

All I want for Christmas is ... “Kleine Figo”

The total auction for Kees Bosua, organised by “De Duif” in December 2008, attracted buyers from all corners of the globe. It was no surprise to any one that it resulted in a major success story due to the renowned racing results and top quality presented by Kees Bosua. One man however, Mr George Rankin of the American Pigeon Centre Lofts of Houston, Texas, was pleasantly surprised with his wife's choice of gift for him that Christmas ... the world famous breeder ... the “Kleine Figo”.

George Rankin was introduced to the Racing Pigeon Sport in Scotland and Jennifer Rankin was a practising Neurological Medical Doctor in Shanghai and Beijing before marrying George and becoming his partner in a manufacturing business in Houston, Texas.

George continued with the Racing Pigeon Sport in Houston, for 20 years and his business travels to Europe presented an opportunity to develop a relationship with World Racing Pigeon Champion Jos Thoné in Belgium.

APC (American Pigeon Center) Lofts was founded in Houston, Texas as an enterprise involving the Rankin's, Dr. Ken Warren and Jos Thoné that brought together proven high quality Belgian Racing Pigeons from Jos Thoné and the unique collection of “969” line



George and Jennifer Rankin.

of Janssen Bros, Arendonk pigeons cultivated by Dr. Warren.

APC Lofts has competed in the Gulf Coast Homing Pigeon Association since 2002 and sends young birds each year to Futurity and One Loft Races.

Dr. Ken Warren passed away in 2003; George and Jennifer sold their manufacturing business recently and have built a modern loft facility to continue breeding and racing pigeons from their Cypress country home outside Houston.

The Rankin's and Jos Thoné have recently purchased top racing and breeding stock from record setting auction sales in Europe. “Kleine Figo” is the sire of probably the best nest mates ever, the NL03-5301441 “De Kannibaal” and the NL03-5301440 “De Kerkduifje” both bred and raced by Kees Bosua, and is the première pigeon purchased that is transferring to Houston in 2009. This wonder breeder purchased for €60,000 will now reside at the fantastic facilities of the APC.

George Rankin briefly tells us of his journey from Scotland to Texas:



Kleine Figo ... Dordrecht to Houston.



Morning exercise at APC.

“I set up an Aqua-Dyne Ltd branch in Dice in 1976 and had two Royal Tech. (University of Strathclyde after my day) friends run it with me until ICI bought us out in 1989, at that point I was on about my fortieth and gratefully last trip to the Forties Platforms in the North Sea.

I grew up in an area between Edinburgh, Glasgow and Armadale and kept pigeons from early boyhood.

After proving myself worthless on the soccer field I got into running which resulted in getting an offer of an athletic scholarship at the University of Houston in Texas when I was 22 years old.

Departing Scotland in the middle of January, ostensibly to take a look at the Scholarship offer, I arrived in Houston finding the weather much more to my liking and thoughts of ever returning to the “Scottish Tropics” quickly vanished.

The Christmas present was truly a big surprise as I had been expecting cinders or worse in my stocking, though as an after thought, aftershave would have been just right.

A truck load of ice came with “Kleine Figo” to keep my frugal Scottish blood under boiling point”.

There is no doubt that the “Kleine Figo” will continue in Texas where he left off in Dortrecht, and we wish the Rankin’s every success with him in the future.



Office and reception.