

“Dippy” cont.

I felt very honored when asked by Jean Fergus to include “Serendipity” as a Bitch of Significance—allowing her to join the ranks of those very deserving bitches featured in earlier issues.

To all those who know her, “Dippy” is a love bug, a couch potato, a cuddle bunny and an ideal bedfellow. She excels in head quality with correctly proportioned head, lovely eye, a clean stop, and smooth skull that is very pleasant to look at. She presents a balanced picture with a decent front and rear. As a show dog, however, she preferred sitting in laps and kissing kids to hustling around the ring. As a result of this lack of interest, she was shown only a few times and picked up a few points. It wasn’t until her three daughters finished that we said to ourselves, “Get serious and get this bitch finished.” My theory was that if all the bitches in your lower dam line are champions, you have achieved a certain level of quality, and that kind of quality is essential to keep a strong bitch line going generation after generation, even when you only have a few dogs to work with. Of course, “Get serious” is easier said than done.

Luckily, we have the Coens to turn to—as they had finished Dippy’s three champion daughters. Nioma reluctantly said she would try, and at age five, Dippy began her career in earnest. Actually, Nioma didn’t just say she would try, she gave me a long lecture on how much had to be done to get Dippy into condition. She needed a lot of road work, less weight, and much grooming (as she always had too much coat for her 14-1/2 inches). After much hard work on Nioma’s part—biking, jogging, many hot baths, hours of arm breaking brushing and grooming—there emerged a correct fitting coat, a svelte figure, a reluctant but faster trot, an unusually hungry baiter, and some new muscles

for Dippy and Nioma . . . voila! She was ready for her first shows.

Dippy kept us holding our breath for the next year as she had some nice wins and some disappointing almosters and some losses that just make you cranky. She finished at the Saratoga Show, August 11, 1990 under Judge Robert A. Smith who was unprepared for the huge ovation Dippy got from all her ring side buddies. I’m sure he thought he had missed something along the way, but he was pleased to hear it was a Major win to finish. Later, as the story goes, the judge asked Nioma if the ovation was for her and she told him it was all for Dippy. It was true; I’ve had my share of bitches that other people liked, but that day it was clapping and tears from winners and losers alike. Five years later people I don’t



1989—“Dippy” at one of her first shows after the Nioma “do-over,” going BOS under Judge Mr. Robert Nutbeam.

even know ask, “How’s Dippy?” Well, at age eleven, she’s as happy as can be.

Let me take you back a few years to 1975. You see, Serendipity’s story really started for us at Cindahope with her great-granddam, Ch. Beltane Bonnie Jean. “Bonnie Jean” was a “Peter” daughter out of Ch. Beltane Kitty Macleish, who was by Fair Play Of Sea Isle ROM and her dam



Ch. Beltane Bonnie Jean, April 30, 1977. This is one of the first photos done by Gulie Krook.

was Ch. Beltane Solitaire by Am. Can. Ch. Malpsh Great Scott ROM. Remember the words of the song from *Brigadoon*, “I’ll go home, go home, go home with Bonnie Jean?” Well, we did; from the day we brought her home, to this day almost twenty years later, I’ve had a love affair with this family of bitches.

I remember going to the Curry’s to pick up my puppy when she was nine weeks old. We arrived to find two other families there to get their puppies as well. In Barbara’s special fashion, it was not a matter of “Which one would you like?” or “You have first pick and you have second pick” . . . it was “This is your puppy and this is yours.” I was a little skeptical of this at the time, but knowing Barbara, I knew it was this one or nothing. I was very fond of Kitty Macleish and wanted this combination very badly, so we gathered up a leggy, calm, but somewhat reserved pretty sable puppy. All our hopes for a future champion in our arms, we went home with Bonnie Jean. It was early July and as a teacher, I had the summer off. Our five children loved Bonnie Jean and she got all the right socializing and more. We soon discovered we had a very easy-going, playful, people-loving Sheltie who was happy to go anywhere with anyone—the more kids and people the better.

Bonnie Jean grew up to be elegant with beautiful coat color, pretty eyes, natural ears, full muzzle and balance. She loved to bait and show. She was near the height limit as an adolescent but by five

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