

Australian National Racing Pigeon Board Inc



COMMEMORATING THE PAST *flying gallantly into the future*

27 November 2020

Chair's Annual Report to Board Members

Introduction

Year 2020 was a year in which life changing events impacted upon the Australian society.

Firstly, the Eastern and South-Eastern seaboard experienced the catastrophic bushfires that devastated significant communities and caused tragic losses. A side effect of this was the air pollution that clouded out Canberra and many other cities and communities. Unfortunately, due to the health hazard, the ANRPB was forced to cancel the Canberra symposium on *The Future of Racing Pigeons in Australia* scheduled for February.

The second disaster was the world-wide covid-19 outbreak that has had a life changing impact.

Whilst Australia appears to have managed the covid-19 outbreak better than most countries in the world, our Victorian communities have been severely impacted, with the state in lockdown for much of the year. With the covid-19 health hazard and the ban on overseas travel the November scheduled Sydney symposium on *The Future of Racing Pigeons in Australia* in conjunction with the Central Cumberland Federation and PIPA, also needed to be cancelled.

Australian War Memorial, Canberra

On the 23 February, *National War Animal Day*, the ANRPB sponsored commemorative plaque was laid. This plaque commemorates the role Australian racing pigeons played during World War 2 in Papua New Guinea and the South Pacific, maintaining communications that led to the saving of many lives.

The ANRPB sponsored plaque was beautifully crafted by Arrow Bronze in Victoria. I would particularly like to acknowledge Emma McGregor of Arrow

Bronze and Neil Machar, our retired Victorian Delegate, for their roles in making the plaque happen in such a short time period. Board members may recall that the ANRPB only gained the invitation from the Australian War Memorial in December 2019.

I would also like to acknowledge members of the Canberra Racing Pigeon Combine, in particular Peter D'Arcy and Grant Paterson, who played pivotal roles in making the day a success.

My wife and I were honoured to share the occasion with Stephen and Susan Shears and Paul and Helen Gibbs.

The event gained nation-wide television news coverage and write-ups in pigeon magazines in Australia and England. I was also interviewed on ABC Radio.

The ANRPB also proudly supported an excellent initiative by Rod Simmons and the Pigeon Radio team whereby pigeon fanciers Australia wide were encouraged to release their birds at dawn on ANZAC Day. Video clips forwarded to Rod Simmons were subsequently made into a film clip commemorating ANZAC Day.

Follow up with the Executive of the AWM has led to the AWM agreeing to put on a special display of pigeon related memorabilia for National War Animal Day 2021.

Subject to covid-19 travel related restrictions I would encourage as many Board Members as possible to attend in 2021.

Board Matters

This year was challenging on many fronts. Not only was the ANRPB forced to cancel planned symposiums on *The Future of Racing Pigeons in Australia* scheduled for Canberra in February and Sydney for November; but was also forced to respond to criticism (some quite unfounded) from an influential individual from Victoria.

The fallout was the resignation of highly respected Board Members Jim Craig, our Secretary/Treasurer, and Neil Machar, our Victorian Delegate and Vice-Chair of the ANRPB.

No organisation can afford to lose two such quality people, and I must confess that I have personally felt the loss of both immensely.

It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge our Qld Delegate Jeff Profke (A/Secretary) and NSW Delegate Stephen Shears (vice-Chair) who have taken on additional duties.

A Jeff Profke initiative has seen ANRPB meetings move from Hot-Air Conferencing to Zoom live face to face conferencing at a considerable cost saving.

The Board's attempts to recruit a new secretary have not been successful, with Jeff Profke being asked to stay in the role much longer than anticipated. This is a situation that must be resolved early in 2021.

I am pleased to advise that Jim Craig has agreed to re-join the Board in 2021 in the capacity of Treasurer.

The Victorian Delegate position has remained vacant post Neil Machar, but this will hopefully also be resolved in 2021.

The Tasmanian Delegate position is also likely to be declared vacant at our AGM.

Constitution

The current ANRPB Constitution requires all Board members to retire after serving a 3 year term.

This will mean that the following Board members are due for retirement at the end of 2021:

- Greg Kakoschke - President
- Stephen Shears - NSW Delegate and Vice Chair
- Kevin Wilson - WA Delegate

As State Delegates can be nominated to serve a further 3 year term, Stephen and Kevin (subject to their wishes) may be nominated by their respective federations to extend their voluntary service to Australian racing pigeon fanciers.

Given the challenges the ANRPB has experienced in recruiting suitably qualified members to fill executive positions it is proposed that amendments to the Constitution will be required in 2021.

This may include opening up the ANRPB Organisation for general membership.

ANRPB Website

Our ANRPB website has undergone significant development this year thanks to the efforts of Joe Jackson. However, to take our website to a professional level it is likely that the ANRPB will be required to engage a suitably qualified person. This may require considerable expenditure.

Treidlia Biovet

Treidlia Biovet has recently circulated a survey as development work on Rotavax continues.

As vaccination for Rota remains voluntary in most states it is likely that Rotavirus is here to stay.

It is my belief that compulsory vaccination for Rota for all racing pigeons in all states is the only way the virus will be eradicated.

I am pleased to advise that Treidlia Biovet have now re-paid in full the \$60,000 interest free loan to the ANRPB Disease Management Fund.

At the October Board meeting members voted to retain the repaid loan money in the Disease Management Fund. Having such a fighting fund may prove extremely beneficial in the likely future event of a pigeon related virus outbreak.

Australian War Animal Memorial Organisation (AWAMO)

Nigel Allsopp, President of the AWAMO, continues to network with the ANRPB. This has led to Arrow Bronze in Victoria manufacturing war animal plaques that are now on display at a Memorial in Townsville, Queensland.

Nigel has also recently advised that the AWAMO has funded the new NATO war animal memorial in Belgium. Due to covid-19 this is likely to be opened next year and Nigel has sought ANRPB assistance in liaising with pigeon fanciers in Belgium to commemorate the event.

Future Directions

Opening up the ANRPB Organisation for general membership with voting rights is an issue for further discussion and progression in 2021. This will require amendments to the current ANRPB Constitution.

I would also like to see the progression of the ANRPB website to a professional standard with the inclusion of pigeon racing educational and promotional material that can be made available to every pigeon organisation in Australia to assist in promoting the sport of racing pigeons.

With the view to generating communication and bringing together pigeon fanciers across Australia the ANRPB plans to promote a National Race from Emmdale NSW on the first Saturday in October 2021.

This *National* event will be open to all city and country pigeon flyers in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and Queensland. With fanciers in WA and Tasmania and country NSW less than 450km from Emmdale being invited to breed 10 bird race teams for placement in a participating loft.

Whilst still in an early stage of development initial feedback is encouraging.

The ANRPB is currently seeking sponsors and interested fanciers in each state to assist in the planning and organisation of *The National*.

With *The National* proposed for 2021 I seek to continue in my role as President for 2021. However, in accordance with our current Constitution I hereby advise that it is not my intention to remain in the post beyond our 2021 Annual General Meeting.

Yours in Our Sport

Greg Kakoschke JP

President: ANRPB Inc

Visit: www.anrpb.org