

1999 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

HAMISH MACCALLUM

The Australian Quarter Horse Association honours Hamish MacCallum with induction into the Hall of Fame.



The name, Hamish MacCallum, is associated with the words “gifted, honest, reliable, and professional”. Hamish was known as one of Australia’s greatest horsemen with an extensive knowledge of horse breeding and bloodlines.

Photo: Hamish on his way to win the Snicklefritz Reining Futurity.

Information courtesy of Denise MacCallum.

Hamish was born in Coonabarabran, NSW on the 27th of March, 1954 and raised on a working farm in the beautiful Warrumbungles, NSW. He left the farm after grade six to attend boarding school at Scots College in Sydney and returned home on holidays. ‘At 16 years of age Hamish started to work for Robert Baldwin at Euroka Quarter Horse Stud and worked there for a couple of years. During this time he attended a cutting clinic conducted by Tom Lyons in Australia and was offered a job by Tom in the States - at the time he declined. Several months later he rang Tom Lyons and was on a plane for the States the following month at the age of twenty. He worked for Tom for seven years and then went to Santa Barbara to work for one year before returning home to Australia. During his time in the USA, Hamish showed in many cutting and working cowhorse events on horses that he trained.’

While in America Hamish met an Australian girl, Denise Cooper, in Fort Worth, Texas. ‘I went to the NCHA Futurity with my parents Jack and Joan Cooper to watch a stallion they had bought compete in the 1979 Futurity named Peppy Palleo and while I was there my dad introduced me to Hamish. We talked and then met at the after party of the Futurity and danced. After the dance Hamish invited me to come back to America and visit him at Phoenix where he lived. I went home with my parents and for 12 months saved up. I was earning \$67.00 a week as a secretary and paying \$25.00 per week in board so I knew it would take a while. I set myself a goal to win the Alclibar Working Cowhorse Championship which paid \$600.00. I had a great working cowhorse named Wyera and I knew I could win it. I won the show. It was, even now, in the top two most exciting events I ever won. I went over to the States and stayed with Hamish for two weeks and then came home. I started training horses at my parent’s place and did so for another year. I then went back to the States and started working for Tom Lyons, who Hamish worked for. Hamish picked me up at the airport and from that moment we were together. We became engaged 11 months later and married 11 months after that in Melbourne at St Johns Church in Toorak and had our honeymoon in Melbourne before returning back to Phoenix the following week.’

On his return to Australia with his wife Denise and their son Grady, Hamish started his own training operation, Hamish and Denise MacCallum Quarter Horses at Nar Nar Goon in Victoria. The following year Denise gave birth to their second child, a beautiful daughter named Jessica.

After two years in Gippsland, on the 27th of November 1995 Hamish and Denise both started working at Chance Lodge. Hamish was offered the position of Manager and Trainer by Jill and John Farnham who wanted to purchase the property but would only purchase it if Hamish would work for them, an offer Hamish proudly accepted.

Photo: Hamish and Ardo Quarter Lyra. Tamworth 1990.



Although Hamish only worked at Chance Lodge for 14 months before he sadly passed away, he loved



working at Chance Lodge where he paved the way for the stud being as successful as it is today. 'Hamish had an enormous amount of influence on how we breed today because of two factors. Firstly he purchased great mares for me to breed with and secondly apart from being a great horseman Hamish was a great follower of bloodlines and he understood breeding. He loved breeding horses and knew exactly what worked and didn't work with bloodlines. Luckily he passed on much of that knowledge to me although I chose to breed to Smart Little Lena USA-1565822 (Q-53702), Peptoboonsmal USA-3097910, Freckles Playboy USA-911588, with certain crosses, it was Hamish who taught me how it all works,' commented Denise.

After purchasing a great mare Blue Boons My Granny USA-3350157 in the USA for owners Jill and John Farnham to start up their very

Photo: Hamish and Denise

successful breeding program, Hamish also purchased some great mares in Australia for Chance Lodge including Oaks Cello FM-22206 for breeding and showing. Hamish was responsible for some of the great horses that are now owned by Chance Lodge including the son of Doc's Oak USA-919614, Amadeus Doc (imp) Q-18767,

Beaver Doc Q-2980 (now deceased), Blue Boons My Granny USA-3350157 (who lives in America), Freckles Fortissimo (imp) Q-46828, who is the son of the world famous Freckles Playboy USA-911588, to name just a few.

Over the years Hamish's influence on breeding Quarter Horses in Australia saw him being pursued by family, friends and clients requesting his knowledge of horse breeding and conformation to find them future sires for their own breeding programs. In the Quarter Horse industry the horses that Hamish found, quickly became household names and have influenced and even reset the bar in Quarter Horse breeding in our country.

When Richard Bull wanted to purchase a colt by Doc's Oak USA-919614, the son of Doc Bar USA-76136 and Susies Bay USA-50162 from the 1981 foal crop Hamish came across a sorrel colt from the incredibly well bred mare Freckles Fancy USA-912806 a daughter of Jewels Leo Bars and Miss Cocoa Jay. The resulting foal is the famous cutting sire Docs Freckles Oak Q-14053 (imp/dec) who was started by both Hamish and Tom Lyons in America before he was exported to Australia. Doc's Freckles Oak Q-14053 (imp/dec) was inducted into the AQHA Hall of Fame in 2000 and the NCHA Hall of Fame in 1995.

It was very fitting that Richard was awarded the 2005 Hamish MacCallum Memorial Open Non Pro Champion at the Victorian Futurity when he showed his imported black stallion Acres Destiny Q-38061 to mark 150 points in honour of his closest friend Hamish.

Hamish found the son of the world famous Peppy San Badger USA-1089924 and the daughter of Doc Bar USA-7616, Doc Bar Tonette USA-942908, Doc Denius Q-13011 (imp/dec) for Mt Widderin Quarter Horse Stud. Doc Denius Q-13011 held ROMs in Cutting in both the USA and Australia, he also earned NCHA and AQHA Superior Cutting Horse Awards and was named as the 1986 AQHA Senior Cutting Champion.

For his sister Sally and brother in-law Vince Bonello, Hamish found the palomino son of Smart Little Lena USA-1565822, Smart Little Diablo Q-18444 (imp/dec), who is from Docs Christa USA-1349566. The stunning palomino colt arrived in Australia at 10 months of age in March 1985 and was later started by Peter Costello. His training was completed by Hamish upon his return to Australia. Hamish has also been responsible for many non-professional riders becoming interested in cutting and purchased horses in Australia on their behalf. 'Because of this the majority of non-professional riders competing in 2005 started with horses that Hamish located for them. They have bred on and so it continues,' commented Denise.

Hamish's own great achievements in the show arena included training the World Champion Snaffle Bit Futurity Champion in the USA named Docs Baroque, training and showing the winner of the Snicklefritz Snaffle Bit Reining Futurity Champion and the Arizona Snaffle Bit Reining Futurity Champion and training the Reserve Champion Hackamore Cowhorse and Reserve Champion Texas Snaffle Bit Cowhorse.

Hamish enjoyed many wins in Cutting in both Australia and America and took the following horses to the top of their fields, Docs Baroque, Amadeus Doc Q-18767 (imp), Smart Little Diablo Q-18444 (imp/dec), Chickasha Maggie Q-21265, Oakolena, Oaks Midnight Oil Q-25127, Fortyniner Lena Q-14021, Ardo Quarter Lyra and Oaks Coco Jay, to name just the tip.

Hamish also enjoyed the following titles,

- 1989 Silver Buckle Challenge Cowhorse Cup - winner of 2 divisions.
- 1992 VCHA Hi Point Novice Horse.
- 1993 VCHA RU Hi Point Open and Novice Horse.
- 1993 AQHA Hi Point Cutting Horse of Australia.
- 1994 NCHA Derby Co Reserve Champion.
- 1994 NCHA \$1000 Novice Horse RU.
- 1994 VCHA Hi Point Novice Horse.
- 1996 NCHA Hi Point Open Gelding of Australia.
- 1996 NCHA Novice and Open Top Ten Australia.
- 1996 Hi Point Open Horse of Victoria RU.
- 1992, 1995 & 1996 Hi Point Open Horse of Victoria.
- 1995, 1996 & 1997 VQHA Australian Invitational Cutting Champion.

Hamish had a great ability to really understand horses, 'Not to be harsh and make them learn to be trained, but rather work with each horse as an individual and understand how they think and make learning fun and good for them. He also had the most tremendous hands of any trainer that I had ever seen at that time. I have never seen anyone yet in Australia with the same gift of great hands that Hamish had. Those two elements made Hamish stand out from the rest and made him so successful,' commented Denise.

Watching Hamish train horses was a great learning experience for Denise, 'It was great for me as a non pro at the time to watch him with horses. He did everything from breaking, to the finished horse, and he was exceptional. I have been the most fortunate of people being able to be around and watch and learn for seventeen years from a person that had an incredible talent. What Hamish had was special in his approach to training and you don't learn that, you just are.'

Hamish had a tremendous amount of influence on Denise's horse training, 'I was extremely lucky to have had parents that supported my love of training early on and so for four years from when I was 15 to 18 years old, sent me to different trainers in the USA for a few months. First Richard Shrake in Oregon for two months who is one of the top youth trainers for showing in the world, then to Kenneth Galyean in Arkansas for Cutting the following year, then David James in Seattle for Western Riding and Trail class the following year, then Tom Lyons. So I had many years in youth where I showed and learnt from some of the greatest trainers in the world. Then of course to meet Hamish and have so much respect for his training, I had seventeen years of constant learning. I would have to say that Richard Shrake and Hamish were the two major influences in my training, Richard for showing and understanding how to teach and treat clients and Hamish for his horsemanship'.

Hamish sadly passed away on the 13th of January, 1998. 'On the 5th of January Hamish came home from a show on a very hot day and had a terrible headache. He had a hot shower and it got much worse. He sat on the couch for the night as the headache was quite bad. We went to the doctor on the 6th and I asked the doctor if he could possibly have a brain tumour or meningitis and the doctor laughed at me and advised Hamish that he had a migraine and to take Panadol. By our wedding anniversary the 8th of January Hamish's headache had lessened but I took him to another doctor who advised us to go up to the hospital in Bendigo and have a brain scan. Although the scan looked quite good they advised Hamish to have a spinal tap to check that he did not have an aneurism. They did the spinal tap and found that he did have an aneurism and they put him in an ambulance. Hamish went to St Vincent's Hospital in Melbourne. Upon arrival at 2am the doctor told Hamish that he had a leaking aneurism and that if he did not get operated on it would burst, and that could happen within the next two weeks. The doctors could not say when exactly it would burst but when it did, it would be fatal. The operation would give him a 20% chance of survival. Hamish agreed to the operation which was done on the 9th. During the operation the aneurism burst and Hamish was without oxygen for 27 minutes. He did wake up a few hours after the operation, which was not anticipated by the doctors, he was awake for around three hours, however he was unable to move or speak and could only move his eyes. He went into a coma shortly after and became progressively worse. On the 12th at 2.37 A.M. his brain stem died and I made the decision that I knew Hamish would have wanted completely and that was to donate his organs. Hamish was pronounced dead on the 13th of January, 1998.

Because of the donation of his organs a 37 year old father of two, who had two weeks to live, received Hamish's heart and lives healthily and happy with his family. A university student who was on dialysis has Hamish's kidney. A mother of three received Hamish's corneas and was able to see her children for the first time. Brain injury deaths are ideal for organ donations and Hamish's death helped many people.

Nothing good comes from death for the immediate family of the deceased however a great deal of happiness comes to those on the waiting list and their families. What a great gift for a deceased person to be able to give,' said Denise on the importance of organ donation.

During the 1999 AQHA Hall of Fame Inductee presentation at the Australian Quarter Horse Championships 21st Anniversary Show Denise MacCallum proudly accepted the award on behalf of her husband Hamish, 'It was extremely emotional for me to accept the AQHA Hall of Fame Award for Hamish. It really was an honour and tribute to a great man for all he had done and I was obviously saddened that he couldn't accept it himself. His children and I are very proud of that achievement and the award will always have a special place in our hearts and house,' commented Denise.

Tribute to Hamish by Daryn Joiner

I first heard of Hamish in 1989, through a friend that raved about this bloke he had seen ride at a Cutting in Nar Nar Goon. We met with his big hand shake and his even bigger smile, but very few words. Our friendship was formed and the few words turned into hours on the phone, talking about horses, fishing, cows and more horses. As a Campdrafter who didn't know anything about cutting horses, spending time with Hamish and watching him bring babies right through to solid horses, I was truly in awe of his ability. His sense of humour was also very sharp. One day he was giving me a lesson and asked me to turn my horse around. I did. But it felt pretty good so I kept turning a few more. "Stop right there!" he said. Thinking I was doing alright, he then said to me, "What are you

doing? I've never seen a cow in a camp run around you that many times!" pause - long silence. Then a big smile, flicking his fingers in the palm of his hand. Then he walked away laughing. Point taken!

Hamish had a pretty big impact in East Gippsland Campdrafting, selecting good horses. .05, Buck, Butterscotch, Wolfman, Roc San, Amadeus Wolf, all in Hamish's judgement, were very good horses. In a short time, these horses that Hamish judged to have drafting ability have set a new benchmark for the way horses are set to work in the camp. He never pushed his horses past the point of no return. The horses that Hamish started were still sound of body and mind many years on doing a variety of horse sports. This is the man I remember, kind, gentle with not too many words and a true horseman to boot.

A mate greatly missed.

Tribute to Hamish by Mathea Usher - Santa Rio Quarter Horse Stud

Hamish was lovely, quiet, and kind. He would never say a bad word about anybody.

It was Hamish who found Morn Deck Q-2160 for Brian and I. I had been in contact with his mother Pat MacCallum when we were looking for a Quarter Horse colt and Hamish was working for Robert Baldwin at the time. One thing led to another and we had a look at three colts and Morn Deck was a standout. Hamish showed Morn Deck at the Moonbi Show to great success at Halter before he went to America and it was Hamish who purchased my Buster Welsh saddle in America for me that I used on Morn Deck in Western Riding events. As a horseman Hamish was outstanding, brilliant and natural. He could ride a broomstick and make it look good, he was such a good rider.

Tribute to Hamish by Robert Baldwin – Euroka Quarter Horse Stud

It is a great pleasure that I have been invited to write a few words about my great friend Hamish MacCallum. To make a long story short with just a few comments that are close to my heart.

When Hamish was 16 I was asked by Hamish's mother, would I take Hamish to Euroka Quarter Horse Stud at Walgett. She told me he was extremely interested in horses and most other animals and this proved to be so true. Hamish arrived at Euroka a very shy 16 year old and after four and a half years proved to be a man of honesty, integrity and loyalty to all those around him. The first thing that I noticed about Hamish was the most magnificent light hands he had while riding, even when very inexperienced, he had this most magnificent asset that I have only ever seen once again and they belong to his sister Sally. During his horse career, which also included an all-round career on the 30,000 acres of Euroka, Hamish blossomed to a man with absolute humour that he was shy about showing other people, he was a magnificent cartoonist and could have made a living anywhere with his talent.

Much has been written about Hamish's talent in an equine precision, so I will only say that I thank him for his effort for Euroka Quarter Horse Stud. I will mention three things, he broke-in Roc O'Lena Q-1662, he trained Euroka Darango R2-929 to become the second Reining Futurity Champion at Moonbi, and a magnificent western riding horse he was, and his training enabled me to win the first Western Pleasure at Sydney Royal, the third, that when I finished riding Ima Beaver Q-823 he showed him for me and we are glad to have the enclosed great photo of him doing this. I had asked Hamish while he was in America with Tom Lyons to ask Tom about judges. Hamish replied back to me, 'Train your horses so well that the judges have to score them,' that has been my philosophy at Euroka Quarter Horse Stud ever since.