



# Young Fanciers newsletter



Spring 2020

Young journeys start here...

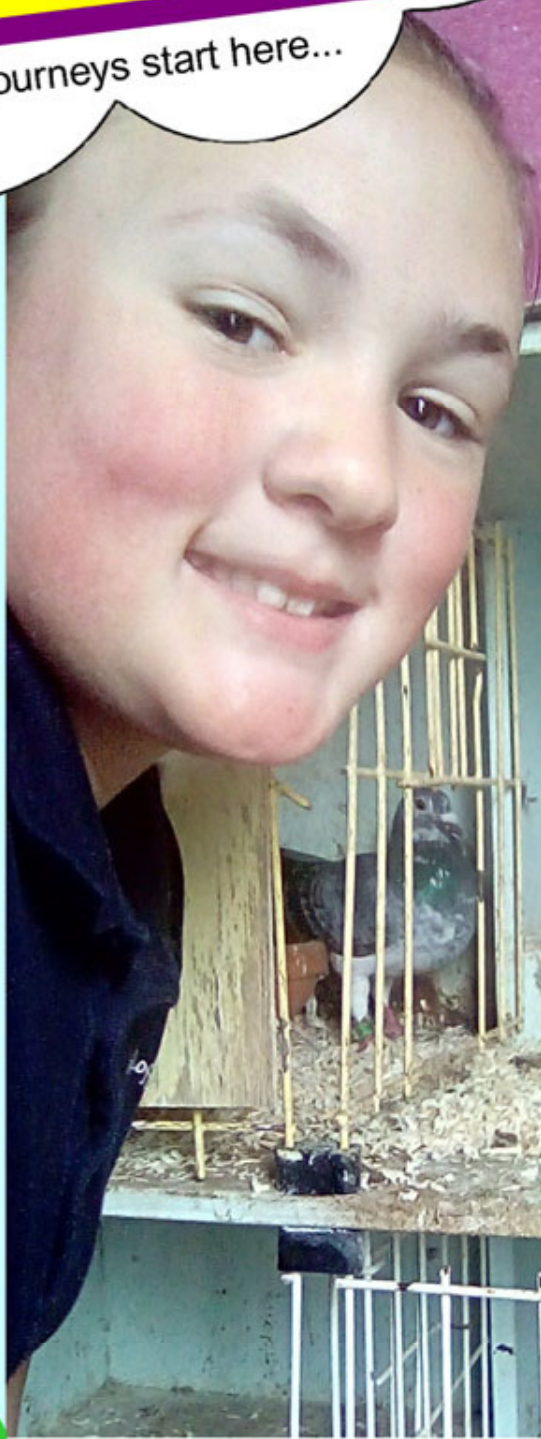
Hello all you  
Junior Members..

We hope that every one of you guys is taking care and keeping safe at home at this very difficult time. By the looks of things it has not stopped you all from enjoying your pigeons from your own back gardens!

Once again we have stories from around the UK, and we also have a competition for the little ones too.

Remember to send us your stories and photos, especially now that your pigeons will be looking their best.

Send them to [speedy@rpra.org](mailto:speedy@rpra.org) and you could be in the summer magazine.



**Show and Tell  
Millie-style!!**

See inside



**THE ROYAL  
PIGEON RACING  
ASSOCIATION**



Vet-Schroeder **TOLLISAN**

**TOPIGEON**



[www.rpra.org](http://www.rpra.org)

## Millie shows pigeons at school



## Millie leading by example

Hi, I'm Millie and I am 11 years old. Over the last 2 years, me and my dad have helped run a local pigeon show during the winter months, and I like to raise awareness about how fun and enjoyable pigeon racing and showing can be.

I have been surrounded by pigeons ever since I can remember, as my dad (Ronnie) has always kept them. When I was 7, I decided to help out more at my club (South Leicester) and became junior club secretary. I have helped run a local pigeon show during the winter months.

We have always entered the show, but never came anywhere close to a first in the final. This year, we weren't very successful until the last group - old cocks - where we came 4th. 'At least we stand a chance at 4th or 5th in the final', I thought. However I couldn't have been more wrong. After the final had been judged, we went into the judging room and everyone was standing around my pigeon. I thought that it was because something bad had happened and rushed over. But to my surprise, there was a 1st place rosette and a bottle of champagne (which was appreciated by dad!). I still can't believe it!

We had a career day at school, and my teacher asked if we could bring in some pigeons to show and talk about. I spoke about the history of pigeons, including the war,

products and feeds, and vaccinations. I used my poster with the different types of racers on, to show different examples. My dad even let the children stroke some of our calm pigeons.

This has changed lots of opinions at school, as many thought that all pigeons are like the ones you see in town and city centres. I spoke about how no one really knows how a pigeon makes it home, and some fun facts about the fastest and most expensive pigeons.

The best part of my talk was releasing some pigeons in our school playground, and I still get asked questions. Many asked if they made it home, even though we only live around the corner!

I love pigeons, and really enjoy the race season, as I get to help out at our club, carrying baskets and cleaning out.

*Thank you Millie, you really have been busy, doing a few jobs around the loft whilst we are on lockdown. Keep up the good work, and we look forward to hearing more from you over the next few years.*

I'm Alan Bradnick and I am 11 years old. I am a third generation pigeon flyer; my dad and my grandad have always had pigeons.

I have decided to start flying pigeons on my own this year. I am looking forward to getting my own loft and a team of young birds which I can start racing. The club that I fly in is full of very good experienced pigeon flyers, and I am looking forward to competing against these members, as all of them are really good friends.

Most of all, I am looking forward to competing against my dad and also beating him. I am under no illusion - this is going to be very hard work.

For the last few years I have been working at the club headquarters, helping out as much as I can and earning the respect of the members of the club, which I have enjoyed very much.

As a young boy, we all see something outstanding and so brave and beyond any boy's dream. I was on holiday last year in Bude, where my parents had arranged a day out at the Cornwall at War Museum. What a day I had! Full of Army, Navy and RAF memories, and too many heroes to mention.

Being a pigeon fanatic, I found the room of my dream - Carrier Pigeons of the Second World War. This room was full of so much information, from caring boxes to message containers and even mobile pigeon lofts.

The thing that interested me was the pigeons and their acts of bravery. The first pigeon was Mary of Exeter, who flew many military missions across the English Channel back to her box in Exeter. She was owned by a bootmaker and pigeon breeder, Cecil Brewer. Her role was to provide critical intelligence to the Allies by delivering top



Looks like the dogs are barking mad on the pigeons too!!

## Alan looking forward to the 2020 season

secret messages from behind enemy lines. She completed four successful missions from France. Returning home from one mission, she was found to have suffered wounds to her neck and breast, missing wingtips and three shotgun pellets in her body. She was nursed back to health by her owner, and once again returned to action for the



National Pigeon Service. On her final mission, she returned home with a vital message but had suffered major injuries to her neck from shrapnel. The neck injury was so severe that Cecil Brewer made a special collar out of leather to support her neck and hold her head up. She was officially retired from service.

If that wasn't remarkable enough, while recuperating and in retirement her pigeon loft was bombed by the

Luftwaffe. Many pigeons were killed, but Mary survived. In 1945 she was awarded the PDSA Dickin Medal for

outstanding endurance on war service in spite of wounds. What a hero!

There were also other many heroes, such as Cher Ami, William Of Orange, Paddy and GI Joe. Real superheroes. What can I say - what a day!

I would like to say a special thank you to all the NHS staff, Doctors and Nurses, Paramedics, Police, Fire Service, Post, Delivery Drivers and other essential workers in the front line.

I have decided to call my loft Rainbow Lofts, as my tribute to the NHS. I hope that the RPRA name a special race to all of these great and brave people.

'Stay Safe , Stay Home and Protect The NHS'.

Two young pigeon fanciers take us into the quirky world of pigeon racing as they prepare for the UK's biggest pigeon show

**My Life**

**MY PIGEONS AND ME**

CBBC 5.30pm and 7.35pm on Tuesday 25th February



## 'My Life' with Keelie

**Hello everyone**, my name is Keelie Wright, and earlier this year I appeared on the CBBC 'My Life' programme. Here is a little of what happened whilst we were filming.

I filmed 'My Life - My Pigeons and Me' over the course of a year - two days during the racing season, and two days during the show season. It was such a good experience, as I got to meet lots more people in the pigeon world, and make some new friends through it.

When we were filming in the racing season the BBC had to wait on our pigeons coming home. Lucky enough for me, my pigeons were early on the day, so that was great. We filmed lots of things, both with my pigeons and also outside of pigeons, but we couldn't get it all into the show as it was only 15 minutes long, but I do still think it's extremely important, as the episode shows different aspects of the 'pigeon world', especially for us younger people.

The thought of filming for this episode made me quite nervous at first, but as time went on and I met the people who were shooting the episode, and the people who were in it with me, I realised I had nothing to be nervous about.

Pigeon racing is such a good sport, and I hope to continue to promote it as much as I can. I hope you all enjoyed the final episode that was shown - it was an experience I will remember forever.



What a super job you have done Keelie, a true star in the sport. We are looking forward to seeing your progress over the next few years.

# Inspiring words from Finn

Hi my name is Finn Chaplin, I am aged 15 and I've been interested in pigeons ever since I could walk.

I help out my disabled grandad (George) and my uncle (Andy) under the name of G. Chaplin & Sons.

We used to race north road (pigeons flying from north to south), however we have now changed to racing from the south. This will be our third season flying this direction and we are loving every minute of it.

Back in October my grandad had a heart attack and was diagnosed with double pneumonia. After two weeks in Glenfield Hospital, Leicester, he was discharged to spend Christmas with his wife of 50 years Marylin.

Over Christmas he was at home, but he was recently told that he has prostate cancer (which was a big shock to the whole family). Before all of this he was helping out up the shed, looking after the birds.

The whole family help out with the birds and it has brought us together. We have had a good few results, some of the top results being 15th Fed Fougères with a 2 year old hen and 15th NMCC from Saintes (clocked on the second day as only one pigeon was clocked in on race day) with a 3 year old red hen.

I have just recently become a member of the RPRA



Finn and young assistant with a squeaker

Junior Membership, and after reading the latest newsletter I was inspired to write in, as pigeon racing has been in my Grandad's life for over 50 years, and mine since before I can remember. Pigeon racing is not just a sport or even a hobby, it's a way of life for us, and there's no greater excitement than waiting for the birds to return on race day (with a brew in hand).

*Thank you Finn. It does show that no matter how hard things get, pigeons will always be there to help you through the bad times, and to help you celebrate the good times. It would be great to hear more stories like Finn's about how pigeons have helped you through both good and troubled times.*



# Dexter's YouTube Pigeon Adventures



My name is Max Davis and I am 10 years old. My silent partner is my brother Dexter, aged 9, and we are from West Wales. My Dad has bought us our own loft to race pigeons, and we will be competing to beat the best in Wales. I am a member of a midweek club - the Fairfield Elite Club - and also the West Wales Classic Racing Pigeon Club. We even compete against the UK and Europe, as I am now a member of the BICC and National Flying Club, who both offer free membership to Young Racers - so watch out, because we're going to win!



I have a YouTube channel, which shows junior members how to get more involved, and to see how easy it is to keep pigeons. You can watch and subscribe to our videos by going to 'Dexter Racing Pigeons' on YouTube - get your parents' or guardians' permission, and like and subscribe. It's for free, dude, and we will answer any questions you have.

We have both been busy with the young birds lately. We have had them in the basket overnight, where they learn to eat and drink, which I feel will help them later on in their lives when they go overnight to some of the races, especially those from France.

We haven't painted the front of our loft yet, so we would like to get you guys involved by sending in a

drawing of your favourite pigeon - the winner can pick the colour, and we will paint the front of our loft. (See below.)


We would like to thank the RPRa for their hard work, and all the key workers and NHS for keeping us all safe at the moment. We look forward to hopefully racing soon. In the meantime, remember to get your parents' or guardians' permission and subscribe to our YouTube Channel, and also send in your competition entry.



Send your drawings to [speedy@rpra.org](mailto:speedy@rpra.org) with the subject "Max Dexter Competition" and we will see what great ideas you have for Max and Dexter to paint their lofts. Watch this space for the winner in the next edition of Young Fanciers magazine.

# Attention all Young Flyers!

Upgrade your membership today for just £7 to become a Young Racer. By becoming a Young Racer you will become a full RPRA member and you will also receive a Membership Card and 20 free rings (8 to 16 year olds). The first 10 new Young Flyers that upgrade to become a Young Racer, by sending in this form, will be in with the chance to win one of our cuddly Speedy toys! Please send attached form with a cheque or postal order for £7 made payable to "RPRA" to upgrade today, and be in with a chance of winning.

Name.....	
Address.....	
.....Town.....	
County.....Postcode.....	
DOB...../...../.....Phone.....	<b>Please tick rings required</b> (Racing Rings) <input type="checkbox"/> (Show Rings) <input type="checkbox"/>
Membership Type: Young Flyers UPGRADE	

## It's Tyler again!

Hi, it's Tyler here again. As you know, I am 12 years old and have been racing pigeons for five years now. I race with my grandad, and our pigeon lofts are on an allotment. Some people just have to walk out of their back door, but luckily our allotment is just across the road.

It's been a bit tough these past couple of weeks for everyone, but it doesn't stop me from looking after my pigeons. In fact, I have been able to spend even more time with them, as I do not have to go to school now, which is great. I'm up there from the crack of dawn, and every day I race down to my pigeons to look after them!

It is really important that we keep them fit and healthy, and we can do this by allowing them to fly around the loft every day. Luckily they are not in self isolation, and they can fly where they want. It is great to see them doing this, especially when the weather has been so good recently.

So will we be racing? I hope so. It's a shame that we can't race right now, as this is the highlight of the season but we are all just waiting for the lockdown to end, and hopefully we can start back up again.

Do you know my favourite race point? No? Well I'll tell you - it's France, all day long, waiting for the birds to return after their long journey is over, especially when they have to fly over the English Channel! To wait for a few hours, and then finally see one pop up in the distance is one of the best feelings you can have, and to think this is possible from a little bird that you have looked after and watched grow up, there is no feeling like it.

Here is one of my favourite distance/France pigeons. He's always one of my first back from the races from France, and he has won me many prizes from that distance. As you can see, he is a cracking little pigeon, and he is always one I can rely on to be there, no matter what the weather or the wind direction.

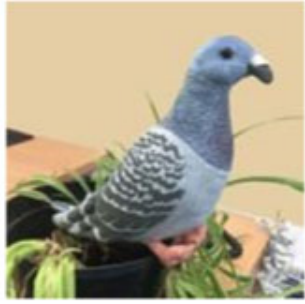
Breeding season this year has been amazing - all of the youngsters are coming on brilliant. It has taken a few months of hard work, but it is definitely worth it.

The main thing I am working on now is to get them tame so that they can literally eat out of my hand - that's the fun part!

Anyway, I hope you enjoyed reading my article. I'm off now to spend even more time with my pigeons. I hope you are all keeping safe, and I look forward to writing more in the future.



# Win a cuddly Speedy!



This competition is for our members who are still at Primary School.



All you need to do is colour in the picture in the most imaginative way you can! That's right - we want to be able to see your creative side in the picture, and you can let your imagination go wild. Once you have completed your creation cut it out and send to us at Speedy's Competition, RPRa, The Reddings, Cheltenham, GL51 6RN. Remember to state your name and age. Entries close on Friday 31st July 2020. Good luck everyone!

## COMPETITION TIME!

We are looking for photos to go into our 2021 calendar and want you to send us your photos of you with your pigeons and pigeon lofts. The best ones will be selected to appear in the British Homing World calendar for 2021.

The photos should be 6" x 4" or more and in landscape format, and have your full name, address and telephone number on the back, together with the date, details and your location. Then fill in the entry slip below and send to Calendar Competition 2021, British Homing World, Severn Farm Enterprise Park, Severn Road, Welshpool, Powys SY21 7DF. Unfortunately we are not able to return any photos that are physically sent to us. Alternatively you can send them by e-mail to [editor@britishhomingworld.co.uk](mailto:editor@britishhomingworld.co.uk)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ DOB \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian Tel No \_\_\_\_\_

Young Racer Yes  No

Young Flyer Yes  No

GOOD  
LUCK!

Remember... If you would like to feature in the next edition of Young Fanciers why not send me an email to [speedy@rpra.org](mailto:speedy@rpra.org) with a story all about you and your pigeons, along with a photo, and you too could feature in the magazine.

