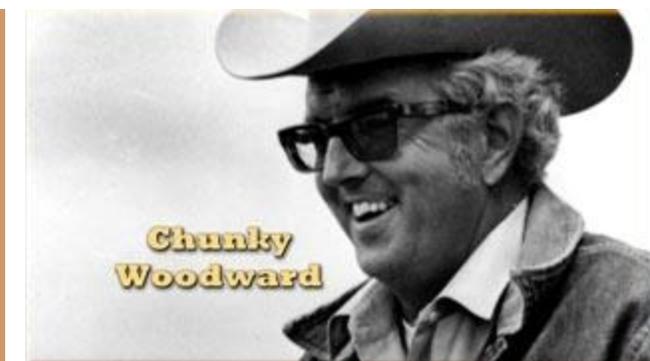


It's no stretch to say that Charles N. "Chunky" Woodward was one of Western Canada's last great renaissance men. A multimillionaire who made his fortune after becoming president of the Woodward's department store chain upon the death of his father, Chunky was also a philanthropist, patron of the arts, loving family man, and the developer of Canada's first shopping mall.



But more than anything Chunky was a horseman ... so infatuated with life in the saddle that he purchased the world famous Douglas Lake Ranch and Cattle Company in central B.C. in 1957 and often spent days riding the range as a working cowboy. It was also at Douglas Lake that he honed the skills that made him and his cutting horse Peppy San world champions in 1967.

Charles Nanby Wynn Woodward was born in Vancouver on March 23, 1924. From the age of three through his teenage years he spent every summer vacation at Alkali Lake Ranch, a sprawling outfit in the heart of the Cariboo that his grandfather had purchased in 1908. At the peak of its operation Alkali Lake had more than 4,000 head of cattle and horses and employed dozens of working cowboys ... and right from the start young Chunky was enthralled with the lifestyle. He was spellbound by the roping and branding, watched the beef drives, round-up trips and night herding, and listened intently as the cowboys spun tall tales around the campfire. It was an enchanting life for the quiet kid with a flair for riding, but with the onset of the Second World War those ranch holidays became less frequent. After graduating from high school Chunky enrolled at the University of British Columbia, but abruptly quit during his sophomore year to join the Canadian Army. Shortly thereafter he packed his kit and served overseas with the 12th Manitoba Dragoons.

After securing his discharge at the end of the war Woodward served as manager of the fledgling Park Royal shopping center in West Vancouver, and after becoming president of the company in 1956 he spearheaded the purchase of some former Canadian Pacific Railway property on the south side of the city that became the \$10 million Oakridge Center. His "apprenticeship" at Park Royal, which was the pioneer prototype for all future malls in Canada, had convinced Woodward that his company was on the cutting edge of an exciting new concept in merchandising. As author Douglas Harker described the scene in his 1975 book *The Woodwards*: "Our shopping centers are for families ... for informal shopping," Chunky told the board of directors. "When folks go downtown to shop they get all dressed up and it's a planned activity. But in our shopping centers they can go in slacks, or without a coat. Our centers are for convenience shopping. Everyone is on wheels these days, and once a person is in a car an extra mile or two doesn't bother them. It's being sure they get parking that matters ..."

With his new shopping center solidifying the company's standing as one of the nation's leading department store chains, Chunky was able to turn his attention back to his first love – horses. In 1957 Col. Victor Spencer and Frank Ross sold Douglas Lake to Woodward and John West. West's ownership continued until his death in 1968, at which time Woodward became the sole owner. During those years the ranch hosted numerous famous guests and government dignitaries. In 1959 Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip paid a visit

and they later invited the Canadian Cutting Horse Association team to attend the Royal Windsor Horse Show, where Chunky presented them with a Douglas Lake bred quarter horse which became a polo mount for Prince Charles.

No doubt recalling those happy summers on his grandfather's ranch, Woodward started the horse program at Douglas Lake, consisting of 100 head of registered horses and an additional 200 head of saddle horses used for the regular ranch work. Peppy San, whom Chunky purchased in Texas in 1963, went on to become a world famous quarter horse stud, placing his pedigree in many of the horses still used at the ranch today. Though still owned by the Douglas Lake Cattle Co., Peppy San returned to Texas in 1976 to stand at stud, and he remained there until his death in 1989 at the age of 30. At the height of his breeding career Peppy San commanded stud fees of up to \$20,000.

Peppy San competed in the first National Cutting Horse Association Futurity in 1962, where he won the preliminary (defeating 17 others), and placed second in the finals. That same year he achieved his open American Quarter Horse Association performance register of merit in cutting. In 1963 he was named AQHA champion. After being turned out with Douglas Lake broodmares for a couple of years Peppy San returned to competition in 1965, attaining his AQHA superior in cutting with 181 points and going on to be crowned open NCHA world champion two years later. After being put to stud he sired a total of 493 registered foals from 22 foal crops, and more than 40 percent went on to become AQHA performers. In a 1986 interview with the Vancouver Sun, Woodward described Peppy San's progeny as "perfect cow horses ... they come into the world just wanting to work a cow. It's just like a good bird dog; he's going to point a bird or something because that's his nature. That's what these horses want to do; they just want to work cattle."

Chunky Woodward died in Vancouver on April 27, 1990, and the Douglas Lake Ranch was left to his four children. It remained in the Woodward family until 1998, when it was sold to Bernard Ebbers, a Canadian-born resident of Mississippi.



Chunky at Mill Woods Mall in South East Edmonton. Pictures taken August 2013