



The Horse in Australia

Fiona Carruthers

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A beautiful and comprehensive book on horses.

From Phar Lap to Makybe Diva, Garryowen to Picasso, and Our Solo to Peppermint Grove, Australians adore their horses. Be it a pony club mount, an Australian Stock Horse descendant of the mighty Waler or a Snowy Mountains brumby, such is our love for the horse, we have virtually granted him honorary native status.

When the First Fleet arrived in 1788, they brought a collection of rough pony-sized horses purchased at South Africa's Cape of Good Hope. In 1810, the Colony's first official social gathering took the form of a three-day race meet in Sydney's Hyde Park. By 1813, hardy pack horses were part of the critical crossing of the Blue Mountains, and from the early 1800s, impressive breeding operations of Thoroughbred and Arabians were underway with imported blood horses such as Rockingham and Saladin. The horse has remained fundamental to our sense of national identity.

Despite urbanisation, we retain one of the world's highest rates of horse ownership. Through the stories of our most iconic horse events - such as the Melbourne Cup, the Golden Slipper, the Inter Dominion, the Garryowen Perpetual Trophy, the Warwick Gold Cup, the Tom Quilty Endurance Ride and the Pony Club movement in Australia - Fiona Carruthers captures how we have embraced the horse.

This comprehensive, beautiful book rattles to the pounding of hooves, exploring the much-loved Australian Light Horse, the all-Australian sports of campdrafting, polocrosse, bush polo and picnic racing and the evolution of the Australian Stock Horse. Every significant horsy name is covered, from John and Elizabeth Macarthur to Violet and William Murrell, the Roycroft family, Marjory and Edward Hirst and the indomitable Miss Kay Irving and her sisters. Banjo Paterson, General Sir Harry Chauvel, Bart Cummings, Gai Waterhouse, John Singleton, Sinclair Hill, Brian Hancock, RM Williams and Kerry Packer. Our contemporary stars across a range of disciplines discuss their dreams, their goals - and their favourite horses - including leading endurance rider Meg Wade, three-day-eventers Andrew Hoy, Megan Jones, Clayton Fredericks, show jumper Edwina Alexander, and the Atthow family, boasting five generations of campdrafters.

The Horse in Australia brings all aspects of a proud and vital Australian tradition under the one roof. Encyclopedic in the knowledge shared, it's told at a gallop and weighted with stunning images, making it the ideal gift for Australians of all generations.

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