



≈ BREEDER PROFILE ≈

ANN TAYLOR'S WOODLAND STALLION STATION AND WINTERGREEN MORGANS

Prior to shipped semen, a stallion station was a way of sharing diverse bloodlines with mare owners in a geographic locale. Ann Taylor's efforts in California foretold her significant influence as a breeder and competitor of Morgans, especially in sport horse disciplines.

A life of Morgan horses began for Ann Taylor, a fourth generation Morgan horse breeder, on 26,600 acres that spanned 16 miles of the Eel River of Lone Pine Ranch in Covelo, California.

"In the mornings, my grandfather saddled up a pair of horses for us. He would tie a burlap bag of grain to his saddle and fetch his bugle, before telling me to come along. We rode up some steep, timbered hills to a high meadow and we stopped on a ridge. He got off his horse with the grain bag and he spread the grain in piles on the ground. Remounting with the empty bag in his hand, he pulled out his horn and he called the horses. I saw the stallion come up to the next rise. He looked at us and disappeared. Several minutes later a herd of mares topped the hill at a full gallop. They spread themselves out among the piles

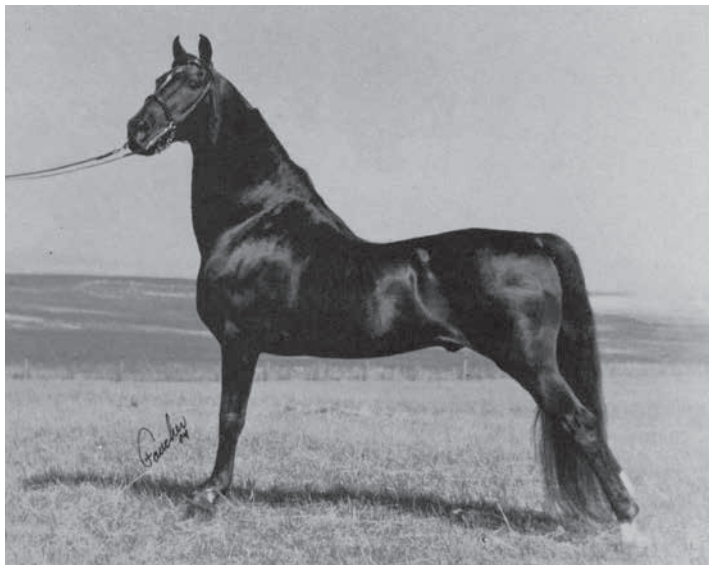
of grain, the stallion watching. He waited until his girls had eaten their fill and then he ate what was left. I was ten years old."

Eighty years later, this remarkable woman is still ardently involved with the Morgan breed. Her passion percolates through our conversations and leaves me eager for more.

Ann's grandfather, Jesse Sheldon Lux Potter, ran cattle on 11 ranches belonging to the cattle empire of the Miller & Lux Corporation, established by Sheldon's grandfather, Charles Lux, and Henry Miller. His holdings ran from just south of the Oregon border to Bakersfield, California. In the late 1800s, his father, Jesse Sheldon Potter, realized his need for suitable equine partners, horses with endurance and tractability, for his cattle ranches. He went across the country and came home with a herd of Vermont Morgan horses for this purpose,

By Lindsey Berry

ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: Ann Taylor, with Carol Fletcher, receiving a 2017 AMHA Open Competition award for Wintergreen Beaufort; Wintergreen Fortune with Susan Garmier on the cover of the November 2003 issue of The Morgan Horse; Ann at 75 in 2010 when she rode Wintergreen Treasure to the Trail World Championship.



Ann has stated that the goal of the Woodland Stallion Station was to bring blood from the east to mare owners in California. This was clearly the plan when she acquired Petalbrook Sigmalect (left) (photo © Paucher), the sire of UVM Watchman (right). Watchman was a crucial sire for the University of Vermont in the era of Dr. Donald Balch, shown driving the stallion.

which he used to breed a larger herd. The resultant Morgan horses he produced, carrying the Lone Pine prefix, herded cattle up and down the West Coast.

The entire Miller & Lux cattle and meat packing enterprise was located on more than 1.3 million acres owned and another six million acres leased in California, Nevada, and Oregon. With the associated control over a large percentage of the water rights, their irrigation techniques and business practices changed the agricultural landscape of the American West. The estate of co-owner Henry Miller at his death was valued at \$40 million, which today would be approximately \$1.1 billion. An important piece of their cattle farm management strategy hinged on the intelligent, durable, and sensible minds of their Morgan horses.

Ann's involvement with these Morgan horses began young. "My dad was the ranch manager, and I got to go with him when he made his rounds," she remembers. "When I was 10, my grandfather gave me a Morgan mare I named Midget. She had to stay at Merced Ranch because I lived in San Francisco where the ranch headquarters were located.

"I never had any formal training. I rode on the ranches as a child, competed on the show team in high school and on the rodeo team at the University of Arizona. I rode an Arabian in high school for an owner that needed a rider and again in college on a nice Quarter Horse mare. I successfully competed with both," she says. Although her tone is light and casual, she was clearly a talented rider. In 1949, she won Champion All-Around Arabian at the Western National Arabian Show at the Cow Palace in San Francisco, and in 1953 she won the Quarter Horse Pleasure Championship in Sonoita, Arizona.

Horses remained in Ann's life as she grew up and began her own family. "I was married in 1954 and moved back to California in 1957. My husband stayed in Active Reserve until he retired as an

Air Force Major General, and he entered the real estate business. He was gone a good deal of the time, and I was really bored, so I persuaded him to bring my Morgan mare up from my grandfather's ranch. I boarded her at a friend's ranch close by. That friend had six children, and they were my first students," Ann says.

In the sixties, Ann's family moved to a property with some acreage. Her children rode Welsh ponies, and as they grew up her sons chose a Thoroughbred and a Quarter Horse. As her children enjoyed their own horses, Ann's love for and involvement in the Morgan breed continued. "My sons began to show, and I started to judge small shows. I took in a horse for training and started giving lessons at the local riding club. We started with small shows for my little group of students, all on Morgans. I helped them buy most of their horses. We ended up competing at 4-H and local shows, then moved on to the Morgan shows: Santa Rosa, Monterey, Watsonville, Mother Lode in Sacramento, and the Regional at Santa Barbara. Sadly, all except the Mother Lode are gone now," she says.

"An old friend, Doris McMicking, asked me to take a three-year-old Morgan mare to train and eventually show. SA Desiree was a quiet mare, not suitable for showing in Morgan English pleasure classes. I started to show her along with my small group of students and we did well, especially in trail classes. Doris came to see her and couldn't believe how good she looked! She said we should start showing in Morgan shows. That was the beginning, and eventually we won multiple world championship titles in Oklahoma.

"After that, I started judging more seriously, getting my state certification, then my license for Morgans. I eventually judged all over the United States, Canada, and England. I judged our world show in Oklahoma City twice," Ann says with pride. She is carded in Western (R), Stock Seat Equitation (r), Morgan (R), and Welsh.

While she was expanding her horse world, her husband Jim and his two business partners had acquired 1,300 acres of land. Jim

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Ann Taylor, Betty Greene, and Connie Barker, all from California, grand ladies of Western Trail in the Morgan breed; Ann in a victory pass on homebred Wintergreen Treasure (photos by Ed Moore, Howard Schatzberg).

had offered 50 acres of these for his wife to use at her discretion. With this in mind, Ann and her friend, Doris, decided to visit a stallion station on their way home from the show in Oklahoma, to consider if that could be a suitable use for her land. Their visit inspired Ann, and she began to plan how to pull this off.

Ann recalls, “When Jim asked what I was going to do with it, I told him I was going to start a stallion station. He said he thought that was a terrible idea and would not put any money into it. I said I would raise money through selling shares in a limited partnership. He insisted I use our lawyer to draw the papers. That was fine with me! So, I made an appointment. Our lawyer said it was a terrible idea and that most horse ventures went broke. I told him that he needed to draw the papers or I would find another lawyer.”

Her goal was to sell ten shares at \$10,000 apiece, and the income from these shareholders would build the infrastructure of the facility. She reached out to Ellen Shaw, who was then employed by Bob Morgan at Triton Farm, to ask if Ellen would like to be the new stallion station manager once the facility was built. Ann had a whole scheme in mind for how they would entice business. “I told her my idea was to get six well-known Morgan stallions from the East Coast,” Ann says, “and have them donate one breeding a year to start a \$10,000 futurity.”

Since Ann was known in the Morgan circles from her judging, she was successful in lining up a notable group of six stallions to start her project: Petalbrook Sigmalect, Shaker’s Ba Ba, HVK Santana, Tara’s Hallmark, Rapidan Revelry, and Charlestown Oakmist. The stallions boarded at her facility, expanding the geographical reach of these stallions and enabling West Coast enthusiasts the opportunity to breed to stallions they could otherwise not access. The get of these stallions would be eligible for the \$10,000 Wintergreen Stallion Station Futurity with no further nomination fee.

She recalls, “It was at the world show in the early ’80s when I saw a yearling colt by HVK Santana named Something Blue (x

Rapidan Es Mala). He really impressed me. When talking to his owner, I found out that Santana’s owner wanted to lease him. So, when I started to put together my group of stallions, I called her.”

While getting her dream started on her plot of land with her shareholders and stallions, Ann continued training her little group of Morgan-riding students, five girls and one boy. They hauled into the Sacramento Horsemen’s Association for lessons in hunt seat and Western, and they went to shows in the area. “In those days, hunt seat and saddle seat riders rode in the same class. The hunt seat riders would end up out of the ribbons. Gloria Jones, Terry Jones Brennan’s mother, and I got together, started sponsoring hunt seat classes, and then filled them with our students. That was how that division got started,” Ann explains. “Two of my students were good enough and could afford to go to Oklahoma. The boy won a world championship in trail and one girl placed well in hunt seat.”

The Woodland Stallion Station successfully opened its doors in 1982 with Ellen Short (nee Shaw) as the manager and trainer, the group of shareholders eagerly standing by to judge the value of their investment, and the seven East Coast stallions whose get would be eligible for their new futurity.

Ann purchased her first registered mare, Brica-Jo Colleen (Joe Collins x Brica), from Roy and Janie Coates. She bred this mare to U C Crackerjack, producing Wintergreen Token, the first horse to carry the Wintergreen prefix. Token was named a “Blue Hen Mare” by the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF), defined as a mare bred to multiple stallions and who produced multiple champions. She continually produced superstars who won championships at major Morgan shows. Her nine offspring include Wintergreen Strike, a Grand National and world champion dressage mare, and Wintergreen Sultana, a multiple Grand National and world champion in carriage, dressage, hunter, and versatility.

Ann purchased additional outstanding mares to incorporate into her own breeding program, including Funquest Agalee, Kerry

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WINTERGREEN EARLY MARES

(TOP TO BOTTOM): Winfly Ruffian; Ladonna; Ultras Perfect Timing (photo © Casey McBride).

B Spangled, Ultras Perfect Timing, Ladonna, Winfly Ruffian, and M Bar D Highly Treasured.

Those first years at Woodland Stallion Station were very successful—until AMHA approved transported semen in 1985. Most of the owners took their stallions home because they thought why pay board if they could ship their semen themselves? Petalbrook Sigmalect, Shaker's Ba Ba, and HVK Santana stayed at the Station. Around this time Ann purchased Santana as well as Cedar Creek Hallmark and Whispering Showdown to increase the available stallions following the loss of the previous residents.

The Station had further challenges. Manager Ellen Shaw fell in love with Brandon Short, and they decided to move. Without Ellen as manager, breedings fell off, and then the economy followed. Ann had just hired Tom Simmons and Susan Garmier as trainers for the facility at this time, and they were in need of a covered arena. Ann did not feel it would be appropriate to go back to her original investors and seek further financing, so she took out a \$100,000 loan. Previously, everything had been on a cash basis. With the hit to the economy, interest rates went up and her variable interest loan went to 15-percent. It was a difficult time. Taylor sold Hallmark and Showtime. She hosted fundraisers for the local hospital and for politicians running for election. They started to host clinics and shows at Woodland Stallion Station, and even a West Coast Morgan sale. They did everything they could to boost visibility and to make any extra money so the Station could stay in the game.

"We pulled it off, but what a challenge! It was a hard couple of years," she says.

Luckily, the tide turned. Woodland Stallion Station stabilized financially. Ann was able to purchase a couple of well-bred mares for reasonable prices, and she leased a couple of other mares Tom Simmons recommended to her. They started a production record that would brand the Wintergreen prefix.

Ann has produced some outstanding foals by HVK Santana. The success of his offspring in sport horse arenas, including trail, has arguably become the signature of the Wintergreen prefix. The horses' aptitudes have made them candidates for classical and Western dressage, hunter/jumper, carriage, trail, and even eventing. Wintergreen Fortune, Wintergreen Sultana, Wintergreen Don Diego, and Wintergreen Beaufort carry multiple world and Grand National titles in these and other divisions. In addition, they represent the breed at open sport horse competition, including eventing.

Ann explains, "I originally started to show Wintergreen Don Diego, and had him entered in the World Morgan Futurity at Grand National. I had been asked to judge that year, though, and rules prohibited a judge owning an entry, so I sold him. I had his younger brother, Wintergreen Beaufort, so we started to show him, which turned out to be very successful.

"Betty Greene, a well-known Western trainer, helped me train my mare Wintergreen Treasure. She was a wonderful trainer who could really read a horse, and we were very successful. I won several world championships in amateur and open with this mare, the last one in 2010 when I won World Champion Western Trail with her when I was 75 years old! I had

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OTHER WINTERGREEN EARLY MARES

(TOP TO BOTTOM): Brica-Jo Colleen, who produced the mare Wintergreen Token (by U C Crackerjack), with Ann up (photo © Howard Schatzberg); M Bar D Highly Treasured and her daughter Wintergreen Jessamine, shown with Patti Bell, Ann Taylor, and Susan Garmier.

outstanding show years from 2007 to 2010, and the last time I showed in Oklahoma was in 2016,” Ann recalls with pride.

Ann was awarded Leading Breeder of the Year in 2007 and Leading Owner and Leading Breeder of the Year for the Morgan breed in 2010 by USEF. In 2016, she was the Reserve Leading Breeder of the Year and HVK Santana was named the Reserve Leading Stallion of the Year, a great honor for Ann’s wonderful sire, awarded fourteen years posthumously.

In 2016, Ann decided it would be time to find the next owner for the Woodland Stallion Station. Keila Golden and Daren Robbins had toured the facility with their realtor and decided that they were interested in buying it. Ann requested a meeting to confirm their intentions and met Keila and Daren to interview them as potential buyers.

“She was concerned that someone might buy the property without an appreciation for what it is—a large, special equestrian center developed over years as a labor of love—and would close it down,” Keila explains. “She preferred to keep it rather than sell it to someone who didn’t want to run it as a breeding and training facility.”

The three spoke for a long time, covering Keila’s background with horses and her intentions and goals. “I guess I passed, because Ann ultimately agreed to sell it to us at a fair price, lower than what she was asking.”

In May 2017, Keila and Daren took ownership of the stallion station. Ann kept a small parcel of land, about 33 acres, upon which she and her husband had built their house, a four-stall barn, pastures, and a beautiful rose garden. This also meant that the Taylors were the closest neighbor to the Woodland Stallion Station, and she became both friend and mentor to Keila.

“I learned a ton from her at first, and I still do,” says Keila. “She has been doing this for longer than I have been alive, and she is always available to coach me and answer questions—anything from sourcing hay to client interactions. I don’t think I’ve ever had an issue that she has not experienced before. She has been a priceless mentor. When I took over the business, Ann strongly encouraged me to keep her longtime ranch foreman, Larry, who has worked here for 30 years, lives onsite, and is truly indispensable. So, I begged him to stay, and he agreed. Ann was correct: we could not do it all without Larry.”

Today, unburdened with the responsibility of running Woodland Stallion Station, Ann keeps her mares at home. She does employ help to do much of the labor but remains very much involved with the day-to-day care of her horses, which is incredible considering she turned 90 years old last year. She still oversees the care of her stallion, Wintergreen Beaufort, though her home is not equipped to house and collect stallions, so she boards him nearby at Woodland Stallion Station.

“His sire, HVK Santana, is buried here at the Station, on a

PHOTOS OPPOSITE PAGE: HVK Santana (1) has been an integral sire for the Wintergreen prefix. His get include Wintergreen Beaufort (2), Wintergreen Fortune (3), Wintergreen Zinfandel (4), Wintergreen Sultana (5), Wintergreen Don Diego (6), Wintergreen Shaman (7), and Wintergreen Strike (8) (photos © Suzy Lucine, Grey Horse Photography, Howard Schatzberg, Casey McBride).

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hill where he can see his descendants play in the pastures. I expect some day ‘Beau’ will be buried here next to his great father,” says Keila.

Santana, a nationally ranked sport horse sire with multiple FEI-level offspring, has a most remarkable son to carry on his sport horse legacy in Beau. I had the opportunity to breed a son of Beau, Starberry Reveiller (x BCT Gentlemans Prime Time). In him I see the athleticism, type, beauty, and the quiet and kind disposition for which Beau and Santana are both known and for which their bloodlines are sought.

Before that day comes, though, Wintergreen Beaufort continues to breed, ride, train, show, and win, with a massive show record including, but not limited to, 2023 USEF Horse of the Year—Versatility (Region 7, Open); 2021 National Dressage Pony Cup Small Horse Championships (West) Reserve Champion; 2018 USEF Region 7 Morgan Champion Dressage (Second Level and Above); 2016 Morgan Grand National Champion Fourth Level Dressage and Hunter Over Fences; and the 2013, 2016, and 2018 USEF Region 7 Morgan Versatility Champion. His daughter, Wintergreen Jessamine, is also a successful eventer, and his son, Wintergreen CincoDeMayo, was the 2019 USEF Morgan Horse of the Year for Versatility. His popularity extends to the warmblood sport horse world, and he has sired many beautiful half-Morgans who are proving to take after their father.

“Although I breed Hanoverians, and there are now more Hanoverian foals here than Morgans, it is only fitting that the Woodland Stallion Station remains the home of Wintergreen Morgans,” Keila says. “Ann sends her mares here to foal out each spring, and the foals go to her home farm to grow up on her big green pastures before they return here for training with Susan Garmier, who continues training here to this day with her protégé, Geneva Miliken. Ann and her former-boarder-turned-breeding-partner Kelly Rose plan to keep Wintergreen Morgans producing top Morgans for sport here, at their home, with their trainers and ‘Uncle Larry’ still foaling out their babies, as it has been, and as it should be. I could not be more grateful to be along for the ride with Ann as a leader, teacher, mentor, and friend.” ■



(LEFT, TOP TO BOTTOM): Trainer Susan Garmier has been a major factor in the success of the Wintergreen sport horses. She is shown riding Wintergreen Don Diego, Wintergreen Fortune, and Wintergreen Beaufort (photos © Howard Schatzberg, Casey McBride); **(RIGHT):** The stallion Wintergreen Beaufort represents Ann’s prefix today, both in competition and as a sire. He is pictured with his daughter Wintergreen Jessamine and son Wintergreen CincoDeMayo (left to right).

THE STALLIONS OF WOODLAND STALLION STATION

PETALBROOK SIGMALECT (1)

(Sealect Of Wind-Crest x UVM Annandale)

FOALED 04/10/1959

BRED BY Philip and Jean Jackson

OWNED BY Sawmill Stud Farm from 1959–1964,

Philip and Jean Jackson starting 11/19/1964

LEASED BY Woodland Stallion Station from

11/2/83 to 12/31/1999

109 REGISTERED OFFSPRING,

two with the Wintergreen prefix.

SHAKER'S BA BA (2)

(Troutbrook Playboy x Holly's Gay B)

FOALED 03/05/1973

BRED BY T. D. Ulrich

OWNED BY Ann Bronson from 1979–1984,

Robert and Sansa Alexander from 1984–1986,

Martin and Cathleen Castano starting 11/27/1986

16 REGISTERED OFFSPRING,

two with the Wintergreen prefix.

TARA'S HALLMARK (3)

(Empyrean Apollo x Bar-T Regina)

FOALED 5/27/74

BRED BY Frances Pugh

OWNED BY Frances Pugh from 1974–1993;

Gary and Dana Marie Thomas starting in 1993

LEASED BY Gary and Sharon Harper 1987–1989,

Gary and Dana Marie Thomas 1992–1993

28 REGISTERED OFFSPRING,

one with the Wintergreen prefix.

HVK SANTANA (4)

(Beamington x Equinox Georgianna)

FOALED 07/12/1974

BRED BY Herbert V. Kohler Jr

OWNED BY Robert and Toni Hughes from

1974–1982, Lewis and Julie Butler, Prime Time

Morgans from 1982–1990; Ann Taylor from

1990 to his death

LEASED BY Beverly Clementsen from

1993–1994

148 REGISTERED OFFSPRING,

29 with the Wintergreen prefix.

RAPIDAN REVELRY (5)

(UVM Flash x UVM Rhapsody)

FOALED 05/24/1971

BRED BY University of Vermont Morgan

Horse Farm

OWNED BY John and Marjorie Hagan from 1971–

1975, Roland and Winona Rhodes from 1975–1988,

UVM Morgan Horse Farm starting in 1988

LEASED BY UVM 1986–1988,

Donald and Nancy Nard from 1997 forward

107 REGISTERED OFFSPRING,

two with the Wintergreen prefix.

CHARLESTOWN OAKMIST

(Elm Hill Charter Oak x Optimistic)

FOALED 5/16/1979

BRED BY Leo Le Fave

OWNED BY Adrienne Wailes from 1979–1980,

Jo Ann Stewart, Woodside Morgans from

1980–1981, Pat Wisby, Nighthawk Morgans from

1981–1988, Amanda Wisby starting in 1988

LEASED BY Christine Hyde and Ellen Shaw

Short 1985–1988

36 REGISTERED OFFSPRING,

one with the Wintergreen prefix.

CEDAR CREEK HALLMARK (6)

(I Will Command x Virginia O Cedrcreek)

FOALED 07/01/1983

BRED BY Larry A. Bolen, Cedar Creek Farm,

who owned him until 1985

OWNED BY Janzen Morgan Farm from

1985–1989, Ann Taylor from 1989–1998,

Virginia Snyder from 1998 until his death

26 REGISTERED OFFSPRING,

six with the Wintergreen prefix.

WHISPERING SHOWDOWN

(Waseeka's Showtime x Glamadonna)

FOALED 07/30/1983

BRED BY Michael and Florence Scanlon,

who owned him until 1985

OWNED BY Janzen Morgan Farm 1985–1989,

Ann Taylor from 1989–1991, Russell and Patsy

Jenkins 1991 until his death

16 REGISTERED OFFSPRING,

four with the Wintergreen prefix.

WINTERGREEN BEAUFORT

(HVK Santana x Kerry B Spangled)

FOALED 04/07/2004

BRED AND OWNED BY Ann Taylor

12 REGISTERED OFFSPRING,

seven with the Wintergreen prefix.

(Photos © Paucher, Suzy Lucine)

