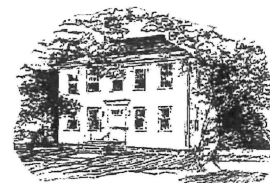


IMAGES

...THEN AND NOW

From the Indian Hill Historical Society



Buckingham Lodge
1861

Camargo Stables – Then and Now

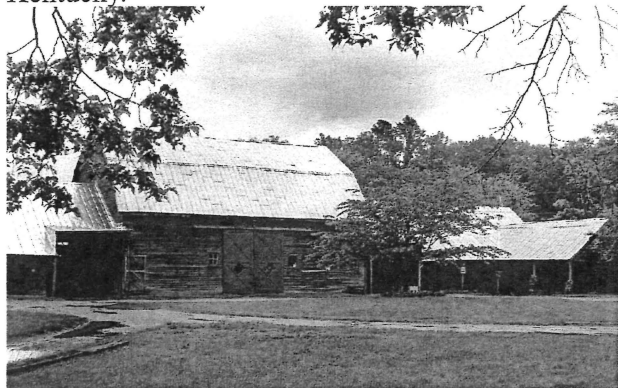
Located at 8605 Shawnee Run Road, the Camargo Stables has a long history of horses and riders. An ongoing operation for more than 80 years, it has been the site of many memories and much sporting lore.

The formation of the Camargo Realty Company in 1924 marked Indian Hill's change from a farming to a residential community for some of Cincinnati's prominent families. To appeal to riders, the newly formed Camargo Club (1925) offered clubhouse privileges for a brief time if one boarded at their Stables. Two polo fields were originally planned on Club property, just a short distance away. These features attracted members of the Cincinnati Riding Club and other equine enthusiasts.

The core of the Stables was an old barn, which had been moved from the present day Camargo golf course across Shawnee Run Road. It was enlarged and rebuilt, and featured in the *Enquirer* as the "Summer Stables of the Riding Club of Cincinnati". A horseshoe shaped entry led into a large courtyard, surrounded on all four sides with buildings. The original barn was located opposite the entry, and there were 40 stalls. By 1925 instruction was offered, outdoor rings were available for schooling and showing, and adjacent fields were fenced for exercising the mounts. Camargo Club's formal support of the Stables ended after the 1929 crash and subsequent Depression. The property (about 40 acres) continued to be owned by Camargo Club, but the Stables were supported and administered by boarders – mostly members of the Camargo Hunt – throughout the 1930s and the 1940s.

In 1948, Camargo Stables became a for profit corporation, though that objective was never achieved. Members of the Camargo Hunt who lived in town (Hyde Park, Clifton, etc.) kept their horses there to be close to meets. These included the Clippinger, Rawson, Strauss, and Wulsin families. Some Village residents who were Hunt members also boarded at Camargo, among whom were the Barbaras, Kites, Macks, Randolphs, Schiffs and Schmidts.

Camargo Stables' staff was composed of dedicated and talented equestrians. In the 1930s and 1940s, the manager was Lauren Purvis. Randolph Tayloe followed him briefly, and then Frenchy Delarbre was in charge for 20 years. After him, Marvin Alexander was hired. And the last male manager was Houston Puckett, who worked there for 26 years. On hunting days, every mount that went out was perfectly groomed, with braided tails and mails, coats sparkling, and all tack cleaned and polished. Grooms would lead each horse to the mounting block, and hold it until the rider mounted, then tighten the cinch. At the end of the day the staff took care of all the tired mounts. The horses were clipped, groomed, fed, and exercised daily. Often grooms rode one horse and led two, one on each side, which meant about 5 hours of riding per day. They also cleaned the stalls, took care of the building, and provided lessons. Additionally they transported horses to Hunt meets in Kentucky.



After the Hunt moved to Clermont County in the 1970s, Camargo Stables slowly began to change. There was turnover of staff and boarders. Benevolent donations to the corporation started to subside. As Indian Hill developed, some riding trails were closed, limiting access to riders. The stable, as a structure, was showing its wear. Stalls needed repairs and termites were a problem. Eventually operating the Stables as a boarding facility was no longer profitable. Bill Kite, who had run the Stables for 25 years, developed a plan with Marianne Murphy, whereby she assumed a long term lease to manage the Stables. After this occurred in 1980, Marianne rebuilt part of the existing barn, and added a second barn (1993) with a spacious indoor

ring. Since then she has operated a successful venture for schooling horses and riders.

Camargo Stables evolved from being the official Hunt barn to an equestrian facility. Most of the 30 stalls now house privately owned horses. A few stable ponies are available for lessons. Camargo Stables continues to be a treasured feature of Indian Hill.

Thanks to Mandy Barbara, Peggy Kite, Marianne Murphy, Houston Puckett, & Lynn Schiff for sharing memories.