

# Three Stallion Inn



Wintertime settles over the Three Stallion Inn in Randolph, VT.

photo courtesy of Three Stallion Inn

## Randolph, VT

# ❧ Winter Wonderland at Three Stallion Inn ❧

by Charles Sutton

When Sam Sammis and his wife Jinny bought the 1,300-acre Green Mountain Stock Farm in Randolph, VT, in 1971 with its historic farm buildings, he had no idea that years later he'd be personally running The Three Stallion Inn there.

He had purchased the property with the intent of developing building sites of 10 to 100 acres in the woods with open areas left intact, an environmentally forward idea at the time. Sammis was well into a career in real estate development and commercial leasing with offices in Connecticut. The Vermont land purchase, with its beautiful old stone house down the road from the Stock Farm, would be a reason to have a base in Vermont for business and weekend family escapes. Innkeeping was not in the picture.

But what to do about the buildings that came with the farm, which was one of Vermont's major breeding centers for Morgan horses from 1927 to 1962. The farm house had been vacant for years and the horses were gone, and farm animals were roaming in areas that today are the dining room and pub for the Three Stallion Inn.

### From humble beginnings

By one of those chance happenings, Sammis was put in contact with Kim Mumford, the Olympic skier, who was looking for a place to stay in the area while attending Vermont Technical College, and she began housesitting for them. In the meantime, Olympic skier Bob Gray, whom she was soon to marry, was looking for a place to run an informal ski touring center. Sammis offered Bob and Kim the use of the old farm buildings on an initially sweat-equity basis. The Grays set up a cross country ski touring center at the stock farm which they managed during the winters for the next five years. (The couple today lives in Newbury, VT, where they own The Four Corners Farm, known for its wonderful strawberries and other produce.)

Sammis tells the story of how, in Bob and Kim's first winter, a New York Times travel writer got stranded in Randolph during a blizzard and ended up spending the night at the "Gray's Inn." Here were these hardworking Olympic skiers patching up the old farm buildings in the middle of what seemed like a wilderness, cooking meals, and hosting ski touring, all by themselves with only the help of their Golden Retriever. He had never seen anything like it and stayed an extra day. The next weekend a front page story about the couple fixing up the place, heating with wood stoves, and doing their skiing thing appeared in the Times's travel section. It put the place on the map and it's been there ever since.

### Enjoying outdoor recreation!

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 and endurance. During the late 1970s the inn was renovated and fixed up initially to service a girls' horseback riding camp and later Vermont Bicycle Tours, a relationship that continues today. Sammis recalls one big selling point for bicycling in the greater Randolph area was "fewer cars." Today there are 500 miles of mapped trails and bike tours in the area with plenty of choices for beginners and experts.

For years after that the inn was run by full-time managers. Potential purchasers of the neighboring land for home sites stayed at the inn and enjoyed its recreational opportunities, fitness center, restaurant and pub.

Sammis continues to provide use of the inn and its facilities for community events including an outdoor summer concert by the Vermont Symphony Orchestra, the Vermont Chamber concert series (two events), and the Randolph Fire Department's annual Fourth of July fireworks display on the Stock Farm Road.

Today, guests of the inn have all-season recreation at their front door. With recent snowfalls, the cross-country ski center is busy with rentals and 35 kilometers of trails that criss-cross the Stock Farm's 1300 acres. In warmer weather visitors can play golf, swim in the pool, hike and mountain bike, and play tennis. And the fitness center is good any time of year. It includes a Stairmaster, Life Cycle bike, treadmill, Universal, Concept rowing machine and hand weights, 2 whirlpools, hot tubs and a sauna.

### Every comfort offered

With Sammis taking over as hands-on manager this past spring, the inn has undergone a major updating of facilities. One only has to go to the basement to get a feeling that this is the engine room of a luxury liner. New boilers assure ample heat and hot water and several storage tanks guarantee a fresh supply of fresh water from the property's three wells. There are intriguing storage spaces including one kept at 36 degrees, where bottles of white wine are kept and nine kegs of beer are tapped and run up to the bar directly overhead.

The many renovations and updates on equipment are the handiwork of property manager Brian Hartigan, a builder and contractor who grew up in Randolph, but worked for many years in the Philadelphia area where he renovated brownstones and built a chain of Murray's Steak Houses. His most recent accomplishments at the inn include doing over the 14 bedrooms and baths. The new bathrooms have

Carerra marble vanities, heated marble floors and steam showers and the bedrooms are furnished with top-of-the-line Euro pillow-top beds and new luxury carpets. Thanks to his handiwork, guests can use their cell phones from any place in the inn. And there is high-speed wireless Internet access throughout.

Many of the improvements at the inn have been geared to bringing in more weddings, conferences, reunions, corporate retreats, and family gatherings, according to office manager Amy Rosalbo. She said it's true the inn's staff insisted that Sam Sammis manage the inn himself when the last manager left, and that the entire team there would do what they had to make it possible.

### Known for excellent dining

Sammis is pleased at how well the staff has rallied around. Part of making the inn popular has been the excellent food and he has high praises for chefs Bob Hildebrand and newcomer Tim Kingzett. Bob said the inn makes a major change in its menu four times a year, but that there are weekly updates using foods that come in season. Sammis has contracted with local farms to grow to order for the inn and the crops are delivered freshly harvested. The assortment is a source for the chef's inspiration for weekly specials. Truly farm to table gourmet dining! Who can resist their "Pick of the Market" dishes like Prosciutto, Gruyere and Spinach Chicken Kiev; Seared Yellowfin Tuna with Wasabi Cream, Daikon Salad and Tempura Nori Roll; Grilled Cervina Venison Medallions with Juniper-Madeira Sauce and Potato Gratin; or Prime Rib? There's also light fare and small plates of grilled Halloumi cheese, wings two ways, Prince Edward Island mussels and tempura duck tenders.

Sometimes guests just show up at the door. One regular who comes every August arrives after an all-day trek in a horse-drawn carriage, has dinner and spends the night. The horses are put up, too. After all, this is the Three Stallion Inn!

*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 (800) 424-5575, e-mail: [tsi@3stallioninn.com](mailto:tsi@3stallioninn.com) or visit [www.3stallioninn.com](http://www.3stallioninn.com). Pick-ups from the train station can be arranged.*

*Morgan's Pub and Lippitt's Restaurant are open to the public Tuesday through Sunday 5-9 pm.*