



ANDERSON BEAN BOOTS

BOOTS WITH A SOUL

Handmade in Texas, USA

"THOSE WHO LOVE THEIR AB BOOTS LIVE LIFE THE SAME WAY WE MAKE OUR BOOTS: ROOTED IN TEXAS TRADITION AND STYLE. THEY RIDE, WORK, TAILGATE, TWO-STEP, COMPETE AND DO EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN IN THESE BOOTS."

BY SIMONA DIALE

Anderson Bean was created in 1987 by the owners of Rios of Mercedes boots in order to offer a high quality, all-leather cowboy boot that would fall in the

medium price range. Their independent label has grown for almost 30 years to include one-of-a-kind custom boots, plus a full line of stock boots for men,

women, kids and babies. Boots for a full lifestyle, and boots built upon the knowledge and expertise of over 150 years of exceptional boot making.



Trainor Evans and Ryan Vaughan

"I come from six generations of cattle ranchers," says Evans, co-owner of Anderson Bean and Rios of Mercedes. "I was raised in West Texas and Eastern New Mexico. I graduated from school and had a chance to get into the boot business in 1973. My step dad was running Rios of Mercedes and we started in New Mexico doing the fancy stitch on the top of the boots. By 1975 we were doing so well we were able to buy Rios of Mercedes and we kept on building the company all through the 70s. In the 80s we realized that the Rios of Mercedes-end of the market was not very big — it was top-end — and if we wanted to continue to grow, we had to do something else. We know quality and we know how to make boots — our way — and that is the reason that we take young kids and teach them. There is a certain look in our boots that you will not see in any other boot."

Evans says that when they decided to go into the AB business, they knew that they could make a better boot than the rest of the bootmakers in that specific market. "In 1988 we started when the boot business was having a bad shake up," he said. "Cowboy boots got to be very popular and a lot of bootmakers were spending every dime that they had

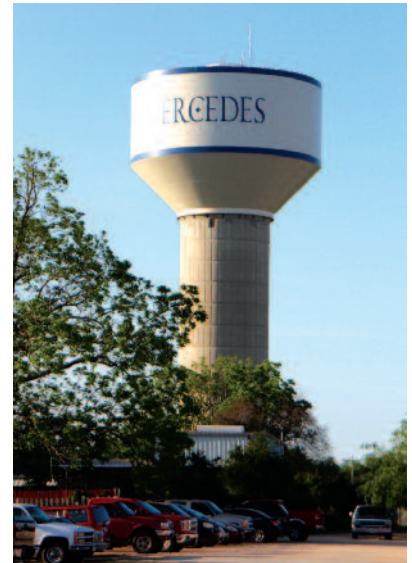
made on themselves and they were either broke or sold out. We had saved every nickel that we'd ever made and when things started to come apart, we had the money to pay inventory. We did it because we were careful, not because we were brilliant, and we had that advantage. This is not an easy business. It takes a lot of cash and foresight and you need to spend less than what you make. When we started AB, we wanted to make a boot that stood out beyond its peers. A lot of companies were moving overseas

and we thought we could make a Made in Texas boot for a cowboy that would be able to use it — and have it repaired if needed. We also got into the business by offering private labels; for example, we went to Teners, in OKC, and told them that we'd put their label on the boots and they jumped all over it. Pretty soon Anderson Bean had a label.

"One of the things that really got us going, 13 years ago, was NRHA who started endorsing us and we started promoting our product through the association. The people that know good boots spend most of their time in the saddle, with their boots in the stirrup. It turned into a really good deal for us; it was a good fit, and a good partnership."

In 2000, Ryan Vaughan, Evan's son-in-law, came in the business. "It's the best thing that ever happened to me," said Evan. "Ryan took the business to new levels. He put together a good marketing and production team that really is way above anything that I had ever figured. We've been blessed to have been put out there in front of the crowd and have been very well treated in the market."

Evans has been married to his wife, Karen, for the last 40 years and they have two children; Jody — who is married to Ryan — and Clayton,



© Photography by Simona Diale

Anderson Bean Philosophy

Boots that last a lifetime need the care and precision that can only be done the old-fashioned way — by hand. Anderson Bean's approach to boots is simple and this is their motto: "We value the tradition of Texas bootmaking, and we build our boots honestly — without any shortcuts or factory tricks."

Every Anderson Bean boot is built by hand — "the right way," as the company likes to think of it. All boots are in leather for the best in comfort and style, as the Texas based company is committed to making a great-fitting boot. There are a couple of non-leather components such as a steel shank for arch support and wooden pegs in the arch area. These are tried and true methods which aid arch support and hold the boot together.

Anderson Bean holds strong to their tradition of quality with great attention to detail — from the inside structure to the outside style — on every boot. Contrary to what other boot companies today seem to think, according to AB, that what you can't see does matter. That's why they are one of the last bootmakers to use channeled welt construction, which recesses the stitching into a groove in the leather insole, resulting in a distinctive low profile.

Anderson Bean boots are handcrafted in Mercedes, Texas, USA in the Rio Grande Valley. With quality USA-made products being few and far between these days, their pride is Texas-sized because they are one of the few boot companies that build boots by hand, all by themselves!

RERAFTING YOUR 'OLD' BOOTS**BOOTS WEAR OUT, BUT YOU DON'T WANT TO THROW THEM OUT!**

Do you love your Anderson Bean boots and want them restored? It can be done! Simply visit www.andersonbean.com/recrafting

Insoles and relasting: Complete recrafting including new insoles and outsoles, heels, welts, spring steel shanks, and leather reconditioning. This option applies if you have worn a hole through the sole of the boot.

Soles and heels recraft: Complete recrafting including new outsoles, heels, welts, spring steel shanks, and leather reconditioning.

Add crepe to leather sole: New crepe outsoles and heels (original welts and midsoles will remain). Leather must be in like-new or good condition. Or, request new heel bases, rubber heel caps, pulls, boot stretching, etc.

“At our factory in Mercedes, each skilled craftsman has a unique role in the process, just as each AB boot design has its own unique style and vibe. It takes many hands to make a pair of boots at Anderson Bean. But it's not just that our boots are handmade – it's about the hands that make them. We get that, which is why we have such a strong family vibe within our company.”



160 years of experience shows that people come first. Our team is a family, and families stick together over time.

leather heel. Then, to ensure the boot will hold up to riding in the stirrup, a steel shank is added to support the arch. The boot's heel is built with a longer base so that the base will hit the edge of the stirrup before the rider's instep runs into the stirrup, ensuring the foot does not slide through. The heel sticks out behind the back of the boot, featuring what is referred to as a 'spur ledge' where a rider's spur can rest. This aids in keeping spurs from sliding down the heel when cueing the horse. On the opposite end of the boot is the toe, which fashion dictates be square in today's reining horse industry.

A military-type synthetic box toe is used so that if the horse steps on the rider's toe, you can reach in and bump the toe back out and it won't damage the boot. Most boots are made with a solid box toe that can crush.

“Our goal is to have a boot that can go back to work,” says Evans. To top off the foot, Anderson Bean sews on a double vamp, adding thickness to pad a rider's foot from the spur strapped

who is involved in the software part of the business.

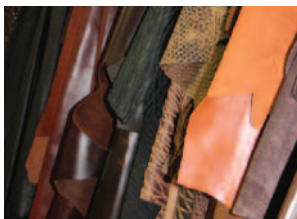
“One of the things that I have learnt from Trainor is that there are a lot of intricacies involved with boot making,” said Vaughan. “I wasn't raised on a ranch but was exposed to showing cattle in high school. We raised heifers, and I went through ag school and that's where I met my future wife, Jody, who I've been married to for the past 18 years. I joined Anderson Bean in 1999 and jumped straight into the business and, after spending a year in understanding the process, Trainor told me 'lay the production line out.' I didn't really know what I needed to do but Trainor's management technique is

where I thrived. It was fun, I wanted to be productive, and I was fortunate to collaborate with a great group of workers who embraced me and taught me how production worked. We want to be able to say that we are the best in that market and what we do is extremely hard and challenging but we are creating, building and employing. Building the very best boot we can at a specific price point is what my challenge was, and is. Identifying a solid niche is one of our objectives and the reining world is a huge niche for Anderson Bean.”

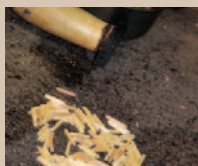
How are AB boots made?

Anderson Bean Boots are hand-lasted with a leather insole and a

Attention to detail is important.



With these traditional types of soles, lemon wood pegs are used to secure the spring steel shank in place in the arch of the foot for support. This process is more than tradition, it is pure functionality, and Anderson Bean craftsmen have been using it for over 150 years. The pegs will actually expand and contract with the leather as it changes temperature and moisture content so that they do not fall out or rust like a nail.



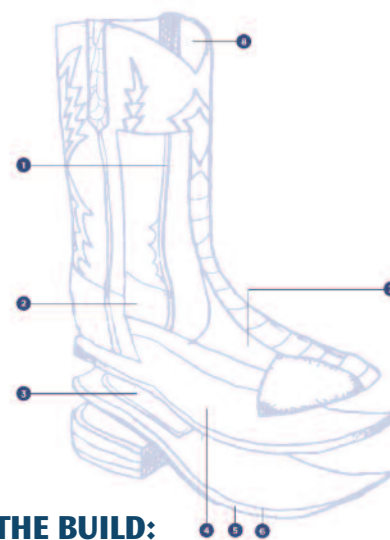
across the arch. This also helps keep the spur strap from excessively wearing the vamp. For safety, the throat, or area where the foot slides into the boot, is soft enough to allow a rider to slide out if hung up. All of this is put together with stitching and wooden pegs, thus ensuring no nails can tear socks or break through leather.

Evans said that while the company's tried and true method of pegging and sealing soles works for most riders, those working in and out of the fine-grain footing in reining arenas brought a small problem to his attention. "We found that the fine arena dirt was getting between the arch and the sole in that area where the wooden sole pegs are located," he says. "Number one, we started going to a full welt with the boots, changed some glues and adhesives, and learned a lot from dealing with a group of people that was rough on our product. Instead of complaining about the customer, we worked together to create a boot that stood up to the daily wear and tear of a reiner."

NRHA membership was also instrumental in the company developing new sole styles that did not wear quickly. "A leather sole is by

far the best you can put on a cowboy boot, but we found that when you repeatedly get your boots wet washing horses and cleaning stalls, the sole gives up the tannins you put into it. The leather soles did not last as long or wear as well. Based on that feedback, we started working with reiners to come up with some new soles," said Evans. "The style that suits most NRHA members is a hybrid sole. The traditional leather sole is in place, but natural rubber covers the ball of the toe and heel. This small tweak enhanced the already popular product and ensured those purchasing Anderson Bean's got their money's worth.

"The professionals are the style setters; they want a careful, specific look, and they give us clear guidance," Evans says. "Our retailers will do a small run of boots, six or eight pairs, and when they see people like it, make a second order with maybe a new width for new customers. Typically, it is reiners that are buying the new boots and weighing in on colors. In addition to being a great platform to show the Western wear people our product, the association is a good testing and proving ground for new styles." ♦



THE BUILD:

1. LEATHER SIDE WELT & PIPING
• prevents chaffing and cracking

2. SOLE LEATHER HEEL COUNTER
• stabilizes the wearer's heel
• enhances fit
• helps prevent run-over

3. SPRING STEEL SHANK
(held in place with lemonwood pegs)
• gives maximum arch support for walking or riding

4. GENUINE BARK-TANNED LEATHER INSOLE
• maximizes removal of moisture created by the foot
• creates a natural foot bed

5. GENUINE BARK-TANNED LEATHER OUTSOLE
• wears long without excess weight

6. LEATHER SOLE WELT
(sewn into a channel in the insole)
• creates a low profile boot which has no fillers
• easily repairable

7. DOUBLE HAND LASTED VAMP
• retains its shape
• prevents excessive stretching

8. PREMIUM COWHIDE LINING IN VAMP AND TOP
• enhances wear
• enhances comfort
• moisture removal

