

Rahar Arabians

By Francie Schermerhorn

Our first Arabian was a yearling filly by Ibn Daareyn (Daareyn x Talawa) which my husband Wally purchased when we lived in Michigan's Upper Peninsula when he was in the Air Force. I had always admired the breed, having read all the books by Walter Farley, and the acquisition of An Am Fleydas Pixie (Ibn Daareyn x An-Am Fleda), aka Talla Nur, naturally lead to subscriptions to all the Arab magazines available at that time, the mid-sixties, which I read cover to cover, of course. Pixie was a good, correct filly, just not as typy as some of the horses pictured in the Arab magazines.

Wally made the decision not to re-enlist and we moved back to western New York with our toddler daughter, three dogs, a pet raccoon, a Mynah bird, and two horses, Pixie and a Quarter horse stud colt acquired while stationed in California a few years prior.

I was drawn to the *Raffles bloodlines which were very popular at the time, as well as the newly imported exotic Straight Egyptians. Fortunately, the Egyptians were so outrageously expensive, and the *Raffles-bred horses were just as appealing in their own way, with the added bonus of better dispositions, and generally more reasonable prices, that we dodged that Egyptian money pit and focused on the *Raffles bloodlines. Pixie and the Quarter Horse were sold, and we looked at the Arabians in our area. There were several lovely Naharin sons and an Indraff son, Shirik, all quite nice, but I guess we wanted to do our own thing, so to speak, which was to breed concentrated *Raffles stock.

Lois Selby Perry's Partridge Hollow Park was in Connecticut, a mere six hours away and her ads, "Blood will tell", soon had us firmly hooked on *Raffles/Skowronek horses. Although we couldn't afford her higher priced mares, I had fallen in love with a small (13.2hh) Thoraff (Athos x Rafnisa) daughter (a triple *Raffles great granddaughter) with a beautiful head and big dark eyes who was miraculously within our price range. We bred Sinahra (Thoraff x Rahsina) to Syzygy (Rafferty x Raffleeta) and his son, Asil Aristocrat (Syzygy x Asil-Aurora) and got fillies. We were on our way!



Sinahra
(Thoraff x Rahsina))

We needed a farm name, so "Rahar Arabians" was born. Rahar's was the name of the bar I hung out at while in college, and also, it turned out, was frequented by airmen from nearby Westover Air Base. To make a long story short, I left college, got married, and began the next phase of my life.



Comar Rafleygan
(Azraff x Rafleyga)

Lois Perry was a wealth of fascinating information to us newcomers to the breed, pointing us to various publications and books (the Raswan Index being one) and I started to buy the stud books and study the pedigrees of horses in the magazines.

I had finally convinced Wally to consider getting our own stallion, namely an Azraff son. Timing is everything, and we arrived at Comar Arabians having narrowly missed the chance at the full brother to Comar Bay Beau+++ (Azraff x Rose of Mirage). But we got to see Azraff. To me it was like being in the presence of royalty, and in fact Garth commented on his "kingly" disposition. We bought a two year old son, Comar Rafleygan (Azraff x Rafleyga). He was out of an Ibn Mirage (*Mirage x *Kareyma)

daughter who was out of a *Raffles daughter, all Selby breeding the bottom half of his pedigree. Over the years Rafleygan filled our pasture with typy, always grey, offspring. He was definitely prepotent.

Soon we outgrew our 14 acre property with its 8 -10 stall pole barn so we moved to an old farm, with more acreage and a big old dairy barn that had to have cow stanchions removed and horse stalls built. And split rail fences were put up instead of barbed wire. Because we then had more space, we made a few unwise purchases of mediocre mares.

And then we got divorced. It was an amicable divorce and I got to keep the farm, our two kids, and all the horses and bills, the savings account, and the Raswan Index. Of course I had no job, no income, so most of the horses had to go, and the horses leased from Lois had to be returned. I think I was then down to about six. I couldn't bear to part with my Azraff son, or Sinahra, and her very special double Thoraff weanling colt who was to be the bay stallion I longed for, and my daughter's pony. I intended to keep a gorgeous weanling filly out the beautiful PHP Star Gida (Asil Aristocrat x Rafgida) who had been leased from Lois. I loaned her out to a young man in Canada who had already bought two colts from me. He would raise the filly and get a foal out of her, the same arrangement we had had with Lois. Tragically he had a horrific barn fire and lost all but one horse that was away for training. An amateur wiring job, or newly baled wet hay.

I went to work at my father's company. With no office experience, I started at the bottom, literally sharpening pencils and putting canceled checks in alphabetical or numerical order. The Dark Ages and poverty had arrived.

Suffice it to say, the Dark Ages eventually passed. I got promoted and a raise, but unfortunately the bay colt, my double Thoraff stallion prospect, died and the breeding program stalled out for a few years.

Comar Rafleygan was getting up in years and I thought about getting another stallion. Gai Parada+++/ (Ferzon x Azleta) had caught my attention, and soon I was on a plane with my friend Maureen, to Minnesota to see a five year old Parada son, Gai Cartier (Gai Parada+++/ x Lea Azranette). He and some other Gainey horses were scheduled to be auctioned off soon, but I made an offer and with the help of a home equity loan, Gai Cartier was soon in my barn.

Somewhere around this time another opportunity cropped up. There was an ad for a dispersal sale at Comar Arabians. As luck would have it, Maureen and her husband were hauling a horse to Wisconsin, and Maureen, ever the enabler when it came to horse issues, persuaded me to fly out to Iowa where they would meet me with their EMPTY four-horse trailer.



Gai Cartier
(Gai Parada+++/ x Lea Azranette)

Joe Buchanan met me at the airport, put me up at a motel, and then he and Garth took me out to dinner. I had told Garth that I was interested in a mare with the *Kareyma dam line to compliment my aging stallion who I had bought from them 20 years before. They brought along a list of all their horses (40 at least) on two sheets of legal sized paper with just the name, age, and sire and dam listed. I studied that list well into the night, wishing desperately that I had bought along the stud books to help me isolate the *Kareyma-bred mares.

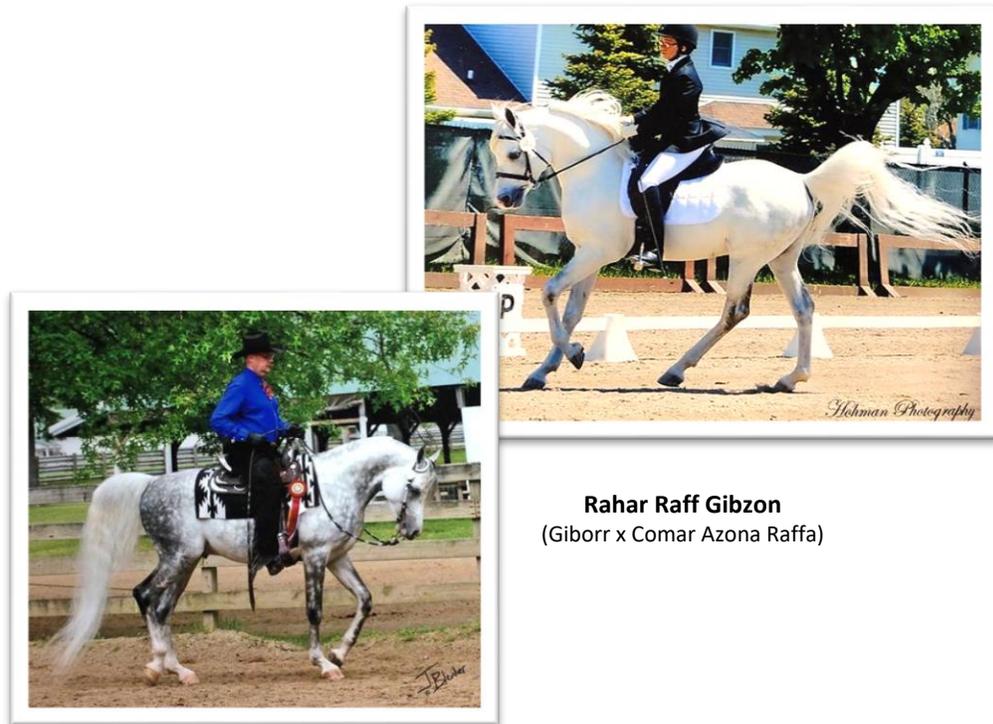
The next morning Joe took me to the farm. From the moment we turned in the driveway I was stunned. They all were so similar to each other and to most of my horses at home that I seriously worried about how I was going to make the right selection.

After we looked at three beautiful two year old fillies, and a separate paddock of five or six yearling fillies, I abandoned making notes on each horse and began putting stars by the ones I particularly liked. The more stars, the better I liked them. Then Joe and their hired man brought out from the pastures each mare, and I did the star thing

with them. And the stallions! Since I already had two stallions at home, I couldn't seriously consider them, which, in retrospect, I regret.

I felt I couldn't afford my three-star first choice two year old filly, so I "settled" for my second choice two year old, Comar Azona Raffa (Comar Rafeymazon x Comar Azona), then picked Comar Nightingale (Comar Rafeymazon x Comar Azraferzona), the yearling full sister to my first choice, rationalizing that two would travel better than one, and once again giving thanks for my home equity loan.

In the 20 years since my first visit to Comar, Ferzon blood had been added to the program, crossing so well with the Azraffs that it was repeated numerous times through several generations. On the long ride home I must have irritated my friends with non-stop exclamations over the pedigrees of my new fillies which Garth had provided, linebred to three stallions, Azraff, Ferzon, and *Raffles. And I have to add that of my six top choices five were full siblings and the sixth was a full sibling in blood, all of the *Kareyma dam line. I still don't know how that happened.



Rahar Raff Gibzon
(Giborr x Comar Azona Raffa)

This was a turning point for Rahar Arabians. Comar Azona Raffa became my foundation mare. Her foals were always better individuals than herself, and her two sons, which I retained, are proving to be excellent sires. Rahar Raff Gibzon (Giborr x Comar Azona Raffa) has also had a successful show career with many championships in Western Pleasure, and after a career change, went on to more championships in Sport Horse and Dressage, working currently on Level 4.

Two more mares were added. Gainey Arabians was dispersing. Even knowing they were out of my price range I finally called. Yes, out of my range, but I made an offer which was accepted several days later. Gai Radiant Silk (Gai Radiant x Gai Shara by Bey Shah), a beautiful little mare with a sweet disposition, an exquisite head and huge dark eyes, arrived and soon started her own dynasty.

Then, at a local Arab show, Ev Shea of Windfall Arabians in Pennsylvania, having noticed my daughter, Koren, showing one of Azona Raffa's fillies, approached me saying how he really liked our filly, which led to a discussion of bloodlines (she was by my Parada son) etc.,etc. Then at the next show I ran into Ev again and he wondered if I knew anyone who would be interested in taking an older Parada daughter as he was retiring his breeding program and moving to South Carolina. Of course we went down with the trailer and brought back Gai Primavera (Gai Parada+++ / x Lea Primrose) a lovely mare with the sweetest disposition. She had consistently produced



Gai Primavera

(Gai Parada+++ / x Lea Primrose)

exceptional foals for him, and he thought she could do well for someone else. I bred her to Rafleygan, but it was late in the season and she didn't take. Before we could do the breeding again Rafleygan began having mild bouts of colic over a two week or so period, culminating in one massive fatal episode. The autopsy verified my vet's suspicions when he plucked out a grapefruit-sized enterolith which had caused the intestine to rupture. It was a devastating and very painful end to an old friend.

We bred Primy to Gai Cartier in the spring, a match I was a little hesitant to do. They were more than $\frac{3}{4}$ siblings in blood, being by Gai Parada+++ / out of Azraff daughters with Ibit (Ibn Mirage x Little Bit) as the tail female. She settled, but six weeks later she colicked repeatedly, with no apparent cause. At my vet's advice we took her to Cornell where they did exploratory surgery. They showed me the problem, a nasty, bloody little tumor on a tether called a lipoma which had wrapped around her intestine and would have soon cut off circulation. Primy recovered, and delivered a beautiful filly the following spring who I named Rahar

GaiWindfall (Gai Cartier x Gai Primavera), aka Windy . Sadly, Primy eventually foundered, and I had to make the heartbreaking decision to have her put down.

Windy grew up and did her mother proud, producing foals of quality that have bred on to the third generation, and counting.

And last, but certainly not least, two stallions were added who were extremely influential in the breeding program: Giborr (PHP Brilliance x Reverie Gida by Wasl Raffles x Rafgida) and Lea Gai Azada (Gai Parada+++ / x Lea Rougeyma by Gay-Rouge). Azada was owned by Rocky Rossini, but in the care of Randy Stoneback.

Giborr came to us when he was 16. He had only one recorded foal at the time. My friend Jim Robbins had bought him from the estate of Pat Model, near Albany, NY. Jim, living in Oregon, needed a place to keep him until he could arrange transportation to the west coast. In exchange for board, I could use him at stud. Not a bad deal, except that he wasn't in my barn 24 hours before I realized I couldn't let

him leave. The pedigree was perfect, but even better was his whole demeanor. He radiated TYPE, and his disposition was to die for. I bought him from Jim and never looked back. My only regret is that I couldn't use him more due to my limited space. He was fun to show to visitors. I'd bring him out in front of the barn and he'd strike a pose as he gazed at the mares in the pasture and I'd watch everyone's jaws drop. He wasn't a halter horse, but he didn't know that. His front end was impressive – long, long shapely neck rising out of a massive shoulder, classic head, and a clean throat latch with just the right hook. He had great legs, but his hindquarters were not well muscled, due I believe, to inadequate turnout time as a colt. His foals were outstanding, correct, typy, and had his exemplary disposition.



Giborr

(PHP Brilliance x Reverie Gida)

We kept running into Randy Stoneback at our local shows, and eventually Randy came out to my farm to see my horses as we both had similar bloodlines. So Randy knew what mares I had when, a few years later, he told me about a stallion he had that “should be used”, his words. At that point I was trying to cut back and reduce my numbers. Several encounters with Randy later, my arm firmly twisted, we went down to Pennsylvania to his farm. I took one look at Lea Gai Azada (Gai Parada+++ / x Lea Rougeyma) and forgot about cutting back. He had to come home with us! He was the missing link I hadn’t known I needed. He was 24 when he came to us and sired his last foal at age 30. A grand old gentleman, he died a month after his thirty-third birthday. The foals he sired here were some of the best to carry the Rahar name.

I never had a grand plan, never planned breedings several generations in advance. Good horses just came my way by chance and through the timely influence and generosity of a few Arabian “people”. Lois Selby Perry and Garth Buchanan set the bar for quality to strive for in the horses, and pedigrees with a focus, creating breeding stock of genetic prepotency. Jim Robbins, it seems, has a genius for finding little known horses with great pedigrees, and I thank him for allowing Giborr to stay on my farm. I am indebted to Ev Shea for the “gift” of Gai Primavera, whose daughter has contributed so much to improving my stock. And I am thankful to Rocky Rossini, and especially grateful to Randy Stoneback for allowing me the use of Lea Gai Azada because he “needed to be used”.



Lea Gai Azada
(Gai Parada+++ / x Lea Rougeyma)



Gai Radiant Silk
(Gai Radiant x Gai Shara)



Rahar Giboraraffa (Left)
(Giborr x Comar Azona Raffa)
Rahar Zsa Zsa Giborr (Right)
(Giborr x Scarlett O Rahar)