

ART *for* DOG'S SAKE

The American Kennel Club Museum of the Dog in St. Louis is a gathering place for dog lovers. Featuring a robust collection of more than 7,000 pieces that are periodically rotated, as well as special exhibits, the museum captures the attention not only of local dog enthusiasts, but also of the dog fancy from across the country.

Founded in 1981, the museum is the only one in the world dedicated solely to dog art. "This museum, as depicted in its fine art, truly represents the nature and strength of the canine-human relationship over time, illustrating how it has changed yet remains the same," says Executive Director Stephen George.

Located in the historic Jarville House in Queeny Park in suburban west St. Louis County, the dog museum is a bonus for those who travel here for their parent club's National Specialty at the Purina Event Center in Gray

A Palladian-style doghouse featuring Scottish Terrier sentinels and a marble floor is on view in the Sally Johnson Spillane Special Exhibit Gallery of the AKC Museum of the Dog.





The main hallway of the 14,000-square-foot addition built in 1990 blends art from special exhibits and the permanent collection.

Summit, Mo. The museum often puts together special breed exhibits for these clubs.

This past year, the museum featured “Herding Dogs in Art” during the Bearded Collie Club of America National Specialty. Among the featured pieces was “A Sheep Dog,” a 19th century oil painting by Scottish artist Philip Reinagle, loaned by the American Kennel Club in New York.

“Promoting the museum to breed clubs is good for us and for the museum,” says Purina Event Center Manager Kaite Flamm.



The museum staff includes, from left, Diane Saltzman, museum assistant; Susan Haney, museum coordinator; Stephen George, executive director; Jan Trudt, special events coordinator; and Pam Schuchat, museum assistant.

“The museum is a must-visit attraction for any National Specialty group coming to St. Louis. The staff accommodates everything from guided tours to private receptions to help make an event memorable.”

Board member Gretchen Bernardi, breeder of Irish Wolfhounds under the Berwyck prefix, agrees. “Clubs can combine their events at the Purina Event Center with a cocktail party, wine and cheese reception or a dinner inside the museum or on the patio,” she says. “Combining efforts is a win-win formula.”

The Norwich Terrier Club of America has twice held barbecue dinners at the museum as part of its National Specialty activities. About 100 people attending the Pembroke Welsh Corgi Club of America National toured the museum in late September. Fundraisers, such as one in 2008 featuring “Uno,” the Westminster Best in Show Beagle, are festive occasions.

A recent homage to Pug lovers, called “A Regal Pedigree: A Special Exhibition of the Pug in Art,” was assembled from private collections by art connoisseur Gary Bachman of Chicago. Opening

The AKC Museum of the Dog is located in the Edgar M. Queeny Memorial Park, 1721 South Mason Road, St. Louis, MO 63131. Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday to Saturday and 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday. The museum is closed Mondays, Tuesdays and on holidays. For information, visit museumofthedog.org or call 314-821-3647.





Members of an advanced dog obedience class that is taught on Tuesdays at the museum practice the sit-stay command. At right, "Nina," a 3-year-old Havanese, looks up at owner Debbie La Fara of St. Louis.



in October, the showing in the Sally Johnson Spillane Special Exhibit Gallery included many rare pieces. Inkwells, porcelains, bronzes, paintings, and novelty items showcased many facets of the Pug through the ages.

George, who recently became executive director, envisions a community-based museum, where people come regularly with their dogs to view the art and attend special events. Obedience classes taught by a trainer from a local program have met on Tuesdays for 18 years. A premier dog park, expected to open in 2014 next door to the museum, is bound to usher in a new cohort of dog art lovers.



"Scottish Deerhound and Recumbent Foxhound" painted by Sir Edwin Landseer, one of Queen Victoria's favorite artists, is part of the permanent collection.

Other possibilities are art education classes for children and adults, art internships affiliated with St. Louis area colleges and universities, and an enhanced volunteer program. Tapping into social media via Facebook helps the museum stay connected with members and fans.

Future social media outreach efforts could help educate about exhibits and artists.

The history of the museum began in New York. Members of the Westminster Kennel Club, the Westminster Kennel Club Foundation and the board of the American Kennel Club came together to form the museum to enhance appreciation for and knowledge of the significance of the human-dog relationship through art, artifacts and literature. The founding was prompted, in part, after some 6,000 dog-related works of art amassed by Geraldine Rockefeller Dodge, a niece of John D. Rockefeller, were auctioned piece by piece in 1975 following her death.

Not long after opening, the museum outgrew its space on the ground floor of the New York Life Building. Desiring a more central location, the museum moved to the Jarville House in Queeny Park in 1986. The Jarville House, built in 1853, passed through several hands until Edgar Queeny, president of Monsanto Co., and his wife, Ethel, bought the property in 1931. The Queenys sold the estate in

1962, and a few years later, St. Louis County bought the land to develop the Edgar M. Queeny Memorial Park. In 1986, the county leased the Jarville House to the dog museum.

A 14,000-square-foot addition to the Jarville House completed in 1990 provides space for additional exhibits in the Sally Johnson Spillane Special Exhibit Gallery and meeting rooms. Dinners and receptions are held in the 2,000-square-foot Charing Cross Courtyard and the 3,500-square-foot Constellation Room. The Hope A. Levy Memorial Library is located in the Jarville House.

Sandra Stemmler, a board member and breeder of Barnstable Norwich and Norfolk Terriers, says, "Our museum contains many works of art. The wonderful collection of paintings, sculptures, porcelains, books, and literature gives us the challenge of protecting and preserving these pieces so they can be enjoyed by all."

Although the majority of artwork is British and European pieces dating to the 19th and 20th centuries, there are many earlier works from around the world as well as American dog artwork. Among the most famous artists whose work is fea-

Spring Porcelain Exhibit Coming Soon

An impressive gift of numerous dog porcelains and fine art figurines, including many Royal Doulton pieces, from the estate of Glen Twiford has inspired a spring porcelain exhibit at the AKC Museum of the Dog. The Twiford donation includes 145 books given to the museum's Hope A. Levy Memorial Library.

The exhibit in the Sally Johnson Spillane Special Exhibit Gallery will also feature dog porcelains by other prominent makers. These include Meissen (German), Royal Copenhagen (Danish), Rosenthal (German), Lomonossov (Russian), Sèvres (French), Hutschenreuther (German), and Nymphenburg (German).

A collector of Royal Doulton dog porcelains, Twiford is believed to have owned an almost complete set of every breed in every size. A Collie breeder under the Wind-Call prefix for nearly seven decades, Twiford started in the breed as a 12-year-old on his family's Wyoming



"Japanese Chin Recumbent" is a Royal Copenhagen piece.

ranch. His early Collies were working and show dogs, which gave him an understanding of importance of structure and working ability that helped to guide his breeding.

A blue merle male Collie Twiford bought in 1954 from Elizabeth Browning of Tokalon Kennels, CH Tokalon Blue Banner, CD, became a top winner and top-producing sire. In tribute to "Patches," Twiford had a unique glass mosaic portrait created that is now part of the museum's permanent collection.

Although Collies were Twiford's main breed, he also bred Dachshunds, some breeds of terriers, Whippets, Doberman Pinschers, Irish Wolfhounds, and Shetland Sheepdogs. Twiford was 93 years old when he passed away on Jan. 14, 2013.



"Inkwell with Mastiff" created around 1840 by Jacob Petit and made by Sèvres and "Seated Bulldog" by Royal Doulton will be part of the spring exhibit.

tured are Sir Edwin Landseer, a favorite of Queen Victoria who was known for giving dogs humanlike emotions, and Maud Earl, the first woman commissioned to paint dogs of England's Royal Family.

Many of the museum's contemporary works of art come from The Art Show at the Dog Show, a juried show held annually for 27 years during the Wichita (Kan.) Kennel Club Dog Show. The



This soulful painting of a yellow Labrador Retriever, titled "Waiting," is part of the museum's collection as the winner of the The Art Show at the Dog Show in 1990.

competition is a fundraiser for the Museum of the Dog, and the art that is selected as Best in Show is donated to the museum by the show sponsors, one of which is Purina.

Artist Joy Beckner of Chesterfield, Mo., created a bronze of a Dachshund titled "A Good Life" that won Best in Show in 1998 and appears in the main hallway of the museum's addition. "That piece is still one of my favorites," Beckner says. "The museum does so many good things. I am pleased to have this art exhibited there."

"Our job is to help get the word out about the Museum of the Dog," Bernardi says. "We want to ensure that more people in the country and locally know about the museum. We want to reach out to all dog lovers — people who simply love dogs and can't imagine life without them."

"There are so many opportunities to reach people and to cultivate a passionate dog art following," George says. "I am committed to seeing this special museum become a center of activity and a place where people come to remember special dogs and how much dogs enrich our lives." ■



A bronze titled "A Good Life" won The Art Show at the Dog Show in 1998 and was donated to the museum.