

A proposal for a Bronze Statue

Of the Thoroughbred Minoru

**Presented to the Parks, Recreational and
Cultural Services Committee of the City of
Richmond**

Tuesday, January 25, 2005

By

Jack Lowe

Proposal

To have a bronze statue of the racing thoroughbred Minoru made and placed in Minoru Park.

Presented to Members of the Parks Recreation and Cultural Services Committee of the City of Richmond:

- Councilor - Harold Steeves – Chair
- Councilor - Eveline Halsey Brandt – Vice Chair
- Councilor - Linda Barnes
- Councilor - Sue Halsey Brandt
- Councilor - Bill McNulty
- Councilor - Derek Dang

Presented by:

- Jack Lowe - Member of Richmond Friends of the Archives
 - Past President the Richmond Retired Teacher's Association
 - Member of the General Currie Heritage Committee

Some Local Background

The idea of having a statue and a memorial plaque placed in Minoru Park is not a new one. I understand that there was some discussion of such a proposal soon after the death of Councilor Bob McMath a few years ago. I believe some civic funds may have been set aside for such a project as this.

This proposal has to do with an idea for a Civic Celebration in August of the year 2009. This would celebrate a very special segment in Richmond's early history.

August 21, 2009 will be the 100th Anniversary of the opening of the Minoru Racetrack on this very site. What is proposed is to have a bronze statue of Minoru – one and one half life size - cast along with an appropriate plaque placed in Minoru Park, on a site approved by the City and unveiled on August 21, 2009.

Historical Background

Minoru's story is really an international one. Minoru was born at Tully Stud, a farm in Kildare, Ireland in 1906. Colonel William Hall Walker then owned Tully Stud. At this time Colonel Walker was having a Japanese Garden created on his estate. He hired a gardener from Japan, Tassa Eida, who had two sons, Minoru and Kaiji.

When Colonel Walker's mare, Mother Seigel, gave birth to a colt in 1906 he named him Minoru after Tassa Eida's son, Minoru. In the Japanese language this name means "Enlightened One" or "Light of My Eye".

At this time Edward VII was very involved in thoroughbred racing and was not happy with his stable. Colonel Walker agreed to lease half a dozen thoroughbreds to Edward VII who sent his Racing Manager, Lord 'Markie' Beresford, to Tully Stud to choose the horses. Minoru was among those he chose. In 1909, under the King Edward VII's colors, Minoru won the Epsom Derby.

In Richmond, very close to this time, Samuel Brighthouse and his associates had just completed the building of their racecourse in Richmond and were searching for a name. They decided on the name Minoru Park in honor of King Edward VII's Epsom Derby winner, Minoru. This racecourse kept the name Minoru Park until the year 1920 when a rebuilt park opened under the name Brighthouse Park.

During the late 1920s and well into the 1930s, the "Depression Years", Brighthouse and Lansdowne Parks generated more tax dollars for the Municipality than any other industry

The Cost

An approximate estimate for the statue would be approximately \$150,000 plus the base.

Considerations

If this project is approved some considerations might be:

1. Striking an organizing committee to raise funds and plan a civic event for August 21 2009.

The committee could have representatives from:

- Service Clubs
- Business Associations/Board of Trade
- School Board
- Local Media
- Historical Organizations and The Tall Ships Committee
- BC Thoroughbred Association and Local Horse Clubs

2. The Organizational Committee would need to look at such things as:

- size and cost of the total project
- raising monies through private and corporate donations, government sources etc.
- providing a tax credit for people donating to the project
- tender and commission a sculpture to do the work
- plan the unveiling ceremony, Royal guest?, Eida Family member?, Brighthouse Family member
- seek the co-operation of Hastings Park to sponsor a Minoru Handicap that day with the winner being decorated by the civic guest(s)
- a local Horse Show at Twin Oaks
- civic banners with a racehorse, picture of Minoru, that year in the Brighthouse area
- postcards and other memorabilia for sale at the Museum, Archives, Racetrack etc.

I have done some exploration regarding having the bronze created and there is at least one artisan living in Richmond as well as a company in Cochrane, Alberta who could do this. The Alberta company specializes in horse statues.

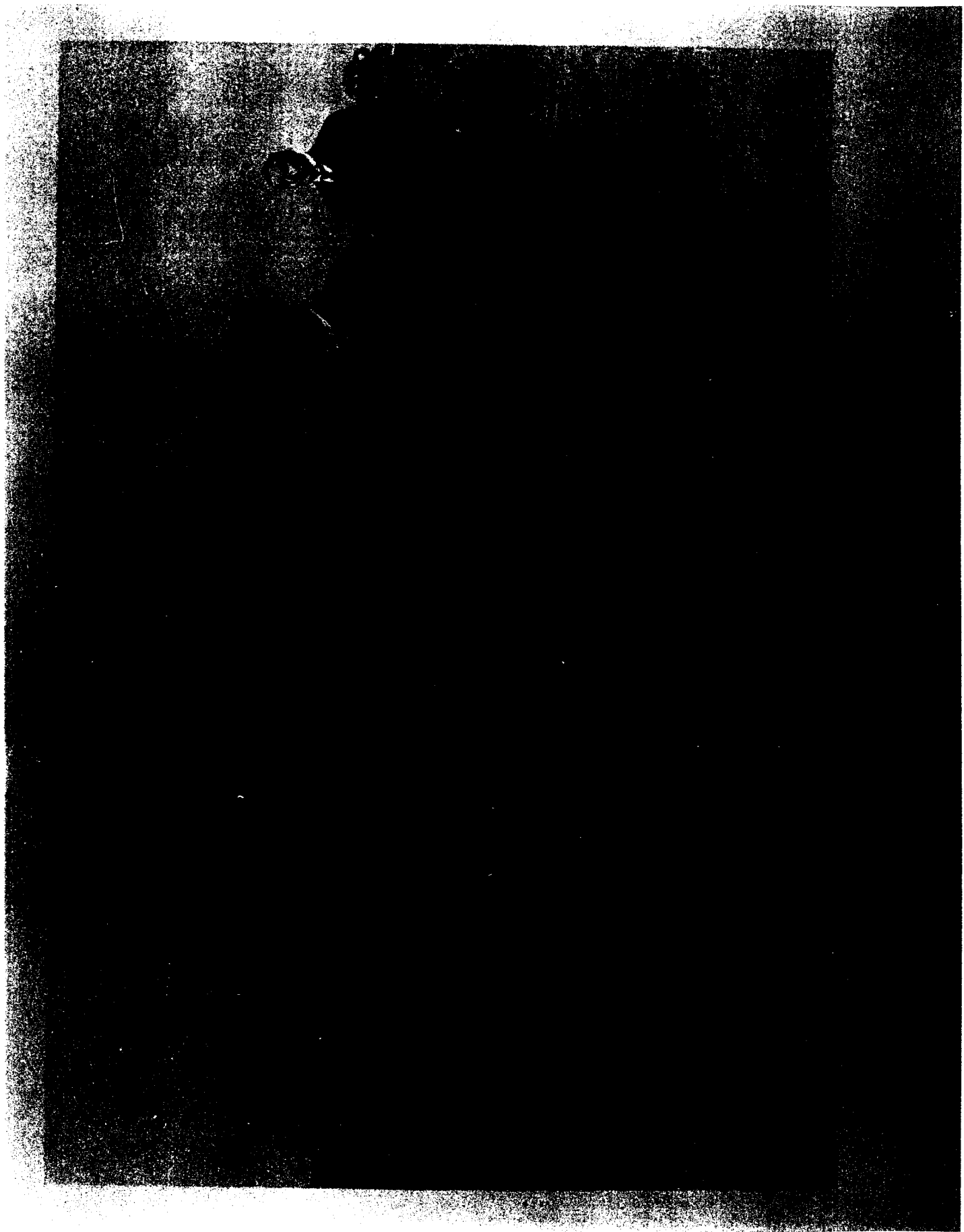
I welcome hearing your thoughts on this idea.

I would be willing to serve in any way possible to make this proposal a reality.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully submitted,







Hentschel-Colonotype, London.

(Mother: Siegel)

"Minoru."

(Cyllene)