

The Corgi Quarterly  
Talks With  
Margaret Sullivan  
TALBOT  
Pacific Palisades, California

*This interview was conducted at the home of Margaret Sullivan on June 27, 1987 by Nancy Rogell.*



*Did you grow up with dogs?*

Yes, we had both dogs and cats, pedigreed and show-quality animals. My father was a secretary for a German Shepherd club in Vancouver, British Columbia. As a young girl, I'd exercise dogs for people and look after them at the benched shows, which they had at that time.

I have always been around animals that were bred for quality. My grandfather was the trainer and breeder for Will Roger's polo ponies. As some may remember, the polo team in the late twenties and thirties was quite prominent internationally. My grandfather taught me how to breed good animals.

*Did your father show?*

We used to show German Shepherds. A friend and neighbor also showed them. She had one of the first Pembrokes brought over from England. Her Pembroke, Tuffy, didn't get along with her Shepherds. My Shepherd had just died so she decided I should have Tuffy; this was my introduction to Corgis. He became a Canadian and American champion and was a very well-known dog in Canada and the US. This was in the thirties.

*Did you continue in Corgis from there?*

By then I had various other interests; I was a "regular" teenager and went to school and college; I didn't really think about raising animals until after I was married and had children. One of my sons wanted a dog, so I decided to buy him a Pembroke Welsh Corgi. I started in Corgis again in this way.

I bought a Pembroke bitch from the Stewarts, from an old English line of dogs. She was fairly successful but mostly just a pet. Once I got back into the swing of things, I became active again in the Pembroke club and progressed from there.

*Was that bitch your original breeding stock?*

I bred from her and had several Pembroke litters. It's only recently that I haven't had a Pembroke. I've had Pems and Cardis, have belonged to several Pembroke clubs and have held offices in both Pembroke and Cardigan clubs: the Pembroke Welsh Corgi Club of Southern

California, Golden Gate Pembroke Fanciers and Cardigan Welsh Corgi Club (Southern California and National).



Ch. Talbot's Pilot Programme and Ch. Talbot's Another Deborah

*Did you show your dogs at the time?*

Yes, here in the U.S. I showed in the early sixties.

*Why did you choose Cardigans as well?*

I was on the rescue service for the Pembroke Welsh Corgi Club of Southern California; at that time we were monitoring advertisements. I found an advertisement in the Sunday paper one day offering a Welsh Corgi for sale in our neighborhood, but I didn't recognize it. I called the number and a girl told me it was a Cardigan Welsh Corgi. When I asked where it was from, she said it was from eastern and western breeding and that she wanted to sell the puppies right away because she needed the money.

A friend of mine and I went up to this house in the Hollywood Hills and found an adorable Cardigan puppy that I thought was everything the breed needed. The quality of Cardigans being shown was not, in my opinion, very apropos; they were high on the leg and with no bone, no type and ugly. This girl, who was quite a mysterious person and said she was a member of the Charlie Manson group, told me, after I asked if the litter had been registered, that they weren't but she knew the AKC number and who the mother and father were. I asked for this information and found that this dog had some very well-known English lines. She just asked me for what I thought was the right amount of money for this puppy (\$75) and asked me to help her register the litter.

The puppy turned out to be my first Cardigan champion, Talbot's Coch Tywill, a red and white dog. He was undefeated except for one show. He was everything that a Cardigan Corgi should be except he was a little short in the back. He had the bone and substance, the pizzazz, the headpiece. I did very well with him.

*Did you buy a bitch to go with him?*

No. I thought this dog was so great - and this is how one's opinion changes. I had my husband take him back to a National Specialty where he met Agnes Parkinson. The Parkinsons came out West again to judge the Pembroke Southern California Specialty. While talking to them about Cardigan Corgis, I was informed that he was a very nice dog but not really of a true Cardigan type in that his back was too short and his ears weren't large enough. They did have some very nice lines, but Agnes suggested that I should buy a bitch from England.

Six months later, I went to England and saw the famous Parmel Kennels; naturally, I wanted to have a bitch from their famous Parmel line, but they were rare and far between. Instead I bought one that was by their famous stud dog, Eng.Ch. Parmel Digger, out of Eng.Ch. Robgwen Black Beauty; that was Am. & Can.Ch. Robgwen Destiny. I brought her over to the U.S. as my basic foundation bitch. That's how I first met Gwen Roberts who was a very good friend of mine and mentor.



"Dilly" (Am. & Can.Ch. Robgwen Destiny, the foundation bitch)

About a year and a half later, Gwen sent me a stud dog to go with this bitch, Robgwen Nice Fellow. I based my pedigrees and line on these two dogs.

*When did you breed your first litter?*

My first litter of Cardigans was in 1974.

*You mentioned that you had other breeds. Was this before you started in the Pembrokes and Cardigans?*

As a young girl, I had German Shepherds and later on, the Corgis.

*How many litters have you bred in Corgis?*

I've bred three in the Pembrokes and about four in Cardigans. I'm not, as you can tell, a big producer; I believe in producing quality.

*How did you get started in the frozen semen litters?*

The way we fell into the frozen semen business is an interesting story. I became friendly with Carol Bardwick whose husband was my doctor at that time. He told me I had to meet her because she was very interested in dog research and she lived just up the street from me. We became friendly and seemed to get along well together.

I had a blue merle sent to me, Am.Ch. Blue Jake from Dyerwood. She really liked this dog. We were out exercising it one day. Her neighbor happened to be a famous urologist, the head of the human sperm bank. He was outside gardening as we went by; he jokingly said to Carol and me, "Why don't you start a sperm bank for dogs?" (laughter) after looking at this nice blue merle Cardigan. He told us to come down anytime and go through their laboratory. It was in Century City, so we decided we would.

*When was this?*

It was in the early eighties. I was in medical research, and Carol was graduated from veterinary medicine. We became friendly with their technician and decided that if they could do it, we could, too. I had retired from a medical research program, so I had all the facilities of UCLA Medical Research Library. We went down and ran a few things on Medline about frozen semen. We came up with some interesting background and applied what we had seen to the technician's knowledge. We found a suitable medium. This, of course, took place over a span of about two years.

With that beginning, we began trying to freeze dog semen. I can remember Carol trying to use her Lhasas; then she suggested that we use my Corgis. We found that some of my dogs' semen was quite potent, so it lived longer than the Lhasas'. We expanded this to other breeds, and from this, she perfected the technique of freezing dog semen and retrieving the living sperm cells back again.



Frozen semen litter by Ch. Talbot's Pilot Programme,  
containing Ch. Kennebec Ice Anchor

One day, I had a bitch in season. We had semen we'd collected from Ch. Pendragon Broncobuster that had been frozen for about three or four months. She suggested we use this so I called up Dorothy Riley and got her permission to use her dog's semen. She said it was all right. Broncobuster was one of the first dogs banked. We used the semen. It was all done out

on my patio. We had no idea what the chances were of having a litter; it was a 99 percent chance that we wouldn't. All of a sudden, Joy became very pregnant and she had five puppies, one of the first AKC registered frozen semen litters.

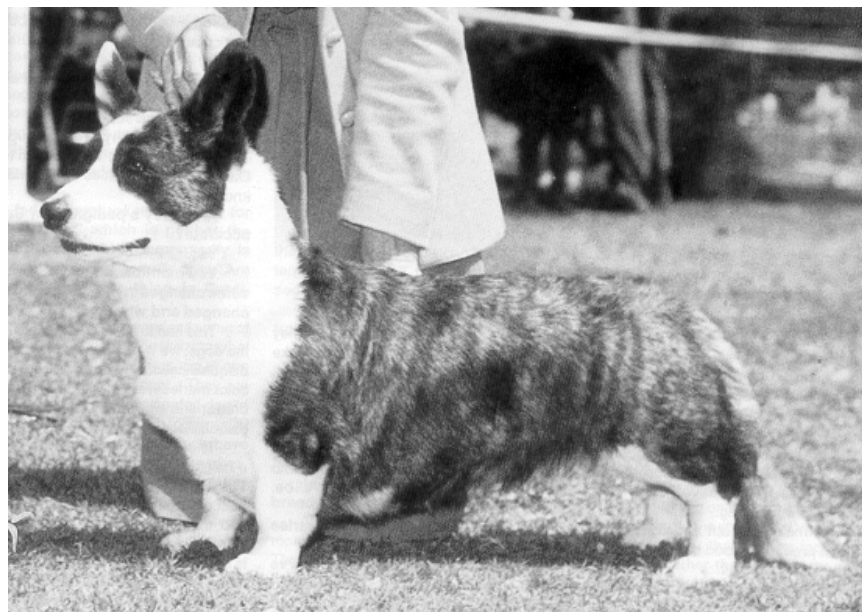
There was no problem registering them at that point. Luckily, Carol had done all the groundwork. Other than filling out the various forms and following all the AKC's procedures for collecting and registering frozen semen, we had no difficulties at all. Since this was one of the first frozen semen litters, they did send out a field representative to see them when they were three or four weeks old.

*The AKC was very receptive to this?*

They've always been very receptive to work done in this field, if it's done correctly.

*How did the puppies turn out?*

They turned out very well. You can see Queenie here (Ch. Talbot's Snow Queen); she's a double specialty winner and finished her championship very easily from the Bred-by class. I have other members of the other litter who are also champions.



Ch. Talbot's Snow Queen

*How long are they able to store frozen semen and then retrieve it?*

Indefinitely. It's suspended cells in an inanimate state. They believe it could be stored for 20 or 30 years. Dog breeding will have changed quite a bit in this time, however.

*Has there been a litter born from semen that has been stored a number of years?*

I believe so. Perhaps Dr. Seager has done this. He, among various people, did a lot of work in frozen semen.

*I know there are a number of banks across the country. Are people using them?*

Yes, but at first people were very reluctant to use frozen semen. They were fearful because they didn't know much about it. They weren't knowledgeable about what was happening and how the bitch is inseminated; it is an artificial insemination, in other words. They thaw the straws; the sperm is living in the medium. This is, in turn, introduced into the bitch.

*Are there problems in doing this?*

Yes. The directions are very simple, but when you get people who are highly specialized, they try to misinterpret simple techniques, such as steps in the thawing; they might overcook the semen. As a result, there are no living cells. They impregnate the bitch at the wrong time, perhaps, so this leads us to a whole different field of questions. What kind of bitch should you use for frozen semen?

*How do they thaw it?*

It's very simple. Use a little thermos jug with water at a certain temperature. It's left in this for five to six seconds. If this isn't followed carefully, you aren't going to retrieve the living semen.

*Is this being used more and more?*

It is, particularly abroad. Our cryobank has customers, particularly in Hawaii and Japan. There have been litters in Norway and Sweden from sperm shipped from here. I can't wait for England to open up for this use.

*The English don't accept frozen sperm?*

Not now. They feel that, perhaps, rabies is going to be transmitted in the seminal fluids. I don't know if this is possible.

*Has anybody done any work to find out if this is true?*

I don't know.

*Who or what has had the most influence on your breeding program and the direction you've taken?*

The Parkinsons and Gwen Roberts are the people who gave me the lead to the best of the English lines. They have educated me as to the Cardigan type and the correct soundness and movement.

*Do you show your own dogs?*

Yes and I use a handler as well.

*How many champions have you finished?*

I haven't counted them all, but it is quite a few.

*Who was your top winner of all these you've bred?*

I like my old dog, Am. & Can.Ch. Talbot's Pilot Programme; he and his offspring have been very successful, among them Ch. Pendragon Lineleader, Ch. Pendragon Broncobuster, Ch. Kennebec Ice Anchor and Ch. Kennebec Black Ice.

*Did you import more dogs after the original two?*

No, but I'd like to because I have to rely on other people importing dogs. There aren't a lot of people doing this. In the Cardigan breed, people don't use each other's stud dogs to advantage. In the Pembroke breeding plans, people import and use each other's stud dogs.

*There aren't very many Cardigans. Does this limit your gene pool?*

I wouldn't say so because I'm a firm believer that, if you have something good, you linebreed and inbreed on that line.

*When you need something to add to it, is this a problem?*

I know where to go; if I don't, then hopefully England and Australia might soon take a different tack on frozen and cooled semen.

*Do you keep stud dogs here?*

Yes. I accept outside bitches for breeding. I want to know something about the bitch's background first of all. My criteria are eye and hip examinations and a vaginal culture, plus a brucellosis clearance.

*That has become a problem everywhere.*

Yes. A lot of people who just want to breed one litter don't want to come up with all these clearances. They go elsewhere, which is fine with me; I'm not going to expose my stud dog to any infections.

*Is the bitch the backbone of the breed?*

Yes and no. I'll have to clarify that. You have to have a great bitch to begin with, but there have been some pretty potent stud dogs that leave their mark on the breed.

*Have there been any particular dogs in America that have had a big influence on the Cardigans as we know them today?*

There are certain styles of Cardigans; you can recognize these when you see them in the ring.

*How often do you breed your bitches?*

Every other year to the age of seven. I don't breed many litters.

*Do you cull your litters?*

No.

*Do you get fluffies?*

Yes, we certainly do.

*Do you have color problems?*

If you breed the wrong colors, you'll get color problems, but I don't run into that. I don't know of any in my own breeding program.

There are several I've heard about in the breed. If you're breeding merles and you do the wrong color combination, you'll get the wrong-colored merles. I've heard of people having eye color and nose pigmentation problems in other colors as well as the merles. It's not really a problem in the breed. A dog with this particular problem comes from a particular source, and you can pinpoint it.

*Are hips a problem in the breed?*

We do have dogs with dysplasia but if you have been cleared by OFA, that's enough.

*What kind of eye problems occur?*

There have been some problems with PRA. People tend to point fingers at certain lines; I've had that problem. People say that my stock is PRA prevalent, but if they really want to inquire, they will find it's not so. They have no proof of it.

*Do you have a color preference?*

No, although brindle is usually the most typey Cardigan. Black and white dogs are inclined to be smaller boned; they are a smaller type of dog. Some of the red and whites tend to be more "Pembroke" in nature, though not all. They are shorter backed because the breed was interbred, so unfortunately, there aren't that many good red ones.

*When did they stop interbreeding them?*

In the late twenties. We have Pembrokes that look like Cardigans and vice versa. Unfortunately, as with the red and white dog I had, there were qualities that were like Cardigans but he also had Pembroke qualities, the smaller ears and shorter back. This doesn't go over today.

*At what age do you evaluate your litters?*

The moment they are born I make an evaluation, while they are wet. I evaluate them every four to five weeks after that, I can tell a lot about the angulation when they're wet. There is no tone to the muscles.

*At what age do you sell your puppies?*

After eight or nine weeks; by then, it's hard to tell if they're show quality because Cardigans do change a lot.

*Do you sell them as show quality or show prospects?*

Show prospects.



*Do you have any contracts with your puppies?*

I certainly do, because I've been in the rescue service for quite some time. I ask that my pet quality stock be neutered. I ask that the dog be returned to me if they find they can't keep it later; I have the right of first refusal.

*How do you decide who buys your puppies?*

I have been quite strict about that. I like to sell to families that have enclosed yards and who will care for the animal.

*Why would you not breed a bitch?*

She isn't representative of the breed. I wouldn't breed her if there were whelping or breeding problems in the line. It must have the required tests also. Sometimes I will direct people to the right type of stud dog; many people call me for stud services and I decide their bitches would be better bred to another stud dog. I don't hesitate to tell them so.

*What guarantees do you give with your puppies?*

I give them health certificates for that particular month, but I don't guarantee anything other than good health. My puppies are reasonable enough that they can either be show or pet price; they are almost the same. I've spent as much time with the pet quality as with the show quality.

*Do you guarantee hips or anything like this?*

No. I would replace a puppy, if it wasn't environmentally caused, for temperament, eyes or hips.

*Would you breed a dog or bitch that was a good specimen of the breed but had a serious fault?*

It would depend on the type of bitch and whether or not I felt the fault could be eliminated by using my stud dog.

*What conformation fault bothers you the most?*

In Cardigan Corgis, it is the type. Many breeders aren't familiar with Cardigan type.

*Do you see a lot of variation of type across the country?*

Yes. This is caused because people haven't taken the time to study what type is.

*How would you describe the ideal Cardigan?*

It's what is written in the standard. A typey dog should be able to win in any country. I've proven that.

*The Interpretation of the standard depends on one's eye. People have very different interpretations sometimes.*

We have this problem with judges, too. They don't spend enough time looking at and studying the breed, which is needed. You must ask questions and go to the people who have been the most successful to find out how they did it and what they want to do. I was fortunate to go to England and Wales to talk to many people and take in a lot of information. From that, I established my line of dogs. There are a lot of people who don't want to be inquisitive, don't want to find out what type is. They feel their own dog is the proper type. They have to have an open mind and look at other's dogs.

*Many people can't travel, so they see those animals in just their area. This happens to many judges; this is what they've been told is the proper type.*

These judges will have to study a lot of videos and pictures to learn the different types; they should talk to top breeders who have the best animals. They'll see the different types, regardless of the breed of dog. You must keep an open mind.

*Is the testing of judges for the standard going to help?*

Certainly. We have many judges who don't know what the standard actually says.

*Have they done a video on Cardigans?*

They are planning this but haven't done it yet. They've started the slide shows; hopefully this will be very helpful to the breed.

*Are the Cardigan clubs doing seminars to help people, novices, breeders and judges across the country?*

I haven't heard of any lately. We have National Specialties where people can go to view the dogs, but not everybody can attend these.

*Are the local clubs doing enough to educate people?*

No; they need to do more. I'm on the board now for the national club but we get hung up on some rhubarb and don't accomplish a lot. Things that are beneficial to the breed are passed over; so anytime you can have someone of authority come in and speak for you, show slides and movies, bring in videos, everybody is going to benefit. People in areas who don't know what type is can learn.

*Is your local club doing things like this for educational purposes?*

I'm not aware of anything. They are a very small club.

*Do you have many Cardigans being shown in this area?*

Yes, we do. We have one of the larger entries here on the West Coast. We have the highest point system.

*Is the quality of the Cardigan any better in any geographic area?*

Yes. Right now, the Midwest has better Cardigans. At one time, we used to have some nice ones on the West Coast. The breeding programs in the Midwest and their utilization of bitches and stud dogs may account for their success.

*Do you do a lot of inbreeding?*

Yes. My latest litter is a grandfather to granddaughter breeding. I've done mother to son breedings. Gwen Roberts has done so also.

The basis of these dogs that I've bred is inbreeding. These specimens are genetically pure. If you have a genetically pure dog that's a good specimen, you can breed it to anything you want and come up with something that's beautiful.

*Isn't it difficult to know if it's totally genetically pure?*

That's true. Helen Jones has one from my mother to son breeding; she bred it, an accidental breeding, to Ice Anchor's brother, who is Joe Parky's (Talbot Pilot Programme) son. Ice Anchor is also from my line. A litter resulted wherein there was a giant and another was okay; it was typey, but something happened and it became cow hocked in back. We then wondered where these two came from; this breed has that happen quite prevalently.

*I've noticed that poor rears are usually cow hocked.*

I think it is genetic and a joint and muscle combination.

*Are poor rears the primary thing that plagues the breed?*

Poor shoulders and poor rears.

*Are there any other problems that are difficult to get rid of?*

There are specimens that don't have pleasing heads; they aren't typical Cardigan heads. We have problems with tail sets and size. There are some people who believe in breeding small Cardigans, which are not correct. Some believe that bone isn't that necessary, but it is. It is supposed to have more bone than a Pembroke. It looks ridiculous to see a Cardigan in the Group ring that is smaller and finer than a Pembroke. Take a look; it's quite frequent. The Pembroke is supposed to be smaller. We are finding some Cardigans that are as short backed as the Pembroke and can't step out like the Pembroke, so they drag behind. The Cardigan, if he's correctly assembled and is the correct type and structure, should be able to outgait the Pembroke any day. He can do this because he's a bigger dog; if he has the correct front and back assembly, he should cover the ground in larger steps. He can, therefore, pass the Pem any day.

*Were the Pembroke and Cardigan originally used for the same purpose?*

Yes.

*What was the reason for separating the two breeds?*

They were two distinct types. One came from Cardiganshire; that was more of a true Corgi. The Pembrokeshire Corgi was from the lowlands; that dog was probably mixed in with other

breeds, particularly the dog from Flanders, a little Spitz-type dog, or Pomeranian-type. If you look back on the origins of the breed, the Cardiganshire is rather isolated. That Corgi was inbred and linebred in the mountains whereas the Pembroke Corgi had other influences. The farmer might see a Border Collie or one of the Flanders dogs to breed it to; naturally, they weren't interested in pedigrees. They were interested in the best working dog.

*Were they originally a variation of one breed?*

They used to be shown together. Back in the early writings of the breed, in fact, you'll find that in one litter there were both Cardigans and Pembrokes. In Wales, when I was there, a breeder lived in an isolated area and raised both Pems and Cardis. (This was in the 1980's). This was kind of hilarious at the time. He lived in a beautiful Welsh cottage and asked me in for a cup of tea. We discussed Cardigans and had tea and cakes. He was going to whistle the dogs down from the hills and all these dogs came down, both Pems and Cardis. He had some litters of Pembroke puppies and some of Cardigans in the household. I asked him how he could tell, with all the dogs running together, which were mated to which? Did he catch the bitches when they came into season? He said that sometimes they have puppies out in the rocks or the caves. He said that, in breeding them, if he can catch them, fine; if he doesn't, he just looks at the litter and those that look like Cardigans are called Cardigans; those that look like Pembrokes are called Pembrokes. If they do them that way today ... (laughter)

*Do they allow crossbreeding in England?*

No, but this is how this Welshman did it. He was open-minded and told me about it.

*I saw a dog at the Windsor show in England that was an extreme Corgi type but a little leggier.*

That's true. I was on an interesting trip recently; it was on the influence of the Celts. I started in Wales and went to Ireland; I went to the Isle of Man, the Orkney Islands and the Shetland Islands. In the Orkney Islands I found a dog that looked a great deal like the Corgi. I took pictures of these dogs. They were gray and had little short ears; they looked like a Spitz. I firmly believe that the Norsemen had quite an influence.

*I've looked at very old pictures of Corgis, Pembrokes and Cardigans. At one time, they had a good deal more leg under them.*

That's true; they were higher on the leg and were a heavier dog. I'm in the process of doing an article on the early Celts and the influence of the Norsemen on the breeding of dogs. You found this dog in Norse country; they probably brought their dogs on the long ships ashore into Wales. Those dogs were interbred with the Corgis. They probably picked up some of these puppies and took them back to Norway or Sweden. They certainly are throughout the Shetland/Orkney Islands, where I found them.

*I've found the Cardigans a highly intelligent breed.*

That's why I like Cardigans. These dogs are what I call my "postage stamps" because they find me. They are very loving. All of these qualities have been inbred into these dogs, which makes them good family dogs.

The early farmers didn't know what they were doing; they were inbreeding and line-breeding. They bred all the better qualities into these Corgis.

They are very intelligent. I can tell you stories about how smart my Joy is.

*Have you done any obedience work with your dogs?*

Yes, but I'm not really into obedience. I've gone all the way through Open training. I've put degrees on some of the Pembrokes.

*You mentioned some of the problems plaguing the breed, such as the cow hocked rears and poor shoulders and tail sets. Are the breeders working to eliminate some of these things?*

I hope they are. Some people are very cognizant of the faults in the Cardigan Corgi. I'm an analytical person and do research. I base my breeding program on what Mr. and Mrs. Parkinson did, what Gwen Roberts did, and I follow their pedigrees, as they were taught to do with the Kentwood line in England, and also various people here. I had one of the Parkinsons' and Gwen Roberts' dogs, and I followed their most successful breeding program which was very close line-breeding and inbreeding. When you do follow someone's program and copy their methods at producing good dogs, then you can do the same yourself.

My advice to anyone would be to pick an outstanding bitch from a very good line and use the very best stud dog that's available for your line to correct a fault. You can do this either with frozen semen, cooled semen, or just by sending your bitch off to be mated, choosing the best dogs. For Cardigans, linebreed; do not outcross because the Cardigan is not a stable line. Some of the Cardigan people haven't followed a breeding program that closely in utilizing the best bitches and stud dogs available. Things have begun to change; we are getting a more uniform look in the breed and much more soundness.

*Although it isn't a very popular breed, it has gained in some popularity in the last few years. Has this been more helpful to the breed?*

Yes. I'm trying to promote them, as they are in England; most of the large Pembroke breeders also have a Cardigan. This was true in many large kennels there. Consequently, a lot of people have changed over from Pembrokes to Cardigans. There is a lot of work to be done in Cardigans. The more knowledgeable people in Pembrokes who can take part in this, the better off we'll all be. This is what I'm trying to promote.

*How does the type in other countries compare to the type in this country?*

In their land of origin, from what I've seen in England, at one time they were far ahead of us. Now we have surpassed England in many ways. The dogs in Australia are very nice but they have problems with recognition of type. They don't follow a close breeding program. A very good Australian friend of mine asked me what she should breed her bitch to, but I wouldn't know what stud dogs are available in Australia. She sent me some pedigrees. I suggested a stud dog that would go with her bitch's pedigree; she had never even thought of doing that. He happened to be an English import. I told her to study his pedigree very closely; she'd see that he was an inbred/linebred stud dog. I asked why people in Australia hadn't used him. She said it was probably because they didn't like the woman who owned him. I told her that you're not breeding the woman; just use her stud dog (laughter). They should use this stud dog because

of his marvelous line. She ended up with a National Specialty winner of Australia and a whole litter of champions. I thought that was great; I did a breeding by remote control!

*This makes you wonder how many times people don't use particular dogs because they either don't care for the person or just think they might not. It's very sad.*

That's happened to me. I have certain requirements of the dogs. It's unfortunate that some bad publicity comes out so that particular animal isn't used. It really is a shame.

*Is the type in Canada very similar to what we have?*

I don't think so.

*Are there many breeders up there?*

Yes, there are, but I haven't been in Canada since the fifties so I wouldn't really know.

*Are today's pedigrees in Cardigans accurate?*

Yes.

*You mentioned that you'd just made some changes in the standard. What was changed and why?*

This had to do with color and the size of the dogs; we were a little more explicit. The disqualifications were changed. The off-color merles were mentioned; a muddy-colored merle with a red undercoat would be disqualified.

There is, as in the Pembroke Standard, a height, weight and length discrimination. They changed, for one thing, the predominance of white and also the off-colored merle and the quality of coat. It used to be a disqualification to show a fluffy, but now that is no longer enforced. It isn't a disqualification; it's a very serious fault. I don't know why this was changed; I'd want it to be a disqualification because we still find people showing coats that are long and that have been scissored.

*Are fluffies a big problem in the breed?*

Yes, we have fluffies in the breed, just as in other breeds. I've heard of some people having whole litters of fluffies, but as far as I'm concerned, it's a recessive gene. It's very difficult to get rid of it. I've had fluffies. I sell them as pets. There is a lot of enjoyment in having a fluffy dog. The personalities are good; they do well in obedience.

*Is there an original reason for not showing both types of coats?*

The short, hard coat is preferred; the long, fluffy coat probably is from the time when Corgis were interbred with Border Collies. They adopted a short coat because a long coat would not be a working type of coat; it would catch in the briars and would not be waterproof. I would not be for promoting both short- and long-coated Corgis.

*How has the breed changed over the last fifteen years?*

It's changed by the introduction of new lines of dogs. I hope I was one of those people who introduced a new line of dog, plus a more open way of thinking about them. I've seen a lower-stationed, heavier-bodied, elegant-looking dog with a beautiful headpiece.

*Have you seen any detrimental things happening?*

I've seen people promoting the long-coated dog. They believe in using that in their breeding program because, unfortunately, some of these longer-coated dogs are very typey and they do have a great deal of bone. They are lower-stationed and pretty; they have a nice head and a nice Cardigan outline.

*The fad in Pembrokes has been for the "show coat," which is neither the short, hard coat, which supposedly is correct, nor is it the long, fluffy coat. Are you finding this same thing in Cardigans?*

Yes. I'm beginning to wonder if some of these people aren't going to be utilizing what some of the Pembroke breeders did at one time for that nice full show coat. They are going to have to use a longer-coated dog to produce this. In my breeding program, I have utilized the English lines which have nice full-bodied coats and big fox brushes, as you can see here. There aren't very many Cardigans that have nice full fox brushes. I like to see that in the breed; it gives them a certain elegance along with the nice big ears.

*By using the fluffies, will they run into problems with coats down the line?*

You're bringing in a recessive, which must be taken into account.

*Where is the breed going from here?*

It's going upwards. When I looked at the last two National Specialties, I noticed how much the breed has improved in overall quality.

*Do you have a problem with getting too much white?*

Yes. Looking at Queenie here, she has a half white ear and that's permissible in Cardigan Corgis, but in Pembrokes that wouldn't be permissible. The white markings in Pembrokes have a certain limit in their standard; Cardigans don't. It's just 50 percent white. There were some very famous dogs in England that were carrying a good deal of white, or had a white splash coat. The famous Parmel Digger was a white splashed-coated dog, but he was brindle and white with white splashes. His movement and type were so outstanding that his coat was overlooked; it didn't influence the judges. The Cardigan Standard says it is open to thought; it can't be more than 50 percent white. Unfortunately, we have some judges who don't know that, as in my case, when I showed this bitch, Queenie. He looked at her as if to say, "Is that right, to have a half white ear?" They're thinking of the Pembroke Standard, not of the Cardigan Standard.

*What kinds of problems have you found with Pembroke judges judging Cardigans?*

Not knowing the type and forgetting what the dog was built for, a herding dog; this means that movement is very important.

*Describe the correct movement of a Cardigan.*

It is free flowing; the stride is forward and unobstructed, with a back gait that is true and sound. The rear feet are well under the dog with the back and forward reach in the rear. These dogs can really go at a terrific pace when they are correctly assembled.

*Do you want a single- or double-track?*

It's a double-track, like the Pembroke.

*Is most judging honest and competent?*

It is honest, but there are times when I wonder if the judge actually knows what the breed is. According to their ability, it is honest.

*Is the Cardigan a particularly difficult breed for a lot of people to judge?*

Yes, it is quite an involved breed. I wish more people who judge us would study the dogs and apply the standard. They think it's like a Pembroke with a tail but I'm sorry, it isn't.

*Do a lot of judges have a problem judging the short-legged breeds?*

Yes. They think it's a small dog so it might be easier to judge, but it isn't. It's harder to judge.

*Do breeders or handlers make better judges?*

Breeders do because they know what is required of a breed. Not too many handlers know what type is unless they are involved with the breed.

*If a judge breeds one breed and is excellent in that breed, what about all the other breeds he judges?*

I'm not sure - that's a good question. I've known some handler-judges that I'm very reluctant to show under and yet some of them have had a good bit of experience with Corgis and so they are good judges. Then there are some breeder-judges who are good but then they get a quirk in their mind about how a Corgi should look. They become so rigid they can't get past that one little thing. I'm sure you've observed that sort of thing, too.

*Is there a color preference among judges?*

I've seen some who do have a color preference. I've even heard about them doing this with markings. I wonder why they'd do that. Someone called me the other day about a puppy, saying they wanted one with very flashy markings. I asked them, "You don't want a typey, sound dog; you only want flashy markings?" (laughter) They had wanted a show dog. It's hard to show a plain-colored dog in the ring; there are a lot of very nice plain-colored dogs that go unnoticed.

*Do judges prefer the brindle, black and white or the merle?*

I know of one judge who only likes merles. There isn't any one color that's any more difficult to show than any other.

*Should judges withhold ribbons for lack of quality?*



I certainly do. Every time one does, I write him a note to thank him. They don't do it often enough. I congratulate anyone who withholds ribbons for lack of quality.

*Do most judges take into consideration what a dog was bred for when they're judging?*

No. You wonder if they even know.

*What is the biggest problem judges have when judging the Cardigans?*

They might not know how to judge a class of, say, dogs of type and non-type; they might go for a non-typey dog that is sound. They're judging on faults rather than on type and judging to the standard. I've seen judges pick out a dog that was an indiscriminate Cardigan rather than picking the one that was the more typey, correct dog. It might have just thrown one foot off to the side or something like that and they ignore it completely.

*Do a lot of judges judge more negatively than positively?*

Yes. They are fault finders instead of looking at the overall picture.

*Do a lot of judges have trouble judging the type of front end a Cardigan is supposed to have?*

Yes. There are several judges who line up all the dogs to look at their fronts; I even smile about them. So what do they do? They pick the one that has the worst front; they think they ought to look like Queen Anne fronts. Actually, they should not; that's a very faulty dog.

*Do you find a lot of judges look for a very straight front?*

I've seen some that don't know the difference. When you're talking about straight fronts, you're talking about the shoulder assembly and/or straight forearm. Straight front legs, like a Terrier front. They are judging the turnout rather than the shoulder layback. The feet should only turn out slightly, not extremely. A lot of emphasis is placed on the turnout rather than the actual shoulder assembly. Consequently, the dog can't possibly move out correctly. Any judge of any breed of dog can see when the dog moves whether or not the shoulder assembly is correct.

*Is it ethical to retouch photos for advertising?*

No.

*Does advertising have an affect on the judges?*

Surely.

*Does the rating system influence judging?*

Sometimes, for those who are unsure of themselves. We need more judges who are sure of themselves instead of going around reading about the ratings and how often someone advertises their dog.

*Has there been a lot of change in judging the Cardigans over the last ten to fifteen years?*

Yes. Judges now are more informed and are taking the time to learn more about the breed. I'm very glad that judges have taken this time to learn. The AKC is following suit with their video and tape shows, showing the standards and also the slide shows. These are wonderful. The judges will be better informed. I'm proud of all the judges who are now recognizing good Cardigan Corgis and are putting them up in the Group.

*Are judges putting them in the Group more often because they are able to recognize a good one?*

Yes, they are learning more and are able to do this. The breed has improved a great deal.

*What types of noticeable changes in the Cardigans can be attributed to this?*

A Cardigan that is at the top is typey and sound and very elegant; it has a nice presentation. When you have an elegant, typey, showy dog, it's going to place in the Group.

*Does this elegant, typey dog fit in with the standard?*

It does.

*Are there many Cardigan breeders who are also judges?*

Not many; there are very few. We need some more knowledgeable people who are breeders and judges. We have a lot of Pembroke breeders who are judges; they judge both Pems and Cardis. They have a lot of knowledge to pass on to Cardigan people about the soundness of Corgi movement.

*Are there a lot of old-time breeders of Cardigans in this country?*

There are a few, but now we have a younger generation that's coming up; we have to look toward them.

*What kind of advice would you give to these young people if they approached you for help?*

I'd tell them, first of all, to go out and learn as much as they can about the breed. Attend as many shows in as many different locations as possible. Read lots of books, study the literature, and look at pictures and videos of famous dogs. Go and look at other breeds of dogs so they can understand body structure and movement.

*What kind of help do you offer other people in the breed?*

If anyone wants to ask me questions, I'll certainly be open with them and tell them all about it. I'm more than willing to tell them how I bred my dogs; I will give them the results of my various breedings.

*Are there some people in Cardigans who have had a lot of influence in the breed?*

Yes, there have been in the U.S. Some of the old-timers who were one of the greatest influence were the Brymore ladies, Mary Nelms and Michael Pym; Margaret Douglas of the Swansea Kennels; the Kencia lady, Marcia Lopeman, who had a great deal to do with the

breed. We all know Helen Bole Jones, who is Roberta Holden Bole's granddaughter; she's been raising Corgis since she was a young girl, but she's not really one of the old-timers.

In judges, (always think of Derek Rayne; his first Corgi was from a litter of both Pems and Cardis. He'll tell you the story about this. Although he's known to be a prominent Pembroke person, he's also into telling you about Cardigan Corgis.

*Did he actually have Cardigans?*

I don't think he ever did, but he had enough exposure to them. He has some interesting things to say about the origins of Cardis and Pems when they were first being shown. He had a dog that was from a litter of Cardigans and Pembrokes.

*When they used to breed between them, did they register them on how they looked?*

Yes. At one time the early Pembrokes had a stubby tail; there were breeds of Pems that didn't have short tails so that's how that originated. When you look at some of the old Pembroke photos, you'll see the little stubby tails. Perhaps, at that time, they thought that the ones born with stubby tails would be Pems; those with the nice long tails would be Cardigans.

Sometimes today, some judges can't tell the difference and don't want to learn.

*Were there any other judges who had a significant influence on Corgis?*

In Cardigans, I think of the Pimlotts who used to have a Cardigan Corgi; it was a very successful dog. Eileen and Roy have done a lot to influence people as to what is good and bad stock in that breed. I hope they still have influence now.

*You recently made a trip to England. Tell us about the breeders over there.*

I mentioned the person in Wales who is even now intermingling the breed there. He's one of the old stalwarts of, shall we say, the Welsh breeding of Corgis. One has to go over and see this for themselves, see the land that these dogs are raised in and the temperament of the people. It's quite unusual.

I went to a show there in Wales; Gwen Roberts, who is Welsh, took me there. I wondered what in heaven's name I'd gotten into. I never saw so much in-house fighting about dogs. I thought this was just like America; they were very brash. "I don't like your dog because it's got this or that!" Golly, will they come to blows just as they enter into the show ring? They went in and showed their dogs, came out again. Then I heard some mumbling about the first and second place winners. I thought it was going to be a big argument again, but they all went over and congratulated the winner; the winner took everybody over to the bar and bought them a drink (laughter). It was wonderful. This goes on in Wales. The person who wins gets to treat everybody at the bar so everything is all right. He's treating the other competitors to a drink; they, in turn, are treating him to a drink, so it all ends in one big, merry party. Everybody is loving and hugging each other. This was completely different. I enjoyed their on-the-spot criticisms of each other but also their support of each other after the show.

*A bit of sportsmanship that we certainly don't have here.*

That's right. Their criticisms about each other's dogs were true. We'd never think of going up to someone and saying their dog is cow hocked or is out at the shoulder or it's in poor coat.

*You don't even say it if you're asked!*

The Welsh are open about this; they just go up and say things like, "I've seen your dog look better."

*Doesn't this kind of thing hold true all across England?*

Yes, and they are also very complimentary if the dog is in coat. "Gee, I never saw So-and-So looking better." This open criticism and camaraderie is very beneficial to breeding dogs.

*How would you compare their shows to ours?*

They are much more relaxed, but that first show I attended was kind of uptight at the beginning. Since then, I think their shows are great. I'd love to go to any show in the British Isles; they are marvelous. They are well-run and are lots of fun. I've even shown dogs in Wales and England; I've shown a lot of Gwen Roberts' dogs and had a marvelous time doing it.

*Are their Pembroke and Cardigan Corgis comparable to ours?*

Their dogs are better than ours.



Am/Eng/Can. Ch. Robgwen Gregson

*Are they comparable in size?*

The Cardigans are much larger than what we have in the ring. The Pems are just a tad larger; some are not, and some are smaller than our top winners here. Overall, their quality is better.

*What things would you say are better?*

Their type and style and the true Corgi look, in both Pems and Cardis, is better.

*What about the heads and ear sets?*

That's what I'm talking about ... the headpieces, meaning the style and the true Corgi look. Many of them are losing that, particularly in the Pembroke Corgi, but also in the Cardigans. People are losing that wonderful expression and the bold, kind look.

*We've seen a trend towards a higher ear set, more of a Shepherd look in some of our Pembrokes. Is this also happening in Cardigans?*

The headpieces are changing somewhat. There are some lines of dogs whose headpieces are not as pleasing as in others. There are some skulls that are narrow, long and pointed, which is atypical.

*Is there a tendency in Cardigans to breed to the current winner?*

Yes and no. It depends. I've had current winners but haven't had that many stud services from them. People do tend to flock to the current winners in hopes of gaining that same success. This does not help the breed; one has to seriously study the backgrounds of the dogs, how they were produced and what their genotype and phenotype are before you can make a decision.

*When we talked about temperaments, you mentioned that you thought that the Cardigans were losing something.*

When I got my first Cardigan, I thought Cardigans did not show enough alert behavior; they all seemed to be like duds. That has gradually changed; we are getting a more alert-looking dog. We do have some temperaments that are not as nice as others; we're getting some shy dogs. One has to wonder whether these are genetically produced or environmentally produced, or a combination of all of these. My dogs here are quite friendly. I hand raise all my own animals. They can be shown by anybody anywhere.

*Were the temperaments in England a good deal different than ours?*

They were; I saw some very shy dogs with very poor temperaments, almost like cowards. I wouldn't want to include them in my breeding program. This was due to a combination of a lack of socialization and genetics. Corgis should not be that way.

*Pembroke Corgis do very well as obedience dogs. Do the Cardis do as well?*

They do very well. At one time, we had an all-Cardigan relay team that was quite a sensation here in California.

*Do you have a number of people in the breed who are in obedience?*

We have a lot of obedience people. They are also into tracking. Although Joy hasn't been trained to be a really good tracking dog, I consider her as one. There was a fellow at the bottom of this canyon here who was training his sporting dog to retrieve a dummy for hunting. This dog was so dumb; he never knew where anything was. We would sit up here on our deck and watch him. He'd blow his whistle and call this dog; you could hear him correcting him. He didn't know the right manner of training this dog, but she was listening to

it all. She walked down the canyon, which you can see is about a block long; she went down there, picked up the dummy or whatever it was, brought it back here and put it in her bed.

*How many shows a year do you attend?*

I made every one of them at one time. I've gotten out of showing for the last two years. One can become addicted to it.

*How far did you travel to show?*

I went outside of California. I liked to travel all over, but because of my traveling situation, I could jump on a plane and take my dog to Philadelphia. That was half the fun of it, to turn up at a show somewhere where they'd never believe you could have made it. Everybody would look in the catalogue and say, "Oh, her?"

*This gave you a pretty wide view of the Cardigans across the country.*

Yes. I have lots of friends all through the British Isles and all over this country, in Canada and lots in Australia. I haven't been to Australia yet, but everybody who comes from Australia stops off here (laughter).

*Did you find it difficult to win sometimes in other areas due to having a different type of Cardigan than what was being shown in that area?*

No. If you have a good, typey, sound dog, it'll win anywhere.

*Do you enjoy dogs as much as you ever did?*

I enjoy them even more now. I'm not running to shows every weekend.

*Would you do it all over again?*

Yes. I'm a very competitive person, as you can see. Our whole family has been competitive so we're all into the showing of animals.

*How have the dogs affected your lifestyle?*

As you can see, we bought a house with lots of property that is open to everything. Otherwise, I'd probably be living in a condo.

*Have the dogs had any negative effects on your life-style?*

Yes. Probably there were portions of my family who didn't appreciate all my competitive nature. Overall, they can reap the rewards of what their mother has done.

*How did your kids feel about you trotting off to dog shows?*

They sometimes didn't like it, but I felt like I was doing my own thing. They had their mother here to raise them during the week. At least the shows were here when they were smaller; when they were in high school and college, they were all within a certain radius. I didn't really go jumping off to faraway places until seven years ago. I enjoy showing all over the country.

*Have any of your kids shown an interest in showing dogs?*

I had one son who used to show some of our Pembrokes and was doing very well in obedience; he'd won a lot in Junior Handling. The thing that threw him was when he trained his dog to the nth degree in obedience; it was considered a very good heeler. He went to one show and forgot to take the dog out to relieve itself before he entered the stake. The poor dog relieved itself in the ring and that was that. He was all set to win this big trophy and that blew it for him.

*You mentioned you had other interests than the dogs.*

Right now I'm into scuba diving. I used to be on a swim team; I belong to a masters swim program. I also have yoga classes at my house now; I'm an eclectic person, you could say. I like to travel as well.

*Would you change anything?*

There are some things I'd do differently. I only wish I'd had all the knowledge I have now. We all have to learn the hard way.

*Is there anything you'd like to add?*

I'd like to stress to Corgi people to always keep an open mind, not only in raising and showing your own dogs, but to any new processes that will improve your breeding and showing dogs. In even talking to you here today, I was amazed that I learned something about showing dogs which we can incorporate.

Because there are still people who are quite rigid about using the cooled and frozen semen and about breeding their animals and looking into the backgrounds, whether or not their animals might have some defective breeding problems in their lines, such as low thyroid, whelping problems and reproduction problems, I'd also like to stress that they should look into this vast amount of literature that one can receive. Inquire of a vet about this; we have specialists in every combination in vet medicine now. Go to many seminars, read many books; look at dogs of other breeds. See what people have done with their pedigrees, not only in your own breed, but in other breeds. Find out why they came up with that top dog and how they got that particular line of dogs. Perhaps you can apply that to your breeding and showing program.

*Do you have any amusing experiences you'd like to share?*

There was an amusing happening with one of the residents of the Palisades here. At first, I didn't know who this man was; I thought he was that weirdo man (laughter). I was down at the Palisades Park; this was when the frozen semen puppies were over six months of age and had to be show trained. I had all these dogs on leads and tied to trees. While I was taking one or two out, a man came down with this nondescript outfit on, a sweatsuit, and he had iron gray hair and a beard. He had a dirty, ungroomed Old English Sheepdog. This dog came along on the pavement and one of my Corgis got loose and ran up to it barking. The dog was so shy, it collapsed to the pavement and was a perfect coward. You'd think that an Old English Sheepdog shouldn't act this way. I ran up to the man who was holding this dog and took my Corgi back. I apologized and made the comment that it was unusual for an Old English Sheepdog to act this way. He told me that we all acted that way when we're scared.

He asked if all these dogs were mine and I told him they were. The Sheepdog was still cowering on the end of the lead. I asked if he could get his dog up off the pavement. He said, "No; we're all overwhelmed and scared!" (laughter) It turned out that this man was Walter Matthau.

In the Palisades, we have the cryobank in one section; north of this is a grooming parlor. One of the people who used to come in and have his dog groomed was Walter with his Old English Sheepdog. He came in with it and it was all matted and looked awful. I asked, "Do you always keep your dog in this way?" He said, "Yes; he likes to be unkempt just like me." Anyway, he had the dog shaved and groomed; he didn't have to go around with all those mats on him any longer. If you see Walter Matthau on the street, he looks just like this dog. (laughter)

*Thank you very much.*

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