

# WALKING TOUR

John Oliver "Jack" Keene, the owner/developer of the racing and training complex that would eventually become Keeneland, was a rare individual who lived a varied and interesting life. He enjoyed great success as a trainer in Russia and Japan in the early 1900's.

It was his dream to build a racetrack that would showcase Thoroughbred racing in its finest form... as sport for the enjoyment of Bluegrass residents. He went on to build Keeneland Stud with the proceeds from the sale of the track.

**Thank you for visiting Keeneland. We hope you can come back soon to enjoy a day at the races.**

Keeneland Association, Inc.  
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800 456-3412  
[www.keeneland.com](http://www.keeneland.com)

## Rules for your safety and the safety of horse and rider

- Horses always have the right of way
- Never approach a horse unless invited
- Do not make sudden movements or loud noises around horses
- Do not use a flash camera around the racetrack during morning workouts
- No walking on, or crossing, the racetrack at any time
- No smoking on the grounds
- Do not let children run on the grounds while horses are present

Location: Six miles west of Lexington on U.S. Hwy. 60, adjacent to Blue Grass Airport.

Total Area Grounds: 921 acres

Parking: Space for 10,000 cars. General Parking free.

Live racing every April and October. Post time: 1:15 p.m. daily. Gates open at 11:00 a.m.

We are glad you are here. As you take this tour, keep in mind that the top of the map is trackside.

### Clubhouse

- The original clubhouse building was designed in the mind of John Oliver "Jack" Keene, the original owner/builder of the clubhouse and racetrack. No blueprints were used in the construction.
- The foundation was created extra thick and most of the walls are stone-faced with 4 x 8 tile backing on the interiors. Virtually no wood was used, except on the third floor, which was intended to be used as a ballroom.
- In 1935, finishing touches were added to the clubhouse and the grandstand was constructed entirely of wood.
- Former president, Louis Lee Haggin II initiated the well-groomed clubhouse lawn area and the use of ornate flower arrangements throughout the facility because he believed in extending Keeneland's philosophy of respect for horses, their owners and the racing patrons through landscape design.
- The clubhouse is private, with membership primarily open to those who race and buy or sell their Thoroughbreds at Keeneland.
- The stone pattern used by Jack Keene on the original clubhouse is known as a "two over two" style of stonework. It was thought to be influenced by his travels abroad and consists of two smaller stones set over a large stone with another two small stones set below – almost in a north-south-east-west orientation. The result, from a distance, is an attractive and unique quilted effect.

From the clubhouse, turn to the right to arrive at Grandstand South.

### Grandstand South

- Jockey hitching posts are on each side of the walk as you approach the Grandstand South entrance. The one on the left is painted in the colors of the winning owner of the Toyota Blue Grass Stakes, a historic spring prep race for three-year-olds on their way to the Kentucky Derby. On the right, the jockey sports the silks of the winning owner of the Overbrook Spinster, one of America's most important fall races for fillies and mares and an important steppingstone to the Breeder's Cup Distaff.

Proceed through Grandstand South entrance, bear left, then take next left just before reaching the Keeneland Shop. At the end of the hallway, turn right to reach the Early History Display.

### Library

- One of the world's largest repositories of information related to the Thoroughbred, it houses more than 10,000 books, 100,000 news and trade publications, 225,000 photos and negatives, 1,500 video cassettes and 3,000 files of news clippings.
- The library was established in 1939 through a donation from William Arnold Hanger. The current building opened in July 2002.
- Many special collections have been generously donated over the years.
- Open year round from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm each weekday, except major holidays.
- All materials are for reference use only.

### Early History Display

- Winding down the corridor of the paddock-side rear entrance to the Clubhouse resides an historical perspective of Keeneland contained under glass for your viewing pleasure. Be sure to take this little detour for fascinating information.

Follow the hallway back to the walking ring to explore the unique gifts at the Keeneland Shop.

### Keeneland Shop

- On the Clubhouse side of the paddock, this little shop is packed with wonderful gifts for all occasions including designer jewelry, home accessories, Keeneland apparel and souvenirs.
- During the holidays, visit the festive Keeneland Christmas Shop - located in the Clubhouse lobby.

Once outside the shop, go straight and follow the fence line of the walking ring to view the paddock.

### Parking Lot

- Landscape architects of national renown, Innocenti & Weble, designed the tree lined parking lot and grounds to create a park-like setting.
- Drive-thru wagering is available at the southeast corner of the parking lot.
- Note the large green cast iron "KA" post as you enter and leave the Keeneland grounds. These are replicas of the original posts found at the Kentucky Association track located in downtown Lexington. While removing building materials purchased from the old Kentucky Association track, Keeneland's first president Hal Price Headley was delighted when he realized that the "KA" monogram in the laurel wreath could also represent the new Keeneland Association track.

To tour the library, follow the double-laned road that leads to Man O' War Blvd.

## Racetrack

- In 1916, Jack Keene called in the surveyors and asked them to lay out a mile and one-sixteenth track on a portion of the land he had inherited.
- The track was built at a cost of \$52,000, a huge sum for the day. Keene anticipated running the races in the morning and had the track laid out facing west so that the sun would be at the patron's backs. Today, with races run in the afternoon, the sun can bring out a bevy of Keeneland's signature white parasols.
- Originally, the inside rail was made of wood, but in 1949 Keeneland became the first track in America to install an aluminum rail. The Fontana Safety Rail designed for the protection of horses and riders replaced the aluminum one in 1983.
- Inside the main track is a seven and one-half furlong turf course that was created in 1984. On October 5, 1985, Keeneland became the first organized track in Kentucky to offer grass racing.

- Keeneland was also the first track in Kentucky to introduce the totalisator system of wagering. Prior to the invention of the "tote," bookmakers who set the odds took bets by hand.
- During the filming of the movie Seabiscuit in 2002, the tote board was re-made to look like Pimlico's 1939 board. Keeneland officials liked it so much, they kept it!

- In 1979, Japanese yews were planted to form the Keeneland hedges on either side of the tote board.
- If you look closely at the area of the infield beyond and to the right of the totalisator board, you will notice an indentation in the ground where there was originally a lake. The westward orientation of the track created a blinding glare as the sun's rays bounced off the lake, making it almost impossible for patrons to watch the afternoon races.
- Keeneland's early starting gate was pulled by draft horses until a team was unable (or unwilling) to move the gate off of the track after a race had begun. Fans jumped over the rail and joined Keeneland staff to successfully move the gate to the side, allowing the horses to finish the race. Thereafter a tractor, with a back-up, was assigned the duty of setting and removing the gate.

Proceed along the rail past the finish line to the Racing Office.

## Grandstand

- The original wooden grandstand was designed by architect Robert McMeekin and had a seating capacity of only 2,500. The box seat section was replaced by steel, concrete and aluminum construction in 1950 and in 1953 the grandstand was expanded to a capacity of 3,849. A 384-person dining room was also added at that time.
- In 1963, a renovation project linked the grandstand and clubhouse and, in 1976, the old wooden grandstand was entirely replaced by concrete and steel.
- Keeneland's biggest expansion came in 1991 when 22 corporate boxes were added along with two dining areas, the 500-person Phoenix Room and the 70-person Lafayette Room, all on the fourth floor.
- Take time to visit the winners' circle on the left side as you face the track. This is possibly the most coveted piece of real estate on the grounds.
- The "apron" is the large paved area leading from the grandstand to the racetrack – a "purse" is the money that an owner and jockey win in a race.

- Adjacent to the winners' circle is the jockey's scale. In every race, in an effort to even the field, each horse is assigned a specific weight to carry, which includes the weight of the rider and tack. These weights are checked prior to the running of the race in the jockey's room and after each race in front of the public by a racing official aptly referred to as "The Clerk of Scales."
- Unique to Keeneland is the shoe board that is on display in the middle of the grandstand on the ground floor near Elevator B. Here fans can see the various types of horseshoes worn by the equine athletes participating in the day's races.
- On the second level of the grandstand, stop by Box 58, which is the box originally assigned to the Keene family.

The second level of the grandstand (trackside)

will give you a great vantage point to view the track. When you have read about the grandstand and the race track, go back down to the ground floor trackside and head to the rail.

## Paddock

- The paddock at Keeneland is actually two distinct areas – a saddling paddock and walking ring featuring two beautiful bronze sculptures mounted on stone pillars of the great mare Kinsem and her jockey Otto Madden. Victorious in all of her 54 lifetime starts, Kinsem, is considered by many to be one of the greatest racehorses of all time.
- The saddling paddock is dotted with an abundance of trees encircled by rubberized bricked walking rings. The trees and flowering shrubs in the paddock provide beautiful color in the spring and vibrant fall foliage.
- During the race meetings, horses are saddled by their trainers and valets under the trees or, in case of rain, in the stalls at the far end of the paddock.
- The horses are led by their grooms from the saddling area to the walking ring where their riders await. The jockeys, each in the colorful silks of the owner, mount their charges and are led out of the walking ring, down the path through the tunnel and on to the racetrack.
- Note that the "brick" pavers in the saddling paddock, walking ring and on the path through the tunnel are made of recycled auto tires, which provide a safe surface and sure footing.

From the paddock, enter the ground floor level of the grandstand adjacent to Elevator B. Go straight through the facility to trackside. Walk along the rail to view the grandstand, winner's circle, racetrack and the infield.

## Sales Pavilion

- From its first yearling sale in 1943, Keeneland has become the best known sales company in the world.
- Originally built for \$700,000 on the site of the old sales building, the 650-seat arena opened for the summer yearling sale in 1969. Keeneland's early sales were held in a tent.
- The facility has been expanded several times and a 13,000 sq. ft. covered show ring was added at the back of the sales pavilion in 2000.

From the Sales Pavilion, get in your car to explore Keeneland's parking lot.

As you head toward the library (on the hill as you look in the direction of the farm behind Keeneland) you will see Keeneland's unique drive-thru wagering booths.

## Racing Office

- As you walk past the end of the grandstand, you will see a small building known as "The Racing Office." This is where the business of racing is conducted. The Racing Secretary and staff take nominations and entries for each race day.
- Past the racing office is an area known as "the gap." This is the main entrance to the racetrack during training hours. Normal training hours for the main track are from 5:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. with a break at approximately 8:00 a.m. to harrow (or redress) the track (mid-Mar. through mid-Nov.).

Just past the Racing Office and the gap is a parking lot and barn complex. You will see the training track nestled below.

## Training Track

- Please note the training track on the northwest side of the gap. It is a five-eighths of a mile oval and was opened in 1955. It is used in winter months when the main track is closed and the rest of the year for training younger or less experienced horses. Weather permitting, at least one track always remains in use throughout the year.

If you have gone down to see the training track, retrace your steps and continue on the path parallel to the back of the grandstand to view the stable area.

## Track Kitchen

- At the east end of the stable area is Keeneland's famous track kitchen, where owners, trainers and stable employees get their early morning coffee and breakfast before heading to the barn.
- Turf Catering, Keeneland's concessionaire since opening day in 1936, operates the kitchen.
- Visitors are always welcome and the friendly ladies that work there insist that it is the best track kitchen in the world.
- The track kitchen opens at 5:30 a.m. almost every morning and closes at 5:00 p.m. during the sales, 7:00 p.m. during the race meetings and 11:00 a.m. the rest of the year.

Follow the same road back and turn left to continue to the sales pavilion.

## Stable Area

- In 1935, six wooden barns were erected from remnants of barns from the old Kentucky Association track to prepare for Keeneland's inaugural race meeting originally scheduled for April of 1936 (opening was delayed until October 1936).
- Today, the number of barns in the stable area is 54 with a capacity of 1,852 horses.

To sample authentic track foods, take the road next to barn 20 until it stops in front of the track kitchen.

Keeneland opened for business on October 15, 1936, as a not-for-profit racetrack dedicated to the Thoroughbred racehorse and horse racing enthusiasts. "We want a place where those who love horses can come and picnic with us

and thrill to the sport of the Bluegrass," said the track's first president Hal Price Headley.

"Racing as it was meant to be," is not just Keeneland's motto – it is the commitment that everyone involved with the organization shares and safeguards with fervor. As you traverse the historic grounds, keep in mind that everything you see has been constructed with a respect for the past and an eye on the future, but always with horses and patrons in mind. A National Historic Landmark, Keeneland is truly a palace garden built to host the sport of kings.

**The Keeneland walking tour begins at the Clubhouse adjacent to the Grandstand South entrance**