

# A Living Museum

## Couple to Share Historic Farmstead With Students

To visit the Corbin Homestead in Joppa, Ala., is to take a step back in time and glimpse life on a late 19th century farm. And soon that's exactly what students will be able to do when this living museum opens its doors and property to educate them about history and conservation.

"I want to help youngsters celebrate our culture and natural heritage and appreciate and understand our past and how it has shaped our lives," says Randy Humphries, who represents the fifth generation on the farm, which was designated as a significant landmark in 1999 by the Alabama Historical Association.

### In the Beginning

In 1894, Randy's great-grandfather Tom Corbin and his wife, Ella, came to this northeast corner of Cullman County and purchased an 80-acre tract, where Tom constructed the farmhouse that still stands today. Tom grew cotton, corn, peanuts, peas and sorghum cane; maintained a large peach and apple orchard; and raised cattle, mules, hogs and yard chickens.

He also was a self-taught veterinarian who practiced medicine from 1902 to 1950. He succeeded in providing six of his 10 children with a college education — quite an accomplishment for a small farmer in the early 20th century, and perhaps a harbinger of Randy's later commitment to education.

### A Working Farm and a Place to Teach

Four generations later, the now 120-acre historic farmstead continues to be a working farm, with a herd of cattle and a hay operation. Randy also owns Humphries Farm Turf Supply Inc., which specializes in farm and garden machinery. His wife, Susie, teaches biology and chemistry at Snead State Community College.

In 1990, Randy and Susie established the Humphries Foundation to educate and inspire young people and instill the principles of conservation of our lands and the creatures that inhabit them. Its goals are to encourage students to discover their skills, talents and interests; think critically, build relationships, practice leadership and develop concern for their community and the world; and be good

stewards of all creatures and their environment.

"Alabama Farm Credit is honored to assist this multi-generational

farming operation, which strives to preserve the lands and the ways of the old, while encouraging future generations of farmers through education and history," says Barrett Walls, branch manager in Cullman.

"Alabama Farm Credit helped us purchase additional farmland, and they have been good partners to work with," says Randy.

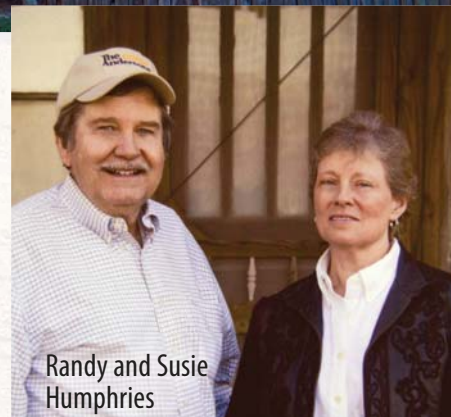
### A Great Many Plans

The couple wants visitors to see all their artifacts, period-era furnishings and buildings, including a barn buggy shed, corn crib, cotton house, well shed, outhouse, hen house and rock fence. Additional plans include developing educational programs involving nature trails on the property for studying botany, geology and ecology.

Randy and Susie also are eager to teach youngsters the history and chemical processes used by the Corbins back in the day, when, for example, they made lye soap, smoked pork in the smoke house, and canned vegetables that they harvested from the garden.

Beginning in the fall of 2018, Randy and Susie, through the Humphries Foundation, will be working with Extension agents and teachers to coordinate field trips and learning experiences for children. For more information, or to set up a tour, call (256) 586-8760.

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Randy and Susie Humphries