

Volpino's My Inspiration – by Terralea Collins

Growing up I was told stories by my dad, about his little white dog named, Pookie that he had when he was about 9-10 years old. Somewhere there is a photo of him. I loved the stories and fell in love with the little dog as a child. My dad said he was a Pom/Spitz but as we all know the History about these little dogs, and why they were called that at that time. It turned out it was a Volpino. The name Volpino was not used in the, 1930's. I don't know when Italy started calling them that, I would like to know.

In 1993/4 I went to our local shelter to adopt, what I wanted a little white scruffy dog. As I looked up and down each aisle of dog's they were all big dogs until I got to the last one where there was a little scruffy white/cream dog that said he was a Volpino written on the gate. He raised up and put both his paws up on the fence and I just knew he was telling me to take him home please.

The people at the shelter didn't know what a Volpino was so they put Pom/mix on the paperwork. Little did I know at that time, it would lead me to where I am today and this little boy Pooh was my inspiration to eventually breed.

On that Friday, I adopted the little scruffy white dog, took him home, named him Pooh, gave him a much-needed bath, cleaned hundreds of fleas off him, naturally by picking one by one off of him giving him a bath. When he was dry, he was beautiful. Pooh was 6 years old when I got him and 16 when he died from congestive heart failure in my arms.

About 5 years after getting Pooh, I was at a store called Costco. I saw a big breed book and just opened it just toward the back of the book, as if God had opened that page himself, to show me a Volpino. I had forgotten that name and my jaw dropped, there was Pooh or at least a dog that looked just like him. I bought the book.

From then on, I knew what a Volpino was and showed my dad the photo and he said yes this is what his Pookie looked like. He always called my Pooh, Pookie too,

We found out Pooh was ailing about 1 year before he died. During this time, I began researching Volpino's on the Internet, in 2003/4 Internet was not as easy to research as it is today. Only one breeder in America, who had a couple litters but no puppies at the time and later I got to know her and she never had another litter after that.

My search lead to Italy, I didn't speak Italian and there was no translation software at that time. I searched for Champion Volpino Italiano. It led me to a couple breeders, Montefrondoso and Del Colle Degli Ulivi. These were the only 2 on the Internet at this time.

I wrote to Del Cole Degli Ulivi first, several months later I got a response from his daughter. They don't speak English so had to wait for their daughter to come home from college to translate. After several months waiting I wrote to Montefrondoso, I saw some photos but I could see they were not what I was looking for. It seemed to me the Del Cole Degli Ulivi kennel had the style of Volpino close to the looks of my Pooh. After another, year of communicating back and forth, in 2005, we confirmed 4 Volpino's. They were 4 to 6 months old when we got them.

It turned out that 2 of them were brother and sister and another was ½ brother and sister so I could not breed Chicco to either Carmela or Charlotte. I was despondent as I wanted different blood lines to show and breed.

Because of this, I sent Chicco, to a friend in California to breed with her, Luna Montefrondoso, who she got from Alex Montefrondoso kennel in Italy. Chicco and Luna, had their first litter about 2 1/2 years after we had our first litters from Carmela & Charlotte, in 2007.

2 of those female puppies, from Luna/Chicco, Cupertino & Allegra, went to live in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Cupertino & Allegra, eventually coupled with a male, "Agapito" who's mother, was born from my first litter, her name being, "Lilianna", who at that time, lived in Pagosa Springs Colorado. Lilianna bred to Papagayno from Del Colle Degli Ulivi in Italy, he lived in northern California. So, Agapito, Cupertino & Allegra became the 5th breeding pairs and in Colorado USA.

In 2010 the breeder who owned Agapito, Cupertino & Allegra could not keep them so I got Cupertino and 3 of her puppies and one of Allegra's puppies, who's name is Carmelo. Carmelo grew beautiful so we bred him to my Angelica.

Our kennel grew from rescuing, 8 Volpino's. Finding homes for the older puppies was hard but I did find homes for 4, the rest stayed with us. We enlarged our kennel so the pairs could be paired off and singles could be single in their own spaces and houses and during the day they could go out to play in a big secured yard.

As we grew over the years, our Couples were;

1. Quartetto/Charlotte, From Italy. PLL CLEAR

2. Camilla/Quartetto, from Italy, Camilla, who had 1 litter then died from a poison "Cow Ant" bite to her tongue. Quartetto PLL CLEAR

3. Tia/Chicco, Tia, daughter of Charlotte/Quartetto. Chicco from Italy.

Chicco got hit by a car and died just before his and Tia's litter were born. Tia PLL CLEAR. Puppies were DNA tested CLEAR PLL.

We then paired,

4. Tia with Carmelo. Tia first generation born in America, Carmelo first/second generation born in America. Both PLL CLEAR

5. Angelica/Renato, Angelica daughter of Charlotte/Quartetto.

Renato, from Nick/Furba a breeder in Nebraska, Nick and Furba were the 6th breeding pair in America and they were from the Montefrondoso Kennel in Italy. Nick PLL Carrier, Furba PLL Clear, Renato Carrier so we didn't breed him again. They had 1 litter, 2 of the puppies were PLL Clear and 1 Carrier all got neutered.

6. Cupertino/Geovanni both PLL CLEAR

7. Cupertino/Giuseppe both PLL CLEAR

After another year, both

8. Agapito and Allegra came to live with us too, both PLL CLEAR

9. Farfalla/Gavino PLL CLEAR

10. Fabiola/Tacito – Fabiola/Lorenzo – PLL CLEAR

11. Fabiola/Pelu our current and only breeding pair. PLL CLEAR

Doing it this way we developed many different blood lines so today with the other breeders in America their puppies can be bred to one another.

This is a breed that is a watch dog, it has acute hearing and smell, they are hunters of truffles in Italy, birds, moles and ground hogs. So, they might dig up your prettiest plant up. Many plants, mushrooms are poison to any dog and cats. So be sure that what is ever in your garden it's not toxic.

Being a watch dog means it will hear when you get out of bed or someone drives up, comes home, then they may bark. They are my door bells! My husband being hard of hearing, it really helps him to know that something outdoors is going on. They are cuddly, loving and loyal. Getting them young is important, an older one will take a little longer to settle in and will have to get used to your schedule or you to theirs. They can live a long time about 15+ years, so if you get a chance to get a puppy, I recommend that. ~Terralea Collins, Volpino's R Us – Terra di Collina in USA