

HOW GADEBROOK BEGAN... PART II

With a fifty five year record, and still counting, Gadebrook Stud's progeny have increased exponentially. So apologies if the second part of its history trots all over the place, in the UK and overseas.

• WORDS AND PHOTOS BY ANNE BROWN •



Anne and precious Silver Aura (Ben Rabba x Silver Sheen) in 2006

The successful 2002 Crabbet Convention kick started renewed interest in Crabbet Arabians in England. Gadebrook was invited to parade a number of horses, including some of my high-stepping Silvern Sceptre progeny: young stallion Crystal Magic (from Crystal Lazuli), and full siblings Silver Aria and Bright Sceptre. These two were out of my gentle Ben Rabba daughter Silver Aura, a former British National Champion Mare, and the daughter of multi-British Champion Silver Sheen.

Two other horses on display that day later came to Gadebrook. The versatile eventing and endurance stallion Shaded Silver arrived in 2004 and sired full siblings Blue Shadow in 2005 and Azarina in 2007 from Zaharina (Ludomino x Zahra), and full sisters Rhapsody in Blue in 2005 and Rose of Summer the following year, from majestic Summertime Blues (Indian Idyll x Rose of Bediya).

Jean Peck and Mary O'Rourke generously loaned me their double Silver Fire line mare PHA Silver Heart, so admired at the Convention, to put to my young stallion Binley Prince Salim. Her long-legged grey filly Silver Sunbeam (2009) was snapped up by OSO Arabians in Australia for their extensive endurance programme.

Now I had settled in to Tansor Lodge Farm, I was able to invite over forty of the horses I had bred – and their owners – to a reunion party in 2004, to celebrate thirty five years of Gadebrook Stud, with a hog roast, mounted Treasure Hunt, and cream tea. Ironically, my two foal stars of the day were not pure Crabbet. The first, Rusleema, was by the dashing show champion Rusleem, out of Sunne in Silver. Rusleema has now started her own dynasty with Lyn Bunce at Mattilda Arabians in Australia. The other filly, Kalish (Crystal Magic's first progeny), was out of Kumasha (Persimmon x Khamala by El Shaklan), a former 'Horse of the Year Show' Ridden Champion Mare.

The party reunited all four of Hachim's daughters: Hadith (x Someone Special by The Shah), Zaha (x Zaharina by Ludomino), Magic Fire (x Nishtar by Jubilee Star) and Magic Sheen (x Crystal Sheen by Crystal Magician). Silver Aura reigned supreme, bedecked in full Arabian regalia, reunited with her breeder, Iona Bowring.

Happy days!

The following February shot Gadebrook into the stratosphere when Hachim (Achim's Silver Magic x Hamsfah by Hanif) won the World Endurance Championship, in the (then) world record time of 100 miles (160kms) in seven hours and two minutes, ahead of over 140 of the world's top riders. In the capable hands of HH Sheikh Hazza

bin Sultan al Nahyan of Abu Dhabi, Hachim also won the Best Conditioned Award. I followed every stride in the crew car across the Dubai desert, one of the most exciting days of my life. How could that success be topped?

Well, not to be out-done, older brother Magic Domino (Ludomino x Hamsfah by Hanif) earned the coveted 'Living Legend' title in the USA for his achievements in ridden showing and dressage and as a prolific sire of successful competition horses. The honour is bestowed only



Above: Magic Sheen took part in the Gadebrook reunion party in 2004 and was later exported to W'rsan, Abu Dhabi where she is pictured here in 2010



Left: Also at the reunion was Summertime Blues. She is pictured here in a Peter Upton painting with her 2006 filly Rose of Summer by Shaded Silver

once every twenty years and to only twelve out of around 350,000 Arabian horses in America.

Domino had crossed the Atlantic from Gadebrook as a three year old in 1991, having won the Junior Championship and Reserve Show Championship at the Wessex Arab Show – when classes were huge! – on his very first outing, under judge Diana Whittome. I flew over to support owner/rider Kim Thomason for the long drive from their Arabian Dream Farm in Tennessee to the jamboree in Denver, Colorado. Our adventures during three-day haul across the States with our serene white 16hh Crabbet stallion in tow should have been filmed! The Crabbet Convention in Australia that October, and the stud tours before and afterwards, introduced me to so many pure Crabbet lines long lost in the UK.

They opened my eyes to the treasures they have been breeding since Mrs Dorothea McLean imported more than thirty horses from Crabbet Park in the 1930s. Her Fenwick Stud in Victoria, now run by her granddaughter, Mrs Vicky Johnson, still stands pure Crabbet stallions. Shanadarr Stud grabbed young Fenwick Just Brilliant

who is already producing impressive stock.

That 2005 visit inspired the Boomerang Plan - to bring these valuable genes back to Britain, starting with bay Palma Benay from Leon Bennett's Pevensey Stud, as a two year old in 2007. Palma has proved to be an important sire-producer with three bay pure Crabbet sons and a grandson now in breeding programmes in England and Europe – with great grandsons at Binley Stud. The latest colt, Binley Silvern Salam, will soon join Moonlight Arabian Stud. In Cornwall.

Although Palma was initially backed, her value as a brood mare was greater. Among his many awards and accomplishments, the versatile Kaalif (her first foal, 2010), by Silver Zaanif, won the AHS Performance Horse Awards championship for Purebreds, and the Binley Rose Bowl as Overall Champion at the Crabbet Show at Equifest plus the Junior Sport Horse class at the AHS National Championships! His son, Shaarif, out of Gadebrook's imported bay Australian mare Inshallah Signature, is now FEI qualified for international endurance races with rider Anja Ward. Both father and son have represented England at Home Internationals.

In 2012, I sent Palma to Llain Arabians in Wales to be covered by Erin Park Excel, the bay pure Crabbet youngster with whom she had travelled from Australia in 2007. She duly produced another fine bay colt, Palermo in 2013.

2012 also saw the arrival at Gadebrook of two bay pure Crabbet mares: Inshallah Signature (in foal to Monarch Lodge Ambition) and Pevensey Zariffia, to expand the Boomerang herd. Signature's resultant sprightly bay colt, Bismillah, is flourishing in an endurance home with Katherine Macgilchrist in Devon.

By now, flashy chestnut Marbon Masadi (Naresh x Marbon Melissa) had joined Gadebrook, and promptly covered Palma and Pevensey Zariffia. Bay colt Dandini and chestnut filly Mazaria duly arrived in the spring of 2014, charming visitors with their soft muzzles.

With the importation of Mill Park Blaid's frozen semen from Australia in 2017, Palma produced her second 100% antipodean Crabbet son, Gadebrook Blade, in 2018. In the experienced hands of Susan Hawes, he is now starting open endurance, also ridden by teenager Sophie Wynne. Blade may have inherited his stunning golden sheen and blonde



Above: Imported Australian Crabbet mares Pevensey Zariffia and Inshallah Signature at Gadebrook, 2016

Right: MAS Royal Dart and owner-breeder Deborah Duncan (left) at the Futurity evaluation where he gained Gold Premium yearling



mane and tail from Rose of Sharon (1885), the daughter of the Blunts' original imports, Hadban and Rodania. Lady Anne's perceptive notes on Rose of Sharon say: "A golden chestnut with white mane and tail; the colour constantly appears in her descendants."

In 2021, I lent Palma to the new Moorland Arabian Stud in Devon where she produced the striking bay colt MAS Royal Dart in 2022, sired by the WAHO trophy winner Silvern Prince. Dart was the 'Leading Yearling' at the 2023 National Futurity Evaluations. Palma's latest colt, the smart bay Imperial Dancing Fire (2024) for the Plaister Charitable Foundation, is the first progeny from their Crabbet Champion, Imperial Silver Phoenix - and a credit to him. Palma will hopefully produce a couple more foals for Gadebrook



All-Australian Crabbet Gadebrook Blade (Mill Park Blaidd x Palma Benay) at the Cirencester Endurance Festival in 2024

before retirement – a filly would be nice...

The invitation to parade five horses at the 2013 UK Crabbet Convention was irresistible.

Two played starring roles. Pure white stallion Binley Prince Salim was one of the three full brothers to proudly lead the parade under saddle, with Silvern Prince and Ikoni. In the finale, Kalish appeared in full Arab costume ridden by Caroline Hawes for a gallop round the ring with Jade Rani, ridden by her mother Susan.

Palma's only filly to date, pretty Palmyra by Klinta Sultan, appeared early in the parade, followed by my young Crabbet stallion Kaalif, and finally another of my Australian imports, Pevensey Zariffia – all three pure Crabbet. Also in the spotlight were two lovely mares bred at Gadebrook: Rhapsody in Blue, now owned by Diane Northwood, and Hachim's daughter Magic Fire (ex Nishtar by Jubilee Star), who has done well in endurance and the Marathon with owner Joanne Wallis Baga. Joanne has produced all the illuminated pedigrees of my Crabbet horses that adorn my staircase.



Stud manager Jackie Pringle and her race winner Magic Phantom, pictured here at the Gadebrook 35th reunion party in 2004

Gadebrook featured as the first stud visit on the tour that followed the 2013 Crabbet Convention. As everyone tucked into lunch, the Australians were mobbed by my inquisitive, sociable herd.

Gadebrook would never have developed the way it has without the input of one very special person – my stud manager Jackie Pringle who would handle any horse or situation with the utmost calm and care. She taught maiden Hachim to cover as a clueless two year old, and also Sambist - who had only over met a dummy for semen collection. The look of surprise (and delight?) on his face when he realised he could mount a real mare was a treat to behold. Both stallions were kind and gentle with their mares, and very fertile.

With Jackie's support, I have hosted stallions at Gadebrook including pure Crabbets Shaded Silver and Marbon Masadi, maidens Klinta Sultan and Silver Zaanif and homebred Crystal



Remynisce and Susan Hawes on the hill climb at Cirencester 80kms in 2018

Fire, on a return visit from Spirit Arabians. Jackie admired Someone Special's 1996 foal by Hachim's sire, pure Crabbet Achim's Silver Magic. We named him Magic Phantom - the vet had thought the mare was having a phantom pregnancy! Jackie trained him single-handedly and ran him in just four races, when entries were so large, horses could be balloted out. Phantom won once, came second twice, and third once – results any professional trainer would be proud of. We were ecstatic!

My first 'outsider' part-Crabbet stallion was Remington Steele *+, a Tevis Buckle winner and top all-rounder, owned by Patti Bailey. I met them at the Denver 'Living Legend' presentation where her stallion was also honoured. He followed this by winning the very first WAHO trophy for the USA. Patti chose me to represent his frozen semen in the UK which has been very successful as he has highly potent sperm. I had monitored its journey in my new \$1,000 state-of-the-art shipper every step of the way from the Denver lab to arrival at Heathrow and storage at Prof Twink Allen's Equine Fertility Unit in Newmarket.

His first colt, Remynisce, from my high-percentage Crabbet AHS Premium mare Jazmyn, went to the top in endurance, winning many awards, including Gold and the Faranoush Trophy at the Golden Horseshoe with rider Susan Hawes. Susan has his latest filly by frozen semen, Gadebrook Lily (2022) from my mare, Kamillah – the first trans-Atlantic mating of two WAHO trophy winners. Jazmyn followed this with five bright, athletic foals from the other stallion to have a huge influence on Gadebrook - straight Russian Sambist.

Born at the Tersk State Stud, Sambist had won all five of their Classic races before he was brought to Europe as a five year old and sold at auction for \$385,000. Once his racing days were over – he won his final hard-fought race at Goodwood over two and a half miles in a course record time – he retired to Umm Qarn Stud. But when the stud closed and HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Khalifa al Thani moved the horses to Qatar, Sambist came to Gadebrook. Sambist was not happy in the heat of the Gulf. What a gift! Who could resist one of the finest Arab racehorses and racing sires of his generation?

Sambist continued to sire race winners and was awarded the AHS 'Racing Sire of the

Year' trophy thirteen times in fifteen years. The achievements of his offspring also earned him AHS Premium Sire status. His progeny are now increasingly competing in endurance although he died in 2011.

Alongside successes, breeders must also accept heartbreak. In the case of Hadiya, it was a double disaster. His dam Pevensey Zariffia, the precious 'Princess of Pevensey' had died with a prolapsed colon giving birth to him in 2016. As he had been generously fostered by the woolly Belgian draft mare, Blondie, the orphan colt matured into a fine stallion, winning the Futurity Endurance Reserve Championship as a three year old. From his collected fresh semen, three Gadebrook mares conceived immediately: Inshallah Signature, Azarina and Kamillah.

2020 started so well with all three of the resulting foals – Bright Moonlight, Hazar and Kamelliya – gaining Gold Premiums in the national Futurity Evaluations. Then tragedy struck – twice! First we heard that their sire Hadiya, our golden hope for the future of Crabbet breeding, had broken his leg in three places at his Sussex trainer's in a freak field accident, and had to be put down.

Within weeks, a similar call came from Anja, and in a second, Kaalif was gone too. Just so sad that two such versatile, kind, handsome pure Crabbets were lost within a month.

At least Kaalif's son Shaarif, from Australian imported Inshallah Signature, is now qualified for international FEI endurance races.



Anne Brown, Sambist and Patti Bailey, his US representative, and owner of Remington Steele at Gadebrook in 2014

Of Hadiya's fine foal crop in 2020, super-friendly chestnut Bright Moonlight from Inshallah Signature has been to Italy and is now back at Gadebrook, preparing for a ridden show career – and a Crabbet foal at some point, hopefully.

Hazar, Azarina's first foal, is now gelded and settled in a keen endurance home in the Lakes with proud owner Josephine Randall.

Bold, beautiful Kamelliya ('Leyah'), from WAHO trophy-winner Kamillah, has been gently backed by the brilliant Martin Leonard and is aimed for the top in ridden showing with a new owner in Sussex. All three prove the importance of the Australian bloodlines.

Prolific Palma's son Dandini, is now in Sweden with Anne Karlsson at Gimmick Arabians,



Above: Hadiya, orphan Crabbet colt, and Blondie, Belgian draught foster mare
Left: Crabbet stallion Hadiya ('Buddy') and trainer Susan. Buddy was tragically lost to a field accident in 2020 but has left some super youngstock including (below) Gold Premium Arabian yearlings Kamelliya, Bright Moonlight and Hazar

after a stint at Iñaki Izagirre Sarasola's stud in northern Spain and at Seren in England.

Showing the horses to visiting breeders from around the world is always a joy. The Thomasons' (Magic Domino's owners) stay at Gadebrook in 2001 coincided with a visit from Yitzak Levron of Sabra Arabians with his wife and baby daughter from Israel. We are a magnet for film and TV crews from the Middle East – although hearing my words dubbed into Arabic is a little freaky...

Guests have included the generously-turbaned Prince Malik, President of the Pakistan Tent-Pegging Association, mare reproduction specialist Dr Sandra Wilsher and world famous equine geneticist Prof Doug Antczak. Now retired from Cornell University, Prof Antczak was an instigator (with Dr Sam Brooks) of the equine genome project. His TB mare Twilight was the first horse in the world to have its genome fully mapped – Sambist was the second, and the first Arabian.

The red carpet is always down for Antipodean guests, including former Arab Horse Society of Australia Council member and good friend Br Peter McIntosh, and leading Crabbet icon Leon Bennett, Astra Temple and Randall McArthur, Bob Curtin, Sean Johnson and his family from Kendra Park, Linda Henley (Wootton Arabians), Ian and Deb Watson (owners of the Sambist son Samson Tai whom I saw at their Moondarra stud in Australia), and keen breeder and endurance rider Struan Duncan from New Zealand.

My travels overseas and WAHO conferences have allowed me to meet up with breeders and equine reproduction specialists including Drs Anne and Michael Bowling in 2005 (then, both professors of genetics at University of Cal Davis) and their New Albion Stud of Crabbet horses.

Another world expert, Lee Morris, welcomed me to her Equine Repro Vets, where she is pioneering frozen embryos in New Zealand. I was privileged to meet world-renowned Angus McKinnon, the AI specialist at Goulburn Valley Vets in Australia, before his retirement.

When staying with Buzz Moore's hospitable mother Barbara at Fairfield Farms in Virginia, she told me about the wonder drug Banamine which can relieve colic within minutes. Of course, it is banned in the EU, as they eat horses, so the UK banned it too....

To better understand artificial insemination



Pevensey Zariffia interviewed by Al Jazeera TV (Qatar) at Gadebrook in May 2013





Anne has met many wonderful people in her lifetime with the Arabian horse, from all over the world.
 Above: Anne with Peter Upton at the AHS Centenary Exhibition opening and book launch
 Left: Prof Douglas Antczak, Anne Brown and Dr Sandra Wilsher gift to Gadebrook, pure Russian Arab mare Pepelka
 Above left: Crabbet breeders Leon Bennett and Anne Brown at Makahiwi Stud, New Zealand Feb 2019

procedures, I completed the DEFRA AI course and qualified as an AI Technician. 'Horse & Hound' gave me a double page spread to explain the process. I have since qualified in Frozen Semen handling. Repaying the passion that has rewarded me so well finds me crewing Gadebrook endurance horses most weekends. To help the AHS, I edited their magazine from 2015 to 2017 and still report on WAHO conventions (representing the AHS at the 2014 Convention) and the many equine reproduction conferences and vet seminars I attend. I constantly stress the importance of genetic testing to avoid mating carrier to carrier. I have been privileged to represent the Arab Horse Society as its President, to serve on Council, finally as Vice Chair, and currently on the Stud Book and Registration committee, and to Chair the AHS Premium

Performance Scheme organising parades and events to promote Arabian horses. I have supported Crabbets in the ring since the inception of the Show in Devon in 2006 and present the perpetual Gadebrook Shield to the Champion. Learning that British Dressage ran championships for specific breeds, I instigated the annual BD Arab Dressage Awards. Embarrassingly, my own Binley Prince Salim won the Elementary Section, ridden by Emma Thomas, at the inaugural Championships! Salim was so versatile, he won the Overall Performance Horse Awards championship in 2015. By coincidence, that was the year I was AHS President, so I made the presentation to my own horse, together with his breeder Caroline Sussex. For more than a year, I created and prepared the events to celebrate the Society's 100th anniversary in 2018. We started with the launch of the 'Centenary' book at the opening of the first ever Arab Horse exhibition at the National Horse Racing Museum, then held a 'Champions' Parade to show-case the versatility of the Arabian horse, and ended with a revival of the AHS Marathon over the historic Rowley Mile and July courses in Newmarket. My e-mail message sign off is www.gadebrookstud.com – established in 1969 to breed world-class Arabian performance horses. It was a dream fifty five years ago; now it is a reality – and most of the stud's success is due to Crabbet horses. Although I was born only a few miles from the Yules' Hanstead Stud in Hertfordshire, I was far too young to be aware of its existence – and importance. The founder Lady Yule's daughter, Gladys, died in 1957, just three weeks after her 'rival', Lady Wentworth. I feel proud to carry on the incredible legacy of these gifted breeders. □

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