

Book Review

Heart of a Hoofbeat

By *Margaret Evans*

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By *Janna Smith*

Our beloved equine and the ancient life connection we share is the focus of *Heart of a Hoofbeat*. It is an eloquently written, uniquely insightful read, with beautiful illustrations and anecdotes featuring Duncan, Daisy, and the many horses who live with or near author Margaret Evans. What better treat for a horse lover?

The early chapters dig through millions of years of evolution, uncovering the rich her-

itage of our modern equine companions. The development of their physical attributes, as well as their natural instincts, intelligence, and emotions are explored. From an understanding of their incalculable contribution to human survival comes the realization of their significance to the history of humanity. Evans's deep appreciation for the rich historical human-equine connection is evident in these first chapters, and the one-page fictional story which sets the tone for each chapter makes for an engaging reading.

Jumping forward to modern times, Evans explores the natural instincts, behaviour, interaction, and communication of the domestic herd. Readers will immediately recognize and appreciate these traits in their own horses. As Evans shares her own real-



life horse stories, she once again illustrates the modern horse's connection to its herd, its environment, to horses in the wild, and to history.

As a fairly new rider, I was warmed with the immediate connection I had with the horse I am learning on, and I now have an awareness of how essential and timeless the bond among the horses in a herd can

be... and today's herd encompasses any barn with multiple horses. I feel as though *Heart of a Hoofbeat* has equipped me with the knowledge I need to become a better rider, and the respect I need to truly connect with my horse. ■