

BRIAN SKEFFINGTON

A Lifetime Dedicated to the Gloster Fancy

Brian Skeffington's lifelong passion for animals began at an early age. From just twelve years old, he spent weekends and school holidays helping his uncle on the family dairy farm, while also sharing his father's enthusiasm for racing pigeons. These early experiences laid the foundations for what would become a lifetime devoted to livestock and the exhibition of birds.

After marrying in 1978, Brian's priorities naturally shifted towards building a home and raising a family. However, fate had other plans. In 1983, while living in a new neighbourhood, he frequently heard the distinctive song of canaries coming from a nearby garden shed. Curiosity led him to knock on the door, where he met Mike Palmer, a dedicated Gloster breeder with just eight pairs of birds. That chance meeting marked the beginning of a friendship that continues to this day—and the start of Brian's remarkable journey with the Gloster Canary.

Inspired by what he had seen, Brian built a small birdroom in his own garden and was generously gifted four pairs of Glosters by Mike Palmer. Determined to learn as much as possible, he began visiting local cage bird shows and the National Cage Bird Show in Birmingham, studying the breed and developing an appreciation for the quality and type required to succeed in exhibition.

His progress accelerated after attending the GFCC All Gloster Show, where he met several respected breeders, including Bill Morse, who supplied him with



“The Gloster fancy has never been just about breeding or exhibiting birds—it has been about the friendships, shared experiences, and lifelong enjoyment that this remarkable little canary has brought to so many enthusiasts across the world.”

quality stock that helped him establish a stronger breeding programme.

Brian joined his local Cage Bird Society in 1987 and exhibited for the first time the following year. To his surprise and delight, he won Best Novice with a Buff Consort Hen. From that point onwards, he became a regular exhibitor at local shows and specialist All Gloster

events across the country, steadily improving his stud and collecting numerous awards along the way.

His involvement with the Gloster fancy soon extended beyond the show bench. Through his friendship with Dave White, then Secretary of the GFCC, Brian volunteered to assist with the administration of the All Gloster Show. Working behind the scenes

gave him valuable insight into organising specialist exhibitions and helped build the confidence that eventually led him to accept judging appointments.

One particularly memorable breeding season came during a house move. The timing could not have been worse, with nests due to hatch just as the family relocated. The breeding cages, complete with nesting hens and eggs, were carefully transported in the back of a removal lorry to their new home. Remarkably, not a single nest was lost, and the season went on to become Brian's most successful ever.

In 1991, during his final year as a novice exhibitor, Brian achieved one of the highlights of his exhibiting career by winning Best Bird in Show at the now sadly defunct Devon All Gloster Show with a Blue Consort Cock. The bird was judged by Dave Cottrill and Arthur Young, making the achievement even more memorable.

Brian's first appointment as a specialist Gloster judge came at the South Wales & Bristol All Gloster Show, where he judged alongside the experienced Andrew Jones. Although understandably nervous, the experience proved both enjoyable and invaluable, marking the beginning of a judging career that has since taken him throughout the United Kingdom and overseas.

He was also one of the founding members of the Swindon All Gloster Canary Show, a specialist exhibition that, although no longer running, made a valuable contribution ➤

From Convention to Council

AGM 2026 - THE EVOLUTION OF THE 3D MODEL

For more than half a century, the Gloster Fancy has understood the importance of having more than words on a page to describe the ideal Gloster. Sometimes, to truly appreciate type, balance, proportion and character, fanciers and judges need something they can see, study and discuss together.

Since the birth of the "Gloster Convention", two physical Gloster models have played an important part in that process.

The first is believed to have been produced in the "early 1970s", although the identity of the artist remains unknown. A second model followed in the "early 1980s". Both have been conserved with remarkable care over the decades, preserving an important part of the history of our Fancy.

Even more significantly, the moulds used to produce the later Convention model were also preserved and are today in the possession of the "Gloster Fancy Canary Council International – GFCCI".

These models were never intended to replace the written Standard of Excellence. Their purpose was educational: to provide fanciers and judges with a physical reference around which the finer points of the Gloster Canary could be studied, compared and debated.



A glimpse of what's to come...
The new 1:1 scale GFCCI 3D Gloster Model will be officially unveiled at the AGM in Peterborough on 13 September 2026.

And now, that tradition is about to enter a new era.

At the "GFCCI Annual General Meeting in Peterborough on Sunday, 13 September 2026", the Council will officially unveil a completely new "three-dimensional Gloster model".

Produced at "1:1 scale", the new model has been created as a modern reference and educational tool that can be used by today's fanciers and, importantly, preserved for the generations that will follow.

Let us be very clear: "this does not change or replace the official Gloster Standard of Excellence." The Standard remains the Standard.

The 3D model is a visual interpretation — a tool designed to encourage discussion, education and a greater understanding of the characteristics that together create the ideal Gloster.

Its unveiling will undoubtedly be one of the highlights of the 2026

AGM and represents another link between the heritage inherited from the Gloster Convention and the responsibility now carried forward by the GFCCI.

"From Convention to Council, the objective remains the same: to preserve, understand and promote the Gloster Canary for future generations."

Following its official presentation at the AGM, the new 3D model will be made available to fanciers who wish to own a piece, representing what we believe will become "one of the important milestones in the continuing history of the Gloster Fancy".

For now, however, only a glimpse...

"The full model will be revealed in Peterborough on 13 September."



- Keeping • Breeding •
- Showing & Loving •

**Pedigree Livestock
since 1987**

this is our way of life

www.glenariff livestock.com

◀ to the Gloster community during its years of operation.

Over the years, Brian has been honoured with invitations to judge specialist Gloster shows throughout the UK, as well as international appointments in Malta, Italy, Belgium, and Ireland. Alongside judging, he has continued to enjoy success as an exhibitor, winning numerous major awards, including several Best in Show titles at specialist Gloster events.

Balancing family life and work commitments has never been easy, but Brian has always remained committed to supporting the hobby whenever possible. Looking back, he regards the friendships, opportunities, and experiences that the Gloster Canary has given him as far more valuable than the trophies themselves.

A long-standing member of the Gloster Fancy Canary Council International (GFCCI), Brian continues to support the Council and greatly appreciates the passion, dedication, and countless hours contributed by its members to preserve and promote the Gloster Canary around the world.

**For Enquiries regarding the New 3D Gloster model
Contact Mario Zahra at: mariozahra@gmail.com**

Visit 

www.gfcci.com


NEWS


ARTICLES




EVENTS


GLOBAL COMMUNITY

Your Global Home for the Gloster Canary