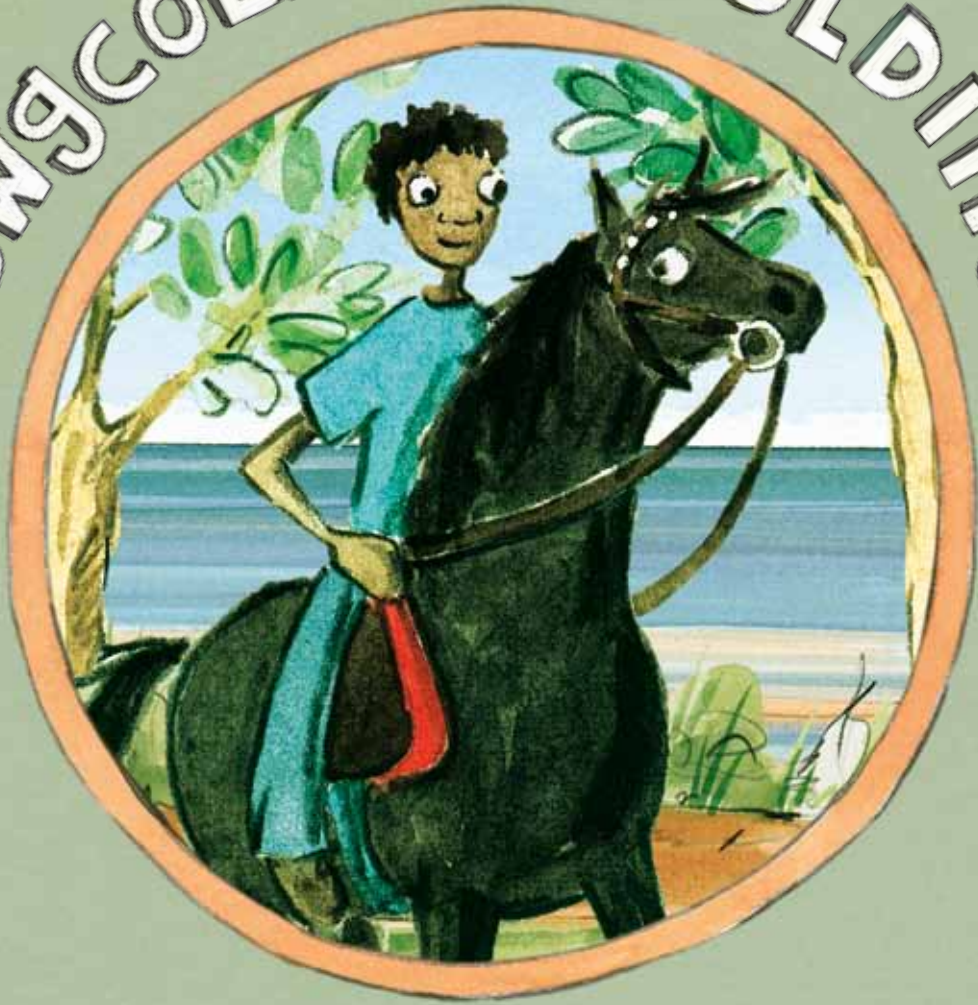


# BWYCOLMAN GELDING



BOOK 3

Illustrated by Tamsin Ainslie



# The BWGCOLMAN Gelding

*Story inspired by Rae-Jon Bunting*



Rae-Jon has spent most of her life as a farmer, livestock dealer, horse breeder and trainer. Now retired, she works harder than ever as a voluntary educator and animal welfare crusader in Indigenous communities. She regularly visits the Palm Island Aboriginal community where she teaches children how to look after their animals and assists the community generally in animal welfare and management. Rae-Jon's original story was the inspiration for this book.

*Foreword by Matt (Matty) Bowen  
North Queensland Cowboys and Australian rugby league player*



G'day kids.

I really liked reading about a kid growing up in an Aboriginal community, as I did, and having horses and all sorts of other animals around. When I was growing up I loved horse riding and having dogs to play with, just like some of the kids in this book.

It's good that the book tells you about the rules of how to look after your animals. Did you know that there are simple rules to follow when you ride a horse or if you own a dog?

As you read this book, you will meet an old fella, Elder Stan, and he will explain some of these rules. All they really mean is—if you ride a horse or if you have an animal, then you have to look after it properly.

It's a bit like me playing football. It wouldn't be a game if there were no rules for me and the North Queensland Cowboys to follow and guide us. So, I want you to follow the rules and look after your horses, dogs and other animals.

I hope you enjoy this book as much as I did.




## Elder Stan explains some NEW WORDS

When you say the word **BWGCOLMAN** it sounds like **BWIKALMAN** or **BOOKALMAN**.

What does it mean?

When people were brought to Palm Island many years ago they came from more than 40 different tribes, from all parts of Queensland. Because of this the 'old people' created the word **Bwgcolman**. It means 'many tribes'.

When you see my hat  above a word turn to pages 22 to 25 where I will explain what the word means.





# BWGCOLMAN Gelding

Christmas came as it always did, but this year was a special one. Bryce was having his 15th birthday.

There was going to be a big party. Relatives were coming from all over. The young girls were going to perform island dances and a music group from the island would play traditional music.

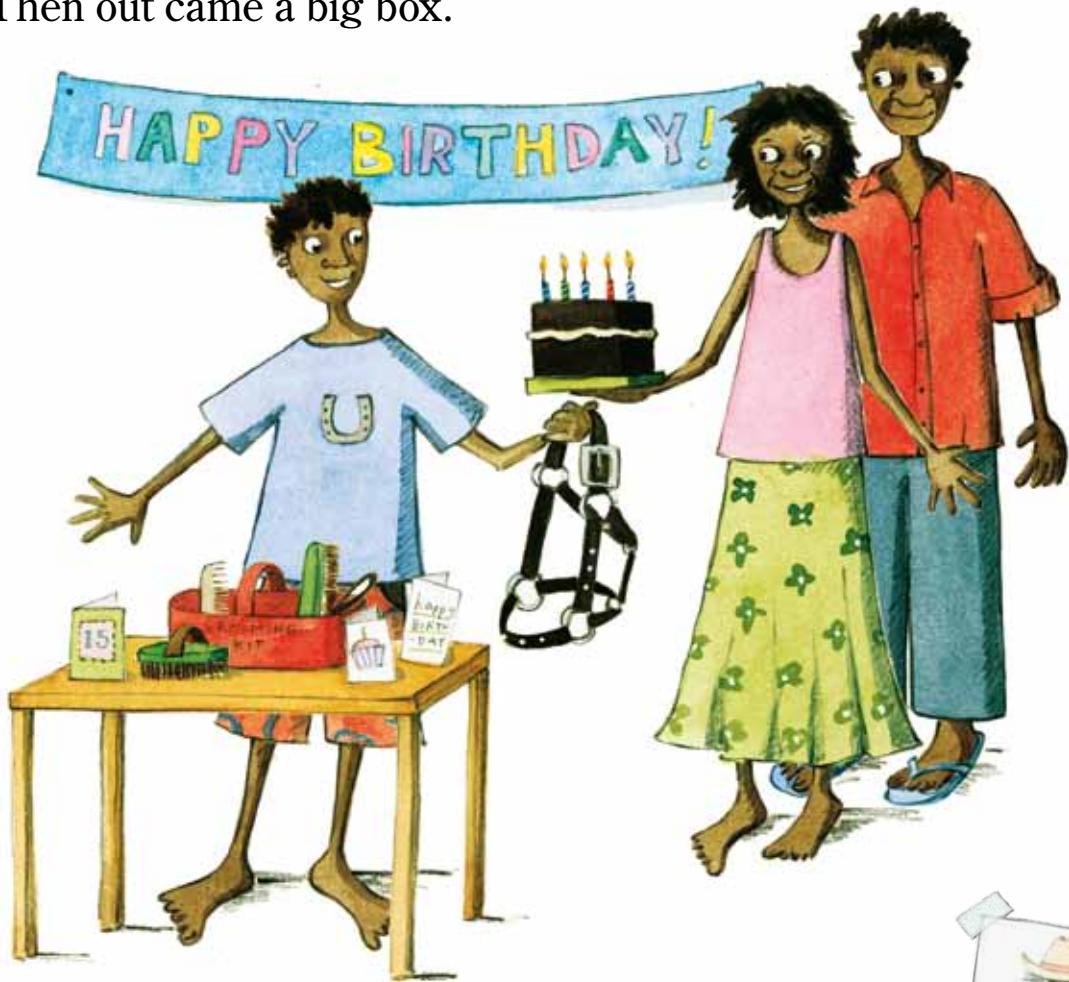
Bryce's parents were so proud of him. He had finished school and had done well.

Bryce was given the strangest presents on the day of the party—at least, that's what some people thought. From his Grandma he got a grooming kit in a lock-up box, and a black leather headstall with silver buckles and studs. Uncle Les gave him a  **lunging** whip and  **reins**.

Auntie Sue gave him a piece of paper and said that he could pick up his present from the wharf tomorrow. It was too heavy for her to bring, she said.

The best surprise of all came when the band stopped playing and Elder Stan took the microphone. He called Bryce up to the bandstand and made a long speech. Bryce was so embarrassed he hardly heard what Stan was saying.

Then out came a big box.



Good Riding Gear is something to  
TREASURE and take PRIDE in.



‘I know you have been working and saving hard,’ Bryce heard Elder Stan say. ‘I hope this is what you really wanted.’

Bryce started to undo the box. It was so dark inside. He put his hand in, took hold of a strap and pulled it out. He couldn’t believe his eyes. It was a black bridle, studded with silver, and with it a silver bit that shone brightly in the sun as he drew it out of the box.

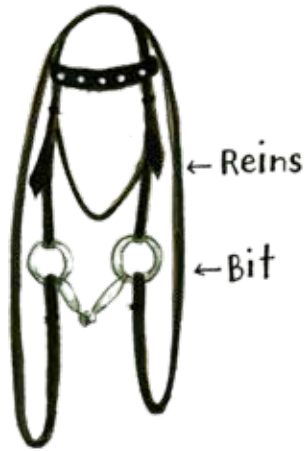
Next, he felt something soft and spongy. He pulled out a red saddle blanket as Stan said, ‘Come on. Your horse will be too old to ride by the time you get your present out of its box!’

Bryce tipped the box over to empty it. Tears came to his eyes. He didn’t know whether to laugh or cry. Fifteen-year-old men don’t cry, after all.

There on the floor was the deadliest black saddle he had ever seen. Stirrups and **girth**—silver studded. Bryce just lost it. He turned to Stan, hugged him, shook his hand and hugged him again. Honestly, he didn’t know what to do.







Bridle



Saddle Blanket



Saddle

← Stirrup



Girth

A bridle, bit, saddle, saddle blanket, reins and stirrups are all **IMPORTANT** horse-riding gear.



The next morning Bryce and his Dad drove to the wharf to find out what he would get with the piece of paper.

He handed the paper to the attendant, who laughed and said, 'Horse feed. You have lots of horse feed. **Pony pellets, oats, corn and lucerne chaff.**'

He loved the present. There was nothing that would stop Bryce from looking after Midnight now.

Bryce and his father arrived home with the ute so loaded up it felt like the front wheels were hardly touching the ground.



They packed all the feed into the laundry so it wouldn't get wet or stolen.

After a quiet family lunch, Mum went to have a nap and Dad settled down to watch the footy. The little kids were playing with the dogs.

All of a sudden there were kids everywhere. The quiet afternoon had turned very noisy. 'Where's Bryce, where's Bryce?' they all called.



It is a BIG job to store enough  
Feed for a horse.



Kids were calling. Dogs were barking. ‘Knock it off,’ called Bryce’s Dad.

‘Elder Stan is here,’ someone called. ‘And he’s got a horse!’

Bryce ran out of the house and almost knocked over his Dad. He couldn’t believe what he saw. Elder Stan stood with a lead rope in his hand, and on the end was the most beautiful black horse anyone had ever seen—Bryce’s gelding, Midnight.

‘Well,’ he said. ‘You gonna ride him boy?’

‘I can’t,’ said Bryce. ‘He’s not broken in.’

‘Oh yes he is,’ said Stan. ‘I broke him in for you while you were doing your exams. He’s as quiet as a kitten. But you will have to keep up his training. He is only fresh.’

Bryce went to jump up on him. ‘Hey,’ said Stan. ‘What about putting a saddle and bridle on him. Seems like you need to be broken in too!’

Stan helped Bryce put the new bridle on Midnight, being careful to fit it properly. Stan then showed Bryce how to fit the saddle blanket and saddle, and made sure the stirrups were the right length for Bryce’s legs. Finally, he showed Bryce how to get on the horse safely.



A horse needs to be **BROKEN IN**  
and have the **RIGHT GEAR** to  
be **SAFE**.



‘Off you go,’ said Elder Stan. ‘But don’t take him out of a trot. He hasn’t learnt enough yet.’

The horse pranced up and down the street. Bryce kept him on the grass. He didn’t want to hurt his hooves. He hadn’t been **shod** yet.

‘He will settle down with practice,’ Stan assured Bryce. ‘But you will have to work him every day.’

Bryce and his gelding looked a picture.



Bryce rode him for a full twenty minutes and then brought him into the yard. He took off the grand saddle and bridle and hosed him down.

‘What are you going to do with him now?’ asked his mother.

‘I’ll leave him here tonight so that he’s safe. I’ll work the rest out tomorrow,’ answered Bryce.

‘You’re not leaving him there at all,’ his Mum said. ‘He will bring the flies and eat my garden.’

‘Okay,’ said Bryce. ‘I’ll work it out tonight then.’



Hard Roads can make even  
a horse's feet SORE.



In the morning, Bryce's parents woke to hear banging and the sound of someone being growled at.

Bryce, Sydney, old Morry and Elder Stan were all hard at work. They were building a yard and a **stable** for Midnight, right up against the back fence. The yard went way back up to the rock face, far past the trees. It was big.

'That looks good,' Bryce's Dad told him. 'But how are you going to keep the other horses out?'





‘Easy,’ said Bryce. ‘I’m going to put up a “shockin” fence along the top all the way around. That will keep him in and everything else out.’

‘What is a “shockin” fence?’ asked his Dad.

‘An electric fence,’ Bryce replied. ‘That will fix them.’



A FENCED yard will help PROTECT a horse from Thieves.



Midnight was happy in his new yard, with his very own stable. He had an old bathtub for water and half a 44 gallon drum for his feed. Bryce rode, brushed and groomed his horse every day.



Often, other kids asked Bryce if they could ride Midnight, but he said no—not unless he led the horse and never without a saddle and bridle. He didn't want his gelding to get a sore back.



Having your own horse means making sure it has FOOD, water, shelter and kindness.



One afternoon, a stranger was watching Bryce ride Midnight. He called out to Bryce and said his name was Fred.

‘Do you want to sell the horse?’ the stranger asked.

‘No,’ answered Bryce straight away. Fred said that he was the new bookkeeper at the council and rode **endurance**. He said that Midnight would be a perfect horse for endurance.

‘How old is he?’ asked Fred.

‘About two and a half,’ said Bryce.

‘He’s no good then,’ said Fred. ‘They have to be at least five years old to do endurance. But if you worked him up he could enter when he’s older. He would be great.’

‘Well what could I do now?’ asked Bryce. ‘He is really smart.’



‘You could teach him how to <sup>hat</sup>**run barrels** or <sup>hat</sup>**sport** him or just ride him for fun. But he’ll be much happier if he’s learning something new all the time.’



Just like kids, horses can keep on Learning new things and having Fun.



Bryce thought to himself that he would ring the horse shop in the city and see what teaching books they had. Thank goodness he had gone to school and could read and write ... and had saved his money. Yep, that's what he would do.

It would be a long time before Midnight could enter an endurance race, but he had lots to learn and lots of fun to have in the meantime.

Bryce and Midnight were both very happy. Bryce knew that it was only a matter of time before he and Midnight became champions.



## ELDER STAN'S NEW WORDS

<b>Word</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Page</b>
Lunging	A way of exercising a horse when she can't be ridden. The horse canters in a circle around the trainer, who holds her with a long strap (a lunge line). This takes a long time to learn.	4
Reins	The two leather straps attached to the bit at one end and held by the rider at the other end. The rider uses the reins to turn or stop the horse, or even to go faster or slower. The reins should be held down low and should not be pulled back too hard as this will hurt the horse's mouth.	4
Girth	The very strong band that goes right under the horse's belly to hold the saddle in place. It should fit snugly behind the front legs. It is important to have a good girth that is fitted properly so it doesn't hurt the horse.	6





# ELDER STAN'S NEW WORDS

<b>Word</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Page</b>
Pony	A small horse no bigger than 14 hands high. (A hand is a special measure used only on horses—one hand is 10 centimetres or 100 millimetres.)	8
Pellets	Specially mixed horse food put through a machine to make small, dry lumps. They use a similar process to make our cornflakes and rice bubbles. Pellets are good because they can be stored for a long time.	8
Pony pellets	Pellets made with less grain than pellets for bigger horses so that ponies don't get too fat or 'agro'.	8
Oats	A grain just like corn or wheat or rice. Oats is the main grain used in horse feed.	8
Corn	Another good grain to feed horses on—especially working horses.	8



# ELDER STAN'S NEW WORDS

<b>Word</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Page</b>
Lucerne	Lucerne is a good plant for horses to eat, especially horses that are ridden or are working. Lucerne makes the best hay.	8
Chaff	Chaff is a dry, grassy feed like lucerne that is chopped up with a cutter and put into bags. It is easy to carry and easy for horses to eat.	8
Shod	When a horse has shoes put on we say the horse is 'shod'. (A funny old word—but that's how it goes).	12
Stable	A house or shed just for a horse. One horse—one stable. This gives the horse protection, especially in bad weather.	14



# ELDER STAN'S NEW WORDS

<b>Word</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Page</b>
Endurance	A special long horse race that the winning horse must finish without getting foot-sore or exhausted. Vets check all of the horses in the race and stop any that are not fit to continue.	18
Run barrels	The horse has to race around three drums (barrels) set out in a triangle in the paddock. This is a horse race usually for girl riders—the fastest horse wins.	19
Sport	A sport horse does many things—jumping, flag and bending races, cowboy polo, and lots of other games. Girl and boy riders can both ride in sport games.	19



# BOOK SERIES

## BOOK 1



### **Bwgcolman Foal**

The story of a boy and his horse

## BOOK 2



### **Bwgcolman Yearling**

Helping a horse to grow up

## BOOK 3



### **Bwgcolman Gelding**

A grown-up horse to look after

## BOOK 4



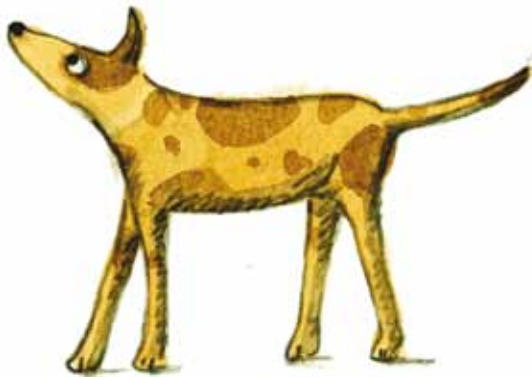
### **Midnight, Bwgcolman Pride**

Lots of horse work to be done

# SPECIAL THANKS ...

To the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries production team:

Jack Shield (coordinator); Matt Radford (production manager);  
Tamsin Ainslie (illustrator); Leanne Bensley, Danielle Jones and  
Robyn Morrison (editors); Kathryn Montafia (graphic designer).



PR08-1498

© The State of Queensland, Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries 2008.

Copyright protects this material. Except as permitted by the *Copyright Act 1968* (Cwlth), reproduction by any means (photocopying, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise), making available online, electronic transmission or other publication of this material is prohibited without the prior written permission of the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, Queensland.

Inquiries should be addressed to:

Intellectual Property and Commercialisation Unit  
Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries  
GPO Box 46  
Brisbane Qld 4001

or

copyright@dpi.qld.gov.au  
Tel: +61 7 3404 6999



