

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

By
Denny Mighall

(taken from Historical Records)

The phenomenal growth and success of the Canadian Cutting Horse Association is indicated by the record figures produced at the 1981 General Meeting.

During the 1981 season, there were 2,780 entries in cutting events, competing for \$161,408.00 in prize money. This amount was split into seven categories – Open, Novice Horse, Non-Pro (Open), Non-Pro (Intermediate), \$5000 Non-Pro, Novice Rider and Youth. This variety of contests permits a large number of people to compete at their own levels, and has done much to promote and sustain interest in cutting.

Thirty years ago, the sport of cutting was unheard of outside the borders of Alberta. Today, cutting is popular in all provinces from British Columbia to New Brunswick. Cutting events are featured at big shows across Canada, in modern arenas where smart presentation and precise timing are the name of the game to ensure maximum audience appreciation.

Newcomers to the CCHA participating in these well organized events in glittering arenas before thousands of patrons might feel that cutting events have always been like this. To illustrate what a far cry the well organized, professionally presented shows of today are from the “Sunday afternoon, back of the barn” cuttings of yesteryear, it is necessary to go back to the beginning of cutting in Canada.

The art of cutting was established in Western Canada long before the turn of the century when the separating of individual heads of stock was an integral part of the cattle raising industry. To perform this task, it was necessary to have horses with speed, stamina and an inborn cow sense – this, coupled with skill on the part of the rider, gave rise to the competitive element which has developed the sport of today.

In the Fall of 1949, a meeting was held in the Memorial Hall at High River, Alberta, attended by some twenty-five interested persons, which signaled the beginning of the Canadian Cutting Horse Association. Unfortunately, what notes were taken at this meeting have been lost, and memory, faded by time, has to be relied upon. To name a few, Ed Burton, Jim Wyatt, Royal Burrows, Cliff Ross, Jac and Allie Streeter, Quinton Armstrong, Hope Hunter, Charlie Ivans, Jim Cartwright, Bert Sheppard, Fred Bradley, George Cheatham, Stuart McRae, Tommy Primrose and Percy Bennett attended this meeting.

These men were mostly ranchers, or allied with the cattle industry. What they lacked in knowledge of putting together cutting contests, they made up for in enthusiasm.

The horses of those days were not of the aristocratic ancestry we see in cutting today. Every breed was represented – Quarter Horses, Appaloosas, Arabs – with a variety of mixtures and some whose breeding was known only to God. The Quarter Horses of that era were nearly all of the “bulldog” type, stocky with heavy quarters and stout, rough legs.

Whilst the appearance of these horses in our cutting arenas today would elevate a lot of sophisticated eye-brows, it must be conceded that these men and horses were true professionals, as working cattle was an almost daily event in their lives.

Contests in the early 1950’s were small, homespun affairs in small towns or rural communities. At times it was difficult to line up five horses to enter, due to the fact that they, and the riders, were otherwise employed back home at the ranch.

Transportation was an uncertain affair over miles of dirt roads in a variety of contraptions which passed for horse trailers, which would be regarded today as unfit to haul goats in. Trailers of every type and size were in evidence, all homemade, and equipped with hitches which were the brainchildren of the owners. Brakes and lights were not yet fashionable.

If ever an organization started from scratch, the CCHA has that distinction. Very few members had ever seen a properly organized cutting contest so everything was put together by the trial and error method. Our homemade set of rules was so full of holes that interpretation was both varied and difficult. Each individual appointed to judge had his own version of what good cutting should be. This rather loose system left many contestants feeling they had been robbed, thus necessitating judges to absent themselves until things cooled down.

In the very early nineteen fifties, the writer took over the job of Secretary-Treasurer from George Cheatham. The office equipment comprised of a dime store copybook and a brown envelope containing seven dollars – the total assets of our Association. The new Secretary-Treasurer was elated when, soon after, we had a membership of twenty-five and a small bank account. The membership fees were \$5.00.

During these formative years of our Association, the writer attended almost every contest and meeting which was staged. During these travels, copious notes were made of the happenings on these trips, which are tantamount to a diary.

A perusal of these notes today reveals the whole-hearted efforts that both the members and their wives and families put forth to make the CCHA the viable organization it is today.

In addition to the serious determination of competition, there were many absurd, hilarious, hard to believe situations which just could not happen in this day and age.

In the Fall of 1954, over one hundred interested people gathered at the Memorial Hall at High River, Alberta to form the Canadian Cutting Horse Association, elect a President, and Board of Directors.

President	Hope Hunter, High River, AB.
Vice-President	Ken Brower, Aden, AB.
Sec.-Treasurer	George Cheatham, Calgary, AB.
Directors	Charlie Ivans, Cardston, AB. Royal Burrows, Midnapore, AB. Cliff Ross, Edmonton, AB. Quinton Armstrong, Nanton, AB. James Cartwright, High River, AB. Percy Bennett, Millarville, AB

By this time the ranks of the ranchers and cowboys making up the Association had been augmented by a goodly sprinkling of businessmen who had been bitten by the cutting bug. These new members brought with them business expertise and well-trained cutting horses, purchased from Texas and California.

During the early period, the Association was feeling its way along by trial and error, playing everything by ear. It was necessary to hold frequent meetings, which amounted to a meeting at every contest we attended. Meetings were held in ranch living rooms, in barns or behind a shed out of the wind.

In dramatic contrast to the meetings of today in elegant Board Rooms of someone’s company office, or the lush conference rooms of modern hotels, one meeting was held in an Indian Teepee near Jim Cartwright’s ranch. With the President and Directors squatting on their haunches in a circle, the meeting proceeded with all the decorum of a meeting of General Motors Corp., despite smoke and fumes from the fire in the centre.

The popularity of cutting was increasing by leaps and bounds, with more invitations to appear at shows than we could handle. In the light of this public acceptance of cutting, it was vital that we pay attention to the format and general manner of presenting cutting to the public. It was mandatory now to shave, clean the boots, wear clean shirts and curry the manure off the hocks, even if only out of respect to the customers in the grandstand.

Contests were being held in Saskatchewan and British Columbia, as well as many town in Alberta. A request from Berwyn in the Peace River County caught the imagination of our Executive for the reason that this would be the furthest point North on this continent where cutting had been held. A series of contests was

put together for Berwyn, High Prairie, Grimshaw, Alberta and Fort St John, BC.

This was quite an undertaking involving some sixteen hundred miles of travel over a lot of mud and gravel roads. Five outfits started out from Edmonton, each hauling two horses, headed for North of the Peace. The journey was uneventful until we reached the banks of the Peace River at Old Fort Dunvegan.

The "Most of a mile" wide Peace River was crossed on the ferry, one outfit at a time. Heavy rains had turned the road up the steep banks of the Peace into a muddy nightmare. Each unloaded trailer was pushed up the mile-long hill and the horses walked up later. Despite heavy rain, darkness and a spate of mechanical troubles, we eventually arrived in High Prairie, AB.

This foray into the North Peace Country was an unqualified success in every respect. Whilst cutting had never been heard of nor seen in the whole area before, it was enthusiastically received by the viewers.

In addition to the hospitality, there were many humorous incidents which will remain in memory. The cutting at Berwyn was held in conjunction with their Annual Fair and Rodeo. A covey of young ladies were to be judged for the honor of being Rodeo Queen and Tom Fox was appointed to judge them on personal appearance and ability to ride. The choice of Tom's "Queen" did not meet with the approval of the cutting fraternity, because during the presentation ceremony, her horse spooked and she fell off. Tom was also in bad odor from the fact that he wore the same shirt day after day, claiming that he didn't want to break his winning streak by changing his winning shirt. The odor had become unbearable at close quarters.

In the Fall of 1958, with a record of sweet success at shows from the Peace River south to Millarville, a small group of our members were inspired to enter at Lewistown, Montana to see what they had to offer in the way of competition.

With 'Honest Jack' and 'Connie Bee' in the trailer, Royal Burrows, Cliff Ross and the writer arrived at the Border. George Cheatham with 'Punkin Jones' was following about one hour behind us. At this point we learned about Vet Certificates, Export Permits, etc., etc., of which we were totally ignorant. The officer explained to Cliff Ross that without these documents, there was no way we could enter the U.S.

From the back of the station wagon, the writer noted that the officer spoke with more than a touch of "Old Country Accent", and engaged him in conversation with particular reference to parts of the Emerald Isle. After a lengthy exchange of pleasantries, we learned there was no reason at all why we couldn't proceed to Lewistown. An irate George Cheatham arrived in Lewistown four hours later, having been detained at the Border for some minor irregularities with his Vet and Export papers. George, an American Citizen, was not amused to learn of the ease of our entry. As to the success of the trip, that is a moot point; however, in retrospect, it is safe to say that had a soothsayer been consulted beforehand, we would very probably have stayed at home.

In the latter part of the 1950's saw a number of successful businessmen become involved in cutting. Some of these men had had very little to do with horses and took their lumps with grim determination to get with the art of cutting. Interestingly enough, a number of these men later became champions in Open events, both here and in the United States.

With more members came more horses, some of top flight caliber from the U.S. The standard of performance developed to the point where cutting was featured at major events such as the Calgary Stampede.

That our Canadian people had "arrived" in the cutting world is born out by the fact that Royal Burrows of Midnapore, AB, won both the Canadian and the North American Championship at Calgary.

Without detracting in any way from work of the "grass roots" people who started it all, this infusion of new blood into the Association played a major role in its progress.

Since its inception, the CCHA has been blessed with a large number of dedicated enthusiasts who have given unstintingly of their time and resources to the organization and promotion of cutting. The problem which haunts so many organizations that have an abundance of Chiefs and a paucity of Indians, has never plagued our group. Over the years, some mammoth projects have been carried out to further cutting and there has never been a problem of lack of competent volunteers.

The many occasions when cutting contests were held at ranches of members are never-to-be-forgotten events. At these affairs, the term "true western hospitality" was exemplified by the warmth of the welcome and the good food. The generosity of these hosts did so much to foster friendship and good will amongst the membership.

To name a few of the people who made this important contribution:

Ken & Tiny Paget	Cochrane, AB.
Cliff & Phil Ross	Evansburg, AB.
Wilbur & Betty Griffith	Calgary, AB.
Andre & Kate Bohomolec	Sundre, AB.
Tom & Clara Fox	Edmonton, AB.
George & Eleanor Golden	Deville, AB.
Walter Hellyer	Waterford, ON.
Alex Bailey	Bragg Creek, AB.
Chunky Woodward	Douglas Lake, BC
Hu & Joyce Harries	Uncas, AB.
Gordon & Betty Hood	Pigeon Lake, AB.
Ian MacRae	Hardisty, AB.
Hal & Mary Yerxa	Camrose, AB.

One element totally absent in the makeup of the CCHA was and is, male chauvinism. The ladies have entered into all of our activities and have always been welcomed. They have fed and watered us at contests, kept scores and records, competed in every class of cutting and on so many occasions have basked in the spotlight of the winners circle in Open contests at our major shows.

Of the many ladies who played important roles in cutting, two must be singled out for their great contribution. Jeannette Burrows and Clara Fox traveled many thousands of miles to be present at contests to record scores. This required hundreds of hours of work under all kinds of conditions. We would not have functioned as efficiently without them.

The Ross-Mewburn trophy which is awarded annually to the Canadian Open Champion was donated by one of our keenest lady competitors, Florence Mewburn of Calgary, AB. Florence also set up a fund to purchase replicas for many years. This handsome trophy was fashioned out of a solid block of silver by Frank Phillips, Silversmith, of Calgary. This trophy was first awarded in 1959 to "Skeeter Conway" owned and ridden by Don MacKay of Edmonton, AB.

During the 1950's the people of Western Canada had not yet emerged into the affluent society of the 1970's. Therefore, contests were modest and frugal. Possibly this era is best described by some quotes from a monthly bulletin dated June 1957. Those were the days of outside arenas, small purses, small entry fees, no cattle charges.

"June 14 & 15, 1957 - Hardisty Rodeo. Purse \$300.00, entry fee \$20.00, office charge \$2.00. Accommodation, stabling and feed available at Ian MacRae's ranch.

July 1, 1957 - Bassano, AB. Purse \$100.00, entry fee - \$10.00, trophy buckle to winner.

July 1, 2 & 3, 1957 - Swift Current, SK. Purse \$300.00, entry fee \$25.00. Two go-rounds and finals.

July 25, 26 & 27, 1957 - Vermillion, AB. Purse \$250.00, entry fee - \$15.00, office charge \$2.40.

The following are some of the contests we intend to put on this year, probably July and August when the outside rings will have dried up this very wet year. We will have one at Royal Burrows', also High River, Millarville and at Jim Cartwright's.

Inside arenas other than at Edmonton and Calgary were just non-existent; hence a lot of cutting was done exposed to just what treatment the elements chose to dish out. Contests when started, continued despite rain, hail, wind or dust storms. One contest was held in the very late Fall, outside, with a temperature of twenty degrees below zero Fahrenheit. For this endurance contest, each participant was awarded the "Order of the Frozen Spur". A group of Saskatchewan enthusiasts, headed by Arling Newton of Hallonquist, SK. Put together a large number of shows – Saskatoon, Swift Current, Regina and Moose Jaw, which were well attended by cutters from Alberta and British Columbia. The contingent from Alberta would travel in convoy and stay at the same hotel or motel. If all the fantastic capers which happened on these forays could be recorded, there would be ample material for a best seller.

Cutting was becoming an integral part of the Quarter Horse Shows in BC, Alberta and Saskatchewan. These Quarter Horse shows were well attended and provided the CCHA with a "show window" for us to present and further the interest of cutting. Several families who were Quarter Horse people also interested in cutting were, in some shows, the mainstay of the show entries.

Ken Paget of the Two Rivers Ranch at Cochrane, AB, would arrive at a show with as many as seventeen entrants – members of his family and local young people – George Golden of the G-E Ranch with a dozen, and Tom Fox of Meadowview Ranches with five or six. It was generally acknowledged that with these outfits entering, sufficient to make up a list of classes was assured.

The 1960's saw a marked increase in our membership and also many new horses of a very high caliber. New comers to the Association had purchased well bred and highly trained cutting horses from such professions as Don Dodge and Buster Welch of the U.S. This did much to enhance the quality of our presentations at shows.

This chronicle would indeed be remiss if it did not record the part our early horses played in getting cutting off the ground in Canada. Records of our early cutting horses are incomplete and considerable reliance has to be placed on memory. These horses could lay little or no claim to aristocratic lineage. The only possible exceptions could be the get of "Sleepy Cat" P-620 in the American Quarter Horse Registry. This stud was imported to Canada by the Streeter Brothers and is number One in the Canadian Registry of Quarter Horses.

Honest Jack	Royal Burrows, Midnapore, AB.
Punkin Jones	George Cheatham, Calgary, AB.
Sparks	Kerm Stav, A7 Ranch, Stavely, AB.
Chief Sleepy	Jack Streeter, Nanton, AB.
Sleepy Sadie	Cliff Ross, Edmonton, AB.
Speckle Boy	Jim Wyatt, High River, AB.

The summer of 1957 saw cutting horses coming out of the hills from every direction. Cutting had really caught on, making it possible to accept invitations to stage contests at places we had heretofore had to decline through lack of men and horses.

To list a few of them:

Pay Day	Leo Lemieux, Edmonton, AB.
Black Peppy	Barry Fox, Edmonton, AB.
Moiria Girl	Dave Batty, Douglas Lake, BC
Kimbal Joe	George Golden, Deville, AB.
Tivio Don	Cliff Ross, Evansburg, AB.
Old Tivio	Cliff Ross, Evansburg, AB.
Bonita Tivio	Chunky Woodward, Douglas Lake, BC
Bueno Jesse	John H. Ross, Edmonton, AB.
Ann D'Or	tom Fox, Edmonton, AB.
Skeeter Conway	Don MacKay, Edmonton, AB.
Honest King	Ian MacRay, Hardisy, AB.
Connie Bee	Cliff Ross, Evansburg, AB.
Zebra Brandy	Arling Newton, Hallonquist, SK.

In researching material for this chronicle, the writer came across some notes made at various shows which were typical comments and happenings of that period.

Swift current, SK. Royal Burrows was seen emerging from an Evangelist's Marquee adjoining the cutting arena. Fellow contestants took hot exception to this as it was considered he was taking an unfair advantage in seeking Divine Guidance to assist his cutting.

Medicine Hat, AB: Tiny Paget, looking up at a six foot four inch cutter – "Your feet nearly touch the ground on the turns, aren't there rules covering that?"

Moose Jaw, SK. One Judge to another. "You know, I guess I should have given him another point. He really fluked a good ride".

Edmonton Horse Show: A little fellow walked up to Bill Collins, who had just received the trophy for the event. "Can I carry your spurs Champ?"

Veteran cutter at the same show to a not so experienced cutter. "Nice going... weren't you over marked though?"

Saskatoon, SK. – Gordon Hood, Judge, who on the side would "Make Book" at a cutting, maintaining always that a "Hood deal was a good deal". In a reflective mood, Gordon gave voice to his philosophy. "Wives are suckers for placing bets on their kin. Who puts up the money? Dad! Who collects if they win? Not Dad! Who gets paid if they lose? Hood!"

The following item pertains to the long established practice of the winner at a show buying the steaks for his fellow competitors. Sometimes the trick was to nail the winner before he could skip out of town. The writer, who was the Editor of the Bulletin at that time, received a request to publicly thank Don MacKay and Bill Collins for so generously providing the steaks after winning only one go-round of the Vancouver show and to advise Cliff Ross that he was pardoned for hiding after he had won the Championship of the show. This, out of gratitude for his unselfishness in passing their trailer on the way home when his intuition told him that there was a police speed trap ahead, thereby allowing his friends to proceed without delay and costly court appearance, which he suffered for them!

This quote from a 1957 "bulletin" has a familiar ring. "A number of our members have not yet paid their dues for 1957. Please send in your \$5.00 right away. We need the money. Tom Fox is entitled to a free membership by reason of the fact that he joined the CCHA in November of last year."

Another item in the "Bulletin". Number of shows for 1955 – seven. Total purse and entry - \$1,600.

The 1960's were years of dramatic expansion for the Association. Cutting was popular in Manitoba and had spread to Ontario. For the advent of cutting in Ontario, full credit must go to Walter Hellyer of Waterford. Walter obtained some very good cutting horses, which he hauled all the way to the West Coast competing in cutting and gaining experience. Walter, businessman and rancher, devoted a lot of time and energy in developing cutting in Ontario to the standard it enjoys today.

During 1962, Tom Fox and Cliff Ross made several trips to Amarillo, Texas where meetings were held with the Executive of the National Cutting Horse Association, and the following Agreement was entered into:

"In as much as the National Cutting Horse Association and the Canadian Cutting Horse Association have for their basic purpose the public exhibition and constant promotion of the Cutting Horse, it is hereby agreed:

That each Association be recognized as the body governing and conducting cutting horse contests in their respective countries, and that the rules of each Association shall apply within their boundaries.

All contests approved by the Canadian Cutting Horse Association shall also be co-approved by the National Cutting Horse Association.

Disciplinary actions of either Association will be recognized and honored without consideration of national boundaries.

This agreement entered into, January 23rd, 1963.

(Continued in next Cutter)

Historical Highlights (continued)

By Denny Mighall

Cutting interest and activity in British Columbia was increasing rapidly. Cutting was being featured at shows in Vancouver, Kamloops, Vernon and the Douglas Lake Cattle Co. Chunky Woodward played the leading role in fostering cutting in BC. He obtained top-flight horses and was responsible for a lot of his friends and associates entering the field. The Douglas Lake Cattle Co. was to become the home of some of the finest cutting horses in the West – two, Peppy San and Stardust Desire, became World Champions. The Douglas Lake Cattle Co. breeding program produced some remarkable cutting horses out of such fine mares as Stardust Desire, Bonita Tivio, etc.

In 1964 a three month long tour of England with six cutting horses participating in seventeen horse shows was the most venturesome plan ever attempted by the Association.

The idea was hatched on the lawn in front of C.N. Woodward's ranch house at his Douglas Lake Cattle Co. in the summer of 1963. His Royal Highness, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, was Chunky's guest for several days where he had watched our C.C.H.A. group cut cattle. The Prince, an accomplished horseman, was soon off the fence and onto a Quarter Horse. Needless to say, he did well and was bitten by the cutting bug. He expressed the opinion that cutting would be a new and refreshing attraction at horse shows in England and enquired if we would be interested. Under the circumstances, good manners called for assent which was given and promptly forgotten as everyone was confident the subject would never come up again.

Some weeks later, we received a letter from Geoffrey Cross, Chairman of Prince Philip, to participate in seventeen horse shows in England during the summer of 1964. An emergency meeting was called – realization that the cost of such a venture would resemble a payment of the National Debt, the point at issue was – how do we get out of this one?

The same night, Hal Yerxa, attending a dinner at the Macdonald Hotel, related our problem to a fellow guest, who had a sympathetic ear. The next day the guest, who happened to be Vice-President and Marketing director of Rothman's of Pall Mall Canada Ltd., contacted Hal advising that his company would be pleased to sponsor the group and horses in England. This good news was followed by an offer from British Overseas Airways Corp. to fly our horses to England.

These sponsorships cleared away the main obstacles to the venture so that serious planning could get underway. Committees were formed and allocated various phases of the project, and it was here that the Association profited by having a goodly sprinkling of astute businessmen in the ranks, good organizers and a lot of idea men, all with a willingness to work.

One of the big items was the designing and construction of a portable corral. This structure was 100' x 64' tubular steel posts, aircraft cable and canvas mesh. It weighted about 1,500 pounds and packed into three large wooden boxes. Leo Lemieus and Tom Fox put a lot of thought into the designing of this fence and the construction of it was done by the maintenance staff of Associated Helicopters. Several dry runs erecting and dismantling the fence were done in Edmonton prior to shipment to England to iron out any final bugs. This preparation must have paid off, because erection time at the shows was seven minutes or less, with a different crew each show.

The selection of horses was of the greatest importance as only the very best were acceptable. They were selected on proven ability, and to be of the temperament and physical condition to withstand a lot of arduous travel under extraordinary circumstances.

The horses selected for what was to be known as the British Tour Team were:

Bonita Tivio	Owned by C.N. Woodward
Silver Sport	Owned by Lyall Roper
Poco Dipsy	Owned by Don MacKay
Muy Bueno Young	Owned by Hal Yerxa
Tivio Don	Owned by Cliff Ross
Bueno Jesse	Owned by John H. Ross

The tour would be for three months duration. Most of the men could not be away for that length of time, so it was decided to split the group to two periods of six weeks each.

The personnel were:

Bill Collins	Don MacKay	Barry Fox
Fred Duke	Cliff Ross	Lyall Roper
Bill Elliott	Hu Harries	Denny Mighall
Tom Fox	Hales Ross	John H. Ross
Ian MacRae	Chunky Woodward	Hal Yerxa

Early morning of May 3, 1964, the horses were shipped by rail to Montreal where they were stabled on a farm near Dorval Airport for a few days prior to being loaded on a BOAC SL44 Freighter Aircraft for the flight to Manchester, England.

Six men accompanied the horses on the thirteen hour flight. Despite the fact it was very noisy and rough on takeoff, the horses just did not stop eating, so there was merit in having cool-headed Quarter Horses aboard.

The aircraft was not insulated and therefore very cold, which was beneficial for the comfort of the horses, but very cold for the men. After an uneventful flight was over, we landed in Manchester where, after the usual vet's examination, the horses were loaded aboard a van for transport to Newark in Nottinghamshire, the site of the first show.

This show at Newark where the County Fair and Agricultural Exhibition was held, was typical of Country fairs which are held all over England during the summer months. It is the big event of the year, attended by almost everyone in the County. Livestock of every description, produce and crafts were on display, and always, a horse show.

The careful thought and planning we had given to almost every detail of our plans, the format we would adopt, the putting up of our portable corral etc., paid off. Everything seemed to work to perfection without a hitch. We had wondered if the English cattle would be suitable and face up to a horse. Our fears allayed on the first work – they were mostly Holsteins and testy enough for anyone.

This was the first time that Quarter Horses and cutting had been seen or heard of in England, and that the performance was an instant success was evidenced by the wild welcome they afforded us.

The most spectacular show we attended was the Windsor Horse Show, one of the highlights of the whole tour. The show grounds are nestled immediately below Windsor Castle – a more beautiful setting would be hard to imagine. For this show, the Castle is completely swathed with floodlights, with the Royal Standard flying from the highest turret of the Castle. The night show was a musical ride by the Household Cavalry, resplendent in plumed helmets, scarlet tunics and steel curasses before many thousands of people.

It was at this event that we presented a Quarter Horse to H.R.H. Prince Philip. This was a very well bred three-year-old, purchased from the Douglas Lake Cattle Co., ostensibly for his use as a polo pony. We learned later that this plan did not materialize as this filly became a favored saddle horse of the Queen – apparently, such things happen in Royal families too.

Don MacKay, as President of the C.C.H.A., was required to make this presentation. Whilst the importance and magnificence of the occasion caused Don some misgivings, he delivered his presentation speech in a most eloquent manner.

Prince Philip took the microphone, something we were told he rarely does, and made suitable reply to Don's remarks. Later on at

this show, we met Her Majesty the Queen, and our wives sat in the Royal Box with her.

The British people are dyed-in-the-wool horse lovers, knowledgeable, and are appreciative of what a horse can do. A short explanation over the microphone as to what cutting is all about was sufficient to clue them in and it was obvious from their response that they understood and enjoyed cutting.

Our event was described by the Press as “smashing”. There was a moment when there was more truth than poetry in this expression. The cattle supplied for the cutting were mostly Holstein steers and at times on the wild side – always testy. During the performance on two occasions, a steer jumped the fence and charged towards the Royal Box where the Royal Family were seated. The situation was taken care of by Fred Duke, who was lurking in the vicinity of the Royal Box, well mounted with rope in hand.

We were honored by a reception hosted by Prince Philip where we met such notables as H.H. the Maharaja of Jaipur, world renown polo player, the Duke of Beaufort and Lord Alexander of Tunis. All the horse shows we attended followed similar patterns, each seemed to be the big event of the year attended by people from all over the country. Every agricultural product produced in England would be on display – from livestock and chickens to fruit, vegetables and flowers.

The horse shows had large halter classes featuring every breed from heavy Clydesdales to Connemara and Welsh ponies. Our cutting horses were quartered in portable box stalls right on the show grounds. As a result, we had a constant stream of visitors. The Quarter Horse breed had not been seen in England before our visit, and these people, knowledgeable regarding horses, were very favorably impressed. The powerful forearms and hind quarters of the breed, in contrast to smaller structure of the Thoroughbred, brought forth much favorable comment.

In every County we visited, we were entertained lavishly, both at Civic receptions and at ancestral manors. A sizeable book could be written on exciting interesting, humorous, and at times unbelievable things which happened.

Laundry was always a problem, and dry cleaning as we in Canada know, was non-existent. As we would be in a town for about four or five days, we would hurriedly get last week’s soiled clothing to the laundry, hoping we could get it back before we left, which did not always happen.

English laundries are great on starch – Cliff Ross received three pairs of jeans starched so stiff they stood up by themselves, and Ian MacRae entertained us one day by flipping starched shorts around the room just as one would a Frisbee.

Possibly the largest and certainly the best attended show in England is the one at Stoneleigh in Warwickshire. Many thousands of people thronged the show grounds all day long. We had been receiving a lot of publicity in the media and according to some show managements, our cutting was drawing larger crowds than they ever had before.

One of the highlights of the “Stoneleigh” was the opportunity we had to meet the Queen Mother. This gracious Lady left the Royal Box to come to our arena and greet each member and engage in some earnest conversations.

Traditionally, it rains all day, almost every day, at horse shows, so we were told. However, we enjoyed beautiful sunny days with the exception of the Exeter show where torrential rains turned the show grounds into a sea of mud.

Working cattle on wet, slippery grass was hazardous, even though sand had been sprinkled on the grass. Horses would slip and slide in the fast turns and frequently would fall. The times they would regain their feet and still head off the cow, the spectators would loudly voice approval. Tivio Don, ridden by Cliff Ross, accomplished this feat several times.

We were very fortunate to have recruited a helper in England in the person of Miss Pat (Tishpat) James, who was with us on the tour and later settled in Canada. A competent horsewoman, she did much to maintain the good health of our horses over the three

month schedule. The schedule of cutting was a heavy one, and coupled with constant travel, was demanding, and the manner in which our horses stood up to it exceeded our expectations. It is to be expected that when herding a bunch of horses from place to place, one will encounter “incidents” and “situations” will develop. We had our share, and it seems that most of them emanated from one horse, Silver Sport – a showy yellow horse with a white mane and tail, of questionable ancestry. He spent his youth in a rodeo bucking string and when this phase of his career ended he traded for a pair of riding boots. By sheer accident, it was found that at cutting cattle, he was a natural. Now, the Justin Boot people do not manufacture enough boots to buy him. Silver Sport performed before the Queen.

Habits die hard, and once in a while, Silver Sport would have hallucinations that he was coming out of “Chute 5” and Lyall Roper, who rode Sport, has the scars to substantiate this. We were saddling up at a show, and as usual people crowded around looking at the equipment. Roper, saddled up, had gone back to the stable to get something. At that moment a quite large lady, wearing a voluminous slicker, had mounted Sport, something no one dared do. The lady was requested to get down gently, and then we resumed breathing. Had Sport blown his cork amidst this crowd it could have been serious.

For the majority of our group, this was their first experience of Europe, an entirely different culture, customs, manner of speech, etc. To this change in their lifestyle, they adjusted very well, even though at times, the learning process was, to say the least, thought-provoking.

At the Liverpool show, the usual lunches and entertainment was laid on for us, including an invitation to a private club established for the purpose of elbow bending and gambling. It was here that the Canadians purchased some costly lessons in a variety of heretofore unheard of card games. The situation was rectified at a later show when our English hosts were initiated into the fine art of stud and draw poker.

One of the most interesting places we visited was the ancient city of Chester, originally an old walled Roman camp established in 48 A.D. Our hosts were the Duke and Duchess of Westminster, who went to great lengths to see we enjoyed our stay.

The Chester Show was the half-way mark in our tour when six of our group returned home to be replaced by the balance of our team. This was a time to take stock and review our performance objectively. We had perfected a format for our presentation which suited the conditions under which we operated. The horses had stood up to the hard going and travel, all show managements expressed great satisfaction with our display, from whom we learned that show attendance was up – in some cases over fifty percent. With these facts in mind, we felt that we were on the right track and would continue the format for the balance of the tour. The tour resumed in the north-eastern part of England, continued to the South, and wound up at Windsor for a Command Performance at the polo grounds. Her Majesty the Queen, Prince Philip and other members of the Royal Family were present. Our final performance was an excellent one before a huge crown of spectators. At the conclusion, H.R.H. Prince Philip presented the “Prince Philip Trophy” to Hales Ross, who had the highest aggregate score of the tour on Tivio Don. Each member received silver ashtrays suitably inscribed.

To us, a fitting climax to this highly successful tour was the party which the Queen and Prince Philip put on for us in a private tearoom at the Pavilion on the Polo Grounds. No other guests or reporters – just Clara Fox and our nine members – the other wives had long since returned home. It was here we saw the Royal couple relax and really enjoy themselves. With warm handshakes, they wished us goodbye and told us how well we had done. Thus ended the most memorable tour in the history of the C.C.H.A. The publicity cutting had received as a result of the British Tour resulted in many invitations to stage cutting in various parts of the

world – Germany, Australia, etc. and later a return trip to England. There, being a limit to what one can do, these did not materialize. One invitation we did accept was from the Toronto Royal to put on a cutting contest at their show. This was the first cutting event at the Toronto Royal, and from the enthusiastic reception we received, it was a success. One pleasing aspect of this show was to see Walter Hellyer, the man who really brought cutting to Ontario, in the winner's circle of the Toronto Royal.

One of the most enjoyable events in many a moon was held at the 1980 Calgary Stampede, the "Old timer's Cutting". This event was well and truly named because participating were members well into the yellow-leaf stage, who were in cutting since 1950. Some of the competitors were approaching their eighties, and some well over.

The masterminds and organizers of this event were Bill and Pearl Collins of Calgary, for which they are to be highly commended.

Attending were:

Archie Miller	Calgary, Alberta
Roy Glascock	Shamrock, SK.
Hal Yerxa	Camrose, AB.
George Golden	Deville, AB.
Tom Fox	Edmonton, AB.
John Tattersall	Kitscoty, AB.
Royal Burrows	Calgary, AB.
Bill Renard	Calgary, AB.
Johnny Bishop	Central Butte, SK.
Ed James	Calgary, AB.
Bill Collins	Calgary, AB.
Pearl Collins	Calgary, AB.
George Oxtoby	Innisfail, AB.
Denny Mighall	Edmonton, AB.
Allie Streeter	Nanton, AB.
Florence Mewburn	Calgary, AB.
Gordon Hood	Edmonton, AB.
Hu Harries	Edmonton, AB.

The winner of this keenly contested event was Royal Burrows on San Gold Holly. Reserve Champion was tied between Ed James on Holey's Irish Girl and Hal Yerxa on Sitten Pretty.

In the late 1940's and early 1950's when competitive cutting was developing out of what had heretofore been regarded as just one facet of the cattle raising industry, no one dreamed it would become a nationwide sport. For this reason, little or no attention was paid to recording events on paper.

Unfortunately, what meager records there were have been lost.

However, by dint of researching old files and correspondence, straining the memories of old timers, it has been possible to produce a fairly accurate record of our Association.

It is hoped that this story of cutting will be of interest to the young men and women of today, in whose capable hands the fortunes of our Association rests.

To the old timers, it is gratifying that the birth and early development of the C.C.H.A. is being preserved for posterity.

.....Denny Mighall

ADDED NOTE FROM PRESENT:

On May 20, 2008, Bill and Pearl Collins were holidaying in England, and at the invitation of H.R.H. Prince Philip, (this meeting being fitted into his busy schedule) had a thirty minute visit with him at Buckingham Palace. This informal meeting was very enjoyable for both Prince Philip and Bill, as they enjoyed looking and reminiscing over the pictures in Bill's Album. This Album had been taken during the 1964 tour. Bill also presented the Prince with framed pictures (copies following) for him to keep. Following this visit, Bill and Pearl were treated to a tour of the Royal Meuse at Buckingham Palace, followed the next day by a visit to Windsor Castle and a tour of all the Queens Carriages and Horses. This visit holds very happy and emotional memories for Bill and Pearl.