

For Immediate Release
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Contact: Tracy Livingston
707-459-5992
seabiscuit@saber.net

Seabiscuit Stud Barn Dedication Ceremony

Seabiscuit Heritage Foundation Joins Effort to Save Ridgewood Ranch

Willits, California, May 29, 2004 –The Seabiscuit Heritage Foundation (SHF) is pleased to announce the rehabilitation of Seabiscuit's Stud Barn. The Foundation joined several other organizations in an official dedication ceremony on the morning of May 29, 2004 at the beautiful 5,000-acre Ridgewood Ranch in Willits, California. Charles Howard built the barn for Seabiscuit within view of the family home when the great racehorse retired from racing in 1940. This barn is the centerpiece of the ranch and the first to be rehabilitated. Special guests, Col. Michael Howard, great grandson of Seabiscuit owner Charles S. Howard and his mother Barbara Howard, officially re-opened the front doors to the newly-restored barn before an audience of 250 guests. This was the first time that the Howard family had gathered together at the old family home since the 1950's (*Charles S Howard died in 1950*).

"Without the leadership of Willits Rotary President Dale Flanagin and the dedication of Club members, this restoration wouldn't have been possible," according to Tracy Livingston, President of the newly formed Seabiscuit Heritage Foundation. As its Centennial Project, The Rotary Club undertook the challenge of returning the Stud Barn to its former glory. The Rotary Club provided funds and volunteers to complete the project. Livingston acknowledged that the Club's effort has been important in laying the groundwork for historic preservation activities at the Ranch.

Other honored guests who attended the ceremony include:; California Department of Conservation Director Darryl Young, Anthony Veerkamp, Senior Program Officer for the Western Office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Willits Vice Mayor Tami Jorgensen and Dale Flanagin, President of the Willits Rotary Club.

The formation of the Seabiscuit Heritage Foundation was announced and Honorary Board Members were identified. Also, Anthony Veerkamp of the National Trust reported the award of the Trust's Favrot Grant to the Foundation for historic preservation at Ridgewood Ranch. The Foundation, a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization, was formed to promote the cultural legacy of Ridgewood Ranch, the home and final resting place of the legendary racehorse, Seabiscuit through historic preservation, environmental conservation and public education. Without a focused historic preservation and land conservation effort the Ranch is at risk for development. The Seabiscuit Heritage Foundation is collaborating with several organizations to assure the preservation of Ridgewood Ranch's cultural legacy: the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) and California's State Office of Historic Preservation, to save historic buildings in perpetuity; the Mendocino Land Trust on the purchase of conservation easements to protect natural resources and working farmlands; and the Willits Chamber of Commerce on tourism programs. The Seabiscuit Heritage Foundation is honored that the National Trust recently named Ridgewood Ranch as one of **America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places**. Since 1988, the NTHP has identified 160 threatened one-of-a-kind historic treasures. More information about the NTHP can be obtained at <http://www.nationaltrust.org>.

Seabiscuit Heritage Foundation President Livingston announced that the following luminaries have joined, as honorary board members, in the effort to save Ridgewood Ranch:

- **Laura Hillenbrand**, New York Times best selling Author of ***Seabiscuit, An American Legend***
- **Barbara Howard**, Author of ***Letters to Seabiscuit***
- **Col. Michael Howard USMC**, Great Grandson of **Charles S Howard**
- **Janice Howard** Great Grand- Daughter of **Charles S Howard**
- **Jeff Bridges**, Actor, Charles Howard role in ***Seabiscuit***, the motion picture
- **Gary Ross**, Director of the Academy Award nominated film, ***Seabiscuit***
- **Chris McCarron** , Hall of Fame jockey who played the role of Charley Kurtsinger, War Admiral's jockey in the motion picture ***Seabiscuit*** and is currently the Vice President and General Manager of ***Santa Anita Park***
- **Bill Nichols**, Charles Howard's ***former ranch hand at Ridgewood Ranch***, California Race Horse Breeders Association Board of Directors
- **Stephen Ives**, President of Insignia Films and Producer/Director of ***Seabiscuit***, the Emmy Award winning documentary
- **Richard Moe**. President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation
- **Knox Mellon**, Former California State Historic Preservation Officer and current Executive Director of the California Missions Foundation, who ***witnessed Seabiscuit's final race at Santa Anita in 1940***

Individuals interested in contributing to the preservation and conservation of Ridgewood Ranch may send a donation to the Seabiscuit Heritage Foundation on line at <http://www.seabiscuitheritage.com/help.html> or mail checks to:

The Seabiscuit Heritage Foundation
Ridgewood Ranch, 16200 Highway 101
Willits, CA 95460

or to: Mendocino Land Trust, Inc.,
Post Office Box 1094
Mendocino, CA 95460.

For more information please contact Tracy Livingston at 707-459-5992.

- Photos available on request. Contact biscuit@mcn.org