

# Noel Lusty, Muckamore HPS

## Under Doctor's Orders

It is with much trepidation, that I have arrived at the point where I must part company with my beloved sport, that has been very much a part of my life since I was a young boy in short trousers, of primary school age, when I cared for and managed my father's birds whilst helping him out on his bread run covering West Belfast.

Keeping racing pigeons was always part of the family ancestry and I can remember my grandfather having his lofts raised on his back yard wall in Westland Street. This interest evolved, much I thought, as a result of his service during the war.

There was much rivalry between my father and grandfather, particularly when it came to distance racing and my first steps down this path, was when my father called in upon Montgomery's pet store on the Falls Road for a tea break. I was found inspecting the pigeons in the pens and one in particular, a chequer cock, IUUF 59, stood out above the rest. A picture of health and vitality, that I was not for leaving the shop without, my dad was coerced into paying Montgomery my pocket money, half a crown, for the bird, which I took home, much against his prejudicial thinking against strays in particular.

The cock sired many hard day winners for my father, one mealy hen in particular, was so tame she would drop from the sky onto my shoulder. That hen won down Ireland and after hurting her keel, went on to take 8th Club, Weymouth. If that was not enough, my father decided against my pleadings not to send her to France, and she was sent off with nine others. Well I was overcome with joy, when she was the only one in the loft to return, winning 1st Club and 8th Open Ulster Federation Dinard. When we moved house, the hen and siblings were sold at auction and shipped off to England.

Arithmetic was my favoured subject at school and this was helped by calculating velocities, long-handed version and estimated time of arrival following release.

My journey through life, followed a predicted course, that was to see me joining the Royal Ulster Constabulary (GC) and making the move over to the PSNI. It took me away from home for five years, returning after the passing of my father, by that stage I was married and began to settle in the quiet village of Templepatrick.

My wife detested my interest in racing pigeons and persuaded both sons to take up diverse interests, and she was proactive in her efforts to give them the best education possible, with due credit to the fact that they are both independent and having professional jobs, one a GP and the other a Director in a Financial Institution. I have never managed to enjoy the luxury of having pigeons at home and much less the goodwill of neighbours less inclined to the sport. Undeterred, I soldiered on, moving lofts a couple of times, at the instigation of various changes in circumstance.

My lofts are very modest, nothing palatial by modern day standards but house, what I am proud to call, my own family of distance pigeons, that emanated through the acquisition of the McCartney Bros, Moria, distance lines crossed with pigeons introduced from my very good friend Johnny Dreaden, Rochdale. I call these my Dennis Dall lines but really they are a judicious cross of Vic Taylor's blood, through Terry Hayley's famous hen, Misty Lady, and Gebr Hegans breeding. Other families I have found particularly beneficial by making a contribution in their own right such as the Tuplin Barkers, Kenyon, Liam O'Callaghan's Irish distance lines and birds recently introduced from N Black & Sons, have kept me in contention. I am not one for standing still but realise that in Ireland one needs to cultivate a special team of birds with heart and stamina if they wish to compete from France.

I am dedicated to National racing with the Irish National Flying Club and I am a disciple of the racing, training and feeding methods of that Great Scottish National



Noel Lusty.

Flyer, in his day Dennis Dall, with minimal adjustments of carbohydrate loading prior to the National race concerned.

During my time spent in The Police Service I accepted incremental promotion and held the position of secretary of the RUC(GC) PSNI Pigeon Club until dwindling membership, forced the club into retirement. Unique by all description the club originally formed to allow serving officers short period off-duty to record and see their birds home from a race, expanded to much greater depths. Sadly during 'The Troubles' two of our members and colleagues, were murdered by the IRA. George Shaw, when closing the gates at Ballynahinch Police Station after shift duty and Millar McAllister, a much respected police and pigeon photographer, in his home garden, in front of his pigeon loft, while he was waiting on his birds return from a race.

As a National racer, I harboured the desire, if not to win the King's Cup, that I might be fortunate enough to win a Hall Of Fame Diploma with the INFC or coveted Gold Medal.

In 2018, my ambition was realised and Champion Edith, having flown the King's Cup four times, won the Hall of Fame



Edith, Hall Of Fame winner.

Diploma. On her way to doing this, in 2016, was partial to winning the Rhead Cup. The much acclaimed trophy for Best Average over both Old Bird and Young Bird Nationals.

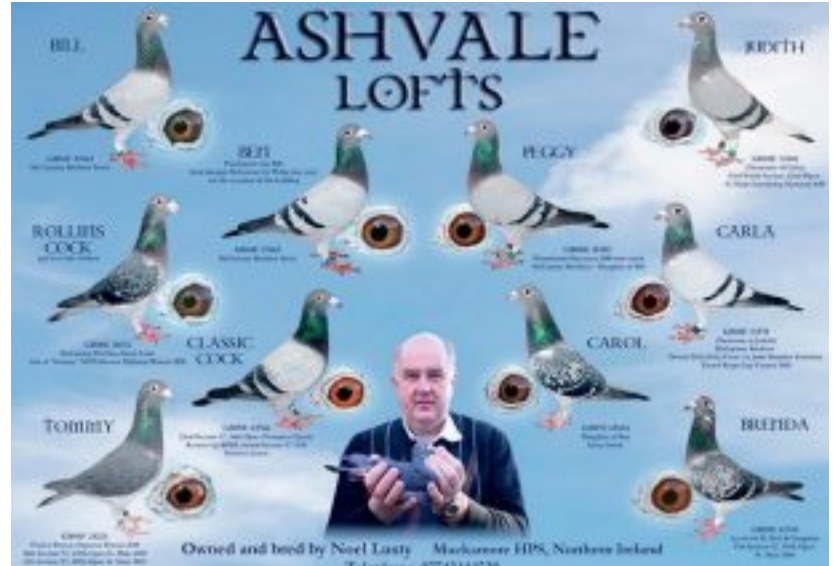
In closing and in particular, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the McKeown family in Templepatrick, for allowing this to happen and being so kind to me for the past twenty years, allowing me onto their farm. I have amassed a network of friends throughout and across the broad spectrum of pigeon racing, locally and abroad and I have enjoyed every minute of sharing our interest and being near to you.

It is with regret that I finish my article with the following announcement, that I have instructed Sawyers Pigeon Auctions to commence with the entire clearance of my stock, old bird and young bird teams via their online platform in October of this year. My own circumstances are such that I have recently been plagued with bouts of hospitalisation, medical treatment for knee problems and over the upcoming sale period I shall be incapacitated on account of two surgical operations to both eyes. Hopefully I shall be up and on the go again by Christmas and I feel that the time is now right to make this transformation even though it hurts. Good luck and may good fortune be yours.

**NOEL LUSTY**  
LLB, LL.M, QPM.



Family occasion at INFC dinner.



Family dynasty.