Well, I had collies first and my children grew up with them. I saw the shelties at the shows and decided I would like one. My first sheltie was a Peter daughter that I bought from Tom Coen, Macdega Beyond the Reef, who unfortunately was not quite good enough to show but I bred her to Ch Malpsh Great Scot. The Scot daughter was the grand dam of Ch Macdega One Day At A Time who I sold to Tom and she was Best Of Breed at the 1985 National.

The name Aylmere came from an old map of Ireland that I found and I thought it would be good to have a Kennel name that was at the beginning of the alphabet.

As I said before, I started with a Peter daughter and I still have a tri factored sable daughter, Aylmere Esprit (1 major) and a young blue pup that traces right back to my Peter daughter.

I would say that Ch Aylmere Dixieland Jazz was one of the most important bitches that I had. She was not perfect but when she pulled herself together she was breathtaking. One remark that I heard about her when she got her Award of Merit at the National was “Dixie should wear a string of pearls, wear high heels and carry a purse”. That description fit her to a T. A friend of mine, Mary Hankey, bought a Sportin’ Life daughter who was very beautiful, had bred her once, decided she did not like breeding dogs and taking care of pups. I co-bred her next litter and bred her to Ch Rorralore Sportin’ Chance who was one of my favorite dogs. I kept a pup from that litter (Dixie) and sold her litter sister to Hazel Mott. The sisters were a little different but both finished their championships. Dixie did produce 4 champions: Ch Aylmere Dixie Melody, Ch Aylmere Alabama, Ch Aylmere Annie Lori O’Win-D-Nol, and Ch Aylmere Ragtime On Prinhill.

Another important dog in my breeding program was Ch Benayr Sentimental Journey. I was very lucky to have met Susan Bentley when she had three young male pups. None were for sale when I saw them but at the next National I was able to buy Journey at nine months. I had been looking for a dog that had the attributes that a couple of my bitches need and he had to be tightly bred. Journey fit the need so he came home from Texas with me. Not only did he fill my need but also he was a wonderful dog and companion. We just lost him last year at the age of 15. I still have two daughters of his, Ch Melody, 15 yrs and Maggie, 14 ½ yrs.
The other dog that became important to my breeding program is Ch Tara Hill Aylmere Wild Card, ROM. On one of my trips to California to visit my three daughters, I was asked to judge a sheltie match. I fell in love with a 10 week old sable male. He had this beautiful expression and a lovely head. I think at the time I didn’t look any further ~ fortunately, he was very sound. He was with Bonnie Smith (Tara Hill) and I was lucky that she agreed to let me have him. He was bred by Bonnie and Valerie Daniels (Dan Dee).

“Regan” complimented both my bitches and many others and is the sire of 14 champions. One big thrill was that “Regan’ sired Ch Aylmere I’m No Angel, the Best In Futurity and RWB at the ‘94 ASSA National.

A very important thing to me in these years of breeding and showing dogs were my friends, especially the person who did most of my handling, Bob Olsen (Bare Cove).

How do you evaluate your puppies? Are you looking for overall balance, structure or head detail when you decide to grow out a puppy?
It’s hard to say how I evaluate my pups. I don’t do a lot of feeling heads, etc. I just watch them grow, move around and play. If one really stands out to me, I grow it out. One thing that is important to me is that I like one to just grow and not go through too many changes. They seem to be the ones that produce better as well.

Do you plan to apply for your judge’s license?
As far as judging, I don’t have any plans to go for my judge’s license. I just enjoy judging sweepstakes and matches.

Are you concerned with any problems that face sheltie breeders today?
Yes, I am concerned about some of the genetic diseases that our shelties have and I think we all should do the best we can to control them.

As custodian of the ASSA Film Library, can you tell us if requests are made often to borrow tapes.
I’ve had custody of the ASSA Film Library for many years and it has been fun doing this job. The tapes that people borrow and enjoy the most are the ASSA National Specialty Tapes. Pepper Power’s tapes are also very popular.