

By **Grania Litwin**
Times-Colonist Living staff

YOU DON'T have to be a clothes horse to attend this event, but some equine enthusiasm wouldn't hurt.

That's because this fashion show — being staged Sept. 12 in the waterfront grounds of Eagle's Nest in Uplands — is being held as a benefit for the Vancouver Island Annual Horse Festival.

The non-profit society is dedicated to promoting the horse industry and raising public awareness about the contribution it makes to this community.

"We grant awards to equine research, we develop safe riding trails and facilities, we offer riding experiences for the disabled and scholarships," said event organizer Win Armstrong who hopes to raise close to \$25,000.

She said the afternoon will feature music, two fashion shows, delicious refreshments, strolls through the gardens and guided house tours.

Situated on 2.6 acres, Eagle's Nest was previously owned by evangelist Brian Ruud who bought the house in 1977 for \$315,000 and sold it to Japanese corporate interests in 1990 for \$3.55 million. It is currently on the market again for \$4.9 million.

The palatial mansion boasts a gold leaf dome over a sunken bath, a replica of a 400-year-old Italian ceiling in the living room, and a plaster fresco depicting the life and times of Brian in the den.

"I'm sure people who come to the show will be aghast and agog when they tour the mansion," said Armstrong as she strolled through some of the more eccentrically decorated rooms, all of which have spectacular views.

The fashions will be no less exciting.

The show will feature the fall collections of Giorgio Armani, Otto Kern, Emanuel Ungaro and Zapata, said Masaccio owner Ginny Goldberg.

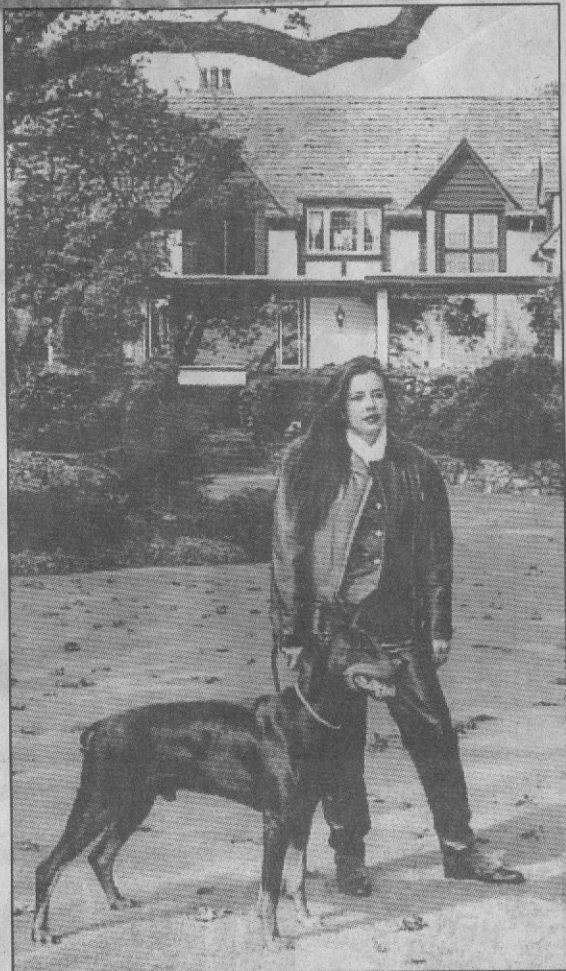
Eighteen models will wear about 50 outfits and there will be two shows in the garden, at about 1:30 and 2:30 p.m.

Some of the looks will be romantic and costume-y while others will reflect country chic, casual weekend moods or classy executive style, she said.

"There will be some heavy satins and a few floaty things, and lots and lots of cashmere. The colors are all autumnal — browns, charcoal, navy and black."

The stars of the show will probably be the trousers.

"We'll have all kinds, from very narrow to loose and wide, and we will show them in whole new ways based on the new proportions."



There will also be longer and short-cropped jackets with nipped in waists, and skirts from ankle-length to "short, short."

"This season's look is all about layering so that's what people will see: say a cashmere T-shirt under a tweedy vest, or beautiful long blouse left out over trousers and topped with a vest and wool jacket."

The event will run from 1 to 3 p.m. and refreshments will be provided by Murchie's Tea & Coffee. There will be wine from Mark Anthony Wine Mart and tours of the house conducted by members of the Hallmark Society wearing authentic historical outfits.

Members of the Horse Festival will also be dressed to the nines — in riding costumes, complete with jodhpurs and bowlers.

There are 1,000 tickets for the show and they are available at Masaccio, Shanks' Saddlery and at the Beacon Cat Hospital in Sidney.

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