

Welsh Hawking Club

20th Year
Debs Journal 1980



the
AUSTRINGER

THE AUSTRINGER

The Official Journal Of The Welsh Hawking Club



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Members Of Breeding Project Comm.	R. Haddon. J.M. Buckner. M.J. Shuttleworth. C.J. Griffiths. C.P. Milson.

EDITORIAL

Dear Reader,

I had hoped to get this year's edition of our magazine out to you earlier this time, but unfortunately, due, as they say on T.V. "to circumstances beyond my control" this was not possible. I sincerely trust that (always supposing I edit another 'Austringer') next time it will be.

You will of course notice that the magazine is fewer in pages than the last one. This, I assure you, is not from choice but from necessity. It is expensive to reproduce and at the present time it was a matter of (so I am given to understand) trimming the size or reducing the quality. It was felt that the former was the best option. Jim Skaer and his associates do a splendid job with 'The Austringer' and the Welsh Hawking Club is grateful to them. Perhaps, in the future it will be possible once again to return to a larger issue.

1980 saw the 20th anniversary of the Welsh Hawking Club, and in the President's article which begins the magazine one can see how the Club has progressed from its early days. However, it is good to think that many of the stalwarts who were there at its founding are still serving the Club today.

At the 1981 A.G.M. it was agreed that a new family membership should be introduced. This kind of membership will entitle the holders to one vote (should there be a full member and one copy of 'The Austringer').

The Welsh Hawking Club has a further new Vice-President, John Fairclough, who is well-known to many of our members, as well as being a prominent member of the Midland Group of the British Falconers Club. I believe that John will again play host to the next international meeting of the Welsh Hawking Club in 1982 at Lichfield. We also have a new Honorary Member, Terry Jenkins, whose expertise both in falconry and captive breeding is widely acknowledged.

There are a fair number of the beautiful prints still available of the Lanner Falcon by John Haywood. They are well worth owning and should you not yet have one you are urged to get in touch with John Buckner our Hon. Treasurer or Ken Macleure our Chairman. The price for each mounted print is £10.00.

My thanks as always to Lorant, our President, who always takes an active interest in the magazine, and to my husband for his assistance.

Don't forget that the contributions made to 'The Austringer' by members of our Club are essential if we are to have a magazine - so send those articles in!

Yours Sincerely,
The Editor.

How the W.H.C. Began Written on its 20th Anniversary

BY LORANT DE BASTYAI.

1980 was the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Welsh Hawking Club. Since that founding a lot of water has run down the River Usk and our Club has been through both good and bad times, but, touch wood, the good have out-numbered the bad, and now thankfully the Welsh Hawking Club is well known in this country, in Europe and overseas. Naturally this has not come about through wishful thinking, but has been worked for, particularly by members who have been with the Club from the start and still play an important part in its affairs. Perhaps also we have had a little help from Simurgh, the god whom Asian falconers believe rules falcons, storms and lightning.

The start of our Club is what this article is mainly about, because I feel that among our more recent members there are fellow falconers who do not know how our Club began. Just a few months ago, when our Hon. Secretary, Mick Shuttleworth, and I were in Germany by invitation of the Deutscher Falken Orden, I was asked by several young falconers if the Welsh Hawking Club had been started by some members of the British Falconers Club. Of course I told them that this was not the case. The Welsh Hawking Club was not begun by members stepping out from the British Falconers Club for some reason or another, although members who had started with our Club may also have joined the British Falconers Club so acquiring 'double citizenship', and vice versa. So let me relate the 'official' story of our beginning.

Perhaps I could go so far as to say that if I had not become bored with working in London for the famous taxidermy firm of Roland Ward and saw the post of taxidermist for the South Wales and South West England Museums Council, resident at Newport Museum, advertised, and was lucky enough to have been selected from several applicants to fill it, the Welsh Hawking Club might not have come into existence.

I had not been working at Newport Museum for many weeks when someone came to my workshop there and asked to speak to me because he had heard that I was a keen nature lover and shooting man. This 'someone' was our present Chairman Ken Macleur, a dear friend. He also invited me along to the Newport Wildfowling and Gun Club, which resided near Caerleon, at the so-called Lido. My visits to this Club became more and more frequent, and I also met there Lawry Workman, Doug Morgans and other friendly people. I was invited on a pheasant shoot, but even so, as at the meetings of the Gun Club, our talk turned to the subject of falconry and birds of prey. Inevitably this topic came up at almost every meeting that I attended, until one day someone came up with the idea of starting a falconry club, as many of the Wildfowling and Gun Club were seriously interested in the

sport. To get a clear idea how many would be interested in following up the suggestion we decided to hold separate meetings, so we moved (the falconers) from the Lido to comfortable pubs in Newport or on its outskirts. The idea of a falconry club gradually ripened, until one day there appeared in the 'South Wales Argus' a short article to say that a few members of the Newport Wildfowling and Gun Club were to hold a meeting with a view to starting a falconry club in South Wales. This small notice was enough to ensure that besides Gun Club members other people who were interested in birds of prey and falconry came along, as did Jock Husbands, the Editor of the 'South Wales Argus', so it was decided to go ahead and start and organise a club. What should it be called? Among the many suggestions made, as the club was based in Wales, I thought that the name 'Welsh Hawking Club' was the most appropriate, everyone liked the idea and so our Club was born.

Thanks to Jock Husbands every movement of the Club was reported in the 'Argus', and sometimes it also appeared in the Cardiff newspapers. However, we were short of hunting birds. We had one Goshawk from Jack Mavrogordato called 'Basuka', who could not fly very much owing to trouble with her wing, Peter Tew had a Chanting Goshawk which, according to him, was a good hunter, and I had 'Strici' the Spanish Bonelli's Eagle. This was in the summer of 1960. During that summer we held not only 'chat meetings' at different pubs in and around Newport, but also schools for our members. I remember that we had Saturday afternoon lessons at Yewberry Cottage where I lived at that time. On one of these occasions a reporter came from London to see us, and our falconry school appeared in the 'Times' Sunday issue.

The Club was still short of hawks, we only had the Chanting Goshawk, the half-winged Goshawk and the Bonelli's Eagle plus 'Lochinvar' the Golden Eagle belonging to John Murray, who stayed with Ken, our Chairman, during his summer rest, but nothing else. I felt that a hawking club could not make progress without hunting birds, so we held a meeting and decided to take part in the international field meeting of the Deutscher Falken Orden in Germany, because I remembered that at its last meeting some of the German falconers had offered Goshawks not just for sale but as gifts. We hired a mini-bus, which proudly wore the slogan 'Welsh Hawking Club' across its windscreen and set off, a party of nine or ten members, for the German meeting.

Our trip was very successful, not only for the fact that our Club made a lot of friends but also that almost every falconer that went succeeded in getting a Goshawk for themselves.

The homeward journey was a little, should I say, uncomfortable for our members. On the mini-bus the seats were set along both sides, so the travellers were sitting opposite to each other with their goshawks on their fists. I was 'all right Jack' with 'Strici' my Bonelli's Eagle, as I was seated next to the driver but in the passenger compartment where the full-cropped goshawks were all standing with their backs



The first Welsh Hawking Club exhibition.



The first communal trip to the
Deutscher Falken Orden meeting in 1962.
Photographs by courtesy of Lorant de Bastyai.

to the people sitting opposite it was a very different matter. It was a night trip so one could not see what was happening - just hear!

Still, we arrived home safely. Everyone was delighted except the driver and the owner of the mini-bus, (for obvious reasons) and some of the falconers' wives. We were pleased because every falconer in the Welsh Hawking Club who wanted a hunting bird could now obtain one from our connections abroad, so the enjoyment of hawking had well and truly come to Wales. In a relatively short while some of the birds became famous for their hunting ability, such as Lawry Workman's goshawk 'Jabberwok' and others.

We received birds not only from the Continent but also from the United States, from which country 'Mini' the Prairie falcon was the first to arrive. Then we went abroad a second time, this time to Austria, bringing back with us not only goshawks but 'Tatra', the Golden eagle, who originated in Czechoslovakia and was given a home by Martin Prichard.

Now our Club is over twenty years old. We have held several successful international field meetings, with such eminent falconers attending as Jacques Renaud from France and Dr. Calvetti from Italy. This illustrates how, with good team work, a Club can progress. We have our year book, 'The Austringer', which has been admired both in this country and overseas.

Yes, we have had many good times in the past, and will, I hope, continue to do so in the future, in spite of all the regulations which are supposed to protect our sport. I sincerely trust that it will not turn out to be as the proverb says 'among the many mid-wives the baby was lost'.

Our President

BY ANN SHUTTLEWORTH.

Although it may be considered presumptuous of me, as there are others among our members who have known our President, Lorant de Bastyai, for longer than I have, I felt that in this issue of our magazine which reminds us of the 20th. anniversary of our Club it would be appropriate to say something about the gentleman who was not only instrumental in founding the Welsh Hawking Club, but who also celebrated in the same year a more personal milestone, his 70th. birthday.

I confess that an article about Lorant which I read in the 'Coventry Evening Telegraph' earlier in this present year prompted me to write this, as surely our own 'Austringer' should contain a reference at this time to a President who, in the opinion of many falconers worldwide, ranks among the

great names of our sport.

Lorant was born in Szeged, Hungary, "where paprika and Hungarian salami come from", and from his earliest years has always been interested in natural history. His father was a keen shot and he gave Lorant a small shotgun on his ninth birthday. Lorant was also interested in taxidermy and skinned and preserved the animals and birds that he shot helped by a school friend's father, who was a professional in this field. The conservatory of the family farm became so full of these mounted specimens that he was persuaded to donate some of them to schools in the locality.

When his family moved to Budapest Lorant found new opportunities to study wildlife on the banks of the Danube, at the same time pursuing farming studies at University.



Our President in younger days
with 'Sultana' his Saker falcon and
the last heron that she killed.

He went to his first falconers' meeting in 1937, and had formed the Hungarian Falconry Association in 1939. Soon he was corresponding with falconers all over the world. Even during his four years war service with the Hungarian Army he kept his peregrine with him.

He came to England shortly after the Hungarian uprising to join his elder brother and late mother who were living in Stratford-Upon-Avon. This move, made as it was when he was Curator of the Bird Section at Budapest Zoo, led him to work for a short while at Chester Zoo. He then spent several months in Germany training falcons, and on his return to Britain he worked for a time at the Slimbridge Wildfowl Trust with Sir Peter Scott. He then moved to Newport Museum as resident taxidermist and after that he took the post of Curator and professional falconer at the Welsh Mountain Zoo in Colwyn Bay. Nowadays he resides in Leamington Spa.

These are the bare facts of Lorant's career up to date and do not include the rich variety of his experiences and his knowledge of birds of prey and falconry.

My family and I have known Lorant and his dear wife Nancy for some considerable time now. We had always been keenly interested in falconry, then we met Lorant who taught and encouraged us until now we too are deeply involved in the sport. He also introduced us into the Welsh Hawking Club.

His expertise and knowledge are enormous and can only command respect. He has flown practically every hunting bird it is possible to fly, and is willing to share his experience with anyone who proves himself genuinely interested in falconry. On the many occasions that he and Nancy have entertained us in their home, which is a treasure house of falconry pictures and mementoes, we have listened to him talking with obvious love and understandable pride of his many hawking experiences and his beloved birds with great enjoyment.

Recently an author friend in Hungary sent him a bibliography of works on falconry and birds of prey. Lorant's name appeared as the author of nearly forty published works, including several books. His latest book "All My Life With Hunting Birds" is now with the publisher and should be out by the summer, naturally we all wish him well with this.

He is an Honorary Member of the Hungarian Falconry Association, The British Falconers Club, The North American Falconry Association and other similar bodies in Austria, France and Germany.

Two years ago when he revisited his native land he was well remembered. In fact he was driven in an official car to keep an appointment with the President of the Hungarian Nature Conservancy. This trip was also an opportunity for him to renew old friendships and to visit his beloved great plains of Hungary, which he talks of with such longing.

Although nowadays he is unable to take a very active part in the sport that he has devoted much of his life to, he keeps up a steady stream of correspondence with falconer friends

in many different countries, and he and Nancy do a good deal of entertaining. His marvellous sense of humour and shrewd remarks make him a wonderful companion, life, for Lorant, is always taken at his pace, and this relaxing effect rubs off when you are with him. My family and I count it a privilege to know him, a friend who is always ready to help and advise, and in my humble opinion the Welsh Hawking Club is fortunate to have a President who cares so deeply and constantly for its well-being.



Our President (centre) at the 1980
Deutscher Falken Orden meeting,
on the left Dr. H. Brull,
on the right Baron Van Loe.

Photograph by Mick Shuttleworth.

The Disappearing Library?

BY ROGER JAMES.

Having something of a passion for books in general, and those on hawking in particular, it didn't take much arm-twisting on our Chairman's part to encourage me to stand in as acting librarian when other commitments forced John Evans to withdraw as Club Librarian.

The first thing was to find out what books we had (after all there may be some I hadn't read). It was at this juncture that I discovered all was not well with the Club's literary world: eighteen of the thirty-four books in the library seemed to have gone A. W. O. L. A bit of Sherlock Holmes stuff to discover their whereabouts revealed that some things were not elementary, my dear members.

Some books had been on loan for nine years! One or two offending members were members no more, others had never had them or had brought them back? And yet others had skipped the country (it was rumoured that Ronald Biggs had a first edition of "Falcon In The Field").

So come on chaps, and ladies too, scour your bookshelves, and if you have any Club books, return them so that others may have the pleasure of reading them.

I have personally asked several members to return books that I know they have, and still they have not done so, but remember, we know who you are!

Any donations of books, pamphlets etc., would be most welcome, as will be the two copies of our President's new book entitled "All My Life With Hunting Birds", Neville Spearman, which he has generously offered.

The Royal Wedding Telegrams

Our Chairman, K.C. Macleur, at the President's request sent the following telegram to H.R.H. Prince Charles:-

The President, Officers and members of the Welsh Hawking Club extend their loyal congratulations to you and the Lady Diana on your engagement. Signed Lorant De Bastyai.

The following telegram was received in reply from Buckingham Palace:-

The President, Officers and members of the Welsh Hawking Club C/O 27 Broadwalk Caerleon Wales:-

Prince Charles and Lady Diana send you their warmest thanks for your extremely kind and thoughtful message. signed Private Secretary.

Tame Hacking, Training and Hunting with Imprinted Goshawks (*Accipiter Gentilis*)

BY JOSEPH VORRO AND KENT CHRISTOPHER.

"And of all hawks she is doubtless the most shy and coy of any, both toward man and dogs, requiring more the courtship of a mistress than the authority of a master, being apt to remember any unkind and rough usage, but being gently handled, will become very trainable and kind to her keeper, and may be brought from that aversion she hath to the spaniels." Richard Blome (1710) on the goshawk.

INTRODUCTION

There is no real need to hack goshawks. This seems to be the opinion of a good part of the falconry community. Because these shortwings do not fly in the long-range, high-powered, high-speed style of the longwings, many believe *Accipiters* do not require the extra conditioning the muscular development (good pluck) so essential to falcons. A review of the falconry literature shows many articles dealing with and advocating the use of the traditional hack for the longwings. However, it seems that only Michell (1900) has thought enough of the benefits of hacking the *Accipiters* to advocate what he said should be a fairly long hack for this genus. During the spring of 1979 both authors were able to experiment with the tame hacking of imprinted eyas goshawks. The tame hack differs somewhat from the traditional hack (Beebe and Webster, 1970). We feel there are definite advantages in using this technique for gosses, and this article discusses those advantages.

THE TAME HACK

"There is a single system of education for all eyasses. The principal points which should be observed in caring for these birds are: to give them plenty of food of the best quality, to take care that their nest is kept very clean, and to let them enjoy their freedom as long as possible; in a word, to do everything that can contribute toward making conditions favourable for the complete development of their feathers and the exercise of their physical strength." Schlegel and Vester de Wulverhorst (1844-53).

Since the authors hacked their birds somewhat differently and under different circumstances, each of their experiences will be described separately.

Kent Christopher and the Female Goshawk.

Pre-flight stage. The gos was taken as a large downy at approximately 17 days of age. She spent the first two weeks

with me, living in my trunk, at friends' homes and in motels, travelling over 3,000 miles. During that time, the young hawk was exposed to everything from highway traffic to robins (*Turdus migratorius*) looking for worms in the yard. When we returned home, she spent as much time outdoors as possible. If I could not keep an eye on her, I would put her in the mews.

Tame hack stage. Cynthia began to fly at 45 days of age when she made several 7 to 15 meter flights. It was necessary after this time to put her in the mews after her evening meal. The basic schedule for the next week was to feed her all she wanted (on the fist) in the morning and return her to the free flight mews. After returning home from work, I would release her to fly around the yard and nearby woods for three or four hours before calling her down to the lure or a live bird. As she became more familiar with the area, she was allowed to remain outside during the afternoons and evenings for longer periods of time. Finally, she was left at hack all day and left unattended for several hours at a time.

The young hawk developed a definite routine while at hack. She frequented the same areas during specific times of the day and could usually be located on one of her favourite perches. She was quite vocal while at hack and this was also helpful in keeping track of her. At times, I could find her bathing in the lake in the early afternoon at a spot where the sandy shore sloped gently into the water. After drying and preening, she was ready for several hours of playing and exploring. I often saw her "killing" sticks and other objects on the forest floor. At other times, she would pick up a twig in her beak, fling it into the air, then "kill" it when it hit the ground.

Cynthia was curious about everything around her and every day was full of new learning experiences. She often followed people walking through the woods, and once she made great sport of chasing a spaniel that showed up. If I were reading a magazine outdoors, she would often fly over to investigate. She was greatly interested in all the various birds of the area. Robins and red-winged blackbirds (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) would scold her and make passes at her in the trees. At times Cynthia chased these birds, but she never connected. Butterflies and other large insects captured her interest as well, and she often chased them.

The young hawk's flight style improved daily, and after two weeks of the tame hack she had a good command 1.3km² (one-half square mile) of woods and lakeshore around where I live. She flew through the woods with the speed and agility so characteristic of goshawks. One day when I could not find her, I tracked her with telemetry gear. I found her chasing a deer around in the nearby woods. When I flushed the deer, Cynthia flew after it, and when the deer stopped, she would take a stand in the tree above it in much the same way that an experienced gos would take a stand over a rabbit or pheasant that has been put in. Of course, she was not hunting the deer, she was just playing.



The goshawks as downies.
Uther (lt.) and Cynthia (rt.) in their portable nests.

At the end of the day, I would call Cynthia down either with the lure or a bagged bird and return her to the mews for the evening. I always called her down in the same spot, and I could count on her awaiting my arrival at day's end. For bagged birds I used coturnix quail, legal passerines and pigeons. She had been killing birds since the time when she was only partly feathered.

During the tame hack, Cynthia was fed all she wanted to eat twice a day. When she was hard penned, about 65 days of age, she was cut back to one feeding a day. This triggered the screaming response. After this time, the tame hack routine was converted into a strict hunting routine. I flew her at the same time each afternoon, gradually lowering her weight.

The hunting routine. The two or three weeks after a hawk is hard penned and serious hunting begins is a critical time. A hawk's weight must be lowered very judiciously to prevent aggression, and this should be done as a purely hunting routine is adopted. If wild game is not plentiful, bagged game can be used. I feel that bagged game should be released in a manner which simulates natural conditions.

The hunting season. Cynthia started out her first hunting season on migrating water fowl. We flushed ducks, for the most part, from the many small to medium sized ponds in my vicinity. The hawk showed absolutely no aversion to water and often ended up in the drink after binding to the ducks. If she caught the duck above water, they would land together in the pond with Cynthia doing her best to hold on and swim to shore with her prize. Larger ducks, such as mallards

(*Anas platyrhynchos*) would often escape by pulling the hawk under water, forcing Cynthia to let go. The best procedure, of course, was to get a close flush and force the ducks over land. Unfortunately, they are difficult to encourage along these lines. Cynthia was generally slipped from the fist but I sometimes allowed her to take a stand in a tree overlooking the pond.

The ponds froze up and we lost our ducks in October. At the same time the hare cover was still too thick and difficult for hunting. Because of this we were forced to hunt the only available quarry, arboreal grey and red squirrels (*Sciurus carolinensis*, *Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*). I found these flights quite sporting as well as providing excellent conditioning for the hawk. This also served for getting Cynthia going on furred quarry which made the switch to hare hunting a bit easier.

Hare became accessible in December after the first heavy snows beat down the thick vegetation. The hare I refer to is the North American Snowshoe Hare (*Lepus americanus*). These hare are pure white in the winter and change to brown in summer. They weigh from 2-4 pounds and are found in swamps, forests, and thickets throughout much of northern North America and south along the mountain ranges. They are primarily nocturnal and feed mostly on bark, twigs, and buds in winter. They are named for their very large, furry feet which enable them to walk and run on top of light fluffy snow.

To be successful in hunting these hare, the hawk must be taught to take a stand high up in a tree. The falconer and if he is lucky enough to have company, begin moving through the frozen swamps and thickets trying for a flush. It would be nearly impossible to hunt snowshoe from the fist since they often run far up ahead and out of sight. It is also difficult to walk through the thick cover and in 3 to 4 feet of snow with a hawk on the fist. Starting from a high perch gives the hawk a tremendous advantage.

Of course, in most cases the hawk is the first to spot the hare and take wing. The falconer does his best to keep up with the action. The hare uses the thick cover and runs through and around the brush in an effort to escape. We generally get well over 5 meters (200 or more inches) of snow in a season and this provides the hare with numerous snow caves or tunnels in which to take refuge. After a hare runs into a snow tunnel I generally find the hawk standing over the tunnel entrance and at times she even ran down the tunnel after the hare. With the hare in a snow tunnel, I generally tried to poke it out with a stick. If that wasn't successful I used a ferret. In either case we usually got a classic goshawk flight through the thick cover. I never cease to be amazed at the speed and agility displayed by a good gos chasing prey through thick cover.

Once Cynthia took hold of the hare's head it was all over for the big white bunny. With one foot on the head and the other on the hare's back, the hare generally tried to pull loose by digging under the snow. Like all good hares, they

try their best to kick free of the hawk with their powerful hind legs. Snowshoes are not the biggest of hares but the fact that they are hunted in the thickest of cover and in deep snow makes them tough quarry indeed. We have had some truly memorable flights and I will always enjoy strapping on



Female gos on Snowshoe hare.

a pair of snowshoes and beating through the white winter landscape flushing big white bunnies for a good goshawk.

Cynthia is without doubt the finest goshawk I have ever flown. Even in her first year, she is equal to any goshawk I have ever seen fly. I attribute this in no small degree to

the tame hawk. She seems to do everything right in the field and is a well mannered bird as well. It is late February now and she is still feather perfect after taking 64 head of quarry, 24 of which were snowshoe hares. I sincerely hope that I am able to hold on to this gos for many years to come.

Summary. Cynthia's regime can be divided into three major parts. First, the pre-flight stage (17-45 days of age) when she was kept in a man-made nest and introduced to many new and different surroundings. The bird was never handled; rather, the entire nest was moved with her in it. When she became mobile, she was allowed free run of both nest and the outdoors and could thereby act like a normal brancher. The second stage was the tame hawk. This lasted from the time the bird began to fly to when she was hard penned (45-65 days of age). The third stage began when a strict hunting routine was adopted and the gos was introduced to wild quarry. After a few successful flights, the bird gained confidence and we were on our way. From then on, only the daily hunting experience can upgrade the quality of performance.

Joseph Vorro and the Tiercel Goshawk.

Pre-flight stage. The tiercel was taken at approximately 13 days of age. He seemed easygoing and unconcerned about his new surroundings, taking an evening meal just several hours after being removed from the nest.

A light, portable nest with branches, twigs and fresh ever-green boughs was arranged in a large bath pan. The tiercel readily accepted this as his new nest. He was never handled or lifted at this early age. I feel that handling is very disruptive at this age to all but a few very adaptable raptors. When a hawk gets to the brancher stage, he will readily hop to the fist and get used to the handling routine. The gos was, therefore, transported during this stage by carrying him in the nest.

For the first couple of weeks Uther spent most of his time on his tarsi. He rode with me to and from work each day. I simply put the bird and nest on the passenger side of my car and off we went. While at work, he was subjected to everyday activities and lots of human contact. Upon our return home, he was placed out in the yard to observe (contemplate) nature, wander in and out of his nest, and await his evening meal.

As time progressed and Uther gained the use of his feet, legs and, to a limited extent, his wings, I began to train him to respond to the whistle and lure. Feeding frequency was cut from four to three ad lib feedings per day; now, however, upon my blowing the whistle, Uther had to hop out of his nest and run or walk to the garnished lure. Even at this early stage, Uther would play at footing (killing) branches in his nest or hop out of the nest to try catching a butterfly or bee. He seemed to accept human attention and continually entertained people by turning his head upside



Close-up of female gos on Snowshoe hare.

down to see what we looked like from that vantage point.

Tame hack stage. At around 45 days of age, Uther started to fly. His meals were cut to two full gorges per day. This occurred with no noticeable change in the hawk's behaviour. The first meal was given about 7.00 a.m., while the evening meal was given around 6.30 p.m. As his powers of flight (short bursts for about 10 to 13 meters) began to develop along with his increased curiosity, I had to stop taking him to work. Instead he was left in a free-flight mew.

It was at this time that the full flight stage of the tame hack began. I live in a rural area and the fields immediately around my home abound with corn, soy, oats and wheat. Just before leaving for work (about two hours), I would whistle him in to a bagged bird. He took these birds in free flight with varying degrees of adroitness; however they were all taken with enormous relish. I would make in, lift both birds from the ground and allow Uther to finish his meal on the fist. He would then be put in the mew until I returned home from work. At this stage, Uther was always fed his morning passerine.

Returning from work at about 5 p.m., I invariably found Uther next to his mew door ready to come out. He was released at tame hack again to do as he pleased. I could go into the house, spend some time with my wife, have dinner, do some chores, and three or four hours later concern myself with the gos. I usually found him nearby and, like Cynthia, he was very vocal while at hack. It was amusing to watch him flying after barn swallows (*Hirundo rustica*) (always to no avail), soaring over the treetops, or putting in his best killing strokes on some of the branches or logs on my fire-

wood pile. One day he thought that he could land on the top of a sea of oats, only to find that he would merely sink to the ground. Every day was a purely natural learning experience.

Uther was either flown from the fist or from wherever he was perched for his evening meal. This meal was always a full gorge. With the twice-a-day feeding regime just described, Uther would weigh in at approximately 780 gm. (27 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz) before each meal.

When he was hard penned, the same hacking procedure continued. For the evening meal, however, I chose to walk with him to one of the open fields near my home where I had previously hidden a bagged pigeon. These birds were reasonably impeded by pulling several primaries from one wing. As we walked through the field mimicking a pheasant or duck hunt, I would pull a string uncovering the hidden pigeon. At this time we would be about 50 meters from the quarry and in a couple of minutes, when the pigeon had its bearings, it would fly off. Immediately, the gos would bolt from my fist and fly the pigeon down. Although he never failed to respond to the flushing pigeon, Uther's behaviour once he caught the pigeon would vary. At times he seemed to be more curious than hungry and tended to play rather than eat. At other times he proceeded to eat the pigeon immediately. At any rate, I would make in, at times having to kill the pigeon, and allow Uther a full gorge. This procedure continued daily. However, as time went on, I pulled fewer primaries from the pigeons. This taxed Uther's abilities and taught him what to do when he missed quarry. He generally pursued these pigeons for varying distances up to 100 meters. Then, if unsuccessful, he would take a perch and wait for me to call him.

The hunting routine. The tame hack ended as Uther was developing into a game hawk. I can only advise someone using this technique to watch the hawk closely. As the powers of flight develop and as the hawk gets used to taking quarry (bagged or otherwise), it gets increasingly more dangerous to leave the hawk unattended. The forays into the woods and the distances with which she pursues quarry will increase. These signals the final touches of training to begin.

As the tame hack ends, the hawk's weight will most likely have to be cut and feeding dropped to once a day. As with Kent's gos, Uther began to scream when his weight was cut, and I too feel that the best thing for the bird at this point is the establishment of a regular hunting routine. Although the State of Michigan is not particularly liberal with its few falconers, we have been lucky recently in getting extended seasons to take migratory birds. This allows us to hunt ducks, for example, from September 1 for the full 107 days allowed by treaty. In addition, we have a put-take pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*) season (pen-raised birds planted in certain locations by the Department of Natural Resources) that begins in the middle of August and lasts until the end of December. These seasons are just perfect for getting an eyes started.

The hunting season. I never formally entered Uther to waterfowl or pheasants. From his first exposure to either of these quarry, he hunted them with a certain acknowledgement albeit vehemence. We were lucky in that Uther took a hen mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) over land very early. This set a positive tone to the hunting experience. It was quite a few weeks till he scored his next head of game. In the meantime he hit duck after duck as they sprang from the water only to be pulled under the surface by what were usually mallards. From then on he seemed not to fly at them with the speed he was capable of. A typical hunt began with as close a flush as possible, Uther always bolted from the fist, and upon approaching the rising ducks he tended to slow down as the ducks dove into the water in single file one after another. After trying many different approaches to the ponds and different solutions to the problem, I decided to concentrate on ring-necked pheasant hunting.

The local pheasant population had been lowered by two severe winters but I could manage almost a slip a day. It was here that I found that the tiercel could be beaten on most flat out flights by ringnecks and that his only hope was to have the game head for cover. Once the pheasants put in, the tiercel had a chance, however, if the pheasants decided to fly for 500 meters or more before they put in, my hawk and I would be out of luck and out of a tasty meal.

No flight was ever mundane. They were as fast, furious and interesting as one could want. We ended the season with twelve head of quarry (10 ringnecks and 2 ducks). Uther refused cottontail rabbits (*Sylvilagus* sp.), a fact that I hope we can correct during the next season.

Summary. My tiercel was subjected to an early and regimented routine, one like that of the female gos, which included three stages of development. In the first stage (pre-flight), hardly similar to the traditional hack, the hawk was allowed full freedom of an artificial nest. He was allowed in or out of the nest at will and could roam around the yard and investigate his surroundings at his own pace. As he developed through this stage, his meals were cut from four feedings per day to three. This stage, which roughly approximates the downy through brancher stages of a wild hawk's life, ended when he was able to fly. By now, however, the gos was trained to the whistle and the lure and had been exposed to live quarry in the form of small passerines.

The true tame hack began when the hawk was just beginning to fly. He was free for approximately two hours in the early morning and about double that time in the afternoon and early evenings. During this period he was free to come and go as he pleased. When it was time to put him in the mews, he was called in to bagged quarry. The early meal consisted of one bird while the late meal was given ad lib. As the tiercel became hard penned, he was introduced to larger bagged quarry in the form of pigeons. This stage of the tame hack ended as the gos was developing into a game hawk and this coincided with the opening of our early hunting seasons. The hawk's weight was lowered and his meals cut to

one a day. As a substitute for the hack and the extra meal, the gos was put on a strict hunting schedule. The transition between the hack and the daily hunting schedule was reasonably smooth, and I too feel that the constant routine and quarry availability is of the utmost importance to the hawk at this stage.

DISCUSSION.

"...those who love the blood, sweat, toil and tears of endless training may have them (branchers/passagers) because after knowing the imprint I will never fly them by choice again." Harry McElroy (1977)

Probably the biggest advantage to the tame hack process is that the hawk progresses from a downy to a successful hunting companion without any interruption or delay and this is done at her own normal pace. There is no period of inactivity in the mews while the falconer waits for blood to recede from the hawk's feathers. There are no traumatic stages in routine to which she must adjust or take exception. The old stages of training -- manning, carrying and flying on the creance -- are foregone. By the time the hawk is hard penned, she is manned, trained, entered and ready to begin the refinement of her hunting abilities. All that remains is the daily hunting to provide the experience and conditioning necessary for a good game hawk.

Although goshawks may not, in most cases, perform the long-range, dramatic, high-speed manoeuvres of the longwings, they certainly are capable of rapid acceleration and intricate pursuit patterns, and have the sheer determination that makes them consummate hunters. These qualities depend, as with the falcon, on good conditioning. Harry McElroy has demonstrated repeatedly how important good conditioning is to the trained Cooper's hawk, and we feel that the early conditioning derived from the hack is the perfect beginning to the goshawk's overall development programme as well.

Quite probably, early behavioural development is every bit as important as the hawk's early physical development, and both may indeed go hand in hand. In fact, we both now feel the early behavioural development due to the hack may exceed the physical benefits. Animal behaviourists have discovered that much of the learning that goes on in developing animals is "adaptively programmed." An animal will cue in on certain things in its environment which trigger specific learning programmes. The programmes are confined to particular critical periods in an animal's development. These triggers and critical periods are quite obvious in insects and have also been found, wonderfully elaborated, all along the evolutionary continuum up to and including human beings. The critical period for imprinting goshawks, for example, seems to be between the ages of 17 to 25 days.

Photograph on next page - Tiercel goshawk on ringneck pheasant.



After this time, the instinctive learning pattern of imprinting is completed and what has been learned will remain with the hawk for the rest of its life. By using the tame hack, the falconer can approach a natural pattern of development for the hawk, one which takes into account its critical periods. Although we do not fully understand the triggers and critical periods involved in the development of a goshawk, we feel that the tame hack allows for the most natural development to occur given the set of obstacles implicit in life with a falconer. The one major addition to the natural process is the hawk's constant association with man during these critical periods. Surely the development of a goshawk into a well-manned game hawk is more complex than this simplistic discussion, however, we feel that making the imprinted hawk's development as natural as possible and having this occur at the bird's own pace is working to insure the fullest actualization of her inherent potential.

BEHAVIOURAL OBSERVATIONS DURING THE HACK.

"They are so foolish as the first year they will hardly be taught to take a bough well, and if that cannot be effected, there can no prosperous success be expected." Edmund Bert (1619) on the eyas goshawk "... upon whom I can fasten no affection for the multitude of her follies and faults."

The authors noted certain behaviour characteristics during the hack which were similar in both birds and probably indicative of goshawks and, perhaps, raptors in general. These points are listed and briefly discussed.

1. Both birds spent a good deal of time playing, usually in the form of "killing" various inanimate objects around the yard. We interpret this play as pre-tuning activity whereby the bird enhances its development of motor patterns. Eventually, these patterns become more object specific and more object appropriate (prey).
2. Through the hacking process, the birds developed early flight co-ordination, received general strengthening of flight muscles and the cardiovascular system, and indulged in the trial-and-error type of learning it takes, for example, to land in trees correctly.
3. Entering is made as natural as possible with the hawk in free flight situations and usually in the company of the falconer. Bagged birds may be used; however, the hawk has the opportunity to pursue recently fledged wild birds. The female gos took two such wild birds before she was hard penned.
4. While at hack, the hawk will encounter a multitude of living things found in the hack area; dogs, cats, people, deer, various birds, scolding robins and whatever else lives in the area are all encountered and adjusted to. It is hard to define the value of this early experience, but we suggest that somehow the hawk may begin to develop a sense of how she fits into the total "scheme of things."

CONCLUSION.

Certain conditions are necessary for the tame hack. The

physical environment must be suitable for the hawk to have its freedom yet be safe. We do not feel that a person needs to live in a completely rural area to tame his bird. People interested in this idea should experiment, within reason, regardless of where they may live. We fully realize that this technique requires additional time and attention on the part of the falconer. The results we have seen seem to far outshine other methods used for raising eyas goshawks.

Frederick II stated that "the falconer's primary aspiration should be to possess hunting birds that he has trained through his own ingenuity to capture the quarry he desires in the manner he prefers." Surely, the true test of any theory or method lies in the ability of the falconer and his hawk to hunt successfully. Both goshawks are just beginning their second year. By all indications they are doing very well. However, the true test will be in the game bag, and this we will assess at the end of each season.

The authors wish to thank Will Shore, Editor of the Hawk Chalk, for his kind permission to reprint parts of this article which originally appeared in the December, 1979 Hawk Chalk.

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After this article had been completed I received a letter from Mr. Vorro asking for the following additions:-on page 14 line 34 the insertion of (Canis Sp.) after the word spaniel, and on the same page line 48 (Odocoileus virginianus borealis) to follow the word deer. He also said that his tiercel goshawk did particularly well during the past year, mostly on pheasants but also taking rabbits for the first time. The female goshawk Cynthia was lost just after Kent moved to Colorado - she hasn't been seen since. I was also interested to hear that Mr. Vorro has taken over the editorship of the N.A.F.A. Journal, the next issue of which is due out in November/December 1981. - Editor.

The Modern Jess

BY D. Le MESURIER.

With nylon leashes being used more and more these days a nylon jess has come onto the scene. It takes the form of a plaited mews jess, and has several advantages over the more traditional leather jess, in that it does not require to be greased, is far stronger and does not wear so quickly, a fact which can lead to a lost hawk due to the leather button suddenly snapping.

CONSTRUCTION.

To make the jess you will need three lengths of braided nylon, the type used for creances is well suited for this. These are clamped a few inches from their centre and are plaited for several inches from this point. This plait will need to be double the length of the swivel slit required. (Fig. 1).

The two ends of this plait are held firmly between the fingers and the clamp removed. The ends are then brought together to form a loop. (Fig. 2).

For the next stage it will be found easier if something is placed in the loop to keep the whole thing taut. I find a small round file held between the knees is best for this.

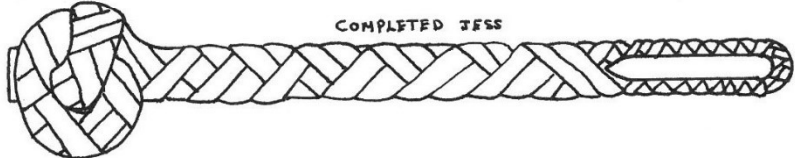
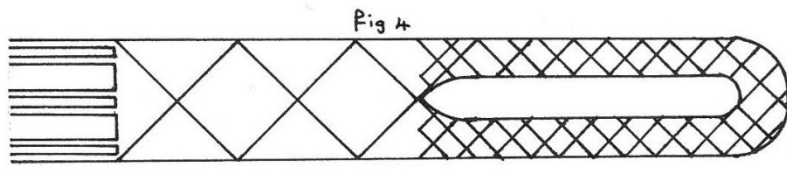
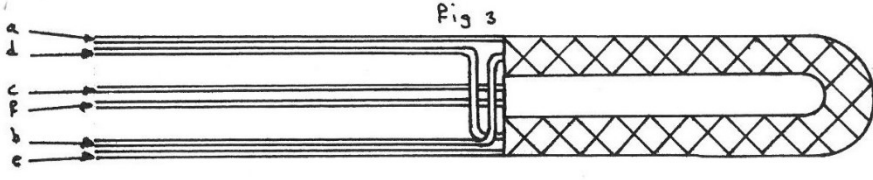
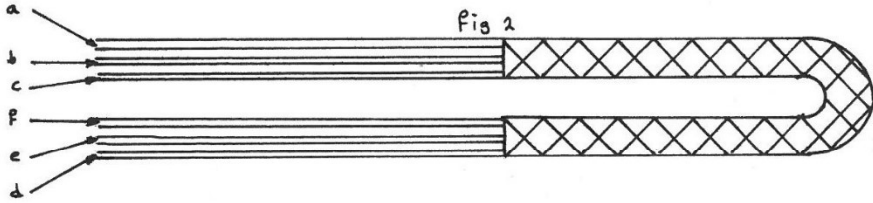
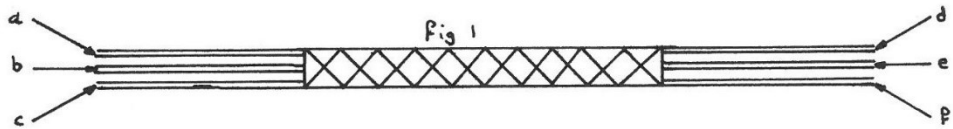
Now comes the hard part; on each end of the plait you will have three lengths of nylon, making a total of six free lengths; these must now be made into three double lengths. This is achieved by taking d and placing it alongside a, placing b alongside e and c alongside f. (Fig. 3). You will now have three double lengths.

To make the main body of the jess take each double length and plait with them as if they were single strands. When the plait is complete it can be tied off at the length required. This knot will take the place of the button on the leather jess. Any surplus line is cut off a short way beyond the knot, these ends are then melted onto the knot, which prevents them from fraying and also helps to secure the knot.

It may be found that this knot is too small for the eyelet, in which case a disc of stiff leather may be cut and a small hole punched in it; through which the jess is passed.

For small hawks I find a thin line such as that used for flying kites is the best. This produces a very thin, strong jess which passes through the smallest eyelet.

Several friends and I have been using this type of jess for the past few seasons and have found them to be very reliable.



 — Plaiting

Extract from "Falconry in late Medieval Art"

A THESIS BY MIKE DONNELLY.

Such was the prestige given to the sport of falconry that it was a natural development for hawks to appear in the heraldic art form.

Consequently it was King Edward III who conferred the title of "Falcon King Of Arms" upon worthy individuals, usually heralds and pursuivants.

Froissart in 1395 calls Faucon (Falcon King Of Arms) only a herald, and in 1364 mentions this officer as a King Of Arms belonging to the King of England. It is certain that the title of Falcon King Of Arms continued through both the reigns of Richard II and Richard III, but at what particular period of time the officer was discontinued, cannot be correctly ascertained.

France was particularly rich in heraldic emblems of office. The French for many centuries led the rest of Europe in all matters of honour and etiquette. The English, however, did not place such a rigid scale of comparative importance upon such tokens until it later spread to the English Court from the French.

There exists long detailed lists of the various ranks accompanied by their official heraldic insignia. From the high ranking position of "High Constable Of France" to the humble but almost equally important position of "Gamekeeper to the King". Such lists were comparable to England also, and definitely as complete.

The important position of "Grand Falconer" was usually bestowed upon a deserving lord of the realm who had particular expertise at the sport. "Two lures appending from the ends of the mantling" is how his insignia is described, the lures being those used in his sport.

Apart from the majestic Eagle and its ostentatious role in heraldry, the Falcon was the important figure in Mediaeval social life, being the noblest bird flown in the field, and therefore is more significant here.

Heraldry, in its emblazonment, makes no distinction between the appearance of the falcon and the hawk. In fact in falconry terminology a falcon is exclusively the name given only to the female Peregrine. However the word hawk can be used to describe all hawks and falcons.

Quite often the falcon is depicted in crests wearing bells on its ankles. The term "belled" may be used in heraldic terminology as meaning either singly belled, on one leg, or belled on both. In many old books on the subject one finds such terms as "jessed and belled". This term was oddly used

to describe the falcon's bells as being attached by the jesses or lunes (old term used for jesses). This implication is totally false however, as any falconer knows, bells are attached to a hawk's legs by means of bewits. The jess is in fact a leather thong which a falconer uses to hold and secure his bird. Again attached around each leg they are usually left on the falcon when hunting. This practice can be noted if one examines the famous "Devonshire" tapestries closely. In the crowded scene of the tapestry "Falconry Chase", every flying falcon is shown wearing bells and jesses, the ends of which are "varvelled" (old name for metal rings attached to the free end of a jess).

The technical term "armed" was used to describe an emblem which theoretically included the talons and beak, oddly enough, but in actual practice the bird would always be referred to as "beaked and legged". This was because of the different coloured tints used to distinguish the various anatomical parts of the falcon's plumage.

The falcons head was a very common representation on a crest. Often the whole bird was shown "mantling" or "trussing" its prey. These terms were employed when the hawk had its quarry pinned to the ground in a submissive posture, with wings majestically outstretched but inverted. Such a crest was used for the armorial bearings of one R. E. Yerburch Esq: "Per pale argent and azure, on a chevron between three chaplets all counterchanged, an amulet for difference Mantling azure and argent. Crest: on a wreath of the colours a falcon close or belled of the last, preying upon a mallard proper".

Indeed, a member of the landed gentry, as well as the upper classes, would ensure that his coat of arms and crest were clearly visible on his armour and the trappings of his horse.

Such precise etiquette was always rigidly adhered to concerning the apparel worn both by the lord, his chief falconer and horses.

After all, a Welsh proverb says that a "true gentleman is known by his crest, his horse, hawk and greyhound.

Meeting at Pwhelli, October 1980

BY J. M. BUCKNER.

A limited hawking meeting was held at Pwhelli, North Wales from 7th - 11th October by courtesy of our Honorary member Bob Bond who kindly let all the falconers who attended stay in his four beautiful holiday cottages. The areas to be hawked over were arranged by Gary Morris and Terry Large, two of our very active North Walians.

Quarry was reasonably plentiful, and all hawks present flew exceptionally well, John Fairclough brought his peregrines and his tiercel really was in super condition, waiting on very high and excelling himself at both partridges and pheasants. The falcon was also very good and did sterling work at rooks and carrion crows.

Ronnie Moore had his golden eagle which also took quarry. A beautiful bird and so well flown and understood by Ron.

The goshawk contingent were Bob Haddon, Andy Kenyon and Brian Lewis, all of which took their fair share. Bob's bird was one that he had bred himself and it was pleasing to see an aviary bred bird going so well.

The Harris's were flown by Terry Large, Stuart Wilkinson and Carl Moody. Again all flew well and all were aviary bred birds. Terry lent his bird to all and sundry and on the last day Pat Haddon flew her in what I thought a very expert fashion. She killed a good cock pheasant after a fine slip and flight. On her return I congratulated her only to find it was the first time she had actually flown a bird in anger. (Bob must be a good teacher.)

Tony Burnett and Mike Johnstone came up with their lurchers and when not hawking they showed us some super sport with the local hares and rabbits.

The total bag for the meeting was Hawks - 30 head
Lurchers - 14 head.

We fed ourselves each evening with the help of Gill Fairclough, Sheila Mc Phail and Pat Haddon, and with the exception of a beautiful smoked ham sent to us by Ronnie Burnett lived mainly on the quarry that was caught.

All had a splendid time and I again thank Bob for his generosity and hope he will make it an annual event.



A group photograph taken at the North Wales meeting.
By courtesy of J. Buckner and R. Bond.

BELAN

Diary of a Goshawk

BY R. HADDON.

To any falconer worthy of the name each hawk he possesses is something special, but once in a while there is one that for some reason or other is extra special. Such a one is Belan.

Her start in life was different to most Goshawks, as she was aviary bred and reared by her parents. She and her two brothers were taken from the breeding quarters for training when they had already been on the wing for three weeks or more. They were left in for so long due to pressure of work leaving little time for their training, but aggression towards the parent birds forced our hand and out they came.

The eyasses had seen no human being at all until I went in to catch them up; they hadn't even been rung so as not to disturb the parent birds. So imagine my feeling when about ten days after training started she began to scream. I was at a loss to find the cause. It certainly wasn't due to too much weight reduction too quickly, as she was only two ounces down on her aviary weight of 3lbs. I came back to a belief that I have held for some time that some screaming is due to boredom.

Most young animals indulge in play and it has been noted in some birds also. In 1979 I bred a female Goshawk which I would bring into the house in the evening, put her down on the carpet and give her a ball made of screwed-up newspaper. She would pick up the paper ball and throw it into the air, run after it and repeat the performance for up to twenty minutes. I had first noticed this behaviour at the bow perch, when she would perform similar feats with rabbit legs or any other object she could pick up in her beak.

Bearing in mind that my female eyes had been very little trouble to train I decided to try an experiment. I noticed that she was screaming when she had been out on the bow perch for nearly two hours; so I gave her a whole rabbit head and a lot of neck skin and fur one and a half hours after fetching her out from the night quarters. For nearly half an hour she played with the head, then she would spend some time "plucking" it and finally she would eat it. The whole procedure gave her over an hour's occupation and a crop full of rabbit fur mixed with a little meat. Her screaming got less and less and stopped completely after about 10 days. Obviously I had to leave her training until late in the afternoon but this fitted in quite well with my plans.

Her training went well and she soon caught her first rabbit. The hawk's name at that time was Gem, Being a reversal of the 1979 female's name Meg. Neither were very inspiring names and show a distinct lack of imagination on my part (or to pass the buck as it were; my families part).

On Tuesday the 8th. October my wife Pat and I accompanied by

Gem arrived at Broom Hall, situated between Pwllheli and Criccieth in North Wales, the home of Bobbie Bond. We were there at the invitation of Bob Bond and John Buckner to attend a small private three day hawking meeting. Around ten other hawks were there including Sheila, one of the best Gosses in the country, and her owner Andy Kenyon. Ronnie Moore was there with his magnificent Golden Eagle and his first class tiercel Gos. and representing the longwings John Fairclough from the Midlands with his high flying Peregrines Fog and Coco.

The meeting proper started on the Wednesday morning and I was excited to hear that our first venue was to Belan Fort.

During the very early 1970's I had a short break from falconry and took up beach fishing for Bass along the coast of North Wales. Just south of the entrance to the Menai Straits is a very famous bass storm beach called Dinas Dinlle and between there and the Menai Straits is a sandy peninsula of around 1,000 acres called Belan Fort. Now if Dinas Dinlle is famous for bass then Belan fort is equally famous amongst the locals for rabbits. The whole area is virtually one big warren absolutely swarming with the varmints.

So here I was with a young captive bred Gos being told that I was going hawking on the Crewe Junction of the rabbit world, it seemed too good to be true, which is exactly what it was because of the old falconers equation; sandy soil + lots of bunnies = lots of holes. We spent a rather frustrating afternoon watching hundreds of rabbits popping down hundreds of holes, but we had some fun and came away with five or six.

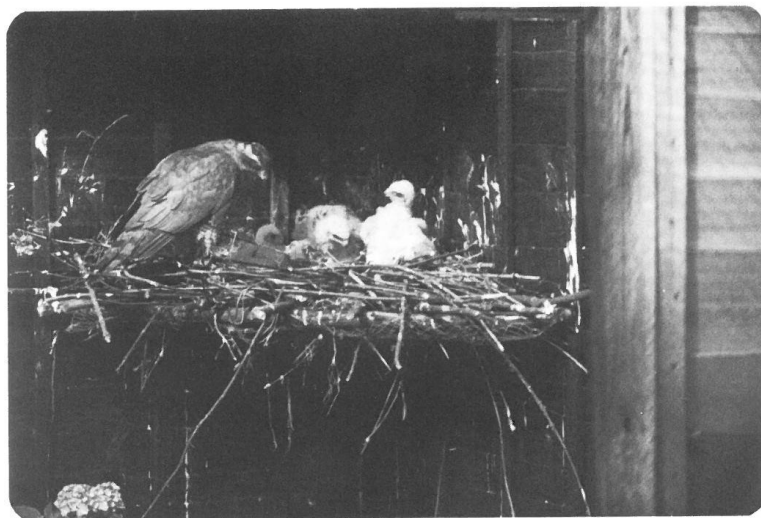
Brian Lewis and I learned the secret of hawking Belan Fort on our second visit, but due to wet weather were unable to beat the world record by putting it into practice. However, I enjoyed the time spent there and seeing familiar places, I decided that from then on my hawk would be named Belan.

Hawking Diary Extract:- Friday 28th. November, 1980.

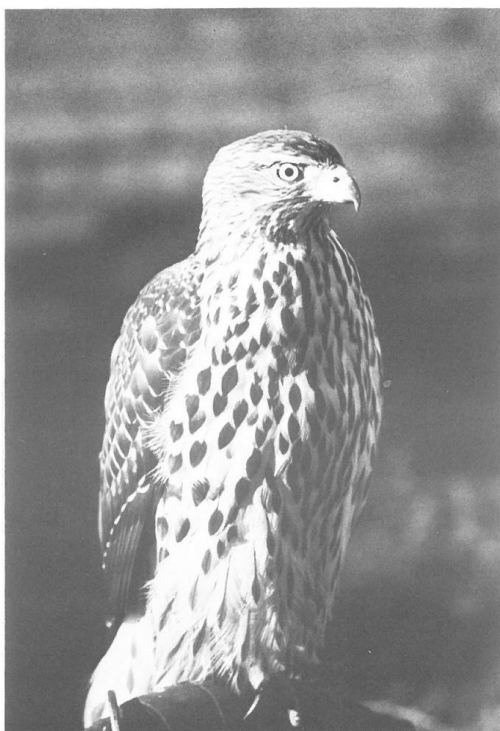
A lot of snow overnight, but most of it gone by mid-morning. 2lb. 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ ozs. Pat dropped me off at the Heath. Bitterly cold, very strong wind and no sooner had I entered the first field than a blizzard started. I managed to spot a hare in its form some 60yds. away. It had its head well down protected from the driving snow and didn't bolt until I was some 10 yds. away. Belan flew it immediately. The hare jinked a lot and Belan could not get to terms with it, she was beaten when the hare turned and ran into the wind. Still an exciting flight and pleased to see she was going for the head.

After sheltering for 20 mins. for the snow to ease made our way to Black Pit wood and put her in the trees, put a rabbit up almost at once and Belan took it well. As we neared Watling St. farm put up a rabbit in the snow, short flight of about 25yds. and another rabbit in the bag.

There are many entries of a similar nature in my hawking diary and one or two that I would have preferred not to have



Belan and her two brothers in the breeding aviary.



Belan.
(Photographs by courtesy of Bob Haddon.)

written such as:- Saturday Dec. 6th. 2lb.12 $\frac{3}{4}$ ozs. very cold bitter wind. Late start so to save time and escape wind went straight into Freemans Wood. Put Belan in trees some 30yds. from boundary ride and worked the brambles away from the ride. We were about 70yds. from the ride when we heard a shot from our rear. Belan bobbed her head in that direction and left the tree at a fair speed. Tim and I shouted as loud as we could and raced after her, there was a second shot. We dashed over to the source of the shots and asked if the man had seen my hawk "No, I've just shot at a rabbit" was his rather sheepish reply. We listened and after what seemed a very long time heard the bells. Called her down from the tree where we found her and as I was still shaking from the episode fed her up and called it a day.

The following day we went hawking in the afternoon as usual and put up a hare in the second field, as soon as Belan left the fist it was obvious something was wrong. She could hardly fly. I picked her up went home and called the vet. X-rays showed a fracture in the right wing and pellets in her left wing, in her leg just above the knee and one in her breast. My feelings and emotions were mixed, I was angry that anyone could be so ignorant or barbaric enough to shoot such a creature and was relieved that as bad as it was it could have been considerably worse.

The amazing thing was that if it was not for her inability to fly there was nothing in her general behaviour to show that anything was wrong. She roused, bathed, preened and put her foot up when she perched. It was probably due to the fact that I like my birds as high as possible and at 2lb.12 $\frac{3}{4}$ ozs she was fairly high and also very fit.

The fracture was a "good" one, broken but lying quite well for mending so I decided to just rest her and not to splint the bone and cause her distress that way. I also decided to leave the shot in, only time will tell if my decision was right or not.

Entry for December 27th. reads:- Lovely sunny day but cold. Decided to take Belan out for the first time since shooting. 3lb. $\frac{3}{4}$ oz. Pat came with me and Sam the Springer pup, who shows tremendous potential, if he doesn't make it, it will be my fault not his. We walked the two miles to the farm. Belan was well behaved, I put the tracker on her and decided that if she bated at anything I would let her go. Tried her from gate post first. Not very interested but considering her weight not very surprising. Put up rabbit from grass field by Double Pits, she went after it like there had never been a break either in her wing or in her hunting; failed to contact and threw up into a tree. Took 15 mins. to get her down but no worry, if it had taken an hour and fifteen minutes it would' n't have palled my delight at seeing her back in action. She was a little restless on the walk home but nevertheless a good start to the renewal of what I hope will be a long and happy relationship.

It was only a few days before she was catching rabbits again and as I was giving her long slips at hares (100 yds. plus) flying her from the trees in the wood and flying her daily

she has become very fit and strong.

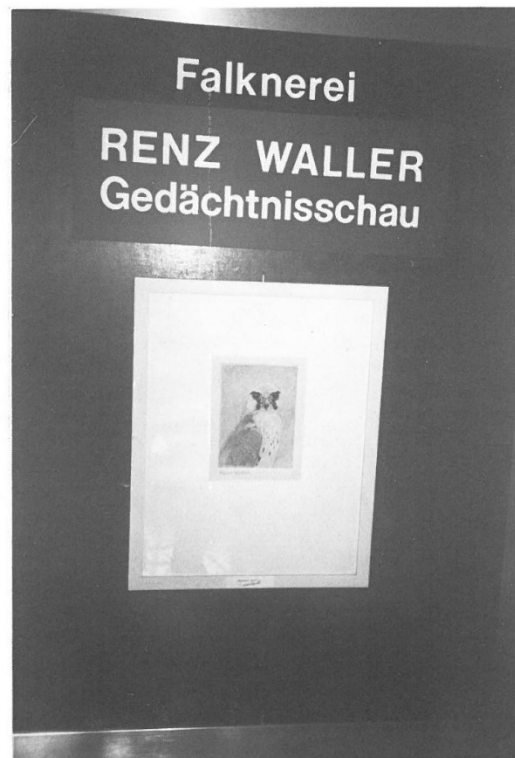
Another incident worthy of mention, Bill Jennings, my father-in-law and I were staying at a cottage in North Wales for a general relaxation period and a bit of hawking. On Tuesday February 10th. 1981 we had left the hawking a little bit late, as usual trying to fit too much into one day. Bill (to whom time has no meaning) was filling his pipe and performing various other operations that people do when you are in a hurry. Patience has never been one of my virtues and so I removed leash, swivel and jesses and inserted field jesses ready for a quick start. I stood outside the kitchen trying to relax and not get up tight at the delay, when Belan bated. I was, I am ashamed to say, caught completely by surprise, the jesses slipped through my fingers and Belan flew straight through a pane of glass in the french windows of the adjoining cottage. The glass measured approximately 18" x 12" and must have been very strong, but she went through it as if it didn't exist amid what was virtually an explosion of glass. Amazingly she was unharmed. I fetched the keys for the cottage, went in and picked her up. Within the hour we had a rabbit in the bag. What a hawk!

The broken window incident has a rather amusing sequel, but that's another story.

She still hasn't caught a full grown hare but continues to fly them. A remark about how blunt her talons seemed at the B.F.C. Midland Group Meeting has opened my eyes to the probable reason. She is kept on a brick floor at night and every morning bates to me; obviously not doing her talons the slightest bit of good. I have changed her night quarters now and her talons are getting quite sharp. I hope it will only be a matter of time before a full grown hare joins the quarry list of:-

Leveret	1.
Rabbits	46.
Moorhens	14.
Pheasants	4.
Woodcock	1.
Rat	1.
Mouse	1.
Various	2.

Postscript:- My wife Pat typed this article on the morning of March 10th. 1981. In the afternoon of the same day at 16.00 hrs. Belan caught her first hare.



The Renz Waller Memorial Exhibition in Munich, West Germany

Readers of the previous edition of 'The Austringer' will remember the tribute paid to the late Renz Waller by the President of the Welsh Hawking Club, Lorant de Bastyai.

At the end of that tribute our President said that he believed that the hawking possessions of the famous German falconer would be placed on view for the benefit of other

falconers and those persons with an interest in our sport, perhaps in a local museum. This has indeed come about, and the four photographs reproduced here were sent for our magazine from Munich by his brother George de Bastyai.



One of Renz Waller's treasures,
An antique bronze figure of a
Chinese falconer with a goshawk.

NEXT PAGE.

Top:- Some of Renz Waller's hawks which he had mounted,
also some of the infertile eggs which they had laid.

Bottom:- His ornate hawking jacket and hats, also his
dagger, bugle and armbands.



The Small Hawk Specialist

BY LORANT DE BASTYAI.

With drawings by the author.

I had been reading with great interest an article by Chris Gosling about pheasant shooting in Hungary in the September 25 - October 1st issue of the 'Shooting Times', and it brought back nostalgic memories of the same countryside where the author saw "clouds of pheasants" and the same small town where the English shooting party had stayed named Szarvas, which means 'red deer' in the Hungarian language. Why, in the middle of the Hungarian plains there exists a town with such a name I do not know. There are no red deer in this district at all, the terrain is not suited to this animal, but perhaps if someone took the time and trouble to look into its history they would discover the reason. To be honest I have never been interested enough to do so. I remember that in front of the Town Hall in Szarvas there stood a larger than life-sized statue of a red deer cast from bronze, which I believe is still there as I write these lines.



The bronze statue of the red deer from which the town of Szarvas got its name.

There was so much of interest in and around Szarvas for me as a young falconer and other falconers who were already 'in adult plumage' that the name of the town was of secondary importance because it was the home of Lajos Rohony.

Lajos Rohony was a small-town cobbler. He had a little workshop in his bungalow which stood at the edge of the town. His customers were the poor people of Szarvas who took him all their old boots and shoes to be repaired. However, it was not the repairing of footwear which drew falconers to him, but his marvellous skill or perhaps one should say art in trapping migrating small hawks. At that time (the year was 1939) there were no regulations on the trapping and keeping of hawks of all species. On the contrary, it was the duty of a gamekeeper to shoot all birds with curved beaks (unfortunately) to protect the pheasants and partridges. Lajos Rohony did not make a business out of trapping and training hawks, he did it purely out of keenness and love for birds of prey and falconry. He always gave away his birds as gifts, and when he was unable to place them after he had trapped them he would ring them with the marking rings of the Hungarian Ornithological Institution and release them.

His bungalow was a very simple little building, situated as I have said previously on the edge of the town. Opposite to it began the great plains, an endless mixture of stubble fields, lucerne fields, sugar beet fields and fields of grass. Around the fields were dirt roads and one could see in the far distance the acacia and poplar trees that ran along-side them. His traps were set about a hundred meters out into the fields from his bungalow from the time when the migration began until the end of the migration back in the spring. They were mainly bow-nets but he also had noose and cage traps. The bait used was house sparrows, which were so plentiful that the farms and estates employed boys to chase them away from the different crops armed with catapults or small bore pistols. Poisons were used at that time to control birds, rodents and weeds, but Lajos Rohony found that the best way of 'poisoning' sparrows was to soak wheat in apricot brandy, which he then scattered onto his yard and garden. The sparrows then became drunk from eating it and he could collect them up with his hands and put them into large cages where they were given time to 'sober up'. Naturally they were properly cared for, even when they went to serve their duty in the traps. Holes were drilled through the bottom of his kitchen window frame, and through these were passed the strings which were attached to the traps.

When it came to luring small hawks Lajos Rohony had a 'speciality'. He invented a little leather 'trouser support' which was just right for a sparrow. On the top of this support was a ring which continued with a small piece of string tied to the 'lifting mechanism', which was a miniature of the wells which can be seen on the plains of Hungary, Italy or Spain. This consisted of a fork-shaped post standing vertically from the ground and between the fork, on a wire horizontal-wise, was another stick, to one end of which was the string attached to the sparrow 'trouser holder' and attached to the other end was a much longer line leading into Lajos

Rohony's kitchen through several rings fixed into the ground. When he pulled this line in his kitchen the horizontal stick went up, lifting the sparrow into the air about 10 or 15 centimetres, and when he loosened it the stick went back down, this made the sparrow acting as bait flap its wings, making the same movements as when flying down to the ground - naturally the bait was placed in the middle of the bow-net. Lajos Rohony would sit at his kitchen window with his binoculars watching the sky very carefully. When his sharp eyes caught sight of a sparrow hawk or a merlin he would start his manipulations with the sparrow, which flapped and attracted the migrating hawk's attention. In no time the hawk was below the bow-net, another line was swiftly pulled and the hawk was trapped.

He also used, as I said before, cage traps, again using sparrows as bait in the lower compartment. When the hawk went into the trap it worked automatically with springs trapping the hawk. Naturally the sparrows were given food and drink whilst they were in the traps - not in this case treated with apricot brandy, and also after the hawk had been caught.

Some winters Lajos Rohony had a good deal of success in trapping merlins and sparrow hawks. I remember as clearly as if it were yesterday those winters during the Christmas holidays when I visited him and spent days with him in his kitchen. In his sitting room I have counted six, eight or sometimes ten hooded merlins and sparrow hawks. They were everywhere, waiting for falconers, but he never ever sold any of the hawks he trapped, he gave them away as gifts. Naturally, if someone brought him some brandy or a bottle of wine he would take this small gift gladly, but he was not a great drinker, he would just have a drink in the company of other falconers to the health of the hunting birds.

Falconers, young and old, came to his small bungalow from all over Hungary, and he and his small, dainty wife were the kindest and most generous hosts that anyone could wish for. The beds, food and drink were excellent, as was the service given to their guests. His son Samuel (just called Samu by his father) was the butler, servant and also the assistant trapper and falconer. His daughter too, whose name I am ashamed to say I cannot remember, helped as assistant cook in the kitchen with her mother and also helped to keep the bungalow clean, which was quite a task after the eight or maybe ten small hawks for Lajos Rohony very rarely used paper below the birds, just sand or sawdust, and of course there were usually guests too.

He would keep the trapped hawks for a couple of weeks or sometimes a month, then if no-one came for them he would ring them and return them to the wild. Sometimes he re-trapped after an interval of several weeks one or two of the birds that he had kept in his home. If this happened he would put a ring on the bird's other leg and release it at once. He never took a bird into his home which he had kept and then released before.

His whole life was most interesting. No-one knew how he had

acquired all his knowledge about birds of prey and falconry, he had never read a book on the sport, just articles which were published in the shooting magazines on the subject from time to time. I used to tell him and also other people who knew him that one of his ancestors must have been a keen falconer in Medieval times and Lajos Rohony had inherited his spirit and soul by some miracle.

He had a small field around his bungalow where he kept chickens and ducks. He killed his two pigs every winter and of course repaired the boots and shoes of the village folk. But when the time came for trapping and hawking everything else was forgotten. The customers who brought him their footwear to be repaired would have to wait for a long time to collect them or look around for another cobbler who was not engaged in falconry.

At that time during the winter and the spring I was living in Budapest with my parents, and I carried on a good deal of correspondence with falconers from many different places, and also of course with the 'maestro' Lajos Rohony. I remember very clearly that just as I was about to finish my studies at the Agricultural University the postman brought me a telegram from Uncle Lajos (in Hungarian Lajos Bacsi) telling me that if I wanted to see some "extraordinary" hawking I should come at once. The next morning I was aboard the train taking me from the Capital to the Hungarian plains and the town of Szarvas.

He was waiting for me at the station, and despite the fact that I had a rucksack on my back and the sun was blistering down we had a pleasant walk to his bungalow. In Hungary the weather was in those days 'real weather'. In the winter it was cold, sometimes very bitterly cold between Mid-December and the end of February, but March really was March and April was really 'silly' April. May was a lovely month, the lilacs were all out in their various colours and the acacia trees were blooming, hanging with flowers like grapes for the benefit of the honey bees and of course the bee-keepers. In the bushes and thickets on the hills and mountains the nightingales were in full song and in the orchards and woods you could hear the typical flutey songs of the golden orioles. The call of the cuckoo could be heard everywhere, and in the reeds and rushes the song of the reed warbler was competing with the croaking of thousands of frogs and toads. The sky lark climbed on the warm air, looking as if it was hanging suspended on invisible strings, then at the end of its song it would dive down to its nest where the female was sitting her clutch of eggs.

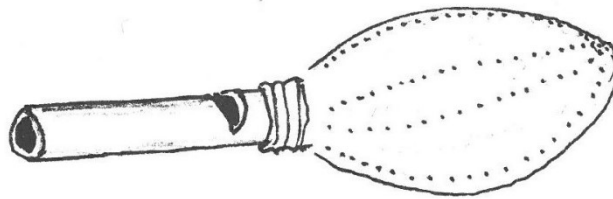
It was towards the end of May, with the corn bowing gently in the warm breeze, when we arrived about lunch-time at Lajos Rohony's bungalow, and we stepped inside to be greeted by the very appetizing smell of fried chicken. We brushed off the golden dust from ourselves and had a quick wash before lunch. Before sitting down to our meal Uncle Lajos showed me his hawks, among them were two sparrow hawks and three merlins. He pointed to one of the hawks, a jack merlin in adult plumage, and said to me "he is the master of all

the merlins, you will see what we can do together." At that hour, following lunch, the May sun was still too high in the sky and everything settled down to have a siesta, as the Spanish call the interval between twelve noon and three in the afternoon. So we took two easy chairs, some ice-cold light wine and some soda water out on to the veranda where we sat and chatted about our beloved hunting birds. Everything was quiet, the silence being broken only by the twittering of the young swallows in their nest under the roof when their parents arrived to feed them with insects that they had caught in flight. The time passed very quickly as it always seems to do when you are contented and happy. Then at about four o'clock Uncle Lajos got up and said that we should prepare to go. I collected my binoculars and camera and he fetched his falconers bag, a very well-used army one known as a 'bread bag', which contained a lure made up from quail wings and some freshly killed sparrows for the merlin. On his left fist, standing on a much-used glove was the hooded jack merlin.

We walked along the wheat and sugar beet fields for about half an hour. The sky larks were still singing, but now another voice came 'on stage', that of the cock quail. Naturally we could also hear pheasants and partridges calling, but on this occasion we were not interested in them. When we reached some acacia trees standing on the edge of a large cornfield we settled down on the bank of a small ditch. Our surroundings were very pleasant with the smell of the acacia blossom and fresh grass. Uncle Lajos took the hood off the merlin and with an easy movement threw it up on to his cap. The little bird looked very much at home in this position, and started to preen himself.



About ten minutes later, when the merlin had completed his brush-up, the maestro took a very peculiar instrument from his pocket. It was a whistle made from the leg bone of a goose with a little leather ball at one end of it. This small rugby-shaped ball was lightly stuffed with the wiry hair of the Hungarian curly-haired pig and was elastic, so that when it was pressed it came back into shape. Uncle Lajos took this instrument between his thumb and first



The lure whistle used to imitate the female quail.

finger and with his other hand started to hit it very gently. The sound that it made was just like the call of the female quail.

We sat very quietly listening to the different voices of nature coming from the whispering cornfield which was bowing before the breeze like a gently waving sea. Then in the silence, coming from the distance, we heard a cock quail calling. We describe this call in Hungary as sounding like pity-palatty. When the little jack merlin heard the voice of the quail he began bobbing his head in every direction. He was standing completely free on the maestro's cap. Uncle Lajos again called with his home-made whistle and the answering sound of the cock quail was now a little nearer. He whispered in my ear that the male quail was running towards us looking for the female. The cock quail called again, and again the 'female' was made to answer. Suddenly we could hear two or three separate calls coming from different directions and varying distances. Uncle Lajos silenced the 'female' call in order to further excite the cock quails who were looking for it. Again we heard a call, now quite near, it could not have been more than twenty metres in front of us in the cornfield. The call came nearer, ten metres and then five metres in front of us, but the corn was so thick that we could see nothing of the quail, who equally, luckily, could not see us. At the point when the cock quail had come to within four or five metres of us Uncle Lajos stood up and clapped his hands. The noise startled the quail which took to the wing and flew away over



The maestro luring the cock quail with the whistle which imitated the call of the female.

the corn, at the same second as the quail got up the jack merlin was in the air from his perch on the maestro's cap and in lightning fast flight caught the cock quail no further than fifteen metres from us, going down with it into the corn. It was heroic work finding the tiny merlin in the sea-like corn, but the bells on his legs led us to where he was standing on his kill, which was bigger than he was himself. He had already plucked the head and neck of the quail and was just starting to feed when Uncle Lajos picked him up. The little hunter finished his meal on the fist as we walked slowly homewards.

The sun was already sinking behind the acacia woods in the far distance and there was a chill in the air. We walked in silence, still under the influence of our recent excitement. Everything was still back at the bungalow. The swallows were asleep in their nest with the exception of the adult male which was standing guard on a wire stretched below the roof. Silence reigned, broken only by the call of a little owl standing on the chimney.

The Last Word

BY DR. N. C. FOX.

As a zoologist I had always understood that although birds could be taught to speak, they could not be persuaded to talk sense. The words spoken are not normally relevant to the situation in which they are used. So Gregory Dunn's White-backed Magpie came as a bit of a shock.

Greg Dunn lived on a 20,000 acre sheep station in the Southern Alps of New Zealand where I was working on New Zealand Falcons. The White-backed Magpie is not related to our European Magpie but looks like a rook-sized shrike and has a melodious yodelling call. Greg had found this one soon after it had left the nest.

Its propensity for wandering off and getting up to mischief had caused Gregory to trim its wings. But it was still very active and often strayed two hundred metres or so from home. If one of the sheepdogs started rounding it up it would sing out "Way leggo!" the New Zealand command for calling dogs off. If this failed it would yell "Help!" and dive for cover. On another occasion, when a wild falcon came over after Greg's house pigeons, it screamed "Help! Hawk! Kek kek kek kek!!"

In the autumns I used to go north for ten days or so into this area trapping falcons and flying my research birds at California Quail. I used to stay in a shearers' quarters or whare (pronounced as in 'sorry'), and invite a few friends along. One day I was sitting on a log in the clearing by the whare attending to a tiercel when this dreadful magpie jumped up and started to bother me. With a beak like a small crow, and with a twisted sense of humour, these birds are experts at causing chaos. So as it sidled up to me I made to swipe it away with my spare hand. The magpie backed off just out of range, looked at me sideways and warned - "Tell Gregory!". I replied that I'd tell Gregory as well if he didn't knock it off sharpish!

Although the bird could not construct sentences it had a curious aptitude for saying the right thing at the right time. Words which had presumably been learnt in association with certain situations were applied later to appropriate and entirely new circumstances.

Over Easter 1976 (autumn down under) I organised the first fieldmeet of falconers in New Zealand. Fifteen people attended, some flying 600 miles to do so. As I was the only person with permits for New Zealand Falcons, the falcon and three tiercels present were all my research birds, but three of them were handled by others. Three Australasian Harriers were present; all were flown (one by my wife), but none killed. At 500-700g (18-23ozs) males and 700-1000g (23-34ozs) females, these birds are not to be totally despised for falconry, and scores of 12-20 rabbits in a season have been reached by keen folk.



Quail country, Marlborough, New Zealand.
Lining out the field.

As this was such a historic occasion we decided to have a group photograph. People with hawks were lined up in the back row while those unaccompanied knelt in front. Greg, not to be outdone, nipped off and returned with the magpie clinging drunkenly to his arm. The sun that day was as unpredictable as it is here and we had several delays as various people dashed forward to use their cameras. Greg knelt in the front row with the magpie waiting none too patiently

on his arm. Behind him was a young male harrier on its owner's fist. Suddenly the harrier started to winnow its wings, practically blowing the magpie away. The magpie, unused to such belligerent company, cast a filthy look over Greg's shoulder at the harrier and said two brief emphatic words, unfit for publication: "P--- off!"

That was one photo I didn't need to be told to smile for!

Photograph on next page:- Fieldmeet New Zealand 1976.
Back left to right: Albie Wilson, juvenile male harrier, Colin Wynn, hacked eyas male N.Z. falcon 'Dodger', Nick Fox, hacked eyas male N.Z. falcon 'Dennis', Norman Mackenzie, hacked female N.Z. falcon 'Sally' (small northern bush form) John Powell, hacked intermewed eyas male N.Z. falcon 'Blue', Mrs. Sarah Fox, haggard male harrier 'Nolin', Tony Trollope, eyas female harrier.

Front row: Greg with magpie, Mrs. Shelley Wynn with hunt-away 'Spike', Mrs. Phyllis Harrison with rehab. Little Owl, Mrs. Joan Trollope, cocker spaniel 'Susan', Dean Yule, Andrew Fidler.

Photographs by courtesy of Gavin Woodward and Alan Green.

Breeding Report given at A.G.M. 1981

BY R. HADDON.

The Breeding Scheme report for this year is somewhat similar to the one I gave last year in as much that we have had a number of eggs but no offspring.

We have one pair of Luggers, one pair of Kestrels, a share in a pair of Goshawks and the latest addition a breeding pair of Sparrow hawks.

The Luggers laid two clutches, the first consisted of 3 eggs which were chilled at the scrape due to severe frost at the time. The second clutch of 2 were infertile.

The Kestrels laid two clutches which with a bit of outside help totalled 15 eggs. All the eggs were infertile which was surprising due to the fact that copulation was witnessed on many occasions. This may be due to the youth of the male, we shall see this year whether this is so or not.

The pair of Goshawks get on well all year round and this year built two nests. The male attempted copulation a few times but the female was unreceptive and no eggs were laid.

Over the past month we have been given a breeding pair of Sparrow hawks and they are installed in a new aviary and hopefully will breed again this year which will be their fourth breeding season. Thanks for this pair are due to a member from the North of England who would like to remain anonymous.

That concludes my report.



Report of the 1980 International Meetings of the Czechoslovakian Falconry Association at Diakovce and Opocno

BY STEPHEN BECHTOLD.

President of the Hungarian Falconers Association.

Photographs by Stephen Bechtold
and Gabriel Varga of Slovakia.

By invitation of the Slovensky Club Sokoliaron we travelled on the 24th of September 1980 to Diakovce for the four day meeting. Six nations were represented by the falconers present, Austria, Czechoslovakia (the host country), Poland, Hungary, the German Democratic Republic and the West German Federal Republic. All together sixty eight falconers with their families and friends attended.

The headquarters for the meeting was the hotel of the local Thermal Bath and the wooden log cabins surrounding it. On the grass in front of the hotel, on the usual block and bow perches were the hunting birds. Their numbers were made up of 57 Goshawks, 3 Golden Eagles, 3 Peregrines, 2 Sakers and 3 Kestrels. The falcons came from Austria and the Czechoslovakian breeding places.

The opening of the meeting took place on the following afternoon, with all the falconers standing in a seemingly endless line with their hunting birds on their fists. Then they were divided up into six groups and the buses arrived which would take the different parties to and from the various hawking grounds.

The weather for the meeting was just right, a little cool and sometimes foggy in the mornings, but the sun came out during the day and it was quite warm.

The hunting grounds were full of every kind of game. Hares especially were plentiful and there were also pheasants and partridges. The hares, with a few exceptions, were not large specimens, so they were excellent for the Goshawks.

The list of quarry taken during the four day meeting was:-

77 Hares.	53 Pheasants.
7 Rabbits.	4 Partridges.
1 Polecat.	2 Pigeons.
1 Water Rat.	1 Other.
1 Hamster.	
4 Others.	<u>60.</u>

91.

A total of 151 head.

Following shortly after the meeting at Diakovce at the in-



The hotel at the Diakovce meeting.



Part of the long row of falconers at the morning line-up.

visitation of the Slovakian Hawking Club, we travelled on the 15th of October to Opcno for another four day international meeting.

The town is a very old and historical one and the falconers were comfortably lodged in two castles. Here also six nations were represented, and a total of eighty eight falconers attended joined also by the non-falconer guests.

The hunting birds were:- 67 Goshawks, 5 Sparrow Hawks, 6 Golden Eagles, 5 Peregrines, 1 Lanner falcon, 3 Luger falcons, 1 Gyrfalcon and 2 Kestrels. All the hunting birds were kept in the beautiful parks of the two castles. Three members of the Hungarian Falconry Association took part with three female Goshawks.

On the morning of October 16th the falconers lined up in the courtyard of the beautiful castle built during the Renaissance. Here too they were divided up into six groups, but before leaving for the hawking grounds they were greeted by W. Svoboda, the President of the Czech Falconry Association. (In Czechoslovakia there are two falconry clubs. The first is the Slovakian Club, whose President is Ivan Marosi, and the other is the Czech Club, of which W. Svoboda is the President.) After the opening the buses again arrived to transport the falconers to the hawking grounds.

I have to mention with some pride that on the first day the three Hungarian falconers, Janos Bagyura, Endre Salamon and Emerich Stift took 11 head of quarry, 4 Hares, 6 Rabbits and 1 Pheasant.

The whole of the meeting took place in the most beautiful sunshine, and this, with the countryside in its lovely Autumn colours, added to the occasion and also the performance of the hunting birds.

On the 18th of October there was a flying display given for the people of the town of Opcno, with talks given by some of the falconers for the sake of wild birds of prey.

The list of quarry taken at the Opcno during the four days:

112 Hares.	37 Pheasants.
8 Rabbits.	1 Sparrow.
1 Water Rat.	1 Other

121.

39.

A total of 160 head.

A Resume Of The Meetings.

The organisation of both meetings was excellent. The weather, apart from one or two windy days, was very good. The hunting birds were well-manned and worked superbly, especially the Goshawks and the Golden Eagles. Taking part in the meetings was exciting and useful, we have strengthened our contacts and broadened our knowledge. Last, but certainly not least a mention of our hosts. The welcome was extremely kind and hospitable. Our accommodation and the service given to us were excellent and was warmly conducted.



On the way to the hawking grounds by bus.



A short rest in a stubble field.

The districts and the hawking grounds were well selected. The lovely countryside, with its small hills and plains, the old towns ornamented by their ancient buildings, and the historical castles, with their pillared courtyards, their centuries-old trees in Autumn colouring, the velvet lawns and grassy parks, all were a suitable background for our beloved sport. Falconers thanks to our hosts for this, as well as for the unforgettable days. Also, thank you to the falconers, the hunting birds and the well-trained dogs, and finally thanks to everyone who is working to keep up for a long, long time our noble and beautiful field sport - falconry.



A good-looking German falconer
with his equally handsome peregrine.



ALL MY LIFE WITH HUNTING BIRDS

LORANT DE BASTAI

All My Life with Hunting Birds is a fascinating mixture of autobiography and expert training manual by someone who has literally devoted his life to Hunting Birds.

Lorant de Bastai's interest was first aroused by the visit of Indian falconers to his native Hungary when he was a boy. Since coming to England he has made an outstanding contribution to the public awareness and understanding of birds of prey.

All My Life with Hunting Birds contains chapters on the history of hawking in Britain and Hungary; on longwing, shortwing and broadwing hawks, their introduction, training care and health. There is a particularly interesting chapter on birds of prey and the balance of nature and a fine selection of hawking stories. Throughout, the reader will find a wealth of hints and anecdotes, and an unequalled breadth of knowledge about every facet of hawking.

The book is illustrated with a fine selection of black and white half-tone and line drawings, many showing the birds which the author has owned and flown over the years.

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Enquiries for the book, priced at £11.50, should be addressed to: Neville Spearman Ltd. The Priory Gate, Friars Street, Sudbury, Suffolk.