



Brittany Field Trial Hall of Fame

New Space at the Bird Dog Museum Welcomes 2012 Inductees

By Ken Blackman



Chairman Rick Smith presided over the inductions

The American field trial community gathers each February in Grand Junction to celebrate its heritage and honor the reasons we make that trek to the hallowed halls of the Bird Dog Foundation's Museum - dogs and people. Springers, Retrievers, Brittany's, GSPs, Pointers, Setters along with owners, trainers and handlers are enshrined there. But behind all the paintings and memorabilia are stories of our sport's heritage back to the late 19th century. Some like Elhew Hannabell are recently departed. Some like Scipio's Mister Chips are long gone and

people for raising some money (be it a great amount), is to minimize the greatest gift that these and other people have given. Time is a priceless commodity and these stalwarts of our community deserve and will be given a place in history yet to be written.

Friday evening, our Board of Directors meeting was held Collierville where a veritable crowd of Brittany folks gathered to listen to Chairman Rick Smith offer a heartfelt "Thank You" to the people who worked to secure the initial funding for our share of the funds to begin construction. Along with the work of David and Hayley Killam (GSP), Rick announced, with comments from Jim Chase, that we had secured enough funding to be allocated (along with an equal amount by the GSP folks) an equal share of floor and wall space, an amount of over 30% of the total dollars collected. We will now have enough room to move all the Brittany paintings, photos and memorabilia from the Assembly Hall and have more space for future inductions. But our work isn't completed according to Jim and Rick. We still have to raise funds for the endowment fund to sustain operations. With that being said, several members met a challenge and we were able to raise over \$5000 that evening alone. AND, if that wasn't enough, we

raised funds to secure a Patron Plaque next year for our dear, departed friend, Don Young.....he certainly would have been proud!

Saturday morning, we all traveled to Grand Junction for the ceremonies. Upon arrival at the museum, everyone is presented with a beautiful brochure that contains photos and biographies of each inductee for all the breeds. We thank Sportdog and Purina for these informative keepsakes of this special day. After the morning inductions, a sumptuous luncheon was provided courtesy of Purina, a continuing sponsor of field and bird dog events.

After lunch, the ribbon cutting was announced for the new 6,000 sq. ft. Sporting Dog Wing so we all crowded into the new area and



Tom Fife (in black hat) with wife, Claudia (holding photo); others (l-r): Cathy Kliewer, Herb Rea, Tom Kliewer (rear), Ruth Parman, Kirsten Teague, Roger Fife, Larry Hagedorn, and Bernie Mathtys of the American Field magazine.

almost forgotten. But we revel in the fact that our older members have the keen memory to recall great performances and valiant efforts during competition to bring the best of our sport to life each day on the wall of the Hall.

This year's event had an even greater significance. After nearly a decade of Blue Sky talk and recent hard work and perseverance, the newly completed Sporting Dog Wing at Grand Junction was dedicated and opened for an expanded presence of Continental Breed history and honor. For our heritage, Jim and Janet Chase, Delmar and Rick Smith, David and Joyce Lincoln, Bill and Rheta Cartmell, and others too numerous to name here, a vision of an area that had enough room and wall space to permanently present and offer an uncluttered view of Brittany Field Trial History became a reality. To just honor these



Dr. Ron Harling, Sr., inductee (holding scroll), son Ron Harling, Jr. (holding photo); others (l-r): daughter Carol Gillis; wife Sue Harling; (back) son Stephen Harling; and at right Mrs. Ron Harling, Jr. (Maggie).



Scipio's Mister Chips scroll, accepted by Linda Langford & Margaret Horstmeyer

strained to see what was going on. Our local Tennessee Assembly member Barrett Rich and TN State Senator Deloris Gresham read a proclamation honoring the Bird Dog Foundation on the opening of the new wing. In addition, Tennessee named the section of TN Rt. 18 from TN Rt. 57 north to the entrance to Ames Plantation the "National Bird Dog Highway". With the 113th running of the National Bird Dog Championship, the 8th annual Hall of Fame Springer Spaniel Championship in nearby LaGrange and this year's 19th annual AKC Gun Dog Championship at Ames Plantation, this proclamation has given the Grand Junction area a significantly higher profile in the nationwide Field Trial community. Dale Bush, the outgoing President of the BDF, spoke briefly on his pride in the group that raised funds, including the Chase's and the Killam's. David Smith next credited and thanked Dale for his leadership and work to move the BDF into the new space but also his direction in expanding the BDF into more outreach and educational areas that will most certainly mean more young people will be exposed to our heritage. One of the drivers in this funding effort was, as Dale noted, Jim and Janet Chase.

After the ribbon cutting, we all adjourned to the Assembly Hall and commenced inductions of our Brittany honorees. Our friend David Fletcher announced the recipients of Patron Plaques over the preceding year. Jim Chase accepted a Founders Plaque for our dear friends Lloyd and Ella Conable after which Lisa and Paul Pollock accepted their Founders Plaque. Tom Burroughs accepted the Patron Memorial for Rob Richter and was successful in bringing out the emotions that honored Rob and his involvement in our

sport. Bernie Crane was also very eloquent in accepting his Patron honor. One of the reasons that we (the Brittany FT Community) were able to be a significant member of the Sporting Dog Wing was the Plaque Program. David Fletcher noted, with some pride, that in the history of the program there were donations to the endowment in excess of \$300,000 across all the sporting breeds. With the addition



Founder's Perpetual Membership Plaque accepted by Jim Chase; given posthumously to Lloyd and Ella Conable

to the Foundation of other sporting breeds, this program will yield significant funds in the future.

Rick Smith took over the program and called upon Larry Hagedorn to present Tom Fife as a member of our Hall of Fame. The Big Guy was eloquent and emotional as he only touched upon Mr. Fife's impact on Brittany Field Trials in the Midwest. It was obvious that Larry learned much from his association with the Fife family. Tom introduced his family members who came to Grand Junction and related a small bit of his history in our sport and what it has meant to him and his family. Mr. Fife exemplifies a true gentleman that any of us would do well to emulate.

Ron Harling, Jr. was asked to introduce his father, Dr. Ron Harling, Sr. as the other person to be inducted. It was clear in his brief remarks that his Dad was the father all of us would have been proud to have and a friend that we all wished we could depend upon. When Doc, Sr. spoke he recognized the Holman family as one of the reasons that field trialing was a sport that their whole family enjoyed and expected to continue for his extended family.

Margaret Horstmeyer traveled from California to join with Linda Langford to accept the Honor Roll for Scipio's Mister Chips. Margaret spoke of the efforts of Dale Shores in this dog's field career. We all shared a moment of sadness that Dale wasn't able to be there to accept the paper. This dog's career can be seen by him as a positive impact on our breed.

When the ceremonies were concluded, we all adjourned to the Reception Hall to continue visiting and congratulating new inductees. It was gratifying to see all the people who traveled to Grand Junction to participate in the event. Without a doubt, all of us can thank Mary Crawford for the work she does during the year to keep this event one of the keystones on the Brittany calendar. Mary goes way beyond our expectations to ensure that the committee's activities are communicated to the members and the ABC clubs around the country. A personal "Thanks" and a big hug for you from me.



Life Patron Membership Plaque accepted by Bernie Crain



Patron Memorial Plaque accepted by Tom Burroughs; given posthumously to Rob Richter