

William DeLong

1928-1992

Inducted 1993

Bill acquired his love of horses early in life. One grandfather kept many draft teams for use in the grain business and road grading. Another grandfather was a true horse trader while being a mail carrier on a horse drawn wagon for many years.

After serving in WWII, Bill came home and purchased his first Standardbred from Doc Marquis in the early 40s. Beginning in the 60s Bill got his family involved in racing horses. Because of the demands of the family's feed, grain and fertilizer business, racing was mainly confined to the county fair level, with an occasional trip when time and horses permitted at the Chicago pari-mutual tracks.

During the 70s and 80s, Bill put his emphasis on developing and training trotters. If they couldn't or wouldn't trot, he would give them to his sons to race on the pace. All of Bill's horses began their careers racing at the county fair level.

The horse that Bill enjoyed most in his later years was Delco Smokin Crown, although Smokey wouldn't trot, Bill decided to keep this pacer for himself. During his career, Smokey raced 100 times with 58 wins, 21 seconds and six thirds. Not only did Bill drive Smokey, but every member of the family that wanted to did. After some health problems in the late 80s, the last few years of Bill's life were spent enjoying the races at the fairs, where it all started for him.

Nominated by Kathleen Larson