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THE EQUESTRIAN LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

THE SUMMER TRAVEL ISSUE

*Morocco, Argentina, Australia, Ireland
And The Hamptons ... With Horses*

*Cool Solutions For Your
Hot Weather Problems*

**OTTBS & PREDATORS:
UNLIKELY PARTNERS**

**TIPS FOR TOP-NOTCH
TAILGATING**

ROCKY STARTS AND HAPPY ACCIDENTS

There's a long list of reasons Old Salem Farm probably should never have been built, and it begins with the piece of land on which the farm rests in South Salem, New York.



PHOTO COURTESY PAUL AND ROBIN GREENWOOD



BILL ATHERTON PHOTO

“That property is built on the side of a hill, a rocky hill. That was never a great place for a farm,” says George Morris in our story on the facility (p. 20). “To make that a horse property, with those rocks and those hills, there is nothing conducive about that property to build a horse facility. Every person who has gone in there has had, in a way, an uphill battle to buck the property.”

But someone *did* decide to build Old Salem Farm (first called Salem View Farm) back in the 1960s, someone otherwise unfamiliar with both farm management and horses, which is likely the only reason it happened. Then the facility went through owner after owner—including some famous and infamous tenants—and it fell into disrepair, despite hosting a series of popular shows, before its current owner purchased it in whole in 2001 and organized an extensive renovation.

Now Old Salem is known as one of the country's most beloved show facilities, and one of its most successful if you're measuring by the number and quality of its shows. The facility will host this year's Adequan/FEI North American Youth Championships for show jumping and dressage for the first time. Its spring shows and the prestigious American Gold Cup, held in September, remain stops for many top competitors every year, and the farm hosts shows more weekends than it doesn't.

Is owning Old Salem Farm a good financial decision for Kamran Hakim? Probably not, as property manager Alan Bietsch says the owner calls it his “boat,” referring to the quote that says: “A boat is a hole in the water into which you throw money.” But he's willing to shoulder that burden and in the process keep a piece of history alive while also investing in the future of show jumping—and in the riders who base there, including new head trainer and young Olympian Lucy Davis. These are all positive things, and they all came from the original ill-advised decision to build a horse farm on that piece of property.

If you could go back in time, would you warn retired police officer Frank Amendola of the challenges he'd face with Old Salem Farm? And then the people who came after—Paul Newman, Paul Greenwood and others—that the property might serve as their own personal albatrosses for a few years before it found its way?

Maybe not. Because even though the facility struggled for a few years, maybe even a few decades, it's now a gem that shines even brighter because of its location and history—and that's the kind of happy accident you can't plan.

Lisa Slade

—Lisa Slade

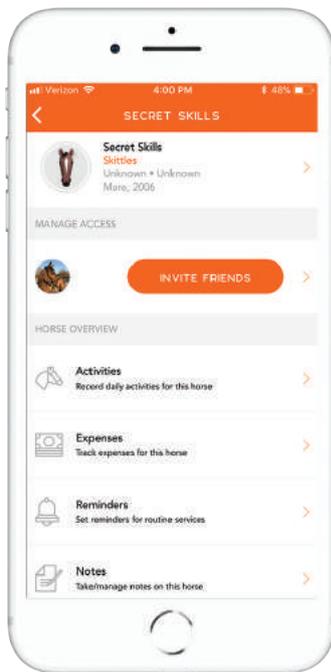
ON DECK

JULY AND AUGUST

This year's FEI North American Youth Championships are split between two competitions.



The PonyApp



Lucy Davis, Olympic silver medalist and now head trainer at Old Salem Farm (see p. 20) designed the PonyApp with a team shortly after graduation from Stanford University (California). It's now been on the market for more than a year, and it's gained a devoted following.

The PonyApp can organize your horse's (or horses') records, track training sessions, and it'll show you the latest equestrian news. Bonus:

There's cute and customizable merchandise available on the PonyApp website (ponyswaggie.com).

JULY 18-22

■ EVENTING
at Rebecca Farm in
Kalispell, Montana



Lindsay Berreth Photo

AUGUST 1-5

■ SHOW JUMPING and DRESSAGE
at Old Salem Farm in
North Salem, New York

JULY

16

■ Don't miss the deadline for the American Academy of Equine Art's Fall Juried Show, which will take place Sept. 6-30 at the FEI World Equestrian Games in Tryon, North Carolina. Visit aaea.net/upcomingexhibitions for more information.

*The TRIALS &
TRIUMPHS*
of
OLD
SALEM
FARM

It's seen top trainers, movie stars, world-class competition—and near financial ruin. Now Old Salem Farm rebuilds again, with Olympic show jumper Lucy Davis as its new in-house trainer.

By Jennifer B. Calder



After undergoing extensive renovations over many years, Old Salem Farm is now a top destination for both international and local shows.

Photo Courtesy Old Salem Farm



Olympic silver medalist Lucy Davis, pictured with Caracho 14, was recently hired as the Old Salem Farm in-house trainer.



Bill Atherton Photo

Nestled off the undulating country roads of North Salem, New York, far beyond the bustle of New York City some 50 miles south, Old Salem Farm sits perched behind a gated entrance atop a hill. The main barn overlooks sand rings dotted with jumps and an immaculate, brilliantly green grass grand prix field. Horses heading out to school clip-clop across the cobblestone drive as dogs, belonging to riders and grooms, chase each other up and down the famous hill where spectators have observed shows for decades.

The architecture of the renovated main barn, with its stone and shingle facade, takes its aesthetic cues from the surrounding Hudson Valley area, and although much has changed over the passing decades since the farm was developed in 1964, the basic layout remains the same—albeit much, much larger.

Long loved by area residents, the 125-acre Old Salem Farm in North Salem has kept the feeling of a small, local boarding stable while now offering elite training and competition opportunities under the guidance of Olympic show jumper Lucy Davis, who came on as the in-house trainer this spring.

It's a balancing act, functioning as one of the few barns in the country that offers nearly year-round shows—including the two weeks of Old Salem Farm Spring Horse Shows and the Fall Classic, host of the American Gold Cup CSI**** grand prix—while still functioning as a year-round training facility. Old Salem Farm has finally hit its stride under the leadership of current owner Kamran Hakim and Alan Bietsch, its facility manager. But getting to this point took many years, many owners—and even more money.

The Same, Yet So Different

The thickly wooded, rocky and hilly topography in the northern corner of Westchester County, New York, was not the most hospitable site to open a new equestrian facility, but local retired police officer Frank Amendola—whether through lack of experience or optimism—went ahead anyway.

Amendola, along with a few local friends, carved out what was then one of the largest indoor rings on the East Coast and erected a barn on the 54-acre plot of land, naming it Salem View Farm with the intention of creating a boarding facility and show barn.

Despite his inexperience, Amendola knew enough to reach out to young professional George Morris, who had been leasing space in nearby Armonk, New York.

“Toward the end of 1964, I was approached and told that they were building this fabulous place in North Salem, and they wanted me to be the professional and work there,” says Morris.

He accepted.

“It’s basically the same set-up today,” he says. “The driveway is the same; they had a sand ring where the sand ring is now. I mean it’s *way* better now, way, way bigger and better, but it’s the same basic set-up. They’ve expanded it enormously; they’ve improved it enormously, but it is the same pond, the same brook running through it, the same tree is there, the same indoor ring.

“That first winter, the indoor ring was not totally finished, and there were some parts of the roof that were open,” Morris adds with a laugh.

Morris based out of Salem View for one year before a family friend warned him that the owners might have bitten off more than they could chew and were experiencing financial difficulties.

“They were not horse people,” Morris says. “They were nice guys. They were not rich, and they got in over their head—that’s what happened. I had a great year there though.”

The Hill Years

According to documents provided by the North Salem Historical Society, Amendola sold Salem View Farm in 1967 to Dr. Albert Keston, who renamed it The Hill.

Keston brought aboard Jack Rockwell and, in addition to

leasing out stalls, held regional and local shows, including one on Easter Sunday, which became the precursor to the current Old Salem Farm Spring Shows.

Frank Madden, who would go on to have two stints of training at Old Salem Farm throughout his career, remembers showing at The Hill in the 1970s.

“They had the one indoor. You entered their ring from the far end of the building. It’s so long ago, I can’t remember all the nitty gritty of it, but it was very, very rough,” Madden says with a laugh. “I remember that. But even back then in the 1970s it was a landmark in the area for horses.”

Rather than the farm being under the auspices of one trainer, many worked concurrently out of it over the 14 years Keston owned the property. But the barn eventually fell into disrepair.

“That property is built on the side of a hill, a rocky hill. That was never a great place for a farm,” says Morris. “To make that a horse property, with those rocks and those hills, there is nothing conducive about that property to build a horse facility. Every person who has gone in there has had, in a way, an uphill battle to buck the property.”

But the next to try their luck? Joanne Woodward and Paul Newman.

“Every person who has gone in there has had, in a way, an uphill battle to buck the property.”

—GEORGE MORRIS



Far West Farms In The East

The famous actors purchased the ramshackle farm in 1981 and immediately began renovating. The barn was of its time, which is to say the late 1960s, and looked it. People described it alternately as looking like a split-level ranch house or a ski lodge.

Woodward and Newman named it Far West Farms Of New York when they brought in trainer Nick Karazissis from California, who commuted back and forth between his West Coast Far West Farms and this new East Coast base. Daughter Clea Newman trained with Karazissis, Morris (who by this time had started his Hunterdon Farm in New Jersey), Madden and Bill Cooney.

Woodward, although initially terrified of horses, became interested in riding when, after trying to console Clea after a disappointing horse show, Clea told her mother, “You don’t know anything about horses.” So Woodward set off to learn.

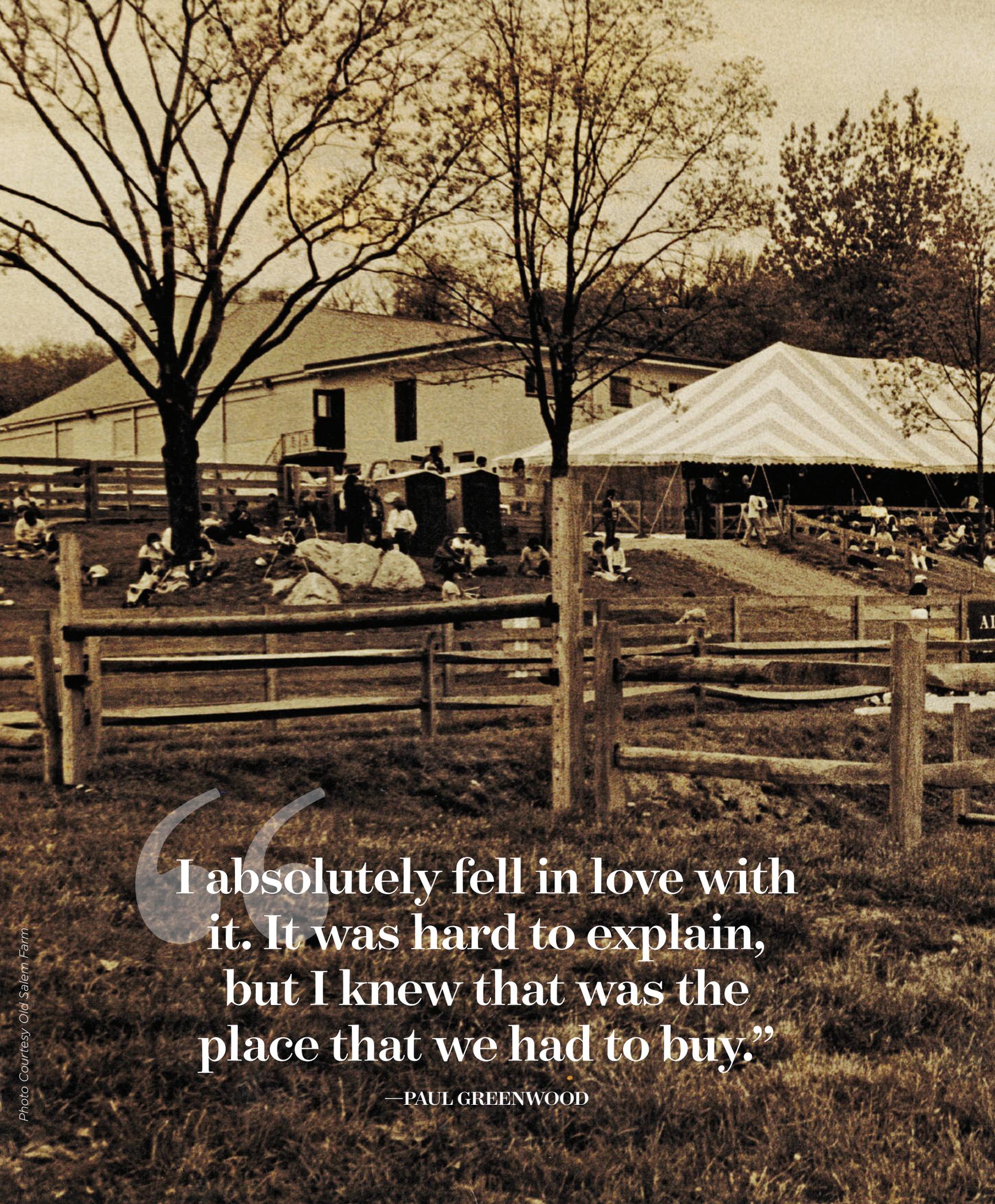
Under the ownership of Paul and Woodward, attention was paid to exterior concerns, such as adding a new grand prix field designed by Pamela Carruthers. Local Olympic eventer Michael Page also rode and coached out of the facility.

After working to renovate the property for three years, Newman invited Morris to lunch in the city to discuss the hurdles involved with turning the farm into a showplace.

“That place was always a battle,” repeats Morris. “So I go into the 21 Club, we sit down, we have a drink, and he said, ‘George, what should I do with this place?’

“[I said,] ‘Paul, get rid of it!’ He practically kissed my feet!” Morris says with a laugh.

“He was so happy! Because everybody else was telling him to do this and do that and buy more horses and change the ring, and I just said, ‘Paul, get rid of it. Get rid of it.’ He was ecstatic,” continues Morris.



“I absolutely fell in love with it. It was hard to explain, but I knew that was the place that we had to buy.”

—PAUL GREENWOOD





The rocky, hilly topography of North Salem, New York, was not the most ideal setting to create an equestrian facility, but Old Salem Farm has hit its stride after its most recent renovation, and ushered in a new era under the training leadership of Olympic show jumper Lucy Davis (bottom left). *Bill Atherton Photos*



Becoming Old Salem Farm

About the time Paul Newman was having this conversation with Morris in 1984, a couple on a weekend drive in search of a possible country home drove past the farm and pulled into the long driveway.

It was Paul Greenwood and his first wife, Edie.

“I absolutely fell in love with it,” says Paul Greenwood. “It was hard to explain, but I knew that was the place that we had to buy.”

Edie was less convinced, as it was an equestrian facility and not the country house she envisioned. Both rode for pleasure and had started taking lessons, but neither were serious equestrians.

It was not listed for sale, but Paul Greenwood inquired as to the owner and asked if he might be interested in selling. A day later, he got a phone call.

“I met with Paul Newman, and we agreed on a price, and that was that!” he says. “It was just one of those things that was meant to be. My wife and I eventually ended up getting divorced, and all I cared about was keeping Old Salem because I *really* knew what it could become, and it was just something that was part of me from the minute I saw it.”

Around this time, Morris decided to focus on jumpers at his Hunterdon Farm and suggested Madden and Cooney take the equitation and hunter parts of his business to a new location since he needed the space.

Paul Greenwood recalls getting a phone call not long after he purchased the property in 1984.

“Maybe three or four months after I bought it, I got a phone call from somebody I’d never heard of—George Morris,” he says. “In his typical baritone voice, he said, ‘I understand you’ve purchased [Far West Farms]. I think you should hire these two fine gentlemen, Bill Cooney and Frank Madden.’ So I said, ‘Ah, who are you again?’”

“It was a very strange conversation, and I said, ‘Well, if you feel that strongly about it, I would be happy to sit down and talk to them.’ I did talk to them, and it worked out really well,” he adds. “They left Hunterdon and came to Old Salem.”

Ironically, during the three years her parents owned the property, Clea stayed in New Jersey at Hunterdon, and it was only after they sold it that she moved her horses there to follow Madden.

Paul Greenwood, who renamed it Old Salem Farm,

envisioned turning the property into a place like Spruce Meadows in Alberta. But, despite adding an additional 66 acres in 1986, the property would never be large enough. And he, like the others, ran into issues due to the topography.

“While North Salem is beautiful, it’s also basically bedrock, so it was going to be about as big as it was going to be,” says Paul Greenwood.

Madden and Cooney weren’t the only trainers leasing stalls during Paul Greenwood’s tenure. Robin Greenwood—Paul’s second wife (the two were married on the property in 1992)—moved her business there, as did Scott Stewart and Charlie Weaver.

“The barn was completely full,” says Stewart. “We had a lot of ponies and junior hunters and equitation and amateurs, the whole thing. At that point, in the beginning of my years there, we stayed home for the winters; we didn’t go to Florida. We did all the winter horse shows there, and they were actually quite big and competitive back then, the indoor shows. But it was nice! The ring was great. The field was always great to ride on—that is pretty much the same.”

During this period, Paul Greenwood cultivated sponsors, including Pepsi, which offered a \$1 million prize to any rider who won back-to-back Sunday grand prix classes during the two-week spring show in May. The farm also hosted the U.S. team’s selection trial for the 1990 FEI World Equestrian Games in Sweden.

“My goal was to get as many really good horse shows as we could,” Paul Greenwood says.



The New Old Salem Farm

In the late 1990s, despite its popular shows, Old Salem struggled financially. New York real estate investor Kamran Hakim had two children who rode there and wanted to continue.

Alan Bietsch, who has worked for the family for decades, jokes, “I don’t think it was [Hakim’s] first choice. ‘Dad, can you help these people out? We love to ride there.’”

“Kamran calls this place his ‘boat,’” Bietsch confesses, in reference to the oft-quoted line, “A boat is a hole in the water into which you throw money.”

“But he and his wife absolutely love it,” he adds. “They are not horse people but love the property.”

In 2001, Hakim bought out Paul Greenwood entirely. In 2009, Paul Greenwood was arrested, and he was later prosecuted, convicted of investment fraud, and sentenced in 2014 to 10 years in prison. At the time of this story, his sentence had been reduced to five years, and he's scheduled for a 2019 release.

Hakim started a massive renovation, which extended, both in time and money, far past the original budget estimations. Bietsch, who had worked for the family on other projects and had a background in golf course construction, was asked to look around in 2006.

"We wound up severing ties with the people who were working on it and brought in our own in-house crew and completed the renovations in 18 months," he says.

Spending \$30 million and updating in phases, the group turned Old Salem Farm into the current showplace. The immaculate, massive 68-stall main barn wraps around the original indoor ring and offers a second-floor viewing area complete with a private boarders' lounge and gym alongside. There is a separate restaurant and bar area on that floor for horse show participants, also with a large observation window overlooking the indoor.

A second, smaller barn was also renovated and provides 26 additional stalls, and there are five outdoor competition rings. But the shining jewel of Old Salem Farm is its now-pristine grass grand prix field, which is aided by Bietsch's golf course management experience.

The group also carved out more parking, moving tons of rock and limestone, and focused on making the venue user-friendly for horse show participants, with room for exhibition booths and more than 1,000 horses, while remaining cognizant of the needs of those who make the barn their home base.

All those efforts paid off with Old Salem Farm now hosting nearly 30 weeks of shows, including the prestigious Gold Cup and, this summer for the first time, the Adequan/FEI North American Youth Championships.

"We are *very* excited," Bietsch says of winning the bid. "We

have some support from some of the locals, McLain Ward and Georgina Bloomberg, who did enjoy participating in Young Riders. They felt it was a very valued part of their experience of getting ready to compete in Europe. They felt it needed a change of location and maybe a shot of fresh air. It's a good horse community around here, and we've interacted with a lot of local businesses."

Madden, who left during Paul Greenwood's ownership to head a barn in New Jersey, was brought back as the in-house trainer in 2011, along with Steven Weiss. Madden stayed until last December when Old Salem Farm announced it was handing over the reins to Davis early this year.

"We felt we needed a change in direction," says Bietsch of

hiring the 2016 Olympic Games (Brazil) silver team medalist. "The concept of: Who do you hire for this thing? I felt that. She's a bright, bright person; the Olympic résumé is excellent.

"[She's] a Stanford graduate, smart, involved with the PonyApp business, focused and not a crazy person in this industry," adds Bietsch, checking off her

qualifications with a laugh. "I think she is one of the future stars in this sport, and she is very composed, thinks through things logically, and I think it's a great thing for young girls and women to aspire to be like that. I think it's a great step in the right direction."

A New Era

For Davis, the decision to take the position at Old Salem was not one she made lightly.

"I always knew it was a really good opportunity, and it's such an iconic place with so much tradition, so, in that sense, it wasn't a hard decision," she says. "But it's a different kind of direction in my career with training, and also I have another business I work on, my PonyApp, so I definitely have to balance my time and really be more organized and proactive about using time wisely and efficiently. But I do love being in New York City and really like being in this area."

Davis lives primarily in the city and makes the one-hour commute to the farm, although she does have an on-site

There is so much tradition, so much history, here,"

—LUCY DAVIS

apartment when needed. Her four mounts: Barron, Caracho 14, Cassis 54 and Boucherom also live on the farm.

Davis, who graduated from Stanford University (California) in December of 2016 with a major in architecture from the department of civil and environmental engineering, appreciates the design of the renovated facility.

“They kept the kind of iconic style of the area, which is nice when you modernize—to keep a little bit of that history,” she says, looking at the main barn.

Following the success she found at the Olympic Games, Davis contributed to a bronze team finish at the Furusiyya FEI Nations Cup Final (Spain). She then took a month off from showing before getting back into a heavy competition schedule, undoing the equilibrium she cultivated during her college years.

“I think a lot of what I was missing the last couple of years, before moving to New York, was that balance I always had while I was at Stanford of friends and people that don’t do horses,” says Davis. “If you want to do this long term, for me it’s a very necessary balance. During school I would spend summers in Germany training with Markus Beerbaum, and that was fine because there was always an end date. I was really training towards a goal, which was the Olympics. As soon as I achieved that goal and didn’t really know what my next focus was for my riding, it became the gypsy life, and motivating to continue that gypsy life was difficult.”

Last fall, Davis stabled with Old Salem Farm neighbor and friend Georgina Bloomberg to test out the area. Bloomberg grew up riding at Old Salem, first on ponies with Robin Greenwood and then with Stewart.

“I ended up really, really liking it,” Davis says. “Alan approached me and told me about the opportunity here. I obviously was very interested at the outset, but I also just wanted to make sure that if I was going to do it, I would be able to give the time and energy necessary for each student.”

And discovering she enjoyed teaching came as a surprise to Davis.

“I’ve done enough teaching on the side before taking this job to know that I would, on the whole, enjoy it,” she says. “But I always thought that people taught as a means to an end in this sport, and I realized that it’s not necessarily the case. It’s actually a very rewarding experience, and I think it’s helped me in my own riding.”

Barron, her mount for the Olympic Games, was named after Davis’ beloved grandfather, Bob “Barron” Frieze, a now-retired

jockey’s agent who represented Jerry Bailey and Edgar Prado, among others.

Davis traces her love of horses back to her grandfather and her mother, Kelly Davis, who grew up going with him to the track.

“He still goes to the track all the time,” Lucy says with a laugh. “He calls me weekly, multiple times. ‘How are the horses? How are we doing?’ They live in Florida, so they get to come a lot to the shows. He’s definitely a big figure in my life.”

Barron the horse is presently coming back into work after an injury.

“I’m just taking my time with him in the hopes that if I do, he’ll be able to tack on a few years on the other end,” she says. “It’s really hard when you have one top horse, and that one is out. It’s something a lot of professionals go through, and I feel fortunate in the meantime that I have other projects that I’ve been working on, like PonyApp and now Old Salem.

“It’s been transitional for my own sport,” continues Lucy, who is now building towards the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo.

Behind her in this quest is her new Old Salem family. They’ve reimaged her role as in-house trainer from her predecessors, allowing her time to show. This summer, Lucy will take a group to Europe.

“We want to support her effort for Tokyo in any way that we can,” says Bietsch.

And Lucy envisions creating a pipeline to the top at Old Salem Farm.

“It’s no secret there have been a lot of people who have based their business here, and I really see this as an ideal place to do so. But it’s also an opportunity to build a real, collaborative team,” she says. “It’s such a large facility and, in that, very comprehensive for ponies up to Olympic horses. Literally. This is what we have here. There is no reason why you couldn’t maintain the same system from those levels but also work with a team and play to strengths—and basically take somebody from having a fun pony lesson, whether it’s with me or another trainer here, and take them all the way to international competition.”

Although Lucy, 25, was born decades after ground was broken on the original site, she looks to add her mark to the farm’s rich history.

“There is so much tradition, so much history, here,” she says. “A lot of people have been here, more than I even knew, really, and I am very happy to be one of them.” ❧