm. In 1966 one was held in Highland Park and in 1967 we met again in the Thornoaks home of the Bartholemew's. In 1970 we drew 43 entries in the classes with 17 champions. This showed the interest that had built up in the area.

In 1967 the Fun Match was held under the auspices of the parent club and was, therefore, sanctioned as a "B" match in order to prepare for hosting the National Specialty the following year. We held a match in 1968 and also hosted the Traveling Specialty in conjunction with the Chain 'O Lakes KC. We repeated this in 1970.

Throughout this learning period the membership had shown an interest in becoming a local Specialty Club.

Our application was sent to the AKC in 1974, was approved, and we, in the meantime, had made our plans to have our first Sanctioned Specialty at the Great Lakes Terrier Show in June of that year.

Our first judge was Winifred Heckman and the first BB Australian Terrier was Ch. Sprite Lea Dylan, owned and bred by Gene and Katharine Barnes. Of the 35 charter members there are four that still belong to the Club. This tenth anniversary was dedicated to the memory of Gene H. Barnes, a staunch Australian Terrier supported and distinguished breeder who held several offices and was one of the founders of the ATCGCA.

The tenth Specialty weekend on June 16, 1984, had arrived after another year of planning and we hoped we were prepared! Thursday night delegates for the Great Lakes Terrier Association helped set the scene for the specialties on Saturday. They cleaned out the building, hung banners of each club and the Great Lakes Terrier Association logo banners.

Friday proved to be perfect for showing at Skokie Valley KC with Judge Robert Graham. BW was Crestwoods Cinder, owned by Marge Reignier. While BOS was Ch. Wismiss Olivia, owned by Carol Sazama, and BB Ch. Crestwoods Crackerjack, owned by Marge Reignier. Second in Group.

Saturday the ATCGCA held a brunch at the motorhome that Bridgit Gierhan and Jennie Worthing had for the weekend. Many wonderful Australian Terrier fanciers attended.

Sweepstakes: 16 entries
Judge: Roland Taub
Best in Sweeps Puppy Bitch, Hott to Trott on the Farm, owner Sheila Wolpoff. Best of Opposite Puppy Dog, Regency Bravo, Ida Ellen Weinstock and Alice Ann Wight.

Regular classes: 43 entries
Judge: Dr. M. Josephine Deubler
BW: Sprite Lea Deanna, owner Katharine Barnes. BOS Ch. Regency Lady Begorrah, owners Ida Ellen Weinstock and Alice Ann Wight. BB CH Crestwood Crackerjack, owner Margaret Reignier. Crackerjack was handled by Jane Tenor and went second in group.

Sunday, at Chain 'O Lakes, which ATCGCA supported, there were 25 entries. The judge, Mrs. Carson, chose BW Ridge Park Chadwick, owned by Marjorie Lehtinen. BOS Ch. Wismiss Olivia, owned by Carol Sazama. BB Ch. Crestwoods Crackerjack and he went fourth in group.