

A "Sez-Lez" special report on.....

CARSON BROS OF WINSTER LONG-DISTANCE SPECIALISTS



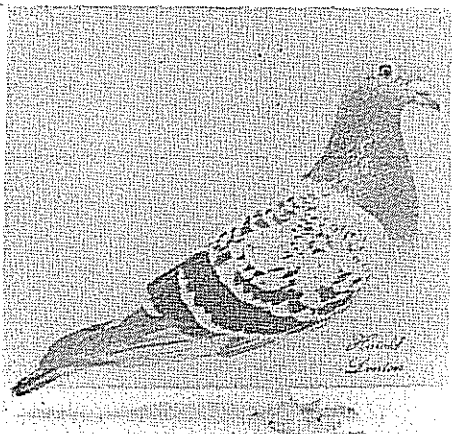
Barry Carson with one of his champion racers
(Photo by 'Sez-Lez')

WHO ARE Carson Bros? I suppose the fanciers who have heard this name before are mostly those who take a great deal of interest in the longer races in preference to the sprinters that one so often reads about. To the part of the Country where these two lads fly one would assume that the longer races must suit the birds as it is very hard, up in the hills of Winster. To get there via the Buxton Hills we steadily climbed up hill and as we arrived we were getting very close to the mist that had started to gather around the tops of the hills. The rain had also decided to join us which did not make the day any more pleasant. However, we did get very warm, sitting in front of the fire, with a nice warm cuppa.

We arrived in the drive at Barry Carson's home and sat for a minute or so while Barry was getting his togs on, which he certainly needed as it was one of those days when the weather was not going to be very good to us. Although there are two to the p/ship I shall stick to Barry on the basis that brother David did not make an

"SUNNY BANK MISS MERCURY"

Winner of in 1979 1st Sect & 5th Open N.F.C. Pau, 4,781 birds, 677 mls, winning several Trophies and RPRA Award; 1980 - 20th Sect NFC Pau; 1981 - 21st Sect NFC Pau and 1982 - 1st Sect & 83rd Open NFC Pau, 6,928 birds, Vel 800. Bred & raced by Carson Bros.



appearance, perhaps he was too shy of the camera. Never-the-less it was David that took to pigeons at the age of 12 yrs and Barry gradually took a little interest which eventually led to him joining his brother at the age of 16 yrs.

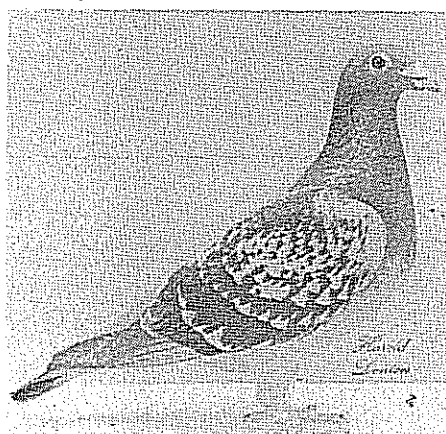
Fanciers who really brought pigeon racing to light where Carson Bros were concerned was Fred Marsden of Elton, the birth place of Barry & David; there was also the present Secy of Winster H.S. Frank Elliott. In those days they use to run to a clock between two lofts which is a far cry from the way things are done today. These lads were like most fanciers when they started up i.e. they had pigeons from anywhere which is always a mistake but one that you must learn by. Even so, they did obtain a fair amount of success in the Inland races but failed when it came to the Channel. Probably a contributing factor to their failure in the Channel events was that they were feeding far too much carbohydrates, which is all very well for the shorter events but when it comes to the Channel a little more is needed.

In those early days the loft was a stone affair with a barb-wire top but the present one stands 12ft from the ground, on top of the garage, has 18 nest boxes and gone are the bob-wires of the olden days for it is now the open door trapping. This loft has plenty of ventilation at both front and rear as they believe that this is necessary to keep quality feathering and excellent health even though on this particular day Barry had put a little polythene on the front to stop the driving rain. Ventilation and dryness are most important for the birds, as is privacy of the nest boxes (see photo) these consisting of half the nest box being blanked out which allows the birds to nest out of sight and are not disturbed. These lofts are, of course, scraped out but the Bros do think that deep litter is a good thing for the fancier who has not got the time to clean out daily, thereby leaving more time to spend with his birds. Having tried several types of deep litter during the winter months straw was found to be the best thing to use.

Birds housed consist of eighteen pairs in total

"SUNNY BANK ELINOR"

Winner of 3rd Sect & 20th Open N.F.C. Pau, 4,781 birds; 2nd Club Angouleme as a 2-y-o and 1st Club Angouleme (523 mls) as a 3-y-o. Bred & raced by Carson Bros.



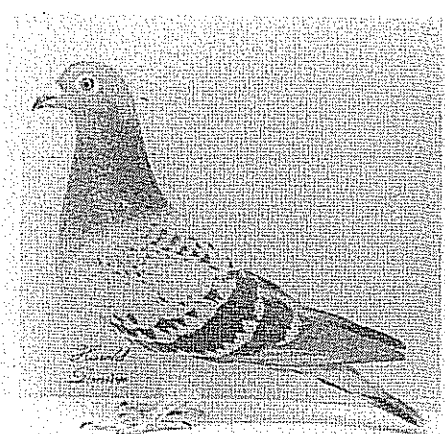
including four pairs of stock that have been retired from racing after having earned their perches. These birds are paired during the second week of March, a time which sees the OBs in the right condition for the Channel events. Between them, they rear approx 25 YBs and believe that if you only breed a small team off the best stock you will hang on to the YBs and not have a 'fly-away.' It is no good what-so-ever breeding off pigeons with fancy pedigrees if they are not up to standard for all you do is to fill the loft with youngsters, hence the 'fly-away.' As the main aim is crossing the Channel all the racing is done on the Natural system. It is the extreme distance that is aimed for and the hens fly much better from Pau, which shows in their results. Whilst on the subject of Hens for the distance it is aimed to get them on a small YB whereas the Cocks are preferred to be sitting six to eight days. It is no good chopping and changing from one method to another, never allowing the birds to settle to a pattern and consistently bringing in new blood. Get settled to one method if you want to win, it works nearly every time. These pigeons for the distance are well tried out and not over-raced when they are selected for Pau but given fairly frequent single-up tosses from around 50 mls. They find that although YBs may win to the corn tin you take away their bodies and thereby loose all the potential for future Channel racing.

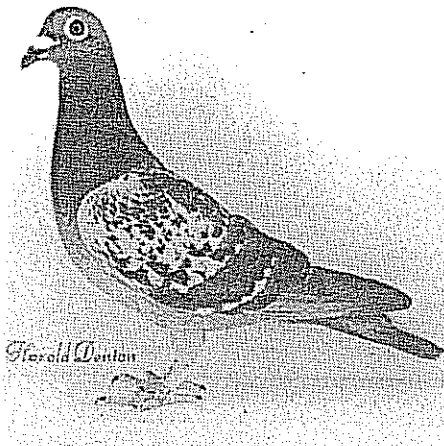
The origin of this present day team of birds are based on the old S.P. Griffiths from Eric Fox & Son of Bakewell which have blended into the present day family with very few introductions. One particular introduction that left its mark was one of Parrish bloodlines from Whitehouse Bros of Derby, a family similar to their own. Based on their consistent performances over the years, Barry reckons that Eric Fox & Son must be about the best fanciers they have to compete against.

For Producers, a good quality of feather is most important plus a good strong back which dips at the tail. Good length with the three end flights all the same length and narrow. The

"SUNNY BANK JUBILEE QUEEN"

Winner of 1st Derby-Burton Fed Avranches and 5th Sect Midlands NFC Nantes and clocked from Pau, 677 mls. Bred & raced by Carson Bros.





"SUNNY BANK DAYBREAK"

Winner of 1st Sect & 3rd Open Angouleme in Midlands N.F.C, 523 mls; 5th Sect & 58th Open Nantes, 407 mls, in Midlands N.F.C and 2nd Sect & 9th Open Angouleme, 1,525 birds, Midlands N.F.C, Vel 676. Dam & G.Dam of many winners. Bred & raced by Carson Bros.

Producer must also have a good 'eye-sign' and their No.1 Stock Hen won many 'eye-sign' shows and went on to live until she was 22 years of age. The birds must have 'eye-sign' but they must also be able to think for themselves.

Another loft has recently been erected for the sole purpose of housing the birds of Chris Roper from Winstler who owned a really great family of distance pigeons which he had cultivated over 40 years by careful inbreeding around individual distance pigeons i.e. 'Peakland Treasure' — 2nd Sect & 26th Open Pau Nat; 'Peakland Queen,' G.Dam of 'Treasure' and 3rd Sect & 18th Open Nantes Nat; 'Peakland Queen' was one of the foundation stones of the loft and was an exceptional breeder of birds to be clocked consistently from Pau, 682 mls. 'Peakland Emperor' — 1st Sect & 23rd Open Pau Nat and 4th Sect & 36th Open Pau Nat; 'Emporor' was clocked to win four prizes from Pau and two R.P.R.A awards, a son of 'Peakland Queen.' Chris Roper won no less than four R.P.R.A awards from Pau, 682 mls.

Chris Roper's birds are now housed in a separate loft behind the Carson racing loft so they are waiting in anticipation to see what they will do. From what I have seen I cannot see these pigeons failing to uphold the good name of the late Chris Roper.

Carson Bros have put up many creditable performances at all distances and some years ago they had a report in the 'Gazette' which came about more for the club racing. Nowadays, things are different because they have more than earned a mention for their Channel performances which include 5th Open Pau; 1st Sect N.F.C, 1979, when there were only four birds to beat them which were all flying over 100 mls shorter. 1st Sect & 3rd Open M.N.F.C Angouleme; 1st Sect & 72nd Open Nantes N.F.C which took their major positions to 2 x 1st Sect, 1 x 2nd Sect, 2 x 3rd Sect from Pau, flying 677 mls, and they have never been out of the first twenty five when competing from that race point.

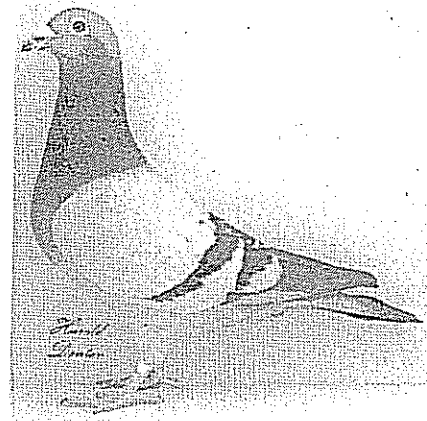
It was while gaining one of these positions that Carson Bros got the most satisfaction out of racing their pigeons and it was not with the 5th Open pigeon. This was with 'Sunny Bank Miss Mercury,' who arrived at 9.50 p.m on the winning day from Pau 1982, in almost total darkness, a race that although they did not know at the time was to give her 2nd Sect win and having flown between 50 & 70 mls further than the majority of birds in the Sect, and at the age of 8 yrs she still looks like a yearling. Their biggest set-back was losing 'Sunnybank

Daybreak' when she died at 5 yrs after a bout of Coccidiosis.

In order that the pigeons are fit to fly the distance races Barry feeds the birds a mainly Beans diet with a little Maize which is hopper fed. I have found this choice of diet to be that of many distance minded fanciers that I have visited. However, during the moult a high protein diet with oil seeds such as linseed are given, plus frequent baths. The birds are also parted as soon as racing is finished and given plenty of peace and quiet.

Old birds of two years and over have to fly 500 mls whilst the Yearlings are lightly raced with all the YBs having to go right through the programme. As to the training the OBs receive single-up tosses from between 30 & 40 mls but the YBs get as many tosses as possible from 10 to 20 mls. A little showing is participated in because the Bros believe it helps keep them on their toes to have the birds in good condition during the Winter months.

I think it is about time we went for a bit of advice to the novice which is "Go to a good local fancier who has kept his own family but make your own mind up as to whether you want Sprinters or the distance birds and you must copy the methods of the fancier concerned. Some fanciers will never win because they do not work their birds hard enough to sort out the weaklings, consequently they are rearing off birds of poor quality a point that the novice should take note of. Patience and kindness,



"SUNNY BANK EXPECTED"

Winner of 1st Sect & 72nd Open N.F.C Nantes, 11,964 birds; 1st Club & 2nd Fed Nantes, 1,797 birds. Bred & raced by Carson Bros.

getting to know each bird individually, freedom to come and go as they please, all this we think creates a good home environment where birds will really fly home."

All the best to the Carson Brothers in their conquest of National Racing.

MONTHLY CHIT-CHAT continued

another W/hood loft dominates, that of Kenny Burt who is 1st & 2nd, 1184 & 1151 with two Busschaerts; 3rd J. Turley & S 1147; 4th D. Brown & S, 5th D. & A. Anderson and 6th W. Whale. From Northallerton, John Basset is top, 1072, followed by Kenny Burt with his W/hood Busschaerts in 2nd, 3rd, 4th & 6th places, split by J. Turley & S, 5th. Second Northallerton and Kenny Burt turns the tables with 1st & 2nd, 1144 & 1138, with a pair of Busschaerts, one on Natural, the bloodlines of J. Palmer's '333' x 'Little Black,' the other a W/hood of 'Butterfly Rapido' bloodlines. 3rd, 4th & 5th, 1130, 1128 & 1116 plus all pools, is J. Bassett and 6th J. Hillier & Son, 1114, with a Busschaert hen sitting 8 days.

From Morpeth the Woolwich Club experienced a similar result to the Belvedere with J. Basset winning on 1214 with a Blue Burger cock, sent driving, and clocked one hour in front of the next bird. 2nd & 6th, 1075 & 1040, plus all pools, were J. Hillier & S; 3rd Mr/Mrs. E. Rule & S, 1066; 4th D. Brown & S, 1044 & 5th K. Parker, 1041.

The South of Thames Fed opened up its season from Newark, and in the Erith NRFC, veteran Stan Pimbley and young ptrn, John Turner, are 1st & 5th, topping the S of Thames Fed. Stan flies the old Marsden Flints on the Natural system and he has had them for some 20 yrs or so with only the odd cross or two. At present, he has a small team of Ko-nipius which he is wanting to try out. Leslie says Stan is a natural stockman and his knowledge of all kinds of livestock is fairly comprehensive. 2nd & 3rd are Mr/Mrs. J. Cotton, and all pools, flying the Ko-nipius. 4th it's O.A.P W. Willis and 6th A. Newington. On to Retford and it's Pimbley & Turner again, 1st, 2nd & 4th; 3rd & 6th Mr/Mrs. J. Cotton and 5th G. Finnely with a Dordin x Tate W'hood cock. Newark again and it is the same old story. Pimbley & Turner 1st, 2nd & 4th (nice of them to leave 3rd for someone else each week); 3rd is W. Wills and Mr/Mrs J. Cotton 5th & 6th with their Ko's again. A change of name at the top from Wetherby, lib 8.30 a.m in a S.W. Wind. R. Colman & Son get a 'hot' one at 1.15 p.m, a Westcott hen sitting 14 days, for 1st. Ron had problems earlier in the

year and is down to 11 OBs - something got into the loft and killed the rest. 2nd Mr/Mrs. J. Cotton with the '07,' a Ko-nipius Cock and winner of many cards; 3rd W. Wills, 4th H. Tandy & S, 5th A. Newington and 5th Pimbley & Turner. From Northallerton, it was a similar tale to the Morpeth race in Belvedere and Woolwich, with Jim Smith 1st, 4th & 6th, 2nd W. Wills, 3rd H. Tandy & Son & 5th Mr/Mrs. J. Cotton, keeping in the frame every week. These birds were spread over a 50 mins period.

News from the Bexleyheath & Dist where Beck Bros win the Newark race (21/262) on 1127, a nice opening. Sorry to hear that George Beck died before the start of the season but his brother intends to continue. 2nd is novice Mr. Dewsbury; 3rd & 4th R. Love and Lisa, his
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The closed-in type nest boxes as fitted in the loft of Carson Bros. (Photo by 'Sez Lez')

