

# In Memoriam

## Mr. Anthony Killykeen-Doyle

### Killykeen Irish Wolfhounds

It is with great sadness and despair that we have to report the passing of Mr. Anthony Killykeen-Doyle, owner of the famous Killykeen Irish Wolfhounds. Tony was a wonderful man full of charm, kindness, enormous knowledge and one of the last of his kind, a true sportsman. Just over a year many friends wrote articles for the *IW World*, a written tribute to Tony. That articles, among other things, celebrated the fact that he had owned, raised and breed Irish Wolfhounds for 55 years. Little did we know at that time, that just over a year later he would be taken away from us.

His Killykeen Hounds are famous the world over. They have had an enormous influence on the breed, nearly as much as Tony himself. His deep knowledge of bloodlines, conformation, structure and his true devotion to this beloved breed was unmatched. He dedicated his life to these wonderful hounds and keeping his promise to his mentors, to continue their work to keep the lines going. And so he did for over 56 years, until his death. In the end, Tony and his Killykeen hounds was the longest established kennel in Ireland.



*Tony with a boy from his last litter, having a discussion about who's jacket this is.*

He got his first wolfhound when he was 11 years old, the beautiful Emer of Ballytobin from Dr. Robert May. The dog's parents were Jo of Ballytobin & Cill Dara Machushla. Tony described her as "a dark brindle bitch with true Irish spotting; a white chest, four white feet and the white tip to the tail. A coat like steel wool, small ears, dark eyes and lovely facial furnishings".



*To the right: Tony with Emer*

Tony was a young boy when he started showing. His first placement at a show was under the great judge Miss Loughrey at the Irish Kennel Club Show. Tony arrived late and the class had already been judged. Miss Loughrey was about to place the class when she was told that the missing puppy had arrived. She brought Tony and Emer into the ring and went over the bitch; then told Tony to walk up to the front of the line. Miss Loughrey then announced to the exhibitors that there were three types of Wolfhounds; the cart-horse, the hunter and the thoroughbred. The thoroughbred arrived late, but won! He later won green star and Hound group under the same judge.

So many great kennels all over the world started with breeding stock from Tony. He had so many friends all over the world that loved him and have so much to thank him for. Irish Wolfhound history will remember Tony fondly and with much gratitude for his work in the breed.

He had foresight in breeding, which meant only breed from the soundest, most beautiful hounds. That's what made the Killykeen Irish Wolfhounds special. Tony went to great lengths to stay true to his type; he would never go for the latest fashion. And he had very strong opinion on the "chocolate box specimen" type of wolfhounds. He often spoke about this and would warn us from using this type of "show dogs" in breeding and also try to prevent this type of wolfhounds to win at any shows. His Hounds were the original thoroughbred, happy, healthy hounds.

To observe him judging in the show ring was a real treat. He gave every dog, no matter the quality, the same attention and love. He was known for his special touch to every dog that was lined up and made ready for his examination. He'd go down on one knee; kiss the dog's nose, and then he would reach into his pocket for his comb. After arranging the dog's whiskers like he preferred them, he'd send them around the ring and then do his



critique. This special treatment of every dog in the class was heaven for the dog and their handler. This wonderful way of judging changes the atmosphere inside and outside the ring and made the dogs and their handler to relax and enjoy themselves.



Those of us who were fortunate enough to visit and stay with Tony in his lovely County Cavan home; also had the fortune to study alongside him as he went about feeding and exercising his dogs. This was a wonderful opportunity to gain valuable insights from a very intelligent teacher. It was incredible to see him surrounded by all his dogs in the pasture. He loved them all and gave each the special attention. You could see that every one felt that they were the best one; the most beautiful; and that most precious one to Tony.... just like he could make you feel. And all the dogs knew how he felt about them and showed the same deep affection toward their beloved master.

Tony spent hours out in the kennel kitchen every day preparing meals for his hounds. He was a strong believer in feeding them the old way; meat, eggs, milk and vegetables. He did not take any shortcuts and would never feed solely commercial dog food.

Tony was very fond of his true friends, very generous and always there for them. He would take time to give advice, help and comfort when you were down or when things were not going so well. He also would celebrate with you when there were victories or good news. He had the ability to make you feel better and fill you with energy after talking to him. He also had a remarkable way of teaching you things without you ever feeling like he was lecturing you.

Tony had a voice made for doing lectures and telling stories. So full of authority, credibility and a very exiting way of telling stories. He was also incredibly gifted with the pen, and wrote many wonderful lectures and the wonderful book "A Discussion of The Irish Wolfhound". Which is a "must have" for all wolfhound lovers that is interested in the history of the breed. And as Tony always said, you can't breed a true Irish Wolfhound without knowing the history of the breed and how the masters in the past meant the ideal wolfhound should be.

An incredible gentleman has left us, and his death is especially hard for those of us who knew him well and loved him. He has left us all a permanent legacy through his writings and through his Killykeen Hounds.



A bright light is gone from the world of Irish Wolfhounds.  
Rest in peace, dear friend.

*Velda Clark & Anne Mette Mikkelsen*

