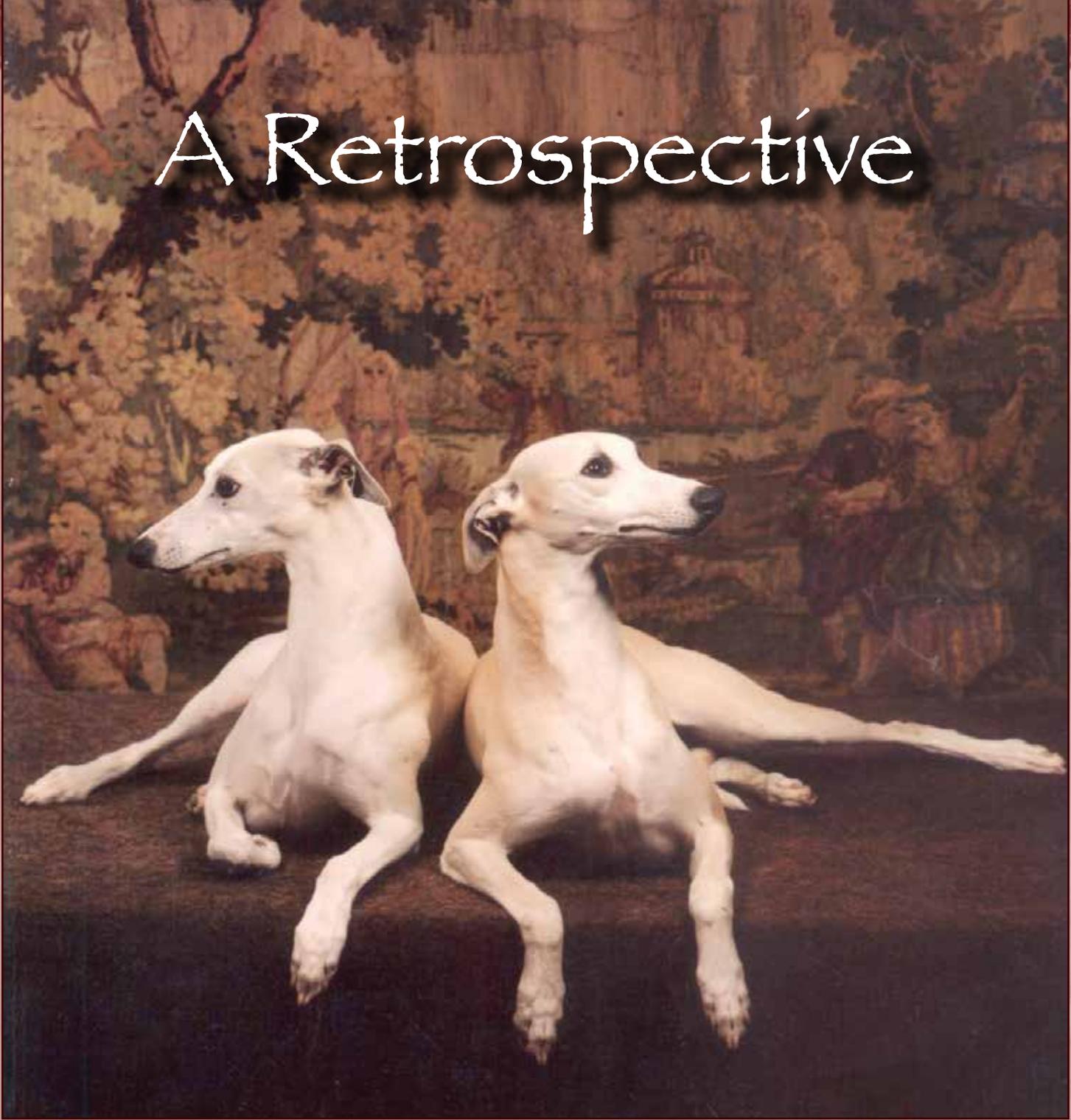


# A Retrospective



*Two winners of Best in Show at the American Whippet Club National Specialty, Ch. Merci Isle Burncoat Babylon and his sire Ch. Merci Isle Meridian. Photo by Samuelson Studios.*

## Merci Isle

Iva & Jeffrey Kimmelman  
Stow \* Massachusetts \* USA  
[www.merciisle.com](http://www.merciisle.com) \* [iva@merciisle.com](mailto:iva@merciisle.com)



**THE FIRST WHIPPET:**

**Verdi of Merci Isle**

b. 1971  
by Dahnwood Busstop  
x My Pretty Penny



**Folquin Sprig**

b. 1972 by Ch. Morshor's Whirlaway  
x Ch. Ultimate Folly

## The Beginning

**M**erci Isle began in 1967, the year I had my first hands-on experience with a Whippet. I was 18 years old at the time, had grown up in love with dogs and all animals and was working as a kennel assistant to professional handlers Ben and Marie Talbot at the Royal Acres kennels in Washington State.

I was into "real dogs" in those days, but this skinny little thing just wrapped me around her paw... She would stand a few feet away and just stare adoringly into my eyes. At first I thought it was odd, but after a while I found it charming, and my fate was set.

The Talbots' daughter owned "Peggy," whose registered name was Ch. Pennyworth This One Is

Mine, and they had obtained her from Mrs. Margaret Newcombe's famous kennel in New Hampshire.

I had seen the full-page color photo in *LIFE Magazine* of Ch. Courtenay Fleetfoot of Pennyworth after he won Best in Show at Westminster in 1964. That sealed the deal, but I didn't know it at the time. Peggy was a daughter of that gorgeous Whippet in *LIFE Magazine*, and she charmed me into "seeing" Whippets for the wonderful, beautiful breed that they are, inside and out.

My first Whippet was a little fawn-and-white dog named Verdi of Merci Isle, who was given to me by Marie Talbot after I stopped working at Royal Acres in 1971: I had told her how much I wanted to own



**Widgets Pandora**

b. 1971 by Dahnwood Busstop  
x My Pretty Penny

a Whippet some day. I also got his registration papers, which were blank. He was born in the town of Mercer Island in Washington State, where I grew up, hence my kennel name and my beginnings.

Continued



**Ch. Merci Isle Strange Brew**

b. 1973 by Folquin Sprig  
x Widgets Pandora, shown with Iva and judge Robin Hernandez.



**Ch. Merci Isle The Sting**

b. 1975 by Ch. Westgate The Sorcerer x Ch. Merci Isle Strange Brew. BOW at AWC Western specialty 1977, shown with judge Bo Bengtson and Rosemary Sutton.

**A Watershed Stud Dog**



**Ch. Westgate The Sorcerer**

b. 1973 by Ch. Pathens Shaitan of Carrob x Ch. Pennyworth At Odds. Bred by Susan Vargas. Owned and shown by Iva Kimmelman and Rosemary Sutton.



**Ch. Merci Isle Designer Genes**

b. 1982 by Ch. Summerwind's The Magician (a Sorcerer son) x Merci Isle Magnificent Me (a Strange brew daughter). WB & BOW at the first So. Cal. Whippet Fanciers Assoc. 1983 under judge Dale Simmons, handled by Iva.



**Ch. Merci Isle Celebrate Me Home**

b. 1979 by Merci Isle Triad Jihad x Merci Isle Cariad Cayenne. WB & BOW at the AWC Midwest specialty weekend 1981, handled by Jeri Cates under breeder-judge Anthony Gutilla.



**Ch. Merci Isle Brave New World**

b. 1979 by Ch. Westgate The Sorcerer x Ch. Merci Isle Strange Brew. RWD at the AWC Western specialty in Santa Barbara 1977, handled by owner Donna Lukasky under judge Lynnette Schelling from Australia.

Verdi was a grandson of that wonderful little Whippet I had met, Peggy, and had some of the most illustrious names imaginable in his pedigree: Ch. Ringmore Finisterre, Ch. Pennyworth Would You Believe, Ch. Courtenay Fleet-foot of Pennyworth, Ch. Laguna Ligonier and Ch. Tantivvey Diver of Pennyworth. I learned later that Peggy was the dam of Ch. Pennyworth Starlet, the famous bitch that went to Jackie Q. Kubat's Dragonfly Whippets, now in Argentina.

Although Verdi was never used in my breeding program, his litter sister, Widgets Pandora, whom I

purchased as an adult, certainly was. She is behind all Merci Isle dogs today. These two dogs were the poster children for how Whippets charm everyone with their sweet, natural affection for people. I so wish I had dogs like them to breed to today. They were of beautiful type and had wonderful temperaments. They had it all.

Over the years I have been blessed with some great mentors, and also learned from some bad examples I have seen, but like everything else, I didn't realize the value of this in the big scheme of things at the time. Right or wrong, I learned from the best and the worst. Only later, as I looked at my dogs, at my dogs' pedigrees and at what I have accomplished over nearly 50 years of loving Whippets, did I realize that I had really been paying attention to these people.

I was fortunate to know the people I did: A-list breeders and exhibitors who saw that I was

serious about Whippets and took me under their wings. Many became my mentors — John Shelton, Isabell Stoffers and Michael Dougherty to name three of my favorites. They were highly knowledgeable, strong-opinioned leaders, and I am so grateful they didn't just pat me on the head and ignore me. They sought me out to teach me how to do things with dogs with honor and integrity.

Merci Isle has always been a small breeding operation, breeding on average barely a litter per year, plus a few co-bred with others. I have bred, according to old records and what I can get from the AKC, well over 100 AKC show champions and at least 40 that are Lure Coursers of Merit, AKC and/or ASFA Field Champions. There are also Merci Isle champions in Canada, Sweden and Great Britain that I am extremely proud and grateful for.

Welcome to this visual representation of my beautiful Whippets and the many rewards that loving them has afforded me through the years. I hope you enjoy what you see!

IVA KIMMELMAN  
Merci Isle Whippets



**Ch. Merci Isle Touch Gold, FCh.**

b. 2006 by Ch. Byerley Savile Row x Ch. Merci Isle Velvet Hammer, FCh.

## Sires of Significance

A few sires of the past have had great significance for Merci Isle.



### **Ch. Delacreme de la Renta, ROMX**

b. 1983 by Ch. Saxon Shore Amber Waves x Ch. Runner's Creme de la Creme. Bred by Mary Dukes. Owned by Mary Dukes and Doris Bandoian.



### **Ch. Hamrya's Lucky Charm, SC, FCh., ROM**

b. 1987 by Ch. Morshor's Majestic Prince x Ch. Hamrya's Moonscape V Tyobi. Bred and owned by Donna Lynch.



### **Ch. Sporting Fields N' Erin Piano Man**

b. 1994 by Ch. Topaz Jazz Singer x Sporting Fields Simplicity. Bred by Dionne Butt Giles, owned by John and Sharon Lyons.

*Iva with Ch. Merci Isle Strange Brew in the 1970s.*

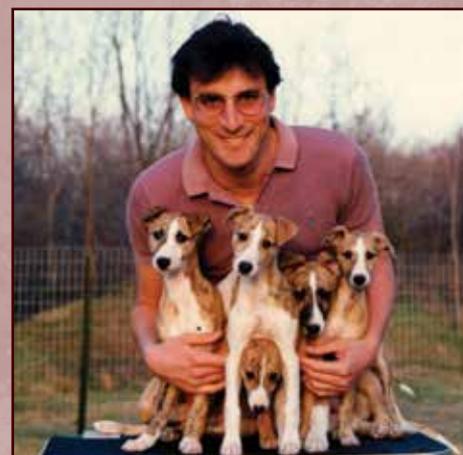


## Jeffrey Kimmelman

I want to take this opportunity to thank my husband, Jeffrey, for being my biggest cheerleader and supporter. He has also been an important guide for decisions that turned out really well.

It was Jeffrey who insisted we rescue and take possession of Spectre Forever Amber when her owners thought so little of her they literally threw her and her AKC papers over her breeder's back fence.

We took Amber in and Jeff saved her. She was a wreck, a totally feral Whippet that had apparently received no socialization whatever. Jeff won her over with infinite patience and offerings of



*Jeff with puppies born 1987, sired by Ch. Hound Hill Sea Otter out of Ch. Merci Isle Designer Genes*



cheese, which she loved, and it was he who encouraged me to breed her to Ch. Morshor's Majestic Dell, which produced five champions, including Ch. Merci Isle Hot Flowers. The rest is history, as they say. Amber's dam was a granddaughter of Ch. Merci Isle Brave New World, so she was at least partly of my breeding.

Jeffrey is also quite a good handler: he never gets stressed, doesn't care about the unimportant things that go on, tries to win with a dog he believes in — and often does.

### **Merci Isle The Maneater, FCh.**

b. 1986 by Ch. Spectre Westgate The Mystic x Ch. Merci Isle Designer Genes, pictured lure coursing with Jeff.

## Racing and Lure Coursing



### **Ch. Merci Isle Jacaranda, LCM**

b. 2011 by DC Surrey Hill's Golden Boy, LCM  
x Ch. Merci Isle Dove Feather, FCh.

## It's All About Agility and Speed



### **Ch. Merci Isle Butterfly Ballet, LCM**

b. 1999  
by Ch. Sporting Fields  
N' Erin Piano Man  
x Ch. Merci Isle  
Dreamy Draw, FCh.

### **Ch. Merci Isle Dove Feather, FCh., ROM**

b. 2005  
by Ch. Byerley Savile Row  
x Ch. Merci Isle Velvet Hammer, FCh.



I raced my dogs before I ever exhibited in the ring in the early 1970s. I was taught to show and race, usually on the same weekend.

Then I discovered open field coursing and later lure coursing, through Lyle Gillette, whom I knew from the field. Lyle had started the American Sighthound Field Association in California in 1972. I have long been identified as a Whippet fancier who promotes the traditional dual purpose enjoyment of our breed, and I still breed for healthy, handsome, well-made dogs with a keen prey drive.

I have tried hard, and often succeeded, to produce dual-titled Whippets with every litter. If a Whippet can't run like a Whippet should, it is not really a good representative of its breed.



### THREE GENERATIONS

Spectre Forever Amber, ROM (left) with her daughter Ch. Merci Isle Hot Flowers, FCh. and granddaughter Sw. Ch. Merci Isle Whisper To A Purr, pictured in the early 1990s. Photo Magnus Hagstedt.



### Spectre Forever Amber, ROM

b. 1985 by Ch. Saxon Shore Amber Waves  
x Ch. Spectre Chalcedony.

It was just a stroke of luck that this beautiful Whippet came our way.

## Someone Special



### Ch. Merci Isle Hot Flowers, FCh.

b. 1988 by Ch. Morshor's Majestic Dell, LCM x Spectre Forever Amber.

I adore and live for my dogs but have never loved another dog like "Willow." She was my baby. It drove Jeff crazy that I had a hard time leaving the house without her. I don't know why, but she was the one. Willow lived to be 16 years old.





**Sw. Ch. Merci Isle Whisper To A Purr**

b. 1989 by Ch. Delacreme de la Renta x Ch. Merci Isle Hot Flowers, F.Ch. Shown with Iva, pictured winning her Puppy class with judge Carol Willumsen and trophy presenter Dr. Barbara Henderson at the 1990 AWC National Specialty. 'Kittre' later went to my friend Magnus Hagstedt in Sweden and produced several champions both for his Signum Whippets and for Airescot.



**Ch. Merci Isle Distant Mirror**

b. 1993 by Ch. Merci Isle Meridian x Merci Isle Black Heart, FCh. Pictured with Jeff and breeder-judge Cindy Scott.

**Merci Isle Black Heart, FCh.**

b. 1990  
by Ch. Hamrya's Lucky Charm  
x Ch. Merci Isle Spectator Sport



**Ch. Merci Isle Zephyr**

b. 1989 by Ch. Delacreme de la Renta x Ch. Merci Isle Hot Flowers, FCh. Litter brother to Zoom, lost prematurely in an accident.



**Ch. Merci Isle Bavarian Chocolate**

b.1981 by Ch. Knolland High Time x Ch. Merci Isle The Moonraker. WB & BOW Santa Barbara Kennel Club under judge Bo Bengtson, bred and owned by Iva and Christine House, shown by Sharon Zaker (now an AKC judge).





"Zoom" and Jeffrey

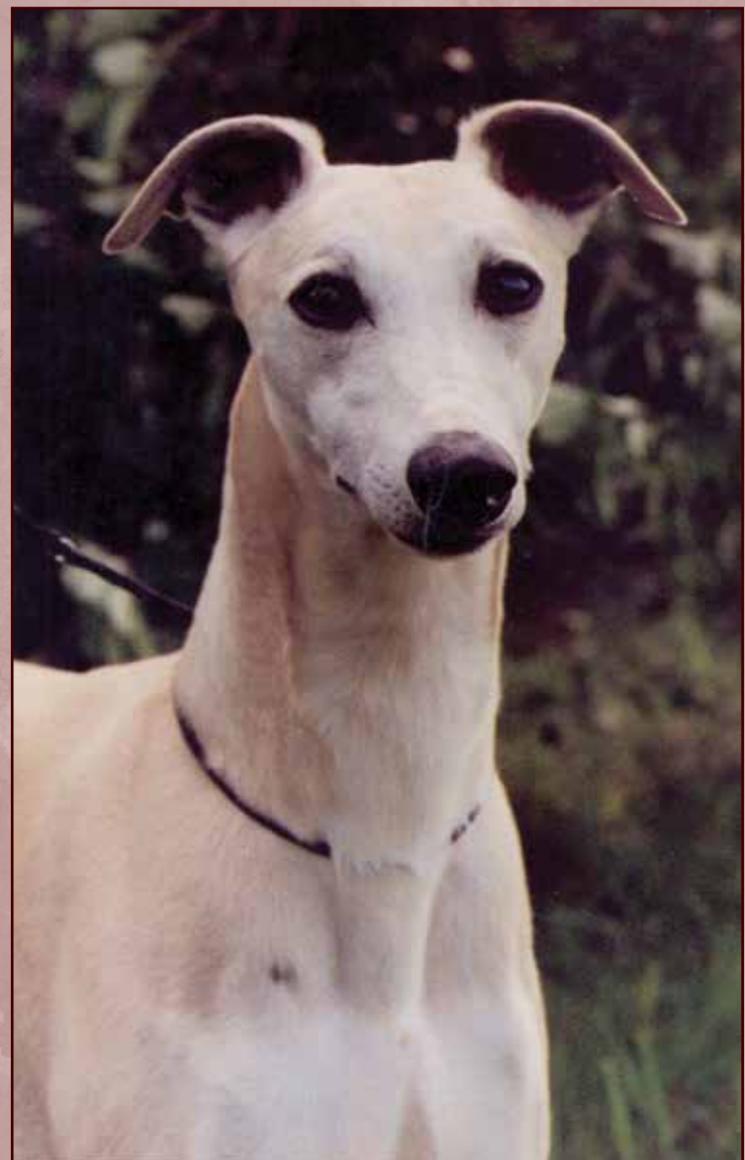
## Game Changer

### **AWC National SBIS Ch. Merci Isle Meridian, ROMX**

b. 1989 by Ch. Delacreme de la Renta, ROMX  
x Ch. Merci Isle Hot Flowers, FCh.

"Zoom" won the AWC National Specialty under breeder-judge Mrs. Lorraine Groshans in 1993. Bo Bengtson wrote in *Dog News*: "It was a tremendously popular win for a dog which oozes Whippet type and has been close to getting 'the big one' several times before. (In fact, his young son Ch. Merci Isle Burncoat Babylon preceded his sire as an AWC specialty winner last fall!)"

Owner-breeder-handler Iva Kimmelman has been one of the most consistent and conscientious Whippet breeders since the 1970s — and I think everyone was thrilled to see her persistence pay off."





**AWC National SBIS  
Ch. Merci Isle Burncoat Babylon**

b. 1991 by Ch. Merci Isle Meridian x Ch. Morshor's Appraxin Sheree. Left, on the beach; above, winning the AWC National Futurity in 1992 under judges Mary Beth Arthur and Jean Balint. He also won the AWC Southern specialty that year and the AWC National specialty in 1995, both under breed specialist judge Dr. John Shelton.



**Merci Isle Banarama, JC**  
b. 1996 by Ch. Merci Isle Meridian  
x Ch. Merci Isle A Distant Mirror, SC

# The International Connection



**SBIS Aust. & Am. Ch. Byerley Savile Row, ROMX**

b. 2000 by Aust. Ch. Khabaray Hugo Boss, imp. UK x Aust. Ch. Byerley Demeter. Bred and owned by Peter Moore and Peter Griffith in Australia, who graciously let us lease 'Sav' for a year and a half. During his stay in the U.S. he qualified for his ROMX title as a top producer.



*Sav with puppy Flair immediately after arrival from Australia in 2004.*



**UK Ch. Barnesmore Red Rose at Palmik**

b. 2008 by German Ch. Barnesmore Paint The Town Red x Barnesmore Summer of Love. Bred by Felicity Thompson in Ireland, imported from Palmik in the UK, dam of champions at Merci Isle.



**Am & UK Ch. Merci Isle Magnolia at Palmik**

b. 2011 by DC Surrey Hill's Golden Boy, LCM x Ch. Merci Isle Dove Feather, FCh. ROM. Exported to Palmik kennels in Great Britain.



Velvet Hammer on the coursing field.



**Ch. Merci Isle Velvet Hammer, FCh., ROM**

b. 1997 by Ch. Sporting Fields N' Erin Piano Man  
x Ch. Merci Isle Dreamy Draw, F.Ch.

## Inspirational



**Ch. Merci Isle Dreamy Draw, FCh.**

b. 1996 by Ch. Merci Isle Meridian  
x Ch. Merci Isle A Distant Mirror



**Ch. Merci Isle Light The Way, FCh.**

b. 1997 by Ch. Sporting Fields N' Erin Piano Man  
x Ch. Merci Isle Sallie Forth



**Ch. Merci Isle Look Out!**

b. 1999 by Ch. Merci Isle Light The Way, FCh.  
x Ch. Merci Isle A Distant Mirror

## Type Comes First

**D**og shows were created for breeders to exhibit potential breeding stock to judges for their evaluation. Somehow that got turned around to be all about winning and not much more.

I believe the Whippet in ten years won't look like the original breed if this nonsense about extreme side gait doesn't stop. This is a breed that is about running at top speed. Assessing side gait was to check if the dog was sound (not lame), nothing more. Unfortunately, some judges who don't know any better have perpetuated the problem.

Type should come first, then let's test for soundness on the down and back and the go-around. More is not better.

**Ch. Merci Isle Poinciana**

b. 2011  
by DC Surrey Hill's  
Golden Boy LCM  
x SBIS Ch. Merci Isle  
Dove Feather, FCh., ROM

**Bred to Produce**

**SBIS Ch. Merci Isle  
Dove Feather, FCh., ROM**

b. 2005  
by Ch. Byerley Savile Row  
x Ch. Merci Isle Velvet Hammer, FCh.  
Breeder-owner handled by Iva under  
judge Dana Cline. "Plume" won SBIS  
at the 2006 AWC Eastern specialty  
under Australian breeder-judge Ian  
Dougherty.



**DC Surrey Hill's  
Golden Boy, LCM**

b. 2007  
by Ch. Chelsea Chalcedony x Ch.  
Diabless Surrey Hill Say Yaha, JC.  
Breeders Karen Bowers Lee & Leila  
Anichini. Owners Kristen Fredericks  
and Karen Lee. A Specialty BIS  
winner and top sire, Golden Boy  
sired two litters at Merci Isle and  
contributed a great deal to my  
current dogs.





**Merci Isle Maverick Bandana, FCh.**

b. 2000 by Ch. Chelsea Gold Rush of Keynote x Merci Isle Bananarama, JC. Granddam of Cosmonaut (facing page).



**Ch. Merci Isle 2Kill A Mockingbird, FCh.**

b. 2004 by Ch. Merci Isle Light The Way, FCh. x Merci Isle Maverick Bandana, JC. Winner of the AWC National Futurity 2005 under breeder judge David Samuelson.



**Ch. Merci Isle Above The Clouds, FCh.**

b. 1999 by Ch. Sporting Fields N' Erin Piano Man x Ch. Merci Isle Dreamy Draw, FCh.



**Ch. Merci Isle Zig Zag Girl, FCh.**

b. 2013 by DC Surrey Hill's Golden Boy, LCM x Ch. Merci Isle Incantation. Pictured with owner Hillary Frank.



Left: Group of Merci Isle Whippets, mid-1990s.



**DC Chelsea Gold Rush of Keynote, ROMX**

b. 1996 by Ch. Rhode Paved With Gold x Ch. Jocora Chelsea One For The Road. Breeders S. Hoagland & D. Christianson. Owner Deann Christianson. Legendary sire. Behind many of my greats today.



**NSBOS Ch. Tangens The Maverick  
Cosmonaut, FCh., CRX**

b. 2007 by Ch. Winsmoor Maverick Cowboy Up, JC x Plumcreek HW Across The Moon. Purchased as a puppy from Eva Engvall. BOS at the AWC National Specialty 2010 (judge Russell McFadden), AOM AWC National Specialty 2012 (judge Connie Brunkow, above). He was picked out from photos by Jeff and Iva and confirmed with an examination by our friends Paul Lepiane and Bo Bengtson in California. He is everything we hoped for as a performance dog, show dog, sire and companion.

The inspirational sires from other breeders made a huge difference when incorporated into my bitch line and helped change the direction that contributed to the Merci Isle success. The real game changers were definitely Savile Row and Cosmonaut. If not for those two dogs, very prepotent in many areas, I wouldn't have the fantastic dogs I have had for the last ten years.

**Ch.  
Merci Isle  
Paradise  
Garden,  
FCh.**

b. 2012  
by Ch.  
Tangens  
The  
Maverick  
Cosmonaut,  
FCh. x  
UK Ch.  
Barnesmore  
Red Rose of  
Palmik



**Ch. Merci Isle American  
Beauty, FCh.**

b. 2012 by Ch. Tangens The  
Maverick Cosmonaut, FCh. x UK Ch.  
Barnesmore Red Rose of Palmik

**Ch. Merci Isle  
Jacaranda, LCM**

b. 2011 by DC Surrey Hill's Golden Boy, LCM x Ch. Merci Isle Dove Feather, FCh. Winner AWC ASFA field trial 2014 in an entry of 158. Judges were Tom Cigolle and Todd Miller. "Jax" held the No. 1 ASFA Whippet position from April to October 2014.





### Four Future Champions...

— three of them titled in the field as well. Left to right, shown in late 1999: Ch. Merci Isle Butterfly Ballet, LCM; Ch. Merci Isle Luxury Life, FCh.; Ch. Merci Isle Look Out!; and Ch. Merci Isle Velvet Hammer, FCh.

### Merci Isle Jona Gold

b. 2013  
 by Ch. Tangens The  
 Maverick Cosmonaut, FCh.  
 x Ch. Merci Isle  
 Jacaranda, LCM



## A Tribute

The saying from history, *"If I see farther, it is because I stand on the shoulders of giants,"* is always true when it comes to breeding great dogs. No one does it alone. It takes a long time to create a bloodline.

There are many who helped shape the Merci Isle Whippets and all they have accomplished. They let me use their breeding programs for inspiration, their gene pool, their examples of how to properly care for dogs and what to avoid.

I especially want to thank Bo Bengtson, Michael Dougherty, Eva Engvall, Peter Griffith and Peter Moore of Australia, Magnus Hagstedt of Sweden, Mike Howgate and Yvonne Hull in the U.K., John Shelton, Isabell Stoffers, Susan Vargas... — but the list could go on. Thank you!



### Merci Isle Northern Spy

b. 2013 by Ch. Tangens The Maverick Cosmonaut, FCh.  
 x Ch. Merci Isle Jacaranda, LCM

## The Future...



### Merci Isle Eglantyne, FCh.

b. 2013  
 by Ch. Merci Isle Touch Gold, FCh.  
 x UK Ch. Barnesmore Red Rose of  
 Palmik. "Tyne" is from Rosa's first  
 litter. We are very excited about her  
 upcoming litter.

**IVA & JEFFREY  
 KIMMELMAN**  
 Stow • Massachusetts  
 USA • iva@merciisle.com

Merci Isle