There are some core principles on which I base my ideas. Great birds and fanciers will always be rare and that makes them special and so it is in every echelon of society. The innate potential of a bird comes into the light of environmental influences on hatching and man is part of the complex of factors that will determine the bird's destiny.

Strains emerge like the rising sun and are all of mixed origins. The rise of names in the public domain is often generated by the pursuit of money and power. Top producing birds can alter your racing life and fortunate are those who discover them.

A great deal of inbreeding can be practiced with certain birds and old established men do this over many generations. The key to a good marathon pigeon is often in its navigation/orientation abilities along with the desire to home. 900 miles will test the homing limit of most UK birds.

The exact nature of homing remains a mystery to mere humans and I like that. The sport welcomes all-comers from nearly every walk of humanity and long may this be so.

Jim Emerton.

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