

LESTER PIGGOTT - RACING LEGEND

My late dad Michael was a fanatical follower of Horse Racing, a devotion born out of his early and formative years of being in the company of many leading owners, trainers and jockeys who knew his own father, JB.

Indeed many famous members of the racing fraternity stayed at his dad's hotel , the "Pheasant" in Retford or enjoyed the generous hospitality offered by my grandfather, JB.

My dad developed his own close contacts in the world of horse racing, worked for several years in the 1960's as a Bookmaker and enjoyed many days - winning and losing - at most, if not all, the race courses in the UK. His expert knowledge of "form" was helped by these close friendships, especially amongst jockeys who he often ferried to meetings and even went on holiday breaks with.

Dads' own racing "dreams" were realised when he achieved a lifetimes ambition to become a horse racing owner & winner in the 1980's.

But from as early as I can remember, his greatest sporting hero was the multi champion jockey and racing legend, Lester Piggott, whose career he followed with unreserved admiration.

When my dad passed away in 2019, I inherited a large collection of signed memorabilia by Lester that had been personally obtained on race courses and even as a visitor to Lester's Newmarket home by MJ.

My mum Mary and dad both attended the race meeting at Nottingham on Tuesday 29th October 1985 to witness Lester's final race meeting before his (first) retirement as a jockey, when he won on 'Full Choke'. According to Mary , dad joined the queue of hundreds of fans who lined up for the great man's signature that day.

I mentioned this to Keith and Ian and they invited me to show you all some of these wonderful items:

DVD " Lester Piggott ; His Classic Story" (2006) - part of a trilogy of the History of Horse Racing - is a tribute to Lester's 40 year domination of flat racing.

"LESTER" - the official Biography by Dick Francis (1986)

"LESTER PIGGOTT " THE PICTORIAL BIOGRAPHY by Julian Wilson

(1985) - possibly signed at Nottingham on 29 10 1985 (?)

"LESTER" - THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF LESTER PIGGOTT (1995)

SIGNED CARDS - ORIGINAL SIGNATURES

PHOTOGRAPHS - After being introduced to Lester by mutual horse racing friends, MJ wrote to Lester enquiring if he could meet him to obtain his signature on photographs of some of his famous 'Derby' victories for which donations to Lester's designated good causes would be forthcoming.

MJ was duly invited to the Newmarket home of Lester & Sally Piggott and the result was several autographed prints and two marvellous days talking & chatting about all things racing and enjoying numerous cups of coffee with his hero, Lester.

Visit 2006 - Photographs and signed cards of Lester's first Derby winner , " Never Say Die" in 1954.

**Visit 2010 - Photographs of Lester's famous 5th Derby Winner ,
" Nijinsky " in 1970.**

PHOTO of Lester and MJ at Lester's home 2010

**Thanks to my dad, I have a great collection of Racing memorabilia
and memories of his loyalty and friendship with one of the
greatest,- if not THE greatest - of sporting icons of all time, the late
Lester Piggott RIP**

Chris Hall

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