



The History of the International Federation of American Homing Pigeon Fanciers, Inc.

Herein are the fanciers who took time out during the past 50 years to serve as Presidents of the IF:

1950-54	Dr. Arthur S. Williams	New Shrewsbury, NJ
1955-57	John Inglis, Jr	Metuchen, NJ
1957-62	Gilbert L. Hunsinger	Bloomfield, NJ
1963-69	Clarence E. Martin	Richmond, VA
1970-71	William Walling	Long Branch, NJ
1972-75	Harry Hansen	Lindenhurst, N
1976-77	William Walling	Long Branch, NJ
1978-82	Ben Feuerbach	Central Islip, NY
1983-85	Nick Schiavone	Philadelphia, PA
1986-88	Joe Lizik	Pittsburgh, PA
1989-95	Matt Reilly	Elmont, NY
1996-98	Val Matteucci	East Meadow, NY
1999	Richard Smith	Valley Stream, NY

By Gil Hunsinger & Val Matteucci

A thank you to Gil Hunsinger, past IF president, for a good portion of the following information pertaining to the history of the IF, with updating by Val Matteucci.

The International Federation of American Homing Pigeon Fanciers, Inc., better known as the IF, was born on November 6, 1881 in Philadelphia, PA. The 12 organizing fanciers were from Newark, NJ, Philadelphia, PA, Brooklyn, NY, New York, NY, Fall River, MA, Jersey City, NJ and Hoboken, NJ.

Edward T. Steele of Philadelphia, was the first President of this fledgling organization. It was ironical that six of the initial organizers took turns being President of the IF from 1881 to 1896. From 1881 to 1996, the IF had 51 Presidents from various towns and cities, mostly along the Eastern Seaboard. H.E. Nelson wrote an interesting article, "Fifty Years and the IF," which appeared in the April 1935 American Racing Pigeon News. He notes three important developments during the administration of I. Fred Goldman, IF President from 1895 to 1897. First, was the issuance of the seamless band, which helped a great deal in record keeping and identification purposes. Secondly Goldman was instrumental, with the help of generous and prominent fanciers who advanced their own money, in making it possible for the Federation to

purchase timing machines, which were rented to the members. This was the real start of racing homers in this country. Thirdly, I.W. Sprangdehl, a New York City lithographer, presented the organization with a stone from which the present-day diplomas are made, and they were classed as the prettiest ever presented.

Almost from the inception of the IF in 1881, the early leaders began to set down on paper the rules and regulations of the organization. Every few years, these regulations were looked at and revised to fit the needs and requirements of the IF at the time. A number of these same rules and regulations are found in the operational documents of our local clubs, combines and concourses. Ed Topaleski, of Glassport, PA, revised the By-Laws in 1980. The current By-Laws are updated on a yearly basis by the By-Laws Chairperson, Scott Landry, and his committee. They are available for reviewing and/or downloading on the IF website, www.IFPigeon.com.

Up until the late 1930s, the IF Convention was attended mostly by men to transact the business of the organization, renew friendships and visit a few outstanding lofts. In recent years, the IF Convention has become a mixture of business, education and pleasure. We now notice that the fancier puts the convention on his vacation schedule and brings his wife. There is a full schedule of women's activities at the convention—bus tours to local places or interst, luncheons, fashion shows, bingo, etc. Attendance of the "little lady" may contribute to harmony back home when the husband is busy training and flying the birds in the races. A wonderful by-product of the convention is the fellowship and friendships that are developed.

Another important development in recent years in the IF has been the increased involvement of women in our sport; that has changed for the better. Starting at the top, the IF has had three women as National Secretary/Treasurer; namely Faith Inglis, Nona Feuerbach and Marie Rotondo. In addition, ladies' auxiliaries are the backbone of the social aspects of the club and IF conventions.

The IF will continue to strive to be a "Big Brother" to all clubs and provide guidance or direction as required. Our goal is to educate the public and elevate the sport so that it will be accepted by the members, through advertising, personal contact, exhibits, seminars, charity auctions and whatever other avenues might be available to us.

