

For the Good of
the Horse





Bill and Carole McAlpin have created a tranquil paradise for breeding and raising quality Thoroughbreds.

Bourbon County Farm Provides Nurturing Environment



“We’re basically simple people, and when we decided to create this Thoroughbred operation out of an old crop farm, we were determined to keep it unpretentious.”

— Bill McAlpin



Left, Greenwood Lodge Farm is immaculate yet unassuming from the road. Right, a cottage that holds the farm office is a part of the European yard.

By Sue Wylie | Photos by Lee P. Thomas

Hiding a 290-acre horse farm isn’t easy, but no signs of Greenwood Lodge Farm appear along the quiet road in Bourbon County where the property lies. There are no markers, no stables or barns in sight, no great house rising on the horizon, and not a single horse to be seen grazing in the wide, unbroken fields. No hint at all of a Thoroughbred horse farm.

And that’s just how the owners want it.

Beyond an unadorned iron gate spreads an estate based, the owners say, on a “concept totally different from other horse farms.”

The first difference Bill and Carole McAlpin insisted upon was that their Greenwood Lodge Farm have as little visual impact on the landscape as possible. They wanted nothing showy, nothing that would cause tourists to stop their cars and whip

out their cameras for postcard-like photos of horses gamboling in front of a Southern mansion.

“We’re basically simple people, and when we decided to create this Thoroughbred operation out of an old crop farm, we were determined to keep it unpretentious,” said Bill McAlpin, greeting a visitor in a charming cottage built to hold the farm office. The cottage is part of a cluster of brand-new buildings that compose the “European yard.” The yard also holds an 1,800-square-foot guest house, a hay storage building, a very attractive maintenance structure, and a spacious dog kennel complete with bath facilities for the pups and an overhead apartment for people. These buildings all open onto a big central courtyard enclosed by a brick wall.

But still there are none of the buildings here that horse farms must have. No stables, no barns. Instead, the handsome barns of Greenwood Lodge Farm were built to stand close to the family’s residence.

“We never could understand why American horse farms

For the Good of the Horse



Left, Bill McAlpin leads the broodmare Plaza, one of their many Thoroughbreds with European breeding. Above, Carole McAlpin stands with a homebred being readied for the Keeneland September yearling sale.

had the house and the stables so unconnected,” Bill McAlpin said. “We decided to centralize the operation like a European farm. We focus on international horses here. In fact, I call it a ‘trans-national horse farm.’ We have lots of horses with European pedigrees here, and we send our horses to Europe to be trained and raced.” With the introduction of artificial surfaces such as Polytrack at Keeneland, McAlpin anticipates that more European horses will race in the United States. Therefore, he said, Greenwood Lodge Farm breeds horses that are attractive to both American and European buyers.

The McAlpins have built homes before, in other states, “but nothing like this,” they said with a laugh. A family coffee business takes them frequently to Texas, to Costa Rica, and to other parts of the world, but after breeding Thoroughbreds and boarding mares in Kentucky for 17 years, they finally decided it was time for their own Bluegrass horse farm. They then spent almost seven years searching for an “already made farm,” but with no luck.

“Finally, we decided to drive around and find the prettiest piece of property we could. It had to have three things — good soil, trees, and privacy,” Bill McAlpin said. “We found all those here on this land that had been owned and farmed by the same family since pioneer days. There were just some old tobacco barns here and a totally ramshackle 200-year-old house that no one had lived in since the ‘70s.”

Just as important as finding the land, of course, was finding the right architect to turn the McAlpins’ vision for the rundown crop farm into reality.

Reese Reinhold of Lexington was the perfect choice. He is an extremely talented, well-known, and sought-after architect-contractor of horse farms and historic houses. The McAlpins were impressed by Reinhold’s work at a number of Bluegrass farms, including Denali Stud, Ashford Stud, Stonerside, and Three Chimneys. In turn, Reinhold was thrilled by the challenge of designing an entire horse farm — stables, barns, roads, pad-



The farm's original 1810 house (top) has been renovated with great care.

docks, offices, the main house — everything. He completely understood what the McAlpins wanted their farm to be.

“We had a master plan,” McAlpin said. “I told Reese that on the day the farm was done, we wanted it to look like it has been here for 100 years, and I told him that we wanted to be able to see horses from every window of every room in our house and he made both of those things happen.”

Reinhold said, “I devoted five years

of my life, 50 to 60 hours a week, to this farm. It's the McAlpins' home, but I love it just as much as they do.”

His plans left the farm's thick woods untouched and saved nearly every one of the giant old trees. He planted an additional 300 trees on the farm and 1,200 in the nursery. He laid out miles of new farm roads and carefully hid them with berms and trees. He designed beautiful stone bridges to link many pastures and buried all utility lines so not a single ugly light pole could be seen. He also saved the life of the farm's original 1810 house, which was so decrepit the McAlpins planned to have it demolished.

“It was a very simple house, but grand for its time,” Reinhold said. “It had big rooms, 11- and 12-foot ceilings, and handsome trim. I brought in stonemasons and other experts and finally con-

vinced the McAlpins that we could build on the core of the old place. We spent one entire year just re-pointing the house.”

During that year Reinhold became intrigued by the once-lovely house and the family that had built it, lived in it, and loved it.

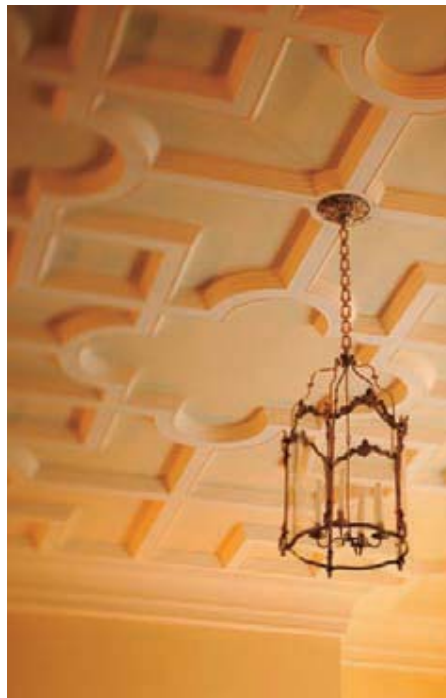
“I knew nothing



“I told Reese that on the day the farm was done, we wanted it to look like it has been here for 100 years, and I told him that we wanted to be able to see horses from every window of every room in our house and he made both of those things happen.”

— Bill McAlpin

For the Good of the Horse



All of the mantels in the house as well as the stenciled ash floor are original, while this ceiling (center) was inspired by Bill's family home.

about the history of the Garth family, but I began researching it. I learned that farmer Thomas Garth had built the house in 1810, but it was his son, William, who really fascinated me and for a personal reason. William Garth was a distinguished professor of mathematics at Georgetown College. He died tragically at the age of 45. He drowned, along with his wife and two half-sisters, when a boat they were taking from Chicago to Milwaukee was struck by

another boat and sank. But, here's the amazing thing."

Reinhold shook his head and laughed at what can only be considered destiny. In his will Garth had set up a scholarship fund for Bourbon County high school boys who wanted to go on to college. Reinhold, who grew up in Bourbon County, won one of those scholarships, setting him on a career path that ultimately would lead to his restoring the house that Garth loved.

Now, the original 3,500-square-foot house has grown to 11,000 square feet and exudes taste and beauty. All four of its mantels are the originals, and the little entry hall of the old house divides the new part from the old. To the McAlpins' surprised delight, restoration uncovered the hall's original wallpaper and stenciled ash floor with its sycamore leaf pattern, which they have now made the logo of Greenwood Lodge Farm.

While Reinhold worked his architectural magic on the house, the McAlpins incorporated several of their own ideas into the design.

"Bill was raised in England, and we designed part of the house from pictures of his family home," Reinhold explained. "For example, the fabulous ornate pattern in the plaster

DECORATORS' SHOWCASE

The Nursing Home Ombudsman Agency (NHOA) of the Bluegrass is hosting the 22nd Decorators' Showcase at GlenLary Farm, a historic, privately owned home and horse farm in Paris, Ky. All proceeds from the Decorators' Showcase will benefit NHOA.



The Showcase will be open to the public April 24 – May 16, 2010, and will feature several interior designers and landscape professionals. Hours of operation: Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., and Sunday, 12 p.m. – 4 p.m. General admission to the house is \$15 per person at the door or \$12 presale. A special room will be set aside in the house for guests to enjoy a lunch in the Showcase Bistro. For more information, please call (859) 278-6072, ext. 302 or email Showcase2010@gmail.com.

For the Good of
the Horse

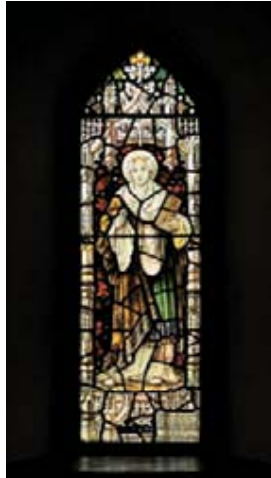


For the Good of the Horse

drawing room ceiling was copied from photos of his father's home. The kitchen, with the fireplace surrounding the oven, was inspired by a photo in an English magazine. The idea was to create a gracious English country house that would tie in with the English-European feeling of the walled barnyard."

McAlpin knew exactly how he wanted his barns to be. "Big and airy so you feel like you're outside. Plus, the foaling barn had to be close to the house, because this is a very hands-on horse farm and Carole and I attend every foaling." Greenwood Lodge is home to 25 mares and their offspring.

From the back of their house, the magnificent view of the farm's expanses has been enhanced by a "ha-ha wall," which Reinhold



The private chapel that stands near the McAlpins' house includes stained glass windows from England and medieval paving stones.



explained is an element often used in English landscaping and gardens. The 280-foot-long stone wall provides protection for the horses but cannot be seen from the house. It virtually vanishes into an elevation and creates the illusion of endless pastures.

The three most important factors in choosing an advisor.

REPUTATION | EXPERIENCE | CONTACTS

The one place you can find them all.



Getting started, managing a project or problem solving for select clients.

Contact Dan Rosenberg at 859 753-8856 or danrtc@windstream.net

For the Good of the Horse



Privacy is a priority for the McAlpins, so they treasure the personal chapel that Reinhold designed to stand near the house. Stained glass windows from England, antique wooden pews, and a floor of medieval paving stones grace the chapel where Rev. Donovan Cain of St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Paris, Ky,

conducts services on special occasions such as Easter and Christmas. The McAlpins say they are looking forward to the chapel's first christening with the approaching arrival of a new grandchild.

So, seven years after Carole and Bill McAlpin finally found the perfect place to call their Old Kentucky Home, all is happy and harmonious at Greenwood Lodge farm. Each day is exciting and rewarding, but the McAlpins' very favorite times come when they can sit quietly together, at the back of their marvelous house, and watch their hors

es graze in lush green pastures.

"Horses, like people, thrive on tranquility, and so this is a spectacularly good farm for raising horses," Bill McAlpin said with obvious contentment. "This place is so serene and calm. We feel it and so do they." 🐾