

From Convention to Council

WE ARE ONLY THE CUSTODIANS OF THE GLOSTER BREED

Gloster Convention to become an annual event

The Gloster Fancy made a great step forward on April 28 when a convention of Gloster Specialist Societies took place in Oxford, writes G. R. Wolfendale. Seven clubs were represented by two delegates each. Delegates from the International Gloster BA, Midland GFA, Western GFCC, Gloster FCC, Southern GFCC, South Midland & Eastern Counties GCA and East Anglian GFCC. R. Hopkins was elected as chair. A number of motions were put forward and discussed at length. Those which were carried are now being taken back to individual societies by delegates for further discussion. Key-note of the convention was one of co-operation. It was agreed that the convention will become an annual event. The next will be in Oxford on April 27, 1969.

The Birth of the Gloster Convention

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Delegates from seven specialist societies in Oxford for the Gloster Convention

By Clair Osborne

GFCCI General Secretary

The spirit of cooperation within the Gloster Fancy has deep historical roots. One of the most significant milestones in that history took place on **April 28, 1968**, when representatives from several specialist Gloster societies gathered in Oxford for what would become the first **Gloster Convention**.

Reporting in the May 1968 issue of *Cage & Aviary Birds*, writer G. R. Wolfendale described the meeting as a major step forward for the fancy. Seven clubs were represented, each sending two delegates to participate in discussions about the future direction of the breed. Among the societies represented were the International Gloster BA, Midland GFA, Western GFCC, Gloster FCC, Southern GFCC, South Midland & Eastern Counties GCA, and East Anglian GFCC.

During the meeting, R. Flopkins was elected chairman and a number of motions were presented and discussed in detail. Those adopted were to be taken back to the respective societies for further consideration. The defining theme of the gathering was cooperation, and it was unanimously agreed that the Convention would become an annual event with the next meeting scheduled to take place in Oxford on April 27, 1969.

From that moment on, the Gloster Convention became an important annual forum for discussion and collaboration among specialist clubs. For more than four decades, it provided a platform where ideas could be exchanged, issues debated, and the development of the Gloster Fancy guided through collective experience and shared enthusiasm.

The photograph accompanying the original report captures many of the respected figures involved in those early years of cooperation. Among those pictured are Nick Barrett, Lou Manchester, Ron Hopkins, Jeff Heart, Jack Stretton, Roy Gregory, Gordon Adamson, Cliff Harris, Brian Moon, Morice Powell, Ray Yeowell, Nev Thomas, John Thornton, Charlie Flood, Ron Morby, Harold Prater, and Jeff Crunkhorn, along with another participant whose name is unfortunately uncertain.

In that historic image, two figures remain closely connected to the Gloster Fancy today. On the far left stands our current Chairman, Nick Barrett, while second from the right is Jeff Crunkhorn, who continues to contribute his knowledge and experience as a valued member of today's Council. Their presence in that photograph provides a remarkable link between the cooperative efforts of the past and the leadership guiding the breed today.

Despite its long and important history, the Gloster Convention sadly came to an end in April 2009. On that occasion no members attended the Annual General Meeting, leaving the late Mr. Fred Osborne and his wife waiting alone in an empty hall. It was a deeply disappointing moment for the fancy and marked the final chapter in the life of the Convention.

Yet from that difficult moment emerged a renewed determination to preserve the spirit of cooperation that had defined the Convention since its beginning. Later in 2009, a group of dedicated representatives, led by Nick Barrett, came together to establish what has evolved into today's Gloster Fancy Canary Council International (GFCCI).

The creation of the Council ensured that the Gloster Fancy would continue to benefit from organised collaboration and leadership. In recent years the Council itself has continued to evolve, most notably through the Extraordinary General Meeting held in Leicester. The commitment and vision of the twenty-two members present at that meeting helped strengthen the structure of the Council and ensured that the organisation could move forward with renewed stability and purpose.

Thanks to those efforts, the Gloster Fancy has avoided a repeat of the circumstances that ➤



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A Landmark EGM with the GFCC going Global



By Mario Zahra

GFCCI Int. Secretary

The recent Extraordinary General Meeting of the Gloster Fancy Canary Council, held in Leicestershire, on the 15th February will undoubtedly be remembered as one of the most significant gatherings in the organisation's history.

What many anticipated to be a heated and potentially divisive debate instead developed into a calm, respectful and highly collaborative meeting. Delegates approached discussions with a shared vision for the future of the Gloster Fancy Canary, resulting in a series of progressive decisions that may well become a cornerstone moment for the breed worldwide.

A strong attendance of 21 members was recorded, including several new faces whose thoughtful contributions added fresh perspective and constructive dialogue throughout the day. The overall atmosphere reflected unity and forward thinking, with all present focused on strengthening the Council's role both within the United Kingdom and internationally.

From GFCC UK to GFCCI

One of the most historic decisions of the meeting was the unanimous approval to change the organisation's name from GFCC UK to GFCCI — Gloster Fancy Canary Council International. The change formally recognises what has already been developing in recent years: the Gloster Fancy Canary is no longer governed solely from a national perspective but has evolved into a truly global community.

← brought about the demise of the Gloster Convention in 2009. Instead, the Council continues to build upon the principles that first inspired the Convention in 1968 — cooperation, dialogue, and shared responsibility for the future of the breed.

Today, through the work of the GFCCI, the Gloster Fancy continues to benefit from the dedication of breeders, judges, and enthusiasts who remain committed to safeguarding the heritage and ongoing development of one of the most beloved breeds in the canary world.

Alongside the name change, an updated logo was approved to reflect the Council's new international identity.

Constitutional Changes Open the Door to the World

Equally important were the approved updates to the Council's Constitution and Rules, designed to encourage wider international participation and representation.

These changes were based and build upon the successful appointment of Michel Abou Khalil who was appointed as Ambassador representing the Middle East and North African regions.

His appointment demonstrated the benefits of structured international engagement and paved the way for broader reform.

Under the newly adopted structure:

- Every country hosting a GFCCI one or more recognised Specialist Gloster Shows may now nominate one councillor to represent that nation.
- International participation within Council decision-making is formally embedded into the organisation's governance.

This reform marks a major step toward global inclusivity and ensures that breeders and specialist clubs worldwide now have a direct voice at Council level through their representative.

Possibility of Hosting the AGM Abroad

Another progressive motion approved at the EGM allows any country represented on the Council to apply to host the Annual General Meeting.

While specific organisational criteria will need to be met to ensure accessibility and proper international coordination, the decision signals a clear intention: the Gloster Fancy Canary Council now belongs to the worldwide fancy.

A New Digital Platform

Members also approved the development of a new official website that will clearly explain how

the GFCCI operates as an international governing body and how it supports Gloster activities across different countries. The Council is currently seeking sponsors to support the hosting and continued development of the website, which is expected to launch in the coming weeks.

The Council also extended its sincere appreciation to newly elected Vice Chairman Steve Chennells for his generous personal donation of €100 presented following the EGM, a gesture warmly received by all.

Structure of the New Council

Following the approved constitutional reforms, the Council composition has been defined as follows:

- Every Gloster Club within the UK may appoint one councillor.
- Each country hosting one or more Specialist Gloster Shows may appoint one national councillor.
- Members present at the EGM table, including senior members, form part of the Council.
- The positions of Chairman and General Secretary will remain held by British nationals.

The Newly Approved GFCCI Council The newly formed Council, unanimously approved at the meeting, now consists of 33 councillors representing both the United Kingdom and the international Gloster community.

Executive Officers

Chairman - Nick Barrett (UK)
Vice Chairman - Steve Chennells
General Secretary - Clair Osborne
International Secretary - Mario Zahra (Malta)

United Kingdom Councillors

- Keith Baker - Kent Gloster
- Paul Reay - Northern GFCC
- Richard Lambert - Yorkshire GCC
- Dave Rands - Humberside GC
- Mark Goodwin - East Anglian GC
- Dave Thomas - S. Wales & Bristol
- John Herring - GFSS
- ~~Steve Webb~~ - IGBA (Resigned)
- John Cronin - West Midlands GC
- Brian Skeffington

- Alan Hayward
- Craig Biddle
- Dave Hobart
- Neil Burton
- Trevor Goddard
- Jeff Crunkhorn
- MLacolm Lowe
- Maria Osborne

International Councillors

- Fabrizio Ioppolo — Italy
- Andrea Sghedoni — Italy
- Michel Abou Khalil — Lebanon
- Joel Cordeiro — Portugal
- Bruno Chetta — France
- Yassine Dridi — Tunisia
- Hatim Souadka — Morocco
- Javier Morilla — Spain
- Luis Zanchetti — Brazil
- Mateusz Terczyński — Poland
- Hamid Abdollahi — Iran

A Defining Moment for the Breed

The Leicestershire EGM demonstrated that cooperation, respect and shared ambition remain the driving forces behind the Gloster Fancy community. Rather than division, the meeting produced unity, modernisation and international expansion.

With its extensive years of history, revised constitution and globally representative Council, the GFCCI now enters a new chapter — one that reflects the worldwide passion for the Gloster Fancy Canary and secures a stronger, more inclusive future for generations of breeders to come.

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