

Profile

Tony & Ger Redmond (ATHCARNE IRISH WOLFHOUNDS)

It was in January 1973 that Coill Tomair Maeve joined the Redmond household. This was to become the foundation bitch of the Athcarne Kennel but back in 1973 Tony & Ger had no thoughts of showing or breeding.

Maeve immediately instilled a love of the breed in the Redmonds; she was a tremendous character with a lovely friendly temperament. Besides having a great personality, she was a well balanced bitch with free effortless movement — too effortless, the family thought, when she gave them the fright of their lives by scaling over a six foot wall. Maeve became the family's introduction to showing and later to breeding. She proved her quality as a brood bitch by producing South African Ch. Athcarne Daragh when bred with Ch. Ballykelly Reamonn. Later when bred with Ch. Boroughbury Justice she produced American Champions Dulta and Cara. Athcarne Shiofra was the puppy they kept from this breeding. She went on to become an Irish champion and successfully gave rise to the present generation Athcarnes.



*Coill Tomair Maeve, Bernard of Cordoogan,
Ch. Athcarne Shiofra.*

Tony & Ger's first male was Bernard of Cordoogan who carried Ballykelly, Ballytobin & Nendrum lines, as did Maeve. To use Tony's own words "Bernard was big of body and big of heart" — he weighed 150 pounds. A successful stud dog, Bernard sired Finnish Ch. Ballykelly Rogan, top winning Irish Wolfhound in Finland for two consecutive years. His wins included Best in Show at the Swedish Specialty.

Sadly, Tony & Ger lost Maeve and Bernard as well as their little crossbred gundog "Goldie" all in the same year. With the death of Maeve, her daughter, now Ch. Athcarne Shiofra, gently eased herself into that special place in the heart of the family. Shiofra was a bitch that always caught the eye of the judges, especially because of the quality of her movement which allied to her good type produced a winning combination. Mr. R. M. James, judge at the 1975 Irish Specialty wrote "moves beautifully, she skims over the ground without effort with great long reaching action". Shiofra possessed a lovely head with a beautiful eye and a quality that sets the Athcarnes apart, an extremely harsh, thick coat of nice length. Shiofra won the movement trophy at the Club show of the Irish Wolfhound Club of Ireland on three separate occasions, 1975, 1976 and 1978.

Shiofra was an exceptionally good mother, always giving her pups the best care and nourishment. She had three litters. First in 1977 she was bred with Gwernyfed Lleigus of Carrokeel, producing among others Finnish Ch. Athcarne Bran who was top winning Wolfhound in Finland for four consecutive years. Later Tony & Ger introduced new blood into the country by bringing Shiofra to Britain for breeding. Their choice was the then young Eng. Ch. Outhwaite Am Cu who was an impressive performer in lure coursing contests as well as in the show ring. Shiofra was bred to Am Cu twice. From the first litter, Tony & Ger kept Athcarne Fintan (Finbar), the litter also produced Canadian Ch. Athcarne Fran and Irish Ch. Coolbreagh Athcarne Clodagh.



Athcarne Fintan

Athcarne Fintan had many good points in his favour, especially his ability to stride out as he went around the ring. He was poetry in motion, as he used his shoulders, stifles and hocks to maximum effect, flexing and extending them to produce an effortless but forceful action. If he had been campaigned more extensively he would certainly have finished his championship. Like his sire, Fintan excelled as a lure courser, winning our Club's 1983 lure coursing event and was second the following year. Even though he was not used extensively as a stud dog, his progeny have left their mark on the breed in Ireland.

Fintan's litter sister, Clodagh had some spectacular wins on her way to championship, e.g. Green Star St. Patrick's Day 1980 and Best of Breed the following year. Again in 1981 she took Best of Breed at Swords, our second biggest all-breed show. Clodagh, like the rest of the Athcarnes is always game for the chase. She recently amused everyone at a small informal gathering of hounds by continually scanning the field looking for the non-existent lure.



Ch. Coolbreagh Athcarne Clodagh



Carrokeel Moon Beam of Nendrum

In the late 1970s, Tony & Ger were pleased to accept Carrokeel Moonbeam of Nendrum (Sugru) from Betty Murphy. Sugru (meaning playful), a daughter of Eng. Ch. Eaglescrag Toby and the beautiful Carrokeel Karen, was a bitch with plenty of type and quality but lacked a little in height. Her quality did not always catch the eye of the all-round judges but her beautiful head and curved outline were always noticed by breed specialists. She won Best of Breed at Bray under Jim Behan and Best of Breed again at Combined Canine under Tony Doyle. Sugru was bred to Athcarne Fintan and produced among others, Athcarne Cian, Athcarne Grainne Dawson, and Athcarne Eimer who is now with Betty Murphy. Cian, owned by Catherine Abbott, though shown little, has made a good impression especially when he won Best of Breed at the 1983 Club Show.



Athcarne Neesha

Ger & Tony kept Athcarne Neesha from Ch. Athcarne Shiofra's second litter by Eng. Ch. Am Cu. Neesha is a tall bitch possessed of a lot of quality, she was Green Star winner at the 1983 St. Patrick's Day show. In 1983 Neesha was bred to Carrokeel Kalypso. Athcarne Eadoin (Ada) was kept from this litter. Two of Ada's litter sisters went to Dr. Paul Palmer, a Wolfhound Specialist judge in the U.S.A. One of these young bitches now with Mr. & Mrs. Dave Sherwood, won the Open Class at the West Coast Specialty, 1985 and at the Santa Barbara Show she won Open bitch, Winners Pitch and Best of Opposite Sex. Dr. Palmer wrote to Tony & Ger "these two sisters should inject some genes for steel wire coats, head, small ears and great shoulders into the American gene pool".



Athcarne Banshee

Tony & Ger have two young bitches at present which they hope will carry on the fine record of their predecessors, as well as Ada they have Knocknarea Blathnid — daughter of Athcarne Oisín (Oisín is litter brother to Ada) and a new puppy has just joined the Athcarne family of hounds — Coolbreagh Crana, a daughter (black) of Ch. Coolbreagh Athcarne Clodagh and Killykeen Mars.

Tony & Ger and their three children, Cianán, Colm & Gráinne live in Athcarne Cottage which was originally built as the herd's residence for Athcarne castle. The latter, alas, is now just a ruin. Although, commitments of a young active family do not allow them to attend many shows in the year, Tony is an active committee member of the I.W.C. of Ireland with special responsibility for the rescue section. Tony was show secretary and show manager for a number of years.



Tony & Ger with all the family

The success of the Athcarnes is evidenced by the widespread use of the line by other Irish breeders.

Compiled by Billy Clarke