



# MEMBER PROFILE ~

by Mark & Laurie Ulrich

You know you've reached that "certain" age when you are asked to reflect on your time with a breed. So, here I am, writing a brief history of my almost 35 years of involvement and association with the Irish Terrier and the ITCC.

It all began in February of 1990 at the International Kennel Club Show in Chicago. I attended that show with two friends, merely as spectators, in search of a dog and a breeder that I could bring into my life. This is how things were done before Al Gore's invention of the internet. You spoke with people (oh, how I miss benched shows; the best way to connect with others and meet dogs!). As my friends and I entered the show, the first breed we saw in the ring was the Irish Terrier. My friends exchanged glances and decided that the dog looked like me; therefore, I should "get one."

That was it; that was the entirety of my research: I was getting an Irish Terrier.

We then continued onto the bench row for Irish Terriers. It was here that I met breeders and past ITCC members Woody and Becky Scherer. One thing led to another, and in June of 1990, I welcomed Kridan's Sir Norton of Orange (Norton) into my life. Norton and I took up residence in a coach house in East Wicker Park, amidst the gang territory of the Insane Unknowns. As a puppy, Norton quickly became a local favorite among the IUKs. We were never bothered and were often watched over during our late evening walks around the block.

But Norton, this David Niven in a sweater/street-savvy dog, had other plans. With the gentle push and direction from Becky Scherer, Norton and I found our way into the world of conformation dog shows.

(Side Note: It was also because of Becky and Woody that I became a member of the ITCC in 1990 and served as club president for three years and treasurer for four.)

It's easy to catch the Dog Show Bug when your first show ever is a 4-point major. I quickly learned that this is not the norm; you don't win every time, even though we all wish we could.

These early shows taught me that I was not cut out for the owner-handler world. Visually, I saw myself more as a Picasso of dog showing—all the body parts were there, just not in the correct places. I decided fairly early on to excuse myself from the show ring and instead become a professional client.

Peter Atkinson and Liselotte Johansson were my first handlers. It was through Liselotte that I was introduced to Gertrud and Thomas Hagstrom. Shortly after, my second Irish, Merrymac X-Tra Special Delivery (Lucy), arrived from Sweden.

While I never finished Lucy, she did become the foundation bitch of my breeding program under the kennel name Dearg Madra.

Around this same time, my Irish and I moved from gang territory to the land of Nobel laureates and world-famous economists in Hyde Park on Chicago's South Side. Here, in a third-story walk-up with no fenced yard, I started my breeding program, eventually living with eight dogs (six Irish, one Scotty, and one Portuguese Water Dog). Known in the neighborhood as the Celtic Clan, I often walked all eight dogs at once (they were all fed loose in the kitchen). I will admit, these dogs were the most well-adjusted I have ever owned, simply because of the social experiences and noises they encountered while living in the city. My personal belief is that you don't need a fenced yard to raise and live with Irish Terriers; you need to go outside with them, take them on walks in all kinds of weather, and introduce them to every possible experience. It is by doing this that you truly see the Irish shine.

The years in Hyde Park also introduced me to my future wife, Laurie, and my second professional handler, Connie Clark. Connie finished a number of my Irish, including my first-bred champion, Ch. Dearg Madra's Lady Is A Tramp (Fiona), and the first group-winning dog I ever owned, Ch. Merrymac Don't Blame Me (Carl).



Ch. Dearg Madra's Something To Talk About (Vivian)

continued next page.....



# MEMBER PROFILE ~ CONTINUTED

by Mark & Laurie Ulrich

Laurie and I eventually moved to Southwest Michigan, where we continued our canine pursuits with Irish, Smooth Fox Terriers, and Portuguese Water Dogs. Our professional client journey continued in Michigan with Allison Sunderman, who spent the next 22 years handling and showing our terriers.

Some of our accomplished Irish include:

- Ch. Dearg Madra's Eli Eli Oh — Westminster Kennel Club Breed winner in 2004, sire of 14 AKC champions, 5 champions in Sweden, 4 champions in Finland, 1 Russian champion, 3 International Champions, and 1 World Winner.
- Ch. Dearg Madra's Something To Talk About
- Ch. Dearg Madra's Foolish Pleasure
- Ch. Dearg Madra's Bacchanal
- Ch. Kalaney's Wyndsong
- Ch. Merrymac Don't Blame Me
- Ch. Merrymac Going To The Top



Ch. Dearg Madra's Eli Eli Oh (Eli)  
photo courtesy Gertrud and Thomas Hagström

While Irish Terriers no longer play a role in our home or dog show experiences, Laurie and I have our connections to the breed to thank for our other successes in the conformation world.

It is because of the Irish (with Connie Clark as our handler) that we were able to become successfully involved with Smooth Fox Terriers.

It is because of the Irish (through Gertrud and Thomas Hagstrom) that we were introduced to the Russell Terrier breed and had the opportunity to campaign Ch. Goldsand's Columbus—the winningest Russell Terrier in breed history, with 34 Best in Shows and 141 Group 1s, all achieved within just 22 months of showing.

It was through our affiliation with Irish Terriers (with Peter Atkinson as our handler) that we had the privilege of owning and campaigning the Westminster Kennel Club Best in Show winner, CJ (GCHP VJK-MYST Garbonita's California Journey).

In fact, it is because of the Irish Terriers that the dogs we have bred and/or owned have won numerous regional and national specialties, placed in many groups, and achieved over 100 Best in Shows in both the US and Canada. We have been truly blessed because of our relationships with Irish Terriers.

Now, Laurie, our son Athey, and I enjoy our days on our farm in Southwest Michigan, where my time is spent mucking stalls, scooping runs, mowing, hunting turkey and deer, and working with bird dogs.



Athey, Laurie and Mark Ulrich