



# The Canadian Walker

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## **CRTWH, A REFLECTION** by Dianne Little

In 2022 CRTWH celebrated 40 years as a purebred registry for TWH. At the birth of the Registry, I was a relatively new Tennessee Walking Horse owner. As a CRTWH life member, 2022 was a time for personal reflection.

Reflection includes memories and analysis of those memories. After 40 years, were the events positive or negative? Did the decisions create positive outcomes for TWH's in Canada? As a new Tennessee Walker owner when the Registry was formed, I had no understanding of the purpose of a Registry or why a new one was important. However, over the past 42 years I have learned a lot. The following is my analysis and opinion of the actions of the Canadian Registry.

The founding members were steadfast in their decision to form a Tennessee Walking Horse Registry in Canada. Under Canadian law, a purebred Registry was incorporated by Agriculture Canada and was governed by the Animal Pedigree Act. Only one purebred registry per breed was allowed in Canada. Any decisions regarding livestock would be subject to Canadian law and regulations. The founders recognized that the Registry would be accepted by Agriculture Canada as the representative for the breed. They would be charged with the responsibility to develop Bylaws/Constitution, fees, Rules of Entry and Rules for Showing the Tennessee Walking Horse in Canada. As most Canadian TWH owners were opposed to many of the practices in training and showing TWH in the United States, a Canadian Registry could ensure those practices were not allowed in Canada.

They believed that if a registered horse was bred and born in Canada, it should have a Canadian Registration certificate. Comparison was made to Canadian citizenship – a Canadian Citizen was either born in Canada or immigrated to Canada and applied for and eventually granted Canadian citizenship. Horses already in Canada were either imported into Canada or born in Canada. The Registry founders felt that any purebred registered Tennessee Walking Horse could and should be imported into a Canadian Registry and issued a Canadian registration certificate.

No matter the breed and circumstance, forming a new Registry is not easy and mistakes are certain. Initially the founding members chose to name the new Registry the Canadian Walking Horse Registry. They omitted Tennessee in the Registry name, although the breed was clearly identified on Registration certificates. This was a major error on the part of the Founders and in my opinion, they were rightly criticized. Eventually the name was changed to Canadian Registry of the Tennessee Walking Horse. Without a doubt, the name change brought a change in support from previous critics.

When something innovative is in the planning stages, silence is imperative. The founders' believed silence was necessary. The original founders were from the Calgary area, and most were members of the Alberta Walking Horse Association. They did not seek input from other areas of the province or other Canadian TWH organizations. When the formation of a Canadian Registry became public,

many TWH owners were insulted and angry they were not consulted and asked for input. I understand their reaction, but in retrospect believe the founders were correct. If Canada recognized only one Registry per breed, it was important to ensure that a Registry was accomplished as quickly as possible. It was important that the accepted Rules for Showing did not allow the practices for public demonstrations that were allowed in the US. To invite more input would delay the process and may even lead to a competing submission to Agriculture Canada.

The founders were also responsible for establishing the rules of registration, etc. All horses entered in the Canadian Herd and Stud book were accepted as registered in the new Registry. Unfortunately, the Rules of Entry stated that before a foal could be registered, the sire and dam must be registered not only with the original US Registry but the Canadian Registry. This was contentious and rightly so. It involved extra cost. Some owners felt it insulted registration papers issued by the original US registry. It is perhaps not wise to grow a registry by forcing owners to spend needless money for membership and three registrations to register a foal born in Canada. Critics rightly felt that 'Canadian born' should not mean sire and dam must be registered in the same registry first.

At the first Annual General Meeting I attended, an amendment to the Constitution regarding Rules of Entry was made and seconded. The requirement to first register sire and dam prior to registration of a foal was changed. "In order to register a foal, the owner must be a member of the Registry, the sire and dam must be registered by the initial US registry or Canadian Registry and the resulting fees paid". This change in Rules of Entry was the catalyst for moving forward. The members demonstrated they had a say in the registry and the Board of Directors (Founders) demonstrated they were willing to listen and open to changes. This ability of the Board to listen and respond was established and continues 44 years later.

The new Registry adopted a hands-off position for registrations and transfers. Registrations, transfers, record-keeping and issuing of certificates were subcontracted to Canadian Livestock Records Corporation. This ensured that the Board of Directors did not physically handle applications or fees as all paperwork and fees were sent to CLRC. If there was a problem in an application or fees, CLRC contacted the applicant for clarification. This hands-off

approach ensured that favoritism or interference by individuals was not an option. CLRC deposited all fees received into the Registry bank account. The Registry paid all bills. The computer capacity of CLRC ensured records could be updated and maintained electronically.

Today, the CLRC website includes the complete pedigree of every horse registered with CRTWH, a history of ownership, DNA results including the lab, achievements by individual horses, extra genetic test and up to 4 pictures of each horse. This data base is available at no cost to members and the general public. The Founders could not have imagined the amount of information that would be publicly available in one location 44 years later.

Many founding members were also members of the Alberta Walking Horse Association. The AWA had established a Tennessee Walking Horse Futurity. They started small, hired respected pleasure horse judges and recognized and rewarded TWH born in Canada. In a forward thinking move the Canadian Registry took ownership of the Futurity, and the name was changed to 'The Canadian' Futurity. The format changed from comparative judging to evaluative judging, and each entrant received a written copy of the evaluation for their horse. The change to evaluative judging was controversial. Over a couple of years, breeders saw the value in written evaluations. In addition to weanling, yearling and two year old classes, 'The Canadian' Futurity expanded to include Yearling in Hand, 2 Year Old Line Driving, Driving Performance, 2 gait Performance, 3 gait Performance and Breeders class.

After the 2004 Futurity, the Board made a difficult decision. In a desire to be more inclusive and allow horses from across Canada an opportunity to participate, the Board made the philosophy behind 'The Canadian' available to Canadian registered TWH of any age. This decision meant the end of a live Futurity, a decision seen by many members as negative. It took away the enjoyment of watching Canadian registered horses in a central location. The Board invited comments, but eventually determined the time was right to invite all Canadian registered horses of any age to participate in an evaluative program.

The Program for Excellence was launched, offering awards in the Bronze, Silver and Gold categories. The Platinum category was added to honor the role of the sire and dam. As a result of this in-

clusive decision, the Board developed two other programs - the Training Level Challenge and Ride/Drive/ALT. 'The Canadian' TRIPLE CHALLENGE was launched. Again, it was a difficult decision, but one that has increased participation and pride. Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards are noted on every Registration Certificate and on records on the CLRC website. Originally the Training Levels Challenge comprised Basic Skills in Hand, Horsemanship Levels 1 – 3, Driving Levels 1 – 3, but has expanded to include Extended Trail or Horse Camping and Liberty.

In 1994, Jane Mueller suggested that her husband Mike could build a web page for the Canadian Registry of the Tennessee Walking Horse. Web pages were rare at that time. Even though the Board did not fully understand what a web page was, they accepted Mike's offer. Thirty years later the relationship between Mike Mueller and CRTWH is strong and crtwh.ca provides valuable information past and present for those interested in Canadian registered Tennessee Walking Horses.

Although not mandated, The Registry encouraged blood typing on all animals. Many Canadian registered horses were blood typed and the blood typing recorded with Canadian Livestock Records Corporation. If blood typing was done in a Canadian lab, the blood was saved and was available for retesting in case of a dispute or future scientific developments. This proactive decision was important when parent verification became the standard for registries. The newest technology for parent verification was DNA profiling but the universal horse community had not determined the number of markers to use. Some Registries decided to use blood typing for parent verification. Looking forward, CRTWH decided to recognize both blood typing and DNA profiling and allowed members to decide. CRTWH waited for the number of international markers to be determined. When the number of markers were determined, CRTWH phased in a parent verification program accepting both methods. Because blood had been stored in a Canadian lab, conversion from blood to DNA was simplified. The decision to wait for the international decision was not well received by some breeders, but eventually the decision to accept both blood typing and DNA was seen as prudent. Today, blood typing is rarely used and as the equipment ages, it is not replaced.

In the early 1980's the first equine semen was collected and frozen. Two of the Founders had semen collected. Some registries only allowed for live cover in herd, but foals conceived through ar-

tificial insemination were allowed by Agriculture Canada. In 1984 CRTWH registered the first foal resulting from artificial insemination using frozen semen. This forward-thinking action was indicative of the attitude of the Registry.

In 1982 and 1983, a collection was organized by Alberta Horse Industry and conducted by Dr. Wayne Burwash. Three TWH stallions, Calta Midnite Victry 224 (owned by Hilton and Claudia Hack), Go Shadow Go 129 and Shaker's Royal Heir 135 (owned by Helen B. Williamson), participated. Semen was successfully collected from all three stallions and frozen. The frozen semen was stored at Alta Genetics. The owners of the stallions were founding members of the Canadian Walking Horse Registry (now Canadian Registry of the Tennessee Walking Horse). This forward-thinking action was indicative of the attitude of the Registry.

Initially Board meetings were in person – expensive, time consuming and realistically only attended by Alberta members. The meetings morphed into conference calls to include board members from other provinces. Eventually meetings became virtual. The Constitution requires an Annual General Meeting each year. A quorum is set and initially the only viable location was Alberta. Today, technology has advanced and all CRTWH members can participate virtually.

*Walking Horse News* was launched as a newsletter by Marjorie Lacy in 1977. Over the ensuing 47 years, *WHN* has evolved into a bimonthly magazine. It is the voice of the naturally gaited TWH and the official communicator for CRTWH. During the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year, CRTWH approached Marjorie and asked permission to include all issues of *WHN* on crtwh.ca. Thanks to Marjorie Lacy's generosity, the history of Canadian TWH is included on crtwh.ca. Without Marjorie's dedication to the newsletter that morphed into a magazine, much of the history of the TWH in Canada would be lost.

CRTWH started as an ambitious dream. With a rocky beginning, it has morphed into a respected and modern international Registry. It is not mired in the past but looks to the future. Technology has been embraced and unique programs have been developed to support those who love the Tennessee Walking Horse. I am thankful for people who looked toward the future. I have confidence CRTWH will continue to embrace the future.

*Note – The newly formed Registry (now CRTWH) requested reciprocity with the original TWH Registry. Meetings were held, views exchanged but unfortunately agreement on reciprocity was not achieved.*

# CONGRATULATIONS TO CENTURY PARTNERS

## 'Fred Lloyd-Smith & Hallelujah's Doll



Hallelujah's Doll was foaled 9 April 1992, out of Curry's Doll by Royal Hallelujah. Bob bought her in Iowa at age 2, intending to develop her for Field Trialling, and I rode her enough to become impressed with her exceptionally smooth gaits, sensitivity, spirit, and ability to learn what was needed for the sport.

She could gait so fast that the others had to canter to keep up. She accepted carrying dogs back to base camp if required, she spun quickly enough to prevent a dog on a rope from sweeping around behind her and she never seemed to tire.

We also did some demonstration events representing Tennessee Walking Horses and we looked pretty good all dressed up!

As time went on we learned about natural horsemanship and she partnered with me through Level 1 Parelli before her son Ace (Black Mack's Ace, sire Trackin on Heir TR) took over that partnership role. Doll had three foals in all.



In short she was my first horse and she continued to be a bright, energetic, and friendly soul until she passed this August 3.

Celebrate with me my long bond with my special mare. The photos were taken recently by photographer Wendy Webb in celebration of our becoming Century Partners.

In fact our ages together came to 101 - & she is indeed A Horse to Remember. 'Fred