

24/2/2022

Lloyd Marshall - Talking Birds  
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Hi Lloyd

Thank you for your interest in the 2022 Sydney Royal Easter Show aviary bird competition and display. The event runs from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at the Sydney Showground at Olympic Park. The aviary bird competition is held over 2 days, this year on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> April 2022. A number of volunteers organise and staff a significant avicultural display that runs for the duration of the show. The display features aviaries, hand-raised birds and various banners and brochures promoting aviculture to the hundreds of thousands of people who pass through the event annually.

As you well know Lloyd, I have been personally involved in the finch competition and the various displays for a number of years now. I recall meeting with you at the event in 2017 - some images attached which you may like to include alongside this letter within Talking Birds.

In terms of CCBFA involvement – we do not run or oversee the event in any official capacity, it is managed and operated by the competition staff of the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW (RAS) with whom CCBFA have had a close working relationship for numerous years. Underneath the RAS staff are representatives for each of the five major bird groups exhibited, namely budgerigars, parrots, canaries, love birds and finches. CCBFA routinely includes the RAS competition on our agendas as most of the representatives attend our CCBFA meetings as do many of the judges. However, this is largely informative – decisions are made by the RAS staff in collaboration with the representatives of each of the five bird groups.

Although CCBFA do not directly manage the event, CCBFA member clubs and qualified judges from our clubs have been central to the running of the competition aspects of the event for as long as anybody can recall – in the order of 100 years. The competition, although certainly run competitively, is not viewed as a serious competition by the majority of exhibitors. Rather it is a fabulous chance to positively showcase aviculture to thousands of members of the general public. By this measure it is certainly a major successful marketing event, all thanks to the efforts of many many volunteers.

Display aviaries have come and gone over the years. The recent aviaries have been a feature I've personally encouraged and assisted with over the past 6-7 years. It is the committee of The Finch Society of Australia Inc. (FSA) whilst I was President that first suggested the inclusion of one or more display aviaries. In 2017 (coincidentally the year you attended Lloyd) the FSA invited the Avicultural Society of NSW (ASNSW) to join us in showcasing aviculture at the event. Many of us were on the committee of both the FSA and ASNSW, the ASNSW was struggling for members somewhat at the time and furthermore Graeme Phipps (who was ASNSW President at the time) was able to organise some of his TAFE students to assist, this added some much-appreciated young faces to our volunteer

ranks. The FSA has organised and led the aviary display since with the assistance of the ASNSW. We have always had joint volunteers, banners and various brochures. In fact, a new banner is currently being designed with the approval of both the FSA members and ASNSW members.

Sadly, the current President of the Avicultural Society of NSW (ASNSW), Con Tsintarakis, appears to be unwilling to work with the FSA or his own members or even his own committee. I am advised that Con has organised sponsorship from Trill, the ABA and the ASNSW. To date neither the ASNSW committee nor the ASNSW membership has approved any donation to the RAS. There is no official notification in any communication from the RAS to exhibitors. Despite this I am personally aware that such a donation was arranged by Con without RAS knowledge or consent and outside their processes and system. Having worked closely with the RAS staff over many years I am aware Con's intrusion has not been appreciated and has caused some frustration.

The Avicultural Society of NSW (ASNSW) remains a CCBFA affiliated and insured club as has been the case for many years. This insurance, as is the case for all our member clubs, provides public liability coverage for all meetings and events including their Hawkesbury Showground sale held last year. Recently CCBFA has been informed of a number of outrageous claims allegedly made by Associated Birdkeepers of Australia (ABA) representatives including Con Tsintarakis and ABA President Craig Jeffrey regarding public liability insurance. One such outrageous claim was made as recently as our last CCBFA February 2022 meeting by Craig Jeffrey. Readers may like to examine the minutes of this meeting. All minutes of all CCBFA meetings are available publicly within our magazine Feathered World and under the Journals tab on our website [www.ccbfa.org.au](http://www.ccbfa.org.au).

The Associated Birdkeepers of Australia (ABA) has never, to my knowledge, had a role in the showing side of aviculture. If, as we suspect, the ABA are donating to the RAS competition it is unclear why their funds would be allocated in this manner. As with expenditure by any club or association, this is a matter for their membership to decide. Do any ABA member clubs know? The FSA certainly has not been asked or informed and quite a number of their paid life members were certainly not consulted. Does the ABA release minutes publicly? When was their latest magazine, ironically titled "The Communicator", last released?

To my knowledge (and I was ASNSW Vice President until recently) there are few, if any, members of the ASNSW who show birds seriously. Those few ASNSW members who enter the RAS competition are also members of other clubs that have a stronger showing focus, or they are like me, entering birds to enhance the display with any awards being more luck than good management.

The total number of entries in this year's RAS competition is in the low 500s, which is pretty much the same as it has been in recent memory. In any case, the maximum number of birds that can be exhibited in 2022 is set at 600 as stated in RAS documentation.

Various proposals to sponsor a range of events, including the RAS competition, have been put to CCBFA delegates at meetings a number of times since I have been President. I understand similar motions have been put numerous times in the past. Recent motions have not been passed as the feeling of the CCBFA delegates has been that it is unwise for CCBFA, as a national body, to sponsor individual events. CCBFA is of the view this would set a precedent requiring similar sponsorship for potentially hundreds of events run by clubs and representative bodies across the country.

The Associated Birdkeepers of Australia (ABA) has in recent years been inactive with regard to most issues and a net negative on the few matters to which they have contributed. For example, the ABA supported the push by PRIAM for a National Registration Scheme for Native and Exotic Live Birds and recently refused to oppose the proposal alongside all other avicultural bodies nationally. Then there is the ABA's recently released "Endorsed National Code Of Practice For The Conduct Of Bird Sales And Auctions", this code is unknown to all bird clubs and representative bodies I have contacted in all states of Australia. They claim this code also applies to poultry and pigeons – again not one club or representative body I've contacted is aware of this code. Indeed, as I stated at our February 2022 CCBFA meeting "most have been shocked and appalled and others have stated the ABA is irrelevant and should be ignored". These are just two matters – there are many other issues where the ABA has either deliberately or simply through ignorance worked against the best interests of aviculture.

CCBFA has tried to collaborate with the ABA on numerous occasions. I personally attended one of their meetings a number of years ago where agreement was reached for executive of both ABA and CCBFA to meet and discuss resolution. Craig Jeffrey as ABA President, and as has so often been the case, ceased communicating. The ABA simply did not reply to our numerous emails and phone calls attempting to schedule the meeting. Such complete lack of communication and inability to act responsibly, professionally, and openly has been the hallmark of the ABA over the past decade.

I and many other representatives nationally have to date chosen to simply ignore the ABA. I can no longer do so. The ABA is actively harmful to aviculture nationally. Lately a significant proportion of my time has been wasted on countering the ABA's negative activities.

The time has come for the Associated Birdkeepers of Australia (ABA) to be shutdown.

I personally 100% support Ron Robertson on this matter and on all matters of which I am aware. As hundreds of clubs nationally will attest, Ron's work for aviculture over numerous decades is beyond reproach.

Kinds Regards

Sam

Sam Davis

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