

# Jim & Ann Donaldson of Peterhead, Scotland

## End of an era

While speaking to Jim a couple of weeks ago I was absolutely stunned when he informed me that after a lot of soul searching, he has decided to call it a day with his pigeons. For many years Jim has suffered with serious ill health which has included major heart operations. My first loft visit to him was made in 1996 when I compiled a loft report for the Racing Pigeon Pictorial. Since that initial visit just a couple more visits have been made to Peterhead although Jim and I keep in touch through phone calls.

On my first visit I was totally surprised at just how few pigeons were housed in the loft. Racing with the SNFC some of the racepoints that the club flies from gives Jim's pigeons a race distance of over 700 miles. When I was driving up to Scotland through the Lake District and up through the Highlands it dawned on me just how tough it can be for these pigeons to reach their loft way up in Peterhead after a 600-700 mile fly when even in June or July this part of the country can be covered in mist, fog, rain and gale-force winds.

Jim and Ann have cultivated their family of pigeons over many years with the intention of producing a family that can win from the extreme distance. They have accomplished this over many years with one, two, three and even four generations winning at the highest level. On my visits to Jim it did not matter what pigeons I asked to handle it was the same story, not only was the pigeon in question a good performance bird but it was bred from performance pigeons that in turn were also bred from performance pigeons. This was fact as with just a reasonable small team of race pigeons they were all related in some way.

As I have said Jim has built up this family of pigeons by only introducing proven pigeons from some of the country's top fanciers. The first pigeons to start off this dynasty were from the loft of David Scott of Brechin, Dennis Dall of

Ladybank and Eddie Mann of Johnshaven, Giles Sharrock and Atwell Brothers, all fantastic fanciers in their own right. Over time several more pigeons were introduced with birds coming from Sid Bear of Hemel Hempstead, these were bred down from Lancashire Rose and Blue Angel lines.

It was through these introductions that Jim crossed the Sid Bear pigeons with the David Scott pigeons to produce his foundation stock cock the famous Circus Boy. On one particular visit Circus Boy was still enjoying his retirement at the age of 24 years old, he had his own single pen in the garage.

There have been many champion pigeons bred and raced from the Peterhead loft, none more so than one of my personal favourites a pigeon I have had the pleasure of handling on a couple of my loft visits, a true champion distance pigeon the great grizzle hen Reims Girl. This fantastic hen is a winner of a Scottish National Flying Club Gold Award with her performances of 1st North Sect, 52nd Open SNFC Reims 620 miles, 1st North Sect, 239th Open SNFC Reims 620 miles, 1st North Sect, 13th Open NFC Tours 707 miles, 2nd North Sect Tours 707 miles beaten by loftmate, 2nd North Sect, 7th Open SNFC Tours 707 miles. The sire of Reims Girl is a full brother to Donnan, the chequer cock that was 1st Open SNFC Sartilly 605 miles with 1,864 birds competing. A fantastic performance to win the Scottish National so far up into Peterhead. When I mention the distance that these pigeons fly, I must mention Niort Lady, a lovely mealy hen that recorded 1st North Sect, 40th Open SNFC Niort at 775 miles, also she was 2nd North Sect, 14th Open SNFC Sartilly at 605 miles. Rennes Lass, a granddaughter of Circus Boy, is the dam of Donnan when paired to The Dall Cock, this pair have bred birds to win 26 SNFC Diplomas including 6 x 1st Sections also 1st Open SNFC.

I could go on mentioning the many Section wins that this loft has accumulated over the years but in short Jim and Ann have won the North Section an incredible 28 times. As we all know winning averages is one of the hardest things to do and to win the North Section Averages in the SNFC you have to time in on every race sometimes with races over 700 miles. Suffice to say that this loft has won the Section Averages nine times, a truly remarkable achievement which no other fancier has yet exceeded.

TERRY PEART



*Yours truly holding Reims Girl with Jim & Ann Donaldson.*



*Reims Girl, SNFC Gold Award winner. 1st North Sect, 52nd Open Reims, 620 miles; 1st North Sect, 239th Open Reims; 1st North Sect, 13th Open Tours, 707 miles; 2nd North Sect Tours, beaten by loftmate; 2nd North Sect, 7th Open Tours. Sire a full brother to Donnan, 1st Open SNFC Sartilly, 605 miles.*



*Circus Boy, bred and raced by Jim Donaldson of Peterhead, Scotland. Now 24 years of age, Circus Boy is the foundation stud cock of the Donaldson loft that has won over 100 SNFC Diplomas plus 28 x 1st North Sections and 1st Open SNFC Sartilly, 605 miles. Circus Boy is the direct sire of 6 x 1st Section winners. (Photo taken as a yearling.)*