On the 19th of April, prior to the book launch, the annual meeting of the Cochin Club was held. To his own astonishment, Piet Verhoef, the secretary, was appointed as honorary member.

After lunch, the 'Cochinboek' was presented, which was actually supposed to appear in 2011 in honor of the 25th anniversary of the Cochin Club, but it did not. However Ardjan Warnshuis (pictured left), Chairman of the Cochin Club, was determined, the book just had to come, even if a little later. Up to August 2013 he had been 'brooding' on the subject. After he had asked Hans Ringnalda and me for the possibilities, it really took off. The tasks and chapters were well distributed between the three of us. For the history of the club Piet Verhoef was asked to author the part dealing with the history of the club, and Hans was the one who had control over the whole. And it worked! Within eight months, the book was finished.

About 50 interested people attended the presentation, including Jantinus Timmerman as a representative of printing company Ten Brink in Meppel; Bert Beugelsdijk, on behalf of Small Animals Publications BV; Wim Voskamp as a figurehead from the small animals hobby and Jasper Smelt as chairman of KLN. Ardjan Warnshuis said the Chinese ambassador had been invited in view of the history of the Cochin. Unfortunately, he did not come.
Warnshuis called Ringnalda a "slave driver" in a playful way. "Then you sent dozens of pictures and thought it was good. By return mail Hans replied that those did not comply technically and you could start again. But without a strict stage, which Ringnalda had, nothing will ever get off the ground".

Then Hans Ringnalda (photo left) got the floor to present ‘his’ book in detail. Hans has always been very interested in the history of chicken breeds in general. He really has his relationships worldwide and through them received wonderful material for publication. That also demands coordination! This book contains many illustrations that I really did not know existed. Anyhow, the book with 600 full colour images is a real picture book. With his presentation Hans gave a look behind the scenes of the whole process and showed a lot of those ‘unknown’ pictures. Some things he came by chance on the track. Other things were very interesting, but could no more find an empty spot in the book. Still other plates came too late and could therefore not be included.

To the surprise of the audience, all these things had been contained by Hans in an A5 booklet on the ‘making of’ and presented to all attendees. (photo right)

Jantinus Timmerman (photo left) spoke for printing company Ten Brink. "In the person of Ringnalda of course there was a lot of critical expertise on board to also pick out the extreme in the field of printing technology," he said. And that happened in a quality to make your mouth water.

Then the first copies were handed out to Jasper Smelt and Wim Voskamp. In his acceptance speech, Jasper Smelt stated that the results were great and he clearly saw the ‘signature’ of Ringnalda in the book. It is creativity at its best. "Creative people are difficult," he said, "and I have been negotiating with Hans often enough to know that he is going to the extreme, but he knows exactly how marketing and PR should be put into practice. We have too little of such idealists".
Wim Voskamp (photo left) said that the team of authors had supplied a truly remarkable achievement. The creative and never-resting mind of Hans Ringnalda, combined with the work ethic and perfectionism of Hendrik Timmer and the Chairman Ardjan Warnshuis, always full of commitment and dedication, have created a masterpiece of books in chicken country. In addition, the club’s history was represented by honorary member Piet Verhoef in an excellent way.

Right: Piet Verhoef was appointed honorary member of the Cochin Club prior to the book launch.

“We have only borrowed the Cochin and Cochin bantam (Pekin) from our parents and grandparents, with the obligation to maintain them and improve them where possible, in order to pass them on to our children and grandchildren”. Hendrik Timmer

All writers were also congratulated with the result. After the presentation, attendees were able to collect their ordered book. Several club members bought more copies, which they planned to sell together with surplus animals to interested breeders.

And everyone was unanimous on one thing: it will be the gem of the bookcase.

Left: Buff Cochins, breeder & photographer: Bobo Athes, Romania.
COCHINS EN COCHIN KRIELEN
(COCHINS AND COCHIN BANTAMS) – a Totally New Book

Review by: Elly Vogelaar, chief editor Poultry,
www.aviculture-europe.nl

When I say ‘totally new’ I mean especially the approach to the breeds in this book. Four authors each filled a part of the book, starting with the section on the history of the Cochin, which is written by Hans Ringnalda. For this, he has not only drawn information from his own library and archive, but also from the archives and libraries of a large number of ‘chicken friends’ worldwide. Moreover, many historic poultry books are now available in digital form, so finally we should be able to put all historical "facts" in a row. Or not? While reading these ancient writings it becomes clear that the former renowned poultry writers and artists liked to give their own twist on the origin and appearance of giant breeds. This is Ringnalda in his element. Page after page, he treats the reader to historical facts, facts that are just as easily refuted, right on the next page. And then, slowly but surely, the real history of Cochins and Cochin Bantams emerges, on some points appearing to be surprisingly different from what one has always assumed.

While the first part of the book is mainly a bizarre mix of Cochin hysteria and history, on the one hand, and world history, on the other, in the following chapters Ardjan Warnshuis, President of the Dutch Cochin Club, presents the recent history (ca. 1930 to 1990) of the Cochin in The Netherlands and Europe; he does this in a very particular way, with a chronological display of photos completed with the names of the breeders. Thus, he reveals before our eyes the development of the Cochin in Europe into the Cochin we know it today. The same concept is preserved for the Cochin bantams, with Hendrik Timmer providing the background information on the development of the type of the Cochin bantam.

Left and above, right: Illustrations from the book. The most fantastic stories went round, especially about the size of these chickens coming from China.
Piet Verhoef, the current secretary of the Cochin Club, then describes the fortunes of the club, and eventually the book is completed with the descriptions of the colour varieties of today’s Cochin and Cochin bantams, again with beautiful photos. A classification on country was applied. However, it is not only a ‘pictures book’! Hendrik Timmer and Ardjan Warnshuis also filled a thick section with informative advice regarding the breeding of the many colour varieties of the Cochin.

Because our chicken-hobby is not only a matter of history, but at least as much a matter of looking forward, the book ends with a detailed description of some beautiful colour varieties in the making. Rightfully, it is stated that a new colour that is recognized in one country will also be present in other countries in the shortest time. “Barriers don’t exist anymore in the poultry world. In fact, at the present time, many breeders work together throughout Europe”, says Hendrik Timmer.

“The gem of the bookcase”, they say. But this book will hardly be in the bookcase. The Cochin lover will prefer to always keep it within reach, to read and reread, enjoying and discovering something new each time. On http://www.cochin.nl/cochinboek.html are a few pages of this book to view, and there you will find all the information on how to order this book. (Note: It is written in Dutch!)

Do we now know everything? No. For me, for example, it is still an intriguing question how one was able to breed chickens at that time in China in such a large format. So, like Dr. Fressy wrote in AE Feb 2014: “For the fanciers who are really interested in the history of poultry there is still plenty to do. The global cultural integration and digitization of publications, but especially the opening up of today’s China creates opportunities to examine old Chinese prints and writings to enrich our historical knowledge!”