

# Chinqua Penn Plantation

*Advance® Termite Bait System Protects Historic Plantation in North Carolina*

Tucked away off the winding roads near Reidsville, North Carolina, is an American architectural gem known as the Chinqua Penn Plantation. Built in the 1920s for prominent businessman and farmer Thomas Jefferson Penn and his wife, Beatrice, the sprawling estate is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and has been featured on the A&E Channel series, “America’s Castles.”

The Plantation is anchored by a 27-room English countryside mansion filled with rare and elaborate furnishings from 30 countries, many of which the Penns acquired while traveling the world. It is surrounded by 22 acres of gardens and

historic landscape, and it recently re-opened to public tours.

“The grounds are spectacular and the level of architectural and design detail was a huge draw,” explains Lisa Phelps, who bought the house in 2006 with her husband, businessman Calvin Phelps. “We also wanted to renovate and preserve an important part of the region’s history.”

A big part of preserving the historic plantation comes in the form of preventing damage caused by one of the area’s biggest troublemakers – subterranean termites. North Carolina is a hotbed of activity for subterranean termites, which cause



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more than \$5 billion in damage in the U.S. each year, according to the National Pest Management Association.

The first sign of potential trouble came while the Phelps' were conducting their final walk-through before closing on the property. The inspector found termite tunnels in several spots, but further inspections by the property's long-time pest control company, General Termite & Pest Control, showed that there was no active termite infestation.

That scare was enough, however, for the owners to seek out the best possible long-term preventative treatment for all of the structures on the plantation. Chinqua Penn's caretaker and groundskeeper, Mead Lott, was utilizing Whitmire Micro-



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Gen's Advance® Termite Bait System (ATBS) on his own home, and General Termite & Pest Control also uses ATBS as their exclusive baiting system. With this meeting of the minds, a solution was born.

"Since we made the switch to the Advance Termite Bait System three years ago, we've never looked back," says Karen Pugh, owner of General Termite & Pest Control. "And in the case of the Chinqua Penn Plantation grounds, there really wasn't any other viable solution that provided the long-term treatment that the owners wanted."

Now, nearly 200 Advance Termite Bait Stations surround and protect the plantation house, as well as the grounds' four additional buildings.

Pugh says there were two key reasons why ATBS was the treatment of choice. First, the structural aspects of the buildings do not lend themselves to a liquid treatment. The main house is made primarily of stone and the owners did not want to compromise the integrity of the structure by drilling into the stone and pouring in chemicals. The ATBS system was also appealing because the Advance stations sit inconspicuously at ground level where the many guests and tour groups will



*General Termite & Pest Control is owned by Karen Pugh and is in its 47<sup>th</sup> year of business.*

not spot them while walking the property.

“The design of the stations – all the way down to the color – makes them blend in perfectly, and they are still very easy for our technicians to locate and service,” Pugh says.

Secondly, Calvin and Lisa Phelps preferred to find a treatment method that was environmentally friendly and used the least possible amount of chemicals. “We have a young son and there are so many people that come through the property that we just feel better about minimizing the use of chemicals,” Lisa Phelps says.

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ATBS stations typically see signs of termite activity within 15-45 days of installation. Once the stations have a “hit” from termites, a bait cartridge containing an insect growth regulator is placed into the station. The termite colony is eliminated

after the naturally occurring molting process is short circuited by the Advance bait. Within 60 days of the ATBS stations being installed at Chinqua Penn, there were four termite hits on property that had no obvious evidence of termite activity.

Pugh says that servicing ATBS on a quarterly basis not only

provides the owners with long-term peace-of-mind, but it also coincides nicely with her ongoing pest management efforts at Chinqua Penn. She adds that the technical and training support she



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receives from Whitmire Micro-Gen has been an enormous help to her business. In fact, she says, it is that technical support that allowed her company to take on such a big project.

“We are a small, female-owned business and we don’t have a lot of specialists on staff, so Whitmire Micro-Gen’s technical expertise was invaluable.” She encourages other small PMPs not to be put off by large projects like the Chinqua Penn Plantation when they have this level of support.

General Termite & Pest Control is in its 47th year of business, and Pugh notes that being a woman-owned business certainly puts her in the minority. But she is noticing an increase in the number of women who are the heads of households or busi-

nesses who are making the pest control decisions.

“More women are buying houses and taking care of certain decisions in the home like pest control. I can sense the comfort in many of their voices when they speak with another woman about their pest control needs,” Pugh says. “Ultimately, they’ve got to feel confident in my knowledge and ability to solve their problems – and sometimes that takes additional time – but we always get there.”

The Phelps’ certainly have confidence in the ATBS solution, which enables them to focus on revitalizing and enjoying the grandeur of the Chinqua Penn Plantation. “In the end, we just don’t want to have to think about termites. This allows us to check that worry off the list.”



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