

Peter McKinney Desmond McCullough

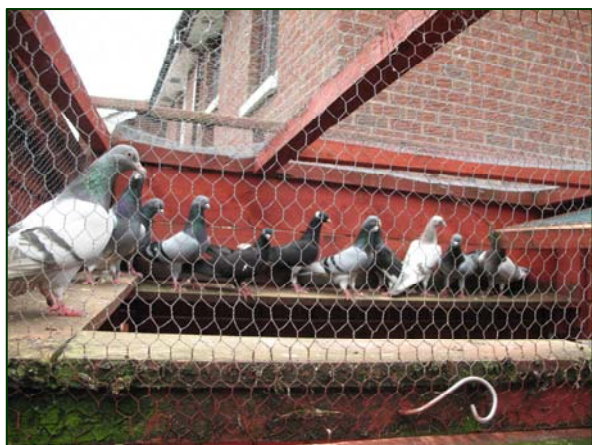
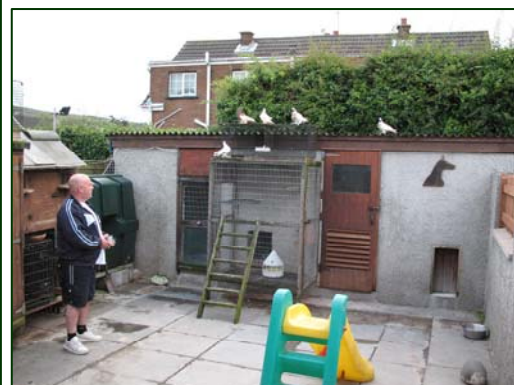


Left - Peter McKinney and yours truly on the first young birds fly. His kit did 13.35 on not a very good day. On Long Day 18.38DQ. (over the hour).

Right – Desmond McCullough, new guy on the block...fly's Lovett type Tippler. His birds are very typical, look very much the same in every way. Bottom right, holding his blue bar cock, the bird handles very well. Top right, exceptionally well put together blue bar. Bottom, Desmond in front of his loft with droppers.



Eamon Ryan Willie Mckee



Eamon Ryan holding some birds and just below his breeders. Eamon's birds are well put together. Willie is a seasoned flyer in the sport a long time.

NOTE: Mickey Forgione deserved to be mentioned even though he doesn't have any birds at this time. Some idiots took his birds and burnt his loft. However all the top guys in the clubs pledge to help him with a pair of birds each. By the way, Mickey was the one who picked up the eggs from Manuel and brought them over to Shannon's place for me.

Harry Hutchinson



Harry Shannon and eighty four year young Harry Hutchinson, who incidentally happens to be Ulster club band secretary and on the day of the first young birds fly (July 01/07) was taking over the timing so that Manuel Fenton could take me around to meet the other flyers.

Bristol Boys...

On July 3, 2007 Harry and I flew from rainy Belfast to Bristol to visit the hot bed of tippler flying of yesteryears where there used to be more than fifty flyers competing while currently only few brave souls are left to give it a try despite the menace called peregrine. After forty five minutes we landed in Bristol greeted by cloudy skies and light rain. Picked up our carryon then walked off the airport to meet with Brian Rose who was waiting for us. From there we followed Brian to his place where we had breakfast and a cup of tea served to us by his better half. While enjoying our food Brian asked if we were interested in fishing? No, but we can talk tipplers. At this point, I found out Brian is out of tipplers for about twenty five years. However, he continues to be the NTU secretary for all this time. As soon as we step into his back yard we found his true hobby. Raising fish in two big tanks, must have been about fifty of them, all carp and some as big as twenty five to thirty lb. Some more small talk and after saying goodbye to Mrs Rose we were ready to go meet Roy and Christine Hardwell.



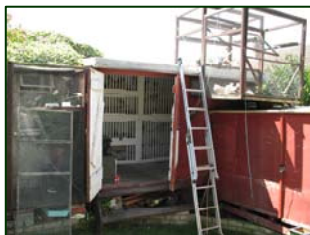
Brian led the way and in no time we reached the Hardwells. Harry introduced us and immediately I felt like we always knew each other. After some small talk about our club and about the tippler flying in Canada and North America in general we talk about the great flyers of years gone bye where they didn't have to worry about the menace of peregrine or some other challenges...like theft. At one point the Bristol area used to be up to a 100 or more flyers and I meant flyers...not just band members. After enjoying a great lunch prepared by Christine, it was time to go visit a couple of guys who are still brave enough to stay in the game despite the hawk. Our first was Steve Ames; his birds are of Heaton type as well as some Welsh badges. Steve flies mostly big kits claiming his losses are much lower then when he flew a smaller kit.

Top left - Brian Rose and Oskar.

Right - Roy and Christine Hardwell

Steve Ames

Steve Ames and Harry Shannon discuss the finer points of Tippling. Steve's loft to the right and a nice pair of Heaton type Tipplers followed by his old hens with a dropper and young birds at the end.



Roy Hardwell

Far left Roy Hardwell holding his prized Pilot hen and to the right a couple of blue beauties. The hens I believe were gifted to Harry. Last photo shows Harry and Roy looking over another gem.



Mickey Murphy

Mickey's cocks (two centre photos) and his beautiful blue, badge and grizzle hens. Picture of health.



Friends from the Midlands...

After a good night of sleep we had our breakfast prepared by Christine, which by the way was delicious. Harry and I said our goodbyes and hit the road on our way north toward Wolverhampton. Here we met some of the greatest guys in the sport of Flying English tiplplers. On the road for about four hours or so we received a call from Tex Brookes telling Harry where to get off. Tex, Ken Potts, Jimmy Johnson and Fred Eaton Lees will be there to meet us. Well it didn't take long to arrive at the agreed place. Sure enough even though I have never seen any of them in real life, I was able to recognize Jimmy and Ken from photos I've seen before. After being introduced to each other we continued on following Tex to Jimmy's place. From that point there was all sorts of bird pictures and I wish the pictures were as half as good as the birds. However, the birds were bred and selected by experts unlike the camera, which was handled by an amateur. At any rate here they are.

Top row - Harry Shannon, Fred Eaton, Jimmy Johnson, Bottom row - Tex Brookes and Ken Potts



Jimmy Johnson



Here you see Jimmy in his garden with the loft in the back. Jimmy flies the Hartshorne type of Tippler very similar to the Lovatt birds. To the right you can see some of Jimmy's beautiful hens. Check photo taken for Luka's pleasure...he sure likes checks. But look at the yellow mottle hen. Wow...wow....wow.

Tex Brookes



Tex's single flyer boxes and individual breeding boxes



Tex holding one of his Tiplplers and to the right his beautiful loft. Overall I have never seen a better designed loft...functional and a compliment to the yard.

Ken Potts



Ken's well kept loft to the far left and his treasure wall of trophies in the middle photo. Oblivious to the jewels were Jimmy and Fred. And to the right some sharp looking youngsters of 2007.

Andy Stone



Ashley Cresswell



John Bicknell



Here we have a few more Tippler fancier. Ashley is the President of the NTU. John, sitting here with a great vantage point is another keen flyer. A few of his youngsters can be seen in the top photo.

Final stop...Sunderland

From John Bicknell's place it was time to go for supper and reserve a room for the night because early in the morning we had to get ready for more than five hours of driving to Sunderland to see some more of the best there is. It was Ken Potts who reserved the motel room for the night for us, right next door to a restaurant where we were treated by our hosts to a great supper. After supper, we moved next door to a pub, where incidentally, I had more beer in couple of hours than I usually have in a whole month. After a good night sleep and a quick shower, a good breakfast we were off to Sunderland. We hit a few detours on the way giving Harry and I a chance to talk about anything and everything. Finally, we were close to our destination so we made a phone call to our friend Davey Warrener. We were advised to look for him some thirty miles down the road. Sure enough, there he was waiting for us on the side of the motorway. We stopped for a moment just enough to greet and meet and then we followed Davey to his home. Yup, it was raining as usual and his birds were out, all eleven of them on a training fly. Right behind them must have been seventy homers mixing with his tipplers. My question to him was... how many do you lose because of it? "Not very many" says Davey... go figure. We then proceeded to the house where we met his wife and son. With the introductions and small talk done we were served a nice lunch and a cup of tea. From that point the talk was all about birds. Naturally, his family of birds on which he worked for the last forty years or so was the initial topic of discussion. I might add, some of his type are in many different lofts in UK and the world.

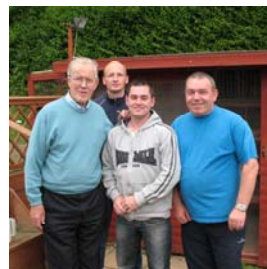
Davey Warrener

Oskar and Davey in front of the loft. Some of Davey's youngsters followed by his hens and cocks last.



Dave Black

From his place Davey took us to see Dave Black. Again, before anything else it was a cup of tea and then Dave's birds. We were shown some of the best looking/handling Boden and Pilot type tipplers as well as his Pilot outcrosses which he competed with this year...excellent birds. Obviously they are demonstrating their worth winning all four young birds fly of the year. Dave in my opinion has all the qualities to be one of the best in the sport...and I mean best. Great birds, good location, know how and always trying to learn more. But most importantly both of his feet are firmly on the ground....a great attitude and personality for a young man.



Dave Black holding a Pilot flying machine. Next, four lovely Pilot hens followed by Pilot cocks. Last photo of Harry, Dave and Davey in front of the loft. Notice the lighting on the loft...night flying!

Dove Brothers



Phil and Geoff Dove have some good looking birds. Mostly crosses of top families in the area. Unfortunately, the photo of Phil did not turn out but I did get some nice pictures of their hens (top) and cocks (bottom). But look at the craftsmanship of those individual fly cages.

Paul Unworth



Paul in front of his fly boxes. To the right, one of his youngsters. A good fly position and good looking Tipplers.

Tony Veater



I believe these hens flew over 20 hrs. if my memory serves me right.

Tony Veater was next on our visit. Again some of the best birds anywhere... flown well over 20 hours and I'm sure Tony will get them to even greater times. I believe he is creating his own family and doing a good job, for sure. Second photo of his loft... nice setup.

Ian Elstob



Ian Elstob was our next destination. A photo of Ian and Harry looking over one of Ian's top hen badges. Oh, talking about badges, well here is the place with some of the best that I have had the pleasure to lay my eyes on. Ian was more the willing to show us his birds even though it was raining buckets. Two badge hens were flown 20:51 that you see here. I believe that is the father of the two hens in the last photo with the youngster.

Final note...

It was getting quite late so Davey, Harry and yours truly went for supper and then back to Davey's place where Dave Black dropped by to take us to our hotel for the night. Even though Harry and I insisted he stay with his young birds because they were still flying in heavy rain and wind. Wouldn't have any of it. He wanted to make sure we get to our hotel without any problems and I guess he knows his birds. Of course the kit waited for him to be dropped. After a good night of rest it was time to have breakfast and then a few hours of driving across the north part of England and southern part of Scotland for home. Got a bit lost here and there but eventually made it to Port of Stranrear, where we were suppose to take a ferry boat across the Irish sea back to Belfast. We just made it or so we thought...not quite, just a couple of minutes late and had to wait for the next one...taking off seven hours later.

We finally made it to Harry's place at about 10pm. Harry fed the birds and I assisted. We talked some more tipplers and it was time for bed after a long day. Next morning after breakfast I did my usual walk in the back garden while Harry trimmed the hedges. He must be doing it regularly because his garden is a place of beauty, a masterpiece. Early afternoon Harry put out the nine young ones for a fly and then it was some more tippler talk, beer and tea drinking with friends from England. A few friends flew over the previous day to spend some time with their Irish mates to exchange some know how and some birds as well.

So what did I learn here in the UK about the Tippler?

One thing for sure more enthusiasm among the Tippler flyers. Other things like birds kept extremely clean...willingness to help each other...hospitality out of this world. All this made possible because of a little flying machine...The English Tippler. A tippler responsible for all the many friends I met here and around the world. If it wasn't for our hobby of tippler flying I would have never met some of the most wonderful people whom I count among the best of friends. In conclusion, I would like to say thank you Harry and Anne Shannon. You made all this possible and I shall never forget it. We were treated just like family. Their home was our home for those two weeks. How can Kathy and I ever repay for everything they have done for us? We sure hope it will be soon and the pleasure will be all mine. In addition, a big thank you to Bobby and Ann Dunseith for everything they did for us. Thank you Manuel for taking me around on fly day and for the fresh bloodlines you provided. Hope I/we can do them justice when the time comes. Thank you Mickey, Eamon, Desmond, Tom, Harry Hutchinson, Peter, Wesley,.....and all the others in Belfast who's names escapes me at the moment. And I shouldn't forget all the great guys in Bristol...Brian, Roy, Steve and Spud Murphy. How about the Midlands ...Ken, Tex, Ashley, Jimmy, Andy, John, Fred...by the way forgive me for forgetting the rest of the names. Isn't all my fault...you chaps bought way too many beers...thanks a million...hope I can return the favour one day. Thanks to everyone in Sunderland...Davey, Dave, Phil, Tony, Ian and Paul for giving me great pleasure of being able to see your fantastic birds. Sorry if I omitted anyone, it certainly wasn't intentional....keep 'em flying boys.

Oskar Zovic