

Honour Roll Don Richardson



The Canadian Hereford Association congratulates Don Richardson, for his induction into the 2016 Honour Roll.

Don was born in Queen Charlotte City, British Columbia in 1953 and is the fifth generation on Richardson Ranch, which was established in 1919. After graduating from the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in 1978, Don worked in Prince Rupert before returning to the ranch to continue his practice on the Haida Gwaii (formerly known as the Queen Charlotte Islands), in a veterinary clinic that his father Doug built. Don and Doug formed a partnership to “modernize and rebuild the cattle ranch”, implementing performance recordkeeping and using artificial insemination on their crossbreds to increase weaning weights. Within ten years, weaning weights had risen by nearly 200 lbs.

Leslie, originally from the Vancouver area, worked with Doug on the construction of the vet clinic.

Don and Leslie ultimately formed a partnership and married in April of 1980. Their daughter, Jamie Richardson, was featured in the first

Young Guns article in the August 2010 issue of the Hereford Digest. She and her partner help manage the Hereford herd at Copper-T Ranch in BC’s northern interior. Their son Dane is now a practicing veterinarian and the second generation doing business from the clinic in the Haida Gwaii.

In 1982, the beginning of regular ferry service meant travel off the island was easier and Don purchased his first purebred Herefords and joined the Yellowhead Hereford Breeders’ Association. Their A.I. program was expanded and embryos were purchased to begin an ET program. As purebred numbers increased, the commercial herd was dispersed. Don & Leslie made their first trek into the show ring at the Bulkley Valley Exhibition in Smithers, BC in 1984 and continued each year for the next 21 years. Don believed that if you didn’t show your animals off, people wouldn’t know what you had, and wouldn’t buy. The first Richardson Ranch bull was sold at the Vanderhoof Bull Sale in 1986 and by 1987, they consigned the high selling bull of the sale. Richardson Ranch was, in seven years, recognized as a reputable breeder of quality Polled Herefords - a trend which continues to today.

Over the years, Richardson Ranch had many champions in the showing, including Agribition and the 2012 World Hereford Conference, as well as high selling animals at prominent sales. Due to their remote location, the Richardsons’ dedication to showing and contributing to sales is remarkable.

In 2010, the First Annual Richardson Ranch Online Sale was established, with many lots selling across Canada and

eventually worldwide in 2015. Don has sold semen and embryos worldwide and continually fosters these international relationships. He has attended the World Hereford Conference since 2004 and has extended his time after the conferences to visit local Hereford breeders.

Don is a huge supporter of the Hereford Industry both locally and internationally. He has been a long time member of the Yellowhead Hereford Breeders’ Club and the British Columbia Hereford Association (BCHA). For many years, he has also been the National Director on the governing board of the Canadian Hereford Association, for which he has participated on committees and for which he acted as President.

Don and Leslie play multiple roles in their small community in the Haida Gwaii. Don is proud of his new, ultra-modern veterinary clinic in Tlell but he also manages their farm supply store and works on their ranch while dedicating a lot of time to the provincial and Canadian Hereford Associations. Don also manages the website of the BCHA.

He is also very involved in the veterinary community, regularly attending conferences throughout Canada and the United States and giving local presentations and workshops. As the only vet on the Haida Gwaii, Don has been on call for over 35 years!.

