

# Daily Commercial

## Arabian horses will be bred at Clermont farm



Al-Marah Arabians / submitted

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Owner Mark Miller, who ran the now-closed Arabian Nights attraction in Kissimmee, operates Al-Marah Arabians in Clermont.

Nearly three dozen horses from the oldest privately owned, continuously bred Al-Marah band of Arabian horses in the world will be headed from Tucson, Ariz., to their new home in Clermont in December.

A public homecoming event will be held from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Dec. 14 at the horses' new 80-acre home at 11105 Autumn Lane, Linda Negron, spokeswoman for Al-Marah Arabians, said in a press release. There will be riding demos, tours of the farm, horse sales, entertainment and food.

Owner Mark Miller, who ran the now-closed Arabian Nights attraction in Kissimmee, took over the herd upon the death of his mother, Bazy Tankersley, in February 2013, Negron said. Tankersley was a legendary breeder of Arabian horses who managed the herd for more than 70 years.

“This band of horses has been together since 1815,” Miller said in the release. “We are only the third family to have custody of the herd.”

According to Negron, the herd dates back to the nomadic Bedouin tribes, who roamed the desert and were noted horsemen and horse breeders. A core group of the best of these horses was acquired by Abbas Pasha, ruler of Egypt in the 1850s. He bred them on his farm outside Cairo and raised them until the end of the century.

Upon his death, his nephew, Ali Pasha Sherif, inherited the herd and managed it until his death in the 1890s.

Many of Ali Pasha Sherif's horses were purchased by Wilfred and Lady Anne Blunt, and relocated to Crabbet Arabian Stud farm in England, the release states. Their daughter acquired several of those horses and bred them until the late 1950s at Crabbet Stud.

In 1958, Bazy Tankersley purchased 36 horses — the core herd of both Crabbet and its sister farm, Hanstead — and brought them to the United States to join the Crabbet-bred horses she had been breeding since 1942.

Tankersley moved her operation a couple of times, finally settling in Tucson. She bequeathed the 85-acre property to the University of Arizona, which will continue to use it as a working farm.

Miller is continuing the legacy that began with the Bedouin and was most recently carried out by his mother, the release states.

“My mission is to preserve the herd for my lifetime and leave it intact for the person who will carry it forward after my death,” he said.

Of the 350 horses that Al-Marah has traditionally kept in Tucson, 35 will make the trip to the farm in Clermont.