

## NSAC's New Stable

Great news from the Nova Scotia Agricultural College in Bible Hill, N.S. The NSAC has opened a new stable to help facilitate teaching in the equine and veterinary technician courses. The NSAC originally housed a Clydesdale, Morgan, and Standardbred breeding program. The equine industry at that time was working diligently to improve the Clydesdale breed in the Maritimes so the new stable is aptly named Baron's Pride Stable.

Direct decedents of Baron's Pride were the foundation of the NSAC Clydesdale breeding program. Royal Baron, Prima Donna, Baron's Lily, College Belle, College Baron, College Royal, Primer Fashion, and Lord Ullin are some of the progeny of that breeding heritage.

"The stable name Baron's Pride was chosen due to the heritage of this great stallion and the interest in honoring that history," explained Dara Pelkey-Field of the NSAC. "Bill Jenkin, a pre-eminent principal at the NSAC had brought horses back to the college in the 1960s thru to 1990. The horses then were used for horsemanship, horse handling, and other classes."

The name of the stable brought back great memories for NSAC graduate and instructor Roz Moskovits. "Back in the late 1980s when I was working at the NSAC Equine unit – I had just gotten my first apartment and was complaining because I had no furniture. . . one of the maintenance guys found out and brought me two things that were in bad shape and being tossed in the trash. One was an old wooden chair, the other a framed photo of Baron's Pride! This photo inspired me to suggest the name for the new stable. The Clyde stallion was from Scotland. This old photo and wooden frame were from back when the NSAC stood Clyde, Morgan, and Standardbred stallions. Baron's Pride was a most famous stallion. He was 1894 Champion of the prestigious Highland Horse Show in Scotland and later credited as being a great success as a producer of both mares and stallions and more than any other in his time to standardize the breed. Numerous sons of BP were imported to Canada with some (although we are not sure how many) of them being successful breeding stallions on campus."

Heather MacDonald, daughter of Dr. Jenkins, attended the grand opening of the stable along with her mother Reba who is now in her 90s. Reba was born at the college and recalls the heavy horses being at the NSAC. She also met husband Bill at the college. He went on to study elsewhere and returned to the AC as principal in later years.

In a lovely letter to the Equine Program Heather wrote:

"I was delighted to get the "call" to attend this opening. I am here with my Mother, Reba Jenkins. She was born and lived as a young girl on this campus in the home belonging to the farm manager, my grandfather, W.R. Retson. He managed this farm over a century ago, from 1904 to 1929! It was my mother's early years that she remembers the horses here at AC. The horse barn then was located across from Halley Institute. The barn housed four driving horses: Lil, Fred, Dolly, and Queenie, each with their own unique carriages. Dolly was used to go get the mail at the Truro post office each day. Often Dolly would stop on her return to pick up secretaries who were walking to Cumming Hall. Queenie was used to go get the cattle, especially if they wandered over to the other side of the Salmon River. Lil and Fred were used on more special occasions. During that time, there were also at least two heavy draft teams that worked the farm: plowing or perhaps hauling wagons full of turnips from the fields. During those years my grandfather worked hard to improve crops and provide quality livestock on Nova Scotia farms.

My mother and father met here at AC when my Dad was a student and working in the poultry dept. My father, Bill Jenkins continued his education at MacDonald College, later Cornell and then two terms at Harvard earning him his PhD in Public Administration. During his studies, he continued to work here at AC holding various positions, and all the while, promoting a more business-like approach to farming. Dad was principal of NSAC from 1964 to 1972, and his ambition was to make the NSAC the best vocational and technical agricultural college in Canada. I have heard it said that NSAC is one of Nova Scotia's best kept secrets. He was thrilled when Jenkins Hall was named in his honor, because it would be a gathering place for all students. He believed that education was not only books and classes but should also embrace a social life and above all, hands on experience.

My grandfather and father both embraced change. They would have been in awe of the advances in technology and how it changed education as we know it today, even the smart boards and virtual learning. But to come full circle in those 100 years and now see a horse stable on the grounds again providing comfort, joy and first hand education to students would certainly put a lump in their throats if they were here today."