

# ECAHS Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient

## JEWELL CANTRELL

### A LIFETIME WITH HORSES—THE CRABBET LEGACY ENDURES

by Cindy Reich

In an age where true breeders can be counted on the fingers of one hand, Jewell Cantrell, of Cantrell Arabians is as her name suggests. She is a bright shining jewel who has been breeding exceptional Crabbet and Crabbet bred Arabians for over 50 years!

Jewell is a life-long horsewoman. She credits her grit and work ethic (she still is out in the barn working every



day!!!) to an aged pony called Tom Thumb. “I was about three years old, and my uncles could see I was absolutely horse crazy”, said Jewell. “They got me this pony who was about 20 years old and knew every trick in the book. He would scrape me off on trees and was totally barn sour, but of course, I adored him. Since he was so barn sour, my father put a peach crate at the end of our road. Now Tom Thumb would lead just fine, so in order to ride him I would have to walk him all the way down to the end of the road, get up on the peach crate and he would race back to the barn. It took me three hours to get to the end of the road, and about one minute to get back to the barn!!! I would do two trips a day. One before lunch and one after—I learned to ride and I learned perseverance. My father was moving cattle one afternoon and was using a portable gate made of

barbed wire. He forgot I was out “riding” and left the gate in the road. Well, Tom Thumb came charging down the road to that gate, stuck his head between two of the wires and scrambled through, leaving me hanging on the wire! He made me a determined horsewoman!

After Tom Thumb came a Arab/Welsh cross, but she graduated from that to American Saddlebreds. However, once she was married and had children, she realized that raising show Saddlebreds was a lot of work. “By the time you got them ready, took off tail sets, groomed, worked them, groomed them again, put on tails sets, etc., there just wasn’t any time left in the day”, said Jewell. For a time, Cantrell bred and showed Quarter Horses, as California is very much still a cowboy state. “I liked the Quarter Horses”, said Cantrell, “and I always had to have pretty Quarter Horses. However, I just didn’t enjoy the way they moved. They would just shake your bones loose riding them. They were just so short strided. Then I rode an Arabian, and it was like trading in a Model T for a Cadillac! I still wanted a horse with that elegant look, so the Arabian was the logical choice!”

Jewell’s first Arabian was a mare Thearaby (Bezaleel x Nallana) that she leased and bred to Nadjur, a Fadjur (Fadheilan x Bint Sahara) son out of Hi-Netta (Fertif x Vans Natta). The result was a filly, Tajura. Jewell started showing at some Arabian shows in California, USA where she had her farm. It was at a show in Sacramento that she saw a gentleman leading a huge colt. “This colt was absolutely beautiful”, Cantrell recalled. “He had a gorgeous head, a neck that went on forever and a hip that was a mile long. I tried to be everywhere that gentleman was that day—he certainly was proud of his colt and was leading him all over the show grounds. I introduced myself to the owner and said, “If you handle him right, he could be a National Champion. That colt, of course, was Ben Rabba++/ (Aurab x Rollicka).”

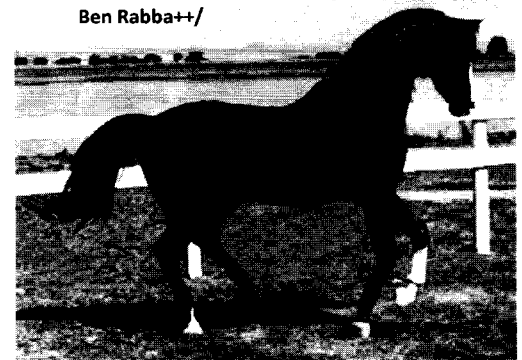
The owner, Ed Hubbert, was a real amateur at the time, but he had the guts to go out and show his horse anyway. Ben Rabba++/ had the best disposition—he would really take care of his owner. Regardless of the expertise of his rider, Ben Rabba++/ just demanded attention from the judges. He was simply too beautiful to overlook”, said Cantrell. “Ed would take him to a show and maybe win the Western Pleasure class. Then he would change tack and take Ben Rabba++/ into the Hunter Hack class where they would have to jump two small jumps. He might place in that class. Then the next morning he would show Ben Rabba++/ in halter, and he would be Champion Stallion!” That is what I like best about the Crabbet horses—they are so willing, and they can do anything”.

Jewell had not seen Ben Rabba++/ since he was a two year old, but they crossed paths again several years later at

a show in Watsonville. They were putting on a presentation with Aurab, and during the presentation they brought out Ben Rabba++/. Now, Ed would breed Ben Rabba++/ to anything. He was the greatest promoter of the Arabian horse, and clearly adored his stallion. He might be riding out on the trail and meet up with some other riders. They always admired Rabba. Ed would ask them, "Would you like to breed to him?" If the mare they were riding was in heat, Ed would say, "Take off the saddle and we'll just breed her now!" Ben Rabba++/ bred more mares on the trail than probably any Arabian stallion in California", chuckled Cantrell.

"So I was watching this presentation", Jewell continued, "And they brought out Ben Rabba++/ and a parade of mares after him. Now these mares were NOT of high quality in any sense of the word. There were Walking horse mares, grade mares and some Morgan and Arabians. However, at the side of every one of these mares, were these gazelle-like foals. All the foals were superb and much, much better than the mares. It was right then that I decided I wanted to build a breeding program around this stallion!" Well-known trainer Patience Prine-Carr's mother worked for Ed Hubbert, and as Patience developed as a trainer, she showed Ben Rabba++/ to many championships in various disciplines, but especially in sidesaddle. He went on to win many championships in Halter and under saddle, which became the trademark of his offspring as well.

Jewell got her first son of Ben Rabba++/, Robby (Ben Rabba++/ x Ohadi Abbie). from Curtis Cox of Ohadi Arabians when he was just a long yearling. Regardless of her American Saddlebred past, Jewell was very much into the Western show disciplines and the majority of her horses were shown in western classes. Robby helped out in this regard as he went on to become the number one sire of Working Western horses. One of his best known daughters, Serannada (x Serana) owned by Alice Jackson and Sandy Robinson has won well over 30 National Championships—primarily in Trail, shown by Youth and Amateur riders. She has more National Championships than any other Working Western horse in US show history. I had the pleasure of judging Serannada++/ at the Youth Nationals in 2008 when she won 5 National Championships in Trail at that show.



Ohadi Indian Fire, a full brother to Robby, has won numerous National awards in Western Pleasure and Hunter Pleasure. Additionally, he is producing award winning performance horses such as Indian Magic+++// (x Aloha Waiki by Druska). Indian Magic+++// has won countless championships in Sport Horse Mare In Hand, Western Pleasure, Hunter Pleasure and Sidesaddle. Rhinestone Cowboy (x Dazzle Me by Rollicka) won numerous National Championships in Ladies Sidesaddle.

Cantrell Arabians is known throughout the United States for her beautiful Arabian horses that excel in performance. Her horses are easily recognizable for their consistency of type. Jewell credits the Crabbet breeding for these traits—it is what she pursued in her vision of a breeding program built around Ben Rabba++/. "What I love about the Crabbet horses", said Jewell, "is that they are big, full-bodied horses. Not a little tiny mosquito! You know you are riding a real horse. Their movement is so comfortable and balanced. Another trait that is classic Crabbet is their disposition. When Ed was riding Ben Rabba++/, even though he was not a great rider, Ben would take care of him and keep Ed in the saddle. In fact, sometimes when Ed was riding Ben around the countryside, often someone would drive by and come back to comment on the beauty of his horse. Now, these would not be horsemen—just regular townspeople. Ed would ask if they ever thought of having an Arabian horse. The people would reply, "Sure, if it looked like that!" Ed would then invite them right then and there to come back with him to the ranch and he would let them ride Ben!!! And Ben would be so gentle with them! He would adjust his body to keep them in the saddle. That willingness...that desire to work but also to take care of the rider has come down through the generations".

"Ohadi Indian Fire is a great example. The trainers wanted to make him an English Pleasure horse. However, I'm a western gal, and I wanted him to go Western. The trainers scoffed at me, but he won spectacularly in Western. The thing about these horses is that they can do anything well. You just think about what you want them to be—and they will become that horse! They are very trainable. There is something about the Crabbet horses—they have a serene quality to them. If you go easy and show them what you want them to do, they just go to work and do it". It should also be noted that the vast majority of Jewell's horses have been and still are being shown to National awards by amateur owners, another endorsement of the willing nature of her horses.

Jewell Cantrell is now many generations into her breeding program of over 50 years. After making Ben Rabba++/ the focus of her breeding program, Ed Hubbert willed Ben Rabba++/ to Jewell. Ben Rabba++/ also has the distinction of

being the first American bred Arabian horse to be leased to England, home of his ancestors. He was in England for 2 ½ years where he sired 44 foals. After Ed's death, Ben Rabba++/ came to Jewell to live out the rest of his days. As he took care of her by founding a dynasty of big, beautiful athletes, so Jewell took care of him.

Jewell has in her determined and steadfast manner, preserved the Crabbet legacy of beautiful athletes in her breeding program over the last 50 years. While others chased after one fad or another, Jewell quietly continued producing horses of the Cantrell "look". Large, short backed, well balanced horses with superb length and depth of hip and length of croup. Strong, straight legs with wide tendons, short cannon bones and good feet. A long shoulder, high set, arched neck that balanced the horse with a clean throat. A beautiful head with a large, expressive eye and most importantly, a great disposition with a huge heart and willing work ethic. Jewell's big red horses are recognizable around the world, cherished by their owners, rewarded by the judges and respected by trainers. She has been a good and faithful guardian of all that the Crabbet horse embodies.

Perhaps her impact might well be summed up by one of the many people who consider themselves to be the owner of a Cantrell horse. Jaede Miloslavich has ridden and trained horses all of her life. When she finally decided to buy a horse just for herself—not for a client, she went to Jewell. This is what Jaede had to say:

Why a Jewell Cantrell-bred horse? Jewell Cantrell simply breeds the finest Crabbett horses on the planet and I am not the only one who thinks so. She is a small breeder, with just a few foals per year. But yet, AHA data selected her as Number One Breeder of Purebred Arabian Western Working Horses 2004-2009. To achieve this, she has carefully chosen as her main bloodline Aurab through Ben Rabba++/ then out-crosses to selected horses, then back to Ben Rabba++/ again.

To me, she is the perfect breeder. She knows what she likes, and she RIDES her horses.

For over 40 years I wanted one of those big, glorious, beautiful-moving chestnut horses of Jewell Cantrell's! But, being all of 5'2" (tippy-toe), every time I went to visit, it seemed I got shorter while Jewell's horses got taller.

But in 2007, I saw an incredible Cantrell-bred mare, Serannada+// (Robby x Serana), ridden by juniors, amateurs and professionals, winning every Regional and National Trail Championship possible. And at the 2008 Youth Nationals, Serannada won FOUR Championships, in Trail Walk/Jog

10 & Under, Trail Horse JOTR 14-17, Trail JOTR 13 & Under, Trail Horse JTR 14-17, and Trail JTR 13 & Under.

At the same time, other Cantrell-bred horses were placing National Champion or Top Ten in Halter, Western Pleasure, Hunter Pleasure, English Pleasure, Ladies Sidesaddle, Sporthorse in Hand, and Dressage.

That did it. I had to go back to Cantrell Arabians. Since I have been training my own horses for decades, I knew there was no other breeder who concentrated on and was so successful in consistently breeding good moving western and sport horses, with sound conformation, good minds, and gentle enough for amateurs and children. Exactly what I needed.

Jewell matched me with a lovely double Ben Rabba++/ three year old gelding, El Tapahtio (Lakota Moondance x Fire Song CA). Bright chestnut (of course!) with sabino markings, deep hipped, shapely neck and head, lovely eyes, and moved like a dream sequence. That fall, he lived up to his bloodlines: he was the easiest horse I ever started while being the sweetest horse in the barn.

Fast forward three years: "Tito" is a certified California State Parks Mounted Patrol horse, is a Sport Horse-in-Hand Champion, and placing well in Open Western Pleasure. At the same time, he goes horse camping, helps with trail work in the Sierra Mountains, while being my 9-year old granddaughter's arena horse. He has fulfilled every possible wish that I had for him. There are so few Arabian breeders like Jewell anymore - those who breed true saddle horses, ones that you enjoy riding, that keep sound, look pretty, and have an excellent temperament. Call me old fashioned, but these are the exact attributes I look for, too. And all I have to do is go to Gridley, California, and enjoy the lovely horses at Cantrell Arabians. Don't forget to ask Jewell for her awesome peach cobbler!

