

## NEWHAVEN STATION

Native title of Newhaven station was acknowledged in 2010, recognising Ngalia-Warlpiri/Luritja people as the traditional owners.

It's in the Tanami – north-west of Alice Springs in the Northern Territory, and was taken up by Alex Coppock in the late 1950's, being 265,501 hectares - previously not a station. Alex's wife named it Newhaven in 1959.

In 1959 Alex brought horses there from his father's property on the Stuart Highway. He put in bores for water. There were no horses on Newhaven when he took it up.\*

His father's property was Gibeanie on the Stuart Highway. Gilbert and Elizabeth Coppock, his parents, took it up in 1930. The horses there were locally obtained. Over the 1930's and 40's, passing drovers left tired horses there, or old ones, and Alex's father gave them a replacement of one of his young horses. This way new blood came in, NT blood and Qld blood, possibly some WA blood. Alex's father therefore had a good collection of Central Australian genetics with a bit from wider afield, all working cattle horse blood. Alex grew up with horses and built two good sets of horse yards on Gibeanie, the first when he was 14 years old.

After 42 years on Newhaven, Alex sold up. Birds Australia bought the property. They planned to remove all water sources and kill all the horses. Alex went to a lot of trouble to try and find some horses homes, he didn't like to see a good horse going to the meat-works. Some went to a relative in W.A.

Noel Fraser in South Australia got a lot of Newhaven youngsters too young to get any price at the meat-works, so were put in a paddock to grow out. He then sold a few to good homes. People such as Jac and Ben Kindblad travelled over to Noel's in South Australia to buy their Newhaven horses.

Peter Fischer supported saving the Newhavens and registered them as Walers - he also had to fight off those opposed to saving them who ironically professed to be interested in the survival of the Waler breed. He left WHSA Inc over this and started WHOBAA Inc.

Newhaven was sold by Birdlife Australia to the Australian Wildlife Conservancy. They're doing a good job of feral cat eradication and have renamed it Newhaven Sanctuary. Visitors are welcome. Alex has been very helpful as a guide and mentor to many scientists there over the years.

Alex said there were quite a few "pretty horses" - some chestnut and white and some blue and white that he bred. Some of these were saved. He hated when the horse trucks came when he sold, as whether mad or good, all horses went off, and he knew "their heads would be cut off," that is, go to the meat-works. He gave some pretty horses, good natured, to some Aboriginal people who looked after them well.

After he took up Newhaven, he also took up Mount Gurner on its north-west border. The horses there and some at Bililuna came from Newhaven.

Alex said a vast stretch of dry country separated his place from Braitlings and horses didn't cross that area, and there weren't a lot of horses on Braitlings anyway when he got Newhaven. He said most wild horses then were over Tempe Downs way. That was good to know as previously I'd assumed the horses on Braitlings may have drifted there. As there were no horses on Newhaven when Alex bought it, there's no need to go into the genetics of other Tanami horses here.

The horses Alex took there stayed on Newhaven in genetic isolation due to being landlocked by vast dry areas. A wonderful saviour of Central Australian horse genetics of yore. It was a tough environment, so they became wise and hardy. Alex provided water which was gladly welcomed by birds and wildlife in dry times. He very much loved the property.

His brand was CTA which was on all the Newhaven horses which left the station. This brand is called the Newhaven Mexican Hat brand by many who subsequently got his horses. It's a big C on its back - like a horseshoe - with a small A sitting in it, the A has no bar. There is no sign of the T.



The Newhaven horse brand on Pearl, one of Angela Tiede's horses. Newhaven horses were usually branded on the hind quarters but towards the end of cleaning horses off the station some may have been branded in the general area due to haste. Photo kindly supplied by Angela.

Alex also got a chestnut stallion - by a Percheron stallion out of a Thoroughbred mare - and put on Newhaven about 1970. It threw good bone, a good quiet temperament but a rather short neck.

There are no horses or donkeys on Newhaven now. The environmental organisations also cull any camels that come on there by aerial shooting as camels still wander there occasionally. There is a rabbit problem now.

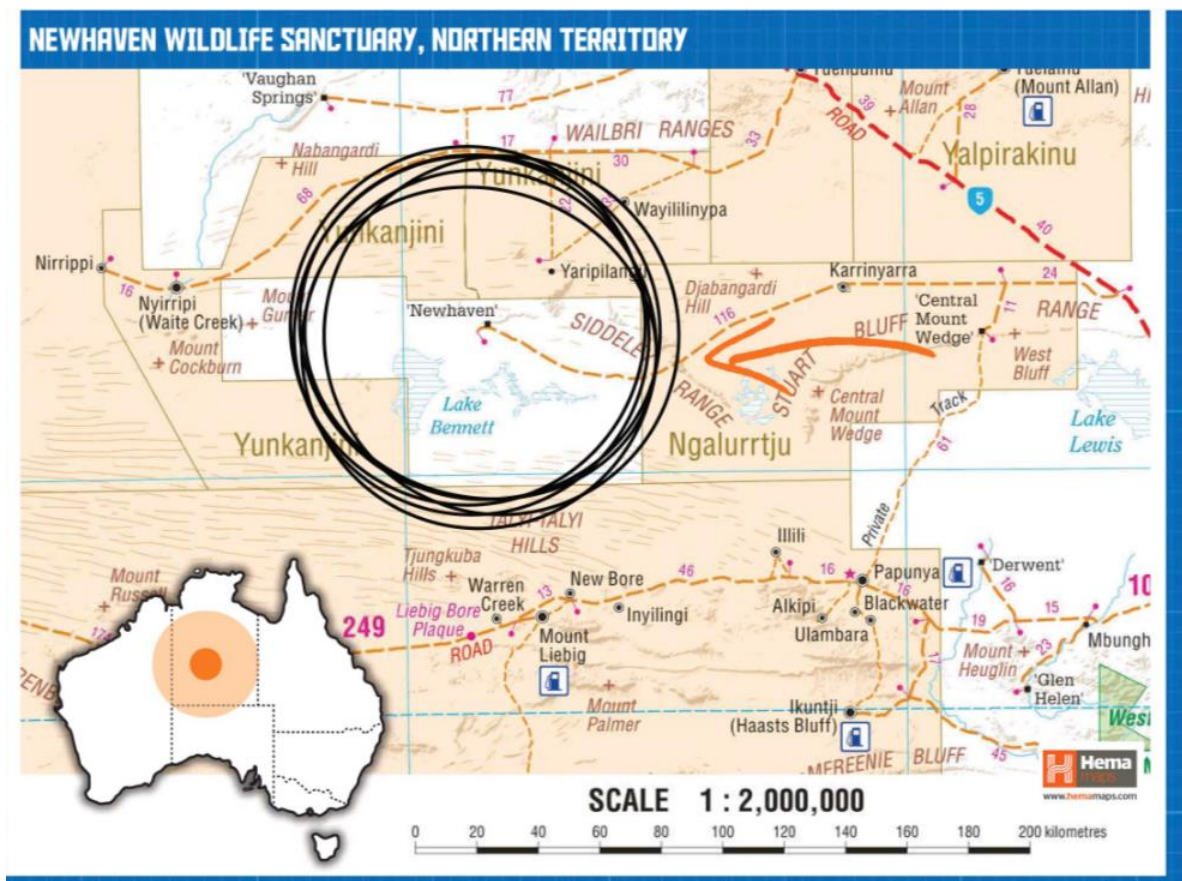
Most of the horses that came off Newhaven are lost to time - dead of old age, and never recorded, or recorded where no-

one can access the information. We'll put all we can find on this website - information most welcome, and corrections.

We also have a Facebook page called Waler Data Base, so information may be relayed there as a post, comment or message. Or through this website on the contact form. Or directly to me Janet Lane (while I'm still alive!) email [walerwild@gmail.com](mailto:walerwild@gmail.com).

\*This and several other details from interview by phone with Alex Coppock of Alice Springs, 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022, with Janet Lane, Llandaff, Tasmania.

Map : from PressReader website. Link: <https://www.pressreader.com/>



Janet Lane 2022