Henry Cochran Kendall (1922-2007) — by John R. Swift

Henry C. Kendall was born on June 8th, 1922 in St. Louis, Missouri where he would spend his entire life. Henry always had a love for birds and animals. He was always exploring the wooded areas around his home. He would eventually raise over 50 species of birds taken from local nests as young birds. This early skill would later serve him well in rearing young Prairie Falcons in 1967. Several other area youth shared the same interests as Henry and together formed a local falconry club when they were all in their teens. The clubs members who attended John Burroughs and Country Day School and were all invited to hear falconer/author Capt. Charles Knight, who brought his Golden eagle, Mr. Ramshaw, speak on falconry. That served to spur Henry's later life he kept a Gyrfalcon and would often go hawking with the falconers in the St. Louis area always enjoying the hunting and falconry experiences but unfortunately would just precede his greatest tragedy. On a spring vacation, without Henry, the family car struck a bridge abutment and Henry's wife Betty was killed. The Kendall family would never be the same. Henry's falconry career declined the next several years, the house was eventually sold and the breeding falcons given back to the owners.

However, Henry never completely left falconry and kept one or two birds when he was able to construct a small movie. One of Henry's more famous hawks was Whitey, an albino-red tailed hawk, he obtained in the late 60's. Originally obtained from the St. Louis Zoo where she was brought in as a rescued chicken. Henry became the only falconer to ever fly a white red-tailed hawk in falconry. She lived for 36 years and is now at the Archives of Falconry in Boise, Idaho.

Henry married again in the late 70's and with his wife Anita raised three more daughters. During Henry's later life he kept a Gyrfalcon and would often go hawking with the falconers in the St. Louis area always enjoying the hunting and fellowship. Henry passed away at his home in Chesterfield, Missouri on December 5th, 2007. His contributions to falconry were significant and many future falcon breeders also became successful. It was one of the high points in Henry's falconry experiences but unfortunately would just precede his greatest tragedy. On a spring vacation, without Henry, the family car struck a bridge abutment and Henry's wife Betty was killed. The Kendall family would never be the same. Henry's falconry career declined the next several years, the house was eventually sold and the breeding falcons given back to the owners.

(Author's personal note): I met Henry and Betty in 1968 when I moved to St. Louis after college and they were great hosts and friends while I was learning falconry. I enjoyed several dinners with the entire family. Betty's death in April 1969 was devastating to everyone and many changes were made. I spent that summer at Henry's house often staying for late visits and wine on the large back porch. I was even with Henry during the Apollo moon landing that summer. I met my future wife Vicki in the fall of 1969 and we also had some enjoyable evenings at the Kendall's house. Our lives would occasionally crisscross over the next 30 years and we would pick up with our lives again. He was a good friend to me throughout the years and I always enjoyed the times we were able to spend time together.

Henry Cochran Kendall
Kendall, Henry Cochran 85, died peacefully at his home in Chesterfield, MO on Wednesday, December 5, 2007, surrounded by his loving wife, Anita and children. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Elizabeth Conant Kendall and daughter Faith. He is survived by children Elizabeth, Judson, Harry, Mardi, Sam, Jessica, Jennifer Jaimee; and grandchildren Luke, Judson, Gwynned, Alexandra, Sara, Benjamin. Because of his longstanding dedication to animals during his lifetime, the family requests that, in lieu of flowers, donations be sent to: The Animal Protective Association of Missouri, 1705 S. Hanley, St. Louis, MO 63144, or The Archives of Falconry, World Center for Birds of Prey, 5668 W. Flying Hawk Lane, Boise, ID 83709.

Services will be private. Condolences can be shared at: www.stlouiscremation.com.

St. Louis Post Dispatch

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Frank Serra with European Goshawk and Henry Kendall with ‘Whitey’, an albinistic Red-tailed Hawk at a NAFA Field Meet in South Dakota.

Newly hatched captive-bred Prairie Falcon, April 1967

Top L-R: Gary and Giselle Meyers, Sally and Mike Melvill, Heidi and Erich Awender; Bottom L-R: Henry and Betty Kendall, Frank Serra (at the Kendall’s home, ca. 1967)

Don Hunter, Frank Beebe, Henry Kendall

BREEDING PRAIRIE FALCONS IN CAPTIVITY
by Henry Kendall, St. Louis, Missouri

Don’t miss the exciting new chapter on this past summer’s falconry activity in a small town. With me was my eyes and ears peeled for any signs of predators or other birds that might have taken the falcons from the wild. It is not all hard to speculate that within the next few years, some of the best places to see falcons will be in captivity.

Frank Serra with European Goshawk and Henry Kendall with ‘Whitey’, an albinistic Red-tailed Hawk at a NAFA Field Meet in South Dakota.

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