

Congratulations Nev on 62 years of flying

Neville Nicoll of Brisbane has been flying pigeons for 62 years and is about to retire from racing. He is one of the longest flying racing fanciers in Brisbane. His daily routine of rising at 6.15am to let his birds out for their morning fly and the cleaning of their lofts is about to be replaced by a well-earned sleep-in and a read of the paper.

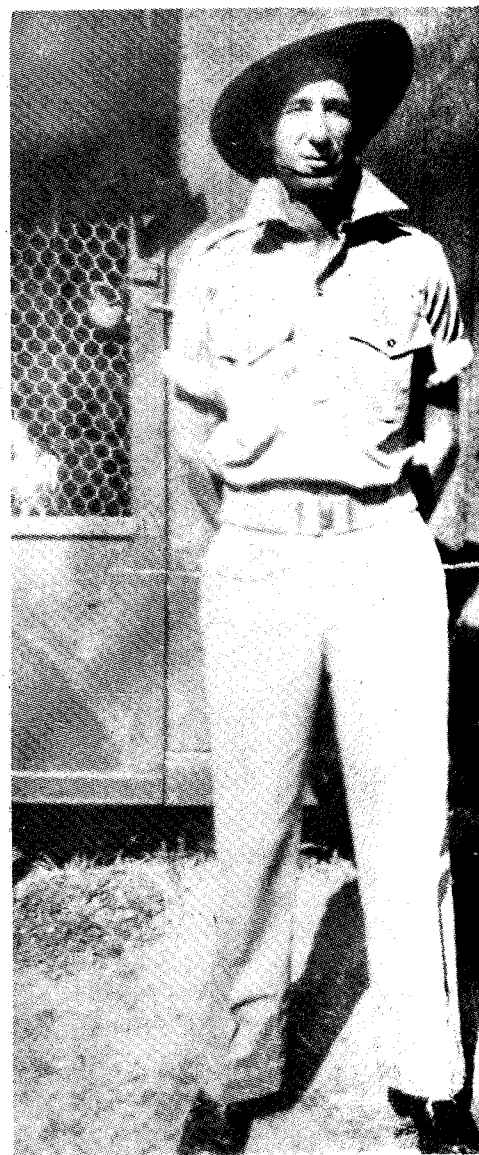
Nev started racing pigeons in 1928 at the age of 13 with his older brother Noel at Cannon Hill. A Juniors Club, the BHPC, was formed and its members were: Arthur Langford, Teddy Buckmaster, Danny Frude, Nev and Noel Nicoll, Mick McGuinness, Felix Stefano, Vince and Jimmy O'Toole. Snowy Stevenson gave the club a lot of assistance in those early days. Ian and Alf Howard joined later as did many others and the club grew to become very strong.

Nev started his stock with birds from Ammenhauser and Dick Gill, and later with others from George Kingston and Vic Fletcher. A small wooden loft of only 2 compartments, one for stock and one for race birds, was used in those days as compared to the much more elaborate loft of today comprising 5 compartments. In 1941 he enlisted in the Army and went into the 8th Aust. Pigeon Core, spending time at Gympie, Rockhampton, Ingham and Tully. During this time he was involved in many rescue operations of the coast, where pigeons were sent to Brisbane and used on small craft that didn't have radio equipment for messages. On one occasion one bird flew 200 miles to Rockhampton to raise the alarm. He then spent time up in the Tablelands attached to the 7th Division, training and tossing pigeons with a mobile loft before being sent to Balikpapan on Borneo. He was discharged in January 1946 and returned to Brisbane where Charlie Carmichael had looked after his birds during his time away.



Nev Nicoll of Brisbane.

In 1947 Nev was a foundation member of the Queensland Pigeon Federation with other flyers including his brother Noel, Vic Fletcher, Bill and Butch Haylock, Abe Neal, Alf and Ian Howard, Les McCormick, Mick McGuinness, Bill Cundy, Herb Knablauch, Snowy Stevenson, George Remington, Harold Goodridge, Ted and Ben Chester, Earnie Parker, Ron and Alex Scott, Vince and Jim O'Toole, Claudie Woodforth and Arthur Joseph. Their commitment and hardwork in those early days helped to



Nev Nicoll with army loft in Ingham.

make the Q.P.F. the success it is today. After the way he flew with the B.H.P.C. then broke away to form the Hawthorn Club and finally flying with Cannon Hill Pigeon Club for a number of years.

In 1950 Nev started breeding his successful family of 'Blues' that have been much sort after by his fellow flyers over the

years. They were founded on a Bastin-Harrison cock from Bill Cundy and a hen from Bill Gofton which was out of a Harrison from Carl Knobauch and Charlie Carmichael's Triple Pied Winner. He won Quilpie with the daughter and bought a cock from Ted Chester (a Harrison Gits), which was the foundation of a strain that he line bred to keep pure for 40 years.

In 1966 Nev moved to Upper Mount Gravatt and joined the South Coast Homing Pigeon Club, however in 1971 the boundaries were changed and he changed to the Garden Centre Invitation Club. He then spent a couple of years with the Q.R.P.A. before returning to G.C.I. in 1984.

There were many memorable occasions over the years that all flyers would relate to, such as he could have won Bowen Fed but was not feeling well so he went to bed without checking the birds and in the morning, before daybreak he found a hen asleep on the board. Or the time he should have won the Quilpie Fed. by near ¾ of an hour, however he had only entered the club race that week. There were wins like the time a hen won 6 firsts, a 23rd and a 4th in the one year while he was at Cannon Hill and another year when flying the West he won 3 of the 500 and 600 mile races being Windorah and Quilpie on the first series, and Windorah and a 3rd in Quilpie on the second series. There was a trophy he won for the Kempsey Young Bird Derby and then 2 weeks later he found notoriety in the Sydney papers with a bird from a Taree race that had been blown off-shore by 100 mile-an-hour winds and landed on a ship bound for Japan.

There have been many wonderful memories from those 62 years and also many friendships made that will carry on into the years to come, and with that we say "Good Luck and Congratulations Nev on 62 years of Flying".

The above article was compiled by Nev Nicoll's daughter, Julie Goeldner, as a tribute to her father's life long hobby of pigeon racing. I am sure I can speak for all QRPF members when I say "Nev, have a long and healthy retirement, good luck".

Len Vanderlinde.