



“50 Fast Years.....50 Great Stories.”



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS – 50 GREAT STORIES

Researching and writing this project was very similar to putting a giant puzzle together without having a picture or a map to go by – I kept searching for another piece, trying to fit it in properly and then I'd find another clue or story to be told about quarter horse racing. Some stories are missing and it is regrettable, but the large scope of 50 Fast Years- 50 Great Stories means that some stories, unfortunately, are left untold. And, like many stories, if they are not written down, they are forgotten and much of our quarter horse racing history has not been documented.

For months now, I listened and I wrote. I became so consumed by what I was doing that at times I would hear stories in my sleep. I would phone one person and he or she would tell me, "you should get in touch with so and so" and the lists and the phone calls would go on and on and on.

I had a number of individuals who served as my "memory banks"- these individuals have spent their lifetimes committed to quarter horse racing and were a constant source of input and information. I'd especially like to thank Darcy Edwards, Susan MacLeod, Audrey and Cliff Whitelock, Jim Munro, Garnet Leech, and Donalda Cochrane.

I would also like to thank all the individuals in the racing community who took the time to tell their stories. I laughed, I was saddened and in the process found out things I never knew from a period of time and experiences that I hadn't encountered. I sincerely hope when you read the stories, you gain an understanding of the journey and the passengers involved in our "50 Years of Quarter Horse Racing." These are real people telling their stories the way they saw, experienced and remembered the event, race or happening. The words I have used are their words - I would never change their story! One thing I will state unequivocally, all are passionate in their love of fast quarter horses and racing. Please forgive us for any insignificant flaws or omissions because as near as we want to be perfect, we are only human. "If I thought you said Scamp, but your horse's name was Champ, we'll both blame it on the fact, we couldn't hear very well on the telephone."

Enjoy! "50 Fast Years – 50 Great Stories" – Janice Sather



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CHAPTER 1 - DREAM BIG, LIVE THE DREAM, AND RUN FAST HORSES

DREAM BIG, LIVE THE DREAM, AND RUN FAST HORSES

No one knows where the dream originated or how the dream got started – it could have been that cattle rancher from Oyen or Drayton Valley who started it, or was it that rich oil tycoon from High River who previously had owned cutting horses that started the dream? Or, was it that woman way up in northern Alberta who watched that first foal being born from her fast Montana mare who thought of the dream? Or, could it be that wise elder of the Blackfoot band down by Cardston who had seen his sorrel stallion run across the plains and run so quickly that it made his heart quicken? He had the dream just as certain as that old rough cowboy from Medicine Hat did. They all saw the dream, owned the dream and lived the dream of running fast horses, horses that were quick and compact, not horses that would go the distance but horses which possessed the fastest speed, the speed of an equine cheetah, the speed of the quarter horse. The quarter horse as a breed was well known in Alberta and very popular –they were versatile, athletic individuals but they were also capable of running races at the local fair, rodeo or where ever there happened to be a race track. Quarter horse racing was fun, entertaining and competitive so once the dream originated, it carried to a lot of people and it carried to a lot of places.

A newspaper article taken from the Calgary Herald in 1957 documents that the “Millarville Races are going to get off to a fine start this year with a 400 yards quarter horse race. If this isn’t the first quarter horse race in Canada, it is among the first. It could mean the opening of QH racing in this country. It has become a big money business in the U.S. and with the interest in quarter horses in Alberta and Saskatchewan growing steadily the same type of short swift races may become a big event on the Canadian turf. There aren’t a great number of registered Quarter Horses in Canada. In view of that, the race committee at Millarville decided to leave the race open to registered and unregistered quarter horses. As the breed becomes better established tighter regulations may come into effect.” So, we know that quarter horse racing was alive in 1957- it was a substitute for the former saddle horse race and ran for a purse of \$ 150. As well, there was pari-mutual betting and the Calgary Herald predicted, “in all probability there will be increased attendance because the races are held in one of the most scenic spots in the foothills.”

In all parts of Alberta, in the 60s, the dream of quarter horse racing took hold. In the 1970s and 1980s under the auspices of the Can-West



Turf Association quarter horse owners, trainers and jockeys were like traveling gypsies as they moved from track to a different track the following weekend. We'd race at little bush tracks like Stettler, Milo, Standoff, Trochu, Vegreville, Teepee Creek, High River and Millarville. We'd camp beside the river at Cochrane, hurry up to Hobbema to find stalls, go on to Enoch to find a first class facility and modern bathrooms. We ran at fair grounds like Lethbridge, Red Deer, Grande Prairie and Medicine Hat. We ran at places that possessed exotic sounding names like Trout Springs and Cardston. We ran for \$200 purses and we ran for a little gold trophy that still sits on many of our shelves -it's just the same trophy with a different horse's name on it but each of us was connected to a special horse. That horse is still a part of our heart and memories and we talk about him or her proudly. It was that special horse crossing the wire just a little in front that keeps the dream alive even today in a different time and at a different race track.



CHAPTER 2 - AT THE VERY BEGINNING TIME FRAME - 1950s and 1960s

BACK AT THE VERY BEGINNING- GERRY GOING'S VISION

When I was doing my research into the roots of quarter horse racing, one man's name kept cropping up again and again; people said, "You'll have to get in touch with Gerry Going because he was instrumental in organizing the Alberta racing association and he was one of the first who raced quarter horses in the province." It took considerable detective work but I finally talked to a very gracious and humble horseman who acknowledged his role in the quarter horse racing industry.

"I owned the High River Auction Market and then bought the Bar U Ranch so I was always interested in quarter horses, ranch horses and cutting horses. We mainly raised "using horses " and at one time I had upwards to 100 horses. I had a great cutting horse named Holly 4 Jinx who would work cattle just like a collie dog. He was so willing and quick. One time, I was riding him out in the hay field and I worked him just to see how really quick he was against this young colt. Well, I weighed about 165 lbs. at the time but that colt never even came close to that stallion. In fact, every time that colt would move up on Holly 4 Jinx, Jinx would pin his ears and just plain run off on him. So, I began to cross him with some better mares; mares who were daughters of Three Bars or Sugar Bars. In the very early years, I had a call from Bill Pratt who offered to allow quarter horses to run in Calgary on a regular basis if I could guarantee him 80 horses. At this time, quarter horse racing was really taking off and in places like Yakima, Washington interest was fantastic. I phoned around but I couldn't come up with a guaranteed 80 horses but I could come up with enough to have some races at the Calgary Exhibition Grounds. I often wonder how significant it would have been if we could have come up with enough horses because this would have been huge for quarter horse racing. If we could have run our horses there on a permanent basis, well who knows what might have unfolded.

We decided to put an association together because we were really pushing quarter horse racing. Nick Nichols was involved, Jim Munro, Everill Jones was our first secretary and she really worked hard on this project. We weren't running for any money in the 60s -purses were around \$200 but we had racing in our hearts and we tried to establish the association the right way. We drove miles and miles through snow storms and bad roads for those first meetings. I admire people like Everill and Jim Munro for their dedication. Jim Munro has always been faithful and true. One year, a guy phoned me from Lloydminster and asked if we could run quarter horses there for some little sports meet. Jim took a



truck full of horses up, I took a load up, some others made the trek too and we put on a nice little race meet for those people. There wasn't any pari-mutuels but there was a lot of betting being done outta the back of truck tailgates.

I ran some good horses and some not so good. Three Beauties, a daughter of Three Bars was pretty fast and Going Easy was another one I remember well. I bred Three Beauties to Holly 4 Jinx and the result was a colt I named Bold Champ and a lot of quarter horse pioneers remember him. Going Easy was an incredibly good looking horse but there were times, if he didn't want to run he wouldn't run a jump but the next time, he'd really bring home the mail. Probably, one of my fastest runners was a mare from Leo Bar named Lori Bay. She still holds the track record from Kamloops for 220 yards but unfortunately, she was killed in a lightning storm.

I'm still in the business of racing but it's Thoroughbred racing now and I'm proud to state that my stallion, Bold Ruckus, has been a leading sire in Canada for the last 10 consecutive years and was voted in to the Canadian Thoroughbred Racing Hall of Fame. I've never been out of horses and I guess I'll never be. When the quarter horses come to Northlands in Edmonton, I always make a point of going up there to watch them run."

On behalf of the AQHRA, I'd just like to say we are honored to have Gerry Going as our guest at any race or at any race track where we run quarter horses. If it wasn't for his determined efforts and dedication, I wonder where we would be now?

As told by Gerry Going

JIM MUNRO - EVERY ONE'S FRIEND - THE ASSOCIATION'S MENTOR

"I love horses, always have and always will; it's that simple, and one of my dad's fundamental rules was you value your horse. You look after it before you look after yourself. As a kid, I had to break horses to make money and I rode a lot of match races at a place called Little Washington, which was just south of Cluny along the river. Well, the reason I became involved with quarter horse racing is truthfully because of my pride. Everyone was talking about quarter horse racing so I decided to run my rope horse, Birds Rep, in this quarter horse race - this was about 1957 at Milo and the race was longer than a normal quarter horse race. We ran half way around the track and Birds Rep was a long, long way back so my pride was really shattered and my reputation was on the line. I knew right then that I liked being at the front instead of the back in a horse race. Also, my cousin in Montana, Floyd Munro, owned



Printer's Devil and a lot of good mares so this fuelled my itch to go racing too. We never ran for much money back then -\$15 for 1st, \$10 for 2nd and \$5 for 3rd – I remember at Milo one year, it cost \$4 for the wife and I and our kids to get in and we only ran third so we made a dollar profit," laughs Jim.

"Anyway, I brought Mr. Robin Reed into Alberta and he was a big time horse. I remember Wilf Matier setting people up to make money on him. At Medicine Hat, this ole boy said that Robin couldn't run 3/8 of a mile and Wilf calmly said, "Oh, I think he will and pulled \$100 bill out of his wallet. The bet was on, Robin finished way out in front and Wilf was another \$100 richer. I had other good horses too – Clabber's Fly and Hi Ho Nino. That mare was a spoiled horse and she was rotten. I bought her from John Bassett's father in Arizona; he wished me well with her but said, "If you ever can get her into the gate, she's a runner and she'll do well for you but she is rotten and one tough head case." Anyway, one time my wife and kids had her loaded up and I had to drop my wife off at her work in town. We got outta the truck and all of a sudden, Hi Ho Nino was scrambling on the ground beside us. She had smashed the stock racks to smithereens and jumped clear out. As I said, she was snaky but with time and a lot of ranch riding, she did get better. We never trained her just hauled her to the races and let her run. She was scarred from the knees in all directions from all the wrecks she had been in but she still won a lot of races for us.

I was a part of the first association; we were the first die-hards who started it – Gerry Going, Art Nelson, Pat Boussher, Nick Nichols and I. Our goals were to run quarter horses, develop a racing program and to promote the breeding of running quarter horses. There was a lot of hard work done to get it started and I remember years later, in the 1990s at a meeting of the AQHRA when the economy had taken a real bad turn and racing was losing its glow and people were losing heart, telling the directors that you have to take the good with the bad but they had to have confidence in the industry and what they were doing. That's what we envisioned and had set out to do in the 50s and 60s, things weren't easy then either. Even Custer didn't have it easy..."

Jim Munro is a true friend to every one at any race track. If you don't know him, ask about him and then go up and shake his hand. We owe this man a tremendous amount of gratitude – he truly represents what is fine, what is noble and what is fun about quarter horse racing.

As told by Jim Munro Bassano, Alberta



CHESTY CHUB -14.2 HANDS TALL BUT AN EARLY LEGEND

“Chesty Chub was an absolute freak of nature – he was small and looked like more of a working horse than a race horse but he went back to Peter McCue and around southern Alberta if you mention the name Chesty Chub, old timers will still remember him. My dad, Harold Scoville, bought him as a yearling from an old rancher, Tip Johnson, of Longview and we started running him in 1962 and ran him all through the 60s. We ran at Stettler, Calgary, Milo, Millarville, Lethbridge, Fort Assinboine, Medicine Hat, Enoch and Grande Prairie. I guess he was about 12 when we finished running him and then he sired a whack of good colts too, colts that stood up and were multi-purpose horses. Chesty Chub was the sire of another top horse we bred and ran, Shain Gold Stream. We rode Chesty Chub all year round; we never barned him and after he ran a race we’d bring him home and brand cattle off of him. We would run him twice a day on tracks just out on the prairies- one race was just a short one and then, there was always a 3/8 race we’d stick him in and he’d wup up on those horses too. When we hauled him to Prince Albert, this guy leaning on the rail said, “You know these stubble-bums from Alberta bought a Shetland pony to out run us.” Well, my dad Harold just winked at me because we knew the kind of horse we were leading. Anyway, Chesty Chub beat em all, including a Thoroughbred mare which was the prize of Saskatchewan, a mare named Family Court. Dad really liked this classy mare that stood about 16.2 and made Chub look even smaller. The man who owned her said if we beat her the next day, he’d sell her to my dad so sure enough, Chub beat her again and Dad ended up with her. We hauled Chub to Fort Benton, Montana and other tracks in the U.S. and he always did us proud because he’d try so hard. As time went on, Dad turned the training duties over to me and I was with Chub at every race meet .His heart was immeasurable –I’ve ridden lots of horses but none faster and none better.”

As told by Conrad Scoville Coronation, Alberta



SOME PRINT- A BIG TIME HORSE WITH A BIG TIME HEART

“My ole man, Dennis Edwards, started in this business pretty early, oh back in 1963 when he bought a mare out of the Cereal Auction Mart, a mare called Rogers Babe. He paid \$75 for her and she was supposed to have papers on her but we never got them. Anyway, we tried her out on the ranch and she could just plain run away from any of the horses we had so next thing that happened we were loading her in the back of the truck and hittin the little tracks at Hannah and Stettler to run her. In those days, you had to run against any type of horse – thoroughbred, mustang, just for bragging rights. She ran against Chesty Chub and Manny Kay who was a pretty good sprintin Thoroughbred. But Rogers Babe was fast too and that’s how we were hooked into this racing game.

In 1967, my dad bought a yearling who was big, raw-boned and maybe not the prettiest colt but that colt was Some Print and folks around Alberta remember him because he was one of a kind. He was a son of Printer’s Devil and we ran him as a 2 year old in 1968 and in those days you ran the 2 year olds against older horses. I rode him in the Open Futurity at the Calgary Stampede and he won that race. I’m guessin he had around 27 starts as a 2 year old and was never beaten as a 2 year old. We ran him for a lot of years – every where. We ran him at Stettler, Taber, Medicine Hat, High River and my dad and uncle weren’t afraid to haul him farther either. We won races in B.C., Oregon and Montana with him and he just kept runnin tough as he could. We finally retired him but someone told dad that the reason he was retired was because he couldn’t cut it anymore so the next year we pulled him outta the pasture, worked him into shape and went back to the track. We hauled him to Millarville and by this time, he was 9. There was a ton of interest in that race and you know the crowds that were at Millarville, fans hanging on the rail to watch. Everyone thought that Jack Cutts horse, Wins Eagle, was a shoo-in to win but old Some Print put it to him and won by day light. After that, we were content to retire him and that horse died out at our ranch. I always remember Orville Strandquist talking about Some Print because I was just a young kid when Orville and I had a match race at Ralph Innocent’s farm near Stettler. (This was where every, would be and wanna be, jockey and trainer congregated to test just how fast their ponies really were.) Anyway, we were in the starting gates and Dad told me, “Darcy, after those gates open you just get about 3 lengths in front and then take ahold of him . Don’t put too many lengths on Orville’s horse.” Well Orville said that he just thought my Dad was blowing smoke but after the race he said, “I’ve been around horses all my life and I’ve never seen anything as fast as Some Print was that day.”



Later, my dad and mother, Marguerite, had other top runners – horses such as Times Snazzy Lady and Makeover were multiple stakes winning mares and awfully good to us but for my money and my memories, it was Some Print who left a legacy.”

As told by Darcy Edwards Lethbridge, Alberta

CHARLIE IVINS – RANCHER, ROPER, AND RACE TRACKER

There’s an old saying that cowboys need to be tough, rugged individuals but need to have a soft heart too. Well, a rancher from Cardston who followed the rodeo circuit and could throw a mean loop competitively matched that description entirely and his name was Charlie Ivins. “In 1938, Charlie won Calgary and was named North American Champion roper. Because he always had a great love of horses when he was older and finished roping, he needed something to keep him busy so he started down the racing path. In 1961, he brought up 4 good mares from Colorado and one of the first foals we had was a mare called Custus Choice who was out of Printer’s Devil. We raced her at Fort Benton, Montana and I can remember Dad won the futurity or derby with her. We also had a foal called Diva Doran who gave us some early wins – Dad bred her mother, Tar Van, to a running stallion, Salty Charge who Cliff Ross had brought up to Alberta and this mating produced Diva. We bred many of our mares to Stormy Custus, who was owned by George Golden, and Dad used to register many of the horses he bred with Custus in their name. We owned Miss CC’s Image who could be a ratty gate wrecker at times but she was fast. Dad used to train his own horses even when he was in his 70s but in 1975, he was riding one of his colts up a hill to leg him up when the colt slipped and went over backwards. Dad broke all of his ribs on one side and punctured his lung so this wreck laid him up pretty bad but he still took horses to the race track. He loved visiting with people like Dave Healy, Ernie Kellar, and Bert Dalglish. He’d sit drinking coffee in Bert’s motor home and they’d swap horse stories and jokes like the 2 old codgers they were. Racing for my dad and Zola was a great time of their life – he was older then but he still had the dreams, drive and enthusiasm of a young man who raised good horse flesh.”

As told by Connie Ivins, his daughter, Cardston, Alberta



I was with Charlie at the race track in his later years starting in 1982 and we had so much fun together. My daughter, Kelly Cardwell, helped look after the horses too and ponied at the races. We ran Diva's Kid, Fair Custus, Care ToDeck Her and Diva's Time and one of my most distinctive memories is just how kind and helpful people were to us. I remember we had just made the long trip up to Grande Prairie and were unloading the horses out of the trailer. Just at that moment, some chuckwagons came roaring down the track and unfortunately, the horses got away from Charlie and headed to the bush. Along came Bob Finch and another guy and even though they didn't know us from Adam, they volunteered to saddle up with Charlie and go looking for them. They must have split up some where on the trail because Charlie came back around 11:00 at night feeling pretty dejected. However, he soon was elated because the other guys had found the horses and brought them back about an hour earlier. The guys were all covered with mosquito bites and welts but I just couldn't believe how they would take hours searching for some lost horses belonging to total strangers. But that's what I remember about the race track... the total kindness of the people we met there."

As told by Zola Cardwell Lethbridge, Alberta

THREATIN JET - THE ART AND MARILYN NELSON STORY

"My dad, Art, had always owned quarter horses but what made him so excited about racing them I'll never know. I can remember though Dad and Gerry Going having some match races. We owned such mares as Linda Kilobar and Molly Gay who ran early on. We also owned Go Sure Shot but probably, the horse that most people remember is our grey horse, Threatin Jet. Dad bought him from Jack Miller from High River and Jet was an honest, hard knockin runner and just plain tough in any race. When he retired, he stayed on the farm till he died. We always trained our own horses, Dad was very easy to get along with and there was always excitement over who was going to out run who. We had some real rivalries - Edwards owned Some Print and there were just a lot of good horses back then."

As told by Blair Nelson Milo, Alberta



“What I remember is all the good friends quarter horse racing gave us – we enjoyed the visits , the camaraderie and every weekend, we couldn’t wait to load up the horses and go to another race meet. Art was really involved; in fact I think he was President of the association but I’m not sure of the exact dates. I also remember some crazy moments like the time we drove to Enchant to run Go Sure Shot. They were behind the starting gates when Sure Shot dumped the rider off, pulled away from Art and high-tailed it back to the bush and down the road headed home. We never caught up to him for a long while and he had gone miles by this time. Anyway, Art caught him and we just jumped him back into the pick-up and carried on for home. We didn’t have even a horse trailer then but Sure Shot was quite willing to jump back in the stock racks. I guess he just didn’t want to race that day... Maybe, his mood wasn’t in it or the weather was too hot.”

As told by Marilyn Nelson

“I think Artie Nelson was one of the greats of quarter horse racing and plain and simple, just a wonderful man. In the beginning, I know he worked tirelessly to put a straight away in at Milo and one time we were behind the gates and another quarter horse diehard (I can’t remember his name now) turned to him and said “Art, you can go home now. You managed to get this track built for us and your job is done.” I thought at the time this was a fitting tribute for a man who did so much. I also know that when racing was in the area, you could stable at Art’s, his horses were put in the corrals so that his friends’ horses could be put away in the barn. That’s just the way Art was, a quiet man but a man who stood by your side whenever you needed him.”

As told by Jim Munro, his old and loyal friend

THE EARLY YEARS WITH CLIFF WHITELOCK

“I had this brilliant idea I could get rich running quarter horses and I had always been obsessed with fast horses even as a kid riding lap and tap races at some little sports ground –that’s why I got into running quarters,” chuckles Cliff Whitelock. “ About getting rich, well everyone knows that never happened but Audrey and I had a lot of fun and met a lot of friends running our horses.” I don’t remember exactly when we started but it was in the 60s and I even have some win pictures when I look a lot younger so it was a while back.”

“In 1968, I went to Calgary with 2 horses as Stampede Park was having exhibition quarter horse races and I pulled down there with Count Kilobar and Tina. Count Kilobar went on to become a Superior



Halter Horse and gained an outstanding reputation in the show ring but I knew he was quick, real quick. His daddy, King Leo Bar, could cut steers in a blink of an eye and even though, he was a small, dumpy cutting horse, he had ran a lot of AAA times so it was no wonder that Count Kilobar was quick too. My other little mare was Sugar Buds Tina and she could really scamper – she was a solid AA mare. You do crazy things though when you're bitten by the racing bug. I can remember I went up to Fort Assinaboine around 1970 to run Kit Van Bar and there were no riders. I was over 40 then but I rode him myself and I had to send her 5/8 of a mile because they wouldn't run any shorter distance. Well, we were both a little played out but we still won the race.

What I can remember about running then was that everybody and his dog helped you out. If you didn't have an over-girth, some one would lend you one. If you didn't have a rider, somebody's cousin would show up and you took your chance, that's just the way it was. We had a lot of laughs and even when I couldn't get away from work and Audrey took the horses to the track herself, there was always someone willing to give her a hand to get them saddled and into the gates. We owned a little mare named Leanne that could really blister out of the gates - she was mainly Audrey's mare and set a track record for 300 yards at Medicine Hat. We ran Just Another Jet, a big tough bay gelding, who was a deadly 870 horse and we won the Enoch Speed Sprint with him in 1994.

We've brought some pretty good running stallions into Alberta -in 1969 I bought Better Believe It, a direct son of Mr. Bar None from Oscar Jeffers Jr. in Oklahoma and I also stood Limdeck, a son of Moon Deck, who I bought from Everett Limbeck in Oregon. There were a lot of good horses sired by these stallions.

We still breed running horses and ended up winning the Prairie Gold Futurity in 2001 with a homebred, Ali Rey, so it's pretty safe to say we'll always have running horses around."

The AQHRA would like to salute Cliff and Audrey Whitelock – people who were in on the ground floor and are still involved in our 50th anniversary celebration.

As told by Cliff and Audrey Whitelock Drayton Valley, Alberta



CHAPTER 3 - THE SUPER SEVENTIES START IT UP AGAIN TIME FRAME - 1970s

RACING POPULAR IN NORTHERN ALBERTA TOO - THE JERRY STOJAN STORY

The same winds of racing which were blowing through central and southern Alberta were blowing through the north as well and no one was more excited or enthusiastic about quarter horse racing than Jerry Stojan. He would rattle off quarter horse pedigrees till your head was spinning but he was also one of the sport's earliest breeders of running horses. He purchased Son of a Bar in 1969 whose pedigree showed strong Three Bars breeding and brought him back to cross with his mares. He, and his wife Irene, also owned such great mares as Trim Kim, Leo's Lark, Horton's Miss Leo and Ole Lady Jay Bar. In 1973, Leo's Lark won in Grande Prairie – she was a quiet, well-behaved little mare who never made a mistake in the gates and was a pure running fool at any distance. Jerry also purchased a stallion named Mr. Horton, a son of The Ole Man in 1976 for \$10,000. However, Jerry's death came before he could fulfill all his dreams but he passed the torch on to his family and Chuck Stojan ran many good horses in the 80s and 90s too. Chuck campaigned such notables as Radar Bars, Horton's Miss Leo, and George Rocket. The Stojans don't race quarter horses any more but we respect and appreciate all what they have done to further the racing industry.

As told by Peggy Stojan Grande Prairie, Alberta

“A horse gallops with his lungs, perseveres with his heart, and wins with his character.”

JIM AND GWEN CHIPMAN - HANDS ON THE ASSOCIATION'S WHEEL

“Jim was into racing quarter horses because at first, he was into show horses and he felt that effort was just too political. He didn't like the idea of your halter horse being judged not on its own merit but rather, on who was holding the halter shank at the time. So, in 1973, he decided to start running quarter horses and we called around people who were interested in re-establishing a racing association for Alberta. Jim was the President for 3 years and I was the secretary for 4. I can remember we rented an old photo copier and I put out the newsletter to keep all our members informed on what was going on, upcoming race meets, race results and it was quite a job. Our first actual race horse was one we owned in partnership with Don Hanson. He was called Big Blow



but it was quite comical in Stettler because on the program, they called him Big Glow. I didn't want the kids to cheer for him unless he won – somebody else could own Big Glow. He did win and after that, Jim bought Fair Davy, an Alberta stallion who sired a number of good race horses. We bought Fowler's Candy down in Idaho from Virginia Goodman and it was a very odd situation in that another guy had previously purchased her and took her back. He told Virginia, "This horse is absolutely no good, she's worthless " so Jim told Virginia that he'd like to try her and the rest is history.

Jim was quite a tease and one time he had this beautiful filly. I asked him, "Where did she come from?" He hummed and stammered around till I knew something was fishy. Then, he said, "Well, if you must know the papers are in your name". He thought I wouldn't really want a race horse but I just looked at him and grinned and replied, "Great, I'll keep her." The biggest mistake we probably made as a racing decision was selling a horse instead of keeping her and that was Times Snazzy Lady. We sold Snazzy as a yearling to Dennis Edwards and what a terrific race horse she turned out to be. She was out of Ernie's stud, Now Is The Time and one of Jim's mares, Miss Snazzy Leo. She earned \$101,884 which certainly, was quite a feat for a mare who was a two year old in 1989.

Jim trained for a number of people but Alex Link's mare, Jet Cadence, was special. When we went to Helena to run her in a futurity, she jumped at a shadow and failed to qualify. Jim was naturally disappointed so he challenged the trainer who had won to a match race- just the 2 horses, Seems Good and Jet Cadence. There was a tremendous amount of interest in the race, even the stewards agreed to supervise it. Anyway, no shadows were jumped this time and Jet won by a half-length and Jim felt vindicated.

Jim's training philosophy was unusual; he believed if a horse can run, it can perform, it can rodeo, it can be a using horse, it can do anything. That's why he'd often jump on his race horse bare back and ride him back from the test barn."

The AQHRA sends a big bouquet of thanks to Gwen Chipman and her late husband, Jim. We're glad they ran fast horses, we appreciate her being one of the earlier secretaries and we thank her for keeping that old photocopier churning.

As told by Gwen Chipman Taber, Alberta



RUNNIN' L RANCH - THE LACZO FAMILY

“I grew up with horses and did just about every thing with them. As a young girl, I grew up on a farm and we used horses as work horses. I rode flat horses, I rodeoed, I barrel raced and then Donnie drove chariots and chuck wagons too. When I had Tony I was barrel racing a week before he was born, took the weekend off when I was in the hospital, and the weekend after that I was back competing at another rodeo. We were extremely busy then and our kids just came with us whenever we were working with the horses. I remember one time Donnie was at work so I had to exercise his chariot team and I had just a flat sleigh that you stood on to drive them. Anyway, Brant was just a toddler and Tony was just a baby – I turned the corner way too fast, the kids rolled off the sleigh into the deep snow and both of the boys were howling and crying. Later on, we invested in a PMU facility and operation so our thoughts were if we have all these mares, why don't we raise some better quality horses and do something with them? A black mare named Rare Bow was really our first race horse back in 1974 and she was just an outstanding mare. Not only was she an honest runner, it didn't matter what we bred her to they were runners too. We hauled her down to Texas and bred her to Aforethought. When Donnie first saw the colt, he just shook his head and said, “It's about as big as a jackrabbit” but I told him, “Maybe, its heart was that big too and sure enough, Rare Thoughts was a runner. We crossed her with Ernie Keller's stud, Now Is The Time and ended up with Rare Good Time. He was Champion Running Horse in 1986 and between him and another horse we owned, Rich Way Thinker, we won a lot of races. Both horses could really motor but it seemed, they just changed gears the farther they went and at 440 yards, they were hard to out run.

What I remember about our past was little things like when we went to Sundre to run our horses and because there were no jockeys, Brant and Mike Keller had to ride. I stayed up pretty well all night sewing some white silk pants, a shirt and a cover for his helmet. Talk about dedication and it's funny because if you see these boys today, they're pretty big men and you doubt they could ever be small enough to ride. Tony stayed small and rode on the Can-West circuit and down in Washington for a few years but even though he had lots of desire and talent, his body grew and it was just too difficult to keep his weight down. We used to take a little sweat box along with us but he wasn't meant to be small. I also can recall the great times we all had at the race track – it was just like we were one big family then; people did things together and there was a real positive atmosphere around the track. For example, Jean Dalglish was having her 65th birthday at Cochrane on one of the dark days. We all brought salads, steak, pot luck dishes and



had a big celebration with her – probably every one on the race track was there and no one went away hungry or without a laugh. Sure, we wanted to out run one another but there was a true spirit of warmth and friendship.”

Runnin’ L Ranch still is very active in the quarter horse industry. Shirley and Don continue to breed running horses with such stallions as Daddy’s Belly Roll, Wakeup Runnin, Willasboy and King’s Nest. Brant Laczo is one of the leading trainers on the community circuit today and very quick to help out anyone on the back stretch while Tony and his wife own Blue Creek Ranch. Tony stands two prominent sires – Really Movin and Speed Eye Express. The Laczos are to be commended for their efforts to improve the quality of quarter horses – they have been in the business a long time and their successes and accomplishments will be remembered by anyone that knows the history of quarter horse racing in Alberta.

As told by Shirley Laczo Winfield, Alberta

BERT AND JEAN- GOOD BUNS, GOOD COFFEE AND GOOD FRIENDS

It wasn’t unusual that Bert and Jean Dagleish became involved in quarter horse racing; after all they packed their kids to fairs and rodeos to do the show circuit or the rodeo trail so quarter horse racing was another new adventure for them. They were a team together who at one time owned 250 pack horses taking out geologists and oil companies all through northern Alberta and B.C. They had worked with horses all their life and were true horsemen but that didn’t necessarily mean they always agreed with each other.

If the air was blue when they were loading a difficult colt in the trailer, Jean would say “Now, Bert...” and you really wondered who she wanted to calm down – Bert or the colt. They didn’t always agree on who had the fastest horse either because Mom’s colt, Whirlaway Deck, was way faster than the colt Dad had picked to be a runner. They first started running in 1973 with a mare they brought up from Oregon as a yearling called What Deck. She was a daughter of Tip Top Deck and had never been touched until she was a long yearling and they wanted to haul her back to Canada. They broke her out and she won races at Kamloops and Grande Prairie even against the aged horses. In 1974, she won the B.C. Quarter Horse Derby at Kamloops and for a big mare with platter feet, she was pretty fast and would just grunt leaving the gates. Another colt, they campaigned was Whirlaway Deck, who was a super gate horse and full of grit –he’d run at any distance and in 1981 was awarded Champion Canadian Running Horse. He received his Superior Race Award as well.



Bert and Jean were “seniors” when they were at the track – Dad was in his late 70s and 80s but there were a ton of great people and great friends to help them in the paddock or starting gates . Mom was still ponying in her 70s and sometimes, other people would give her the worst knot-heads and train wrecks but I never saw any horse get away from her when she dallied up on Hippy. She ponied a very young Scott Sterr to his first win at Enoch.

We always wondered how come Mom could get “stalls” because in those days, there was a big competition to race ahead for stalls. However, she’d just smugly state that Harold and Alex Peacock were saving some at Enoch for her or her friends at Hobbema had stalls already bedded down for her. I think the secret though was all that good food and coffee she served in that motor home. If you wanted shortbread cookies, home made buns, raspberry squares and coffee, just go see Bert and Jean. There were a lot of strong friendships made in that old motor home eating Jean’s cooking and listening to Bert’s stories.

Submitted by Janice Sather Beaverlodge, Alberta

GARNET LEECH TALKS ABOUT RUNNING QUARTER HORSES

“I’ve been around horses, hundreds of horses, forever- in fact, I’m of the age when kids rode a horse to school so that’s what my life has been about – horses. I’ve been running quarter horses because it’s something that I’ve done for an awful long time and it all started because I bought 3 mares with colts on them privately and darn if one of those mares had running blood in her. She went back to Redman who was a tough ole horse and dang that’s where I got this crazy notion about running horses. And then if that wasn’t enough I bought 9 more mares, 5 of them were in foal to Hank Ace who was a direct son of Tonto Bars Hank and the other 4 were bred to Pals Top Deck. Then, of course I had the brain wave that I needed a stud to cross with these mares so I bought Mr. Robin Reed from Art Nelson and Norm Jones – gave them each \$1000 for their shares because they owned him together. Well, Mr. Robin Reed was a pretty well-bred stallion at the time and he had won a lot of races in the states. Jim Monro had brought him up from Colorado and I started crossing him with these mares. One of the first foals I had out of Hank Ace was Dolls Bar Two; she won the Alberta Bred Futurity at High River in 1976. I can remember it had rained and rained, not just a little rain but the track was just pure muddy slop. She had been the 9th fastest qualifier and the only reason I got to run was because one horse had dropped out. Anyway, we were lucky enough to draw the 7 hole and I told Jody Buxton if you get out ahead of the rest take her as far to the fence as you can because it was a little more solid ground so that’s what



he did. Dolls Bar 2 came screaming right down the outside and she was so close to the fence that Marilyn Anderson couldn't even take her picture!

What I remember about those times – so many stories it would be hard to tell 'em all. I remember in 1977 we went to Grande Prairie and it rained the whole 5 days we were there- I'm not kiddin. It rained so hard I'm sure beaver were swimming in the ditches. When we had gone up there, along the highway was an R-V trailer dealership so I traded my old camper for a brand new holiday trailer, a Prowler, and we thought we were really up town. Well anyway, one of the first initiations it had was at Grande Prairie in the mud and grime. John Beierbach and Al Davis stayed with me that night and when we woke up the next morning, one was laying on the floor and one was sprawled over Florence's new chesterfield. Florence was pretty mad about all the mud but she got over it.

I also remember that sometime in the 70s Jim Chipman phoned me and said they were trying to start this racing association going again and a bunch of us got together and put up \$100 each to get it started. I can't remember who all was there but I can remember Jim Chipman, Ernie Keller, Charlie Ivins, Al Davis and myself.

Another great horse I owned was What I'll Be, a son of Tiny Charger, who I bought at a sale in Denver. His mother was a full sister to Top Rockette who was a World Champion mare so he had all the credentials to run. I think I paid \$5000 or \$5500 for him but after the sale, a guy said that I had bought the best horse in it. He won a lot of races for William and me, ran AAA times at tracks from Medicine Hat to Enoch, was a Superior Race Horse and ended up even siring some pretty good running colts. The filly Darcy Edwards owned, was out of What I'll Be and so was my good filly, Thermy's Image, as well as Charging Possum, Tiny Bar Doll and Tara's What A Charge. Another fond memory quarter horse people have is the times when What I'll Be hooked up with Kinland and Tango King. Both horses were sprinting champions - in fact, Tango Kid was a World Record Holder at 3 ½ furlongs...Kinland came out from Northlands and the buzz was that nothing we had at Enoch would run with him going 660 yards. Well, What I'll Be put it to Kinland and beat him and Tango King ran third. Two years later, his connections came back and asked for a rematch but at a longer distance, 770 yards. So, we loaded up in the gates again and this time What I'll Be won by an even bigger margin. There was a lot of money bet on the outcome and the guys with big hats smoking cigars before the race went away with lighter wallets and disappointed faces."

Garnet Leech is still around the track especially at Lethbridge because it's pretty close to home. If he has a horse in the race with you, you better remember for sure it'll be tough to outrun, but after the race



is over go up and ask him for a story . I'm sure he'll be glad to tell you one and I know it'll really be time well spent listening.

As told by Garnet Leech Medicine Hat, Alberta

JOHN AND FAY BEIERBACH - GOLDEN YEARS AT THE TRACK

“When John and I were running horses together all I can say is that it was a wonderful period of our life. We had raised our family, worked hard, but we didn't want to stay on the ranch and bother our kids, we wanted some excitement and purpose. Running quarter horses and racing was the exact prescription for a lot of us in our “senior years”. We made so many wonderful friends, ran some great horses like Kotari, Miss Rood Copy, Deck O Harts, Star Charge Leo, Samhill Blue and Motion Picture and traveled all over Alberta, and parts of the U.S. One year, I counted we had ran at over 20 bush tracks between Arizona and Grande Prairie. John would drive the truck and big horse trailer with 6 horses in it and I would follow him with the motor home pulling the 4 horse trailer. I can remember crazy times like the time we were lost in a snow storm coming through Salt Lake City. I knew Johnnie was going the wrong way on the free way because my John was not a map reader and never followed one in his life. I just kept going though through this blizzard because I didn't want to lose him. (There were no cell phones then - traveling with John sure would have been easier if there were but somehow, in every situation we could find something to laugh about.) We always had ranch horses but when our sons were roping they needed faster and better horses so with that in mind, we bought Mr. Snazzy Bar from Denver in 1975. He had won some races as a 2 year old and we crossed him with some mares on the ranch. That started us thinking about racing but as every one knows in racing, there are heart aches too. I remember I purchased the most beautiful filly you could ever wish for in Miles City and her previous record showed she was a bona fide runner. Anyway, we took her to Red Deer for her first start and the track was knee deep in mud and very heavy. She snapped a leg off her very first race and I was heart-broken. John and I worked together at the track -he ponied our horses but while he was doing that, I was cleaning stalls or grooming. It wasn't what many people think about retirement but for us, it was perfect and we couldn't wait till spring rolled around and we were back racing.

I think what is so special in quarter horse racing history is the people who were at the race track. They were like family to us - we couldn't wait to see one another again and there were some fantastic visits with people I hold dearly in my heart even today. ”

As told by Fay Beierbach Medicine Hat, Alberta



MAKING YOUR MARK - ERNIE KELLER'S CONTRIBUTION

“How I first got into quarter horses was going on a holiday in 1975. Really! Shirley and I had taken a holiday and drove down to San Antonio where I went to a horse sale. I had no more idea of buying a horse than flying to the moon but that was where I bought 2 horses, Laico Leo Bar and Jag Rebel. I even had to buy a trailer down there, put a ball on my motor home and our holiday was abruptly over. Jag Rebel wasn't much but the roan stud, Laico Leo Bar, was the horse who totally hooked me into racing quarter horses. I purchased Laico Leo Bar, who was a son of Laico Bar as a 3 year old and in his derby year, he won 8 out of 10 races so no wonder we had enthusiasm! Jody Buxton first rode him then Leanne Knechtel rode him as a 4 year old. He was a solid AAA runner but Jim Chipman and I always had a rivalry going who had the fastest horse - Laico Leo Bar or Fowler's Candy. We used to give each other the gears constantly but everyone around the track wondered the same question. We only hooked up the once and it was at Medicine Hat. Wouldn't you know it Chipman beat me but to tell the truth, the race was so close that I said it was a dead heat. The stewards gave it to Fowler's Candy but I always kidded Jim that the reason this happened was because his horse had a white nose while Laico Leo Bar's was black and you couldn't see it in the picture. The next year I went to Denver and purchased 4 running horses, Angelina's Bug was one of them and she was a pretty classy filly. Another one was Miss Five Moons, a flashy black mare - I only paid \$1500 for her. Later, I sold her to Iron Horse Ranches and she won a lot of races for them.

I trained quarter horses for years, mainly my own but I trained for Ed Welsh and he had some really fine runners such as Regal's Black Velvet, Timely Bid and Bit of Rockette. I remember a horse of Alex Links, Even Jet who was out of one of Alex's good mares. I ran that horse 5 times in a row at Lethbridge, a week apart for every race and he won 5 in a row. He developed a real following at Lethbridge and was a crowd favorite.

Perhaps, my main achievement concerning quarter horse breeding and racing was I did bring up some very strong stallions into Alberta. All of these stallions sired horses which were well known at the race track. In fact, Bar Hemp and Now Is The Time were Alberta's leading sires five years in a row. I brought Bar Hemp, a direct son of Hempen and out of a Three Bars mare named Three Lilies, up from Oklahoma. There were some good runners from him like Bar Hemps Buddy that Edwards owned and the filly owned by Pat and Mike Murphy, Three Little Indians. She was a very tough filly to outrun. Now Is The Time sired big strong horses - Payforaday, Lucky Time Charlie and Rare Good Time were all solid AAA and top AAA runners. Times Snazzy Lady owned by the Edwards was



just about unbeatable every time she came out of a starting gate. Bit Moore, a son of Mr. Jet Moore, was another stallion I introduced into the country and you still can see his name on many pedigrees”.

Ernie Keller now trains Thoroughbreds and he’s still around the race track. He’s an individual who spent years and decades with quarter horses and we’d like to recognize Shirley and him for their contribution to the racing industry. Bravo!

As told by Ernie Keller Spruce Grove, Alberta

THE DAVE AND SHIRLEY HEALY STORY

“My dad was always interested in racing horses, on the reserve we were forever tearing across the prairie to see which horse was the fastest so it was only natural that he became interested in quarter horse racing. I think my dad bought his first horse from Charlie Ivins called Why Joe. However, around 1974 we ran Barbie’s Finale and she could get out and dangle. Dad also owned Toyote, a short, little sorrel horse who if you ever saw him you wouldn’t think he could out run a fat man but he was very fast and had a lot of wins for us. We campaigned Stormy’s First Light and that horse won at Coeur De Laine and she won the derby at High River too.

My dad was a public trainer back in the 70s and 80s. He trained for a lot of owners such as Jerry Stojan and Alf Brown. I remember one funny story because when we first started training Jerry’s horses he was worried that my dad would be out partying all night and Jerry would have to stay awake and vigilant to look after the horses. It was really ironic because Dad didn’t drink and when Jerry confessed to him about his concerns, they both had a good laugh together. We won the 1983 Alberta Bred quarter Horse Futurity for Jerry with his mare, Horton’s Miss Leo and ran Ole Lady Jay Bar and Almost Trim Kim. I remember how sad it was when Jerry was dying from cancer and by this time, he was too sick to even come out of the house to see his horses. My Dad, Dave took the horses right up to his place and we showed him them from the lawn. Jerry cried seeing them but we knew, it would be a special moment for him. That’s the type of man my dad is too – he’s considerate of others and is really well-respected at the race track. Dad won quite a few races for Alf Brown with a horse called Rockies Rocket back then too.

I remember funny moments too such as taking a little too much time over coffee. Around 1980, we ran Ebars Limdeck, who was from Cliff Whitelock’s stud and a real tough running horse. However, he was a tough gate horse too and after numerous gate wrecks, my dad decided to tie him in the gates early in the morning at Grande Prairie. So Gerry Bouchard, Dad and I tied him with a flipping halter securely in and left



him. We decided to go for breakfast and coffee and probably stayed to long gabbin and swapping stories. When we came back, Ebars had a couple of black eyes but he never flipped in the gate again and sometimes, an education like this can turn a horse's attitude around."

Dave and Shirley still come to the races especially at Lethbridge where it's close to home. The AQHRA are glad they do because it's people like them that were the origins of what we do and celebrate today – quarter horse racing at its finest.

As told by their son, Geoff Healy Cardston, Alberta

DR. AL DAVIS – WIT, CHARACTER AND A LOVE FOR RACING

"I've been racing for a lotta years, probably started in 1975 but the first real good runner was Bar Dot Jet. I bought him in Stevensville, Montana and in 1978 won the saddle for Champion Aged Quarter Horse in Alberta. At High River, Jack Cutts wanted to buy him from me but Jack is a little close with his money and a tricky devil. He brought a bottle of whiskey over to try and soften me up. I told my wife to go get an empty pickle jar and all the time we were talking, I pretended to be a little drunker than I was but every time Jack was distracted or would get up to go to the bathroom, I'd pour my drink into the pickle jar. Finally, Jack wanted to get down to some serious horse dealing but I told him "I was on to what he had done and no, I wouldn't sell my horse." He said looking at the pickle jar, "Well, at least are you going to give me my whiskey back?" I replied, "Hell no, I'm gonna drink it and keep my horse too."

I also owned a bay filly, April's Venture, who was pretty rapid and won some races. She was supposed to be tattooed at Kalispell but right on her papers instead of a tattoo number, the word IMPOSSIBLE was stamped. If you wanted a fight on your hands, just go into her stall with scissors, metal or a tattoo kit as we soon found out. Her full sister was a beautiful sorrel mare, pretty with lots of chrome but that's why you should never trust a blond. That filly wouldn't run a lick. In fact, she thought she was supposed to chase all the other ones home. Eventually, she ended up as a prize winning show horse.

Another fair horse I owned was Cosmic Pistol who was out of Pistol Bar and if you beat on him long enough, he would find a faster gear. Anyway, we were down in Montana and I stuck him in a claiming race, I think it was for \$1000 and he was claimed. After the race, the guy came up to me all apologetic and contrite. He said, "I'm so sorry I claimed your horse. I shouldn't have done that; I bet you're really mad at me now". I looked at him as if he was crazy and said, "Mad at you, I could kiss you right now but you might think I'm gay." That's my theory on running



horses- you can't be married to them. You're further ahead sometimes to run them in a claiming race. If they are claimed on you well, if you love 'em that that much, claim them back. That's the name of the game.

I remember lots of crazy things happening on the bush tracks like hot air balloons coming down outta the sky at High River. Those stupid balloons coming down right next to the track made my horses come unglued. I wonder what brainwave thought that up? I also think someone should write a book called "Stories Trainers Tell You". Can you imagine all the tales that would be in it?

I still go to the track every chance I can. There's many great people there and there's never a dull moment. I have a nice mare out of Jus Cash and she's bred to Midnight Corona; I'm really looking forward to when that foal is on the ground and if it'll be a runner."

Al Davis or Doc Davis as most people call him is one of a kind and if you're interested in quarter horses, you should meet him. I guarantee you he'll keep you laughing. When we're celebrating our 50th anniversary, we're celebrating real characters such as him.

As told by Al Davis, Medicine Hat, Alberta

A FRIEND TALKS ABOUT JACK CUTTS

"Jack Cutts is a straight up kind of guy -if he doesn't like you, he'll tell you so. I knew him and hung around with him when we were running quarter horses together back in the 70s. Jack owned some good horses- Win's Eagle, Caranot and a horse called Slightly Dangerous. That was the wrong name for him because he wasn't just Slightly Dangerous; he shoulda been called Totally Dangerous. He was totally unpredictable; he'd buck, kick bite, strike and I'll put it this way, he wasn't kind. Jack had a special flipping halter made out of old tire chains for him but I'll tell you how really tough that horse was. One time, he spooked and got going the wrong way on the race track. He was so totally out of control; he ran head on to another horse and killed him. The other horse broke his neck but I doubt it even phased Dangerous. He might have had a mild concussion but it never bothered him any. Jack doesn't race horses any more but he still rides up in the mountains - one of the last times, we visited he took me on a 37 mile ride. For Pete's sakes and a whole lot more #**#^## I hadn't rode in years and I wore a piece of hide off my backside about the size of a dollar bill clear through my jeans. I don't think you could write about quarter horse history though without writing about Jack Cutts. He's simply a legend in Alberta racing lore and if you wind your way up the back road into the bush close to Montana and meet the man, you'll understand why."

As told by his good friend, Al Davis Medicine Hat , Alberta



THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS - FIRST TRACK RECORD HOLDERS

- 1968 - Exceptabull set a track record going 220 yards at Calgary Exhibition Grounds clocking 12:46. Exceptabull was a stout, solid bay horse owned by Bobby Barr of Arrow Wood Alberta. He also set track records as a 5 year old at High River in 1969 for 440 yards -22:71 and at Millarville for 350 yards - 19:51.
- 1969 - Some Print as a three year old puts down track records in Calgary for 350 yards in the time of 18:86 and at High River in the time of 18:96. Dennis Edwards owned and trained the horse while Darcy Edwards was his jockey.
- 1969 - Shain Coldstream as a 2 year old set track records for 300 yards at Calgary and at High River in a time of 13:91. He was owned by the Harold Scoville family.
- 1971 - a bay mare, Molly Gay, owned by Art and Marilyn Nelson set a new track record at Millarville going 350 yards in 18:98.
- 1976 - Doll Bars 2 owned and trained by Garnet Leech, set a new track record at High River for 350 yards - 18:78.
- 1976 - Fowler's Candy, a sorrel mare with a big blaze face owned and trained by Jim Chipman set new track record as a 3 year old at Medicine Hat 440 yards - 22:70.
- 1976 - What Deck, a platter-footed bay mare, owned by Bert Dalgleish and trained by Janice Dalgleish set a new track record as a 4 year old at High River for 400 yards- 21:16.
- 1976- Laico Leo Bar, a roan stallion as a 4 year old and owned by Ernie Keller set a new track record at Medicine Hat for 400 yards - 20:75.
- 1976 - Leo's Lark, a little buckskin mare, owned by Jerry Stojan, sprinted to a new track record at Medicine Hat as a 6 year old - 18:59.
- 1977 - Rare Bow, a flashy black mare owned by Don and Shirley Laczo, set a new track record as a 3 year old at High River running a time of 20:36 for 400 yards.
- 1977 - Angelina's Bug dashed to a new track record at Medicine Hat as a 2 year old. She was owned by Ernie Keller and ran a time of 18:19.
- 1977 - Leanne, a speedy bay mare owned by Cliff and Audrey Whitelock, set a new track record as a 3 year old running 300 yards in a time of 16:56.
- 1979 - Jet Cadence, a 3 year old filly owned by Alex Link, set a track record at Cochrane for 250 yards in a time of 13:46.



- 1979 - Bo Day Shus, a big bay gelding, owned by Barry and Janice Sather set 2 new track records. He ran 250 yards at Grande Prairie in a blistering time of 13:24 and set a new track record at Enoch for 400 yards in a time of 20:16 when he was a 4 year old.
- 1979 - Miz Re Lee, a classy bay filly, owned by Mac McLeod, ran 440 yards as a 3 year old at Enoch in the time of 23:12.

Perhaps, these quarter horses weren't as fast as the runners we own now - it's definitely true they're not but track conditions aren't the same either. Jockeys back then often weighed in at over 140 lbs. and post parades could be a little "western." However, don't discount these runners because they were full of heart and fire and represented the finest for their time. And, oh by the way Bo Day Shus still holds the track record for Grande Prairie - his speed index of 106 going 250 yards has been tested but never broken.

Submitted by Audrey Whitelock and taken from her early AQHA Chart Books



CHAPTER 4 - RACING FEVER HITS US ALL TIME FRAME - THE 80s

GOING DOWN THE ROAD WITH DONALDA AND EARL

If a statistician was ever going to compile a poll over who put the most miles on their pick-up truck going to the races or hauling horses down the road, I would just have to get on the bandwagon and nominate Earl Brown and Donalda Cochrane to top the list. Not only does this couple have bragging rights for being successful owners, trainers and breeders but they drive to Texas, Oklahoma, California, or Lethbridge the way most people drive to the grocery store. They have been racing since the 70s and Donalda even used to ride thoroughbreds and quarter horses on the bushes. (Funny, it was never a problem for her to make weight.) As Donalda says, “I don’t know why I started racing but when I did, I jumped in with both feet. Earl sometimes thought I was nuts about it but then he realized I was just plain nuts. We have lots of stories but some of them wouldn’t be printable. Our very first racehorse was Miss Joker’s Deck, who was a ½ sister to What Deck, and we bought Miss Joker’s Deck from Red Truitt in Oregon. From then on, we have owned mares and bred them. In the 1980s we purchased 2 stallions, Whirlago and Spook Dance, who we used in our breeding program.”

They have owned some memorable horses such as Racing Time, Alcan Run, Team Captain, Chop Time, Sign of Rona, Shady Bailey, Wyatt Steel, Totally Special Girl, Western Jeopardys, Promised Class, Class Project and many more. They’ve ran on tracks from Kamloops to Cochrane, Trinity Meadows to Los Alamitos, Houston to Hobbema and if you ask either one for a favor, they’ll be glad to help you out. One exciting highlight of their racing endeavors was in 2004 when Western Jeopardys represented Canada in Houston, Texas in the Professional Claiming Challenge race. “Jeep” finished a close third and would have won it with a few more jumps. Another achievement that has brought them fame is from the movies. The horse that doubled as Seabiscuit in that popular movie was born at Fort St. John on their farm. Donalda Cochrane bred and raised the bay Thoroughbred, I Two Step Too, that was used as the bay wonder horse, Seabiscuit. Donalda is like the “Energizer Bunny” and Earl is her number one supporter but Earl Brown can really look at the conformation of a horse with a “good eye”. It’s these qualities which make them a dynamic racing duo.

They are still involved in racing and breeding their own foals. They also own 2 stallions – Class Project and Promised Class who are enrolled in the Alberta Gold Stallion Stakes Program and have sired a number of winners and stakes winners. When will they give up racing? My prediction is NEVER – they’ll probably be around to celebrate our next



50th year anniversary and Donalda will be saying “Earl, I think these yearlings this year in the north pasture are the best ones we’ve ever raised” and I’m sure Earl will nod his head and agree with her.

As told by Donalda Cochrane Fort St. John, B.C.

WANT TO HAVE A BABY AT THE RACE TRACK?

“I’d never been around horses in my life other than a few farm horses and occasional Shetland pony, wasn’t around them or wasn’t much interested in them until I met Jan. She lived and breathed horses as did her parents so pretty soon, it wasn’t long before I was driving the horse trailer to pick up horses, halter breaking colts and paddocking their race horses. Since 1975, we have been hanging around race tracks and in our time, have had some memorable runners and then others who were doubtful. Doubtful and questionable why we had bought them in the first place and doubtful and questioning our own sanity why we still kept them. The first horse we owned together and the one that still is firmly entrenched in our hearts was Bo Day Shus. He was a big gelding by Etabo and on a dry track was hard to beat but if there was a cloud in the sky don’t bet him because he would just slip and slide like a big moose. We bought him by telling the Royal Bank we wanted a farm improvement loan to build some fences and corrals because who in their right mind would borrow money to buy a race horse and better yet, what bank would lend money in 1979 for such a request. Anyway, Bo was very good to us – the first time we ran him was at Grande Prairie and when I picked him up, Dennis Pabrum, our jockey said to me “This horse isn’t a race horse, he’s a bleepin’ jet”. Bo had ran a speed index of 106, was over 6 lengths in front in a 250 yard race. Bo was honest and true and when he seriously injured himself, it was a sad day for a lot of people at the race track. We took him to Saskatoon, had him operated on and he wore a cast for over 3 months. He never ran on a race track again but was sound all the rest of his life and would beat anything in from the pasture.

We owned horses like Our Dog Spot, Luna Time, Oak Trees Tuffenuf, Tag Me If You Can, Just Another Six, Hit the Latch, Really Movin, Red Hot N Leavin , Really Rona and many more. We ran for quite a few years down in Oklahoma and managed to qualify for 12 Grade 1 or 2 stakes. Heck, we even won some. However, the time I can honestly say I was the most excited at any race track was in Cochrane in 1980 when we just about had our first child there. We were camped there when about 7 o’clock in the morning Jan said to me, “I think this baby is coming sooner than it’s supposed to be”.



These were words I didn't want to hear right then but it was obvious that I had better drive to some hospital and do it quickly. We were racing Bo that afternoon so I high tailed it over to Donalda, threw the bridle and blinkers at her and said, "Would you take Bo to the gates; I'm headed to the hospital." We gunned it for Calgary but Jan wanted to stop for breakfast. I said very pointedly, "Are you outta your mind. We're not stopping for breakfast." My adrenalin was really flowing especially when we had to find the Foothills Hospital and hope there was an available doctor. So much for the thought of taking any pre-natal classes. We were far too busy taking care of important matters like running race horses. Shortly after we arrived, our first son, Travis was born. I phoned back to the race track to tell them our good news and they announced it over the microphone that he was the best Alberta bred that day. Then, Bo went out and won us another race so we were indeed, double winners.

We plan to continue to run quarter horses for a long time. Our friends are there, our past is there, our hopes are there, racing is just a part of who we are. We're very proud to be a part of the 50th anniversary of quarter horse racing and appreciate all the other wonderful people who paved the way."

As told by Barry Sather Beaverlodge, Alberta



DO YOU REMEMBER??????

1. Randy Putman who came up from Texas to ride on the Albert circuit with his thick Texas drawl. He knew how to stick a horse though and was a leading rider.
2. Gib Daniels, his lovely wife, and just how good their kids could ride. Gib would put his young son on some pretty rank horses and even though his son was only 9, he'd better not complain if the horse acted up or ran off.
3. Standoff races
4. Ray McMillan using Moon Key who was a very well-behaved stallion, to pony Big Tuff Honor Jet and Gasohol (both very rank stallions.) Ray never seemed to have any problems though.
5. Kenny Anderson calling John Beierbach, Garnet Leech and Al Davis, "The Three Amigos."
6. What a fantastic singer Dennis Dickinson was and the good job he did explaining sale pedigrees.
7. Barry Hope's grin
8. Barely Shaken breaking track records in his first start at Lethbridge
9. Just how fast mares like Makeover, Thermy's Image, Racing Time, Seditious, Knowhentoholdem, Packin the Fire, Vartanash, Three Little Indians, Times Snazzy Lady, Cleats Rockette, Adulteress, Lady of the Rockies, Poutin Lori, A Special Martini, Our Lady Kas, and Oklahoma Fun could actually run. Imagine having a fillies and mares stake with a crew like this. Ouwhee...none of them would run under a speed index of 98 unless they were tired.
10. Just how many times we were discouraged because we lost our best horse or lost our super race prospect. Our hearts might have been broken but as always, we soldiered on in the face of adversity.



THREE GENERATIONS - THE MACLEOD CLAN

If you were visiting Alberta bush tracks in the 80s or 90s, chances are you would run into some B.C. invaders - the Macleods from Cranbrook and Fruitdale, B.C. At one time, there were 3 generations of B.C. MacLeods involved with racing and when you were invited to the Macleod family re-union held at the race track in Enoch, you witnessed more of the gathering of the clan. After his dad, Mac Macleod, retired from teaching and was campaigning a quarter horse runner named Miz Re Lee in 1979, John Macleod left his showing and reining pursuits to help him work with their running horses. In 1980, John, Sue and Geoff crossed the mountains to come over and run their horses against their Alberta counterparts. Geoff was the perfect size to be an exercise rider and it was often left to Sue and Geoff to look after the horses while John drove back to Cranbrook to work. They owned such horses as Little Bar Penny, Fanny's Print but it was Batu Kahn who really set the bush tracks on fire. He won many futurities in 1982 and dueled it out to run third to another great horse, Terrific Shipleave, in the Enoch futurity. Who could forget their biggest winner though- a horse who was so appropriately named Sweet Rewards? Sweet Rewards, a son of Sir Alibi, won the Canada Cup Futurity in 1997 and in the win picture, there are 4 generations of the family represented. When I asked John and Sue to relate some of their race track memories, there were many chuckles.

"We remember every weekend chasing to another race track down the road. It seemed we were always in a rush because if you didn't hurry, all the stalls would be gone or you'd have to build some of your own. We remember good horsemen like John Beierbach, Red Truitt and Jean Dalglish. We remember sad moments like when we lost Batu Kahn at Millarville when he went through the outside rail and drove a plank through himself. We remember listening and laughing to Jim Munro and Garnet Leech's stories-we'd be laughing so hard that we remembered and re-told them for years. We remember the laughter and the friendships we have made. It's funny just how much in common you have with other people around the race track and what an important time of your life it is when you are there."

The AQHRA would like to thank John and Susan for being with us for over 25 years of racing. John has served as our association's President in 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2002. At the present time, he is on the Board of Directors and serves on the Board of Horse Racing Alberta as well. The MacLeods are friends to all at the race tracks and we appreciate their dedication to the race track community.

As told by John and Sue Macleod Foremost, Alberta



ALEX LINK - A RANCHER TURNS TO RACE HORSES

Alex Link is a gracious gentleman at the race track – soft-spoken and humble, he is a good sport and keen competitor but if your horse out runs his, Alex will be the first to offer you congratulations and shake your hand. “I started running horses in 1977 because Jim Chipman from Taber talked me into it and the idea just snowballed. Early on, I had horses with some pretty good trainers – men like Dave Healy, Jim Chipman, Ron McLeod, and the race track has some special memories for me. Probably, my first good horse was a mare called Jet Cadence; she won some derbies for me and in one race, her and Miz R Lee went head to head until the wire. What’s funny though was that Miz R Lee really won the race but had lost her jockey right out of the gates so the caption in the local paper read “Ghost Rider Wins Race.” I had some other big gun runners – Copy Bar None had 10 wins in a row but he could be a bad actor in the gates and sometimes, he just wouldn’t load either. However, he was a true runner when those gates opened and went on to be a leading barrel horse sire in Canada. I also had, Copy Poo who won the top claiming award and Dream On Copy who was a little salty too. What I remember about running in the 80s was going down the road with my son, my brother Wes, and being stuck in an eight foot camper for the summer. We’d have to tear back home to go farming but leave one of us to look after the horses and if you were the one who was stuck in Cochrane in the mud and rain without a decent toilet , well that eight foot camper got a little closed in. I also remember that old straw barn at Cochrane and what a fire trap it would have been had someone been careless with a cigarette. I remember some admirable horses too- horses like Bo Day Shus and Unerring who seemed to do every thing right. I’m still running horses, I ran Shu Can Fly in 2006 and this year, I’m sending a grey gelding from Eye Take Time that’s nominated to the Prairie Gold Stallion Stakes Program program. Anyway, nothing will keep me away from the race track and I can’t quit now – we’ll just carry on like we always did and I bet our next big winner is just around the corner.”

As told by Alex Link



KEN TAILFEATHERS - A TOP HAND AND A FRIEND TO ALL

My grandfather, Ken Tailfeathers, became involved in quarter horse racing when my dad, Dave Healy, sold him Barbies Finale as a 3 year old. She had been campaigned as a 2 year old and because I had stayed so small, unlike my older brothers, I galloped all their horses on the reserve and went with them to different race tracks. I learned many fundamental codes from my grand father. He always said “There are a lot of good guys in this world regardless of what race they are...but if you’re a jerk, you’re a jerk and that’s how people will remember you no matter what.” Grandpa was an old cowboy but he bought some excellent race horses both quarter horses and Thoroughbreds- horses like Bar Azure, Tesky Road and My Soon were well known and well-respected runners.

I remember my grandpa telling stories and joking around with people like old Charlie Ivins. One time he was grooming this horse off in the stall when this little guy kept staring at him bug-eyed so Grandpa threw the brush at him and then went and caught him. Grandpa asked him “Why are you staring at me?” It turned out that the little fella was Carl Hebert and the reason he was staring was because he hadn’t seen many natives before. My grandpa laughed, took Carl under his wing and they became very good friends. In fact, Carl was just learning to ride and wanted to apply for his jockey’s license so Grandpa let him practice on the pony horse, Jet Arrow. When Carl had to ride before the stewards, it was this horse he rode to get his license.

I remember having so much fun at the race track. There were many of us who were just kids then – the Laczo boys, Brant and Tony, William Leech, Geoff McLeod, Darryl McMillan. We grew up together in the summers and there was always something happening, some action we could stir up.

We haven’t ran horses for a while because our careers have gone in different directions. However, we’ve bred some mares now and want to get back into it. I know that Ken Tailfeathers would say “That’s a good idea, Geoff, just remember everything I taught and told you”.

As told by Geoff Healy Cardston, Alberta



RACING BIT STABLES - A LOOK AT THE BONNETT FAMILY

For a number of decades, Gerald and Diane Bonnett, along with their family ran quarter horses and they ran in the colors black, white and yellow- the same colors as their wire line company, Bonnett's Enterprises.

"I named my stable after a little sorrel mare named Racing Bit who we had bought at the Heritage Sale in 1978 and she turned out to be that special horse. Prior to that, I had bought using quarter horses for my girls from Bert Dalgleish but my first race horse I purchased from Ernie Kellar. Her name was Laico Roma and I think you had better tell Ernie this that her best speed index was 17. We weren't off to a great start with this speed demon so it was fortunate that we picked out 3 good fillies from the Heritage catalogue. In fact, Diane and I traveled to Oklahoma quite a few years - we bought such horses as Bric Brac, Racing Bit, Flicka's Toast, Stride Right, Te Twister and many more from the Heritage. Then, we'd laugh and argue over who picked out the best yearling - Diane or me. I really had to give her a hard time and tell all our friends how when she was buying her first race horse, she became so excited and intense that she kept raising her own bid. That mare cost us an extra \$1000 just because Diane was such a keener.

We went to the bush tracks mainly at Grande Prairie, Cochrane, Enoch and later Lethbridge and managed to win many exciting races. We owned, Dr. Cory, who won the Enoch Futurity in Enoch and then later, we sent him to California with Blaine but he was claimed from us by the Mexicans at Los Alamitos. Red Truitt came up from Oregon for a couple of years and trained for me and that man provided horsemanship with a lot of funny stories mixed in. I trained my own horses as well when the girls, Jackie and Sis, were around to pony and give me a hand. What I remember about the race track was how frustrating it was to run our quarter horses. There just wasn't enough races written for the number of horses entered and you were always getting drawn out. It was crazy because there was the preferred system but you could wind up with 3 stars but that just meant, your horse might get to run in another 3 weeks. Really expensive top quarter horses spent too much time standing in their stalls while some other breeds managed to run their cheapest claimers frequently, even with 4 horse fields as often as they wanted.

Along our racing journey, we purchased some excellent stallions with the intention of breeding the best mares we owned to the best stallions we could find. This was before shipped semen. We bought Bunny McKay, who had an incredible racing form in California and was a proven sire and then we bought Truly A Bunny, his son as well. We had tough luck both with Truly a Bunny and Cabachon, another well-bred stallion we brought up from California because both horses were killed in



freak accidents and we never had the chance to see what runners they could throw. From very limited foals, Cabachon sired Cash in a Flash and Chona Moon, who were Alberta Champion Gelding and Filly the year they raced. We also brought La Royal Cash and Birdzilla up to Beaverlodge and then sold them when we sold our place. In 2006, Birdzilla's off-spring really tore up the track so I guess it was lucky I brought him up from Oklahoma. I still love quarter horses and I have some babies coming from Agouti and SC Chiseled in Stone so it's something to look forward to."

The AQHRA wants to recognize Gerald Bonnett and his family for running fast horses, bringing quality bloodstock into Alberta, breeding fast horses and being a fundamental part of quarter racing history.

As told by Gerald Bonnett Lethbridge, Alberta

DON AND VERLA BONNETT - HOOKED ON RACING

"In the late 1970's , we were encouraged by Gerald and Dianne Bonnett to purchase a race horse, get in on the great fun and win some big money (ha). Kojack Jet was our first race horse and when we finally got a win that year in 1979, we were really hooked. We traveled to Oklahoma the next year and bought Flamingood and Regal Thought from the Heritage Sale. Regal Thought won the GP/Alberta Quarter Horse Derby in 1981 and went on to be a Superior Race Horse. However, Georgia's Party holds a special place in our hearts as she was every thing a race horse lover could have wished for. There were highs, lows, and total heart pounding excitement. She won 4 futurities in the United States, 2 derbies here in 1984—one in Grande Prairie and one in Enoch, plus many other races. We also bred, Cashin A Flash, who was the 1998 Champion Canadian Three Year Old gelding. All in all, we've had some very memorable horses and memorable moments racing - we're glad to be a part of the 50th anniversary."

As submitted by Verla Bonnett Beaverlodge, Alberta



FROM MELODY MOON TO PRAIRIE GOLD - THE OULTON CONTRIBUTION

“I guess it was 1977 when I ran my first race horse, Melody Moon, and probably the reason I became involved with racing was sadness. Truthfully, I needed something to do, something purposeful to occupy my time as my older brother was killed in a car accident in 1976 and I naturally had a hard time dealing with it. So my dad sent me over to Cliff and Audrey Whitelock’s ranch and Cliff became my mentor. You couldn’t ask for more helpful people to get you started into racing. I’ve owned many memorable horses, most of them I purchased from Everitt Limdeck in Oregon and there’s so many stories, I don’t know where to start and I don’t know just how many are printable. However, we’ll start with a mare called Desi Moon Rocket; she was a looker but more than that, she was a natural hook horse. I never won a straight race with her but going around the turn, she just seemed to accelerate. I won 3 hook races in 5 days at Red Deer. Then, there was Tizza Charger, who never wanted to be alone and definitely, never wanted to be in front. I picked up a lot of pay checks with him but very few win pictures. Probably, the fastest that horse ever ran was in a lightning storm at Hobbema. He never had much desire but that day, I was in the starting gates when lightning crackled all around us, thunder boomed like the second coming and Charger left that gate about 6 lengths on top. Dennis Dorchester claimed him that race but I’m sure Charger ran out of fear and desperation, he was so scared. A lot of my win pictures are of Chet Deck, another distance horse, who was real tough. It’s funny about racing – there’s only 2 places, I haven’t started horses- Calgary and Olds (when they were running there). Other than that, I can’t think of a place any where else in Alberta where I haven’t ran. You name the track- Drumheller, Vegreville, Teepee Creek... I’ve been there and some of the experiences, I’ve had were more than interesting, let me tell you. We have ran on the bushes but a gelding, we bred and owned named Buggy Burner started at Los Alamitos too – he won 5 races for me. Not too bad for a home-grown, Alberta bred horse from my own stallion, El Rey Burner.

However, one accomplishment that I am really proud of was when Roco on the Run won the AQHA for Champion Aged Mare in 2003. That was impressive but what I am more proud of is how versatile, she proved herself to be. Roco was my daughter’s 4-H project and one weekend, she took her to 4-H show, the next day, she went to a gymkhana where she placed in both barrels and poles and then the next week end, we ran her and won with her at Lethbridge. This is the epitome of what the quarter horse breed is all about – versatility and willingness to do many events well. The kids, Teagan, Lexya, Tyrel and Riordan, are all interested in racing and this is what makes it a family affair with us. My wife, Sue,



previously had no experience with horses but now is quite comfortable working with them .This past year we said we could take a different type of holiday instead of going to the race track. However, this idea was quickly vetoed down because all the kids wanted to head up to Grande Prairie for most of the summer.

My goal as President of the association in 1989 was to attain better racing with more competitive horses. I think we're well on our way to this reality because right now, Alberta is the place to race, not Oregon, not Montana or Washington but Alberta. I'm also proud of the success of the Prairie Gold Program - at its duration, we'll have paid out over a million dollars in purse money.

What lies ahead? I think my girls will pursue the passion of quarter horse racing and I think I've raised the best yearling crop of colts that I ever have so it gives us all something to look forward to. Every spring when the new foals are born, I think I have a good one, so isn't that every horseman's dream."

As told by Wes Oulton Olds, Alberta



**CHAPTER 5 - LOTS OF ACTION, TONS OF EXCITEMENT
TIME FRAME - 80s and EARLY 90s**

A LITTLE RACE TRACK HUMOR

There's always something to laugh about around the race track so here's some race track humor.

Cliff Whitelock was leaning on the paddock rails at Millarville and Conrad Scoville was leading his horse around. An old boy in the crowd hollered out to Connie.

"Hey, can that horse run?"

Connie hollered back, "Hell yes, he can run."

The old boy high tailed it to the windows to put a big bet down. Well, the long and the short of it Connie's horse ran back and the old boy came back red in the face and pure mad.

"I thought you said that horse can run."

"He can run but just not very damn fast," replied Connie with a grin.

Jim Munro vividly remembered the first time quarter horses were given a urine test. "We were at High River and my horse had won a race. There was no test barn, there was no cups provided, there was no government officials over seeing what was being done. I was leading my horse back when someone said, "Hey, when you take your horse back, catch a urine sample and bring it back."

"So, I took my horse back but I didn't know if she would make water or not and my pony horse was tied right beside her taking a long leak. I grabbed a bucket, caught some of his pee, put it in a pop bottle and gave it to the racing officials. By this time other guys needed samples too from different races so I lent them some from my pony too. We weren't trying to be smart or anything - I don't think any of the samples were really being sent out to be tested anyway but that's just what they thought they should do. We certainly have come a long way in this regard."

Donalda Cochrane was helping Ray and Evelyn McMillan with their horses because Ray had to head back to Grande Prairie and they had 2 entered in the futurity at Standoff. Ray said, "You'll be fine though because Darryl knows how we run them and the equipment we use. One wore blinkers, the other didn't. One had to be ran in a ring bit, the other a simple snaffle."



Donalda said, “No problem” and the fillies ran first and second. However, when their win pictures came back, every one got to laughing because every thing was mixed up. They had the blinkers on the wrong horse, the ring bit on the soft mouthed filly and Evelyn was chewing on them for being so stupid but according to Donalda the horses didn’t notice the differences.

At Cochrane one year, it was moving day so everyone was up busy packing things up and trying to load up tack, feed, horses and get on the road. Evelyn McMillan wanted to wash out the water buckets first but the hose wouldn’t work. She immediately began to use the most colorful language that she could and picked up the hose most carefully to examine why it wasn’t working. (Unknown to poor Evelyn, the scoundrel, Geoff Macleod, had it kinked off.) Just when the hose was right in her face, Geoff unkinked it and Evelyn received the full force of ice cold water. Geoff was killing himself with laughter as were others in the shed row. “You little, rotten” was all she said, but she soon forgave him because she brought him fudgicles and treats the next weekend just as she always did.

HANDICAPPING THE RACES - A LOOK AT GEORGE BLACK

George Black was a better; a real honest to goodness better who traveled around the “bush circuit” for decades and made money playing the ponies. In fact, he told Bert Dalglish that he had paid for his house in Calgary with what he’d made betting. He was passionate about horses and horse racing and handicapping was a part of his soul. In the mornings, Big George was always seen nosing around the shed row to see what nag was sore or asking a trainer what jock was going to ride. He vacuumed all the tidbits up into his memory and his program and then he’d head to the window. What was truly remarkable about George was how he knew the horses and what they were capable of better than most owners and trainers. Consequently, that’s how he made money at the game and you’d often hear him modestly say, “Yah, it was a good day for my picks today” as he wadded up his cash from his exacta picks at Enoch.

Holly Crichton, an amazing, talented jockey, commented on George’s wisdom when she said “George touted me on how to ride certain horses and he was right. He’d tell me that horse had tried to duck out at the rail in his previous race or a certain horse needed to be asked, all little things but I know I was a better rider for listening and doing what



he said. He truly knew more of the quirks and habits of each horse than anyone at the race track- I guess that's why he was such a good better." Audrey Whitelock echoes this sentiment. "Leanne was going off as an extreme long shot in Medicine Hat so George put a wad of cash on her - I don't know exactly how much he made but I know it was a healthy return for a few seconds investment."

Race trackers who were around in the 70s, 80s and 90s will all remember George Black. He was a personality, a fixture, a friend and a bona fide handicapper and racing fan.

LLOYD THOMPSON AND HIS GIRLS - IT'S ALL IN THE FAMILY

We've all heard the phrases, "It's a family effort" or "It's all in the family" but what do you do when you're at the race track, your horses aren't performing the way you want them to, you're frustrated and the trainer you want to blame just happens to be your young, personable, daughter. If the sparks do fly, you recognize that she knows what she is doing and moreover, she can hold her own with her strong-minded, dear old dad. Such was the case with the Lloyd Thompson-Bev Cleveland racing team from Camrose, Alberta. They were a father-daughter combination who teamed up so successfully, that both are instantly recognized around the race track and in the winner's circle.

"It all started with Ego Test in 1982 and we were really bit by the racing bug. Dad paid \$1,400 for this gelding when purses were only \$400. Ego Test ran until he was 9 years old and finished out his career with earnings of over \$30,000. I loved that horse just like I loved Vartanash. Vartanash, as a 5 year old, was fifth in the world for wins and this helped vault me into receiving the Leading Trainer Award for 1993 and 1994. Dad and I get along really well and I think all those years we spent at the track together were special for both of us. We traveled the circuit together pulling the motor home, setting up the walker and keeping the horses perking. We had a lot of laughs together even when Dad teased me about paying too much for some straw bales just because the seller happened to be a good looking cowboy.

My sister, Valerie Von Platten, is also involved in the horses but it's more in the capacity of a breeder. She stands Western Dash and as a family affair, we have bred such horses as Western Creek Song, Dashing Vartanash, Vartanash Does Dash and Western Jeopardys.

We have been racing for over 20 years and we have seen some very significant changes. The quality of horses has improved many times over and where I used to run for \$400 purse money, I now run for \$4,500 just for the average race. In addition, our stakes program has grown in leaps and bounds. We are now given incentives for breeding and owning



quality horses. Before every thing came out of our own pocket and it was difficult to justify your love for quarter horse racing if you measured it against your bank account. We now run some of our races at Northlands and Stampede Park. When we look at these improvements, they were just dreams for us years ago when all of us were just starting out.”

Keep running those horses, Lloyd Thompson and your girls. It's been a family affair but people like you are the back bone of our industry.

As told by Bev Cleveland, now following her dream and racing in New Mexico.

DO YOU REMEMBER??????

1. Gerry Bouchard's thick French accent, his beat up cowboy hat and how excited he would become when he was telling you a story?
2. The pow-wow celebrations at Enoch and how they would go on singing and dancing for days? Not much sleep but their dancing and costumes were unbelievable...
3. Just Another Six, a 3 year old gelding trained by Ron Wilcox, and owned by Barry and Janice Sather won more races in 1987 than any other horse in North America and was the top of the AQHA stats on Horses with Most Wins. He had 13 wins and was Champion Running Horse of Alberta that year.
4. Elige Bourne's raccoon tail on the back of his jockey helmet and what a hip jockey he was in his flamboyant riding style.
5. Trout Springs
6. How Dennis Dickenson's wife, Mary-Lynn, could get a horse ready to strut in the paddock. She would checker plate Li'l N Petite's rump, put yellow flowers in her mane and tail and make her look like the prettiest horse you'd ever see. No wonder the little mare won so many stakes.
7. Greg Chipman turning the corner with the Arabs at Cochrane. He was running so fast that he showed up on the photo strip with them. Somehow, the stewards didn't see the humor in the situation.
8. How many dogs used to be around the race track grounds scaring horses, jockeys, and other unsuspecting souls.
9. Jack Cutts and his tales about Win's Eagle and the wild west.
10. The Laczo boys chasing after the Bonnett girls.
11. The old fair grounds track at Grande Prairie knee deep in mud and gumbo.
12. Just how much beer could be drank at any Horsemen's Dance at any track?



13. Mickey the Tuff, the palamino stallion, who was so proudly owned by big Al Sahl from Kamloops?
14. Donald No Runner's stallion HHH Lucky Tarzan being such a dominant smoking 2 year old in 1998. Just how many futurities did he win?
15. When the gates mal-functioned at Evergreen Park, the horses were left in them, some gates opened and some didn't, Unerring and Bo Day Shus were left in and all hell broke loose. They hit the fronts so hard, the gate was teetering so badly it was about to come right over and Kenny Anderson atop of it was in perilous danger.
16. Terrific Shipleave, won the Enoch Futurity in 1982, for trainer, Ernie Kellar, and owners, Ed and Marilyn Welsh.
17. Darcy Edwards jockeying or was that before your time?
18. Red Truitt telling stories about all his racing adventures and mishaps on tracks all over North America?
19. Ross Brigdon winning the Canada Cup with Lady of the Rockies?
20. Wes Oulton having the vision/organizational skills to conceptualize and administer the Prairie Gold program.

LITTLE KNOWN FACTS ABOUT WILLIAM LEECH

1. William Leech has trained horses for close to 3 decades and to quote Richard Chamberlain's article in the AQHA racing journal, "In western Canada, it's awfully tough to outrun William."
2. He has won the Leading Quarter Horse Trainer award in Alberta over 20 times.
3. He has qualified more horses to the Challenge races than any other trainer in Canada.
4. He has won the Alberta Bred futurity too many times to count - in 1998 with I'm the Wind, in 1999 with Destiny Rode, in 2001 with Royal Quick Wind, in 2002 with Barely Shaken, in 2003 with Mr. Justin Incredible, in 2004 with He's Almost Famous, and in 2005 with Taking On A Judge. In the last 10 years, he has trained the winning horse 7 times for a 70% racing average. (We could call him the Paul Jones of the North.)
5. His dad, Garnet, taught William everything that he knows, just ask him.



RON AND DIANE MACLEOD- ANOTHER HORSEMEN, ANOTHER STORY

“We became race trackers probably because my dad’s brother, Mac Macleod, was into it and my dad, Ben, and Uncle Mac, went to a sale down in Washington and came back with a gelding named Jet Valley Joquin. He wasn’t a bad horse but later, we had some better ones such as Unerring, My Gold Spice and Cold Hand Duke. We bought Unerring from Verle Bonner – he had 2 wins on his papers from Centennial Park in Colorado and was a real nice horse for us. In 1983, we won the saddle with him for Top Aged Horse and that was an honor. When I was buying horses, I seemed to gravitate to pedigrees that had some Thoroughbred bloodlines in them. My oldest uncle, John Macleod, used to say, “If they didn’t have a little Thoroughbred blood in them, the horse wasn’t worth breaking.” I trained for a number of clients but Alex Link’s horses, Copy Bar None and Copy Poo ran exceptionally well for me.

I have a tremendous amount of memories about the race track. In fact, if I can close my eyes I see people and experiences vividly – who wouldn’t remember these people? I see Jim Munro getting whacked so hard with the overgirth snapping back against him that it just about laid him low. I see Wilton Goodstriker with his braids and Ken Tailfeathers with his cowboy hat on. I see Jean Dalglish on Hippy, Whirley on one side; Bo on the other. I see Ernie Kellar and William Leech and remember what tough trainers they were to run against. I see Geoff Macleod getting dumped back in the spruce trees so hard at Evergreen Park he could hardly get up.

Being at the race track with Diane was so exciting for us –our whole family was involved and worked together as a family with the horses. Maybe, people didn’t realize but I’m sure Diane did most of the real work at the track in the morning while I was in the office entering. One year, my son Dean, wanted to make some extra cash so we leased a quarter horse filly from Ed Welsh. Dean was only 17 that year but Ice N Chips won 8 races that year for him. She was out of Gerald Bonnett’s great stud, Bunny McKay, and I think what a good guy Ed Welsh was to let Dean have that experience.

What I really think was special about racing back then was how people would lend a hand and how much time we spent together. If someone was out of hay, you’d lend them a few of your bales. Or, if we went golfing, we’d all go make fools of ourselves. Often, we’d move together like a traveling caravan. If someone new came to the track, we’d try and out run him but we’d also welcome him too. That’s what I remember and Diane and I are proud to be a part of quarter racing history in Alberta.”

As told by Ron Macleod Lethbridge, Alberta



GEOFF AND ROBIN MACLEOD- JUST MARRIED AND TRAINING

“We went training the year we were first married, in 1986, and for 9 years, the racetrack was our fun and our focus. We trained for Geoff’s parents, John and Sue, and we also had Grandpa Macleod’s horses as well. We ran a mare called Little Miz Re Lee but Geoff nicknamed her Cranky and the name should tell you every thing. Most times, she was a real flipper and Geoff would be in the starting gates holding his breath hoping she wouldn’t wreck. Sometimes you can have just the right moment of racing luck and we had it in the Grande Prairie Derby with her in 1986. Cranky wouldn’t have stood for one more second and the fact was, she was rearing in the air when Kenny Anderson kicked the starting gates but that was just the right impetus because she flew out of them. Stride Right was closing on her fast and the stewards took forever to declare us the winner but Cranky had hung on by a whisker. We were grinning from ear to ear.

We trained for clients like Percy and Carol Head, Alex Link, Barry and Janice Sather, Cliff and Audrey Whitelock and Wes Oulton. You remember little bits about everyone’s horses but I think one of my favorite ones was Coco Hugo. Sathers had brought him up from Oklahoma and he’d just bounce his way to the paddock plus he’d make these weird faces with his tongue and water bucket. Cliff Whitelock’s stallion, Bunny Bid A Deck, could scoot out of the gates like he was turbo-charged but unfortunately, he was set down in a couple of his nice races when he had really thrown a nice race with a high speed index.

What we liked about the race track was everything. Sure, it was hard work and some days you were lagging but the whole way of life was appealing. The people were very colorful characters even crazy at times, but Geoff and I loved all of it. We loved working together and we loved the horses.

When you talk crazy moments, probably the craziest moments were when we were at Hayworths which is a training track out of Strathmore. One time, we were there and because it was Ron Macleod’s 40th birthday, everyone was celebrating. Our jockeys, Scott Sterr and Tim Smith were partying when they decided to do a little sparring. The first thing we knew is that all of a sudden, the boys were really going at it with fists flying everywhere and blood was flowing. Scotty tagged Tim with a knock-out punch and Tim went down like a sack of potatoes. Then, they both were sorry and were trying to make amends to one another by shaking hands because no doubt, they were really good buds and friends. By this time, we were laughing but what’s really funny was a moment before this happened Geoff had said to Dwayne Hayworth. “This is getting rough, maybe one of them might hit their head on the barn floor”. Dwayne calmly replied, “Oh, let them go, the knuckleheads, their



heads are made of cement anyway.” Both the boys laughed at Dwayne’s comment later - they were good scrappers just like they were good jockeys.

When we started a family, we decided to settle down and 1994 was our last year training. Both of us miss the action of racing and the life training quarter horses. In fact, don’t be surprised when are kids are grown that you won’t see us back at the race track.”

As told by Robin Macleod Foremost, Alberta

RHONDA GIESBRECT AND TIM SMITH - A RACE TRACK COUPLE

“My first quarter horse was a stout, dark bay gelding, Trux Tony, which I bought from Donalda Cochrane and I ran him in 1992. He was a good little horse just like the filly I purchased from Jim Chipman named Special Feelings was too. She was from the Thoroughbred stallion, Docile Boy, and I had wins on her papers from distances of 350 yards to 6 furlongs. In 1985, Special Feelings won 7 races for me among them the Whirlago Speed Sprint and the West Country Stakes, mainly written for Thoroughbreds. However, Special Feelings would try so hard that she always lived up to her name. What I remember about racing then was how much fun it was and how we were like a huge, mixed family at the race track. We had some crazy times together like the time Scotty broke Tim’s nose one night when they were celebrating Ron Macleod’s birthday too much. Then the very next day, wouldn’t you know it Scotty was bucked off a big, grey Thoroughbred of Windy Turton’s and I saw Tim out on the track standing over Scotty laughing his head off. Scotty had just busted his nose too so it was quite ironic that both jockeys were walking around with thick, red, busted snoozers and Tim asked Scotty quite sarcastically, “How does your nose feel now - does it hurt the way mind did last night?” I can remember all the different race tracks we ran at from Teepee Creek to Lethbridge. One year at Millarville, I remember we had to wade our horses through the creek to get them to the race track.

Racing was a very important part of our lives and that’s where Tim and I met. He was a jockey and now, years later we have a family together and still like the atmosphere and summer holidays at the races.”

The AQHRA still counts Rhonda and Tim as a valuable part of our history. Rhonda is a very talented seamstress so who do you think makes all the blankets and saddle cloths for our stakes races? It’s Rhonda and the next time, you receive one of those beautiful blankets, just remember the lady who made it ran and trained fast quarter horses too.

As told by Rhonda Smith Drayton Valley, Alberta



THEY MADE A DIFFERENCE, THEY LEFT A LEGACY

As any researcher can attest to, it's always difficult to track down a story or find the missing piece of the puzzle. Then, there are always stories that are left out or incomplete and you can only find snippets of stories. In addition, there are so many stories that if you printed all of them, the task would become so grandiose and monumental that your written work would be in danger of never being completed though. Therefore, on behalf of the AQHRA, here are some partial stories about horses and horsemen who contributed to our history and left a legacy.

Exceptabull was a stout bay horse who every body called "The Bull" and Darcy Edwards said he was just that. He was as mean and tough to outrun as any horse in Alberta and that's why he holds so many track records in the AQHA racing archives dating back as early as 1968 . His regular rider was Barbara Eresman.

Mike Murphy was the President of our association for numerous years devoting endless time and energy into building it up and making it thrive. He and his lovely wife, Pat, were always at the races. They were the type of couple who were not only passionate about quarter horses, they were warm and personable to every one. They owned some exceptional horses in the 1980s and 1990s, among them the beautiful filly, Three Little Indians. Who could forget how Pat became so animated and glowing when she talked about her horses and their love of racing?

Glen Sutton of Thorsby, Alberta was another horseman who brought quality bloodstock into the province and raced quarter horses through out the 1980s and 1990s. He bred, owned, or trained such horses as De Bon Ease, Think Kit Will, Shades of Bronze, Ease On Joanne and was very knowledgeable about pedigrees and the quarter horse industry. He also served as President of the AQHRA and was on the Board of Directors for years. His daughter, Debbie Sutton, carried on her father's tradition of training quarter horses for years later.

Mel Hanson, his wife Pearl, and daughter Terri, were very big supporters of quarter horse racing. Terri was a young trainer who trained for such people as Dr. Ed Welsh, Mac MacLeod, Bob and Ruth Finch as well as her father's horses. When Fair Davy, Burnt Pleasure or Miz Re Lee were running, you could bet the Hanson trained horses were well-conditioned and well looked after.

Homer and Brenda Hebert were a husband and wife team who actively ran quarter horses in the 1980s. Homer trained and Brenda developed into a very good jockey. Unfortunately, Brenda was killed riding in a training race and Homer died later in a car accident, and both were sadly missed by the racing community.

Pete Landry ran very fast horses - he often purchased the high sellers at the AQHRA yearling auctions. Perhaps, one of his best runners



was a little horse who was just pure speedball, Shades of Bronze but who could forget another great one, Will Bug. Pete still enjoys the sport of quarter horse racing and you can often see him at the races yet.

Ray, Evelyn, Mona and Darryl McMillan from Grande Prairie ran horses for decades and owned such notables as Miss Super Pride, Snippity Dip, Moon Key, and trained a well known sire, Big Tuff Honor Jet. Later, Darryl became a jockey. We lost fine quarter horse people when we lost Darryl and Ray but we still recognize what the McMillans gave to quarter horse racing.

Teresa and Maxine Sealy were two very knowledgeable sisters who first started training quarter horses for Bud Kelts in 1986. Teresa is now involved with Olds College and their equine programs designed to ensure quality horsemanship in the racing sector. Maxine and Ken Anderson, our former Can-West racing secretary and starter, have their own Thoroughbred breeding farm.

Dwaine Ferguson was an enthusiastic director of our association back in 1986 preparing the stakes book and guess what- he's a director in 2007 still working hard and still enthusiastic about racing. In 2006, a filly he owned named Sass N Dass was named Co- Champion Three Year Old Filly. We need people with his determination and work ethic to keep our association strong and progressive.

Elly Rutherford along with her wonderful mother, Lil, were prominent in quarter horse racing. Elly trained her own horses and she owned such notable winners as Seek, Anywho, JJ Junebug and other classy runners. She now is a very successful Thoroughbred owner and trainer but still comes back to watch the quarters run and have a visit with her old friends.

Bucky Stockwell is now fulfilling his life's dream and is training horses in New Mexico. Bucky owned such memorable stallions as Whose Bad and Gasohol. He also bred Outa Patience who represented Canada in 2006 in the Claiming Challenge Championship.

Pete Schoeler won the Canada Cup futurity twice, the first time with Classic Signature and in 2004 with Poutin Lori, a filly with tons of heart, trained by Eric Crofoot. They still pair up to win lots of races and no one would be surprised if they won another Canada Cup.

Jimmy McAleny first started his jockey career riding quarter horses for Donald Cochrane and had his first start at Teepee Creek in the mud. You wouldn't believe how far his career has soared but you can see him winning many major races at Woodvine.

Strawkins, owned by Don and Peggy Boyle and trained by John Harris, was campaigned as a 2 year old at Evergreen Park and Rocky Mountain Turf. He ended his Alberta campaign by winning the Canada Cup Futurity in 2005. In 2006, he never ran in Alberta but ran extensively in the U.S. He not only won the Rainbow Derby, he shattered



the track record in the process. He was named World Champion Three Year Old Gelding by the AQHA in 2006. Now, you know how competitive quarter horses run here in Alberta because Strawkins was beaten in Alberta by horses owned by Albertans.



CHAPTER 6 - QUARTER HORSES GET THEIR FASTER TIME FRAME - THE 90s and ONWARD

BUY A HORSE AND LIVE THE DREAM - THE WALKER CONNECTION

“At the spring meet in Lethbridge in 1994, my dad, Garnet, and I came across a beautiful bay filly. There was something about her that just stamped her as special so my dad, who was retiring, and I purchased her from Bud Butts. Hemps Prime Time was from Bar Hemp and out of Ernie Keller’s good mare, Now Donna. We took her home right after the spring meet and chose not to run her in Grande Prairie but to start her in the fall. We ponied and conditioned her and that fall, woeee, she won 4 races for us and we weren’t just a little hooked, we were crazily hooked on quarter horse racing. We then bought Duncan Pi and he won the All-Canadian but probably 1997 was the most significant year for us. We purchased a filly named Knowwhentoholdem from the Heritage Sale not thinking we would win a graded stakes with her but that’s what she accomplished. She won the Pot of Gold futurity that year and I think at least 45 horses had paid into the trials. We also won the All- Canadian futurity that year with her and now, she is a very valuable part of our broodmare band. We are now in the breeding business and have 2 prospects that make the future more exciting – one is a Dash Thru Traffic and the other guy is from Hawkinson. What I’m further excited about is the fact we’ve brought new owners into racing by establishing syndicates. Phil Dennis is a new owner and totally enthusiastic about quarter horse racing. My father, Garnet, is now 76 still loves going to the race track in the mornings to see the ponies work.

I joined the AQHRA Board of Directors in 1995 and if I can stick a feather in my own cap, I was quite instrumental in first organizing the Canada Cup Sale and futurity guidelines. There were 4 of us- Blair Anton, Gary Haus, Ken Connery and myself who created the concept and really pushed the sale into fruition. The first sale was so successful that we were able to add \$30,000 to the Canada Cup futurity and now, look how it has grown. I couldn’t have done it without the help of some long time horsemen such as Alex Link, Lloyd Thompson, Donald No Runner, Blair Anton and Donald Cochrane. I went to them and said, “Look guys, if we’re gonna have a sale, we need you to bring some horses to it” and that’s what they did. That’s the origin of what is now a premier event – I’m still very enthusiastic about the racing potential for quarter horses in Alberta. In fact, I call this province “the Ruidoso of the North”. Right now, my 13 year old daughter has partnered up with her grandpa on a grand daughter of Hemps Prime Time, from Aprils Prime Time, so we’ll see if we can create some of that Ruidoso magic here. It’s pretty wonderful when you can involve three generations in racing.”



The AQHRA would like to congratulate the Walker Family on following their dream, following their passion and racing quarter horses.
As told by Jay Walker Stavelly, Alberta

ALBERTA BREDS SET MILESTONES - RECORD EARNINGS

We've all dreamt of breeding that spectacular race horse, that special one which is simply a class above the rest of the horses on post parade. That is our dream and that is why we breed our mares to the best possible stallion we think would cross with her to come up with that magical runner. We pray she's in foal, we watch over solicitously, check on her at 3 o'clock in the morning and when that foal comes gushing out, we're ecstatic about its arrival. When that gawky foal turns into a promising yearling, we are in the horse business and so we may consign this special one to an auction sale because this is one that we raised and we're especially proud of. It's significant that the first two quarter horses who earned over \$100,000 were bred by Albertans and ran on Alberta tracks - had they been campaigned in the U.S., there is no doubt their total earnings would even be higher.

"I told my dad, Dennis Edwards, that if he was going to buy a yearling that year, never mind going to the Heritage Sale, because the best yearling around was that little filly of Jim Chipman's and she was right in his back yard instead of traveling to Oklahoma. The ole man just snorted at me but he ended up buying her at a sale in Lethbridge for \$3500 and it was the best money he ever spent. I knew all about her dam though because back when we were running Some Print, there was a deadly mare named Miss Snazzy Leo running at the same time in Montana so her filly we bought had a license to run. I had looked at Snazzy at Jim's place and she wasn't a big filly but she had a presence about her. Her sire was Now Is The Time owned by Ernie Keller and he was making a real name for himself as a sire. Anyway, Dad bought her and I broke her - she was so willing, easy to work with and honest. That's how I would describe the mare and that's why she had 34 wins on her papers. The biggest futurity purse she ever ran for was \$35,000 so her earnings were honestly won by her efforts. What she did was go into the starting gates, she'd never move or flinch, she'd look down the track and then just explode out of the gates. She ran from Point A to Point B and would never make a mistake. Around the barn, she liked you but she didn't want you to fuss with her or bother her. I'm very proud of this mare's accomplishments - she won every futurity she was entered in that year (1989), she won the Grande Prairie Derby and the Enoch Derby, she was Canada's High Point Aged mare twice and she set new track records



at Grande Prairie, Lethbridge and Kallispell. For the time earning \$101,884 was very impressive but what's even more significant is in all AQHA records of all quarter horses, Times Snazzy Lady is ranked 34th for all times wins. I lost the mare just last year when she was in California at the stallion station but I have one of her babies which looks like a miniature Snazzy so that's why I'm hopeful again. Who knows in this business? If it runs like its mother, I think Dad and Jim Chipman would both be smiling in Horse Racing Heaven."

As told by Darcy Edwards Lethbridge, Alberta

DESTINY RODE - KICKS OUT THE BACK, JUST KEEPS WINNING

When observers stand around the paddock or watch the horses on post parade, the air is electric and the atmosphere is speculative. What horse looks the most ready to run? Who is in top form that's going to deliver the big race? All the spectators are lined up with their comments and insights. If you were around in 1999, one horse stood out and that was Destiny Rode. He would be led to the paddock, glistening and shining, and William Leech, his trainer, would saddle and put on his green and white blinkers. Then he'd start bouncing and kicking and just go out and win another race. According to Garnet Leech, That horse was perfect or just about as perfect as a race horse can be. We'd be leaning on the paddock and when Splash got to kickin out the back, one of his owners Dave Carlson, would turn to me and say, "Time to get your money out boys and bet him...he's ready to run."

Destiny Rode was bred by Kay Haus of Seven Persons, Alberta, one of Alberta's leading quarter horse breeders. His sire was Splash Bac and his dam was Dashing To Please. For most of his career, he was owned by the Cattle Connection who were a group of cattle buyers or associated with the cattle industry. Ed Vanee was a part of that syndicate and now, he's still racing horses and is a director in our association. Destiny Rode won the 1999 Alberta Bred Futurity, 1999 All-Canadian Futurity, 2000 All Canadian Open Derby and the 2001 MBNA Canadian Challenge. Twice he was named Canadian Running Horse Champion; he ended his career with 23 wins and in that time, amassed a remarkable \$134,812 in lifetime earnings.

Where is Destiny Rode now? Towards the end of his career, William and Jane bought him, and he still won a lot of races for them and he's registered in my grand daughter's name, Haley Leech. They're going to make a pony horse out of him and he would be perfect at that too. He's a stout horse who must be around 16 hands and must weigh at least 1300 pounds, so nothing will push him around. His temperament is



so easy, nothing gets him rattled or excited and it's not like he hasn't seen the race track before.

So, it seems quite fitting that we may see Destiny Rode on the race track again. He represented one of the finest horses our breed could offer and we all would like to see him again. Maybe, he'd give a little kick out the back for all his fans too as he goes by the grandstand.

As told by Garnet Leech Medicine Hat, Alberta

A BUDDY HOOKED ME INTO QUARTER HORSE RACING

"I guess I'll blame it on McFarlane because as soon as I started hanging around him I was bitten by the racing bug and as every one knows there's no known cure for this affliction," laughs Tom Kenway, a Game Warden out of Saskatoon. I had always been involved in roping, rode cutting horses but I met Ken McFarlane at a race meet in 1985 in Melville, and from then on it was all down hill. Probably my best horse was The Jedi, a small, black gelding I bought from Lonnie Stokes in Oklahoma. He was a horse who had all kinds of personality and all kinds of attitude. He could be a little rank or ornery especially in the paddock where he always tested his jockey just to see if he was awake or not. However, I could really put up with his little personality quirks because in 1988, he had 8 starts and finished the year with 6 wins and 2 seconds. We ran from Manitoba to Lethbridge so The Jedi was a nice beginning for me.

I also owned Earl - he won the Prairie Gold Derby for me in 2000. His real name was Charm the Girls but I bought him from Donalda Cochrane and since he wasn't a filly, I had to name him after Donalda's husband, Earl Brown. He definitely was the fastest horse I've ever trained. I was twice lucky in that I won the Prairie Gold Derby again in 2005 with Eysa Screamer - even beat my old pal McFarlane, not that I haven't mentioned it a time or two.

My family has always been interested in racing. When they were teenagers, everyone would always wonder how I could get 4 teenagers up at 5:00 in the morning mucking out stalls and exercising but I can honestly say they were fully as committed as I was. We call our stable, Twin K Plus after the kids and our colors are black and silver. I picked those colors a year before Gretzky did - that must have been an omen.

I like every thing about the sport of quarter horse racing! I like the incredible speed they possess, I like their athleticism and I like working around them. The race track is where I like to be and just you watch,



once I retire, my whole life will be focused around racing and I'll be there constantly. Can't wait."

As told by Tom Kenway Warman, Saskatchewan

HEZA CASH REQUEST WINS FOR CANADA IN CHALLENGE RACE

We all recognize what an honor it is to win a regional Challenge race and then go to have your horse represent Canada in the finals at Lone Star or Los Alamitos. However, we all recognize just how difficult it is to run against the best quarter horses in all the U.S. and Mexico. The year was 2002 and a big, strong gelding named Heza Cash Request, brought fame, recognition and considerable monetary satisfaction to his owners, Stan and Christine Webb, when he won the Professional Claiming Challenge at Los Alamitos. This horse was no stranger to our win circles because he was tearing up our racetracks at all distances but not many American handicappers gave him the nod and Heza Cash Request went off at big odds. When the gates opened, he shot away like a cannon and continued to battle to the front, ears pinned gearing for the finish line. He won handily and this horse represented the first time a Canadian horse had won any Challenge races. Not only was this horse bred in Alberta by Stan Webb but was owned and trained by him to make this event even more of a worthy accomplishment.

Heza Cash Request is retired now but I'm sure if you wanted a match race, the old horse would still be able to run a 100 speed index – a horse such as this never loses his class.

PARTNERS IN SPEED – DIXON AND CROSS RACING

"We went to High River to a race horse sale, at least it was advertised as such, and the first horse that was led into the ring was a nice looking filly so Howie and I bought her. I'm not sure that was our intention or we were just carried away by auction fever but we were in the racing business. That mare was JDS Wind River and we ran her in 1996 and 1997 and along the way, she was runner up for the Champion Running Horse of Alberta so that was a nice initiation into the business for us. Then, Howie raised some outstanding race horses from her such as Royal Quick Wind, Okey Dokey Wind and Ms Quickasthewind. Royal Quick Wind or Little Jo as Howie called him, not only won the Canada Cup in 2001, he was a multiple stakes winner as well.

Since that first horse, Howie and I have bought at least 10 other horses together and now Bob Francis, a neighbour of Howie's, is a partner with us on Run Hawk Run. What I like about racing is that it



takes me away from all my ranch activities and it's something different. There's good people and good fun especially when your horse is winning," chuckles Bill Cross.

"Howie knows more about pedigrees than I do but when we go to a sale, all of us look over the prospect including our trainer, William Leech. When we bought Run Hawk Run from a sale in California, all three of us liked him. He was our pick and we were determined to wait for him. We were lucky that the only strike against the horse was his birthday; he had a late birthday, otherwise I'm sure he would have gone for a lot more money and maybe, the horse would not have Canadian owners.

We had an incredible year with Run Hawk Run in 2006 – out of 8 starts, he had 4 wins and 3 seconds. He won the Canada Cup Derby and the Bayer Canadian Challenge Derby and was named Champion Three Year Old in Alberta. However, in this business, you have to face adversity too. We bought a beautiful mare, Princess of Dash, out of the Ruidoso Sale a few years ago and were really hopeful about running her in the All-American when two weeks before the trials, she broke a bone in her foot. It was really disappointing because she had just out worked the best horse in our trainer's barn and was starting to show she was something special.

We now have an upcoming two year old out of Fisher's Dash, called White Fish. He'll probably have his first start down south in Utah but then, he'll come north to run up here."

The AQHRA congratulate owners such as Howie Dixon, Bill Cross and Bob Francis on being a vital part of our association and constantly improving just how fast our quarter horses can run. Run Hawk Run set a new track record in 2006 at Rocky Mountain Turf Club. In addition, to my knowledge, there never has been a faster speed index going 440 yards that a three year old has run than what Run Hawk Run sprinted out in Evergreen Park. And oh, just how fast did he go? A mere SI of 112, that's how fast and that's what it takes to beat him.

As told by Bill Cross Nanton, Alberta

HOW TO BREED AN AQHA CHAMPION- WOODY AND CLARICE BEEBE

"Joe Birdrattler, my cousin, had tried to talk me into the running business for years but I had always been putting him off," chuckles Woody Beebe. "Then, it's a very unusual story because in 1992 I bought two mares from Peggy Buffington in Cutbank, Montana and I only had \$5 in my pocket when I went to look at the mares and I still had the same \$5 in my pocket when we made the deal. I went down there to help out



my cousin's son whose house had burned down and I had spent all my cash buying clothes, bedding and household goods for the family. While we were down there, we went to look at Beyond the Moon and another mare but I had left my cheque book behind and like I said, I only had 5 bucks, and not enough to buy supper. However, in the horse business there's an honor code and my word was what mattered to Peggy. It turned out that Beyond the Moon was a great brood mare – in fact, she was an answer to our prayers. She was the dam of Mr. Trollinger who had earnings of over \$52,287 and a wonderful filly my wife and I bred named Dashes Rhythm. What can I say about this mare except she won the Canada Cup Futurity, ran second in the Canada Challenge and was named AQHRA Champion Two Year Old in 2002. When I first started in the breeding business it was my goal to raise a Canadian champion and I did, but the only thing I did it a lot faster than I thought I could.

We also owned a mare named Sheza Streakin Jewel who produced Our Lady Kas and First Place Jewel. Both horses were stakes winners – I believe Our Lady Kas won 5 straight races as a 2 year old including the Bonnett- Brodon futurity for her owners, Fran and Andy Johnson. I was the only one who could handle her as a yearling though because she was quite temperamental. If you ever were mean to her, she'd kick at you just for the fun of it.

Jimmy Eller phoned me from Granada Farms and said he would give me a real good deal if I bred Sheza Strikin Jewel to First Place Dash so that's what we did. It's funny because I wasn't really interested in buying this mare in the first place but my wife quite often over rides my decisions. The truth of the matter is that she wears the pants in the family", laughs Woody again. Anyway, my wife doesn't miss much and has a real good eye for a horse so that's how we wound up with Jewel. Then, when we crossed her with First Place Dash, we ended up with First Place Jewel who was a definite runner here in Alberta but he's still doing well running in Texas. We've bred other horses too like Catcha Mean Six, Sheza Autumn Song and Renos Road Trip.

We do have some regrets in that we sold our best producing mares though. So, I said to my wife that we need to raise some foals from a daughter of Beyond the Moon out of Mr Eye Opener. We still own her and she's unraced but the foundation of sound breeding is there."

The AQHRA would like to congratulate the Beebe family for their involvement in the breeding and racing industry. After all, if it wasn't for the breeders of these race horses just where would our next stakes winner originate?

As told by Woody Beebe Standoff, Alberta



ELEVEN YEARS OLD AND WINNING STAKES RACES

When a win picture is taken, it's not unusual to have a crowd of people with a bunch of smiling kids in it. What is unusual though is when the kid is the winning owner and the horse he owns has just won the second biggest futurity in Alberta. Such was the case when a sorrel sprinter named Takin On A Judge crossed the finish line in front for her young owner, Austin Cross in the 2005 Alberta Bred Futurity. Now, to make this story even more interesting, his race partner is his mother, Arletta, who picked out the filly herself from the 2004 Canada Cup Sale.

"My mom has a real good eye for a horse because she was the one who picked Takin On A Judge by herself, bid on her and bought her. Dad wasn't even at the sale. I love quarter horse racing, there's so much excitement about it, not like Thoroughbred racing, which I find long and boring. When our filly was running, we were always hopeful but I was never sure of the outcome and I was really nervous. I wasn't superstitious but Mom and I would always be yelling and cheering and Mom was more confident than I was," stated Austin.

Next time, you go to a horse sale, you just might want to take the Cross partners with you as bloodstock agents. It sure seems they know what to look for, after all, Takin On A Judge, turned out to be a multiple stakes winner, was named Champion Alberta Bred Two Year Old Filly and won close to \$40,000 in career earnings. Not bad for an eleven year old to bank or invest; if he tries the stock market, I'm sure he'll do all right because he's done pretty well so far investing in quarter horses.

As told by Austin Cross, a young owner, Nanton, Alberta

WHAT DO I KNOW ABOUT HORSES? I'M A MUSIC PROMOTER

"For me going to a yearling sale in California was like going to a lady's fashion show, you look at the butts, you look at the pretty heads, you wonder if that filly has real good legs or if they have a deep enough girth, but the truth is I don't really know much about what makes a good horse", chuckles Ron Sakamoto. "That's why I let my partners pick out the horses we have owned - I give my opinion but Ed Vanee and Darcy know a lot more about horses than I do. Both of them are long time, knowledgeable horsemen. The first horse I bought in a partnership; there were 5 of us who bought Oklahoma Fun and wow, she was an awesome horse for us. William Leech, our trainer, bought her at the Heritage Yearling Sale and she didn't do much as a 2 year old but when she turned 3 and 4, she almost was unbeatable. She won 6 races in a row, won the Challenge Fillies and Mares Division, was the Top 3 Year Old AQHRA Champion and was named Canadian Champion 3 Year Old filly



in 2001. She's a broodmare now and Ed and I own her together now so we're trying to pick out the best stallion we can. We have an Azoom yearling out of her and she's currently in foal to Ocean Runaway. Talk about future race horses – if we breed the best to the best, from these crosses, we should have speed.

How did I get into running quarter horses? Well, it's a little funny because I'm a music promoter with some diverse business interests such as golf courses and race tracks. I did partner up on some Thoroughbreds in the 70s but I am a part owner of Rocky Mountain Turf and when I went there and saw quarter horse racing for the first time, it simply blew me away. It was far more exciting to me and I couldn't believe how these horses could reach top speeds from 30 to 40 mph right out of the starting gate. It was so intriguing to me – I was mesmerized by them because it was like BOOM; they were shot out of a cannon.

After we had so much success with Oklahoma Fun we went to California and purchased Sizzlin Red Corona out of the yearling sale. Ed picked him out and when we came home, Darcy Edwards came into the mix. We have had a lot of fun with Sizzlin Red and the key is to have fun, that's what racing is all about. My wife, Joyce, enjoys racing and the people we have met just as much as I do.

Once I become passionate about some undertaking, I become fully committed to its well being and give it 110%. The individuals I have met in our association are super – they are all class. So if you feel in your heart, something is right for you like I do with the AQHRA, you are committed to it and work fully towards its goals. I feel we're making very positive gains in the quarter horse racing industry."

I don't think I've ever seen Ron Sakamoto when he wasn't smiling and laughing. What a sense of humor that man has. We'd like to extend a heartfelt thanks to him and his wife for all what they have done including their many concert ticket donations. No wonder he is the Number 1 music promoter in Canada – we're just happy, he runs fast horses too.

As told by Ron Sakamoto Lethbridge, Alberta

SHADY LANE STABLES – SUCCESSFUL FROM THE START

Located near Leslieville, Alberta is a racing stable that since its inception has set a very high standard of quarter horse racing. Darren and Marilyn Pollitt chose the name, Shady Lane Stables, because there is a long lane with evergreens and trees on each side leading up to their home and horses. Now, to people familiar with quarter horse racing, the name is equivalent to breeding and owning some of the fastest stakes winners seen at Alberta tracks today. It's hard to know where to begin –



First Bidder, Talk Doc, Adulteress, Seditious, Sheza Special Chick, Vigorously, Mezoomn, Its All About Speed, Silver LaJolla, and many more. In 2002, Adulteress won the Canada Cup Futurity and then, in 2006, Its All About Speed duplicated the win. Mezoomn won the All Canadian Futurity and AQHA Juvenile Challenge in 2005 whereas Seditious had won the same race in 2003. Vigorously won the All-Canadian Derby in 2005; then Silver La Jolla won it in 2006. Shady Lane Stables was also recognized as the AQHRA Leading Owners in 2006. This is only a partial list of their accolades but, if I mentioned more of them I'm sure Darren and Marilyn wouldn't want me too because they are gracious and modest winners.

"I drove pony chuckwagons and went to rodeos for years so having horses was nothing new, but in 1999, Glen Sutton, who was always telling me I should get into quarter horse racing, talked me into going to the Lethbridge sale. That's when I bought my first horse- Shady Bar Hemp and from then on, everything just snowballed. What I like about the racing is how it takes Marilyn and me away from the stresses of owning and managing our oil field company. We are a hands-on operation; in fact, we describe ourselves as absolute working lunatics concerning our horse operation. We totally love the horses, the atmosphere and the people involved in racing. Our best friends are there and our son is enthusiastic as well. As a matter of fact, the first foal from Mezoomn and out of the stakes winner, Adulteress, belongs to him so naturally, he's very pumped about his future runner. Now that we're breeding our own horses, this adds a further dimension to our stable because there's nothing more rewarding than watching that particular foal being born and then watching it win the Canada Cup.

We have a little newspaper published in Leslieville, a great little paper called the Western Star. Whenever our horses are racing, the editor will phone me up and do a write-up or article on them. It's totally amazing how the community is so interested in quarter horse racing now. After the Canada Cup was televised, I had so many people phone me up, offer congratulations and say that they had seen us on T.V.

I do have some some goals and hopes for our future. What I would like to see is trainers and owners from the U.S. come up to our tracks and run here. We have the best quarter horses in Canada right here in Alberta and I feel we can compete with the best. A second initiative I'd like to see is more recognition for our back stretch workers. We need these people – they work long hours with not so many rewards but they are essential to our industry. In addition, we need a strong, united association. If I were to compare it to a chuckwagon team, the team must pull together for maximum efficiency and results. The AQHRA is no different – we are all a team and we all must pull together for our future



successes and achievements. I am very respectful of how hard people worked in the past so that we could be racing today and now, it's up to us to carry the torch into the future.”

As told by Darren Pollitt Leslieville, Alberta



CHAPTER 7 - OUR PAST, OUR FUTURE, RAINBOWS

A LOOK AT OUR TRACKS - EVERGREEN PARK

Quarter horse racing has a long history at Grande Prairie – during the early 50s, there were stock horse races, Roman standing races, flat races and novelty races involving ranch type quarter horses but it wasn't until 1973 that there was a specific race written just for quarter horses. Since that time, racing has grown by leaps and bounds and currently, Evergreen Park is the venue for July and August where fans, supporters, back stretch workers, and race trackers gather to watch fast horses run. It has a beautiful scenic location situated among the pines and evergreens and the race track chute can accommodate different distances right up to 550 yards. On the long oval, 660, 770 and 870 yard races are charted.

“What I like about quarter horse racing, said Brian Cook, Race Coordinator, is just how unique it is. There are so many intricacies and complexities to it; it's like the timing has to be perfect for your horse at the gates because if there's a slight hesitation, a one thousandth of a second hesitation, your horse may need to make up ground. Or, the photo finishes literally make everyone watching the race, hold their breath until the race is declared official. One year, in the Challenge Championship I think there were 7 horses within a length of each other and there were 5 horses separated by mere noses and heads. In fact, the big nights for our handle are the nights when the futurities, derbies and Challenge races are run. There's so much electricity in the air that you can just feel the excitement.

On behalf of Evergreen Park, I would just like to say how we value the quarter horses as an integral part of our racing program. When you watch these horses dash down the straight away, it's like the Olympics and you wonder who is going to go through the trials to the finals. It's so close in times that no one is sure of the outcome. Quarter horse racing totally completes our race card and so Evergreen Park would like to extend congratulations on 50 great years of racing and your fantastic anniversary.”

As told by Brian Cook, Race Coordinator Grande Prairie, Alberta



A TOTAL ADRENALINE CHARGE - ROCKY MOUNTAIN TURF

“Quarter horse racing is 100% excitement; it’s an immediate charge. I’ve owned quarter horses and I admire them immensely because they have bred and developed a horse that runs to its maximum capacity one jump out of the gate. It’s all about an adrenaline rush because it’s great to see horses so focused. Then they jump out of that starting gate and they run fast and they run like hell.” This quote is stated by Max Gibb, in the very dramatic fashion that the CEO of Rocky Mountain Turf brings to his race track. As he so aptly explains, “I’m passionate about horse racing, all horse racing and I have been this way since I was eight years old and climbed on the back of a horse running fast. If you have seen the movie Seabiscuit, I could compare myself to Red Pollard except without his talent but I could fight better than he could,” he says chuckling. “There’s nothing like that feeling of being a jockey and if a horse has the heart and desire of a champion, then I’m in love with it.”

The biggest day for fan and total track attendance is the day of the Canada Cup races. No question about it, it’s our biggest day because it’s the Kentucky Derby of quarter horse racing in Alberta and there are hordes of people here. The excitement leading up to the race is unbelievable and this year is going to be more spectacular than ever. Ron Sakamoto who races quarter horses himself has some unbelievable connections to the music industry and is the biggest music promoter in Canada. I won’t give away the whole secret but I’m certain when people hear what we’re going to do, let’s just say, Rocky Mountain Turf will be rockin with racing and fun.

We’re thrilled to have the caliber of quarter horses run here that we do. There are many opportunities for them to compete here and they are world class horses. Quarter horses make up one-third of our races and I applaud them on their 50th anniversary. On behalf of Rocky Mountain Turf Club and me, we send the AQHRA best wishes and will welcome the opportunity to celebrate this memorable event with them.”

As told by Max Gibb Lethbridge, Alberta



COME ALONG FOR THE RIDE - A LOOK AT THE JOCKEYS

Anyone who ever has watched a horse race soon realizes a jockey is quite different from a normal rider. They must be fearless and brave; they must be athletic and light; they must like living on the edge; and they must enjoy the sweet taste of victory and hear the deafening silence of defeat. What must it be like to ride a quarter horse perched upon it as it is running close to breakneck speeds? How do you cannon out of the gates, make split-second decisions and simultaneously, push your horse to go faster, faster, faster? Welcome to the world of the riders and the AQHRA and the whole racing community wish to honor these jockeys for their contribution in riding fast horses.

When quarter horse racing first began, jockeys rode with very little protection. They rode with no helmets and no flack jackets. They rode on muddy dirt tracks, little sports grounds and small town race tracks. There wasn't much glory or money earned in being a jockey, sometimes you didn't even get your picture taken to remember the event. Sometimes, jocks drifted on to different places or different jobs but inevitably, they longed to be back riding and maybe, it was this memory that made them restless souls. Or, sometimes it was broken bones and injuries that made them stop riding, after all, just how many times can you get pitched from a two year old?

We remember the jockeys though for they are as distinct in our minds as the horses they rode. They were colorful individuals who left a legacy in Alberta racing and we'll always remember and be thankful that they "came along for the ride". This was a historical ride; a ride that lasted 50 years, from 1957 to 2007.

"If wishes were fishes, we'd all be throwing nets. If wishes were horses, we'd all ride." - A famous quote by Doug Norton



JOCKEYS WHO RODE ALBERTA'S FAST HORSES

Orville Strandquist
Woody Bourke
Barbara Eresman
Marsha Willard
Don Holbrook
Babe Lauder
Don Senebald
Ivan Clark
Art Stine
Tim Crites
Dale Stark
Shelley Jones
Pat Bodnard
Randy Putman
Clinton Rycroft
Tim Rycroft
Tony Laczo
Wayne Supernaut
Tim Smith
Terri Landaker
Scott Woodley
Melanie Crerar
Butch McDonald
Elige Bourne
Darryl McMillan
Mark Shemm
Steve Burns
Rory Noel
Roger Buening
Todd Kabel
Vicki Rix
Wendel Travers
Gary Melanson
Don Pacheco
Dusty Huntington
Doug Jones
Tex Hollingworth
Rae Schubert
Cammie Papineau
Clark Jones
Harold Kent
Jimmy McAleney

Vern Watson
Conrad Scoville
Gwynn Edwards
Clyde Smith
Jody Buxton
Gary Wendlend
Herbie Olive
Everill Jones
Herman Eagleplume
Nora Engelbetson
Herbie McNally
Barb Hartum
Jim Roebuck
Lyle Pambrum
Kelly Rycroft
Riley Rycroft
Brant Laczo
Todd Kable
Garth Jewels
Rick Siegel
Holly Crichton
Darryl Wendlend
I.J.Ruiz
Ken Street
Percy Baron
Tim Giacomelli
Kevin Furlong
Scott Sterr
Shannon Wippert
Becky McDowell
Shawn Henkins
Robbie Love
Larry Layton
Andy Scarlet
Mike Steel
Ron Bilodeau
Mike Rocha
Anna Barrio
Ferando Gamez
Joe Coversup
Ron Blinston
Peter McAleney

Jack Troute
Jerry Seal
Darcy Edwards
Rocky Strandquist
Sharon Willis
Forest Lavik
Arnold Thompson
Mike Steel
Stan Yule
Stan Benson
Karen Campbell
Leanne Knechtel
Billy Couch
Dennis Pambrum
Patty Rycroft
Brenda Hebert
Norman Jewel
Dougie Hall
Doug MacDonald
Travis McNally
Howie Solberg
R. Wiese
Curt Klosson
Len Street
Jeff Rigdon
Scott Woodley
K. Ross
John Cox
B. Serles
Brian Hiyashi
Don Herber Jr.
Cliff Miyashiro
John Rodrigues
Mitch Toussan
Kuz
April Friesen
Terry Ronson
Oscar Monroy
George Seinz
Hector Garcia
Perry Winters
Barry Hope



J D Mitchener
D. Smith
Jackie Smith
Berkley Packer
David Brown
Brooke Mellish
Janine Stianson
Shannon Beauregard
Shawna Barber
Duncan Gordon
Bonnie Danielson
Gary Wendlend

Dan Moore
Carl Hebert
Antonio Ramirez
Jay Conklin
Angelle Wilson
Sean Evans
Hugh Huston
Henri Garcia
Roman Figueroa
Mike Keller
Neil Poznansky

Tim Constance
Nate Smith
Ivan Ortiz Jr.
Darrell Constantine
Laurina Bugeaud
Sheldon Chickeness
Randy Cunningham
Hector Garcia
Laurie Ferguson
Layne Davis
Bryce Lawrence

This list is as accurate as our research could give – if we have left out any one, that was never our intention and we regret the omission.

Compiled with the help of Audrey Whitelock, Darcy Edwards, Donalda Cochrane, Susan MacLeod, Garnet Leech and Jim Munro.



OUR PAST, OUR FUTURE RAINBOWS - ROSS BRIGDON

“Dr. Al Davis is my uncle and it was through him that I turned to owning and training quarter horses. My dad was killed in a car accident so I came out to live with Doc and his wife in Medicine Hat and attend high school. Al was really fired up about quarter horse racing and in the 70s, we started racing together under the name B and D Stables. Gradually, I went out on my own because horse racing is like a sickness and once you have the ailment, it’s a hard disease to get rid of”, laughs Ross Brigdon. “In fact”, he asserts so strongly “What’s better than winning a horse race? I can win any type of race even the simplest maiden race and feel charged about the win because there’s no feeling like seeing your horse stick his nose going across the line.”

“Our first big horse was Oh Dynamite Kid, a big bay, that William Leech trained for us and in 1989, he won every major derby in Alberta. There’s a funny story to that horse because we were down in Arizona and I had bought some mares from Glen Burnham. They had just weaned this colt and he was pretty ornery and had kicked the girl that was looking after the horses. Glen glanced at me and pointedly said, “I better get rid of him.”

But I told Glen, “I already bought more horses than I should have and there’s no way, I’m going to buy more.”

Glen looked straight at me and replied, “Who says you’re buying him? I’m just sending him with you back to Canada. ”

So, that’s the story behind Oh Dynamite Kid. He was big and strong and even won the Tucson Derby. Of all the horses we’ve owned, it’s his picture that hangs in my office. We’ve had other horses like Lady of the Rockies in 2000 that were runners but Kid is our family’s favorite.

I’m very proud of our 50th year of quarter horse racing. I think that after 50 years of hard work and dedication where people could have thrown their hands in the air and quit, they didn’t. Where would we be without our fore – fathers and people who had the courage and convictions to follow their dreams? We wouldn’t be here and we are so fortunate to be living in Alberta and racing in this great province and we owe the gains we have made to the tenacity of these early individuals. I think our future is extraordinary – after all these years and determination, our breed is finally being accepted. As President of AQHRA, I think quarter horse racing will continue to grow and be a vital force for the future so here’s to “50 Fast Years, 50 Great Stories.”

As told by Ross Brigdon, AQHRA President Medicine Hat, Alberta



CHAPTER 8 - WE'VE CAPTURED THE DREAM - WE'VE LIVED THE DREAM

WE'VE CAPTURED THE DREAM-WE'VE LIVED THE DREAM

What I have found about the history of quarter horse racing in Alberta is that it enfoldes many interesting concepts. Quarter horse racing truly has been a grand endeavor and shares some common features with every one who has participated in it since its beginnings.

What I found out was how family orientated it has been. The interest in quarter horse racing has been transmitted down to our future generations. Our children have been involved and now, even our grand children. We have given race horses to our children when they were nine or eleven years old. We have given quarter horses as wedding presents to our sons. We have partnered with our daughters and grand-daughters on future stakes horses. Many of the best quarter horse trainers today in Alberta have early roots in the industry because they started being around the race tracks at a very early age helping their father or mother with the horses and just carried on. We have exercise riders and jockeys, from Woodvine and Northlands Park who first obtained their licenses on the backs of quarter horses.

Another very important concept to acknowledge is that the dream of quarter horse racing has transcended through time. We have the same emotions and passions about the sport as the people who were involved in it 50 years ago did. They were just as excited about that special foal being born as we are right now thinking about our new born futurity prospect. They met and made many difficult sacrifices to organize a province wide association to represent the interests of quarter horse racing. They weren't able to have the luxury of modern communication with conference calls, web sites, e-mails or text messages. They didn't receive the support of Horse Racing Alberta with owner's and breeder's bonuses or added purse support for their breed. No, it was hard for them to follow their dream. They traveled through snow storms and blizzards. They used old photo-copiers, and met voluntarily in one another's kitchens. They bought stall fronts with their own money, supplied tractors to work the track, hauled horses for nothing, donated stallion services and in essence, they made sacrifices for us and the betterment of quarter horse racing without much help or recognition.

Another essential common ingredient is that quarter horse racing and the AQHRA transcends all class and status systems. Our participants have involved millionaires who owned their own trucking companies or individuals who never knew what a bank account was and traveled to the different race meets in an old Volkswagon bus. There were dentists and doctors who owned quarter horses, cattle ranchers and



game wardens, mothers and music promoters. They were remarkable people who owned fast horses and they persevered through poor purses, injured horses and bad track conditions. "One of the hardest moments of heart ache for me was losing our horses in a stable fire at Trout Springs in 1995," stated Garnet Leech. "It was a tragedy - 59 horses were killed and I lost 6 of them, such devastation for anyone who loves horses."

What other important concept has developed through 50 years of racing? We have consistently improved our breed and our race horses are more numerous and faster. We may have started with one good filly and now as any good breeding program can attest we have kept the best and tried to breed to the best. We now have horses that can be competitive at any track and Alberta is recognized as one of the most vibrant locations in all of North America for quarter horse racing.

Finally, the dream that first started long ago has been carried on but now, there are many more of us who are passionate about quarter horse racing and our industry. New owners are coming in every year and there is a climate of positive enthusiasm and excitement. In 2006, the Canada Quarter Horse Cup Futurity television broadcast under the auspices of HRA won the Multimedia category of the AQHA Marketing and Media Awards. Fans and supporters come to watch our fast horse run in record numbers.

How far can we go and just how fast can our horses run? It's uncertain but one thing for sure is certain - we have followed our dream, we have lived the dream and we ran fast horses.

By Janice Sather Beaverlodge, Alberta



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