

# From Stardom To Beach Bum, Nameless Took Early Retirement

BY SUSAN USHER

In a year's time Nameless made the transition from stardom to beach bum with nary a complaint.

The white and black English sheepdog, former star of TV commercials and magazine ads in New York, looks more and more like the unkempt shaggy dog in "My Three Sons" as he lounges about the house on Marlin Street than the elegant dog in a series of Kodak ads, a job that won him notice in animal modeling circles.

Like many Holden Beach residents, Nameless took "early retirement" to enjoy life after working hard at a successful career.

After a versatile, but short—five-year—career, Nameless has taken readily to the relative anonymity of laidback living, Holden Beach style.

So has his owner, Lee Klimas, and her business partner and housemate, Elaine Angrilla.

The two gave up a successful dog grooming and supply business in a posh suburb, to move to Brunswick County in November 1984.

"The people were the deciding factor," recalled Klimas. "We moved here after visiting a friend who lived in Shallotte."

Unlike the friends they knew in the North, their Brunswick County friends got up early, prepared breakfast and saw them off. Back in New York State, said Klimas, their friends were more likely to leave a goodbye note with a reminder to lock the door as they left.

"We went back, put everything up for sale and moved here," said Klimas.

While they enjoy the foods and excitement of an occasional visit to urban fronts, the two have no plans to move back to Long Island.

"I believe that when you move here, you're ready for what's here," she added.

Klimas and Angrilla operate a new business on the causeway, Kaleidoscope, selling kites, wind socks and custom-printed tee-shirts.

Klimas said they're looking forward to a second season, possibly using Nameless to help promote business.

After all, it's a role he's accustomed to filling. Back in St. James, he regularly appeared in newspaper ads promoting the store, called April Showers, and helped expand the shop's trade from English sheepdog owners. Once he donned mortar board and diploma in an ad.

His popularity spread far beyond the shop doors. A costumed Nameless once co-lead a Halloween Ragamuffin Parade through downtown St. James with the mayor.

"You can dress him," continued Angrilla.

Added Klimas, "I can do anything to him. Elaine can too."

Nameless came into Klimas' ownership about the time a "pooper scooper" law went into effect on Long Island, requiring owners to clean up after their pets relieved themselves along city streets and sidewalks.

"We found him roaming around a major road. We advertised, but no one claimed him," she said. From his "nameless" status her children plucked the moniker "Nameless" for the six-month-old dog.

Soon the large, effervescent pup was enrolled in obedience school



four-hour day, with no residuals for repeat airings of the commercials.

"Animals are considered props," recalled Klimas. "They make them work their tails off."

Once, while making a Shields soap commercial in which he ran along the beach in 80-degree heat and under hot lights, the producers refused to give Nameless a much-needed water break. Instead they put ice cubes between his legs and made the sheepdog work overtime.

Nameless enjoyed his work, though, and directors could get a could five to six hours of work from him—more than from the average animal model.

Sometimes on short notice, he had to report to work each morning immaculate, a Herculean task for a longhaired, mostly white, gigantic dog. Klimas taught herself to brush and comb him everyday without fail.

Sometimes he showed up at work spotless only to get soiled by mud from ears to docked tail over and over again—and then cleaned up, as in a Tenderleaf Tea ad shortly before his retirement. After washing the dog, the couple sits back to enjoy a cup of tea.

At other times, said Klimas, advertisement writers expected the impossible or the ludicrous—dogs that could bend their arms, for instance.

One of Nameless' most obvious claims to fame is a May promotional pic followed by two-page spread and cover blurb in the June 1982 issue of *Parents* magazine, illustrating a story on children and honesty.



However, before his retirement in 1984, Nameless had appeared on television and in newspaper and magazine ads for big-name clients such as Kodak, Arm & Hammer (remember the dog in the family station wagon with baking soda in the ashtray?), Nestle's Toll House cookies, and Cotton Inc.

While retaining anonymous to most of his fan club, Nameless created quite a name for himself.

NAMELESS, owned by Lee Klimas of Holden Beach, is a former celebrity. After winning roles in commercials for big-name clients such as Kodak and *Parents* magazine, he took early retirement to enjoy a slower pace of life.

where he was, in effect, "discovered."

The trainer's own dogs were models, explained Angrilla. She told the two that English sheepdogs were in demand as models.

After posing for a portfolio and acquiring an agent, Nameless' career in front of the lights was launched in 1979.

"He must have sat for 150 photos," said Angrilla, who was Nameless' handler on most occasions. "He's very patient."

"But when he was done, he was done. He just sat down."

Both women praise obedience training as an essential for any

household pet, especially one of Nameless' size.

Triumph dog biscuits, Nameless' favorite, helped him along the road to stardom.

"He will do anything for a biscuit workwise," said Klimas.

And Nameless loved working almost as much as he now appears to enjoy taking it easy. Someday he may get want to go back in front of the lights. With the advent of filmmaking in the Wilmington area, that's a distinct possibility even in Brunswick County.

"He'd love to work again," Klimas suggested. "He is bored."

As a working dog, Klimas said, Nameless was to go to bed the night

before on an empty stomach—a rule she found hard to follow. Usually he simply got a smaller dinner portion.

"I'd tell him he was going to work the next day," she said with a grin.

"He would go to bed early."

Life before the cameras wasn't any more glamorous for a dog model than for a human model.

Nameless was paid a flat rate for a

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