

Interviewed: April 26, 1976Tape 85, # 1

Mrs. Isabelle Jensen,
1344 Cambie Road,
Richmond, B. C.

David Stevenson - Researcher

- They first moved to No. 5 Road and Bridgeport about 40 years ago.
- Nels, her husband, was a cattle dealer at the time; he was always interested in horses.
- They had horses in their backyard at 61st Avenue and Fraser when they were first married.
- When they moved to Richmond they had a few dairy cows, Nels was still buying and selling cattle.
- First race horse was Victoria Star.
- The mother of Broad Oak was Sparton Beauty who was the first brood mare that they had.
- She raised Sparton's last on pablen and cow's milk from a week old.
- Then they were in the dairy business on No. 6 Road.
- Nels started training his own horses when Broad Oak was a 4 year old; before that they had other trainers.
- So they sold horses, bought and sold cattle and milked cows...a very busy life.
- Horses in this area were not that expensive because the breeding was not so good.
- Gradually they have up-graded the breeding over the years.
- They also imported fillies from Kentucky and sold them to improve the local breed.
- She recalls racing at the Willows and at Lansdowne and at Brighthouse.
- Eventually Nels gave her a brood mare and she became more interested in horse racing.
- Brighthouse was a bit run down even then but it was still considered the best track, better than Lansdowne...had a bounce to it and was kind to your horses.
- She doesn't know the Brighthouse track that well, but she remembers the Lansdowne track well.
- The club house was eventually condemned and the racing was transferred to Exhibition Park.
- Races were better attended at Exhibition Park because it was so difficult to get to and away from the Lansdowne track.

Mrs. Isabelle Jensen

HORSE RACING

- Lansdowne was better than Exhibition Park...for one thing it was longer; it was a mile and Exhibition Park is only 5/8th of a mile and very sandy.
- Lansdowne track was kinder on your horses.
- It attracted mostly local horses and a few from Seattle and Spokane.
- Competition is mostly friendly among local owners.
- The top owners in the area are the Ballantynes and Don Morrison, trainer, are usually up there in the winners.
- Very hard on the trainer who runs a public stable.
- Her husband had five heart attacks partly because of the strain of training.
- The trainer should be on his own to train but often the owner pushes the horse harder than it should.
- They over-estimate the horses' ability.
- Horse training takes at least three months.
- Summer Lil, for instance, has been in training since January.
- Usually they start as two year olds.
- At Santa Anita no races for two year olds.
- Thoroughbreds' birthday is January 1st regardless of when he was born.
- To break a horse...get used to a rider and saddle and the bit...left and right turn.
- She never rode at all, too busy milking cows and raising a family.
- Each jockey has an agent who gets 10% for obtaining a good horse for his jockey...he knows the horses well.
- The "back stretch" is the barn area where horses train and jockeys are selected.
- Jack Diamond is the President of "Jockey Club".
- He had the top two year old, April Wine, she was a Kentucky bred and was lost in a claiming race at Santa Anita last year.
- Claiming races are when others have the option to buy the horse.
- Broad Oak did most of her running in Calgary.
- She was named after a light lunch store at Broadway and Oak owned by Mr. Jensen.
- Nels was always in a lot of things.
- Had a butcher shop on the same block..
- There are more days of racing now...used to be two weeks at Lansdowne, at Brighthouse and at Exhibition Park.

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HORSE RACING

- This gave horses a chance to move around from track to track....
"horses for courses".
- She has three horses in training right now...two 3 year olds; Canadian Silver and Market Babe, and one 2 year old, Top Sport.
- They won't be racing until the end of the month.
- Producing a winner depends on a lot of factors, like breeding, training and health.
- She sold several horses when her husband died.
- Now she has three brood mares and two yearlings...one colt and one on the way from Lucky Spot.
- Stud fee on the filly is \$5,000.00, sometimes they are much higher fees
- Raising horses is a full time occupation...it keeps you busy.
- One year, she had several horses training at her place and she was very busy cooking for three hired men and four children.
- They have raced some horses back East...they did very well with a friend named Andy Smithers.
- They raced in Phoenix and Spokane and raced right into October.
- The racing season has a high casualty rate on the horses.
- Some horses do better than others.
- Their legs are the most vulnerable part and viruses are also a problem.
- Some horses retire at ten years of age.
- A good horse is easy going in his thinking and he can relax after his work-out.
- She recommends Alice Cunningham as a good person to interview.