

# AUSTRALIAN LEGENDS

OUR HISTORY OF OUTSTANDING QUARTER HORSES

VOLUME ONE



KAREN THRUN



# Commander's Boy

1963 BROWN STALLION (IMP) Q215

HE WAS AN  
EXTREMELY  
ATHLETIC AND  
SUPERBLY-BRED  
HORSE.

Commander's Boy was already a highly credentialed horse and a proven sire of halter and performance horses when he arrived in this country in 1971. He was one of the top ten finalists in the 1966 American NCHA Futurity, a holder of an AQHA ROM in Performance and an NCHA Certificate of Ability, and one of five leading Junior Cutting Horses in the USA in 1967. He'd accumulated 23 cutting points from open competition throughout America.

## Flying L QH Stud

Originally cattle graziers, Bill and Judith Long of Greenbah Station at Moree, NSW, decided to diversify from beef cattle to Quarter Horses, enlarging their operation to incorporate a stud and purchasing a draft of horses in conjunction with Luther M. White of White Farms in Florida, USA. In the space of one year the Longs imported their entire

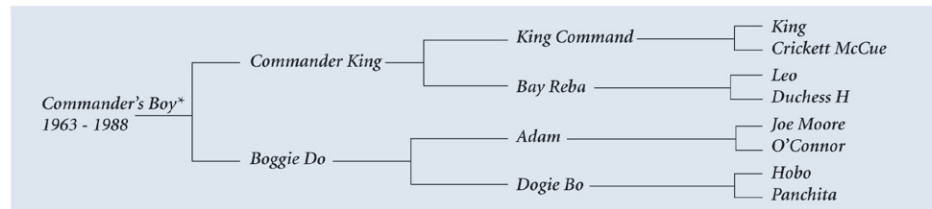
nucleus of breeding stock for the Flying L Quarter Horse Stud. Bill and Judith had three sons, Gordon, the eldest, then Richard and Stephen. They sent their youngest son, Stephen, to America in March 1970 with the awesome responsibility of purchasing the stock, a consignment of horses worth close to a quarter of a million dollars, through private sales, and gathering them together at the Florida ranch.

Stephen Long explains his mother's original concept for the stud, "Getting involved in the Quarter Horses was mum's idea of a retirement plan. She wanted four mares and one stallion just as a little hobby and, initially when I left to go to the States, that's what we were going to get." Stephen had been enjoying life up in Queensland working as a jackaroo when his father asked him to return home. "And when I got home he landed this on me, and I thought ... God. It was both exciting and frightening to be quite honest. It was a great opportunity, but I

Commander's Boy in 1972 at the Flying L Stud at Moree, NSW. The stallion arrived in this country as a proven cutting horse, he was the 1967 Open Reserve World Champion Junior Cutting Horse in the USA.



Photo by Keith Stevens



was fairly naive as far as the horse industry went. We'd certainly done the pony club thing, and we'd played polocrosse and polo and were all pretty confident horsemen, but I never ever dreamed I'd be getting sent to the States on a buying trip."

As it turned out Bill Long was good friends with Jack Reilly. They were old acquaintances going back to Reilly's days in the police force, and by this time he was heavily involved with the AQHA. "Jack Reilly had organised the connections and I was heading off to the States to meet up with Luther White. Jack had teed things up fairly well, but in the process of getting over there he and the old man had decided that this was a good opportunity to make a few quid. Somewhere along the line Jack had convinced him that the Quarter Horse industry was going to take off and now was the time to get in on the ground floor. Behind the scenes, and still to this day I don't quite know how it all took place, but I know there was certainly some tax advantages somewhere along the line for somebody. So from those meagre beginnings of four mares and a stallion it grew rapidly."

## Commander's Boy\*

Commander's Boy\* was an extremely athletic and superbly bred horse, carrying some of the oldest and the best Quarter Horse blood in the world with King, Leo, Joe Moore and Hobo in his pedigree. His sire, Commander King by King Command (a son of King), was also an AmQHA Champion and held a Superior Cutting Horse Award, a ROM Arena and an NCHA Certificate of Ability. King Command was a full brother to Power Command, whose son, King Fritz, established his own dynasty of reining and cowhorses on the west coast of the USA. Boggie Do, the dam of Commander's Boy\*, held a ROM Arena in the USA and was the dam of three ROM Arena horses. She carried the highly regarded bloodlines of Little Joe and Della Moore.

Commander's Boy\* was bred by James E. Kemp of Dallas, Texas and foaled in 1963. Kemp was also the owner of his sire, Commander King, who was trained in cutting by Jack Newton of Abilene, Texas. In 1961



Photo courtesy Glory Ann Kurza

Jack Newton with Commander King, (sire of Commander's Boy) at the 1962 Abilene Horse Show, USA. Commander King was shown by Newton to his AmQHA Championship in 1964, when he was owned by James Kemp of Dallas, Texas. In 1965 Kemp sold the stallion to Jack Newton who took him further to achieve an AQHA Superior in Cutting (1966) and an NCHA Certificate of Ability.

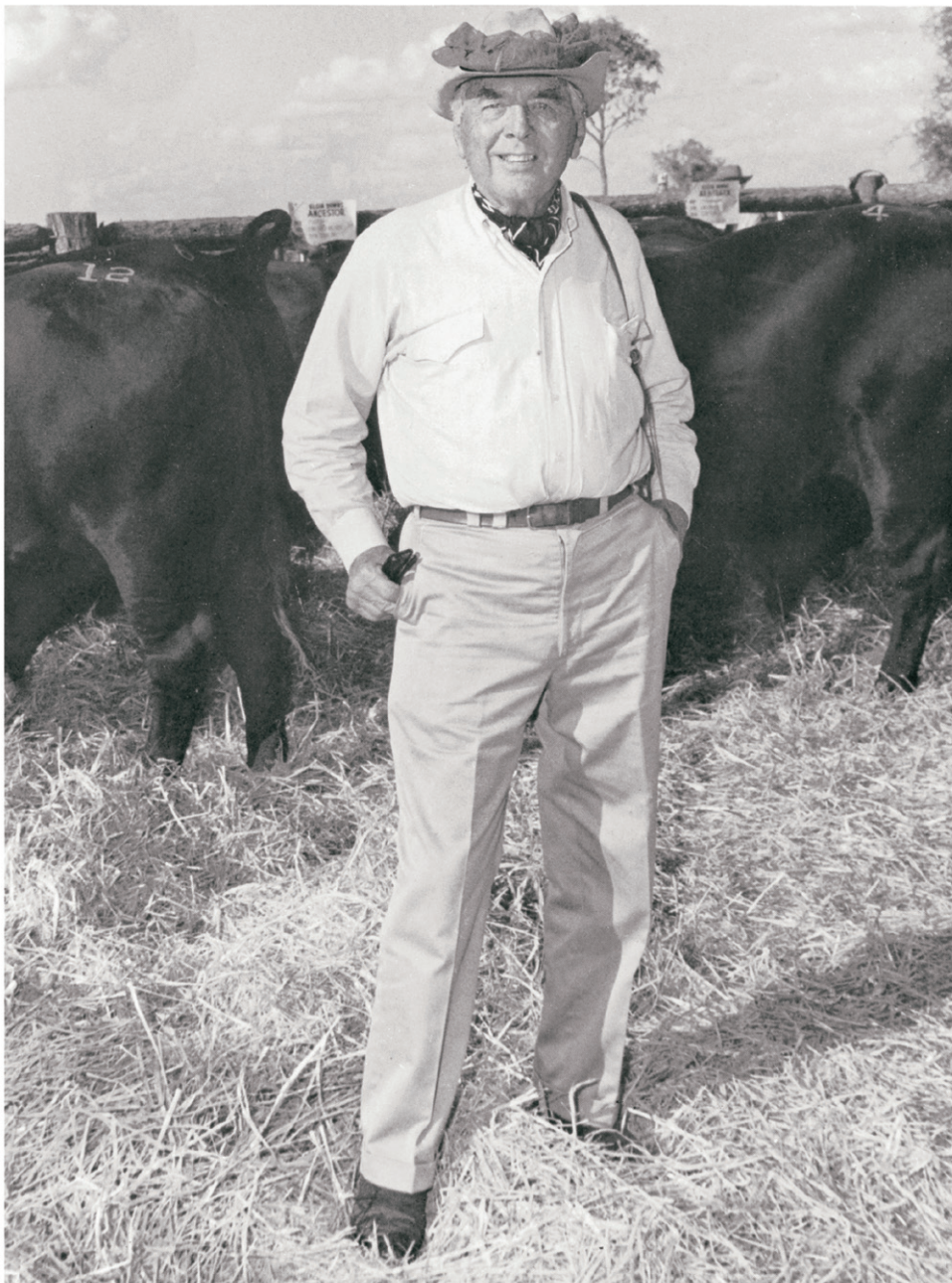
Kemp had employed Newton to train the stallion and then advance to training his progeny. But by 1965, Kemp had problems with the Internal Revenue Service and decided to sell up. From his dispersal sale Jack Newton



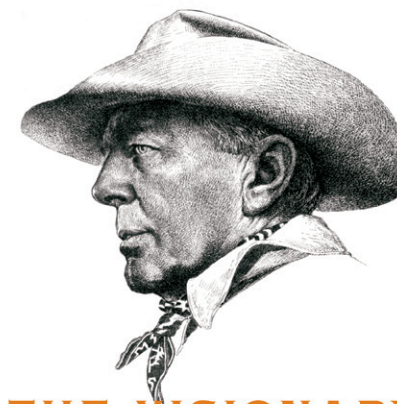
Photo courtesy Stephen Long

Stephen Long takes what was possibly only his second ride on Commander's Boy in the indoor arena at White Farms. In those first few rides, Stephen freely describes himself as being totally out of whack with this athletic horse and feeling very uncomfortable.





Robert J. Kleberg, Jr. built the family business into a 15 million acre global empire, with ranches spread from Argentina to Australia. Of the Quarter Horse breed, back in 1942 he said, "I feel that our effort with the Quarter Horse is a very important one, and if we possibly can, we should keep the thing alive. In my mind, Quarter Horses are just as important on the ranch as the hardy strains that we have developed from Brahman cattle. The Quarter Horse should be on every ranch. I think that one thing we should stress more about these horses is the fact that they are the hardest of all strains of horses under range conditions."



## THE VISIONARY

*'While the art of breeding  
requires intense application to detail,  
endless study, observation and  
application of a keen artistic sense,  
the rewards are great and I know of no task  
of such consuming and lasting interest.'*

Robert J. Kleberg, Jr.,  
President and Manager of King Ranch, Texas.





Photo by Peter-Anne Tenney

*Cassius Deck\*, ridden by his owner, Con Wilson of Bimbimbee Stud, Tamworth.*

Broomfield and Tondara. Service fees in those days were between \$200 and \$300. Stallions like Tejano Chico\*, Bon Hand\*, Mentiroso\*, Valido\*, Quarter Master, Quarter Ala Wimpy\*, Alfie's Cat\*, Lee Bars Boy\* and Eddie Barnes\* all stood for a fee of \$210.

The King Ranch 1969 Sale had very good results with horses being sold to all states of Australia and two lots to New Zealand. Noel Fennell from Willomurra Quarter Horse Stud

in South Australia, probably made the best buy when he purchased Tejano Lady for \$5,000. This mare more than paid for herself when she went on to win the \$5,000 Colony Stud Cutting Futurity held in Penrith at the County Of Cumberland Quarter Horse Championships in 1972. King Ranch sales reached record prices and continued breaking records at future sales, until they eventually found their supply of horses could not keep up with the demand.

For most of Australia's early Quarter Horse breeders 1970 will be remembered as a boom year, when stock prices began to rise beyond all expectations. Up until the early seventies the accent in Australia was still on the Quarter Horse as an animal adept at working cattle and especially suited for competitions requiring speed, agility and a level temperament. Consequently, Quarter Horses tended to perform mostly in specialised events. However, this rapidly changed and increasing numbers of Quarter Horses were seen competing successfully in the general show ring and pleasure events. There was a new demand for saddle and show horses of many breeds, and in particular, there were people willing to spend thousands of dollars for what they came to know as the most versatile horse in the world.

Prices continued to rise for the next four years with records prices set at nearly every sale and attendances at some estimated at around 1,200. At least three shipments of horses were on their way to Australia. Elizabeth (Betty) Hobson of Comfort, Texas, was importing 29 horses including AmQHA Champion, Bimbo Bow\*, along with With It\* and some excellent broodmares for her Claren Park Stud in South Australia. Elizabeth was accompanied by June



Photo by Keith Stevens

*Charlie Beard from Claren Park Stud in SA, with his imported sire, San Leo Joe\*, by Leo San.*

and Charlie Beard and their stallion, San Leo Joe\*, who was later sold to Hugh & Gill Sawrey of Bangtail Stud, Queensland. Bill Long was also bringing in a large shipment which included the stallions, Commander's Boy\*, Bills Shine\* and Magnolia Bill\*, and numerous mares, some in foal to top American sires. Greg McCamley was importing the stallion, Hollywood Return\*, and the mare, Kimba Star\*, and Sam Hordern imported two top sires, Bill's Crockett\* and Fighting Fox\*, along with some mares and foals.

By the end of 1971 a total of 209 purebred Quarter Horses had been imported. In 1974, first cross mares were fetching new record prices of \$9,750 and this was in spite of the cattle price crash which had devastating effects on Australia's cattlemen and graziers. Studs had imported stallions worth thousands of dollars and at great expense. Many will remember Capricorn Stud's imported American Grand Champion Halter stallion, Hunch Bid\* (by Tiny Charger), carrying a staggering price tag of \$100,000. His photograph graced the front cover of the July 1973 Stallion Issue of the *Australian Quarter Horse Journal*.

The Capricorn QH Stud was established in 1970 with the purchase of King Ranch Brigadier (by Mentiroso\*) and two King Ranch mares. In 1972 a draft of seven purebred horses was imported from the United States, in which top American racing bloodlines were represented. During 1973 thirteen more purebreds were imported and although some of these carried more racing blood, other purchases brought top cutting and halter horses to the country. Jack Reilly purchased the Doc Bar daughter, Doc's Misty Morn\*, and Hunch Bid\* on behalf of Eric Clementson, the owner of Capricorn Estates. Additional mares and the top stallion, Lion Deck\*, were imported late the following year. Many of these imported horses established themselves as some of the most outstanding Quarter Horses in Australia.

Capricorn Estates was a family business and included a Brahman Stud on the property situated between Canberra and Yass in NSW. Eric's sons, Pat and Barry Clementson, also helped their father with the management of the property and the stock. Capricorn held its first horse sale in 1974 to reduce numbers and make room for outside mares to visit the various stallions standing at stud. They were predominantly into sprint-bred horses, standing other notable imported sires like Thundering Jet\*, Booty Man\*, With It\*, Chick's Boy Image\*



Photo by John McKone

*Imported by Capricorn Estates, Hunch Bid\* (Tiny Charger x First Bid), was the first \$100,000 horse to be imported to Australia in 1973.*

and Tiny's Patriotic\*. They exhibited their horses at shows and competed in Quarter Mile racing in the eastern states and were successful in taking many major prizes and winning many races. For three consecutive years Capricorn's horses won the Trangie Race with Chick's Boy Image\* in 1973, Tiny's Patriotic\* in 1974 and Jazz Set\* in 1975. Jazz Set\* was trained and raced by the stud, even though he had been sold just prior to the race.



Photo by Peter-Anne Tenney, courtesy Geoff Perrett

*Wise Bid\* (Double Bid x Ima Bar Deck), the record-breaking \$40,000 3 year old bay stallion sold to Mr and Mrs Doug Mayne of Dingo, Queensland in February 1974.*



# Clover Cherry

1960 CHESTNUT MARE (IMP) Q56

**FOR MANY AUSTRALIANS, SHE WAS THE FIRST QUARTER HORSE THEY HAD EVER SEEN CUTTING A COW.**

Clover Cherry\* was one of Australia's best known cutting mares. For many Australians, she was the first Quarter Horse they had ever seen cutting a cow. Californian horseman, Greg Lougher (pronounced Lawher), gave an exhibition on Clover Cherry\* at the 1967 Warwick Rodeo and from there this mare continued to demonstrate her incredible skills throughout the country during the late sixties and into the early seventies. In 1970 Clover Cherry\* won Australia's first Cutting Futurity and in 1971 the mare was given an AQHA Award of Honour for her role in promoting the Quarter Horse in Australia. Later she was recognised by the NCHA with induction into the Heritage Horses Hall of

Fame. After her retirement from competition, Cherry continued to excel in the breeding barn, producing both a daughter and granddaughter who were also inducted into the NCHA Hall of Fame.

The tale of this great mare would not be complete without the background story of Greg Lougher, the man who started the Clover Leaf Stud in Australia, and who, along with his daughters, showed a sceptical Australian public exactly what this new breed of horses was capable of. It is both an exciting and interesting piece of our Australian Quarter Horse history and needs to be included in this chapter. The importation of Clover Leaf horses took place in 1967, thirteen years after the first Quarter

Greg Lougher riding the great mare, Clover Cherry\*, imported in 1967.



Photo by Keith Stevens

Clover Cherry\*  
1960 - 1983



Horse stallions were imported by King Ranch. It was the largest single consignment of Quarter Horses ever to be imported into Australia at that time, and it nearly didn't eventuate.

## The Californian

Gregory Lougher, born in 1915 on a ranch near Mt Diablo in central California, started riding horses as a four year old and since then his life never ventured far from the animals he was so passionate about. He competed at rodeos and shows very early in his riding career and took on problem horses, turning them into good riding mounts. He was a 'natural' with horses and generally very successful. At sixteen years of age he competed in his first senior event at a rodeo and from that point on there was no stopping him. He left school and headed for Nevada's cattle country, where he spent the next three years developing and refining his horsemanship skills. This was followed by a three year university course in Animal Husbandry in California, which included two years of Veterinary Science. Greg's eventual plan

was to breed and train his own horses, but in the meantime, he paid his way through university by continuing to break and train horses and compete at shows and rodeo events. During his university years the Inter-Collegiate Cowboy contests were introduced and Greg won the first All Round Inter-Collegiate Cowboy award at the Victorville Rodeo in California, scoring more individual points than any other team.

From 1943 to 1946 during WWII Greg was drafted into the Army and his duties began in the veterinary section of the Cavalry at Fort Riley in Kansas. The Army then sent him into Burma, India and China, utilising his veterinary and farriery skills working with mules and pack horses, transporting vital supplies and artillery through mined jungles and mountain passes. Following his discharge, Greg continued to pursue his dream. He broke in horses for the Greene Cattle Company, (commonly known as the RO) of Arizona, one of the largest cattle companies in the US. The ranch bred their horses solely for the purpose



Greg Lougher and Clover Cherry\* - winners of the Queensland Cutting Futurity in 1970.

Photo by Keith Stevens