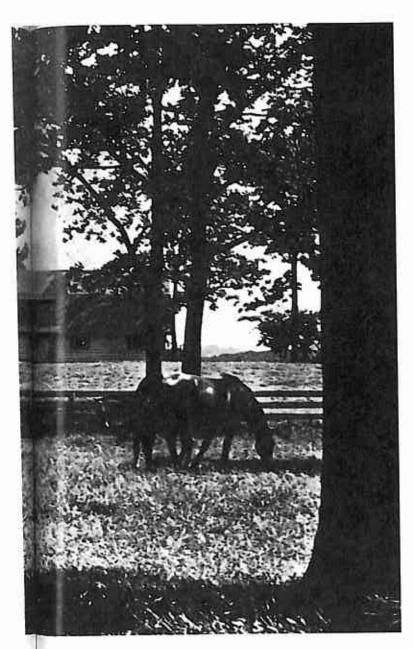
MARYLAND MANOR STABLES

Compiled by members of the Leadership Brentwood Class of 2008:

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The information was compiled from the following sources:

- Portraits in Time, Williamson County Bicentennial, ©1999 Journal Communications; page 51.
- Granny White and Her Pumpkins, by T. Vance Little, @1993; pages 69 and 70.
- Historic Brentwood, by Vance Little, ©1985 J M Publications; pages 116 124.
- Miscellaneous clippings from The Tennessean, Williamson County A.M.



Maryland Farms Wins the Race of Progress

It's not your ordinary office building. Once the 20-stall stable for some of the nation's top American saddle horses and Tennessee walking horses, the remodeled barn is today the centerpiece of Brentwood's tree-lined business complex, Maryland Farms.

J. Truman Ward originally bought 100 acres along Old Hickory Boulevard in 1937 and quickly added 300 more. He named the spread for his wife, Mary, and the farm became one of the South's finest equine showplaces and training facilities. Movie stars and country music legends, including Gene Autry and Barbara Stanwyck, bought their horses from Ward and his trainers. In 1941, the Wards bought American Ace, an outstanding stallion and show horse who sired a line of impressive horse flesh. When American Ace died in 1953, the Wards turned to cattle raising.

But Brentwood's love affair with horses lived on. In 1958, Edward Potter, founder and president of Commerce Union Bank, leased Maryland Farms and returned horses to the sprawling property. A year later, horse aficionados launched the Brentwood Derby on the farm, an annual horse race that was the Brentwood Chamber of Commerce's sole fund-raiser for local charities until the tradition ceased in 1971.

The city of Brentwood incorporated in 1969, and by the mid-1970s the provincial character of the community was shifting toward an upscale business setting. Today, Maryland Farms is a model office complex where several corporations have located company headquarters — and where the horse race on the acreage is the daily contest of American business.

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Ward's Horse Farm Showplace Develops Into Upscale City Office Park

During the Brentwood Renaissance many residents were into horses, but none more so than the Truman Ward family. They put together an operation that for many years made Brentwood synonymous with fine blooded horses. It was Maryland Farms.

Maryland Farms had its beginning in 1937 when J. Truman Ward, then owner of WLAC Radio Station in Nashville, bought 100 acres of "stump land" on Old Hickory Boulevard in Brentwood. He later added other lands until he had amassed a 400 acres spread, which he named Maryland Farms for his wife Mary. In 1941 and 1942, they built a family home, calling it Maryland Manor. The two story colonial style home was built in fine architectural style and contained over 7,500 square feet of living space.

Ward's love for horses manifested itself in this showplace for fine horses. He began by building a twenty-stall stable measuring 44 by 155 feet with an interior of wormy chestnut and knotty pine ceilings. Twenty by 20 feet stalls were finished in oak. Both American saddle horses and Tennessee walking horses were stabled there for training. Other barns and pastures were enclosed within five miles of white plank fences. In its heyday it was home for 50 brood mares.

Today the stable still stands and serves as an office building.

In 1941, Truman Ward bought seven mares and a stallion named American Ace from Spindletop Farm in Lexington, Kentucky. American Ace was the leading sire of his breed in the 1940's and achieved worldwide fame as an outstanding show performer.

Many notables visited Maryland Farms. Some who bought horses were Gene Autry, Barbara Stanwyck, and Norrie Goff of the radio team "Lum and Abner." Industrialist L. B. Manning came to purchase horses

and remained to locate a plant in Nashville, Vultee Aircraft Corporation, now AVCO.

After the death of American Ace in 1953, the Ward family replaced their horse operation with a cattle farm, which boasted over 200 head of Hereford cattle.

In 1958 Edward Potter, founder of Commerce Union Bank, now NationsBank, leased the farm and again turned it into a horse operation. A three-eighths mile covered training track was moved from the Tennessee State Fairgrounds to Maryland Farms. There was also a five-eighth mile open track. During this period there were over 100 horses in training at Maryland Farms.

By 1968 Brentwood was more than the sleepy village it had been when the Wards began acquiring property there. It became a city in 1969 and was experiencing a variety of growing pains as well as criticism from those who opposed growth. But, as we saw and are seeing, growth was, and is, inevitable.

Truman Ward and his son Jimmy had a vision. In the late 1960's they saw a planned community of office buildings and commercial establishments where there had been a horse and cattle farm. They saw research facilities, banks, company headquarters, and streets lined with Bradford Pears and flower beds. The dream continues to became a reality in the form of Maryland Farms of today.

10 Maryland Farms

No organization or institution has been more influential in setting the pace for Brentwood's lifestyle than Maryland Farms. The institution began as a pacesetter. For many years, the name Brentwood was synonymous with fine-blooded horses. So was the name Maryland Farms.

Maryland Farms had its beginning in 1937 when J. Truman Ward, then the owner of WLAC Radio Station in Nashville, bought 100 acres of stump land along Old Hickory Boulevard near the village of Brentwood. He later added other acreage, making Maryland Farms, named for his wife, Mary, a 400-acre spread unsurpassed in the South.

Ward's love for horses manifested itself in this showplace for fine horses. He began by building a twenty-stall stable measuring 44 by 155 feet with an interior of wormy chestnut and knotty pine ceilings. Twenty by twenty foot stalls were finished in oak. Both American saddle horses and Tennessee walking horses were stabled there in the beginning for training. Other barns and pastures enclosed within the farm's five-mile white fence were home to 50 brood mares.

American Ace

In 1941 Ward bought seven mares and a stallion named American Ace, who achieved worldwide fame as an outstanding show performer, from Spindletop Farm in Lexington, Kentucky. American Ace was the leading sire of his breed in the late 1940's. He died in 1953.

Many notables visited Maryland Farms. Some who bought its horses were Gene Autry, Barbara Stanwyck, and Norrie Goff of the radio team "Lum and Abner." Also, industrialist Victor Emanuel came to purchase horses and remained to locate a plant at Nashville, Vultee Aircraft Corporation, now AVCO.



J. Truman Ward, founder of Maryland Farms, with American Ace.

Maryland Manor, the Ward residence, was built in 1941-42. The two-story Colonial-style structure was built in fine architectural style of classic design and featured over 7,500 feet of living space.

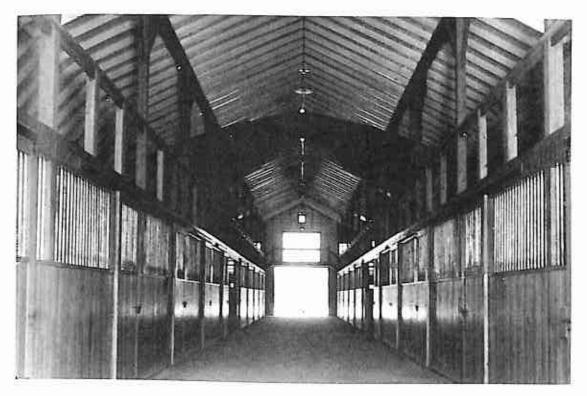
After the death of American Ace, the Ward family replaced their horse operation with a cattle farm boasting over 200 head of Hereford cattle. In 1958, Maryland Farms once again became a horse farm, this time by lessee Edward Potter, founder and president of Commerce Union Bank and the Tennessee Thoroughbred Training Association, of which he was president. A three-eights mile covered training track was moved from the Tennessee State Fairgrounds to Maryland Farms. There was also a five-eights mile open track. During this period, there were over 100 horses in training at Maryland Farms. Middle Tennessee weather was deemed ideal for this type of operation.



Among the many dignitaries who visited Maryland Farms were Mr. and Mrs. Andy Devine, shown with Mrs. Ward (left) and Truman Ward (right).



An aerial view of Maryland Farms in 1940.



Hallway and reception room in the show barn at Maryland Farms.



Maryland Manor in the days when it was a cattle farm.

Brentwood today had not emerged. However, there is no doubt that, even prior to 1950, discerning people were discovering Brentwood's beneficial qualities. Their movement into the area foreshadowed the surge in local growth which followed.

Also significant in attracting new residents to the area were Brentwood's major equestrian events, notable horse shows and fox hunts, which captured the imagination of a special group of new residents who moved to Brentwood in the early part of this century and thus brought about a "renaissance" in the area.

Horses

Since the remote day when Tennessee was young, horses have been plentiful and in great number here. Tennesseans have always loved horses — this is not unnatural, for the population is predominantly Anglo-Saxon. Englishmen have always loved and raced their horses. Further, the Central Basin of Tennessee is a "natural" for all types of livestock. The native bluegrass, the gently rolling hills, the varied species of trees and the numerous springs all contribute to the production and development of fine horses. Horses foaled here grow rapidly and possess great stamina due to the phosphate and lime content of the soil. It has been observed that native Tennessee horses are remarkably free from blemishes and unsoundness, a by-product of the mineral-rich environment.

When the early Tennessee settlers came across the mountains from Virginia and the Carolinas to build homes in the newfound wilderness, they brought their horses with them. These horses were a sturdy breed of saddlers, and there were thoroughbred stallions among them. According to the earliest records available, breeders and thoroughbreds were prominent in Middle Tennessee. These horses played an important role in the development of the Tennessee Pacer and the Tennessee Walking Horse. Today, hundreds of horses within a 75-mile radius of Nashville flourish in a variety of stables, barns, and open pastures. They are "at home" here, and have been so for more than a hundred years.

The Iroquois Steeplechase. — Touted for many years as "the South's Greatest One-Day Sporting Event," the Iroquois Steeplechase is held near Brentwood in Nashville's Percy Warner Park on the Saturday in May following the Kentucky Derby. The prestige surrounding this event has conferred the name "Iroquois Day" on the day of this event, an annual tradition since 1941. The main event has been run continuously since 1941 with only one break, in 1945, because of the war. It has from the beginning attracted horses and riders of class and distinction. The number of starters in the main event has varied, from five in 1944 to 16 in 1950. During recent years, large fields have been the rule.

The first Iroquois Steeplechase meeting in 1941 had only five races, but there was no shortage of either entries or spectators even at the first meeting. Approximately 40,000 people witnessed a spectacle which had never before come to Mid-

dle Tennessee, one which has subsequently become the best steeplechase in the world, apart from infield races at major tracks.

A great deal of tradition seems to have become full-blown at the time of the first meeting. The race is named in honor of Iroquois, the only American-bred three year old ever to win the prestigious Epson Derby in England, which he did in 1881.

The Iroquois was a pioneer in the upsurge of steeplechasing which has swept the South and West. Within a year after the first Iroquois meeting, other similar meetings began to be held in Peoria, Illinois, Tryon, North Carolina, Chicago, St. Louis, Indianapolis, and Louisville.

Horses of Maryland Farms. — As previously mentioned, one of the most outstanding horse nurseries in the south was Brentwood's own Maryland Farms, which is now an office complex. Located on Old Hickory Boulevard nine miles south of Nashville, this beautiful farm of 317 acres was ideally situated in the foothills of the Harpeth Valley.

Maryland Farms was owned by Mr. and Mrs. J. Truman Ward, who shared a life-long love of horses. Their son, Jim, acquired their love for horses, and took as much interest in them as did his parents. Maryland Farms is named for Mrs. Ward, whose given name was Mary. The Ward family derived much pleasure as well as notable success from their farm and saddle horse operation. They had one of the most attractive show and training stables in the country, surrounded by miles of white board fences, paddocks, stately trees, and pastures. Especially noteworthy was their barn, which was built along colonial lines.



The barn at Maryland Farms, remodeled as an office building.

Maryland Farms attracted numerous persons who were interested in both American Saddle Horses and Tennessee Walking Horses. A great variety of horses was available at Maryland Farms, from weanling colts to finished horses ready for the show ring, not to mention well-trained pleasure horses of both breeds.

Over forty top-blooded brood mares were stabled at Maryland Farms, many of which established outstanding show records before being retired. The farm boasted three prize sires, including the nationally famous American Ace, purchased by Mr. Ward from Spindletop Farms in Lexington, Kentucky.

Although no longer in operation as a horse farm, Maryland Farms today continues its heritage of leadership as an office park in which numerous corporations house their national headquarters.

The Brentwood Derby. —From 1959 until 1971, Maryland Farms was the site of the annual Brentwood Derby, a local horse racing event. Edwin C. Eggert developed an interest in horse racing and persuaded the Brentwood Chamber of Commerce to promote the Derby as a fund-raising event. In addition to Eggert, the first committee to oversee the event included Irby Bright, Bob Smith, Harry Pearson, and Eddie Arnold. The Derby was the only fund-raising event sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce during the days of its running, and revenues from the event were used to support charitable organizations and civic projects. Among these were the National Kidney Foundation, Fanny Battle Day Home, Lipscomb School Library, Granberry School Library, Crippled Children's Hospital, Little League Baseball, the Boy Scouts of America, and the Girl Scouts of America. The last Derby was held on April 24, 1971.

The Brentwood Horse Show. — Starting first at Robertson Academy and later moving to the Houghland family's Bright Hour Farm, the Brentwood Horse Show was an annual event where horse owners and their families gathered for fun and competition. Especially noteworthy in connection with this event was the Vernon Sharp family, who won the event more often than did any of the other participants. Calvin Houghland, Jr. reports that many present-day residents of Brentwood and Nashville often refer to their participation in the event. A similar event was held at Maryland Farms in the 1940's.

Hounds

The Harpeth Hills Hunt Club. — In the early 1920's, Rogers Caldwell and a group of friends organized the Harpeth Hills Hunt Club. The long club house was situated on Old Hickory Boulevard. In traditional English style, the club organized and held fox hunts. Harpeth Hills Hunt Club disbanded in 1938, several years after some of its main supporters had organized another similar club known as the Hillsboro Hounds.

Maryland Manor faces demolition

Brentwood property still is listed for sale, but will be razed if buyer isn't found

By JANET H. LETHGO Staff Writer

BRENTWOOD— Maryland Manor will be demolished within the next few months, unless someone else comes up with the money to buy and move the building or restore it to a new use.

On Monday, Sunrise Contracting Inc. of La Vergne filed for a permit to demolish the empty manor, an 8,624-square-foot home that is next door to city hall.

Maryland Manor is a significant piece of Brentwood's past because it was the house and surrounding horse farm that eventually became the Maryland Farms office park

Trustee for the property owner, Brentwood attorney Chris Harris, was out of town yesterday, but someone in his law office said that Franklin banker and investor Gordan Inman is brokering the property. Inman also was out of town. The asking price for the house and 3 acres is not known.

Inquiries last week into tearing down Maryland Manor prompted city commissioners to hold a meeting to call for a moratorium on demolition of buildings in the city until staff can review the ordinance and tighten up language.

City officials learned that a 90-day grace period in the ordinance was purely voluntary. They are expected to change the voluntary grace period to a mandatory grace period.

Maryland Manor, at 5201 Maryland Lane, is now a hodgepodge of empty offices: with rotted, boarded-up verandas. But it was once the

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enterpiece of a horse farm operaon that drew top horse breeders, imous actors and others to Brentood before it was incorporated.

J. Truman Ward purchased the um in 1937, paying \$10,000 for the rst 100 acres. Over the years, the Vard family raised champion orses and cattle. In the 1940s and 0s, the farm was home to Amerian Ace, an American Saddle Iorse recognized as the leading tallion of the breed based on his

winnings in the show ring.

Later, the farm was a serious cattle operation. Then in the 1970s, developers Jack Massey, John Neff and Albert Johnson formed a partnership with Ward, and the office park was developed.

Jim Ward, J. Truman Ward's son, grew up in Maryland Manor. Last year, he said he understood that economics will dictate what happens to his boyhood home.

"Things change. If a use can't be found for it, the owner has to do something," Ward said. ■

Rush is on to save Maryland Manor

By Clint Confehr Staff Writer

At least three, perhaps six, and maybe more investors are gathering this afternoon to find a way to preserve Maryland Manor, the centerpiece of the Maryland Farms office park and the horse farm from which the park was created.

A LaVergne company has applied for a permit to demolish the mansion, public records show, but Don Robinson, president of Reserve Construction Co. Inc. of Brentwood said Wednesday that he's "part of a group that's trying to put together a package to save it."

One of the "key players" was arriving in Nashville on Wednesday from Scotland, Robinson said. "We're trying to get as much support as we can."

The effort developed early last month, Robinson said, declining to be too specific.

Sunrise Contracting Inc. President

Constance Wesnofske applied for the demolition permit nearly a week after Brentwood city commissioners imposed a 30-day moratorium on issuing new demolition permits.

The moratorium expires April 8 and Brentwood city commissioners are set Monday to enact a mandatory 90-day waiting period on demolition of 61 buildings in Brentwood which the city has deemed historic, including Maryland Manor.

The waiting period is planned to provide preservationists time to find buyers of historic properties which are threatened.

However, city officials have realized that an application filed before the new law is enacted — to transform a voluntary 90-day waiting period into a mandatory waiting period — might be seen as unaffected by the new law which hadn't been enacted.

"If an applicant for a demolition permit wanted to raise that issue, it would have to be resolved by a court," said

City Recorder Roger Horner, who's also assistant city attorney.

Meanwhile, a March 15 letter from Wesnofske to the Brentwood Planning and Codes Department announced the request for a demolition permit for the building at 5201 Maryland Way and indicates steps have already been taken toward demolition.

"The utilities have been disconnected and the water and sewer lines are to be capped," Wesnofske said. "We have had a preliminary asbestos inspection performed at the site and were unable to find any suspect asbestos material.

"The building will be demolished using a hydraulic excavator and the debris will be removed from the site by rollaway containers.

"We have a signed contract with Christopher Harris, trustee, to demolish the building," she wrote to the city.

Her application states the cost of demolition will be \$49,500.

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Manor

Brentwood lawyer Christopher Harris is listed as the trustee for the owner of the mansion, an 8,600-square-foot home on 3.222 acres just east of Brentwood Fire Station No. 1 and the Municipal Center.

Harris' office said he is in Mexico and won't be back until next week.

Williamson County Property Assessor's office records show the total value of the property at 5201 Maryland Way as \$1,208,000 with the land worth \$982,100 and the improvements valued at \$225,900. The values are based on the county's reappraisal in 1996.

Other county records show that the mansion and land was transferred by a quit claim from Fairlawns Partnership to Harris for the benefit of John R. Lindahl Sr. on Feb. 19, 1999.

Brentwood Commissioner Anne Dunn has taken a leader-ship role in the city's attempts to preserve the historic house with the moratorium and a mandatory waiting period, a period when preservationists might find buyers who are willing to save such old buildings.

I know of at least one interested party," said Dunn, but she was unable to name the individual.

Brentwood City Community Relations Director Linda Lynch said Wednesday that at least one individual was trying to find financial resources to acquire the property.

Dunn said, "We've had about two people who've had serious looks at it within the last two months. As soon as we realized they were interested in not keeping it themselves, we tried to promote it. But there's quite a bit of money involved."

At least one prospective buyer apparently didn't understand the nature of historic preservation, she said.

"I'm not trying to put them down because they're not historic minded, but some have said they would build something that looks like the mansion in the front of the property and call it preservation," Dunn said. "We weren't enthusiastic about that."

Those developers hoped to build office buildings on the land, Dunn said.

Ultimately, Brentwood officials have no final control over historic properties.

"I believe that no one wants to buy it with the house sitting on it and endure the rancor of the public when they tear it down," Dunn said. "But I sus-



Maintenance workers at Mooreland Mansion have talked with floating specters.

A Tale of Two Mansions From working farm to working neighborhood

With two major office parks anchored picturesque historic homes. Brentwood unique Tennessee—and perhaps Southeast-in the way its businesses have joined forces to preserve the past and, in fact, put it to work for the city's future.

Style, Grace and Ghost Stories

Alexander Moore was the fourth member of his family to have a hand in building Mooreland, the landmark Greek Revival plantation home that is now the well preserved focal point of Brentwood's Koger Center. Moore's grandfather, father and brother all held the deed to the property at separate times, and all died before the manor was

When the task passed to Alexander, the finished product was on a lesser scale than was orginally planned, and a wing on one side was drastically reduced-thus the off centered front

One hundred years and several gen-

erations later, the Moores sold the 28 room house. Mooreland's current inhabitants—the law firm owned by attorney Kirk C. Waite—have inherited the ghost of Ruth Moore, She was Robert Moore's neice, whose death in her upstairs bedmom on the eve of her wedding remains unexplained.

So far, Waite hasn't seen her. But his employees say they have.

One evening Waite got a call from a cleaning woman at the law firm, "She was at the foot of the basement steps and wouldn't move. We had to go get her," he said. She had seen a woman in a blue dress float down the steps and



Jim Ward remembers visits from Andy Devine to his Maryland Farms home-

point out places she had missed in cleaning. Blue, Waite said, was the color of the dress Ruth Moore was buried in.

Among other stories about Mooreland are those related to its use as a hospital after the Battle of Franklin, when Mrs. Moore sent 26 slaves far and wide to bring in anyone who was wounded and dying. Local residents still claim to see gray-coated men wandering about the grounds of Mooreland.

Working in a Dignified Manor From 1942 until 1958, the focal point of Tennessee's most well known horse farms, Maryland Farms, was the lovely Ward mansion. Today, Maryland Farms is a progressive, 400-acre office park, whose developers, like those of the Koger Center, have made large capital improvements in Brentwood and are avid participants in the community. And its focal point is still the Ward mansion.

Only now, the forty-seven year old manor home helps convey a feeling of community throughout the park, and will take one of Maryland Farm's tenants well into the future,

Where famous horses once strode the grounds and famous horsemen once lingered to visit, the Ward mansion is now the home of the law offices of Gordon & Bottorff. "Our objective was to preserve the character of the house as the center of Maryland Fams, and make it a functional structure for our firm," said attorney Ed Gordon, partner in the firm occupying the mansion since 1981.

Jim Ward, who lived in the home from ages 11 to 24, now spends his days in his office at Maryland Farms Developers across the street from his old house.

"We had a rope swing in the big tree out front," Ward said. "We called it the grandchildren's tree because they all stayed on it. The rope was still there the last time I looked.

"People were always coming in and out of that house," he said. "It was a real entertainment center."

Today, Tom Bottorff's law office operates in the room that was Ward's boyhood bedroom.