

Interviewed: April 27, 1976Tape 86, 1 ~~82~~

HORSE OWNER: Mrs. Alice Cunningham,
415 Jacombs Road,
Richmond, B. C. (278-1490)

JOCKEY & TRAINER: Mr. Ted Graham

David Stevenson - Researcher

- At present she owns "Midnight Babe" who is 22 years old and "Craig D. Jr.", a 7 year old, they are both retired now.
- Her first horse was in 1931, "Betty Ellesworth".
- She quit her job then and has been racing then since.
- Then she got "Gal's Maid" given as a gift from Roy McDonald of Checkered Taxi.
- He died in 1951 and left her Gal's Maid and from her she got "Lamore" and then into the breeding business and from her she got "Midnight Babe" and from her she got "Ma Petite Juliette" who was a stakes winner, and from Gal's Maid she got "Little T.R." who broke his leg when he was a 2 year old.
- She was born in Quebec, came to Vancouver in 1919.
- Her husband died and she went to work for Checkered Taxi and Mr. McDonald.
- Left her the farm, where she is presently living; she in turn sold it to Jack Diamond of the B. C. Jockey Club.
- First tracks she raced at were Brighthouse, Lansdowne and at Victoria.
- Brighthouse was the better one, you could take it out and graze your horse, there was lots of room, unlike Lansdowne.
- People came to the races, things were cheaper then...everybody seemed happier in those days.
- Not unusual to see a big pot of corn cooking in the tack room and if you were tight for money, others helped you out; if you needed hay, your neighbour helped you.
- Many of the horses in the 30's came from California.
- Ted Graham was a jockey and a trainer for Mrs. Cunningham.
- There were more millionaires around in those days...Austin C. Taylor, R. B. Speckles Jr., J. W. Marchbank, Eric W. Hamber (ex-Lieutenant-Governor of B. C.), Robert G. Dunlevy, Herbert L. Fullerton.

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- All millionaires with really good race horses.
- Austin Taylor's horse "Indian Broom" went to the Kentucky Derby and placed 3rd, he had one of the most powerful stables in the West Coast.
- In those days, the breed of local horses was not so good but it has been improved over the years.
- Names local horses who won races..."Quality Quest" won the Longacres Stakes; "Eddie's Boy" also won the Longacres.
- In later years the breed improved.
- Frank McMahon, head of West Coast Transmissions, bought a horse for \$750,000 and they are hard to compete with.
- It has always been an expensive sport and you meet people from all walks of life.
- She made money every year when Teddy trained and rode them, since 1970 it has been a losing proposition.
- She had trouble finding good hired help.
- She raised ten horses.
- Gives the history of Midnight Babe.
- Won her first race and her last and twenty-five more in between.
- Her daughter, Ma Petite Juliette, won \$50,000 and then was sold to an owner in Toronto named Willmott, for breeding.
- Brighthouse Park (Minoru) was built in 1908 and never required any additional soil, it was really good and kind to a horse...best track on the Coast.
- They sold in the 40's and racing continued at Lansdowne.
- Access for the public was difficult...you had to use the inter-urban and it took a long time to get to it.
- Today, all the racing is done at the Exhibition Park track.
- The old racing season...7 days at Brighthouse, 7 days at Lansdowne, 7 days at Hastings, 7 days at Brighthouse, 7 days at Lansdowne and again to Hastings (Exhibition Park) and then to Victoria (the Willows) and Callwood for 14 days.
- They were on the road a lot.
- The track at Exhibition Park does not compare to the original Brighthouse, the track at Exhibition Park is changed every so often... it's very sandy and the horses can not get a hold of it and it's

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difficult for their footing.

- Today, most of the horses are locally owned at the Park.
- Les Gilmour is one of the best horse owners, a pioneer in Richmond who bred some of the best cattle here.
- Ted Graham started racing at 17 years of age for Austin C. Taylor, Preston Birch, J. W. Marchbank, all over the States and the prairies.
- There are some horses who break their legs and they have to be shot.
- Another problem is that sometimes these horses get their legs caught against the wall of their stable and they can not move out of it.
- The horses are locked up most of the time except for their one hour exercise time and half hour cooling off.
- Training techniques have changed a lot but they are still much the same.
- He discusses the psychology of training horses, like raising children, you have to chastise them at the right time.
- Some horses take three months to train starting as a yearling, the bit, turning, and carrying a rider.
- For every B. C. bred winner, there is a one per cent bonus from the government to the owner based on the amount wagered.
- Last year "April Wine", a B. C. horse, won \$50,000 and was claimed in Santa Anita.
- Jack Diamond is credited for putting B. C. Racing where it is today.
- Grandstand has been improved and the club house has been improved.
- He has 24 horses at the track now.
- Mr. Diamond is credited with improving the breeding of local horses.
- The B. C. Futurity is now called the Jack Diamond Futurity...it's a \$40,000 race in August.
- Horses in foal are nominated at \$35.00 a piece for each year until they are ready to run.
- The Queen's Plato is even much bigger with \$100,000 or \$50,000 stakes.
- There weren't any big races when he was riding.
- He won the Speed Handicap with "Hemlock Hustler" and also the Governor's Handicap both for \$10,000.
- The stakes are going up all the time.

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- Mr. Jack Diamond gave her a big helping hand with her farm and her horse training.
- Their property is still zoned for agricultural use...many farms are gone now.
- Trainers are on call twenty-four hours a day and they put in long hours.
- Jockeying is a dangerous job, if you are not careful.
- He plays a record of an actual horse race when one of Mrs. Cunningham's horses, "Midnight Babe" which is on the Tape One...these races were at Exhibition Park, June 10, 1960.