

-Close up-

# Arabian horses a specialty

by Stephen Dodd  
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Horses have always been a part of Lois and George McNab's life. Their love for Arabian horses can be traced back to an old geography book that the McNabs have kept since their days in public school.

The book entitled, "Ontario Public School Geography" has one picture in particular called "Arabian Scout, Arabian Horse." It was this picture of a black Arabian horse that led them to admire the Arabian breed.

In August 1968, George McNab and his wife Lois purchased 100 acres of land in McNab Township. At the time they raised a few saddle bred horses but weren't completely satisfied with their performance as some days they were just too high strung.

In 1973 they purchased a young Arabian stallion, and in the next few years assembled a herd of five mares to form the nucleus of a small breeding operation. They currently raise three or four foals each year for sale.

## Have won many awards

Within a 75 mile radius of home, the McNabs and their daughter Linda travel to several horse shows in the summertime. One of their mares won 25 first place ribbons and two championships, this past season. They compete in confirmation, riding and driving classes. For several years they participated in the Tulip Festival Exhibition on Major Hill Park.

In addition to raising horses, Mr McNab who is retired, has a collection of antique horse drawn vehicles. He uses a spindle back buggy to compete in obstacle driving events, one well restored two seater carriage that placed first at the Ottawa Winter Fair in the Antique Vehicle Division this fall and two others with the idea of selling them. Mr McNab also uses his antique carriage for weddings and special events. Not too long ago he was asked to carry the Furrow Queen of the Ploughing Match at Richmond.

## Community Involvement

The McNabs are two of the founding members of the Madawaska Pleasure Riders and are also active members of the Ottawa Valley Arabian Association, and the Eastern Ontario Pleasure Driving Society. Mrs McNab went on to explain a bit about each of the organizations. The Madawaska Pleasure Riders is a local horse club which holds regular monthly meetings and social events such as barbeques, trail rides and overnight excursions. They also have their annual show at McNab Centre Park. Mr McNab added that it was founded in 1970. The main concern of the Ottawa Valley Arabian Association is to promote the Arabian breed.

Last year for example they set up booths at both the Toronto CNE and Ottawa Winter Fair.

The McNabs also hold a membership in the Eastern Ontario Pleasure

Driving Society, which has 140 members from Eastern Ontario and parts of Quebec. "The club is concerned with driving horses for pleasure rather than exhibition", said Mr McNab. The club sponsors clinics and speaker demonstrations as well as more than a dozen weekend drives in various locations around Eastern Ontario throughout the year.

## What's in a name

Later Mrs McNab brought out a book for a short history lesson on the name of McNab. The clan MacNab as it was originally spelled came from Scotland. The crest badge has a savage's head affronte proper and the motto is "Timor Omnis Abesto" which means "Let fear be far from all". The name in gaelic is "Mhic an aba" which was the war cry of the McNab clan. The McNabs adopted this as their farm name and incorporate part of it in the name of each of their horses they raise. The Arabian Horse Registry allows each horse to have up to 17 letters in its name and no duplications are allowed.

By using "An Aba" as the first part of each new name, Mr McNab is sure that each one will be unique and that others will recognize where the horse was raised.

The many years of hard work and careful breeding are paying off. The McNabs are proud that they now own and raise some of the finest Arabians in the Ottawa Valley.