

Drinker of the Wind

the story of

bint

maisa el saghira

■ by **Cynthia Culbertson**

photos by Judith Forbis, Johnny Johnston, Rhita McNair, Potter, J. Keeland, Houston, Jerry Sparagowski, Polly Knoll, Robert Dressler, AM Little, Erwin Escher

The 1950's were an interesting period for the Arabian horse in Egypt. During the early part of the decade the Royal Agricultural Society (RAS) became the Egyptian Agricultural Organization (EAO) and the name of the state stud was changed from Kafr Farouk to El Zahraa. General Tibor Von Szandtner, formerly the head of the renowned Babolna Stud in Hungary, had come to Egypt in 1949. Shortly thereafter he made the monumental decision to bring the stallion Nazeer back from one of the many stallion depots located throughout the country. By the late 1950's the wisdom of this decision was apparent to all who traveled down the palm-lined lanes of the EAO. Many wonderful daughters of this influential stallion were born during this decade, including Abla, Tifla, *Bint Moniet el Nefous, *Bint Nefisaa, *Ansata Bint Mabrouka, *Ansata Bint Burka, and *Bint Mona, to name just a few. One leggy Nazeer daughter, a bright bay foaled on August 22,

1958, was to have a lasting impact in a country far from her birthplace, and eventually around the world. Her name was *Bint Maisa El Saghira, and she was an unforgettable mare to all of those who knew her.

"We saw Bint Maisa El Saghira as a young mare in Egypt," explains Judi Forbis of Ansata Arabian Stud. "She was among the best of the Nazeer daughters, quite tall and an elegant individual, although not as exotic in the head as some of the grey daughters. She had a definite finesse about her and a quiet self-assurance. Little did we realize that someday she and *Ansata Ibn Halima would be the two horses that brought the straight Egyptian into focus in the American show ring. *Bint Maisa El Saghira will always be one of my favorite Nazeer daughters."

The journey from Egypt to America was as unforgettable as



*Bint Maisa El Saghira (Nazeer x Maisa) was an exceptionally leggy mare who took the American show ring by storm - winning fans everywhere for the Egyptian Arabian.



*Bint Maisa El Saghira (Nazeer x Maisa) demonstrates her exceptional movement, trademark tail carriage, and the large nostrils which made her a true "Drinker of the Wind."



*Bint Maisa El Saghira winning one of her many English Pleasure Championships with Rhita McNair aboard. She was the only mare ever to win U.S. Top Ten Halter, Top Ten Park and Top Ten English Pleasure.

***Bint Maisa El Saghira**

- Mansour
- Nazeer
- Bint Samiha
- Shahloul
- Maisa
- Zareefa

*the mare herself. Douglas and Margaret Marshall of Gleannloch Farms, along with Don and Judi Forbis of Ansata, and Richard Pritzlaff of Rancho San Ignacio, were among the first Americans to import Arabians from the EAO. In those days the horses traveled by boat and the journey was long and difficult. Sadly, when the three mares from the first Gleannloch importation arrived in the United States, they tested positive from a vaccination they had been given in Egypt and were forced to return once again by boat. It was only after a second perilous journey that *Bint Maisa El Saghira made it to her final destination in Texas.*

*Ironically, her status as an ambassador for the Egyptian Arabian in America came about because of another tragedy. *Bint Maisa El Saghira had been bred while in Egypt awaiting her return journey to the U.S., and her foal, by El*

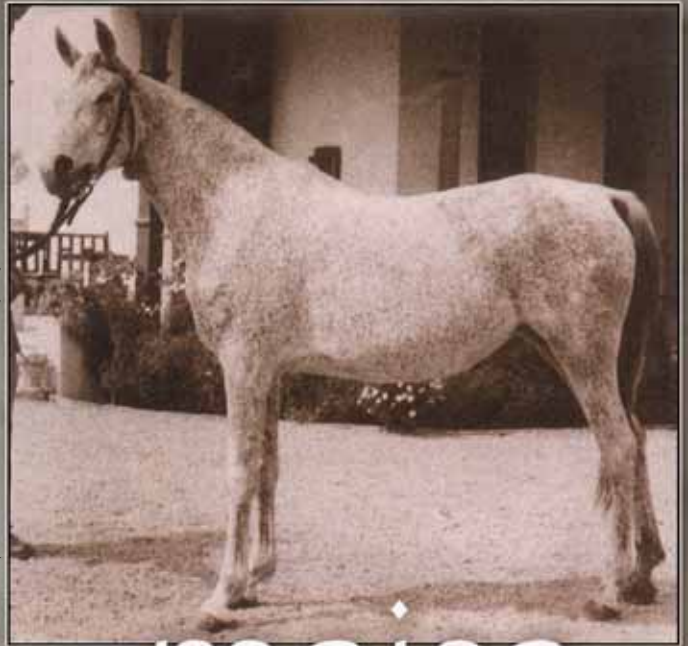
*Sareei was born dead after her arrival. This led to the landmark decision to put her in training, joining the famous Gleannloch show string, capably managed by Tom and Rhita McNair. In many ways, that decision changed the history of the straight Arabian in the United States. *Bint Maisa El Saghira garnered victory after victory in both halter and performance. She was named U.S. Top Ten in Park in 1964 along with the famous Polish import *Bask. In 1965 she was both a U.S. Top Ten Mare at halter and U.S. Top Ten in English Pleasure. That same year she was awarded the Legion of Merit for her show ring accomplishments and she remains the only mare to have earned Top Tens in halter, English Pleasure and Park.*

*More important than the championship ribbons and trophies was the impact *Bint Maisa El Saghira made on those who saw her enter the ring. Most people in the*

bint maisa el saghira

United States were familiar with Egyptian blood primarily from the imports of W.R. Brown and Henry Babson in the 1930's, but they had no idea of the type, elegance and quality of the horses being bred at the EAO. The reaction of Melissa Huprich of Lotus Bloodstock is typical of those who saw this mare in the show ring. "It was an 'Oh my!' experience that I have not forgotten for over forty years," she explains. "I was at the U.S. Nationals, then held in Springfield Illinois, and had the opportunity to see *Bint Maisa El Saghira, not just showing in the ring, but up close in her stall. My vision of the Egyptian Arabian to that point came from the Babson Egyptians, and this mare was not at all what I had come to expect from them. She was a lovely mare, but what really surprised me was the length of leg she had in proportion to her body and size - I loved this new vision of an Egyptian horse!" Indeed, the description "New Egyptian" gained popularity to distinguish these later imports from the older Egyptian bloodlines. Yet in pedigree, *Bint Maisa El Saghira did have a connection with the Babson Egyptians, as she traced in tail female to Durra, a Dahmah Shahwaniah mare of the Bint el Bahrein branch of this strain, as did *Bint Bint Durra, one of the original Babson imports.

As an individual, a characteristic mentioned over and over when it comes to *Bint Maisa El Saghira was her length of leg. "One of my favorite ways of describing *Bint Maisa's conformation is to make reference to her tallness of leg,"



maisa

Maisa, the dam of *Bint Maisa El Saghira was by Shaloul out of Zareefa. She traced in tail female through Durra to the Bint El Bahrein family of the Dahmah Shahwaniah strain

explains Lisa Lacy, who knew both the mare and many of her progeny. "She had good length of forearm and fluidity of movement that made everything she did look effortless. She seemed to pass along that trait, even with the modifications from other bloodlines. *Bint Maisa had a beautiful eye and refined head but not a particularly dished face." Today's fashion calls for more extremity in the features, but when one looked at Bint Maisa, she reflected type and quality, even without the extreme features. Bint Maisa had true balance: her length of neck and body components complemented each other to make her look like a mare with a long neck, but in fact, her length of leg suggested the length of her neck and back. Bint Maisa's successful performance career was no accident: she represented form and function at its finest."

Steve Diamond, who also spent considerable time with *Bint Maisa El Saghira recalls that while she was full of grace and elegance, she also had a strong personality. "When she decided she was not in the mood to do something it was obvious," he explains. "She wasn't afraid of getting into trouble or being reprimanded, yet when she was happy and ready to go, she was a tremendous show mare and nothing could defeat her."



nazeer

The great sire Nazeer (Mansour x Bint Samiha) produced a plethora of great daughters during the 1950's, many of which went on to stellar careers as broodmares. (Forbis Photo)

bint maisa el saghira

*"*Bint Maisa El Saghira and *Ansata Ibn Halima made a wonderful combination and won so many friends for the Egyptian horse on the show circuit," recalls Judi Forbis. As they traveled throughout the U.S. during the show season, the elegant bay mare and classic grey stallion influenced countless breeders to add the blood of the straight Egyptian to their programs. Yet *Bint Maisa el Saghira's impact would go far beyond the show ring as a result of her years as a broodmare. It was in this capacity that she would truly influence Egyptian Arabian breeding around the world.*

Alidaar, another grandson of *Bint Maisa El Saghira, is a beautiful example of the quality stallions which her son Shaikh Al Badi produced. Alidaar, who was exported from the United States to France, is now a senior sire at the renowned Al Rayyan Farm of Qatar.



alidaar



nafairtiti

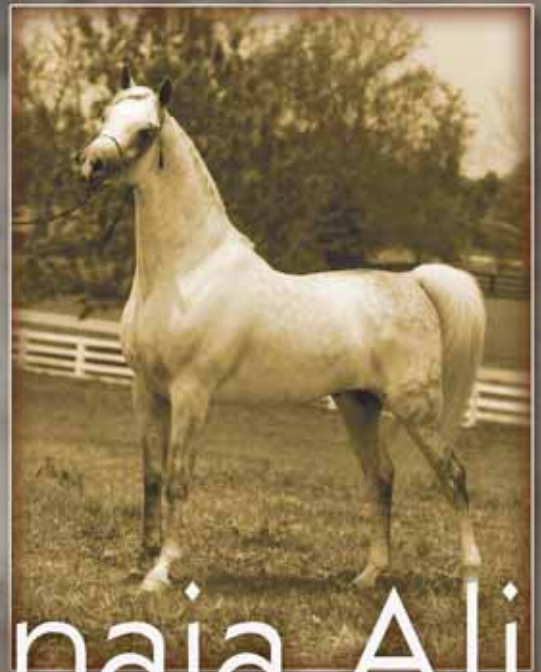
The beautiful Nafairtiti was the last of three daughters of *Bint Maisa El Saghira sired by the legendary *Morafic.

**Bint Maisa El Saghira had nine living foals, eight of which bred on. Her first was a filly, Mashallah, by *Moftakhar. Interestingly, *Bint Maisa El Saghira had just been shown to an English Pleasure Championship a few short weeks before she gave birth to her filly which was born on Christmas Eve. Next came Dahmah Shahwaniah, appropriately sired by her companion on the show circuit, *Ansata Ibn Halima. "I remember her as one of the prettiest fillies I saw at Gleannloch," recalls Judi Forbis. Lisa Lacy also loved this beautiful bay daughter of *Bint Maisa El Saghira. "While Dahmah Shahwaniah had a more compact frame than her dam, she still had a vertical look about her, as did her dam, which was a remarkable and relatively unique trait of both." Dahmah Shahwaniah was a key broodmare for both Gleannloch Farms and Bentwood, who purchased her when she was middle-aged. "When I would walk people through the pastures at Bentwood," Lisa Lacy remembers, "she would walk up and nudge us with her*

bint maisa el saghira

nose, and then follow us when we looked at the other horses. She was just an ideal combination of sweetness and spirit and she passed that along to her foals.”

Dahmah Shahwaniah was an influential broodmare, producing two bay stallions for Gleannloch, Shahir by *Morafic and Almawardy by *Ibn Hafiza, and another colt by *Ibn Hafiza, Ibn Dahmahn, after her arrival at Bentwood. “Both Ibn Dahmahn and Almawardy reflected the combination of their sire and dam,” explains Lisa Lacy, “with a strong croup and hip, excellent legs, strong shoulder, good wither and spring of rib, and breath-taking movement. Ibn Dahmahn was



Ruminaja Ali is perhaps the most influential of the grandsons of *Bint Maisa El Saghira with a total of 450 foals.

Ruminaja Ali

the easiest stallion to ride, handle, breed, or manage in any way.”

While at Bentwood, Dahmah Shahwaniah also produced AK Shah Moniet, by *Ibn Moniet El Nefous, and AK Ishmael by her half-brother Shaikh Al Badi, two beautiful and athletic stallions, both of which were lost at a relatively young age due to injuries. She also gave birth to the exquisite AK Nawaal by The Egyptian Prince, a mare that has carried the banner of the *Bint Maisa El Saghira line to both South America and Europe. AK Nawaal produced several beautiful offspring for Count Zichy-Thyssen of Argentina, and then came to Rosemarie Kolster of Authentic Egyptian Arabians in Germany, where she produced the beautiful champions Nadirah El Shah and



Dahmah Shahwaniah, by *Ansata Ibn Halima out of *Bint Maisa El Saghira, was admired by all who saw her. She is also the dam of the beautiful AK Nawaal by The Egyptian Prince.

dahman shahwaniah

bint maisa el saghira

Authentic Ibn Nawaal and several other lovely foals which have bred on in Europe.

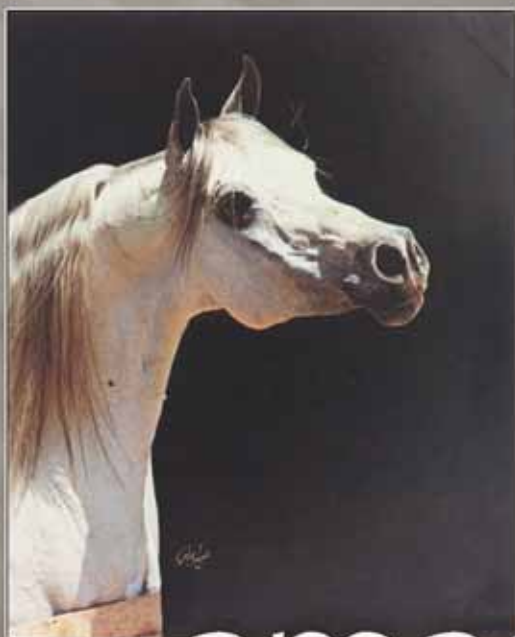
*Most breeders know that type within a line often differs considerably according to color and the foals of *Bint Maisa El Saghira were no exception. She produced five grey offspring, three bays, and a single chestnut, her daughter Dahma Il Ashekwar, sired by the Anter son *Fahidd. This mare produced two beautiful daughters who also bred on, Rahmaa and Morgana, both by *Morafic.*

*In 1968, *Bint Maisa El Saghira foaled the first of her five offspring by the great *Morafic. He was a beautiful colt named Amaal, which means "hope" and many people considered him to be her most beautiful son. Although he was never shown due to an injury as a youngster, Amaal produced over 150 offspring during his tenure as a sire for Imperial Egyptian Stud as well as Gleannloch. In many ways, however, his fame was somewhat eclipsed by the next *Morafic colt out of *Bint Maisa El Saghira, whose name was Shaikh Al Badi. A U.S. National Futurity Reserve Champion as a colt, Shaikh Al Badi was also a Class A Halter Champion and an extremely popular sire. It is through this sire line that *Bint Maisa el Saghira has made the greatest impact around the world, and viewing the numbers associated with Shaikh Al Badi and his popular sons makes it clear that hers is one of the most influential*

dam lines in the straight Egyptian, although, sadly, is relatively rare in the tail female.

*Shaikh Al Badi produced nearly 700 foals and over 4,000 in the second generation. This is largely due to the popularity of three of his sons who were full brothers out of Bint Magidaa: Ruminaja Ali, who sired 450 foals; Ruminaja Bahjat, whose total is 308; and Alidaar, whose foals number currently over 200 and who is still siring foals for Al Rayyan Farm of Qatar. The international influence of *Bint Maisa el Saghira, although found in the damline through AK Nawaal, is primarily through these sons of Shaikh al Badi, whose offspring are found today in almost every country which breeds straight Egyptians.*

*Radia, the next foal from *Bint Maisa El Saghira, is considered to be the daughter most like herself, and was a bold-moving bay mare like her dam. She was retained by Gleannloch Farms throughout her life and while she died relatively young, at age twelve, she produced two stallions and two mares which have bred on in straight Egyptian lines. Rihahna, the grey full sister to Radia, was completely different in type and was an extremely compact, heavier-bodied mare. Rihahna was a Class A Champion mare in the show ring, and like Radia, was owned by Gleannloch Farms her entire life. She produced six foals, but only three, a stallion and two daughters, bred on.*



Amaal (*Morafic x *Bint Maisa El Saghira) was a stallion of classical type. He was considered by many to be the most beautiful son of *Bint Maisa El Saghira, and he was an influential sire for both Gleannloch Farms and Imperial Egyptian Stud.



amaal

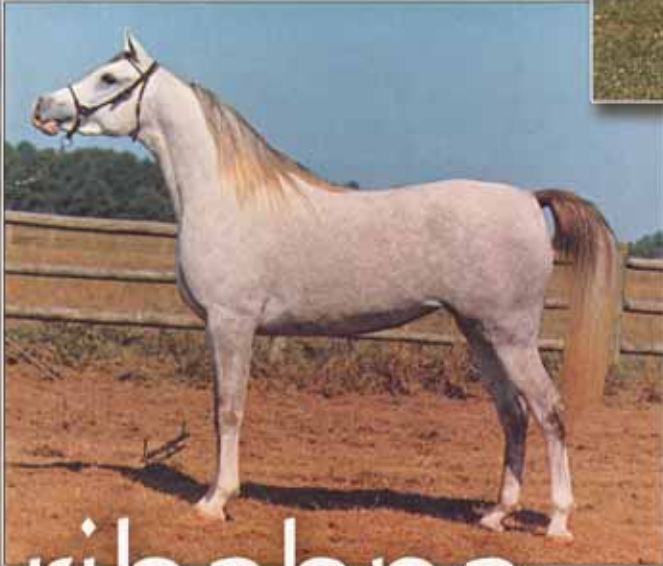
bint maisa el saghira

shaikh al badi

Shaikh Al Badi, by *Morafic was the most famous stallion out of *Bint Maisa El Saghira and was the sire of nearly 700 foals.



Rihahna (*Morafic x *Bint Maisa El Saghira) was a Class Champion at halter for Gleannloch Farms. She produced six foals during her lifetime, but only three have bred on in straight Egyptian bloodlines.



rihahna

**Bint Maisa El Saghira's last daughter by *Morafic was named for an Egyptian queen, Nafairtiti, and was a queen of a mare herself. She produced twelve foals, ten of which have contributed to modern straight Egyptian pedigrees. Nafairtiti spent her final years with Dr. Jody Cruz of Rancho Bulakenyo, who felt quite privileged to have this full sister to Shaikh Al Badi. Nafairtiti produced two beautiful full sisters, Moon Mystique and Kachina Moon by the *Ansata Ibn Halima son El Hilal, and another lovely daughter Hadassa by The Egyptian Prince. "The Nafairtiti family represents one of our most successful female lines," states Dr. Jody Cruz, "and from this family we have retai-*

ned SF Moon Maiden, Moon Storm MH, Kachina MH and Amirah MH. A colt by Jabbaar El Halimaar out of Kachina MH has just sold to Egypt, so this family will be represented there as well."

*The last foal from *Bint Maisa El Saghira came when she was seventeen years old. He was a dark bay colt sired by *Ibn Hafiza named Shamruk. Steve Diamond recalls being there as *Bint Maisa El Saghira gave birth to her final foal. "I watched Shamruk being born, blew into his nostrils, and saw him take his first breath. Ironically, I was also at his side in the year 2000 when Shamruk took his final breath." This compact bay stallion, while he did not have an extreme face, was exceptionally powerful and correct. "He was extremely masculine," recalls Steve Diamond, "with the solid conformation reminiscent of the Babson Durra line, and he produced this solid structure in his foals." Shamruk sired over 140 offspring and the Mantei's of Canada, who owned him most of his life, generally used him on their refined group of heavily Moniet el Nefous bred mares. Shamruk had an extremely successful show career. He was a multiple Class A Champion at halter, a Most Classic winner, a Native Costume winner, and an English Pleasure Champion, demonstrating the versatility and style of his famous dam.*

Just four short months after giving birth to her last foal,

bint maisa el saghira

**Bint Maisa El Saghira passed away, yet her legacy in the world of Arabian horses has given her immortality. Not only did she inspire hundreds of breeders in her show ring days, helping create and sustain an awareness of Egyptian bloodlines, but through her offspring she bequeathed her elegance and motion to thousands of straight Egyptian Arabians around the world. In terms of numbers, there is no doubt that she is one of the most influential Nazeer daughters in modern pedigrees, as from her nine foals came 1,010 offspring in the second generation alone.*

*Fate was kind to *Bint Maisa El Saghira, despite the bad luck that plagued her first journey from Egypt. She had wonderful owners, Doug and Margaret Marshall, and exceptionally talented trainers, Tom and Rhita McNair. In her lifetime, *Bint Maisa El Saghira gained a legion of fans, all of which are united in their memories despite the passing of over forty years – of the beautiful bay Nazeer daughter they simply say: “She was unforgettable!”*

**Bint Maisa El Saghira
Bay Mare foaled August 22, 1958 at El Zahraa in Egypt
Died 26 October 1973 at Gleannloch Farms, Texas, USA*

*Production Record:
Mashallah, Grey Mare by *Moftakhar, Foaled 24
December 1963*

*Dahmah Shahwaniah, Bay Mare by *Ansata Ibn Halima,
Foaled 4 February 1966*

*Dahma II Ashekwar, Chestnut Mare by *Fahidd, Foaled 3
January 1967*

*Amaal, Grey Stallion by *Morafic, Foaled 19 January,
1968*

*Shaikh Al Badi, Grey Stallion by *Morafic, Foaled 17
January 1969*

*Radia, Bay Mare by *Morafic, Foaled 14 January 1970*

*Rihahna, Grey Mare by *Morafic, Foaled 16 February
1971*

*Nafairtiti, Grey Mare by *Morafic, Foaled 01 July 1972*

*Shamruk, Bay Stallion by *Ibn Hafiza, Foaled 18 June
1973*



radia

Radia was one of three *Morafic daughters from *Bint Maisa El Saghira and resembled in dam in many ways, including her superb motion