



As part of our 125th Anniversary Celebrations we will be profiling a select number of members who have achieved very special recognition in the world of dogs. We call them the Living Legends.

Dr. Richard Meen – former CKC Chairman, international dog judge and renowned breeder – was born in Britain and came to Canada at the age of twelve. After graduating from medical school, he took his post graduate degree in psychiatry. His distinguished career has included work with troubled young people in various types of youth services, from Children’s Aid to the Ontario Correctional Institute.



His well-known kennel name, Kishniga derives from a combination of his childhood dog, a mixed breed named Kim; his first purebred, an Afghan hound Shan; his first Borzoi in 1969, Nicholas and his second Borzoi, Ganya.

Nicholas died shortly after he was purchased but that tragedy introduced Dick to his life partner, veterinarian Dr. John Reeve-Newson whose interest was Old English Sheepdogs.

The doctors purchased a farm in Campbellville, Ontario. Within five years, they had produced the two famous Borzoi brothers - Kishniga's Desert Song and Kishniga's Dalgarth. Dalgarth is the top-winning Borzoi in the history of the AKC and Desert Song ("Moustache") number two in the AKC and the top hound in the history of the CKC - owner handled. Their generations of home bred Borzois have influenced the breed worldwide.

There's a saying: "Luck is fascinated with the efficient". The various breeds Dick Meen has chosen have had enormous success, but he was always careful to begin with quality dogs from renowned kennels.

His first CKC champion was a Doberman. Then came the discovery that Canada at one time had

bred the best Skye Terriers in North America under the Talisker name. Desiring to restore the breed to its former glory, he discovered some Canadian bloodlines in Bogata, Columbia. He proceeded to produce several generations of BIS, winning Skyes in both Canada and USA including Kishniga's HMS Gunsmoke, the top winning Skye in the history of the breed and Canada's number one terrier in 2011.

Dick's fascination with different breeds continues to this day. As he was born in Hound country in the UK, Dr. Meen decided to breed Harriers and produced the top-producing sire in the history of the breed in the USA, and whose daughter was the USA's top-producing Harrier bitch.

Then came an interest in French Bulldogs. Dick and John produced the top-winning Frenchie in Canada, Kishniga's Benvenuto, who won BIS's as a puppy. Although he died young, he had a significant impact on the breed in North America.

Other breeds to join the Meen household have included Italian Greyhounds, Deerhounds, American Foxhounds and a white Standard Poodle (a 40th birthday from Dr. Reeve Newson).

Left:
Dr. Meen and Desert Song's first BIS with Jim Reynolds.

Right:
Dr. Meen and Desert Song's BIS at Bucks County under Council Parker, 1979.

“By the end of the 70’s, I decided it was a responsibility to get involved with preserving the essence of the sport.”

Q. Tell us about your involvement with the CKC and other organizations.

A. By the end of the 70’s, I decided it was a responsibility to get involved with preserving the essence of the sport. I ran for the Board of the CKC, became a director in 1980 and eventually President and Chairman of the Board. I also was one of the founding members of two breed clubs, Borzoi Canada and Skye Canada, as well as the first Chair of the International Borzoi Council that brought fanciers together from around the world to develop a consistency within the breed.

Q. What do you feel was your greatest contribution as CKC Chairman?

A. When I was President and Chair of the CKC, I had the luxury of a very committed board from across the country who were prepared to work together as team to achieve positive outcomes, driven partly by the Centennial Celebrations. The projects were most positive and permitted us to enter the next century in a positive light. Sadly, sustaining that harmony and productivity

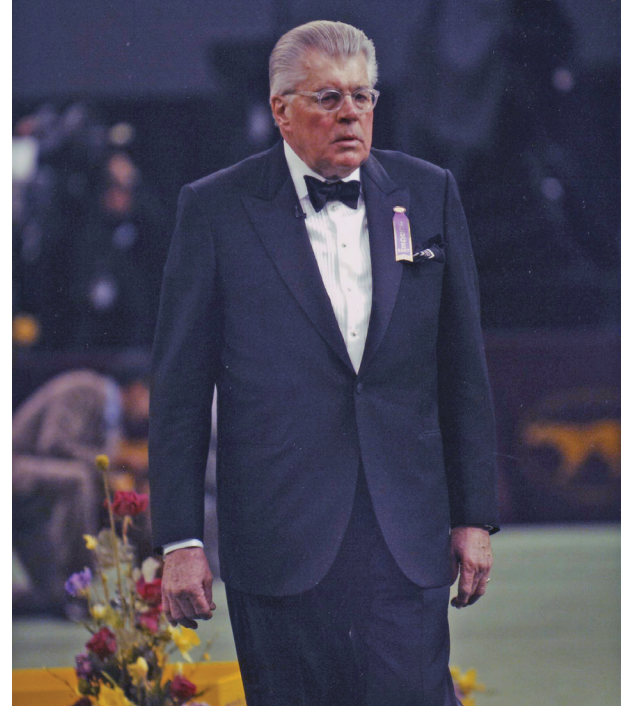
was not possible and all attempts to move to a board model appropriate to the “new era” failed. However, I am pleased to have as part of my legacy the foundation of the library and still dream of expanding it to museum status.

Q. Any special memories as an exhibitor?

A. As an owner/breeder/handler, I have had some great moments that are always with me: My first Group 1 at the Sarnia KC under Hans Brunotte. My first all-breed BIS with Jim Reynolds as judge. Best in Shows at Chicago international; Golden Gate in San Francisco; Bucks County (where I also beat Annie Clarke with her poodle;) Ottawa Show of Shows. Retiring the BB trophy of the Midwest Borzoi Club; #1 hound and #1 Skye Terrier in the history of the CKC and top terrier in Canada.

Q. You began judging in the 1990’s. What special moments do you recall?

A. Being asked to fill Annie Clarke’s shoes at Westminster in 2007 was a significant and terrifying honour that will always be



remembered. I have also had the privilege of an international agenda and will be judging Borzoi at the World Show in Helsinki next year. However, I am not an all-breed judge since I do not believe in the creditability of such a title.

Q. Does being a Psychiatrist give you any insights either as an exhibitor or judge?

A. I think that being a psychiatrist of course has impact on all areas of my life including my role in the dog world. However, I attempt not to practice diagnostics and treatment in the ring - although sometimes, it is very tempting!

Q. You are known for your inspirational speeches. Can you give an example of how your words have affected others?

A. As the years have gone by, I frequently get feedback from new fanciers who were very young when I was campaigning my dogs and working on the CKC board about the impact I have had on their own commitment to the sport. This pleases me that they recognize

the need for long-term commitment and involvement with honest and objective evaluation rather than a superficial response.

Q. What are the greatest challenges facing our sport today?

A. The greatest challenge is clearly bringing the sport of purebred dogs into this century with a population of young people who live in the present not in the past and are all looking for the quick fix.

Q. Tell us something that most people don't know about you.

A. My father, Reggie Meen was the heavyweight boxing champion of the UK in 1932. One of my favorite memories was when William Stifles introduced me as guest speaker to the Dog Judges Association of America, suggesting that I had the ideal criteria to be President of the CKC because my father was a boxer and I was a psychiatrist! ●

Left:
Dr. Meen at the Canadian Professional Handler's Association Awards Dinner, 2012.

Right:
Dr. Meen - Standing in for Annie Rogers Clarke - judging the Terrier Group at the 2007 Westminster Kennel Club dog show.



Mike Macbeth is a renowned breeder, international all-breed judge, CKC life member, founder and President of the Dandie Dinmont Terrier Club of Canada, and award-winning business writer.