

# In the Klarion Spotlight



## THIS MONTH: MJR OWNER ROBIN HOLLEYHEAD

**R**OBIN's first horse with MJR was Cheeney Basin, whom he owned jointly with friends Nick Cowes and Paul Proud. The King's Signet gelding did well for him, winning three races before being doubly unlucky at Wolverhampton as a four-year-old. Not only did he miss out on a fourth career win by a short head, but he was also claimed out of

the race by John Akehurst! Despite that keenly-felt setback, Robin has had a number of other forays into ownership, both on his own account and as a member of various partnerships within the yard. A keen cyclist and golfer, Robin has an infectious enthusiasm for racing and particularly enjoys the sport during the midsummer months, and especially at York and Goodwood.

**Date and place of birth:** December 15, 1945, in Leeds.

**How, and when, were you introduced to horseracing?** I worked on a building site as a student and one of my tasks was to take bets to the local bookies. It was in the era of the chalk man and the blower and some bets were successful. So I had a go and I remember my first winner was Maddox Court. I was hooked.

**And to MJR?** My mate Nick Cowes was successful with a bid at a charity auction for a day out with Mark Johnston Racing. I tagged along with him. We had breakfast, watched some of the horses on the gallops and set off to Catterick. Mark had a winner ridden by Dazzler Holland and, as the owners were not around, we celebrated on their behalf. This is the life for me I thought. It's not without irony that Cheeney Basin's first win came at Catterick.

**What is your main occupation?** Consultant forensic scientist.

**If you could choose any other career, what would it be?** Professional musician.

**Where do you live and what took you to that area?** Yorkshire, and when you live in Wharfedale the answer to the second part of the question is obvious.

**What was your most exciting racing moment?** Maid in Rio winning the Brown Jack Stakes last year at Ascot.

**What is the best horse with which you have been associated?** Maid in Rio.



Robin as a young boy

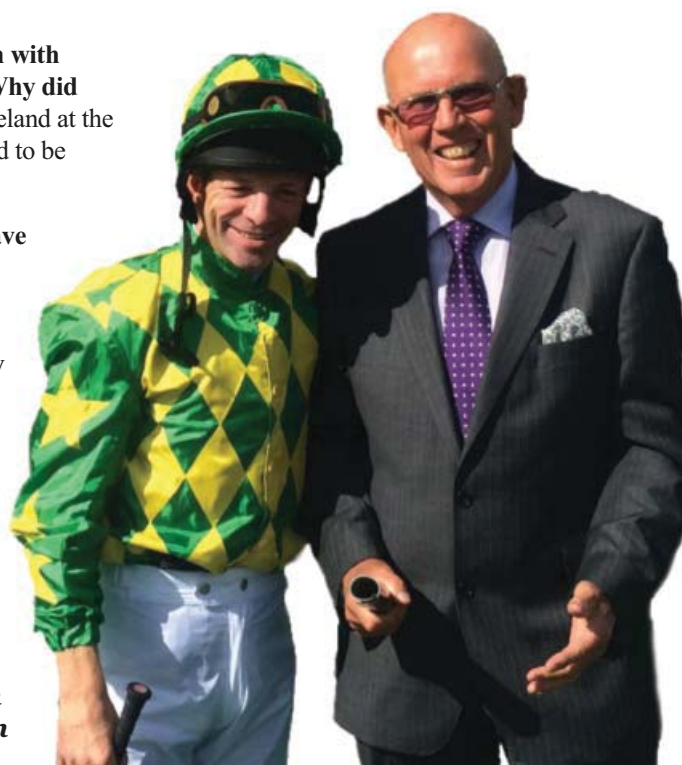
**Your racing colours are green with yellow diamonds and stars. Why did you choose them?** I lived in Ireland at the time and all the winners seemed to be wearing green!

**What is the best name you have given to a horse and why did you choose it?** The best name would be Cheeney Basin - a famous ancient landmark in my home village of Kippax.

**And the name you wish you had thought of?** Johnny B Goode.

**The best race you have won and what it meant to you personally?** The Brown Jack

Robin with Franny Norton



Stakes at Ascot -- it gave me a great feeling and we had lots of fun celebrating.

**Choose one race to have replayed on TV:** Frankel's 2,000 Guineas.

**The race you would most like to win?** The Juddmonte International Stakes at York's Ebor Festival.

**What is your favourite holiday destination?** Gran Canaria.

**Place/s you most want to visit?** Australia

**What is your favourite sport outside racing?** Cycling



Perched above the Tsarte Baranco, Gran Canaria

**Other recreations?** Golf, walking, gardening, and playing guitar in a band.

**Favourite racecourse? Why?** York - There have been good times there; there are presently great days; and, hopefully more good times ahead. Great hospitality, not much of a draw bias and good value for money.

**Least favourite? Why?** There are no bad racecourses but I prefer summer racing on grass to all-weather surfaces in the winter.

**What is the last film you saw and film you would most recommend?** The last film I saw was James Marsh's The Theory of Everything, while the film I would most recommend is David Lean's 1962 classic, Lawrence of Arabia.

**Last book you read and book you would most recommend?** Most recently I read Nora Webster by Colm Toibin. As for recommendation, I love The Man Within, Graham Greene's first novel, and pretty much everything else he has written.

**Favourite TV programme?** Sport.

**What schools did you attend?** Castleford Grammar after Kippax Junior School.

**What were your best, and worst, subjects at school?** Chemistry was my best subject, and art my worst.

**Are you superstitious?** No.

**Lucky number?** Don't have one.

**Two people you would most like to be seated next to at a dinner party?** The footballer Steven Gerrard and the actress Gillian Anderson

**Do you have any pet hates?** Cats and bad manners.

**Favourite actress?** Gillian Anderson.

**Favourite actor?** Harrison Ford.

**Favourite author?** Graham Greene.

**Favourite singer/band?** John Lennon.

**What pets do you have?** No pets but I would love a labrador if I had time to look after it.

**What kind of car do you drive?** BMW 6 series.

**What cd/s do you currently have in your car?** Coldplay, Adele, Abba and Bruce Springsteen.



At Kingsley House in July 2014, Robin (right) about to set off for a ride with friends Franco Fantoni (left) and Simon Stirk

**What station is your radio tuned to?** Radio 2/Radio 5 Live.

**What would be your 6 desert island discs and one possession you would like to have on your island?** Imagine by John Lennon; Bridge Over Troubled Water by Simon and Garfunkel; Johnny B Goode by Chuck Berry; Save The Last Dance for me by the Drifters; Beethoven's Violin Concerto and Vivaldi's Four Seasons. By way of possession, a boat would be nice.

**A restaurant that you would recommend?** The Michelin star-winning Black Swan at Oldstead, Yorkshire.

**What would you choose as your last meal?** Breaded haddock, with new potatoes, broad beans and parsley sauce.

**What is your favourite drink?** Bollinger La Grande Année.

**Who has had the biggest influence on your life?** My parents.

**What was the best advice you were ever given?** Learning is about listening, not talking.

**Tell us something about yourself that we probably don't know:** I have climbed all the mountains over 3000 feet in the UK.

**Do you have any regrets or things you would like to have done differently?** I have no regrets.

**Do you have a racing hero, human or equine?** Lester Piggott and Sea Pigeon.

