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SCFA 1954-55 Top L-R : Jerry Grisco with haggard gos, Bob Klimes, Briane Grisco, Bob H., Gil Nash, Bottom L-R: Jimmy Yester, Howard Haigh, Dave Weeks, Tom Cade

**He Follows an Art  
Nearly 50 Centuries Old**

Jerry Grisco, a brewer at the Los Angeles plant, devotes his spare time to an unusual hobby — one that's nearly 5,000 years old. He and some 15,000 other patient persons in this country practice falconry. He is a member of the Southern California Falconry Association and has been interested in his hobby for three years.

As he explains it, falconry is the training of certain types of extremely wild hunting birds so that they will fly, hunt, take food from lores (described later), then return to the leather-gloved fists of their masters.

Originally, falconry was strictly a form of hunting. Ancient Persians discovered a way to train hawks and through this gave man a method of taking his quarry at great distances. The art was passed down through the ages and was most popular in Medieval Europe and Britain, where different types of hawks were allocated to nobility according to title. It is said that a knight would sacrifice his freedom before surrendering his falcon.

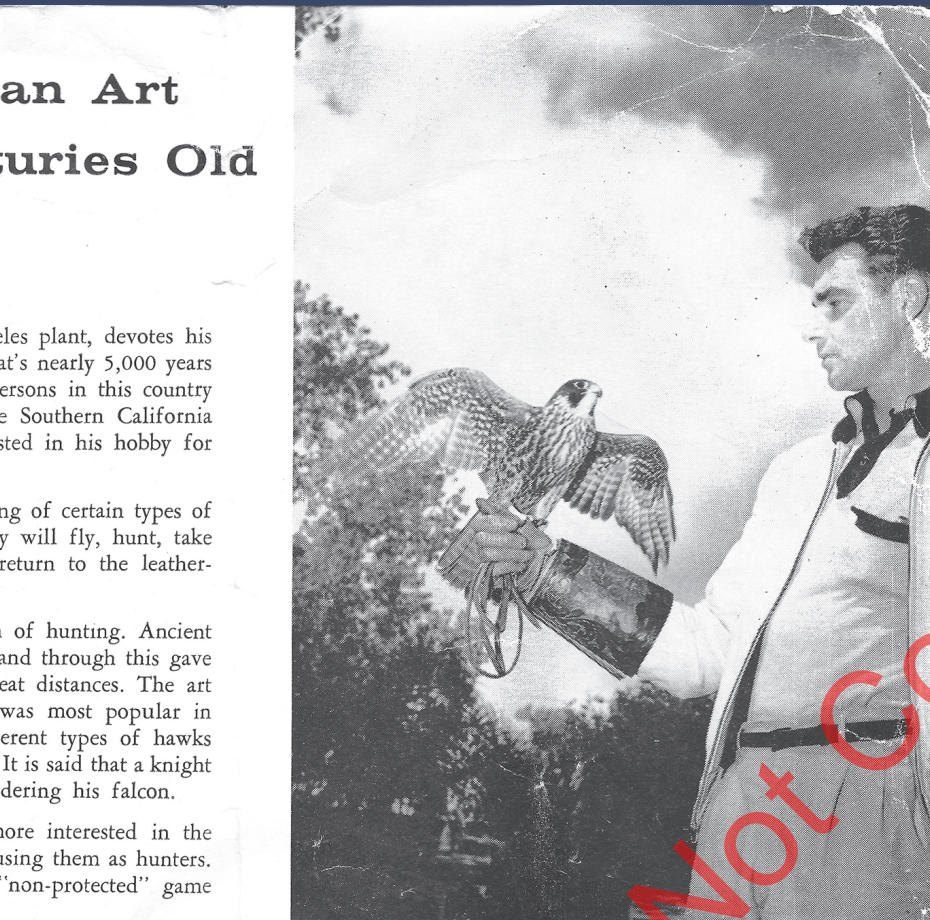
These days, says Jerry, falconers are more interested in the training and flying of their birds than in using them as hunters. State laws allow falconers to hunt only "non-protected" game with their birds.

Most falconers are content to "cast" their birds into flight and have them attack lores. A lore is usually a horseshoe padded with leather and attached to a five-foot thong. Fresh meat is tied to the lore and it is swung in a verticle circle. A falcon is attracted to the lore by the movement and the knowledge that food is at hand. He will swoop down on it and grab the food.

Most falcons are of the hawk family and are obtained when they are small from nests in mountainous areas.

It takes a good three months to train a falcon and during this time the trainer must spend several hours each day carrying his bird on his fist. The birds are fed fresh meat and are taught to take food and remain with or return to the trainer.

In the field, falcons are cast from the fist to start their flights and some can soar as high as 2,000 feet. Jerry says it is a great thrill to see a falcon "stooping", which means the bird spies its prey with its telescopic eyesight, then folds its wings



Tightening the falcon's hood. Hood, covering the eyes, keeps bird calm and quiet during trips.

All leather glove and gauntlet give Jerry protection from falcon's sharp claws.

Bell attached to bird's leg can be heard 1/2 mile. Note special handmade perch.



also had to learn leather and metal craft to make hoods and other equipment.

He says the modern day appeal is not the "kill" but the control that can be exerted over these wild birds. And he



Jerry's Coopers Hawk, Coco

## IN MEMORY OF JERRY GRISCO

Jerry was the eldest of the six Grisco brothers. Briane, the second eldest, was the first to get into falconry. Jerry soon followed. Jerry was inducted into the Army in 1949 for two years. He was an Army lifeguard in the USA and an MP in Korea. When he came home in 1951, he worked in plumbing with his dad. In the meantime, he saw Briane working with his birds and became interested. Briane belonged to the Southern California Falconers Association. After acquiring a prairie falcon, Jerry joined the club. He flew a couple of prairies, but came to realize that he preferred shortwings. He got the opportunity to get a goshawk from Al Oming, a friend who was in charge of the Edmonton, Alberta game farm. Al would send club members merlins, goshawks, and different kinds of owls when asked. Jerry flew a goshawk for two years and an intermixed Coopers named Coco for six years. He hunted his game at the Sepulveda Basin along with most members of the SCFA. Jerry worked as a brew master for the Pabst Blue Ribbon Beer Company while practicing falconry. He and his bird were featured in their company newsletters. He was married and had a son. Jerry died quite young at the age of 48.



*During his life as a falconer, Jerry flew Goshawks, Prairie falcons and a Coopers Hawk.*



Jerry served in the Army for two years.