

LEST WE FORGET



The Dressage Relationship



Vi Hopkins, the legendary Dressage instructor, said, “The unity between human and horse is a precious quality that sinks into the soul, making life more meaningful.”

Dressage riders understand this. When teaching a human to perform an athletic feat, we describe verbally what to do and how, draw diagrams, show pictures, videotapes, and DVDs. None of these techniques works when we set out to teach and train a Dressage horse. We use hands, legs, seat and weight. We are now communicating with another species – a very remarkable thing in itself.

“Making life more meaningful,” as Vi Hopkins said. When we train a Dressage horse, we experience so many of life’s elements – hard work, teaching, persistence, temper control, teamwork, challenge, patience, disappointment, defeat, winning, triumph, victory, accomplishment, excellence, satisfaction. We are regularly engaged in athleticism and physical exercise. We experience caring, affection, closeness, fellowship, companionship, quality time, connection. We cultivate a friendship bond between horse and rider, often lasting for life.

Jim Wofford said about horses, “The worst of them sense our fears and take advantage of us. The best of them sense our dreams and take us there.”

Ah, the wonder and joy of the Dressage Relationship!

.... By John F. Boomer

Maryal Barnett

of Holt, Michigan, long prominent in American dressage, and active in the group of founders of the United States Dressage Federation, is concerned "Lest We Forget." She wishes to ensure that future dressage generations remember the pioneer group of eighty-one founders (listed below) who met in Lincoln, Nebraska in 1973, and what they did there. Their vision formed and organized USDF. Maryal Barnett wishes to remember, in a permanent way, Lowell Boomer, who devoted so many years of hard work in transforming the founding group's dream into action. Maryal Barnett and her family have donated a horse head carved from a tree trunk to commemorate Lowell Boomer and the original eighty-one founding organizers. The tree



Maryal Barnett

trunk was chosen to symbolize the growth and many branches of a tree, as they spread and reach out into the future, as USDF has

indeed branched out and grown from its roots. Maryal Barnett requested that Lowell Boomer's biography be written by his son, John, which he has gladly done, and which appears in this brochure. The Barnett family contributed the carving, along with funds for

the preparation and printing of this brochure, and requests that the carving and brochures be housed permanently, side by side, in the Hall of Fame of the United States Dressage Federation in Lexington, Kentucky.

Maryal Barnett has made this gift of special remembrance through The Dressage Foundation to the United States Dressage Federation –

"Lest We Forget."

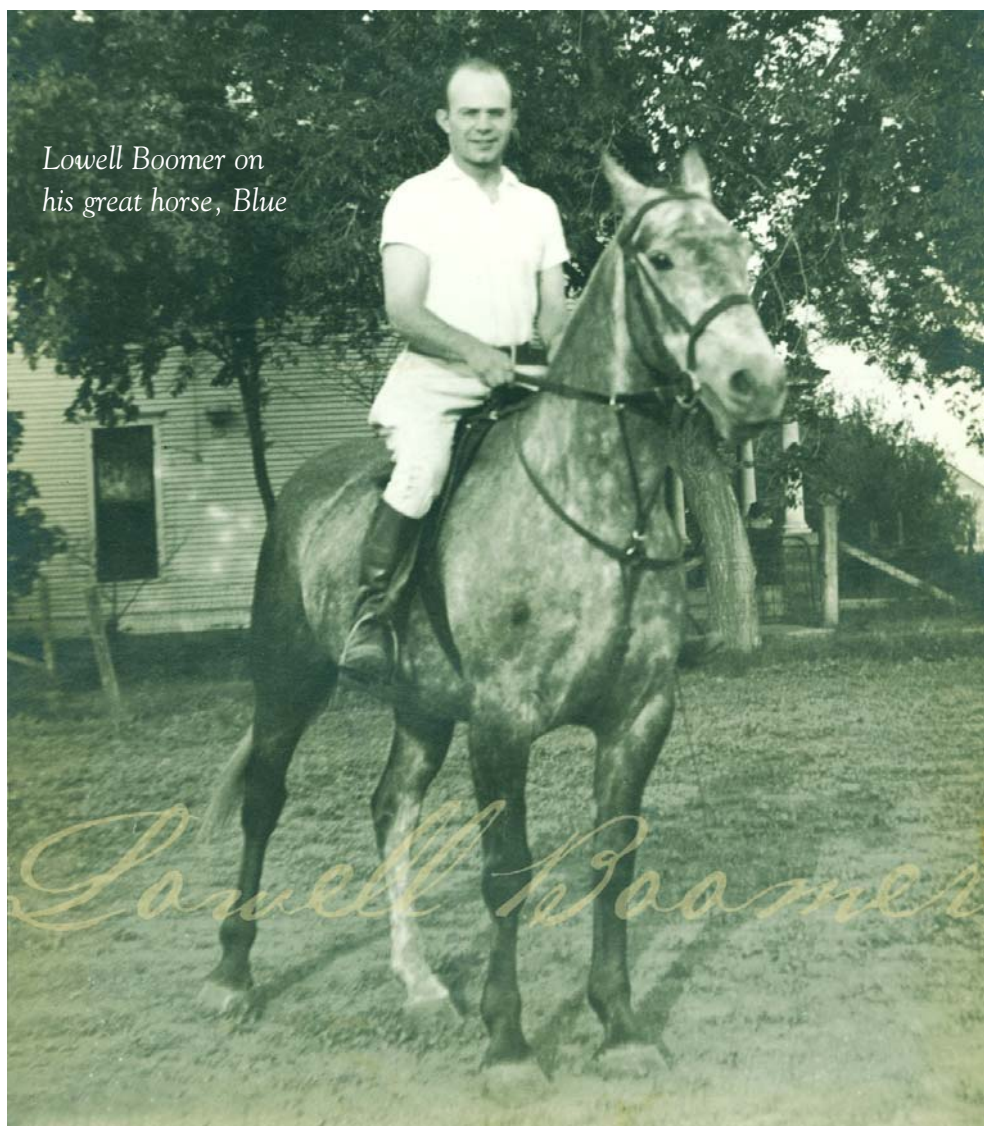
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Lois Arnold (MO)
Oscar Babcock (FL)
Gail Batten (IA)
Barbara Beck (CA)
Ivan I. Bezugloff, Jr. (OH)
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Elizabeth Coester (IA)
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*Lowell Boomer on
his great horse, Blue*



Lowell Boomer

Throughout the summer of 1972, a feeling was growing that the United States needed an organization to promote dressage. Col. Donald W. Thackeray said, "We need an organization to take the ball and run." But there was considerable disagreement as to who the ball carrier should be, and the thorny problem of where to locate it since people from both coasts thought it should be on their terrain.

Lowell Boomer, who owned an equestrian center and a printing company in Lincoln, Nebraska volunteered to help, and offered Lincoln

as a "Center of the Nation" geographic site. Eighty one people (listed in this brochure) convened in Lincoln on February 17-19, 1973, formed the United States Dressage Federation (USDF), named Lowell Boomer the Executive Secretary, who would remain for twelve years in that post, followed by four more years as President, before completely stepping down.

Riding his pony as a child, Lowell later frequently visited the U.S. Cavalry School at Ft. Riley, Kansas to watch Col. Hiram Tuttle and Col. Isaac Kitts school their horses, and then went home to emulate

them. After establishing his Great Plains Equestrian Center just outside Lincoln, Lowell went on to ride and compete in horse shows, to fox hunt, organize horse trials, and to teach and train riders in jumping, eventing, and dressage.

Lowell Boomer has been honored throughout his lifetime with prestigious equestrian awards. He is the first inductee into the USDF Hall of Fame, the founder of the Nebraska Dressage Association, the recipient of the Braley Gray Award, and the United States Equestrian Federation's sterling silver cowboy hat emblematic of USEF's Lifetime Achievement Award. *The Chronicle of the Horse* named him "one of the 50 most influential horsemen of the twentieth century."

In 1989, Lowell Boomer formed The Dressage Foundation in Lincoln, Nebraska, "to cultivate and provide financial support for the advancement of dressage."

Said Lowell Boomer, about the two organizations, "USDF's highest priority is education, and the organization is structured to encourage and educate those at the lower levels who want and need to learn more." Of The Dressage Foundation, he said, "my hope is that it will become a wellspring – a continuous, growing stream of funding to help bolster dressage education, programs, and events."

From Lowell Boomer's vision has come two premier Dressage organizations, structured and operating as separate entities, one focused on education, the other on funding. Lowell has left a rich legacy for our sport.

"Isn't it Wonderful to See More Than Just a Piece of Wood?"

That is what my grandpa said to me when I was six years old. I used to spend the weekends with my grandparents, and grandpa had a woodshop. When I was in the shop, he gave me pieces of wood and set me off to the side, more than just to keep me away I think. He would always praise me, whatever I made, and from that time on I was hooked. To this day I can still hear him say, "It's wonderful to see more than just a piece of wood." A few years ago, I had a place in Michigan and we had a tornado go through the back yard. It took down four large box elder trees. When I came out after the storm, at first I thought what a mess; but since I ran out of carving wood, it was a blessing in disguise. I had never carved box elder before, but I love the wood, the colors, and it doesn't check as bad as most. So about one and a half years ago, I was down to this last stump and I saw a horse. By the time I got most of the wood out of the way, it was a horse.

One day, a man drove by and saw it. He loved it – said his family had to have it. They wanted to give it in honor of a great horseman. They told me about Lowell Boomer, and the leadership he had provided in the equestrian world, his achievements, his honors and recognition. So, now I have a small part in honoring Lowell Boomer who has done so much for young people and all of us who love horses and love to ride.

Rick Logsdon
Kingman, Arizona



LEST WE FORGET

A Gift of Remembrance
in Honor of
Lowell Boomer
and the 81 founding organizers of the
United States Dressage Federation
1973

*Given to
United States Dressage Federation
through
The Dressage Foundation*



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