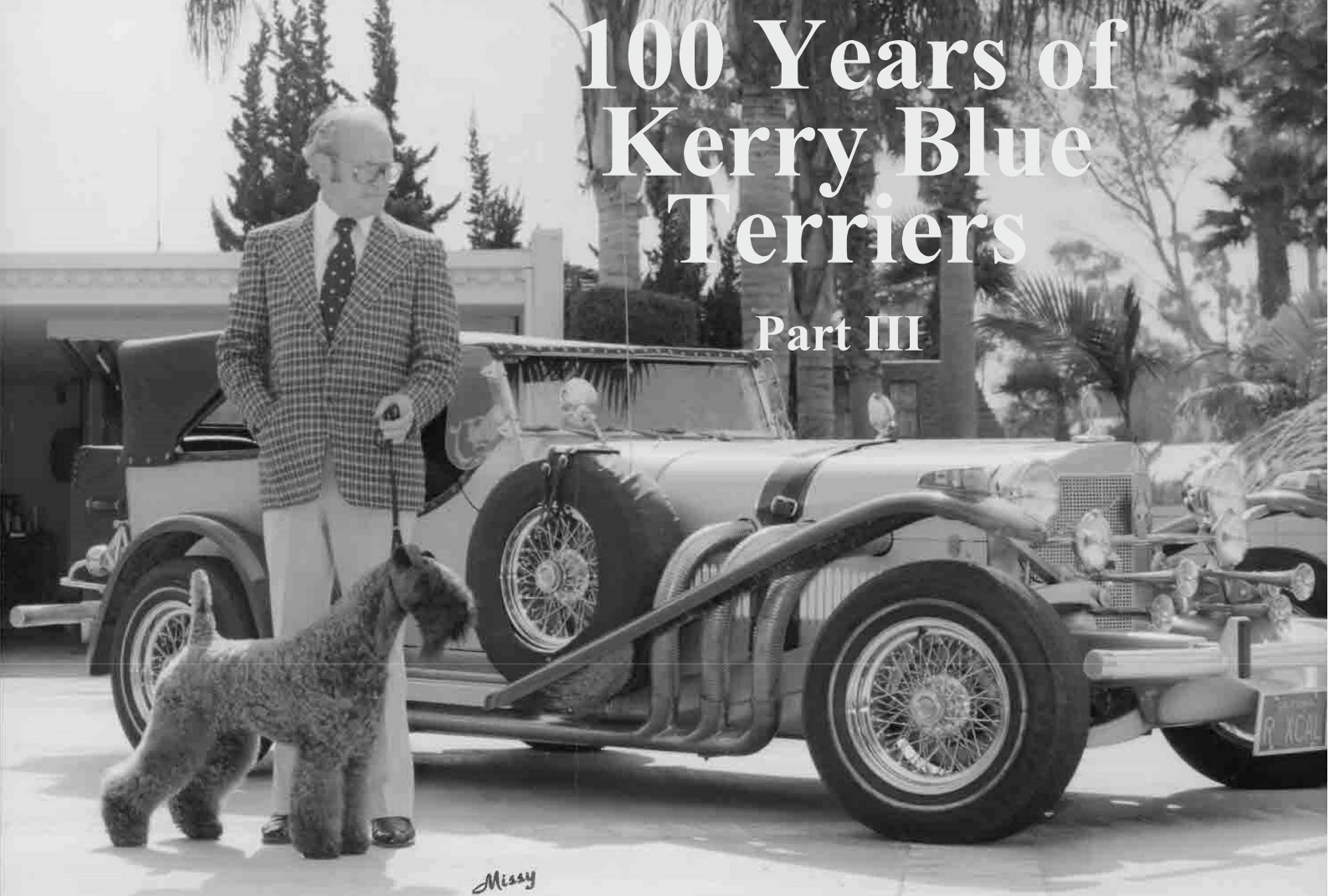


# 100 Years of Kerry Blue Terriers

## Part III



Am Ch Morbleu Marauder of Tontine (born 1976) handled by Raymond Perry Photo: Missy Yuhl

## Northern America

Text by Tiina Hallsten

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In 1924 American Kennel Club recognized the breed, and in 1927 there were forty-one American bred and twenty-eight imports registered by American Kennel Club. The first breed club, the Kerry Blue Terrier Club of America was formed in 1925 and it merged with the United States Kerry Blue Terrier Club in 1936.

In the beginning breeding and showing was the privilege of wealthy people as only they could afford to import the best stock and travel with them to shows.



Am Ch Fox Hill's Thunderbolt (1947) handled by Pop Sayers, "Mr Kerry Blue" Photo: E Shafer

## In the Early Days

In the early days big kennels were in charge and one of them was Mme Lilian Soresi (Oakcrest kennels) who imported and showed many of the important specimens as well as provided some nice breeding stock. Edwin "Pop" Sayers of Delwin kennels was "Mr Kerry Blue" and he did more than any other person for the breed and the breeders. He worked as handler-manager for several kennels and was responsible for the greatest Kerry Blues brought to America. He helped many on their start to success and as a handler he was one of a kind. His knowledge of the bloodlines was amazing and he was able to predict the quality of the planned matings. While Pop Sayers was active in the East Coast, William "Bill" Fox of Fox Hill's kennels was showing and breeding in the West Coast. Mr Fox also produced some important stock including Ch Fox Hill's Thunderbolt (1947) and Ch Fox Hill's Vixen (1948).

Possibly the most important dogs in the earliest days of the Kerry Blues in America were the imports from Ben-Edar kennels in England, especially Am Ch Ben-Edar Blaise (1931) and Am Ch Ben-Edar Bawcock (1933). Combined with the American bred, Irish bloodlines of Am Ch Sheepshead Lad (1927) and Irish-English bloodlines of and Am Ch Gulf Stream (1940) they produced the base of the American Kerry Blues. Such great sires as Topper of Belcrest (1936) and his son, Am Ch Michael of Somerset (1939) and his grandson, Am Ch Deed's Show Off (1945) and the great bitches like Am Ch Rackety Packety Killmenskeg (1933) and her daughters Am Ch Bumble Bee of Delwin (1936) and Am Ch Fox Hill's Rackety Kilta (1940) who all produced well and whose descendants are found on the pedigrees all over the world.



Am Ch Ben-Edar Blaise (1931) had a great influence in the American Kerry Blues Terriers in the early days  
Photo: Tayskey



Am Ch Bumble Bee of Delwin (1936) as well as her mother Am Ch Rackety Packety Killmenskeg (1933) were both very important brood bitches of the time. Handled by Harry Sangster Photo: Ludwig



Important addition to the American breeding were the English imports, Can Am Ch Netswell Ranee (1936) and Can Am Ch Lisnalea Enbuska (1937) who went to Kenmare kennels of Fred Spikers in Canada. They produced quality stock, amongst others Am Can Ch Kenmare Masterpiece (1944) who was purchased by Eileen McEachren of Tailteann kennels. She also bought Am Can Ch Fox Hill's Witch (1949) who with Masterpiece produced the very important Can Am Ch Tailteann's Widan II (1952). With the addition of Am Can Ch Miss Show of Cognewaugh (1950) Tailteann kennels extensive breeding program produced such great names as Tailteann's Rare Gem (1954) and Am Can Ch Tailteann's Jim's Show Off (1955). After Eileen's sudden death in 1959, many of the Tailteann's Kerries went to Marie Greene's Edmareann's kennels.



### Next Generation

Bert and Peggy Tormey of Marberlane kennels began with the American bred English-Irish bloodlines. Marberlane kept breeding their own line and they only casually introduced some new blood to their breeding program. Am Ch Marberlane's Citation (1957) sired the great Am Ch Marberlane's Top Brass (1961). Am Ch Marberlane's Minuet (1954) was sold to the West Coast and bred to Dudeen of Maeveen (1949) she produced one of the great sires of that time, Am Ch Bluemore High Fidelity (1956). Marberlane's dominated in the 1960's and in the beginning of the 1970's their name was kept up by Am Ch Marberlane's Medicine Man (1970) whose name can be found in many pedigrees all over the world.



Eileen McEachren with Am Can Ch Kenmare Masterpiece (1944) and Am Can Ch Fox Hill's Witch (1949), who laid the foundation for her Tailteann's kennels.



Am Ch Marberlane's Minuet (1954) handled by Ric Chashoudian Photo: Ludwig



Fellbrin's kennels of Fred and Fern Rogers established their breeding on Sharonellen's dogs. Helen Larson's Sharonellen kennels were established in 1934 and she based her breeding on the "old lines". In 1959 full siblings, Am Ch Sharonellen's Skibbereen and Am Ch Fellbrin's Bantabreen were born and they were top producers. Fellbrin's produced a constant flow of Champions and many kennels have begun with their breedings.



Am Ch Townshend's Blue Blaise (1956) handled by Fred Young Photo: Ludwig

Edith Izant's Townshend's kennel was founded in 1939 and was active until early 1980's. Townshend combined the "old" lines with the best of the current ones providing breeding stock to many kennels. Calkerry's Kerries bred by Catherine and Lou Wright began with Am Ch Townshend's Seanna (1959) and they produced one of the all time top producers, Am Ch Calkerry's Defiant (1967). Margo Steinman's Kilmarley kennels began with Townshend's Pixie O'Toole (1965). Gladys Titcomb (Blujac kennels) began with Kilmarley bitches and produced Am Ch Blujac's Afternoon Delight (1976).



Am Ch Fellbrin's Skibbereena (1967) handled by the breeder Fern Rogers



Am Ch Townshend's Casey O'Toole (1964) handled by the breeder Edith Izant Photo: Ludwig



Kilmarley Townshend's Tara (1975) went to Carol Postley's Elbrley's kennels and there from to Trefoil's kennels of Margareth and Bill Duch. These two kennels had some co-operation and with limited breeding they have produced winners as well as breeding stock, such as Am Ch Elbrley's Trefoil Demon (1981).



Am Ch Kilmarley Townshend's Tara (1975)  
Photo: Ashbey

Donna Perdue of Kerryglen's kennels began in the beginning of 1960's and produced littermates Am Ch Kerryglen's Quinn O'Grady and Am Ch Kerryglen's Nan-C-Lin (1963). They were by Bluemore High Fidelity out of their bitch Am Ch Erinblu's Toirse (1961) who was from the "old" lines. Nan-C-Lin was a beautiful silver-blue bitch whom Bea and Mel Schlesinger of Melbee kennels acquired and re-started their breeding program as they mated her to Canadian bred Am Ch Tregoad's Vicky's Victor (1957) to produce the top dog of the era, Am Ch Melbee's Chances Are (1965).



Am Ch Bluemore High Fidelity (1956) was one of the great studs of his time Photo: Lockhart



Am Ch Kerryglen's Quinn O'Grady (1963) was one of the top producers of the time Photo: Henry



Am Ch Melbee's Chances Are (1965). He must be one of the most famous Kerry Blues, known all over the world.  
Photo: Ludwig

Sharon Crenshaw of Kerrageen's kennels began with Tailteann bloodlines and Am Can Ch Kerrageen's Diamond Jubilee was born in 1963. Diamond Jubilee was the dam of the famous stud Am Can Ch Kerrageen's Irish Royalty (1970). Helen Roy of Kel-Tara's kennels in Canada began in the early 1960's and in 1971 she had a litter by Irish Royalty that produced three siblings; Am Can Ch Kel-Tara's Star Jubilee who achieved top winning Kerry of all time in Canada, Am Can Ch Kel-Tara's Star Tracer and Can Ch Kel-Tara's Star Sapphire. Two latter ones were the grandparents of Am Can Ch Kel-Tara's Kolonel Kopper (1980) who sired Am Ch Kerrageen's Hotspur (1986) – the top winning Kerry Blue of all time in the States.



Am Can Ch Kel-Tara's Star Jubilee (1971) was the top winning Kerry Blue of all times in Canada. Photo: Hodges



Am Can Ch Kerrageen's Irish Royalty (1970) handled by his breeder Sharon Crenshaw Photo: Robert

English bred halfbrothers Am Can Ch Roundway Bryony (1961) and Eng Nor Swe Am Can Bermudian Ch Carholme Charles (1962) arrived in Canada with Knut Egeberg (Music's kennels). Charles had spent some time in Norway and was shown there and in Sweden and gained Championships there, too. Charles made his sensational debut to the United States by winning Best of Winners at the Westminster and then four Specialties. His legacy lives through such great dogs as Am Ch Edmareann's Jim Dandy (1967), Am Can Ch Music's Long-Wanted (1967), Am Ch Melbee's Trouble Brewing (1968), Am Ch Rayjac's Am Bruth Firecracker (1969) and Am Can Ch Kerrageen's Irish Royalty (1970).



Horace “Jud” Perry’s Kearnach kennels started also with the American bred English-Irish bloodlines at the end of the 1940’s but they had a fresh start with Boliva’s Tamarind (1964) and Am Ch Calkerry’s Defiant producing quality stock such as Am Ch Kearnach Fergus MacRoy (1967), Am Ch Kearnach Vindicator (1969) and Am Ch Kearnach Kayne of Kiskevin (1974). Kearnach kennels provided foundation stock to number of kennels and they have carried out the bloodlines throughout the years.



Am Ch Tontine's Kilamy of Kavanaugh (1969)  
Photo: Ludwig

Ray and Lou Perry began their Tontine’s kennels with Am Ch Donagay’s Shannon Sprite (1964) of Tailteann breeding and Am Ch Maylew’s Main Event (1960), a son of Bluemore High Fidelity. Tontine and Morbleu of Lucille Meyers worked together and produced amongst others Am Mex Ch Tontine’s Something Else (1968), Am Ch Tontine’s Himself of Morbleu (1972), Am Ch Tontine’s Mr Tambourine Man (1977), Am Ch Tontine’s Midnight Marshall (1977) and Am Ch Morbleu’s Marauder of Tontine (1976) who had most of Specialty wins. Ray really had the “Eye for a Dog” and he also could use his talent in grooming and trimming his Kerries for the ring. The quality of Tontine’s Kerry Blues is known worldwide.

The kennels mentioned in this article have had a great influence in making the foundation for the modern Kerry Blue Terriers that are still found in the pedigrees of today's Kerries.



Am Ch Kearnach MacCushla (1965) handled by the breeder  
Jud Perry Photo: E Shafer

In those years it was very common to use tight in-breeding and that was probably one of the reasons that in the beginning of 1970’s there arose a problem with PNA (Progressive Neuronal Abiotrophy), nowadays known as Canine Multiple System Degeneration (CMSD). Today there is a DNA test for the disease, but back then there was a study published by Dr A de Lahunta from Cornell University (U.S.A) and the study proposed an autosomal recessive inheritance for this disease. The autosomal recessive gene cannot just simply be bred out nor could it be disposed of by culling the lines of known carriers. There were documented PNA cases on both sides of the Atlantic and there rose a war how to fight this dreadful disease. Many breeders, especially the new ones in the breed, didn’t want to cope with the problem and left the breed.

This was an end of one era and in the United States there was a huge drop in the registrations from at its peak of over 1300 to just little over 400.

Sources:

- \* USKBTC Hansbooks 1968, 1985 and 1992
- \* The Complete Kerry Blue Terrier, E.S. Montgomery, Denlinger’s 1950
- \* USKBTC Pedigree Database