

I have been involved with Labrador Retrievers since 1974. We purchased our first yellow female as a family member. Only weeks after we brought her home, we met a couple with an English Setter at our local corner store, we started chatting and they suggested that we come to one of their local Kennel Club meetings and possibly join.

With their guidance, we attended our first Sanction Match and we were hooked. That same year we registered our Kennel name Labradale with the C.K.C. Unfortunately, Kim, our first lab was not impressed with the dog show scene, and she became a happy couch potato, and enjoyed walks and swimming at the back of our property.



Our next Labrador came from Sally McCarthy of Shamrock Acres Kennels, he was a handsome yellow boy, but due to an injury, we were not able to show him and he was placed in a family home. We then purchased a yellow bitch from Jeanne Young of Balmoral Kennels in the U.S. This was a great experience for me, she became Am.Can.Bda. Ch. Labradale's Jill of Balmoral. She was shown in Bermuda by our good friend Barbara Partridge who was a handler. She was later bred to Ch. Briary Brendan of Rainell owned by Lorraine Getter and for her second litter she was bred to Ch. Briary Breakthru which produced champions.

It was Lorraine Getter who introduced me to the Labrador Retriever Club of the Potomac in 1976. This was an eye opener for me, I couldn't have imagined so many beautiful Labradors in one place. I met so many wonderful people and still have longtime friendships.

I never thought that I would have a Labrador good enough to compete at the LRCP Specialty. In 1989 I showed 'Jill' (BISS Am.Can.Ch. Shadowvale's Jill at Ranbourne,) she was awarded W.B. & B.O.W. under Dot Gartner and Joan McCann, I can't tell you what an honor that was for me.

In 1980 my husband and I separated and I transferred our Kennel name Labradale over to him. In 1982, I registered my new kennel name Ranbourne with the C.K.C. I acquired my foundation bitch from Mike & Huguette Beattie (Shadowvale). She became BISS Am.Can. Ch. Shadowvale's Jill at Ranbourne. She was bred to Am.Can.Bda. Ch. Bradking Rangeways Mr Chips who produced BISS Can. Ch. Ranbourne This Bud's For You, who has produced Champions in Canada and the U.S. Bud was awarded Best of Opposite Sex in Sweepstakes at the LRCP under Sally Bell. Bud and his litter sister Beanie gave me so much joy and lived until the ripe old age of 15 ½ years old. This has been a 40+ year journey for me, there have been good times and some not so good, but I would do it all over again. I have made 40 year friendships with folks that I would be proud to call family. I have finished dogs in Canada and in the U.S. I have attended several Specialties over the years and had to cut down at one point, but still kept my feet in the Dog

World and enjoyed showing dogs for my Labrador friends. I knew that I probably would never be a big breeder but I am proud of the dogs that I had. In 2004 I decided to apply for my Judge's License which gave me the opportunity to judge the Breed that I love and also a way to give back to what gave me such wonderful memories. I later applied to judge Golden Retrievers.

A special boy to remember is A.J. (Black) a.k.a. OTCH. Nycoma Way Design For Ranbourne, Am. UD, WC, CGC (Am.Ch. Ghoststone Hyspire Dressed to Impress x Nycoma Way Sweet Pea, JH) bred by Heather Johnson (Nycoma Way). A.J. passed away a few years ago at the age of 13 years old. Time (Yellow) a.k.a. Can.Ch Belgairn Time in a Bottle at Ranbourne Am. & Can. CDX (Ch. Blackwing Superfine x Ch. Belgairn Shadowbrook Dream Time) who is 12 years old and bred by the Kelly & Silva families ( Belgairn & Shadowbrook). Howie (Black) 8 years old, Ranbourne The Beat Goes On, Am. & Can. CD, training in Open & Utility (Can. Ch. Chablais Victoria, WC x GCH Laurglen Ardent Rogue at Hyspire). We were fortunate to acquire a puppy from Heather Johnson (Nycoma Way) during COVID, a black boy Nycoma Way Due North to Ranbourne (GCHB Ch. Lakeside Memoir of Gallivant, CGC TKN x Nycoma Way Dragonfly on my Shoulder), looking forward to getting him out to some shows.

I am a Lifetime Member of The Canadian Kennel Club, The Chateauguay Valley All Breed/Obedience Club, The Labrador Retriever Club of Canada and Le Club du Labrador du Québec. I am also a member of the Canadian Dog Judges Association and the St. Lawrence Region Dog Judge's Association. I love ring stewarding both in Conformation and Obedience. It's always an honor and a privilege to be invited to judge a Specialty and I look forward to seeing some beautiful Labradors today.

Valerie Walters

Ranbourne Reg'd