

A little notebook was tucked amongst some old Capitol Bulldog Club files. This history was found within.....Hope you'll enjoy!

Capitol Bulldog Club
Submitted by Michelle Pries (date unknown)

At a time in the 1960s three different Bulldog clubs operated in and around the Washington Metropolitan area. No one I talked to even remembers enough to name them. Dr. Landsman, Chester Johns, Bill Tooten and Earl Johnston were involved then and at least one of the clubs was called Washington Bulldog Club. Notwithstanding activities of which certainly the clubs could each boast, it came to the attention of the AKC that one among them was "elitist". Specifically, that it was "a closed society of old timers" whose rank's newcomers could not hope to penetrate.

This was settled by the AKC who thereupon mandated that the three clubs become one and become known as Capitol Bulldog Club upon consolidation. It was further settled that no one from the Boards of the "feeder" clubs could serve as either an Officer or Director of the new club for a period of three years. Capitol Bulldog Club incorporated in the District of Columbia in 1962.

1967-1975: I interviewed John Spencer and O'Neill and Beverly Wagner. Capitol Bulldog Club Specialties were held as the supported entry in conjunction with Rock Creek Kennel Club at the National Guard Armory. (John Spencer mentions that he showed there as a first-time novice to a benched show with no crate, no chain for the bench, and long whiskers on his bitch. Ernie Hubbard had to tell him what to do. Bob Reed was then President.

Club picnics were hosted at the home of Mike and Myra Meyers of the Middletown Valley in Frederick County, MD.

I asked a "then and now" question of the interview subjects and the big difference, viewed in harmony, is how quickly a dog can be finished now, as compared to then. Due, in no small measure to the every-weekend venues now and the ability to transport dogs to them in air conditioned cars. Before air conditioning, you were drastically limited in what shows you could safely reach transporting Bulldogs.

1975-1985: I interviewed Dick Blanchard and Pat Hartle. Pat Hartle described himself as a 2-term president and "good will ambassador" (tongue in cheek). Specialty shows were held as the supported entry in conjunction with Catonsville Kennel Club. Matches were held at Bullis School. Hartle says he was the protégé of Bill Tooten (Broxton Kennels) and Bob Eisenberger. Eisenberger was hard-core and was still at the shows even after he lost the ends of his feet to uncontrolled diabetes. Both men are gone now, he assumes.

I asked a "then and now" question and the biggest apparent difference seemed to be diminished camaraderie between Bulldoggers of today. Part of the reason could be geographic, since when exhibitors widen the region where they exhibit, the relationships are more diffuse the farther afield one travels from home. Another reason could be economic. For instance, Dick Blanchard recalls being part of a group and their spouses who traveled together in England in celebration of the 100 year anniversary of the

Bulldog Club of England. A nine day stay and round trip airfare cost \$425.00 per person. This was a great bonding experience but would be cost prohibitive now.

1985-1995: My (*Michelle Pries*) association with the Capitol Bulldog Club –

We began to meet in the basement at the home of John and Mickey Spencer in Burtonsville. O’Neill Wagner was President. Our specialties were held in conjunction with Baltimore County Kennel Club at the Cow Palace in Timonium. Later the club meetings were at the Woodlawn Center in Baltimore County and Nancy Schultz was president, followed by Jim Hertok, followed by Harry Cook. Under Harry Cook, club meetings moved to Morrison’s Restaurant in Annapolis. Matches were held at Quiet Waters Park in Annapolis. Bob Rodenski put up Harry Cook to be National Show Chairman and Capitol Bulldog Club hosted the BCA National in 1995 at the McLean Hilton in Tyson’s Corner, VA. This was aptly described “**A Capitol Affair**” and came to be remembered as what we worked hardest and most cohesively at, and would long be most proud of. Judge Cody Sickle awarded National’s Winner to **Ch. Millcoat’s Titus** owned by Dwayne and Caroline Miller and Best Puppy was a handsome and photogenic 15 month old named **Little Pond’s Chief**, owned by Dan and Liz Karshner.

Bob Rodenski was the hardest working man in show business. President of BCA in tux and cummerbund one minute.... and in Marine fatigues shoveling x-pens the next minute.

Bill Smith followed Harry Cook as president.

Strong enough to really draw an entry to our shows, Capitol Bulldog Club took to hosting independent specialty shows. The venue for these was first the Waldorf Holiday Inn, and meetings moved to the Olive Garden Restaurant in Waldorf. We even took the show to Frederick, MD for one year. We picked up Pete Wysocki (former Washington Redskin and CBC member) as “Master of Ceremony” at our shows and Pete remained our announcer for years until the time of his death.

Dennis Quinn followed Bill Smith as president. Our independent specialty grew to be the Mid-Atlantic Spring Cluster in Fredericksburg, VA. Meetings moved to Sherwood Forest Library in Alexandria, VA. When Dennis Quinn left, Bill’s wife Marcia Thompson, became president and moved the meetings to Arlington Animal Welfare League. The Capitol Bulldog Club Specialties with Division VII combined, moved to the Charles County Fairgrounds in LaPlata, MD. Another tradition started by Bill and Marcia was the annual Christmas gathering for dinner and gift exchange at the Army-Navy Country Club.

I have to stop here to turn it over to the people who have been the impetus and the thrust behind 1995-2005, Marcia Thompson and Bill Smith. “Then and Now....”

For my part, continuity is a by-product of respect for the Veterans, both Bulldogs and Bulldoggers, alike. John Spencer and Dick Blanchard have kept me going. It is these relationships with an “old-timer” (man or beast) that that can chance a fancy for dogs into a 20 year passion and devotion. It’s that thoughtful word of encouragement.

~Michelle Pries

1996---see TCBC history on our website

Plateaus and National Recognition

Several BCA National Winners emerged from within the ranks of Capitol Bulldog Club:

In 1986, the bitch won. **Ch. Bowag's Polar**, owned by Beverly and O'Neill Wagner. Polar was by Ch. Bowag's Arthur DeDay, out of Ch. Bowag's Bebe Ruby Day and handled by Agent Nancy Schultz.

In 1990, club member Nancy Schultz again handled the National Winner, **Ch. Brumar's Call Me Higgins**. Higgins was by Ch. Bowag's Rocky Beauty, out of Brumar's Our Gal Sow. Higgins was lovingly owned by club members Bob and Sigrid Treat.

In 1990, the Wagners and Bowag Kennels reached the BCA's 50th plateau level as breeders of 50 or more champions of record!

Capitol Bulldog Club has an Honorary Lifetime Member in John W. Spencer who has been there from the beginning.

(Every effort was made to type this recollection as it was written by Michelle Pries – date known).



1986 – Judge Jeanne Zalud, Birdie Newbill and Nancy Schultz with Polar. Photo courtesy of Jeanne Zalud.