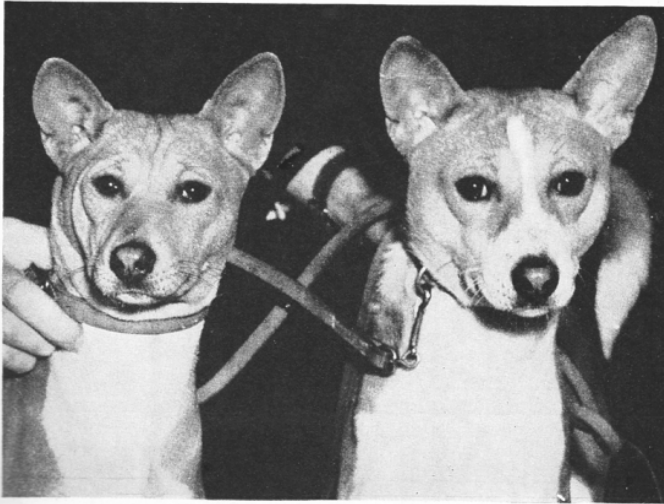


## BERENGARIA BRINGS BARKLESS BUSH DOGS TO U.S.



Most interesting passengers landed by *S.S. Berengaria* in New York on Sept. 28 were the two dogs shown here. They are called Basenji dogs and are remarkable because they never bark. Most they ever achieve vocally is a low growl when angry and a thin, eerie whine when bored. "Basenji" means "bush dog." In its native Belgian Congo, the Basenji is a great

hunting dog. When hunting game, natives tie gourds to a Basenji's loin so they can follow its silent stalking. The dogs are 18 inches high, have short-haired chestnut coats with white markings. This pair, first imported to the U.S., was brought in by B. Hamilton Rogers (*below*) who expects them to thrive and, being barkless, become popular apartment-house pets.



# Blean Imports 1937

"Life" © October 1937

Left cutting: Bakumba of Blean and either Rougie or Bashashi of Blean are shown on arrival in New York in 1937.

Bakumba of Blean is later registered with the American Kennel Club as:

**Phemister's Bois**  
and becomes a part of the foundation of Basenjis in America



Cutting from New York Sun with notation October 1937

**From a letter  
(seems to be by George Gilkey):**

"As noted above Mrs. Byron Rogers can be credited with being the first to establish the breed in America. Besides Boise she brought in a bitch puppy born to Bongo x Bokoto while in quarantine. This bitch was bred to Bois and a litter resulted. Unfortunately the litter and the dam died. .... Later he was acquired by Alex Phemister but was not in condition for breeding until late in 1942."

**A Letter from  
Mary McWain, Haku Kennels:**

"The oldest Basenji registered is Phemister's Bois, date of birth being given as 1936." (*Apparently there was no pedigree given in his registration.*)

"Nairobi (Bois x Phemister's Naida) whelped 12/13/1942 also bred by Phemister's but not bearing their name. Owned by Mr. and Mrs. Alfred King. Also, Ruki, same litter owned by Eugene E. Scott."

**In Veronica Tudor-Williams's first edition of  
*Basenjis, The Barkless Dog* writes:**

"When Mrs. Burn's Basenjis made such a sensation debut at Crufts in 1937, Mr. and Mrs. Byron Rogers, of New York City, became interested in the breed, and took three dogs back to the states in the S.S. Berengaria, September 1937. They consisted of a bitch by Bongo ex Bokoto of Blean, another bitch by Bongo ex Bereke of Blean, and a native-bred dog which had not completed his quarantine in England. He was Bakuma of Blean, by Noko ex Coqui, bred by the Chief of the Donkese, born July 1936. Unfortunately, both the bitches died about a year after their arrival in the States, and the dog was lost sight of after going to a pet home."

"Mr. Phemister then acquired another native dog, said to have been owned at one time by the Byron Rogers. This dog appears to have been lost, but it is almost certain he was Bakuma of Blean, photographs of Bakuma and Bois being identical. He was re-registered with the American Kennel Club as Phemister's Bois."



## BARKLESS BASENJIS

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Mrs. Byron Rogers to inspect  
them at their first public  
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New York  
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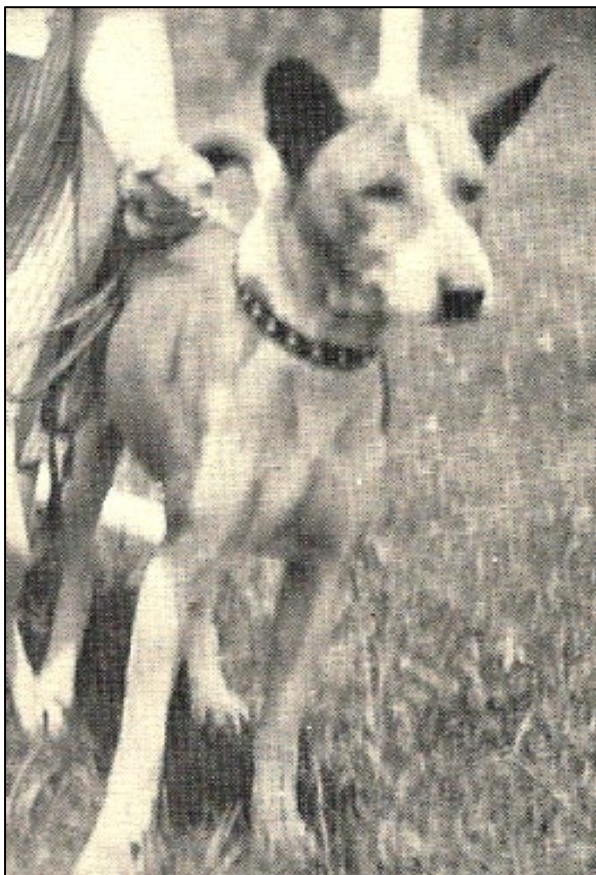
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Plucking and grooming to show standards.  
All breeds of dogs sold on special order.

*Advertisement in the Westminster catalog in 1938*



**In October 1979, Veronica Tudor-Williams writes in *The Basenji*:**

“The first old cutting (see page 1) is out of the ‘*New York Sun*,’ with a written-in date of October 1937. It shows Mr. Byron Rogers with Basashi of Blean (bitch) and the native import, Bakuma of Blean (dog), who is without doubt the dog later known as Phemister’s Bois. The markings are identical, and in one newspaper cutting “Bois” is written in above the dog.”

*Phemister’s Bois  
with the Phemisters*



## Glen Dymock posted this article to Facebook in December 2020

Here is an article (right) by the person who introduced the Basenji breed to the US, Alice Lang Rogers (who always styled herself as "Mrs Byron Rogers" as was convention at the time), whose Misty Isles kennel was well known in Poodles. The piece was printed in "Kennel Review" in March 1938 and reports that the first Basenjies arrived in the US five months prior. As is well documented, Mrs Rogers' venture was short-lived. Of her three UK Blean imports, the two bitches, Basashi and Rougie, died without issue within a year, but thankfully the African-bred male Bakuma, although rehomed, resurfaced a number of years later as Phemister's Bois and went on to become a very important sire in the establishment of the breed in the US. He sired the first American champion. With thanks to Bo Bengtson for sending me this wonderful piece of breed history.

Another photo of Basashi and Bakuma on arrival in NY



### The African Barkless Basenji

By MRS. BYRON ROGERS

For years and years innumerable in the heart of darkest Africa have lived a breed of small dogs, chestnut in color with white markings. Ownerless, as we understand the word, these dogs wander at will among the various savage tribes of Africa, picking up their food as best they can and earning their right to existence by hunting the fleet antelope for the natives.

Almost as fast as a Greyhound, small in stature, and lithe as cats, they race through the long elephant grass and press their way through the dense jungle after their prey.

They run mutely for they cannot bark nor bay, so, tied round their bodies are small gourds filled with pebbles which rattle as they run and by this noise the hunters are able to follow the trail of dog and deer.

The dog's size gives him an advantage in the dense undergrowth of the jungle over his larger prey and when the chase is up, strong jaws clamp like a vise on the throat of the antelope which often runs many more miles before the natives catch up, hampered by the hanging body of the little brown dog whose grip never loosens.

This extraordinary and deadly grip is seen among these dogs in civilized life when, in fighting with their own kind, they do not bite each other, breaking the skin, but merely hold on to the throat of their enemy.

These little hunting dogs are called the Basenji, which in native dialect means "bush thing" and it is just over a year ago that the first specimens were taken out of Africa and exhibited at Cruft's show in London.

Five months ago America welcomed to her shores the first representatives of this fascinating barkless breed and what a welcome they received! No longer need dog lovers fear complaints of neighbors in town or country and no longer need we put off the joy of owning a dog in a city apartment lest their barking annoy ourselves and others! A new era in dogdom has dawned with the coming of the barkless Basenji!

Except for the unique feature that these dogs cannot bark they are perfectly normal. They growl and they have the most fascinating habit of talking to humans giving a deep toned, throaty "groo-groo" in welcome or conversation.

Displeasure is evidenced by a stand-

KENNEL REVIEW  
March, 1938

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ing erect of the hair all down the spine and their "slinky," oblique eyes can look menacing and at other times, unutterably sweet and loving.

Innumerable wrinkles appear on their foreheads when they prick their sharply erect ears to attention, giving them a wise and alert look which is characteristic of the breed.

Their hair is short and crisp yet satiny to the touch, growing out of a very loose, supple skin and in stance they resemble their native prey, the antelope, even possessing the swelling throat peculiar to the deer tribe.

Long and strong of neck, high in shoulder setting, deep in brisket, and waisted in body, with curled tail and straight legs ending in rather long, very pliant pasterns they carry themselves and step proudly, meeting each new situation with absolute self-confidence and insatiable curiosity.

Judging by the litters already bred from the original imported native stock it is found that they breed absolutely true to type and this is accounted for by the fact that the best specimens of the breed in Africa are owned by the various chiefs of the various tribes.

These dogs are greatly valued for their hunting abilities so they are more or less well cared for and their breeding is superintended and recorded by the natives. Also, there does not appear to be any other breed of dog indigenous to the interior of the Congo from whence the Basenji come.

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### AFRICAN BARKLESS BASENJI



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Apply

MRS. BYRON ROGERS  
Misty Isles Kennel

Bedford      New York

### **Litter Planned**

**Glen Dymock posted this advertisement to Facebook in December 2020**

An advertisement from the March 1938 issue of "Kennel Review", featuring the first two Basenjis to arrive in the US, Bakuma of Blean (who was in fact bred in the Belgian Congo) and Basashi of Blean, both exported from the UK by Olivia Burn. I don't think the advertised litter materialised as poor Basashi died in whelp. It is well documented that Bakuma later ended up in the ownership of Mr and Mrs Alexander Phemister from where, under the new name of Phemister's Bois, he went on to play a very important role in establishing the breed in North America. Mrs Byron Rogers was a big name in poodles but I think she may have fallen on hard times shortly after this advert was placed, which might explain why she gave up on the idea of breeding Basenjis. With thanks to Bo Bengtson for unearthing this fascinating clipping.

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**AFRICAN BARKLESS BASENJIS**



First American-bred Litter for Sale

Apply  
**MRS. BYRON ROGERS**  
Misty Isles Kennel

Bedford New York

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