

Anne Roslin-Williams interviews.....

Hazel Small and Judy Parker-Tucker of the Avenelhouse and Uniquecottage Cairn Terriers

More than likely, anyone tracing back the pedigree of a modern Cairn will find either the Uniquecottage or the Avenelhouse affix cropping up.

Uniquecottage was the affix of the partnership between Misses Marshall and Longmore, better known these days as Mrs Judy Parker-Tucker and Mrs Hazel Small, or “Jo and Hazel” as they are known to the terrier folk. Uniquecottage now belongs solely to Jo while Hazel’s dogs carry the Avenelhouse prefix which she took in 1968 when her husband wanted to become her partner.

The two lines are intertwined, coming from the same stock to the extent that some members of a litter would carry one affix and the others the other – a historian’s nightmare!

It all started with young Hazel Longmore, whose mother and older sister by seventeen years, Poppy Longmore, bred Sealyhams at Mellands, Powderham in Devon. The first Cairn, **Placemoor Truant**, born 1922, a family pet, arrived when Hazel was three years old. She was brought home and proudly put down on the drive by Poppy whereupon, rather naturally, the puppy bolted. A posse of Hazel, Poppy, the nurse-maid, the gardener and the village policeman set out to look for her. A heron disturbed her from her marshy ground where she had hidden and she bolted back, to be caught by Hazel who kept her.

In due course she bred from her, giving her mother one puppy, **Jollee Sir Bubbles**, while the other went back to “Birdie”, Mrs Bird, her breeder, as pick of litter.

Hazel took the affix Jollee when she was eight and used it up to and in her partnership with Jo some twenty years later. It was then used on the Westies, Jo’s affix Uniquecottage being used on the Cairns. Mellands was Poppy Longmore’s affix, which also graced many Cairns.

Hazel started breeding Westies when she was seven or eight and had bred her first champion, **CH Cooden Shrapnel**, when she was thirteen! This was by CH Cooden Sapper ex Cooden Sandmaid and Hazel handled him to a CC for Mrs O R Williams, his owner, who had him as pick of litter

Right from the beginning, Hazel knew exactly what she wanted to do and set about getting her own way to do it! Her forthright character was evident even then and the great names of the day were already terrified of her.

When told that it was inadvisable to send one of her Westies away to a top breeder to be mated to her current champion (Hazel adds that she did not know enough to use the SIRE of the current star) because it might be mated to another dog, young madam

took the bull by the horns and approached the owner of the dog to ask if indeed this might happen"I would not dare" was the reply!

She showed her own Westies and her sister's Sealyhams and Cairns. She liked trimming and learnt how to do it properly, by asking. One of the famous Sealyham pro-handlers of the day showed her, on one of her sister's dogs, and she went on from there. Very early in her career she was trimming the 'out of the West" Cairns when their owner came to stay before shows.

Also passionately interested in horses, Hazel had her first Exmoor ponies to break when she was eleven. Throughout her life she had horses, until very recently keeping a hunter at home.

From the age of seventeen she ran her sister's boarding kennels – a hundred dogs – and also taught riding.

When World War II broke out, Miss Vickers sent her Mercia Cairns to Hazel to look after. She was also looking after the bombed out dogs from the Services, which received a food ration from Stamina, was working at Exminster hospital with hospital car service, was doing Searcher's work and also running a herd of Jersey cows for her mother during the second world war.

Miss Vickers gave up her Cairns at that time and they were worked into the Mellands line. Hazel took them on, along with her sister's Cairns.

Judy Marshall also knew exactly what she wanted to do in life and that was dogs. Her introduction to them came through family pets, starting with a Labrador. She worked in a tobacconist's next door to Burrows and Wellcome and used to sneak off there to see the dogs.

Through a friend of her mother's who knew the Longmores she went as a pupil, one of four pupils to Hazel and her mother on VJ Day, August 17 1945. That was when she met her first Cairn, and she was hooked on the breed.

Subsequently, she spent a few months with Mr and Mrs Leigh's Thistleclose Cairns at Henley Swan, where there were over twenty Cairns in the kitchen!

She returned to Hazel and in no time at all became her partner in dogs, breeding both Cairns and Westies – indeed her first litter were Westies.

Through showing, Hazel had met Mrs Wingfield Digby with her team of Van Zaandam Keeshonden. One day she discovered this lady was none other than her cousin, Gwen! Hazel and Jo, with Mrs Wingfield Digby as sleeping partner, set up the Endeavour Boarding Kennels in the summer boxes at Sherbourne Cattle, Mrs Wingfield Digby's home.

Jo was in charge of the super kennels with her own flat in the castle and a couple of Jersey cows. She had her own Cairns there. Within the partnership Hazel and Jo always kept their own dogs.

This set-up worked well for several years until Hazel's father became ill and the Endeavour Kennels were given up and Jo returned to Mellands.

Her first Cairn was **Excel of Mercia**, whom she took with her to Sherbourne. While there Miniature Schnauzers, a breed admired by both partners, were added to the Uniquecottage kennel. They won up as far as reserve CCs.

Hazel gives Jo credit for breeding the Cairn champions and says that she seems to have intuition as to which dog to use.

The first CC winner was **Goldust of Uniquecottage**, a son of Excel of Mercia ex a bitch carrying Blencathra bloodlines. His first CC came from Col Page Croft at Birmingham, the second from the great Jimmy Garrow.

Jollee Gay Memory, one of Jo's house dogs at Sherborne, was bred by Hazel by son of Sir Rogue of Mercia. Mated to Thistleclose Royalist of Rhu, she bred the first champion for the partnership, **CH Uniquecottage McAilenmor**, made up in 1954, and his litter-brother **CH Uniquecottage Maningrey**. These were born in 1951 at Sherbourne.

Gay Memory to Goldust bred **Uniquecottage Goldigger** who, to Walter Bradshaw's CH Redletter Fincairn Frolic, bred three champions in one litter: **CH Uniquecottage Blackgold**, **CH Uniquecottage Sir Frolic** and **CH Redletter Miss Muffit**, herself the dam of three champions. Mr Bradshaw never charged a fee for the use of his dogs so Miss Muffit was a gift to him.

No other Cairn bitch to date has bred three champions in one litter. This was an outstanding litter in the nest with little to choose between them. Hazel was not too popular when she let one go as a pet "by mistake", thinking she had done well to get £25 from the buyer who had come for a "ten pound pup"!

Sadly, Goldigger died whelping her next litter, a great loss.

CH Blackgold to CH Maningrey bred **CH Unique Cottage Goldmoidor**. CH Sir Frolic sired **CH Uniquecottage Gold Melody**. Others made up in quick succession were **Gold Goblet**, **Mr Bradshaw** (so named because this was the puppy they knew he would like in the litter), **Terrible Twin** and **Powdermonkey**.

Powdermonkey was bought in specifically to use on Uniquecottage bitches as the home team were too closely related to use on them. He was so named as he had to "keep the guns going" – Hazel's military background! He proved an excellent buy.

On the death of Mrs Hoyle, her dogs were looked after, as promised, by Hazel and Jo who made up **CH Warberry Watagirl** and **CH Warberry Wild Honey**.

In 1958 Hazel married Major George Small and they moved to Avenel House. George being very much a hunting, shooting, fishing and sailing person, the dogs had to take a back seat and the majority stayed with Jo at Mellands. Hazel was supposed to only keep about half a dozen with her.

George became interested in the dogs – indeed Terrible Twin was named by him as he referred to the two puppies on the lawn as “the Terrible Twins”. He bought Terrible Twin at three months and the first time he showed him, himself, won the CC from Mrs Hilda Manly who asked Hazel “who is that extraordinary man that does not know one end of the dog from the other and I don’t think will ever show a dog properly?” Hazel had the joy of replying “He’s my husband”.

He enjoyed going to shows with Hazel. Although Jo had the majority of the dogs at this time she could not show much so Hazel handled several to their titles, and twice did the double. Jo had done this previously with Sir Frolic and Black Gold, and of course has done it many times since.

Now that Hazel’s husband had become used to the dogs and was interested in them, they came back and increased in numbers. The Avenelhouse affix was in the name of Major and Mrs Small and the first champion it graced was **CH Avenelhouse Cloth of Gold**, born 1969. By CH Lofthouse Rough Tweed, he was ex Uniquecottage My Fair Lady who was also the dam of Mrs Marsh and Mr Danks’ **CH Wandering Willie of Topwig**, bred by the Smalls and sired by Mrs Marsh and Mr Danks’ CH Topwig Tilden.

CH Avenelhouse Golden Oriole, winner of ten CC’s before he retired, and **CH Bankfoot Devoran** were the Smalls’ next champions. Golden Oriole was by CH Blencathra Brat.

Meanwhile Jo had married, four years after Hazel, and became Mrs Parker-Tucker. Her husband’s name was also George! The partnership was dissolved in 1968 and Jo kept the affix, Uniquecottage, which was originally hers, and some of the dogs.

She did not have much room at the time to keep dogs and was working. Her daughter became a successful long distance runner which Jo attributes partly to the fact that she used to run back from school to give the puppies their midday meal and to put the potatoes on sometime when Jo was extra busy.

For sixteen years Jo and her husband looked for somewhere with more room for the dogs and eventually found the ideal spot where she lives now, within a huge walled garden. Her husband set up lovely kennels and the dogs could expand again. Although he was not officially a dog person, she recalls that her husband was to be found gardening with about a dozen Cairns “helping”! She lost her husband a few years ago.

When Hazel’s husband died, she moved out of the “big house” into a smaller cottage and then into a smaller flat, but kept the ground for the dogs and kennels and her lovely garden.

Jo owned and bred **CH Uniquecottage Gold Wings**, by CH Avenelhouse Cloth of Gold ex Uniquecottage Wingletang and Gold Wings to CH Avenelhouse Golden Oriole bred **CH Uniquecottage Gold Pippit**.

CH Early Bird of Uniquecottage was bred by the Smalls ex Avenelhouse Cinderella by CH Heshe Donavon, a son of CH Blencathra Brat and going back to Uniquecottage ‘Enry ‘Iggins on his dam’s line. Early Bird to Jo’s **CH Craiglyn**

Caledonian bred **CH Uniquecottage Grey Wagtail** and the Hootons' **CH Uniquecottage Grey Swift**. **Ch Avenelhouse King's Frolic** came from a repeat mating. CH Early Bird back to her sire, Donavon, bred **CH Uniquecottage Whinchat**.

CH Uniquecottage Flycatcher, winner of fifteen CC'S, came from a Gold Wings daughter sired by CH Felshott Honey Badger, mated to Uniquecottage Bushchat, (a Caledonian ex Early Bird son). Jo specifically wanted a bitch from this litter but had to repeat the mating to get it – **CH Uniquecottage Gold Feather**. She kept Flycatcher, despite him being the wrong sex, as she believes in keeping something good if you get it – if you let it go you may not get the like again.

Flycatcher, with **CH Tweenus Georgina of Uniquecottage**, a Grey Wagtail daughter, bred **CH Uniquecottage Treecreeper**, winner of fourteen CCs, and Uniquecottage Red Kiskadee who bred **CH Uniquecottage Gold Kinloch**.

Hazel owned and bred **CH Uniquecottage Acrobat Bird**, so called because she used to swing on top of her pen as a small puppy, ex a Cloth of Gold daughter. Acrobat Bird to CH Flycatcher bred **CH Avenelhouse Dark Gentleman** and to Bushchat, the sire of Flycatcher, bred **CH Avenelhouse Noble Hindrance** who sired **CH Noble Dancer of Avenelhouse**.

Another champion at Avenelhouse was **CH Rossarden Cherry Brandy**, going back to 'Enry 'Iggins on both sides and bred by Miss Charlie Dixon. Cherry Brandy had one lovely litter, from which nothing was kept, and never bred another litter, which was sad.

The Uniquecottage, Avenelhouse and Rossarden lines put together had produced several champions down the years including **CH Uniquecottage Gold Doublet** and **CH Uniquecottage Gold Rouble**, both by CH Ronaldshay of Rossarden ex different bitches. Hazel points out that she fancied using Ronaldshay, so her hunch came off. CH Uniquecottage Mr Bradshaw was by Warberry Regency Beau of Rossarden, while Miss Dixon's CH Rossarden Eye Catcher was by Flycatcher.

CH Uniquecottage Brer Fox (Uniquecottage Gold Brick ex Uniquecottage Gold Harrier) sired **CH Uniquecottage Bristlebird**, winner of ten CCs. Gold Harrier was a CC winning daughter of CH Early Bird by Uniquecottage Badger who was a result of brother-sister mating of progeny of CH Uniquecottage Gold Goblet and CH Warberry Watagirl. Gold Harrier to Flycatcher bred **CH Uniquecottage Gold Diver**.

Gold Diver sired **CH Uniquecottage Soleil D'Or**, **CH Uniquecottage Swallow Lark** and **CH Uniquecottage Gold Grouse**, who spent sometime in the States. Grouse was ex Lorikeet who was by **CH Seneley Captain Poldark of Uniquecottage**.

CH Swallow Lark to Uniquecottage Grey Strike bred **CH Uniquecottage Snow Lark**. Grey Strike, who is now in Australia, also sired **CH Uniquecottage Kittiwake**. A son of Golden Grouse sired **CH Uniquecottage Cara Cara** ex Uniquecottage Bronze Wings.

Mrs Parker Tucker considers Cara Cara and Snow Lark among her best bitches and Treecreeper, Flycatcher and Bristlebird outstanding among her recent dogs. Mrs Small thinks Golden Oriole the best of the Avenelhouse Cairns.

Both consider that they hit the jackpot in their earlier days of partnership with the litter containing CHs Black Gold, Sir Frolic and Miss Muffit. Black Gold and Sir Frolic are their ideal Cairns. Incidentally, Sir Frolic never won higher than third in a puppy class but was a champion by 18 months.

These were large kennels in their heyday, housing about forty or fifty Cairns. Jo still has a large kennel but Hazel has reduced hers and decided not to breed anymore because she feels she is getting on in years and does not want to leave a lot of dogs to deal with, should anything happen.

Cairn Terriers are a breed with carefully recorded lines and families, which are derived from the tail male and female only. Within the Uniquecottage kennel there are four lines and three families but two others have been lost. Jo feels it is important to know the lines and families.

Looking at the Uniquecottage and Avenelhouse pedigrees it is enthralling to see how these clever breeders have used different combinations and permutations of their own stock, occasionally using dogs from other kennels which carry their lines.

Both ladies like dogs of all breeds and apart from their co-owned Miniature Schnauzers and Westies, have owned other breeds. Hazel likes big dogs and owned a GSD with whom she used to ride out to collect the Jersey herd, a Great Dane who was a great ratting dog, and she now shares her home with a Continental-bred Tervueren.

Jo has a great liking for Keeshonden, dating back to her days at Sherborne Castle, and now owns a couple of Bernese. The intention was for them to be guard dogs and to be shown but, after wasting a lot of money on entry fees for classes which clashed with the Cairns, the idea of showing them was abandoned.

Counting the champions from these two kennels is not easy. My reckoning is well over forty UK champions. Their influence comes through many lines to today's winning Cairns.



One of Jo's favorites Ch UC Sir Frolic. One of three Champions in the same litter a record still unbroken in the breed.



Six Champions owned in partnership with Hazel Small in the 60s.
L-R Ch UC Terrible Twin, Ch Warberry Wild Honey, Ch UC Powder Monkey, Ch UC Gold Rouble. Ch UC Gold Moidor and Ch UC Gold Goblet.