

THE KENNELS: CARMEN KENNEL



By: John Little, Staff Writer



“The KENNELS” - who are they? Kennels play a great role in making up the framework that supports the structure and continuation of the breed. It is with this respect that the St. Bernard breed would not be existence today without the assistance of these highly motivated and dedicated breeders.

Therefore, when trying to produce a consistent specimen of breed type, much time, patience, and expense goes into this task. It is ultimately the dedicated kennels that have continued this breed from its historic origin to its National Shows of today.

Today, we travel to Bridgewater, Massachusetts, to visit Carmen Kennel – a highly respected kennel that has been around for over a century and counting, which is owned and operated by Janice Holmes Myers.

CARMEN KENNEL

“...Carmen Kennels was registered with the American Kennel Club on April 22, 1903, by Thomas Edward Lewis Kemp, or T.E.L. Kemp, as he was better known. Born in 1879, Mr. Kemp’s early interests were in Mastiffs, Pointers and Boston Terriers. He acquired his first St. Bernard in 1898 as a guard dog for the tack room at his stable. Saints became the focus of his kennel after that: “...because the St. Bernard is

a friendly dog (most often), but can take care of himself in any kind of trouble and is very intelligent”. One of his first Saint Bernards was Duke of Leinster. Mr. Kemp started showing in 1899, at the same time that Col. Jacob Ruppert (owner of the N.Y. Yankees and Brewery fame, donor of the SBCA Best of Opposite Sex challenge trophy) was showing St. Bernards. Some other prominent kennels of the era were Hercuveen, Alta, Parkdale, Chemung, and Groveland. He did business with Frank Gould (SBCA Best of Breed challenge trophy). There would often be 100 Saints at an all-breed show. There were only two groups then, Sporting or Non-Sporting.

Mr. Kemp imported Saint Bernards from Holland, England, Canada and Switzerland. He decided to name his kennel Carmen because he loved the opera. T.E.L. lived in Alston and Dorchester, Massachusetts, during that time.

In 1905 T.E.L. Kemp married Agnes Maloney. In 1915 they moved to East Street in Bridgewater, Massachusetts, where they started Pine Grove Farm. They had the usual farm animals, along with the kennel of Saints, Newfs, and Boston Terriers. He and his wife, Agnes, owned many Saint champions. Among them were King Carmen, Prince Napoleon, Alta Guide, Alta Priscilla, Sea View Abbess, Princess Joan, Carmen Ivanhoe, Carmen

Victorious and Carmen Marie. He exported puppies all over the world.

T.E.L. and Agnes were members of the St. Bernard Club of America, Providence County K.C. and Bridgewater K.C. Thomas superintended horse shows as well as dog shows. He worked many of the biggest dog shows in the Northeast, and many throughout the U.S and Canada under the name Kemp Dog Show Organization, Inc. Among them were Ladies K.C., Eastern K.C. (when it was a three-day bench show), and Bridgewater K.C. He did this with the help of his children, Arthur, Rita, Tom, Ruth and Nellie as his show committee. He kept at least three very detailed scrapbooks that were discovered in the late 1980’s in his son’s attic. They are rich in history of the breed in the early 1900’s, from all of the shows he entered and served as Superintendent. Clippings were from many different newspapers and from the American Stockkeeper, Field and Fancy to name a few. They listed all of the winners at the shows, along with many pictures, and articles.

These clippings have details of several of T.E.L.’s dogs winning the Ruppert & Gould Cups in 1901 -1909. His dogs appeared in plays and pictures and obtained world fame. A copy of these scrapbooks has been donated to the SBCA library.



1935 -CH Princess Joan with Aunt Nellie



Supt of the Bridgewater K.C. 10/12/1943



CH King Carmen

CARMEN KENNEL'S BLOOD COTED ST. BERNARD CHAMPION KING CARMEN



T.E.L. Kemp

Agnes was the first woman in America to get her license to judge all breeds. She was the first woman ever to judge in Canada. She judged at Westminster and also judged many all-breed Best in Shows. She was on the board of the S.B.C.A. and a very respected horse judge, as well.

The Kemps took in several children and adults who were down on their luck. Times certainly were difficult. They struggled with the kennel, having lost a lot of valuable litters to distemper before they had shots for it. It really took its toll on his breeding program. The family tells how devastating the 1938 hurricane was to all of the kennels and barns.

Agnes died in 1936 at the age of 56. T.E.L. died in 1944. The East St. property was sold in 1945. Their daughter Rita Kemp Holmes took over the kennel, although the stock was very depleted. Rita rebuilt the bloodlines with dogs from Canada, Mr. Moulton's Al-Ver-Don kennels, Alpine Plateau lines and Aimee Boynton's Albamont kennels in N.H. Aimee and Rita became good friends. Rita, her brothers Arthur, Tom, and sisters Ruth and Nellie, continued as Superintendent of

the shows for quite some time. Their son Arthur originated and published "The New England Dog", a monthly magazine for dog enthusiasts. He also managed the operation of the magazine and served as Editor. He sold it for a profit in 1947.

Rita married Harold Holmes in 1938. They moved to 434 Elm St. in Bridgewater, MA, in 1954. Their 14 acres had room for their growing family. They wanted to expand the kennel and start a boarding kennel, have room for horses, cows, chickens, and gardening.

Rita was one of the first six people to become co-founders of the New England St. Bernard Club in 1946. She served as the club's Treasurer. Her husband, Harold, was President of the club twice and awarded its first Good Sportsmanship Award. Rita also received that honor later. They were both honorary lifetime members of the N.E.S.B.C. Rita and Harold were also members of the S.B.C.A and the Hockamock K. C., serving on the Board and as Treasurer. They were both lifetime members of the H.K.C.

Over 60 years ago, Rita and Harold met Margaret Myers. Through their interest in Saints, they became partners. It was never necessary even to sign a piece of paper. Miss Myers operated Ox Yoke Kennels in Plainville, MA. Rita and Margaret traveled to many shows, including Bermuda in November of 1966. This was the first time Saints were ever shown there. Margaret did a lot of the show handling of the dogs. Many of their dogs played important roles in breeding programs throughout the northeast, especially Ch. Carmen President John Ox Yoke, Ogric of Sunny Slopes and

Ch. Carmen Promise (Bobby). They can be found in the background of many dogs all over the United States. Some of their other champions were Ch. Carmen Pandora of Oxyoke and Ch. Carmen Showgirl of Oxyoke.

Rita helped many new breeders get their start, and mentored many others along the way. It was well known she had a very keen eye for Saints. She had selected Ch. Bowser Waller as her choice of best puppy in his breeder's litter. He went on to have a great show career. Once she was asked to help a customer pick out a puppy from another breeder's litter. They showed them the puppies they had available for sale. Once she picked the one she liked best, the breeder picked the pup up and said it was no longer available! The breeder kept him and he ended up becoming the No. 2 Saint in the country several years in a row. Her second choice was purchased and finished his championship and went on to produce beautiful puppies.

Over the years at 434 Elm St., she also raised Cocker Spaniels, Newfoundlands, Collies and Chihuahuas. She ran a boarding kennel, bathed and trimmed dogs. Rita and Harold raised six children and had eight grandchildren. Their children also enjoyed showing horses, raising and showing dogs, chickens, rabbits and cows! Rita and Harold also took in several foster children, had several adults needing a place to stay - who had come to live with them for a short time, taking on that tradition from her parents. Their children spanned 17 years in age. So Rita and Harold spent 30 years going to parent conferences, 4H meetings for horses, cows, gardening, trucking horses to horse shows weekends, swimming lessons, scouts, (Rita was a scout leader too!) church, C C D ,



Agnes Kemp with Brace



Rita Kemp



Arthur Kemp with Kitty Boo



Arthur Kemp as a child



CH Carmen Promise (Bobby)



CH Carmen Pandora of Oxyoke



CH Nerthus' Maxwell Centurion



CH Carmen Prophet of Marjoe

giving everyone rides to work, and band practice. Harold was an avid Boston Red Sox fan, gardener, stamp and coin collector. He was always repairing horse corrals and kennels in his spare time. They never hired kennel help. There were no cluster shows back then. Shows were few and far between. Needless to say, they didn't get to stay for the group very often when their dogs took Best of Breed, or had time to special many of their dogs, or travel to many nationals. For that reason, what showing they did do was done locally at all-breed shows and the NESBC specialty. Despite that, their bitches won the Brood Bitch Class at the NESBC Specialty from 1963-67. President John won the Stud Dog Class several years in a row, and their dogs had a lot of impressive wins there. They had many, many dogs that would have finished if they had the time to get them out to the shows. Family ALWAYS came first. An old NESBC Sentinel mentions that Rita and Harold took pride not in their accomplishments, but rather in the friends they made over the years. Their honest sincerity endeared them to all that knew them well.

Harold and Rita celebrated 50 years of marriage in 1988. Harold passed away in 1989. Margaret Myers also passed away in 1989, ending a 46-year partnership with Rita. Rita passed away in 1992 while still owning two Saint Bernards. Each of their deaths was a great loss to the breed. They were devoted by love for the Breed and were never motivated by self-promotion. Their children and families always came first, and the Saint Bernard had a great impact on their lives.

Upon their retirement in 1978, the kennel has passed onto its third generation. Harold and Rita's youngest daughter, Janice Holmes Myers (no relation to Margaret!) started showing at the age of six. She was very active showing in Jr. Showmanship, and also judged Jr. Showmanship. Retiring the NESBC Jr. Showmanship Challenge Trophy gave her the bug to keep showing. She is past President of the N.E.S.B.C. and was awarded its Good Sportsmanship Award in 1993. She is also a member of the SBCA and Hockamock K.C., where she has served as a long time Board Member. Janice, along with fellow NESBC members Liz Gaudet and Cindy Stark, started a rescue referral for the New England area for many, many years. She and her sister Theresa Gleason ran the boarding kennel until 1985. Their sister Pat always lent a helping hand as a part time driver, holder of dogs and lender of moral support at the shows. Brothers Harry, Arthur and Bill gave support as well.

Janice started with Carmen Peaches of Oxyoke as her foundation bitch. She was out of Carmen Penelope of Oxyoke x Tryas von Mallen, a double grandson of Ch. Titan von Mallen. She has finished many champions of her own. Among them are Ch. Carmen Prophet of Marjoe (OFA), Ch. Nerthus' Maxwell Centurion (OFA) HF (after importing Max from Canada, it was discovered that in his 5th generation he went back to a pup Rita sold to her next door neighbor!). Max blended well with the Carmen lines. He was inducted into the Hall of Fame for Production Excellence. He won Best of Breed at the NESBC 1986 Specialty from the Veteran dog class. He

was a multi Best of Breed winner and Group winner in 1983 before the groups were divided. He was in the Top 20 in 1983, all owner handled by Janice with very limited showing. Another Carmen dog was in the Top 15 in 1984. Max's daughter, Ch. Carmen Pink Panther, won Best in Sweeps over a large entry at the 1984 NESBC Specialty held in conjunction with the SBCA National. She was Winners Bitch at the 1986 NESBC Specialty. Three more Max offspring were Ch. Carmen Hocus Pocus, Ch. Carmen Magic Teddy Bear, and Ch. Carmen Polka Dot AKA Whitney. Ch. Shagg Bark Bret V. Meadowrock (OFA) co-owned with Rita, was Winners Dog and Best of Winners at the NESBC 1985 Specialty. In 2002 Ch. Carmen's Pathfinder Taz finished his championship. Taz went back 15 consecutive generations on his mother's side to Carmen dogs dating back to 1945, including Ch. Carmen Promise. Promise was Rita and Margaret's first champion, born in 1949. (Taz's frozen semen is stored.) It was a shame he didn't care to show, as he was a very striking dog. In 2004 Ch. World Top's Biglerville obtained his title.

Janice's son Christopher went into the show ring for the first time at the age



CH Carmen's Pathfinder Taz



CH Carmen Polka Dot
AKA Whitney



CH Carmen Pink Panther



CH Carmen Hocus Pocus



CH Carmen Magic Teddy Bear

of eight. He showed Taz to Best Puppy and won Best Jr. Handler at a NESBC match. Christopher became the fourth generation of the family to enter the show ring!

In 2003, Carmen Kennels celebrated 100 years registered with the A.K.C. It is the oldest registered kennel in the U.S.A. The American Kennel Club did a six-page feature article celebrating the anniversary in its August 2003 issue of their Gazette magazine. It can be seen on the Saint Bernard National Archives: <http://clubs.akc.org/saints/Archives/carmenkennel.pdf>. The Barry International also published a great article. Faith Blackman, then editor of the NESBC Sentinel, put together a great four-page insert honoring the occasion. Dogs in Review did an article. Also, several Carmen dogs were used for TV and print ads for B.J.'s Wholesale Club in 2003. Three litters born that year were all registered with C in their name. C is the Roman numeral for 100! After a three-year absence of the Carmen dogs from the show ring, it was a great thrill for one of Janice's C pups, Carmen C Phunny Valentine (Haley) to win RWB, WB and BW at the 2007 NESBC back-to-back



CH Carmen's Pathfinder
Taz and Christopher

specialties. It was extremely gratifying because she is now 17 consecutive generations on her mother's side of Carmen owned dogs, dating back to 1945. The 18th generation was born this spring out of litter sisters, Carmen Pure Kismet and Carmen It's Destiny: Priceless. Both were sired by Benbaron's Ustinov of Eddie, the newest addition to the kennel added in 2005. Carmen Kennels currently has eight Saint Bernards and is breeding and showing on a small scale.

As we enter 2009 it has been over 110 years since T.E.L. Kemp purchased his first Saint Bernard that would share the history of this breed with his family.



Carmen C Phunny Valentine (Haley)

WORDS OF THOUGHT & EPIGRAMS

JANICE HOLMES MYERS

"...My mother Rita had a favorite saying "better the devil you know, than the one you don't". She applied it

in breeding dogs, and I have also. She would often say that people would buy dogs from across the country or another country because they thought they didn't have the problems of dogs in their area. Of course, she would say, it is just that they are so far away you don't know what their problems are because you don't hear about them. Make it a practice whenever you are considering buying a dog or shipping semen from a kennel, to ask the breeder if he/she has kept any offspring from those lines. If not, ask why? So do your homework first. Try to find out the temperament, the longevity of the lines you are getting into. What were the causes of their deaths? Do as much studying of pedigrees and bloodlines as you can. Don't be tempted to breed a dog with a serious fault, no matter how beautiful a show dog it is. It is very easy to breed a fault into your lines. It is much more difficult to breed one out! If a dog is a great show dog, study if he has produced as well. What were its parents and offspring like? Don't get taken in by the allure of its show record. Remember the big picture generations down the line. It's better to do your homework first, than to try to figure it out once you are two or three generations deep and have to start all over."

"...If you show your dogs, remember to have fun and be a good sport."

"...Given the frigid temperatures in the northeast of late, it brings to memory my best piece of advice, "when



CH Carmen Pathfinder Taz with Janice



Carmen Christina with Janice



Carmen Kennels Medallion

scooping and chipping away frozen poop, keep your mouth closed!!"

CARMEN LINEAGE

The 17 generations behind

- Carmen C Phunny Valentine (or Haley!) D.O.B 2/14/03
- her dam Carmen Poliwag D.O.B. 3/8/1999
- her sire Ch. Carmen's Pathfinder Taz D.O.B. 6/3/97-2006
- his dam Carmen's Patient Passion D.O.B 1/95-99
- her dam Carmen Patches D.O.B 3/90-99
- her dam Carmen Porsche D.O.B. 8/86- 2002!!!!!!!
- her dam Carmen Pep-Ce's Challenge D.O.B 83-92
- her dam Carmen Peppermint Patty D.O.B.1980-91
- her dam Carmen Peaches of Oxyoke D.O.B. 1972-84
- her dam Carmen Penelope of Oxyoke D.O.B.1969-?
- her dam Carmen Christina D.OB. 1962-?
- her sire Ch. Carmen President John Oxyoke D.O.B 1960-?
- his dam Carmen Lady

Chardamick D.O.B ? (her sire was Ch. Carmen Promise D.O.B 3/28/1949)

- her dam Sherry's Queen Gretchen 7/31/51
- her dam Richardson's Tom Boy ?
- her dam Carmen Star 9/25/1947
- her sire Frandra's Kelpie 4/28/1945

THE STORY OF THE "P"

As some of you may already know, Carmen Kennels has had a tradition since 1949, of naming their own dogs beginning with the letter "P." It started when Rita Kemp Holmes, daughter of T.E.L Kemp and Agnes Kemp, founders of Carmen kennels, was showing a pony at a local fair. The pony was newly acquired by the family, and his history wasn't well known. Rita was very young and went into a class against professionally trained horses and expensively attired grooms. She felt her chances to win were remote. It was a great thrill when this pony placed among the best. Unaware of his previous training, it was a huge surprise when the pony bowed as the ribbon was awarded to him! His name was Promise, and he made the kind of memory Rita would never forget. In honor of Promise, she named one of her first St. Bernards, Carmen Promise. Promise soon became her first champion. She then decided to continue using the letter "P" for good luck!!

It has become fun over the past 60

years, coming up with names for a kennel full of dogs, many times making them timely, like Ch. Carmen President John Oxyoke in the 60's, Pep-Ce's Challenge in the 80's, Picabo St. after the Olympic skier, Pathfinder in honor of its landing on Mars, Carmen Pudge's Fame born when Carlton "Pudge" Fisk was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame as a catcher for the Boston Red Sox, and Fenway Park born five minutes into game two of the World Series that the Red Sox won after 86 years of waiting!!! It has been challenging to continue this tradition without duplicates, often even trying the "double P's" like Peppermint Patty, Patient Passion & Pink Panther. Often, friends and family get caught up in the challenge, submitting their suggestions for future *prospects!*.... *Janice Holmes Myers.*"

CONCLUSION

Longevity in any hobby can be hard to find today. Longevity is hard to come by since we live in an age of affluence, a constant feeling of want, now, and out with the old and in with the new. With new times we see trends of climbing divorce rates, decline in religion affiliation, and individuals buying on more credit, thus becoming more in-debt. These three agents are arguably some reasons why longevity is lost – why passion is not considered timeless, but rather now considered quick gratification. Sometimes being in the breed can be difficult, as everyone has had their heart broken, whether it be the loss of a special dog, financial burdens, time constants, etc. It is with rare circumstances that staying in this, or any, breed for a long time occurs. Often, when something



t r a u m a t i c happens, it can cause those in the breed to retire. Once in a while that can be for the best - but rarely can you find those that, when knocked down and are tired, get up and continue their passion for the breed so gallantly.

Perhaps it is passion and human will that drives those in the breed, or perhaps it is what is in their genes, or perhaps it is about balance. The owners of Carmen

Kennels encompass all those astonishing attributes. Carmen Kennels is such a unique story, which is truly poetic with a theme of pure inspiration.

The American Kennel Club featured an issue on Carmen Kennels in a special article called "The Belles of Bridgewater." [Belle meaning beautiful in French.] Author Bud Boccone commented that "three generations of remarkable women have steered Carmen Kennels through a momentous century for their sport, their sex, and their country." This amazing article, "The Belles of Bridgewater, Carmen Kennel's 100th year," can be found in pdf format at: <http://clubs.akc.org/saints/Archives/carmenkennel.pdf>. The honor and recognition of being featured by the AKC is truly remarkable for Carmen Kennel

and the entire Saint Bernard breed. It is a landmark accomplishment and should not be forgotten.

With much due respect - this special man, T.E.L. Kemp, founder of Carmen Kennels in 1903, is a man who has passed down his dream to current kin Janice Holmes Myers. Carmen Kennels is a story like Casablanca and is one of true longevity in its most innocent form. Carmen Kennels is truly an American legend in the realm of the dog world.

On behalf of Saint Bernard enthusiasts, thank you Janice Holmes Myers of Carmen Kennels for your dedicated work in the breed. Until the next issue of *The KENNELS*, where we travel next and what kennel we visit is not too far away. John Little

Ten Questions with SBCA Member Carole Wilson

By: Erin Hines, Staff Writer

Name: Carole Wilson

Kennel name: Kryskara

Location: Belleville, IL

Time in breed: 41 years



1. Favorite memory about or with your dogs

We have many great memories with our dogs. Some of these are personal with our family. Other memories include the successes and heartbreaks at dog shows. The most memorable of these has to be our Best In Show with Ace at a fairly large dog show.

2. How did you come up with your kennel name?

Our kennel name is Kryskara. This is a combination of our daughters' names which are Kryshelle and Kara.

3. What would you like your greatest accomplishment in the breed to be?

I would like for my greatest accomplishment to be in my role of Education Chairman for the SBCA. We have had some really good

seminars, and we are going to have some new publications which I hope will help the breed. We are also planning great seminars for the next National.

4. What has been your biggest surprise with the breed of Saint Bernard?

I am always surprised by the loving temperament and outstanding loyalty of the breed.

5. When did you get your first Saint?

We got our first Saint in 1968. She turned out to be a very tall and lanky saint.

6. If you could change one thing about the Saint Bernard today what would it be?

I wish I had a magic wand and with that wand I could keep saints from ever bloating or having cancer. Since that is not possible, if I could change only one thing about the breed, I believe it would be the eyes. Beautiful, correctly shaped, clear, very dark eyes are what give our dogs their lovely expression. I have judged many with light eyes that look like headlights. This ruins the expression on an otherwise good head. I know we have a lot of issues to consider when we breed, but let's also consider the eyes.

7. Why did you choose a Saint Bernard?

We had a Pomeranian, and our one-year-old was always following her. Kenn's family had an

Irish Wolfhound, and we wanted a large dog, so we got a Saint Bernard.

8. Who are your role models or mentors?

The people who were our mentors are Don and Marcia Carter. We had been in the breed about seven or eight years when we got our foundation bitch from the Carters. Over the years they provided us with a background on breeding, who to breed our bitches to and why. Marcia was an expert on pedigrees and was willing to share her knowledge. I only hope I can do as well by the new people that ask questions of me.

9. If you could tell people one thing about the breed what would it be?

Your Saint Bernard is going to love you unconditionally. In turn, you should love your Saint Bernard unconditionally. Everything you do with your dog should never put your dog in jeopardy in any way.

10. What is one thing that you could not go without in your everyday life.

I sincerely hope I will have a Saint Bernard for the balance of my life. If my health would limit my ability to have a Saint, I hope Kara will still have saints for me to love.