

INTERNATIONAL SILKEN WINDHOUND SOCIETY



ABOUT THE BREED FOUNDER AND THE ISWS

Out of the childhood aspiration of a 5 year old who wanted to become a veterinarian after her parents purchased their first Borzoi in 1953, Francie Stull took the first steps on a journey that would culminate in the remarkable challenge to develop a new breed, the Silken Windhound. After spending her senior year in high school as a foreign exchange student in Italy, Francie came home to pursue her study of animals. Her passionate love for and admiration of horses and dogs became the primary focus of her studies.

In 1969, Francie and her husband Chuck purchased their first Borzoi, which was the beginning of the Kristull Borzoi Kennel. Her sister, Jackie, also captivated by the beautiful Borzoi, shipped Francie three lovely Borzois from Holland, Germany, and France to add to the two-finished American Champions Francie had purchased earlier. For the next twenty-five years, Kristull Kennel produced some of the finest Borzois in the United States. Two hundred and nine (209) of the Kristull dogs who were all owner and/or breeder handled garnered championships. Since the emphasis was on breeding dogs with all the characteristic elements that would encourage their owners to show them, Francie did not keep a record of the dogs that won their championships with professional handlers. Between 1970 and 1995, Francie produced 40+ litters of Borzoi and Scottish Deerhounds and participated in dog shows from Canada to Peru.

To appease her interest in and fascination for the breeding aspects of horses and dogs, Francie earned her degree in Genetics in 1976 from the University of Houston, with a minor in Anatomy and Physiology. Francie's desire was to be a Genetic Counselor, but there was no career option of this kind at that time and consequently she took a very different direction to satisfy her soul's passion and vocation.



The Gazehound magazine, first published in 1970, was "the bible" for sighthound enthusiasts and after its closing in 1980 a vacuum existed for those aficionados dedicated to the sighthound breeds. In 1982, at a time when there was no magazine of notable recognition specializing in the various breeds of dogs that hunt by sight, Francie and her partners Sara Whittington and Lynda Robyn started *The Sighthound* magazine.

One of the magazine's headline stories was about a Boston breeder and his Longhaired Whippets. Francie and her sister, Jackie, had been looking for a second breed and lo and behold, here was a sighthound in a smaller version than her favorite dog, the Borzoi. In 1984, Francie talked the Boston breeder into selling her a pair of Longhaired Whippets. These small, beautiful, longhaired sighthounds, in a variety of colors, were the stepping-stones toward a dream that would evolve throughout the next two decades into the most impressive, enchanting new breed, the Silken Windhound. In 1984, Bo Bengston of Sweden, an international judge and breeder of Whippets, bought *The Sighthound* magazine. Renamed *The Sighthound Review*, it is still the leading Sighthound publication.

In 1988 Francie and her husband, Chuck, decided to invest money in a new project, raising llamas. They wanted to bring llamas to the same prominence as their beloved Borzoi. They spent a couple of years living and working with the Aymara Indians of the Alti Plano of Northern Chile before flying nearly 300 llamas and alpacas from Arica, Chile to Antigua in the Caribbean. Although the llamas never made it into the United States, working with rare and unusual species of animals helped Francie achieve invaluable knowledge that would be essential in all her extraordinary enterprises.

Francie's passion and love for horses led her to another worthwhile venture—preservation of the endangered Caspian horse. In 1996, she purchased a small herd of Caspian horses and in December 2001, she purchased 75 more Caspians. Francie is a lifetime member and early President of the Caspian Horse Society of the Americas. As the Registrar, she is responsible for getting DNA profiles for the breed. Much of the breeding is done by artificial insemination by both Francie and her husband, Chuck, who have received certification from Texas A&M University in the reproductive sciences of Artificial Insemination, Embryo Transfer, and Ultrasound Evaluation. Kristull Ranch now owns and manages the largest herd of Caspian horses in the United States and the second largest in the world. They are responsible for the preservation of every available foundation bloodline in the sixteen stallions at stud and in the mare herd.



**Kristull Jewel of the Steppes, BOB
1st Caspian Show in America**



During the late 1980's and early 1990's Francie began the process of closing down her Borzoi kennel to begin breeding Silken Windhounds exclusively. Francie added her first Borzoi bloodlines in 1985 and two registered smooth Whippets carrying the longhaired trait in 1991. During the 1990's Francie added two additional Borzoi crosses to further soften and lengthen the coat and to produce a wide spectra of coat colors, patterns, and coat traits ranging from sparse to luxuriant. Through Francie's patience, persistence, and wholehearted devotion to her charming little dogs, she created the dynamic, charismatic Silken Windhound breed.

After more than fifteen years and six generations of zealous hard work, heartache, and considerable financial expense in sustaining an extensive breeding program to develop the Silken Windhound breed, this magnificent, striking little hound had finally become a reality. The long-awaited dream to fill the niche in the Sighthound breeds with a small dog that was aesthetically pleasing with its long, flowing coat has assuredly been skillfully consummated by Francie Stull, who was the solitary advocate and admirer of this venerable new breed until 1998.

In November 1998, a dedicated and resolute group of people from diverse regions of the United States and Europe came together on the Internet to communicate with one another for the exclusive purpose of advancing the Silken Windhound breed. To their credit, the members have accomplished a myriad of goals in an astoundingly short time!

In March 1999, these Charter members came together in Austin, Texas, home of the breed founder, to form the International Silken Windhound Society (ISWS) and to begin the tradition of yearly Silkenfests and National Specialties. These members elected Francie as the founding President.

The founding charter members wrote the ISWS By-laws, Code of Ethics, Constitution, and a superb Breed Standard. These charter members unanimously agreed that the long-term goal of the ISWS would be purebred recognition by the AKC; the short-term goal would be acceptance into AKC's FSS program for new breeds.



Gift plates from Sweden's Susann Stjernborg

Since that first historical gathering at Silkenfest 1999, the Club has developed and implemented Breeder Guidelines, required DNA testing of all Silken Windhounds to maintain the integrity of the Registry, and developed regulations to govern the registration of Silken Windhounds. The Club gathered in Austin, Texas for their second Silkenfest and National Specialty in April of 2000, followed by the third in March of 2001, with another Specialty in October 2001. In October 2002, Gloria Hyland-Fisher of Cool Run Kennels in southern New Jersey will host the fourth annual Silkenfest and National Specialty. Our European member, Eija Achrén, will host Silkenfest 2003 in the country of Finland on a private island owned by her family.



Winner's Dog/BIS
Kristull Dante by Cool Run

Winner's Bitch/BOS
Kristull Gimlet

The members of the ISWS are deeply committed and dedicated to their purposeful goals and they will continue to work unremittingly towards their dream of AKC recognition and of filling the niche in the Sighthound breeds with a small longhaired sighthound. On that momentous occasion of recognition, these beloved Silkens, who have a magical way of winning one's heart, will be admired and valued even more so because they will at long last be acknowledged as Pure Bred.

And the legendary Francie Stull, creator of the Silken Windhound breed, will have left her indelible mark in the historical records.



Lucille Meale, Biographer
--Registrar ISWS