

# Ritzzy Home REAL FARM



Edith was just as involved in the operation and the community. She was a longtime proponent of state agricultural fairs and was elected president of the N.C. State Fair in 1921. Subsequent land sales eventually trimmed Biltmore to today's 8,000 acres. By 1930, parts of the house were opened to tourists for the first time, and the last members of the Vanderbilt family to use parts of the house as a residence moved out in the 1950s. While the house itself has never served as an inn, the owners did respond to a demand to stay on the property by building the luxurious Inn on Biltmore Estate a decade ago.

Today, Biltmore, which employs roughly 1,800 people, remains a major economic driver for the region. The estate is still privately owned by Vanderbilt heirs who run the operation, day to day.

Kevin Payne and his wife, Becky, have had the privilege of living on the estate for nearly 30 years. Their 100-year-old house is tucked just off a hilly road near the barn where livestock feed is stored. Becky homeschooled their three sons here, while their dad would have the boys measure out feed as part of their math lessons.

"It's not so much work as it is a lifestyle to us," says Payne. "The boys grew up here, staying in the woods all day." Employees who live on the grounds are allowed to hunt the expansive wooded mountains and fish the ponds and the French Broad River that bisects the property.

One son, Carson, now works full time with Kevin—and lives on the property as well. "He's never really left Biltmore," says Payne. "We've been blessed." Millions of visitors here would be inclined to agree. **FL**



**10,000:** Books in the Biltmore house library. ///

**For more information:** To learn more about the farm and house at Biltmore, see [biltmore.com](http://biltmore.com).