

Many years ago, when I first got involved with NAVHDA [in addition to Bodo Winterhelt] two people who were very significant to the organization and who also took me under their wing were Johnny Shulkey and Freddie Heilig from Southern California. (In 1980 I had the good fortune to go to Germany with both of them to learn more about the origin of the NAVHDA testing system.)

Freddie and I struck a common bond because we both had Brittanies. He always encouraged me and supported me and my dogs in this predominantly German breed testing organization. Freddie was probably in his 80's when I first met him. He passed away at the age of 102, I think in 1998.

The dog that he had when I first met him was called "Patina." He loved her so very much. When she passed on, Bodo got him another dog. This one he called "Gigi." I'm not sure when Gigi died but I know they spent their last years together. There is a NAVHDA member from Maine by the name of Patti Carter who is an absolutely superb artist and in 1988 Freddie commissioned Patti to do a portrait of Gigi. When Freddie died, his family gave the portrait to Bodo, since he had got the dog for Freddie.

Recently Bodo had some serious health problems himself (he's now 82) and he was hospitalized for nearly a month. He had planned to breed Chris' Pudelpointer Strike to his female Odette again because the first mating was so successful. Well, Odette was due to come in season soon so we arranged for her to be brought to me. To make a long story short - the breeding was successful and I ended up whelping six Pudelpointer pups for Bodo. Chris got one and he took the other five to Bodo. (I got to see 5 of the 6 at the Pudelpointer Expo in Bandon, Oregon.) Bodo was so grateful that we had made sure the breeding happened and the puppies were taken care of that he gave Chris the portrait of Gigi to give to me in appreciation. The moral of this story is . . .

You see - "Gigi" was an "EPAGNEUL BRETON."