

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POODLE

Some of the key words people think of about Poodles would include:

- ✓ **Intelligent**
- ✓ **Lively**
- ✓ **Elegant**
- ✓ **Adaptable**
- ✓ **Affectionate**
- ✓ **Hairy!**

These Poodle characteristics arise from the Poodle's history across the centuries in a wide range of roles as a partner with people:

- as a water retriever
- as a circus and show business performer
- as a truffle hunter
- as a personal and home companion
- as a modern show dog and
- as a performance dog in Obedience, Agility, and Dancing with Dogs.

See the website www.poodlehistory.org/ for more information about Poodle History. The website www.vipoodles.org is another interesting site.

You can read more about Poodle Characteristics in the ANKC Poodle Breed Standard at www.ankc.org.au/ Read the Breed Standard Extension link in the upper right corner of the Breed Standard page.

Read as widely as you can, visit shows, observe Poodles and talk to breeders and exhibitors. All have their individual ideas about interpreting the Poodle Breed Standard and it is good to learn as much as you can.

History of the Poodle – a Summary

This History page is only a summary sketch of Poodle History up to the 1960s, with a bias towards Australia, and has many gaps that further work will address.

A useful source is the website www.poodlehistory.org/

Early history

Poodles in earlier centuries were used as water dogs for retrieving ducks and other water fowl, and this is the reason for the special Poodle coat texture and traditional clipping styles.

Some say Miniatures and Toys have been bred down from the larger Poodles and they therefore exhibit the same general characteristics. This can be seen in the extended pedigrees going back to the early twentieth century and even into the nineteenth century. However, the smaller Poodles also have their own histories as circus performers, truffle dogs and personal companions. Small Poodles are depicted in art from several hundred years ago.

Generally historians of dogs agree that the modern Poodle originated in Russia France and Germany. The Poodle also appeared early in England, where he was depicted in a 1643 English Civil War cartoon of Prince Rupert of the Rhine (a German grandson of James I of England), fighting for the King against Parliament, and his large white Poodle “Boye,” who was said

to be a dog-witch who could only be destroyed by witch experts from the colonies! Later on we see a “water dog” in a picture from 1803 in The Sportsman’s Cabinet. One of the most famous Poodle portraits from the nineteenth century is Sir Edwin Landseer’s ‘Laying Down the Law,” where a big white Poodle presides as judge, looking very wise and be-wigged.

The first entry of Poodles in the UK stud book is said to have been made in 1874 (Irick, ***The New Poodle***, page 24). The Poodle Club (UK) was formed in 1876.

The Twentieth Century

The Poodle Club of America was formed in 1931 by Mrs Whitehouse-Walker (Carillon Poodles) and her father, and 8 others.

By the 1930s the Poodle was making himself felt in the show ring. The white Standard Poodle International Champion Nunsoe Duc de la Terrace of Blakeen (from Europe via the UK) won Best in Show at Westminster, New York, in 1935. A black Miniature Poodle, Ch Pitter Patter of Piperscroft (from the UK), won the same award in 1943. An American

bred Toy Poodle, Int Ch Wilbur White Swan, won Best in Show at Westminster in 1956. The brown Standard Poodle, English Ch Tzigane Aggri of Nashend, was Supreme Champion at Crufts in the UK in 1955. Show Poodles had arrived!

Miniature Poodles became extremely popular after the Second World War in both the UK and the USA, with record top registration numbers. Poodles had the top registration numbers of all breeds in the USA from 1960 to 1983.

Poodles in Australia

An excellent booklet was produced by the Poodle Club of NSW in October 1985 in which Lady (Primrose) Potter of Valencay Miniature Poodles presented a fascinating history of the breed in Australia from the age of the gold fields to the 1970s and 1980s. Her story of Poodles that may have been abandoned by a circus that failed financially on the gold fields suggests a very interesting basis for "colonial" Poodles.

The earliest show reference to a Poodle that Lady Potter could find was in the show catalogue for the Sydney Royal Easter Show of 1873, including one called "Flo," owned by H. Granville. Flo was described as Colonial bred, 5 years old, 8 inches high and weighing 7 pounds (3.2 kilos). This is interesting given that it pre-dates the first UK stud book entries.

Lady Potter found that the early show entries were classified as either French or Manilla Poodles and there was no division by size. All were entered as "Standard." The males were called "Dogs" and the

females "Sluts." The term "bitch" did not come into use until after 1900. The first classification of Miniature Poodle at a Royal Show occurred in 1950.

Miniature Poodles in Australia in the 1950s-60s

In the 1950s Sister Garrard in Victoria had her Omuka Miniature Poodles using English Firebrave and Bellepointe breeding. Rothara white Miniature Poodles were imported from the UK in 1953-4 by Dr Frank Ritchie and were influential, along with Mrs Sylvia Steyn's Kon Tiki Poodles from Mrs van Stavren in New Zealand.

In the 1960s Mrs Ilse White bred the great black Miniature Ch Guerlain What-a-Boy, by Ceba of Kon Tiki out of Monmartre My Fancy (Imp UK). He was followed by Ch Guerlain Black Magic. Mrs Roger Dunlop (Lady Potter) established her Valencay Poodles with a number of imports from the Jalahalli, Drummaids, Bartat, Montravia and Myrtlebury kennels.

Mrs Hedda de Soos established the Jolie Jouet Poodles with a number of black, brown and silver imports principally of Jalahalli breeding including the big winning brown Ch Jalahalli Copper. Mrs Mann was showing the white Ch Matisse Masterpiece very successfully. The Rev and Mrs Drayton brought in the record breaking black Ch Shah of Montfleuri for their Jondolyn Miniature Poodles, and other imports arrived from the Pleiades Poodles in the UK and Mutiara Poodles in New Zealand. More research will cover the 70s and beyond.

Standard Poodles

Breeders and importers included Mr and Mrs Lloyd Coleman with the browns Vulcan Daredevil and Vulcan Petronelle, the foundation of Abbey kennels. Abbey Beatrice was bred to Mrs Rhodes Smith's import Vulcan Champagne Baffy and produced Nileene Adagio, owned by JF and Mrs Snow of Detroyes Poodles, who mated her to their black import Ch Vulcan Champagne Hallmark to produce Ch Detroyes Pernod UD. Other Vulcan stock were being used at the de Ballement Kennel in New Zealand. The Sheridale kennel was established with Troubadour of Millwheel (Imp USA) and Rettats Periwinkle (Imp UK).

A central influence in the 1960s was the Marsail Kennel of Patsy Greenwood (Handscomb), who ran the famous Dogs Bath Club in Sydney. Mrs Handscomb's bitch Ch Detroyes Pernod UD – Bo Bo - was a very famous conformation winner and Obedience Poodle. Bo Bo became the mother of the multi Best in Show winning Ch Marsail the Astronaut.

Dr and Mrs Barry were showing the brown dog Ch Marshcourt Max of Frenches and Vulcan Champagne breeding and the brown bitch Ch Pindacourt Juliette of Marsail and Vulcan Champagne breeding, Max's son Ch Truffle Pete and finally the Barrys' homebred dog Ch Maxcourt Maxtoo. Also showing were the Lowmont Poodles and the Clancy Poodles.

Mrs Handscomb later imported the black English and Australian Ch Evorglens Sweet and Low who brought to Australia the lines of

Bibelot's Tall Dark and Handsome, then sweeping the Canadian, English and American Poodle worlds. This line was later strengthened by the importing of Ch Wycliffe Sybil and others who will be the subject of further development of this History.

Toy Poodles

Lady Potter states that Toy Poodles were not classified as such in Australia until 1961.

Mrs Steer and Mr Foster imported the white Poppetina of Montessor from NZ, who was Best in Show at the Sydney Royal in 1963. Other imports included Blanchfontaine Bombshell and Blanchfontaine Aussie King (black), Tres Petite Son of a Witch and Eng Ch Tuttlebees Rich Reward. A number of Rhosbridge apricots and various silvers also came in, including Frenches Stoneham Silver Diamond who was Best Opposite Sex in Group at Sydney Royal.

Sister Garrard (Omuka) imported toys of Fircot, Emrill, Querida and Pleiades breeding. Mrs Molly Burton brought her Summercourt Poodles to Sydney including Summercourt Sweep.

Toys and Miniatures were still being crossed and the Toy Summercourt Sweep was mated to the small Miniature Francelle Fille de Fler, a grand-daughter of Jalahalli Janon and bred by Mrs Pearl Darley. The Toy Ch Barsbrae Outward Bound was imported and won Best in Show (All Breeds) at Brisbane Royal. He was also used well in the breeding program at Mrs Darley's kennel.

More research will cover later period.

