

Meet Your Breeders!

Marvin Wallis ~ Zande Basenjjs

**“A funny thing happened on my way to Best In Show.....
I didn't win my class!”**

Marvin Wallis is originally from Illinois, USA. He is married to Sally Wallis and they currently live in Great Britain with their Zande Basenjjs.

Marvin is an All Breed, Group and Best In Show judge, completing multiple assignments in the UK, USA and Europe. He has judged over 1,000 Basenjjs and seen 10,000 in these 50 years.

Their website (enter “Zande Basenjjs” in a search engine or <http://www.zandebasenjis.com>) has more detail of his breeding, showing and judging experiences. Marvin says that he *must* get Sally to update his judging data!

He was president of BCOA in 1962.

1. How did you get started in Basenjjs?

I got started in Basenjjs when my company, Douglas Aircraft, sent me to Cape Canaveral, Florida to work on the Thor missile program. Rental accommodations were scarce in that area in 1956 so I bought a house in Orlando (some 60 miles distant from the Cape). I had lived in hotels or apartments (pets prohibited!) after the war. I then thought, “Why don't I get a dog” and “Why not a Basenji?” Now, no one could say nay. Now when someone said, “Your dog's barking will keep me awake,” I could reply “Not my dog, Basenjjs don't bark!” I didn't know then about the fire siren screaming in the middle of the night when bitches are in season!!

How I knew about the Basenji - other than it didn't bark - I don't know. I went into downtown Orlando and bought a copy of Dog World to look at the ads. One caught my eye from Bettina Belmont Ward's Basenjjs in Middleburg, VA in what appeared to be a Colonial mansion in the photo. Late that year I drove the 1,000 miles to see the dogs. The “Colonial mansion” turned out to be near-dolls-house in size! I missed it on the West bound entry into the village and only found it when heading back East.

No one appeared to be there as I peered through the grape stake fence to see one Boxer and a number of Basenjjs - all looking back towards the one human eye peering through the gap. Then I heard barking! Back in front of the building, I saw small faces looking at me from the second floor - dogs that looked as though they had been chasing parked cars - and catching them. Pekinese! Bettina also bred these toys.

Shortly Bettina showed up and we looked at the dogs. She had a one year old tri bitch that had recently had a litter and she was for sale. I agreed to buy her - thus I came into possession (or vice versa) of Bettina's Dark Diamond. She later became an American and Canadian Champion and my foundation bitch. I also told Bettina that I'd like a male and was told that if I could wait for 4 months or so I could have a good one (teeth would be permanent then) to which I agreed. The kennel manager at that time was Damara Bolte and the Boxer was hers.

2. Why did you start breeding? When?

My first litter was born in 1957 with six pups - three tris and three red/whites, with two dogs and a bitch in each color. These were by CH Miacor's Zippor x Bettina's Dark Diamond, otherwise known as

Dinah. My intention at the time was to breed the best Basenjjs in the country! It's easy to dream, isn't it?

3. What persons influenced you most strongly?

The persons who have influenced me most strongly were my fellow exhibitors! We can, if we will, learn much from one another.

4. What have you seen improve in Basenjjs over the years.

Over the years I have seen the breed increase in elegance, better feet and temperament.

5. What do you think today's Basenji breeders need to pay special attention to?

Today's breeders need to pay greater attention to the dog's gait. The long swinging stride with good drive from the rear is often missing. Front and rear movement needs attention right now.

6. What advice do you have to a new breeder getting started?

Don't rush into things! Study the standard and every example of the breed you can. Ask questions (but beware, some breeders may not tell you where the dog is lacking). Then, choose your breeder and buy the best animal you can afford. Check carefully into the background of prospective mates for your dog/bitch - health problems in the animal or its ancestors, faults, good points, temperament and see if you can see some of their ancestors and offspring. Then ask yourself, “Will it improve what I have?”

7. What dogs you've seen or owned that stand out as outstanding examples of the breed and why?

Of the dogs I've owned there has been Am & Can CH Chafya of the Zande, Am & Can CH Feliji of the Zande, Mbarapi Zande (from the first UK litter here) and Zande Chafya (yep, we're on the second ▶

round of the alphabet). The first two were top Basenjis in Canada in the 60's. Call names in order are: Tiger, Wrinkles, Deedles and Firbi (first born in his litter). Deedles has sired more UK Champions than many a Champion here. Another was CH Feruzi of the Zande, top Basenji in the USA in 1964 while Wrinkles was doing the same thing in Canada. A third dog from this six DOG litter was CH Fahali of the Zande, BW at Westminster KC. Zande Weledi JW, (Curly), is the only Basenji to have sired a Crufts Best in Show winner (2001) and the entry was over 24,000 dogs. Recently, at the BCOA Specialty 2004 the little tri bitch I picked as WB and BW, Klassic Hot Ticket to Berimo, was outstanding in coat and movement at that time. We must remember that dogs can/may improve or decline with passing time.

8. What do you feel are your most significant achievements with the breed?

Probably my most significant achievements include the dogs I've bred in the USA and those Sally and I have bred here. My being fortunate enough to have judged Basenji specialties in the USA, UK (2), Norway (2), Germany (1), plus Dortmund (2) including the Europa Show, as well as a large number of other breeds here in the UK and all six varieties of Dachshunds, Rhodesian Ridgebacks, Basenjis and one other breed (sorry, senior moment of the exact breed) in the Republic of Ireland. All of the last four were with Green Star - this is equivalent to WD and WB - save for the fact that here there is no special class for Champions - they go into Open.

9. Anything else you would like to say?

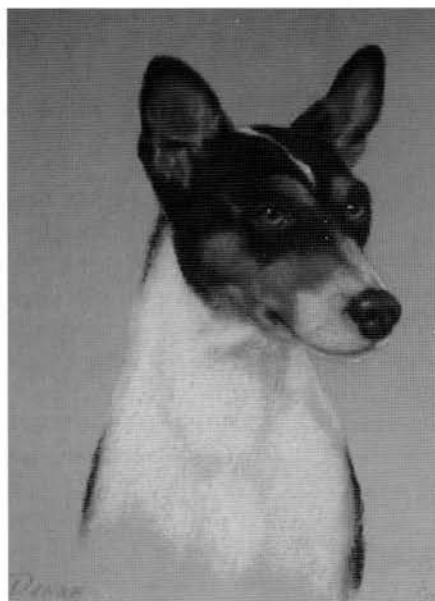
As an odd item, when I was a small boy in Elgin, IL, my parents said I was to go to Cornell University. Well, I did graduate from UCLA in 1955 as a rather older student having served in WWII and the Korean "police action". In 1957 I finally reached Cornell University - especially, the men's gym. It was the first dog show I ever competed in and I recall I was benched next to the ladies from Marlise Kennels. So, your parent's wishes may come true after all!

10. Your chosen Kennel Name is ZANDE. How did you choose this name? Why? Does it have a meaning?

I was Basenjis of the Zande in the US which was chosen simply because it was a region of the Congo. In the UK we are simply Zande Basenjis as we have a registered affix which had to be earned at that time. The first litter here was the M litter (I'd forgotten that I had gone farther along in the alphabet than that in the US). That litter here was registered (tried to, anyway) only to be informed by The Kennel Club that they required two names. So they became M—1, M—2, and so on to M—5, all in Swahili language. When Mbarapi Zande won his first Reserve Challenge Certificate as a puppy, that earned us the right to a registered affix in the UK - Zande.

We have a peculiar method of "call" naming our dogs. Examples - Litter of 4 - Hubble, Bubble, Toil, and Trouble (tri we kept and the mother of our current kept puppy. Then a litter of 3 boys - Curly, Larry and Moe (The Three Stooges)

11. Please include a few pictures of yourself and dogs.



Am Can CH
Bettina's Dark Diamond

Foundation Bitch



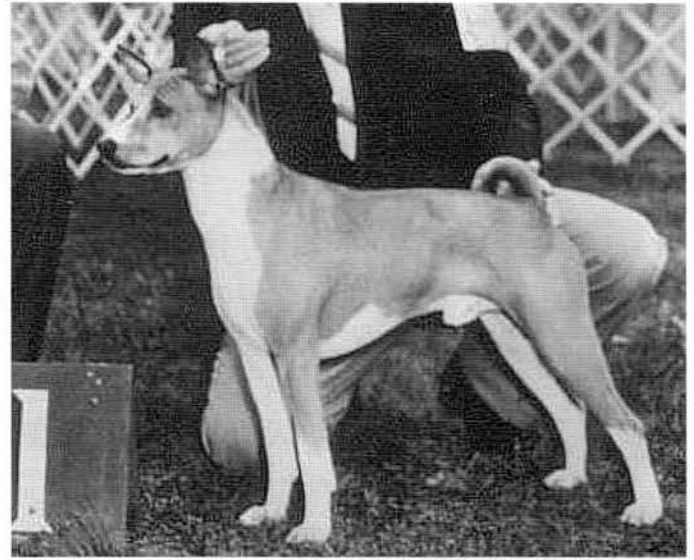
AM CAN CH Chafya Of The Zande



AM CAN CH
Feliji Of The Zande



AM CAN CH Fahali Of The Zande



AM CH Feruzi Of The Zande



Mbarapi Zande - Deedles at 15 + years old



Zande Weledi JW - aka Curly
