

Reflections



Ruth Carmichael Johnson

By Barbara Kingsbury

Editors Note: The Scottish Terrier Club of America's National Specialty on October 8, 2000 was dedicated to Ruth Johnson

I met Ruth Johnson at Montgomery County in 1963; I was introduced to her as I was combing out a dog for Florence E. Prentice. Ruth immediately handed me a leash, with a dog attached, said "I need help," and pushed me into the ring. The judge, a nice lady named Evelyn Kirk, overlooked my fumbling, smiled as I baited with cellophane (the only thing I had in my pocket), and proceeded to put us up, the dog, certainly not me. As we walked back to the tent, Ruth, Florence, the Stalters, the Ayers, the Hardys, Ron Schaeffer and Johnny Murphy, were all loudly discussing, how much of a problem I might have hitch-hiking back to New Jersey. In those days, we all had fun at the dog shows.

Ruth, of course, was best known as the breeder of Ch. Carmichael's Fanfare, alias "Mamie." But, she also raised some other lovely Scots that I knew, namely: Chs. Carmichael's Frivolity, Evening Edition, Intriguing, and some great brood bitches: Carmichael's Margaret and Fashion Fury. Ruth, rarely had more than one litter a year, and never had many dogs in the small kennel behind her home, but she certainly managed to produce quality Scots.

Ruth did have an offbeat sense of humor, which I enjoyed as we bunked together over the years. I can remember waking up once, hearing her discussing weather conditions with someone, and wondering whom the devil was in our room at that hour. When I opened my eyes, I realized that she was conversing with my dog, "Rowdy", who sat on my bed listening intently, as she spoke about the possibility of rain and cold temperatures.

Ruth could also be rather stubborn, and she paid dearly for this on more than one occasion. She, Steve Shaw, and I had just gotten set up in the handlers' tent when we heard a dog coughing. Steve and I looked at one another, and decided to run for the hills. We offered to help Ruth move to a safer ground, but she refused, reasoning that since we were outdoors, it should be fine. Needless to say, all of her dogs came down with kennel cough by the weekend.

Ruth became a member of my extended family; my family consisted of dog people, who loved their breeds, bred conscientiously, and taught and encouraged novices. Many of them are gone now. Their loss has been felt not only by their friends, but also by the breeds that they were devoted to, for so long a time.

