



A 1927 photo shows Marriott at the first **Hot Shoppe** he opened in May that year at 3128 14th St. NW. "A nine-stool root beer stand is how everything started," Cate says.

## Family business

Va. ranch holds Marriott memories

BY KRIS CORONADO

**Marriott is a** well-known surname today, but there's a lesser-known piece of the prominent family's history an hour and a half from the District. Fairfield Farm at Marriott Ranch, a 4,200-acre working cattle farm, was a retreat from the city for John Willard Marriott, the late founder of the worldwide hotel chain.

Although he and his wife, Alice, lived in the District's Wesley Heights, Marriott bought the Hume, Va., property, in 1951 and stayed in the manor house. "This is where he probably came to get away from it all, to clear his mind and think," says Marriott Ranch general manager Lanier Cate. "He spent a lot of time out here."

After Marriott's death in 1985, the house — built in 1814 by James Markham Marshall, the brother of U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall — became part of the Inn at Fairfield Farm (Hume; 5305 Marriott Lane, 540-364-2627, [marriotttranch.com](http://marriotttranch.com)). Here, guests can peek at knickknacks owned by the former occupants. The house's library is dedicated to the Marriott family.

In this undated photo, Marriott sits astride an appaloosa named **Bucky** at Fairfield Farm. Marriott's Fairfield Inn & Suites, named after the farm, launched in 1987. "That picture was taken here and is in the lobby of all Fairfield Inns," Cate says. Today, there are almost 700.



A **trophy** on a mantel reads "Wild Bill Marriott, The Greatest Modern Pioneer, Utah State Society," harking back to Marriott's life growing up on his father's farm in Utah. Fairfield, says Cate, reminded Marriott of those early years.

**Fairfield's** guests have included President Ronald Reagan and King Hassan of Morocco, who visited in 1982. Marriott "and President Reagan were friends, and they would ride horses together out here," Cate says.



The family's novelty cattle brand is used to brand concrete instead of farm animals. This **millstone** was salvaged from nearby ruins of a mill in 2006 and incorporated into a walkway behind the inn.

