

# EUARD STUD OORKANT EQUESTRIAN CENTRE THARG AMBRE SOLAIRE

Diana Jean Stratton was born into the farming community at Malmesbury in the United Kingdom in 1940 growing up around horses. She competed in point-to-point racing and jumps for the Beaufort Hunt Pony Club and completed the sought-after British Horse Society Instructor (BHSI) qualifying examination. She married a South African Air Force Officer, Phil Barnard and they decided to settle in South Africa where they farmed for a while at Villiers on the border of the then Transvaal and the Orange Free State.

In the 1970 Journal of the Mother Society, the Editor, Mrs Alison Mountain reports that 'Tharg Ambre Solaire 7029 has emigrated to South Africa with his owners Mr and Mrs P J Barnard. Now two years old, this Section B colt did well showing here is 1969. By Sinton Bellhop 4689 and out of Gurnos Jem F.S.2 (by Gurnos Golden Glory), if all goes well with him he could provide some useful new blood in South Africa'.

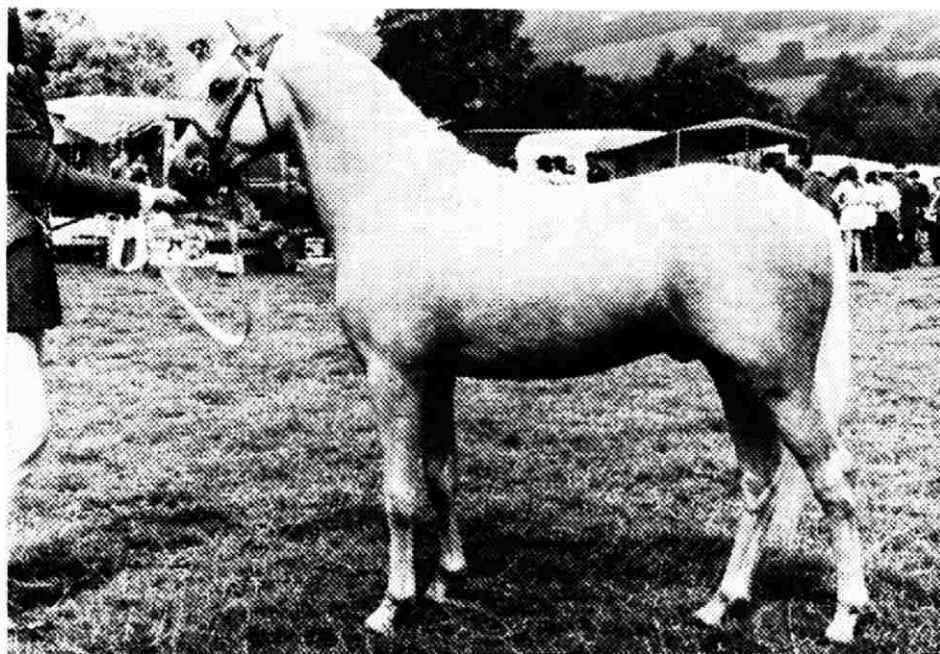
In February 1970 Mrs D Jean Barnard B.H.S.I. arrived with her husband, to settle in South Africa and brought with her the delightful little Section B cream colt Tharg Ambre Solaire who was bred by Mrs J Strange in Dorset and foaled in 1968, as well as an Arab yearling colt.

It was noticed that 'Mrs Barnard has set up the Euard Stud and her Oorkant Equestrian Centre at Villiers, OFS and is available "to give courses of instruction designed to meet individual requirements on General Equitation, Dressage (up to advanced standard), Jumping, showing and racing over hurdles and fences. All courses include comprehensive lectures on any aspect of equitation, stable and stud management"'.

Jean taught riding at the Kildare Riding School at Honeydew and also competed in the show ring. She won the elementary Dressage at the Epol Indoor Horse Show, one of the top shows in the country.

It appears that Jean never used Solaire for breeding and sold him in 1971 to A T Fincham who in 1975 sold him to Mr WEJ Wampach, eventually being owned by Mr L Immelman from 1980. There are only two foals registered as progeny:- Jeninvor Rhys, a Section B colt out of Welgemeend Maanlig in 1976 and Manilla Golden Gardie, a Section B filly out of Foresyte Cambrian Gwendoline in 1980.

At the Championships in Bloemfontein in 1984, Ambre Solaire was Reserve Section B Stallion Champion to Firby Cronos and second in the Ladies Fine Harness with Mrs Immelman. At the 1985 Championships in Bloemfontein he was Reserve Section B Ridden Champion with G Immelman.



Soon Jean decided that it was too difficult to make a living out of show horses and took herself to the Yearling Sales where she bought two fillies and then applied for a trainer's licence which took so long that her husband sold the fillies.

Jean Barnard persevered and before long was recognised as a leading Thoroughbred Horse trainer and was based at the Vaal racing track in the Free State Province just south of the Vaal River. In only 9 years she headed the list of trainers in the then Transvaal. She won four South African National Champion Trainer titles and 12 consecutive Highveld Provincial titles during the golden period of horse racing in South Africa in the 1970's and 1980's.

Jean married Mike Heming whilst training at the Vaal. A controversial figure, she was widely admired for her knack of turning out winners, 1 612 winners with her best including Benny Bazooka, Mr Universe, Off The Hook, Flight Path, Main Man, Smackeroo, Rain Forest and SA Derby champions Pedometer and Kwiktan.

Her favourite by far was Roland's Song, a mare who won 14 of 35 races including back to back Summer Cups and three Computerform Champion Stakes.



At her training yard she kept a lion which had been given to her as a cub which she raised, with it sleeping with her in her bed. When Caesar matured a reporter, against advice, entered the enclosure and was mauled. Later when she acquired a dog, the lion became incensed with jealousy, jumped the fence, and was such a threat to all the staff that she had no option but sadly to immediately put it down herself.

Jean was shot four times on the evening of 21st December, 1993, when she went to investigate unusual noises on her farm near Viljoensdrift. The gunman just came up to her and started shooting. Although she had the wages in cash, the money was not taken and nothing else in the house or office was burgled. Although five people were arrested, nothing came of the case because the police had 'lost the case file'!

She was charged three times for alleged use of banned drugs, was warned off twice, but was later cleared of all charges, one after going to the Supreme Court.

Jean Heming never fully recovered from the shooting and battled with her health, being confined to a wheel chair. They returned to the United Kingdom in 1999, first to Tetbury in England and later to the farm Greenacres they bought in Dornoch, Scotland where she sadly passed away on 19th October, 2018, at the age of 78 years.

-----0000000O0000000-----

*When the Almighty put hoofs on the wind and a bridle on the lightning, He called it a horse ~ Author Unknown*