Little Brown Jug Society President & Hall Of Famer Tom Thomson Dies; Memorial Service Scheduled Saturday, January 28

Walter D. "Tom" Thomson, 73, President of the Little Brown Jug Society, Director of Racing at the Delaware County Fair and a member of Harness Racing's Living Hall of Fame, died January 20. Mr. Thomson passed away at his home with members of his family at his side.

Tom was the son of the late Henry Clay (Hank) Thomson who founded the Little Brown Jug along with Joe Neville. Tom has been part of the Delaware, Ohio County Fair and the Little Brown Jug since age 16 when he started working as an errand boy for the staff at the log cabin.

Tom became president of the Little Brown Jug Society following his father's death in 1994 and became director of racing in 1973. Thomson served on the Delaware County Agricultural Society for 41 years and was selected as the 1995 Little Brown Jug Wall of Fame honoree.

Thomson served as president of the Grand Circuit for the past 21 years. He was elected to the Ohio Harness Racing Hall of Fame in 2004. In 2006, Thomson received the sport's highest honor when he was enshrined into Harness Racing's Living Hall of Fame at Goshen, NY. He was also a trustee of the Hall of Fame. Tom was named a Distinguished Alumni of the Delaware City Schools in October, 2011. Tom also graduated from The Ohio State University.

Throughout his career, Tom met most of the sport's greatest trainers, drivers, owners and breeders. He also led in making major changes at Delaware like the removal of the hub rail, adding the cash-sell wagering system, installing an all weather track and the construction of the Jug and Jugette barns.

Tom, the great-great grandson of Abram Thomson who founded the Delaware Gazette in 1818, ran the daily newspaper following his father's death. Tom sold the newspaper in June, 2004 to Brown Publishing. At the time of the sale, the newspaper had been owned by a single family longer than any other newspaper in America.

Tom has pointed the Jug toward the 21st century, modernizing the Pacing Classic without losing its quaint county fair charm and rich tradition. Through his hard work and dedication, Thomson kept the Jug one of the most recognized sporting events in the world.

Thomson is survived by his wife Sherry, and his children, Chriss Cawley, Cheryl (Tom) Wright, H.C. "Chip" (Margaret) Thomson and Thomas "T" (Lisa) Thomson, and eight grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his first wife of 42 years, Helen, who passed away in 2001.

The family will host visitation from 12-noon to 2 p.m. Saturday, January 28 at the Asbury United Methodist Church in Delaware, OH. A memorial service will follow at the church starting at 2 p.m.

In lieu of flowers the family has requested donations be made to either the Delaware County Fair or to the Harness Racing Museum and Hall Of Fame in Goshen, NY.