

Jane Morton Galetto's
playful thoughts about Clive for his 80 Birthday 2015

In sharing that which I am about to relay I do so with admiration and affection for the loveable cherub we know as Clive. I am also suspecting that many folks will tell stories about the live birds released from Clive's head, or the serious duties of cannon netting. Or his wonderful teaching skills. So I am inserting my five cents to give balance to this genius of a man we call Clive.

I have known Clive since he first started coming to the Delaware Bayshore shorebird reserves. I chaired the Endangered and Nongame Species Advisory Committee in the State of NJ, USA for 18+ years and still serve on this advisory board. Through this entity I became familiar with shorebird recovery work. As President of a regional conservation organization in the Bayshore area I encouraged our members to become involved in assisting at banding stations and feeding the Shorebird Recovery Team, to the tune of some 1000 meals a season, so that the team would hopefully depart from our bayshore as well-fed as the birds.

Now let me make it clear that Clive did not eat all 1000 meals, but he made a good showing. He is famous just as much for his love of shorebirds as for his love of the camaraderie surrounding a meal and the partaking of it. And lest anyone think that the faddish vegetarian or vegan palate is his fare, you would be sorely mistaken. He has a deep appreciation for wild North American fare. Elk, quail, striped bass, Canada goose and the like all make their way to his menu. And our vegetarian chili is not on the top of his all time hit-list. It is typical for him to exclaim, "Where is the MEAT?" In fact he often speaks in exclamations with continual emphasis on the superlative in each sentence and with stress on the last syllable. Such as "That is MAG-NIF-I-**CENT**!"

His great enthusiasm for life, people and naturally shorebirds dominates his landscape. His infectious love of people brings others to share in his "magnificent" zest for all that he does. Now I'm not certain if it is his English upbringing or Aussie style but for us Americans he has a way with words. This flourish for the spoken word is loaded with positive embellishments, so much so that his superlatives act like kindling on a flame igniting all of us to follow his glow. His joy is contagious. He describes shorebird stopovers like cruise ship dinners, in which the birds double their weight and can hardly take off. He paints pictures for us lay folk to share in a complete understanding.

Clive's manners are usually impeccable, especially in the area of making everyone feel welcome. This is not to say he gets everything right, but it is to say that in those areas where he might be a tad off-mark we choose to overlook or just tease him

about it. Which brings me to his sense of style, or *savoir-faire*, in the fashion department. A number of years ago a reporter was coming from some highfalutin' newspaper like the NY Times for an interview with Clive. Now as you might guess, the shorebird trapper's wardrobe is not exactly what you might wear when giving a college lecture, but nonetheless Clive's accouterments are just so extra special. Aussie team member Susan Taylor and I were in the kitchen awaiting the man of the hour's entrance after getting gussied up. Now, not that either of us is properly credentialed as fashion critics but you just didn't have to be on the staff of Vogue to know that this was one remarkable outfit. Envision drawstring shorts pulled waist high, in fact higher, a tucked in T-shirt, knee high dark socks, some kind of leather foot wear, and slicked hair. We asserted that his casual style needed the T out over the top of the draw-string shorts, which he clearly thought not proper, but he finally caved in when yet a third member, Jeannine, echoed the same recommendation. That was the best we could do before sending him to the media wolves... where we knew in the end he would be ... well, beloved.

Now the 2013 season brought about a new and would-be embarrassing twist were it not all for us being out-of-door researchers. We clearly understand those compulsory moments when nature demands that our bodily functions must simply ... function. During shorebird season there is little foot traffic on our beaches so one can often find some dune or high grass for such solitary moments. Now Clive's sister Angela assured us that Clive used proper decorum in his time of need. Nevertheless his decorum evidently wasn't good enough for a beachfront resident who apparently found it necessary to steal a peek. It also wasn't good enough for her to register her complaint with dignity or due respect. Oh no! Instead she indulged in what we here in America refer to scientifically as "coming unglued, going bonkers, or going off her wig." Now I did not witness either event - his act or her dismay. But by the amount of play it got during this year's banding season one could gather it was, as Clive might say, "a superior fuss." In fact registering her complaint with the shorebird recovery team was not good enough. Oh no! She had to get the authorities involved. And to my surprise they were not amused; evidently the constable on duty is not involved in wildlife rehabilitation. And likely he was of a ripe young age where he could ignore bodily functions through a catch that might last many hours, such that his sympathies were not with the crew nor Clive. In fact he threatened arrest for any repeat performances. This lack of understanding brought Clive to a particular degree of indignity that we rarely see in his personality. He told us that he could not and would not ignore bodily needs, and they could bloody well lock him up. Thus the incident became the subject of a considerable amount of teasing for the remainder of the season. One might suspect that the banter might actually resume this coming season as well. The joking may have climaxed at our annual shorebird picnic, in which the indoor loo is no further than 100' from the site, yet we rented a portable John to halve the distance. Displayed on

the side was a sign directing Clive to the wooded area adjacent to the outhouse. Now this story might not sit well with your attendees at his 80th birthday celebration, but let me say it is the absolutely festive way in which he handled all the jive passed his way that makes him simply the most loveable of all folks on the entire planet.

The plight of shorebirds on this planet is made more hopeful with the advocacy that Clive brings to his work. Many scientists pursue their research with little sense of responsibility for the outcomes and impacts on the species they study. Clive brings to all of us a shared responsibility in the future of the species. In fact it is that very future that drives his work. After working with Clive one can not look at a shorebird without thinking about the prospects, without thinking about the beauty, without thinking about the hope, the details and without thinking about him. Happy 80th birthday, Clive.

Love,
Jane Morton Galetto
President Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and Its Tributaries, Inc.
Your personal chefs, your mentees!