

American Racing Pigeon Union

Pigeon Tracks



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Fall 2017

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This is how entries stack up as of August 2017. You can keep track of your status on-line through the AU website pigeon.org. You will find a link to the convention on the left side of the page. From there you will see the YOUTH RACE link on the convention website and then the YOUTH BIRD STATUS button on that page. It is updated whenever there is a change, so you can keep track there.



Dave McAnally, your convention race handler tells us all the birds are settled and doing well. He has nearly 70 youth birds in the loft. He will begin training in September.

According to Dave, "The race is not that long, maybe about 150 miles from the north end of the Grand Canyon, so I anticipate them coming pretty good. The release time will be around 7:00 a.m. and I would expect the birds maybe 9:30 to 10:00 ish.

You are welcome to come and watch the birds and enjoy some snacks. It should be fun. Hope you can make it."

Good luck to all entries!

First	Last	Band
Connor	Aycock	AU 2017 ARPU 10192
Chloe	Aycock	AU 2017 ARPU 10191
Gwen	Berglund	AU 2017 STILLY 9731
Hannah	Carns	AU 2017 WBC 3038
Ryan	Carns	AU 2017 WBC 3036
Alicia	Carvajal	AU 2017 ROCA 85
Ridrigo	Carvajal, Jr	AU 2017 ROCA 84
Alexandria	Comsa	AU 2017 SUNBURST 115
Antonia	Comsa	AU 2017 SUNBURST 117
Casey	Dagnan	AU 2017 AA 36885
Kayli	Dagnan	AU 2017 AA 36884
David	Dow	AU 2017 4-H THUNDERBIRDS 1730
Colt	Gardner	AU 2017 4-H THUNDERBIRDS 1730
Max	Gardner	AU 2017 4-H THUNDERBIRDS 1737
Madeline	Gilman	AU 2017 IEIC 210
Nester	Hernandez	AU 2017 SUNBURST 333
William	Hernandez	AU 2017 ARPU 10198
Athianian	Holloway	AU 2017 4-H THUNDERBIRDS 1735
Brynn	Horton	AU 2017 ARPU 10190
Grayson	Horton	AU 2017 ARPU 10189
Clara	Jackson	AU 2017 ARPU 10195

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Status Report on Youth Race Birds

(Continued from page 1)

First	Last	Band	First	Last	Band
Cheyenne	Kiecker	AU 2017 L&L 7126	Faith	Perrault	AU 2017 AA 32416
Breann	Kiecker	AU 2017 L&L 7128	Rebecca	Perrault	AU 2017 AA 32414
Joshua	Kittess	AU 2017 4-H THUNDERBIRDS 1732	Levi	Perrault	AU 2017 AA 32421
Erin	Larson	AU 2017 WEIR 66	Bree	Perry	AU 2017 GSF 7083
Simeon	Leavitt	AU 2017 4-H THUNDERBIRDS 1740	Nicole	Ramos	AU 2017 PSC 70
Samantha	Long	AU 2017 L&L 7129	Ashley	Ramos	AU 2017 SUNBURST 43
Ionel	Man	AU 2017 SUNBURST 543	Luke	Ramos	AU 2017 PSC 1
Catarina	Marques	AU 2017 TOP RPC 504	Carlos	Ramos, Jr	AU 2017 ROCA 30
Marta	Marques	AU 2017 TOP RPC 505	Jesse	Randolph	AU 2017 MOB 17031
Miguel	Marques	AU 2017 TOP RPC 503	Abigail	Redekop	AU 2017 FH 8188
Emma	Masterson	AU 2017 SUNBURST 1434	Luke	Redekop	AU 2017 FH 8049
Ashley	McAnally	AU 2017 SUNBURST 1011	Kalyn	Reed	AU 2017 TULSA 43
Maggie	McCracken	AU 2017 4-H THUNDERBIRDS 1738	Kylee	Reed	AU 2017 TULSA 14
Ephrem	McKee	AU 2017 SUNBURST 1008	Blake	Roberts	AU 2017 WSM 66
Madelyne	McKee	AU 2017 SUNBURST 1005	Alajandra	Rodriguez	AU 2017 ARPU 12399
Myles	Montano	AU 2017 NMRPC 15	Julianna	Salinovici	AU 2017 RFL 39
Claramae	Olsen	AU 2017 WII 801	Luke	Salinovici	AU 2017 RFL 41
Mecarte	Olsen	AU 2017 FOYS 9103	Sean	Salinovici	AU 2017 RFL 31
Ryndon	Olsen	AU 2017 FOYS 9102	Adriana	Starkey	AU 2017 LKY 17074
Arnold	Orban	AU 2017 SUNBURST 1816	Jayaira	Starkey	AU 2017 LKY 17073
Veronica	Perrault	AU 2017 AA 32402	Adrian	Vega	AU 2017 ME-FUI 26
Hannah	Perrault	AU 2017 AA 32415	Alize	Vega	AU 2017 ME-FUI 4
Elisha	Perrault	AU 2017 AA 32418	Ryan	Williams	AU 2017 ARPU 14139
Isabelle	Perrault	AU 2017 AA 32407	Spencer	Williams	AU 2017 ARPU 14141
Shaylynn	Perrault	AU 2017 AA 32422			
Mattison	Perrault	AU 2017 AA 32425			

AU Supports Education

Karen Clifton, AU Executive Director



In 2016, the American Racing Pigeon Union began offering three scholarships to students (under the age of 23), that are members or relatives of AU members. This being our second year, we did receive more applications than last year. Three very deserving students have been awarded \$2000.00 to assist with their tuition, books and other related expenses.

You may not be in college yet but we know that many students do begin college courses while still in high school. If you are interested in applying for the 2018 scholarship, please see the following page in this edition of *Pigeon Tracks*.

Be sure to follow the listed instructions and get your application in, postmarked no later than

June 1, 2018.

Perhaps you have siblings or other family members that the AU Scholarship Fund might benefit. Be sure to share this information with them as well.

Even though most of you are still enjoying summer break, school will be starting again soon so we wanted to once again share the information regarding the AU Scholarship Fund. The AU's goal is to help our younger members realize their educational and professional dreams!



AMERICAN RACING PIGEON UNION YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The AU Youth Scholarship Program has been established to further the good work of the National Ladies' Auxiliary.

AU members and their relatives are eligible to apply for a scholarship. Criteria is listed below:

- Must be 23 years old or younger
- Must have a minimum B average
- Must be an AU member or relative of an AU member
- Must submit a signed application, bio & photo by no later than June 1, 2018
- Bio will include educational & professional goals, work experience & community service involvement. Tell us how you work within the community (service programs, clubs, scouting, church, etc.) Be sure to include any certificates of acknowledgment or achievement and letters of recommendation. Supporting letters from educators are important.

Applications must be postmarked no later than June 1 each year. Applications and bios will be reviewed by the AU Youth Scholarship Committee. The top three essays (with the above information) will be selected. Each scholarship recipient will receive \$2,000.00 to assist toward fulfilling their educational goals.

Award recipients will be notified. Upon receipt of proof of enrollment for the Fall semester, a check will be issued.

Scholarship winners will be announced each year at the annual AU Convention.

MAIL APPLICATIONS AND DOCUMENTS TO:

**ARPU
SCHOLARSHIP FUND
PO BOX 18465
OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73154-0465**



*Check out
last year's
winners on
page 4.*

2016 AU SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



Mariah Moore

Mariah will be attending Kansas State University to study animal science with a pre veterinary medicine option, and a minor in agriculture business.

She had a high grade point average, and took advanced placement classes while still in high school. Mariah was an honor roll student and enjoyed 4-H, band, color guard, National Barrel Horse Association, and American Rabbit Breeders Association.

Working out of the county extension office in the nutrition department as a Food Smart Family Ambassador, she teaches healthy nutrition to limited resource families under a grant given to the state of Nebraska.



Paige Steigerwalt

Paige is studying forensic accounting with her eye on a career with the FBI. She is on the Dean's List, received the President's Freshman Award, and was inducted into the Black Belt Hall of Fame for her karate expertise. She is great with public presentations and her heart belongs to special needs when serving as an instructor in martial arts. Paige knows work! She has been in the wait staff profession since 2013.

Paige was accepted into her college honors program as a freshman because of her outstanding academic record and she is maintaining a 4.0 grade average.



Anne Vogrinc

Inspired by her grandmother, Anne aspires to nursing. She has an interest in pediatrics, geriatrics or travel nursing to assist people in all walks of life. She loves helping people and connecting with people from many different backgrounds.

Anne dreams of living and working in Ireland before she settles down to start a family. The challenge of traveling to many different and unfamiliar environments and adapting medically to her surroundings is something very intriguing to her.

Volunteering is important to Anne. She gives her time and talents to many different organizations, from church to Humane Society.

Logan Dean/Crossroads RPC Featured in Newspaper



Tribune/Star/Joseph C. Garza A rest for every racer: Logan Dean leans against the wall in the family's pigeon loft as some of the pigeons sun themselves on Tuesday at the family home south of Terre Haute.

Logan Dean gently cradled a pigeon named Pablo in his hands.

He stood inside the backyard loft where Logan and his dad, Scott, feed, water and care for dozens of racing homers — pigeons bred and trained to use their instinctive ability to fly long distances and find their way back home.

Scott guided a half dozen of the birds to a platform aside the loft, while a few pigeons fluttered their

wings and moved from one perch to another. May sunshine beamed through screened windows, lighting the shelter.

“It’s so addicting,” Scott said of the hobby. “The birds are so calming and peaceful. Sometimes we’ll even bring lawn chairs out here and just sit and talk and watch the birds.”

And occasionally Pablo, 15-year-old Logan’s favorite, sits on the

teenager’s shoulder in the Deans’ living room, watching TV with the family.

Logan and Scott are among 20 members of the Crossroads Racing Pigeon Club, which has roots dating to the 1950s. The homing ability of pigeons can be traced back 5,000 years, according to the American Racing Pigeon Union. The father-son Dean duo just got

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Logan Dean/Crossroads RPC continued



Lunch is served: Pigeons scurry about a long feeding tray for a place to eat in their loft on Tuesday at Scott Dean's home south of Terre Haute. Dean and his son, Logan, are meticulous about raising the homers, with everything from diet to training regimen well thought out.

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started last year, and Logan's glad they did.

"I love being able to do this with my dad and come out here and be able to do this with the birds," Logan said. "They just fascinate me."

The Crossroads ranges from firefighters, such as Scott, to a retired delivery driver, doctor, restaurant manager, teachers and other vocations. Some care for 30 pigeons, while others maintain as many as 500.

The members' ages run from 94 to 15, said Ron Deisher, club president. They come from as far north as Montezuma to Bruceville in southern Indiana, from eastern Illinois to the outskirts of Indianapolis.

They raise and train racing homers to fly back to the birds' home lofts, where they know to find food, safety, shelter and daily attention. It's a gradual process. Scott and Logan keep a couple dozen breeding pigeons, and their eggs hatch in about 18 days. When the racing homers

hit five weeks old, they'll start flying. Those flights begin with a simple release at the home loft, letting them fly and return. Soon, the Deans drive the birds to a spot 10 miles away, and release them to fly back home.

Eventually, the pigeons can find their way home from distances of hundreds of miles, often from release points designated along Interstate 70, Scott explained.

Some perils exist. Hawks and falcons prey on racing homers occasionally, Deisher said. Also, hunters sometimes mistake pigeons for doves and shoot them. Some are killed by hitting utility power lines. The vast majority, Deisher emphasized, safely reach their destination, motivated by the desire for the food, water and comfort of their home lofts.

A natural GPS, of sorts, enables homing pigeons to navigate even confusing territory and return home, according to a report in *ZME Science* this spring. The story cited two curious findings. First, the U.S. Geological Survey concluded that pigeons use low-frequency waves

emitted by the earth to map their path. Second, the creatures also may be able to relay knowledge among each other, Oxford University scientists said, an ability previously thought to be limited to humans and primates.

Return is 'exciting part'

Pigeons in the Crossroads club are putting that uncanny knack to use right now. The group's spring racing season, for older pigeons (those born before this year), is under way and continues into June. Its fall season runs from August to October and features the young racers, all born in 2017. Members drive their



Logan Dean releases one of his racing pigeons back to its perch in his family's pigeon loft on Tuesday at the Dean family home south of Terre Haute.

pigeons to a race starting point on a Friday evening, leave them with organizers overnight and drive home. Officials release the birds at sunrise and alert the competing members by email.

Each member awaits the birds' arrivals to their home lofts, where an electronic timer records the pigeons' identities and flight time and

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Logan Dean/Crossroads RPC continued

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speed. (Some fly longer or shorter distances, depending on the owner's home location.) Those times and speeds are relayed to the organizers, who calculate the order of finish and prize money, and all of the club's \$100-per-bird race entry fees go toward those prizes, said Walt Williams, a longtime member.

Racing homers' flight speed averages about 45 mph, so a club member may wait more than two hours for a pigeon to return from a 100-mile race.

"That's the exciting part," Scott Dean said, grinning.

Pigeons fly home from incredible distances, said Deisher, a 58-year-old former college instructor and insurance businessman from Darwin, Illinois, who now raises and sells the birds for a living. He's released his own racing homers at Kansas City, Missouri, and added, "You can't drive on the interstate and beat 'em home."

"These birds are athletes," Deisher said, "and you treat them just like that."

Along with food and water, racing homers typically get vitamins, minerals and any needed medications, Scott Dean said. Tending to them requires time. As a firefighter who often works 24-hour shifts, Scott is grateful to have his son's active



Scott and Logan Dean's pigeons sun themselves on a receptor platform on the side of the pigeon's coop at the family's home south of Terre Haute on Tuesday.

partnership. "He does as much with them as I do," Scott said.

Youth involvement crucial

The involvement of young people in the sport matters to both the Crossroads club and the national organization. The American Racing



Not quite a feeding frenzy, but almost: Logan Dean, 15, watches his and his dad Scott's racing pigeons finish their lunch as he holds one of the homers. "They just fascinate me," Logan said.

Pigeon Union hired Karen Clifton, whose background was in marketing, to target growth in youth participation, she said by telephone from the group's base in Oklahoma City. Its overall membership grew from 7,100 in 1999 to just under 10,000 this year, but junior membership has tripled.

That increase "is a good thing, be-

cause you want to get young people involved to perpetuate it," Clifton said.

Williams began the hobby as an 8-year-old. Ed Chambers, a teacher in his hometown of Hymera, started a club in 1958 for kids to raise and show pigeons at county fairs. By the early 1960s, that group — the Sycamore Haven 4-H Pigeon Club — included adults and continued until 1996. The following year, the West Central Indiana Racing Pigeon Club formed, evolving in 2006 into the Crossroads club, which keeps a "working man's" affordability, Williams said, by spreading prize money to several places in the finish order.

Williams' interest hasn't wavered since boyhood. Now 68, he lives south of Fairbanks in rural Sullivan County.

"I just enjoy it," Williams said. "The birds are relaxing and a lot of fun. And, there's a sense of accomplishment when a bird that you raised comes back in at the end of a 300-mile race."

Americans' fascination with homing pigeons rose after their heralded exploits in World War I and World War II. Allied forces used the birds to deliver vital messages in dangerous zones where radio communications were either disabled or too risky, according to American Racing Pigeon Union archives. They crossed seas and endured harsh weather, yet

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Logan Dean/Crossroads RPC continued

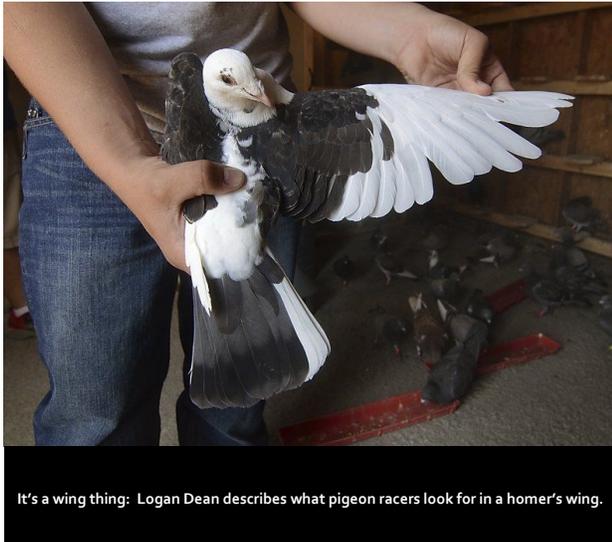
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“provided the balance between victory and defeat” in some situations.

“They delivered,” Clifton said.

Today, local and regional clubs do presentations to church, scouting, farm and service to help spread the racing and homing pigeons’ popularity, Clifton said. While most pigeon fanciers live in California and Texas, the Midwest makes up nearly half of the national organization’s membership.

Here in western Indiana, Scott Dean is happy with the niche he and Logan found in the sport. “A lot of people don’t realize how



It's a wing thing: Logan Dean describes what pigeon racers look for in a homer's wing.

much fun these birds are,” Scott said inside his loft, surrounded by cooing pigeons. “I’ve had a lot of hobbies over the years, and this one, by far, I enjoy the most.”

Williams discovered that joy long ago. While he likes the racing, sometimes he’s happy to just observe the birds.

“I like to sit on the porch,” he said, “and watch.”

Find the original article at http://www.tribstar.com/features/valley_life/fascinating-long-distance-flying-abilities-of-racing-homers-inspire-pigeon/article_14735508-efa1-57e5-969f-b1e289fd9bad.html

Show Us Your Loft!

Send your photos, name and a little bit about your loft.

Email to aupromo@aol.com.



Veterans Day—November 11, 2017

Have you thought about promoting your hobby for Veterans’ Day? Many communities pay tribute in special events. Perhaps you can participate.

If you need any handouts, just give us a call.

Contact information:

American Racing Pigeon Union
PO Box 18465
Oklahoma City, OK 73154
1-800-755-2778, toll free
1-405-848-5801, telephone
1-405-848-5888, fax
www.pigeon.org

Find us on:



Pigeons—A Complete Pet Owner’s Manual

an excerpt

Written by Matthew M. Vriends and AU’s Tommy E. Erskine, this is part of Barron’s educational series and available through Amazon, Foy’s Pigeon Supplies, and downloadable on Google.



PIGEONS AND MAN

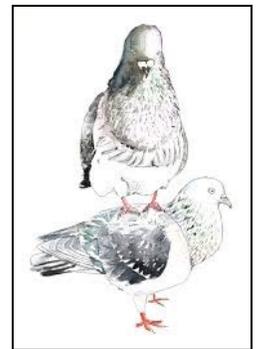
Pigeons are found wherever man lives: in cities, in parks, on buildings, almost everywhere. But the pigeon is not just a bird. It is a totally unique animal, very different from all other flying animals. The pigeon is a genetically significant, uniquely distinct species of non-gallinaceous (without a gallbladder) bird that is not classed with those birds commonly referred to as fowl or poultry: Pigeons are colony birds, very social creatures, with a hierarchical system in their social structure, and although they make excellent pets, they should not be raised in solitude.

The pigeon’s association with man is long recorded throughout history, the bird having served as pet, as messenger, and as food. Although there is still a dedicated group that breeds and exhibits various forms of the birds, pigeon racing has come to the forefront of the hobby. It grew out of the bird’s use as a messenger to become a world-wide sport with many related commercial enterprises that serve to also support the “fancy” bird keepers.

It is not known where birds (pigeons) were first kept in captivity, but it was long before humans expressed themselves in wall paintings or in writing. Pigeons or doves, specifically, are mentioned repeatedly in the Bible. Noah’s dove, surely a tame variety, returned with an olive twig in its beak, signifying that the floods were receding.

The earliest mention of pigeon-keeping dates from the fourth Egyptian dynasty (about 2600 B.C.E.) Paintings and hieroglyphics left by the ancient Egyptians

contain many references to pigeons. In the Near East, the pigeon was a well-established, common garden or park bird even in ancient times. The Romans were experienced breeders, who kept highfliers and tumblers, among others. Today, the total number of pigeons cannot even be estimated.



Pigeons instinctively return to their place of birth, an ability that has been exploited by almost every culture. Aristotle (384-322 B.C.E.) wrote about a “pigeon sport,” and in Athens at the time, pigeons were being used as messengers. The people of Baghdad had a messenger service to the Syrians and the Persians that functioned until about 1258. In the sixteenth century pigeons were used during the Eighty Years’ War to carry messages. During the siege of Paris in 1870-1871, as well as in both World Wars,

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pigeons were used. During World War I, pigeons were used mainly at night to carry messages. The English-bred *Cher Ami* (Dear Friend) saved many lives serving with an American unit in France. In spite of losing a foot and having a wound to the head, the bird carried a message on its wounded leg to its home loft, a distance of 25 miles (40 km), in 25 minutes.

During World War II, pigeons carried secret messages to American agents behind enemy lines and many birds received the British Dicken Medal for bravery and valiant service. In 1956, the American army sold its last pigeons, to make way for computers and electronic communication devices, but other armies continue to use them for various purposes.

The Pigeon Fancy

It is not known exactly when the pigeon *fancy* began, but the Egyptians and Romans raised pigeons. Some towers attached to Roman houses

contained more than 5,000 birds! Some birds were kept for their unusual flying abilities, such as acrobatic flight, including tumbling, rolling and flying at high altitudes. Although such acrobatic flying is a tendency in all domestic pigeon breeds, it is rarely seen in the wild rock dove (*Columba Livia*).

The Crusaders probably helped spread interest in the pigeon fancy, popular in the

Far East for hundreds of years. As trade increased with Arabia and Persia, many pigeon breeds were brought to Europe. Writings in the early seventeenth century describe the import of various breeds of pigeons from Asia to Europe by Dutch and English seafarers. Many paintings by the Dutch, English, and French masters of the seventeenth century show illustrations of pigeon varieties then known, and many were far different from those seen today.

In the monasteries and abbeys, monks exploited the birds’ homing instincts and set up communications systems. This led to the exchange of information about fancy and homing pigeons from various locations where original breeds were further improved to produce regional varieties or strains. Some or the markings and colors produced became unique, extending the frontiers of genetics. Breeders would go on to develop written standards for specific breeds. (This was before Gregor Mendel’s rules of genetics were fully understood.)

Established standards and breeding for specific traits and abilities also led to the development of the news services and the racing pigeon sport.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century the first bird exhibitions including pigeons were organized. The organization of the first bird shows was also the basis for the expansion of the hobby. Since then the pigeon fancy has developed more than 200 different breeds, in an infinite variety of colors and markings. Today there are numerous shows worldwide, which will ensure their preservation as a uniquely distinct, genetically significant species far



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into the future.

The show season and the breeding season are the high points of the pigeon fancy year and vary depending on local climate. For example, in the Northern Hemisphere, the show season normally runs from November through February.

Messengers Become Racers

As certain flying traits were honed and certain breeds became more reliable “homers,” news services developed. Out of this the sport of pigeon racing grew and captured the interest of many fancy pigeon keepers. The sport has grown until today it enjoys widespread popularity in North and South America, Europe, India, Japan, and China. Systems for racing the birds vary from country to country. For example, in the United States, old birds (that can fly long distance) are raced in the spring, whereas young birds (8 to 10 months old) are raced in the fall.

The focus of this text is not on the racing-pigeon hobby; however, the sport enjoys widespread popularity. Many famous Americans and Europeans, to include royalty, are avid racing-pigeon enthusiasts. In Belgium, pigeon racing was the national sport for many years. The sport is on the wane in many places now for many reasons but more so because of the basic changes in our societies.

The principles of training, care, and treatment of the birds found herein generally apply to all pigeons, racing as well as *show* pigeons.

Historic Dovecotes or Pigeon Lofts

The words cote and coop have fallen out of general use in America today. The word loft is a better term and more descriptive of the structure, regardless of size, specifically designed, built, and organized to house pigeons, be they fancy birds or racing homing pigeons.

It would be impossible to list many of the fine dovecotes found around the world, some housing 1,000 birds or more. In England and continental Europe, many were found on large estates, wealthy farms, and in parks. After the sixteenth-century Reformation many of them came into the hands of laypeople who rarely had the means or will to maintain them or had little interest in perpetuating the structures as historic relics.

The ninth-century Abbey of St. Gall in France is a significant example because the monks kept many kinds of animals, and cultivated various edible and medicinal plants. They wrote detailed manuscripts about their observations and methods of management. These served as unique references for other abbeys, and have been a major resource for the world and posterity. The pigeon fancy was fairly stable until 1920’s, when many dovecotes were restored and populated with various breeds. Some of these historic structures stand today, some still in use. Others have fallen to progress or the inevitable effects of wind, rain, and neglect.

