

Our new President - Col Flanagan

At the BCV Council meeting in May last, the new President Colin Flanagan was elected.



Col is no stranger to the workings of the BCV, having been involved in the hobby since his teenage years.

In the past he has served the fancy in many ways.

Colin has been the BCV Vice President, BCV Secretary, a member of the Judges and Standards committee, Classic Show Manager, National Show Manager, and ANBC-WBO Delegate.

He last served on council the 1990's before retiring to concentrate on his business interests. Now in semi-retirement Col feels he has the time to help reinvigorate the hobby.

He has stated that his aim is to have the committee concentrate on attracting more new members through broader involvement from everyone, and for the committee functions to be more open and transparent to the membership, with a long term approach to planning.

Col is an accredited Judge and enjoys that part of the hobby as well as breeding and showing.

In the beginning.

Most of the bird fancy has heard of the partnership of "Shepard & Flanagan". A most formidable budgerigar partnership, but perhaps few know the story of how this partnership has developed to this pinical of success that they now enjoy.

Bruce Shepard and Colin first met as they joined the 1st North Moorabbin scout troop when they were just eight years of age. In later years they played for a local football club alongside each other in the back line for the under 15 and under 18.

In the early scouting days and unbeknown to each other they both had a few pair of birds breeding at their homes. It was their parents that identified this common interest and as they lived in the same suburban block, the two became inseparable at weekends as a brief bike ride would link their common interest.

Their combined confidence grew and they travelled beyond their suburban block in East Bentleigh in search of other breeders, Alan Moss and another breeder in Bentleigh were a real hit for these two boys as they witnessed first hand other breeders with all those new varieties and so many breeding cabinets.

It was not long before they found another breeder; just a short bike ride away lived Frank Gardner, there is no doubt that this introduction was the turning point for these two young lads in their budgerigar breeding future.

Developing the essential Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes

Frank Gardiner back in those days was the Chairman of the BCA, the Chairman of the Judges and standards committee and ran the judge's training school monthly at the Camberwell football ground, his contribution to the bird fancy was significant and he was a respected National icon of the bird game and was even said to have invented the Budgerigar.

Frank took these two enthusiastic youngsters under his wing and the tuition that was passed on over many years was second to none. In those years when Frank went out judging he had the two youngsters in toe most of the time.

Frank had a constant stream of visitors to his birdroom people such as Des Demoore, A&D Bassett, Brice Grinlington, A. Bugg, L Vines, Harry Eady, Ian Hunter, John Scoble, Harold Heath and many more, but what an introduction for these kids and be assured they were there listening to every conversation.

After a long conversation with Bruce & Colin's parents Frank was permitted to take the boys to a local Budgerigar club meeting, they were probably around 14 years old by this time, it just happened to be the Nepean Society, here they were introduced to more big name of the bird game G Campbell, G Gill, B Adams, R Reed, H Wise, C Bishop, F Stone, B McDowell and J Tanner.

In those days as part of the monthly meetings Frank Stone conducted a monthly education program that focused on a variety or an aspect of the fancy, this was accompanied by hand out notes that were cherished by the two as they were so eager to learn.

Under the close tuition of Frank, Bruce and Colin passed the judges test before they had their drivers license, and importantly Frank instilled the important values for a judge and what that meant to be a competitor as well, all of which these days are more commonly referred to as life skills.

The Nepean society is responsible for instilling their strong competitive nature, Nepean was a strong club and very competitive in the various local interclub and shield competitions and all of which flow onto the National competition.

The two are quite passionate about being foundation members of the Mountain District Society, as it was a difficult time for them as they severed long standing ties with Nepean and almost immediately had to compete against their old and favoured club at the shield. They went onto establish even more relationships with a new bunch of members such as Brice Grinlington, J. Hobbs, B. McVilley, J. Verdonk, Neil Collins, Phil Bach, Tony Borg and Rod Skivington.

Bruce and Colin were fortunate enough to join Frank as councillors on the BCA and it was here that their involvement in the administration of the fancy begun.

Forming the Partnership

The partnership was formed in 1990 by necessity in a way, individually they could not afford to import a shipment of birds from the UK separately, so as a partnership they participated in the very first shipment (nine birds) and the majority of their stock was purchased from Tom Williams and Peter Sanderson.

Bruce and Colin have been fortunate to have visited many aviaries in the UK and stewarded at the BS show.

Together they have established a strong nucleus of Normals, Opalines, Dominant Pieds and Cinnamons, before moving into a much wider range of more specialist varieties, where each concentrate on only a few but they do include: Blackeye, Clearwing, Greywings, Yellow Face, Crests, Spangles, Lacewings and Clearbody's.

They said that a full collection of varieties does go a long way to ensure that Mountain districts are able to compete with the best of the Victorian clubs

At the beginning Bruce and Colin showed separately, it was not until the importation of the birds from the UK that they formed the partnership and began to work much closer, although for a long time earlier birds were exchanged regularly at the time of pairing.

The limited numbers of birds that came in from the UK really restricted the flexibility for the two as you divide some nine birds into two separate sheds there is not a lot to work with.

Recent National Show Results

There is no doubt that Colin & Bruce have stamped their mark on the ANBC National competition, remembering that it is difficult to even get a bird selected in the very competitive Victorian team.

They have been early recipients of the National Budgerigar Council Hall of Fame trophy and were inductees in 2007 with 9 wins, subsequently in 2008, 2009 (3), 2010 (2), 2011 (2), 2012 (2) 2013 (3), 2014 (2), 2016 (2). Total wins 26, Including 4 in Blackeyed Self colour class.

