

# *Looking Back*

Mrs. Alexander Phemister  
July 1965

Anniversaries commemorate events of past years and all Basenji owners take pride in the fact that our breed has achieved the distinction of a twentieth anniversary — celebrating twenty years as a member of the Hound Group. Few people today can appreciate what an achievement this was and what a small group of Basenji enthusiasts accomplished this. In 1943, the American Kennel Club gave official recognition to the Basenji breed and the Basenji Club of America. Between 1943 and '45 the set goal was for one hundred registrations. What a small enthusiastic group we were — from Washington on the west coast to Massachusetts on the east coast — and by the spring of '45 the goal was attained. Exactly twenty years ago Mr. Rice of the American Kennel Club notified Mr. Phemister, as president of the Basenji Club of America, that the Basenji breed was officially placed in the Hound Group.

Perhaps my readers would like to know a bit about this small group which worked so unselfishly for the recognition and advancement of the Basenji breed. From the state of Washington were the H. N. Frances'; from California, Mrs. John Taaffe (well-know for sporting dogs); from the Midwest were L. C. Emerick, William Tuten (a great Bulldog man), Thomas Crawford, Mrs. Beulah Wildon, R. P. Valtier; and from Batavia, N.Y., Miss Mary McWain (now Gannon); from Wisconsin, George L. Gilkey and Dr. Eloise Gerry; from Texas, Forrest N. Hall, one of the best-known dog men



*Mrs. Phemister with Katema of Carmel*



*George Gilkey's first Basenji from Dr. Richmond : Tanya of Windrush*

in the country; the Johnny Cadwells from Ohio; the late Dr. Richmond, from Toronto, Canada; each active in breeding and exhibiting — and of course Mr. Phemister, well-known then for Bulldogs — and myself.

Because I wrote, for eight and a half years, the Basenji column in the American Kennel Gazette, from the time the breed was officially recognized, I brought out my 20-year-old Gazettes to refresh my mind on the Basenji activities of twenty years ago. I found them most interesting and felt perhaps my readers would enjoy a few 1945 Basenji highlights.

The first issue included the news that a second Basenji won his CD degree in Obedience — Phemister's Berecke — which later carried the championship prefix, also, Berecke followed Phemister's Barrie, which also won his CDX degree with tremendously high scores. The '45 March issues states that 110 Basenji had been American-Kennel-Club registered — 10 over the goal necessary for the Group classification. The April issue tells that five Basenjies were shown at Westminster by five different owners — in Miscellaneous Group, of course. Mrs. John Taaffe's imported male, Kindu, was Best Male; Mr. Phemister Kamante was second, and Mr. Gilkey's imported Zippi of the Congo, third. Miss McWain's Thruza of Windrush took Best Female and Dr. Carsten Johnson's Mowe was second. Following the judging, these exhibitors and club members — R. P. Valtier, from Detroit, Bill Tuten, from Baltimore, and I — attended a meeting of the Basenji Club of America. Since all the dogs were only one, two, or three generations from the native African Basenjies (and these from different sections of Africa) there was considerable variance in the size, but with determination to breed strictly to the Standard (identical to the English Basenji standard) there was confidence that a more uniform size would be developed.

### Exciting News

The long-awaited happy news of the breed's group placement was announced in the May issue (although we all knew of its months before). My column in the July '45 issues expressed everyone's happiness over the surrender of Germany, and I quoted from Miss Tudor-Williams' letter that "all England was full of heartfelt thanks that the war was over." She also urged that, should a change of Standard be desirable, both American and



#### BEST SHOW BASENJIS

MID-HUDSON—1B Hans Oberhammer J. Carsten W. Johnson's Mowfe's Zimba.

PASADENA—1B Mrs. Eva Hill J. Mr. & Mrs. Fred Kyle's Binji.

FONTANA—1B Leo M. Meeker J. Mr. & Mrs. Fred Kyle's Binji.

LONDON—2B Fred H. Hadley J. Mary McWain's Thurza of Windrush.

No entries Danbury, Longshore, Teaneck, Englewood, Skokie, So. Bend, Marin.

#### BASENJI IN NORTHWEST

H. N. Francis, 2315 N. W. Irving St., Portland 10, Ore., writes: "I have four different bloodlines in my k's and am able to vary the somewhat usual pattern in breeding. My females whelped 14 pups and they are today all living and in robust health. Compare this statement with some of the others who have encountered the misfortunes of dog raising."

#### FIRST GROUP WINNER

Telegram 17 July '45—"Flash! My male basenji Andy of Glen-Ho best in hound group, Vancouver, Washington, Kennel Club show July 15."—How-Gert K's 2315 N.W. Irving St., Portland 10, Oregon.

Congratulations, Mrs. Gert—your barkless hound makes show history for the breed—the first to take the group.

A Better dogs and better care for all dogs should be the constant aim of all dog fanciers.

#### THE THREE BASENJIS

##### I MOST WOULD LIKE TO OWN

1. BLACK MIST OF THE CONGO—This is a black, tan and white bitch I imported from Miss Tudor-Williams this spring. When she arrived at the age of two and a half months she was the rarest perfect young puppy I have ever seen—short in body, excellent feet and a remarkable tail for one so young. As she matures she is showing great promise and I think should give us the type of puppies we are looking for.

2. FAITHHAVEN B'CHESICA—Owned by I. C. Emerick. Without exception one of the nicest bitches I have ever seen; she is the kind of basenji we all dream of owning. Chessie has a beautiful body, short and compact, good head and tail and a lovely gait. Also the superb manner in which she is handled by Mr. Emerick's daughter Dorcas adds much to her beauty in the ring.

3. BLACK IDOL OF THE CONGO—My first black and tan import and the gayest, happiest dog on earth. His appearance is quizzical, his general conformation good and while he isn't the best basenji on earth, he is an excellent specimen, one that I am proud to own and wouldn't part with under any circumstances.

Since we were limited to three dogs, these are my choice, but had I unlimited space there are any number of others I'd be happy to add to my kennel. Without exception, every breeder I have visited has had one or more basenjies I have yearned for.—MARY McWAIN, Haku Ks, Batavia, N. Y.

English clubs collaborate. Since America had two Basenji strains they did not have in England, she hoped there would be a possibility of getting a stud from the combined blood. This was the Bois line, owned by Mr. Phemister, and the Kindu line, owned by Mrs. Taaffe.

What thrilling news in the September issue! Mr. and Mrs. H. N. Francis of Portland, Ore., announced that their Andy of Glen Ho had won the Hound Group at the Vancouver show. Therefore, for all future records Andy will be so listed — first to win the Hound Group in North America. Many present-day Basenji owners probably have never known of the very great records of the earliest Basenjis — no later than 1945 — proof that they were dogs of elegance and type, appreciated by many a judge. Many placed high in the Hound Group within the six months shown in '45. At the North Shore Kennel Club show, Myopia, Mass., our English import, Zinnia of the Congo, CD, took 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Group and the following day her son, Phemister's Simba, also took 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Bridgewater Kennel Club show. Mrs. Taaffe's Kindu placed 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Vallejo Kennel Club show at Vallejo, California.

The November issue expressed the pleasure and pride of the Basenji exhibitors and their dogs and told of the reactions of the spectators at the shows — their comments, "Oh, here are the Basenjis; aren't they lovely?"

The December issue announced the first American champion, Phemister's Melengo, a daughter of the African-born Bois and the English import Zinnia of the Congo. A little late for that issue, but to be included now, is that Andy of Glen Ho and Rwanda, both owned by the H. N. Frances', became the second and third Basenji champions, with our Phemister's Simba fourth — all within several weeks of exhibiting.


What exciting days these were for Basenji owners, and little could they visualize the growth and success of the breed during the following twenty years. We ask all of you who are so happy with your Basenjis to join us "oldsters" in celebrating our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

While some of these things are not really too important, we ARE trying to develop the nearly perfect specimen, so why not try to work for every good point possible? I feel that the traits of the parents and

**Christmas Greetings**  
from the  
**WILSON KENNELS**

LITTERS DUE  
Nov. 26—Dec. 9

HAPPY NEW YEAR



**Beulah & Robert Wilson**  
Farmer City, Ill.



grandparents of these dogs we use for breeding are the ones that we must be most careful about as I believe, definitely, that 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> generation faults and assets do, occasionally, turn up.

Mrs. Alexander Phemister

August 1965

Progress of the Basenji bred between 1945 and '50 was activated by one or two owners in different sections of the country. There were no large kennels in those years such as later developed in the '50's — but most of the early owners acquired enough Basenjis to enjoy thoroughly all activities — breeding and exhibiting in both conformation and obedience.

Many of these owners brought along enough dogs to make points at the local shows, and since these dogs were either imports or progeny of imports and of equal quality throughout the country, the outstanding winners, were, usually, deserving of their championships.

The great "name" shows brought out entries from all sections of the country, as well as imports, so the win — as, for example, at Westminster — went to an outstanding specimen. Much credit for the success of the breed during that period and for the years that followed belongs to this small, loyal group that used every avenue to bring good publicity to the breed. Also, great credit must be given to the English Basenji breeders who co-operated with the American breeders to produce finer specimens. As an example — size, then as now, was a subject of much discussion in England, and Lady Helen Nutting, then president of the Basenji Club of Great Britain, agreed (with the approval of the other officers) that no change would be made in the English Basenji Standard, regarding size, without the approval of the Basenji Club of America. Also to be given full credit not only for being Canada's first Basenji owner and breeder, but for his tremendous help during the very early years and his complete co-operation with American owners is the late Dr. A. R. B Richmond of Toronto. The offspring of his English imports were sold to Mr. Gilkey, Mr. Phemister, Miss McWain, and Dr. Eloise Gerry, in this country, establishing new bloodlines to combine with those already here.

At Stud to Approved Bitches  
**CH. HAKU KIMBU**  
(Awaiting AKC confirmation)  
Place your order now for PUPPIES due  
in November.  
**Haku Kennels, Reg.**  
MARY McWAIN, Owner BATAVIA, N. Y.  
• Basenjis •

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**Phemister's**  
**ZINGA**  
Litters due Nov. 26 —  
Dec. 9.  
MRS. BEULAH WILSON  
FARMER CITY ILLINOIS

OCT. 1946  
Basenjis  
Haku Kimbu (H-9,220)  
Phemister's Berecke (CD) (A-738,978)  
Zinnia of the Congo (CD) (A-785,511)

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FOR SALE—One male and one female pup  
five months old. Also, two year  
old female that will be ready for  
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**RHOSENJI KENNELS**  
Have been importing  
Basenjis  
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TWO OUTSTANDING  
MALES and ONE FE-  
MALE born last December  
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GEO. L. GILKEY  
MERRILL, WISCONSIN

*Dog World advertising in 1946*

Westminster was the most important show for Basenji owners during the early years and I will list the best-of-breed winners as I skip through the years. The '46 show was the first in which Basenji could compete under the Hound category, and Best-of-Breed win went to Ch. Phemister's Melengo. The Basenji breed stirred up much interest that when seven Best-of-Breed winners were selected to be televised during the evening at Madison Square Garden, Melengo was invited to join the group. The Basenji Club of America (then as now) had its annual meeting following this show and the election results were read with Mr. Phemister as president for the fourth term; Dr. Eloise Gerry still vice-president; Miss McWain, secretary; and Mr. Gilkey, treasurer. Of an international flavor, Mr. N. W. Cutler, Secretary of the British Basenji Club, on behalf of his committee invited Mr. Phemister and Mr. Gilkey to become honorary members of the English Club and needless to say, both accepted this honor.



Now booking orders for puppies sired by Pickle of the Congo. Send orders early for Show Dogs and brood stock.

MR. & MRS. EDWARD LAMBERT  
Black Oak Road,  
Washington, Indiana

*Pickle of the Congo*

Among the American exhibitors were Mrs. Taaffe of Calif.; H. N. Francis of How-Gert K'ls, Oregon; R. P. Valtier, of Detroit; George L. Gilkey's Rhosenji K'ls, Wisconsin; Forest N Hall's Hallwyre K'ls, Dallas, Tex.; Mary McWain's Haku K'ls, N.Y.; and Dr. Claude Jones.

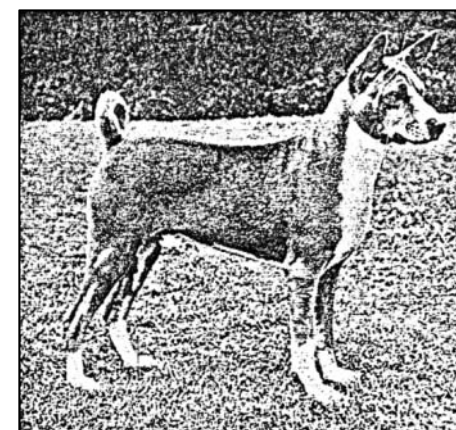
In 1947 Miss Tudor Williams of Congo fame, visited the U.S. and judged her first American show at Tonawanda, N.Y., which drew an entry of 20 Basenjis — the largest entry, to that date, in

America. Best of Breed was Edward Lambert's "Pickle of the Congo." The Westminster Best of Breed was a repeat of '46 — Ch. Phemister's Melengo. The Club offices continued to serve in the same capacities as in '46, and new names were added to the list of Basenji exhibitors: Mrs. Beulah Wilson, Farmer City, Ill.; John Rich, New York, N.Y.; Mrs. Moehlman, of Penna.; and Edward Lambert, Washington, Indiana. Interest continued to grow, and a number of national magazines came out with




PUPPIES bred for disposition from this beautiful smiling bitch now available. Litter sister to Mofwe's Zimba—1946 Westminster Winner

DR. CARSTEN W. JOHNSON  
PLEASANTVILLE NEW YORK



*Ch. Phemister's Maestro*

feature articles on the breed.

In 1948, Lady Kitty Ritson, of England, judged the Chicago International Show (she helped to formulate the English Basenji Standard) and chose for her Best-of-Breed winner Mr. Gilkey's Ch. Coco of the Congo.



*Coco of the Congo*

Within only three years the Basenji breed jumped from 110<sup>th</sup> position (in number of registrations) to 57<sup>th</sup> place. In the fall of that year, the first Basenji sanctioned show was held at Kingston, with the well-known all-rounder, the late Mrs. Drury Sheraton, judging. As proof of national support for the breed, 31 Basenjies were entered — many complimentary — but 15 actually competed — some coming from a considerable distance. Best in match was Phemister's Maestro.

The Westminster Best-of-Breed winner was Mr. Hall's Kingolo, from an entry of eight Basenjies.

In '49 the best of breed Westminster winner was again Mr. Hall's well-known Kingolo. This was the year when the English breeders passed a resolution that cream-colored Basenjies be banned from shows.

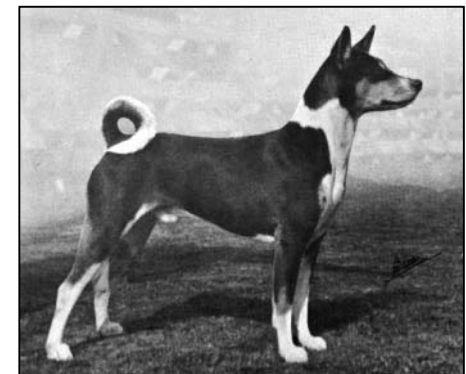
Mrs. Alexander Phemister  
September 1965

The years of 1950-'55 were fruitful for the breed. The general public was becoming acquainted with the Basenji and the breed was receiving excellent publicity; also, with the advent of the specialties shows it was a fine opportunity for many Basenji owners to meet, compete, and see what each blood line was producing.

The various blood lines were producing Basenjies much closer to the Standard than in the earlier years. Although the red-and-white colored dogs were in the majority here in America, a few breeders were introducing the tri-colors, one of the most enthusiastic "tri" breeders being Miss Mary



*Forest Hall with Ch. Kingolo Kandu*



*Eng. Ch. Black Ace of the Congo*

McWain (now Mrs. Gannon) of Batavia, N.Y. A few of us early breeders had some tris but most were not from tri parents; the tri genes being behind these dogs several generations, and in our case, we preferred to stick to the one color — the red Basenjis. However, not only Miss MCWain maintained her enthusiasm for her tri color, but Mr. and Mrs. Leo Shadic of Philmont, N.Y., imported a tri male, Eng. Ch. Vagabond of the Congo. Miss McWain imported the Eng. Ch. Black Ace of the Congo and Black Mist of the Congo in 1950, and later bred the winning Ch. Haku Black Icicle and others. In Canada Mrs. S. W. Anderson of British Columbia purchased and produced a number of tri-colored Basenjis along with the reds so many of her reds also carried the tri color genes.

The first big event in all dog circles each year is the Westminster show, and this was important to Basenjis fanciers for two reasons, not only for the show event itself but because it was the time for the annual meeting of the Basenji Club of America. Westminster, 1950, saw another Forest N. Hall Basenji go Best of Breed — this year Kingolo's Kan Kan, a son of Ch. Kingolo who had won the last two shows at Westminster. Best of opposite was Norman Slater's Parke's Own Kasandara. During the club meeting the mailed ballots of the membership of the Basenji Club of America were opened and the presidency for 1950 went to Mr. George L. Gilkey of Merrill, Wisconsin; vice presidency to L. C. Emerick of Ohio; secretary-ship to Mrs. Alex. Phemister, and the office of treasurer to Dr. Eloise Gerry of Madison, Wis. Announced at the meeting was the winner of the '49 award for the most bests of breeds for the year — Ch. Phemister's Maestro who won it two years before.

The highlight of Basenji achievement was the holding of the first Basenji specialty show (this held June 11<sup>th</sup>, 1950) in conjunction with the Tonawanda Kennel Club show at Batavia, New York. The honor of judging this first Basenji specialty show went to the greatly respected Alva Rosengerg. He chose for best of breed George Gilkey's homebred, Rhosenji Beau, which then went on to take fourth in the group. It was a field day for Mr. Gilkey as his Ch. Rhosenji's Ginger took best of opposite sex.



*Top: George Gilkey with Rhosenji's Beau and bottom photo: Rhosenji's Ginger*