

# THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE

## Ledyard Farms

### The People's Choice Breeder of the Year

By Jenny Grey



Located in King Ferry, N.Y., Ledyard Farms has been in the Haines family since the early 1900's. It is home to Morgan horses, Scottish Highland cattle and many other farm animals and birds.

During a time when many breeders were scaling back their operations, William (Bill) Haines of Ledyard Farms in King Ferry, N.Y., has achieved a remarkable record of sustainable success in less than eight years. Discipline, focus, a great staff and trainers, a willingness to consult with experts and a deep love for the Morgan breed are all critical success factors that have earned him your votes as the People's Choice Breeder of the Year. Read on to discover what makes Bill Haines such a vital component in the continued health and prosperity of the Morgan breed.

In more than any other category, this award reflects what a breeder has achieved over time and their progression in becoming successful. Beginning with Ledyard's Eduardo CH, the first horse with the Ledyard prefix to win world titles both in hand and under saddle, Ledyard Farms has continued to produce beautiful offspring capable of competing at a world level. Following Eduardo's early victories, the next four years yielded 16 more Grand National, World Championship and Reserve World Championship titles for Ledyard's Lucky Lucas GCH, Ledyard Mysterious Prince, Ledyard Perfect Manhattan, Ledyard's One More Time, Ledyard Merry Me, Ledyard's Liberator and Ledyard Oberon.

Home to both Morgan horses and Scottish Highland Cattle, Ledyard Farms is Bill Haines' haven away from his high-paced real estate business based in New York City. Originally attracted to Morgan horses for their beauty, Bill gained a further appreciation of their athleticism and versatility when he acquired a few for recreational purposes then began showing in

2005. Inspired by Ann Hailey's great passion for her Copper Beech Morgans managed by the late Harry Sebring, he began to think more about breeding. Outgoing and approachable, he became friends with trainers Mike Goebig and Dwayne Knowles, Lynn and Kathleen Peeples and Nancy Flower, respecting their expertise while also enjoying their company. These experts have trained and developed regional, national and world champions for Ledyard Farms since the breeding program began in the 2009/2010 time frame.

Bill approaches the management of his breeding farm with the same focus and discipline he applies to his business operations, planning for each foal crop to be no more than 10 and to keep the herd at around 40 horses. With a first-rate staff led by his equine manager, Rebecca Rodlin, he never worries about the farm while he is away. Always planning, discussing ideas with Rebecca and the extended team of trainers and consultants, he is constantly learning and assessing how well the Ledyard Farms program is performing. "It's so pleasurable", said Bill, whose much-loved Morgans are his way to find rest and relaxation. "The more I get involved, the more I see what the pros see...I will ask opinions of anyone who will talk to me!" People generally give him well-reasoned answers, adding to Bill's prodigious database of knowledge.

Rebecca Rodlin showed Morgans on the East Coast before moving to upstate New York for college. Ecstatic to find a Morgan farm just a short distance away, she cleaned stalls at Ledyard before becoming a member of the equine management team. The former equine manager began

a 'natural horsemanship' program in which every broodmare learns respectful behavior and every baby is handled and ready to go to work by the time they leave the farm to be trained as coming two-year olds. When he retired, Rebecca took his place as manager, continuing the training program and having the coming two-year olds wearing tack by the time they go out for training. Highly regarded by all of the Ledyard Farms trainers, she is appreciated for her meticulous attention to detail, her understanding of bloodlines, the excellent care the mares and foals receive and her strong communications skills. On the same page as Bill regarding breeding decisions and intimately familiar with the mares in her care and the babies they have produced, she talks on the phone with him nearly every day. "He's very supportive; we have a great staff including our assistant manager, Karen Huether who's my right-hand helper and has been with this program since day one. We also have all the equipment we need and great veterinarians", she told us. Also in charge of planning for the open house and party during the New York Regional horse show that Bill hosts at King Ferry, Rebecca facilitates an opportunity to showcase the farm and network with the Morgan community.

In keeping with his business background, Bill has straightforward, measurable goals – in addition to improving results each year, he aims to breed and show quality, marketable horses who will be successful for new owners -- a great strategy for both promoting the Ledyard name and for keeping the herd at a manageable size. While several Ledyard offspring compete all year, a horse will only show in Oklahoma if



Bill Haines (right), owner of Ledyard Farms, was on hand to congratulate Lynn Peoples and Ledyard Oberon (Man in Black x Graywood's Epona) on their unanimous win in the 2016 Futurity Two-Year-Old Stallion World Championship. It was the fourth time in the past five years that a Ledyard bred horse has won this title.



Rebecca Rodlin, the Ledyard equine manager, is appreciated for her meticulous attention to detail, understanding of bloodlines and the excellent care given to the mares and foals on the farm. Her love of these horses is shown in this photo of Dutch Mor's Joy and her colt Ledyard Bombshell (by Mizrahi).

Bill and the team agree it has the potential to place among the top three. In 2016, every horse shown for Ledyard Farms placed in the top 3 and exceeded the goal by winning national and world championships. Having a good sense of whether or not a two-year old is meeting his criteria for success, Bill will sometimes sell them to good homes and move on. This does not mean the slower developing horses may not have a chance to succeed as three or four-year olds. If Bill sees potential, he is willing to wait.

Bill has a similar philosophy with respect to mares, who he considers the most important aspect of his breeding program. Studying mare families, he determines which crosses are most likely to succeed. Bill has friends in the thoroughbred community who use the term 'blue ribbon' to refer to those mares who produce top quality babies year after year. Bill intends that every mare in the Ledyard program will meet this criterion. Graywood's Epona, Dutch-Mor's Joy, Mendon Belle Amie, Rare Piece, CBMF Immortal Belle and Wild Imaginings have consistently produced great offspring since the early days of the program. Other outstanding additions to the broodmare band are CBMF Who's That Girl, Crying Out Loud, LPS Endless Love, FRF Stolen Moment, LPS Out of Bounds and his home-bred Ledyard's Tiger Lily and Ledyard Unique Monique.

If after producing two foals Bill does not feel the mares are a good fit to produce the kinds of horses he wants to show, then they move on to another owner with whom they have a chance to be successful. In this way, the focus and discipline is maintained. "I love the breeding program!" Bill emphasized, already excited about the two-year olds who are out for training this year. Bill will visit his trainers in the early spring to discuss and determine the potential of these youngsters. Not only do they evaluate performance potential but also disposition and trainability.

Lynn Peoples, People's Choice Breeder of the Decade for 2000 to 2010, presented Ledyard's Eduardo (Town Assets x Mendon Belle Amie) in the first world championship victory for the Ledyard prefix in 2012. A year later he brought

Eduardo back into the ring with another first for Ledyard Farms by winning the Futurity Park Saddle Three-Year-Old World Championship and a repeat win with Ledyard's Lucky Lucas GCH (Astronomicallee x Graywood's Epona) as the World Champion Futurity In Hand Two-Year-Old Stallion. This talented youngster also won the World Champion Junior Stallion and Reserve World Champion Stallion titles. Last year Lynn showed Ledyard's Oberon (Man in Black x Graywood's Epona) as the undefeated World Champion Junior Stallion and the World Champion Futurity Two-Year-Old Stallion, the latter with a unanimous vote of the judges, making this the fourth time Ledyard Farms has won this title in the last five years, showing a consistency in the breeding program that is undeniably difficult to achieve in such a short period of time.

Lynn describes Bill as a person who gains knowledge from people he respects. "There are certain attributes and credentials he wants to see in his mares and foals", Lynn told us, adding that Bill is open-minded, giving his horses extra time to develop if he and the trainer think it worthwhile. "It's easy to work hard for him", said Lynn. "He's appreciative and smart...a lot of things make it work; it's very beneficial to have the babies worked and they (the Ledyard Farms staff) are willing to do whatever you want them to do."

Lynn bred Man in Black (Town Assets x Town Sweetheart), who he and Bill subsequently co-owned before Bill purchased him outright to use as a breeding stallion for Ledyard Farms. "He's wonderful to own horses with", Lynn remarked. "He's very businesslike and there's no drama." Man in Black (Johnny) is crossing very well with the Ledyard mares. Ledyard Oberon, undefeated in Oklahoma last year, led the way as his top scoring offspring in the breeders' charts. Oberon was also the High Point Report Grand Champion In Hand Stallion. The best is yet to come", Lynn predicted. "I'm very pleased for his success."

Nancy Flower showed Man in Black in the pleasure driving division through his two-year old year. With a special gift for working patiently with the two-year olds she loves, Nancy takes

great pleasure in seeing them mature and succeed. "Bill loves the Morgan horse and is dedicated to the promotion and success of the breed", said Nancy. "He talks to everyone and asks their opinions; he's observant and willing to look at different bloodlines to make the best crosses for his breeding program to work... He's very patient in the development of a young horse if it has the potential to be an outstanding show horse and the trainer has the confidence in the horse's ability to do it. He gains great satisfaction from their success."

Ledyard's One More Time (Mizrahi x Dutch Mor's Joy) is very special to Nancy. Starting this athletically gifted gelding as a two-year-old, she shared the showing responsibilities Katelyn Byler. He won the highly competitive English Pleasure Three-Year-Old World Championship and the Futurity English Pleasure Three-Year Old Reserve World Championship last year with Katelyn in the irons. He was recently named the High Point Report's English Pleasure Junior Horse Grand Champion. Also responsible for the early training and showing of Ledyard Mysterious Prince (CBMF Crown Prince x Dutchmor's Joy) Nancy showed him as the 2014 Park Harness Two-Year-Old Grand National Champion and the World Champion Park Harness Two-Year-Old with a unanimous vote of the judges.

For Bill Haines, looking at different bloodlines for his program is not a hit or miss risk. He studies extensively then goes to horse shows to see who is successful, what is their breeding and what are they bringing to the show ring. Heart and desire are attributes prized as much as beauty and size. This year Man in Black will have five new foals on the ground; there will be three more each by Astronomicallee and taking a new turn, Bill bred three mares to the top young sire Graycliff Tony GCH in 2016.

Mike Goebig, distinguished recipient of a 2016 UPHA Lifetime Achievement Award, is another of Bill's valued trainers and consultants along with Dwayne Knowles at Broadmoor. They have been delighted with the Ledyard experience. The great Astronomicallee (Futurity French Command x Liberation Starbrite), standing at



*Man in Black (Town Assets x Town Sweetheart) is crossing very well with the Ledyard mares and expecting five new foals on the ground this year. Ledyard Don Quixote, out of Mendon Belle Amie, is an excellent example.*



*Bill Haines hosts a well-attended party each year for the participants of the New York Regional Morgan Show as well as neighbors from King Ferry and the surrounding area.*

Broadmoor, is an integral part of Bill's breeding program. He sired Dutch Mor's Joy (Astronomicallee x Pompp and Pazazz) who was shown by Mike in 2010, winning the English Pleasure Four-Year-Old World Championship. She is now firmly established at Ledyard Farms as a 'blue ribbon' mare.

"Bill's a great leader with a clear vision that all can follow", Mike observed. "He has a good understanding of what's necessary to succeed and he doesn't let sentiment get in the way... he manages the farm in a very businesslike fashion but he genuinely enjoys what he is doing. He loves the horses and gets really excited when they do well." Mike finds the Ledyard offspring to be very marketable, a highly positive aspect of working with Bill Haines. "I've had really good luck selling them and seeing them go on to be successful. It's a huge asset and it doesn't always happen."

Shown under the Broadmoor banner by Dwayne Knowles in 2015, Ledyard Perfect Manhattan (Astronomicallee x Mendon Belle Amie) was the World Champion Futurity Two-Year-Old Stallion. Subsequently purchased for Michelle Quinlisk, he was crowned the 2016 Three-Year-Old Hunter Pleasure World Champion with Sarah Gove in the saddle. His dam, Mendon Belle Amie, is one of the few Ledyard mares who has never been shown but who produces outstanding babies every year. Ledyard's Merry Me (Mizrahi x CBMF Can't Touch Me), another Ledyard bred star under Broadmoor's direction last year, was the Four-Year-Old Pleasure Driving Reserve World Champion with Mike at whip and was recently named the High Point Report's Pleasure Driving Junior Horse Reserve Grand Champion.

Kathleen Peeples of Waterford Farm has also trained for and consulted with Bill since the beginning of his program. "I'm so excited for him!" said Kathy, emphasizing the significance of Bill's People's Choice award. "His heart is 100% behind the breed. I'm very proud of what he has done...We need people like Bill Haines. He loves what he is doing. He rounds up good advisors, all of his trainers work well together and he values our opinions. He's very hands on and approachable."

Standing Man in Black at Waterford, Kathy is a key member of the extended Ledyard Farms team. A young stud, 'Johnny' is consistently siring top quality foals. "We have a good feel for it now", she observed, looking forward to this year's crop. Kathy won the 2013 Three-Year Old Mare English Pleasure Grand National Championship with Ledyard's Donatella (Mizrahi x Boot Scootin' Bootie) and has earned top awards with such talented youngsters as Ledyard Lucky Lucas GCH and Ledyard's Rare Soul (Astronomicallee x Rare Piece) who she will show as a four-year old this year.

We have listened to the collective wisdom of some of the most successful trainers in the Morgan breed who are delighted to have played a part in the success of Ledyard Farms. Dedicated to continuous improvement, Bill Haines is meeting and exceeding his goals. Discipline is key to his success, but it is tempered with a deep and abiding love for his Morgan horses. Surrounding himself with good people, he has experienced the best of possible outcomes. Ledyard Farms has experienced a meteoric path to stardom but we are secure in the knowledge that it is sustainable. With offspring still very young and with ten new potential show ring stars born each year, the best is yet to come. Many congratulations to Bill Haines and the Ledyard Farms team for being honored as the People's Choice Breeder of the Year for 2016!



*Ledyard Merry Me (Mizrahi x CBMF Can't Touch Me) starred as the 2016 Four-Year-Old Pleasure Driving Reserve World Champion with Mike Goebig. Along with Dwayne Knowles, Lynn Peeples, Nancy Flower and Kathleen Peeples, Mike has trained the Ledyard Farms horses since the inception of Bill Haines' breeding program.*



*Very special to his trainer, Nancy Flower, the athletically gifted Ledyard's One More Time won the 2016 English Pleasure Three-Year-Old World Championship with Katelyn Byler in the irons. Known for his willingness to sell the best his program produces, Bill Haines recently sold One More Time to Deborah Hamilton.*