

# Old Hemlock Foundation

# Old Hemlock Setters



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*The joy that quickens the blood of quanners  
also cheers Autumn with a bird dog.  
George Bird Evans*



The Old Hemlock Foundation's mission is to preserve and promote the legacy of George Bird Evans and Kay Harris Evans.

*"Briar, caro nome, I ask myself if I was aware how very much alive you were while you were living; did I lay my hands on you often enough; did you know how wonderful I thought you were."*

*—An Affair with Grouse*





The first litter of Old Hemlock setters was born here at Old

Hemlock in 1947. George bred a male setter named Blue that he acquired from George Ryman's kennels with an orange belton female from Debonair Kennels named Dawn. Blue contributed a unique combination of Llewellyn blood and Ryman's own Sir Roger DeCoverly breeding, and Dawn carried a mixture of English dual bench and field blood.

From that first litter, George and Kay chose to keep an orange belton male they named Ruff. Ruff developed into an excellent grouse dog, and would go on to serve as the foundation of the Old Hemlock line. *Head of a God*, the sculpture George created, which you can see on display in the house, is of Ruff. (Photo top center)



*"When you start out with a puppy, you are shaping a life, his and yours, which should be one. Like your gunning, your puppy will be what you make him by your attitude toward him, not as a tool to get birds but a bond between you that is the finest thing a human and a dog can know."*

—*a Dog, a Gun, and Time Enough*



In addition to Ruff, George and Kay's Old Hemlock setters included Feathers, Shadows, Dixie, Bliss, Briar, Belton, Quest, Manton, and Becasse. George and Kay also acquired a female named Wilda as a mate for Ruff, and she lived most of her lifetime at Old Hemlock.

The setters are typically belton type, which means that they are white with either orange or blue ticking (spots) without solid patches. Occasionally puppies will have solid patches or tri-color markings, when both orange and blue markings occur together. The body size of the setters will vary; however, the typical male setter is approximately 55-60 pounds and the typical female is approximately 45-50 pounds.

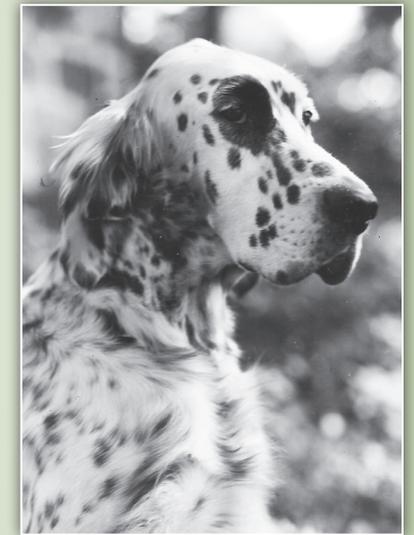


*"It is pleasant to hope that when Kay and I are no longer gunning, Old Hemlock setters will keep our ideals alive."*

There is no central kennel. Each of the dogs lives with their families all over the country, hunting primarily grouse, woodcock, and quail. When a breeding is planned, the owner of the sire and dam will arrange to meet at a mutually agreeable location for the breeding to take place.

Upon George's passing on May 5, 1998, the Old Hemlock line was transferred to Roger Brown, who continues to breed one or two litters per year. As George did, Roger likes a dog that hunts with fire and drive, to the extent of bell range, and checks back with the gunner.

George and Kay jointly registered each Old Hemlock puppy with the Field Dog Stud Book. The joint registration allows control over which dogs are used in the breeding program to carry on the Old Hemlock prefix. Roger Brown continues to use that approach today.



*George wrote of Bliss "... it was Ruff coming back to me ..."*

—*The Upland Shooting Life*

—*Troubles with Bird Dogs*

