

BASSET GRIFFON VENDEEN special



On the international scene

by Linda Skerritt

WE HAVE come a long way since 1969 when a PBGV, the first BGV to arrive in England from France, faced six months quarantine and, for enthusiastic UK breeders, importation was difficult and costly. However many travelled regularly to popular European shows and more PBGVs gradually arrived.

Counteracting the reluctance of French breeders to part with their hounds, the 1970s saw a gradual migration to other European countries, predominantly via the Wells-Meocham/Seiffert 'Jomil' lines, reared skilfully by kennelman Nick Frost (Dehra). PBGVs appeared in Scandinavia from France and England and, in Denmark, Per Knudsen took up the reins, with his Morebess Petits dominating.

From Morebess roots, an early PBGV to earn recognition was Gunnar Nymann and Holger Busk's **Chouan Gimlet**. It was at the World Show 1989 in Copenhagen that he gained the distinction of going BIS. Already holding several European titles, he then went to Helen Ingher (Charlen) and Carol Strong in the US, picking up other titles before returning to Denmark. Chouan continued to prosper, fostering the breed's popularity in other countries including Australia, Czech Republic and Poland.

In Holland, a year after the import of a bitch called **Neruska**, in 1973 a Jomil PBGV arrived for Carla Gerber (Hollandheim) and Thelma Vlas acquired others from France. Shortly after, in 1978 Jolanda Huisman started her du Greffier du Roi kennels with a Grand female and Petit male.



Chouan Gimlet, best in show at the 1989 World Show in Copenhagen.



Ch Soletrader Peek A Boo, 2012's Top Dog all-breeds in the UK and best in show at the Amsterdam Winner Show in 2011.

However success at the 1980 French Nationale d'Elevage with the larger variety set her heart in specialising in her distinctive Grands. In 1988 a du Greffier du Roi became the first BGV for the Huikeshoven family and what was to become another leading Dutch kennel. The Van Tum-Tum's Vriendjes regularly gained top honours throughout Europe with their BGVs, the latest being group one at the Amsterdam Winner Show 2012 with PBGV **Can/Am Gr Ch Soletrader Bjorn Borg**, the result of a breeding between a Swedish Vilaudens dog and Afterglow bitch.

Interest in America started in 1972, when a Jomil PBGV arrived for the Bergishagens, who had previously lost a French import. However it wasn't until the early '80s, that further UK imports from Vendric, Varon, Wakelins, Jaclin, Monkham and Beacontree helped bring the breed to judges' attention. Then, in 1989 the first BGV in America, **My Key du Greffier du Roi**, went to Mike and Arlene Dickenson (After-Ours), Oregon. Ten years later **After-Ours Grand Larceny at Hootwire** became a success story for Debbie Perrott, Shirley Knipe, and Carolyn Marzano, with countless BIS wins and group two at the World Show in Mexico 1999. Since then numbers of Grands have grown steadily, supported by an enthusiastic club and strong foundations from European lines.

UK PBGVs have been a force to be reckoned with in the American show ring. 2002 saw **Am Ch Pepperhill-Dehra Charmaine** gaining her 20th BIS in Texas, with more to come. Charmaine hailed from UK stock (Ch Dehra Urio ex Ch Varon Tapette), exported to the US by Nick Frost on moving there in 1995. In 2003, she went BOB at the prestigious Westminster but she had to settle for a group two. In 2005 **Ch/Am Ch Afterglow Woody Woodpecker** went group three but it was an American-bred PBGV, from European lines, who finally achieved group one in 2007. **Am Ch Celestial CJ's Jolly Fairchild** was a popular winner who wooed the crowds. Looking ahead, UK-bred PBGVs continue to dominate with a staggering eleven gaining BOB at the PBGVCA Nationals since the first 1987 show, successful Afterglow, Soletrader and Monkham PBGVs topping the national rankings and a Monkham becoming the only Petit to ever win multiple BIS/BVIS/best in speciality and BV in speciality in the same year.

Although Jomil PBGVs went to Edith Hurling in Australia in 1973, the breed did not endure. It wasn't until the late '90s that American and UK imports arrived. By 2002, Robyn Wallis finally had her first homebred Petit in the ring, after four years' research, traveling and advice from overseas breeders. **Rokeena Alyons Amusement**, whose dam was a UK-bred Plushcourt, became a wonderful ambassador, siring champions in six countries. Since then, Robyn and husband Russ have imported from various lines including Chouan, Charlen and Monkham and their kennel dominates the Australian show scene, with successful exports to New Zealand and the US.

In 2002 Plushcourt PBGVs were also making their name in Europe as Betty Judge conquered pet passport requirements. It was at the European and Paris shows where **Chiroubles** made history by becoming the first British-bred and owned PBGV to win top honours, gaining the title European Winner.

At home, a Debucher PBGV, **C'est Ça**, made headlines in 1997 winning the Crufts hound group. Then in 2000 a top-winning Grand, **Le Barbu**, also bred by Vivien Phillips, achieved the accolade of going BIS at the Amsterdam Winner Show. Subsequently co-owned with Jolanda Huisman, he followed up with RBIS 2003. The Winner Show has been a magnet for successful BGVs over the years, none other than for Soletrader, whose **Ch Willowbrae Amazing Grace** headed the group in 2001, followed by grand-daughter **Ch Peek A Boo** who in 2011 also achieved the ultimate BIS, the year in which she triumphed with RBIS Crufts. In more recent years, Gavin and Sara Robertson's Soletrader kennel has contributed to the show scene worldwide having exported widely with success in countries as far apart as Russia and Canada, where they collaborate with



Ch Debucher C'est Ca won the hound group at Crufts 1997 under Jean Lanning.

Martin and Wendy Doherty (Auriga), UK-bred Grands have now established the breed down under, where Debucher became foundation stock for Debbie and Darrell Matthews (Rickaby), although Jane Quinn (Laserra) was the first to import from Tarmachan, Scotland, in 2008. Between them and with a further import from Jessica Holm (Holmchappell), they have helped secure a bright future of the Australian Grand.

With today's relaxed travel requirements, the BGV is now a familiar and popular addition at international shows. Without doubt many successes worldwide have been enhanced not only by the larger UK kennels but also the smaller ones, whose enthusiasm and dedication have cemented its future as a hound to be reckoned with.



Ch/Dutch/Ger Ch Debucher Le Barbu, best in show at the Amsterdam Winner Show in 2000 and the breed's first UK champion.