

A Night to Remember

By Paul Gibbs

The Central Cumberland Racing Pigeon Federation celebrated its 2015 Annual Presentation Evening on the 12th of December in what was a wonderful evening for all concerned. Around 90 members and guests were in attendance to applaud and congratulate all winners of the various Federation races. Catering for the evening was exceptional with a great variety of mains and deserts and seafood lovers were not disappointed with all the fresh prawns and crumbed calamari you could eat. If a desert lover you would have been in heaven. It was a good practice run in the lead up to Christmas.

The night was also a celebration to honour the Centenary Year of ANZAC and to recognise and give thanks to Legacy for the work they do in providing assistance to the families of our ex servicemen and women.

As regular readers of this magazine would know the CCF management committee decided at the beginning of 2015 to conduct a special race to commemorate this special anniversary year along with the involvement that pigeons played in the many theatres of world conflict.

Along with conducting a special race it was decided to use the year as a fundraiser for Legacy as well, and I'm proud to say that a sum of \$10,000 was raised with a cheque being presented on the night to Mr Eric Easterbrook, the President of Sydney Legacy. Eric told me that he was quite surprised with the overall formality and scope the evening along with the organization that went into making the evening such a wonderful event. He was also amazed at the quality of trophies and awards that were on display ready to be presented to those lucky enough to be receiving one later that evening.

While Eric Easterbrook was our special guest on the evening, we were also lucky to have in attendance to assist and present awards, especially to the Section Winners and Overall Winner of the ANZAC Race Mr Keith Wrightson, that stalwart of the pigeon fraternity and one of only a very few remaining Ex Pigeon Corp Servicemen.

It was fitting to have Keith there not only because it was the 100th Anniversary Year of ANZAC, but because as Keith's health has been let's say "not up to scratch" as much as he would have liked over the past few seasons, this the 2015 season is/will be Keith's final year of racing. Keith telling me that all his beloved pigeons except for two pair that have all gone to new homes. I would like to think that this evening was a fitting end to a long career in the pigeon game and on behalf of all pigeon fanciers would like to take this opportunity to thank Keith for all he has achieved and done for the fraternity over the many years that he has been involved in the sport.

Prior to the presentation of trophies and awards both Keith and Eric gave speeches that held the attention of all present and I believe that most there would have left

the night with a better understanding and insight of the work that Legacy undertakes along with the involvement that pigeon fanciers, along with their birds played in WW2, especially during the Pacific Campaign in New Guinea.

The Section Winners and Overall Winner of the ANZAC race were presented with a Special Federation Certificate along with a Commemorative ANZAC Certificate (both beautifully framed) along with a trophy (refer to attached photos). With the Overall Winner, the partnership of Vescos & Marshall being presented with a special trophy that was donated by Clarrie & Lyn Henshaw, a trophy that I feel the winners will cherish for many years to come.

While there were many trophies presented to the winners of various races throughout the year, the main awards and award winners were:

Young Bird National – Won by Jim Vescos (donated by Phil Murphy LPM Stud)
All Age National – Won by George Kypreos (donated by Phil Murphy LPM Stud)
500 ml Winner – Steven Summers
600 ml Winner – Herbie Sprye
CCF Flyer of the Year – Paul Vassalo
CCF Bird of the Year – Won by Paul & Helen Gibbs

The 2015 season proved to be a mostly good season for all concern, and while there might have been a few “bumpy” ones most flyers would have been happy with the season’s results. 2016 will see the CCF members compete once more on the South-coast Route, this will be a change from the usual as it has been many years since the CCF has flown the same route two years in a row. It will be interesting to see how successful last years remaining birds will be having raced this route the previous year.

Many readers will be aware that the CCF members have voted for a “New” rotating system that commences this year (2016) that being a so-called “windscreen wiper” system which allows for a slow rotation each year going from the Sth Coast to south, to west and Nth west etc. Then returning the other way.

Well that’s the end of the first report for the “New Year” and I hope all fanciers right round the country enjoy good health, good racing and more importantly good returns in 2016.

In closing I would like to quote John Burroughs, who once said of New Year Resolutions: ***“The one resolution I have made and always try to keep is this, to rise above the little things”.***