

Interviewed: March 29, 1976

Tape 67, 2

PRESIDENT: Mr. Ken Somerville,  
864 Heather Street,  
Richmond, B. C. (274-1585)

Don Banister - Researcher

- The club was first organized around 1958-60.
- He was still in school at the time; he left the club after a year or two and went back to it in 1968.
- He was a junior member of the club in 1960.
- In 1960, the club had six to ten members.
- Names some of the original organizers of the club.
- In racing pigeon, the birds race from a race point back to their respective lofts. The distance from the race point to a given loft is measured in terms of a straight airline distance by a computer in the States. The distance can be measured to within a few yards.
- He gives an example of the speed of the birds. Birds released in Eureka, California, at five in the morning sometimes reach Richmond by eight o'clock.
- The weather influences the speed of the bird's flight.
- The Richmond club is part of a combined club. The combined club owns a truck which transports the birds to the release point.
- The combined club has about 100 - 200 members.
- The club no longer flies from the south.
- They fly from the east as far away as Edmonton.
- The club also flies with a Victoria combine club.
- The Richmond Club has performed quite well in competition with other clubs.
- The cost of keeping racing pigeons has gone up substancially; i.e. a sack of grain has gone from \$5 to \$9.
- The overall effect of inflation is that the pigeon fanciers can only keep a limited numbers of pigeons.
- The club is self-sufficient.
- Once a year, the club holds a show in Richmond and invites the various clubs to show their birds; usually they make enough profit out of this to carry the club through the year.
- There are two combine clubs in Vancouver; one club flies from the north and one club flies from the east.

- There are about ten active members in the Richmond Club at present.
- The numbers of club members have fluctuated.
- The racing pigeons have to be trained.
- The training begins when the birds are about 3 months old...they can be taken a couple of miles from the loft...in a couple of weeks, this can be brought up to about 50 miles.
- Young birds can be raced about 300 miles.
- Two year olds can fly about 500 miles.
- Three year olds can fly about 500 - 600 miles.
- The biggest hazard to flying birds in B. C. is the weather...bad weather is where the majority of the birds are lost.
- Forest fires and hawks are also hazards which the pigeons encounter.
- Pollution is another hazard...the odd birds will go down for a drink and land at a stream that is polluted and you'll never see him again.
- The Richmond Club flies about 8 old bird races a year...these events start at 60 miles and go up to about 600 miles.
- They also fly about 8 young bird races...these events start at about 60 miles and go up to 250 miles.
- The Richmond Club bestows awards for birds that have a good flying average and also for the longer races which are the ones that people tend to like to win.
- People who were racing pigeons in Richmond before 1959 belonged to the Vancouver Club.
- Discusses the problems the people had then.