

“GOOD SAMARITAN”

Brief History of An American Family of Racing Pigeons

The Silverado Family of Racing Pigeons

©By Silvio Mattacchione BA MA

No good deed goes unrewarded” which is often spoken ,I believe is in fact a truism. When an individual goes out of his way to do what is morally right and just. When one does so freely and unencumbered. When one expects nothing and wants nothing in return the fates or the muses have, on many occasions a way of compensating, that good deed that is most unexpected, actually so unexpected that it can be life changing. So it was with the beginnings of that unique family of “American” racing pigeons now generally referred to as the “Silverado Family” or often mistakenly called the “Silverado Janssen’s”.

The single event that lead to the founding of this highly successful family was unexpected and certainly at the time very tragic and frightening. Our story actually beginnings over 30 years ago in Arizona. It begins when a pigeon fancier in Arizona had an unfortunate “heart attack”. Imagine suffering such a debilitating event and having no one to care for the birds you so carefully cared for, for so many years. This was in fact the situation when a very young local fancier, lets call him “Bob” decided to help a fellow fancier in need. Bob cleaned, fed, cared for and trained this gentleman’s birds during the entire length of his recovery (and thankfully he did recover).The recovery was a long and slow process, but Bob persevered and this Arizona fancier was so thankful that he insisted that “Bob” choose two cocks from his extensive (and I do mean extensive as there were 307 young cocks in those sections) late bred sections as a sign of his enormous appreciation. Well our friend “Bob” refused, said that compensation was neither expected nor necessary. Well the fancier would not hear of it and he made it abundantly clear that “Bob” had to pick himself to late hatch cocks; after all it was just the “right thing” to do! Well “Bob” relented.”Bob” went through every one of those 307 young cocks and somehow eventually completed this seemingly daunting task and in fact selected two. So off goes our recovery Arizona fancier to look up the pedigrees on these two youngsters and much to his utter amazement our friend “Bob’ had in fact chosen two “full “brothers from two separate rounds. Pretty unlikely given the numbers to choose from, but that is in fact exactly what happened all those long years ago. What makes this story even more interesting is that the sire of these two young cocks was none other than a direct son the now legendary “DONKERE STEIR” an incredible half brother to the “OUDE MERCKX”. The dam of these two young cocks was the fanciers famous “FRILL KLAK HEN”. What are the chances of a person picking two brothers under these circumstances? Not very likely! Yet it did occur. The fancier was shocked, after all even 30 or mores years ago he sold this breeding for between \$1000.00 and \$2000.00 US each. The brother of these young cocks had in fact just won “National Hall of Fame”. The fancier



asked this “Good Samaritan” if it was OK for him to take only one. “Bob” our “Good Samaritan” agreed replying “certainly I did not expect anything”. Well it took “Bob” another 30 minutes to decide which cock he would take and as you know, it often happens that in these types of situations you often “choose the wrong one”, so it was that the final choice was left to chance, to fate, to the muses, and a coin was tossed and “Bob” went home with one cock. But not just any cock and time would prove this out very clearly. So just who is this Good Samaritan “Bob” that we are referring

to?

Well it just happens to be “Robert Kinney” and that young cock was eventually to become know as the “Silverado Stier”!

Bob Kinney would eventually become known throughout the world he traveled and wrote articles for the sport for year’s .Eventually he started his own magazine called “*The Thoroughbred*”. The highlights of his career would eventually include National and International honors but I think the foremost in Bob’s estimation



Robert Kinney

was in fact the eventual success of “The Great Lakes Scholarship Program” that he started.

Bob Kinney tragically passed away on Sunday November 26th 2007 in Kruger National Park. He died in the African wilderness close to nature as he had always wished! His ashes were laid to rest in that pristine area that he loved so much.

Bob had begun his career in the “racing pigeon sport” around 1962 with a Stassart family of birds. They won for him and Bob was an average flyer but at least he was not last on the sheet. Then He purchased a black Stichelbaut hen. This hen produced many winners mated to three different cocks, her young won over and over. Bob had this family of birds all based on this hen for about 10 years. Bob would eventually write the following regarding this early period in time:

“In those years, Janssen's were the BIG NAME. Everybody was winning with Janssen. Everybody was selling Janssen. I tried many and as soon as the race got long or the day got hard, they were lost or if they came back they

GIVE CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

"Janssen brothers always have claimed that the only pigeon they successfully imported in their loft was the so-called 'Halve Fabry' ('Half Fabry') B-60-1000863.

'Halve Fabry' is the grand grandfather of world famous 'Oude Merckx' (B-67-6282031) and 'Oude Merckx' is father of '019' and of 'Jonge Merckx'. Janssen brothers got 'Halve Fabry' from Mr Fabry who bred it off a Janssen bird (so it could also have been called 'Halve Janssen' and a hen of his own (B-59-1005026) which Fabry got from... **Jos van den Bosch. It was a daughter of his 'Young Princess' (B-57-6327825) and 'Young Princess' was a daughter of Jos van den Bosch's 'Princess of 56'. 'Princess of 56' was a sister of the mother of 'Oude van den Bosch' of Karel Meulemans!** Can you imagine that? **The world famous Janssen pigeons are related to the world famous Meuleman pigeons.** The connecting link is 'Princess' a pigeon of Jos van den Bosch who also supplied Huyskens van Riel with their 'Dream Team' shortly after World War 2 so:

-Janssen and Meulemans both live in the town of Arendonk.

-Janssen and Meulemans both had a miracle bird called 'Merckx'.

- Both these miracle birds descend of 'Princess' of Jos van den Bosch.

The bloodline of 'Princess' is not only in Janssen's Merckx, 019 etcetera.

'The Halve Fabry' which I mentioned before is father to that wonder bird 'Oude Witoger' (B-65-6371172) which won 15 first prizes and 'Oude Witoger' is father of 'Oude Raket' etcetera."

Reference: [The Meuleman's Story \(part 1\) by Ad Schaerlaeckens](#)

So as we can see the "Silverado Stier" the original Foundation Sire of the "Silverado Family" being a son of the famous "Donkere Stier" who is a half brother to the "OUDE MERCKX" is in fact a descendant of this very same "Meuleman's "Princess line".

were ruined. I did not like them. Plus I was flying in "Gordon Country". Every loft and there were 70 in our club and over 150 in our combine had some Gordon's. Not me as they were little, ugly pigeons, with poor eye sign and only raced well when it was a difficult day. They won at 800 yards a minute and under. I thought in those days a pigeon could walk faster than that. At 700 yards a minute flying, they would surely fall out of the sky.

However, many of our races were very slow and difficult. Many days the birds had to come through rain and headwind. Even snow, in old bird races and very hot in young birds. It was a very tough course. In those days, we also did not have the weather knowledge and forecasting that we have now so birds went up under all conditions. Throughout the years, the most coveted racing wins were at the distance. 500 miles (800-900km) and up. We often flew two to four 800 to 1000 km races each 10 weeks and many years a 1500 km race. I even organized a race from Alaska to Chicago one time that was 3,500 km over the Rocky Mountains.

...there really are "horses for courses" and in this cases that horses name was "Gordon"...it was a hard lesson but he eventually learned the lesson well and would use it to his advantage!

What I noticed in those days was I could win below 700km but I could not get the birds to win over that distance. The Gordon's always beat me. Sometimes they beat me very bad. It was embarrassing. Finally, I went to my best friend who was the champion on the long races and he gave me four of his Gordon pigeons. I really did not like them at all. However, the next old bird season, I won an 800-km race with a yearling from them. That was it.

I had learned something. It takes the right pigeon to win on the course. Not all pigeons would do it no matter how good they may be. Just like dogs have special talents to themselves. Just like people have special talents. Our racing pigeons must be able to race the course and handle the task they are given.

I kept my Stichelbaut family but used Gordon on them."

So according to Bob there really are "Horses for Courses" and in this particular case the horses name is in fact "Gordon"! So let's resume our story where did Bob go to from here? Well according to my recent conversation with Bob that took place early November 2007 he proceeded to mate the young "gift pigeon" eventually to be called the

Bob's experience is founded on five national champion loft awards, called "President Cups" in America, and many national "Hall of Fame" racing pigeons that have all been related that were the result of his "Silverado Family". Kinney's loft and birds are known in many parts of the world and they have won in Holland, China, Taiwan, and South Africa as well as Canada and the United States to mention only a few. They have won over water, over mountains and over the plains.... Two of the "Silverado Family" birds, sold at public auction as late bred's bred the winner of the "Sun City Million Dollar Pigeon Race" in South Africa for "Qualls" of the USA. This event, without a doubt is the most coveted event in the Racing Pigeon World carrying along with the glory the enormous 1st place prize of \$200,000.00 US. That winning bird was "Silverado family" a Janssen/Gordon family and it was about 10 minutes out in front of the next bird. They came that day one at a time. No doubt about whom was out front and where they were that day. Less than a dozen lofts in the world have ever have bred the first place winner of this race e. I fully expect that some year soon; Bok Kinney's "Silverado Family" family will do it again

"Silverado Stier" to his best hen at that time, here is exactly what he said:

"I mated him ("Silverado Stier") to a Stichelbaut/Gordon hen that I had. Used that pair as a pumper (foster parents) for the first two rounds of eggs. Then I raised a pair off them. That pair of babies, I gave to a friend of mine to fly. One of them won first as a young bird at 550 km. The other one won the next year first at 800 km. By now, the hen was already gone. I had sold her or something... I thought maybe this cock was something special and I started to look for a hen for him. Not from my family but from some Janssen family. Since I traveled for the sport and wrote for magazines in the sport, I knew many, many fanciers. In California I found a hen. Very special but still young. I asked the fancier to send me two babies off of that hen mated to whatever he thought was his best cock. This happened to be a Klak Janssen family and very good at the middle and long distance in California. However, it was a fast course and the birds had the ocean on one side and the mountains on the other. They could not get lost. So I did not know if they would fly in the Midwest, through storms, weather fronts and bad weather. I did not know if the homing ability was strong enough."

It is interesting that at this point Bob goes looking for a Janssen hen flies the youngsters from California falls in love with one of them:

"I trained the babies I got from the California fancier and like one so much that after the season, I just put her to stock to go onto this Janssen cock. One pair of Janssen's could not hurt my loft. If good, I would keep them and if not, they would go like so many other Janssen's did. Out of the loft to the waste can... That very first year, I bred six from the pair and five of them won for three different lofts. I had something but they had not yet been to the distance. These were the races that I wanted to win. I had already in the years past won so many of the middle races; it was the distance that I had a hunger to have victory in."



Blue Pride was the Silverado Foundation hen that was always mated to "Silverado Stier" to produce incredible prepotent children including "Slade", "The 540" cock, "Dolly", "1710" and a host of others that have impacted on lofts around the world.

“...To put my thoughts on breeding into the very simplest of examples. Consider the following. Image a jar in front of you with gold dollar coins in it. Imagine that each gold dollar coin represents a winner gene and you want to reach into that jar and pull out another winner. There are say 20 gold dollar coins in that jar. So long as there are only gold coins in that jar, every time you reach into it you will pull out a winner.

So lets imagine that you now decide to bring in a cross, unproven, an unknown quantity, that you now mix into your loft (or jar). So now your jar is full of the 20 gold coins to which you have just added 20 copper pennies. So it is easy to understand that your odds of pulling a winner out of your jar have just been reduced by 50%. Now do that for another generation because the bird that you imported or bought cost so much and is claimed to be so good and you now have say 60 copper pennies and the same 20 gold coins. If you multiply the number with even more unknown gene packages and the likelihood of ever finding one of those gold coins is even further reduced. The above is a formula for life long mediocrity.

When I found that super pair I literally culled everything and worked with that pair and their children. Some were proven as youngsters others were bred for stock. I proceeded to mate them together because I had no choice. With a total of seven pair I started over. I was LUCKY enough to find the “gold mine” my jar was full of gold coins... Over the years I have twice cut back to seven pair only. Each time resulted in a leap forward in performance...”

Bob Kinney

“Blue Pride and the “Silverado Stier” over a number of years bred 12 1st place winning children, as well as National Award winning pigeons however their children, virtually without exception bred 1st place after 1st place winners for Bob and a host of other fanciers. Bob never claimed that he had anything special that he brought to the table. He credited his foundation pair totally. He would often say that he got two superior pigeons that when mated together were possessed of a “genetic package” that was truly awesome. From this pair Bob mated together a brother and sister, the special mating was the “540” cock X “the 1710” hen which was his full sister. It was without a doubt the greatest move Bob could have made. This pair produced winner after winner and their children were even better breeders than their parents. Somehow the “genetic package “ was intensified.

Its so true is it not that the “hunger” is what drives you to try one more time, to hope, to will something into being you must have the will to achieve. Many have the talent most fall short in that they fail to “DARE” to achieve. They worry so much about the possibility of failure that they welcome mediocrity. Bob had a dream and he was prepared to risk all in an attempt to bring that dream of an all purpose American racing pigeon family to reality. Here is where it gets personally interesting for me. You see in late in 1992 I purchased at public auction, sight unseen an old “Silverado Family” Foundation Sire called “Slade” at that time I paid \$2000.00 US for this cock and all on his pedigree, actually on a hunch that this “Silverado” genetic package would blend with my own “Spanjaard Family” line. I was not to be disappointed. Bob continued the story of the creation of his family as follows:

““Slade” was one of the first young cocks I got from the pair. He won a young bird race and then was lost for four weeks. I thought, that is it. They are no better than the other Janssen’s around the world. I flew 12 widowhood cocks and had an empty box so when he came back; I put him into the widowhood loft and forgot him. He was just there. He must fly or die basically. That next spring as a yearling, I sent him to four different 800 km races on three different courses and he won one of them and scored in the top 10 on the others... Now, I knew I had something. I bred him and his young were no good. However, because he had flown so well, I bred 6 late hatches off his parents. So they were all in the stock loft as well. A new family plus the old family. ...I mated these six various ways. To the Stichelbauts and to the Gordon’s. One pair of brother and sister together.

From the Stichelbauts, I got nothing that flew well. The brother sister pair only bred one that flew well. However, the two pairs that were Gordon and

“(Nature is not on your side).

Nature never progresses from less order to greater order, but always from order to disorder. In the hands of the originators of these families, we had a certain (lesser or greater) degree of order. Eventually, in the hands of the mass of fanciers worldwide, we naturally revert to disorder, or what I referred to as common form. Whatever qualities these masters fixed to lesser or greater degrees was eventually diluted and lost in the hands of lesser fanciers. It really takes very few generations for this to happen-as little as one or two in most cases.

Most fanciers love to race. Once the season is over, for the most part so is their interest for yet another year. They really just love to see them come home. Most fanciers are not dedicated to a lifetime of trying to achieve a specific breeding goal-the result of which may be total failure in the end anyway. The old adage is that "half the fun is getting there." As for me, win or lose, I will continue undaunted, mating father/daughter, brother/sister, looking for that most elusive of all qualities, a pretty face. Each year they look more and more like peas in a pod, each year more structural uniformity, each year prettier faces; what more can you ask?"

Reference: <http://www.silvio-co.com/pigeons/strains.htm>

...An old timer told me that when building a family, you work with a cross of two or three inbred proven lines. Then you take those crosses that fly or breed like champions and mate them back to either side of the family...

Janssen cross, bred me birds that won in young birds five of the 11 races I flew. 800 yards a minute through 1700 yards a minute.

I thought wow! However, I was still not convinced. I certainly did not realize that I had stumbled by accident the foundation of a family that would in the years to come make me known around much of the world.

My breeding was planned. It was test, test, and test. However, it was not genius or smart.” A word of extreme caution is necessary at this point: Remember that inbreeding is a tool to an end. It is a special purpose tool. In and of itself, it cannot create anything new; it can only fix in a family desirable or undesirable genes by bringing all genes to a homozygous state. If the fancier is unfortunate enough to choose incorrectly in his original stock, then the task of breeding out the undesirable characteristics may prove totally impossible-and so it does in most cases.

In the hands of a visionary it is possible to conclude that an inbred family can be purified, in which case the offspring would be almost identical in appearance, equally good racers, potential winners on race day, and ultimately, very valuable stock birds. In addition. Such a family would be highly desirable for out crossing because of their homozygosity. This is in fact the theory and rarely is it ever achieved without great struggle and perseverance. Bob Kinney has, in my opinion proven that he was so determined. Here is how Bob described his revelation:

“I had the right pigeons in the loft to put together and I put them together every which way possible and I raced them.

Over the next year or so, many races for myself and other fanciers that had the birds from me for testing were to be won, including a national champion daughter came from the original pair.

Finally, the light bulb in my brain came on and became bright.

I got rid of all the Stichelbauds. Every one of them. There was about 35 pair at that point in time. I went to 7 stock pair. Huge risk to my future again. That was the original Janssen pair. Several of their sons and daughters that were never raced. Just bred for stock. Plus an old Gordon cock that I really did not like. My purpose now was to build a family. I insisted in my mind that if they were good, then inbreeding the brothers and sisters would work and the genetic package would be stronger the next generation. Some of the inbreeds were good. Not great but good. All of the babies from the Gordon Cock and one of the Janssen hens were great. One became a national champion. I was now a strong force on the long distance races. Depending on the day. It could be a Janssen straight but most often was a Janssen/ Gordon.

I went to a sale of birds from a one loft race and bought all the birds that

... Many call it a Janssen family but I never have. It is my family and a Janssen/ Gordon family....I think that anything can race 200 km and if it traps fast, it could win. When you are talking 800 to 1200 km, it is the pigeon. It must have the brains and the stamina.

In my many years of racing, the greatest test of which my good long distance birds will be in the future is young bird races over 325 miles (480 km). For whatever reason and I don't know the answer or why this is so but I find it is. Races at 450 km have different winners than races from 480 km. My very best long distance young and old bird racers come from birds that have flown or bred the winners at races over 480 or 500 km.

"Asia" who was a son of national champion "1505" when mated to the "1515 Hen" so he is about a quarter Gordon went on to become the foundation cock for the next generation or two of the Silverado Family. "Asia" won first combine at 930 km... Bob and his son James probably have the best breeding Gordon hen in this country, the "483" hen. Major winner after major winner came off of her and off her kids when on the Silverado family. "483" bred the "Little Belgium" winner. 1st place winner when mated to "Blue Asset". Her daughter is the "17" hen who has won 2 times 1st by from 10 to 25 minutes out in front at 323 miles against some of the finest racing pigeons in the country." 483" herself is a 1st place winner at 350 miles....

were in that race from three different lofts. No matter where they scored, as it did not matter. My thinking was if these fanciers put the birds into this race, they did so to win the money and glory so they had off their best in there. The entry fee was expensive to enter and not a race to send "try me outs" to. I bought five and they were all Gordon's. I took them home and crossed them to my Janssen's that next year. From one, came many more good to great racers. Now, I had enough to make 3/4 crosses. An old timer told me that when building a family, you work with a cross of two or three inbred proven lines. Then you take those crosses that fly or breed like champions and mate them back to either side of the family. You keep the gene package strong and even intensify it for winning.

I did just that."

The following year came solid success for Bob in one of the largest club's in the USA:

"The next year, my club that was the second biggest in the US with many great national champion fanciers and famous birds over the years was dominated by my family of pigeons. This club was over 70 years old and my new family of birds broke every record there was in the club that season. When it came time for the awards dinner, they just put them all on my table and took away the one or two that I did not win. I enjoyed that evening like no other I can remember. However, I am not sure that my club mates and competitors enjoyed it nearly as much as I did!"

So through very good luck, a lot of dedication, perseverance and vision Bob Kinney managed to create and sustain a family of "all purpose" racing pigeons for almost four decades. There was certainly more that he wished to achieve. But let's look at what he did achieve:

In the years since, the victories have become so routine that one takes them for granted. I was racing widowhood with 12 cock birds vs. an entire combine of fanciers flying hens natural. It is difficult to beat hens on natural AT THE DISTANCE UNLESS YOU HAVE THE WIDOWERS JUST RIGHT. I became very proficient at widowhood. The greatest long distance race that I ever flew was an 800km race. Tough tough day with no day birds at all anywhere. I was middle to long end and kept expecting a call that the short end had a bird at dark or something. Never came. Next morning about 7:30 am, which was an hour and half after sunrise, I got a bird. It was 3/4 Gordon and 1/4 Janssen. Pencil blue cock. This was June 6th, 1992. The winner was 91 ER 1001. About 20 minutes later I got a second bird. 89 ER 1961 BB cock. He was 3/4 Janssen family. Five minutes later I got another. This was my national champion "1505" DC cock. (See the World Champions book, 1994 Edition published by Kenichi Yoshihara of Champion Trade Company in Japan). Eight minutes after "1505" came 90 NVC 1083 BB cock. Seven minutes after him came "MoneyMaker" who

"You can't see it or recognize that gene in either the racer or the breeder, until racing is underway. That is our test. Our window to the genetic package that a bird carries.

Few in the world are they pigeons, dogs, horses, or people get that gene but if it is in the family and it is nurtured and intensified, it will show up. As breeding progresses from year to year and selection is based on winning or breeding winners, it will get stronger and stronger.

Numbers are important--to the extent that the more birds you breed from that carry this gene, the more likely that gene will get passed on to the young...If I leave something behind in the pigeon sport worthwhile, I hope it is a family of pigeons that pass this championship gene on for generations to come. I know they have it. In all my travels, I also know there are great race records and great individual birds but a family is a rarity and that is the one key ingredient to maintaining the champion gene from generation to generation.

The objective now is for me is to find and intensify the gene that makes the difference between winning and being at the top over and over, and being out front and alone. Leaving even the champions behind. It is there. I have seen it. Raced it. Bred it. So for the next 20 years, I plan to intensify it...It is where the goal is set that makes the first step in accomplishment. Then the attainment comes along because of the genes...

Bob Kinney

One Champion with good care will make you famous for two or three years. The rest of the birds in the loft are just there to scare your competition. Take care of them so the champion can show himself.

Bob Kinney

was not of my family but a cock that in the years to come would be bred throughout it. Then a few minutes later I got TB 1751, a 3/4 Janssen cock.

Those were the "Awesome Six". They took first, second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth of both club and combine. I had shipped 10 birds of the 12 bird team to the race as I recall as we had some more long races coming up and I wanted two held back to increase their reserve if needed for a 1200 km race coming in three weeks. Two weeks later on June 20th, the same team went back to 800 km. Again, a tough race. I got "Moneymaker" just after dark and he won both the club and the combine. One other day bird that came about the same time that he did but it was 32 miles short of me. Then the next morning they rained in. When it was all done, my team took 1st, 4th, 6th, 8th, 9th, 14th, 15th, 20th positions.

The trophy with these two races on it is still on my wall and will be until passed on to my son who is also racing my family.

In the years since, the victories keep coming. "Asia" who was a son of national champion "1505" when mated to the "1515 Hen" so he is about a quarter Gordon went onto become the foundation cock for the next generation or two of the family. "Asia" won first combine at 930 km. His mother, the "1515 Hen" is off of a full brother sister pairing. They are both off of the original pair. She and her sister "1316" who is still here and alive but laying only an occasional egg, are the birds behind the NEXT STEP UP in the family. The base of the Silverado family. Many call it a Janssen family but I never have. It is my family and a Janssen Gordon family. I still keep some straight Gordon's and if you remember I told you earlier I did not like the looks of them and how they handled. That is pretty much still the case. However, they are amongst the best anywhere. My son and I probably have the best breeding Gordon hen in this country, the "483". Major winner after major winner off her and off her kids when on my family. I had a lot of splash and white show up in my family based around a cock called "Prodigy" who was a cock I bred but and in the family a lot but mostly gone now. I don't want to encourage the splash or lots of white so those go to sales as a rule. They are just as good and the peds have proven over and over to be some of the best breeders but when you mate them close as I do, you get to much of it. I had a white cock that had bred in two years 4 or 5 winners that was of this "Prodigy" line and I sent him to a friend. I brought him back this summer to use on "483" so I could preserve that genetic line within the family. I did not want the white color but got it anyway, so I will keep the first two from this pair for the future and hope to breed back away from it.

So as we now clearly see the "Silverado Family" is in fact a unique family that is a cross of mainly Janssen and Gordon the family is inbred/line bred with the basket essentially making the final decision. So far it has progressed under the founder's vision for almost four decades whether it continues is now in the hands of his son James Kinney as well as others who over the years have tested the "Silverado

When I started racing pigeons I did very well. I worked, had a great mentor and then I worked some more. I also had little "compassion". The birds marvel to me was not just returning home, it was returning home at a winning speed.

When that first champion came along, it was such an eye opener or brain opener to me that it changed not only my perspective of pigeon breeding and racing, but of all things in life. It set the standard higher and the goals way out there.

When you think about it, here is a little bird that has inherited something inside that puts him above others of his kind.

A bird that is not just having a good day, but has good days over and over. Every other bird on the team is basically treated equally and yet something special in this bird's make up allows it to get home first. First, at a speed that always keeps it either in front or near the top, over and over even when conditions are not in its favor.

One time may be luck but to repeat that is something inside that creature.

I was a kid at the time. As I looked around my world, people had that same quality. A very few but some. Some dogs. Some horses. Something special that set them apart in some manner from their peers or kind. Made me wonder if I had it inside me as well. This has made my life an exploration and made me willing to both try and put all of me into many different things to search for the champion quality within myself. It has made me acutely aware of it in others and maybe more important I think it made me appreciate excellence in areas of life that many pass on by. It is not a movie or a movie star I remember or admire. Not even a sport or sport figure. Certainly they may have a champion quality but of what value in the universe.

I have different "heroes".

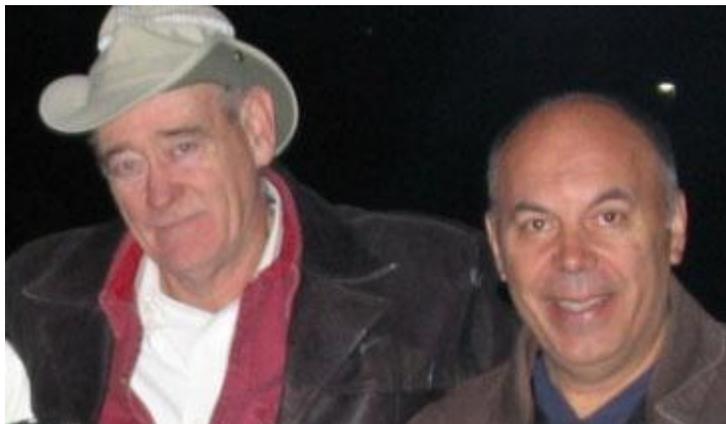
Bob Kinney

"James Kinney" I believe that you were one of those heroes...I know your dad loved you above all else!

Silvio Mattacchione

Family" stock. Over the years I had often thought of Bob as a "bull in a china shop". Earlier this year I saw another side of Bob. I have fond memories of Bob coming to Canada to participate in the two incredible "Sick Children's Hospital Charity Auctions" that I organized in 1994 and 1995 that raised over \$25,000.00 for the Hospital for Sick Kids. So I guess that it was only appropriate that Bob, on November 4th 2007, should have been in Canada for an auction of his pigeons in Oshawa Ontario. A few of my friends and I had dinner with him at the Mandarin on the evening that he arrived. He loved the food and the friends so much so that we went there a second time, after his auction, and treated us all to a wonderful dinner before he left for home. That evening, at his motel room, as we said goodbye he gave me a great big hug, thanked me and said that I was a good friend to him and that he would return to spend more time with me. Bob loved his son James, loved his family, loved Africa and had told me that day, that if he were ever to die he would prefer to do so in the "African wilderness". So it has come to pass. Bob had written extensively on Africa and had asked me to edit a series of short stories on his beloved Africa. He planned to build a home in Africa and live there at least six months of every year. He had the region picked out, had told me with great delight of his plans for establishing a new racing pigeon club in the area, he had so many plans, so much that he wanted to do. He loved his "Silverado Family" of racing pigeons and through good fortune, great instincts, incredible know how, he perpetuated this family for over 4 decades and moved it from accomplishment to even greater accomplishment. He was present in Africa as two pigeons bred by him, were mated together to produce the winner of the greatest pigeon race in the world "The Sun City Million Dollar Pigeon Race". He was proud, rightly so for he had achieved what few will ever achieve. As "Former International Marketing Director Sun City Million" he was directly responsible for helping to make the "Sun City Million Dollar" the greatest, most prestigious pigeon race in the world. Robert Kinney founded an "American Family of Racing Pigeons" second to none in the world.

Figure 1 November 3rd Bob Kinney and Silvio Mattacchione at the Mandarin in Oshawa Ontario Canada.



“Honey”

94 TB 4729 BB w/1wf Hen

Current Silverado Family Foundation hen. Dam of over 30 firsts that we know of, and grand dam and great grand dam to countless. She is a truly great, great hen. Her mother is the legendary “1515 Hen”. Her half brother is “Asia”- first 600 miles and foundation cock. Her nest mate is the “Klak Cock” sire of 11 first. I sold her as a squeaker out of the nest to a fancier Dick Crawford. Mr. Williams purchased her years later on Crawford’s death. For Mr. Crawford, she bred over 20 different first. For Mr. Williams she bred:

1st 125 miles, 1st 400 miles, 1st 300 miles

3rd 275 miles, 1st 250 miles, 1st 275 miles

1st 475 miles, 1st 200 miles

Equal 1st 250 miles, 11th 400 miles (22 day birds)

I got her back home in Jan 2003. Since then she has bred first after first and super breeders for me and for others.

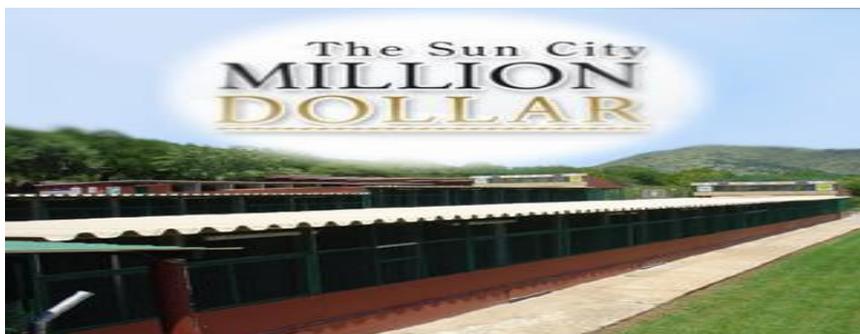
The great “17” hen is a grand daughter (double 1st Place Winner 320 miles, out front 10 to 20 minutes and dam, gr dam of many winners). Remember, the winner of the **Million Dollar race** was a grand child of 1515. **As was the 5th place winner a few years later.** Also the year I had two birds out front 1st and 2nd position vs. 4000 birds off the best of the world in the million for several weeks in a row in the overall results, one was off of “Honey”. This is the same line that produced First Federation and second Federation vs. over 3000 and 4000 birds in Africa. Plus other Federation winners and Federation Champion Birds. **This family wins out front, over and over.**

Silvio Mattacchione

The “Silverado Family” will continue to successfully fly the skies of Africa, China, Taiwan, Canada, USA, and Europe with distinction, for generations to come. Long ago I saw Bob at his lowest and in November I saw a man at the very top of his game, in love with his family, proud as punch of his son James and all that he hoped for him, I saw a man in love with his adopted people and his adopted country “AFRICA”, I saw a man in love with LIFE. Bob Kinney was very much a big man, at 6ft 4 inches he was in his prime, strong and ready to achieve even more. Even so, I saw a change in him he was no longer a “bull in a china shop” he had mellowed to a great degree, more contemplative and more philosophical. God keep you safe dear friend and may your spirit watch over the African plains and may your incredible family of racing pigeons fly the “Silverado” skies of the world! So to conclude Bob Kinney’s good deed to that ailing fancier was repaid to him handsomely!



Dam of over 30 direct children to win 1st. Bred 201st for Dick Crawford and for Mr. Williams she bred 1st 125 miles, 1st 400 miles, 1st 300 miles, 3rd 275 miles, 1st 250 miles, 1st 275 miles, 1st 475 miles, 1st 200 miles equal 1st 250 miles and 11th 400 miles only 22 day birds



This is a 2007 baby off of Honey when mated to Pilansburg (Asia/204). “Pilansburg” has bred 7 different 1st place winners. This baby is 07 Silverado 7600 and named “**Legend**” Sold for \$5,000 in US