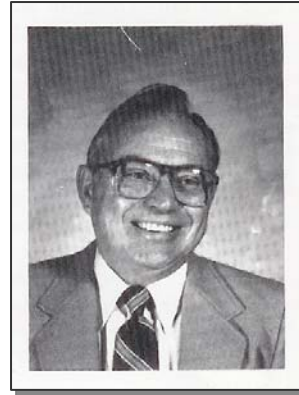


OLD VARIETY CANARY ASSOCIATION

Notable Facts and Founding Member Biography

The Old Variety Canary Association (OVCA) in the United States began in the mid-1970s. The association's first meeting was held in the back yard of the Chicago home of one of its founders, William Reichert. Mr. Reichert, along with cofounder Mr. Harold Sodamann, worked to successfully establish a canary association similar to the Old Variety Canary club in the UK. Mr. Sodamann, the first paying member of the Association continues to support the OVCA's vision and purpose. The oldest and longest good-standing member of the National Cage Bird Show, Mr. Sodamann has made many contributions to the practice of aviculture and has received much recognition for his numerous achievements.

The history of the OVCA cannot be discussed without notable references to Harold Sodamann, a bird breeder of 76 years. In 1932, at the age of 10, Harold raised his first nest of baby canaries. Over the years, Harold has raised numerous canaries of every variety. Remarkably, in 1973 he raised 438 birds in one season. In 1958 he received his judge's license for both color and type under the supervision of Judges Kanouse, Halter and Brooking. A founder of the International Gloster Breeders Association, along with cofounder Mark Whitaker, Harold supported the establishment of the National Cage Bird Show (NCBS). Harold served as the NCBS president and went on to serve in every official capacity in the organization throughout the years. During his term as NCBS president, the Stafford Canary and the Third Division for Colorbred Birds were granted entry. Mr. Sodaman continues to serve as an honorary member of the NCBS Board of Directors.



In addition to his involvement with the NCBS, Harold Sodamann has written for several publications that are now out of circulation. He was the coeditor of articles published by the American Cage Bird magazine and authored additional articles published in All Pets Magazine. Harold's collection of journals includes every catalog ever printed by the NCBS and a collection of bound copies of the American Cage Bird Magazine. Each set is currently owned by two private collectors, Dr. Francis Martin and Terry Watson. Harold has retired from writing publications and is enjoying his retirement in Kansas with his wife, other family members and a well-stocked aviary of canaries.

In the late 1950s Harold welcomed Margaret Gordon and her Gloster Canary to the local St. Louis Bird Club. Mrs. Gordon had recently returned with the bird from the UK where her husband was stationed in the military. In the early 1960s, Harold imported the first Lizard Canaries from the Lizard Wizard, Mr. Fred Snelling of the UK. Much of the Lizard stock in the US today has ties to Harold's imports from Mr. Snelling.

An experienced showman, Harold has won the prized Kellogg Trophy for both type and color canaries and had the best Gloster several times before Glosters had their own division in the NCBS. Harold recalls that he won his first trophy at the National Show in the Hartz Canary category, although the bird was really a Gloster Canary. At that time, none of the judges could classify the bird, including a judge from the UK. This type was simply too new to be recognized.

The Lizard Canary Club was formed by Harold. While the blue Lizards had been previously bred in the UK by someone other than Harold, he is credited with breeding the first cinnamon Lizards during the 1960s. Most of the Lizard Canary breeders participating in the Third Division at the NCBS are familiar with the Sodamann strain. Breeders who wish to learn more about the Lizard Canary need only listen to Judge Sodamann while he critiques their birds. Some cringe when he is finished, but all breeders walk away with a deeper knowledge of the Lizard Canary.

Harold's personal career is as distinguished as an aviculture career. He was raised on a farm in Miami County, Kansas where he attended a rural high school. After high school, he earned an undergraduate degree and two post-graduate degrees. Harold has taught all levels of elementary school including Kindergarten. His career spanned 45 years in both elementary and post-secondary education and included the titles Director of Elementary Education in Wellington, Kansas and Professor at Hays State University.

During World War II Harold served in the US Army as an Infantry First Sergeant in the 2nd BN 12th Reg. 32nd Division in the Pacific Islands. His family and friends cared for his birds during the years Harold was away so that he would have stock when he returned.

Harold Sodamann has made major contributions to the hobby of aviculture and to the success of many breeders. He is a contributor as well as a true friend of the fancy.