



Gudrun Ragnars Gudjohnsen, Iceland

What is your affix?

Garða.

When did you get your first dog and what breed was it?

I got my first dog when I was 8 years old. It was an "Icelandic Sheepdog" - probably not completely pure-bred, but fairly typical for the breed. It was a tri-coloured male and I called him Kátur which means "little round one".

What breed(s) do you have today?

Today, I have three Tibetan Spaniels 10 and 12 years old, which I have imported from Sweden.

What breed(s) have you bred?

My great interest in dogs is the preservation of our native breed, the Icelandic Sheepdog. I bought my first bitch, Sunna, in 1972, and bred my first litter in 1975. My last "Icelander", Disa, died in 2002, aged 15.

Which one of your dogs has meant most to you (breeding, showing, other)?

If I am only allowed to mention one significant home-bred dog, it would be Garða Tinni, a male from my first litter. He was the undisputed leader of my pack, and taught me a lot about canine behaviour, leadership, puppy rearing etc. He was the first dog of all categories to be awarded the championship title (Islensk Meistar) by the Icelandic Kennel Club (Hundaræktarfélag Íslands). The Tinni Shield was named after Garða Tinni, and is awarded annually to the top show dog of the year in Iceland.

Apart from breed showing, have you worked your dogs in any other canine sports and, if so, what (e.g. field trials, working trials, obedience etc.)?

Working trials and competitions have never been a great canine passion of mine. But I have certainly done some obedience training and been involved in temperament testing, canine environmental enrichment courses, basic obedience and puppy training classes for many years, and have found it interesting and exciting.

In what year did you qualify as a judge?

I underwent my judge's training at events hosted by the Swedish Kennel Club, became authorised in 1995, with exemption from authorisation for a single breed, the Icelandic Sheepdog.

What breeds do you judge?

Icelandic Sheepdog.

What countries have you judged in?

Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands and, of course, Iceland.

Apart from canine sports, what other interests do you have?

Dogs have been a very large part of my life. My involvement has included pioneering work on behalf of the HRFÍ due to the ban on dogs in virtually all urban areas in Iceland. It has involved training instructors and drawing up courses for dogs and dog owners, from the most basic, such as "buying a dog" to advanced training for search and rescue dogs etc. The most important thing for me, in addition to canine sports, is family and friends, animals and the countryside - yes, life itself, with all its wonderful diversity.

What is your everyday job?

For the past seven years, I have worked at the Geysir Centre, one of Iceland's major tourist attractions. I have been in charged of both the museum and the souvenir shop.

Other?

I am planning to retire in September 2007, and do all those things I haven't had time to do yet.