



**State of Tennessee
Department of State
Tennessee State Library and Archives**

**BLYTHEWOOD FARMS
(Cleveland, Tenn.)
AMERICAN SADDLEBRED HORSE SCRAPBOOKS,
1932-2016**

COLLECTION SUMMARY

Creator:

Blythewood Farms (Cleveland, Tenn.)

Inclusive Dates:

1932-2016

Scope & Content:

This collection is composed of 27 scrapbooks chronicling the history of Blythewood Farms in Cleveland, Tennessee. Spanning the years from 1932 to 2016, the scrapbooks contain photographs, newspaper clippings, award certificates, registration certificates, event programs and articles about Blythewood, its owners and the American Saddlebred horses bred, trained and shown there.

Volume 1 (1932) contains newspaper clippings. Among them are articles about Bess Mayfield as a young horsewoman in New York City.

Volume 2 (1942-1948) contains newspaper clippings, photographs, judge's ribbon, pin, and ringmaster ribbon. Among the articles is the engagement announcement of Bess Mayfield to David Neil. Photographs include one of Bess Mayfield at a three-gaited competition.

Volume 3 (1949-1952) "Blythewood No. 2" contains newspaper clippings, articles about Sue City Sue, Grand Champion at Atlanta, and Blythe Spirit, Road Horse Champion, and Blythewood Farms horse sales.

Volume 4 (1951-1964) “Thoroughbred Book No. 1” contains newspaper clippings and photos of various Blythewood Farms horses. There are also photographs of Winston Neil, brother of David Neil, at Churchill Downs and Oaklawn Park, and a victory photograph of David Neil at Churchill Downs.

Volume 5 (1953-1958) “King Coe Book No. 1” is devoted to the National Champion horse King Coe and the many horses he sired as an award winning stallion.

Volume 6 (1954-1958) “Blythewood No. 3” contains newspaper clippings and magazine articles about Blythewood Farms and its many horses. It also contains photographs of various competition winners.

Volume 7 (1956-1963) “Thoroughbred Registration Papers” contains thoroughbred registration papers, including breeding and pedigree data for Blythewood Farms horses. It also contains a copy of *The Breeder’s Guide to Descriptions*.

Volume 8 (1958-1962) [Horse Racing Photographs] contains a collection of horse racing photographs with Winston H. Neil, horse owner and trainer, at Churchill Downs, River Downs, and Arlington Park.

Volume 9 (1958-1968) “Blythewood Book No. 4” contains data concerning the horses of Blythewood Farms, and David Neil, Chairman of the AHSA Roadster Committee.

Volume 10 (1959) “King Coe Book No. 2” is devoted to King Coe, voted the number one breeding sire, the many horses he sired, and his death.

Volume 11 (1959-2013) [Horses of Blythewood Farms] contains certificates of registration for Blythewood Farms horses and recognition of CF First Night Out as Reserve Sire of the Year.

Volume 12 (1962-1965) [Horses of Blythewood Farms] contains clippings about the horses of Blythewood Farms, including an article citing one sold to an individual in South Africa. It also contains a photograph of David Neil and other officials at the California State Fair.

Volume 13 (1965-1968) [Horses of Blythewood Farms] contains clippings about the horses of Blythewood Farms and the pedigree of Grand Command. It also contains a Memorial Certificate, “The United States of America Honors the Memory of David Neil,” signed by Lyndon Johnson, President of the United States.

Volume 14 (1965-1969) [Horses of Blythewood Farms] contains clippings citing Blythewood Farms horses winning five-gaited competitions. “Blythewood’s Entry

Wins Five-Gaited Competition,” and “Light and Bright Takes Top Honors in Five-Gaited Mare Event.”

Volume 15 (1966-1970) [Horses of Blythewood Farms] contain pedigree data for the horses of Blythewood Farms.

Volume 16 (1979) “Blythewood” contains clippings concerning Blythewood Farms entries in competitions including “Music City Winners,” and “Ain’t Love Grand, Richard Witt, Whip.”

Volume 17 (1979-1988) “[Horses of Blythewood Farms] contains clippings concerning Blythewood Farms entries in competitions and certificates of registration.

Volume 18 (1982-1983) [Horses of Blythewood Farms] contains photographs of Blythewood Farms horses, including Hayfield’s Bold Knight and Bell Ringer.

Volume 19 (1983-2009) [Horses of Blythewood Farms] contains registrations and award certificates for multiple horses, including CF First Night Out, People’s Choice Reserve Champion, and the National All-American Award presented to Night Out, Jury’s Out, Pocket Aces, Magical Promises, and Positive Outlook.

Volume 20 (1987-2009) [Horses of Blythewood Farms] contains clippings concerning the horses of Blythewood Farms, and one of Bess Neil receiving the Audrey Gutridge Award.

Volume 21 (1988-1991) “Blythewood Farms” contains photographs, clippings, and pedigrees for Blythewood Farms horses, and an article from *Hoof Prints* magazine, “Blythewood Farms,” August, 1989.

Volume 22 (2005-2015) “Horses Bred at Blythewood” contains pedigrees and award certificates for Blythewood Farms horses, including horses sired by CF First Night Out. It also contains a photocopy of a check signed by actor, William Shatner.

Volume 23 (2009) “First Night Out” contains biographical information about CF First Night Out and clippings and photographs of the horses he sired.

Volume 24 (2010) “Cleveland and Family” contains a variety of items including photographs of Blythewood Farms horses, pedigrees, trophies and tack, and Neil family photographs. There are four photographs of special interest: David Neil as a child sitting on the pony he rode to school every day and his brother Winston; Dallas Hardee Neil, sitting, and Annie Gill, standing; a group photograph of Elinor, Robie Gill, Winston Neil, Annie Gill Neil, Dallas Hardee Neil, Mary Elizabeth (Mayfield) Neil, Martha Neil, Robert Neil, Anne (Mayfield) Neil,

Robert “Buzzy”, Margaret E. Everhart, and Martha Anne Neil; and Robert Neil, David H. Neil, and Winston Neil.

Volume 25 (Undated) “Happy Valley Farms” contains clippings about David Neil and his tenure at Happy Valley Farms where he obtained the ranking of Master Trainer. It also contains a much earlier clipping of Bess Mayfield showing her horse, Minawanda, at Madison Square Garden, in New York.

Volume 26 (Undated) “Blythe Spirit” is a compilation of Blythe Spirit’s pedigree, an alphabetical listing of ancestors, paternal and maternal charts, base information for multiple horses, and paternal and maternal information for multiple horses.

Volume 27 (Undated) “Harrods Burg” is a compilation of Harrods Burg’s pedigree, an alphabetical listing of ancestors, paternal and maternal charts, base information for multiple horses, and paternal and maternal information for multiple horses.

Volume 28 (Undated) [CF First Night Out Part 2] contains biographical information about CF First Night Out and clippings and photographs of the horses he sired.

Physical Extent:

28 volumes

Accession/Record Group Number:

Mf. 2066

Language:

English

Permanent Location:

Mf. 2066 (available only on microfilm).

Repository:

Tennessee State Library and Archives, 403 Seventh Avenue North, Nashville, Tennessee, 37243-0312

Administrative/Biographical History

Blythewood Farms was founded in 1942 by David Neil and Mary Elizabeth “Bess” (Mayfield) Neil. It was named in honor of Mrs. Neil’s father, Pearson Blythe Mayfield, who purchased the property in the 1920s. Blythewood is one of the oldest and largest American Saddlebred nurseries and training farms in the

country. Today (2016) there are approximately 175 horses on the farm, with about 20 foals born each year.

Blythewood Farms has produced more than 300 American Saddlebred World and Reserve World Champions. Among the stallions that have stood at Blythewood are Blythe Spirit, CF First Night Out, ranked the number one performance sire of World Champions, 2005-2010, and Sire of the Year in 2009), and National Champion King Coe.

Mary Elizabeth “Bess” (Mayfield) Neil was born in Cleveland, Tennessee to Pearson Blythe Mayfield, a Cleveland attorney and founding board chairman of the Cleveland Public Library, and Mary Summerfield Key. She was educated at Girls’ Preparatory School in Chattanooga, Bob Jones College in Cleveland, Tenn., and attended Mrs. Semple’s Finishing School in New York City. Her father shared his love of horses with her as a girl, and they often rode together. She first competed in the early 1940s with the Bradley Riding Association, riding behind the Bradley County High School.

According to Mrs. Neil, “The American Saddlebred is the peacock of the horseshow world. I think they are stunning in structure, appearance and ability. They are primarily bred for show, but also used in jumping, dressage, endurance and trail and pleasure riding. I adore working with animals, especially show horses. I like the wonder of them.”

Among the honors and awards earned by Mrs. Neil are:
Lifetime Dedication Award from the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame
Breeder of the Year United States Equestrian Foundation, Breeder of the Year American Saddlebred Horse Association, Lifetime Achievement Award United States Equestrian Foundation, Lifetime Achievement Award American Saddlebred Horse Association, Audrey Pugh Guthridge Award, American Saddlebred Breeders Hall of Fame, United Professional Horseman’s Hall of Fame.

In 1942 she married David Neil and in the same year they founded Blythewood Farms together. David Hardee Neil (1913-1965) was born in Kentucky. Prior to his marriage he sold horses in Nashville and at Happy Valley Farms in Rossville, Georgia. He and Bess Neil were the parents of two daughters, Anne Neil and Margot (Neil) Everhart. Anne Neil works at Blythewood Farms and is a professional trainer, showman and salesman.

The staff of Blythewood Farms also includes Richard Witt, breeding manager, who came to Blythewood as a teenager looking for a summer job. Except for attending college, Mr. Witt has never left the farm’s employ. He was inducted into the American Saddlebred Horse Association Hall of Fame in 2003. Assisting with training and breeding are Ramon Gomez and Pedro Martinez, both of whom have worked at Blythewood Farms for over 40 years.

Organization/Arrangement of Materials

Volumes arranged chronologically.

Conditions of Access and Use

No restrictions.

Restrictions on Use and Reproduction:

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Index Terms

Personal/Family Names:

Everhart, Margot Neil
Gomez, Ramon, active 1975-2016
Martinez, Pedro
Mayfield, Pearson Blythe
Mayfield, Mary Summerfield Key
Neil, Anne
Neil, David L.
Neil, Mary Elizabeth Mayfield
Neil, Winston L.
Witt, Richard
Neal family

Corporate Names/Organizations/Government Bodies:

Blythewood Farms (Cleveland, Tenn.) -- History -- Sources

Subjects:

American saddlebred horse
Horse farms -- Tennessee -- Cleveland
Horses -- Breeding -- Tennessee

Geographic Names:

Cleveland (Tenn.) -- Social life and customs -- 20th century -- Sources

Document Types:

Scrapbooks

Acquisition and Appraisal

Provenance and Acquisition:

Collection loaned to the Tennessee State Library & Archives by Mary Elizabeth “Bess” Neil, owner of Blythewood Farms, Cleveland, Tennessee. The collection was microfilmed and returned.

Processing and Administrative Information

Preferred Citation:

Blythewood Farms (Cleveland, Tenn.) American Saddlebred Horse Scrapbooks, 1932-2016

Processing Information:

The scrapbooks were processed by Barbara Fagen, Cleveland, Tennessee, in March 2016. Minimum conservation was undertaken. Loose photographs were secured with an archival adhesive, loose covers were secured with cotton tying tape, and loose papers were placed in folders, labeled with the appropriate scrapbook number, and placed at the back of each scrapbook.

Existence and Location of Originals:

Held privately.

DETAILED COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

CONTAINER LIST

Contents/Item Title	Date
Volume 1	1932
Volume 2	1942-1948
Volume 3 "Blythewood No. 2"	1949-1952
Volume 4 "Thoroughbred Book No. 1"	1951-1964
Volume 5 "King Coe Book No. 1"	1953-1958
Volume 6 "Blythewood Book N. 3"	1954-1958
Volume 7 "Thoroughbred Registration Papers"	1956-1963
Volume 8 [Horse Racing Photographs]	1958-1962
Volume 9 "Blythewood Book No. 4"	1958-1968
Volume 10 "King Coe Book No. 2"	1959
Volume 11 [Horses of Blythewood Farms]	1959-2013
Volume 12 [Horses of Blythewood Farms]	1962-1965
Volume 13 [Horses of Blythewood Farms]	1965-1968
Volume 14 [Horses of Blythewood Farms]	1965-1969
Volume 15 [Horses of Blythewood Farms]	1966-1970
Volume 16 "Blythewood"	1979
Volume 17 [Horses of Blythewood Farms]	1979-1988
Volume 18 [Horses of Blythewood Farms]	1982-1983
Volume 19 [Horses of Blythewood Farms]	1983-2009
Volume 20 [Horses of Blythewood Farms]	1987-2009
Volume 21 "Blythewood Farms"	1988-1991
Volume 22 "Horses Bred at Blythewood"	2005-2015
Volume 23 [CF First Night Out]	2009
Volume 24 "Neil Family and Blythewood Farms"	2010
Volume 25 "Happy Valley Farms"	Undated
Volume 26 "Blythe Spirit"	Undated
Volume 27 "Harrods Burg"	Undated
Volume 28 [CF First Night Out Part 2]	Undated