

Christine Monteith - OMHC Hall Of Fame Nominee



It is an honour to present to you tonight, our inductee for the OMHC Hall Of Fame; Mrs. Christine Monteith!

When I took over as chairperson for the Hall Of Fame committee replacing Chris as the original chairperson, I thought this was our chance to honour Chris without her knowing, the committee agreed and through secret emails and a couple of 'white lies' we pulled it off. I want to thank Chris' brother David Brent and sister, Gloria Cote for their aid in this surprise too.

Chris's first horse, was a Percheron named Darky, our Grandfather gave Darky to Chris when she was about 4 years old. She rode miles and miles on this horse in the pasture across the road from the farm. She bridled the horse herself (kind of), no saddle, rope for lines and offered to take people for rides. Every day she would climb on this quiet, quiet horse, and ride full tilt around the field.

Many of us that met Chris in the 1970's & '80's will remember her beautiful grey Saddlebred, Danska with whom Chris won many ribbons. She made a lovely Saddle Seat team, I clearly remember them at the CNE.

Gloria remembers when Chris bought her first Morgan. "I cannot remember where she and I were but on the way home we stopped at a farm near Belleville. Chris had heard that they had a Morgan stallion for sale. We walked out in the field and he was running with a bunch of mares. Apparently the man had race horses as he used to take Dartmoor Tor to Belleville raceway and exercise him on the track. He could trot as fast as some of the trotters and if I remember correctly he trained him down to 2:17 or maybe even 2:15 and that was on a half mile track."

She bought Tor, who was a striking chestnut stallion with chrome and that was the start of her love for Morgans. Tor was frequently harnessed to an antique sulky and showed in 'Heritage' type classes, he looked every bit a part of the original Morgan horse trotting down the road. He was royally bred with Merry Knox and Orcland Leader as his grandsires.

Sunfox Flicka, a beautiful dark chestnut mare came next and Chris used to ride her mainly Western. She had a lovely slow jog and was the perfect western horse. Chris and Flicka were very competitive as a western team and always a threat to any others who came to the shows with a western horse. She earned 3 Justin Morgan awards; In Hand, English Pleasure and Western Pleasure and Flicka went on to have a few foals as well.

Over the years, Chris and the HWF prefix became quite well known as both breeders and show competitors. Some of her more well-known horses were Smith's Brandon Bay, Rocky A Fireshadow and Otterbrook Fanfare who I personally bred a mare to! Fanfare sired 9 foals while he stood in Canada. With HWF prefix, she bred 11 Morgans including HWF Pat N Pending who became a rock solid horse for Karen Farnell and Chris' personal mount HWF Play N Hookie.

As Chris moved on and retired from General Motors, Shoal Point Farm was created with her husband Rick and she didn't slow at all! She bought and showed Main's Twist Of Fate all the way to Oklahoma and currently enjoys her two geldings Brogin Kiri and On The Verge to many fantastic wins in Ontario and the US, they are her pride and joy and she and Rick are enjoying daily fun and showing along with their dog Panda.

When I think of Christine Monteith, I think of someone who is genuinely in love with the Morgan Breed and loves participating and supporting the local Morgan scene. She is such a sportsman, always there to congratulate you on a great ride or win. She is compassionate about her animals. She is a good friend.

She has held many roles in the club and is the creator of the Hall Of Fame. We thank her for all that she given to the OMHC.

Truly Chris learned to walk and ride a horse at about the same time. And I see no signs of her slowing down yet! The OMHC is very lucky to have such a wonderful and dedicated lady on their team.

Please welcome Christine Monteith as our 2017 Morgan Inductee.

Nominated by the Hall Of Fame, Nancy Kavanagh, Chairperson.

Hobbiton Aragorn - OMHC Hall Of Fame Nominee



Hobbiton Aragorn became the epitome of what a Western Pleasure Morgan would look like in my mind; he dominated the local Ontario circuit with his owner/rider Geoff Reeves aboard and did well in the United States including Oklahoma. But let's take a look at his early years first.

Deana Wilson purchased Aragorn when he was 3 months old from breeder Rosemarie Papayanopulos of NY. Sired by UVM Enchantor and out of Merry Bellsinda (a Merry Knox daughter) he was a big chestnut colt. He was being raised by the trainer Glen Gable who was very impressed with his size. Glen showed 'Hobby' at the 1974 NY Regional show as a weanling & he won the weanling Futurity & the weanling colt class. Aragorn was to be Deana's next stallion and he came to Ontario.

Deana and Sherri brought him home for the winter and Deana showed him as a yearling. He was still a big colt. When shown at the Gold Cup he reared up & came down on his handler's shoulder, knocked him to the ground, then trotted around the ring to the end of the line where the tailer of the horse in front of him caught him. Mabel Owen was the judge that day and she said she had to place him first or last, he won the class. He had more manners at his next show. Aragorn returned to NY Regionals as a yearling in 1975 and continued his winning ways in the Yearling class & the Futurity yearlings.

Aragorn was full of life and had a ton of personality. He was easy to train but was not going to be bullied by anyone. You asked and he would give you everything. He was a favourite in all the barns he was at, everyone loved the big, handsome colt who demanded everyone pay attention to him.

As a 2 year old, Aragorn was sent to the trainer Max Brittingham for driving training. Aragorn was still growing being about 15.2h now. He did well in his training and was impressive in harness. The decision was made that summer to geld him as it was decided that he wasn't going to be a breeding stallion. Once he was gelded he was put up for sale. In January of his 3 year old year, he became the property of Geoff Reeves and that was the golden cross.

Geoff and Hobby were actually quite versatile earning ribbons In Hand, English Pleasure, Pleasure Driving, English General Purpose, Western General Purpose and of course Western Pleasure. He did it all with pizzazz and grace. The big chestnut with the two white hind socks stood out and when you added silver, it was a 'hard to beat' combination! Geoff and Hobby earned nearly 10,000 recorded points with the CMHA high point system and won 6 Justin Morgan medals, 3 alone in Western Pleasure.

In 1978, Hobby and Geoff were Reserve World Champions in the 4 year old Western Pleasure Championship in OKC. They also won a World Trail Championship & Reserve World Trail Championship in 1978 and 1979.

Hobby may have been named from a storybook character from Middle Earth but he was definitely put on the earth to be Geoff's amazing once in a lifetime horse. Hobby died April 2009 and those who had the opportunity to see him perform will never forget him.

We are proud to nominate Hobbiton Aragorn to the OMHC Hall Of Fame.

Nominated by Sherri Wilson & Nancy Kavanagh

Northline Rain Bird - OMHC Hall Of Fame Nominee



Northline Rain Bird was born May 8, 1984 bred by Bruce and Alice Murray, Northline Morgans. Rain Bird was a chestnut colt with enough chrome to stand out from the crowd. He was out of the mare named Burnt MTN Bridget and by Adanac Balios who went on to be the herd sire for Tim & Wendy Inch. Both sire and dam were famous for their amazing trots that Rain Bird inherited.

Around the farm, he was known as "Bird" and he had a super disposition. This horse loved people and would do anything he could to please. He could come from a class as a hotshot show horse, to giving a little kid a pony ride not five minutes later.

Bird was a horse bred to trot; his road trot could out trot almost any horse. He was full of knee action, but also had the ability to extend without losing the motion. Rain Bird also had an amazing headset, he knew where his head was supposed to be and he liked to keep it there. Bird was notorious for blowing his check in the driving classes. When he blew it, it was hard to tell because his head would not move.

As he grew up, he was entered in the OMHC futurity and won as a yearling. This was the start of a long show career full of many wins. Bird showed primarily in English Pleasure and Pleasure Driving classes across Ontario. Later in his career, he also showed a little bit of Western. He also won the Morgan Roadster (to bike) class at the Kingston Fair and showed against roadsters in the ladies driving at Orono Fair.

Primarily his lifetime partner Alice Murray showed Bird; together they were a team to be reckoned with. Alice drove and rode Bird to many of his championships he received throughout his career. Alice loved this magnificent horse deeply and he was truly her once in a lifetime horse. Rain Bird and Alice won Justin Morgans in Pleasure Driving and English Pleasure just from competing at shows in Ontario.

Rain Bird also did a lot to help promote the Morgan breed. He was the only horse to go to the CNE at the Morgan bicentennial able to demonstrate a Liberty class in the main ring of the coliseum. After strutting his stuff around the ring he came instantly when called, and later returned to participate in the driving portion of the presentation.

He also sired 34 registered Morgan foals, two of which are registered part-breds. The main trait Rain Bird passed on to his children was his trot and versatility. His son Northline Rainmaker went to the Morgan Grand Nationals and came back the reserve Grand National Hunter Hack champion. Freyja competes on the Trillium jumper circuit, Northline AirsandGraces was the CMHA National Morgan hunter/jumper champion in 2013. Northline Raindance competed in the hunter/jumpers and is now a dressage horse. Northline Knightbird competed successfully in Pleasure driving, English/classic Pleasure, Hunter, Western, Eventing, Dressage, you name it this horse could do it. Northline Autumn Breeze also showed over fences and is currently competing in the hunter division and driving. Northline Spring D-Lite is a pleasure driving and Park/English pleasure champion. Northline Snowbird also showed in the Ontario Provincial Saddle seat equitation championships and competed in timed trail events. These are just a few of the horses that were sired by Northline Rain Bird that have gone on to compete and have successful show careers for their owners.

Bird's foals were just as good as he was which an important trait for a stallion to have. Bird loved the crowds, and would put on a show for them. He loved competing at the CNE and at the old Lindsay fairgrounds. Rain Bird was retired from the show ring in 2005 at the age of 21. He lived the rest of his days at Northline Morgans with the Murray's until he passed away on October 9, 2009. He was an amazing horse who touched the hearts of many. He may be gone but he will never be forgotten.

Please welcome Northline Rain Bird to the 2017 Hall Of Fame!

Nominated by Ashley Reeson.