

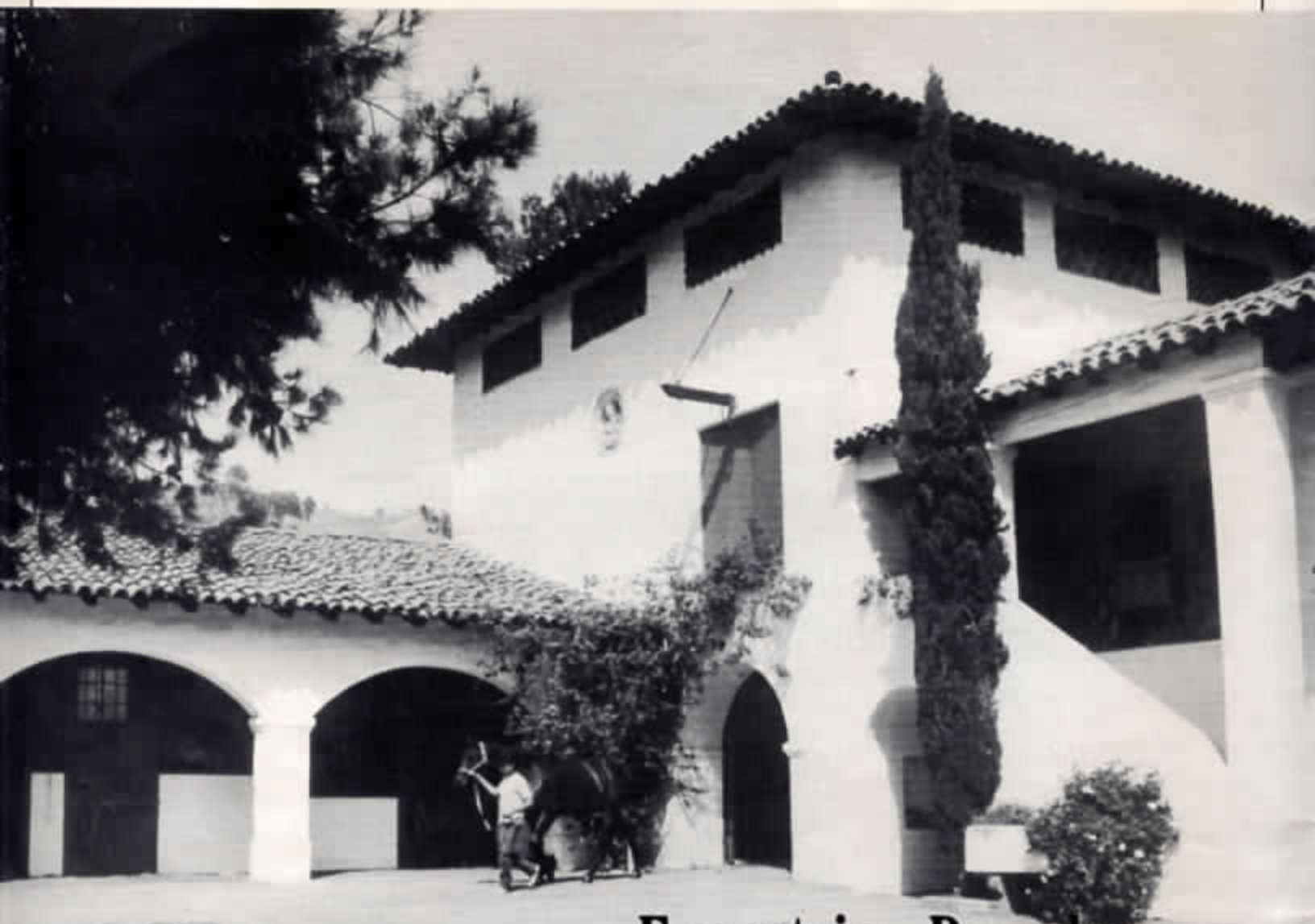
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Palos Verdes REVIEW



Palos Verdes Story



Equestrian Roundup From Pony Rides To Polo

by Virginia Twohy

In the early days of Palos Verdes when O.C. Clausby moved his riding academy from Beverly Hills to the big barns just east of the Palos Verdes Golf Course, he said, "Concrete roads are all very well for motor cars, but not for horses, and Uncle Henry's 'Tin Horse' has made the going extremely crowded for real equines."

On the Palos Verdes Peninsula Mr. Clausby found "the finest going horsemen can wish." There were miles of bridle trails, many offering spectacular panoramic views. Families could ride their horses down to Malaga Cove Plaza and stop for ice cream at the drugstore. Or they could ride down the cliffside trails to the beach. La Venta Inn was used as a rendezvous spot for

breakfast and dinner rides, and guests at the Inn might enjoy a moonlight canter.

The days of the old red barn are gone now, but the passion for horses and the rural life remains. Palos Verdes is still a paradise for equestrian pursuits.

Best estimates put the Peninsula's horse population around 6000, ranging from spirited thoroughbreds, Arabians, quarter horses, and Appaloosas to old Dobbin out in the pasture.

Riding is a sport the entire family can participate in for pleasure and relaxation. Or horse-lovers can train to enter competition. Caring for a horse teaches a youngster responsibility along with all the other benefits.

And charity benefits too. In a community

with street names like Mustang, Colt Road, Flying Mare, and Cinch Ring what could be more logical than choosing the horse show as a successful method of fundraising? Both the Portuguese Bend National Horse Show, sponsored by the Peninsula Committee of the Childrens Hospital of Los Angeles, and Las Amigas de las Lomas Charity Horse Show, in support of the Orthopaedic Hospital, celebrated silver anniversaries in 1982.

Groups such as the Pony Clubs, Equestrian Trails, Inc. (E.T.I.), the Palos Verdes Horsemen's Association, Los Caballeros, and its offshoot Hill Fillies, have thrived in this rural atmosphere. From the six-year-old on her first mount to the Olympic contender, there are



Sue Breiholz and Morgan foal.



PVP Quadrille was formed in 1987 with Louise Koch as riding master.

opportunities for every equestrian.

So let's saddle up and have a roundup - **Palos Verdes Estates** has the only stables on the Peninsula where horses are available for rental - but only with certain restrictions. Some long-time residents remember an occasion when a couple came in to rent horses, rode off into the sunset, and never returned!

The city assumed management of the Palos Verdes Stables in 1983. Previously Palos Verdes Estates had owned the facilities but leased them to a private operator. Now Jeanette Warren operates the stables for the city with the able assistance of Shelly Quinn, who has charge of the horses and programs. A wide variety of programs has been designed to meet the needs of the general public, and there are discounts available for Palos Verdes Estates residents.

Among the most popular are the trail rides, the birthday parties and barbecues, and the camps during summer, Easter and Christmas vacations.

The group trail rides are one or two hours in duration and follow the scenic trails along Palos Verdes Drive North between tall eucalyptus trees. No previous riding experience necessary, but children are required to be at least seven years of age. Reservations suggested.

Complete birthday parties include a cake of your choice, ice cream, a soda or juice, and bandana party favors plus a one-hour trail ride for eight children and two adults or ten children aged twelve and up.

The camp programs are designed to introduce young people to horse care and basic horsemanship. There are also advanced camps, mini-camps and "East into the Saddle" camps for adults only. A 6-week Horse Club is an opportunity to "adopt a horse" and plan events with other members - mostly just for fun. Manager Jeanette Warren suggests early reservations for camp. "One of our summer camps is already filled."

A Brownie program acquaints children with safety around horses, and basic care and instruction, including hands-on experience in grooming and lead line riding. There is also a Girl Scout program designed to meet badge requirements.

Shelly Quinn says there is a limited number of lease and share/lease arrangements available, and some school horses for showing at the local horse shows. The Palos Verdes Stables are located at 4057 Via Opata, PVE. Phone 375-9005 or 375-9561.

The gated community of **Rolling Hills** has its symbol a rider on horseback, and the city is deeply committed to its equestrian lifestyle. Miles of scenic trails meander through white-rail hills, and exercise rings and private stables dot the landscape. Children and horses are at the heart of Rolling Hills. The first mounted troop of the Boy Scouts of America ever to be organized in California was launched there in 1940, and the boys wore on their neckerchiefs the distinctive insignia of Rolling Hills with the mounted ranchero.

Mayor Jody Murdock emphasized the city's support for equestrian activities.

"We have two city-owned rings (leased by the Rolling Hills Community Association). There is Hesse's Gap off Poppytrail with riding ring, picnic area, and show facilities, and the Hix ring, on land off Buggy Whip donated by the late Cliff Hix to the city. We have about 22 miles of trails. Our Caballeros group sponsors

lots of social events such as Red Carpet Rides, weekend trips, barbecues, and pancake breakfasts. Some are planned for non-riders, and many are family activities. The Caballeros also help in seeing that the trails are properly maintained. Safety of riders is one of our primary concerns."

Within the city of **Rancho Palos Verdes** is one of the most picturesque of all riding facilities, the **Portuguese Bend Riding Club** with access to bridle trails through fields with wildflowers and breathtaking ocean views. This is the area where the popular "Walk on the Wild Side" is held each year.

Originally called the "Farmstead" when it was developed by the Vanderlips, the stables and riding ring, buildings and courtyard are now owned by the family of Lisa Garvey, who manages the riding club with her husband, John.

Lisa says, "For me it is a dream come true." A lifelong horse-lover, she competes as an amateur in "A" jumper and hunter horse shows. It was at a horse show that she met John, a professional rider and trainer, who was Horseman of the Year in Illinois for 1987. John's wedding present to Lisa was a horse,



Birthday party time at the Palos Verdes Stables.



"Fiesta on the Bluffs," sponsored by the Palos Verdes Peninsula Horsemen's Association, brought out an enthusiastic crowd including RHE councilman Hugh Muller, Ann Fainsbert, and Bill Ailor.



Lisa Jacquin riding "Sage" at Flintridge Horse Show.



Michael Endicott riding "Mon Bambi" at L.A. Equestrian Center.



Sally Swart, Suzanne Glenn, and Ellie Meary at a Caballeros Wildflower Picnic.

"Say Please," and Lisa and "Say Please" have established a winning rapport together.

The Portuguese Bend Riding Club can board over 100 horses. Facilities include a large jumping arena, dressage ring, school-horse arena (lesson ring), turnout paddocks, hot walkers, and jumping chute.

"We're mainly a hunter/jumper barn, but we also have dressage clinics," John added. "We offer personal attention in a relaxed informal setting. We want to keep the sport fun. It should be recreation and matched to the ability of the rider. Of course, we will also train for competition."

The beautiful courtyard area is the scene of the annual party for the Portuguese Bend Homeowners Association, and on July 22 will

be the setting for a Hospice benefit. It has also been featured in "Chinatown" and other movies. Arrangements can be made for lessons and riding at the club, located at 40 Narcissa Drive, Portuguese Bend, by calling 377-3507. 90274

Inside the boundaries of pastoral **Rolling Hills Estates** lie the greatest number of equestrian facilities on the Peninsula. The city has the **RHE Equestrian Center and Municipal Stables** located at 26401 Crenshaw. It affords space for stabling 110 horses, comprehensive lessons and three riding rings. Linda Fitton, equestrian services supervisor for RHE says, "We have three instructors and give lessons for six-year-olds through adults. We have field trips for kids and horse shows. We

teach Western, English, jumper, and dressage." Call 541-9847 for more information.

Rolling Hills Estates also has riding facilities at **Howlett, Chandler, and Dapplegray Parks**.

In addition there is the highly-rated **Seahorse Riding Academy**, owned and operated by Judy Martin, a trainer with an outstanding reputation. There is a push for competition at Seahorse, and many of the Peninsula's outstanding riders, including Joan Scharffenberger, Rob Gage, and Olympian Lisa Jacquin have trained there. Assistant trainer Michael Endicott is a former national junior jumping champion. Seahorse is located at 26411 Crenshaw, next to the RHE Equestrian Center. For information call 541-4921.

RHE is also home to the private membership **Empty Saddle Club**, a long-time tradition on the Peninsula, and the setting for both of the major charity horse shows. It has extensive facilities on 12½ acres at 39 Empty Saddle Road. Roping and cowboy oriented rodeos have been held there. In his book, "Rolling Hills - The Early Years," A. E. Hanson tells how the club got its name. "It was called the Empty Saddle Club because during the bucking horseback riding contests, there were a lot of empty saddles."

Mayor Nell Mirels says there are also privately owned rings and facilities in neighborhood developments in Rolling Hills Estates. She expressed a concern about preserving horse properties for future use by horse owners. "If we don't plan ahead, we could lose the rural quality and lifestyle we treasure now. The day might come when it would be 'Bye Bye, Horse!' and we would be another city much like Bel Air. That would please some people, but not most of our residents."

There seems to be no lack of enthusiasm for equestrian activity among the young people. **Pony Club** has had a loyal following on the Peninsula for many years. Rolling Hills resident Betsy Raine has been actively involved and says, "Pony Club is wonderful. And it really helps non-horsey parents who have horse-loving kids. Members who don't own a horse can lease a horse by the month and receive lessons once a week as well as



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Joan Saffo greeting riders at Crest and Portuguese Bend Road as they leave for the Mystery Ride.

participating in special events. They learn responsibility through caring for horses along with learning riding techniques, stadium jumping, even dressage. And there is a Pony Club camp for a week during summer."

The Portuguese Bend Pony Club is very active, and Bill Donahower is the long-time

district commissioner. From time to time he receives donated horses which he keeps in Portuguese Bend to lease to the children. Membership is open to youngsters who can manage a horse on the field and hills up to age 21.

Betsy says most of the United States

Equestrian Team members were once "A" rated Pony Clubbers. Mrs. Raine can be contacted at 377-8775 for more information about Pony Club or opportunities to learn dressage.

"Interest in dressage has really exploded here," Carole Hoffman explained. Carole, with her horse Rembrandt, is a top United States dressage rider. Two of the other outstanding Peninsula dressage riders are Louise Koch and Zola Da Virro. Louise is riding master for the Palos Verdes quadrille, which meets at the Hoffmans weekly and is preparing for performances. There is now a Palos Verdes Peninsula Dressage Society with about 65 members.

What's ahead on the local equestrian scene? How about polo on the Peninsula?

At Rolling Hills Estates' latest birthday celebration an exhibition match drew a lot of attention. A Peninsula Polo Club (PPC) has already been established with Dr. Javid Jalali as president. RHE Councilwoman Jacki McGuire and her husband Peter were among the founders, and both are optimistic. "We're still in the exploratory stage, but we believe there is a lot of interest. Our biggest difficulty right now is finding adequate space."

It's interesting to note that a 1941 *Palos Verdes Bulletin* bore a headline - "Empty Saddle Club acquires ground for polo club and rodeo field."

So stay tuned. With the enthusiasm for equestrian activities the Palos Verdes Peninsula has shown since its earliest days, if you don't know a chucker from a chuck-a-luck yet, it is likely you soon will. □



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