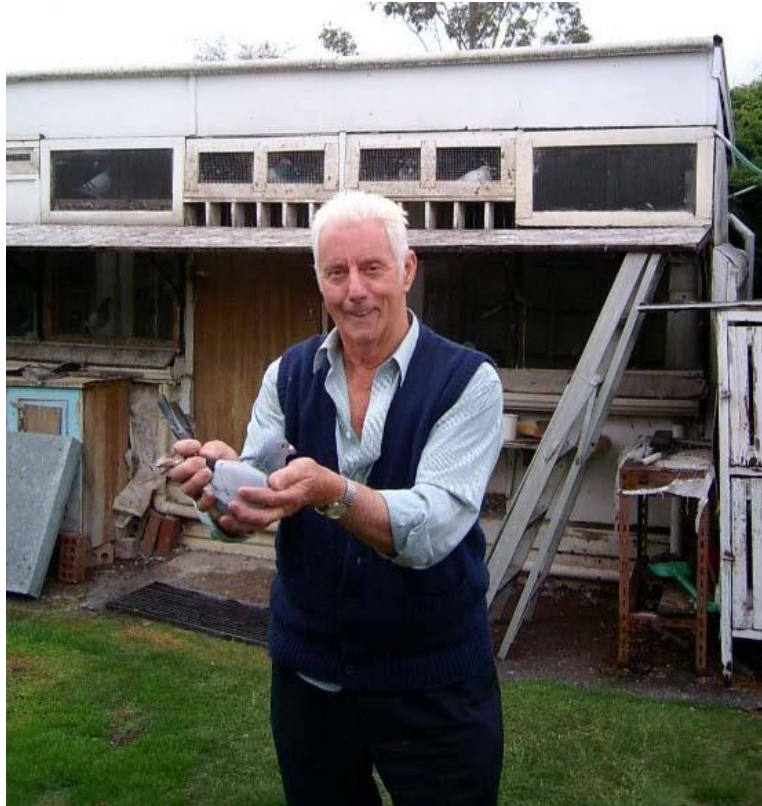


Ken Letch

The Gentleman of the Sport.

Loft Report by Barry Trewin



Ken is a member of The Springvale Homing Club of the VHA which has 22 members. Ken was originally a member of the Southern Cross club and in 1964 gained a 20th fed, that was in his first year fly. To get started in the sport, his friends gave him some pigeons and they used to meet at Bobby Williams' house. He has been secretary of the club since 1973 and the Springvale homing centre has now named the Ken Letch Pavilion. Ken likes all breeds of race birds and the feather legs are the ones that he likes the best, which are the Wickham's and they'll go all the way from woe to go. He has won first Feds and numerous other fed positions and club positions over the years.

He likes to house around 150 race birds at the start of the season and likes to keep a few old birds. Ken uses the Telford's general mix and uses the same feeding all year round he will mix some honey and garlic on to the feed has a good supplement for the birds during the year. Ken will feed the birds until they leave for water, he feeds once per day which is in the afternoon. Ken will release his birds for loft fly in the afternoon and then he will call the birds into the loft to be fed. Ken allows his birds to fly for however long they would like.

Ken likes wean his birds whenever they are ready to leave the nest, and he likes them to be fully feathered under the wing. To assist the youngsters in loft breaking he will use the open door free range technique. This allows the birds time to take in their surroundings without being forced. Ken starts his birds at five miles and builds them up to the Glen Waverley football ground. Ken likes to have as many tosses as he can before the first race, he may train from approximately 40 kilometres every day if he is able. Ken will endeavour to train every day even once racing has started.



Ken never single tosses and he does like to train by himself as he believes that the birds will learn to go by themselves. Ken does not vary in any of his training for the sprint, middle or distance training. He does like the short races where basically in 1 1/2 hours it is all finished. He prefers the cocks for sprints and the hens for the distance racing. he mainly used as the natural system but he'll likes to have a them home to eggs or youngsters every now and then, he says it improves their desire to home. Selecting his birds for a coming event he believes in observation, he will stand inside the loft and watch his birds looking for a shiver or a shake the sign they are ready to go. Ken is a person who enjoys every time he gets a bird home, (This is the sign of a true pigeon fancier, in my book).

Ken doesn't use much in the way of medications on his birds, he will use multi-vitamins in the water and as previously stated garlic and honey. Ken uses a Yankee trap and allows the sexes to run together.

Ken uses the basic breeding system of mating the best to the best. He will pair up his birds in September and will take two rounds. Ken suggests that any novice should always ask questions as you can always learn and also always be observant. Ken also suggested that if more people spent more time encouraging new people, the sport would be a lot better off.

Ken has been a great ambassador for the sport, he is a well-known auctioneer and will always lend a hand, all you need to do is ask. I personally would like to thank Ken for assisting with the charity auction on the Mallee Classic weekend. Ken adds a new dimension to the day and it is much appreciated.

Duncan and myself had a pleasant morning talking with Ken and handling his birds. We look forward to doing it again in the future.



Barry holding one of Ken's Feather Foot birds