

## A look back in time at a piece of NFC History Reg Boyen – Ilfracombe's Joy

Well, we had an interesting enquiry come in via the NFC website recently, as follows:- "I am getting in contact from Ilfracombe Museum, we are about to put on an exhibition called 'Animals in Ilfracombe' we know that an Ilfracombe man called Reg Boyen won the NFC in 1944 with his pigeon 'Joy' we have some photos and some of his trophies but I was just wondering if there was any more information you could tell us about the event that year or if you'd like some copies of the photos we have for your archives?"

Well, this piqued our interest and after confirming from our online records that R.F. Boyen had indeed won the War Time race from Penzance (the only race that year), further discussions and investigations began.



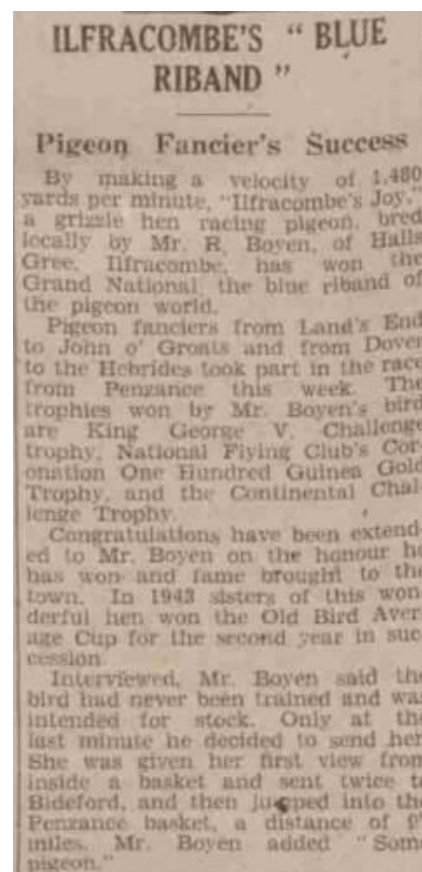
*The display at Ilfracombe Museum, which will remain for the remainder of 2025*

See below the relevant extract from the NFC's Roll of Honour

Year	Type	Race Point	Entries	Winner name	Town	County	Section	Miles	Yards	Velocity
1951	YB	Guernsey	2,314	R. Atkinson	Yiewsley	Greater London	E			1422
1950	YB	Guernsey	2,496	A. Howland	Folkestone	Kent	A			1100
1950	OB	Pau	1,552	Moore & Wooton	Kidsgrove	Staffordshire	J			1108
1950	OB	Nantes	2,736	C.H. Wells	Ramsgate	Kent	E			1040
1949	OB	Brussels	2,793	W.F. Pegg	Cleethorpes	Lincolnshire	K			1022
1949	OB	Luxembourg	1,689	F.H. Jarvis	Harpenden	Hertfordshire	E			1287
1949	YB	Guernsey	1,596	G.E. Lovell	Weymouth	Dorset	C			1568
1948	OB	Guernsey	3,339	H. Harris	Reading	Berkshire	F			1647
1948	YB	Guernsey	1,586	S.A. Hawker	Birmingham	West Midlands	J			972
1948	OB	Guernsey	2,304	Feam & Son	Wirksworth	Derbyshire	I			1215
1947	OB	Nantes	3,968	F.L. Brown	Wye	Kent	A			1171
1947	YB	Guernsey	2,395	Bryant & Son	Plymouth	Devon	D			1048
1947	OB	Bordeaux	2,488	G.E. Jarvis	Eastry	Kent	E			935
1946	OB	Bordeaux	2,380	L. Gilbert	Forest Hill	Oxfordshire	F			840
1944	OB	Penzance	3,848	R.F. Boyen	Ilfracombe	Devon	D			1480



Lindsay, from the Museum, shared photos of Reg and the winning pigeon, named as "Ilfracombe's Joy", a 2yo Grizzle of then Vandy strain, and I was also able to find press cuttings from August 1944, confirming Reg's great win. Paraphrasing the report, published in both the North Devon Herald and the Western Morning News, the report states that "Reg Boyen has won the Grand National, the blue riband of the pigeon world"



Also, worth asking here and now, although these events occurred so many years ago, does any recall Reg in his heyday when living in Halls Green, Ilfracombe ... was he perhaps a family member, relative, friend, etc? If so, why not share information about him and or this pigeon which the Museum could perhaps add into the exhibition?

I'll try and find out more information about when the exhibition will take place at the Museum, and it would be great for Fanciers to look in on it.

Finally, this is of course a one-off story, but I'm sure there are so many others just waiting to be told? So, if you have any old pictures of winning Fanciers and Pigeons, from within your Family and/or Friends, plus accompanying stories and anecdotes, please share them with the NFC, and we will try and research and report them as best we can.

Paul  
The NFC Team