



British Border Fancy Canary Club



History

Late one October evening in the bitter cold and rain of 1927 a number of Border enthusiasts were gathered together as they normally did to have a quiet social evening, to have a drink, a packet of crisps or nuts and a good old natter about their beloved hobby Border Canaries. The subject regarding the inadequacy of Border Specialist Clubs in the North West was brought up by Jack Appleton. After a few more meetings, and a few more drinks with lots of pleasant chit chat, the conversation once more turned to the subject of forming an all Border Club for the area, the original thirteen, God bless them were, J Appleton, H Bland, T Dean, J H Eckersly, J H Hand, T Lingy, M Mouldsdale, Captain C L H Le-Coustre, J M Nelson, E Riley, J Hilton, E Stanley, and A E Huyton. It was decided by these gallant Gentlemen that a further meeting be arranged for the 23rd of February 1928.

By the time the scheduled meeting date had arrived numerous letters of support for a new club had been received from many prominent and influential fanciers of the day, giving their whole hearted backing for the new venture for the area. At this special meeting of Border men Captain Le-Coustre was appointed our first ever Chairman, with Mr. J Appleton as our first Secretary. After some full consultation as to the legal side of matters and many suggestions from the floor a second meeting was arranged for the 13th of March 1928. At this meeting and after a few more proposals from the floor of the meeting, Captain Le-Coustre read out a carefully prepared set of rules, which at a subsequent meeting held on the 15th March 1928 were formally approved and ratified. Then was born The British Border Fancy Canary Club

It was decided at this meeting that membership would be open to all fanciers throughout the four Countries. However because so many fanciers had already become members, it was decided at the meeting that those present would be allowed to nominate and select a total of six fanciers to become our first democratically elected committee of B.B.F.C.C. - those six selected were J Baker, T Craven, E Harper, J Hands, J Lythgoe, and T Sprout.

The next meeting that was called was a committee assembly at which time they learned of many letters that had been received by both the Chairman and Secretary requesting membership of the B.B.F.C.C. These were all duly accepted by all present. The committee at this time was enlarged to ten members, the next meeting was arranged to be held at the Secretaries home Mr. J Appleton. This meeting turned out to be our first Patronage meeting, The first British Border medals were struck and were consequently won in 1928 at the first show by, B Collinson, I Gate, J Hughes, L Nutter, W Hall, S K Royle, J Lloyd, J H Warkup, J Steele, and C Yandle, with J Hilton and A Ainsclough being awarded two each on that first occasion.

The membership at this time had now increased from the original thirteen in its first year to eighty-three by the end of the financial year. By the end of the second year, 1929, it had risen to ninety-six and by the end of

1930 there had been a dramatic increase in our membership to a grand total of two hundred. Unfortunately, we lost the services of our Secretary Mr. J Appleton late in 1943 who at that time had held the office of Secretary for some fifteen years. We all applaud the outstanding dedication and hard work of this man from such a humble beginning in bringing about the formation of the B.B.F.C.C which has grown in stature to its present day status of being the largest single Border Specialist club in the World with members from all over the globe.

Half way through 1943 Jack Greenwood stepped into the breach as Secretary on a temporary basis until the 1944 A.G.M, when Mr. John Hilton from Wigan was elected as our General Secretary. Our membership had fallen somewhat during the war years which was to be expected and understandable because of the circumstances of not being able to purchase seed and the fact that many of our members were overseas doing their bit for Queen and country. As regards to the seed situation it was obtainable at a price, if you knew a spiv or someone on the black-market. Despite all this we did recover our membership by 1947 when it reached 225. By 1952 Mr. John Hilton had the distinction and pleasure of welcoming the 1000th member to our ranks, this was a great achievement for all the officials, Committee members and the many people behind the scenes including the ladies who worked so hard on behalf of the society.

Late in 1952 Mr. John Hilton our Secretary had to stand down due to a very unfortunate accident, at which time Mr. J R Thomas of Warrington became our caretaker Secretary until the A.G.M when Mr. A J Higgs took over for a further year. The following year saw Mr. E Kenyan become our Secretary.

In 1953 two Gold medals were struck for our annual Border show with an enamel Border Canary of the day embossed in the centre. These were won on the day by top Champion Exhibitor, Mr. Tom Read with his then famous clear yellow cock and an up and coming young Novice exhibitor called Mr. Joe Bracegirdle, also with an outstanding clear yellow cock.

At the A.G.M. we had the good fortune in persuading that great Border enthusiast, Mr. Charlie Norfield to become our next General Secretary with Mr. Jim Fishwick as his assistant. In 1955 Mr. Norfield suggested that we run an affiliation scheme which would be open to all Cage Bird Societies, Border Clubs and Associations, which to this day is running perfectly well in conjunction with all the other activities associated with a dedicated club such as ours.

Unfortunately, the years from 1955-57 were very turbulent times indeed for the British Border financially and had it not been for the many officials, committee members and countless donations from our founder members, along with numerous contributions from individual members digging deep into their pockets, we would not be here today. Charles Norfield and his assistant Secretary, Jim Fishwick, were once again able to lay a good foundation for the club to work once more.

Thanks to all those men concerned they were true fanciers; some are to this day still flourishing. Because of the unfortunate episode of those years the first Life Trustees were elected in 1957-58 and they were as follows, Mr. J Hilton, Mr. J Lloyd, Mr. T Marginson, Mr. A J Higgs, Mr. D McFarland, Mr. J Appleton and Mr. T E Davis.

It is with deep regret that in 1960 we lost the services of Mr. Norfield as our Secretary when he had to resign due to the fact that he had moved away from this area and was now living in the south of England. Jim Fishwick who at that time was assistant to Mr. Norfield took over the reins as General Secretary and he held office until 1975 when he had to relinquish his post for a short while due to ill health. Once again, J R Thomas of Warrington took over and stepped into the breach on a temporary basis until Jim Fishwick was well enough to continue his duties as our Secretary.

In 1978, Mr. Jim Fishwick had to relinquish his post as Secretary once again due to poor health at which time Mr. R H Rigby took up the reins for a while. At our 1979 A.G.M. Mr. Jim Prescott was elected as our General Secretary. Jim did sterling work for the British Border during his term in office, devoting all his time and energy to helping his fellow fanciers as well as his duties as our Secretary.

At the 1985 A.G.M., Mr. R H Rigby (Bob) was once again elected into office as General Secretary and did an enormous amount of work for the B.B.F.C.C., both visually and behind the scenes, that people knew little about with the help of his brother John. During his term in office the Club progressed steadily through the years until his untimely death in 1994.

Bob's brother John Rigby, who at the time was Show and Affiliations Secretary, took over the Secretary and Treasurers positions with Bob Norman doing the Show and Affiliations Secretaries job and they are both still in these positions today.

The B.B.F.C.C. has staged a show each year since 1928 with one exception in 1977 due to the firemen's strike. The venue was to be the Stockport Drill Hall which was taken over by the military for a makeshift fire station to operate the Green Goddesses from.

The above History was put together by one of our past and long serving Presidents Mr. Fred Driscoll with help from Charlie Norfield, Roy Stringer and the late John Hilton (Wigan), Joe Bracegirdle and Harry Pass.