

ARIKA EVERATT-MEEUSE

A lot has changed at Shannondoe Farm in St. Thomas since its property housed its first Thoroughbred mare in 1971. One thing that has not changed, however, is the standard of quality and care set out by founders James and Janeane Everatt and maintained by their daughter Arika Everatt Meeuse, husband Tim and family.

The Everatt family can pride itself on its longevity as one of the country's most successful, full service breeding and sales farms. With 54 years in the business, star racehorses have been born and sold by the Everatts through some of the turbulent times in Ontario racing including market crashes and the end of the slots-at-racetracks program.

Today's Shannondoe goes on without its matriarch, the 'boss lady', Janeane, who passed away in the summer of 2023. In fact, it was less a month after her passing that a homebred yearling filly from Janeane's favourite mare Count to Three sold for \$250,000 (US) at the Saratoga select sale. This summer that filly, named No Time, won the \$500,000 Woodbine Oaks.

“That's the kind of stuff that keeps you in the business,” said Arika, who still stands the top Canadian stallion Society's Chairman at the farm.

Not long after No Time, who is owned by Gary Barber and trained by Mark Casse, won the Oaks, Arika sent a group of yearlings owned by the family and clients to the CTHS Ontario sale at Woodbine and was pleased with the results.

“We had a great sale this year. It's been a long time. I think a lot of buyers stayed home, rather than go shopping in Kentucky.”

Among the Ontario bred yearlings sold was a filly by Cairo Prince from Dancing Ghost, who was bought for \$80,000 by Al and Bill Ulwelling, owners of this year's King's Plate winner Mansetti.

Even better, at the Keeneland September sale two weeks later, Arika sold a third generation homebred colt by Vekoma – Hold the Applause for \$325,000 (US).

At one time a trout hatchery, Shannondoe Farm was built up by James and Janeane. James, who was in the construction business, built every stall and barn door, studied

pedigrees while Janeane fell in love with bringing foals into the world.

The list of talented horses bred, raced or sold by the Everatts is impressive. In the early 1980s James sold a mare, Gaelic Logic, whom he had bought for \$32,000 for \$325,000 (US). In the 90s they raced champion Terremoto, a son of their stallion Varick, who they couldn't sell as a yearling.

In the 2000s they bred Sand Cove, who won over \$1 million for owner Ralph Johnson, Breeders' Stakes winner Miami Deco and then came a daughter of Society's Chairman, the family's last remaining stallion, Caren, the Canadian Horse of the Year in 2016.

Caren, the first horse raced by Toronto's Rob Marzilli, earned over \$700,000 and paved the way for her owner to have one of the bigger racing and breeding programs in Ontario. He foals his mares at Shannondoe and shares ownership in a few with Arika. Another client of Arika's is Mark Dodson, whose breeding program has grown and improved in recent years.

Looking ahead, Arika is interested in focusing more on track lay-ups and breaking and training. She wants to build an arena at the farm which would also serve her show jumping-rabid son Braydon well.

Braydon is off to an impressive start after beginning his riding career just three years ago. Colt works tirelessly on the farm, "He's my right hand", said Arika.

The number of mares and foals owned by Shannondoe has decreased in recent years as Arika has focused on quality rather than quantity. There will be a handful of mares producing foals next spring, some in Canada and some at their Kentucky farm, Colton Springs.

More immediately has had some racing excitement as their homebred filly Mathematical, co-owned by their trainer Dave Cotey, is a recent winner who is expected to be a contender in the Oct. 12 Glorious Song Stakes.

It all adds up to the Everatt family's bloodlines being around for a long time.