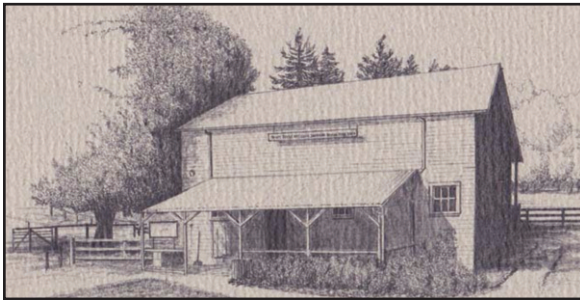


Marin Horse Council

2016 SPRING NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 125

Marin Horse Council | 171 Bel Marin Keys Blvd. | Novato, CA 94949 | 415.259.5783 | www.MarinHorseCouncil.org



Etching of Morgan Horse Ranch by Marin artist Nick Hamil



FROM THE SADDLE

Many of you have read the Pacific Sun article, "End of the Trail," January 20, 2016, regarding the Morgan Horse Ranch (MHR) located in the Point Reyes National Seashore. The Marin Horse Council is in the process of working with Point Reyes National Seashore Association and possible community partnerships that will look at different ways to keep this historic and valuable resource open and operational. Below is some history about the ranch and possible program ideas that would retain the horse presence in the park for future generations.

The Morgan Horse Farm living exhibit went into operation at Point Reyes National Seashore (PRNS) in May of 1970. It was established as one of three demonstration sites at the National Seashore in response to the National Park Service (NPS) bringing more people into the park through "living history" programs. With the development of the "Farm" and the relationship the park had with Boyd Stewart (who bred Morgan horses), the exhibit became a breeding and training facility for the Morgan Horses that would serve the park rangers with their tasks. They were chosen for their distinct characteristics that made them an ideal breed for a variety of jobs in the park. The horses were to be used by the park rangers for patrol duty while also providing the park visitors with live demonstrations about the care, training and management of the horses. The popularity of the Morgan Horse Farm insured the program's success and gained positive attention for the park. The program included these live demonstrations as well as offsite activities such as mounted rangers in Color Guard formations for parades and events. The Director of the National Park Service rode a Point Reyes Morgan in the Rose Bowl Parade in Pasadena just last month. Living history programs like the Morgan Horse Farm are entertaining and over the years have made strong and favorable impressions on the numerous visitors.

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OUT ON THE TRAIL

Dear Editor:

I was saddened to read of the current fiscal problems of the Morgan Horse Ranch at Point Reyes National Seashore. Long ago, I attended the celebratory dedication of this Ranch. The event was hosted by the late Boyd Stewart. National park rangers have benefited from PRNS Morgans for decades.

I have owned Morgans since 1969, stabling them at our home in Sleepy Hollow. I have competed in trail events in five states on them. They are versatile and sturdy. My Morgans have been national endurance champions four times. Hay for my two costs less than \$2.5K annually, which leaves me to wonder at the figures for Ranch upkeep quoted in the story.

As the article points out, the Morgan breed is not only one of the first truly American breeds but its blood also went into the development of the Tennessee Walker, Quarterhorse, and American Saddle Horse breeds. Morgans such as General Sheridan's 'Rienzi' were valued amounts during the Civil War. Morgans stallions were used at cavalry remount stations throughout the USA. Farmers living nearby sent their mares to these stallions and the US Cavalry got the pick of the foals.

Pioneers used horses, mules, and oxen to blaze the westward trails that were later used by stagecoach, telegraph, railroad, and today's highway routes.

Few people know that the horse is native to North America. The earliest fossils, going back some 70 million years, have been found on this continent. The herds wandered over the Bering Land Bridge into Asia and gradually migrated westward. The American herds perished in the last Ice Age some 10,000 years ago, but the horse was reintroduced to the New World by Columbus on his second voyage. DNA tests have established the links. Analysis of horse teeth from burial sites in the Ukraine have proven that horses were ridden 6,000+ years ago. For millennia, language, culture, commerce, government, etc., have traveled only as fast as a horse, or ships, could go. Saddle horses are prized for the companionship and therapeutic values they give. They have superior night vision, acute hearing, and they communicate non-stop with the rider, if s/he knows how to "listen." There is a reason why equestrian disciplines are the only competitions in the Olympic Games where men and women compete together: the horse is the great equalizer. Marin, indeed the entire country, will be the poorer if the Morgan Horse Ranch at the Seashore is closed. Surely a way can be found to keep alive this display of part of our nation's history.

Sincerely,

Connie Berto



Although the exhibit was successful, during the period 1975 through 1979 the administration sought to shut down the Morgan Farm. However, the popularity of the program and its political support kept the exhibit despite the change from "living history" demonstrations to static displays such as the nine full-sized interpretive panels that chronicled the history of the Morgan Horse that exist today at the ranch. Five horses are still housed at the ranch, while two are still in active use. Although it has gone through changes, an average of 10,000 visitors per year visit the Farm. Throughout, the park's two major living history sites, the Morgan Horse Ranch and Kule Loklo were the highest-use interpretive programs and the park's most visited destinations, attracting more visitors than the Visitor Center or the Point Reyes Lighthouse (Paul Sadin, *Managing a Land in Motion – An Administrative History of PRNS*, 2007).

I'm not sure that the above numbers are accurate today as they were in 2007, but the fact remains that the MHR has been a key element in the shaping of PRNS. It is the hope of the Marin Horse Council, that with continued political pressure, community partnerships and a strong volunteer presence, the MHR will continue to be a focus for visitor education and historic preservation and that horses will continue to function as ambassadors for years to come.

Of the three areas of focus supported by the Morgan Horse Ranch, ambassadorship is key in my mind. Not only are horses fun to see at the MHR as well as on the trail, but horses are vital in a number of other ways. They provide an efficient way to place volunteers on trails where, as mounted patrollers, they can assist rangers by helping back country travelers, reporting trail hazards and protecting elk antlers from poachers. The park's volunteer mounted patrol is a function of the park horses that goes unheralded and should stand out as one of the most important aspects of retaining a horse presence in the park. As the number of park-owned horses decreases the easier it will be for park officials to support an interpretive program made of kiosks and not of living beings that are working for the good of the park and its many visitors. By keeping a "living history," PRNS provides an opportunity for people to establish and continue their connections with the land and to share their irreplaceable cultural knowledge with the wider community.

Stay tuned,

- Monte Kruger | President, MHC



OUT ON THE TRAIL



ON THE TRAIL FOR SHARKS

Point Reyes National Seashore offers the equestrian many things, wilderness, diversity, solitude. Some of the best riding trails in Marin exist in PRNS (Pt Reyes National Seashore). One I recently was introduced to is the trail to Drake's Head. I've ridden Muddy Hollow many times before but never have I ventured out as far as Drake's Head. I was taken there by a fellow Novato Horsemen, Mark Carpenter who for a long time wanted to take me out and show me the sharks. Sharks? Immediately I'm going back in time to Saturday Night Live's "Land Shark" skit thinking Mark was joking in some weird way I didn't quite get. But no, "Monte, you have to see the sharks!" he tells me in such an enthusiastic tone that made me say: "Well, okay then, let's go!"

My nephew was up visiting last October and because he loves to ride with me I decided to haul two of my horses out to Muddy Hollow to meet Mark and head out to Drake's Head and see the sharks. It was a lovely fall day and the coast held the expectation of a "see clear to the Farallons kind of sky." We were riding over familiar ground when Mark led us through a gate that separated us from the regular route and onto a portion of Murphy Ranch along the banks of the estuary and among the ranch's many grazing cattle. Water was scarce since the drought was in full swing and the cattle were looking for anything green, even the green plants growing in the brackish water of the upper estuaries. Later we were to learn that the Lucchesis, who run the cattle operation at Murphy Ranch, had only one watering pond for their cattle as the other two had dried up.

Still on our way to Drake's Head, we passed a few of the cows who were knee deep in the water reaching for fodder when we spied one up to her neck in mud, thrashing to free herself from her predicament while still greedily going after one more green bite. Our party of three held up and figured that maybe we could help turn her around and head her to drier land. My nephew, being 6'5" and a pro athlete, took the lead and waded in knee deep to help free the mired bovine. The cow wanted no part of his rescue attempt, so Mark waded in after her too and after an exhausting 20 minutes, we all gave up and thought it best to seek the help of Murphy Ranch. Mark knew the way over the hill and said he was fine riding for help alone and that we should head out to the point to scout for sharks. Remember, Mark really wanted me to see those sharks! Off we rode, my nephew soaked to the bone for his part in

Continued on page 4



TIPS FOR TRAIL RIDERS



SHARING THE TRAIL

Yield when it is safer to do so. All other trail users are expected to yield to equestrians, but sometimes it is safer to yield to others. Pass Slowly. Horses can be intimidating to others. Train your horse to be accustomed to trail riding and other trail users. Stay calm. It helps your horse remain calm.

SAFE COMMUNICATION

Pay attention to your horse. He will hear and sense others before you do. Call out "I'm on a horse, please say hello." Direct others how to pass. Others may be unfamiliar with horses and horse safety, so take the lead to direct a safe passing. Help others to act safely. Ask them to move to the downhill side of the trail so you can pass; horses perceive up slope creatures to be predators. Look ahead, look behind. Be alert to other trail users behind as well as ahead so you can help others act safely around your horse.

- Trail Partners



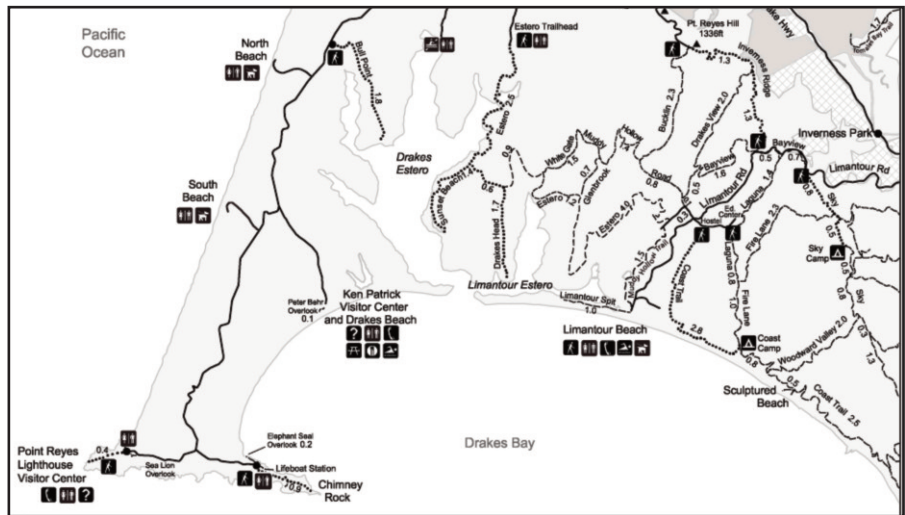
OUT ON THE TRAIL



Greetings from Bay Area Barns and Trails! Since its founding in 2000 Bay Area Barns and Trails (BAPT) has raised and given over \$250,000 to equestrian interest projects around the Bay Area. In 2015, BAPT grants and gifts totaled \$27,000 and included the following projects:

- Funds for Marin Stables and Trails for a round pen project to facilitate outreach programs
- A grant to Ocean Riders of Marin for fence line adjustments to improve site drainage and watershed protection
- Funding for a retaining wall and trail improvements near the junction of the Alambique and Loop Trails in Wunderlich County Park awarded to San Mateo County Parks Foundation
- An annual grant to Tilden Wildcat Horsemen's Association providing matching funds to help support the East Bay Hills Trails Benefit Ride
- A grant to Trail Partners to assist with educational materials for a safety awareness program for equestrians, bikers and hikers on public lands
- A grant providing funds for Volunteers for Outdoor California to construct a new multi-use trail at Franklin Canyon, connecting to the Bay Area Ridge Trail in Fernandez Ranch and Pinole Watershed
- Funding to Diamond Equine Services for construction of a manure bunker to facilitate reopening of Oakland City Stables
- A grant to the Sonoma County Parks Foundation for multi-use trail building at Taylor Mountain Regional Park
- Co-sponsored the Ridge Trail Council's 2015 Ridge to Bridge event

Our Spring 2016 Grant Deadline is May 1. Please visit our website, www.BayAreaBarnsandTrails.com, to download the form. Questions? Contact babtt@sonic.net.



the failed rescue attempt, but undaunted, so we rode off in search of sharks.

After another 45 minutes of glorious scenery we arrived on top the ocean facing cliffs of Drake's Head. Far below the sea was moving in small swells through large channels that lead eventually out to the ocean beyond. We dismounted, cautious of the cliff and our horse's proximity to the possibility of a crumbling ledge. We crept closer to nose over the bank just enough to see the water below. The tide was in, so even though the water was 30 feet below us, it was clear enough to make out the bottom. We stared into the depths, strained and stared, moving further south, we stared some more. Sharks? We moved even further south and peered over the edge again squinting to see what we were sure we were missing, when low and behold the bottom began to take on a familiar shape moving in in a way sharks move, waving back and forth, propelling themselves forward in a circular motion around and around. There were bat rays too, moving with the sharks, skimming the bottom for some kind of nourishment I suspect. Well, I'll be, sharks. Big ones too. 6 footers at least. And that's no fish tale either.

Well enough rubbernecking over sharks, it was time to find Mark and see if he was able to wrangle some help to extract that heifer out of the mud. We met him about 1/2 way back down the trail galloping up with a big smile on his face. Not because he was able to find help for our stranded bovine but because he wanted to know if we saw the sharks! He was thrilled to hear we actually did! As I think back now, maybe I was the only one he could convince to go out there and take a look. Maybe all of the other people he told thought that he was pulling their leg. Good thing we did see them, or I would have to recheck my gullibility level.

On our way back to the trail head a truck came bounding over the hill heading straight toward our party. It was Gino Lucchesi and his wife Kathy McDonald Lucchesi from Murphy Ranch. We stopped, they rolled down the truck window smiling to say how thoughtful it was to come and fetch them. They were able to pull the cow free and she was fine. They spoke of how unusual it was for people to go out of their way to let them know of a situation that could have cost them plenty. Ranching is a hard business and cows like our mud bound gal go for in the neighborhood of \$6,000 each. To us it was an adventure and a fun one at that, it never occurred to us that we were going out of our way to help. It was the right thing to do and

OUT ON THE TRAIL

when as much appreciation was shown to us as the Lucchesis showed us, I for one know I won't hesitate a minute before I offer again if need be.

As for the ride, gorgeous. As for sharks, wondrous. As for good community relationships, priceless. Goes to show how valuable a mounted patrol at PRNS could be. Hint, hint.

-Monte Kruger



Ann Murphy riding "Teddy"

Ann Murphy, Bey Jewell and Amroy Willis with historic farmhouse

Gino Lucchesi and his pal

MURPHY RANCH: HISTORY AND PEOPLE

Originally called "Drakes Bay Hereford Ranch", Murphy Ranch has a long and fascinating history. The ranch is located on the rugged Pacific coastline just past Inverness on Drakes Estero. This ranch is now a part of the Point Reyes National Seashore and one of the most historically significant ranches in the park. In 1857, it was settled by the Shafter family and was called "Home Ranch". They were in the dairy business.

Using this ranch as their base of operations, the Shafter family built a sizeable dairy empire. By 1872 they had developed 31 dairy ranches and their land holdings grew to encompass most of the property now owned by the Point Reyes National Seashore. These holdings stretched from Bolinas in the north out to Pierce Point Ranch and the Lighthouse in the west.

In 1929, the Murphy family acquired the Shafter Dairy Ranch and since then the ranch has been home to five generations of Murphys. During their tenure, the Murphys made the transition from dairy to beef cattle ranching. Back in the day, 150 horses lived at Murphy Ranch – all necessary "equipment" for the daily operations of a cattle ranch. In 1964, the Murphy family sold all 11,000 acres to the Point Reyes National Seashore.

As a part of the national park system, this 11,000 acres of land will now remain preserved in its natural state in perpetuity - and its many wonderful and scenic trails will always remain available for the recreation and enjoyment of the general public!

After the sale, The Murphy family continued to lease back 3,000 acres of the ranch. And although Anne Murphy is the only Murphy in residence, the entire clan constantly comes to visit. How could they stay away? Since 2005, the McDonald-Luchessi Cattle Co. has held the cattle grazing permits for Murphy Ranch and other

Continued on page 6



**SAVE THE DATE!
RIDGE TO BRIDGE RIDE**

The Bay Area's most gorgeous hike and trail ride on the Ridge Trail through Marin and across the Golden Gate.

Ride on April 30th Members-only Registration Open Now Thru March 6. Register NOW!

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ABOUT RIDGE TO BRIDGE: Hikers, runners, bikers (different trail) and equestrians can all join the fun. Horses get a discounted price as we don't need to be shuttled across the Golden Gate. Hikers go to the Presidio Main Post. Those on horses ride a gorgeous loop in Marin. Everyone gets tasty snacks and drinks at staffed rest stops and we gather for a fully catered trail-side lunch!

REGISTER NOW!

<http://www.ridgetrail.org/events/ridge-to-bridge>

**Support the Bay Area Ridge Trail
This is a major fundraiser.**

AT THE BARN



Connie Berto and her Morgan gelding. He answers to Dusty. See page 1 Letter to the Editor.



Original Sign: Drake's Bay Hereford Ranch



Cows next to farmhouse at Murphy Ranch

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large parcels of land. Nowadays the ranchers mount ATVs to monitor and round up the cattle. Gino Luchessis and his wife Kathy are the lone hold-outs to a bygone era. Until very recently Anne Murphy participated in all of the ranch round-ups – riding circles around the ATVs on her talented quarter horse, “Hijo.”

Anne Murphy still holds the lease for 20 acres of Murphy Ranch which is dedicated to the grazing and boarding of horses. The acreage is located smack dab in the middle of the Point Reyes National Seashore and offers direct access to their entire trail system via the Estero Trail and Muddy Hollow Road. You can ride as far as your horse is willing to pack you.

-Amory Willis



TRAINING YOUR TRAIL HORSE



Some of the Lady Cavalry at Marin Stables

My name is Becky Larcher and I am the trainer at Marin Stables in Fairfax, California. I have been teaching riding and training horses for 25 years, out on the Marin Municipal Watershed. People ask me, “What do you need to teach a trail horse to ride the trails? Shouldn’t they know how to do that?” Sounds silly, I know.

Have you ever been on a runaway horse? Ever had a horse that doesn’t want to leave the barn, or leave the group, not go over a bridge, kick another horse while being ridden? Ever had a “seasoned” trail horse do something “he’s never done before?” I could go on and on about what trail horses do that is inappropriate on a ride.



AT THE BARN

Horses, in nature, don't follow a trail. They walk the easiest path from point A to point B. They travel in a herd with a defined leader and the rest are followers. They run when the leader does and they rest when the leader does. That leader, now, they have a job to do. They are constantly on the lookout for any and all possible threats, seen, heard or felt. At the slightest hint of threat, they run. Because they run, so does the herd. Did you know a horse can run a 1/4 mile before taking a full breath or having a cognizant thought? This is done for their protection; they just might outrun that mountain lion chasing them! All of us, who trail ride, have a constant job of teaching our horses to go against their true nature. We want them not to spook, not to run, stay on the trail, follow others politely, and take instruction from the predator on their back. Most horses are not prepared to allow a human/predator to dictate what to do in a crisis, and most humans are not prepared to do the dictating either.

Riding horses in an arena, where the environment is controlled and consistent is easy. It is also poor preparation for trail riding. What it does prepare you and your horse for is for your horse to listen to you and for you to learn when he/she is or isn't listening to you. This may not seem like a big deal but imagine this... You and a friend are out riding down the trail, chatting about life, and two dogs run up behind you. They are charging and bouncing down the trail towards you, no people in sight. What do dogs LOVE to do? CHASE! Dogs are predators. Horses are prey. See the picture? Now add the human into the mix. What are humans? Predators. Where is this human/predator? On the horse's back, where the mountain lion would be, if he caught the horse. Now, if this horse and rider have a clear understanding of who is leader and who is follower, this won't be a big deal. The leader's body language says "it's ok, nothing to be afraid of, hold your ground, turn and face the danger." All of this CLEARLY goes against every instinct in this horse, but because the rider is the leader and the horse is following, it's not such a big deal. Now, if the horse and rider don't have this clear leader/follower relationship worked out, the result can be drastically different. You have a predator chasing the horse, another predator clinging to his back, a rider whose heart rate has spiked off the charts while adrenaline is coursing through the blood stream, their body clamped on, while trying desperately to stay on this runaway freight train.

Anyone ridden this ride before?

If people could understand how their actions and emotions, intentional or not, direct their horses actions, we would have much safer horses and riders on our trails. I went to a Buck Brannaman clinic a while back and he kept repeating something that made so much sense. He was talking to all the people in the clinic who were unable to do the exercise because of one excuse or another. I heard "the arena is too dark, it's too big, there's too many people, people were talking in the stands"...the list goes on and on. What he said was "People, you have GOT to get control of your emotions!" So true.

I ride, practice, learn, teach and train Horsemanship. This is the study of how horse and human relate. It transcends discipline, breed, age, size and ability. Everyone benefits from Horsemanship. Anyone who wants to develop a better understanding

Continued on page 8



More riders of the Lady Calvary at Marin Stables



AT THE BARN



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of these claustrophobic, full throttle-a-holics, and cowards by nature, that we love to ride and spend time with, I highly suggest learning more about Horsemanship. As a predator, humans are poorly prepared to understand prey animals (horses).

From the moment you enter your horse's space, he is gauging whether you are a leader or follower. Your horse believes that his life depends upon whether you lead or follow. Please remember, leadership is earned through trust. This leadership is held through trust, not dominance. There is no love in a horse's natural life; he leads or he is led. Each horse and rider are their own individual herd. Make no mistake, one of you will be the leader and the other will follow. Which one are you?

- Becky Larcher



Park service horses Leo and Stinson.



View of the dairy barn




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PARK SERVICE HORSES AT TENNESSEE VALLEY

Ten minutes north of San Francisco in the Golden Gate Recreation Area, tucked back a couple miles down Tennessee Valley Road past Miwok Livery Stables is the horse patrol stable in the lower Tennessee Valley. Once known as Ranch C/D, and still referred to by the NPS as the Bettencourt Ranch, it was run by Azorean Portuguese immigrants in the late 1800s into the early 1900s. Descendants of the dairy barn have been known to drop by and visit from time to time over the years.

Currently, about 30 volunteers, all with the oversight of Richard Kohn, run the daily operations of taking care of the existing patrol horses. Richard a 25 year veteran, describes the volunteer program as having started as an extension of the park rangers, once connected to the Golden Gate Park Police, who have historically been short-staffed and unable to cover all of Tennessee Valley. There are many horses that have cycled through the barn over the years and lived out their lives under the care of these volunteers. Richard reflects on the importance of the program in lower Tennessee Valley as the eyes and ears of the rangers. Although the barn itself was built 130 years ago, predating the existence of the Golden Gate Recreation Area, it does not meet the criteria for the National Register of Historic Places Golden Gate Recreation Area.

AT THE BARN

Coinciding with the exchange and sale of various land parcels throughout Mill Valley in the 1800's, a wealthy attorney and land owner, Samuel Reading Throckmorton, facilitated the creation of various Ranches throughout the Tennessee Valley area that were designated by letters, Ranches A-Z. There were 24 dairies established by 1890. Some of these were tenant ranches where landowners contributed their land and tenant ranchers contributed their labor. While these were both dairy and cattle ranches, the Gold Rush in the mid-1800s created an increased need for dairy products. Portuguese immigrants from the Azores Islands, near Iberian Portugal, owned virtually all of the southern Marin dairies at this time.

Of these dairy farms, Ranch C/D was established in lower Tennessee Valley around 1880. These two parcels were located on the southern flank of the valley right next to each other and nearby Ranch A/B (which is today Miwok Livery Stables). This area was also known as "Elk Valley." Maybe because of the economy at this time, Joseph G. Lewis and M.P. Sequeira did not purchase these parcels until 1905. These owners did occupy this land rather than leasing it out to tenants at least until the 1920s. With Sequeira retiring in 1939, tenants Laura and Manuel Lopez (who later lived up-valley at the adjacent Ranch A/B) worked the ranch between 1941–1947. The ranch was sold after Lewis's death to J. and Geraldine Bettencourt. Sometime after 1956 Dean Witter acquired most of the parcel, purchasing the land as a hunting ranch.

The National Park Service later turned these ranches into horse stables in the 1970s which included Tennessee Valley and Rodeo Valley stables, and lower Tennessee Valley stables which houses the patrol horses today. Since the only original structure that remains at the ranch is the barn, the property is not eligible to be included in the National Register of Historic Places. That said, plans are currently underway to move the patrol horses to the Presidio Riding Club in the Marin Headlands. Because of the deteriorating state of the barn and need for overall land conservation the NPS has decided to move the horses and return the area to its natural habitat.

-Mimi Vitetta

Resources

U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service (2005). *National Register of Historic Places continuation sheet*. Washington, D.C.



SAVE THE DATE

RIDGE TO BRIDGE RIDE
APRIL 30, 2016
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www.ridgetrail.org
[/events/ridge-to-bridge](http://events/ridge-to-bridge)



HORSE HILL ~ MILL VALLEY



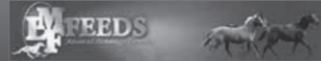
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NEWS & UPDATES

Shows & Events

Dickson Ranch Show Calendar:

May 07~Country Fun day/Playday
9:00 AM

May 14~Dressage Schooling Show
Call for your ride time

June 04~English/Western Schooling Show
8:30 AM

July 04~Woodacre Parade/Country
FUN-DAY 12:00 PM



Our Newsletter is Going Green!

The Marin Horse Council Newsletter is Going "Green!" We will be sending your quarterly Newsletters electronically. In order to do so, please let us know if you would like us to mail one to your home or send it to you via email. Send us a note at:

contact@marinhorsecouncil.org

We want to be better stewards of the environment. The money we save will be put towards supporting our equestrian presence in Marin County.



All MARIN HORSE COUNCIL memberships now renew on JANUARY 1st. Everyone renews on the same date. We will give a grace period to those who joined or renewed in December or November of last year. We are asking everyone to renew online. We are an all volunteer non-profit organization and our Treasurer cannot handle the extra manual work of mailed in checks.

It works better for us online.

To ask about the status of your membership email

contact@marinhorsecouncil.org

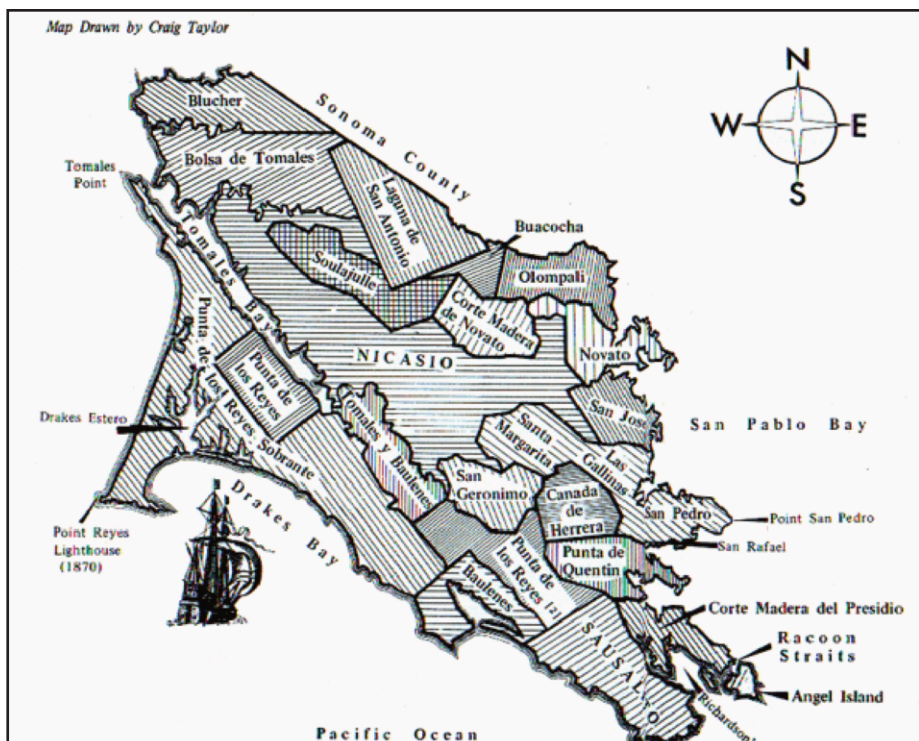


Baywood, From Rancho to Baywood

Baywood Equestrian Center is part of what was the Rancho Cañada de Herrera (Ravine of the blacksmith Ranch) Mexican land grant. People would bring their horses from miles around to be shod and for the chance to socialize. During the years that followed the original Mexican land grant bits and pieces have fallen away to development, leaving only a small piece remaining as horse property. Rancho Cañada de Herrera was a 6,658-acre Mexican land grant given in 1839 to Domingo Sais. The grant encompassed present day Fairfax, Sleepy Hollow and a part of San Anselmo.

The site was once part of a 1,000 acre beef cattle and dairy ranch. In 1934 the Smith family bought the ranch, it was called the Smith Family Ranch, subdivided it and sold parcels ultimately selling the Baywood parcel in 1974. Horses were stabled on the site while it was still an active livestock operation but horse activity blossomed in the 1940s with the development of what became known as the Circle V Ranch.

Ed and Zeke Smith were members of the Marin County Mounted Sheriff's Posse and



NEWS & UPDATES

decided to build a stable in Baywood Canyon for a central facility to board their horses. The outdoor arena was built for a roping club by the Sheriff's Posse and in 1946 opened as a non-profit corporation called Circle V Ranch, the V representing the 5 partners who formed the corporation. By 1949 the outdoor arena had begun hosting rodeos with a seating capacity of 4,000 spectators and was becoming known as the Smith Ranch Showgrounds. In 1954 an indoor arena was built in order to practice cutting and roping in the winter. After the death of the Smith brothers in 1954 and 1955 the Kiwanis club took over the annual rodeo which continued until 1969. The estate was eventually sold in 1974 to Jack Farnar who tore down the rodeo arena and developed the stables, renaming it the Baywood Riding and Tennis club. In the early 1990s the property was bought by the Star Mountain Development company with the intent of building new homes. The horse community rallied.

The Marin Horse Council under the directorship of Connie Berto was instrumental in voicing the needs of the equestrian community as well as the general public. Members of the Marin Horse Council as well as the concerned equestrian community attended many meetings and wrote letters clearing up misunderstandings about possible disease transmission, educating the Marin County Planning Department about the types of trail access and development needed for multi-use by horses, hikers and bikes and compelling them to consider their role in supporting the quality of life brought to its citizens by a healthy equine industry.

I bought Baywood in 2000 knowing little about running a barn but having grown up in Marin and having heard a lot of stories about Circle V Ranch. I am grateful that it was allowed to continue in the face of ever increasing land values and that I have an opportunity to be part of its history. The arena still sports the Circle V gate and as long as I am there will continue to do so. Thanks to the Marin Horse Council and thanks to the equestrian community; I have learned a lot in the last 15 years and am proud to now belong to this community.

- Holly Ford



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Circle V Ranch, Fairfax, Marin County, California, c. 1950. Courtesy of Marin County Free Library. Anne T. Kent California Room.



Women on horseback at Circle V Ranch, Fairfax, Marin County, California, c. 1950. Courtesy of Marin County Free Library. Anne T. Kent California Room.



Rodeo at Circle V Ranch, Fairfax, Marin County, California, circa 1950, Courtesy of Marin County Free Library. Anne T. Kent California Room



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Fergus (Equus hilarious)

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Panel 1: Fergus says, "I know how to untie knots."
Panel 2: Fergus says, "Well, I can open doors and gates!"
Panel 3: Fergus says, "I can hold my foot in a bucket!"
Panel 4: Fergus asks, "Does anyone here play chess?"

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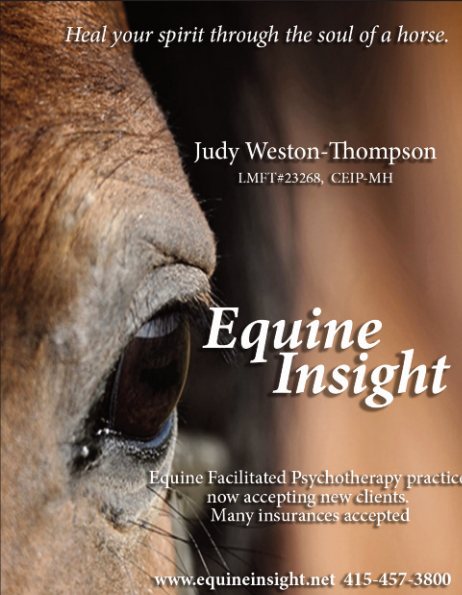
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Circle V Ranch, Fairfax, Marin County, California, c.1950.



Marin Horse Council Membership Application

- Adult \$25
 Junior \$15
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 "Silver Buckle" \$50
 "Golden Horseshoe" \$100
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Occupation _____ Affiliations _____

- Own a horse?** Yes No
Your interests: English Western Trail Riding Endurance Show Jumping Dressage
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- MHC needs volunteers! Please indicate if you can help us with:** Finance, Communication, Membership, Barn Liaisons,
 Government Affairs, Horse Course, Eq Evac, Events committee, Marin County Fair, Volunteer Co-coordinating

Your membership in the Marin Horse Council helps support the Council's many activities on behalf of Marin's equestrians and equines. Donations are also welcome. Fees and donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Thanks for joining! Mail your check to Marin Horse Council | 171 Bel Marin Keyes Blvd. | Novato, CA 94949-6183



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Thank You!

The Marin Horse Council depends on the continued generous support of Marin's horse lovers. Thanks to all members, and in particular, thanks to those who join or renew at Lifetime, Golden Horseshoe, or Silver Buckle membership levels.

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