

By BILL BROWNE

A BOOK from the pen of Fermoy author Jessica Owers is set to shed new light on one of Australia's forgotten sporting legends.

Anyone with even a passing interest in the world of horse racing will be familiar with the name Phar Lap.

For six glorious years up until his death in 1932, Phar Lap was the most famous racehorse in the world winning a Melbourne Cup, two Cox Plates and 19 other top-flight races.

Prior to the mysterious illness that claimed his life, Phar Lap won the Agua Caliente Handicap in Mexico in record time, making him the third highest stakes-winner in the world.

Following his death people said there would never be another horse quite like him, yet within months there came a horse so good that people were asking "is this the next Phar Lap?"

By 1934 Peter Pan had won two Melbourne Cups (only the second horse in history to do so) and could win on any track in Australia over distances from seven furlongs to two miles. Such was his dominance the Sydney Sportsman called him a 'Super Horse' while the Sporting Globe declared "another Phar Lap takes the stage".

One might have believed that his place in the pantheon of horse racing legends was secure, but over the

Fermoy author aiming to restore the Peter Pan legend

years Peter Pan has been forgotten, something that Jessica intends to remedy through her fascinating new book, *Peter Pan: The Forgotten Story of Phar Lap's Successor*.

A former student at the Loreto Secondary School in Fermoy, Australian-born Jessica studied journalism in Scotland before moving back to Australia to live in the mid 1980s. Since then she has enjoyed a successful career as a freelance journalist, with a special interest in the equestrian world.

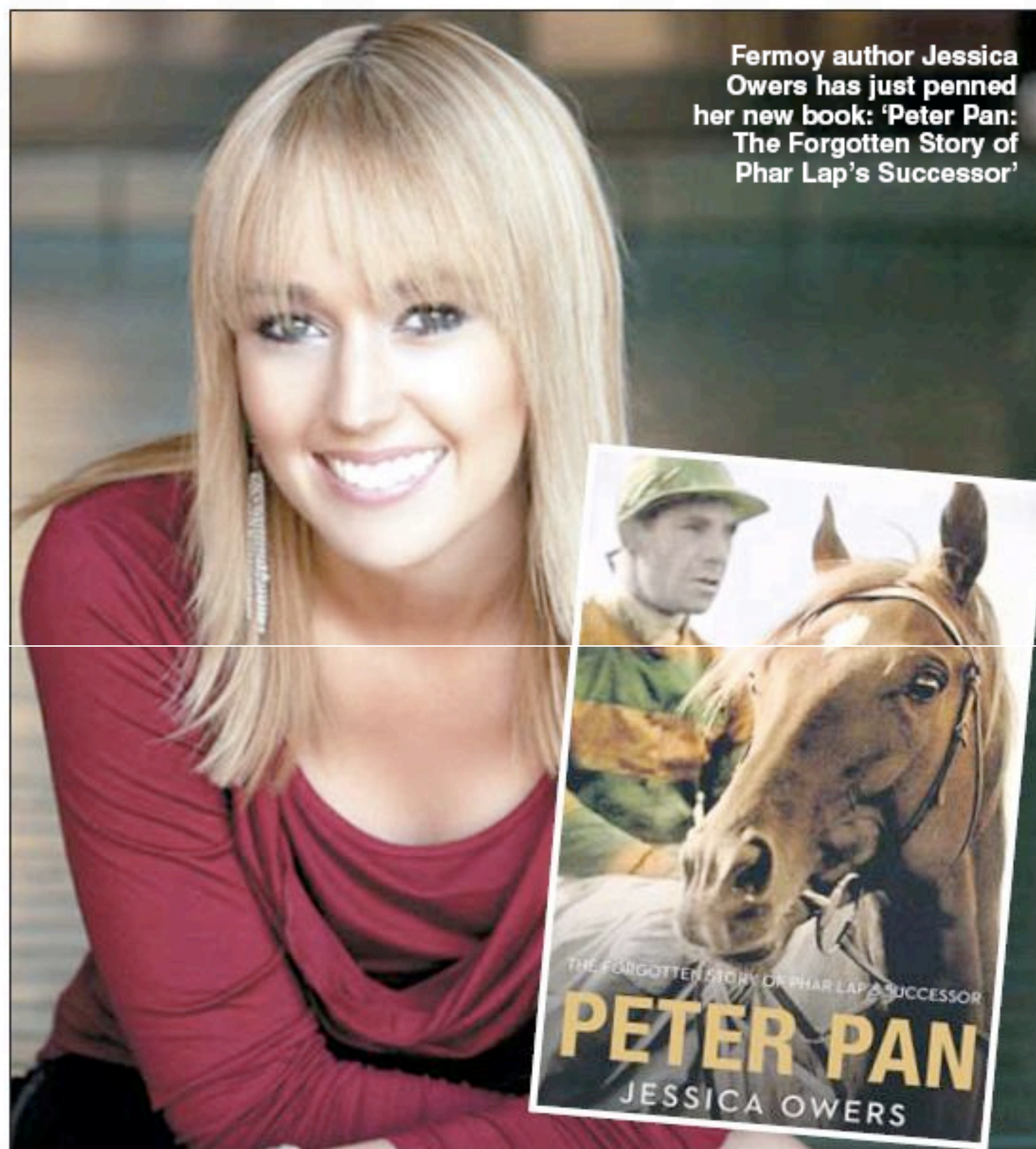
She began writing about Peter Pan five years ago and found the subject so fascinating, it developed into a 464-page book that became a true labour of love.

"Initially, it was Peter's beauty that got me. His blonde hair made him a very unusual thoroughbred," said Jessica.

"But the more I looked into him the more I couldn't believe it. Australia had forgotten this horse that had been a giant of the turf."

The book is not only an amazing read for the racing fan, it also offers a fascinating insight into Australia during the days of the Great Depression.

"For me writing the book has been a long



Fermoy author Jessica Owers has just penned her new book: 'Peter Pan: The Forgotten Story of Phar Lap's Successor'

and delightful road. Although I'm sure that my parents, Jim and Kate who live in Corrin, got sick of hearing about it down the

phone," laughed Jessica. "Over the years Peter Pan's legend has faded. It is my hope that it will be restored through this book," she added.

Published by Random House in Australia, the book will be available from November 1 on Amazon as both a bound copy and an ebook.