

REMEMBERING

Richard Pritzlaff

■ by Joe Ferriss

photos from the Ferriss and Melzac collections
except where otherwise noted



Last year marked the 50th anniversary of the importation to the U.S. of the first get of Nazeer. The importer was Richard Pritzlaff, an intensely passionate man who loved the Arabian horse and understood the merits of all its best qualities.

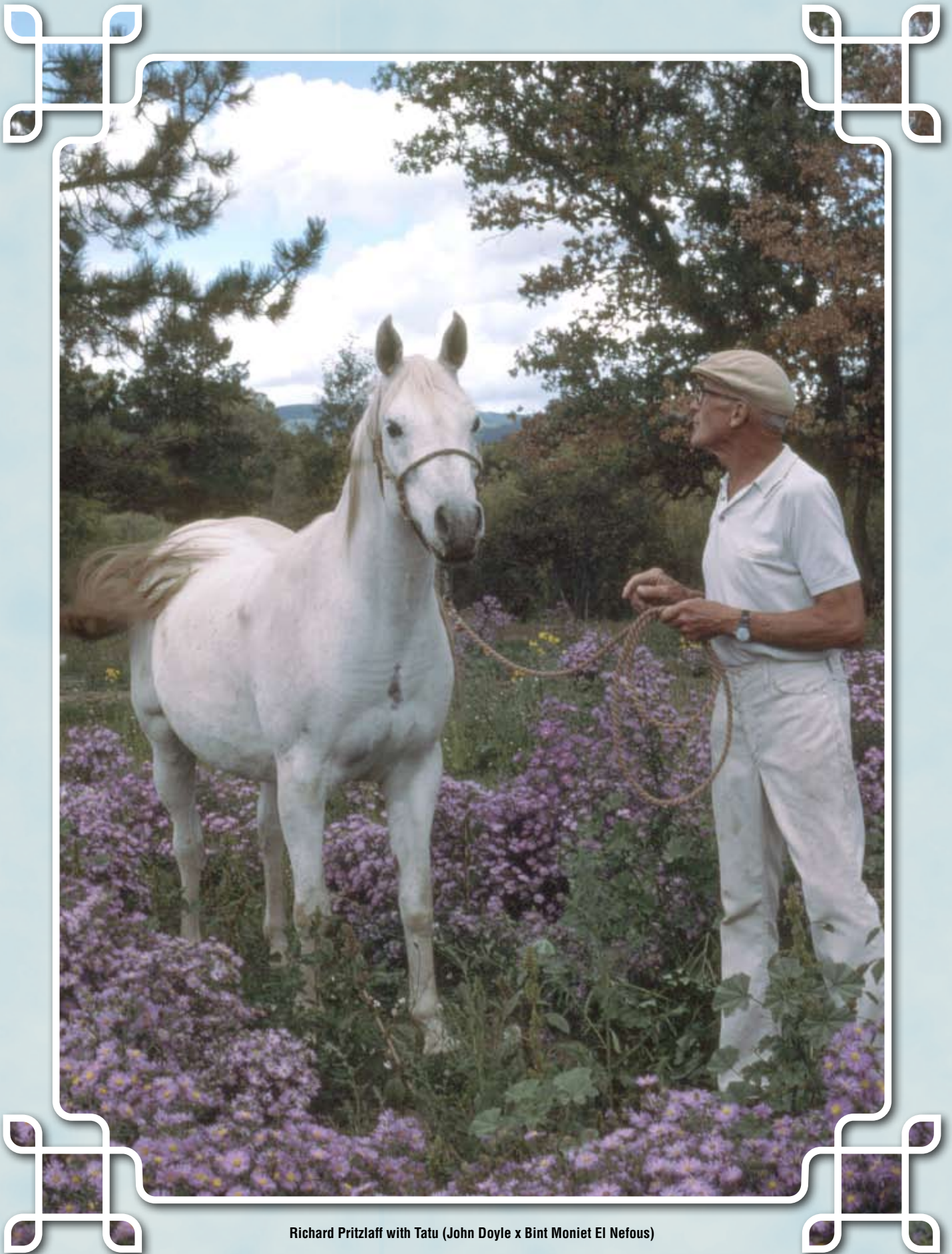
Richard was consumed by all things interesting and beautiful. His collection of art was second to none. He lived on a magnificent sprawling ranch in the New Mexico high country below Hermit's Peak, called Rancho San Ignacio that he had owned since the mid 1930s. After a riding accident on a Paint horse, he decided he needed a more agile and durable mount and had been impressed by the Arabians he had seen. In a simple twist of fate he became acquainted with Carl Raswan and enjoyed riding in the countryside on some of Raswan's Arabians. Raswan had lived among the Bedouin tribes, as well as in Egypt. He had traveled globally and had selected horses for important breeders in the U.S. Europe and Poland. Raswan was known for his excellent eye for a horse as well as his vast knowledge of the history of the Arabian. He was an exceptional resource for helping Richard choose his first Arabian horse. Richard had first obtained a riding horse from Raswan, the Arabian stallion Muntez which was used to produce Anglo-Arabians.

But Richard wanted to breed purebreds so Raswan located a grey filly named Rabanna (Rasik x Banna by Nasr), born 1947. She was of special interest for being of the in-

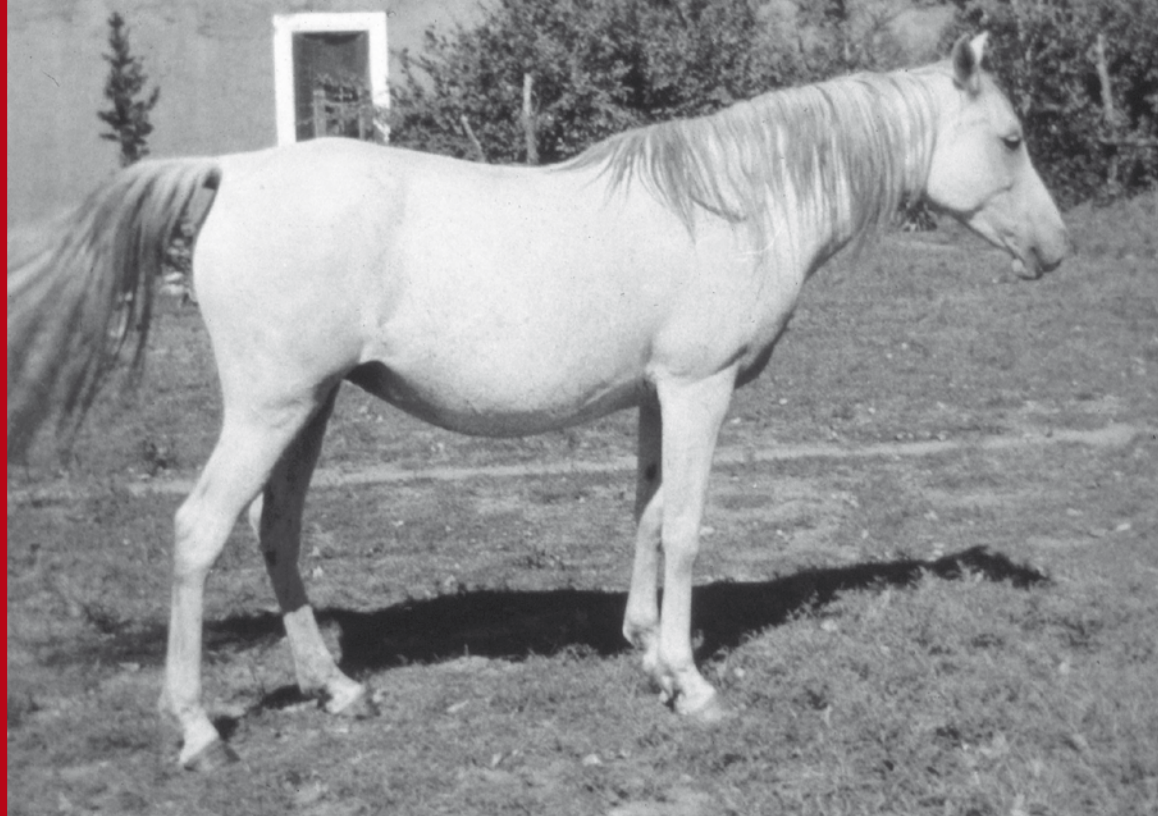
creasingly rare early Crabbet breeding prior to the popular and heavy use of Skowronek at Crabbet. It was also desirable that Rabanna carried exceptionally high percentages of Abbas Pasha and Ali Pasha Sherif blood. In addition, she was a granddaughter of the famed stallion Nasr (Rabdan El Azrek x Bint Yamama by Saklawi II) who was imported from Egypt by W.R. Brown in 1932. She was a remarkable parallel to some of the horses bred in Egypt decades before here time, though two of her distant ancestors did not breed on in the asil stock of Egypt.

Rabanna grew into a fine young mare. She was described as fine boned, well balanced with a lovely head, large eyes set low and wonderful muzzle. Richard trained and rode Rabanna for a number of years and then decided to breed her. Again he enlisted Raswan's assistance. For Rabanna the perfect stallion was chosen, a 25 year old chestnut stallion named Ghadaf (Ribal x Gulnare). He was a grandson of the Ali Pasha Sherif mare Ghazala. The mating was done three times before Ghadaf passed away resulting in two stallions and one mare. From this, the stallion John Doyle (Ghadaf x Rabanna) and his sister Kualoha were to become a part of the Pritzlaff breeding program.

After Ghadaf had passed away there remained very few stallion choices for Richard's mare Rabanna outside of the Babson Farm which normally did not stand its stallions to outside mares. Raswan had suggested going to Egypt to import horses to continue Richard's breeding choices. Raswan had been in touch with the Egyptian government stud manager General Tibor Pettko von Szandtner and a visit was facilitated. In 1958 With von Szandtner's assi-



Richard Pritzlaff with Tatu (John Doyle x Bint Moniet El Nefous)



Rabanna (Rasik x Banna) heavy in foal to Ghadaf (Ribal x Gulnare)

stance, Richard imported 5 Arabians from Egypt to Rancho San Ignacio in New Mexico. For two weeks Richard traveled with the horses aboard ship, enduring storms and high seas, tending to their well being. They arrived safely and swiftly became a part of one of the nation's most beautiful and natural settings for raising Arabians.

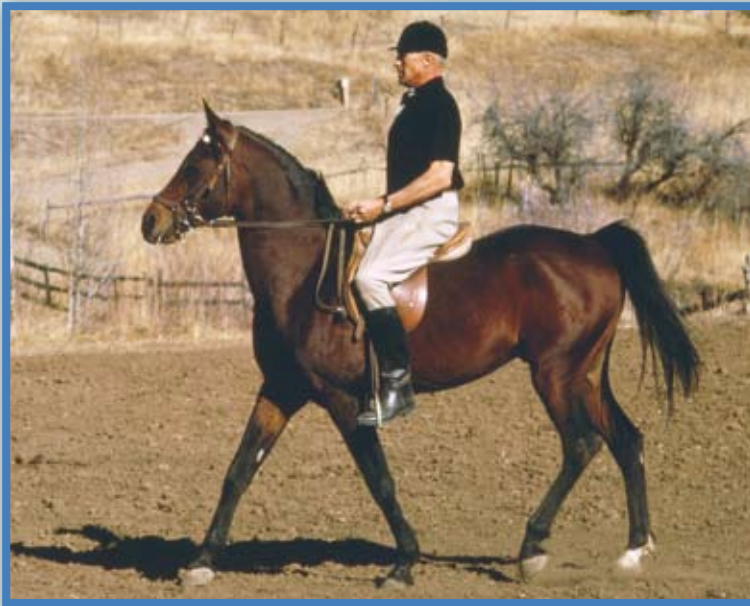
This was the first Egyptian importation to U.S. of any size in 26 years, since the Babson and Brown imports in 1932. It was also the first time Nazeer blood or El Sareei blood had come to America. The importation consisted of five horses: one stallion and four mares.

1. Rashad Ibn Nazeer, 1955 bay stallion (Nazeer x Yashmak by Sheikh El Arab)
2. Bint El Bataa, 1955 black mare (Nazeer x El Bataa by Sheikh El Arab)
3. Bint Dahma, 1956 chestnut mare (El Sareei x Dahma II by Nazeer)
4. Bint Nefisa, 1957 bay mare (El Sareei x Nefisa by Balance)

5. Bint Moniet El Nefous, 1957 chestnut mare (Nazeer x Moniet El Nefous)

In 1958 the imported mares were too young for breeding but Rashad was already old enough so he was bred to Rabanna. It was the right choice with respect to Richard's desire to maintain high percentages of original Abbas Pasha/Ali Pasha Sherif breeding since Rashad was also high in this regard. He was also a horse of good size and movement. The result of this first mating was the bay stallion Tibor The General, a wonderful horse with a good deal of refinement and also a good mover. When we first visited Richard Pritzlaff, we watched him longe this handsome intelligent stallion through all his movements with no longe line! He was taught to perform on Richards' every word. All of the remaining foals of Rabanna were sired by Rashad Ibn Nazeer.

Soon the imported mares were of breeding age and the Pritzlaff breeding program progressed. Because the imported horses were the first of their kind in America they soon



Rashad Ibn Nazeer with Richard Pritzlaff up. Richard valued highly good athletic ability and Rashad was schooled in Dressage

gained attention but to Richard they were an extension of what he had already initiated with the purchase of Rabanna. While the Pritzlaff stock descending only from the 1958 imports was continued throughout his lifetime, Richard did not actually see them as a separate group. All but one of the imported mares (Bint Dahma) were also bred to descendants of Richard's original mare Rabanna as well as descendants of the 1958 imports.

From time to time there were some outside additions to the breeding at Rancho San Ignacio. Two years after the

imports, Richard acquired the Babson stallion Faarad (Faaris x Fadba by Faddan) and produced nine foals from him before selling him. Richard had sold one of his stallions Alcibiades (Rashad Ibn Nazeer x Bint Moniet El Nefous) to the Grows in Washington whose other stallion was Ansata El Salim (Ansata Ibn Halima x Maarqada). In a cooperative breeding exchange that lasted over the years, Ansata El Salim was also incorporated into the Pritzlaff program, bringing in the blood of Ansata Ibn Halima plus another Babson line.

When we first visited Richard in 1976, it was a fascinating experience which ended up lasting se-

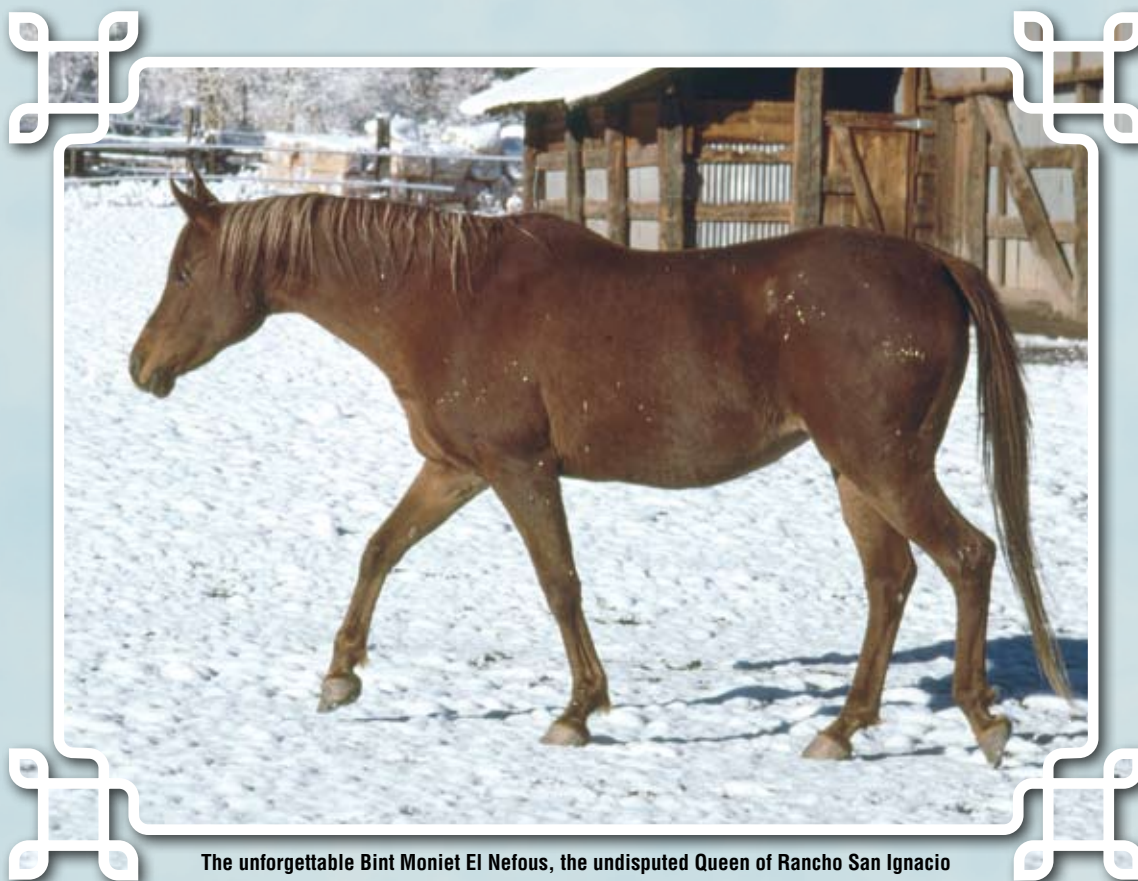


Bint Dahma (left) and Bint El Bataa (right) as young mares



veral days. We saw all the horses and took movies of most of them. He insisted that we stay as we got into lively discussions about Arabians and their history. Richard had a large footlocker full of old correspondence, photos and writings of Raswan. We got into a discussion about Nasr since Rabanna was his granddaughter. He pulled out old correspondence and read it to us, concerning the merits of Nasr as a sire compared to other of the 1932 Egyptian imports. It was clear that Nasr was considered an exceptional sire. For this reason Richard explained why he added one more outside breeding. It was to the

Bint Nefisa as an older mare. She was a producer of very large eyes and dark color



The unforgettable Bint Moniet El Nefous, the undisputed Queen of Rancho San Ignacio

stallion Bel Gordas (Sirecho x Habba). He indicated that he wanted to get as close to Nasr blood as he could so he asked Mrs. J. E. Ott, who owned the aged Sirecho (Nasr x Exochorda), to send him to Rancho San Ignacio so that Richard could use him. She was unwilling to send such an old horse that far so instead sent his son Bel Gordas out of the Babson mare Habba.

At the time of our visit, Rabanna was deceased but her two daughters Kualoha (x Ghadaf) and Naszra (x Rashad) were there as was her son the previously mentioned Tibor The General. Kualoha was a small well built compact mare while Naszra was taller, more refined and more angular. Rashad Ibn Nazeer had already passed away, but the imported mares were still alive. Bint El Bataa was not at the ranch, being on lease in Washington. This left Bint Dahma, Bint Nefisa and Bint Moniet El Nefous.

Bint Dahma was a small chestnut pretty mare with long flowing mane. None of her photos quite captured her lovely head which had the more undulating camel like muzzle with large eyes set low and very deep jowls with good width below. She was fine skinned and dry in facial featu-

res. She was out of a Nazeer daughter.

The lovely bay mare Bint Nefisa was the only Pritzlaff import without Nazeer blood. Like Bint Dahma, she also had big eyes and deep jowls. She had good legs and like Bint Dahma a relatively short back. If you looked around the ranch and saw bay mares with huge eyes odds are they had Bint Nefisa in the pedigree.

Bint Moniet El Nefous was a beautiful mare, well proportioned everywhere, good withers, shoulders and legs. A beautiful head with lovely expression. What was most captivating was her nobility. Her walk and body language clearly radiated that sense of confidence. She was much admired and she knew it.

The Pritzlaff Arabian breeding program was always a focused personal work of art for Richard. He seldom advertised, he was not interested in the show ring which he felt was leading to the deterioration of the original true Arabian and fostered cruelty in some instances. However, Pritzlaff breeding has had its role in Champions internationally. The handsome Rasmoniet (Rashad Ibn Nazeer



World Champion Simeon Shai (ET Crown Prince x Simeon Safanad by Sankt Georg). Gigi Grasso photo

(x Bint Moniet El Nefous) was a world traveler standing at stud in England, Australia, Canada and the U.S. His full sister Bint Bint Moniet was a U.S. National Top Ten mare and dam of Nationals level sire Moniet El Sharaf (x Ibn Moniet El Nefous).

Bint El Bataa's son Sankt Georg RSI was exported to Australia and will be forever remembered for his famous daughter Simeon Safanad (x 27 Ibn Galal-5), a foundation mare for Simeon Stud and dam of World Champion Sime-

on Shai and also Simeon Sadik. Many Pritzlaff bred Arabians have excelled outside the show ring in Racing, Endurance and Dressage.

We made return visits to Rancho San Ignacio over the years which were always a pleasure. It was a joy to see beautiful Arabians living in a natural state outdoors year round, grazing over large tracts of land and drinking from streams, being horses in a heavenly setting. It was pointless to try to distinguish which horses were solely descendants of the imports and which included Richard's original foundation mare. They were all a part of one bigger picture about Arabians.



Bint Moniet El Nefous with filly Monieta RSI in the lush fields at Rancho San Ignacio



The lovely Tatu RSI (John Doyle x Bint Moniet El Nefous) wanders with her foal at Rancho San Ignacio

Richard's goals as an Arabian breeder remained consistent his entire long life: to breed functional horses with the conformation of the original desert bred Arabian combined with the finer head and elegance of the Abbas Pasha and Ali Pasha Sherif Arabians. From Ireland to Israel, Australia to Alberta, and many nations in between Pritzlaff Arabians have been admired for their contribution to the quality, disposition and natural beauty of the Arabian horse. Richard Pritzlaff died peacefully in 1997 at age 95 at Rancho San Ignacio and he has left the world a lasting legacy of original classic Arabians horses worth remem-

bering. □