

DIRECT FROM LAS VEGAS

GREG ANDERSON

AUSTRALIA'S ELECTRIC HORSEMAN

GREG ANDERSON 'AUSTRALIA'S ELECTRIC HORSEMAN' AND HIS LIFE WITH QUARTER HORSES AND ENTERTAINING



HE'S COMING HOME

I grew up around horses, cowboys, rodeos and in the entertainment industry. In fact horses also played a big part in my courting actress, Lynda Keane, when we were 16 years of age. I used to ride for miles with two horses, to pick her up and ride all day, then take her home and return home with the two horses in the pitch dark. What you do for love! Lynda and I were married the week of my 20th birthday and have we now have three daughters - a blonde, a brunette and a redhead and built Gala Stud Ranch, in Terrey Hills N.S.W.

I was always fascinated with Quarter Horses and from the first time I saw Max McTaggart competing on El Grando, and later on War Cutter at Myrtelford Rodeo, I knew I wanted to breed and show Quarter Horses. That opportunity came when Frank Johnson of Nug Nug Ranch offered me my pick of several colts to stand on our family property in Terrey Hills NSW. I picked a young colt that just clicked with me, even though he was green and they'd had trouble with him rearing over backwards.

My decision, to take Nug Nug Butch Cassidy, changed the course and direction of my career and ultimately my life. He never once reared over backwards, but went from strength to strength and his temperament was second to none. We started breeding and showing 'Butch', who soon gained his ROM. Then one day out of the blue, Cinema International asked if I could launch the new Robert Redford movie, 'The Electric Horseman', in Sydney with 'Butch'. Overnight Butch Cassidy, became part of my stage show, leading to many awards including to The 'Mo' Awards Production Show of the Year and Country Entertainer of the Year.

I was also awarded The Variety Club's 'Showman of the Year', and after appearing with Sammy Davis Jnr, at The Sydney Entertainment Centre, which turned out to be Sammy's last public appearance, we were invited to perform at the International Humanitarian Awards, held in Disney World, Orlando U.S.A.

Unfortunately, Butch had a fight with one of his colts and broke his pedal bone on the day of a big convention at the Sydney Entertainment Centre, and his two year old son, Gala Starstruck, was called on to do the show that night in front of 2000, Japanese tourists with cameras flashing everywhere. Starstruck had never performed on stage before, but his temperament was so good he didn't miss a beat even though the pyrotechnics were set off without warning, just as I rode him onto the stage. We then went straight to the Gold Coast to open a new Club and did 14 shows straight. So we decided Starstruck would do the Disney show and Qantas flew him to America.

When we arrived for rehearsals there was a problem, because the Disney management thought the horse was 'Electronic' and not a real live Quarter Horse Stallion. The President of Disney World, Mr. Bob Matheson, came down to watch the



Greg and Stardust, 1st Show Star City



Greg & Butch winning a Variety Heart Award



Stardust enjoying the dam

rehearsal and as soon as he saw it he said, "let them do whatever they want, they obviously know what they're doing." The show went without a flaw and Mr. Matheson said we should stay in the U.S., as they'd not seen anything like my show since Will Rogers, and Roy Rogers.

The next day I rode Starstruck through the Disney Theme Park onto the set of the Today TV Show, with an armed escort. He said they had orders to shoot Starstruck if he played up, but it went off without incident and was televised back to Australia promoting both Qantas and the Australian Quarter Horse again.

When Dolly Parton's Production Company heard of my show they offered us a 12 month contract to open her new theatre in Branson Missouri. Starstruck stole the opening when he bowed for Dolly and it flashed around the world. During the season Glenn Campbell came to our show and celebrated his 20th anniversary of his hit song 'Rhinestone Cowboy' and came on stage to sing the song with me, and ride Starstruck for the bow.

The one year contract was extended and we went on to perform several years in Dolly's theatre in Myrtle Beach SC. We then opened her \$14M Orlando theatre, with my one man one horse show in dedicated 1000 seat theatre, purposely built for our show.

After 10 years we decided to relocate to Las Vegas and performed at major casinos like the Mirage, and the Paris. Starstruck performed over 4,000 shows in the U.S.A alone and never missed a show. His temperament, just like his sire, was exceptional. We lost him a couple of years ago to Cushings, but not before he bred his American Quarter Horse mare, which produced a great colt named StarzSpirit.

Back in Australia, Butch completely healed and went on to do shows across the country from The Opera House, to W.A, S.A. Tasmania, Victoria, Qld and he even flew on a small cargo jet, with his head touching the roof, to open the Cairns Entertainment Centre, with no tranquilizers and free standing. We lost him at 30 years of age of a heart attack trying to get to one of his mares.

Working with stallions is especially challenging, and relies on a mutual trust. I learned a valuable lesson from Butch early on when we were touring NSW, and one of the venues was renovating. We had to go up the rear stairs and across a makeshift covered ramp, used by the construction company to go back and forth with wheels barrows. Butch did not want to go on the ramp, which was surprising as he rarely balked at anything asked of him. When I growled at him he went onto it and immediately his four legs went straight through the floor. It took four guys to link underneath him and virtually lift him out – he was shaken but unscathed. We found another way in, but I learned to trust his instinct as much as he trusted mine.



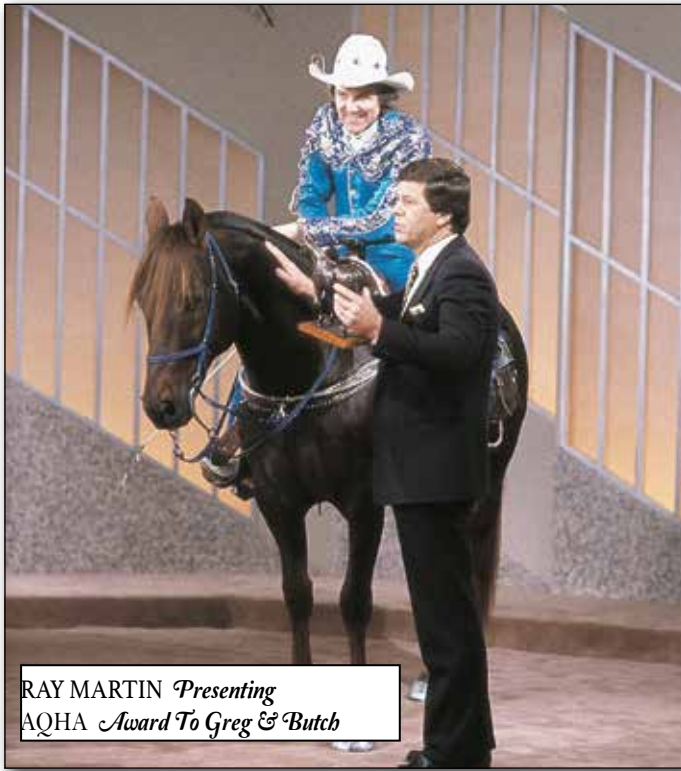
Glenn Campbell performs with Greg and Star



Texas Convention ROEX & ARJETV



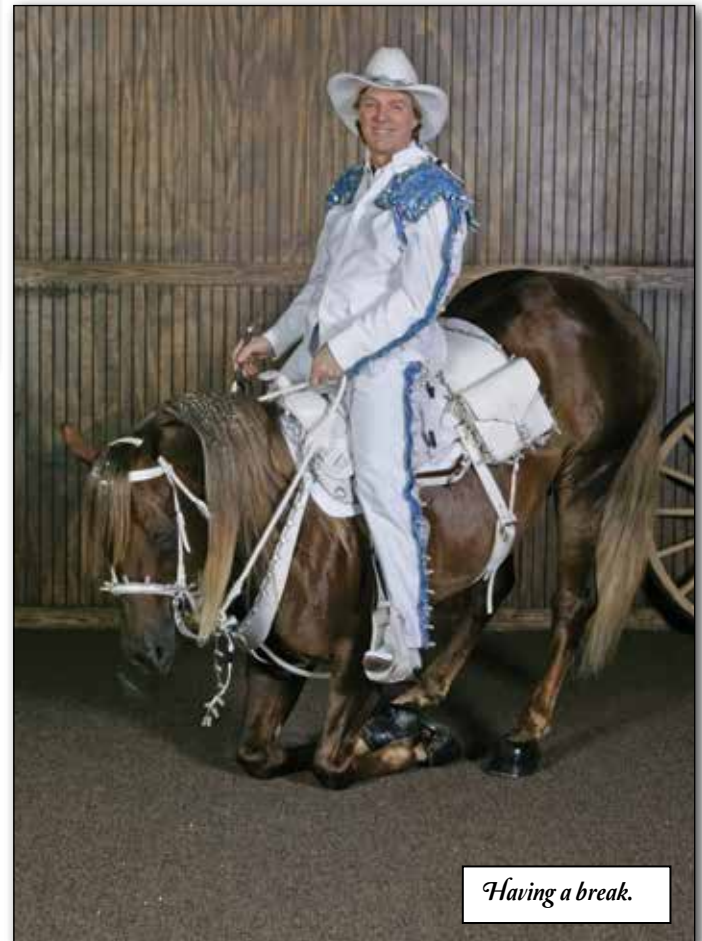
Sammi Davis Jr with Greg and Butch



RAY MARTIN *Presenting*
AQHA *Award To Greg & Butch*

#1 cutting sire with offspring of \$58M dollars. It has long been my ambition to compete in cutting seriously, which I have never had the time to seriously pursue, as well as introduce a new bloodline to our own mares and limited outside mares. 'Ichi' has only just arrived in Sydney and we will start cutting and breeding with him this season.

I have been lucky enough to breed, train and perform with Quarter Horse stallions for most of my life and they have given their all. Time and time again they have demonstrated they are indeed the horse for all seasons.



Having a break.

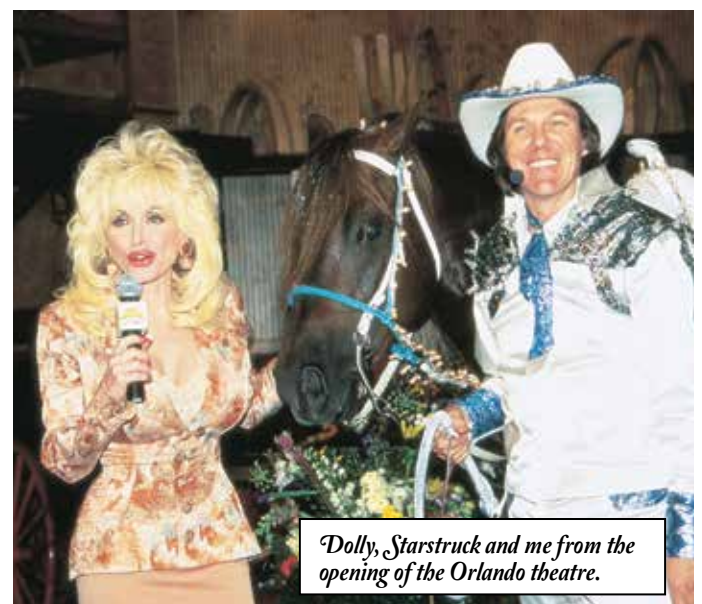
Butch's last colt, 'Gala Stardust,' stepped up to the plate when we were asked to perform for The Children's Hospital Foundation Gold Dinner at the Star City Casino Showroom. Stardust had never performed on stage, so as soon as we arrived home from the U.S. a week before the show, we setup tables and chairs with music, pyrotechnics and everything that could make him spook. The agreement was if I thought he could handle it we would do the show, if not we would have the option to cancel right up to the last minute.

On the day before the show we entered through the Casino for a rehearsal, into the lift and up to the Showroom, where we soon discovered the black tie affair had large round tables all over the actual stage area with less than 500mm between each table. We had to enter from the rear, down several flights of stairs then onto the stage. The rehearsal went well, and the show the following night brought the house down. Stardust has since continued in Butch Cassidy's tradition and also has his dad's temperament and agility.

Our three daughters, Hayley, Kasey and Brooke all learned to ride on Butch Cassidy and now our first two grandsons Jett three and Chase two, are learning to ride on Stardust, such is the temperament of this incredible breed.

I wrote a song called Quarter Horse in dedication to these magnificent horses and perform it virtually in all of my shows. The AQHA Board advised me that they wished to present me with the first ever 'recognition award for promotion of the Australia Quarter Horse to the general public', with a specially commissioned bronze by Mary Pincent. Ray Martin presented the trophy on national television, which was a great honour.

A new phase now begins at Gala Stud Ranch, with the importation of our new Cutting bred stallion, 'Cowhouse Genuine Ich' that was sired by Cat Ichi, America's NCHA Million Dollar status sire, which in turn was sired by High Brow Cat, the



Dolly, Starstruck and me from the opening of the Orlando theatre.