

Dan Allison Cover

1930-2003

Dan Cover was born November 11th 1930 in Mountain Grove, Missouri, the son of Harold and Pauline Cover. He spent most of his life in Thayer, Missouri where he graduated from high school. He attended Central Missouri College and Drury College, graduating from the University of Missouri in Columbia. After serving in the U. S. Air Force he returned to Thayer where he established the Cover Lumber Company specializing in the sale of wholesale lumber throughout the region. Under his guidance that enterprise grew in some fifty years to one of the largest and most important businesses in Thayer.

Dan was always an avid falconer taking his first bird, a Cooper's Hawk, in high school. He would grow to love the Peregrine Falcon, especially the passage Tundra tiercels, specializing in hunting doves and quail. Two of his most renowned tiercels "Speedy" and "Tiger" flew as a cast for over 8 years, taking quarry virtually each time they flew. Witnesses to the flights remarked how high the birds flew and how well they pursued the doves, even chasing them under the bellies of cows that were pastured in the same field. They would often kill one dove, stash it and then return to the air to pursue another. Doubles were recorded almost every day during the hunting season.

Dan had a significant influence on American falconry. His high flights with Speedy and Tiger were documented in a 16-mm. film shown at the NAFA Field Meet in 1972, impressing all and resulting in a great impetus in falconry becoming an actual hunting sport rather than just a demonstration. His impact lives today, exemplified by the number of falconers successfully taking all types of field quarry. Dan served as the President of the North American Falconers Association for 1966.

Another of Dan's passions was his desire for effective conservation and restoration of the land and all wildlife. He spent several years restoring 1,000 acres to native prairie grasses and perfect quail habitat and then donated it to the State of Missouri for all to enjoy. Dan established a breeding program on his Missouri farm and was an active participant in the restoration of the Peregrine Falcon in that state. For a lifetime of his conservation efforts he was formally recognized by the state, receiving the Missouri Conservation award.

Dan and his wife Maureen served for years as gracious hosts for visiting falconers and guests, treating them to good company and a wonderful visit. Visitors were always surrounded by lots of stray dogs and cats for which Maureen served as new owner and protector. She still takes a leading role in the local animal shelter work.

Dan's memorial service was attended by both falconers and numerous local residents. All attested to the influences Dan had on them and on the town of Thayer. Many were surprised to learn how many Thayer residents and lumber yard workers had been helped by Dan to attend college. He was admired and appreciated by many. At the graveside services Steve Heying, a Missouri falconer, flew his Peregrine and it waited on at a perfect pitch over the ceremonies, a sight Dan truly would have appreciated. He will always be remembered as he signed his letters: "That Man Dan".





His Words Speak For Themselves

LOOK-HIGH IN THE SKY.
NO THEY ARE GONE NOW.
BUT THEY WERE SOME
OF THE BEST EVER.
THEIR NAMES WERE
TIGER, SPEEDY, COLONEL.
THEY ALL GAVE ME THEIR
BEST REPEATEDLY.
NO FALCONER COULD
ASK FOR MORE.
DAN COVER



With Tiger & Speedy

Those Wonderful Hawks"
by
Dan Cover

Wonderful Hawks!

had a considerable influence
enjoyed it so much, I've
joys and sorrows in the
avor to be totally honest.
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THE HAWKING IN CANADA
(print from the NAFJA Journal)

member the article we wrote in
Hawking in Canada in 1960.
Rich Awender, Tom Ennenga,
an Cover) made a trip to
purpose of hawking
stayed with our same
ar the North Dakota -
Carievale.
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plenty of flights
use. This area is
farming and in
we harvested,
places for
wills and
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ACCEPTANCE AND "THANK YOU" SPEECH
BY
DAN COVER
ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RECEIPT OF
THE STATE OF MISSOURI'S CONSERVATION AWARD

20 September, 2000

In the late 1930's my parents took me on a trip of the western United States. On this trip I spent much of my time looking for hawk and eagle nests and was moderately successful. One day we were driving to the top of Pike's Peak and I yelled, "Stop! There's a hawk nest!"

It was a one-lane gravel road with no guard rails and my dad was not about to stop. I cried. No one in my family was interested in raptors. I don't know why I was enamored with hawks. Hawks and falcons have influenced my life many times since then.

The attitude toward raptors has changed considerably since then. In those good old days, the only good hawk was a dead hawk.

I would like to share with you some of my thoughts.

To thine own self be true and this must follow as the night, the day, then thou cans't not be false to any man. (Omar Khayyam) Most of my days have been sunny. It didn't just happen, I made it happen. If I wanted to go hawking at 4 p.m., I started working to that end at 8 a.m.

The voice of reason is a soft one, but it does not rest until it has gained a hearing. Ultimately, after endless rebuffs it succeeds. This is one of the few points in which one may be optimistic about the future of mankind.

Happiness comes only when we push our brains and hearts to the farthest reaches of which we are capable...The purpose of life is to matter - to count, to stand for something, to have it make some difference that we lived at all. (Leo Rosten)

Regardless of what your ecological cause may be, it can only be a delaying action until we face and conquer the problem of human over population.

Who can say why we falconers are drawn to raptors. Is it their courage, their speed and grace, or is it that they are capable of feats impossible for humans? But it is not necessary that we know the answer to this question. It is only required of us to respect and admire those wonderful hawks.

Dan Allison Cover



With Tiger & Babe



With Erich A. in Canada



8 eggs - 7 young



1st Falcon - Eyass Prairie



Summer '63 with North African "Rouge"