



## Allan G. Heaton from North Yorkshire

A Yorkshire man, Allan was born in Oakworth, spending his early life in the Bradford area, and graduating from Leeds University with a BSc in Agriculture in 1944. Known for having a sense of humour, when he left university he got a job advising farmers and said that they loved to be advised by 'a pipsqueak townie who had been to university'. Allan met his wife Mary when he lived on a nearby farm to hers and he would ride over on horseback, spend some time with her, and then ask for a leg-up when he returned home. His horse was a thoroughbred that Allan had had from a foal, and had trained by reading techniques in a book. They married in May 1950, farming Canvas Farm in Knayton in North Yorkshire from 1950 to 1966. For five years, there was no electricity or running water. It was here that their children were born: Andrew, Janet and Mark. They later moved to Peel Park at Brandsby in North Yorkshire, living there until 1978. Leaving Peel Park in the hands of their son Andrew, Allan and Mary farm with their other son Mark at Ulwith Farm in Catterick until 1982. They then returned to Brandsby, building a bungalow called West Park, living in semi-retirement until 2007. The bungalow had terrific views over Peel Park, the land that they had farmed. Their final home was a bungalow in Easingwold called Inbetween. In 2010, Allan and Mary celebrated their 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. They had supported each other through life's ups and downs, especially the loss of their son Mark, and Allan's battle with Parkinson's Disease.

Allan competed in his first trial in 1949 with a bitch called Dinah that he had trained himself, winning his first open trial the following year. He ran in his first English National in 1950. Allan won the English National Brace Championship at Salisbury in 1963, with Bob 17242 and Garry 15761. In 1976, he made the English team again at Chatsworth with Stonewall's Ken 86322. Allan qualified for the Supreme in 1989 with Kep 145572 (homebred by Speed 128021), after gaining fourth in the English National. Notable



winner winners for Allan, and prolific sires were Stonewall's Ken and Flash 137604. Achievements resulted from a winning blend that combined successful breeding programmes with the belief of buying in good dogs that he liked, to get fresh bloodlines. Allan bred Roy 163173, Gordon Watt's 1991 Irish National Shepherds Champion. In 1981, Allan was the runner-up on the BBC's One Man and His Dog with a dog called Brandsby (by Stonewall's Ken). Ken was the great grandsire of Aled Owen's Bob. Trialling into a sixth decade, Allan won literally hundreds of sheepdog trials, he took some beating on the trialsfield.

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Getting his priorities right, Allan put the farming business first, setting a good example to others. He was one of the first training instructors for the Agricultural Training Board, helping to improve the handling skills of many farmers as well as starting people in trialling. It was a job that he enjoyed, along with training young dogs, many that other people could not train.

Allan was the founding Chairman of the Ryedale Sheepdog Society in 1968, holding the first nursery trial at Peel Park. It was the first of many trials to be held there. From a modest start, the Ryedale Society went from strength to strength, with Allan and Mary both serving as Presidents from 1997 to 2007. They were proud of any members who made the English team. Their son Mark won Longshaw sheepdog trials in 1979. He made the English team in 1984 with Jason 115366, and competed on One Man and his Dog.

A Director of the ISDS since 1963, Allan served three consecutive terms on council, and worked on ISDS committees (including the English National at York in 1960, and the International at York in 1963). He was the English National President from 1982 (with Nationals at Raby Castle, Northleach and Mottram Hall) culminating in another York International in 1984. He was the Course Director at Moorsholm near Whitby in 1993. As a Past President, Allan carried on the good work, being a mentor and advisor to many.



In 2009, Allan and Mary were jointly awarded the Wilkinson Sword, the ISDS's most prestigious award for their unique contribution to 'the Society, to Sheep Dogs, and to Sheep Dog Trialling'. Always putting back into trialling, as much, as they took out. Allan did more than his fair share of judging. He judged the English National at Tackley in 1980 and at West Heslerton near Malton in 1988, and the International at Alnwick in 1990. His involvement extended worldwide as they travelled to sheepdog trials abroad, judging and competing, and welcomes many international enthusiasts to Brandsby. Allan was one of the first handlers to send a dog to South America, and judged in Belgium, Canada, South Africa, Sweden and the USA. In 1974, Allan and Mary spent seven weeks travelling and trialling in New Zealand, meeting up with their son Mark who was working there at the time. In 1985, they also trialled in South Africa, for three weeks. First-

rate ambassadors for the ISDS, always with something interesting to say, imparted with a sense of humour and a down-to-earth approach.