



~ NEW ENGLAND, THE HOMELAND ~

BREEDER PROFILE: NEWMONT MORGANS

*In Vermont, dairy farming is the one thing bigger than breeding Morgan horses.
The Gladstones do both.*

The drive down Mallery Road, which dissects Newmont Farm's acreage in Bradford, Vermont, is a snapshot, setting the stage for the much larger picture to be revealed over the course of a few hour's visit.

At the mouth of the road, on either side, are dairy barns. Their expanse is more likely to be measured in acres, than in square feet. They are home to a herd of Holstien cows being milked by the 23 full time employees of the farm. Obviously, this is

the business that supports all the enterprises of owners Walter and Margaret Gladstone. The lessons learned breeding and caring for these dairy cattle have been uniquely applied to the breeding of the Newmont Morgans, as we will learn.

By Stephen Kinney

You pass some residences and go through a stand of pines, and at the far end of the meandering drive is the stable. First you see a familiar face: Heidi Osgood Metcalf, her camera poised on a tripod at pasture's edge as she

ABOVE: Newmont's Miss Right & Dragonfire Fourthdimension with Walt & Margaret Gladstone. **RIGHT:** LVM Black Cherry and Newmont's Delta Dawn (by FCF Capestranno) at Newmont Morgan Farm (photos © Heidi Osgood-Metcalf).





ABOVE: Newmont's Belmont Stakes has found a calling as a carriage and sleigh driving horse. Owned by Doug Heavysides of Vermont.

waits for her subjects to appear from the barn. Heidi, who is (like her aunt Jeanne Mellin Herrick was) a keen documenter of the Morgan breed, lives only a few miles away. Good photography, Margaret Gladstone will explain, is essential to the promotion and marketing of the Morgans bred here.

Soon, out of a stall door opening to a run, comes a Morgan mare and foal. The mare is RRG Ms Promiscuous. She is really glamorous and full of snort and blow. She holds a Grand National title in-hand. Her dam, RRG Promises Promises, possessed a world title in-hand. These awards confirm for Margaret that she has purchased mares with superior conformation and type. More meaningful is that this mare's female line goes back to Judy Caldwell's foundation mare HRH Trophyet. Celebrating the bottom line of a pedigree is a lesson carried over from the breeding of cows to the newer activity of breeding horses—and that will be a dominating theme of our conversation today.

The filly at the mare's side is sired by Pot Of Gold, another horse with a world title in-hand. RRG Ms Promiscuous is the only mare serviced by Pot Of Gold in 2018. Indeed, according to the registry database, she is the only mare the stallion has bred since 2007. So clearly, Margaret's breeding decision was not guided by the latest trend, but something else, something deeper. We will learn more about this too!

THE DAIRY FARM

Before it was Newmont Farm, the property in Bradford, Vermont, was Mallary Farm—though you might think of it as an estate. It was previously home to a storied herd of Holstein cows—as it is today. Richard Mallary, who died 2011, in addition to being a dairy

farmer, was a member of Congress and a Vermont Senator. Today, the Gladstones live in the original Mallary farm house toward the end of the winding lane.

In the late 1980s, Walt and Margaret were a young couple starting a family. They had both grown up in dairy families. In fact, without knowing it, they were once pitted against each other on Dairy Cattle Judging Teams, Walt competing with the Cornell team and Margaret with the University of Vermont. They met on a blind date set up by Margaret's brother. She recalls, "this farm came up for auction in 1987 and Walt, at that time, was selling seed locally. He knew about the auction and the fact it was Connecticut River Valley land, we ended up buying it at auction."

Walt continues the story, "It's easy to remember. Our oldest son Will is 30, so we've been here at the farm for 30 years. I can't remember all of them, but I can remember that date."

The dairy is, to say the least, a successful family business today. It evolved over time. Walt again: "Basically, the first ten years we were here, we milked 120 cows. That's what the facility held. During that time, we developed a sweet corn business as well. We were wholesaling about 70 acres of sweet corn. We also developed a pumpkin business. As we got a little extra land and we weren't ready to expand the dairy, we developed these produce lines of pumpkins and sweet corn. About ten years into it, which would have been in '98, we were treading water with the dairy business. So, we thought we would build newer barns, add better technology in our milking center, and we went to milking about 400 cows ten years after we started. To be honest, it was like a breath of fresh air. It was exciting. When we were milking 120 cows I was getting up at 2:30 in the morning and milking



LEFT: Newmont's Imortal Homerun owned by Michelle Cravenho; **RIGHT:** Newmonts Dear Miss Belle & Hanna Welch (photo © Shane Shiflet).

one end of the day. It was quite a grind. As we took on more cows we needed more people, but we became more working managers and not just the workers.”

Margaret updates the evolution. “We also had three sons. We both grew up on dairy farms and not knowing if the boys wanted to be farmers or not—that certainly was their choice—we felt like we needed to be progressive and set up something that was going to be financially stable for them if that was to be of interest when they got out of college. We did not want to be stagnant in the dairy industry.”

Today, Newmont Farm milks 1,400 head a day, grows its own feed planted on 2,000 acres, and has a significant pumpkin growing subsidiary. The farm is powered 50 percent by solar energy.

ON TO HORSES

You might think for Vermont farm owners, Morgan horses were a natural. But that’s not quite how it happened. Horse breeding also took on a unique evolution of its own.

Here is the story in Margaret’s words: “Growing the dairy, we hired help. There was one guy who had to drive to work and he told me there was a horse up in Newbury north of us and it was starving and he said, ‘I think you should save it Margaret. You have a pasture and you could save it.’ I never was a girl who had to have a horse, but I brought Walt up and, sure enough, we decided to save this big Belgian horse. I didn’t know he was a stallion. We fed him and he became too much for us to handle. But I told Walt that I really liked having a horse around. So, we decided to get an Amish driving horse. He was a Standardbred and he was also a little bit too much for me. You hooked him up and he just wanted to go. I thought maybe it would be more

my speed to have a mare that was going to have a baby. So, Walt was on a bit of a mission. On Valentine’s day, he bought me a horse named Rose. She was pregnant and she was a Morgan. A very lovely Morgan. [According to the registry, Rose is actually Spring Run’s Phantom Rose]. She came home and that spring she had a baby.

“Well, also that spring, I had a pony cart for sale and Ann Hastings showed up with a girl who was looking for a pony cart. Of course, I didn’t know Ann Hastings. And here I had this Morgan mare. She was a Phantom Of The Opera daughter. I didn’t know Phantom Of The Opera. I just knew she had a cute baby and life was good. Ann showed up and said she was a lovely mare.”

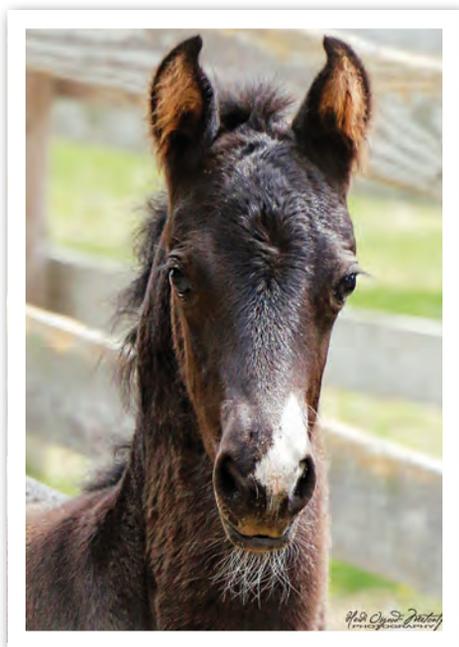
As most know, Hastings is the name behind the Tug Hill prefix famous for the breeding stallions Tug Hill Commando and Tug Hill Whamuniton.

“That day, Ann told me a lot of things, but one thing that stuck in my mind was, she said, ‘If you ever start to breed horses, don’t get barn blind. Don’t think you have something special unless you really do.’ She gave me a lot of advice, but that is the piece that always stuck in my head—don’t get barn blindness. I didn’t even know who she was—but I do today! I did my research after she left and thought, ‘Oh my goodness.’”

Today Margaret jokes about those humble beginnings, “I lay all this on that hired guy who told me to go rescue that starving horse. That and Walt chose Rose on Valentine’s Day.”

WHEN IN DOUBT, DO RESEARCH

Walt and Margaret are specifically grateful to the late Harry Sebring for the introduction to breeding lore he gave them.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Newmont's Captivator (Mizrahi x ALB Starry Night); Newmont's My O My (Titanium x Aljak's Miss Ladeeda); Newmont's Legend (MSV Shooting Star x FMB Peaches N Cream) (photos © Heidi Osgood-Metcalf).

Early on they spent a day at his farm in the Berkshires. He showed them breeding stock and he brought out the Morgan Breeding Standard from the Judging Manual. Breeding of dairy cows is governed by more objective standards than we may be accustomed to in the horse business. And this early exposure set them on a track in which sound conformation would become tantamount.

In addition to Harry's introduction to breeding wisdom, Margaret feels she learned through every avenue of research she could access. "I wanted to see what was out there. I started Googling farms. I had no connections to the Morgan industry. I didn't know people in the Morgan world. I would see breeders online. I was not shy about calling. I really enjoyed picking people's minds about what they valued. I also think I was kind of independent, doing my own thing and hoping I could bring it together.

"I had certain horses at home and then I went to the horse shows and said, 'Oh man, I've got a long way to go. I've got to figure this out.' So, I would just delve in deeper and do more work and research. I was very focused on mares, because that's where we were in the Holstein industry. You try to have a really nice cow to breed. John Hufferd gave me the opportunity to buy Aljaks Miss Wham I Am. I was over the moon. I thought this was the horse I can start moving forward with what I wanted to do. I spent a lot of time on the phone with Joyce Metters and my friend Dickie MacKillop. I like talking to people who have been in the industry a long time and their knowledge about older bloodlines is invaluable to me. Everybody comes at it a little differently and I try to take something from everybody and see what works best for me. The fact I did not have a connection when I started, I felt like I had a lot of making up to do and a lot

of figuring out."

But there is an advantage to being the new breeder on the block. "Different people I've talked to over the years—they might not like one stallion or one trait or one bloodline. I embrace it all. I just look to those foundation mares that I think can produce what I'm hoping to create. I try to be more open minded as a result of not having that history."

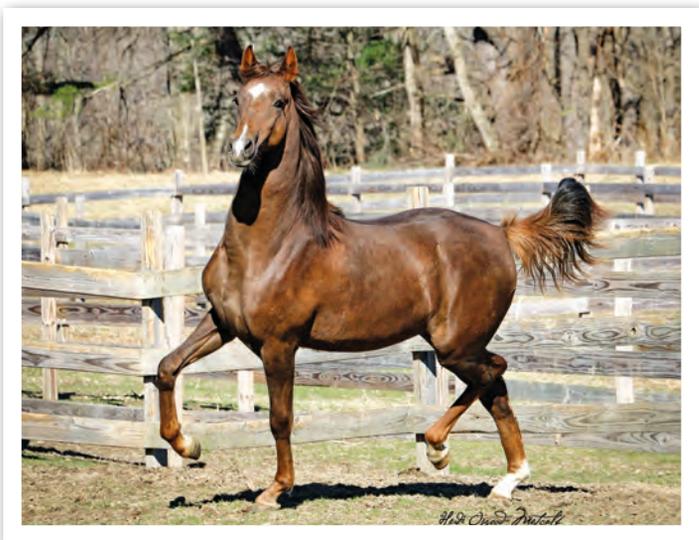
THE DAIRY TWIST TO MORGAN BREEDING

Drive past the milking barns and the Vermont meadows with young cows and the question just becomes impossible to ignore. How has 30 years of doing that affected doing this? It is a question Margaret has clearly answered in her mind many times.

"Everything I do is based on dairy. My barn isn't a traditional horse barn. I built it very much the way I would a dairy barn. You want the animals to be under cover, but you want them to be able to exercise, you want them to be healthy, you want them to be in that kind of environment. If they were going to have a baby I wanted them to run in and out. That is kind of my dairy mind." So, every stall opens to a run and every run opens to a larger pasture.

"I feed my horses like a dairy mind. We are so nutritionally based up at the farm. Everything I do down here is based on that. You get a certain amount of time to make a baby calf grow its structure. If you don't do that you don't end up with the grown up cow you want to have. I want my babies to have that growth."

Margaret explains that the dairy industry has a "red book"—it contains statistical information on breeding bulls, the traits, good and bad, that they pass on. "We were both brought up that you looked at your cow and asked, 'what do you need to



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Dragonfire Fourthdimension & Newmont's Miss Right (raf) (by SpiceOLife Right Answer); Newmont's French Bellboy (HVK Bell Flaire x French Lace) 2018 colt; RRG Ms Promiscuous & Newmont's Legacy (raf) (by Pot Of Gold); Newmont's Momentum (Pondview Tres Bien x RKB Sizzle) 2018 colt (photos © Heidi Osgood-Metcalf).

improve?—you look to the sire that is going to improve milk production or butter fat or protein or going to improve the udder or feet and legs. So that transferred into the horses. When I look at a horse I am critically looking at the conformation and saying how do I want to improve this mare. We go out to Oklahoma and a horse can be a world champion. But, I don't come home and say I have to breed to that horse. I don't do that. You have to figure out if you've got a mare in the barn to breed to him."

Margaret's reaction is to fall back on the philosophy that dictates their breeding of livestock. "Some people breed based on a favorite stallion or on emotion. I do the reverse. I look at my mare and say, 'what do I want to do with this mare?' rather than looking at the pool of stallions first. I look at my mare and move forward from there."

WHAT'S OLD IS NEW AGAIN

As Margaret acknowledges, her horse collecting instincts have

focused on mares, then and now. There was a guiding philosophy with early acquisitions, but it changed over the years. "Having Aljaks Miss Wham I Am and RKB Sizzle as my first two, I was excited because you could say those names to anyone and there was recognition. From the beginning I thought I needed to focus on mares that were recognizable. I got Paradigm Hot Chocolate and everyone knew her. I thought if I focused on getting names that people recognized, that would be a help in sales. Then, as I've evolved, my convictions have changed. I consider size. Obviously conformation and athletic ability are high on the list. Disposition is a must because passing that on to babies is important. It's easier to start with these qualities as you breed the next generation. I have put both [bloodlines and physical factors] together. I now have mares that you may not recognize, like Stonecroft Trivia, in my barn. She's beautiful and she has a really interesting pedigree with a great bottom



TOP TO BOTTOM: Newmont's Angelina & Amanda DuPont; Newmont's Get Real & Dwayne Knowles; Newmont's Mila Belle & Mary Carlton (photos © Howard Schatzberg).

line.”

This Stonecroft Trilogy daughter goes back to Orland Dondarling and a Vigilendon daughter on the bottom. Along with the mares already mentioned, Newmont is home to LVM Black Cherry (full sister to breeding stallion Regal Masterpiece), ALB Starry Night (dam of world champion Newmont's Get Real), and Dragonfire Fourthdimension (with her cross on the bottom side to Morgan sport horse legend Dragonfire Kirin), just to demonstrate the Gladstones' diverse sampling. It is worth mentioning as well that three daughters of Hall Of Fame broodmare Century Oaks Denali have found their way into the Newmont herd (Aljaks Miss Wham I Am, Aljaks Miss Whamamerica, and Aljaks Miss Ladeeda).

Walt has an observation about this. “She talked for a while about needing to stay current. Then she did an about face and said I think we need to look at old bloodlines. It's a meandering river.”

“It is a meandering river,” Margaret concurs. “You talk to people and they will comment, ‘there's too much of this blood and too much of that blood out there and we no longer see this blood.’ I thought, let me do a little research on some of these older stallions, some of this frozen semen that's out there. If you go in my barn, as you did today, I've got one by SpiceOLife Right Answer and people ask, ‘why did she do that?’ I tell the Amish I bred to SpiceOLife Right Answer, they don't know who he is. I have a Pot Of Gold baby down there. Why did I use Pot Of Gold? I really thought Pot Of Gold lined up well with that mare—that's why I used him.

“I focus a lot on what I want to improve. I talk to people who know more than I do and some of these people have opened my eyes to some of these older stallions—if you use such and such, I think it will improve a horse that has this kind of blood in it. The fact I don't have all this history, I am using some of that advice. And using my gut too.”

WHICH LEADS TO

The Gladstones registered the first Morgan with their Newmonts prefix in 2007. Since then a number of horses of their breeding have become well-known in our show ring. Newmont's Miss Moneypenny, Newmont's Mila Belle CH, Newmont's Timeless Joy, Newmont's Angelina, Newmont's Pretty Please, and Newmont's Get Real all have national and world titles. That's quite a record in just over ten years. Margaret is proud of these champions. “Whether I own the horse or you own the horse, if it has my prefix I feel like it's my horse. That's my thrill,” she says. However, she is just as quick to rattle off lesser-known names. “There are a lot of horses you may not know about I've bred that I'm proud of. When I get a nice baby and it goes to a great home and it is appreciated for what it is, I'm proud of that.” Among those on this list: Newmont's Home Run, a treasured dressage horse who “was the most eye catching horse in a parade;” Janie Denning owns Newmont's Lucille Ball, “and she feels she is a blue hen mare;” Newmont's Belmont Stake, “became



TOP TO BOTTOM: Newmont's Miss Antoinette & Sylvia Peterson; Newmont's Pretty Please & Kurt Hufferd; 2016 Morgan Weanling Gala champion Newmont's Timeless Joy with John Hufferd and Walt & Margaret Gladstone

(photos © Doug Shiflet and Howard Schatzberg).

this incredible cross country driving horse.”

Margaret concludes, “Every horse I’ve bred—whatever they become is just thrilling for me. That’s my enjoyment.”

THE BUSINESS MODEL

On their farm, breeding has to be a business. Margaret is thoughtful on the subject of marketing. The stock Newmont breeds is for sale, without exception, whether you visit the farm to buy a youngster or spot a prospect in the hands of a trainer. A point she tries to make is that when you come looking at Newmont, the buyer’s dream is also the breeder’s dream. “I want each horse to find a successful role, whatever the owner’s goal.”

“When I first started marketing horses, Alison Chickering showed me how invaluable a photo could be. Her photo of Timeless Joy as a weanling won *The Morgan Horse* magazine’s foal contest that year. Heidi [Osgood-Metcalf] has been a remarkable resource for me. She can get pictures right away. Good photography is everything. Photos can sell horses. A good photo is worth its weight in gold. And Heidi is just two miles away from me. Whenever I have a photo session my husband says, ‘how many do you think you will sell today?’

“Tami [Johnson] has been super. She’s taught me a that the purchase of a horse is based on emotion and she’s helped me out about how to put horses out there.”

And professional trainers are part of the marketing strategy.

“At one time I had horses with five trainers. I was almost embarrassed by it. But, most professionals have a specialty. Certain trainers can sell, ride, do in-hand, drive a park horse. I don’t keep one to ride and win the world with myself. Therefore, I’m looking for who is going to get me to where I’m needing to go. I’m a breeder and it is a business. I want to get that horse into the hands of the owner who is going to make it its best.”

THE ROAD TO THE FUTURE

If you are in this business, you know breeding is never an overnight success. Despite the background in the more quantifiable world of dairy cow genetics, Margaret is the first to admit horse breeding is not a strict science. The Gladstones have had, however, remarkable success by any standard in fairly short order.

So, it is good to hear that in Margaret’s mind, this is only the beginning.

“When I started—and this will reflect where I really come from, because I’m all conformation. When I started off, these were my three goals: To have a Morgan Weanling Gala winner. I wanted to breed a World Champion Mare and a World Champion Stallion. My dream is to breed a stallion people wanted to breed to. I wouldn’t own it, but it would have my prefix. At this point, I have accomplished one of those goals [Newmont’s Timeless Joy, 2016 Weanling Gala Champion]. So, I have room to grow. I’ve got my eyes on the next prizes.”

This dairy farmer turned Morgan breeder sums up what it is really about in words all seasoned horsemen will appreciate: “I want to breed a conformationally and functionally sound horse. That confirms I got it right.” ■