

## **A CRABBET ODYSSEY – PART 2 - 2005**

**By Caroline Sussex**

The day after the Convention closed, goodbyes were said to new and old friends not going on the Queensland Stud Tour. These Conferences, Conventions, Shows and Events bring people together with a common interest and the camaraderie is tremendous and very special. On the following stud tours, this fun and interest took the remaining group to many of the Queensland studs who had Crabbet or Crabbet related horses and for some visitors, these were the first studs seen in Australia.

Four weeks before the Convention Coralie Gordon had feared that all that would be seen were drought ridden paddocks and a barren land. She had forgotten of course that the British were coming and it normally rains in Australia when the British arrive so she needn't have feared. The countryside was a lush green and we would never have guessed how awful the conditions had been.

Day 1 and the first stop for coffee was at Rudds Pub at Nobby, famous on the tourist trail where a story teller regaled visitors with some of the myths of the famous bush author Steele Rudd. The first stud was the eagerly awaited visit to the predominantly 100% Crabbet Bellmere Stud, owned by Paul and Judy Ward. Coralie Gordon met us there and gave us a running commentary into the history of these horses. Judy shares horses with Shirley Douglas-Greig and also with Dini Mercieca of Wyreema. Sadly, Arfaja Haluj (Rasham x Persarah) had died at the beginning of the year but not before leaving some lovely foals seen on the earlier tour. Judy showed us his beautiful grey daughter, Mill Park Zaafer (Arfaja Haluj x Wellworth Lilac), full sister to the chestnut, Mill Park Zarifa who we had seen at Sean Johnson's. Zaafer lived up to all expectations with her good conformation and exquisite head and large eyes. As yet Judy has not retained any foals but shortly after the visit she gave birth to a filly by Royalund Sparkling Silver so perhaps that one will be kept!

The young chestnut stallion, Bold as Blazes (Al Borg Jarim x Oxford Wonder) was now resident at Bellemere. He showed many of the qualities of the typey Bright Shadow horses and this should cross very well with the lovely grey mares at Bellmere. Judy has in her stud many lines to Bakos. Bakos is by Risheem so quickly picks up the qualities of Irex on the sire side and on the dam, goes back to Nuralina in tail female. The mares paraded by Bakos were all beautiful and very feminine – Judalba, Judina and Royhana together with the daughters of the Bakos son Volcano (seen at Ebjarah Stud) – Cherish and Charlotte Gray.

Judy showed us other horses in the paddocks including the young chestnut colt by Arfaja Haluj out of Royhana, being retained to carry on the Haluj line. Sadly we had to leave too soon and were taken to Warwick and a wonderful tour and lunch at the Abbey of the Roses. Sadly we needn't have hurried as we heard that due to the torrential downpours, the endurance stud of Shardell had to cancel our visit as the heavy rains had taken the roof off the stables and the horses had been set free into the hills for their protection.

At very short notice, Lyn Hall, one of stud tour guides kindly agreed to take us to her stud. She has polish horses so I will not write in detail here but the beautiful stallion Fen, who was imported from Poland, carries some Crabbet lines through Naborr and Naseem. He was a very kind horse with a wonderful temperament allowing us all into his paddock to admire him.

The second day started again with a morning coffee stop at the famous Chocolate Cottage, meeting place for the Convention Committee. It gave us an opportunity to do some shopping and enjoy the spectacular views in lovely sunshine. The first stud of the day was Sahala owned by Martin and Judy Penfound at Goombungee. Here we saw the bay stallion, Sahala Manhattan who had been at the Parade and is by Talquah Jai, by Royal Domino who is quite prominent in the breeding programmes of Queensland. His dam is the pure Crabbet mare, Crown Jewel also prominent in the Boomeri Stud of Dawn Suter and her sister. Dawn was here on the tour to see these horses. Next we saw the correct and free moving Prince of the Wind (Bremervale Silver Prince x Shontel Astradee) who contains a vast amount of Bright Shadow in his pedigree on both sides. Son of Sahala Manhattan, Sahala Mansehra out of a Gai General mare was much admired but had been sold to Malaysia as an endurance stallion.

Judy works closely with Judy Hasted of Istana Stud and although we were unable to visit the stud, we had seen Tobruq at the Convention, one of the last sons of Arfaja Haluj and with all the presence and style of his father out of Mira Monte Silver Glitter (currently with Roxanne Pidoto at her Ebjarah Stud). Before leaving we crossed the road to an enormous open pasture. After a brief call, at least 20 mares galloped towards us out of the distance and allowed us to go in and admire them.

This was a busy day, next stop was Arabe La'Valle stud owned by Steven and Nicki Forrest. What a stunning spot this was, right under an enormous cliff top or so it seemed. Steven and Nicki have the lovely young stallion, Snow Leopard (Mill Park Zaafir x Royalund Sparkling Silver) who was seen at the Convention. This young stallion shows much promise and will be a very useful stallion for the future.

The bay stallion, Boomori Kahlua was of particular interest to the American visitors who were part of the group who had purchased the full brother Dandaloo Kadet. Kahlua was bred by Dawn Suter who had not seen him since he was a foal and she was impressed by the way he had matured. This stallion should be very valuable to the Crabbet breeding programme of Queensland. Currently some of the mares were out on lease to studs in Victoria. The mare, Danjera Nightfly did a superb display and we were much taken with her. It was wonderful to see the young filly foal, by Kahlua out of Inshallah Anniversary who is just over 95% Crabbet.

Next stop another Aussie pub, this time at Goombungee before heading off for the now famous Cameo Stud owned by Ken and Coralie Gordon. Since the Convention another couple of foals had been born whom we were able to see. However, first we were shown the stallions, first Royalund Sparkling Silver (Al Borg Jarim x Fenwick Silver Serenade) a grandson of Greylight. This striking grey has consistently thrown good offspring and at last we could see him in the flesh. He is owned jointly with Peter Butler of Elshada Arabians. Peter lives up at Cairns (see end of article) but his horses are dotted around Australia as he makes use of all sorts of different stallions to further his breeding programme and the fruits of this exercise are very promising. Amongst the offspring of Sparkling Silver are the daughters Velvet Ribbons, Cameo Silver Shell, Cameo Tosca and Elshada Opal Fire who won her class at the Convention Show.

The stallion Chip Chase Desert Wind (76% Crabbet) has left much stock on the ground and Cameo has retained the son, Cameo Prospero, a bay 3 year old Anglo Arab to be used on the Zanzibar daughters. Cedardell Zanzibar (Somered x Zaria (impUK)) was shown to us later

out in the paddocks and is a very striking athletic horse of high percentage Crabbet blood and one of the leading sires of endurance horses in Australia.

The third stallion was Inniskerry a grey colt by Arfaja Haluj out of Cameo Silver Sky, another Somerled daughter out of Tropic Fiona who goes back in tail female to Nuralina. It was interesting to note in Queensland that the influence of Silwan (Dargee x Silwa) was very strong and his pedigree is found frequently in the successful endurance horses in Australia as shown to us at the Convention Conference.

The tour saw again Hallelujah, this time much more relaxed in his home environment and he gave us a wonderful display. Son of the much missed Arfaja Haluj, Hallelujah is already making an impact on the breeding programmes with his daughter, Cameo Violetta Champion filly and the reserve, another daughter, Cameo Silver Halo who was exceptionally lovely, and out of the beautiful Somerled daughter, Pure Silver now owned by Moonlite Stud. With more foals due and a reputation building this young stallion is an exciting prospect.

The latest foal was the pure Crabbet filly, Cameo Silver Rainbow (Silver Wind van Nina x Velvet Ribbons) – Coralie said that no foal was ever born at Cameo and not named on the day of birth. Quite a feat I would say! This foal was born under a rainbow so perhaps it was easy! She was certainly very pretty and strong for a day old.

The remaining horses were shown to us in their paddocks where we were struck with the athleticism of the horses which is hardly surprising as Crabbet horses are athletic and are supposed to be out there performing! Many caught our eye, in particular Cameo Halcyon another Haluj daughter and the chestnut filly Cameo Favorita, by Cedardell Zanzibar, who showed off her style and movement.

Latterly some visitors were sidetracked in their paddock walk as Ken had found a koala for us all to see. Bored of seeing kangaroos in the wild, this was a real treat! Dinner that night was at the Jondaryan Woolshed, close to Ken and Coralie. This was an insight into the typical woolshed used for shearing sheep many years ago together with village life, now a tourist attraction.

On the third day, we left our base in Toowoomba and headed west for Brisbane. First stop was Comanche Lodge owned by Janice and Bruce O'Connor. Janice had produced a wonderful catalogue for us all to use and the parade started with the leased mare, Saronett Dhehebi Zahra by Magic Myth out of Dancing Fay with an exquisite foal, Comanche Lodge Dream Dancer by Silver Wind van Nina who impressed us all. Another Saronett mare, El Fakim Wahida also had a foal by Janice's stallion. This mare is out of Indian Fair, an Indian King grand-daughter. The mare Fenwick Sarina's (Sindh x Salvina) pedigree is amazing in that after two generations you cite Silver Vanity, Silfina, Shalina so it was fascinating to see that her lovely daughter Comanche Lodge Rainbird by Silver Wind van Nina was so stunning. Another amazing pedigree is that of Bundara Park Tria, now 26 years young by Bronzestone (Sindh x Badiyan) out of Ractria (Sharrak x Electria). This lovely mare looked well for her age.

The star of the stud, Silver Wind van Nina, had gone all the way to Victoria in 2000 for the Crabbet Convention in Melbourne. He is by Silver Conquest who we had hoped to see as he was a full brother to the outstanding Silver Somerio seen earlier on the trip. His dam, Ronina was by Grand Royal impressing on us again how quickly the Australian horses go back to the

original Crabbet imports. We were able to enjoy the remaining horses in the paddocks before moving on our busy schedule.

The next stud was Moondarra Stud of Ian and Deb Watson which also featured horses from Charaway Stud of Wayne Beasley and Miranda Kraatz. Here we were treated to a rendition of the Australian National Anthem and a special opening display with Deb's daughter dressed in Arabian costume on the lovely mare, Moondarra Silk N' Lace. The stud started in 1976 with the purchase of Oxford Stardust (Count Manilla x Electric Ray) and the Crabbet mare, Bright Light (Bright Shadow x Shadowlight). The senior mares shown were Mondarra Lace, dam of Silk N' Lace and Pearls N' Lace. The latter is by the senior stallion, Kyarnda Lodge Panache who has much Gainey blood in his pedigree which is high percentage Crabbet. The other stallion who we saw in the paddocks is Samson Tai, a chestnut out of Electra Tai (an El Shaklan grand-daughter) by Sambist, an AHS Premium Stallion and top racehorse in the UK. This stallion was conceived by frozen semen and was of particular interest in seeing his progeny down the line including the lovely yearling filly, Moondarra Samira.

Charaway Arabians produces Arabians for performance as well. They opened their display with a stock horse exhibition by Wayne on the stallion, Aivu, a bay by Mahabi El Shaklan out of Tarren Hill Diiva. Aivu has had much success in the show ring. Amongst the horses paraded was the multi champion mare, D'Amors Silver Sasha, of mainly El Shaklan breeding.

Today we saw four studs and the next stud, Alon Arabians owned by Nola and Gary Holznagel, was where we met up with some other visitors from the Convention again for lunch kindly provided outside prior to the paddock walk. Under the plastic tablecloths were all sorts of articles on Crabbet horses with photographs. This stud was a treat as here we were to see Sindhscenatti at 26 years old, and grey! He is a son of Sindh out of Brilliance, tail female to Silver Fire. This grand old gentleman was still siring foals, one, Alon Navarein just 10 days old and very pretty was out of the mare Jirrima Rosetta, tracing to Rosalina in tail female. It is hoped that this colt will carry on the line. A new addition to their pure Crabbet brood mare band was Mt. Eerwah Chantilly Lace (Prince Rasheyd (imp UK) x Rothlyne Pure Delight). Rothlyne Pure Delight was by Magic Myth, a son of Magic Carpet out of Priscilla. An interesting mare was Mahazin Lakazza (Dandaloo Kadet x Liza with a Zee) who traces back to the wonderful line of Carlina in tail female line. These two mares will hopefully produce some useful bloodlines for Queensland. Until recently the stud has concentrated on high percentage lines and the horses contain famous names of the past from the UK through Cedardell Sharia (Shahid x Zaria) and they have been so successfully crossed into the Crabbet lines in Australia.

The last stud of the day was one of the most famous in Australia, Bremervale. It was from here that Caroline Murray imported the beautiful Bremervale Emperor to combine so well with her mares. It was with high anticipation that we got off the bus to meet the Toft family, so famous in endurance and see their up to date breeding programme. We were given a wonderful show of their horses, with many by Desperado (WN Dajmir x Bremervale Aquarius). The mare that stood out for me was Bremervale Sincerely out of B. Sincerity, a beautiful chestnut with outstanding movement. The other main stallion at Bremervale was Hercules a full brother to Desperado but grey rather than bay and we also saw the imported WN Dashmir. After the parade, one of Australia's top endurance horses, Bremervale Justice gave a ridden demonstration and then paraded with the 2005 silver medal winning Endurance Team. An Aussie barbeque ended an interesting and perhaps demanding day of contrasting studs and styles much enjoyed.

Friday saw the tour party reduce considerably in numbers and the coach was turned into a minibus with a new driver, the ever cheery Jeff Coombes, Ken's son, and nothing was too difficult or annoying for him to do. So started the remainder of the trip and having said goodbye at Brisbane the remaining group set off up the coast. Steve Irwin's Australia Zoo was the first stop and we had not realized of course at the time how poignant this would be one year on and the tragic loss of this amazing man. The shows were an education, and extremely well done and this is one of the greatest zoos in Australia. A lasting tribute to Steve Irwin.

After lunch we journeyed to Mt. Eerwah Stud owned by Geoff and Robyn Pembroke. The stud is situated in an enchanting valley with mountains behind where Robyn trains her horses for endurance. The stud was founded in 1994 and formed with the purchase of Silver Conquest (Somered x Silver Doura), a full brother to Silver Somerio, who sadly died in 2003. We were able to see his son, Mt. Eerwah Silverado out of Rothlyne Pure Delight (Magic Myth x Fasoura) now in America. This young stallion was impressive and hopefully will carry on the dynasty of his father. He is already competing in endurance and Robyn says his temperament is wonderful so he can be taken anywhere. He was Champion Pure Crabbet Stallion at the Queensland Crabbet Show in 2003.

Mt. Eerwah bred the pure Crabbet mare, Mt. Eerwah Anastasia (Prince Rasheyd x Rothlyne Pure Delight). The young colt Mt Eerwah Bay Cavalier (Boomori Kahlua x Mt Eerwah Chantilly Lace) is two years old and had real quality so he has a bright future.

The founding mare of the stud was Montevideo Bella Arafina and was 28 years old. Her daughter by Silver Conquest is retained and competing in endurance. Robyn has other horses from these lines and also breeds some Part Bred Arabians. Anna's Silver D by Silver Conquest out of Gardinea (who goes back to Count Manilla) has been ridden in endurance for some years and completed a Tom Quilty Gold Cup. The mare Fenwick Rulita foaled just after we left, a bay colt I believe by Silverado who looked good from the photos. This stud is one to watch and you can be sure of a good performance horse from there.

Back at the hotel we were joined for drinks by Trevor Lance who owns Magic Myth, another son of Magic Carpet, so a half brother to Magic Prophecy. We had seen many of his offspring on this trip and although not officially on the tour, Mr. Lance invited us to see his horses if we had time. Fortunately we were able to visit the next morning and see Magic Myth and some of his stock. Mr. Lance has pure Crabbet horses including Mill Park Ventura (Volcano x Mira Monte Silver Glitter) and Somers Silver Rose (Somered x The Cameo Rose). We were grateful to be able to see these horses and a quite exquisite bay filly foal on this trip. Mr. Lance has some very interesting bloodlines of value to the Crabbet cause.

We said goodbye to some more of the tour at Gympie and then set off up the coast for swimming, sea food, relaxation and a spectacular day at the Barrier Reef off Musgrove Island. Yes, you shouldn't have left the trip, it was all wonderful. A day or so later we arrived at the end of the tour and Ken and Jan Coombes famous Roxborough Stud. We were made most welcome by the Coombe family and enjoyed a wonderful parade of the horses. Founded 40 years ago, the first stallion was used to breed part bred and then the mare Electricia arrived in 1961 with a filly foal, Royal Tricia, at foot. Electricia was by Electric Silver out of Baksheesh who was of the Barada tail female line. Another Electricia daughter is Trix Silver, dam of Ralvon Pilgrim who won the first International Class in the UK. In 1971 Regency by Grand

Royal out of Gentaza was purchased. No other females were brought in but top mares do visit outside stallions. Ken has followed a very successful line breeding programme and at present is producing high percentage Crabbet horses bred for temperament, riding ability, action and beauty.

We were shown a total of 23 horses from Roxborough and the quality was there right through all the horses. We had seen Roxborough Bandoleer at the Convention and now we saw some of his offspring including, R Banquette, R Bangalay and R Banarra. The mare R Sarlak was of exceptional quality and it was no surprise that her son R. Rivalry was being kept as a junior sire to follow on from his father, R Rissalix. Rivalry was Junior Champion Crabbet Related Colt at the Convention Show.

The stallion R. Rissalix (89.4% Crabbet) was by Bremervale Destiny and out of Takolik, by the grey stallion, Celyn, out of Royal Tricia, and R. Peekay is a grandson of Crystal Fire and combines the blood of the two foundation mares. The mare R Banawarra was by R. Banco, now dead but his influence in the stud is immense. R Banco was by Bandom and the Count Manilla daughter, Iridium (Royal Tricia) and sired three Roxborough horses who were all finalists at the 1998 Australian Championships, two of them going top 10. R. Banjara (91.6%) is being retained as a junior sire and contains the blood of the two original mares at the stud.

The Coombes had invited two pure Crabbet horses from Kay Slattery's Leondon Stud and the Zaneff Stud of Cheryl Zante and Geoff Montgomerie. These were Zaneff Shahaal Ibn Rha and Zaneff Sindherella full brother and sister of entirely Fenwick breeding tracing back to the Barada tail female line. From Leondon were L Indian Vanity by Harb Vanity from Indian Dove, the imported Ludo daughter, and the high percentage Crabbet mare, L. Miss Maddison (by Harb Vanity). These horses put on a wonderful display and we were very glad to see horses from other studs in the area.

For most of the group, the trip ended here at Rockhampton but I had been fortunate enough to be staying just a little longer to get up to Cairns and visit Bruce and Fay Copland at their Koah Stud. They are the owners of Prince Rasheyd imported from Worth Arabian Stud in England who had made such an impact at the Show and Convention. The other stallion at Koah is Mill Park Waterford (Mill Park Falconer x Mill Park Water Sylph) bred by Shirley Douglas Greig in Victoria. This young stallion is double Roberto breeding, with beautiful big eyes, wonderful movement from behind. He is now being broken to saddle and his first foal should be on the ground.

The foundation mare is Koah Royale (Ralvon Job x E' Arlia Faith) and has produced nine fillies and one colt. Fay has retained her daughter Noelle by Prince Rasheyd. The pure Crabbet mare, Inshallah Silver Charm is by the famous stallion Crenel out of Fanfaronade (by Sindh) and she had a good quality colt at her side by Prince Rasheyd. Princess Charlotte had also been at the Convention and is bay and the last filly of Fenwick Winnatt by Rasheyd. She is retained to be bred to Waterford.

Last, but definitely not least was a quick visit to see Peter Butler's Elshada Arabians at home. Most of the horses as I said before are dotted around Australia as Peter believes in using different stallions. The mares at home were the high percentage Crabbet mares of the Silver Fire line, Desert Beauty and Matta Mia Eyeliner. Moonlight Ice was still in NSW with Glenda Shrimpton but I understand mother and son by Arfaja Nassif are now back in Queensland.

What a useful addition to their programme this colt will be. Peter also sent the mare, Elshada Opal Fire, who had won her class at the Convention to Prince Benay after his success at the Crabbet Convention Show and the foal is eagerly awaited.

The tour put together by Ken Coombes had everything, beautiful horses, scenery, food and time for new friendships to be made and old ones renewed. Thank you Ken for such a wonderful tour and to Jeff our very patient driver. In Australia distances seem a barrier for moving mares around, or perhaps this is no different from the UK where some people send their mares to outside stallions and other choose not to. Line breeding is being successfully achieved in Australia and perhaps this is more common due to the distances involved. For the future of the Crabbet horse, there are some very interesting horses dotted around Queensland which can be a good base for the future. The predominant lines in Queensland are definitely the very famous Somerled, Silwan and Indian Dream. They crop up in pedigrees so many times. Last, the hospitality of all our hosts was overwhelming and much appreciated. The new foaling season is already well underway in Australia and we look forward to hearing about the new foals born to further the Crabbet story for the future. We now look to America to invite us in 2008/9? No pressure really!!!

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