

Horse and Rider Welcome at Three Stallion Inn

by Charles Sutton

It is not unusual today to see vehicles on Vermont roads hauling horses to and from the various horse shows. Joining them too, are a growing number of vacationers who bring their horses with them, maybe to be in a show, or maybe to ride on some of the state's many inviting woodland or forest trails. But who takes in horses?

One destination is the horse-friendly Three Stallion Inn in Randolph in central Vermont, with its own 18 miles of well-groomed horseback riding trails through woods and open fields. The inn offers eight well-maintained indoor horse stalls, a riding ring and fenced pastures.

The inn, located on the 1,300-acre former Green Mountain Stock Farm property has quite a history with horses. It was one of Vermont's major breeding centers for Morgan horses from 1927 to 1962.

Home to the Lippitt Morgan horse

When Sam Sammis and his wife Jinny bought the property in 1971 the farm house and remaining buildings, vacant for years, were in disrepair, the horses were long gone. During the 1970s the inn was renovated and fixed up initially to service a girls' horseback riding camp.

Also, during the 1970s the inn and its facilities hosted the Lippitt Morgan Horse Show, named after Green Mountain Stock Farm founder Robert Lippitt Knight, who developed the Lippitt line of Morgan horses known for their strength of character, versatility and endurance.

The main building at the stock farm housed horse-breeder Knight's pine-paneled office. A story passed down about Knight relates that when he had someone who wanted to buy a horse, he'd invite them into his office and they would negotiate a price over a cigar and brandy with a cheerful fire burning in the fireplace. In addition to horses Knight sold and traded a large variety of horse carriages. There also was an extensive library of books on horses.

Excellent accommodations for horse and rider

For those who bring a horse for a trail riding vacation here today, the inn offers a special package of \$150 per night, double occupancy, plus a stall for the horse. An additional horse can be boarded for an extra \$25. There are veterinarians and farriers in the area if needed.

Guests have use of all inn amenities including the fitness center, swimming pool, hot tub, and tennis courts. A continental breakfast is served or guests can have a full breakfast at The Depot Restaurant, former CNRR train Station.

Jinny Sammis, an avid horseback rider, recommends the best place to go after riding the inn's trails, is the Mt. Tom trail system in Woodstock, VT maintained by the Rockefeller Foundation for Billings Farm. No fee is charged. And she adds: "The system includes hiking, cross country skiing, carriage driving and of course horseback riding." Its many trails are very wide, dry, gravel carriage roads, with no real water crossings.

The inn also has recommendations for other riding trails in the area as well as stables where guests can rent horses.



photo by Brian Hartigan

Three Stallion Inn and the Green Mountain Stock Farm offer many miles of trails for riding.

Area equine events

Jinny said of particular interest this summer to horse lovers is the 59th Annual Open Horse Show of the Mid-State Riding Club to be held August 11 at its grounds on Rt. 12 just north of Randolph.

The non-profit club has activities for people of all ages and experience with fun classes (stick horse, costumes and games) as well as traditional competitions. Its goal is equine-related fun and education with a slogan "Horsin' around to get where we want to go!"

In late July the Mid State Riding Club and The Three Stallion Inn host an American Competitive Trail Horse Association (ACTHA) ride where the terrain offers the required difficulties for rider and horse.

For a weekend of watching Lippitt Morgans compete, plan to attend the 39th Annual Lippitt Country Show, August 16-18 at the Tunbridge Fairgrounds in Tunbridge, VT.

This will be an old-fashioned horse show, featuring the Lippitt Morgan horse. Classes include in-hand, English, Western, jumping, trail, costume, stick horse, races and much more. (For information call (802) 235-2264.)

The club notes there are only about 2,000 Lippitt Morgan horses in the entire country and they all are related to Justin Morgan's stallion "Figure" from Randolph.

Morgan horse owners are encouraged to bring their Morgans or just come as a visitor and watch the Morgan Mile Trotting Races starting at 1 p.m. September 7 along the famous Morgan Mile road in Brookfield, VT. This race follows a tradition started in 1796 where

a Morgan race took place on the Morgan Mile when the famous Morgan "Figure" raced down this old Vermont road, easily beating out two New York running horses.

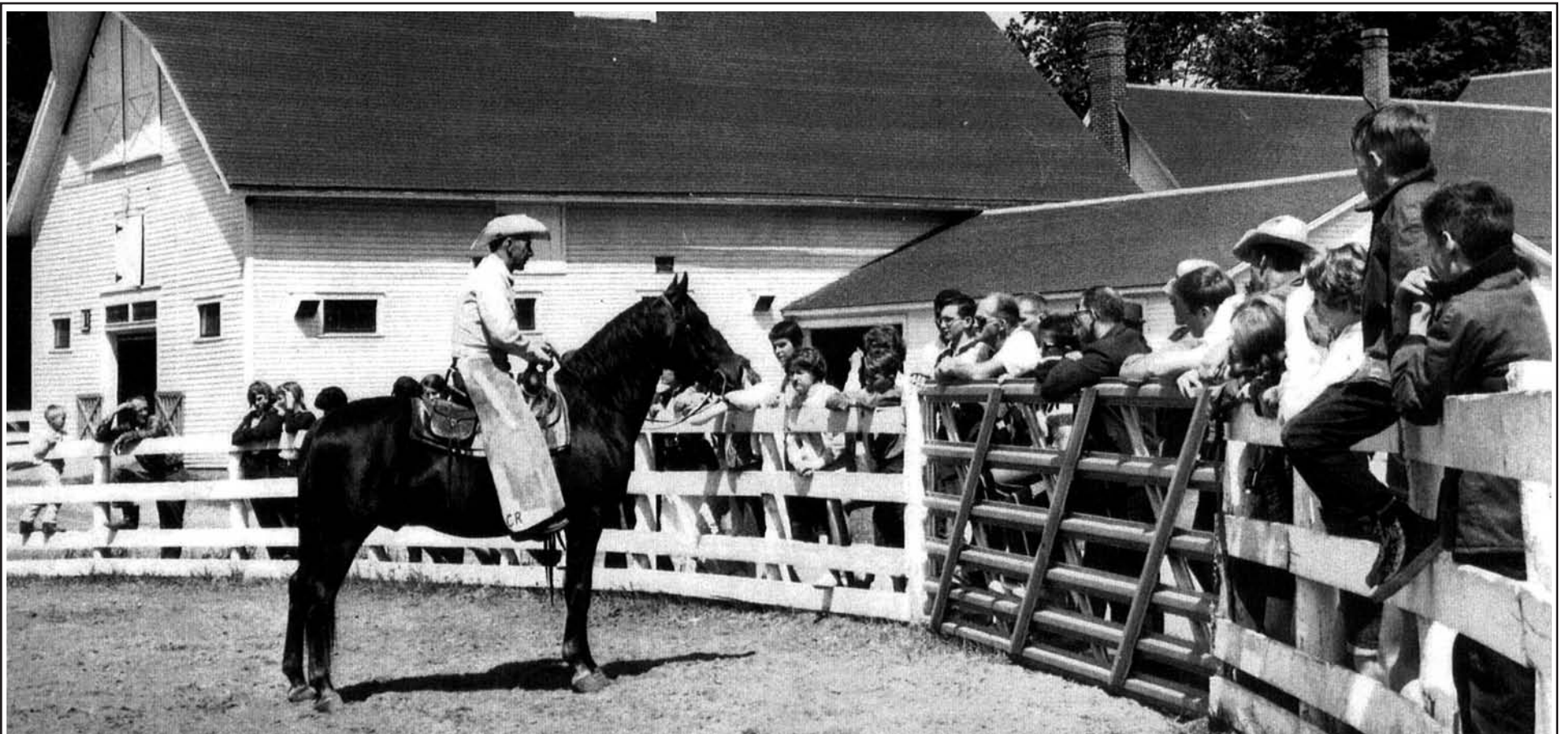
Organizer Dennis Tatro and The Vermont Morgan Horse Association will have two Morgan trotters race at a time, either at a trot, under saddle or in harness. (For information call (802) 763-2516).

Without a horse, there's plenty of equine enjoyment in Vermont. When you drive around you may notice a sign of the times—there seem to be fewer cows, but many more horses!

The Three Stallion Inn is located at 665 Stock Farm Rd., off Rt. 66 near I-89, exit 4, in Randolph, VT. For further information or to arrange a stay call (802) 728-5575, e-mail info@threestallioninn.com or visit www.threestallioninn.com.



The Three Stallion Inn.



Morgan horse shows go way back at the Green Mountain Stock Farm.

photo courtesy of Three Stallion Inn