

Mary Best

Being the Senior member of The Irish Terrier Club of Chicago, it's difficult to decide where to start an introduction to me. There was the child who was taken to dog shows as soon as able to walk; the young mother with the baby and her first litter of puppies, followed by more children (all sons) and more litters. Funny...I've done the same with my children and grandchildren.

My Father, John Best, owned and showed Irish Terriers in the 1920s while in law school ; his parents also had two females. He joined both ITCA and ITCC in 1935. He nurtured my love of dogs, getting my first show dog, Ch. Ozaukee's Color Sergeant (a Beagle). As luck would have it, I exhibited Sarge in the Wisconsin Kennel Club show in January of 1952 at the tender age of 11 and he won the Hound group. I was hooked but good!



In 1958, Mike Gately (Blazer's) sold my dad his foundation bitch Ginger. I was given Fuzzy, (Blackacre Blarney,) soon followed by Brig (Ch. Blackacre Brigadier) and, as I produced four sons, John, Joe, Scott and Jeff Newhauser, Fuzzy produced well-planned litters. I became a member of both ITCA and ITCC in 1962. We lived in the country where I learned to garden, raise livestock and be fairly self-sufficient as my dogs aged out. After a divorce, I would up on a dairy farm for the 1980's, with no Irish Terriers or house pets permitted. When I began working for the local veterinarian, I knew I had found my vocation.

Fast forward to 1990, single again, and to the last of my dad's Blackacre line, BB (Ch. Blackacre Busybody.) She was my Dad's legacy. As it turned out, her litter so carefully begun under Marge Andre's careful supervision, didn't survive the necessary caesarian birth. Suzanne Griffiths came into my life and with her careful supervision and her veterinarian husband's help, she was able to coax a litter from the last viable Blackacre bitch Kate (Ch. Blackacre Brownbriar) in 1992. She GAVE me Bridie (Ch. Blackacre Born Again,) the new foundation bitch. The gift of a lifetime! I could now try to begin my continuation of the Blackacre line by means of Artificial Insemination. Sue became my dearest friend and mentor.

I've spent the time since then showing the dogs. I chose to keep and making new friends by way of events and puppy clients. Lots of great Irish Terriers.; maybe not all show champions, but just as important to their families as any. Getting to know the exhibitors over the years and the great breeders who have become friends too has been wonderful. Like it or not, we are all related by dog!

I've been privileged to hold various offices in both branches of the Clubs. That has also been an honor.

Each of my three granddaughters, Lindsey, Jennee and Jodi Newhauser, has been in the show ring with the Irish and the eldest, Lindsey, has Buzz's (GCH Blackacre Badgerer) granddaughter, with hopes of continuing the dream. Her dad, John Best Newhauser is the

current President of the Irish Terrier Club of Chicago and has shown the little red dogs since a youngster.

I recently discovered in a memoir written by my great-grandfather John Stevens that he was also an Irish Terrier owner in the late 1800's. I think that makes us unique in having 6 generations of Irish Terrier owners.

Families, Irish Terriers and friends. All is good!