

## Silloth Flying Club

Story by: Old Grizzle



The Pigeon Club in Silloth is one of the oldest societies in the town. It was founded over 100 years ago and is still active today. Twenty years ago the Pigeon Club had 20 members, today there are 6 members, five of whom are active. This is a sign of the times, the younger generation have a host of other things to do, computers, play station etc. whereas years ago hobbies were more family orientated and thus Pigeon Racing was often a family affair, father/son etc.

The decline in membership is nationwide, with very few younger people participating in which is a fascinating hobby. Silloth Flying Club is a member of the Derwent Valley Federation, which covers the west coast from Harrington down to Silloth. There are 15 clubs affiliated to the federation, which in turn is affiliated to the Cumbrian Combine, which has a total of 4 Federators as members. All Club Federator Combines are members of the Royal Pigeon Racing Association, of which have the Queen as patron. The Royal Lofts are situated at Sandringham and are cared for by a manager.

Pigeon Racing has a strict set of rules which all organisations must adhere to. The rules are set by the R.P.R.A. and all organisations.

Pigeon racing is a fascinating hobby, the fancier is not only the



breeder but the trainer and owner of these 'athletes of the sky'. It is wrong to confuse a Racing Pigeon with those you see in the streets, public parks etc. there are no comparisons. We all marvel how 14 - 16 oz. of feather and muscle negotiate vast distances and find their way home, e.g.. from Barcelona and various race points in France. Having raced pigeons almost 40 years it still gives me a thrill to see our pigeons arrive home from a race whether it be 50 miles or 500 miles.

Silloth Flying Club although now few in number is still very competitive and have achieved some marvellous results over the years. The latest being W. Minnican & Son winning the Cumbria Combine from Falaise in France last year, a distance of 434 miles.

Our season commences in mid April and continues each Saturday through to mid September. Our first race is from Leyland (Lancs) a distance of 85 miles increasing weekly until the final old bird race from Nantes in France, which is 532 miles.

In mid July young bird racing commences, these are for pigeons born in 2003, each bird has its own metal ring which identifies it with the year of its birth and who the owner is. Our young birds commence racing from Flookbury, which is 51 miles and following on with a series of 9 races ending mid September at Cheltenham which is 212 miles. So far this season we have had 3 races for old birds, two from Leyland and one

from Appleton. The results are as follows: Leyland No 1 12/04/03 112 birds competing 85 miles  
1st W Minnican & Son  
2nd W Minnican & Son  
3rd S Cullin, Grandson & Jackson  
4th J Morton  
5th Reeves Bros. & Grandson

6th Reeves Bros. & Grandson  
The winning pigeon flew 1hr 48mins 22secs.  
Leyland No 2 19/04/03 151 birds

1st W Minnican & Son  
2nd Reeves Bros. & Grandson  
3rd ditto  
4th ditto  
5th ditto  
6th J Morton

The winning pigeon flew 1hr 49mins 3secs for 85miles.

Appleton 26/04/03 110 miles 147 birds  
1st Reeves Bros. & Grandson

2nd J Morton  
3rd Reeves Bros. & Grandson  
4th J Morton  
5th Reeves Bros. & Grandson  
6th ditto

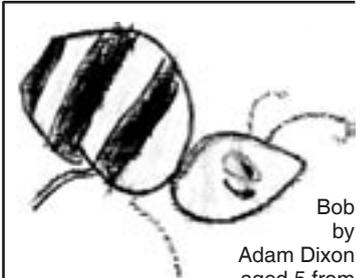
This was a very fast race with less than twenty seconds for the first 6 pigeons to arrive home, they were reaching speeds of almost 70mph. The winning bird took 1hr 41mins 5secs.

Our Pigeons leave Silloth each Friday night on the Derwent Valley Federator transporter, which holds approximately

4,000 pigeons. The birds are collected from our headquarters in Silloth Social Club between 9:30 & 9:45pm each Friday and travel through the night to the various race points.



If anyone finds this article of interest and would like further information or learn about this marvellous hobby, our secretary, Brian Reeves, can be contacted on 016973 31705.



Bob  
by  
Adam Dixon  
aged 5 from  
Silloth Primary School

## Balmoral Hotel

Best Bar in Town  
Live Music & Karaoke

Open All Day  
come and enjoy the atmosphere

Criffel Street, Silloth  
016973 32357

## WEB SITES

designed by

**SOLWEB.BIZ**

for a professional job at a competitive price, get a quote from Peter McRobert

**peter@solweb.biz**  
016973 32180



Champion Owners  
Brian Reeves & Grandson