

RICHARD LAMBERT

A True Lover of the Gloster Canary



Every fancier has a story about how their interest in birds began, and for Richard Lambert it started in the simplest of ways – with a pair of Diamond Doves bought for him by his grandfather. The birds bred well, and the young Richard sold the youngsters and used the money to buy his first pair of canaries. What started as a childhood curiosity quickly developed into a lifelong passion for the fancy.

Around this time Richard met Neil Burton, who is part of the successful Burton and Reay partnership. As Richard recalls, Neil would often arrive on the back of his father's motorbike during Saturday visits to Richard's grandfather, where discussions about Old English Game birds were common. Those early experiences helped shape Richard's growing interest in bird breeding.

Richard's introduction to the Gloster Canary came about almost by accident. As a youngster, he, his father and grandfather owned a pair of canaries but were unaware that there were different breeds, much like different breeds of dogs. Keen to take part in the fancy, Richard exhibited the cock and hen in Border show cages at what was then the largest Border Canary show in Yorkshire, held at Pontefract Town Hall.

However, the experience did not go quite as expected. When Richard returned to collect his birds, he discovered people laughing at them. The reason soon became clear – the birds were not Border Canaries at all, but Gloster Canaries. What might have been an embarrassing moment instead became a turning point. The incident sparked Richard's interest in the breed, and he decided there and then to keep and breed Glosters.

Richard began breeding Glosters seriously in 1979 and has kept them ever since. That same year he joined the IGBA and soon became deeply involved in club activities. He was a founder member of the Yorkshire Gloster Canary Club, initially serving as General Secretary and later as Show Manager. The club enjoyed strong support in its early years, with 93 fully paid members and shows regularly attracting more than 600 exhibits. Among those involved in the early days were Peter and Sue Roome, Malcolm Lowe, Neil Burton, Margaret and Derek Moore, Nick and Annalain Barrett, as well as Marriot and Rayson.

Over the years Richard has both judged and exhibited at many major events, including most of the British All Gloster shows. He officiated at the

IGBA shows in 1996 and again in 2007. His judging experience has also taken him further afield, including appointments in Spain, Portugal, Holland, Ireland and Canada.

Like many fanciers, Richard has always enjoyed meeting fellow breeders while travelling. During a visit to Guernsey he met Edward Jenner, and the following year, while on holiday in Malta, he met Victor Spiteri, who worked for the Maltese CID. Victor and his family made Richard feel extremely welcome and, before Richard left the island, he was asked if he could help source some Fife Fancy canaries for Victor's cousin. At the time the breed was still scarce in Malta, and Richard managed to arrange transport through a pilot at Leeds/Bradford Airport who flew the birds to Malta in the cockpit – something that would certainly be impossible today.

Today Richard normally breeds around 30 pairs each season, aiming to rear approximately 100 youngsters. He keeps most colour varieties and, as a judge, always looks for balance in a Gloster. In his view, truly outstanding exhibits often "pick themselves," while the most difficult classes to judge are those filled with average birds where small differences become important.

Throughout his years in the hobby, Richard has maintained a simple philosophy: **to put more into the fancy than he takes out of it.** He has never sought fame or fortune, instead enjoying the camaraderie and enjoyment that the hobby brings. As the Irish say, he is "in it for the crack."

While he is saddened by the current divisions within the fancy, he remains hopeful that a better way forward can be found for the benefit of Gloster enthusiasts everywhere.



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Support the Future of the Gloster Fancy

The Gloster Fancy Canary Council International (GFCCI) has always operated with a clear and simple principle — that education, guidance, and knowledge about the Gloster Fancy should be FREE and available to everyone who shares a passion for this wonderful breed. For this reason, the GFCCI does not operate through membership fees or subscriptions, ensuring that all fanciers can benefit from the Council's work without financial barriers.

Following the changes in rules and direction adopted at the Extraordinary General Meeting in February 2026, the GFCCI no longer manages the affiliation of clubs. The Council's focus is now firmly directed toward its primary mission: regulating, protecting, and guiding the Gloster Fancy through the work of its Councillors and the invaluable experience of reliable and established breeders.

The GFCCI operates entirely through voluntary dedication and commitment. However, while the work is voluntary, the Council still faces certain essential expenses. The main costs involve hosting the Annual General Meeting each year and maintaining and developing the newly launched GFCCI website, which serves as a central hub of information and guidance for Gloster fanciers worldwide.



To help support these activities, the GFCCI has introduced a donation button on GFCCI.com. This initiative provides an opportunity for fanciers who appreciate the Council's work to contribute toward maintaining and growing this important resource for the Gloster community.

As an added incentive for those who wish to support the project with a small donation, contributors will have the option of having their names and donation amounts listed in upcoming issues of the GFCCI Newsletter. Those who prefer to remain anonymous may simply indicate this in the comment box on the payment page, and their wishes will of course be respected.

There is no fixed amount for donations — every contribution, no matter how small, helps support the continued work of the Council. Every bit truly counts and contributes toward preserving the

standards, history, and future development of the Gloster Fancy.

To make the process even easier, the GFCCI has also introduced a QR code that can be scanned directly from a mobile phone, offering quick access to the donation page and a variety of convenient payment methods. Both the donation button and the QR code are featured on the main page of the GFCCI website, making it simple for anyone wishing to contribute.

We warmly encourage all bird fanciers and Gloster enthusiasts to visit gfcci.com regularly, follow the updates that are continuously being added, and support the work that is being done for the benefit of the Gloster Fancy worldwide.

Together, we can help ensure that the tradition, quality, and education surrounding the Gloster Fancy continue to thrive for generations to come.

Share Your Gloster Knowledge

The success of any club or organisation dedicated to the Gloster Fancy depends greatly on the willingness of its members to share knowledge and experience. Within our community there are many breeders and exhibitors who have developed valuable insights over the years—whether in breeding, feeding, conditioning, or preparing birds for the show bench.

The Gloster Fancy Canary Council International (GFCCI) would like to encourage its Councillors and readers to

contribute short educational articles related to the standard, Judging, keeping, breeding, and exhibiting of Glosters. These contributions can be based on personal experience, practical advice, or observations that may help fellow readers improve their birds and enjoy the hobby even more.

Articles do not need to be lengthy or overly technical. Even a short piece describing a method that has worked well in your own birdroom can be of great interest and benefit to others.

Selected contributions will be published in the GFCCI Newsletter, and we are also pleased to announce that they will be featured on a new "Features Page" on the website gfcci.com, where they will be available for a wider audience of Gloster enthusiasts around the world.

If you are interested in sharing your knowledge or experience, we warmly invite you to get in touch. By contributing, you help strengthen our community and the continued development of the Gloster Fancy.

We look forward to hearing from you and reading about the ideas, methods, and experiences that make your birdroom unique.

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