

**Summary of the
International Irish
Wolfhound Weekend
The Netherlands
by mrs.E.C.Murphy**

International Wolfhound Weekend - Holland

29/30 April/1 May, 1994

To celebrate their 60th anniversary The Irish Wolfhound Club of Holland (IERDIE) hosted an international Irish Wolfhound weekend in Hoensbrook Castle situated in southern Holland. This beautifully preserved 700 year old castle, a museum and cultural centre of international standing, was a perfect setting for Irish Wolfhounds.

The aim of this first international weekend was to give the various committees, breeders and owners of Irish Wolfhounds a chance to meet and exchange views on the various developments of the breed in their own country. It is hoped that this will be the first step in uniting Irish Wolfhound Clubs, breeders and owners throughout Europe and Scandinavia. With border restrictions being lifted all over Europe, IERDIE felt, rightly, that now was the time to start an international liaison between judges, clubs and breeders in Europe to ensure stability of the breed for the future. IERDIE were kind enough to contact the Irish Club in advance, regretting that it was not possible to hold this premier event in the country of origin because of quarantine. However, I must admit that the Irish Club would never have been in a position, financially, to host such a magnificent event.

The weekend opened on the Friday with a talk by Anthony Killykeen-Doyle, Ireland, on "*The Irish Wolfhound: Its origin and Development throughout the years*". This well illustrated presentation was a great success. It was both interesting and thought-provoking and was delivered in an entertaining manner - and was appreciated and enjoyed by all.

In the evening all were invited to a reception hosted by The Irish Wolfhound Club of Holland to celebrate their 60th Anniversary. A member of each delegation gave a short address congratulating the Dutch Club on their sixty years and expressing their appreciation to the host Club for organising the weekend and on its the value to the future of breed. As President of The Irish Wolfhound Club of Ireland it was a delight to see so many international delegations congregate together to share their interest in our premier national breed. It was with pride mixed with emotion that I delivered my few words to this great gathering and listened to the all the delegates express their care and enthusiasm for The Irish Wolfhound.

Junior Special Show. There was an Irish Wolfhound Junior Special Show on the Saturday morning judged by an international panel of judges:-

Mrs. M Marpe (Germany),
Mrs. Heerkens Verschuuren (Holland),
Mrs. de Ridder Onghena (Belgium) and
Mr. Killykeen-Doyle (Ireland).

The day was finished in grand style with a party for the members of the Dutch Irish Wolfhound Club and their guests. As it was the Queen's Birthday we enjoyed a spectacular display of fireworks from the courtyard of the castle. It was like fairy-land.

Congress. The main event was held in the after-noon; a European Congress to which three members of each Club were invited to attend as delegates and at which all Clubs were invited to give a 15-20 minute presentation on:-

- a. The breed in your own country
- b. Its development throughout the years
- c. Health and diseases, genetic problems.

There were 15 presentations from thirteen different countries;-

Holland, Ireland (2), United Kingdom (2), Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Italy and Russia with a written presentation from Australia.

These talks were interspaced with three lectures:-

1. Lifetime investigations of several breeds including Irish Wolfhounds & Deerhounds by Mr. H Braam.
2. Liver-shunt in Norway by Mrs. Ellen Skancke, Norwegian Veterinary College in Oslo.
3. Liver-shunt Result by Mr. dr. H. Meijer, University for Pets, Utrecht, Holland

This information packed programme was well planned with frequent breaks giving delegates a chance to discuss the many points of interest in the various presentations as they were given. Delegates were presented with folders containing the text of the presentations and lecture.

Delegates gave an interesting account of the development of the breed in their own countries. Many were surprised at the strength and popularity of the breed in Finland and were delighted to hear news of the breed from our Russian colleagues. Many speakers dwelt on health and genetic problems but this was no doubt due to the fact that it was specifically requested in their report. This emphasis on genetic problems was underlined by two presentations on liver-shunt. The latter reinforced my personal belief that vitality, the health and future of the breed, should be a basic necessity when planning a breeding programme.

Conclusion. The Dutch proposed the formation of an Irish Wolfhound Federation of Europe in which the participating countries would co-operate to achieve optimum development and promotion of the Irish Wolfhound and to safeguard its future. With this intention the Clubs would co-operate by:-

- * Circulating newsletters, information bulletins and other documents which may be useful for the development of the Irish Wolfhound.
- * Circulating and exchanging all studies and results with regard to the development and health of the Irish Wolfhound.
- * Exchanging their pup intermediation regulations, breeding regulations, as well as list of services and litters in any year.
- * Anticipating (if possible) changes of regulations resulting from co-operation within the framework of the European Union.
- * Circulating their Lists of recognised judges and enhancing the judges' possibilities of optimising the harmony within the breed characteristics and breed standards by means of international exchange.
- * Setting up a working group, consisting of representatives of some of the breed societies present at the meeting, whose task will be to investigate whether it is desirable to establish a European Irish Wolfhound Federation.
- * Organising a biennial conference for the executive committees of Irish Wolfhound Clubs in Europe. The first Conference took place to-day here at Hoensbroek, Castle in The Netherlands. The next conference to be held in 1996, if possible with show(s).

These proposals were circularised to participating Clubs in advance for their consideration. All were in agreement as to the value of the objectives. However, a number of Clubs would be unable to join a formal confederation because of legislative restrictions of their parent Clubs or Kennel Clubs in their own countries.

The Congress agreed to set up a steering committee to prepare the ground work needed to put the above proposals into operation. I have no doubt that the committee will take into account the positions of those Clubs unable to join a formal Federation and seek to find a way forward that will involve all Clubs so that we may work together for the benefit of the Irish Wolfhound.

The following were elected to this first committee:-

Mr. T. Swelheim, Chairman - Irish Wolfhound Club of Holland
Mr. J. Wauben, Holland - as secretary
Mr. E. Rainfelch, Germany
Mrs. L. Helpi, Chairman Irish Wolfhound Club of Finland
under the Presidency of myself, E.C. Murphy, as President of The
Irish Wolfhound Club of Ireland.

It was agreed that the steering committee would report back to the delegates in July, 1995 in Ireland. The World congress of Kennel Clubs is being held in Ireland, 14th/16th July, 1995. It is hoped to have symposiums for all the Irish native breeds for non-delegates as a feature of this event.

Gala Day. The Championship show on Sunday was opened by the Irish Ambassador, Mr. Denis O'Leary. Mr. O'Leary gave his opening address in Dutch, but I caught enough names to know that he was telling of the part the Irish hound played in the history and legends of Ireland and the pride that the Irish have in this magnificent breed. The presence of the Mayor Heerleen added grace and dignity to the occasion. It was with great pride that the Irish delegates saw our national flag raised to the Irish national anthem.

The championship show was an outstanding success. There were 268 Irish Wolfhounds entered between this, and Saturday's Junior show. Again there was a multi-national panel of judges:-

Mrs. E. Wraneus, Sweden
Mrs. M Templeman van der Meij, Holland
Mr. J. Rosner, Germany
Mrs. E. Thornton, England
and myself from Ireland.

Mrs. Thornton and myself had the honour of judging Open Bitch and Open Dog, respectively, then jointly judging Best in Show. Our Best in Show winner, Quincy of Kilmara (Belgium) and Reserve Best in Show winner, Modonna Brona v.d. Reumpol (Holland) were outstanding specimens of the breed, as indeed were the reserve Best Dog and Reserve Best bitch.

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This first International Irish Wolfhound weekend was judged a great success by all participants and its objectives of inestimable value to the future of Irish Wolfhounds. The Irish Wolfhound Club of The Netherlands must feel very pleased and well deserve all the congratulations received from the participating delegations.

Elizabeth C Murphy
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