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Campbellville, ON --- It has been several years since Tom Hill GB, the horse, set foot on the Mohawk Racetrack oval, but Tom Hill, his one-time owner, seems very much at home here.

The native of Morcambe, Lancashire, England is no doubt used to rain and fog, but still it's frustrating to have flown across the pond to watch two of his current charges, Beyonce Blue Chip, a 3-year-old [Art Major](#) filly, and Lucky Man, a 3-year-old son of Camluck, qualify, only to have them disappear into the gloom at Mohawk on a pea-soup morning, which prompted most of the expected Big Guns to stay home.



photo by the author

Tom Hill, second from left, with grandson Tom (left), son Tom (third from left), and Blake McIntosh (far right, in red jacket)

Hill, who on this trip has his son and grandson in tow, both also named Tom, has invested nearly a million dollars in horseflesh over the last couple of years, most of them installed in Casie Coleman's barn. Steeped in harness racing from birth, Hill made his fortune in managing British trailer park retirement communities, and has chosen to spend it on this side of the pond, where racing has more than just the hobby status it holds in the UK.

"The first year I went to the (Standardbred Horse Sale) I bought Beyonce Blue Chip -- I think she was \$140,000 -- and I bought Lucky Man, who was a \$90,000 yearling," Hill recalled. He says he finds the sales almost as exciting as racing itself. "And we bought a little filly called Jett Blue Chip, who Casie came in on."

"To be honest, I had my eye on a horse called [Somebeachsomewhere](#), and my son said 'we've got

enough!' But I'm happy with what I've got.

"The next year, we went to Lexington and I bought three fillies, between \$100,000 and \$140,000. We also bought the Artsplace colt Art Colony, which I'm sure you'll be hearing a lot more about. He was a \$157,000 purchase."

Hill makes three or four trips to Canada each year to watch his horses race.

"I like the racing here; I like the people," he said. "Most of the Canadian people are really nice, and most of the trainers are very good. Ben Wallace (who trained Tom Hill, the horse, until he was claimed in 2000) is a good guy, a good trainer, and as for Casie, I don't think I've seen anyone as professional or as hands-on or with as much attention to detail."

"I would like to win a big race," Hill confessed. "The race I would really like to win is the North America Cup. I've got one entered this year (Lucky Man). I think he's a good colt, but there are some awesome horses in there."

This may be the year Hill watches "the one that got away" take the North America Cup, but it's a safe bet that with his passion, enthusiasm and deep pockets that he'll be taking more than one shot at it.

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