

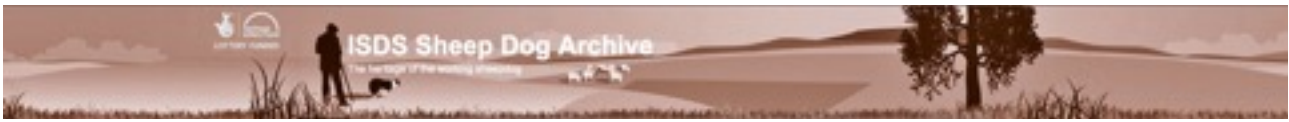


Maurice Collin from Skeeby near Richmond in North Yorkshire

Born in Skeeby on the 14th February 1931, Maurice lived there all of his life, his family were agricultural contractors working all around the area. Maurice met Ros, his future wife, at a Young Farmers' dance and they were married in 1954, Ros originating from Bainbridge in Wensleydale. Apart from the agricultural work, Maurice ran a poultry business and he was the local mole-catcher for many years, undertaking this countryside role as a challenge that he met with great dedication,



as he did any challenge that he encountered. Ros would stand in for Maurice with the mole-catching when his work took him further afield and time was in short supply, their services often being exchanged for hay for the Shorthorn bulls that were bred with a great sense of achievement. Contributing to village life as a colourful character, Maurice would be out working the sheep in all weathers, very much part of the village scene for anyone passing through. With a strong belief in playing an active role in the local community, he served over thirty years on the local Parish Council.



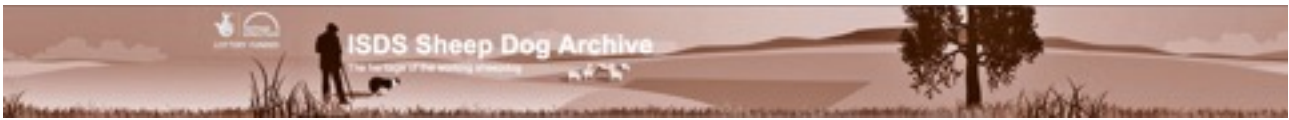
Maurice developed an interest in sheepdogs at an early age, his father was keen on working dogs although he did not trial. Maurice entered and won a best sheepdog class at a local show when he was just eight. At the local Young Farmers' Club, his interest was cultivated and he was put in charge of 'anything to do with sheepdogs'. Trialling began when he was just thirteen years old, the beginning of a lifelong interest that spanned over sixty years. In 1951, Maurice set a record that remains unbeaten today, he won an International title at the age of twenty, and it was the first time that he had taken part in an International. Maurice won the International Brace Championship with Cap 295 and Kep 4448 at Blackpool, demonstrating remarkable talent, and initiating encouragement for young handlers of sheepdogs everywhere at that time and a thread that was to continue throughout his life.



Commitments to family life and his work in poultry farming led to Maurice taking a long break from sheepdog trialling in 1959, for fifteen years. His comeback in 1974 made up for the missing years, with Maurice taking many titles, both open and nursery, throughout the North of England. His considerable talent as a handler was evident whenever he went to the post and he achieved wins too numerable to count but well into the hundreds, and he did so with various dogs. Renowned for saying that a trial is not won until the last man has run, it was certainly true that a trial was not



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won until Maurice had run. His dogs were always under immaculate command, remarkable for someone who in his latter years sat on a chair whilst training dogs due to various mobility problems. Maurice's ability to pen sheep was first-rate, his skill and judgement coveted by many handlers who had watched him time and time again finish a run when many others could not. Apart from his International Brace win, Maurice was in the English team nine times.



Being successful with so many dogs makes it impossible to mention them all and hard to pick out a few. After selling the poultry business, one of the first things that Maurice and Ros undertook was a trip to Wales to look at working dogs. They bought the first one from Owen Davies and Maurice often told the tale of when he first set eyes on the dog and asked Owen why he had trailed him all the way to Wales to look at this poor specimen of a dog. His reply had been, wait until you try him on stock. The dog was impressive, and turned out into a trial winner, a perfect example to prove the phrase 'brains not beauty'. One of their first

wins was a clean run at Sutton show near Thirsk, a remarkable achievement that reflected Maurice's talent as a handler, and it was not long before they made the English team, twice, in 1976 and 1977. Spot 71799 was by Jack Burke's Sweep 57749 and out of W.E. Humphrey's Lyn 25928. A kennelmate for Spot, they also bought a dog called Roy 77767 from John James in Knighton, he was by John's Lad 60776 and out of Fly 34035, a daughter of Alan Jones's Roy 15393. Maurice made the English team with Roy too, in 1979. Over the years, Maurice was good friends with Jack Dinsdale who ran the local butcher's shop, he was good at starting dogs off and Maurice would finish them. As Saturday was Jack's busiest day, he could not get away trialling so Maurice would take the dogs out at the weekend. Maurice once won Pateley Show trial, years ago, when it was in the big field, with a six-month old dog called Derk 89906. Derk was a son of Spot, bred by another friend Derek Hutchinson who lived at Catterick at that time, out of a bitch called Fly 81553. Maurice made the English team with Derk in 1981 and 1982, getting through to the Supreme at Blair Atholl in 1982, on the same occasion that his son Peter got through with Lad 86992. Maurice made the English team again in 1984 and 1985, getting through to the Supreme in 1984, this time with a son of Derk called Shep 118496. Shep was home bred out of a bitch called Val 95271, she was by Mrs Arthurs's Roy 69452 and out of Tot Longton's Gyp 56601. Gyp was herself out of Tot's Gyp 38336 and by Llyr Evans's Bosworth Coon 34186. It was with Shep that Maurice won the final of the B.B.C.'s One Man and His Dog in 1985 in the Lake District, one of his proudest moments. Maurice's second Spot 200319 started his long trialling career winning the Northern Sheepdog Association's nursery aggregate (1993-1994), winning seven out of twenty trials and getting placed in sixteen. Spot was bred by Brian Bell at Barnard Castle, by Glen 143941 and out of Meg 158981, and was started by Jack Dinsdale. Maurice made the English team again in 1998 with Ben 188867,

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a dog bred by Derek Hutchinson out of Meg 173367 and by Maurice's Whiterose Nip 155105, another dog that won a lot of open trials. In his last three weeks of trialling, at the beginning of the 2005 nursery season, Maurice won two and was placed eight times, with Fairlea Bill and Whiterose Bill. With his open dogs Rob 261593 and Goe 259228, he was looking forward to getting back to the trials field after a year's absence but sadly it was not to be.

Behind the trialling scenes, Maurice worked as an Agricultural Training Board instructor for fifteen years, initially part-time and then full-time, his work taking him all over the Yorkshire region, up to Northumberland and south to Humberside. Maurice considered it an honour that so many of his pupils made it to the trials field, even when they took titles away from him, and he considered farmers wanting to learn how to train a dog to be just as important. Philip Hendry used to comment to him about the sudden influxes of I.S.D.S. members from Yorkshire, he valued the work that Maurice was doing. Apart from trialling folk, there was always a steady stream of folk visiting the car at the local shows, ex-pupils wanting to say hello and to chat, for Maurice always kept cheerful and in good spirits, he was interested in people, their lives, and their animals. Maurice performed sheepdog demonstrations at local shows and arranged many charity sheepdog trials. A true Yorkshire gentleman, he was always willing to help anyone with a training issue or any trialling matter and to give out good advice.

Maurice was the Secretary of the Northern Sheepdog Association for twenty-five years from 1974, described by a friend as "the most dedicated competitor the Northern Sheepdog Association ever had and that continued across the whole of the North of England and beyond". A Director of the I.S.D.S. for thirty years from 1975, Maurice took society matters very seriously, he put heart and soul into his responsibilities at every level of trialling business. Every weekend, his regular attendance at trials and openness to discussion meant that he always had his finger on the pulse of many issues. Nothing passed him without receiving a succinct summary of the matter in hand. Colleagues addressing any elements of change would be inclined to pass them by Maurice to get his opinion of the benefits and the pitfalls, as he would mention the flaws that needed to be addressed before giving his seal of approval. All through the week, his commitment never wavered, always working hard behind the scenes, frequently on the telephone to his many sheepdog contacts. Maurice judged the English National and acted as Course Director at the English National in 1999, and he judged the International. Maurice was a great competitor, his success never affected him, he always maintained that you were as good as your last run and that you can only do what the sheep will let you do. Truly one of trialling's remarkable characters, a familiar figure in his deerstalker or straw hat, Maurice was a great ambassador for both the Northern Sheepdog Association and the International Sheep Dog Society.

