TABLE OF CONTENTS
Our Hounds and their Heritage.................................Gertrude W. Hinsch..............3
Saluki- Ancient Dog and DNA. Chap. 3.................Gertrude W. Hinsch..............6
Salukis in the Emirates...........................................Terence Clark.............10
Egyptian Salukis.............................................Editor’s note......................16
Two Salukis from the Land of Pharaohs..................Jutta Rubesam..................17
Dorothy Lees Memorial........................................Terence Clark...............23
Dorothy Lees..................................................Joe Pendry.....................25
More Stamps...................................................Lorraine Trenholm...........28
International saluki fest.....................................29

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OUR HOUNDS AND THEIR HERITAGE.

Gertrude W. Hinsch, Ph.D.

Every breed has its lore and stories. Ours goes way back into historical times. Some of the earliest representations are those presumably from Sumeria.

THE HUNT

The first civilization from which writings and carvings have been found. Carvings from Tepe Gawra about 8000 yrs ago depict salukis hunting gazelles. Numerous carvings in the Egyptian tombs depict smooth and feathered salukis.

In the papyrus scroll above, we see several hounds chasing a variety of game. Similar hunting scenes appear in temples in Sakkara today depicting salukis as well as dogs presumed to be basenjis. Through the years evidence of salukis, probably brought back from the Middle East, appears in paintings from medieval and Renaissance times. These paintings, etc. depict a hunting hound as well as one that graced palaces. Today we have modern paintings, photographs and sculptures of the same hunting hound.
THE HOUND

Fig. 2  Photo ©Andrey Kovalenko

Fig. 3  Joy edition of 8 - Sculpture by Mary Beth Rogers ©2002

Fig. 4  Collage by Lorraine Trenholm ©
THE HAWKS/FALCONS

Throughout historic times, the saluki has been associated with hawks/falcons. The accompanying photograph (fig. ) is of a falcon carved in the wall of a crypt in the Denderah Temple in Egypt. Today in the COOs of the saluki, the hawk or falcon is still an integral part of the hunting scene. In many areas, falconers are training falcons and golden eagles to hunt with their salukis.

In the photo to the right (fig. ), you can glimpse the golden eagle sitting on the leather glove of the falconer.

THE HARES

Fig. 7 Western USA jackrabbit © Herb Wells

Fig. 8 Arabian hare © T. Clark
Hares are the prey of much of the modern date saluki. Though you cannot easily compare the two types of hares pictured here, the western jack is described as being larger than the Arabian hare. Dr. Burchard has mentioned that the frayed ear of one of the jacks is likely to be the result of fighting between two sexually mature males rather than escape from a predator.

Much of what we know about salukis obviously comes from the art of centuries. Having considered these various aspects of the dog we call the saluki, does it really tell us all we might consider about it as a breed? Given the technological advances in the past couple of decades, might we describe our breed in a more meaningful way?

**Saluki-Ancient Dog and DNA.**

Chapter 3.  History, Past, Present and Future

**Just what do we mean when we say the saluki is an ancient breed?**

Literature and legends exist in many countries of origin about the saluki/tazi. Fanciers talk of perpetuating or preserving the breed and many often refer to it as having been developed for the purpose of hunting by the Bedouin. Aside from the early carvings from art produced over a number of centuries mentioned earlier, most of our lore is based on the experiences of individuals who visited the Middle East during the past 150 years, certainly not ancient history.

Can we more accurately trace the origin of dogs at this time? With the explosion of molecular techniques, specifically the canine Genome and DNA analysis, new behavioral studies and more archeological studies (See Science 2002, Vol. 298: 1610-1613; 1613-1616; 1634-1636) we are presented with a broadened scientific picture covering this origin.

**How did dogs evolve?** Many state that dogs have always been dogs. Indeed, historically there have been several theories of canine origin. Some postulated that dogs were derived from the wolf, others that perhaps some were derived from the jackal, etc. The decisions by registries to create the different groups among show dogs were based on morphologic/structural similarities as well as functional properties. DNA studies and behavioral studies of canines have produced some very interesting results and question this group designation.

**Wolf vs Dog.** Morphologically, wolves and dogs are very similar while there are definite differences between other canids and dogs. It is for this reason, that the derivation of dogs from wolves has had the most weight. When comparing the skeletal structure of the different subspecies of wolves, it was found that there are few differences. However, the Asian wolf has a jaw structure that varies slightly from that seen in the other subspecies of wolves. It is this same variation of jaw structure in the Asian wolf which we find in the jaw structure of the dog. On a morphological basis then, it would appear that dogs are derived from the Asian wolf rather than other wolf subspecies.

When DNA analysis of hair samples from many different breeds of dogs were studied, the largest number of variations occurred in dogs in eastern Asia. Since the number of differences in canine mitochondrial DNA were quite numerous in eastern Asia while the variations were reduced in number as the distance away from China increased, it suggests that dogs originated from the Asian wolf in eastern Asia. Though modern man is believed to be descended from a single woman, Eve, the studies on canines suggested that modern dogs were derived from three canine Eves.

The publication of these studies suggesting that modern dogs arose in eastern Asia and not is association with modern man who arose in Africa. Two separate points of origin! At what point in time then did modern dogs and modern men come together?
**Domestication of the dog.** The customary saga as written in historical novels, etc. is that early man (*Homo sapiens*) domesticated wolf puppies taken from the den at very young ages. It has always been a satisfactory story as such. However, modern behavioral studies of wolves have shown that domestication of the wolf does not occur. The captured wolves and offspring of those animals captured from the den still exhibit typical wolf behavior. They do not become domesticated.

What then are the differences between dogs and wolves that set them apart? Wolves in general lack the ability to “read” human behavior. Dogs however can easily read human behavior, can find things hidden away by signs given by the human, can read muscle position in the human face and the sounds of the human voice. It seems then that those dogs derived from the Asian wolf also at some point in time had a mutation in their DNA which enabled them to “read” humans. It is this ability to read humans which ultimately enabled early man to domesticate the dog.

**When did domestication occur?** There are several questions concerning the evolutionary timing of these events. Some scientists state that these changes occurred as many as 135,000 years ago. BUT, to date there is no evidence for man/dog association that dates to near that time. Some recent studies suggest that domestication may have occurred as early as 10,000 years ago. (Still two thousand years earlier than the tablets in Sumeria). The more recent findings in a town in Germany place the human/dog association at least 14,000 years ago approximately the same time frame as the dog entering North America by the Bering land bridge (15,000). Until more data places dogs and man together at earlier times, it is probable that 14-15,000 years ago is the time of beginning domestication. Additional questions arise concerning these early years of the dog.

- Did early man have the knowledge to keep wolf and dog separated and prevent interbreeding.
- Just when did the ancient breeds arise? How did the selection for these breeds by man occur?
- Were the progenitors of these breeds already existing when man/dog relationships occurred?
- Where does that leave us in the saga of the ancient breeds? The time frame may become clearer with additional DNA research.
The breeds considered to be ancient on the basis of mitochondrial DNA. These ancient breeds exhibit many microsatellites comparable with those seen in the Asian wolf. Most more modern breeds, clumped in guard, herding and hunting groups, do not retain many of these same microsatellites. Ancient breeds in Asia - Chow Chow, Shar Pei, Shih Tzu, Tibetan Terrier, Akita, Shiba Inu, Lhasa Apso

In Africa - the Basenji
In the Middle East - the Afghan and the saluki
In the Arctic - Samoyed, Siberian Husky, Malamute

Did these ancient breeds originate between the possible origin of canines about 100,000 and 15,000 years ago? Or did they originate only after their first association (domestication) beginning about 15,000 years ago? In other words, were they distinct predator breeds before their association with man or did man create each of these ancient breeds? We know that in modern day times these breeds were found geographically separated from each other.

As early dogs arose somewhere in eastern China, one can see that many of the breeds apparently did not migrate too far from their point of origin. These are breeds which today we recognize as coming from the Orient.

One can visualize as well the migration pathway of the Arctic breeds up into Siberia, Russia and eventually into North America by way of the Bering land bridge from the point of origin. When one considers the Afghan, Saluki and Basenji breeds, one finds them spread over a very wide range of countries and terrain. The red lines on the map below indicate only a few of the major caravan routes used for centuries by merchants carrying merchandise from China to the Middle East and beyond.

Fig. 10 The Silk Road map.

Roads headed west from China, through the various deserts and on to the central Asia and ultimately Europe and Africa. The Afghan and Saluki being ancient breeds would have moved along what was to become the main caravan routes. If in ancient times animals and
humans acted as they did in more recent times, the early canines being predators would have followed their prey and thus moved along the game trails. Even today in Afghanistan, men still cross over the mountains on the goat trails. The Afghans would have passed into the area of Afghanistan where they survived in the mountains for thousands of years. The salukis one can assume were more wide spread as they are found over so many areas covered by the caravan routes.

One can consider that additional travel routes further spread these known today as sloughi, azawakh, Pharaoh Hound, Khalag Tazy, Tiagan, Galgo Espanol, Magyar Agar, caravan hound, and Rampuri into India, the Middle East and Africa and Europe. communities, animals Dogs in many of the countries included above are recognized as salukis though they may have different local names. How closely related they might be to salukis and afghans we do not know. DNA studies need to be completed in the future to solve these problems. The migratory patterns for several of the breeds is being worked on at the present time.

Is there any association with the point of origin and early domesticated dogs? If dogs originated in eastern Asia, probably China what evidence do we have about early associations. In materials dated about 14,000 years ago in Germany, there is evidence of the presence of a dog in an early town. Also found in the same ruins are fragments of Chinese pottery. This of course suggests that the caravan routes which many of us probably think are relatively new in the time frame were already in existence at the time that domestication occurred. It seems likely that the dog was the first animal to be domesticated.

What does the future hold in the way of DNA research for dogs? Currently many studies are under way to identify specific genes on the canine chromosomes. Tests for some specific diseases in some breeds have already been identified. Others will be in the future as well. Such tests may be of help in breeding programs.

For the present, we have the ability to identify over 100 specific breeds of dogs based on the microsatellite research. This is already being used in some forensic work. Just over a decade ago, DNA studies were questioned. We all are aware of the lawyer who demolished the DNA analyses in the case. Today that same lawyer is using DNA evidence to free many prisoners wrongfully convicted without it.

In the saluki world, DNA typing can determine that the rare smooth that appears in a litter of feathered parents and feathered littermates indeed shares the same parents as its littermates. And in the future when someone finds a brindle puppy in their litter, DNA typing again will solve the question. There should be no more situations where the smooth puppies are excluded from registration while feathered puppies are entered.

To date, there are no DNA tests available for health testing in salukis. Guess that we will have to consider that since the time of the Sumerians man from whatever tribe has been perpetuating the saluki breed rather than developing its hunt abilities.
My wife and I spent a week in the Emirates in March to escape the wicked winter at home and to meet up with some old Arab and British friends resident there. It was a confusing experience to be back again after an interval of just a few years and to find that so much has changed and is changing at an amazing pace while at the same time some of the old traditional way of life somehow manages to survive and even flourish. In Dubai we stayed with friends in one of the few remaining old houses near the sea and their garden full of exotic birds that have migrated here was an oasis of tranquility from the hurly-burly all around. Even so, after a few days in the great metropolis we were glad to move on to the more desert oasis of al-Ain in Abu Dhabi territory.

While in Dubai I called Hamad al-Ghanem, a member of our Society and founder of the Arabian Saluki Centre in Abu Dhabi, who immediately invited us to dinner in the Arabian Court of the Royal Mirage Hotel. What we had not reckoned on was sharing the dinner table with his Gyr- Saker falcon sitting at my elbow throughout the meal! It was of course hooded and as well behaved as any trained falcon should be and amid all the contemporary luxury of our surrounding it served as a salutary reminder that we were still in Arabia. I have known Hamad through the medium of the Internet for many years but this was our first chance to meet face to face and we found we had a lot to talk about. I knew from when I used to live in the Emirates 40 years ago that the Saluki had almost disappeared there as the lifestyle of the local Bedouin underwent fundamental changes after the beginning of the oil boom in the 1960s. Hunting with hawk and hound went into sharp decline and was eventually banned altogether as a wildlife conservation measure and it was only a few of the shaikhs who carried on the tradition, travelling far and wide abroad in their search for suitable prey. Some of the shaikhs maintained large kennels of
Salukis not so much for hunting any more but rather as part of the extensive menageries they have established in the recreational parks and farms that many of them have developed. I remember well visiting one of them in the early 1990s and lost count after about 70 how many Salukis there were there. Clearly in such circumstances it was no longer possible to maintain the close bond between hunter and hound that existed previously in Bedouin encampments and care of the hounds was often delegated to imported staff who had never hunted and were concerned mainly with maintaining or increasing numbers. Whereas the Bedouin knew and could relate the lineage of their hounds, the hired hands tended not to pay too much attention to the selection of their breeding stock and were even encouraged to experiment with crossbreeding with other Sighthounds, especially with Greyhounds after the introduction of track racing in al-Ain in the mid-1990s. Hamad has been working hard over recent years to rekindle interest in the Saluki as part of the area’s natural heritage and at the core of his efforts is the Arabian Saluki Centre near Abu Dhabi airport.

Hamad collected us in Dubai the next morning in his SUV to take us to Abu Dhabi, with a hooded Saker nodding on the seat behind him beside my wife. It took us only 1½ hours on a smooth highway, though I kept remembering how it used to take 8 hours bouncing in a Landrover over the rutted desert tracks. We went to see the Centre that Hamad had started in 2002 on a piece of land given by the then President of the United Arab Emirates, HH Shaikh Zayed Al Nahyan. In its well-designed and spacious kennels with outside sandy runs, he has anywhere up to 40 Salukis at a time, depending on how many puppies there are. He usually breeds up to four litters each year from his own bloodstock that he has acquired from reliable sources around the Gulf. By selling some of the puppies, for which he issues a pedigree and a health record, he generates income to help maintain the Centre: otherwise he relies on donations and the support of his family. He also offers facilities for boarding dogs, which are supported by the superb kitchen that
feeds his own hounds with a very varied diet of meat, rice’ vegetables, herbs and spices. We tasted their food, which had just been cooked, and it was very good! In the administration building he has facilities for visiting groups of schoolchildren and adults where they can learn about the role of the Saluki in the Bedouin way of life.

His hounds represented a range of types from feathered rangy hounds to smooth more compact ones. He had a number of puppies of different ages from a litter of smooth whites of about a month old to some about 4-5 months old, including two unusual cream hounds with black tails. The colour range was also wide: red and white particoloured, black and tan, red, cream, white and one that he called *Bahri*, which means like the sea, though to me it looked like a pale grizzle. One puppy had enormous ears compared with all the others and looked more like a Springer Spaniel. All the hounds were very friendly as my wife soon found!
I was particularly interested to see how he tackled the problem of maintaining the hunting ability of these hounds in a country where hunting is banned. He has tackled it in two ways. First he has devised a kind of arena inside a wire mesh fence where a couple of hounds can run free. On the outside is an enclosed corridor in which a hare is put. The hare runs round the arena safe inside its corridor while the hounds pursue it inside the arena. It does not really test the hounds since the hare is inclined to stop, as if it knows it is safe, but it sharpens the hounds’ hunting instinct and helps keep them fit. Secondly he trains the hounds in muzzles to hunt live hare on his own land. Occasionally up to 8 hounds are slipped on a gazelle which has been given about 1 km start in a competition designed to establish which of the hounds can reach the gazelle first. He hopes to extend this practice soon in a vast enclosure near al-Ain, known locally as ‘7x7’, although it actually measures 6 x 3.5 km! The area of sand dunes and scrub will be seeded with hares and hunters will be able for a fee to train their falcons and Salukis there. An even larger area is planned in the West. In addition Hamad has acquired the equipment from the former racetrack in al-Ain, which had become redundant as a result of a new project to redevelop the area where it stood, for re-use both for exercising Salukis and also for racing Sighthounds at his own Centre in Abu Dhabi. In these various ways he hopes to maintain fit and healthy hounds capable of hunting
wherever they can. Certainly the hounds that we saw looked in good shape.

Valerie and Mike Ratcliffe, old coursing friends from the UK, joined us later at the Centre and we drove back with them for about 1 ½ hours inland to their new home in al-Ain, where Mike runs a large project to raise various game birds and hares for hunting. We were greeted on arrival by Nabla, their young smooth black, tan and white Saluki bitch from the old Barghash line from Dhahran in Saudi Arabia. The next morning Mike took me on a tour of some of his breeding projects. It was the height of the egg-laying season and as fast as the Arabian Partridges (*Alectoris melancephala*) and Stone Curlews (*Burhinus oedicnemus*) deposited their eggs in the little scrapes in the sand that formed their nests, Mike’s staff whisked them away to be hatched in the safety of incubators. As there were about 1200 breeding Partridges alone everyone was being kept very busy collecting upwards of 75 eggs a day. In the afternoon we were joined by Patrick Paillat, a French consultant with many years of experience in raising wild birds in captivity, and drove out to the ‘7x7’ enclosure to give Nabla a run and to drink tea and eat dates sitting on top of a dune as the sun sank slowly in the West – idyllic!

Patrick Paillat came round again the next morning to bring me some very interesting photographs that he had taken in the Mekran area of Baluchistan in Pakistan, where in the late 1970s he went for several months at a time for several years to collect
wild Houbara eggs for a Saudi breeding project. The local Baluchis were adept hunters with hounds of the Iranian Tazi type.  

All good things have to come to an end but the Ratcliffes made it easier for us by driving us back to Dubai via another of his breeding centres in al-Dhaid, where we saw in a purpose-built enclosure the first batch of his desert hare (*Lepus capensis arabicus*) breeding stock, which had come from Yemen. The hares had settled in well and would soon be transferred to breeding cages. Nearby were pens with breeding pairs of Stone Curlews, which are much favoured as prey by Arab falconers.

We were not quite done with the desert as a sandstorm then blew up and we drove the last stage into Dubai through the swirling dust, out of which suddenly appeared strings of camels returning from a training session on the racetrack. I was amazed to see that one of them appeared to be carrying a monkey on its back. On closer inspection the rider proved to be what is known locally as a “Robojock”. This was Dubai’s high-tech response to the worldwide protests at the employment of underage Pakistani boys as jockeys. This is a real break with tradition but at least it keeps camel breeding going.
Overall it was a fascinating opportunity to observe how the traditional Arab culture of the Emirates is adapting to a rapidly changing world by engaging with modern technology rather than resisting it and it will be interesting to see whether the measures being taken to preserve hunting with hawk and hound will enable this noble pursuit to survive in the long term.

**Ed. note-Egyptian Salukis**- Some time ago, Michal Okon on the SPDBS acquired two pups whose grandsire was an Egyptian saluki.

These pups Rim and Assail are pictured above. Their Egyptian origin stimulated discussion about what if any role Egypt plays as a COO. Though Florence Amherst's salukis were reported to have been imported from Egypt, very little is known of modern day salukis. Sir Terence Clark commented that perhaps there were still some salukis in Egypt.

Then later, the Canadian Saluki club’s newsletter published an article by Gail Goodman in which she made mention as well as presented a picture of an Egyptian saluki Cleo living in Germany. Cleo had been imported by her owners but never registered with the German kennel club. A few years back, she was bred to a black and tan feathered saluki. She whelped several pups, both smooth and feathered. Though it has been said that nothing is known of her heritage, it is very likely that she had one smooth parent and one feathered parent considering her pups. Some of the feathered pups have been registered though not the smooth pups.

I learned while in Egypt that there are a few breeders. That they consider the breed very rare and that the current asking price for a three month old puppy is 6000 Egyptian pounds (approx. $1000 USA). For those fluent and conversant in Arabic, I would suggest that the stud farms near Cairo and Sakkara might well be a source of some Egyptian salukis.
About 30 years ago I fell in love with oriental gazehounds. My first bitch “Saika” was a desert-type Afghan Hound whose grandmother was born in Afghanistan. She had no official pedigree. But she became the reason for my interest in desert bred or native oriental gazehounds.

When in 2003 I was looking for a new dog to take home, I saw an advertisement in our local newspaper that there was a litter of Salukis available. Just around the corner! I called the number and asked for information about these puppies. The lady told me that the mother was an import from Egypt, smooth coated, and that the puppies were without pedigree. She invited me to come and have a look at the litter and the parents.

So when I arrived I found three adult Salukis there: two smooth coated bitches, Cleopatra (sand) and Nofretete (chocolate) and a feathered, black-and-tan male called Sultan, the father of the litter.
Cleopatra, the mother of the puppies, and her sister Nofretete had been born in Egypt in the year 1998. At that time Mr. Metzler lived and worked near Cairo. Just before he moved back to Germany he visited a stud for Arabian horses and there he came in contact with a breeder of Salukis. This breeder just had a litter of puppies about 12 weeks old and he still was looking for new owners. The next day the breeder arrived with a car full of Salukis: the mother and her puppies. Mr. Metzler was told to choose two of them. So he picked out a creme and a chocolate bitch and the breeder gave the two salukis as a present to him. In October 1998 he brought his puppies to Germany.

Some years later the owners of the two bitches, when searching for a new Arabian horse, found a young Saluki male that was looking for a new home. So “Sultan” joined the family and became the father of Cleo’s puppies.

In the litter of nine puppies, there were 6 smooth puppies (4 males, 2 bitches) and 3 feathered bitches.

The puppies were named Nuri, Aladin, Ramses, Djamila, Nilofar, Ninifeh, Madijah, Nhubia. (pictured below).

Fig. 3. Cleopatra                                                                                     Fig. 4  Nofretete

Fig. 5 Sultan
Fig. 6  Nouri

Fig. 7  Aladin

Fig. 8  Ramses
Fig. 9 Djamila

Fig. 10 Nilofar

Fig. 11 Ninifeh

Fig. 12 Madijah
When I decided to take the little bitch “Nhubia” home she was ten days old and I couldn’t see what kind of coat she would have as an adult. She turned out to be feathered. In the year 2004 she became registered by the DWZRV and last year she got her coursing licence.

Nhubia is a very special dog to me. She always makes me laugh: running through the garden carrying one of my cats in her mouth, standing on my husband’s desk at the window and howling like a wolf, biting into the waterjet of the lawn-sprinkler……I can’t tell all the stories. But she is dancing in my heart!
Saluki fanciers around the world will have been saddened by the news of the passing of Mrs Dorothy Lees at her home on 20 March just a few months after her 90th birthday. Although her sight was failing in recent years she remained remarkably bright and cheerful to the end and never lost her enthusiasm for the breed.

Dorothy trained as a nurse and served with the British forces in Iraq after the Second World War. She moved to live in Damascus, Syria in the early 1950s with her first husband Ernest (Bill) Fraser who worked for the Nairn Transport Company that ran a passenger service out of Beirut, Lebanon. He had been involved from the early days of the Company, which was first set up after the First World War and carried passengers mainly by Buick cars initially from Beirut to Haifa, Palestine but later across the desert to Baghdad, Iraq. He had lived for some years at the Nairn Resthouse at Rutba in Iraq and got to know the tribal shaikhs along the route. He introduced Dorothy to some of them and thus began a long love affair with the breed.

I first started corresponding with Dorothy in 1991 when I was living in Baghdad to ask for some information about her Salukis, which I knew came from Iraq, for inclusion in the chapter on Iraqi Salukis that I was writing for the book that eventually became *The Saluqi: Coursing Hound of the East*, edited by Gail Goodman. Dorothy was immediately very supportive and responded with the loan of some of her photographs. She wrote: “I had Amira first. She was trained to hunt when she was given to me, a beautiful rich red with black fringed ears, heavily feathered for a desert dog, about 22” in height. She was very fast, very obedient and most affectionate. I knew the family of Abdul Razzak and often visited them in Ramadi when I lived in Iraq. They knew I liked their Salukis and promised one day they would give me a good one. Our Nairn buses had to stop at Ramadi for Customs, where we employed someone to make fresh tea and coffee for the passengers during the half-hour stop. Amira was put on the Pullman there and arrived in Damascus about 8 am. I was delighted with her……….My husband knew the Emir Nuri Sha’alan of the Rualla tribe very well and his grandson the Emir Fawwaz was a good friend of ours and used to visit our home in Damascus. On one of his visits after I had Amira, who he liked very much, he arrived with Caesar, who was about 5 months old, tan and white and born near Rutba: a husband for Amira, he said. He had
feathering on his tail and a little on the upper leathers of his ears. He was very obedient and great fun.” From Caesar Rualla and Amira Razzaka Dorothy bred two litters and together they laid the foundation of the Rualla line. The late Eugenia Kissinger, who had first met Dorothy in Beirut in 1963, took two puppies from the first litter – a bitch, Shihan, which she bred while in Iran, and a dog, Sayyad, which went on to Joe Pendry then living in Jordan but later he returned with Sayyad to the USA. Dorothy and Bill had meanwhile returned to the UK in 1965 with Caesar and Amira and two bitches from the second litter, Ferial and Falha, which were put to two Knightlington dogs, Ch. Kn. Caspah and Ch. Kn. Djahi respectively, from the latter of which came Helen Baker’s bitch Zoulaira, which in 1991 Dorothy described as “the best coursing bitch ever”, and Rualla Naa-naa, which Dorothy put to Amena Rigbyhall Atura in 1974 and from their litter Rualla Shusha and Rualla Mustafa went to Eugenia to perpetuate the Rualla line in the USA. Caesar was also used for stud by Miss Kean of Ajman Salukis, who was very pleased with the litter. Falha eventually joined Eugenia too and Dorothy finally offered her the Rualla prefix.

Dorothy was very disappointed with the reaction in the UK to her desert bred Salukis by some of the breeders and over the years became increasingly disillusioned with some of the Salukis coming forward at the shows. She wrote in a hard-hitting article in the 2003 Crufts edition of The Saluki: “Some of the newer breeders seemed somewhat dissatisfied with the original types of the breed, breeding to enhance it, as they thought. Many small faults could be seen, but, as many of these hounds were being placed at shows, the faults did not seem to matter. I was told by one breeder that they had improved the breed.” She concluded her article: “Serious faults have developed: the future of the Saluki as we wish to preserve it is in danger. What is wrong with some breeders that they cannot see the faults in their own hounds? Sadder still is that some judges do not seem to be aware of them! The future of our ancient breed depends on the decision of the judges.” She appealed to show judges to go back to the breed standard and to give recognition to “the great variations of type due to wide geographical area of origin”.

While she was still working as a matron at a hospital near Windsor, Bill died in 1970 and the following year Dorothy married a former colleague from the Nairn Company, Harold Lees, who passed away in 1985. She continued to attend the Saluki shows occasionally and entered her then 14-year-old bitch Katie in the veteran class at the Northern Saluki Club Show in 1991, “just for fun, as I am not much interested in the shows, but I want people to see how lovely she looks for her age”, she wrote to me. Dorothy too was a lovely old lady and will be sadly missed.
My association and, as time elapsed, my wonderful friendship with Dorothy goes back to 1963. She and Eugenia Kissinger and I were in the Middle East at that time. Eugenia and I in Amman and Dorothy in Lebanon.

Eugenia called me one day from USAID/Jordan and asked did I want a Saluki. After learning what a Saluki was I said yes. Some weeks later Eugenia returned from Chtoura, bringing with her Rualla Shihan (fig. 2) and Rualla Sayyad (Fig.3) for me. The breeder was Dorothy. She and husband Bill had lived in Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon for many years and had obtained their first Saluki from tribesmen transversing the Iraq-Syria border marches. She took the tribal name, Rualla, for her prefix. Time passed and Eugenia went off to Tehran, the Frasers back to the United Kingdom, and me and my first Saluki to the US.

Eugenia found me after a few years in California and we renewed our friendship and interest in Salukis. At this point, early 1970s, my contact with Dorothy was also restored. Dorothy visited Eugenia who had re-located to California and me on several occasions and I visited her every year that I went to the UK for Crufts over the years.
She was one of the most interesting people who have graced and enriched my life. Other than my visits to her in England we also spent a couple of delightful holidays together in Egypt, the last being in 2000. She loved Egypt as do I and usually spent part of the cold English winters there. We spent our days taking carriage rides through the city of Luxor, the bazaar, numerous archeological sites. One of her favorite sites was the Temple of Mut, a part of the Karnak complex. We always talked Salukis and politics. We indulged ourselves in recent visits by bashing Bush and Blair. As we both had lived in the Arab East we were hurt and angered by the ignorant destruction wrought upon Iraq by this vile dastardly duo. She had lived in Rutba and Baghdad. I had spent considerable time traveling in Iraq and Kuwait in the mid 1960s. We had fond memories of a wonderful country and delightful people now all but destroyed along with so much history destroyed by bombings, random shooting, and looting.

Some of my fondest memories of Dorothy aside from her incredible knowledge of Salukis was her sense of history. She and Bill were contemporaries of some of the most colorful expatriate figures in the Middle East during the late 1940s and 50s, not the least of which was H. St. John Philby, the premier Arabist, his wives and children. As an Arabist, I have a keen interest in him and his infamous son, Kim who was part of the celebrated English spy network of Burgess, McLean, Blunt and Kim Philby. Kim would visit his father when on holiday from Oxford and Dorothy and Bill regularly hosted the senior Philby and his second (Saudi) wife and children on visits to Damascus. She found Kim a nice personable young man. The Frasers and H. St. John Philby went back many years to pre-war times while he was married to his first wife (English). He later divorced her, converted to Islam, and re-married a Saudi woman and had two more sons.

As an aside, the expatriate life in the Middle East was very close. One knew just about everyone and when visiting people came through on official business or otherwise one had at least a passing social relationship with a wide variety of unusually fascinating people. That was equally true of my years in Egypt and Jordan. I enjoyed so much her accounts of her life in Damascus and her contacts with so many historical figures, Arab as well as third party nationals. Her friendships with members of the Rualla tribe were a great source of pleasure to her. Her original Salukis came from them. It was a heady, invigorating time in our lives and likely the reason we both felt so strongly about the present Bush-Blair misadventure.
She thoroughly loved Salukis and had a great eye for the good ones. On one of her later visits to the US she critiqued my entire pack - an evaluation that I treasure. She loved my dogs and was pleased with what I had been able to accomplish.

I last saw her at Crufts a year ago. We talked on the phone regularly during the past couple of years. She started sending me her treasured books on Salukis and the Arab East. Like her, she knew that I was a "reader" and would value her books. I did not ask for them and was surprised and honored to be the recipient. Now I must find someone to leave them to. I was really torn up when Phillip Browning called me to tell me of her death. Her loss to me is beyond calculation. Her loss to the breed is, indeed, a great loss. Like my good friend, Shirley Lightfoot, Dorothy got little recognition for the wealth of knowledge that she brought to the Saluki world. Regrettable. To those who did know her and could appreciate her contribution this is an irreparable loss.

Some of the salukis from Dorothy Lees’ life.

(Fig. 5) Rualla NaaNaa in the garden rear- Knightellington Lanra front=Knightellington Zoulaira

(Fig. 7) Rualla Mustafa (Jerico) owned by Eugenia Kissinger.

(Fig. 8) Katie, Dorothy’s last saluki
MORE STAMPS from Lorraine Trenholm
Finland welcomes you to The Saluki World Congress 2008

Welcome one and all to celebrate the multifaceted Saluki in all its glory! The Finnish Saluki fancy warmly invites you and yours to a Saluki celebration without equal - 7 days of seminars, shows, races and lure-courses set in the lovely Finnish summer. A chance to share our passion for the breed with likeminded people from across the globe, from neophytes to seasoned veterans.

We offer a full week of Saluki activities:
26.06. The Saluki Lure-Coursing competition
27.06. The National Saluki Speciality (Judges Mrs. Rosemary Lewis-Knightellington Salukis, England, and Dr. JOAnn van Arsdale-Chubasco Salukis, USA)
28.06. The National Sighthound Speciality
29.06. An International All-breed Show
30.06. Seminars
01.07. Seminars and the Saluki Racing Competition
02.07. The Saluki Racing Competition

The seminars cover all things Saluki and are given by recognized authorities in the breed:
Dr. Riitta Aho (DVM) (Finland) - Saluki movement and conformation
Dr. JoAnn van Arsdale (DVM) (USA) - Saluki Health
Dr. John Burchard (Ph.D) (USA) - hunting and coursing
Sir Terence Clark (UK) - Salukis in the countries of origin
Dr. Espen Engh (DVM) (Norway) - Saluki types and trends around the world
Ms. Karin Hedberg (Sweden) - Saluki temperament
Ms. Dagmar Hintzenberg-Freisleben (Germany) - Saluki activities
Ms. Annika Kutilainen (Finland) - Saluki colors and their inheritance
Brian Duggan and Mary Beth Rogers (USA) - Saluki history
Hamad Alghanem (UAE) - A life with Salukis

The seminar days are wrapped up with panel discussions on the day's topics.

Don't miss out on the Saluki celebration of a lifetime!
From Sir Terence Clark.

"Since writing my article on Kurdish Tazis in Iran (Winter 2006), I have heard that the Tazi Breeding Centre in Sanandaj, Kurdistan, Iran has been built and that there are about 40 Tazis installed there as the foundation breeding stock. They all come from a proven hunting background."

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