

Maryland Stallion Station

by Hope Holland

The Stuff Dreams Are Made Of...

The horse business is an odd one. We are farmers who are not farmers as far as farmers are concerned, sports people who are not “real” sports people as far as the “real” sports people are concerned. We are dreamers of dreams who must mandate reality into our dreams to be practicable.

This a time when the horse has become the equine equivalent of a land yacht, i.e. a hole in the pasture that we throw money into. The horse business is working hard to show that it is a feasible business for people who have expendable wealth to invest venture capital

in. We are streamlining our businesses for several reasons: the horse as a tax shield has been devalued by an unsympathetic IRS, the price of green space is rising as houses, townhouses and condos invade our acreage and the upkeep of a large farm is becoming prohibitive in terms of labor.

What we have forgotten is that this is also a business of dreams. In spite of business

men who want to refashion the horse into a place for venture capital, as an alternative to the now shaky stock market, the horse has lost none of its essential magic. It is what it has always been, an animal to inspire a certain sort of person. These people come from all walks of life. Poor folks, rich folks and all of the levels in between, all dreamers of a certain type of dream, the dream which so easily attaches itself to the drum of the hooves of a galloping horse, to the power and thrust of the muscles of an athlete in a coat of silken colors, the fire in the eye and

The only credential the horse industry asks is the boldness to dream. For those who do, it unlocks its gates and its treasures, not caring who they are or where they came from.

—adapted from Moss Hart

the belly of a fine horse. This is the stuff of dreams as well as money.

Maryland and Virginia have a history of fine horses and of the land that frames them magnificently. We are a place of storied properties, of, if you will, the ambiance that speaks of elegance in discernment in both grounds and in the horses that inhabit them. Sagamore Farm, home of Native Dancer, was for years the

center of the horse world in Maryland and in the nation as well; the Queen of England kept a brood mare at Sagamore year ‘round and had her yearlings shipped home each year to Britain. Harvey Ladew created an entire farm in the image of the ambiance of Maryland’s historic horse farms. E. P. Taylor’s Windfield Farm was, until the demise of both Taylor and the farm’s premier stallion, Northern Dancer, the ne plus ultra of the Mid Atlantic Thoroughbred scene.

All things are cyclical, none more so than the horse industry. Since the days of those great farms we have settled into the working farm. The horse farm has become a place of business; elegance of landscaping has been sacrificed to lack of time and lack of manpower in maintenance. Distinction of basic horse housing has given way to modern buildings that, while they lack the look of timeless quality, more than make up for it in convenience and ease of maintenance.

Into this space has stepped a group of men who have made up their minds to return to the top echelon of Thoroughbred breeders the ambiance that a fine horse deserves. Using the same blueprints that created Lane’s End in Kentucky, Donald Litz and a consortium of

Nothing happens unless first a dream.

—Carl Sandburg

like-minded businessmen have leased 100 acres of land in fabled Worthington Valley, across the road from Sagamore Farm, and are planning to build a stallion station in the likeness of the finest facility for horses in the US today.

William Farish, Jr., son of the owner of Lane’s End, Wm. Farish, Sr., a longtime horse-



“Ever since I have known Don, and that has been since he was a teenager, he has had a love affair with Sagamore Farm and the Worthington Valley. It has literally been a spiritual connection. I am sure Native Dancer is his Guardian Angel and that the energy that surrounds him is one of thundering hoofbeats.”

—Ross Peddicord
Former racing writer
for the Baltimore Sun

dor to the Court of St. James, is a partner in this union of visionary horsemen. With the others, Farish and Litz have brought to what will become The Maryland Stallion Station five fine stallions.

Eastern Echo, by Damascus and out of the Northern Dancer daughter Applause, is a nationally recognized sire of 2 year-olds with average earnings per starter of \$56,000. Jazz Club, Dixieland Band—

Hidden Garden, by Mr. Prospector, is the multiple graded winner of \$417,687.

Seeking Daylight, by Seeking the Gold and out of Play All Day, by Steady Growth, was undefeated at two with career earnings of \$244,710. Rock Slide, multiple stakes winner of \$442,500, is a full brother to Mineshaft (\$2,283,402) both of them be-



(L-R) Don Litz & Jim Steele review the site plans for the Maryland Stallion Station. They hope to be moving earth by the end of December.

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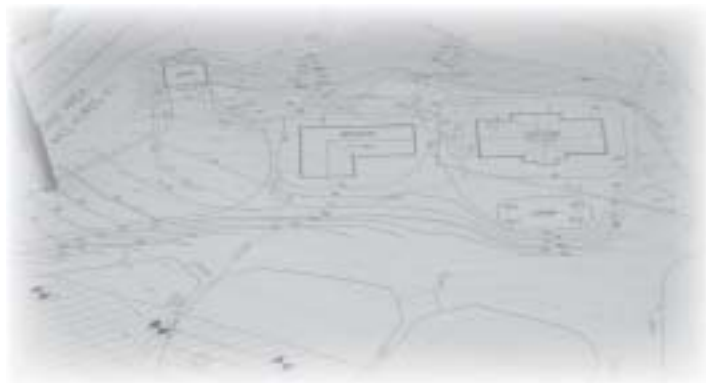
ing sired by A. P. Indy and out of Prospector's Delite by Mr. Prospector. Outflanker, by Danzig—Lassie's Lady, by Alydar is the sire of seven stakes horses which earned black type as juveniles, including Outstander (\$251,800) and the two year old Miss Outrageous, undefeated in two starts.

The idea of combining these stallions, this installation and using the fabled Worthington Valley as a backdrop has long been a dream for Litz.

Donald Litz has been a horseman on the Maryland scene for most of his life. He started working with Dr. Loomis, out of Reisterstown Veterinary Center which—at that time—handled the horses of most of the

The Maryland Stallion Station expects a national and international clientele, as, according to Litz. "The mares in the Maryland/Virginia area represent some of the finest bloodlines in the US at this time. It is a known fact in national racing circles that we are historically the home of many of the best bred mares to be had in this country."

Litz is a firm believer in the cyclical nature of all business in general and of the horse business in particular. "In a business there is only so much sustainable energy," muses Litz, "This is true of all businesses, after a while the energy begins to dwindle and needs freshening. Our group is at the begin-



fine farms in 'the valley'. Later Litz established Litz Horse Transport (now sold to and operating under the name of Tim Porter) and Litz Bloodstock Services. Litz had input in the moving of some stallions from the fabled Windfields Farm to Sagamore upon the demise of Mr. Taylor.

All five stallions owned by The Maryland Stallion Station are in temporary residence at Shamrock, where they will stand the 2004 season while awaiting completion of their new quarters in the Valley.

There are no plans to build mare facilities at the stallion station. Mares will be quartered instead at several farms, including Sagamore, Shamrock, Halcyon and Dr. Michael Harrison's farm, shipping to the station to be serviced.

ning of our cycle. It is our intention to develop a facility with international potential using as a base the mares in the Mid-Atlantic area. This area fully deserves a stallion station of the caliber of Windfield Farm crossing stallions with more modern bloodlines on the mares already available."

This then is the story of a new beginning in Maryland, not only of The Maryland Stallion Station, but also of the beginning of an era of elegance of place and presentation that harkens back to the roots of the horse industry in both Maryland and in Virginia. It is, if you wish, a circle come full cycle in a business that is built both of dreams and sweat, of stardust and sawdust where, like the fairy tale of Rapunzel, straw is often spun into gold.